

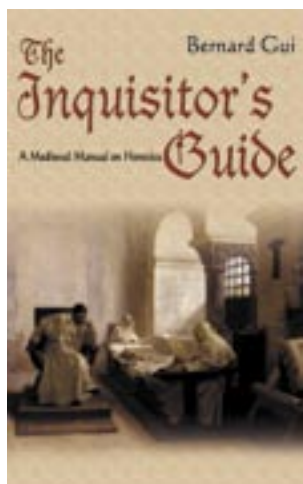
THE INQUISITOR'S GUIDE

A MEDIEVAL MANUAL ON HERETICS

by Bernard Gui

Translated and Edited by Janet Shirley

- ◆ How to outwit heretics and pass judgement upon them
- ◆ An insider's view of the infamous inquisition in the early 1300s, when it was active in the suppression of heretics (from Cathars to Knights Templar), Jews and converted Jews, secret sects, cults, schismatics and sorcerers
- ◆ Written in the 1320s, it will appeal to all those who enjoyed *The Yellow Cross* and *Montaillou*



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The fourteenth century would see Europe wracked by upheaval, war, rebellion, famine and plague. To many it seemed as though society itself was breaking apart, a true age of apocalypse.

No institution was above the tumult. The Church, which had survived critics and outlived sects, found itself under virulent attack from heretics. It countered with the inquisition, Europe's first police state and one of the most effective and brutal organisations ever created.

Bernard Gui sat at the head of this notorious institution as it began its counter attack and, from 1307, he oversaw the final eradication of the Cathars of Languedoc and turned on other secret societies and sects scattered across Europe. Soon Gui and his colleagues were rounding up Cathars, Beguins, Waldensians, relapsed Jews, Knights Templar, sorcerers and 'those who invoke demons'. For two decades he worked hard to bring such 'twisting snakes out of the sink and abyss of error'.

His experiences enabled him to pen this fascinating guide, a practical manual on methods 'To be Used in the Examination and Interrogation of Heretics, Believers and their Supporters'. A robust and readable text, Gui's guide presents stark portraits of the various sects, warns the inquisitor against the duplicity of heretics, and shows how they can best be recognised and dealt with.

Gui's intolerant text is a compelling insight into this tumultuous period, an insider's view of the infamous inquisition and a brilliant window into the medieval mind.

Bernard Gui (1260-1331) was a theologian, diplomat, career churchman and prolific writer. He features as a sinister character in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*.

Janet Shirley is a translator specialising in medieval French texts. Her other works include *Parisian Journal*, *The Song of Roland* and numerous works connected with the Crusades.



"It must be noted that just as all diseases are not treated by one single medicament but that each disease has its own remedy, so one cannot use the same methods of interrogation, enquiry and examination with heretics of differing sects, but must employ distinct and appropriate techniques with one or with many."

"But it must be noted that heretics sometimes pretend to be fools or insane and when professing their errors they mix them with irrelevant and nonsensical expressions, almost demented, hoping to conceal their lies in this way and seeming to say everything as a joke. I have often seen them doing this. Using these deceitful replies they try either to protect themselves and escape as innocent harmless persons, or to exhaust the inquisitors and make them give up the pursuit, or else to discredit the inquisitor among lay persons by making him look like a man who harasses ordinary folk unreasonably."

"They also say that prelates and religious who wear unnecessary and expensive clothes are acting contrary to gospel perfection and to the command of Christ. They are obeying the command of Antichrist, and they and clerics who strut about in rich clothing belong to the household of Antichrist."

