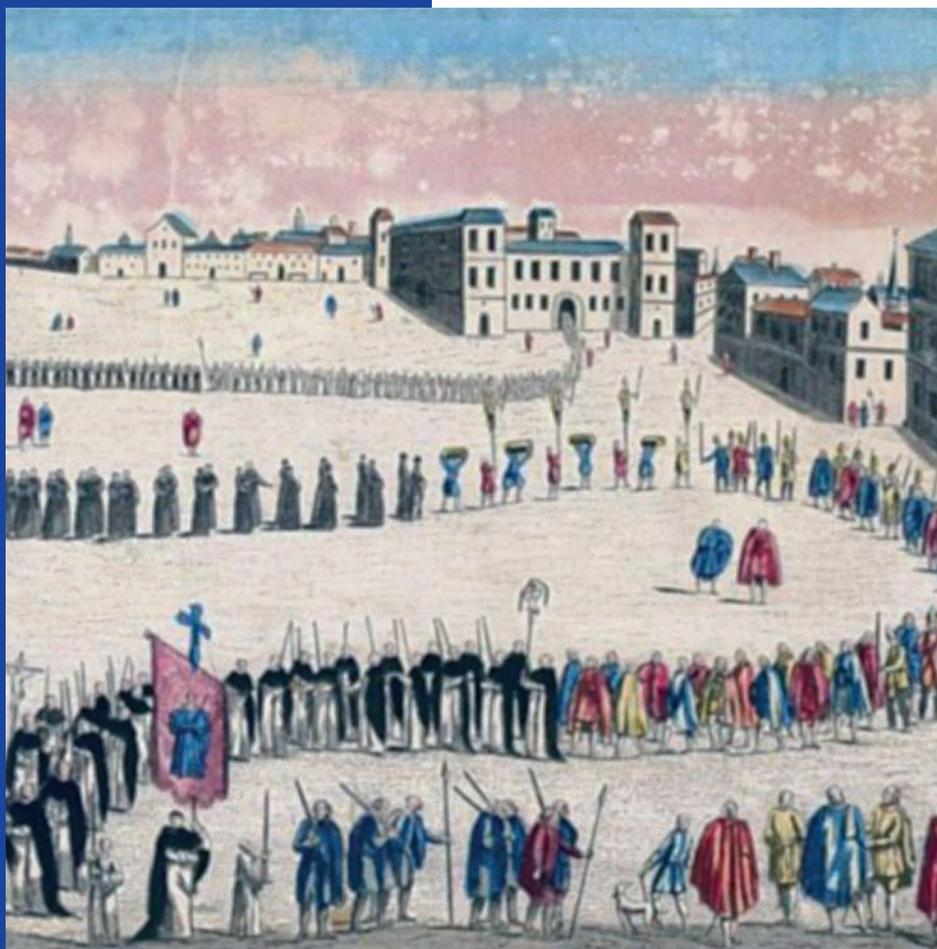


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HEAVEN OR HERESY: A HISTORY OF THE INQUISITION COURSE GUIDE



Professor Thomas F. Madden
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Heaven or Heresy: A History of the Inquisition

Professor Thomas F. Madden
Saint Louis University



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Heaven or Heresy:
A History of the Inquisition
Professor Thomas F. Madden



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About Your Professor

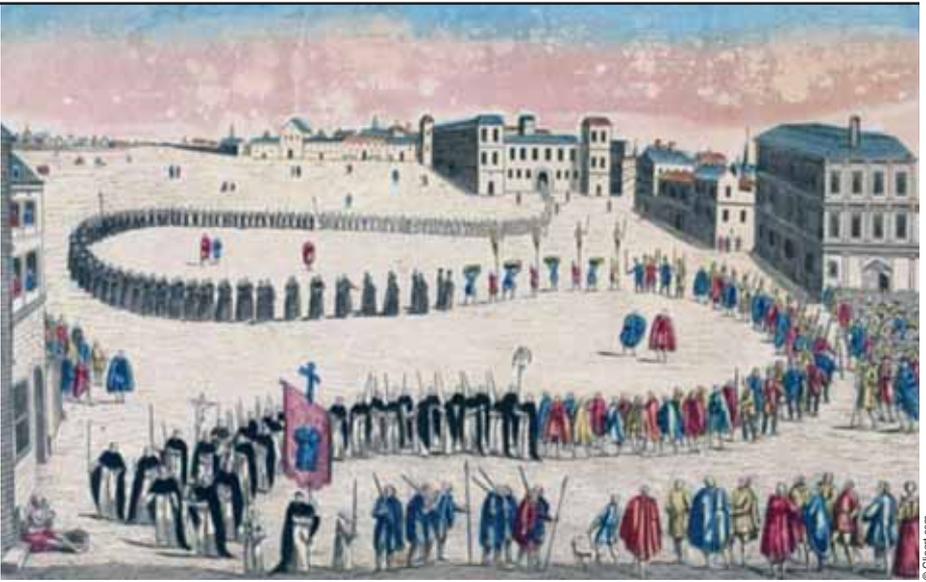
Thomas F. Madden

Thomas F. Madden is a professor of history and chair of the Department of History at Saint Louis University. His numerous scholarly publications include *The New Concise History of the Crusades* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), and *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), coauthored with Donald E. Queller. He is a recognized expert on pre-modern European history, frequently appearing in such venues as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, National Public Radio, the Discovery Channel, and the History Channel.

The following books provide an excellent supplement to the lectures found in this course:

Burman, Edward. *The Inquisition: Hammer of Heresy*. New ed. New York: Dorset Press, 1992.

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.



An *auto-de-fé* during the Spanish Inquisition

Introduction

For many, the Inquisition conjures Gothic images of cloaked figures and barbarous torture chambers. So enmeshed is this view of the Inquisition in popular culture that such scenes play out even in comedies such as Mel Brooks' *History of the World* and *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. But is this a fair portrayal? And how was the Inquisition perceived in its own time?

Professor Thomas F. Madden of Saint Louis University delivers a stimulating series of lectures exploring all facets of the Inquisition, including the religious and political climate of its time and the Inquisition's relationship to heresy and reformation. With a scholarly eye and infectious enthusiasm, widely published author and noted expert on pre-modern European history Thomas Madden imparts an understanding of the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions while dispelling popular myths associated with the subject.

Lecture 1: The Organization of the Catholic Church

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Edwin M.A. Hatch's *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*.

Before discussing an institution like the Inquisition, we must first have some understanding of the framework in which it existed. The organization of the Church, or ecclesiology, is crucial to that understanding. When the Church was founded by Christ, he gave to his twelve Apostles certain authority and powers to lead. In the first decades of the Church, the general expectation was that Christ would be returning soon—in other words, that the Church was a short-term proposition. As the first generation of Christians began to die it became increasingly clear that the Church needed some form of organization. The Apostles who had left Judea and founded Christian communities generally acted as overseers. Through a ritual of laying on of hands, the apostolic power was given to successors or overseers for other large communities. The overseers, or bishops, were therefore the direct successors of the Apostles. Bishops had the authority to ordain priests, who could perform the sacraments, particularly the sacrament of the Mass, but who could not themselves ordain new priests.

With the passing of the Apostles and the first generation of Christian missionaries, the question naturally arose as to where authority lay when disputes about doctrine arose. This was particularly pressing in light of the proliferation of Gnostic challenges to orthodoxy. Ignatius of Antioch, who succeeded St. Peter as bishop of Antioch and probably knew him, insisted that the bishop held the same Apostolic authority to interpret scripture and judge the truth. This was not novel, but a statement of a widely accepted view.

By the third century A.D., bishops of provincial capitals, or metropolitans, were recognized as having oversight authority over other bishops in that same province. These came to be known as archbishops. Similarly, the archbishops of the three largest cities in the Roman Empire—Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria—were generally accepted as having jurisdiction that extended beyond their provinces. These three “patriarchates” were subsequently approved at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Within these three, the bishop of Rome had several claims to preeminent authority over the whole Catholic Church. Rome had been sanctified by the lives, deaths, and mortal remains of saints Peter and Paul. More importantly, according to the Gospel of Matthew (16:18–19), Christ had specifically singled out Peter as the rock on which he would build his Church and gave to him special binding and loosing authorities. Although bishops generally saw themselves as independent, they also accepted some measure of authority that came from Rome. In the 90s A.D. the bishop of Rome, Clement, could write to the Christian communities

of Corinth, reproving them for their actions and ordering them to restore their deposed bishop and clergy. A few decades later Ireneaus of Lyons wrote of the necessity of all communities everywhere to be in accord and communion with Rome.

By the mid-fourth century, after the conversion of Emperor Constantine, popes were men of great importance who had solid control over the Church in the West. After the fall of the empire in 476, however, the pope was placed in a position in which he had to take over responsibility for Rome and much of Italy. He was also the head of the only intact Roman organization in Europe. In the new capital of the empire, Constantinople, a new patriarch, chafed at the pronouncements of Roman popes. After the Muslim conquests of most of the Christian world in the seventh century, the Church began to coalesce around two poles: Rome in the West and Constantinople in the East.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why was the Church in its first decades considered a short-term proposition?
2. How did the Church authority develop in the early Church?

Suggested Reading

Hatch, Edwin M.A. *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*. London: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1999.

Other Books of Interest

Herrin, Judith. *The Formation of Christendom*. Reprint ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Richards, Jeffrey. *Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages, 476–752*. London: Routledge, 1979.

Lecture 2: Heresy and Orthodoxy

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Robert M. Grant's *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*.

The Inquisition existed as a response to heresy, so it is necessary to understand the evolving definitions and role of heresy in the ancient and medieval Catholic Church. From the earliest days of the Church it was taken for granted that there was a unity of truth. Christians did not share the ideas of other Romans, who were willing to accept the existence of almost any god, provided he was not hostile to the empire. For Christians there was only one God, who had sent His Son as a Redeemer for all mankind. Christians were the community of the saved. The community was defined by belief in Jesus Christ, which required a shared understanding of a singular truth. Yet even during the days of the Apostles, Christians began to hold differing ideas about that truth. Who was right? Orthodoxy, or right belief, came from Jesus, through his Apostles and the Church that he founded. Beliefs that were not orthodox were heresy, which originally meant simply a choice, but came to mean someone outside the community of the faithful.

By the second century A.D., heresy had become a problem in almost every area of the empire. The fact that Christianity was intermittently persecuted made it difficult to coordinate a far-flung Church and it is therefore not surprising that different ideas flourished in different areas. But all Christians, no matter how much they disagreed among themselves, agreed that there was only one truth. Not everyone could be right. The authority of the Church to define orthodoxy had been under attack from the earliest times, particularly among Gnostics, who claimed to have secret knowledge of Christ's teaching not given to common people. Christian writers in the second century laid out reasoned arguments against heresies, but the Church and its apostolic foundation remained always the touchstone. As Irenaeus wrote, it was the bishops who were the successors of the Apostles. Each one had received his authority from an Apostle or his delegate. It was not rational to believe that Christian truth resided outside of that line, for Jesus would only have entrusted the truth to those whom he had entrusted his Church. It was the job of the bishop, as the shepherd of Christ's flock, to see to the spiritual health of the Christians in his region.

Several potent heresies threatened the Catholic Church during its first several centuries. Gnosticism, which is a blanket term for several beliefs that were believed to be secret knowledge, was particularly prevalent in the East. All of them insisted on the evil or irrelevant nature of the material world. Some believed that asceticism, mortification, and celibacy were necessary because this would reduce connections to the natural world and avoid enslaving more souls. Others believed that people should engage in whatever practices they

chose, without restrictions, because this world was unimportant or depraved. Gnostic dualism led some sects to conclude that the God of the Old Testament was not the same as the Father of Jesus in the New Testament. The Old Testament God of the Jews was foolish or evil, while the New Testament God of Jesus was good and loving.

Montanism grew out of the spiritual experiences of a second-century convert to Christianity, Montanus, and two female companions, Prisca (sometimes called Priscilla) and Maximilla. The three began to travel across Asia Minor in the 170s with ecstatic prophecies. Because they held their prophecies to have greater authority than the Gospels, they were condemned. Nevertheless their prophecies were collected and a schismatic Montanist church spread and would remain for centuries.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the role of heresy in the ancient and medieval Church?
2. What heresies threatened the Church during its first centuries?

Suggested Reading

Grant, Robert M. *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*. Rev. ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.

Other Books of Interest

Rankin, David. *Tertullian and the Church*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Lecture 3: Roman Law and the Church

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is John A. Crook's *Law and Life of Rome, 90 B.C.—A.D. 212*.

Although the Inquisition was an instrument of the Catholic Church, it was an element of Roman law. The intersection of Catholicism and Roman legal practices has its beginning during the reign of the Emperor Constantine, who converted to Christianity in 311 A.D. The conversion of the emperor and subsequent legalization of the religion had a dramatic effect. This is nowhere more evident than in the question of heresy. When Constantine came to the throne there was a good deal of unrest in North Africa because of Donatism. Donatists held that Catholic clergy who had abjured their faith during the persecutions were deprived of office and could never validly perform the sacraments. Constantine, who believed he was chosen by God to heal the Church, called together synods to settle the matter, even suggesting solutions himself. It was probably inevitable, but the emperor himself was becoming involved in the faith.

After becoming sole emperor of the entire Roman Empire, Constantine turned his attention to the problem of Arianism in the East, a heresy that held that Jesus Christ was less than God. Constantine called an ecumenical council at Nicaea in 325 that condemned Arianism and approved a Nicene Creed. In the past, the answer to heretics was shunning, removing them from the community of the faithful. But the presence of the Roman emperor changed things. Clergy were increasingly given civic positions and stipends and the Church was becoming closer to the state. Constantine accepted the canons of Nicaea and decreed that heretics must leave the empire. For those who refused, other penalties such as confiscation of goods or death were possible. St. Augustine subsequently defended the idea that the state could play a role in the correction of heresy. Although he insisted that there be no compulsion to becoming a Christian,

THE NICENE CREED OF 325

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

And in the Holy Ghost.

But those who say: "There was a time when he was not"; and "He was not before he was made"; and "He was made out of nothing," or "He is of another substance" or "essence," or "The Son of God is created," or "changeable," or "alterable"—they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.

Source: English translation from Philip Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom* (1877); Christian Classics Ethereal Library on the Web at www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/creeds1.i.html

once one had freely chosen to do so it was a matter of charity to bring him back when he strayed. He used the Parable of the Banquet (Luke 14:21–24) to argue that those for whom the banquet had been prepared should be forced to come if necessary.

Christian Roman emperors were in agreement. Since orthodox belief was now decreed by the Roman state, heretics were inherently treasonous, rebelling against the God-given power of the emperor. This idea was mirrored in imperial decrees and codified into Roman law. For example, in 376, all meetings of heretics were outlawed. In the Code of Theodosius of 453, heretics and pagans were equated with traitors. They were to have their property confiscated, their heirs deprived, and their lives taken. The Code of Justinian of 529 similarly put forward a list of penalties not only for the heretic but for those who supported, hid, or in any way helped him.

Since heresy was now a crime, it was tried using the same Roman legal methods current by the fourth century. This included an inquest, or *inquisitio*, in which a magistrate investigated the evidence, called witnesses, prosecuted the case if necessary, and acted as judge. These were the first inquisitions. The purpose of the procedure was to come to the truth, and for that reason torture was applied in most cases.

After the fall of the empire in the West, the practice of arresting and prosecuting heretics disappeared along with the Roman government. The Catholic Church was much too busy attempting first to survive, then to missionize Europe to bother with questions of heresy.

CORPUS JURIS CIVILIS (BODY OF CIVIL LAW) [CODEX JUSTINIANUS]

TITLE I: CONCERNING THE MOST EXALTED TRINITY AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH AND PROVIDING THAT NO ONE SHALL DARE TO PUBLICLY OPPOSE THEM

We order all those who follow this law to assume the name of Catholic Christians, and considering others as demented and insane, We order that they shall bear the infamy of heresy; and when the Divine vengeance which they merit has been appeased, they shall afterwards be punished in accordance with Our resentment, which we have acquired from the judgment of Heaven.

Let no place be afforded to heretics for the conduct of their ceremonies, and let no occasion be offered for them to display the insanity of their obstinate minds. Let all persons know that if any privilege has been fraudulently obtained by means of any rescript whatsoever, by persons of this kind, it will not be valid. Let all bodies of heretics be prevented from holding unlawful assemblies, and let the name of the only and the greatest God be celebrated everywhere.

Let those who do not accept those doctrines cease to apply the name of true religion to their fraudulent belief; and let them be branded with their open crimes, and, having been removed from the threshold of all churches, be utterly excluded from them. If, however, any seditious outbreak should be attempted, We order them to be driven outside the the walls of the City, with relentless violence, and We direct that all Catholic Churches, throughout the entire world, shall be placed under the control of the orthodox bishops who have embraced the Nicene Creed.

Source: Excerpted from Fordham University's *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, "Byzantium" (www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1c.html#Laws); and Scott, S.P. *Corpus Juris Civilis*. Vol. 12, pp. 9–12, 125. Cincinnati: Central Trust Company, 1932.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. How was the Inquisition both an instrument of the Church and an element of Roman Law?
2. How did the Parable of the Banquet support the idea that the state could play a role in correcting heresies?

Suggested Reading

Crook, John A. *Law and Life of Rome, 90 B.C.–A.D. 212*. Reprint ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Other Books of Interest

Buckland, W.W. *A Text-book of Roman Law from Augustus to Justinian*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Jones, A.H.M. *The Criminal Courts of the Roman Republic and Principate*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 1972.

Lecture 4: Birth of the Medieval Inquisition

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is H.E.J. Cowdrey's *The Cluniacs and Gregorian Reform*.

The medieval Inquisition grew directly out of the ecclesiastical reform movements of the eleventh century. Because of the enormous upheavals in western Europe during the fifth through tenth centuries, the Church was in bad shape. Of particular concern were clerical abuses such as simony, concubinage, and clerical marriage. The popes, who were supposed to enforce discipline on the clergy, were Roman nobility more interested in local politics than the Catholic Church. Reform ideas were born in monasteries like Cluny, where reformers concluded that new reform-minded popes must be installed who could restore clerical discipline as a first step to reforming Christian society. By the mid-eleventh century, with the help of Henry IV, the German emperor, this had been achieved. Popes like Leo IX convened local synods and deposed bad bishops. In order to undertake these reforms, the popes needed solid legal basis on which to argue. It was during the late eleventh century that canon law was fashioned, out of Scriptures, the decrees of past popes, Church councils, the writings of Church Fathers, and Roman law, which had a heavy influence on canon law. A flowering of learning assisted with the reform, bearing fruit in the sophisticated study of theology at the University of Paris and of law at the University of Bologna.

Reformers were not only interested in the restoration of the clergy; they also sought to purify the laity. This can be seen in a number of lay piety initiatives in which the monasteries and clergy recruited the common people and nobility into an active life devoted to God. The Crusades, which were preached to restore lands taken from Christians overseas, were a dramatic example of this. This desire to purify, however, naturally led reformers to look to the question of heresy. In most cases, heresy was simply a product of ignorance, which called for education. But in those cases where it was a deliberate attempt to lead people astray, it was the job of the Church to put a stop to it.

In the modern world, we do not think very much about heresy, but in the medieval world it was of prime importance. Heresy doomed the heretic to eternal damnation. Christian charity alone demanded that others attempt to save him. But the heretic who actively sought to spread his heresy was a greater danger, for he threatened the health of the Body of Christ. Heresy, therefore, was not dissent or diversity, it was disease—and a deadly one at that. Clergy, who were the doctors of souls, were required to take heresy seriously and to do everything possible to cure it.

Throughout the early medieval period, heresy was dealt with on an ad hoc basis. With the coming of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, it was precisely defined. Heresies were never new. All of them could be associated with heresies described in the ancient world, which was further evidence that

they were the work of the devil. As a result of the reforms, bishops could take a more active role in finding heresy in their dioceses. The most common response of the laity to heresy was arrest and execution. The most common response of the clergy, however, was *persuasio*. In the vast majority of cases, this worked. Given the poor state of religious knowledge in medieval Europe, it was not surprising that many people, both lay and clerical, fell into heresy through ignorance. It was only in the late twelfth century that *persuasio* began to reveal a hard core of heretics who obstinately held to their beliefs. These were the new heretics.

In 1184, Pope Lucius III issued the decree *Ad abolendam*, which constituted an episcopal inquisition. It was henceforward to be the responsibility of bishops to set up legal inquisitions to inquire into the spiritual health of areas, particularly those where reports of heresy existed. They were to use rules of evidence and take testimony from men of good character. Those found to be obstinate heretics determined to spread their heresy, whether lay or clergy, were to be handed over to the secular courts for punishment. This procedure was implemented almost everywhere. The effect was probably to reduce executions for heresy, since the secular authorities were ordered not to hear cases until the Inquisition could determine guilt. In 1199, Pope Innocent III, defining Christendom as the equivalent of the old Roman Empire, declared heretics to be the same as traitors. Following Roman law, their goods were to be confiscated and their heirs deprived.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why was the Church in bad shape during the fifth through the tenth centuries?
2. How were the Crusades an example of reformers' commitment to purify the laity?

Suggested Reading

Cowdrey, H.E.J. *The Cluniacs and Gregorian Reform*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Other Books of Interest

Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 1990.

Shannon, Albert Clement. *The Medieval Inquisition*. 2nd ed. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991.

Lecture 5: Medieval Heresies

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Malcolm Lambert's *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*.

The institution of local inquisitions certainly led to the religious instruction of many wayward Catholics and saved the lives or property of many who would otherwise have fallen victim to the secular courts. It is ironic, though, that in an age that saw an explosion in theological scholarship and the rapid growth of universities, that most common people still only had the most rudimentary understanding of their faith. Popular religion held Jesus, the Apostles, the Virgin Mary, and local saints in high regard, but the details of theology escaped it. Most people held to a variety of superstitions that substituted for some aspects of religion. These were the sorts of heresies, however, that were easily dealt with by the local inquisitions. The real problem lay with those people, many affluent, who knew the Catholic faith and actively rejected it.

That was the problem that existed in the thirteenth century in southern France and northern Italy. Both areas had seen a growth in wealth due to commerce, which brought not only education and elitism, but also important ideas along with the luxury goods. The most virulent of these heresies was Catharism. As the theologians of the time maintained, heresies were seldom new. Catharism was a dualist belief that grew out of ancient Gnosticism and Manichaeism. It had survived throughout the centuries among merchants in various Mediterranean port cities. By the ninth century it had spread to the Balkans, where it was known as Bogomilism. By the twelfth century, it had a solid foothold in southern France and northern Italy, where it was referred to as Catharism or Albigensianism. Like all dualists, Cathars believed that the universe was locked in an epic struggle between a good god of spirit and an evil god of matter. Yahweh, the good god, made the universe of spirit while Jehovah, the evil god, made the material world to enslave spirits. Cathars believed that those who do not achieve perfection in this life must be reborn. As for Jesus, he was a phantom, sent by the good god to preach the truth. However, His message was warped by the evil god, whose servant the Church crafted a religion of matter.

Catharism survived because unlike other heresies it was well organized, with its own bishops and clergy. The clergy were known as Perfects. They were ordained by a consolamentum, ministering to the faithful and living according to strict regulations. Believers corresponded to the laity. They were not required to obey all of the rules, although they were enjoined to do their best. Pope Innocent III sent several papal legates to the region in order to reform the Church and see that secular lords did their best to combat the heresy. However, the legates were opposed by local church leaders and lay lords.

When the papal legate was assassinated in January 1208 the most powerful baron of the region, Raymond of Toulouse, could not hide his glee. Innocent responded by calling a crusade against Raymond and all lords who refused to combat the heresy. The Albigensian Crusade scored military victories, but the bloodshed underlined the problem of allowing secular lords the opportunity to deal with heresy. In any case, the heresy survived the crusade.

Unlike Catharism, the other major medieval heresy was homegrown. A wealthy merchant, Waldes, who lived in Lyons in the 1170s organized a group of followers who called themselves the Poor Men of Lyons. Attempting to follow the commandments of Christ, they gave up all of their wealth, lived by begging, and preaching to the people. Valdes attempted to get papal sanction for his group as a new order, but Pope Alexander III refused when it was determined that Valdes had a defective understanding of theology. Although the archbishop of Lyons forbade the Poor Men to preach, they continued to do so. They were excommunicated in 1184 and expelled from the city. Although they were not initially purposefully heretical, they soon took on heresies as a result of their rejection of the Church. These included rejection of purgatory and indulgences as well as a Donatist-like rejection of bad priests.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What problem for the Church existed in the thirteenth century in southern France and northern Italy?
2. Why did Catharism survive when other heresies failed?

Suggested Reading

Lambert, Malcolm. *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*. 3rd ed. London: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Other Books of Interest

Barber, Malcolm. *The Cathars: Dualistic Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages*. London: Longman, 2000.

Cameron, Euan. *Waldenses: Rejections of Holy Church in Medieval Europe*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 2001.

Lecture 6: Centralizing the Medieval Inquisition

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Bernard Hamilton's *The Medieval Inquisition*.

The greatest achievement of medieval ecclesiastical reform occurred in 1215 in Rome when Pope Innocent III called the Fourth Lateran Council. Its object was nothing less than the complete reform of Christian society. At the beginnings of its documents are laid out the essential elements of the faith and the requirement of bishops and clergy to make these known. In order to ensure the doctrinal integrity and spiritual health of the faithful, the Council required annual confessions. These private confessions were to be not only a recitation of sins, but an opportunity for the confessor to probe the faith of the laity in an attempt to combat error. Innocent believed this method of *persuasio* could greatly curtail or eliminate heresy.

Medieval secular rulers and some bishops were less optimistic about the ability of *persuasio* to deal with the growing problem of heresy in Europe. The Albigensian Crusade had dramatically brought heresy to the attention of all Christians and they were determined to put a stop to it. This led to an increase in rough justice being meted out to those who fell afoul of the authorities or just mobs. There was a growing sense that the papacy was not up to the task of combating heresy. The Inquisition as it stood had proceeded on the assumption that heresy was error, planted by the devil. But it was not as effective at dealing with those heretics who were well organized and actively seeking to hide their beliefs. While a Cathar Perfect was easy enough to spot, the much more numerous Believers were not and could easily escape the questioning of judges.

For these reasons, local authorities began to undertake new methods to root out heretics. At the Council of Toulouse in 1229—in the heart of heretic country—local Church leaders set up an inquisition in which *testes synodales* (synodal witnesses) were given broad powers to seek out hidden heretics. Louis IX of France in the same year decreed that all royal officials were responsible for seeking out heretics in the areas under their jurisdiction. These heretics were brought to the royal courts where they were tried. As these procedures spread, there was a problem with professional *testes synodales*, who found heretics wherever they went.

In 1231, Pope Gregory IX sent a letter to the prior of the Dominican convent in Regensburg, commissioning him as a judge delegate to deal with heresy wherever he found it. He was given authority to travel in any lands, to preach, and to seek out heretics. Although local bishops were enjoined to help, the Dominican was exempt from local control. He was also given the power to

appoint new judges if he felt it necessary. This act began the long marriage of the mendicant orders with the Inquisition. Both Dominicans and Franciscans were by this time well trained in theology. Just as importantly, they were spread across Europe and under direct obedience to the pope. As a result, the mendicant-led Inquisition becomes extremely popular. Mendicants had a reputation for sanctity and their lack of local connections meant that they could pursue the truth impartially. Because of the importance of preserving rights and working within a legal and pastoral framework, inquisitors began to produce detailed manuals that give us today great insight on the workings of the institution. They also kept detailed records, many of which survive.

The centrally controlled mendicant Inquisition did not supplant secular or episcopal courts, but it did augment them and give them a standard in which to aspire. By the fourteenth century, these other courts began to rise in prominence over the papal Inquisition, largely because of the extinction of Catharism. The Inquisition did not disappear, but its actions became much lower key. It was in any case never very strong in England, Germany, or central France, where local courts dealt with heresy themselves. It is probably no coincidence that those were the areas most susceptible to Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the greatest achievement of medieval ecclesiastical reform?
2. Why did local authorities undertake new methods to root out heretics?

Suggested Reading

Hamilton, Bernard. *The Medieval Inquisition*. Teaneck, NJ: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982.

Other Books of Interest

Kieckhefer, Richard. *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979.

Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*. Elibron Classics Series. Boston: Adamant Media Corporation, 2005.

Lecture 7: The Working of the Medieval Inquisition

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Bernard Hamilton's *The Medieval Inquisition*.

The procedures under which the medieval Inquisition operated were minutely spelled out in numerous manuals. Broadly speaking, they drew from ancient Roman legal procedures as well as current practice in secular courts. By the fourteenth century, secular courts in continental Europe had been greatly affected by the coming of Roman law. The Roman method of allowing a trial without an accuser, or in which the accusal was rumor, bad reputation, or just the state, became much more widespread. These courts began with a *denuntiatio* in which a person of good reputation or an official reported a crime to a magistrate. This usually then triggered an *inquisitio generalis* in which the judge would call witnesses and hear testimony in an attempt to discern whether a trial could go forward. If so, the *inquisitio specialis* would begin in which the accused would be charged, evidence examined, and witnesses heard. For capital offenses a "full proof" consisting of two eyewitnesses or a confession was necessary to convict. If the court had many "partial proofs," the judge could apply torture to get the full proof.

Although the Church's Inquisition followed this procedure in many respects, it differed in that it was not itself a criminal trial. The accused could not be punished in a judicial sense, since the court was one of pastoral care. Penance for sins could be prescribed, but the overall purpose of the Inquisition was to save souls. When inquisitors came to an area they would call together the local clergy and people and preach a sermon that identified them, their authority, and their desire to cleanse the community of its sins. An Edict of Grace was then announced in which those who were guilty of heresy could come forward and repent with no further penalties. This was also the time in which those who knew of heretics or supporters of heretics could come forward. With the expiration of the Edict, the inquisitors would summon suspects and question them with regard to their faith and their knowledge of other heretics. They were allowed a defense, although the identities of any accusers were kept secret so as to avoid reprisals. Torture was rare, being used only for brief intervals in cases where a full proof was obvious but not forthcoming. Those who were found guilty of heresy were asked to repent. If they did so, they received absolution and penance. If they refused, they were "relaxed to the secular arm." In practice, though, this was very rare. The whole process would then end with a public ritual in which the heretics and their dispositions would be announced.

The amazingly detailed and sophisticated rules and procedures that governed the medieval Inquisition were the result of the high levels of theological and legal training available in Europe. Most inquisitors were theologians and were therefore well acquainted with the writings of the Church Fathers on heresy. They also understood a number of scriptural passages to refer to heresies. Inquisitors were assisted by legal experts, who followed the Roman precedent of equating heretics with traitors. They also developed a sophisticated system of terminology, questioning, and evaluation of evidence.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was used as the basis for which the procedures of the medieval Inquisition operated?
2. What did the amazingly detailed and sophisticated rules and procedures of the medieval Inquisition result from?

Suggested Reading

Hamilton, Bernard. *The Medieval Inquisition*. Teaneck, NJ: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982.

Other Books of Interest

Peters, Edward. *Torture*. Expanded ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.

Lecture 8: Birth of the Spanish Inquisition

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Henry Kamen's *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*.

The Spanish Inquisition was created by the monarchy for a very specific purpose. Unlike much of the rest of Europe, Spain had a large Jewish population during the Middle Ages. Although there were some limits, Jews could become very powerful in Spain, even becoming influential members of the royal court. However, in the late fourteenth century, tensions between Christians and Jews in some cities erupted into riots. Continued violence led a large number of Spanish Jews to accept baptism. Although these new converts, or *conversos*, were allowed to reject their forced conversion, very few did. Instead, they became the core of a new group of Spaniards who continued to live in Jewish areas, adopt Jewish customs, but practice the Catholic faith. The presence of these *conversos* led other Jews to similarly convert, thus greatly expanding their numbers. By the mid-fifteenth century, *conversos* were descendants of those who had first converted. They embraced Catholicism and took pride in their Jewish roots, which many of them believed made them even better Christians. *Conversos* spread into the hierarchy of the Church, into the nobility, and into the highest offices in Spain.

The success of the *conversos* sparked resentment among the Old Christians—those prominent families of the older aristocratic lines. Some began to write tracts accusing the *conversos* of being crypto-Jews, who were part of a vast conspiracy to infiltrate and corrupt the kingdom and faith of the Spanish. This was completely untrue, but the steady drumbeat of criticism led Ferdinand and Isabella to agree to investigate. On November 1, 1478, Pope Sixtus IV allowed the monarchs to establish a small Inquisition under royal control to investigate the situation. Although the Inquisition was small at first, it quickly ballooned in size as the inquisitors discovered crypto-Jews wherever they looked. The reason for this was simple. The *conversos* had plenty of enemies, in particular the Old Christians, but also the Jews, who saw them as traitors. Neither group had anything to fear from the Inquisition, so they also had no qualms about spreading rumors and lies. Ferdinand, shocked by the extent of the problem, expanded the Inquisition, which only expanded the hysteria. The pope's and other clergy members' attempts to put a stop to the Spanish Inquisition failed. The first few decades of the Spanish Inquisition were its deadliest. Under Tomas de Torquemada, approximately two thousand Spaniards were burned at the stake.

As the Inquisition continued to do its work, questions naturally arose concerning the propensity of *conversos* to remain Jewish. The answer, the

inquisitors believed, was the proximity of the Jews, who used their family connections and cultural affinity to seduce the *conversos* from their faith. In fact, the inquisitors had it backward, since it was the *conversos* who tended to bring Jews to Christianity. Ferdinand and Isabella, though, came to believe that the problem could only be solved by removing the root cause. In 1492, they ordered all remaining Jews, approximately eighty-thousand people, to convert to Christianity or leave Spain. About half converted. The rest left, but many of them returned.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. For what purpose was the Spanish Inquisition created?
2. Why did Ferdinand expand the Inquisition?

Suggested Reading

Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

Other Books of Interest

Baer, Yitzhak. *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*. Trans. Louis Schoffman. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1993.

Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*. Reprint ed. Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press, 1988.

Roth, Norman. *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. 2nd ed. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Lecture 9: “Poisonous, Offensive, Misleading”: The New Heresies of the Protestant Reformation

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Lewis W. Spitz’s *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*.

Despite the decline of the papal Inquisition in most areas of Europe except Spain, heresy was still dealt with efficiently by local or episcopal courts. In the fifteenth century, secular lords felt confident about their ability to deal with heresy. What they doubted was the sanctity of the Church, which was criticized for its great wealth, corrupt institutions, and seeming lack of interest in spiritual reform. There was a general feeling that reform was necessary and many people had different ideas about where that reform should go. What no one expected was a new and powerful heresy.

Martin Luther was an Augustinian Friar in Saxony ordained to the priesthood in 1507. He subsequently went to the University of Wittenberg, where he studied and then taught theology. Like most academic theologians of the new humanist schools, Luther was critical of the worldliness of the Church. He was especially troubled by the sale of indulgences and said so in his 95 *Theses*, which were published on the printing press. Luther became an overnight celebrity, tapping into a rich vein of German anti-clericalism. Buoyed by this support, Luther went about doing research and writing tract after tract, slowly coming to his own conclusions about Christianity. Although Christianity had always taught that man is saved by faith in Jesus Christ and in good works, Luther argued that it was only faith that brought justification. He subsequently also came to the conclusion that Scripture alone was the authority for the Church. Everything that came after Scripture was simply man-made. These ideas naturally led him to condemn the Catholic Church, which he did in many pamphlets.

The Catholic Church had long experience with various heretics, and Martin Luther seemed at first to be just one more. But he was something altogether different. The initial reaction was to use *persuasio*, and when that failed, to order him under his vow of obedience to be silent. He refused, saying that as a professor he had the right to put forward these ideas. The Church, therefore, debated him, although this had the effect of further radicalizing his ideas. Finally, in June 1520, the pope sent a bull to Luther giving him sixty days to recant. Luther and his supporters burned the bull. At the Diet of Worms in 1521, Luther defiantly held his ground. Emperor Charles V could not burn him, because he needed the support of Lutheran princes to defend against France and the Turks.

Thanks to the printing press, Luther’s ideas moved so swiftly that the Church had no way of keeping up. Across Germany, secular lords used Luther’s

ideas as justification for seizing ecclesiastical property. Peasants did the same to justify revolting against their masters. Splinter reformers began emerging across Europe, such as Zwingli in Zurich and the Anabaptists in Münster. In 1534, King Henry VIII removed his entire kingdom from the Catholic Church and John Calvin subsequently took over Geneva and began exporting Calvinist missionaries across Europe. The medieval inquisitions, already largely gone, were unable to cope.

Martin Luther: Reformation as Heresy

Martin Luther duly appeared before the Diet of Worms, which Emperor Charles V had convened on January 22, 1521, on April 17, 1521. Speaking on behalf of the empire as the assistant to the Archbishop of Trier, Luther was presented with copies of his writings and asked if the books were his and if he still believed in their teachings.

Luther requested time to think about his answer, which was granted. Luther prayed, consulted with friends and mediators, and gave his response to the diet the next day:

“Unless I shall be convinced by the testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear reason . . . I neither can nor will make any retraction, since it is neither safe nor honorable to act against conscience. God help me. Amen.”

Luther was allowed to leave Worms while the diet considered his fate. On May 25, the emperor issued the Edict of Worms. Luther was declared an outlaw, his literature was banned, and his arrest was ordered. The Edict read in part, “We want him to be apprehended and punished as a notorious heretic.”

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What were the main criticisms of the Church expressed in Luther's 95 Theses?
2. How was Luther different from other heretics?

Suggested Reading

Spitz, Lewis W. *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

Other Books of Interest

Tracy, James D. *Europe's Reformations, 1450–1650: Doctrine, Politics, and Community*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.

Lecture 10: The Spanish Inquisition in Its Maturity

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Henry Kamen's *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*.

One place where an Inquisition was in place was Spain. After the replacement of Torquemada with Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, the Spanish Inquisition settled into a more mature state in which standard rules of evidence and the best legal procedures were used. When Charles came to the throne in 1517, he not only continued the Inquisition, but later expanded it to the Netherlands when Calvinism took root there. But by this time the original purpose of the Spanish Inquisition was fading. *Conversos* were no longer a major problem. Instead, the Inquisition began focusing its attention on the new ideas that were sweeping Europe. Inquisitors searched out Lutherans, Calvinists, and even humanists along the lines of Erasmus. The newly revised methods of the Inquisition were extremely effective. Protestantism was stopped at Spain's front door. Following the examples of Italians, the Inquisition also took control of an Index of Prohibited Books.

At the top of the Spanish Inquisition was the *Suprema*, which was one of the five royal councils of state. It governed local tribunals, which were moved when necessary depending on the threat. Each tribunal had two Dominican inquisitors, a legal advisor, a constable, a prosecutor, and a large number of assistants. All of these were lay, and all were appointed by the crown as with any other state office. The Inquisition was largely funded by confiscations, but these were not frequent or great. Indeed, even at its peak it was always just making ends meet. When the Spanish Inquisition arrived, the Dominicans would preach against heresy and announce an Edict of Faith, calling for voluntary confessions and denunciations. Those who failed to denounce known heretics were liable to punishment themselves. Evidence was then assembled by legal experts. This could take a long time, because the rules of evidence were meticulous and all of the proceedings had to be recorded at every point. Like other courts in Europe, the Spanish Inquisition used torture, although only in a small minority of cases. The accused knew that a charge had been made, but not precisely what it was. They were told to examine their conscience and confess. If they refused, a formal trial began. When the inquisition had completed its work it would end with a large ritual called the *auto-de-fé* or Act of Faith. Those found guilty would be announced and their penances received. For those guilty of the worst heresies, the Inquisition handed them to the royal officials, who burned them. Burnings, though, were rare. Indeed, most burnings that did occur were effigy burnings. The total

number of deaths during two centuries of Spanish Inquisition were between three thousand and five thousand people.

The Spanish Inquisition had a long history because it was useful to the crown and genuinely loved by the people. Spain was the defender of Catholicism, so it only made sense that the crown would see to the spiritual health of its subjects. As Spanish prosperity declined, however, so too did the Inquisition. By the eighteenth century, it was criticized even in Spain as a relic of the past. It hobbled into the nineteenth century and was formally suppressed in 1834.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why was the original purpose of the Spanish Inquisition fading when Charles came to the throne in 1517?
2. Why did the Spanish Inquisition have such a long history?

Suggested Reading

Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

Other Books of Interest

Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*. Reprint ed. Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press, 1988.

Lecture 11: The Roman Inquisition

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Edward Peters's *Inquisition*.

By 1530, it had become clear to the papacy that Lutheranism and other Protestant sects could not be dealt with in the usual ways. There was still hope that a solution could be found to heal what still seemed to some as a simple schism. In 1530 and again in 1541, the popes sent delegates to meetings with Lutheran leaders to find common ground. The best hope seemed to be the meeting at Regensburg in which Cardinal Gasparo Contarini seemed to be close to a solution. Yet the talks snagged on questions of papal authority and transubstantiation. It was clear that no agreement was possible. And while the Church talked, Protestantism spread. With the failure of Regensburg, Pope Paul III acted to keep it from spreading into Italy.

In 1542, Paul founded the Roman Inquisition. Prompted by the success of the Spanish Inquisition, the Roman Inquisition was given the task of finding and removing Protestant heretics in papal lands. It was also given control over the Index of Prohibited Books and Authors. Like its medieval predecessors, the Roman Inquisition worked along the best methods of legal procedures laid out meticulously in inquisitors' manuals. Unlike the Spanish *auto-de-fé*, the Roman Inquisition sentenced in private. It had very few executions. Indeed, it was widely criticized in Italy for being too soft on heresy. During the first fifty years of the Inquisition, it focused primarily on Protestants. After 1600, however, its cases were drawn more from superstitions or clerical discipline. It heard cases on witches, but required plenty of evidence to convict.

Perhaps the most famous case before the Roman Inquisition was that of Galileo. The mathematician had trained a telescope on the heavens and came to believe as a result that the Copernican system of a heliocentric universe was correct. This in itself was not heretical. The Jesuits at the papal observatory discounted Copernicus's model because it failed to accurately predict astronomical observations. But if Galileo wished to argue in its favor, there was nothing impeding that. He ran afoul of the Inquisition, however, when in 1614 he began to stray from science into theological writings. He was brought to Rome, where Cardinal Robert Bellarmine made clear that Copernicanism was not heretical, but that if it were true, it would require theological investigation into Scriptures, something that Galileo was unqualified to do. He dismissed the case, but ordered Galileo to no longer hold or defend the theory. Almost two decades later, when one of Galileo's friends was elected pope, he decided to disobey that order. He published his *Dialogue* in which he held to the Copernican system and mocked those who disagreed with him. Again he was called to Rome to stand trial at the Inquisition. He

was convicted of being “vehemently suspected of heresy,” which was primarily due to his disobedience. He recanted and was released to live out his days in a house outside of Florence.

The Roman Inquisition played a role in other Italian inquisitions, most particularly in the Venetian Inquisition. It remained one of the major departments of papal government, although after the eighteenth century it no longer had jurisdiction outside papal lands. It survives today under the name Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why was it clear that Lutheranism and other Protestant sects could not be dealt with in the usual ways?
2. Why did Galileo run afoul of the Inquisition?

Suggested Reading

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

Other Books of Interest

Drake, Stillman. *Galileo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Grendler, Paul F. *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Lecture 12: Crafting the Myth of the Inquisition

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Edward Peters's *Inquisition*.

Although in their day the various inquisitions were considered the state of the art in judicial fairness and integrity, today they are viewed as corrupt and unjust. Although in their day, the inquisitions were criticized for being too soft-hearted or lenient, today they are remembered as cruel and sadistic. Why? The answer lies not in the inquisitions themselves, but in the various agendas of those who came to view the inquisitions.

Martin Luther believed that he and his supporters were uncovering the “true religion.” The problem was that the other reformers who disagreed with Luther thought much the same thing. The one thing that all of the Protestants were adamant about, though, is the insistence that they had not created a new religion. Catholics naturally made this accusation, asking why it had taken fifteen centuries for the truth to be discovered by these men. Luther countered that Church history could be traced through Catholicism until the conversion of the Roman Empire. After that, he believed, the empire had taken over and perverted the Church, creating a new one that was made evident by its persecutions. The true church went underground and was now revealed in his day. It was left to other Protestants to identify themselves with the various medieval heresies. In this light, the Inquisition was not a means of curing souls, but the tool of the devil. Protestant martyrologies were produced that linked ancient martyrs with medieval heretics and then Protestants who had died in modern tribunals.

To this was added a large dose of what historians refer to as the Black Legend. Spain in the sixteenth century was the champion of Catholicism, and therefore the enemy of England and the Netherlands, which had revolted against Spanish rule. In England, every opportunity was taken to smear Philip II and the Inquisition. The treatise of Bartolomé de las Casas criticizing Spanish treatment of the American Indians was translated and used to describe the Spanish as pillagers of paradise. An anonymously produced book on the Inquisition, published under the pen name Montanus, described it as an evil, masochistic institution that was in the business of persecuting the true Christians.

England had a taste of Inquisition in 1553 when Mary Tudor, a Catholic, came to the throne. For a brief moment, Catholicism was restored to England, although the Inquisition there barely began before she was forced to give up power in 1558. Mary had married Philip II, so the twin evils of Spain and Inquisition were joined in English Protestant minds. With the

return of Protestant rule under Elizabeth, new martyr stories were told. John Foxe wrote his highly influential *Acts and Monuments*, which was published in English in 1563 and was almost as popular as the Bible. In a day in which Elizabeth's government routinely tortured and executed Catholics without trial, Mary was referred to as Bloody Mary. When Philip II subsequently imposed the Spanish Inquisition on the Netherlands, it became associated in England and among French Protestants with an attack on freedom.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why is the perception of the inquisitions so different today than it was in their own time?
2. What is meant by the Black Legend?

Suggested Reading

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

Other Books of Interest

Headley, John M. *Luther's View of Church History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

Olsen, V. Norskov. *John Foxe and the Elizabethan Church*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.

Lecture 13: The Inquisition and Enlightenment

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Henry Kamen's *The Rise of Toleration*.

By the time of the Enlightenment movement in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Inquisition, particularly the Spanish Inquisition, was already cast as the oppressor of the true religion and the destroyer of political liberty. It soon became a fixture in the toleration debates. Toleration is a rare thing in human societies and Europeans came to the idea slowly. As early as the sixteenth century, a few thinkers such as Jacobus Acontius began to argue that various religions should be tolerated in one state. During the bloody wars of religion in France, a group called the *politiques* argued for toleration as the only way to bring about order. Toleration, though, was slow in coming. In England after 1688, toleration for all Christian sects was declared, but this did not include Catholics, who were still considered inherently treasonous. For the English, this sort of toleration seemed the only means of peaceful society. The fact that Spain and Italy had managed to retain doctrinal uniformity struck the English as unnatural and therefore clearly a product of an oppressive Inquisition.

Near the end of the seventeenth century, Pierre Bayle wrote extensively on religious toleration, taking apart traditional arguments for coercion. From Bayle's perspective, heresy or religious differences were not the cause of strife, which was caused rather by the Inquisition and the mindset of secular rulers who tried to force what cannot be forced. Bayle's ideas were absorbed by the philosophes of the eighteenth-century salons and coffee houses. Philosophes embraced reason and rejected the medieval world as a time of darkness and superstition. In his much celebrated book *Candide* (1759), Voltaire lampooned the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions. Later in his life he came to view it as genuinely dangerous, a sadistic and bloodthirsty institution of a decrepit Church grasping to hold on to the last remnants of power.

As the Enlightenment and its ideas spread from France across Europe and to America, the Inquisition was repeatedly held up as the example of an intolerant past facing down a bright and tolerant future. Even Catholics like Andreas Zaupser portrayed the Inquisition as an aged hag close to death ready to be supplanted by the youth of toleration.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why was religious toleration slow to develop in Europe?
2. What were Pierre Bayle's views on toleration?

Suggested Reading

Kamen, Henry. *The Rise of Toleration*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

Other Books of Interest

Lecler, Joseph. *Toleration and Reformation*. New York: New York Association Press, 1960.

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

Lecture 14: The Inquisition in Popular Culture

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Edward Peters's *Inquisition*.

By the eighteenth century, a new print culture was being born in Europe and America. In these predominantly Protestant countries, there was a large market for Gothic novels. These usually quite large books were set in medieval times or ruins of the darkest sort and featured youthful innocents who were in some way threatened by the horrible evils of the dark past. Virtually all of the Gothic novels traded on a popular anti-Catholicism that portrayed clergy, nuns, and monks as subtle, devious, and always evil. The Inquisition in one form or another became a stock institution in these novels. One of the earliest such novels, Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1789), painted a picture of the Inquisition that would echo throughout more than a century of Western culture. The trial chamber was draped in black, as were the three somber inquisitors. Laid out on a table were the fearful instruments of torture, which the inquisitors wasted no time in using. In William Henry Ireland's *The Abbess* (1799), the same scene is used, although new elements are added with regard to the torture. Ireland provides a long, detailed account of the various tortures and included physicians who attended the procedure to keep the victim from dying. These images were current in America, where they were rehearsed in Edgar Allan Poe's frightening *Pit and the Pendulum* (1843). The Inquisition was also featured in one of the pivotal scenes of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brother's Karamazov* (1881). In this scene, it is Jesus himself who visits the Spanish Inquisition and is threatened with being burned at the stake.

With the explosion of liberalism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Inquisition became the oppressor of political freedom. In this case, the figure of Don Carlos, the unstable son of Phillip II of Spain, was turned into a freedom fighter for the Netherlands and an implacable foe of the Inquisition. Friedrich Schiller's popular play *Don Karlos* (1787) cast the Grand Inquisitor as the ultimate villain, who led weak Phillip to hand over his son. This theme was further enhanced by Giuseppe Verdi's *Don Carlos*, which included a horrible *auto-de-fé*. The Inquisition was also employed as a persecutor of scientific advancement in an attempt to demonstrate that religion and science are incompatible. In this respect, the Galileo case was resurrected and distorted. In works of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Galileo was subjected to torture, imprisoned for years, and hounded to an early grave because of his desire to pursue the truth.

In the twentieth century, the myth of the Inquisition was so firmly established that it no longer had much appeal in serious treatments. Instead, it became

the subject of comedy, such as the portrayal in *Monty Python's Flying Circus* or Mel Brooks' *History of the World, Part I*. When "inquisition" is mentioned at all today, it is used interchangeably with "witch hunt," which is ironic given the opposing histories of these two activities. Despite the work of numerous historians, the Inquisition remains for most people, as the Random House Dictionary defines it, "an official investigation, especially one of political or religious nature, characterized by lack of regard for individual rights, prejudice on the part of the examiners, and recklessly cruel punishments."

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. How did Gothic literature in the eighteenth century trade on anti-Catholic sentiment?
2. How has Don Carlos been portrayed in literary works?

Suggested Reading

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

Other Books of Interest

Jones, Martin D.W. *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Suggested Readings for This Course:

Burman, Edward. *The Inquisition: Hammer of Heresy*. New ed. New York: Dorset Press, 1992.

Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Reprint ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

Suggested Readings for Individual Lectures:

Cowdrey, H.E.J. *The Cluniacs and Gregorian Reform*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Crook, John A. *Law and Life of Rome, 90 B.C.–A.D. 212*. Reprint ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Grant, Robert M. *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*. Rev. ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.

Hamilton, Bernard. *The Medieval Inquisition*. Teaneck, NJ: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982.

Hatch, Edwin M.A. *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*. London: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1999.

Kamen, Henry. *The Rise of Toleration*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

———. *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

Lambert, Malcolm. *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*. 3rd ed. London: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Spitz, Lewis W. *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

Other Books of Interest:

Baer, Yitzhak. *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*. Trans. Louis Schoffman. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1993.

Barber, Malcolm. *The Cathars: Dualistic Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages*. London: Longman, 2000.

Buckland, W.W. *A Text-book of Roman Law from Augustus to Justinian*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Cameron, Euan. *Waldenses: Rejections of Holy Church in Medieval Europe*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 2001.

Drake, Stillman. *Galileo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Grendler, Paul F. *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Headley, John M. *Luther's View of Church History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

Other Books of Interest (continued):

- Herrin, Judith. *The Formation of Christendom*. Reprint ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Jones, A.H.M. *The Criminal Courts of the Roman Republic and Principate*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 1972.
- Jones, Martin D.W. *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Kieckhefer, Richard. *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979.
- Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*. Elibron Classics Series. Boston: Adamant Media Corporation, 2005.
- . *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*. Reprint ed. Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press, 1988.
- Lecler, Joseph. *Toleration and Reformation*. New York: New York Association Press, 1960.
- Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 1990.
- Olsen, V. Norskov. *John Foxe and the Elizabethan Church*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.
- Peters, Edward. *Torture*. Expanded ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
- Rankin, David. *Tertullian and the Church*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Richards, Jeffrey. *Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages, 476–752*. London: Routledge, 1979.
- Roth, Norman. *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. 2nd ed. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.
- Shannon, Albert Clement. *The Medieval Inquisition*. 2nd ed. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991.
- Tracy, James D. *Europe's Reformations, 1450–1650: Doctrine, Politics, and Community*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.