

THE CONFESSIONS OF RABBI SAMSON DE LOUHANS

*An Analysis of the Anti-Talmudic Procedure in Chambéry in 1417**

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1. Introduction

Since the pioneering studies from the 1880s on the Jews of Savoy by Michael Aaron Gerson and Isidore Loeb, scholarship has drawn a fairly comprehensive picture of Jewish life in the region.¹ Relying primarily on archival documents, research has focused not only on individuals and their roles in society but also on the anti-Jewish policies of the House of Savoy.²

In this article, I discuss a particularly severe episode of anti-Jewish and, more specifically, anti-Rabbinic polemic that occurred during the years 1416–1417 under duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, when Jewish books were seized, examined and condemned. In October of the year 1416, two former Jews, Guillaume Saffon and Pierre de Mâcon, were summoned to Chambéry to examine the Talmud, receiving assistance from two reputed Franciscans: Jean Buffet and Antoine Clément, respectively the convent's librarian and Amadeus's confessor. During this procedure, several Jews were imprisoned at the nearby Montmélian castle. Despite some setbacks, such as the desertion of Pierre de Mâcon, the examination continued during the following months and was finally concluded with the help of another convert, Amédée d'Évian.³ As a result, on January 27, 1417, the Talmud was officially condemned and subsequently burned. A document from the Archivio di Stato di Torino describes the outcome as follows:

that the Jews of both sexes were found to stubbornly assert that God our Almighty Lord had given to Moses – the prince of the prophets – a true law from his mouth, or rather a corrupt one that contains numerous outrageous doctrines, not only against the good morals of the New Testament but also of the Old Testament as well as against natural reason and the natural course and succession of events. And that they attributed the principal authorship, among many authors, to Ravina and Rav Ashi, whose books are known to be called in general 'teaching': that is, Talmud. They have been known to have

* The research giving rise to the present results has received funding from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (PID2024-155482NB-I00/AEI). I thank Ulisse Cecini (Barcelona) and Isaac Lampurlanés Farré (Lleida) for their help in writing this article. I am also grateful for the corrections and suggestions by the two anonymous reviewers of this article.

¹ See Gerson 1884 and Loeb 1885.

² See especially Segre 1986 and Bardelle 1998.

³ The procedure has been analyzed in Ammann-Doublier, Morenzoni 2019, pp. 36–37; Barbu, Dahhaoui 2018, pp. 240–243; and, in particular, in Bardelle 1998, pp. 265–284.

brought forth the compilations of such books in detriment of both faiths [i.e. the Jewish and the Christian] approximately four hundred and forty years after the passion of our most blessed savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the loss of the spirit.⁴

The document contains several elements that were recurrent in anti-Talmudic polemics since the time of the Paris trial against the Talmud in 1240, namely the relation of the Oral Law – that is, the Talmud – to the Old Testament, the Talmud's authorship, its title and its dating. The first of these questions was particularly important for the history of Christian-Jewish polemics, since Christians held that the Jews had abandoned the Old Law/Hebrew Bible to adopt a new law, to wit, the Talmud, as a result of which they were considered heretics and as such subject to papal jurisdiction.⁵

Aside from this rather general information, the account of the archival records of the House of Savoy is quite laconic. As it lacks any textual and doctrinal evidence for its vague dismissal of the Talmud as immoral and irrational, one is left wondering what the specific charges were that were levelled against it.

2. *André Dias de Escobar's Account of the Events*

Another source promises additional information on the procedure: the *Tractatus de publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, which Isaac Lampurlanés Farré and I are currently editing. This treatise first caught the attention of Hen Merhavva, who transcribed relevant sections of the text (Merhavva 1970). Its author, the Portuguese cleric André Dias de Escobar (ca. 1357–1448), was an important figure in the history of the church councils. Born in Lisbon in ca. 1357, André studied at the recently founded University of Vienna and became Bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo in Spain in 1408. Over the course of his life, André attended almost all the general councils of his day: Cividale, Pisa, Constance, Basel and Ferrara-Florence. He was a prolific writer who was widely read; many of his works, which include very

⁴ All translations are mine, if not indicated differently. See the original text in ASTo, Sezioni Riunite, Camera dei conti di Savoia, Inventario 16 Conti della Tesoreria generale, registro 63, ff. 42v–43r: “quod ipsi judei utriusque sexus reperti fuerunt deum et dominum nostrum omnipotentem ore proprio certam legem vel verius corruptalem multa varia enormia non tantum contra novi testamenti sed etiam veteris testamenti bonos mores naturalem que rationem seriem et tenorem continentem dogmata moysi prophetarum principi dedisse pertinaciter asserere auctoritate pluris ex auctoribus Rabinam et Rabasse sumentes quorum libros doctrinam thalmut noscebantur in genere appellari, quorum librorum compillationes tempus in detrimentum utrique fidei post beatissimi salvatoris domini nostri Jhesu<s> Christi <per> passionem ex ablatione spiritus quasi per quatercentum et quadraginta annos noscebantur excitasse.” Quoted from the transcription in Bardelle 1998, p. 270, with corrections based on the original document. For documentary evidence of the burning of the Talmud, see *ibid.*, p. 275.

⁵ On the the Talmud as *alia lex* and *doctrina*, see Fidora 2020. On Medieval debate on the authorship and dating of the Talmud, see Capelli 2016.

popular books such as the confession manual *Modus confitendi*, have been printed several times and confirm his reputation as a theologian.⁶

André concluded *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud* in 1417, the very year of the condemnation of the Talmud in Savoy. The work was conceived under the influence of the epochal Christian-Jewish disputation of Tortosa, which André attended during its final phase in the fall of the year 1414. Convened and presided over by Benedict XIII, the Tortosa disputation was the last and largest of a series of Christian-Jewish Talmud disputations that started with the Paris trial in 1240. Following a preliminary gathering in Tortosa in the summer of 1412, Benedict XIII summoned rabbis from numerous Jewish communities to Tortosa to participate in the disputation: during sixty-nine sessions, between February 7, 1413, and November 13, 1414, they engaged in discussions with a small group of Christians, led by the Jewish convert Jerónimo de Santa Fe, who was the pope's physician. Two Hebrew reports summarize the first sessions of that disputation, while the 'official' Latin account and its Aragonese version cover the entire discussion.⁷ In addition, Jerónimo wrote two anti-Jewish treatises, preserved in a Latin and Aragonese version each: the *Tratado* or *Tractatus primus*⁸ and the *Errores y falsedades del Talmud* or *Tractatus secundus*.⁹ Six months after the end of the disputation, on May 11, 1415, the procedure culminated in the promulgation of Benedict XIII's bull *Etsi doctoris gentium*, which condemned the Talmud as a blasphemous and heretical work and reinforced economic, social and religious sanctions against the Jews. The Tortosa disputation and Benedict's anti-heretical library furnished the basic material for André's *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, which includes important explicit and implicit references to the historical and doctrinal context of the disputation (Fidora, forthcoming).

On top of this, André's treatise refers to other significant events of its day, one of its most noteworthy passages being a detailed description of the anti-Jewish procedure in Savoy which is the subject of the present article. In the following passage, André provides a remarkable report of the events of 1416–1417, claiming that he was himself present in Chambéry during the inquisitorial procedure:¹⁰

⁶ On André, his career and his writings, see Costa 1967. More recently, André and his work have been the object of two doctoral dissertations: Sturgeon 2017 and Uhryn 2022. See also Prügl 2024.

⁷ The Latin and Aragonese proceedings as well as the Hebrew reports have been edited in del Valle Rodríguez 2021. Partial translations of the Latin and Hebrew accounts can be consulted in Maccoby 1993, pp. 168–215.

⁸ For the Aragonese version, see Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2013, for the Latin one, Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677a, pp. 529–545. Fragments of an original Hebrew draft have been edited by Carlos del Valle Rodríguez in a series of articles published in *Iberia Judaica*, starting with del Valle Rodríguez 2017a.

⁹ For the Aragonese version, see Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006; for the Latin one, Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b. The Talmud quotations in the latter have been edited and studied in detail by Orfali 1987.

¹⁰ André probably visited Savoy while attending the council of Constance, where he was sent to by Benedict XIII.

[To the glory] of that Catholic and most illustrious prince and our lord and duke of Savoy, who in my presence in one day caused the books of the Jews to be seized throughout his entire dominion. And certified by the books of the Talmud and by the confessions of the Jewish rabbis present that the heresies and abuses written below were contained word for word in the Talmud and that the Jews did not understand them otherwise than they are written and that they had always believed them to be true and continued believing so, because ‘from their ancestors’ etc., nor did they know how to give them any other meaning: horrified by the said heresies and especially [by the passages] where they speak so maliciously against Jesus Christ and the blessed Virgin Mary, our Lady and advocate, and against the Church, against the Catholic faith, against kings and princes and faithful Christians, the said most Christian prince ordered and caused that each and every copy – the more the better – of the Talmud and the glosses of their rabbis on the Bible should be destroyed, annulled and burned with the greatest flames of fire in his own presence and that of many noble teachers of sacred theology and of both laws in the city of Chambéry, in the year of our Lord 1417. And in a single day he ordered and caused all the said Jews of his land to be seized and put to prison. Afterwards, for a short time, he did not free them lest they promised – under penalty of death and fire which they would incur by doing the opposite publicly or secretly – that they would never, either directly or indirectly, by themselves or through others, publicly practice usury or study, read and teach the Talmud or keep Talmudic books or glosses of their rabbis in their synagogues or homes, but only read the Torah, that is, the law of Moses or the text of the Bible, and they promised to live according to it in Jewish custom.¹¹

André’s account confirms the confiscation of Rabbinic books in Chambéry, the imprisonment of numerous members of the Savoy Jewries and the final condemnation of the Talmud as well as its burning, which are referred

¹¹ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 101r–v: “[Ad gloriam] illius catholici et illustrissimi principis et domini nostri ac ducis Sabaudiae qui me praesente in una die per totum suum dominium libros iudaeorum fecit capi. Et certificatus per libros Talmud et per confessiones iudaeorum praesentium rabinorum quod infra scriptae haereses et abusiones continebantur de verbo ad verbum in Talmud et quod ipsi non intelligebant eas aliter quam iacebant et quod semper eas veras esse crediderant et credebant quia sic a suis maioribus etc. nec alium sensum eis dare sciebant: dictus christianissimus princeps perhorrescens dictas haereses et maxime ubi loquuntur ita malitiose contra Iesum Christum et beatam virginem Mariam, Dominam nostram et advocatam, et contra Ecclesiam, contra fidem catholicam, contra reges et principes et christianos fideles omnes et singulos libros in maxima multitudine ipsius Talmud et glossas rabinorum suorum super Bibliam in civitate Kabarlym [sc. Chambéry], anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo decimo septimo, praesentibus multis nobilibus doctoribus sacrae theologiae et iuris utriusque destrui et annullari ac comburi maximis flammis igneis ipso praesente praecepit et fecit et dictos iudaeos omnes et singulos de terra sua ipsis in circumspiculis in una die capi et ad carceres poni fecit. Postmodum infra paucum tempus nec eos liberavit quousque sibi promitterent sub poena mortis et ignis quam ipso facto incurrerent contrarium facientes publice vel occulte quod numquam per se vel per alios directe vel indirecte usuras publice exercerent vel Talmud addiscerent, legerent vel docerent aut libros Talmud vel glossas suorum rabinorum tenerent in suis synagogis vel domibus, sed solum Thora, id est legem Moysi vel textum Bibliae, legerent et secundum illam vivere more iudaico promittebant.”

to in the archival records. In addition to the examination of Talmudic manuscripts, the above passage refers to the Jews' confessions. These are listed in detail in another section of André's treatise, probably due to structural problems concerning the organization of the work which have been pointed out by Johnna L. Sturgeon (2017, p. 151).

3. Analysis of the Rabbi's Confessions According to André Dias de Escobar

In what follows, I will focus on the said list of confessions, analyzing the single charges it contains. In doing so, I am interested in determining the extent to which they go back to previous literary models, or whether they reflect, rather, the concrete situation in Savoy. Hen Merḥavya surmised that some charges would draw on the Tortosa disputation, while others should be considered more specific accusations from the Savoy context.¹² Thomas Bardelle, in turn, tried to establish a connection between André's list of confessions and the 35 Articles against the Talmud that the Jewish convert Nicholas Donin had submitted to Pope Gregory IX in 1238/39 in preparation for the Parisian Talmud trial in 1240. However, Bardelle eventually concluded that there was only limited overlap between both (Bardelle 1998, pp. 273–274). A conclusive assessment of these hypotheses requires a thorough philological and doctrinal examination of the 25 charges that André transmits. For this purpose, I will provide a transcription of each charge from MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, ff. 142v–144r, followed by its textual and doctrinal analysis.

0. Decima septima conclusio ad maiorem ipsorum iudaeorum confusionem adserta fuit coram duce Sabaudiae, domino Amadeo, per unum magnum rabinorum eorum nomine Samsamen, anno millesimo CCCC XVII, qui confessus est...

The introductory statement to the confessions offers specific information on the participants in the procedure and on its dating. While André's above-quoted general account of the procedure refers to "the duke of Savoy" without mentioning his name, here the latter is identified as Amadeus (VIII). Moreover, the introductory text also reveals the identity of the rabbi being interrogated, who is called "Samsamem" (other manuscripts give "Sampsamem").

¹² See Merḥavya 1970, esp. p. 592. It is indeed plausible to think that the Tortosa disputation provided input for the procedure in Chambéry and probably also shaped the way it was depicted by André. Such a connection is suggested not only by André's presence at both events, but also by the fact that Amadeus VIII requested a copy of the 'official' proceedings of the Tortosa disputation from King Ferdinand I of Aragon, which, however, Ferdinand was not able to offer him at the time of the request, i.e. in January 1414. See del Valle Rodríguez 2017b, pp. 215–217.

nus”),¹³ a figure that can be identified with the renowned rabbi Samson de Louhans, to whom the archival documents also refer in connection with Amadeus’s anti-Jewish procedure.¹⁴ The text of the Erlangen manuscript dates the procedure to the year 1417, while other manuscripts of André’s work yield 1416,¹⁵ both dates being consistent with the archival records insofar as these records describe the procedure as spanning several months, from October 1416 to January 1417.

1.1. *In Hauadozra praecipitur quod quando iudaei transeunt ante ecclesiam christianorum debent hunc versum dicere: Domum elatorum Deus destruit <eos> et faciat stare terminos viduae (Prov. 15:25), id est synagogae Israel.*

The list of confessions starts with a series of allegedly anti-Christian curses, the first of which targets Christian churches by calling on Jews to apply the following biblical verse to them: “The Lord tears down the house of the proud, but he sets the widow’s boundary stones in place” (Prov. 15:25), the latter referring to the synagogues. The source for this curse is Talmudic: to wit, *Ber.* 58b, where it is applied to the houses of the gentiles.¹⁶ Jewish curses and anti-Christian prayers had their *Sitz im Leben* in medieval Jewish communities (Langer 2011). In the present case, however, the accusation/confession does not reflect specific practices among the Jews of Savoy, but goes back to a literary precedent, in the form of Jerónimo de Santa Fe’s treatise *Errores y falsedades del Talmud* or *Tractatus secundus*. Jerónimo wrote the *Errores* during the Tortosa disputation in August 1414, by collecting anti-Christian insults contained in the Talmud which Benedict did not want to discuss publicly during the disputation as he preferred to stay focused on Talmudic proof texts for Christian faith in order to convert the Jews.¹⁷ In the *Errores*, the corresponding text reads as follows:

¹³ See the transcriptions in Merhavaya 1970, pp. 603 and 605, which follow the manuscripts Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, MS Cod. Reichenau, pap. 140, and Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 698 (the latter offers an ‘abridged’ version of *De publicatione*, to which I will come back at the end of this article).

¹⁴ After the condemnation of the Jews in January 1417, “Sansinus et Agnus magistri legis judeorum”, that is, Samson de Louhans and Agin de Nantua, were the first Jews to receive a yellow badge in the Castle of Chambéry. See ASTo, Sezioni Riunite, Camera dei conti di Savoia, Inventario 16 Conti della Tesoreria generale, registro 62, ff. 104v–105r, transcribed by Bardelle 1998, p. 275, n. 169, see also p. 270, n. 138. Also see Schwarzfuchs 1997, pp. 89–91.

¹⁵ See again Merhavaya 1970, pp. 603 and 605.

¹⁶ Here and in what follows, all Talmudic references pertain to the Babylonian Talmud.

¹⁷ Following the pope’s express wish, only a few direct accusations were levelled against the Talmud during the sessions. However, written copies thereof were handed over to the Jews, to which they did not reply. See del Valle Rodríguez 2021, vol. 1: p. 814: “Sanctitati domini nostri placuit quod non nisi tamen paucē allegarentur earumdem ut uideretur an easdem excusare possetis et aliquam pro eis allegare rationem quarum quidem per me allegata-

Iten les es mandado que toda ora que passen cerca la casa de oración de los christianos que digan un verso de ebraico, el qual quiere dezir ‘casa de orgullosos derribará Dios’ (Prov. 15:25).¹⁸

Even though the biblical verse is not fully developed by Jerónimo, the phrasing of the first accusation/confession clearly reflects the lexicon and syntax of the *Errorres*.¹⁹ Moreover, the *Errorres* are key to explaining why the accusation/confession falsely attributes the curse to the Talmudic treatise ‘*Avodah zarah* (*Hauadozra*) rather than to *Berakot*. In the *Errorres*, the passage in question follows immediately upon a very general reference to the Talmudic tractate ‘*Avodah zarah*, to wit:

E todas estas maldades dizen porque han por sentencia en el Talmud en el libro llamado Abodá Zará que es grand peccado de fazer gracia ninguna a los idólatras, nin nonbrar con buen nonbre.²⁰

While in the *Errorres* this remark refers to the arguments that precede it, the author of the accusations/confessions apparently took it to be introducing the curses that follow after it. Consequently, he mistakenly attributed the curse of Christian churches or houses to ‘*Avodah zarah* (*Hauadozra*):

1.2. *Quando autem videt ecclesiam destructam debet dicere: Benedictus Deus qui destruxit domum de hauodozra de oculo [read: de hoc loco]. Ita destruat et eradicet ubique, cito et subito.*

The second imprecation mirrors the first one: when passing by a Christian church that has been destroyed, Jews are prompted to praise God and to pray to him for the destruction of all remaining Christian temples. The passage, which can be traced back to the same Talmudic context as the previous one

rum ne dum semel sed pluries uobis fuerit copia data et usque modo ad aliquam earum non respondistis quidquam.”

¹⁸ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, v, 11, p. 155. In this case, it seems that the accusations/confessions draw on the Aragonese version of Jerónimo’s treatise rather than on the Latin one. Yet, at other instances the Latin text is closer to the wording found in the accusations/confessions. I shall always provide the Latin text in footnote: “Item iubetur eis quod quando transeunt circa Ecclesias et oratoria Christianorum, quod hunc dicant versum: Domum Chloacarum diruat Dominus! (Prov. 15:25)” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 553).

¹⁹ The strong dependence of the accusations/confessions on the *Errorres* becomes particularly conspicuous when comparing the texts to other contemporary Christian translations of the passage, such as Juan de Valladolid’s *Liber de concordantia legis Dei*. See Juan de Valladolid 2019, v, 7, p. 201: “Et iugiter, cum vident ecclesias nostras, maledicent eis sub ista auctoritate sapientis in Parabolis, decimo quinto capitulo: Domum superbiorum demolietur Dominus (Prov. 15:25).”

²⁰ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, v, 10, p. 154. Latin version: “Omnes has nequities dicunt, quia per sententiam est apud eos definitum in libro Abodazara, quod magnum peccatum est facere gratiam aliquam cultoribus idolorum, vel illos laude seu bona significatione nominare” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 553).

– that is, to *Ber.* 57b – is not quoted by Jerónimo in his *Errores*. Yet also in this case, one can point out precedents in Latin polemical literature. Thus, the text was translated into Latin in the *Extractiones de Talmud* from ca. 1245 – a translation that was prepared after the public burning of the Talmud in Paris in 1241/42 when Pope Innocent IV ordered a revision of the Paris trial.²¹ In the thematic *Extractiones de Talmud* the passage reads:

Qui videt locum a quo avoza zara eradicata est, debet dicere: Benedictus Deus, qui eradicavit avoza zara de terris nostris et sicut inde eradicata est, sic eradicetur de omnibus locis Israhel.²²

The wording in the accusations/confessions slightly differs from the *Extractiones*. However, both texts share key notions, e.g. the term ‘*avodah zarah*’ – meaning ‘foreign worship’ or idolatry – which is taken to refer to Christianity. It should be noted that in this case, as well as in other instances, the potential source text of the accusations/confessions also appears in another section of André’s *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*: that is to say, independently of the list of accusations/confessions. In these cases, the quotations are usually closer to the potential source than is the text of the accusations/confessions itself. For *Berakot* 57b, André gives the following rendering:

Sed si inveniatur ecclesia disrupta, benedicendum ac dicendum: Benedictus Deus qui eradicavit hauadazra de terra [...] et sicut hic eradicatum est sic eradicetur de omnibus locis.²³

This wording is very close to the one of the *Extractiones*, whereas the accusations/confessions seem to offer a looser version based on the *Extractiones* or, maybe, on both the *Extractiones* and André’s quote therefrom.

1.3. *Quando vero pertranseunt cimiteria vel prope debent dicere: Erubescat mater vestra, pudor nativitatis vestrae et vestrae nutritionis, quia finis gohim vermis est et putredo (Jer. 50, 12). Mortui eorum non*

²¹ The *Extractiones de Talmud* are preserved in two versions: the *Extractiones de Talmud per ordinem sequentialem*, which offer the translated Talmud texts in the order of their occurrence within the Talmud, and the *Extractiones de Talmud per ordinem thematicum*, which rearrange these texts in a topical order, while including further materials from other works, such as Nicholas Donin’s 35 Articles against the Talmud. The *Extractiones de Talmud* must not be confused with Nicholas Donin’s 35 Articles against the Talmud from 1238/39. Bardelle, for instance, claims to compare the accusations/confessions to the *Extractiones de Talmud*, but in fact he uses Donin’s Articles for his comparison. See Bardelle 1998, pp. 273–274.

²² Cecini et al. 2021, 5 [8], p. 66; in what follows: *tT*. The passage is also contained in the *Extractiones de Talmud per ordinem sequentialem*; see Cecini, de la Cruz Palma 2018, [433], p. 101, in what follows: *sT*.

²³ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 142v.

resurgent, mortui eorum non vivent. Et tu, Deus, remunerabis et destrues eos et totam memoriam eorum disperde.

The accusation/confession refers to another Jewish imprecation, one which allegedly targets Christian cemeteries. Thus, when passing by a Christian graveyard, Jews shall recite the verse from Jer. 50:12: “Your mother will be greatly ashamed; she who gave you birth will be disgraced.” Like the first curse (1.1.), this imprecation goes back to *Ber.* 58b, where it is in relation to the graves of gentiles. And again, Jerónimo de Santa Fe’s *Errores* seem to have provided the *Vorlage* for this accusation/confession:

Et quando pasan por los çeminterios de los christianos que digan ‘será envergoñada vuestra madre, será refutada la que vos parió, que la fin de los christianos es vermen et gusano’ (Jer. 50:12).²⁴

The lexicon and syntax of both texts offer clear parallels, especially with regard to the phrase “quia finis gohim est vermis et putredo”,²⁵ which does not occur in other renderings of the passage.²⁶ However, the author of the accusations/confessions apparently modified and expanded on his *Vorlage*, for instance when referring to the “gohim”, i.e. the gentiles, instead of the “christianos”. In medieval anti-Jewish polemics, this Talmudic term was consistently understood as referring to Christians, possibly reflecting the actual usage of the expression among medieval Jews.²⁷

2. Secundo iudaeus confessus est quod peccatum est thus vendere monachis vel sacerdotibus pro ecclesia, quia res est idolatrarum.

This accusation/confession concerns the prohibition against selling frankincense to Christians. Such a rule can be found in the Talmud, namely in ‘*Avod. zar.* 13b, and was translated into Latin in the *Extractiones de Talmud* as follows:

²⁴ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, v, 11, p. 155. Latin text: “Et quando transeunt iuxta sepulchra Christianorum, dicunt: Erubescat mater vestra, repudiata est genitrix vestra, quia finis Christianorum vermis et putredo erit (Ier. 50, 12)” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 554).

²⁵ Note that for this passage the text of the accusations/confessions is closer to the Latin version: *refutada* – *repudiata* – *pudor* and *putredo* – *gusano* – *putredo*. However, given the fact that the Aragonese version of the *Errores* is preserved in one single manuscript and that there is no critical edition of the Latin text, we lack a firm basis for giving priority to one version over the other.

²⁶ To better appreciate these parallels, it might be helpful to compare the texts under discussion once more with the alternative translation offered by Juan de Valladolid in ca. 1376: “Quando etiam vident nostra monumenta, sub ista auctoritate Ieremiae quinquagesimo capitulo, blasphemant contra nos. Dicunt enim: Confusa est mater vestra nimis, et adequata pulveri que genuit vos (Prov. 15, 25)” (Juan de Valladolid 2019, v, 7, p. 201).

²⁷ Loeb 1880–1881, 1, p. 256.

Haec prohibent vendi goy thus. Dicit Reslakis: Thus purum – glossa Salomonis: quia ex hoc serviunt avoza zara, idolatriae –.²⁸

The accusation/confession takes up both the Talmudic rule from ‘*Avodah zarah*’, which was originally targeting gentiles, and Rashi’s explanation thereof (*glossa Salomonis*) in terms of not promoting idolatry. The combination of the two elements strongly suggests that the author of the accusations/confessions was drawing on the *Extractiones*.

3. *Tertio confessus est quod prohibitum est gohi vendere ceram in die festi quod vocatur candelaria.*

I have not been able to trace a Talmudic origin for the prohibition of selling wax to Christians (gentiles) on the feast of Maria Candelaria, nor have I found any parallel text in Christian-Jewish polemics. Yet there are plenty of regulations concerning business between Jews and gentiles, as the following item confirms. Hence it is not unlikely that the author of the accusations/confessions was drawing on some written source for this specific allegation too.

4. *Quarto confessus est quod prohibitum iudaeis est per tres dies ante sabatum et per tres post facere aliquem contractum cum gohim, id est de gentibus qui credunt in Iesu de Nazareth.*

This text, which forbids Jews from engaging in business with gentiles three days before and three days after Shabbat, goes back to m ‘*Avod. zar.* 1:1, even though the passage is misinterpreted. Once more, the *Extractiones* offer a Latin rendering of the text:

Ante festum goym per tres dies est prohibitum facere aliquam conventionem sive contractum cum eis [...] Dicit rby Symeon: Per tres dies ante festum et per tres dies post est prohibitum contractum aliquem habere cum eis.²⁹

The above charge clearly misrepresents the original meaning of the passage according to which the prohibition applies to the gentiles’ festivities, as the *Extractiones* have it, and not to Shabbat. Interestingly, the incorrect and the correct renderings of this passage both appear next to each other on another folio of André’s *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*:

Vos [sc. iudaei] non debetis [...] nec emere nec vendere cum eis [sc. christianis] per tres dies ante sabatum et per tres dies post [...] Ante festum goym,

²⁸ *tT* 5 [62], p. 75; *sT* [1538], p. 425.

²⁹ *tT* 5 [51], p. 74; *sT* [1502], p. 411.

id est christianorum vel gentium christianorum, prohibitum est per tres dies aliquem contractum facere cum eis, scilicet dare mutuum vel accipere.³⁰

It is not clear where André took the wrong interpretation of m 'Avod. zar. 1:1 from (that is, as referring to Shabbat), nor is it easy to understand how he came to place it in the immediate context of its correct rendering, which he took from the *Extractiones*; apparently, he was drawing on different sources. What is quite clear, however, is that the author of the accusations/confessions combined textual elements from both versions as they are found in André's treatise.

5. *Quinto confessus est quod praecipitur et prohibetur iudaeis ut nec calicem etiam fractum emant et quod postea ipsum gohi revendant, quia ne forte traderent ipsum sacerdoti qui in eo serviret hauodazra.*

I have not been able to identify a Talmudic origin for this prohibition against buying a (communion) chalice from Christians in order to repair it and sell it back to them, but its rationale resonates with the above accusation/confession number 3. Likewise, I could not spot direct references to this subject in medieval polemic literature; however, one can find a kind of negative echo of it in Benedict XIII's bull *Etsi doctoris gentium*, issued after the conclusion of the Tortosa disputation. Here, the point made is that Jews take part in repairing chalices and need to be prevented from doing so:

[...] statuimos ut Iudeo, qui crucem, calicem, vasa sacra vel ad sacrum ministerium dedicanda aliave ornamenta ecclesiastica fabricare, facere vel reparare [...] presumpserit, per loci diocesanum Christianorum communio subtrahatur (Simonsohn 1989, pp. 595–596).

6. *Sexto confessus est quod omnes nosi [read: nozeri] serviunt hauodazra.*

The accusation/confession according to which all followers of Jesus the Nazarene (*nozeri*) are idolaters (*hauodazra* = 'avodah zarah) is rather general and can, in fact, draw on a vast array of sources. A strikingly similar phrase appears in another section of André's *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*: "Noz[e]ri sunt illi qui morantur in errore Iesu qui praecepit eis sollemnizare in dominica et ipsi sunt idolatrae."³¹ André's phrase, in turn, resumes a text from the 13th-century Talmud dossier that accompanied the *Extractiones*, that is, a Talmudic anthology attributed to Donin, the author of

³⁰ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 122r–v.

³¹ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 122v.

the 35 Articles against the Talmud. The text that is rendered in the anthology corresponds to a comment by Rashi.³²

7. *Septimo confessus est quod canes nobiliores sunt gohim qui comedunt carnes prohibitas.*

The comparison between a Christian and a dog goes back to Rashi's exposition of Exodus 22, 30. The *Extractiones* translate this passage as saying that Christians can be given carrion to eat, whereas dogs should receive meat torn by a beast of prey (*terefah*), which is superior. Hence dogs are considered to be superior to Christians:

Docet te quod honorabilior est canis quam goy, quia morticinium datur goy. Et caro rapta, quae melior est, datur cani.³³

This translation is quoted in another section of André's *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, though here the quality of the two sorts of meat is reversed:

Item morticinium dicitur [*read*: datur] gohim et cani, sed caro capta a bestiis non dabitur cani, sed gohi. Igitur melior est canis quam gohi.³⁴

The accusation/confession does not enter into the details of this question; rather, it summarizes either the *Extractiones* or André's version thereof.

8. *Octavo confessus est quod non fiat confoederatio cum gohim nec societas nec pax habenda est.*

This prohibition, according to which Jews shall not ally themselves with Christians, goes back to Maimonides's *Mišneh Torah*, *Madd.*, 'Avod. zar. 10:1.

The text was translated by Jerónimo de Santa Fe in his *Errores*, which also provided the source for accusations/confessions 1.1 and 1.3. In Jerónimo's rendering it reads:

Iten dizen en el dicho libro [*sc.* Meda, *i.e.* *Sefer ha-madda* ' from Maimonides's *Mišneh Torah*], c. x, tales palabras: Non devemos fazer pacto [Lat.

³² Edited in Cecini, de la Cruz Palma 2019, [10], p. 74: "Glossa Salomonis: Noceri sunt illi qui morantur in errore Iesu, qui praecepit eis sollemnizare in die dominica."

³³ *tT* 5 [11], p. 67. The passage is not contained in *sT*; it was incorporated into *tT* from a series of translations of Rashi's glosses on the Hebrew Bible contained in the dossier of the Latin Talmud that accompanies the sequential version of the *Extractiones de Talmud* in the manuscripts. See the edition of Rashi's Latin glosses on Exodus in Hasselhoff 2017, p. 164.

³⁴ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 137v.

confederare] con idólatras nin aver paz con ellos sinon fazerles convertir de aquella idolatría o matarlos.³⁵

The accusation/confession omits the last part of the quote, that is, the invitation to slay the Christians, reserving it instead for the next item.

9. *Nono confessus est quod qui percutit Israhel reus est mortis et debet mori.*

The passage from *Sanhedrin* 58b that orders the killing of a gentile who hurts a Jew is a recurrent motif in Christian anti-Jewish polemic. The specific wording of this accusation/confession seems again very much indebted to Jerónimo's rendering in his *Errores*:

El christiano que fiere [Lat. *percusserit*] al israelita digno es de muerte [Lat. *reus erit mortis*].³⁶

The same phrase occurs in the *Extractiones* as well as in another section of André's treatise; yet the wording of the present confession/accusation is closer to Jerónimo, perhaps with some contamination from the *Extractiones* (*et debet mori/debet occidi*).³⁷

10. *Decimo confessus est quod prohibitum iudaeis est ne de rebus perditis per christianos et inventos per ipsos fiat aliqua restitutio.*

Lost and found: objects that were lost by Christians and found by Jews must not be restored to the former. This accusation/confession draws on *B. qamm.* 113b, which was rendered in the *Extractiones de Talmud* as follows:

Dicit Rab: Unde habetur quod licitum est illud retinere quod goy amittit? – per illud: – ‘non videbis bovem fratris tui errantem et praeteribis sed reduces fratri tuo’ (Deut. 22:1). Fratri tuo reddes quod amisit, sed non goy.³⁸

The passage is also referred to in another section of André's treatise.³⁹

³⁵ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, v, 5, p. 151. In this case, the Latin text is particularly close to the wording of the accusations/confessions: “Non liceat nobis confederare cum Idolorum cultoribus, nec pacem tractare cum eisdem, nisi laborare ut convertantur ab eorum erroribus, aut interficere illos” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 553).

³⁶ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, vi, 3, p. 158. Latin text: “Si christianus percusserit Israelitam, reus erit mortis” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 553).

³⁷ See *tT* 5 [34], p. 71: “Goy qui percutit iudaeum debet occidi” (also in *sT* [1093], p. 287) and André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 137v: “Christianus qui percutit Israhel dignus est morte.”

³⁸ *tT* 5 [19], p. 68; *sT* [663], p. 161.

³⁹ André's rendering is slightly different. See André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione*

11. *Undecimo confessus est quod <prohibitum est iudaeis>, posito quod gohi reperiat iuxta se mulierem, libentius vel citius coiat cum bruto Israhel cum muliere quam [read: quam cum muliere] christiana, quia amicabiliora sunt animalia de Israhel quam mulieres gohim.*

According to this accusation/confession a Christian would prefer to have sexual intercourse with the animal of a Jew rather than with a Christian woman, since the animals of Jews are more appealing to him than Christian women. The Talmudic source for this is 'Avod. zar. 22b, which states that gentiles engage in sexual intercourse with their animals and take particular delight in intercourse with the animals of Jews. The passage is translated in the *Extractiones de Talmud*:

[...] goym frequenter sunt cum uxoribus sociorum suorum et aliquando non invenirent eas et coirent cum bestiis; et si vultis etiam si invenirent eas, quoniam animal Israhel magis delectat eos. Hoc enim dicit Dominus meus – Talmud –: Delectabiliores sunt bestiae Israhel goym quam mulieres ipsorum.⁴⁰

This rendering is quoted literally – with some minor omissions – in another section of André's work.⁴¹

12. *Duodecimo confessus est quod serpens coit cum Eva in paradiso et misit in eam venenum a quo mundati sunt Israhel in monte Sinai. Gohi vero non sunt mundati, quia non fuerunt ibi et ideo iudaei notant christianos de homicidio et intoxicatione et prohibent ne mulieres christianae nutrant pueros eorum, et etiam ea de causa vocant pueros christianorum reptilia, id est serpentes pueros, et dicunt, si esset aliqua virtus in tuffa, id est in baptismo, in quo inmerguntur dicta reptilia, deberet sanare infirmos et leprosos quod tamen non facit.*

This passage combines various source texts. First, a passage from 'Avod. zar. 22b that describes how the snake contaminated Eve in paradise and how the Jews were cleansed of this poisoning on Mount Sinai. This is followed by a reference to 'Avod. zar. 26a, the prohibition of a Christian woman from nursing the child of a Jew, because in doing so she would try to kill the infant. Both passages are found in the *Extractiones de Talmud*, following in *tT* immediately upon the potential source of the previous accusation/confession:

haeresum contentarum in Talmud, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 138r: "scilicet totum illud quod rapis ab illo [sc. christiano] et omnia quae ipse perdit vel amittit tua sunt."

⁴⁰ *tT* 5 [68], pp. 76–77; *sT* [1563], p. 432.

⁴¹ See André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 141r: "[...] gohim frequenter sunt cum uxoribus sociorum suorum, et si aliquando eas forsan non invenirent, tunc coirent cum bestiis Israhel quae multum delectant eis."

Dicit rby Iohanan: In hora qua serpens cognovit Evam proiecit in eam venenum. In Israhel qui stetit super montem Sina deficit venenum, sed in goym, qui non steterunt, non cessavit. [...] Magistri dicunt quod goya bene potest nutrire Israhel, dummodo alii sint in hospitio cum ea; sed in domo sua non potest hoc facere. Dicit rby Mehir: Licet plures sint in domo cum ea, non debet ei tradi puer, quia ponit manum suam super fontinellam capitis eius et occidit eum.⁴²

To this, further material was added, such as the comparison of Christian children to snakes and reptiles from Jerónimo's *Errores* ("[llaman] a los niños cristianos 'sequatem', 'serpientes' o 'reptilias'" / *parvulos christianos, 'reptilia'*).⁴³ The source of the remarks on baptism could not be identified.

13. *Decimo tertio confessus est quare Deus non benedixit diei secundae, quia illa die secundum iudeos Deus creavit aquas in quibus se deturpant christiani in baptismo et vituperans [read: vituperant], unde qui baptizantur in aqua non recipiuntur a Deo nec sunt acceptabiles in futurum saeculum.*

Resuming a passage of Nicholas Donin's 35 Articles against the Talmud, the thematic version of the *Extractiones de Talmud* reports that the Jews called the holy water "maym temeym, id est aquas pollutas".⁴⁴ However, I could not trace the exact source of this charge, which seems to expand on the previous accusation/confession's final comments on baptism.

14. *Decimo quarto confessus est quod omnes gohi, maiores et minores, mares et femellae in omnibus factis eorum sunt polluti.*

This accusation/confession is very general; it is a direct consequence of accusation 12.⁴⁵

15. *Decimo quinto confessus est quod ubi lex dicit: si iudaeus interficit socium suum etiam si esset super altare ab inde accipies eum et morietur (Exod. 21:14), et in eo quod ipse dicit 'socium' intelligitur de iudaeo, sed non de gohi.*

According to Exod. 21:14, one who murders his neighbor shall be caught and put to death immediately, even if that person were on the altar. The ac-

⁴² *tT* 5 [69], p. 77 and [72], p. 77; *sT* [1564], p. 432 and [1578], p. 436.

⁴³ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, vi, 3, p. 158; Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, vi, p. 553. Also quoted in another section of André's *De publicatione*, see MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 130r: "Et [dicunt] pueros christianos sekaczym, id est serpentes vel reptilia."

⁴⁴ *tT* 3 [38], p. 50.

⁴⁵ See *tT* 5 [98], p. 81, [100], p. 82, [115], pp. 85–86 and *passim*.

cusation/confession focuses on a purportedly anti-Christian interpretation of the passage, to the effect that the ruling would only apply to murderers of Jews, and not of Christians (or gentiles), since the text refers to the killing of a ‘neighbor’ (*socius*), which Christians are not. Exodus 21:14 is discussed in *Yoma* 85a, though without any trace of this discriminatory interpretation.

16. *Decimo sexto confessus est per eundem modum quod ubi habetur in Levitico: vir qui adulterabit cum uxore viri aut proximi vel socii sui, moriantur ambo (Lev. 20, 10), intelligitur per hoc quod dicit ‘viri’ quod si quis coiret cum uxore pueri vel iuvenis christianorum, quia non est vir, adhuc non peccat. Et ubi dixit ‘proximi’ vel ‘socii’, quia christianus non est proximus nec socius, ideo adulterando cum uxore christiani nullum peccatum committitur.*

This accusation/confession again refers to a specific exegesis of a biblical verse, namely Lev. 20:10: “If a man commits adultery with the wife of another man, his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress will be put to death.” The verse is subject to discussion in *Sanh.* 52b, where the rabbis try to clarify the sense of the ruling and establish its exceptions through an analysis of the terms “man” and “neighbor”. According to the author of the accusations/confessions, *Sanhedrin* 52b amounts to saying that adultery with a non-adult’s (Christian) wife and with a Christian’s wife in general are not covered by this ruling, because the verse in question refers to the wife of an adult who is qualified as a neighbor. The *Extractiones de Talmud* provide the Latin translation of *Sanh.* 52b:

‘Vir qui moechatus fuerit cum uxore hominis et adulterium perpetraverit cum uxore proximi sui morte moriantur et moechus et adultera’ (Lev. 20:10 – s. hebr. –). Dicunt magistri: ‘Vir’, sed si parvus moecharetur, non esset reus. ‘Cum uxore hominis’, sed si cum uxore parvi, non esset reus. ‘Cum uxore proximi’, sed si cum uxore alterius, non esset reus.⁴⁶

A reference to Lev. 20:10 and its interpretation is also included on another folio of André’s treatise, which, however, draws on other sources.⁴⁷

17. *Decimo septimo confessus est quod unus iudaeus non trahat alium ad iudicium coram christiano, quia talia faciens spernit nomen Dei publice*

⁴⁶ *tT* 6 [73], p. 106; *sT* [1067], p. 282.

⁴⁷ André Dias de Escobar, *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, MS Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 542, f. 110v: “Item super illud Levitici xx: vir qui fornicatus fuerit cum uxore alterius viri moriatur ipse et ipsa. Dicit glossa in Talmud, in libro vocato Calla, et ponitur in libro Nedarim, quod homo intelligitur quando vir est perfectae aetatis; et declarat rabi Moyses: Non dicitur vir, nisi habuerit uxorem [*read: aetatem?*] tredecim annorum. Ergo vir tredecim annorum fornicans cum uxore alterius non debet mori.” Although its meaning is obvious, the passage clearly suffers from some textual corruptions.

et servit idolatrae et negat radicem mundi qui est Deus et debet iudicare sicut haereticus – messumadim –, et est licitum tales perdere mundum et ius ipsorum est in inferno remissius tamquam ius infidelium et haereticorum.

The prohibition against bringing Jewish legal cases to Christian courts reflects Rashi's explanation of Exod. 21:1. The passage in question was rendered into Latin by the *Extractiones de Talmud* as follows:

'Haec sunt iudicia quae propones eis' (Exod. 21:1). Glossa Salomonis: propones eis et non gentibus. Si etiam scias aliquod iudicium quod goym iudicant secundum Israhel, non agites illud in curia eorum, quia ille qui ducit iudicia Israhel coram goym vilificat nomen Dei et exaltat nomen avoza zara – Ecclesiae –.⁴⁸

This charge illustrates very well the *modus operandi* of the author of the accusations/confessions. As in other instances, he enriches and expands his *Vorlage* with more general allegations that arise from the principal point of accusation.⁴⁹

18. *Decimo octavo confessus est quod omnes gohim sunt suspecti de peccato Sodomae.*

This accusation/confession is again quite general and can draw on various proof texts, including the above accusation/confession 11. If one looks for a literal *Vorlage*, one can think of the following rendering of 'Avodah zarah 15b from the *Extractiones de Talmud*:

Nec debet aliquis solus esse cum solo goy, nec tradere ei filium suum ad aliquod artificium addiscendum – propter suspicionem sodomiae et homicidii.⁵⁰

The expression "suspecti de peccato Sodomae" could be an echo of the *Extractiones*' "suspicio sodomiae".

19. *Decimo nono confessus est quod ille qui non credit quod lex Talmud fuerit data a Dei ore non est sapiens sed negat et debet esse in computo*

⁴⁸ *tT* 5 [114], p. 85. The passage is not in *sT*; it stems from Rashi's glosses on the Hebrew Bible contained in the dossier of the Latin Talmud. See the edition of Rashi's Latin glosses on Exodus in Hasselhoff 2017, p. 164.

⁴⁹ A similar case is made by Jerónimo de Santa Fe, although he quotes a different text, namely *Bava qamma* 113b: "qualquier judío que sabía derecho al christiano et fazia testimonio en ayuda dél que fuese excomulgado, porque quitava la pecunia del poder del israelita con su testimonio / quod quicunque Iudaeus sciret ius Christiani et testimonium perhiberet ex eo, esset excommunicatus; vt qui pecunias auferibat Israelitarum aut gentibus illas exhiberet" (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, vi, 2, p. 158; Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, vi, p. 553).

⁵⁰ *tT* 5 [63], p. 76; *sT* [1542], p. 426.

minim, id est haereticorum, et mors ipsorum est in manibus cuiuscumque postquam est publicum, et ille qui non scit quod Talmud sit lex de caelo, de nozrim et massummadim, minim, gohim, non sunt de populo Israhel, de quibus non est habere testes et iudices ac defensiones. Quicumque ergo tales interficit, facit magnam elemosynam, quia tollit inpedientes legem.

From the 13th century on, the authority of the ‘Oral Law’ was a central point of contention in Christian-Jewish polemics. Drawing on ‘*Eruv*. 21b, Nicholas Donin in his 35 Articles against the Talmud dedicated an entire section – Article 8 – to the subject: “Morique debet qui non servavit quae dixerunt [*sc. sapientes*] / He ought to die who does not observe what they [*i.e. the scribes*] say.”⁵¹ The topic was likewise discussed in Jerónimo’s *Errores*, where it appears already in the work’s introduction:

E non res menos los ordenadores del dicho Talmud por bien firmar e fundar sus ordenaciones e errores, mandaron en diversos lugares que todas las cosas ordenadas por ellos en el dicho Talmud ayan tanta efficaçia commo las cosas mandadas por nuestro Señor Dios en la Ley mosaica e ponen pena de muerte a qualquier que negara algo de las cosas scriptas por ellos.⁵²

The importance of the topic is confirmed by a second reference to it, in chapter v of the *Errores*:

[...] pusieron fama que aquellas reglas e constituçiones que ellos estrenían que nuestro señor Dios avía mandado a Moisés de palabra en aquellos quarenta días que estudo en el monte e llamaron la Ley de boca el Talmud, que quiere dezir doctrina, e pusieron muchas más penas gruesas al que viene contra aquélla.⁵³

While it is difficult to determine whether the author of the accusations/confessions drew on these or other texts, he clearly expanded on this fundamental claim, adding further elements to it such as the phrase from *Ber*. 7b: “One is permitted to provoke the wicked in this world.” The peculiar rendering of this phrase in the *Extractiones* reads: “Elemosyna est inpu gnare

⁵¹ See the edition in Capelli 2019, p. 42.

⁵² Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, Intro., 4, p. 91. Latin text: “Et nihilominus vt ordinationes dicti Talmut et eorum errores ceremoniasque fortius fundarent, mandarunt in locis diversis, quod omnes ordinationes in dicto libro Talmut constitutae tantam efficaciam haberent, sicut ea quae a Domino nostro Deo patre sunt in lege Mosaica constituta; deinde mortis poenam imponunt cuique negenti aliquid ex iis quae in dicto volumine continentur et per eosdem scripta sunt.” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, Prol., p. 545).

⁵³ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, v, 1, p. 147. Latin text: “[...] dederunt famam quod omnes regulas et constitutiones statutas per eos, Deus statuerat et praeceperat Moysi vivae vocis oraculo facere observari in illis 40 diebus quibus steterat in monte, et Legem oris illam vocaverunt. Item vocaverunt eam Talmuth, id est doctrinam, et illis qui transgressores illius essent maiores poenas imposuerunt” (Jerónimo de Santa Fe 1677b, v, p. 552).

impium”, a lexical choice that was apparently adopted by the author of the accusations/confessions.⁵⁴

20. *Vigesimo confessus est quod iudaei tenent et dicunt contra Christum quamdam blasphemiam per modum orationis contra christianos vocatos gohim per eos qui incipit: gohim certum est quod ante te pro nihilo adpretientur.*

Accusations/confessions 20 to 22 denounce Jewish liturgical hymns which denigrate Christians. Already during the Paris trial against the Talmud of the 1240s, extracts of such literature, the *piyyutim* or *qerovot*, were translated into Latin under the title *Liber krubot*.⁵⁵ However, only general parallels between the present accusations/confessions and the *Liber krubot* can be established. Concerning item 20, I could not identify the incipit of the anti-Christian prayer: “Before you, they [sc. the Christians/gentiles] will certainly be valued for nothing.”

21. *Vigesimo primo confessus est quod in die indulgentiarum septembris dicunt multas maledictiones contra reges et principes et contra Edom et Ismahel et contra omnem exercitum christianorum.*

Imprecations against Edom and Ismahel, referring to the Christian Church and Islam, occur frequently in the hymns translated in the *Liber krubot*. Moreover, some of them are explicitly mentioned as being part of the liturgy surrounding Yom Kippur. However, the latter is referred to as “dies indulgentiarum” in the present charge, while the *Liber krubot* calls it “dies expiationis”.⁵⁶

22. *Vigesimo secundo confessus est quod qui [read: in] Roshanna continetur una oratio quam dicunt iudaei in festo propitiationum, ubi dicunt et vocant christianos superbos et pollutos et dicunt sic: Et nos paupertatis homines sumus in potestate dominorum crudelium habentium in nobis potestatem, et habent in nobis potestatem superbi et consummunt nos polluti incircumcisi.*

This accusation/confession refers to another anti-Christian hymn, which is again said to be part of the liturgy of Yom Kippur. The idea that Jews are under the dominion of an arrogant and unclean people – the Christians – res-

⁵⁴ *tT* 11 [18], p. 196; *sT* [59], p. 32.

⁵⁵ See the edition by Görges K. Hasselhoff in van Bekkum 2019, pp. 203–215. Many hymns of the *Liber krubot* were also copied into *tT*.

⁵⁶ See Hasselhoff in van Bekkum 2019, [6], p. 204, [16], p. 206, [39/40], p. 213 and *passim*.

onates very much with the *Liber krubot*.⁵⁷ Interestingly, Yom Kippur is now referred to as “dies propitiationum”, that is, differently from how it appeared in the previous item. This variance may be the result of the author’s blending together of different source texts.

23. *Vigesimo tertio, si quis cognoverit uxorem alicuius muti aut surdi vel mente capti vel desponsati alicui puero, omnis talis est immunis et etiam cognoscens uxorem minoris aetatis tredecim annorum et unius diei, posito quod iam ille iuvenis cognovisset eam, etiam si sit sororia cognoscentis, talis est immunis.*

This accusation/confession develops a Talmudic teaching according to which deaf-mute individuals, mentally disturbed persons and minors are not halakhically competent (see *Yev.* 112b–113a). Therefore, the author of the accusations/confessions argues that somebody who has sexual intercourse with the wife of such persons cannot be punished as an adulterer. The passage seems to read *Yev.* 112b–113a in the light of Maimonides’s *Mišneh Torah*, *Naš.*, *Išut* 2:10, which was translated by Jerónimo in the *Errores*:

E declara Rabí Mosén que non ha nonbre varón fasta que passa de treze años, porque se sigue de sus palabras quel onbre que ha menos de treze años es liçençado de qualsequier manera de adulterios. [End of the quote from Maimonides]. Item se sigue que el onbre grande que faz adulterio con mugier casada, el marido de la qual aya menos de treze años, que no peccan.⁵⁸

I have not found a Latin (or Aragonese) source for the author’s contentions referring to deaf-mute and mentally disturbed humans.

24. *Vigesimo quarto confessus est si pater aut filius vel frater cognoscunt aliquam carnaliter, vi vel sponte cuilibet ipsorum licitum est desponsare.*

The case made in this accusation/confession is very obscure: namely, that a father, son or brother can marry a woman if they have had sexual intercourse. As incestuous relations are categorically forbidden in the Talmud, “father”, “son” and “brother” in this place can hardly refer to the direct kinship with the woman in question. Rather, one may surmise that they refer to the family relationship with the husband of that woman. Perhaps this charge is the result of a misinterpretation or a gross distortion of the Talmudic concept of levirate marriage, according to which the brother of a deceased husband can marry the widow if the couple is childless. A passage like *Sanhedrin* 55b could explain, at least in part, such a misinterpretation or misrepresentation,

⁵⁷ See Hasselhoff in van Bekkum 2019, [32], p. 212, [48], p. 214 and *passim*.

⁵⁸ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, I, 16–17, p. 102 (not included in the Latin edition).

as it makes levirate marriage dependent on the sexual intercourse: “in a case where the childless husband of a girl who is three years and one day old dies, if his brother, the *yavam*, engages in intercourse with her, he acquires her as his wife”. Of course, this still does not explain why the author mentions the father or the son (of the deceased husband?). As it stands, it is very difficult to conceive how rabbi Samson de Louhans could have admitted this charge.

25. *Vigesimo quinto confessus est quod iudaeus aetatis novem annorum et unius diei coeat cum bruto vel supponat se alicui viro, tam brutum tam uterque, omnes sunt innumes, quia in prohibitione dicitur vir et non puer.*

The source for this charge is rather clear: it is *Sanhedrin* 54b, which claims that homosexual intercourse of a boy who is under the age of nine cannot be punished. The text is rendered by Jerónimo in his *Errores*:

Item dicen en el mesmo capítulo quel que yaze con el másculo non peca sinon es que aya de nueve años e un día suso.⁵⁹

4. Conclusion

As our analysis shows, the alleged confessions of Rabbi Samson de Louhans are the result of a complex interplay of various sources, among which Jerónimo de Santa Fe’s *Errores* and the anonymous *Extractiones de Talmud* stand out. The following table systematizes our findings:

	Jerónimo	Extractiones	Donin	Krubot	Unidentified
1	<i>Errores</i> v, 11	<i>tT</i> 5 [8], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 142v			
2		<i>tT</i> 5 [62]			
3					x
4		<i>tT</i> 5 [51], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 122r–v			
5					x
6			Talmudic anthology [10], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 122v		

⁵⁹ Jerónimo de Santa Fe 2006, I, 15, p. 102 (not included in the Latin edition).

7		<i>tT</i> 5 [11], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 137v			
8	<i>Errores</i> v, 5				
9	<i>Errores</i> vi, 3, also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 137v	<i>tT</i> 5 [34]			
10		<i>tT</i> 5 [19], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 138r, but different rendering			
11		<i>tT</i> 5 [68], also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 141r			
12	<i>Errores</i> vi, 3, also <i>De publicatione</i> , f. 130r	<i>tT</i> 5 [69] and [72]			x
13					x
14					x
15					x
16		<i>tT</i> 6 [73]			x
17		<i>tT</i> 5 [114]			
18		<i>tT</i> 5 [63]			
19	<i>Errores</i> , Intro., 4 and v, 1	<i>tT</i> 11 [18]	Article 8		
20					x
21				[6], [16], [39] and <i>passim</i>	x
22				[32], [48] and <i>passim</i>	x
23	<i>Errores</i> i, 16–17				x
24					x
25	<i>Errores</i> i, 15				

Table: Sources of the Charges

As the table shows, many of the charges can be traced either to the *Errores* or to the *Extractiones* or even combine both sources. Yet seven accusations remain (3, 5, 13–15, 20, 24) that bear no correspondence to anything in these texts, and at least another five (12, 16, 21–23) where the sources we have identified must have been complemented with further materials. It is worth noting that these passages cluster towards the end of the list. Such clustering may be an indication that the author of the accusations/confessions resorted to at least one further written source.

In many cases, specifically charges 1, 4, 6–7, 9 and 10–12, not only do passages from the *Errores* and the *Extractiones* appear to have been the sources of the charges, but the very same passages are also quoted in other sections of André's work. The wording of these 'doublets' indicates that the charges draw on the original works as their ultimate source rather than on the additional occurrences in André's treatise. A possible explanation for this strange textual situation, which is characterized by clear doctrinal overlaps on the one hand and significant lexical and syntactic difference on the other, is that André brought manuscripts or manuscript notes to Chambéry which became the toolbox both for his treatise and for the accusations/confessions.⁶⁰ Such materials may have included not only the *Errores* and the *Extractiones* but also other works. In fact, research on André's *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud* has shown that he used texts which are not known to us today (Fidora, Lampurlanés Farré 2025). One hint of such texts could be the reference in charge 4 to not selling anything to Christians three days before and after Shabbat. This rather strange ruling is only transmitted through André's *De publicatione* and the charges, thus pointing to a common source that is lost today.

The latter passage is one of several obvious errors – not to mention the mean-spirited distortions – to be found in the accusations/confessions: from the wrong attribution of a passage in charge 1 that refers to '*Avodah zarah*' instead of *Berakot* to the *carte blanche* for what looks like incestuous marriage in charge 24. Such mistakes are not surprising given the intertextual nature of the accusations/confessions, which, being the result of a complex chain of transmission, are very prone to error. What is striking, however, is that Rabbi Samson de Louhans would have admitted such accusations, even when being put under extreme pressure. Given that it is very unlikely that the rabbi really 'confessed' these charges, one may wonder whether we should read the 'confessions' as a literary elaboration rather than a faithful record of a historical event.

Such doubts grow even stronger when looking more closely into the manuscript transmission of André's *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, which includes an 'abridged' version of the work. In this version, the list of accusations/confessions is divided into only 13 items, against the

⁶⁰ Either from Tortosa, where André had access to Jerónimo's *Errores* and other texts, such as the *Extractiones* which were kept in Benedict XIII's library at his court in Peñíscola (see Faucon 1886–1887, vol. 2: p. 123), or from Constance, which – like other councils – hosted an enormous book market (see Lehmann 1921).

25 of the version examined in the present article.⁶¹ Now, this ‘short’ version not only omits some of the charges from our version (which is unsurprising for an abridgement), but it also adds new ones, most of which can again be traced to the *Errores* and the *Extractiones de Talmud*. The existence of two sets of partly overlapping accusations, which cannot be derived from one another, suggests that charges have been added and omitted *ad libitum* in both versions. Such a procedure is difficult to conceive of when drafting a historical record; by contrast, it fits very well with the compilation of charges from various available sources.

Altogether, the intertextual patchwork of the charges, their flagrant misrepresentations of and mistakes with regard to Talmudic teachings and the existence of at least two versions of their text strongly suggest that the alleged confessions of Rabbi Samson de Louhans, as transmitted by André Dias de Escobar in his treatise *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud*, must be interpreted in the context of an established literary tradition of Christian anti-Rabbinic polemics, stretching from the Paris disputation in 1240 to the Tortosa disputation of 1413–1414. Rather than reflecting lived Christian-Jewish relations in Savoy, they are a prime example for the extremely significant intertextual dimension of the anti-Rabbinic campaign during the Middle Ages. Thus, over centuries, ‘imported’ texts from very different geographical areas and historical moments were read and copied – in Chambéry and elsewhere – to fuel the anti-Rabbinic narrative and to create and stabilize the enemy image of the ‘Talmudjude’.⁶²

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⁶¹ The list of 13 items was transcribed from MS Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 698 by Merhavaya 1970, pp. 605–606.

⁶² Patschovsky 1992, pp. 14–27.

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ABSTRACT: One of the most important sources on the Talmud trial in Savoy in the year 1417 is the hitherto unedited treatise *De publicatione haeresum contentarum in Talmud* by André Dias de Escobar. The Portuguese cleric and eyewitness to the Chambéry proceedings against the Talmud provides a fairly detailed account of the events, including a comprehensive list of confessions attributed to the prominent rabbi Samson de Louhans. This article presents a philological and doctrinal analysis of the rabbi’s alleged confessions, which have come down to us only in André’s work. It argues that these confessions do not reflect the actual circumstances of the Jewish community in Savoy but rather are based on a combination of well-established literary models. Consequently, the document must be considered a prime example of the distinctly intertextual dimension of anti-Rabbinic discourse in the Middle Ages.

KEYWORDS: Jews of Savoy, Talmud trial, Latin Talmud, Jerónimo de Santa Fe