

The Napa Witch is considered, by the people of Prats de Lluçanès, to be the last Witch of Catalonia, but what was the witchcraft movement?

At the beginning of the 17th century, there were some years known as "the bad years". During this time, the population was in serious trouble, as there were severe droughts in the summers and very cold winters. In addition, these climate changes caused a large number of storms that further damaged crops, and allowed the spread of disease, increasing the infant mortality of the population.

The people, very religious and illiterate, wanted to find a culprit to explain all the hardships they were going through, and they found that the only one responsible was the Devil himself, along with all his disciples, that is, witches and wizards.

Between 1617 and 1627, in Catalonia, the municipal councils directed all the anger of the people towards the persecution of witches and wizards. They set up a series of courts to arrest, interrogate (where different methods of torture were often used to obtain confessions) and try people accused of witchcraft. During this time, witch hunters also appeared, people who claimed to be able to see marks, invisible to the human eye, that the devil had left on the bodies of his disciples (witches and wizards). Many of the people accused of witchcraft died by hanging, in public executions.

It seems that the persecution of witches and wizards ended in 1627, as part of the Catholic Church opposed it, apart from the fact that the processes that took place left great economic losses for the municipal councils. But more than 100 years later, the people of Prats de Lluçanès accused their neighbor of witchcraft, she was the Witch Napa.

The Napa Witch was actually Maria Pujol, a neighbor of Prats de Lluçanès, daughter of Cal Nap. She was an old woman, and it was not known what she was working for, but she was still surviving. Some neighbors fed her, others accused her of stealing from orchards and farms so she could live, raising suspicions against the woman.



In 1766 a traumatic event happened in the village. The quartered body of Anna Riambau, a 4-year-old girl, was found in a manure pit. Neighbors began to investigate who might be responsible for the death, and some began to suspect the Napa Witch.

Some neighbors went to see the Napa Witch, but when she saw a large crowd in front of her house, she escaped from the crowd in such a way that no one still explains how she did it. Neighbors entered the house and discovered Anna Riambau's left arm and her blood-stained liver.

Neighbors began a raid to find the Witch Napa, and found her on the coast of San Sebastian, in Roc Foradat, a place that is said to have been used by this Witch to make her ointments and to worship the devil. Once she was found, she was arrested and taken to the village.

In order to be tried, she was transferred to Barcelona, where she was accused of being a criminal, and was hanged. Although the sentence did

not accuse her of witchcraft, the witchcraft in Prats de Lluçanès was ended by the people of the village.

