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SIFTING THROUGH THE
PAST–INQUISITIONAL
CONFESSION IN BOLOGNA
AND GAME THEORY

In 1304 in Bologna, an inquisition was in full swing. In previous years, the Bolognese inquisition into heretical depravity had focused on rooting out Cathar heresy, achieving mixed results. But by 1304, the focus was squarely on crushing any support of the heretical Apostolic Order, an order of mendicants that had been begun by Gerardo Segarelli in Parma in 1260 without official church approval but plenty of popular support in the Emilia Romagna, and had since been declared heretical for that it did not disperse when ordered to do so.

This inquisition would result in approximately 900 depositions, from which we can draw a lot of information about the lives of these accused heretics. They can tell us that lay persons organized their own gatherings for the purposes of hearing preachers, that whole families were united in their adherence to the doctrine, and that either beliefs were fuzzy in the minds of believers or that they were simply better at protecting them than protecting their associations. But the mechanism that caused these revelations, the inquisitorial process, and how it was realized here in Bologna is just as important as the information revealed because, as John Arnold determined, the mechanism to a large extent determines how and why information will be revealed.¹ Due to the near-equal importance of the process and the revelations of the individuals, the meeting of this process

¹ John Arnold, *Inquisition and Power, Catharism and the Confessing Subject in Medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 55.

and the confessing subjects creates its own textual reality, the same kind of reality that by Pegg's analysis 'created' the Cathars.²

Part and parcel of the reality of inquisition is the peculiar place in which it exists. Inquisitions (and the Bolognese inquisition is no exception) exist in an interstitial space between sacred and secular, between the temporal and the ephemeral, due to the fact that heresy is both a religious crime equal to treason against God and a secular crime through inclusion of it in the statutes of both communes and empire at the behest of the church. This meant that while the inquisitorial confession could result in fines or even the confessing subject's death at the hands of the secular arm, it was still a religious act meant to unburden the soul, and could and would result in penance-like penalties that brought the confessed back into the flock. Yet this melioration is almost a religious fiction, because the penalty stakes were so high that it took a legal proceeding to extract these confessions, and staff to capture the contumacious. So in effect the nature of the inquisitorial confession is that it is a forced confession that existed halfway between a case formed through a judicial proceeding and a religious act, an utterance that will live on parchment or paper as a record while other confessions slip the bonds of memory or importance, and one to which the confessed can be held accountable in the future as though it were a secular crime.

It is due to this reality of inquisitorial confessions that their contents should not be looked at so much as faithful renderings of heretical behavior, but as the product of strategic thinking on the part of both the deposed and the inquisitor. While the inquisitor can strategically use the tools of punishment and knowledge gained from other confessions, the subject of deposition is also confessing strategically, and this is influenced by the quality of ties to the network of heretics and socio-economic status.

There have been several attempts to understand the strategies of inquisitorial confessing subjects, but one that had previously not been utilized may be the most helpful with regards to the Bolognese inquisition, and that is game theory. Game theory comes to us from economics, and it is simply the idea that in all economic opportunities one person must lose while another wins, and that all strategy is based on optimizing success, but it has been further developed in the context of sociology with the Prisoner's Dilemma. This article explores the concept of game theory and how it applies to the inquisitions, and follows that with an analysis of the confession strategies of two cells within the supporters of the Apostolic order in Bologna—the Sant'Elena and Piumazzo groups, so named for their regions as defined by inquisitors.

² Mark Pegg, *The Corruption of the Angels: The Great Inquisition of 1245-1246* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 19.

I: Game Theory and the Bolognese Inquisition

Inquisitorial records provide an excellent field research resource for analyzing and understanding this group that left none of its own self-referential works. Records give us dates, names, events, and even beliefs. The process of inquisitions and the confessing populations have been a subject of study for several historians of the mid and late thirteenth century and early fourteenth century French inquisitions, but their findings tend to be ill-suited for the purposes of understanding or analyzing Italian inquisitions. James Given analyzed the relationship in terms of structures of resistance such as towns, lordship, and kin, determining that the town was the most effective structure of resistance.³ But in Bologna, a similar analysis would not work because of two aspects: one, that the inquisitors working in Bologna did not at any point cite large populations of any given region of the contado but rather specific individuals who were involved which prevented large scale community ire, and two, that the inquisitors tended to follow chains of events which would nullify virtually any other form of resistance except that of membership.

John Arnold asserted the growth of importance in the confessing subject from the early Languedoc inquisitions to that of Jacques Fournier, and that related to this was that the act of confession was one of social control designed to internalize within the confessing subject the means of seeing oneself through the Church's notions, but that the inquisitor was a necessary fixture in the process to legitimate it, and ensure veracity.⁴ This seems a reasonable enough conclusion, but not particularly applicable to the Bolognese situation as the confessions sought by these inquisitors were not focused on belief, or internalizing any church mores. Rather, they had a bit more in common with the 1250s inquisitions in that they sought names, locations, and events; presence at the event made one a heretic, and once that had been asserted, all that mattered was that the heretic was caught, questioned, and punished. It is also possible, however, that the inquisitors already knew what beliefs these Bolognese followers of the Apostolic Order held, or that they sensed that there was little chance that the beliefs of these Order members would change through inquisition. Arnold's theories do not broach the activities of the confessing subjects in concert with one another, or even their choices in confession of what to reveal and what not to reveal.

But if these other means of seeing the confessing subjects and the inquisitions and the methodologies they entail do not suffice for analysis of

³ James Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society, Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 128.

⁴ John Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 93.

the Apostolic Order in Bologna, then a new method needs be employed. Here game theory is proposed as a means of analyzing and to some extent, predicting, how the supporters of the Apostles would react as subjects of the inquisition. Modern game theory, according to sociologist Duncan Watts, was the brain child of John von Neumann, a theorist who attempted to explain in his book *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* that in all economic opportunities one person must lose while the other wins, and that all strategy is based on optimizing this success.⁵

Moving into the field of psychology, this basic premise was even further defined, this time with Prisoner's dilemma as the basis of the game. The premise of the game is thus: two criminals are accused of the same crime and have been arrested, but are held separately. Each is interrogated, and neither will know what the other said. In the interrogation, each criminal is promised that if he implicates his partner, he will receive a lesser punishment and the partner will bear much of the weight of the crime. At this point, the criminal has options: he can cooperate with his partner and not the police, or he can blame the other guy. The outcomes here are the following—if both cooperate with one another and not the police, they will probably receive a punishment for some other minor thing, because the actual crime cannot be proven; if one keeps quiet while the other talks, the individual who has kept his peace will bear the weight of the crime in its entirety, and if both talk, each will be punished for the crime, but it will be a lesser punishment than if one had been silent and the other not. The crux of the dilemma is not actually the punishment; it is whether one man can trust the other. If both believe yes, then they can beat the rap, or almost. If not, then each man's best strategy is to implicate the other, thereby reducing his chances of bearing the full punishment.

But this game is contingent on just one "turn", one opportunity to formulate a strategy. When the game is expanded but the premise remains the same and the number of turns is unknown—though according to expert on the Prisoner's dilemma and author of *The Evolution of Cooperation* Robert Axelrod, the number of turns must remain unknown for the resolution to occur in any other way than the original game—then a new strategy becomes possible, tit-for-tat, in which players modulate their responses on a cooperative-retaliatory-forgiving-transparent cycle.⁶ When the game is played across the network, the total number of players per game, two, remains the same, but now players can optimize their actions

⁵ Duncan Watts, *Small Worlds: The Dynamics of Networks Between Order and Randomness*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, 200.

⁶ Watts, *Small Worlds*, 203.

based on what they see elsewhere, such as copying the strategy of the nearby most successful player (win-stay/lose-shift).

The prisoner's dilemma has much in common with an inquisitorial confession—the confessing subjects do not see others in confession, they may or may not have time to consider a strategy before the capture, and options like cooperation and implication of the other both remain. But the context of an inquisition is also unique and is played out in “real time” rather than on a computer simulation, thus, an analysis of the game of the inquisition is instructive in furthering a new extension of game theory—the multiplayer game played across a network in which everyone has a move, the move is not necessarily at the same time, but each player can “engage” every other player in a single move through naming them or refusing to name them. To fully explain this, let us return to the two social groups of the network analysis, the Sant'Elena group and the Piumazzo group.

II: Confession Strategies of the Damned

On August 17th, 1304, GuglielmoBlanchi, DamianoBlanchi, and ViveldaBlanchiof the region of Sant'Elenawere hailed before the inquisition and all admitted obliquely that they knew at least two heretics, but did not suggest any further involvement.⁷ The next day, Salvatore, another individual in the group, admitted he knew Zaccaria, who was already dead. On the same day, Maria, Damiano's wife, claimed she knew nothing of heresy.⁸ Yet by the 27th, Guglielmo, Damiano and Vivelda had revealed themselves and each other, as well the rest of their circle and their chief preacher, Rolandino. The change over this seemingly short period of time between first and third testimonies is instructive on the nature of cooperation, the complexities of a multiplayer game across a network, and the reasons why former theories on heretical networks need be reevaluated.

The first most obvious facet of the interaction between subjects and between subjects and inquisition is cooperation in the game theory sense. Family was clearly the primary tie in cooperation in the Sant'Elena circles, and it became the means of resistance, but socio-economic status plays a role as well. Sociologists Phillipson, Allan and Morgan note that in low-trust environments—and this clearly applies to the heretical communities around Bologna between 1290 and 1307—family ties play a strong role, as families are enduring and the connections are more than just fostered social

⁷Acts 633, 634, and 635, Lorenzo Paolini and Raniero Orioli, *Acta S. Officii Bononie—ab anon 1291 usque ad annum 1310* (Rome: Institute Palazzo Borromini, 1982).

⁸Acts 636 and 638.

ones but rather are biological.⁹ Evidence from other inquisitions supports this idea that family ties were the primary focus of resistance to inquisitors. Given found that heretical sects tended to organize resistance to the inquisition through pre-existing ties, one of which was the family.¹⁰ Families would cooperate to agree to say as little as possible, this cooperation tended to be covert and defensive.¹¹ Here in Bologna family resistance meets sect-based resistance on a rather surprising scale. All of the extended family of Guglielmo and Damiano were clearly aware of the plan not to say anything about the family's involvement in heresy. Guglielmo and Damiano had three other brothers—Gerardo, Guido, and Giovanni—all of which were hailed before the inquisition between August 19th and August 24th, and none named his brothers as receivers. In fact, all of the known descendants of Benvenuto and several wives testified in August, and not one revealed a family member in their first testimonies. They named only Giovanni and Bona Osti, who were by public fame known to be receivers.¹² It is possible that these two had taken flight, because Damiano is asked about the whereabouts of their household goods presumably such that the inquisition could seize them, and he is unable to answer.¹³

Phillipson et al also note that kinship networks play a more prominent role in situations in which people have limited opportunities. Wealthier people do not rely on family ties to the extent that poorer ones do.¹⁴ Sant'Elena is poorer, more rural. In tax records from the times, the assessed value of the 89 hearths in 1286 was 3331 lira, while in 1291; those hearths were worth 3237 lira.¹⁵ Compare this to the 73 hearths of Piumazzo, which had a combined value of 37, 746 lira in 1291.¹⁶ Sant'Elena had also faced enough warfare in the past two centuries that the Benedictines had abandoned the church there and pastoral care of the region.

The Blanchis did not, however, simply say nothing, and their choices on who to reveal are just as much a part of their strategy as those they did

⁹Chris Phillipson, Graham Allan and David Morgan, ed., *Social Networks and Social Exclusion: Sociological and Policy Perspective* (Aldershot: Ashgate publishing limited, 2004), 11.

¹⁰Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 117.

¹¹Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 122.

¹² Giovanni B, Gerardo and Guido all identify Giovanni and Bona as receivers, as does Benvenuti, Giovanni's son, but Francesco, Giovanni's son, said he knew nothing.

¹³Act 643.

¹⁴Phillipson, *Social Networks and Social Exclusion*, 11.

¹⁵ Luigi Casini, *Il Contado Bolognese Durante il Periodo Comunale (Secoli XII-XV)*, (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1991), 48.

¹⁶ Luigi Casini, *Il Contado Bolognese Durante il Periodo Comunale*, 34-35.

not. The family knew they had been somehow implicated in the heresy and that simply naming a pair of fugitives who were known by public infamy to be receivers would not satisfy the inquisitors. Thus, the Sant'Elena cell acted in complete cooperation to receive the lesser punishment of knowing the heretics but not implicating themselves or one another in direct involvement. Guglielmo, Damiano, and Vivelda all admitted to knowing a host of heretics such as Bernardino, Benedetto, Pacifico (Paxolinus) and Ugo of Clochis. These persons had most likely fled, as they do not appear in person before the inquisition in Bologna so they were a safe admission as they would not bear any punishment as outcome from this inquisition, nor would they ever find out about the confessions. Additionally both Damiano and Vivelda admitted to knowing Zaccaria in their first testimonies;¹⁷ this is clearly planned as they lived in the same house, and inquisitors would have assumed they would have met the same person. But this is also a safe choice, as Zaccaria was already dead by 1304.

No one reveals any knowledge of Rolandino until the 24th, when three persons outside the family circle had identified the receivers within the family. Even then, when Guglielmo, Damiano, and Vivelda all admitted to their involvement as receivers of Rolandino, each takes care to say nothing of any other non-revealed family member's involvement, though they were most likely aware of their nephews', brothers', or cousins' doings. This may well be cooperation at its most simple and yet powerful levels. Simple in that the cooperative agreements were such that no one would reveal anyone else within the family, and yet this is cooperation at its highest level in that despite the fact that Guglielmo and his wife, Damiano and his wife, and Vivelda were all forced to confess themselves, they all maintained silence on the rest of the family.

What collapsed the success of the cooperation were four persons whose testimonies were clearly not anticipated by the family. The inquisitors were clearly very careful here—they amassed four testimonies (three of which were given by people who were not heretics) as to the involvement of two receivers in the circle, and then most likely presented them with that information, of course without the names to prevent retribution. On the 15th of August, Martino Menaboi, “massariusterre, communis et hominum Sancte Helene” (a member of communal government, most likely treasurer) testified against everyone in the circle, and also shared with the inquisitor Guido of Parma the rumor that Vivelda had spent the night in her father's barn with two heretics.¹⁸ Three days later, Brother Bartolomeo of the Order of the Servants of Saint Mary

¹⁷Acts 633 and 635.

¹⁸Act 699.

testified against Guglielmo and his wife, revealing that they were knowing receivers of Rolandino.¹⁹ The following day, another brother of the Order of the Servants of Saint Mary, Formentinus, repeated the charge against Guglielmo and spouse, but added Damiano and his wife, Salvatore Petricoli, and a host of others.²⁰ Finally on the 22nd, Iacopo Petricini, a traveling companion of Rolandino and perhaps a preacher in training, spontaneously came before the inquisition and revealed everyone he knew.²¹

There are certainly things to note about these four persons. The treasurer was neither remembered as being present by any of the circle, nor was he truly implicated. The companion of Rolandino may have been coming forward as the prisoner in the prisoner's dilemma who implicates his partner for a lesser punishment, or perhaps the fear of being caught simply drove him to reveal himself. The two friars were probably confessors to the local people; the OSM had been given rights to hear confession first in June of 1256 by Alexander IV and then again in 1260.²² Very few orders were given the right to hear confession against the will of the local priest, but by this point the Servites had been given the church of Sant'Elena, and as there was no parish priest, this made them the orthodox representatives in that parish. Their involvement in the inquisition has been discussed earlier in chapter 4, but it should be reiterated that the Servites had reason to destroy the Apostolic network in their new parish, and that they were simply using the inquisition in the same fashion that civilians used the Bolognese legal system, as a weapon against an opposing faction.²³ There is more proof that these two friars probably heard confessions of the locals. Brother Bartolomeo knew Guglielmo well enough to know the man was aware that Rolandino was a heretic, and Formentinus could retell conversations he had with several of the persons. Formentinus is even remembered as present by Guglielmo.²⁴ But none of these men appeared to be persons that the sons of Benvenuto or their children ever suspected of revealing them. That this is the case, that players can be unaware of each other's involvement and that there are players that can be exempt from

¹⁹ Act 733.

²⁰ Act 702.

²¹ Act 703.

²² Franco Andrea dal Pino, *I Frati Servi di S. Maria: dalle origini all'approvazione (1233-1304), Volume II-Documentazione*, (Louvain: University of Louvain, 1972), xii.

²³ Sarah Blanshei, "Criminal Justice in Medieval Perugia and Bologna," *Law and History Review* 1(August 1983): 270.

²⁴ Act 641. Though in this same deposition, Guglielmo claims that a brother Francesco of the very order of Formentinus and Bartolomeo said to him that Rolandino was a good man.

punishment is where game theory needs to be amended with respect to the inquisitions.

Game theory does not permit the possibility of a game being judged in which one player was not aware that another player was competing with him. Most game theory isolates each act into essentially this game—there are two players, and each must anticipate the other's action. This becomes a series of two player games across a network, with each player attempting to respond to the movements of the games he is playing simultaneously. No game properly pulls in another game, and each is resolved in one turn between the two players.

But inquisitorial processes are not played like a series of two player games; they are essentially multi-player games in which persons can be active (cooperative or self-serving), passive, or unaware. Each game can pull in multiple players by naming them in the process, as each person hailed before the inquisition is asked to name all participants at a particular event. The process in effect dictates the number and identity of the players, and the persons named in a process is a combined effort of inquisitor and confessing subject. There are also differences in the rewards of strategies, because here revealing another person can result in your own imprisonment when that person is brought before the inquisition and reveals you, and that others in fact were never under threat of punishment, such as Brother Bartolomeo or Brother Formentinus.

Unlike a theoretical game in which there are no consequences that carry beyond the individual act in the game, the outcomes of inquisitorial activity had real consequences. Each "turn" (each process) is not an isolated event turn, rather, what is revealed in later processes can result in the outcomes of the first processes effectively being rescinded, nullified by additional information. This all means that the continuing process of inquisition in Bologna was a very nebulous game in which the strategies of the witness could be highly effective as they were for the Servites, or only temporarily effective as they was for the Sant'Elena Apostolic supporters, but the possible outcomes shifted with the inclusion of players.

It was when the information from these other players in the game in the Sant'Elena circle was revealed to Guglielmo on the 24th of August that he 'cracked' and admitted that he knew Rolandino.²⁵ This is when they all cracked, and revealed one another on August 27th. Interestingly enough,

²⁵Act 640. It is not written in the inquisitorial process that information was revealed to Guglielmo, but it can be assumed by the fact that a) he revealed knowing Rolandino only after these other persons came forward, and b) suggesting to the confessing subject that the inquisitor had information upon him was a common practice in other inquisitions and still is in criminal investigations.

though, the preacher whose mention was so sought by the inquisitor had not been captured or at least had not been brought before the inquisition. Certainly the inquisitors were clearly seeking the preachers first and foremost—they asked subjects if they knew or had seen Zaccaria, Rolandino, Pietro Bonito, and others, but not if they knew Vivelda, or Alberto of Lirano—but here it was not the supporters who had to fear the preacher's revelations, as Given found amongst the Cathars, but the preacher who had to fear the supporters' depositions.²⁶ Granted, Zaccaria had already named Rolandino as involved, but that was in December of 1303, and he was still unfound as of August. Thus it was not just about taking out the head of the Order, but the body as well.

Revelations of the Sant'Elena group were not the only ones that Rolandino had to fear. He was well known in Piumazzo as well. In Piumazzo, the situation was more complex. The strategies in inquisitorial procedures undertaken by the people of Piumazzo suggest they were not as socially interlinked as the group in Sant'Elena. Here too we find cooperation, some of which was drawn along family lines. Giovanni Albertini, brother of Ugolina, Roberta, Michele, and Maria, in his first deposition before the inquisition denied his sister Roberta (who had been captured by Nascimbene, assistant to the inquisition) was a heretic.²⁷ In his second appearance, he did reveal that his sisters, Ugolina and Roberta, carried food to Rolandino, but then claimed later that he said these things under torture, and that the most involvement that his sisters had were that they were domestic servants to Guilielmina, a known heretic.²⁸ In his fourth appearance, Giovanni admits his sister Roberta's involvement. Clearly, at least Giovanni had some intent to follow a cooperative strategy, and was probably cooperating in strategy on this with his sister Ugolina.

Ugolina in her first deposition on the 2nd of August reveals no one, then on the same day reveals a few persons who were infamous for their heresy so to speak, but no one who was related to her.²⁹ But then on October 7th, the same day her brother Giovanni admitted Roberta's part in the congregation, Ugolina also identified Roberta, though she only refers to her as "involved".³⁰ Roberta herself had already departed the area, perhaps even joined Dolcino and his followers in the mountains near Novara.³¹

²⁶ Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 87-88.

²⁷ Act 686.

²⁸ Act 691.

²⁹ Act 689.

³⁰ Act 717.

³¹ Roberta was condemned in absentia.

Ugolina and her brother Giovanni's socio-economic status may more resembled that of the Sant'Elena cell members than that of others in Piumazzo. Ugolina and Roberta worked as domestics for Guilielmina, a well-known deceased heretic, whereas employment status was not included in the testimonies of other women in the Piumazzo cell.

Not every family in the Piumazzo group was as protective of its members as the children of Albertino of Lirano. Vitale Controli declared his brother Giovanni's involvement in his second confession on August 6th.³² But that it took two confessions to solicit this information from Vitale suggests at least some family cooperation. Benvenuta of Ferrara, who was heavily involved in the cell and as a result knew many members, named both of her brothers Corbellus and Aldrevandinus in her first testimony on October 8th.³³ Corbellus returned the favor; in his first testimony on October 9th he named his sister and brother, and his wife as well, and admitted that he was a receiver.³⁴ For Aldrevandinus there is no recorded deposition; it was either lost or he fled. The siblings may have presumed that they had already been named by reliable witnesses and thus could not choose silence as a strategy, at which point, it may have an altruistic cooperative tactic to name one another as simple occasional participants, as this role would earn them a lesser punishment.

Between families in Piumazzo there was very little or no cooperation. In the first round of depositions taken from the group in early August, three members—Giovanni Albertini, Ugolina Albertini, Viviano the canon—all reveal Vitali and Giovanni Controli in their second depositions. This could be attributed to a lack of concern for those who were not kin, but it is also possible that Vitali and Giovanni Controli's involvement may have been like that of Bona and Giovanni Osti; they may have been known by public infamy. If they were known through public infamy, this would suggest that the strategy employed here was much the same as amongst the Sant'Elena group, except that Vitali and Giovanni were still located in Piumazzo. Nevertheless, some forms of cooperation and a lack of interest in engaging others in the inquisitorial processes can be found. This strategy amongst confessing subjects was to change. In the second round of depositions taken between the 5th and 9th of October in 1304, eight supporters were hailed before the inquisition and all of them identified other members of the congregation in their testimonies, including family members.

³²Act 692. Vitali's first deposition appears to be lost.

³³Act 722.

³⁴Act 724.

The difference between the first and second rounds can be attributed to an important factor that did not arise during the Sant'Elena group depositions—the capture of Rolandino and Pietro dal Pra, both of whom testified in this time period to their receivers and other supporters. These two were the preachers named by the Piumazzo group as active in their area, thus, it is not surprising that the fear that their testimonies engendered in their supporters forced a change in strategy amongst them. Now the strategy shifts from cautious semi-cooperation to a preemptive strike, the fallback in the prisoner's dilemma in which each player thinks for himself and out of fear of the greater punishment, names the other players.

But was strategy and concern for family or self the only reasons why the supporters of the Apostolic Order did not reveal themselves when first brought before the inquisition? These are certainly strong motivators in responses to the inquisitions, but not the only ones. Strong religious convictions are also motivators; note that Beatrice and Gualandus felt strongly enough about their convictions that they went to the region of Trento to find Dolcino,³⁵ while others did indeed heed his call to come to the mountains. Intertwined with the strength of these convictions was the idea that the Apostolic Order and supporters were truly Christians, and the true Christians at that. Cathars also to some extent felt this was true about themselves, but their behaviors—they had their own blessings, their own cemeteries, refusal to acknowledge the old testament—suggests a debatable form of separatism in which they recognized they were not the heirs to the faith of the apostles and Paul, but a new entity. But according to both inquisitorial records and Gui's account of Dolcino's letters, the Apostolic Order believed they were truly following the faith of the original Christian church. So here in Bologna within the Apostolic Order we do not find a Cathar-like separatism, but a continuation of accepted Christian behaviors, such as celebrating the Eucharist and confession.

Conclusions

The Bolognese inquisitors wanted names from Apostolic supporters; this desire guided the inquisitors' tactics, the subjects' strategies, and the results. The tertiaries and supporters of the Apostles likely had no habit, so the inquisitors concentrated on identifying them through the depositions of those who were named by trustworthy others. Subjects' responses varied, but those who were most closely tied to others within their particular cells of Apostolic involvement tended to cooperate with one another in concealment, while those who felt less allegiance to their fellows more quickly revealed them. The depositions of those quick to

³⁵Acts 756, 727.

reveal heretics were used to break down strategies of concealment and force supporters to reveal themselves and their networks. This was not, however, an outcome solely from the testimonies of the Apostolic supporters. The depositions of the Apostles' supporters occasionally discussed their beliefs.

Elizabeth TIMBERLAKE-NEWEL

SIFTING THROUGH THE PAST – INQUISITORIAL CONFESSION IN
BOLOGNA AND GAME THEORY

- s u m m a r y -

Inquisitorial depositions are not simply accounts of heretical belief and action; they are products of strategic thinking on the part of both inquisitors and inquisitorial subjects. This article discusses the strategies of cooperation and non-cooperation among inquisitorial subjects during the Bolognese inquisition of 1290-1307. Game theory (and in particular the Prisoner's Dilemma) is demonstrated to be a useful tool in understanding confession strategies. Family ties and socio-economic status play a role in confessions.