



The Norm-Deviation Model Reconsidered: Four Cases of ‘Alternative’ Sexual Morals Judged by the Inquisition*

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Abstract

The inquisitional register of Jacques Fournier from the years 1318–1325, well known thanks to the book *Montaillou* by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, reaches far beyond the topic of heresy. It encompasses various details about the common life, including sexuality and sexual morals. This case study reconsiders the norm-deviation model on the basis of four Fournier’s trials dealing with sexual morals: that of Beatrix of Lagleize, Peter Vidal, Arnold of Verniolles, and Grazida Lizier. Sexual morals of these four people are certainly very different from the morals required by Jacques Fournier, but they are rather independent systems and norms than simple deviations from another system or norm, i.e. the official sexual morals. The paper suggests that the norm-deviation model distorts the field of medieval sexual morals.

Keywords

sexual morals, sexuality, norm-deviation model, inquisition, Register of Jacques Fournier

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1. Introduction

The topic of this paper originates in my study of the inquisitional register of Jacques Fournier,¹ in which I was focusing mainly on heresy. However, the register does not only contain data concerning heresy, but also provides extensive information on the ways of thinking and on the everyday life of people who did not record their culture themselves. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie was the first to point this out in his famous study based on the register of Fournier² and—although his monograph has been widely criticized³— this is considered Le Roy Ladurie's major contribution. Ever since, the register has been nearly a standard reference.

The register provides, among other topics, much information on sexual morals which invite a further theoretical consideration. I will focus on four cases, chosen simply on the account of rich references to sexual morals in the respective depositions. It is not my purpose, however, to outline an overall picture of sexuality in medieval inquisitional registers.⁴ Neither am

¹ Jacques Fournier was born in about 1278. He became a Cistercian monk, then studied in Paris, and in 1311 was elected abbot of the Fontfroide abbey. Between 1317 and 1326 he held the office of bishop of Pamiers, a town in southwestern France. In 1326 he was appointed bishop of Mirepoix. In 1334 he became Pope under the papal name Benedict XII.

² Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324* (Paris: Gallimard, 1982, first edition 1975), translated into English as *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French village, 1294–1324* (London: Scolar Press, 1978).

³ Leonard E. Boyle, "Montaillou Revisited: *Mentalité* and Methodology," in James A. Raftis, *Pathways to Medieval Peasants*, vol. 2 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 119–140; Matthias Benad, *Domus und Religion in Montaillou: Katholische Kirche und Katharismus im Überlebenskampf der Familie des Pfarrers Petrus Clerici am Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990). The collection Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (ed.), *Autour de Montaillou, un village occitan: Histoire et religiosité d'une communauté villageoise au Moyen Âge* (Castelnaud la Chapelle: L'Hydre, 2001) does not focus on the register itself or on theories and methods used by Le Roy Ladurie, with the exception of Matthias Benad, "Par quelles méthodes de critique de sources l'histoire des religions peut-elle utiliser le registre de Jacques Fournier?," 147–155. For a useful critique of rather outdated anthropological models used by Le Roy Ladurie, see Renato Rosaldo, "From the Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and the Inquisitor," in James Clifford and George E. Marcus (eds.), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1986), 77–97.

⁴ For such an overview, although not really interested in theoretical issues, see Gwendoline Hancke, *L'amour, la sexualité et l'Inquisition: Les expressions de l'amour dans les registres d'Inquisition (XIII^e–XIV^e siècles)* (Cahors: La Louve, 2007).

I going to deal with gender and sexual identities, nor with sexuality as such, but with sexual morals that could be labeled as ‘alternative.’ I use the word ‘alternative’ in the exact sense of ‘different from the sexual morals required by canon and/or secular law and by moralizing writing and preaching of the members of Church hierarchy.’ My purpose is (1) to present these cases in their original settings, without being too quick in categorizing them in terms of adultery, rape, sodomy, etc., i.e. without mechanically accepting the categories imposed by the inquisitor, and (2) to raise some theoretical questions on the model of norm and deviation, which predominates widely in the research based on the inquisitorial registers.

The inquisitorial control of sexuality and sexual morals culminated only in post-Trent Catholicism, not least in Spanish and Portuguese colonies,⁵ but there are already two of its constitutive elements present in the register of Jacques Fournier: (1) the emphasis on the individual’s conscience and self-control,⁶ and (2) the model of norm and deviation. In the inquisitor’s view, the ‘alternative’ sexual morals were some kinds of casual deviations from the (only) system of Christian morals. My query will be whether it is

⁵ Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 102–213, a very useful general overview; André Fernández, “The Repression of Sexual Behavior by the Aragonese Inquisition between 1560 and 1700,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 7/4 (1997), 469–501; André Fernández, *Au nom du sexe: Inquisition et répression sexuelle en Aragon, 1560–1700* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2003); Ronaldo Vainfas, *Trópico dos pecados: Moral, sexualidade e Inquisição no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Campus, 1989); Luiz Mott, “Le pouvoir inquisitorial et la répression de l’abominable péché de sodomie dans le monde luso-brésilien,” in Gabriel Audisio (ed.), *Inquisition et pouvoir* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l’Université de Provence, 2004), 203–218.

⁶ For confession and the concept of conscience as tools of control see Jacques Chiffolleau, *Les justices du pape: Délinquance et criminalité dans la région d’Avignon au quatorzième siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1984), 263; Müller, “Femmes devant l’Inquisition,” 183; Adelina Sarrión Mora, *Sexualidad y confesión: La sollicitación ante el Tribunal del Santo Oficio, siglos XVI–XIX* (Madrid: Alianza, 1994), 37–39; Serge Gruzinski, “Individualization and Acculturation: Confession among the Nahuas of Mexico from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century,” in Asunción Lavrin (ed.), *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 96–117. For the idea of inquisitors as ‘doctors of souls’ see Christine Ellen Caldwell, “Dominican Inquisitors as ‘Doctors of Souls’: The Spiritual Discipline of Inquisition, 1231–1331,” *Heresis* 40 (2004), 23–40.

possible to see them as independent systems rather than deviations from any other system.⁷

2. Inquisitional Texts and the Problem of ‘Authentic Voice’

To work with inquisitional registers means to work with archives of control and repression of thought and behavior. Repression is indeed an important element of the legal proceeding known as *inquisitio heretice pravitatis* (inquiry of heretical depravity).⁸ However, the identification of the *inquisitio heretice pravitatis* only as a means of violent repression is one-sided and leads to misunderstanding of inquisitorial texts. In fact, the establishment of the inquisitional procedure is only one aspect of broader transformations of European legal systems,⁹ and also of transformations of the ways of thinking and writing about an individual and his beliefs. In this respect, the most striking example is the connection between the inquisitional procedure and the subjectivities it produces on one hand, and sacramental confession and confessional subjectivities on the other.¹⁰ Even the very word *confessio* was used for both sacramental confession and deposition before the inquisitor. The inquisitional penalties were imposed as penance, after the absolution,¹¹ following precisely the patterns of sacramental confession. Moreover, both sacramental confession and inquisitional procedure claim to be examining the individual’s conscience.¹² Both

⁷ Jean-Pierre Albert, “Croire et ne pas croire: Les chemins de l’hétérodoxie dans le registre d’inquisition de Jacques Fournier,” *Heresis* 39 (2003), 93–95.

⁸ See Richard Kieckhefer, “The Office of Inquisition and Medieval Heresy: The Transition from Personal to Institutional Jurisdiction,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46/1 (1995), 36–61 for an important discussion on the nature of inquisitions and the Inquisition.

⁹ See Chiffolleau, *Les justices du pape*—an excellent case study with wider implications, and James Given, “The Inquisitors of Languedoc and the Medieval Technology of Power,” *The American Historical Review* 94/2 (1989), 336. Given’s paper might be read as an implicit critique of the vague usage of the term ‘power’ in historical writing.

¹⁰ John H. Arnold, *Inquisition and Power: Catharism and the Confessing Subject in Medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 29, 50, 90; Daniela Müller, “Femmes devant l’Inquisition,” in Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (ed.), *Autour de Montaillou, un village occitan: Histoire et religiosité d’une communauté villageoise au Moyen Âge*, (Castelnaud la Chapelle: L’Hydre, 2001), 173; Chiffolleau, *Les justices du pape*, 261, 263; Caldwell, “Dominican Inquisitors as ‘Doctors of Souls,’” 31.

¹¹ Except, of course, delivering the heretic to the secular arm.

¹² It is worth noting that theology and the practice of sacramental confession underwent important changes in the 13th century. In fact, the canonic form of confession is an

sacramental confession—required at least once a year since the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)—and the Inquisition took part in broader system of social control.¹³ The Inquisition made (and let) individual medieval men and women speak but chose and recorded their words in a particular way for the purpose of control and inculcation.

The problem of reading of the inquisitional texts is a delicate one, and reliability of these texts is just at basic level of discussion. We rather deal with a complex problem of referentiality¹⁴ and of ‘ethics’ of recycling the depositions and subjectivities originating from the inquisitional trials. It is clear that the deponents were forced to speak and think about issues they would never speak or think about in other situations, and furthermore, they did not say what they might have said in other situations. Moreover, it was the inquisitor and his notary who created the deposition, using their own legal vocabulary.¹⁵ The inquisitor’s point of view delimited even the very area of the deposition and based it on the logic of transgression.¹⁶ Obviously, the inquisitional discourse is not simply a filter that could be precisely determined and separated from what seems to be the ‘authentic voice’ of the deponent.¹⁷ But I will assume here that by setting the confession discourse, Jacques Fournier’s tribunal provided the confessants with a

invention of the 13th century. See Nicole Bériou, “Autour de Latran IV (1215): La naissance de la confession moderne et sa diffusion,” in *Pratiques de la confession: Des Pères du désert à Vatican II* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1983), 73–93; Chiffolleau, *Les justices du pape*, 261; Sarrion Mora, *Sexualidad y confesión*, 21.

¹³ Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 60 *et passim*. For a valuable insight into the techniques of inquisitional control, see Given, “The Inquisitors of Languedoc,” 336–359.

¹⁴ Andrea Del Col, “Minute a confronto con i verbali definitivi nel processo del Sant’Ufficio di Belluno contro Petri Rayther (1557),” in: *Le scritte e le opere degli inquisitori* (Verona: Cierre, 2002), 202.

¹⁵ Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 78; Luisa Muraro, *Guglielma e Maifreda: Storia di un’eresia femminista* (Milano: La Tartaruga, 2003), 147.

¹⁶ Giovanna Paolin, “Il cancelliere e l’inquisitore: Alcune considerazioni,” in: *Le scritte e le opere degli inquisitori* (Verona, Cierre, 2002), 183.

¹⁷ For discussions on the ‘authentic voice,’ see Carlo Ginzburg, “The Inquisitor as Anthropologist,” in Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 156–164; James Given, “The Béguins in Bernard Gui’s *Liber sententiarum*,” in Caterina Bruschi and Peter Biller (eds.), *Texts and the Repression of Medieval Heresy* (York: York Medieval Press, 2003), 148; Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 8, 110, 121; Kathleen Biddick, “The Devil’s Anal Eye: Inquisitorial Optics and Ethnographic Authority,” in Kathleen Biddick, *The Shock of Medievalism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998), 105–134, especially 131–134.

space to speak and develop their own strategies;¹⁸ it is reasonable to suppose that the register gives an accurate record of what they said within the limited framework they were given.¹⁹

3. I'll be Ashamed and Lost: Beatrice of Lagleize

When Beatrice of Lagleize first appeared before Jacques Fournier on 23 July 1320,²⁰ she could have been about 50 years old.²¹ She belonged to lower nobility, being a daughter of knight Philip of Planissoles.²² Beatrice was twice married. Her first husband was Berengar of Roquefort, chatelain of Montailhou. In about 1301, some time after Berengar's death, she married Otho of Lagleize.

It is fairly typical that Beatrice does not mention affection or sexuality while speaking about her husbands (even though her silence could have also resulted from the perspective of the source).²³ On the contrary, sexuality is strongly present in her extra-marital experiences: courting of her husband's steward Raymond Roussel, rape by Raymond Clergue, a long-term relationship with the parish priest of Montailhou named Peter Clergue, and falling in love with another priest, Bartholomew Amilhac.

Beatrice dates the advances of Raymond Roussel 26 years back, i.e. about 1294. Raymond urged Beatrice to leave her home with him and go to seek the 'good Christians' (that is 'heretics') living in Lombardy. For it

¹⁸ Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 114–115.

¹⁹ Here, I owe much to Michel Foucault, especially to his *History of Sexuality*. Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, vol. 1–3 (Paris: Gallimard, 1976–1984; for a concise evaluation of Foucault's contribution, see Jeffrey Weeks, "Remembering Foucault," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14 (2005), 186–201), and to John H. Arnold whose insightful book *Inquisition and Power* showed me much of the reading strategy I am using.

²⁰ Jean Duvernoy (ed.), *Le registre d'inquisition de Jacques Fournier, évêque de Pamiers (1318–1325)* (Toulouse: Privat, 1965), vol. 1 (hereafter *Fournier* 1), 216.

²¹ Her precise age is unknown but she had already been married some 26 years before the year of the deposition.

²² For the Planissoles family, see Gwendoline Hancke, *L'hérésie en héritage. Familles de la noblesse occitane dans l'Histoire, du XII^e au début du XIV^e siècle: un destin commun* (Cahors: La Louve, 2006), 405–423.

²³ Gwendoline Hancke, "Femmes et féminité d'après le registre de Jacques Fournier," in Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (ed.), *Autour de Montailhou, un village occitan: Histoire et religiosité d'une communauté villageoise au Moyen Âge* (Castelnaud la Chapelle: L'Hydre, 2001), 158–159.

was necessary, he said, to forsake one's father, mother, wife, husband and children and follow the Lord.²⁴ Beatrice, however, remained unconvinced. She feared that "if her husband learned that he would pursue and kill them."²⁵ "And because the deponent was then pregnant, she asked Raymond what she would do with the baby she was expecting [...]. Raymond answered that if she delivered among the good Christians the baby would become an angel and they would make God his king."²⁶

Raymond's version of 'Cathar' myths left Beatrice cold.²⁷ On the other hand, the example of honorable women who left their families to seek the good Christians proved to be crucial for her: "She said that in order to persuade her to leave with him and join the good Christians, Raymond enumerated various noblewomen who had done so."²⁸ Beatrice states that she answered "that if two or three honorable women, so honorable as she was, left with them, she would have an excuse, while she would have no excuse if she left only with Raymond, as she was young then and people would have immediately started saying that they had left the land in order to satisfy their desire."²⁹

But soon afterwards, Raymond discredited himself in her eyes and as a consequence Beatrice decidedly refused him:

One night, after they had had supper together, Raymond entered secretly the room where she used to sleep and he hid under her bed. Having finished the house chores, she lied down on her bed and while everyone in the house was already lying and sleeping, she fell asleep as well. Suddenly, Raymond crept out from under the bed, lied down next to her wearing only his shirt, and started to behave as if he wanted to lie carnally with her. She asked: 'What are you doing?' He told her to be quiet. She answered: 'Oh I won't be quiet, you rustic!' and she started to scream calling her maids who were sleeping in the same room, saying there was a man in her bed. Hearing that, Raymond got out of her bed and rushed out of the room. In the morning, Raymond apologized to her by saying that he had been wrong to hide next to her. She answered: 'Now I can see that your talks about going to the good Christians had the only one purpose of getting me and knowing me carnally. And if it

²⁴⁾ *Fournier* 1, 219.

²⁵⁾ *Fournier* 1, 219.

²⁶⁾ *Fournier* 1, 219–220.

²⁷⁾ *Fournier* 1, 220.

²⁸⁾ *Fournier* 1, 220.

²⁹⁾ *Fournier* 1, 221.

were not for my fear that my husband would think that I have done something shameful with you, I would have you imprisoned immediately at the very bottom of the tower.³⁰

One thing is obvious from this episode: the feeling of shame and the fear of infamy were extremely important in Beatrice's sexual morals.³¹ I will return to this point later.

The story of Beatrice's violation by Raymond Clergue reveals yet other aspects of her sexual morals:

[S]he said and confessed that one day, while her husband was still alive, Raymond Clergue alias Pathau, bastard of William Clergue, brother of Pons Clergue, who was the father of the current parish priest of Montaillou Peter Clergue, pressed her by force and knew her carnally in the castle of Montaillou and after the deponent's husband Berengar of Roquefort had deceased one year later, Raymond Clergue lived with her publicly. And because the parish priest, cousin of Raymond Clergue, was well aware that Raymond had had intercourse with her, he also solicited her to let him know her carnally. She asked him how he could request her to do this, while he knew that Raymond, his cousin, had known her carnally. And she told him about it. The priest answered that this should not be a matter of violence and that he would not interfere, anyway 'I know about it and I can be of a greater benefit for you and give you more than that bastard', referring to Raymond. He also suggested that they both could have her at the same time but she replied that she by no means was going to allow that, since she would cause discord between them and they both would vituperate her because of one another. And, she said, as the priest had known her carnally, she did not have intercourse with Raymond since, even though Raymond made attempts sometimes. She also said that there had been a secret hatred between Raymond and the priest because of this. However, she knew about it very well.³²

Here, a vague feeling of shame is present as well but most striking are Beatrice's worries about committing incest—in a very broad sense, which was also common in 'official' sexual morals.³³ On the other hand, Beatrice

³⁰ *Fournier* 1, 221–222.

³¹ Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*, 544–545.

³² *Fournier* 1, 238.

³³ Pierre J. Payer, "Sex and Confession in the Thirteenth Century," in Joyce E. Salisbury (ed.), *Sex in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays* (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 131.

did not seem to be embarrassed at all to live with the man who had violated her. Gwendoline Hancke finds the relation of Beatrice and Pathau strange, and to explain it, she argues that rape was considered a far less serious crime than it is today.³⁴ More precisely it could be said that punishments for sexual crimes were relatively severe in theory but they were rarely applied in all their severity.³⁵ And most importantly, a relative toleration of some kinds of sexual violence was not without effect on the experience of the victims themselves.

As Guido Ruggiero pointed out in his study on sexual crimes in 14th–15th century Venice, “[s]exual violence against women was too prevalent—virtually too ‘normal’ for women of lesser status—for them to be able to maintain a strong sense of personal inviolability.”³⁶ Indeed, the narrative of Beatrice’s rape by Pathau strengthens the case for micro-distinctions. Certainly we do not really know her personal experience; we only know that she saw no problem in living publicly with the rapist and that even when she started to live with Peter Clergue he feared that she would still sleep with Pathau.³⁷ However, even these bare facts go against too straightforward interpretations of Beatrice’s relationship with Pathau in terms of violation, humiliation and trauma. The act committed by Pathau was categorized very clearly as crime of rape by the law but Beatrice seems to have been able to cope with it.³⁸ According to John H. Arnold, “[i]t is [even]

³⁴ Hancke, “Femmes et féminité,” 163–164.

³⁵ James A. Brundage, “Rape and Seduction in the Medieval Canon Law,” in Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (eds.), *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1982), 142.

³⁶ Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros*, 102. See also a striking example from another period in Sandra Cavallo and Simona Cerutti, “Female Honor and the Social Control of Reproduction in Piedmont between 1600 and 1800,” in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (eds.), *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 99.

³⁷ *Fournier* 1, 244.

³⁸ See James A. Brundage, “Rape and Marriage in the Medieval Canon Law,” in James A. Brundage, *Sex, Law and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum, 1993), part VIII, 62–75; Brundage, “Rape and Seduction,” 141–146; Michel Rouche, “La sexualité dans le mariage durant le Haut Moyen Âge,” in *Comportamenti e immaginario della sessualità nell’alto medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2006), 387; Guido Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 89–108. According to Ruggiero, “[r]ape prosecution was also most sensitive to a woman’s age and status. The victimization of children (*puellae*) was treated with a stern hand. Wives, though much less important, were more

possible that Béatrice was bound to Pathau, until Pierre Clergue's appearance, by the social discourse that could see rape as a legal contract to marriage."³⁹

This ancient social discourse was backed by sexual morals and conceptions of the self fought vigorously by the canon law of the post-Gregorian Church (from the *Decretum Gratiani* onwards).⁴⁰ Certainly this discourse was seen as deviation by its rivals but this does not mean that we should adopt this point of view in scholarly accounts. In fact, it is rather the post-Gregorian norm that 'deviates' from the older model. To explain Beatrice's living with the rapist in terms of 'strangeness' or deviation from the normal behavior would be distorting.

Beatrice's relationship with Peter Clergue began in about 1299, lasted for about a year and a half and was very intensive. Beatrice stated that they used to make love about two or three times a week.⁴¹ Beatrice's trial proceedings focus on this relationship more than on any other. Bishop Fournier was particularly interested in it for several reasons. First, this relationship involved a violation of clerical celibacy and it began by solicitation during confession.⁴² Second, much like Raymond Roussel, Peter Clergue used his version of 'Cathar' myths to seduce Beatrice. Yet beside the interests of Jacques Fournier, there seems to be one more reason for the extensive records of this relationship in the deposition: it was more controversial for Beatrice herself. Indeed, she stated that she had first believed that any woman who had an intercourse with a priest would be damned forever:

[I]n Lent, she wanted to confess her sins. She went to the church of Montaignou and there she came up to Peter Clergue, the parish priest of that church, who used to hear confessions behind the altar of Virgin Mary. As soon as she knelt down before him, he kissed her and told her there was no woman in the world that he loved this much. She, as she said, was flabbergasted and left

valued than widows by the measure of penalties. Unmarried girls of marriageable age, however, found their rapists penalized with little more than a slap on the wrist" (ibid., 96).

³⁹) Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 276, n. 135.

⁴⁰) Compare Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 142, 146.

⁴¹) *Fournier* 1, 226.

⁴²) It is interesting to note the particular concern of the inquisitors for indecent proposals (*solicitatio ad turpia*) taking place during confession. See Sarrion Mora, *Sexualidad y confesión*, 12 *et passim*; Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, 119; Fernández, "The Repression of Sexual Behavior," 484.

without having confessed. At Easter, the priest was often visiting her and urged her to let him know her carnally. And one day, while he was persuading her this way in her house, the deponent told him that she would rather let four other men know her than one priest because she had heard that no woman who was known carnally by a priest is ever going to see the God's face. The priest replied that she was being stupid and ignorant because the sin was the same no matter if a married woman was known carnally by her own husband or by any other man [...].⁴³

Beatrice yielded soon afterwards.⁴⁴

Beatrice's account of the contraception technique she used with Peter⁴⁵ is very interesting as far as sexual morals are concerned. Beatrice did not think of contraception as something sinful and, importantly, the exclusive emphasis on seeking pleasure, typical of the clerical discourse about contraception, is absent as well.⁴⁶ The motivation of the couple was different: "[S]he told the priest: 'And what shall I do if I become pregnant with you? I'll be ashamed and lost.'⁴⁷ Peter was afraid of shame as well: "[T]he priest told the deponent that he did not want to make her pregnant while Philip of Planissoles, the deponent's father, was still alive because it would make the father feel very ashamed. But after Philip's death, he would like to make her pregnant."⁴⁸ Once again, it is the fear of dishonor, not of sin, that determines their behavior.⁴⁹ References to God are also absent: sexual morals are represented above all as a social matter.

However, it would be one-sided to conclude that sin was of no concernment to Beatrice. In fact, the notion of sin and references to the sacred are

⁴³ *Fournier* 1, 223–224.

⁴⁴ *Fournier* 1, 226.

⁴⁵ *Fournier* 1, 244.

⁴⁶ For the problem of sexual pleasure and its regulation in the Middle Ages, see Jean Verdon, *Le plaisir au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Perrin, 1997); Jean Verdon, "Le plaisir sexuel," *Comportamenti e immaginario della sessualità nell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2006), 613–647. The most comprehensive account of the history of contraception in the West is still John T. Noonan, *Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1966). For the concept of 'avoiding of offspring' (*vitatio prolis*), especially in confessors' manuals, see Peter Biller, "Confessors' Manuals and the Avoiding of Offspring," in Peter Biller and Alastair J. Minnis (eds.), *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages* (York: York Medieval Press, 1998), 165–187.

⁴⁷ *Fournier* 1, 243–244.

⁴⁸ *Fournier* 1, 243–245.

⁴⁹ Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*, 544–546.

also present.⁵⁰ First of all, it was Beatrice's fear that "no woman who was known carnally by a priest is ever going to see the God's face" (quoted above). Second, it was her uneasiness about sexual intercourse on the vigil of the Nativity.⁵¹ Third, she was worried about Peter celebrating a mass without having confessed after they had had intercourse.⁵² Fourth, the reference to sin or breaking a kind of taboo is found in Beatrice's account of their intercourse in the church of Saint Peter in Prades: she followed the apprentice that Peter Clergue had sent for her; they entered the church of Prades and "there they met Peter Clergue who had prepared a bed in the church for them. She said to the priest: 'Oh, how could we do such a thing in the church of Saint Peter?' The priest replied: 'Oh, what kind of great harm will it cause to Saint Peter?!'⁵³ After these words, they went to bed and they slept together in that church and he knew her carnally that night."⁵⁴

Le Roy Ladurie misreads the event in terms of Peter's alleged perversion.⁵⁵ In fact, the choice of a church as a place for the intercourse has other reason than 'perversion,' and Beatrice states it explicitly: she then lived in a house next to that of the Prades' parish priest and it was possible to hear anything through the wall.⁵⁶

Beatrice's relationship with another priest, Bartholomew Amilhac, began in about 1315.⁵⁷ The proceedings of Beatrice's trial, however, give very few details.⁵⁸ More detailed is the deposition of Bartholomew himself.⁵⁹ He was a teacher of Beatrice's daughters, Philipa and Ava. One day, Beatrice invited him to visit her in the evening. When he came, "she told him that she had fallen in love with him and that she would like to have

⁵⁰) Compare Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 202.

⁵¹) *Fournier* 1, 226.

⁵²) *Fournier* 1, 226.

⁵³) Cited in Occitan in the Latin text.

⁵⁴) *Fournier* 1, 243.

⁵⁵) Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*, 235.

⁵⁶) *Fournier* 1, 243. Dyan Elliott, "Sex in Holy Places: An Exploration of a Medieval Anxiety," in Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 61–80 provides a stimulating account of sex in holy places as one of the crucial clerical anxieties since the turn of the 12th century.

⁵⁷) *Fournier* 1, 251–252.

⁵⁸) *Fournier* 1, 246–247.

⁵⁹) *Fournier* 1, 251–259.

carnal intercourse with him. He agreed and he knew her immediately in the hall of her house.”⁶⁰ Beatrice’s love for Bartholomew was so great that she thought she had been bewitched by him.⁶¹

Yet people started talking and Beatrice feared that her brothers would upbraid her. Therefore the couple decided to leave for Palhars in Seod’Urgel where priests lived publicly with their concubines. Both partners of such a couple had to promise to stay together till they die and the children could inherit possessions both in paternal and maternal ancestry, according to Bartholomew Amilhac. Even “wedding and all other things were taking place, except for the sacramental words used for marriage.” Bartholomew and Beatrice entered this sort of concubinage before a notary in the town of Lladros and continued to live together for one more year.⁶²

It is evident from this account that some of the pre-Gregorian structures were still persistent in Palhars at the beginning of the fourteenth century—for this was not a matter of secret priestly concubinage (very common not only in the Middle Ages but also after the Council of Trent⁶³) but an official cohabitation tolerated by the bishop of Urgel.⁶⁴ Interpreting this custom as a deviation from the customs and laws of the Gregorian Church is an evident genealogical manipulation. Rather than a ‘deviation’ it was a ‘relic’ of the older practice. However, it is easy to understand that the Gregorian clergy had good reasons to interpret customs like this as excesses and deviations. As Dyan Elliott puts it, “[i]n the eleventh century, the western clergy, Europe’s intellectual elite, reinvented itself—an imaginative act necessarily accompanied by efforts to eradicate evidence of past identity.”⁶⁵ The reform of clerical sexual morals was a process of inventing a new identity.⁶⁶ And it is necessary to say that it was very convincing: in

⁶⁰ *Fournier* 1, 252.

⁶¹ *Fournier* 1, 249.

⁶² *Fournier* 1, 252–253.

⁶³ Hancke, “Femmes et féminité,” 159; Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, 105, 118.

⁶⁴ *Fournier* 1, 252.

⁶⁵ Dyan Elliott, “The Priest’s Wife: Female Erasure and the Gregorian Reform,” in Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 81.

⁶⁶ For the definition of *ordo clericalis* by means of refusing sex, see Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Ordonner et exclure: Cluny et la société chrétienne face à l’hérésie, au judaïsme et à l’islam, 1000–1150* (Paris: Aubier, 2000; 2nd ed.). See also various essays in Michael Frassetto (ed.),

Bartholomew's deposition, unlike that of Beatrice, the concept of sin is constantly present.⁶⁷

The 'life story' of Beatrice of Lagleize, as represented in her depositions and those of Bartholomew Amilhac, does not show any particular concern for sin. She had a vague idea of sin but it was not influencing much her actual behavior. Instead, she was very concerned about honor. She cared about her reputation, she avowed only one case of infidelity to her husband, and she refused to have two lovers at the same time.⁶⁸ As Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie pointed out, Beatrice's sexual behavior followed a particular code of honor⁶⁹ and was not an aggregate of casual deviations from Gregorian or any other morals.⁷⁰

4. If You Met a Prostitute Here and Agreed with Her on a Price: Peter Vidal

The case of Peter Vidal does not involve any actual sexual transgression.⁷¹ The essence of the case is Peter's statement relating to sexual morals. His first deposition on 31 July 1322, reads that on his way from Tarascon to Ax, he met a priest and a cleric.

[T]he cleric asked the deponent: 'And do you believe that if you met a prostitute here, you agreed on a price with her and then you knew her carnally, you would commit a mortal sin?' The deponent replied that if he committed a mortal sin in this way, he would confess it to God and his priest or friar and he would do and accomplish the penance the priest or friar would impose on him. When the cleric continued to bother him with his question whether he believed that such an intercourse was a mortal sin, he finally answered that he did not believe it would be a mortal sin. And if it were, he would confess it to his priest and accomplish the imposed penance.⁷²

Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform (New York and London: Garland, 1998).

⁶⁷ Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 277, n. 152.

⁶⁸ *Fournier* 1, 239 (with Peter Clergue).

⁶⁹ Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*, 546. See also Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 200–202.

⁷⁰ Beatrice was sentenced to imprisonment on 8 March 1321 and released with double yellow crosses on 4 July 1322 (*Fournier* 1, 553), for other reasons, however, than her sexual morals or behavior.

⁷¹ *Fournier* 3, 296–304.

⁷² *Fournier* 3, 296.

Jacques Fournier remained unconvinced about some details in the deposition. He determined 4 September 1322 as the date of the next deposition and he summoned other witnesses, including both Vidal's casual fellow-travelers. He observed that Peter Vidal's confession was far from complete, and when Peter refused to confess of anything else on 4 September, he was imprisoned.⁷³ For the third time, he was only brought to the court on 29 May 1323. He decided to rectify his deposition:

After they went on a little, Gerald asked him: 'If you met a prostitute here, agreed on a price with her and you paid that price and knew her carnally, do you believe you would be sinning?' The deponent replied that such a deed would not be a mortal sin. Gerald told him: 'So this is not a mortal sin? You will see the bishop for this!' He replied that it did not matter to him, because many men better than himself had been questioned by the bishop.⁷⁴

Even a quick comparison of these two fragments makes it evident that the case of Peter Vidal is not very easy to grasp. All in all, the same event has been described in seven depositions (including two by Peter himself), with some differences in detail, which are, however, significant for the understanding of Peter's sexual morals. Namely, it is not obvious (1) whether the original question concerned any woman or a prostitute, (2) whether Peter denied that such an intercourse was a mortal sin or whether he even denied that it was sinful at all, and (3) whether Peter stated that such an intercourse was sinless only *under some conditions* (i.e., that the woman is paid and that she takes pleasure in the intercourse).

A detailed comparison of the seven depositions leads to a conclusion that the original question most likely mentioned the payment and that Peter's reply almost certainly conditioned the sinlessness by the payment and the pleasure. The question of sin versus mortal sin is more complicated. However, textual criticism, reflections on the respective motivations of the deponents, and the quantification of the notions of sin and mortal sin in the key passages allow to assume that Peter Vidal first did not consider such an intercourse sinful at all.

Peter's confessing strategy brought him nearly one year in prison; on 19 June 1323 he was sentenced to wear a yellow cross on his clothing (a common inquisitorial punishment) and subsequently released. He was freed

⁷³) Fournier 3, 297–300.

⁷⁴) Fournier 3, 303.

from this obligation on 12 August 1324.⁷⁵ Generally, it was a heavy punishment for an opinion all but uncommon.

By the end of the 13th century, prostitution started to be widely tolerated again in Languedoc and male infidelity was not punishable by the secular law.⁷⁶ A commentary to the Toulouse legal code from 1296 even explicitly stated that using a prostitute's services was no adultery.⁷⁷ These contextual remarks show that Peter did not row against the tide so much. His sexual morals seem to go even beyond the minimum requirements of the society he lived in: he stresses the payment to the prostitute, and pleasure from the intercourse.

There are two conclusions to be made from the case of Peter Vidal. First, it points in the same direction as the case of Beatrice of Lagleize: it is not at all evident that Peter's sexual morals were a deviation from some kind of normal sexual morals; in fact, his opinion is far from marginal. Second, the case manifests the clerical interest in controlling the sexual behavior and morals of the laity. Importantly, Jacques Fournier was only the last ring in the chain of control. Gerald *de Calvinhaco* interrogated Peter Vidal on Christian doctrine, he denounced him and had him arrested,⁷⁸ Durand *de Presbiteria* and three other witnesses reprovved Peter for what he had said.⁷⁹ A system of more stern control over the sexual morals and behavior of laics was being put in place.

5. Lesser Sin than with a Woman: Arnold of Verniolles

In June 1323, Jacques Fournier captured Arnold of Verniolles, about thirty-year-old subdeacon from the town of Pamiers.⁸⁰ Arnold's proceedings are presented as an inquiry in the matter of heresy, but the real focus

⁷⁵) *Fournier* 3, 467.

⁷⁶) Jean-Marie Carbasse, "La condition de la femme mariée en Languedoc (XIII^e–XIV^e siècles)," in *La femme dans la vie religieuse du Languedoc (XIII^e–XIV^e siècle)* (Toulouse: Privat, 1988), 107–109. For a detailed study on prostitution in medieval Languedoc, see Leah Lydia Otis, *Prostitution in Medieval Society: The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).

⁷⁷) John Hine Mundy, *Men and Women at Toulouse in the Age of the Cathars* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 68–69.

⁷⁸) *Fournier* 3, 298.

⁷⁹) *Fournier* 3, 299–302.

⁸⁰) *Fournier* 3, 39.

of Jacques Fournier was the ‘crime of sodomy.’⁸¹ One could label Arnold as ‘homosexual’ and ‘pedophile,’⁸² but a closer reading of the proceedings shows how such a straightforward classification would be distorting. However, I do not want to go into discussion of Arnold’s sexual identity;⁸³ this paper is focused on sexual morals and the principal query will be what moral view Arnold and his victims had of sexual intercourse between two men.

The trial was launched by a young student of grammar, John Ferrer, whose deposition from 9 June 1323 revealed that Arnold of Verniolles was having contact with a number of young students of grammar in Pamiers and offered them to hear their confession (although he was not a priest).⁸⁴ Four days later, the deposition of William Ross showed that the case is much more serious and involves the ‘crime of sodomy.’⁸⁵ Following William Ross, three other students witnessed in the case: William Bernard, William Boerii and William Pecs. Among them, only William Bernard avowed that he had had sexual intercourse with Arnold.⁸⁶ Arnold was imprisoned and interrogated only a couple of days after the first testimonies were brought up against him. Finally, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.⁸⁷

William Ross’s deposition is the richest. William stated that Arnold had invited him to his house under the pretext of showing him his books. There, Arnold opened a book of decretals and pretended to read there that if two men lay together and ejaculated, it was a lesser sin than an intercourse with a woman. Arnold also said that “he could not be without ejaculating in one way or another, with a woman or a man.”⁸⁸ The deposition continues:

Then Arnold pushed the deponent to the ground, he twisted his arms behind his back, he laid himself on the deponent and took off deponent’s clothes.

⁸¹ *Fournier* 3, 20, 21, 24. For the ambiguity of the term ‘sodomy’ in the Middle Ages, see Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing unto Others* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), 134–135. Compare also Rafael Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual en Valencia: Historia de los sodomitas 1565–1785* (Barcelona: Laertes, 1985), 32.

⁸² As does Hancke, *L’amour*, 63.

⁸³ The case is analyzed mainly from this point of view by Arnold; Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 214–225.

⁸⁴ *Fournier* 3, 14–16.

⁸⁵ *Fournier* 3, 16–22.

⁸⁶ *Fournier* 3, 22–30.

⁸⁷ *Fournier* 3, 467.

⁸⁸ *Fournier* 3, 17.

Then he told the deponent to take off his underpants otherwise something bad would happen to him. The deponent, as he said, took off his underpants and then Arnold took off all his clothes, he hugged the deponent naked, was kissing him, and placed his penis between the deponent's thighs. Moving as if having intercourse with a woman he ejaculated between the deponent's thighs. After that, he told the deponent to do the same thing to him, asserting that he, Arnold, would not leave the room before he does so. The deponent then ejaculated between Arnold's thighs in the same way. It was Arnold, however, who was moving.⁸⁹

Afterwards, Arnold insisted that they both swore on the deponent's calendar containing the gospels not to do such a thing any more. "And when the deponent said that they had committed a great sin and heresy, Arnold assured him that he would take him to a Franciscan friar who would absolve him from this sin and impose on him a light penance."⁹⁰ Despite the oath, Arnold invited William Ross at least three more times and had intercourse with him. In the second and the third case, William described the intercourse in terms of violation again; in the fourth, he did not.⁹¹

Arnold's casual violence is probable. However, William Ross's clear violation stories are countered not only by Arnold's own deposition (which is potentially unreliable: he had a reason to minimize his guilt) but also by some other indications, such as: William's willingness to meet Arnold again in his house; lack of references to violence in the fourth account;⁹² the fact that during the trial William had "remembered more fully" that besides what he had said, Arnold "had committed the crime of sodomy with him even more times, on different days and at different places, and [...] that once, he had also, induced by Arnold [...], committed this crime with him" (i.e., as active partner);⁹³ and William's remark that Arnold promised to lend him books and give him a knife in return for the intercourse.⁹⁴ Arnold's fellow prisoner, Carmelite monk Peter Recort, reported in his deposition conversations with Arnold in which his meetings with boys appeared rather like parties including wine drinking, eating and relaxed games leading to the intercourse, sometimes between two of the

⁸⁹⁾ *Fournier* 3, 18.

⁹⁰⁾ *Fournier* 3, 18.

⁹¹⁾ *Fournier* 3, 19, 21.

⁹²⁾ *Fournier* 3, 21.

⁹³⁾ *Fournier* 3, 20.

⁹⁴⁾ *Fournier* 3, 20.

boys, without Arnold's involvement⁹⁵—a description very dissimilar to William's straightforward violation accounts.

It is obvious from the above quotations how strongly the concept of sin was present in the thought of Arnold of Verniolles and William Ross. Arnold's deposition underlines this anxiety as well, but proposes a scale of sinfulness different from the one required by the bishop:

Asked whether he had ever told William or somebody else that the sin of sodomy was a lesser sin than to know women carnally, he replied that he told William Ross [...] that he believed the sin of sodomy and that of simple fornication to be equal sins. And he really believed in his heart, he said, that the sin of sodomy and that of simple fornication were equal in terms of guilt, and that rape, deflowering of virgins, adultery or incest were greater and more serious sins than the sin of sodomy. [...] He had always believed, however, that the sin of sodomy and that of simple fornication were mortal sins.⁹⁶

Peter Recort reported Arnold to have spoken to him about sodomy in very similar terms. Peter also cited Arnold's statement according to which only anal intercourse was sodomy. Peter declared that when he asked Arnold why he had abused these boys while he could have plenty of women, Arnold told him that at the time when lepers had been being burnt in Toulouse, he had fallen ill after an intercourse with a prostitute, and he feared that it was leprosy; so he swore not to lie with a woman any more.⁹⁷

Arnold of Verniolles's 'sodomitic' behavior was not an unrestrained satisfying of desires. On the contrary, it was guided by a coherent moral system. Like Jacques Fournier, Arnold considered sodomy a mortal sin—one sin on a whole scale of sex sins.⁹⁸ The difference was in the position of sodomy. For the bishop, sodomy was the most serious among the sins of lechery except *bestialitas* (sexual intercourse with an animal).⁹⁹ For Arnold of Verniolles, sexual intercourse of two men was an equally serious sin as

⁹⁵ *Fournier* 3, 31.

⁹⁶ *Fournier* 3, 42.

⁹⁷ *Fournier* 3, 31.

⁹⁸ Such scales of sinfulness seem to be quite fundamental in the clerical discourses on sexual morals. Compare Vern L. Bullough, "The Sin against Nature and Homosexuality," in Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (eds.), *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1994; 2nd ed.), 60–61, 65.

⁹⁹ *Fournier* 3, 43.

simple fornication—a mortal sin, but not an absolute, incomparable and unmentionable one. It was a normal sin which could be handled.

This basic concept of sinfulness was supplemented by other moral regulations of behavior. First, Arnold never avowed anal intercourse—the only real ‘sodomy’ in his view, if reported correctly by Peter Recort.¹⁰⁰ Second, he refused strongly that he was ever forcing the boys. Third, he insisted that he had not said sodomy to be a sin equal to simple fornication in order to convince the boys to have a sexual intercourse with him but because he really believed it.¹⁰¹ Once again, the model of norm and deviation is, in itself, insufficient to describe Arnold’s behavior appropriately. His acts were not casual deviations; they were bound to some sort of alternative moral system.

6. Both She and the Priest Liked It: Grazida Lizier

Grazida Lizier first appeared before Jacques Fournier on 19 August 1320. She was 21 or 22 years old.¹⁰² Her deposition refers to sexual morals extensively. Her first partner was again the parish priest of Montailou, Peter Clergue; she was then 14 or 15 years old. She underscored that Peter did her no violence at all and that the intercourse took place with the permission of her mother. After some time, the priest made her marry to Peter Lizier.

In the course of next four years, while her husband was still alive, the priest used to know her carnally often, with her husband’s awareness and approval. [...] Asked whether she knew at the time or learned later that the priest was [...] her mother’s step-uncle, she replied that she had not known nor heard that [...]. Asked whether she would allow the priest to know her carnally if she knew that her mother was related to him, although she was a bastard, she replied that she would not. She also said that both she and the priest liked their intercourse, wherefore she did not believe to be sinning with him. Asked by the bishop whether she believed to be sinning when she was being known carnally by the priest before she had a husband or during her marriage, she answered that both she and the priest then liked to know each other, hence

¹⁰⁰ Arnold also refused masturbation; the reason, moral or not, is not specified in the deposition; *Fournier* 3, 43.

¹⁰¹ *Fournier* 3, 42–43.

¹⁰² *Fournier* 1, 302.

she had not believed and it did not even seem to her at the time she was questioned that it was a sin. Yet now she would believe to be sinning if she let him know her carnally because now she would not like to be known by that priest. Being asked whether she believed, or had believed, that when she had been married and had lived in a shameful relationship with the priest, it had been equally allowed and sinless to join carnally with her husband as with the priest, she answered that it seemed to her to be more allowed to join carnally with her husband. Yet it seemed to her—and she even believed it—that the sin was equally little either with the priest, or with her husband, when they knew her carnally. Asked whether she had had remorse while she had been having an intercourse with the priest or whether she believed that God could dislike such an intercourse, she answered that she had not had a guilty conscience nor did she believe that something (*alicui rei*) could dislike her intercourse with the priest, because both she and the priest liked it. Asked whether she would have believed to be sinning by her intercourse with the priest if her husband had forbidden her such an intercourse, she answered that if her husband had forbidden her that—which he did not, however—she still would not have believed to be sinning while having carnal intercourse with the priest, because both she and the priest liked it. Asked whether she believed that if a man joined carnally with a woman who was not his relative, be she a virgin or not, be she married or not, and they both liked the intercourse, they would be sinning, she answered that God disliked any carnal intercourse between man and woman but that she did not believe that they would be sinning, provided they both liked the intercourse.¹⁰³

In the following, Grazida expressed her doubts about the resurrection of the body and about the existence of hell, because hell was a bad thing, and God would not create any bad thing. Similarly, she affirmed that God did not create wolf and other noxious animals.¹⁰⁴ She also repeatedly persisted in her belief that if both man and woman liked their intercourse this intercourse would be sinless.¹⁰⁵ After seven weeks of imprisonment, she avowed that it had been Peter Clergue who had told her this and she renounced any heresy.¹⁰⁶ She was sentenced to imprisonment on 8 March 1321 and released with a yellow cross on 4 July 1322.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³) *Fournier* 1, 302–303.

¹⁰⁴) *Fournier* 1, 303–304. Compare *Fournier* 1, 357–358, 361, 378 and *Fournier* 2, 36, 113–114.

¹⁰⁵) *Fournier* 1, 303–304.

¹⁰⁶) *Fournier* 1, 304–306.

¹⁰⁷) *Fournier* 1, 553.

There is more than one interesting detail in the deposition. First of all, it is Grazida's 'stubbornness': even when confronted with a manifest disapproval of the bishop, Grazida repeated several times that she believed the mutually pleasing intercourse to be sinless. This 'stubbornness' itself is sufficient to make us very careful not to follow Jacques Fournier in his eagerness to ascribe this belief to Peter Clergue. It is very likely that Peter did think it up, but what precisely does his 'authorship' imply for Grazida's thought? Very little, I am afraid. The statement about Clergue's 'authorship' cannot conceal that this belief was somewhat *important* to Grazida.¹⁰⁸ In fact, her thought is very coherent. A good God could not create wolfs and flies. He could not create hell as hell is a bad thing. And how could he dislike much a mutually pleasing intercourse? The concept of pleasure prevails over the concept of sin, which is even expressed explicitly: perhaps God dislikes such an intercourse a little bit but it is not a sin. Even God is integrated within this hedonistic system based on the idea of 'liking.'

The idea of sin was completely absent in Grazida's thought. Even the very idea of allowed and forbidden is nuanced in the deposition. This idea appeared first in Jacques Fournier's question, and it is absolutely clear why: as his previous questions about sin did not yield even a hint of guilt, he abandoned for a while the concept of sin and introduced the ideas of allowed and forbidden, of remorse, and of God's 'disliking' in order to examine whether Grazida was really completely 'amoral.' And although Grazida finally accepted the idea of God's 'disliking,' compatible with her own system of morals, she still continued to believe that such an intercourse was not a sin. Unwillingly, she ended in accepting Fournier's idea of allowed and forbidden, but still she expanded this idea—or undermined it, in fact?—by introducing a range: she thought marital intercourse to be *more allowed* ("*magis ... licitum*"), which did not mean to her that extramarital intercourse was forbidden or even sinful. In the case of Grazida, we discover again an independent and coherent moral system, rather than casual aberrations from a predefined norm.

7. Conclusion

The cases of Beatrice of Lagleize, Peter Vidal, Arnold of Verniolles, and Grazida Lizier show that in fourteenth-century Languedoc there were

¹⁰⁸⁾ Much more indeed than for Peter Vidal, in whose trial records it appears as well.

various ways of thinking and speaking about sexuality and morality, more or less different from the official sexual morals (defined here as morals backed by moralizing writing and preaching of the Church hierarchy and required by canon and/or secular law). Except the cleric Arnold of Verniolles, the common feature encountered in the depositions is that sexual morals of the deponents were not based primarily on the idea of sin, but on different ideas: the idea of shame, the idea of pleasure, or the idea of fair trade. In this sense, these sexual morals are very different from the morals required by the law and/or by the Church propaganda. But difference does not necessarily mean aberration, and the norm-deviation model is not necessarily the one to adopt while reading the inquisitional registers. Certainly, the norm-deviation model did, and still can, produce valuable insights. However, the argument of this paper is that sexual morals of the four people judged by the inquisition are better understood under a different light. In all the four cases, sexual morals make part of a broader worldview. When one tries to account for these moral systems, this broader worldview seems a more interesting and more productive framework than the framework of the official sexual morals.

The norm-deviation model, widely used in the study of inquisitional registers, tends to overestimate the peculiarity of the cases. For example, to understand particular heresy only as a set of differences or deviations from a preconceived orthodoxy means to miss the unspecific, yet very important ideas and behavior that was common both to heretics and inquisitors, but the inquisitors and polemicists were simply not interested in it. In the same way, to study ‘alternative’ sexual morals only with reference to a rival system (that of the official morals) means to follow the inquisitors in overstating the specificity and the absolute difference of the ‘alternatives.’

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