

A witchcraft trial before Jost de Silenen, bishop of Sion: the case of Peter Eschiller, of Münster (1484)

Introduction, édition et traduction française et allemande

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At the beginning of the summer of 1484, Peter Eschiller, from the Conches Valley and the parish of Münster, risked his life. He had believed he could escape the slander of public rumor that had been relentlessly targeting him by fleeing the country a few years earlier. The accusations of witchcraft that had been leveled against him for some time constituted a mortal threat in the 15th century, and particularly under the Bishop of Sion, Walter Supersaxo (1457-1482). He therefore waited for the bishop's death before returning home. Alas, he was imprisoned in the Majorie, in Sion, by Walter Supersaxo's successor on the episcopal throne, par le successeur de Walter Supersaxo sur le trône épiscopal,

Abbreviations used: AB = Archives of the Bourgeoisie; ABS = Archives of the Bourgeoisie of Sion; AC S = Municipal Archives; ACS = Archives of the Cathedral Chapter of Sion; AEV = State Archives of Valais; AP = Parish Archives; AT = Philippe de Torrenté Archives; ATL = Philippe de Torrenté Archives, = books; AV = Valais Archives; BWG = *Blätter aus der Walliser Geschichte*; GREMAUD = Jean GREMAUD, *Documents relatifs à l'histoire du Valais*, 8 volumes, Lausanne, 1875-1898 (*Mémoires et documents*, publiés par la Société d'histoire de la Suisse romande), 1re série, t. 29-33, 37-39; Min. = minute book; Pg = parchment; Th. = box; Tir. = drawer. = minutier; Pg = parchmentum (parchemin); Th. = thèque (boîte); Tir. = tiroir.

¹ We will not delve here into the history of the concept of witchcraft or the assimilation of the crime of sorcery to that of heresy, which took place in the first half of the 15th century. See, on this subject, dernièrement BANDENMATTEN, KUTZTREMP, "From Heresy to Witchcraft: Inquisitor Ulric de Torrenté OP (circa 1420-1445) and the Strengthening of the Inquisition in French-speaking Switzerland," in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique suisse*, 86, 1992, pp. 69-119. For the 1480s, which concern us, the les constituent elements of witchcraft (*heretica privitas*) were in place: a witch was a follower of the devil, du who renounced Christianity, paid homage to the devil, participated in the witches' sabbath, and performed malevolent acts, cf. P. PARAVY, "Making People Believe: Some Research Hypotheses Based on the Study of Trials"

Jost de Silenen (1482-1496). From then on, the machinery of repression was set in motion. Did the well-oiled procedure give him a chance of getting away with it? A very typical trial ensued, which we will recount below.² It should be noted, however, that a man, not a woman, was involved, and that his case closely resembled that of his contemporary Thomas Biderbosten, also from Conches, who was denounced in several trials.³ This contemporary Thomas Biderbosten, originaire de Conches lui aussi, qui a été dénoncé dans plusieurs procès.

The sources

L'affaire nous est connue grâce à des fascicules reliés avec divers documents dans un recueil faste qui a été déposé aux Archives d'Etat du Valais et qui fait partie des fonds des livres de la famille de Tornay. Il nous donne en reconstitution l'ordre. Le dossier comprend les éléments suivants: les cinq admonitions canoniques⁴ formulées du 29 mai au 3 juin 1484, soit du samedi au jeudi suivant⁵; Sunday anche signifiant le repos; les articles proposés par le juge en chef de la foi à l'évêque le 12 juin, qui sont validés par l'évêque le 13 juin; l'interrogatoire de l'accusé du 14 juin; la sentence du 15 juin; la sentence de l'évêque qui déclare le lundi 28 juin de son entière sévérité à la question⁶ de l'interrogatoire du 15 juin; la sentence⁷ des confessions obtenues du 17 juillet au 18 juillet; la sentence épiscopale prononcée le 19 juillet⁸; la sentence épiscopale prononcée le 10 juillet; une note de laquelle Peter Eschiller écrit: "Le châs[ement] du diable est à la tête de tout qu'il mérite en tant qu'hérétique, soit sans nul doute le bûcher".⁹

Le notaire qui rédige le dossier est le bourgeois de Sion Simon Rapillard, fils d'un autre notaire, Walter Saurier. Il a également exercé des fonctions qui le mettent en vue dans la ville de

¹ Witchcraft in the Dauphiné in the 15th century, "in *Faire croire. Modalités de la diffusion et de la réception des messages religieux du XVe siècle*, Romé, 1981 pp. 119-130. On the subject, still little sujet explored in Valais, see PJKÄEMPFEN "Etwas zur Hexengeschichte," in *Walliser Monatschrift für Walliser Material und Ländische Geschichte* 3/1884, pp. 57-59 and 67-69; PJKÄEMPFEN, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse im Wallis*, Stans, 1867; J.-B. BERTRAND, "Notes sur les procès d'hérésie et de sorcellerie en Valais," in *Sorcières valaisannes*, III, n°1921 pp. 151-209; S. STROBINO, *Françoise saved from the flames? A Valaisan-woman accused of witchcraft in the 15th century*, Lausanne, 1996, (Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale, 18) sannois d'histoire médiévale, 18).

² For comparison for the same period see E. MAILER, *Thirty years with the devil. A new witch hunt on the Lake Geneva Riviera (1477-1484)*, Lausanne, 1996, (Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale, 17) sannois d'histoire médiévale, 17).

³ The file consists of issues 80, 81 and 82 of the book ATL 87, pp. 1447-470, i.e. 7, pp. 447-470, soit 12 sheets of paper (20,5x29,5 cm and 21,5x31 cm).

⁴ These are exhortations addressed to someone under strong suspicion of guilt, *procès de culpabilité*, so that he would spontaneously confess his faults and thus benefit from the mercy of the Church.

⁵ AEW, ATL 7, n° 81, pp. 1459-1462 (from the hand of the Sedunois notary Simon Rapillard).

⁶ AEW, ATL 7, n° 82, pp. 1463-1467 (in an anonymous hand which seems to us to be that of the notary Jean de Pictu).

⁷ AEW, ATL 7, n° 82, pp. 1468-1469 (in the hand of Simon Rapillard). The scribe writes: the Saturday which was June 25 but June 25, 1484 falls on a Friday, it is probable that he made a mistake with the quan-fourth rather than the day.

⁸ AEW, ATL 7, n° 82, p. 1470 (by the hand of NN and Simon Rapillard).

⁹ AEW, ATL 7, n° 80, pp. 1447-1453 (by Simon Rapillard).

¹⁰ AEW, ATL 7, n° 80, p. 1454 (Hand of Simon Rapillard). The sheet bears a plated seal in poor condition, quoqué en mauvais état.

Sion and in the dizain. In 1484 he seems to retain with *Jost de Silenen* the prestige he acquired under his predecessor, before falling into disgrace *en disgrâce*¹¹.

Peter Eschiller's file is certainly incomplete. Indeed, it does not contain extracts from the trials of the witches who accused him, as is the case in other Valaisan cases (¹²). The prosecutor of faith, when drafting Article XXVII, likely had these earlier trials before him, although he did not name Peter's accusers in accordance with standard procedure (¹³). The file also lacks the testimonies of the neighbors and acquaintances who triggered the investigation. Finally at the final stage, the sentence handed down by the burghers of Sion on the Grand-Pont is missing, whereas we have kept copies for similar cases (¹⁴). These cases are similar¹⁵.

The various stages thus led Peter Eschiller to the stake in six weeks. Although, in his final sentence, the bishop protested against any mutilation of limbs, shedding of blood or danger of death when hanging, Peter Eschiller over to the secular Peter Authorities, there was no doubt that Peter Eschiller was destined to be burned. This was the fate suffered, for example, by the Conchardes, Trina Tand Nesa Kuehni following the sentence of July 29, 1466, pronounced by Walter Supersaxo: the bishop handed them over to the secular authorities as heretics with the same confiscation and confiscated their property.¹⁶ From his protestations of innocence and his refusal to confess, Peter Eschiller moved to a full confession that condemned him to death. How did he get to this point? It is by placing the trial in a broader context that we can better understand its implacable nature. The case of Peter Eschiller is just one case among many others in the episcopal Valais¹⁷. Moreover, the bishop's commissioners, two canons from the cathedral chapter of Sion, were perfectly familiar with the now classic elements of demonology at the end of the 15th century.¹⁸

¹¹ He long opposed the Chappotz, cf. CH. AMMANN-DOUBLETZI, "The notary, the ages and the memory", in *Vallesia*, XLVIII, 1993 pp. 207-221, more particularly pp. 230-233.

¹² Cf. for example, the trial of the shoemaker *Hennius Heymen* of Biel (1466), AP Biel, G 9.

¹³ See p. 118. See in the final sentence (p. 127) the mention of inquiries in the Conches valley.

¹⁴ On this privilege of the citizens of Sion, cf. AP Biel, G 9, p. 20 (1466, July 12), ABS, Tir. 22-133 (= AGS, Min. B 65, pp. 23-25; 1466, November 8) and J. GRAVEN, *Essai sur l'évolution du droit pénal valaisan*, Lausanne, 1927, pp. 127-128.

¹⁵ AP Biel G 10, p. 47 et seq. See also the fate of the tailor *Nicolaus Schroeter* of Rizingen in March 1467 (AP Biel G 11, p. 11).

¹⁶ Pour donner un aperçu des affaires de sorcellerie dans la vallée, nous avons rassemblé une collection de textes latins et français relatifs à la sorcellerie et au maléfice dans le Valais au XIV^e et XV^e siècle. Ces sources sont éparpillées et que nous nous proposons de publier bientôt.

¹⁷ Without being able to cite the bibliography on witchcraft, which is too extensive, one can profitably consult the works, always accompanied by annotated bibliographies, of R. MUGHEMBLEID, notably *Sorcières, justice et société aux 15^e et 17^e siècles*, Paris, 1987, pp. 249-261, and *idem*, *Le roi et la sorcière. L'Europe des bûchers (XVe-XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1993, pp. 249-259); for the medieval period, we refer the reader to the recent works of A. BLAUERT, *France le siècle des Hérenverfolgungen: Ketzer, Zauberer und Hexenprozeesse des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg, 1989, and A. BLAUERT et al. *Ketzer, Zauberer, Hexen. Die Anfänge der europäischen Hexenverfolgungen*, Frankfurt, 1990, de C. GINZBURG, *Le Sabbat des sorcières*, Paris, 1992, aux études sur les Vaudois de Fribourg de K. UTZ TREMP, and several undergraduate theses by students of Professor A. Paravicini Baglioni of Lausanne, published in the *Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale*. As for sources, one should refer to the indispensable and monumental publication by U. HANSEN, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter*, Bonn, 1801 (new edition Hildesheim, 1963).

The trial procedures

These events took place in a single location in Sion at the Majorie Castle, the bishop's residence since the last quarter of the 14th century.¹⁸ More precisely, the previous stages leading Peter Eschiller to the stake unfolded in the great hall, with the exception of July 8¹⁹, when the trial concluded in a room adjoining the castle chapel. The sentence, however, was pronounced in "the new room," likely a different one from the "la grande salle." The notary also makes sure to indicate the time of the key moments in the proceedings, namely the hour of prison; that is, early in the morning. While he does not record the torture sessions, he indicates that Peter Eschiller was subjected to torture the previous day (June 30) or that he was taken back to the torture chamber (when he qu'il showed some hesitation) (July 3). The notary then hastened to record in writing the confirmation of the confessions thus obtained in front of the prison gate.²⁰ Confirmation des aveux ainsi obtenus, devant la porte de la prison¹⁹.

The place of detention and the location of the trial raise a number of questions: Why was Peter Eschiller not interrogated in the Conches Valley by the local judge (dans major), assisted by jurors? Why did the bishop detain him in his prison in Sion, and why did he appoint the commissioners? Indeed, if we refer to the trials of 1466-1467 that misfortune came down to us, the formal procedure triggered by the arrest of a "sorcerer" in²¹, the Conches Valley following the accusations should have been as follows: the trial was conducted on the spot by the major acting on behalf of the Bishop of Sion, Prefect and/or Count of Valais, or by the judge of the Grafschaft of Biel, called the ammann, surrounded by his jurors (juge de la Grafschaft de Biel, appelé ammann, entouré de ses jurés²²). After pronouncing the sentence, the local authorities come before the bishop so that he may hand the accused over to the secular authorities, and then before the burghers of Sion to obtain confirmation of the capital sentence. The bishop therefore normally intervenes only at the end of the procedure and does not conduct the trial in his castle at La Majorie. In the episcopal Valais judging witches falls under the jurisdiction of the local courts.

¹⁸ HA MON ROTEN, «Das Schloss Majoria in Sitten vor 300 Jahren», dans *BWG*, xliii, 1961, pp. 77-89.

¹⁹ On the use of torture in the inquisitorial procedure, see the article "torture" by L'CHEVAILLER, in RINAZ, *de Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, I, Paris, 1965 (col. 1293-1314), or the article "Folter", in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, IV, Munich-Zurich, 1989 (col. 614-616).

²⁰ This family is mentioned as early as the 14th century in the Conches valley, cf. *Armorial valaisan*, Zurich, 1946, pp. 88-89; *ibid.*, 1946, pp. 88-89.

²¹ AP Biel, G 6, G 10 et G 11.

²² On the respective jurisdictional rights of the ammann of the Grafschaft of Biel and the major of the valley of Conches, cf. L. CARLEN, *Gericht und Gemeinde im Grafschaft Biel zur Französischen Revolution*, Fribourg, 1967, pp. 88-96 and 126-131, and AP Biel, A 4 (1466, June 20 juin).

²³ Cf. for example the trial of Nicolaus Schroeter of Ritzingen, AP Biel, G 11, pp. 28 (1467, March 24, Ernen). In the name of the Lord Arment. In the same year M^{CCCC} LXVII indication XV, on the very XXIII day of March, etc. Aragnun [on a crisp II], where it is customary to punish malefactors according to their own demerits, by the provost men Anthelium Uff der Egger, mayor of Monte Del above, and Anthelium Rüggem [judge in the Committee] parish of Conches, for the most reverend in Christo patre et domino nostro domino Walter, by the grace of God and the apostolic See, bishop of Seldunensi, prefect and committee of Valais, and by the sentence of the iuris and other good men the above-named Claus Schnifer was burned for a python, as he should have been sentenced against himself, and by the aforesaid lord/bishop etc. Committed to sepiulat judgment also by the castellan and citizens of the city of Selduna, affirmation and approval according to all processus prescribed against the same Schnifer and before all men and women present on the same day in any places there, ready, heard and understood before his burning. omnes processus prescriptos adversus ipsum Schroeter et coram omnibus viris et mulieribus eadem die quibuscumque locis ibidem presentibus in banco iuris perfectos, auditos et intellectos ante ipsius combustione ...

Laypeople, the statutes issued by the communities from the second quarter of the 15th century onwards, and the few files or isolated documents from trials that have survived, clearly demonstrate this. Did the place of arrest have any significance?

However, our file does not specify how, where, or by whom Peter was arrested. Was it in Zion? Unless, let us consider other possibilities. Peter Eschiller was a man of the bishop or the bishop was handling the fugitives' case? Or was he detained in Zion because the prosecutor of the faith intervened following public rumors? In any case, we must take into account the Bishop of Zion's conception of his authority.²⁴ En tout cas il faut prendre en considération la conception que l'évêque de Sion a de son pouvoir.

Some hypotheses about the role of the Bishop of Sion in the witch hunt against sorcerers

To explain the role of the Bishop of Zion in the present case it may be necessary to consider, on one hand, his role in the witch hunts and on the other hand, how Walter Supersaxo (1457-1482) conceived his mission as bishop and temporal prince.

The bishop's intervention was reportedly due to a request from local communities. In the Val d'Anniviers, towards the end of Walter Supersaxo's episcopate, it was the valley's inhabitants who reportedly petitioned the bishop to appoint commissioners to assist local officials in the witch hunts. Commissioners Pierre Römmatter and Jacques Zerbubon, both from Sion, traveled to Vissoie, and the trials were held there. The priest François Galendat, vicar of Anniviers, acted as the bishop's lieutenant and is described in documents from Rome as the "promoter" of the episcopal curia's criminal cases.²⁵ l'évêque et est qualifié dans les documents de Rome de «promoteur» des affaires criminelles de la curie épiscopale²⁶.

Article XXIII of our case reveals that, at an unspecified date, Bishop Walter Supersaxo was similarly requested by the district of Conches to take action against witches and send commissioners. This was likely a witch hunt that took place after the one of 1460-1467, in which the local authorities were active.²⁷ This hunt could well have occurred around 1480. On the one hand, Peter Eschiller mentions the execution of certain individuals by the major of Conches, Anton Hallabarter, attested as such in 1480 and 1481.²⁸ On the other hand, Peter Eschiller mentionne l'exécution de certaines personnes par le major de Conches Anton Hallabarter, attesté comme tel en 1480 et 1481.²⁹ On the other hand, Walter Supersaxo wrote on January 18, 1482 to the major and men of the district of Conches calling to a witch hunt.³⁰ Finally, brief extracts from Conchard's trial date from the beginning of 1481. The priest of Münster then styled himself vice inquisitor of the faith, appointed by the bishop,³¹ so député par l'évêque³². Finally in

²⁴ AEV, ATU 19 bis (1487, 8 March 2).

²⁵ See note 21.

²⁶ AC Obergesteln, E12 (1480, 8 July); C13 (1480, 8 September); D2 (1481, 3 April); 3 avril).

²⁷ Cf. «Registrum doctissimi Walteri Supersaxo episcopi Sedunensis. Ein Kopiaibuch von Walter II von Supersaxo, Bischof von Sitten; Graf und Präfekt von Wallis (1457-1482)», Ed. par Ph. KAUBERMATTER, dans *Vallesia*, XLV, 1990, n° 96; *Vallesia*, XLV, 1990, n° 96.

²⁸ AEV, ATU 11/1, p. 1. *In the year of the Lord one thousand four hundred and eighty-one, on the sis fifth day of February, in the presence of the venerable lord Simon Zheim, curate of Conches [i], vice inquisitor of the sacred faith specially for this purpose, by the reverend in Christ father and lord lord Waltér, by the Dei grace of God bishop of Sedune, deputed and in the presence of my notary and undersigned witnesses, personally constituted Markisa, daughter of the former Jannini Kitnis, delivered and detained for the crime of heresy and released from all torture*

During his episcopate, Walter Supersaxo therefore seems to have relied on vice-inquisitors (ecclesiastics) on the ground and appointed commissioners to help or control the local people.

Why this appears to the bishop in the Val d'Anniviers and the Valdi Conches²⁹ de Fons the Val d'Anniviers, the explanation likely lies in the personality of the lord of the manor, the bishop's own illegitimate son, Georges Supersaxo, and in the reassertion of control over the valley after the Rodolphe Esperlin affair.³⁰ As for the Valdi Conches, should we assume a weariness among the people? Could this weariness be due to the burden of costs associated with the numerous trials, the complexity of the procedure, and the difficulty of the cases when the accused appeal to the Archibishop of Tarentaise, whose suffragan bishop is the Bishop of Sion? The bishop intervenes to restore order because there have been excesses in the Val di Conches and violence has prevailed over justice! Furthermore, the local authorities are dismayed that the fugitives are turning to the metropolitan court of Tarentaise qui and obtaining rescripts that halt the proceedings. The bishop takes advantage of this local request because it aligns with his understanding of his temporal and spiritual power.

Thus, although witchcraft cases in the episcopal Valais fell under secular episcopal jurisdiction, Bishop Walter Supersaxo, who held both swords, intended to treat them as matters of faith. While the districts attempted to separate the temporal from the spiritual, Walter Supersaxo thwarted this effort and declared that he held both the détemporel and temporal jurisdiction over his subjects. He also surrounded himself with jurists steeped in Roman canonical culture, whose influence is evident in the Law code he enacted.³¹

In matters of heresy, he considered himself the inquisitor of the episcopal Valais.³² A dispute that arose in 1464 between Bishop Walter and the lords ofurs de Granges sheds light on his understanding of his role from that time onward. He asserted against these lords the power to investigate matters of faith in the parishes of Ayent, to imprison and detain the accused until and including the final sentence. And this in his capacity as inquisitor and temporal prince.^{32r et prince temporel}³².

An undated document sets the bishop, unnamed, against the important lord Peterman of Chevremont.³³ The bishop intends to imprison in his own jail a man from Vercoire, a liege lord of Peterman of Chevremont. This man is being prosecuted for using witchcraft. To support his position, the bishop relies on the fact that this is the opiniōne of divine clēse majesté and that he shares with the inquisitor the power to fully d'investigate the case, detain, and monitor the suspect. We have, however, preserved a fragment of a trial brought against Jean Coppet of Vercoire in March 1482.

²⁹ A long conflict, the history of which remains to be written. Visits Walter Supersaxo against Rodolphe, Esperlin concerning the rights of the noble family of Raron in the Val d'Anniviers.

³⁰ Cf. WA LIEBESKIND, *Bischof Walter III: Auf den Fluß Landrecht der Landschaft Wallis und Wallis Gerichtsordnung nebstd einem Auszug aus seinen Synodalstatuten*, Leipzig, 1930 p GgGHKA; La fin de l'état corporatif du Valais et l'établissement de la souveraineté des dizains au XVIIIe siècle, Sion, 1947, pp 53-60; LEISEISBACH, *Schrifftäten der Diözese Sitten*, Genève, 1973, p 110 (Scriptoria mediae aevi helvetica, XIII).

³¹ The relationship between Walter Supersaxo and the inquisition will be explored in our ongoing research on the case of Pierre de Torrenté, notary of the Val d'Anniviers, burned in 1481 for heresy, hérésie. Walter Supersaxo considers himself the lieutenant of the inquisitor, who remains behind the scenes but issues not completely absent from the episcopal Valais is épiscopal.

³² "Register of Lord Walter Supersaxo", no 125 n° 125.

³³ AEW, AV 67, 1, 16 (undated).

which might shed some light on this affair. Jean Coppatel, husband of Françoise Tavel de Granges, wife of Pierre de Chevron, Viscount of Sion, finds himself incarcerated à la prison d'Échillens. The notary's written record informs us about this delicate situation: why is a lord's husband detained in the Majorie and tried before the bishop's tribunal for a case of heresy? Jean Coppatel appears, the notary writes, before the nobleman Jean de Platea, castellan of Sion, who acts as judge and commissioner of Bishop Walter. The scribe adds "as temporal commissioner." And he crosses out the following words: *cit est avec le consent de l'Viscont de Sion* (acting on behalf of his wife, who holds jurisdiction over the accused), that the latter was handed over to Jean de Platea as a custodian/judge by virtue of an agreement between the bishop and the nobleman Françoise. The wording seems to pose some problem for the notary, as there are erasures and an addition: Was there truly an agreement between the bishop and the lord regarding the administration of justice to Jean Coppatel, accused of heresy? Or was there an initial attempt, through subterfuge, to justify Jean de Platea's role only for the contentious passage to be crossed out when the vidame of Sion reacted against this encroachment on his jurisdictional rights? In any case, on March 30, 1482, the bishop and the vidame of Sion jointly entrusted the property of the late Jean biens de Coppatel, who had been buried, to the children and grandchildren. One might be tempted to write that Walter Supersaxo played both sides, spiritual and temporal. He intervened as a spiritual leader who conceived of his role as that of an inquisitor in order to establish himself as supreme lord, holding the *merum et maximum Imperium*. His attempt to appropriate the confiscated property of the sorcerers also contributes to strengthening the Prince's rights. The great achievements of Walter Supersaxo's episcopate, whether the conquest of Lower Valais and the alliances, the minting of coins, the drafting of the country's laws, the elimination of Rödolphe Esperlin or, in this case, the hunt for sorcerers throughout the diocese, all reveal the constant concern to strengthen the Prince's powers and assert his preeminence.

Both temporal and spiritual powers were thus invoked jointly or alternately to justify the increasingly direct interventions of episcopal authority in witchcraft cases. Furthermore appeals from the Malaisans to the court of Tarasque compelled the bishop to treat these problems as matters of faith so as not to be disavowed externally. The role of the Church, wrote Walter Supersax, on October 10, 1480, was to enable sinners to repent.³⁶ This is why, at the beginning of a general inquiry, a monitory of *est pourquoi au début d'une enquête générale, un monitoire de*

³⁴ ABS, T. 245/1/19 (1482, May 19), in the name of the Lord, amen. In the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and eighty two, on the nineteenth day of the month of Tuesday, at Sedona, in the great stupa of the castle of Majore, before the nobleman John of Platea, castellan of Sedona, as judge and temporary commissioner for this purpose by the reverend in Christ our father and lord lord Valter, by the grace of God bishop of Sedona, prefect and count of Valais (Following the consent of the aforesaid lord vice-lord of Sedona, in the conjunctive name of the said nobleman of France, his wife, from whose resor the undersigned is delivered and deposited in the hands of the said nobleman John as a judge, as he asserts, with the consent of the aforesaid nobleman, the most reverend lord of Sedona, the bishop and prefect of the aforesaid nobleman of France, who in the future will be interested and may be interested in the future) in the presence of the undersigned witnesses called to this effect etc. The said John Coppelat was personally appointed, imprisoned in the prisons of our aforesaid lord, Bishop of Sedona, in Castro Maioria, for the most heinous crime or heresy [.] Iustus Johannes Coppelat, carceribus prefati domini nostri Sedunensis episcopi in castro Maioria ob nephantissimum heresis crimen mancipatus [...]

³⁵ ACS, Min. A 98, pp. 3-5.
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³⁶ Cf. "Register domini Walteri Supersaxo", n° 88.

If the bishop through the parish priests exhibits those guilty of heresy to spontaneous and voluntary confess their sins and denounce their accomplices within fifteen days in order to obtain a final forgiveness and return to the Church; otherwise, the path to forgiveness is closed to them forever. Those who do not confess are then prosecuted with the full force of the law, and it is the duty of the bishops to enlist the help of the secular authorities later.

The Church's involvement in the persecution of witches in the episcopal Valais régional reflects a shift from the years 1428 and 1466-1467, when it fell under the purview of secular authorities, and this development was not without its challenges. Walter Supersaxo faced opposition both within and outside Valais. Fugitives prosecuted for witchcraft, or their relatives, found themselves among Rodolphus Esperlin's supporters in the Tarentaise region. Whether they won over members of the clergy, Walter Supersaxo claimed that they behaved like Wolves against him and felt he had little support from the archbishop.³⁷ Internally, he voiced his discontent to the Diet in February 1482. The bishop was accused of trying to manipulate both spiritual and civil cases for his own benefit. On one side, the nobles intended to thwart his *ui les actions and defend their *in eum et mixtum imperium**, which the bishop is encroaching upon. On the other side, his temporal officers are angered by the harm they suffer when the l'autre suspect flees to Tarentaise. To these reproaches, Walter Supersaxo replies that the Church holds omnipotent jurisdiction over heretics, excluding the ultimate punishment, and that he *que Would be believed to be freed from this burden by others* ³⁸ *l'usage du supplice ultime et qu'il serait soulagé d'être déchargé de ce fardeau par d'autres*³⁸.

Jost de Silenen probably continued the policies of his predecessor.³⁹ One of the ³⁹ L'un commissioners tasked with obtaining Peter Eeschiller's confession was hitherto that que

³⁷ Cf. "Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo," no. 2312 and no. 2322 (1481, December 31)e).

³⁸ Articles sent to the Diet by Walter Supersaxo (February 6, 1482; *Sion, Maior 16*). Also, because *ia for many years now we have heard of disagreements, disputes and contradictions between some nobles of our lands claiming to have a high dominion and ultimate punishment for their vassals, / hence opposition/ of officials and alleging that the ultimate punishment should be remitted to them, since they themselves are nobles who have neither limited territories nor flocks nor trunks, etc. wherefore the ultimate remission of punishment should be remitted to the officer of the high lord who has jurisdiction in this and no one else etc. and lest there be any cause of further contradiction between them, but each knows what he should ride, and no one hinders the other in his justice, and our nobles and officials live together in brotherly love, without complaint, we entrust to you that you declare on this mature advice what seems just to you and inc that this should be observed inviolably by both parties both now and in the future.*

*... Also because it has come to our attention that some patriots suspected of the crime of heresy and fugitives because of the crime itself resort to other tribunals, without and in addition to the fact that *quod any grievance has been brought against them, they obtain writs, they harass us and our officials and / litigious involve them in lawsuits, there is much murmuring in the country, even denigration / with others saying to us / that we would like to have in our hands both spiritual and civil cases from which they would suffer these novelties that they have never suffered since the memory of men, if we had allowed our officials to judge these heretics in their temporal terms as our predecessors did, they would well teach these fugitives to et take another path and in a way threaten by deeds they want to prevent and find a way to be freed from this such troubles, etc.**

We answer that what we did, we did it because the laws so desire that over heretics, up to the last punishment, all jurisdiction belongs to the Church, and that our subjects should not marry in their previous errors and should not burden their souls with things in which they are forbidden power. We labored as we were held and are held, for we would be very content if we were legally freed from the burden of this kind of inquisition and others did it, which would be a welcome and happy exoneratio for us / leta exoneratio. (AEW, Fonds d'Odet, I, batton 8/32/12 original), text edited from a copy of A.-J. de Rivaz by F. DERRINGINIS-EA-SARRAZ, "Développement de l'indépendance du Haut-Vallais et enquête du Bas-Vallais," in *Archiv für Schweizerische Geschichte*, III, 1844, pp. 244-245e, III, 1844, pp. 244-245.

³⁹ On Jost de Silenen, cf. W. EHRENZELLER, «Der Sturz Jost's von Silenen und sein Prozess vor der Kurie: Ein Beitrag zur Walliser Geschichte der Jahre 1495-1498», in *Jahrbuch für Schweizerische Geschichte*, 38/1913, pp. 79-120, p. 73-120.

This bishop's brother: Canon André de Silenen. He holds the significant title of vicar in spiritual and temporal matters to the bishop, dated October 12, 1484⁴⁰. 12 octobre 1484⁴⁰. The other commissioner was also a canon, Leonard Prepositus, a canon, Bachelor of Laws and officer since 1470. Leonard Prepositus quickly gained the trust of Walter Supersaxo, de la whose secretary he was, and who sent him as ambassador to the Master of Requests of the Duke of Savoy on September 9, 1481. des requêtes du duc de Savoie le 9 septembre 1481⁴³. Jost del Silenen, at the beginning of his episcopate, seems to have retained the same staff as Walter Supersaxo. The choice of two clergymen and the location of the trial suggest that the bishop intended to act in this circumstance as his spiritual deader. The bailiff and vice-bailiff, moreover, perhaps in the background, the vice-bailli sont d'ailleurs en retrait. Thus, Peter Eschüller found himself at the Majorie because in matters of witchcraft, theellerie, bishop tended to act as an inquisitor. But also because Jost de Silenen did not hesitate to encroach upon local jurisdictions. This, at least, is what several people interviewed in qu'affirme 1496-1497 affirmed after the bishop's departure, having been driven out by the Valaisans. For example, the notary Jean Jordan reported that when he was pastellan of Bagnes for the abbot of Saint Maurice, plott de Silenen forced him to arrest a man from Vullèges for witchcraft; he had him imprisoned and tried at the Majorie, even though the abbot of Saint-Maurice, lord of Bagnes and Vullèges, claimed responsibility for this arrest and the detention of the guilty man in his prison in Bagnes. The bishop demanded 900 pounds from the accused's son, probably for the redemption of property and the costs of the trial; not content with that, he also demanded a substantial sum (300 florins) from the man who, unfortunately for him, lived in Martigny, a town that had angered the bishop. Jost del Silenen had placed the town under interdict during a dispute over the Rhône dikes, but the people of Martigny had appealed to the metropolitan see of Tarentaise and had the interdict lifted, much to the bishop's dismay.⁴⁵ The former bailiff Anselm Uff der Egg, the major of Conches Hans Bertscher and two other former majors also attest that the jurisdiction of the Conches valley was violated by Jost de Silenen. Without knowing if it was a case of witchcraft, a man named Jörg Gerwer was taken to the Majorie to be tried, whereas the long-standing custom was to try the guilty where they were found. Cela n'a été fait que lorsque la ville de Martigny a été jugée alors que la coutume observée de tout temps était de juger les coupables là où on

⁴⁰ H. VON RÖTEN, «On the composition of the cathedral chapter of Sion in the Middle Ages», dans *Vallesia*, III, 1948, p. 1060.

⁴¹ D. IMESCH, «Das Domkapitel von Sitten zur Zeit des Kardinals Matthäus Schiner», dans *BWG* VIII, 1921, pp. 110-111, let (H. VON RÖTEN, «Zur Komposition des Domkapitels von Sitten im Mittelalter», dans *Vallesia*, III, 1948, p. 97).

42 ACS, Tr. 254, p. 7171.

⁴³ Cf. «Register of Lord Walter of Supersaxo», no. 213 (sd, ca. 1464) and no 92.° 92.

See below p. 106 p. 106.

⁴⁵ ABS, Tr. 92-178, p. 22. *Wer myter bezuget der vorgenant Johans Jordan [schrifet], das der zyt is dor er tschaacht in Bagnies was durch den aupt von Sant Mauritzien, do docht Herr Joss to the same. Jordan that he by the fire to lose Hb and gutt one of Villugen; called Jahan Chedal, as a whirlpool catch and hand, over to him; and as well as the abbot of Saint Mauritzien, chief lord in Bagnies and Villugen, and the bishop, that he would not release the same prisoner from his honor, but keep him in his prison in Bagnies; but Lord Joss wanted to take advantage of this and brought the prisoner to his castle in Sitten to defend himself and justify him, and gave the prisoner's son the sum he should have justly judged, which was a swell, and took from them nine hundred pounds lib guilders, and Perrod Chedal, his son from Martinach, had to give Lordn Joss three hundred guilders, because he was from Martinach, about the aforementioned report to Herr Josen geben dryhundert guildin, darumb das er von Martinach was, über die vorgenant bericht zu Martinach; and that according to the aupt of Sant Mauritzien, lord in Bagnies, has sued once again against the heched mal Johansen Jordan, the bishop who had reported the report to us, should give us a share, oder bericht nutzt wellen geben noch teillen.*

arresting them. The goods were confiscated by the local judge, without opposition from the lord, who then received the judge's accounts. ⁴⁶ Jos de Silené had often violated this ancient custom.⁴⁷ The former bailiff Antoni Lener, of Brign, and authorities from the district of Brign made the same complaints.⁴⁸ In the district of Sierre, Mathieu Ansemier stated that his father, accused of witchcraft, was arrested with others around 1492 and taken to the Majorie without a sentence being pronounced on the matter in Sierre.⁴⁹ Prononcée à ce sujet à Sierre⁵⁰. The testimonies gathered against Jos de Silené suggest that he had found a way to extort money whether the arrested person was convicted or released for they and their heirs had to pay a substantial sum. The bishop intended to profit financially from the prosecution. Could our case constitute one of the bishop's first abuses? Notre affaire constituerait-elle l'un des premiers abus de l'évêque?

Jos de Silené was certainly a man of his time, steeped in this fear of witches and conspiracies. His own father, Christophe de Silené, probably played an active role in the persecution of witches when he was castellan of Sierre in 1428⁵¹ (il était châtelain de Sierre en 1428⁵²). It is not of the question that Jos de Silené was aware of the widespread witch hunt undertaken in the Dauphiné from the second quarter of the 15th century.⁵³ He was indeed coadjutor to the Bishop of Grenoble in 1475, then Bishop of that diocese in 1477. But what exactly is the suspect accused of?lement au suspect?

⁴⁶ ABS, Tit. 92-178, p. 25-26, item Amselhem Uffder Egk, former chief magistrate, Hans Beitschen, mayb' ofis Boysch / Martin Borter, and Casper Zwinot, former mayor of Doysch, accused the incendiary of Doysch of having dem violated the old customs of Lord Josén, by forcibly bringing Joe Gwer to trial in the same district and allowing him to erg judge the matter, which is of old custom and practice, that the wrongdoer should be judged where he was caught, and the judge himself did so gwonheit und wübung wißt, das der ubeltaeter an enden gericht sol werden, da er begriffen wurt, och der selbig richter eins so "Ichen gu't zu" synen handen ah' intag des Herren namen darum blieb er im abscheid syhs gerichts dem Herren rechnung lohnt, wider welch herkenheitheit derselb / p. 26/Herr Jobit aber tat hatt, manigfaltiglich, da' nri wo sich so "Ichen gu" tren fal begehen, has be so emlich Habto / his handanden gezogen.

⁴⁷ ABS, Tit. 92-178, p. 25, item halte geretdy ersamten fromen Peter Metziten, castellan Ze Brug; Antoni Lener, althauptmann Hans Brunlen, Hilprand Lener, alth castellan; Antoni Zuber und Casper Chinen by ir. geschwörteh eid, wie end wohlyplich, syn ist in ellene enden blantz Wallis, kein iäustae ter vör ze fol rügen ze fol sunder, is ander an stätten, doin er griffen wurd, recht fo rüfiget soll werden, dagegen doch Hert Jos, tann hat und so'lich siyheit gewalten klich verscheidlich an Thomas Salzmaran der kilcherin von Naters, denn er zu Glylassen och am Urteil und über rechtsatz von dazhen gah Sitte hilfesorgte hatt; man der kilcherin von Naters, denn er zu Glylassen fachen, och an urteil und über recht satz von dannen gan Sitten geforriget hatt.

⁴⁸ ABS, Tit. 92-60, pp. 3-2 (1492, 3 Decembre). And in the same year, Jean Thomoz, from Valais, the master of the mint of Sierre, the mint master summoned (ducicul, gremio) and diligently examined and questioned by me, the commissary of the above obligeance, said that he knew both that Josén it is of old custom to extort from his people by force of the most nefarious methods, et interrogatus super heremeticis scicte, dicit se tractus acutum non esse, videlicet quod cuperet harsa, multe Thomoz et alii detentos ad castrum Majorie, nulla sententia Sirri super hoc data de qua ipse testis sciat. Quicquidem Thomas postmodum se redditus sancte matris ecclesie et stetit in dictis carceribus detenus spacio unius mensis et tribus diebus, pro quo tempore idem dominus Jodocus ab ipso habere voluit pro expensis per ipsum Thomoz factis LX^{ta} libras mair. semel, quas sibi aut ejus mandato solverunt.

⁴⁹ H. VON ROTEN, «Die Grosskastellane von Siders im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert (bis 1451)», dans *Walläsiat I*, XXXIII, 1978, pp. 124-125) et TH. VON LIEBENAU, «Von den Heken, so in Wallis verbrannt worden in den Tälern, der Cristofel von Sitten her und Richter wæs», dans *Anzeiger für Schweizerische Geschichte*, NF 9, 1903, pp. 135-138; *für Schweizerische Geschichte*, NF 9, 1903, pp. 135-138.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. PARAVY, *From Roman Christianity to the Reformation in Dauphiné*, Rome, 1993, II, pp. 771-906. (Collection of the French School of Rome, 183).

⁵¹ Cf. B. TRÜFFER, *Portraits of the Bishops of Sion from 1418 to 1977*, Zürich, 1977, pp. 33-35, pp. 33-35.

Does riceing allow one to escape the witch hunts in the episcopal Valais?

The rumor that Peter was a sorcerer had been circulating for a long time. It triggered the opening of the trial because the judges could no longer ignore it.⁵² The trials of sorcerers and the testimonies of acquaintances and respectable people had drawn attention to Peter Eschiller and condemned him, branding him with infamy. From the very first interrogation, before the first canonical admonition, Canon Leonard *Propositi of Sion*, the bishop's commissioner in this case, asked Peter if he knew why he was appearing before the tribunal and if he was aware of his reputation as a heretic among his neighbors. The prosecutor of the faith, whose name is unknown, played the burden of this public rumor heavily on Peter. It alone occupied at least 6 of the 28 articles submitted to the accused⁵³ and already constituted partial proof. The rumor had accused Peter and he knew it.⁵⁴

What attitude could he take in the face of defamation? Fifteenth-century documents show us the various possible paths. Peter Eschiller could have attempted a defense and submitted to purgation before the bishop.⁵⁵ This required financial resources to pay guarantor, bail, and court costs. It was necessary to be surrounded by supportive relatives and a network of trusted friends ready to testify on his behalf and "co-expiate". A lawyer was needed to draft the defense. At this stage, the bishop still had to authorize the accused to present his defense. Clearing one's name was therefore no easy task.⁵⁶ A ce stade l'évêque doit encore autoriser l'accusé à présenter sa défense. Blanchir sa renommée n'est donc pas facile⁵⁷.

The fear of the future is great, especially when one knows of similar cases among one's acquaintances. Now Peter Eschiller may have witnessed the first witch hunt in the Conches valley, under Walter Supersaxo. A Peter Eschiller, a bailiff of Conches, appears among those who decided the fate of two witches, Tuina Kuenis and her daughter Nesa, on July 25, 1466, in Embrach. Is this him or someone with the same name?⁵⁸ 25 juillet 1466 à Ernen⁵⁹. Est-ce lui ou un homonyme? We know almost nothing about him except that, on December 10, 1477, he held the title of discreet than, usually reserved for lawyers, notaries, and officials! On that date, he attended, as a simple witness, an agreement negotiated at the Majoria by the bishop and his assessors to lend a serious bailjet between people from Münster.⁶⁰ He was therefore a person of some importance in this village. Our records tell us that Peter Eschiller's wife, named Greta, returned to him after having been away for some time. According to his confession, Peter Eschiller might have been involved in commerce, which would explain his presence in Airolo, on the other side of the Nufenen Pass, in the Léventina Valley, and the debt he left there.⁶¹ ce qui expliquerait sa présence à Airolo, de l'autre côté du col du Nufenen, dans la Léventine, et la dette qu'il y laisse⁶².

Our man is many of the climate prevailing in the Conches valley at the end of Walter Supersaxo's episcopate: the excesses committed by the local authorities

⁵² Cf. Article VIII, pp 14-4.

⁵³ Among the articles written by the procurator of the faith, numbers VII, IV, V, IX, XI, XXVI, XVII, XXVIII deal with the fame of Peter conveyed by public rumor: rumeur publique.

⁵⁴ On purgation (see below pp 134, note 10).

⁵⁵ See S. STROBLIN, *Rapport dressé pour M. James P. A Valaisan accusé de sorcellerie au XV^e siècle*.

⁵⁶ AP Biel, G 10, pp 45.

⁵⁷ ACS, Minn A 139, pp 196-200. Thomas Biderbosten, presumed guilty a few years later, is also there and represents the side of the friends of Berchtold Züszen killed by Thomas Im Hoff de Münster who allegedly raped the wife of the deceased.

⁵⁸ Cf. infra, p. 128.

de la vallée de Gruyère n'ont pas de venir leur échapper des insultes qui se produisent au sein du diocèse de Tarare, et que l'archevêque de Lyon, lequel possède en effet la prérogative de faire arrêter les personnes accusées, et de faire saisir les biens et des condamnations rapides⁵⁹. Il faut être pris.

Faced with the danger posed by his bad reputation, Peter Eschiller left his homeland in the hope of better days. He was not the first to do so. This option of leaving the diocese was, in fact, advised to the Gram brothers, also known as the de Clavibus brothers, of Leuk, by some Wise men. At least, that is what they explained to the Pope on June 6, 1478: Perrinus de Cabanis, a secular magistrate, had seized their relative Perrine, daughter of Jean Thiebaudi, claiming that she was suspected of heresy. Perrine, fille de Jean Thiebaudi, en affirmant qu'elle est suspecte d'hérésie. He tortured her and subjected her to the punishment of being burnt at fire; similarly, he had several other peoples of both sexes burned in this climate of witch hunts, the brothers learned that some people under torture defame them, then recant at the moment of death. Wanting to defend puis se themselves, they asked the judge and the bishop for a copy of the trial records but were refused. It is therefore fear being caught and confessing under torture to crimes they never committed, donc consequently, they risk being subjected to the ultimate punishment, as is the fate of many others in the diocese. They have thus gone into exile and no longer dare to return. It should be added that suspicion must have fallen upon them because their father, Perrod, had himself been condemned II for his crimes around 1466-1467, perhaps for witchcraft⁶⁰. They were quite right to fear for their fate. Infamy marked the lineage and could extend to the relatives. Peter Eschiller must have felt exactly the same sense of powerlessness, the same fear in the face of the threat of torture, even though Théodule, Pierre, and Jean Grant had supported their brother, the clerc, over Stéphane Grand.⁶¹ Similarly, Thomas Biderbost had two brothers, Hans and Jacques, who supported him and presented the evidence for his defense to the bishop; they intervened during the proceedings to try to slow the inexorable machine.⁶² Peter Eschiller, however, seemed quite isolé before his judges. Ils soutiennent et qui produisent devant l'évêque les éléments de sa défense; ils interviennent au cours de la procédure pour essayer de ralentir la machine inexorable⁶³. Peter Eschiller, lui, semble bien isolé face à ses juges.

But he did not seek to clear his name. He could have done so, however, through simple confession and penance.⁶⁴ In the eyes of the prosecutor of the faith, his negligence, sa pas-

⁵⁹ Cf. *Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo*, n° 97.

⁶⁰ *Vaticanae Archivorum Reg. Suppl. 770 (Archiv 765), fol. 134v-135v*; cf. le registre de C. Wirz, *Regesten zur Schweizergeschichte aus den päpstlichen Archiven 1447-1513*, 4, Berne, 1913, n° 341, pp. 135-136.

⁶¹ AGS, MH A 90, pp. 664-665 (1467, April, Leuk); l'évêque Walter Supersaxo vend les biens confisqués appartenant au crime de Perrod Grant de Leuk à Théodule, Jean et leurs frères pour 100 livres.

⁶² While Théodule, Pierre, and Jean Grant were imprisoned in Sion, their brother, the priest Stéphane, appealed to the court of Tarare (see *Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo*, n° 82). On Stéphane Grand, parish priest of Sion, then of Leuk, and finally canon of Sion, see HA VON ROTEN, «Contribution à la chronologie des curés de Sion», dans *Annales valaisannes*, 37, 1962, pp. 358-359.

⁶³ ABS, Tir. 245/1/18 (1481, February 17): We, Walther, by the grace of God and the apostolic See, bishop of Seden, prince and corner of Valais, make known by the present significant ones, which are expedient for all, that in the cause of the defenses granted to Thomas Biderbost, detained for the crime of heresy, having convened by us a council of wise ecclesiastical men of law who seemed to us intelligent in this case, we have examined and published the defenses of this kind closed and sealed produced by the brothers of the same detainee, and have read them verbatim before them... detenti productas apperimus et publicamus ipsasque de verbo ad verbum coram eisdem legi fecimus...

⁶⁴ Sur cette cérémonie, voir N. EYMERICH, F. PENA, *Le manuel des inquisiteurs*, traduit par L. SALA-MOLINS, Paris, La Haye, 1973, pp. 156-158, et ci-dessous, p. 134, note 10.

His actions become proof of his guilt. Moreover, he fled, which in itself constitutes further evidence against him, as Bishop Walter Supersaxo warned the parishioners before proceeding against the witches.⁶⁵ It is because he is guilty that he evaded justice. The flight, besides backfiring on him, authorizes the seizure of the guilty party's property⁶⁶ and deprives him of the means to defend himself. Peter Eschüller is in a difficult position to present his absences favorably. In the face of the prosecutor of the faith's arguments, in 1480, 1481 or 1482, he undoubtedly thought he could better defend himself outside the zehnne and, moreover, since Walter⁴⁸², il a Supersaxo was an elderly man by that time, he certainly hoped for a change of bishop. comme à cette date Walter Supersaxo est un homme âgé, il a certainement espéré un changement d'évêque.

But, once the decision to leave was made, where to flee? Some Valaisans under Walterus Supersaxo sought the protection of lords, such as Berthold Richter alias Mestrat d'Ayent who, alias Marassed by the bishop's officers took refuge in Bex with the lords of Granges and Bex in 1464⁶⁷. He seems to have escaped the stake if it is indeed he who made his will on August 20, 1476 in Saxon, in the parish of Ayent.⁶⁸

As we have already said, some return to the metropolitan court of the Archbishop of Tarentaise, because they do not trust the justice of the country (this is the case of Copinhard's estate and others in the years 1480-69). Others went further, all the way, to Rome. Where they addressed a petition to the Pope, such as Thomas Biderboden or the Grants of Leluk.⁶⁹ By appealing to the court of Tarentaise or to the Pope, the fugitives made their case a matter of faith that would not have been within the jurisdiction of the civil authorities; they placed the Bishop of Sion in an uncomfortable position, he who made the pursuit of witches a matter of faith but who most often acted through secular officials.⁷⁰ It is perhaps to avoid this contradiction that at the end of his episcopate, Walter Supersaxo chose to send clergymen as vice-inquisitors to the Conches Valley and the Anniviers Valley. It, under Jost de Silvren, the trial of Peter Eschüller took place at the Majbrie de Sion; it was perhaps due to this conception, new for the episcopal Valais, according to which the Witch hunt fell within the ecclesiastical domain, c'est peut-être dû à cette conception, nouvelle pour le Valais épiscopal, en vertu de laquelle la chasse aux sorciers relève du domaine ecclésiastique.

Others, finally, fled to German-speaking Switzerland, to the Bernese.⁷¹ Where did Peter Eschüller take refuge, and how long was he gone? Did he have the means -t-il eu les moyens

⁶⁵ See article XXIII, p. 117.17.

⁶⁶ See the statutes of the command of Morel concerning spells (GREMAUD, no. 2809, 1480, June 15) or those of Raron (GREMAUD, no. 2883, 1434, February 13) (tier).

⁶⁷ « Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo », no. 124, 125 and 127. On Juhe 19, 1469, he is said to be a member of the lords of Granges in the parish of Ayent (ACS, Tir. 25-4, p. 46).

⁶⁸ ACS, Min. A 149, pp. 468-472.

⁶⁹ « Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo », no. 96 (order addressed by Bishop Walter Supersaxo to the Dizain of Conches and dated 18 January 1482). We have regrettably ordered you or yours to concurred in a certain conspiracy made by the Tarenti court, and, as you say, for the offences committed by them who, because of heresy, were infamously subjected to the Tarenti court, we have attempted to avenge the accusations committed by their own authority.. See also no. 103 (letter from Bishop Walter Supersaxo seen à un addressed to an ecclesiastic in Rome and dated 2 March 1482). We have some of you who are suspects, and fugitives, with whom, not our fault but our own fault, we are in litigation in the Tarenti court.

⁷⁰ The relationship between Bishop Walter Supersaxo and the Archbishop of Tarentaise was quite strained in the Registrum domini Walteri Supersaxo (pp. 128), p. 128.

⁷¹ G. TOBLER, «Zum Hexenwesen in Bern» in the Swiss Archives of Folklore, 2/1898, pp. 59-60 2, (lettre de la Ville de Bâle à l'évêque de Sion datée du 15 juin 1467); at ibidem, 4/1900, p. 723; Anhoptman zu Wallis. Min. heim haben einfröweli in vängnis von Wallis um haxe reye und welle um kein marte haxe vereicheh, dass ier mi hem wüssen lass, wie si dannen gescheiden, si sich darnach wüssen zu richten, si (1478, 16 mai) wüssen zu richten (1478, 16 mai).

Did the financiers go to Tarasconi or Rome? Once again, we don't know. Did his return to his homeland, after the change of bishop, give him a chance to escape? death or to organize his defense if he was recaptured? Il s'est alors repris?

Returning home and escaping justice after being defamed, leaving Valais, and trying to defend oneself is not easy. What becomes of the three Grant brothers from Lièuk, Pierre, Théodule, and Jean, and their half-sister Maria? utérine Maria? After being allowed by Bishop Walter Supersaxo to return to their diocese, they were arrested five months later and imprisoned again for four months, as they explained on February 28, 1482, to the Pope, to whom they appealed.⁷² Underous Walter Supersaxo, Peter Eschiller had little chance of remaining free upon returning to Valais; moreover, his property had been seized by the bishop.⁷³ After the former, latter's death, Peter Eschiller's imprisonment proved that the witch hunt was not over. Once arrested, can he at least defend himself against the prosecution of faith who considers him guilty? Upable?

The course of the trial occurs

The procedure employed was inquisitorial. The accused was presumed guilty following rumors and denunciations that had damaged his reputation (*then-confession*) obtained by the judges, in this case through torture, constituted the proof. The prosecutor of the faith who established the charges was rarely named in Valais trials. It was often a canon laïc. Il devait souvent s'agir d'un chanoine. The investigation into the sacrilege allegedly committed by Thomas Biderbostenne in Sion, however, gives the name of Nicolas Schiner, the future Bishop of Sion.⁷⁴ In practice, the prosecutor could well be Canon Leopold Prepositi, whosént Peter the canonical admonitions inviting him to confess his sins. Indeed, it is he who signs another document, unfortunately incomplete and undated, addresses a canonical admonition to ascertain Beatrice; he is then explicitly referred to as the prosecutor of the faith.⁷⁵ But since, in the present case, her and the cantor Andrew of Silexnech collect Peter Eschiller's confession, it is more likely that an anonymous third party intervenes as the prosecutor of the faith la foi.

⁷² Archives du Vatican, Reg. Rat. 822, fol. 90v-92 (cf. Regesta de G. WIRZ, C., n° 585, p. 213, 535, p. 213).

⁷³ See appendix pp. 128.

⁷⁴ ABS, Tit. I 245/1718 (undated): dat the voice labors against the same Thomas [Biderbosten] because Thomas himself at that time threw the divine body of Christ to the ground elsewhere and committed sacrilege and treated it irreverently, iabout which the said witness in the hands of my undersigned notary as commissioners appointed for this purpose by the lord of Sion; in the presence of the venerable man lord Nicholas Schiners, sacred procurator of the faith, the said witness said that he knew only as follows: having previously cited Henslin Biderbosten, the witness, I'd swear witnesses as is customary, who was present and saw the said oath taken by the witness himself. iuramentum prestari vidit.

⁷⁵ ACS, *Judiciale* 13/86(b)6.b. The inquisitor, responding, said that he knew nothing else about the crime and did not want to be investigated. Having heard these, the aforesaid Lord Leopold, as previously appointed as the prosecutor of the faith, assigned the same inquisitor to the first hour of the next Monday to specify his malevolent enemies, if he has any or otherwise say, propose and allege whatever he thinks is of interest, why he should not be subjected to questions and tortures, strictly and precisely. *anda non deberet peremptorie et precise.*

The articles of the prosecutor of faith

The twenty-eight articles drafted by the prosecutor of the faith, which form the basis of the defendant's interrogation, clearly demonstrate how Peter Eschiller is Peter presumed guilty from the outset and how the trial closes in on him. The questions are organized as follows: the first two concern Peter Eschiller's entry into the church and his confirmation. Then come apostasy and the pact with the devil (articles III and IV); the resulting spells (V, VI); the defendant's bad reputation among his neighbors (VII to IX); the use of his diabolical art to bring his wife back against her will (X); the absence of purgation (XI); promiscuity with the devil (XII, XIII); participation in various scuté avec l'syhabogues, OK sabbaths, a point emphasized (XIII-XXI) and spells against people and animals (XXII). The investigation under Valter Supersaxo in the Conches district (XXIII-XXVI); again Peter's bad reputation and his flight (XXVII and XXVIII); and (XXIII-XXVI); à nouveau la mauvaise réputation de Peter et sa fuite (XXVII et XXVIII).

The prosecutor of the faith was probably inspired by the manual of inquisitors or *Directorium inquisitorum* by Nicolas Eymerich and the doctrinal treatises that flourished in the first half of the 15th century / fin du XV^e siècle⁷⁶. Indeed, this interrogation is no more original in its conduct than from a demonological point of view. His questions range from the general to the specific. The significant elements are gathered in four main articles (III-VI): a Pact with the devil, apostasy, annual tribute, spells, witches, Sabbath, and accomplices are all mentioned. The devil is presented as the enemy of human nature. The following articles, however, are adapted to the case of Peter Eschiller. eux, They are likely based on confessions from previous trials made by Peter's accusers, whose names are concealed. In fact, before being corrected, the text provided specific place names for the Sabbath.⁷⁷ During the revision, however, someone decided to use vaguer formulation, perhaps so that Peter Eschiller would be less likely to deny his presence in these particular locations. Everything is vaguer moreover. The general pré-rumor has no precise content. The accusations, based on specific facts to which the accused could attach his defense, are thus lacking. Obstinate, the prosecutor of faith says and repeats that Peter knows full well what he is accused of, that he knows his master's name. The accused can only accept or deny the written articles, without any possibility of "dialogue" with the commissioners.⁷⁸ les articles écrits, sans «dialogue» possible avec les commissaires⁷⁸.

Alongside the articles, notary Simon Rapillard noted Peter Eschiller's initial responses. They are particularly laudable: He admits, "he doesn't remember," "he denies it," "he is unaware." They only become slightly more detailed when his absence from the country is discussed (VIII and XXVI). son absence du pays (VIII, et XXVI). He says he left not because he was guilty, but because he wanted to find better justice elsewhere than that which prevailed in the Conches Valley. Peter Eschiller certainly de knows what awaits him, for he is caught in ce qui l'attend car il est pris dans une

⁷⁶ See the presentation of doctrinal writings by A. BLAUFERT, *Friühe Hexenverfolgungen enverfolgungen. Ketzer-, Zauberei- und Hexenprozesse des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg, 1989, pp. 56-59, pp. 61-63, and M61-63, COSTERERO, *Polariser avec les démons : Sabbath et chasse aux sorcières à Vevey (1448)*, Lausanne, 1995, pp. 8, 20-28, (*Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale*, 15), (*Vis d'histoire médiévale*, 15).

⁷⁷ See the edition below, p.119 notes n-r.

⁷⁸ On *l'affaire*, the articles of the interrogation, the confession and the absence of dialogue between the et judges and the accused, of J. CHIFFOLEAU, "Saying the unspeakable: Remarks on the category of *infamie* au from the 12th to the 15th century", in *Annales ESC*, March-April 1990, pp. 289-324, in particular pp. 308-311.

Il's involvement in witchcraft dates back several years, and he knows the fate of the borderers. No one is on his side. The bishop himself urges him once again to rejoin the Church in vain. The number of canonical admonitions addressed to Peter Eschiller is remarkably high: six times he offered the opportunity to repent, but he replies that he cannot repent for a crime he did not commit. Since he is presumed guilty from the outset, his obstinacy is perceived as a ruse. Comme d'emblée il est tenu pour coupable, son obstination est perçue comme une ruse.

Now, since Peter Eschiller refuses to spontaneously confess anything despite the Church's leniency, the bishop decides, by interlocutory decree, to subject him to torture. The use of torture to obtain a confession is closely linked to the inquisitorial procedure. It is this procedure that draws the truth from the accused.⁷⁹

Les aveux après la torture

Après avoir subi la torture, Peter Eschiller fait une longue confession devant les deux commissaires et notables du Valais et de Sion.⁸⁰ Il s'agit de Jean de Platea, vice-bailli de Valais, castellan de Sion (1481-1482), un expert en droit,⁸¹ et de Jean Coppate⁸², bailli de Valais, nommé comme commissaire temporaire de l'enquête par l'interrogatoire du «sorcier» Jean Coppate.⁸³ Ils étaient également chargés de la surveillance de l'accusé. Ainsi figuraient Hans Jungen, le châtelain de Sion,⁸⁴ Jean de Sion, Jean de Prensières⁸⁵, le bannieret Benoît Kalbermatter.⁸⁶ Ils étaient tous des hommes de justice et familiaux, qui avaient une pratique dans les procédures judiciaires, mais également une connaissance de Walter Supersaxo et de Sion.⁸⁷ Ils étaient également amis avec le prévenu, puisque en 1486 il fut associé au Bishop Walter Supersaxo, under whom he served as castellan of Hérémence.⁸⁸ Ils étaient également familiers de l'évêque Walter Supersaxo sous lequel il fut châtelain d'Hermance.⁸⁹

⁷⁹ Cf. note 19, p. 94-94.

⁸⁰ ABS, Tif 1245/18 (sentence interlocutoire du Bishop of Sion, dans laquelle Thomas Bildhofer, qui fut nommé à la question, date du 17 février 1481). *ne quisque defensum
must be questioned, dated February 17, 1481).* *We pronounce sentence and declare that the present defendant
made by the said Thomas against the things that have come against him do not raise any issue or benefit him in any
way, so that Thomas himself will not be questioned in person, and we pronounce notwithstanding the said defendant,
according to the quality of those that are against him and the possibility that the person or the same will and will be
questioned and questioned, Until and until the truth comes from his mouth, without the risk of mutilation of limbs and
et mortis periculum, donec et quoque veritas ab ore eius habeatur, citra tamen membrorum mutilationem
et mortis periculum ...*

⁸¹ Some of these notables were already in Walter Supersaxo's entourage, cf. Ch. AMMANN-DOUBLIEZ, *Le notaire, les âges et la mémoire*, p. 235.

⁸² See HA VON ROTEN, *Die Landeshauptmannen von Wallis 1388-1798*, in *BWG*, XXIII, 1991, p. 103. In 1483, he stated that he was about 33 years old. He became governor of Lower Valais (1488-1490) and bailli in Valais December 1506.

⁸³ ABS, Tif 1245/17/19.

⁸⁴ According to him, he was 37 years old in November 1488, and he was castellan of Sion (1483-April 1485), cf. ACS, Min. A 131, p. 17.

⁸⁵ See his biographical notice in Ch. AMMANN-DOUBLIEZ, *Le notaire, les âges et la mémoire*, pp. 252-254. He would have been about forty years old in 1484.

⁸⁶ Brother of Antoine and Nicolin (ACS, Min. A 138, fol. 323, 1478, January 10), he would have the thirty years in 1482 en 1482.

⁸⁷ It was a privilege, strongly defended, for the burghers of Sion to confirm the death sentences of all of Valais and the executions were a spectacle attended by a large crowd.

⁸⁸ AEV AV 161 (1477, March 7, the Majority).

Chamson's major⁸⁹. He appears as a witness at the trial of Jean Coppatel and bears the title of master⁹⁰, a title he earned through his profession as a saddler⁹¹. As for Antoine Nessim, he was the one who led the notary Pierre de Torrente to the stake in the Val d'Anniviers in 1481⁹². Bailiff Théodule Venetz, absent on July 1st, would attend Peter Eschiller's supplementary confession on July 31⁹³. Jost de Sellen was thus surrounded by figures whose careers had already begun under his predecessor! So many high-ranking individuals were present at this stage of the trial because a confession extracted under torture was considered the most compelling evidence. From the rumor that allowed the proceedings to begin, we arrive at this pivotal moment when the whole truth bursts forth from the accused's lips.

Peter Eschiller recounts his encounter with the devil, which occurred about twelve years earlier in Airolo, at nightfall, in a secluded spot away from inhabited houses. His desire for wealth led to his apostasy and the pact with the devil, whom he calls Hemery. He then describes his subsequent encounters in various locations: in Münster and Obergesteln.

The confession then contains an exposition of the theory that the devil can do anything, since he has obtained the consent of the sorcerer⁹⁴. He can act in the place of the sorcerer whose appearance he takes, and the sorcerer by his own consent knows, in a kind of dream, what the devil is doing and with what accomplices⁹⁵.

The account of the depredations naturally follows, then the names of the accomplices seen in the synagogues⁹⁶. Peter Eschiller reveals the name of four sorcerers already dead: three women and a man, those who accused him, it is specified and a living Thomas Bilderbosten, already accused in 1481 by various women.

As he returns two days later to denounce his accomplices, he is once again subjected to questioning tied to the rope, he is lifted twice and undergoes "the rides" (cavalcade)⁹⁷: deux fois et subit «les chevauchées» (cavalcade)⁹⁷. Il ne me plus.

The new confessions clarify previous statements: the obscene kiss to the devil, the annual nature of the pledge, always given in August at nightfall. Finally, the witches' sabbath, which took place on a certain Thursday, a preferred day of the week in Valais for this type of gathering.
 ⁹⁸> Un autre type de réunion⁹⁸. This is an opportunity to reveal new names of living accomplices. Next come sodomy and devil worship. This time

⁸⁹ ABS, TIR 92/183 (1482 June 27) T. Turbillon).

⁹⁰ ABS, TIR 245/1/19 (1482/21 mars).

⁹¹ AEV, Supersaxo II, P 15 (1488, 23 October). Also: master Hans/Hebelhilt, saddler and citizen of Sedun, testified *its productus* ...

⁹² He is a close associate of Bishop Jost St. Sellen (AEV, Fonds Supersaxo II, P 31 and R 4/1; 1490).

⁹³ Sur ce personnage voir HA VON ROTEN, «Die Landeshauptmänner von Wallis 1388-1798», dans BWG, XXIII, 1991, pp. 59-64.

⁹⁴ In the confessions of Françoise Barras de Chermignon appears this necessary agreement of Christians to the evil deeds of the devil. Cf. S. STROBINO, *Françoise saved from the flames? A Valaisan accused of witchcraft in the 15th century*, pp. 128-129.

⁹⁵ See note 100.

⁹⁶ At that time, sects and synagogues referred to secret meetings and Sabbaths. Cf. A. PARAVICINI BAGLIANI, K. UTZ-TREMP, M. OSTORERO, *The Sabbath in the Alps. The Medieval Premises of the Witch-Hunts* in *Sciences: Reason and Unreason*, Lausanne, 1994, pp. 67-125, in particular pp. 70-72 on the anti-Judaism that underlies the use of the word *synagogue* in this context.

⁹⁷ It may involve rapid uprisings of the accused, which are then abruptly brought back down, see ENT, MÄTER, *Thirty Years with the Devil*, p. 36, n. 7636, n. 76.

⁹⁸ On Thursday, the Sabbath day and the day of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, see *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, vol. II, Berlin and Leipzig 1929/30, col. 336-337-337.

The commissioners got what they wanted to hear, even though Peter Eschiller remained vague in his confession and timidly recanted his denunciation of living accomplices the next day. These names seemed to have been extracted from him and to have cost him dearly. The sentence declaring him a heretic, unrepentant, and an apostate could now be pronounced. The mechanism of the confession led him to the stake.

⁹⁹ On this treatise, which dates from the years 1430-1440, see R. PARAVY, "A propos de l'origine générale médiévale des chasses aux sorcières : le traité de Claude Tholosan, juge dauphinois (vers 1436)", in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen Âge/Temps modernes*, 1971/1979/1, pp. 331-335, 334-335, and B. ANDENMATTEN, K. UETZ TREMP, "De l'hérésie à la sorcellerie", pp. 98-102.

¹⁰⁹ See the edition of this treatise by P. PARAYV "On the medieval genesis of hunts forsses aux witches", pp. 333-379.

¹⁸¹ On the ancient doctrine which helps in the *Episcopal canon* to affirm that the sabbath is a dream, cf. P. PARAYVY, "A propos de la genèse médiévale des chasses aux sorcières", pp. 348-349 and p. 357.

¹⁹² Cette chronique qui rapporte des événements valaisans survenus autour de 1428 a été publiée par J. HANSEIN, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter*, Hildesheim, 1969 (réprint de Bonn, 1901), pp. 531-537; et selon une autre version par TH. VON LIEBENAU, *Von den Hexen, sorin Wallis brennende wurden in den Tagen,*

The pursuit of Peter Eschiller for his participation in the witch hunt in the Conches valley that lasted for several years. Besides the people he names who were burned at the stake, we must add those revealed by the fragments of Thomas Biderbosten's trial: four women—two daughters of the late *Jenivus Berlames* (whose trial, known in extracts, is undated), *Tina Humbrecht*, and *Mariisa Kuehni* (whose trial took place around February and April 1481). Furthermore, the marginal notes in these fragments clearly indicate that Thomas Biderbosten's complete file contained extracts from at least ten trials that incriminated him.¹⁰³ Peter Eschiller's confessions certainly reignited the hunt for the accomplices he denounced, particularly Thomas Biderbosten, on whom many seem to have focused their attacks. Peter Eschiller ont certainement relancé la chasse contre les complices qu'il a dénoncés, en particulier contre Thomas Biderbosten sur lequel beaucoup semblent s'acharner.

Our story does not quite end with the death of Peter Eschiller. A testimony was gathered in 1496-1497 against Bishop Jost de Silenen, then expelled from Vaud, in which the fate of Peter Eschiller's property is mentioned. 104 was indeed confiscated by Bishop Walter Supersaxo because Peter Eschiller had, by fleeing, made himself guilty of the crime of heresy, for which he was suspected. The witness who had vouched for Peter Eschiller with the people of Airolo paid off a debt of twenty pounds for him, which was compensated under Walter Supersaxo with some of the said sorcerer's property. But he had to pay another sum of money to Jost de Silenen, who seized this same property and did not hesitate to demand from him the income that the property should have yielded for three years, even though the bishop had left it fallow. Jost de Silenen's greed is thus denounced. Les témoins auraient dû rapporter pendant trois ans, alors que l'évêque les avait laissés en friche. La cupidité de Jost de Silenen est ainsi dénoncée.

*
* *

Peter Eschiller suffered under Walter Supersaxo and a fugitive did not benefit from the change of bishop. He was caught up in a witch hunt in the Conches Valley, which likely dates back to around 1480. Would his compatriot Thomas Biderbosten, whose reputation was already tarnished under Walter Supersaxo, escape after Peter Eschiller once again accused him? The sources do not tell us. This witch hunt was contemporaneous with the one Georges Supersaxo ne launched in the Val d'Anniviers, which proved fatal to many people, including the notary Pierre de Torrenté and his son Nicolin. dans le val d'Anniviers et qui fut fatale à un grand nombre de personnes, parmi lesquelles le notaire Pierre de Torrenté et son fils Nicolin. Both show the role played by the bishop and his entourage in the conduct of the trials and the subtle progress of a power that asserts itself above particular jurisdictions. lessus des juridictions particulières.

¹⁰² Cristofor von Silinen hieß und richtete gegen den Anwälten G. Schmid, *Die Hexenprozesse im Bistum Sitten*, 1903, pp. 165-188. It is to be the subject of a new edition by K. Uitz Trepmp. On the theme of counterfeit impiety offered by the devil. See for example E. MAIER, *Thirty Years with the Devil*, p. 75 and p. 146.

¹⁰³ ABS-Tir. 2454/17. The following is an extract from the process of the crime of heresy committed by Greta, daughter of the former Jenivi Berlames, insofar as it concerns Thomas Biderbosten. Eighth: In the year and year mentioned above, on the 26th day of February... See marginal notes: In the forest of Castellon; agrees with the first, second, third, fourth and sixth processes. Tenth: The following is an extract from the process of the heretic wickedness committed by us Trija, daughter of Claus Humbrecht, insofar as it concerns Thomas Biderbosten Humbrecht, in quantum concernit Thomam Biderbosten.

¹⁰⁴ Voir le texte dans l'appendice, p. 128-28.

EDITION

EDITING PRINCIPLES: Capitalization is used only for names; punctuation is sparingly adapted to modern conventions. Additions made by the editors for clarity are indicated with square brackets []. Page breaks in the original are indicated by slashes // . Superscript commas , indicate interlinear or marginalia additions by the original hand. Non-Latinized words and summaries are italicized, and marginal titles are given in spaced type. The defendant's answers, placed in the margins of the trials, articles, are presented opposite each article, as in the original. *Les artikeli angebrachten Antworten des Angeklagten werden wie in der Vorlage jedem Artikel gegenübergestellt.*

PRELIMINARY NOTE: The edition adheres to modern conventions for capitalization and punctuation. Square brackets [] are used for words added by editors to facilitate understanding of the text. la convention de l'édition est d'adopter les conventions modernes pour la capitulation et la ponctuation. Les accolades [] sont utilisées pour les mots ajoutés par les éditeurs pour faciliter la compréhension du texte. Slashes // enclose page numbers in the manuscript. Les traits de séparation // entourent les numéros de page dans le manuscrit. The commas / indicate additions in the interlinear space or margins made by the scribe writing the text. les virgules / indiquent les ajouts dans l'espace interlinéaire ou les marges faites par le scribe écrivant le texte. Italics are used in the text for non-Latinized words and regesta, while spaced letters are used titling for titles. Les italiques sont utilisées dans le texte pour les mots non-latinisés et les regesta, alors que les lettres espacées sont utilisées pour les titres. The marginal notes, opposite the articles of the trial, have been reproduced alongside each article. Les notes marginales, opposées aux articles du procès, ont été reproduites en regard de chaque article.

1484, May 29 daily to Sitten, Majoria Majoria

Legal documents against Peter Eschiller from the parish of Münster in Goms, who was accused of witchcraft and imprisoned in the episcopal prison in Sitten der Pfarrei Münster im Goms.

Documents from the trial brought against Peter Eschiller, from the parish of Münster, in the district of Grenchen, accused of witchcraft and detained in the bishop's prison de l'évêque.

AEV, ATL. 7, n°s 81, 82, 80.

1459 Process of canonical warnings made by the venerable man Lord Leondard the prebendarian of Seduna, deputed for this purpose by the reverend in Christ father and our lord Lord Jodocus von Sellen, by the grace of God bishop of Seduna, Peter Eschiller, parish priest of the Monastery, Beangf. Consobr. suspected of faith and therefore detained in the prisons of the aforesaid lord bishop of Seduna fide suspectum et ideo detentum in carceribus prefati domini nostri Sedunensis episcopi.

a.

1484, 29 Mai. Sitten, Majoria Majoria

Erste kanonische Mahnung. Première monition canonique.

In the name of the Lord; amen. At the Year of the Nativity of the same in one thousand four hundred and eighty-four and on Saturday, dated the twenty-ninth of the Month of May, at first hour, in Seduna, in the great stupa of the castle of Maidrie, Peter Eschiller of Consobr., parish priest of the Monastery, was personally ordained, before the prelate Lord Leondard canon of Seduna, in the presence of this commission and me, the notary, and the undersigned witnesses, in testumque subscriptorum presencia.

And Peter himself was asked primarily whether he knew the reason for his detention and imprisonment, which Peter answered that he knew well, as he believed, because of the crime of heresy of which he was innocent, as Peter himself asserted.

Interrogatus ultius si sciat et sciverit se fore infamem publice inter notos et vicinos de heresi, au^t dixi quod non nisi tantum a tempore quo Anthonius Hallbarter ultimorum Monte Deli superius execucionem fecit de certis personis que insun Petrum incipere debuerunt.

Asked further if he knew and had known that he would be publicly infamous among his acquaintances and neighbors for heresy, he said that he had not, except **only from the time** when Anthonius Hallbarter, as mayor of Monte Deli, had previously executed certain persons who should have accused Peter himself.

Item, when asked further if he has any ill-wishers or enemies, he replied that perhaps he has many ill-wishers, whom he has not yet been able to name for the present and of whom he does not remember nor does he know them all.

Which acts, as mentioned above, the said Lord Leonard, hearing and understanding Peter, having been informed of the canonical warnings to be made by the church, in this act warned him canonically and charitably in all the best ways, ways, forms and by law in which he could and should have done more. Since if by chance he has been infected with some crime of heresy through the temptation of the devil or the instigation of some persons or by some sin, he wishes to say so and confess with a remorseful heart; which if he does, he offers him the bosom and pardon of the church and of our lord of Sedona, who do not close the church to any sinner who is willing to repay 450^l, but offers to restore him safe in person and goods to his home and this as the first canonical warning. For Peter, being brought before him, said that he wished to advise.

Quibus auditus prefatus dominus Leonardus, commissarius ut supra, cumdem Petrum detinens, auctoritate suae gratia, dico hunc propter ultimum hunc menses maii, et lunc per eundem de latum auditorum secundum monitionem canoniam. Et de presenti monitione a me rogatio publico, hoc scripto per eundem litteram testimonialm, presentibus ibidem venerabilis ac egregio viris domino Andrea de Sillmon cantore ecclesie Sedunensis, Hans Guerold, pincerna III domini nostri Sedunensis, episcopo, testibus adiunctis, promissa vocatis et rogatis, et me Symone Rapilliardi, notario publico, qui etc. anno et die premissis.

Symon Rapilliardi

^{a)} Followed by Waltherum, deleted. ^{b)} Followed by secuhda, omitted.

^{c)} Followed by pro, deleted.

b.

1484. 31. Mai. Sitten, Majority

Zweite kanonische Mahnung. — Deuxième monition canonique.

Second canonical warning.

In the year in which retro and on Monday (which was the last day of the month of May, at first hour, personally appointed at the aforementioned place the said Peter Eschlyver was detained before the aforementioned lord Leonard, canon as above) and being asked by him whether he wished to confess and form a conscience about any of the said crime of heresy committed by him, he said that he did not wish to form a conscience about what he was not guilty of nor to ask for the pardon of the church. Having heard which, the aforementioned lord Leonard further admonished the same Peter as a second warning, that if he was guilty, he should return to the forum of the church and to the bosom of holy mother church. Which Peter replied that he did not wish to ask for mercy for what he had not committed. Then he assigned the same before the same on the first day of the current month of June, which will be the next day, at first hour, and then by the said accused, to hear and undergo the third warning of the canons.

cam and advise themselves. At the aforementioned place, in the presence of those mentioned above in the first notice and me Simone Rapilliardi, notary public, who etc.

Simon Rapilliardi 1461/

c.

1484, J. Juni. - Sitten, Majoria

Dritte kanonische Mahnung. - Troisième monition canonique.

Tracta manusc. canonica.

Dict' Tuesday, the first of June, at first hour, the said Peter was personally appointed before Lord Leonard, by virtue of the previous assignment. Then he did make known to the said Commissioner, if he had any idea of wanting to confess his crime of which he is accused, he said no. For the lord has charitably admonished the same Peter for the third warning; whereby putting aside all obstinacy, he wishes to confess his guilt of heresy, offering him the mercy of the church which closes no door to its enemies who wish to repay him. He replies that he does not wish to deny-receiving the grace of the church for his other offenses, but does not ask the church for forgiveness for the crime of heresy not imputed to him [?] since he is not guilty of the same. Having given which warning the aforesaid lord commissioner assigned the same Peter to the next day, post'rum hour and then, with special grace and generosity, assigned him to hear the fourth warning with the intimation that otherwise the mercy of the church would be precluded from him. And from there etc. Given on the day, year and place and before the witnesses mentioned Ehd me, Simonno et Rapilliard, citizen of Seduna, notary public, Simonne Rapilliardi, cive Sedunensi, notario publico, qui etc.

Simon Rapilliardi

d.

1484, June 2nd and 3rd. - Sitten, Majoraria

Fourth and fifth canonical warnings. - Quatrième et cinquième monitions canoniques.

Tracta manusc. canonico.

The next day, which was Wednesday, the second of June, was reported to the same Peter by the said Lord Leonard, commissioner, at first hour, and the said person was brought before the said commissioner and asked if he had considered wanting to confess the said crime of heresy, who said no, since he is not guilty of the same. cum de eodem non sit culpabilis. Then he warned him for the fourth warning, which was exorbitant, about the special grace he wished to give to the unity of the Orthodox faithful, offering to grant him the grace of the church while at ease it was within time when he was brought before him, he said that he did not wish to ask for the grace of the church for the said crime of which he was innocent. Having received this answer, the said Lord Leonard assigned him a fifth warning about the kindness of the church for the next day, at first hour ora prime.

Adveniente autem die crastina iovis intitulata tercia huius mensis iunii, But on the coming of the next day, Thursday, the third of this month of June, the said
constituto dicto delecto ut supra dicto commissario et ut supra interrogato,
questioned as above, who answered as he answered immediately above. Then 1462 He
admonished him of the fifth admonition of kindness and special grace, insomuch as he wishes to
return to the unity of the faith of the Orthodox and to the bosom of the holy mother church, offering
himself to be given the grace of the church, while at least it is within time. Who, being reported,
answered as he answered immediately above. With which answerowell, the said lord Leonard
forbade the admonitions of the church to him. Of which he prayed etc. Given at Seduni, year, day,
place, present as above, and me Simon Rapilliardi, notary, who etc.

Simon Rapilliardi 1463/

e.
and.

1484, 12 und 14. Iunij. - Sitten, Majoria

Questionnaire for the trial against Peter Eschiller with answers from the defendant. (Change-of-hand; however, the defendant's answers noted in the margin and some corrections are in *ek-the handwriting of Simon Rapillard.*) (Rapillards.)

Articles from the trial against Peter Eschiller, including the defendant's responses (Translation by hand; Peter Eschiller's responses and some corrections were written by Simon Rapillard.)

Contra Petrum Eschiller.

Anno Domini millesimo quatercentesimo octagesimo quarto et die XII^{ma}
mensis iunii anno 1484, processus in hac forma tendit per procul-
patum et sacrum iudicium. Chalix inter domino
Iudeo de Silvano, Deo et sanctis eius locutione anno
Seduni facta et comite Vallesiis^{a)}, contra Petrum Eschiller, se-
niam Montis Superioris, diocesis Sedonae, leviter et latenter, qui filius
Montis Superioris Petrum, alumnus pecunie, faciebat tickto ortho-
doxi nonneada vocem et formam publice preferens, clamans et cali-
cans, resument taliter esse nullum tempore sine peccato, quod est vel
eretur etiam hoc detegentibus amplexu informacionibus habuisse per com-
plicacionis secretum, de quo inquit invenimus heresis accusacionibus, prout infra
seriatim describitur.

^{a)} Followed by ~~ut ordinario~~ b) Followed by ~~legem~~ et ~~debet~~.*

Articuli dicti processus inquisitionalis.

Confutatur.

Let him confess.

I. In primis super eo quod dicit Petrus sub fide^{a)} sanctissime Trinitatis natus in fonte baptismatis simulo eiudem in christianam creaturam fuit insignitus et regre-
tatus et hoc est verum.

No, dont remember.

II. Item quod successu temporis sacro crismate antistitis Christiani hunc habuisse fuisse, hoc est
trueum.

Denied.

III Also on the fact that Peter himself, having been brought, premissis notwithstanding the aforementioned sacraments by which he was to be protected, that he, Peter, had been brought to the Devil, who is known to be pernicious, with the persuasion of Peter by certain other persons who deviated from the Christian faith whom he well knows, and also by the devil, the enemy of human nature whose name is well known, it gave and offered faith and fidelity to the same devil and denied God Almighty and Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord, and his immaculate mother the Virgin Mary and the other things that are of God; thus violating the faith, committing idolatry and most gravely delinquening in the aforementioned matters, and this is true. /464/ IV Also upon the fact that the said abnegation was committed, he himself, being

Denied.

delivered to the devil, his master, whose name is well known, sacrificed, made offerings, paid homage and reverence, pledged and promised to pay tribute and annual revenue, committing sacrilege and offerings same and inflicting the penalty of the law against such perpetrators, which is damnable and injurious, and this is true apostatam committendo, penas^e 'iuris contra tales talia perpetrantes inflictas dampnabiliter immovendo et' incidendo et hoc est verum.

Denied.

V. Also because while the said deportee, as mentioned above, was bound by the bond of fidelity to the devil, the enemy of humankind, he committed and perpetrated many and diverse detestable diabolical works deviating from the orthodox faith and acting in many ways gravit against the Catholic faith, and is 'solicam' fidem faciendo^g et est true.

Denied.

& Also, that Peter himself, being brought with his companions iheribus sorteri, and heretics deviating from the faith, with their master iheros demon cuius non solum secundum diversorum etiam singularium, in various places, both wild and private, holding sects and synagogues, discussing evil works and counsels, and this is triplex fuit et comparuit et est verum.

Ignored.

VII Also on the fact that in the aforementioned cases, Peter himself was reported by some of the heretical accomplices of the same Peter in previous years in the said tenement on the Mountain of God, and was detained, accused and accused, and is et accusatus et est true.

P. says that he was unaware of his absence before, but afterwards he heard some people say so.

VIII Also on the fact that all the aforementioned injuries, accusations, and defamations usⁱ diffamacionibusque^j the said Petrus [is accused] of having insinuated himself among good and important persons known and close to Peter and having knowledge of him. The public voice and the rumor of this kind of heresy, of which Helcica^j accused, prevailed, as it has been for a long time now'. /465/ 'inclusus et sic fuit et est verum'. /465/

Hunc p[ro]p[ter]e q[uod] dicitur abutit[ur] potesta p[er] de latu[m] dyabolo
 images sui cum nomine b[ea]t[us] p[re]dictus sacrificavit ap[osto]l[us] i[n]t[er] nos
 hominem et diabolum fuit tribulus de peccatis p[er] nos et
 diabolus h[ab]et deinceps hominem popondit a[cc]o[r]d[ing]o[rum] plena
 p[er]secutio et ap[osto]l[us] g[ra]m[at]icu[m] p[ro]p[ter]e[rum] p[er] nos
 dicit[ur] p[er] nos et ap[osto]l[us] g[ra]m[at]icu[m] p[ro]p[ter]e[rum] p[er] nos

Quodlibet[er] p[ro]p[ter]e[rum] p[er] nos

Hunc p[ro]p[ter]e q[uod] dicitur de latu[m] p[ro]p[ter]e[rum] dyabolo natu[m]
 quidam p[er]missu[m] nomen de latu[m] p[er]missu[m] nomen de latu[m] multa et
 diversa detestabili[us] dyabolo p[er]missu[m] nomen de latu[m] g[ra]m[at]icu[m]
 fuit et portauit dyabolo p[er]missu[m] nomen de latu[m] facie p[er]missu[m] nomen de latu[m]

52ftff1?^

Hunc p[ro]p[ter]e potens de latu[m] vniuersitas p[er]secutio
 dyabolo ap[osto]l[us] fuit dyabolo de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m]
 fuit dyabolo de latu[m] fuit dyabolo de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m]
 fuit dyabolo de latu[m] fuit dyabolo de latu[m] fuit dyabolo de latu[m] de latu[m]

Hunc p[ro]p[ter]e q[uod] de latu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m]
 dyabolo fuit dyabolo de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m] de latu[m]
 dyabolo p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m] p[er]missu[m]

Hunc p[ro]p[ter]e ip[s]e omnis dyabolo infama p[er]secutio
 affirmat dyabolo potens apud deos dyabolo potens dyabolo potens
 omni anno annis dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens
 dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens
 dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo potens dyabolo

Dicit ut supra
proxima dicit.

Negat.

Ignorat.

Negat.

Negat.

Negat.

Negat.

Negat.

Negat.

IX. Item super eo quod dicitus Petrus delatus acut de
knew in the past and knows in the present that among his acquaintances
and neighbors and in the surrounding areas he had been findatum,
greatly defamed, accused and suspected of the said crime of heresy and
it is true.

X. Also on the fact that on a certain occasion Greta, the wife of the
same declarant was absent from her country, hoping that the time
the life of the same person who was carried away would not return, he himself,
who was carried away within a few days, without speaking to Greta herself,
caused her to return by his diabolical art, and it is true.

XI. Also on the fact that in the past years, in various places both in this
country of Valais and abroad, it was reported to him and reproached
before trustworthy persons that he was a heretic, about which words,
as if he were guilty in fact, he made no purgation or applied any
diligence to purge himself, and this is true.

XII. Also on the fact that he himself, entitled "Conches", has held and
had the devil as his master in his buildings for many years, whose
name is well known in one glass holding and preserving him [!] and in
obeying him and his commands, about is true [!] ac illi et eius
mandatis obediendo et est verum.

XIII. Item super eo quod dicitur initialis seculi eius
de Conches in sua frater reporto, quod habuit
se ex parte superna delatum, visus delati magistrum
reportato habuit, et ita eundem delatum et est verum.

XIV. Also concerning the fact that the said instigator, together with
his master, whose name is well known, about sixteen years have anni
passed, was and appeared in a certain synagogue of heretics held
within the limits of the parish of the Monastery and outside, what
they did there and who was present, is well reported and is true.
fuerint, bene scit delatus et est verum.

XV. Item super eo quod dicitur initialis seculi eius
in VIII. in villa sua in Castellione
heretics in upper Castellion 'tent' in superiori Castellione.
What they did there and who were present, it is well known that he
himself was reported and it is true.¹⁶⁶

XVI. Also about the fact that on a certain other occasion he
himself was reported with his master in a certain sect of heretics (by
tent near the villa of Castellion) what they did there and who were
present, it is well known that he himself was reported and it is true.

XVII. Item super eo quod dicitur initialis seculi eius
in villa sua in Castellione, in villa sua in
deceased from Conches whom he knew well in a certain sect of
heretics, in which sect some money had been divided. Who brought
them and divided them, and apportaverit et eas divisserit et

quid ultius factum fuerit vel conclusum et qui presentes forent bene scit ipse delatus et qui impedimentum dederint ne hanc et fructus terre destruerentur, non ignorat' et est verum.

Denied.

XVIII. Item super eo quod dictus delatus cum magistro suo in quadam Ibeli locis fuit in quadam secta hereticorum in Ibeli Castellonem^r in quadam loco tanta'. Quid ibidem fecerint et qui presentes fuerint, bene scit ipse delatus et est verum.

Denied.

XIX. Item super eo quod dictus delatus cum magistro suo fuit in quadam 'alio' secta hereticorum^r tenta in dicta parochia'. Quid ibidem factum vel conclusum fuerit et qui erant presentes, bene scit delatus et est verum.

Denied.

XX. Item super eo quod tempore estatis dictus delatus was with his master in a certain sect of heretics held in a certain place of Consches. What they did or concluded there and [who] were present, is well reported and is true.

Denied.

XXI. Item super eo quod dictus intitulatus cum magistro suo in dybolo quatuor nominis, venit qui est communis in ecclesiis, alias secta hereticorum in pluribus locis sibi attributa et privata, quae dicitur 'dybola' et cum eius fuerint presentes, et quid factum fuerit vel conclusum, bene scit ipse delatus et est verum.

Denied.

XXII. Item super eo quod dictus intitulatus arte dyabolica phrasibus invocatur contra personas et bestias feci poisona operaria hominibus et personis dei. Et si tandem qui eventually died or became insane and this is true. /467/

Confessed.

XXIII. Item super eo quod reverendissimus dominus Walterus Supersaxo, quendam bona memoria, at the serious request and request of the messengers of the dese of Consches, as was his duty and due security, as is customary, was given on this, he ordered an investigation in the dese of Consches by his appointed commissioners against the guilty, defamed and suspected, among other things, of the crime of heresy and sorcery, and this is true.

Ignored.

XXIV. Also, that the most reverend lord Walter himself through his letters patent, publicly prohibited and forbade, under penalty of confiscation [!] of goods and persons and of a convicted and confessed crime, that no person should flee the face of justice, leave their own homes and be absent from the country of Valais, except with the special permission of the lord himself or his officials; and this is true.