

## Pope IV

### Compromise on the Talmud

An earlier pope, Gregory IX (1227-1241), had issued letters on 9 June 1239, ordering all the bishops of France to confiscate all Talmuds in the possession of the Jews. Agents were to raid each synagogue on the first Saturday of Lent of 1240, and seize the books, placing them in the custody of the Dominicans or the Franciscans.[15] The Bishop of Paris was ordered to see to it that copies of the Pope's mandate reached all the bishops of France, England, Aragon, Navarre, Castile and León, and Portugal.[16] On 20 June 1239, there was another letter, addressed to the Bishop of Paris, the Prior of the Dominicans and the Minister of the Franciscans, calling for the burning of all copies of the Talmud, and any obstructionists to be visited with ecclesiastical censures. On the same day he wrote to the King of Portugal ordering him to see to it that all copies of the Talmud be seized and turned over to the Dominicans or Franciscans.[17] Louis IX, King of France, on account of these letters held a trial in Paris in 1240, which ultimately found the Talmud guilty of 35 alleged charges. 24 cartloads of the Talmud were burned.[18]

Initially, Innocent IV continued Gregory IX's policy. In a letter of 9 May 1244, he wrote to King Louis IX, ordering the Talmud and any books with Talmudic glosses to be examined by the Regent Doctors of the University of Paris, and if condemned by them, to be burned.[19] However, an argument was presented that this policy was a negation of the Church's traditional stance of tolerance toward Judaism. On 5 July 1247, Pope Innocent wrote to the bishops of Germany and the Bishops of Gallia (France) that, because both ecclesiastical and lay persons were lawlessly plundering the property of the Jews, and falsely stating that at Eastertime they sacrificed and ate the heart of a little child, the bishops should see to it that the Jews not be attacked or molested because of these or other reasons.[20] In the year 1247, in a letter of 2 August to King Louis of France,[21] he reversed his stance on the Talmud, and wrote letters to the effect that the Talmud should be censored rather than burned. Innocent IV's words were met with the disapproval of Odo of Châteauroux,[22] Cardinal Bishop of Tusculum and former Chancellor of the University of Paris. Nonetheless, Pope Innocent IV's policy was continued by subsequent popes.[23]

### Ad extirpanda

Ad extirpanda (named for its Latin incipit) was a papal bull promulgated on Wednesday, May 15, 1252 by Pope Innocent IV which authorized in limited and defined circumstances the use of torture by the Inquisition for eliciting confessions from heretics.[1]

The bull was issued in the wake of the murder of the papal inquisitor of Lombardy, [St. Peter of Verona](#), who was killed by a conspiracy of [Cathar](#) sympathizers on 6 April 1252. The bull argued that as heretics are "murderers of souls as well as robbers of God's [sacraments](#) and of the Christian faith ...", they are "to be coerced—as are thieves and bandits—into confessing their errors and accusing others, although one must stop short of danger to life or limb." [2] The following parameters were placed on the use of torture:[3]

- that it did not cause loss of life or limb (*citra membri diminutionem et mortis periculum*)

- that it was used only once
- that the Inquisitor deemed the evidence against the accused to be virtually certain.

The bull conceded to the State a portion of the property to be confiscated from convicted heretics.<sup>[4]</sup> The State in return assumed the burden of carrying out the penalty. The relevant portion of the bull read: "When those adjudged guilty of heresy have been given up to the civil power by the bishop or his representative, or the Inquisition, the [podestà](#) or chief magistrate of the city shall take them at once, and shall, within five days at the most, execute the laws made against them."<sup>[5]</sup>

### Later life

The remainder of Innocent's life was largely directed to schemes for compassing the overthrow of Manfred of Sicily, the natural son of Frederick II, whom the towns and the nobility had for the most part received as his father's successor. Innocent aimed to incorporate the whole Kingdom of Sicily into the Papal States, but he lacked the necessary economic and political power. Therefore, after a failed agreement with Charles of Anjou, he invested Edmund, the nine-year-old son of King Henry III of England, with that kingdom on 14 May 1254.

In the same year, Innocent excommunicated Frederick II's other son, Conrad IV, King of Germany, but the latter died a few days after the investiture of Edmund. At the beginning of June, 1254, Innocent moved to Anagni,<sup>[34]</sup> where he awaited Manfred's reaction to the event, especially considering that Conrad's heir, Conradin, had been entrusted to Papal tutelage by King Conrad's testament. Manfred submitted, although probably only to gain time and counter the menace from Edmund, and accepted the title of Papal vicar for southern Italy. Innocent could therefore enjoy a moment in which he was the acknowledged sovereign, in theory at least, of most of the peninsula. Innocent overplayed his hand, however, by accepting the fealty of Amalfi directly to the Papacy instead of to the Kingdom of Sicily on 23 October. Manfred immediately, on October 26, fled from Teano, where he had established his headquarters, and headed to Lucera to his Saracen troops.<sup>[35]</sup>

Manfred had not lost his nerve,<sup>[36]</sup> and organized resistance to papal aggression. Supported by his faithful Saracen troops, he began using military force to make rebellious barons and towns submit to his authority as Regent for his nephew. Realizing that Manfred had no intention of submitting to the Papacy or to anyone else, Innocent and his papal army headed south from his summer residence at Anagni on October 8, intending to confront Manfred's forces. On 27 October 1254 the Pope entered the city of Naples. It was on a sick bed at Naples that Innocent IV heard of Manfred's victory at Foggia on December 2 against the Papal forces, led by the new Papal Legate, Cardinal Guglielmo Fiesch, the Pope's nephew.<sup>[37]</sup> The tidings are said to have precipitated Pope Innocent's death on 7 December 1254 in Naples. From triumph to disaster had taken only a few months.