Nota copyright

Copyright notice

THE EVOLUTION OF DOMINICAN STRUCTURES OF GOVERNMENT I: THE FIRST AND LAST ABBOT[1]

BY
SIMON TUGWELL OP

1. *Matthew, 'abbot of the Order of Preachers in Paris'*

Matthew of France was famously the first and last Dominican abbot, and he has caused historians a fair amount of trouble, from Ferrandus onwards. According to Jordan (*Lib.* 47-48), the occasion for Matthew's election was the dispersal of the brethren in 1217. Dominic announced that he was going to send them out 'per mundum', few as they were, and then, as Jordan goes on,

> uisum est ei bonum ut aliquem sibi fratrem in abbatem eligerent, cuius auctoritate ceteri regerentur ut maioris et capitis, cuius tamen correctionem ipse sibi retinuit. Et electus est frater Matheus canonice in abbatem. Ipse in hoc ordine primus atque nouissimus abbas appellatus est, quia postmodum placuit fratribus ut ob humilitatis insinuationem is qui preesset non abbas sed magister ordinis diceretur.

This implies, not only that Matthew was elected abbot, but also that the title was not used again because of a subsequent decision to substitute 'magister ordinis'. So, although Dominic retained some kind of authority over Matthew, Matthew is apparently presented as having been elected head of the order.

---

[1] I continue to use the same abbreviations as in the 'Notes on the life of St Dominic' which have been appearing in AFP since 1995.

Ferrandus obviously felt that such a startling development needed an explanation, so he did his best to supply one (Ferr. 32):

> Voluit autem eos aliquem sibi ex fratribus eligere in abbatem, cuius arbitrio ceteri regerentur, ita tamen ut tam super ipsum abbatem quam super ceteros fratres penes fratrem Dominicum resideret auctoritas corrigendi. Hoc autem faciebat uir sanctus disponens adire terram Sarracenorum et eis uerbum fidei predicare. Unde eciam barbam aliquanto tempore nutriebat.

Saracens were certainly being mentioned as a possible missionary target in 1219 (*ACB* #32, 47); and Cecilia confirms that Dominic had a beard when she knew him (*Mir.* 15). But it is out of the question that he was planning to go on any foreign mission in 1217 (cf. AFP 68 [1998] 67-70).

Ferrandus also filled out what Jordan says about the later decision not to use the title 'abbot':

> Placuit namque postmodum fratribus ut humilitatis gratia is qui toti preesset ordini magister ordinis diceretur, ceteri uero minores prelati priorum uel suppriorum uocabulo censerentur.

As he saw it, a decision was made, not just about the title of the head of the order, but about the titles of all Dominican superiors. And, unlike Jordan, he does not specifically connect 'abbas' with 'magister ordinis'; we are left to infer simply that 'abbas' dropped out when all superiors' titles were fixed. This suggests that Ferrandus was not entirely happy with the statement he found in the *Libellus*.

Nevertheless his story still implies that 'abbot' was an earlier title for the head of the order, and this becomes fully explicit again in the revised edition of Ferr. 32:[2]

---

[2] Ferrandus's original text is a typical compromise between two sources of information: Jordan, suggesting that *abbas* was replaced by *magister ordinis*, and another (more accurate) source suggesting that *abbas* was simply dropped when all titles were fixed. Ferrandus does justice to Jordan by providing an explanation why a new head of the order was required; he does justice to his other source by refraining from saying that it was precisely *magister ordinis* which superseded *abbas*. Cf. his tactic in the story of Reginald (Ferr. 33-36), which we have discussed in AFP 68 (1998) 24-26. The revised text of Ferrandus was not produced by Ferrandus himself (cf. H.Barth, AFP 54 [1984] 99-100); this is shown by signs that the revisers did not always understand Ferrandus's meaning, as here, where they reintroduce Jordan's misconception that *abbas* was replaced by *magister ordinis*. There is another instance of their misunderstanding at Ferr. 60 (where both the printed text and the appara-

> Placuit namque postmodum fratribus ut insinuande humilitatis gratia qui toti preesset ordini *non abbas sed* magister ordinis diceretur, ceteri uero inferiores prelati priorum uel suppriorum uocabulo censerentur.

Ferrandus's explanation of the election of abbot Matthew was for a long time universally accepted,[3] but only Janssenius, I think, explicitly faced up to its consequences. His account is not entirely coherent, since he states that Dominic wanted to go and preach to Cumans and Persians, and then, only a few lines later, tells us that his journey to the Saracens was thwarted. Nevertheless he tries to make sense of the plain implication that Dominic for a time ceased to be head of the order:

> Priusquam delecti in suas quisque provincias abirent, placuit toto ex corpore Abbatem unum eligi, qui cunctis præesset. Electus itaque est in Abbatem F.Matthæus: idque ea de causa, quod ipse DOMINICUS jam tunc Cumanis & Persis se Fidei præconem destinaret. Verum is Prælatus fuit hac appellatione primus & ultimus: mutato enim consilio statutum fuit, ut qui toti Ordini præesset, Magister Ordinis, alij Priores & Suppriores vocarentur. Et quidem inhibita ad Saracenos S.DOMINICI profectione, ipse in Magistrum Ordinis primum electus est.[4]

This does full justice to the belief that, as abbot, Matthew held the job which later received the title 'magister ordinis'; but it is difficult to square with Janssenius's own affirmation that, at the 1220 general chapter, Dominic 'abdicare se conatus est Præfectura Ordinis, atque in ceterorum numerum redigi voluit' (153). If, until Dominic's election as Master, it was abbot Matthew who was head of the order, it was Matthew who needed to abdicate in 1220, not

---

tus are inaccurate in MOPH XVI): Ferrandus wrote: 'etatis quidem alter supra quintum dimidium, alter supra tercium dimidium agens annum' (i.e. 'alter agens dimidium annum supra quintum ...': one of the children was half way through the year after his fifth year, the other was half way through the year after his third year), but his elegant word-order stumped the revisers, who inserted 'et' each time before 'dimidium', which yields an apparently more straightforward syntax, but destroys the construction.

[3] Cf. Const. 26; Humb. 34; Dietrich 73; Gui, *Leg. S.Dominici* 34; Galvano (MOPH II 13); Calò I 48; Antoninus, *Hist.* III tit. XXIII 4.3; Taegio, *Chron. Ampl.* (Bologna 1894 f.22^{v}, AGOP XIV 51 f.8^{v}), *De Insig.* (AGOP XIV 54 f.27^{r}); Flaminius f.XIV^{v} (only Flaminius just says that Dominic was planning to go overseas and does not specify Saracens as his objective).

[4] N.Janssenius, *Vita S.P. Dominici*, Antwerp 1622, 73-74.

Dominic. *ACB* #33 leaves us in no doubt that it was, in fact, Dominic who asked to be 'deposed'.

In the absence of Bzovius's Dominican annals, we cannot know what he made of abbot Matthew. But he seems to have been unhappy with the received story, since in *Annales Ecclesiastici* XIII, 1219 IX, he dates the dispersal of the brethren to 1219 rather than 1217, and it is difficult to see what motive he could have had for this (unless it was sheer carelessness), except an unwillingness to believe that Dominic was proposing to go to the Saracens as early as 1217.

The most influential proposed solution was that of Malvenda (170). He draws attention to the fact that, according to Vincent of Beauvais (*Spec. Hist.* XXX 67), Dominic retained ultimate authority:

> Voluit ut sibi quemdam per electionem preficerent, penes quem super omnes, sub ipso tamen, regendi et corrigendi auctoritas resideret.[5]

This, according to Malvenda, is the essential key to the interpretation of Matthew's abbacy. The 'series Annalium nostrorum', he insists, shows that Dominic retained supreme authority over the order continuously until his death. His conclusion is that 'Matthæus in Abbatem electus est, cum ea potestate, quæ Vicario Generali Ordinis nunc esse solet: & vt si S.Dominicum in ea profectione ad Saracenos mori contingeret, haberent Fratres iam legitimum Prælatum'. Since the expedition to the Saracens never happened, 'Fr. Mattheus loco Vicarii Generalis tantum forte remansit, at ea functio mox extincta est'. This interpretation saves Dominic's position at the head of the order, but totally fails to explain why a mere vicar general should be adorned with the title of 'abbot'.

Rechac (306) quietly drops the Saracens in favour of the Cumans; otherwise he essentially follows Malvenda and makes Matthew a short-lived vicar general. In his brief life of Matthew, however, he adds the comment, 'L'autorité neanmoins luy fut laissée pour toute la France' (Rechac 555). The difficulty with this assertion is that, if Matthew was vicar general in France, it is difficult to divine what rôle Reginald had when he was sent to Paris. We know that he was Dominic's vicar in Bologna (MOPH I 25), and a variant in some manuscripts of VFr III iv (MOPH I 102) gives him

[5] This comes from Const. 26.

the same title in Paris;[6] if he was not Dominic's vicar there, by what right did he accept the profession of Jordan and Henry (*Lib.* 65, 74)?

Souèges (314) follows Rechac in making the Cumans Dominic's intended destination in 1217, but he makes no comment on the nature or duration of Matthew's abbacy.

Échard (QE I 15), perhaps inspired by Rechac, takes a much more radical approach: 'F.Matthæus hac occasione electus abbas non aliam hoc titulo videtur habuisse auctoritatem quam superioris in Francia, & præsertim in Parisiis.' This suggestion respects Matthew's title and does not dilute its import, as Malvenda had done; but at the same time it respects Dominic's continuing position as head of the order. However, it appears to contradict a whole battery of sources, and this is presumably why it was generally ignored by later writers.[7]

Cuypers offers no opinion on the significance of Matthew's election, and Cristianopoulo returns to Malvenda's theory (Mamachi 410):

> Secundas apud nostros obtinuit Matthæus partes, remque Ordinis publicam, quemadmodum qui loco Magistri præsunt, Vicariique generales vocantur, ad tempus, & quasi precario gubernare cœpit. Nam præcipuas perpetuo Dominico fuisse tributas exploratum est. Quod si is, quo tempore apud Saracenos ageret, decessisset, Matthæum, quin suffragia ferrentur, principem fuisse locum, auctoritatemque in Ordine habiturum.

Thus reaffirmed, this interpretation was enabled to survive almost unchallenged into the twentieth century.[8]

---

[6] The variant may derive from a note made by one of the readers in Paris whom Humbert asked to comment on VFr as part of his preparation of the work for publication; see my forthcoming book, *The shaping of the Vitas Fratrum*, to be published in the *Dissertationes Historicae* of the Dominican Historical Institute (this book is now the expected incarnation of the article on the *Vitas Fratrum* which I have several times announced).

[7] Touron (204, 653) seems to be the most faithful follower of Échard; in his view, Matthew was quite simply superior of the brethren sent to Paris.

[8] Cf. Pollidori 74 ('Essendo egli pertanto costituito Capo dell'Ordine dal Sommo Pontefice, acciocchè nel tempo della sua assenza vi fosse alcuno, che supplisse le veci sue, stimò bene, che essi prima di dividersi eleggessero uno tra loro, che presedesse al governo del medesimo'); Drane 183 ('He desired them to make a canonical election among themselves of some one who should govern the Order in his absence, or in case of his death'). Mortier I 90 offers only a slight modification of Malvenda: 'Dominique, qui a toujours au cœur l'ardent désir d'évangéliser les infidèles, propose aux Frères de se choisir un supérieur général maintenu cependant

The first important modern dissenter from the traditional account was Scheeben (238-239), who maintained that Matthew was simply elected superior of Saint-Romain. Jordan was wrong, then, to treat him as equivalent of the later Master of the Order; he 'hat die Stellung des Abtes unrichtig gedeutet ... Matthäus ist nicht Ordensvorsteher, sondern Vorsteher des Klosters Romanus gewesen, wie eine Urkunde von 1220 eindeutig erklärt.'[9] Nevertheless, Scheeben continues, Jordan and Ferrandus correctly grasped the significance of Matthew's election: it was intended to provide for the unity of the order independently of Dominic, and it could do this in as much as 'alle Brüder, die von Dominikus von Toulouse ausgesandt wurden, rechtlich zum Konvent St. Romanus gehörten und auch weiterhin diesem Konvent affiliiert blieben kraft ihrer Profeß.'

In his annotated edition of Mandonnet, Vicaire defended Jordan's authority against Scheeben, pointing out, quite reasonably, that 'si ... Matthieu n'avait été élu *abbé* en 1217 que pour fournir un *prieur local* à Saint-Romain, il n'y avait aucune raison de l'envoyer dans le même moment à Paris' (Mandonnet–Vicaire I 60). Nevertheless he conceded that Matthew was elected abbot of Saint-Romain, interpreting this to mean abbot of the congregation of Saint-Romain, like the abbot of St Victor or the abbot of Prémontré; he thus, in effect, put up against Scheeben a theory which is essentially the same as Scheeben's. His original contribution was the analogy with St Victor and Prémontré, which manifestly does not hold water; the abbots of St Victor and Prémontré may indeed have headed whole congregations, but they were still local superiors of their own monasteries too. One would be surprised to find a newly elected abbot of St Victor or Prémontré immediately transferring his residence to some other monastery.

In 1936, Échard's suggestion was, consciously or unconsciously, revived by Meersseman, who declared, without discussion, that Matthew 'anno 1217 a S.Dominico Parisius mittitur tanquam superior localis' (MOPH XVIII 82). Once again little notice was taken.[10]

---

sous son obéissance personnelle. Matthieu de France est élu et prend le titre d'abbé ... Son autorité resta sans effet, car Dominique ne put réaliser son héroïque dessein et demeura le seul Maître de l'Ordre'.

[9] The document in question is said to be Balme III 29 (i.e. Koudelka #120), but Scheeben must have intended to refer to an earlier text (Balme II 250-251, Koudelka #96), in which Matthew is indeed called 'abbas sancti Romani'.

[10] Carro (368), however, seems to take it for granted that Matthew was simply superior of Paris.

By 1957, Vicaire (*Histoire*[1] II 90-91) had wisely dropped other abbots from his account; he had also come to accept that Jordan's account was not 'tout à fait exact'. Matthew, he argued, was elected abbot of Saint-Romain. Since the brethren, after the dispersal, were all technically canons of Saint-Romain, Matthew was still their abbot. So he was not head of the order nor was he even Dominic's vicar; 'il est comme un héritier provisoire'. In support of his interpretation Vicaire drew attention to the same document that Scheeben presumably meant to refer to: MOPH XV #92 (Koudelka #96). He does not explain how Matthew could be abbot of all the brethren without being either superior general or at least Dominic's vicar.

To say that Matthew was elected abbot simply to be Dominic's heir apparent is rather like saying that Prince Charles should be called 'king' to show that he is next in line to the throne and, as such, precisely not yet king. And the point first raised by Vicaire against Scheeben still stands, and it stands against Vicaire himself as much as it does against Scheeben. By 1216, at least since the brethren first became canons regular, Saint-Romain had its own superior, with the title of 'prior'. The prior was Bertrand of Garrigue (Koudelka #74-76). The only reason for electing a new superior was the impending departure of Bertrand for Paris (*Lib.* 51); but this could not possibly be a reason for electing someone else who was equally going to Paris.

In spite of its obvious difficulties, Vicaire's theory seems to have been widely accepted.[11] Its attraction, I suppose, is that it can claim documentary support in Koudelka #96 for Matthew being abbot of Saint-Romain, and it does some sort of justice to the tradition that he was elected superior of the whole order.

The starting point for almost all the interpretations that have been proposed of *Lib.* 48 is the apparent datum that Matthew held the position whose later title was 'magister ordinis'. In reality, though, there are three basic data, which need to be examined separately: (1) in 1217 Matthew was elected abbot, in connection with

---

[11] E.g. Hinnebusch I 51; Lippini 122; Bedouelle 77; B.Ashley, *The Dominicans*, Collegeville 1990, 8. Galmés (39), however, contents himself with the seemingly contradictory assertion that Matthew was elected 'superior general ... aunque la dirección de la Orden seguiría en manos de Domingo'. Lohrum (62-63) says only that Dominic wanted the brethren to elect a superior 'der die verstreuten Brüder zusammenhalten sollte, falls dem Gründer etwas zustieße'.

the dispersal of the brethren; (2) at some stage a decision was made about superiors' titles in the order; (3) Jordan interpreted this decision as substituting 'magister ordinis' for 'abbas'.

Dominic and his preachers constituted an anomalous entity, and it is not surprising that they generated some rather unclear terminology. When the Toulouse chapter gave Saint-Romain to them, the formal deed states that it was given 'fratri Dominico, priori et magistro Praedicatorum et sociis praesentibus et futuris' (Koudelka #73). A document drawn up on 31 March 1217, in one of the periodic attempts to resolve the dispute between Prouille and the monastery of Saint-Hilaire over the church of St Martin in Limoux, says that agreement was reached 'inter nos ex una parte et fratrem Dominicum, priorem ecclesiae Sancti Romani et G. Clareti et alios fratres Praedicationis ecclesiae Sancti Romani ex altera' (Koudelka #82); in the monks' eyes, at least, Prouille had no autonomous existence apart from Saint-Romain, and Dominic, as prior of Saint-Romain, was competent to act on its behalf. Nevertheless, by 2 March 1216 at the latest, Prouille had its own prior, Natalis (Koudelka #70),[12] and on 23 October of the same year Bertrand is attested as prior of Saint-Romain.[13] And there can be little doubt that, in whatever sense Dominic was prior, Natalis and Bertrand were the local superiors of their respective houses.[14]

---

[12] Bernard Gui found a document at Prouille dated 1214, in which Natalis was called *prior* (MOPH XXIV 24); though no such document is known to survive, there is no reason to dispute Gui's statement.

[13] In Koudelka #70, 71, and 85, Natalis styles himself *prior* of Prouille, and in the lost original, of which #76 is Gui's paraphrase, Bertrand probably styled himself *prior* of Saint-Romain; these titles were therefore not just used by outsiders. But in #82, Dominic apparently accepts the title given him by the monks ('nos frater Dominicus, prior Sancti Romani'), though the text may have been drafted for him on behalf of the monks.

[14] Vicaire (*Histoire* II 63) claims that Bertrand was simply a vicar whom Dominic had put in charge during his own absence, and that that is why he received gifts 'au nom du fondateur'; he thus uses Koudelka #74-75, dated 23 and 28 Oct., as evidence that Dominic had already left for Rome. But, apart from the implausibility of *prior* as a title for a mere vicar, the formula 'dompno Dominico et fratri Bertrando priori' is parallel to the ones used with reference to Prouille in #70-71, and there is no reason to believe that Natalis was merely a temporary vicar at Prouille, nor does Vicaire suggest that he was; indeed, he takes 'vobis domino Dominico ... et priori Natali' in #70 as evidence that Dominic was present in person, as well as the prior (*Histoire* II 38). And Bertrand is not said to receive the gift 'au nom du fondateur', but 'pro eodem Dominico et omnibus habitatoribus dicte domus presentibus et futuris' (Koudelka #74), that is to say, he was acting on behalf of the

Since Bertrand was one of the friars sent to Paris, in principle there were three positions to be filled in August 1217: prior of Saint-Romain, superior of the party going to Paris, and superior of the party going to Spain. Dominic's own rôle as 'prior et magister predicatorum' was not affected.

Jordan's narrative is, naturally enough, focused on Paris. He was in Paris himself, and his information came from the brethren who had been sent to Paris. From this point onwards he displays no interest in or knowledge of what was happening at Prouille or in Toulouse; and he can tell us nothing about events in Spain or in Italy beyond what he could have learned in Paris in 1218-1219 (cf. AFP 68 [1998] 18-33). It is therefore not particularly surprising that the *Libellus* contains nothing about the election of a new prior for Saint-Romain or of a superior for the brethren going to Spain. On the face of it, it does provide information about the superior of the party sent to Paris (*Lib.* 51): 'Missi sunt Parisius frater Matheus electus abbas cum fratre Bertrando ...'.

That Matthew really was abbot of Paris, as suggested by Échard, is shown by Koudelka #120: 'Nos abbas et conuentus ordinis predicatorum Parisius commorantium ...'. The original survives (there is a facsimile of it in Balme III 30), and the text is not in doubt. The interest of this document was vividly brought out by Koudelka in 1963 (AFP 33 [1963] 90-95). His article was noticed by Hinnebusch (I 71 n.77) and by Vicaire (*Histoire* II 91-92); yet neither of them apparently observed that he, like the document on which he was commenting, took Matthew to be abbot of Paris, not abbot of Saint-Romain.

The deed in question dates from 31 March 1220. It concerns only the brethren in Paris and it is presented, very properly, as emanating from the 'abbot and community'. Both the abbot and the community appended their seals. Since, for the period before the general chapter of 1220, this is the only surviving document in which Matthew reveals how he understood his own rôle, its importance can scarcely be exaggerated.

---

entire community. On 24 May 1221, Ugolino formally invested 'fratrem Galam, priorem fratrum Predicatorum qui Brixie commorantur, nomine et vice magistri Dominici, prioris ipsius ordinis, et vice et nomine totius ordinis' with possession of a church in Brescia (Koudelka #170); is this evidence that even in 1221 local priors were merely Dominic's temporary vicars? The point in all these documents is that the acquisition or disposal of property was regarded as concerning the whole order, not just an individual prior or community.

2. *An abbot without an abbey*

In itself, there was nothing odd about sending an abbot and community to make a new foundation. Much the same terminology was used, for instance, in the Praemonstratensian customary (IV 3 in Lefèvre–Grauwen and Krings). What might be considered anomalous was sending an abbot and community to a place where not even a site had been secured for their monastery. It is also rather strange that a community which had not previously had an abbot should launch a new foundation with an abbot.[15]

The first anomaly was, in a way, quite in keeping with developments so far. After all, there had been an operation (*predicatio*) before there was a community, and a community (*conventus*), in Peter Seilhan's house, before there was a monastery. And, with hindsight, the dispersal in 1217 can be seen as foreshadowing one of the more unusual structural features of the order: whereas traditional orders rested on monasteries, the Dominican order adopted the *conventus* as its primary unit, and, as Koudelka has never tired of pointing out,[16] *conventus* means the formal group of religious, not its monastic buildings.

In ordinary usage, an abbot was defined by his monastery: he was abbot of Prémontré or Cîteaux or Westminster or wherever. But for some time the Dominicans in Paris did not have a monastery. They moved into Saint-Jacques in August 1218 (*Lib.* 53), but they did not acquire ownership of it until 3 May 1221 (Koudelka #160), and even their right to celebrate the liturgy there was disputed until well into 1220.[17] In these circumstances the question inevitably arose: of what was abbot Matthew abbot? In his own eye, he was abbot 'of the Preachers in Paris' (Koudelka #120); the *conventus* is already the point of reference, not the *monasterium* (which they did not have anyway); but it is not surprising that other people were reluctant to endorse such an unusual title. This is surely why, in February 1219, Jean de Briard made his gift to the Parisian Dominicans as 'abbati et comfratribus Sancti Romani de ordine Predicato-

---

[15] Jordan is probably correct to see Matthew as the order's only abbot. Sufficient documentation survives from Prouille and Toulouse and from Italy to make it certain that there were no Dominican abbots there, and, if the brethren sent to Spain had been equipped with one, this would surely have left some trace in Ferrandus or Rodrigo or in some document from the peninsula.

[16] AFP 33 (1963) 91; MOPH XXV p.123; *Ut sint unum* 36 (1986) 174-176.

[17] It was not until 29 July 1220 that the pope wrote to the canons of Paris to express his delight that they had granted the brethren this right (Koudelka #128).

rum' (Koudelka #96). Since, a year later, the 'abbot and community of the Preachers in Paris' felt competent to surrender the gift to someone else (Koudelka #120), it is clear that they and they alone were the recipients of Jean's benefaction; Saint-Romain had nothing whatsoever to do with it. But, in 1219 (and, indeed, in 1220), Saint-Romain was the only monastery which the Order of Preachers possessed,[18] so, for anyone who assumed, as most people would have assumed, that an abbot had to be abbot of a monastery, Matthew had to be abbot of Saint-Romain.

To what extent Dominic deliberately sent Matthew and co. to Paris without first securing a monastery for them, we can never know; but we should certainly not assume that this is what he would have done if he had had a freer hand.

Lib. 46-47 might give the impression that everything happened rather impetuously. Immediately after reporting the dream which alerted Dominic to the impending death of Simon de Montfort, Jordan goes on:

> Et inuocato spiritu sancto conuocatisque fratribus dixit hoc esse sui cordis propositum ut omnes eos licet paucos per mundum transmitteret nec iam ibi diutius insimul habitarent. Admirati sunt omnes tam subite dispersionis prolatam ab eo sententiam, sed quoniam animabat eos euidens in ipso sanctitatis auctoritas acquieuere facilius ad bonum hec omnia finem prouentura sperantes.

Nevertheless, Dominic's behaviour does not, in general, suggest impetuousness. In 1216 Fulk gave the brethren three churches, and each one was meant to receive a community; yet, by the time of the dispersal in 1217, no friar had been sent from Saint-Romain to either of the other two churches (*Lib.* 43-44). This suggests that Dominic was waiting until he thought Saint-Romain was ripe for dismemberment.

What Jordan says in *Lib.* 47 must be interpreted in the light of John of Spain's testimony (*ACB* #26):

> Item dixit quod, cum esset cum dicto fratre Dominico apud Tholosam in conuentu ecclesie supradicte, ipse frater Dominicus contra uoluntatem comitis Montis Fortis et archiepiscopi Narbo-

[18] Koudelka #90 in principle gave the brethren of Prouille the status of a separate monastery, but I have argued that this bull was never implemented (AFP 65 [1995] 127-133).

> nensis et episcopi Tholosani et quorumdam aliorum prelatorum misit hunc testem quamuis inuitum Parisius cum quinque fratribus clericis et uno conuerso ut studerent et predicarent et conuentum ibi facerent, et non timerent quia omnia eis prospera cederent. Et prelatis predictis et comiti et fratribus dicebat, Nolite contradicere, ego scio bene quid facio. ... Interrogatus quomodo scit omnia predicta respondit quia diu conuersatus est cum dicto fratre Dominico et uidit ea que de eo dixerat, excepta disciplina de cathena, de qua supra dixerat. Et alia scit quia uidit et interfuit predictis et contingerunt sibi et sociis suis.

John, as is his wont, is probably oversimplifying. He could obviously bear personal witness to his own reluctant dispatch to Paris, but it is not particularly likely that he was present at all Dominic's conversations with Simon de Montfort and the various prelates who did not want the preachers sent out of the region. 'Nolite contradicere, ego scio bene quid facio' may well be what Dominic said to the brethren, when he announced his decision to split them up; Jordan's account of their response rather implies that he did say something of the kind. It is doubtful, however, whether John was in a position to know what Dominic said to Simon and the prelates.

We cannot take John's words entirely at their face value; nevertheless, we must accept his evidence that the brethren in Toulouse knew that Dominic discussed his plans with Simon de Montfort, Arnaud of Narbonne, Fulk of Toulouse and other prelates (such as Guy of Carcassonne, no doubt), and that he met with a uniformly unsympathetic response. This implies that Dominic discussed his plans with the brethren too, which is in any case what we should have expected; it is most unlikely that he kept them in the dark until the very moment when he dispersed them, and even less likely that he chose that precise time to inform them that everybody he had consulted disagreed with him.

Beguiled by Const. 25-26, historians have imagined Dominic returning from his first visit to Honorius III full of plans to expand his order. But, as we have seen, this is false. Innocent III wanted him to turn his preachers into a church-wide religious order, but in 1216-1217 Honorius gave him no encouragement to do this and certainly furnished no legal basis for the expansion of the order as an order of preachers (AFP 65 [1995] 30-35, 37-39).

In fact, as Jordan rightly indicates (*Lib.* 46), the dispersal of the brethren in 1217 was precipitated by the political situation in Toulouse. Should the city fall into the hands of Simon's enemies,

it would become an impossible base for the operation of preachers so closely identified with him and with the thoroughly 'compromised' bishop Fulk. And the threat did not suddenly appear out of nowhere in the summer of 1217.

It was already clear in 1216, before Dominic even left for Rome, that the crusaders' grip on Toulouse was precarious. During that summer, while Simon de Montfort was at the siege of Beaucaire, Raymund, the deposed count of Toulouse, was rallying an army in Catalonia and Aragón, and, according to Cernai, Simon was aware that 'Tolosana civitas et alie terre quas tenebat erant in summo perdicionis periculo'. When the siege of Beaucaire was over, on 24 August, Simon hastened to Toulouse and, for the moment, scared Raymund off ('Raimundus, quondam comes Tolose, qui et ipse veniebat ad occupandam Tolosam, confusus aufugit') (Cernai #583-585).

The immediate danger was over, but that did not mean that Simon's position was now secure. When he returned from Rome in 1217, Dominic must have been aware that the people of Toulouse were still waiting for an opportunity to get their old count back.

What Dominic was discussing in 1217, after his return from Rome, was not some abstract vision of the Order of Preachers spreading throughout the church, to which Simon and the local prelates could hardly object; the agenda was dictated by the situation in the Midi: with Toulouse under threat, it would be prudent to move the preachers' base of operations elsewhere. It would obviously have been possible to keep the Toulouse community intact and transfer it to Prouille or to one of the brethren's other two churches; such a solution would, no doubt, have seemed preferable to people whose primary concern was the Midi, like Simon, Arnaud and Fulk. But, however long and faithfully he had fulfilled the task which had fallen to his lot, Dominic was not personally committed to the Midi for ever; he dreamt of wider horizons, as his conversations with William of Monferrato show (*ACB* #12; cf. AFP 68 [1998] 63-67). It is quite understandable that the precariousness of Saint-Romain prompted him to revive the broader vision for his order suggested by Innocent III, and to think in terms of a base right outside the Midi, in Paris, and of other possibilities elsewhere.

We do not know when Dominic consulted Simon, Arnaud, Fulk and the other unspecified prelates, but, as modern scholars have rightly assumed (e.g. Scheeben 237; Vicaire, *Histoire* II 90), he must have approached them individually, as there was no local council or

other such occasion on which he could have met them all at once.[19] This suggests that, far from acting impetuously, he was proceeding with admirable caution. And it is more than likely that he intended to take soundings in Paris too, before coming to any decision; after all, he had in his possession a papal letter exhorting Parisian masters to come to Toulouse (Koudelka #78), so he must have hoped either to go to Paris himself to make use of it, or to entrust it to someone who could act on his behalf. This would have provided a perfect opportunity to open negotiations with the bishop of Paris for the erection there of something similar to Saint-Romain in Toulouse; if these were successful, then, whatever happened in the Midi, the preachers would still have a secure base from which to operate.

Although the situation in the Midi was threatening, there was no reason to expect any immediate crisis; in fact, things seemed to be going rather well for the crusaders in July 1217. Simon had brought the son of the count of Foix to heel, he had secured the territory south of Carcassonne, and now he was engaged in a triumphant campaign in Provence against the son of the deposed count of Toulouse (Cernai #590-599). Dominic probably thought he had plenty of time on his hands — he had told William of Monferrato that he would not be free to embark on a mission to Prussia for another two years (*ACB* #12).

Vicaire says that Dominic announced his decision 'à la fin du printemps, peut-être à la Pentecôte (14 mai)' (*Histoire* II 90). But, apart from the not very cogent comment that 'nul jour ne conviendrait mieux que cette fête pour ce geste', no evidence is cited except that it was only in early May that Dominic could have contacted Simon de Montfort.[20] And the timing of his discussion with

---

[19] It is particularly unlikely that he could have met Simon and Arnaud together, since they were in a state of feud over the duchy of Narbonne, which both of them were claiming; on 7 March 1217 Honorius III instructed his legate to restore it to Arnaud (Potthast #5490), but Simon evidently appealed, and on 23 Oct. Honorius ordered Arnaud to appear before him in person (Potthast #5611).

[20] Even this is not absolutely certain. When Dominic returned to the Midi from Rome towards the end of March (AFP 66 [1996] 110), Simon was perhaps still besieging Montgrenier, not very far from Foix; the siege ended on the vigil of Easter (25 March) and Simon went home to Carcassonne (Cernai #590). There he remained, so far as we know, until about the middle of May, except for a trip to Agen, where his presence is attested on 18 April (Devic–Vaissète VI 502-503). After that, he set off on a new campaign in the region of Termes, south of Carcassonne, after which he apparently went straight East towards the Rhône, where he was successful against

Simon, even if it were certain, would not be evidence for the timing of his decision or the announcement of his decision. But in any case, Vicaire has misread the situation.

John of Spain's testimony implies that the brethren were well aware of what Dominic was thinking, and they probably knew, in particular, that he was hoping to establish a base in Paris. What surprised them was the suddenness of the dispersal (and, perhaps, its scale): 'Admirati sunt omnes tam subite dispersionis[21] prolatam ab eo sententiam'. An eventual *dispersio* they had foreseen, but not such a *subita* and unprepared *dispersio*. The announcement which startled them was not, 'I am going to disperse you', but 'I am going to disperse you *now*'; it was surely then that he assured them, 'I know what I am doing'.[22] If we may trust Salanhac (and why not?), it was on 15 August that the brethren were given their marching orders (MOPH XXII 15); it is out of the question that they had received advance warning in May.

The dispersal was sudden because Dominic himself was taken by surprise. As Jordan makes clear (*Lib.* 46), it was a quite specific development which prompted his decision: 'Disposuerunt Tholosani insurgere contra comitem Montis Fortis'. This goes beyond the city's general reluctance to accept Simon's rule, of which Dominic had long been aware; the Toulousains were now planning an actual insurrection. Count Raymund finally entered Toulouse on 13 Sept. (Devic–Vaissète V 2211), but before that he had secretly crossed the

---

the 'young count' Raymund (Cernai #591-592). He then carried his campaign across the Rhône (Cernai #596-599) and did not return West until news reached him of the insurrection of Toulouse in September (Cernai #600). Undoubtedly the most convenient time for a meeting between Dominic and Simon was during the latter's stay in Carcassonne; but we do not know enough about Dominic's moves to exclude other possibilities. If he went to Narbonne to consult Arnaud, he might also have gone further East to meet the legate, cardinal Bertrand, who was more or less stuck at Orange (Devic–Vaissète VI 504); this would have provided him with a later opportunity to discuss his options with Simon.

[21] Contrary to the impression given by Scheeben's apparatus in MOPH XVI 48, *dispositionis* is found only in Cuypers's edition of the Osma manuscript; the rest all have *dispersionis*, which is also supported by Ferr. 31.

[22] He may also have used the argument implied by Ferr. 31, that 'semina dispersa fructificant, congesta putrescunt'; as Koudelka points out (AFP 33 [1963] 103), there is a certain similarity between the principle here ascribed to Dominic and the argument used by Honorius III to persuade Parisian theologians to come to Toulouse (Koudelka #78), 'qui ... melius fructificare valeant transplantati'. Since it was Dominic who prompted Honorius's letter, he may also have suggested this argument; and it is quite possible that Ferr. preserves a genuine memory of what Dominic said in 1217, transmitted by Spanish brethren who heard him say it.

Pyrenees, hoping to take advantage of Simon's absence in Provence; he entered the territory of Roger of Comminges, where he held discussions with his supporters, before moving on to Toulouse itself (Puylaurens 100, *Chanson* laisses 180-181). It is unlikely that he had taken such a step without encouragement from the citizens of Toulouse; Puylaurens (98) indicates that they had maintained contact with him while he was in Spain. This is the situation to which Jordan alludes. Dominic had got wind of a serious plot to recapture Toulouse for Raymund while Simon was far away, and he surmised, correctly as it turned out, that there was little time to lose; the matter was perhaps clinched by a dream which he interpreted as foretelling the death of Simon (*Lib.* 46).[23]

This is how it came about that abbot Matthew and his *conventus* were sent to Paris with no idea where they were to establish their monastery, and with no guarantee that they would even be accepted, let alone that they would be able to operate a *predicatio*. If events had unfolded differently in the Midi, who knows when they would have gone to Paris and how much preparatory work might have been done before their departure? As it is, they de facto pioneered the principle soon to be enshrined in Dominican law, that a Dominican *conventus* is defined by its constituent members, not by its monastery, and, if need be, it can exist as a formal entity without having a monastery at all.[24]

---

[23] It was later believed at Prouille that Dominic knew prophetically that the brethren had to leave Toulouse (*ACL* #20 — the fuller text in the Modena manuscript makes it explicit that the witness was a religious of Prouille); but it is not clear whether this was something believed at the time or a later interpretation of Dominic's decision. At any rate, it is unlikely that he broadcast his dream at the time, since its effect could only be demoralising; he probably told his companions about it after Simon's death, and I have argued at length (AFP 65 [1995] esp. 60-61, 99) that he was then travelling in Spain with John of Spain and Peter Seilhan, which would explain how the dream came to be known to Jordan. The etiquette of visions seems to have been different from that of miracles: it was very bad form to allow stories of one's own miracles to circulate (cf. MOPH I 75), but there was apparently no objection to revealing one's dreams and visions, otherwise Jordan would not have related his own vision in *Lib.* 65. Guala similarly must have talked about the vision he had at the time of Dominic's death (*Lib.* 95); and modesty seems not to have been put at risk even by his liking to go to Bologna on Dominic's feast day to read the reading about it at matins (Bartholomew of Trent #20). Even Rao, who did hide his vision out of humility, was later prompted by divine inspiration to reveal it (Const. 65).

[24] A striking example of this is the *conventus* sent to England in 1221 (*Lib.* 88).

3. *Abbot, master and prior*

The use of the title 'abbot' can most plausibly be viewed as part of the Dominicans' normalisation as religious in the tradition of the canons regular. It has been suggested that its adoption was related to a difference in terminology between 'France' and the Midi, but this seems to be quite illusory.[25] It is true that there were canons in the Midi whose superior was called 'prior';[26] but 'abbas' seems to have been the more common title, and it was used even by secular canons like those of S.Paul, Narbonne, whose abbot features in the Languedoc canonization process (*ACL* #18). In Toulouse itself the canons of S.Sernin had an abbot (e.g. Devic–Vaissète VIII 495); elsewhere we may cite the abbots of S.Antonin, Pamiers (one of whom appears in *ACL* #6); Lombez; Les Quarantes, Narbonne; S.Aphrodise, Béziers (e.g. Devic–Vaissète VIII 589); S.Jacques, Béziers (*Gallia Christiana* XIII 91-100, 153-157, 319-320, VI 192-198, 384-397, 414-417).[27] Conversely, at just this time, the new and eminently Parisian order of canons of Val-des-Écoliers was taking shape in 'France' under a régime of priors; even the mother house only had a prior until 1539, when Paul III upgraded him to abbot (*Gallia Christiana* IV Inst. 218-220).

The evolution of Dominican titles goes hand in hand with the development of the institutions of the *predicatio*.

In the beginning there was simply the operation, and the natural title for the person in charge of an operation is *magister*. It is

---

[25] 'Abbé ... désigne dans la tradition des chanoines de France le supérieur propre d'un chapitre et signifie l'équivalent de prieur dans les régions méridionales' (Vicaire, *Histoire* II 91). The only authority cited for this contention is G.Schreiber, *Kurie und Kloster im 12. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1910, II 324 note 4 and 331 note 3. I do not know whether Vicaire had actually seen these notes for himself; in any case, they are totally irrelevant to any alleged difference in terminology between France (in the sense of northern France) and the Midi. In both notes Schreiber draws attention to a difference between France (including the Midi) and Germany, canons in France (amongst others those of Saint-Ruf in Avignon) tending to call their superiors 'abbas', while those in Germany tended to favour 'praepositus'.

[26] E.g. Notre Dame de Cassan and Notre Dame la Réale, Perpignan (*Gallia Christiana* VI 417-419, 1112-1115).

[27] *Gallia Christiana* I 49 gives the impression that Saint-Salvi, Albi, abandoned abbots in favour of *praepositi* when it became a community of canons regular, but this is misleading. Although Saint-Salvi was not the cathedral chapter, it had very close connections with the bishop, and the canons lost their abbot because, at some point, the bishop appropriated the title to himself, leaving the canons with a *praepositus* (J.L.Biget, 'Sainte-Cécile et Saint-Salvi. Chapitre de cathédrale et chapitre de collégiale à Albi', CdF 24 [1989] 65-104, esp. p.69).

too easy for academics to forget that *magister* is not inherently an academic title; its primary significance is found, for instance, in two phrases which go back to classical Latin and are still current in modern English: 'master of ceremonies' and 'ship's master'.

The only trouble with *magister* in a christian context is that it seems to fall foul of the Vulgate rendering of Matt. 23:10-11, 'Nec vocemini magistri ... qui maior est vestrum erit minister vester.'[28] Thus people who had the responsibility of running an operation like preaching or ransoming, and were therefore naturally regarded as *magistri*, were sometimes tempted to call themselves *minister* instead. In the eyes of the Toulouse chapter, Dominic was 'magister praedicatorum' (Koudelka #73), but he referred to himself as 'predicationis humilis minister' (Koudelka #61); the pope called the head of the Mercedarians *magister*, but, for a time, the superiors general themselves preferred *minister*.[29]

In as much as the head of the *predicatio* was the senior member of a party of clerics, he could also be described as *prior*. Thus Cernai says that his uncle Guy became 'prior inter predicatores et magister' (Cernai #51), and Puylaurens describes Durandus of Osca as 'prior' of the Poor Catholics (Puylaurens 48). The same title was also readily applied to the head of the clerics attached to a monastery of nuns, as in the orders of Fontevraud[30] and Sempringham.[31]

In July 1216, in the deed in which Saint-Romain was made over to Dominic and his preachers, the Toulouse chapter gave Dominic much the same title that Cernai gave to abbot Guy years before, 'prior et magister Praedicatorum' (Koudelka #73); and even after the transformation of the Toulouse *predicatio* into a religious order, Dominic continued to call himself 'minister predicationis' (AFP 65 [1995] 24-25). No one seems to have seen any reason to

---

[28] The neat opposition *magister/minister* does not exist in the Greek. Verse 10 belongs with the two preceding verses: you should not be called 'rabbi', because there is only one teacher (διδάσκαλος); or 'father', because there is only one father, the heavenly Father; or 'instructor' (καθηγητής), because Christ is the instructor. Verse 11 then introduces a new point: the 'greater' (μείζων) of you is to be called 'servant' (διάκονος).

[29] J.W.Brodman, *Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain*, Philadelphia 1986, 43, where the use of both titles among hospitallers is also noted, though without any attempt to analyse their respective significance.

[30] Cf. J.Dalarun, *L'impossible sainteté*, Paris 1985, 261.

[31] Cf. B.Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order*, Oxford 1995, 107.

abandon the titles inherited from the old papal mission, in spite of the successive institutional changes which turned it, first, into a formal diocesan body, and then into the Order of Preachers.

To what extent Dominic was called *prior* (apart from the phrase 'prior et magister') is unclear. Bernard Gui treats him as the first prior of Prouille (MOPH XXIV 23-24):

> Hic monasterium rexit et direxit ab exordio ut principalis per seipsum annis aliquibus, quamvis non ibi assidue residens, sed ad diversas partes pro multorum salute discurrens, et ob hanc causam alios instituit loco sui, scilicet fratrem Natalem et fratrem Guillermum Clareti. A confirmatione vero ordinis cepit non Pruliani, sed S.Romani prior et magister ordinis appellari et per priores alios, sub ipso tamen, monasterium gubernari.

There is no documentary evidence that Dominic ever used the title 'prior of Prouille' himself, or that anyone else in the neighbourhood ever applied it to him, nor did Gui at first claim to have seen any such evidence, as he did with regard to Natalis and William Claret (loc. cit.); what he says was probably inferred from *Lib.* 29. Later, he found one document at Prouille which did call Dominic 'prior Pruliani' and duly noted this in the margin of some of his manuscripts; but, as Koudelka has shown (AFP 28 [1958] 100-111), the document is inauthentic. And, on Gui's own account, Natalis was already called prior of Prouille in 1214, which does not easily square with Dominic's retention of the title until the 'confirmation' of the order.

What Gui says about Dominic's change of title derives from his own interpretation of the bull of confirmation (cf. *Cat. mag.* 10, MOPH XXVII 98), in which, it is true, Dominic is given the title of 'prior of Saint-Romain' (Koudelka #77). But he cites evidence (recognisably Koudelka #74) to show that Bertrand was prior of Saint-Romain in October 1216, two months before the 'bull of confirmation'; this makes it difficult to see how it could be true both that Dominic only acquired the title when the order was confirmed, and that he was the first prior of Saint-Romain, as Gui alleges (MOPH XXIV 46-47).

The letter in which Innocent III took Prouille under his protection on 8 Oct. 1215 (Koudelka #65) is addressed 'priori, fratribus et monialibus'. As is customary in curial documents, the prior is not named, but, assuming that Innocent or anyone else in the curia identified him at all, they probably identified him as Dominic, at

whose request the letter was issued. Honorius III certainly treated Dominic as prior of Saint-Romain in 1216-1217 (Koudelka #77, 79, 81). For both popes, *prior* was a convenient and conventional title to give to someone whom they needed to treat as a religious superior, and who did not have any more specific title such as 'abbot' or 'provost'; but papal terminology is a poor guide to the terminology that was taking shape on the spot.

The only local document in which Dominic is called 'prior of Saint-Romain' is #82, in which, as I have suggested, Dominic accepted this designation simply because it suited the monks of Saint-Hilaire to use it. Like the pope, they wanted it to be clear that their agreement was with the man in charge, and, in the absence of any other standard ecclesiastical title, *prior* was the most obvious term available.

It is clear that, at this stage, there was no official or universally recognised way of referring to Dominic. In the eyes of those who saw the burgeoning Order of Preachers as the continuation of the old *predicatio*, it was natural to think of him as *magister*, which he persisted in translating into *minister*. *Prior*, by contrast, was used by people less familiar with the *predicatio*, who needed some way to refer to him as the religious superior of the brethren of Saint-Romain.

It was undoubtedly correct to believe that Dominic outranked both Natalis and Bertrand; but this need not be understood to mean that they were not real priors, superiors of their own houses. Prouille had apparently had its own prior for some time; and *prior* was a normal title for the senior cleric attached to a monastery of nuns. We may surmise that, when the preachers of Toulouse became canons regular and took possession of their new home in Saint-Romain, the *prior et magister predicatorum* became two separate officials there too: Dominic was still the head of the whole operation, the *predicatio*, but Bertrand became superior of its monastic base. As head of a relatively small community of canons, it was quite unobjectionable that he should be called *prior*; this was, indeed, the title which Dominic had been used to at Osma, where the chapter was headed by a *prior* (cf. Koudelka #1a and 2).[32]

---

[32] In Toulouse the head of the cathedral chapter was called *praepositus* (e.g. Koudelka #73), but in Castile *prior* was normal (cf. J.F.Rivera, 'Cabildos regulares en la provincia de Toledo', in *La Vita Comune del Clero nei secoli XI e XII* vol. I, Milan 1962, 236).

The introduction of the term *abbas* is connected with the way in which the order was at first expected to expand, on which we have valuable information from Jordan. According to *Lib.* 43, Fulk gave the brethren three churches, 'in quarum qualibet conuentus et prioratus esse debebat'.

In spite of the success of its English derivative in modern English-speaking Dominican circles,[33] *prioratus* did not enter normal Dominican terminology; this is no doubt why Ferrandus rephrased Jordan's comment in more 'Dominican' terms and said that each of the three churches 'conuentualis esse debebat' (Ferr. 29). Nor was the word's later usage yet normative: in the thirteenth century, *prioratus* did not denote a fully-fledged monastery with a *prior* at its head, or a 'priory' in the sense of a subordinate monastery; it designated a dependency of a monastery, such as a church belonging to a house of monks or canons, in which a monk or canon was deputed by his monastery or chapter to serve as parish priest.[34] Since 1179 it was forbidden for such religious to be left on their own (Lateran III, can. 10):

> Monachi ... non singuli per villas et oppida seu ad quascumque parochiales ponantur ecclesias, sed in maiori conventu aut cum aliquibus fratribus maneant, nec soli inter saeculares homines spiritualium hostium conflictionem exspectent.

Locally, in the Midi, more precise rules had been laid down by the council of Montpellier in 1215, whose canons 30 and 31 dealt with *prioratus* (Mansi XXII 946):

> Cum monasteria et canoniæ regulares prioratus seu obedientias habeant, et in ipsis singulos fratres ponere consueverint ... statuimus ut si talis fuerit prioratus in quo tres fratres valeant comorari, tres ad minus fratres ponantur ibidem, et unus ex eis prior fiat, qui curam omnium habeat.
>
> Si vero tot fratribus non sufficit prioratus, cum pauciores vix possent regulariter vivere, duæ vel tres ecclesiæ juxta arbitrium episcopi, ubi præest episcopus, vel abbatis seu propositi, ubi non præest epis-

---

[33] An extremely superficial investigation suggests that it became normal to refer to a Dominican house as a 'priory' only in the 19th century, presumably because by then 'convent' was, in popular usage, generally taken to mean a house of religious women.

[34] Cf. J.Dubois, 'I termini "prior" e "prioratus" nel medioevo', *Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione* VII, Rome 1983, 832-834.

copus, iungantur in unum et illi priori qui instituetur respondeant. Et idem prior in illis ecclesiis in quibus non sunt fratres, per seculares capellanos ministret.[35]

Jordan is slightly misleading in saying that the Dominicans were meant to establish a *prioratus* in all three of their churches. In reality they established their monastery at Saint-Romain, and the other two churches were among its *possessiones* (Koudelka #77). Nevertheless, we may accept that these two churches were intended in due course to become *prioratus*. In accordance with local law, this would require a community of at least three friars in each; but Jordan's phrase 'conuentus et prioratus' suggests a more substantial presence. The fact that the verb after 'conuentus et prioratus' is in the singular ('debebat') shows that the two nouns constitute a hendiadys for 'prioratus conuentualis', that is to say, a *prioratus* with sufficient religious to form a proper community.[36] I do not know of any exact definition of what constituted a *prioratus conuentualis*, but it clearly had to be enough like a normal monastery to be considered a suitable place for the formation of young religious.[37]

The plan, then, was to have one fully-fledged monastery at Saint-Romain, and dependencies elsewhere, staffed by a proper community, not just by the statutory handful of religious. All the friars would thus be friars of Saint-Romain, as were those of Prouille, which was also regarded as a *possessio* of Saint-Romain (Koudelka #77, 82).

---

[35] This or similar legislation was often repeated (cf. references to other councils in the Midi in CdF 19 [1984] 324-325; also L.Boisset, ed., *Un concile provincial au treizième siècle, Vienne 1289*, Paris 1973, 282). The council of Béziers in 1233 called for '3 or 4' monks to be together in a *prioratus* (Mansi XXIII 277-278). In the North, the council of Rouen in 1231 stuck to the minimum requirement of Lateran III that there must be at least two religious per *prioratus* (Mansi XXIII 218). On *prioratus* in the Midi, cf. J.Avril, 'Les dépendances des abbayes (prieurés, églises, chapelles). Diversité des situations et évolutions', CdF 19 (1984) 309-342, esp. 324-332; id., 'La participation du chapitre cathédral au gouvernement du diocèse', CdF 24 (1989) 41-63, esp. 52-54; J.L.Biget, ibid. 80.

[36] The distinction between *prioratus* and *conuentus et prioratus* is brought out by the periodic calls from local councils for the reestablishment of *conuentus* in *prioratus*. E.g. the council of Rouen, 1231, canon 6: 'Statuimus ut in locis sive prioratibus ubi congregatio conventualis solet esse, si facultates ecclesiæ suppetant, illius conventus restauretur ibidem' (Mansi XXIII 215); and the almost identical canon 10 of the council of Sens, c.1239 (Mansi XXIII 411).

[37] 'Monachi qui non attingunt quindecim annos in prioratibus non conventualibus nullatenus ponantur' (Council of Castres, 1231, canon 25; Mansi XXIII 238).

If things had developed as expected in the Midi, it is more than likely that the superior of Saint-Romain would sooner or later have acquired the title 'abbot';[38] but the crisis in August 1217 set the young order on a different path. Saint-Romain might have no future at all; Paris must therefore become the seat of a, perhaps even the, motherhouse of the preachers. We have already noted evidence that it was from Paris that Dominic expected his order to expand, even in the South-East of France (AFP 65 [1995] 123-124). We may also wonder whether Matthew was not trying to establish *prioratus* rather than independent houses in Orléans (cf. *Lib.* 54) and Amiens (cf. Koudelka #133); there is certainly an appreciable gap between the first evidence of Dominicans going there and the existence of a formal Dominican *conventus*. Nor does there seem to be anything to exclude the possibility that Limoges too was originally envisaged as a *prioratus* of Paris, rather than as an autonomous *conventus*. The date and circumstances of the Dominicans' arrival in Lyons are too uncertain to be helpful,[39] but it is not impossible that even in April 1221, when Dominic accepted the church of Fanjeaux for the order, he and Fulk were thinking of an eventual *prioratus* there, rather than an independent *conventus* (Koudelka #153).[40]

That Paris really was, for a time, envisaged as *the* motherhouse of all the preachers in France and the Midi, is suggested, not merely by the fact that it alone had an abbot, but by *Lib.* 43. Jordan was

---

[38] Such an evolution from *prior* to *abbas* seems to be characteristic of canons regular in Castile, except those in cathedral chapters; cf. Rivera, art. cit. 223-230.

[39] Cf. AFP 65 (1995) 136-141. According to Jean Gobi the Elder, the Dominicans did not acquire a *locus* in Lyons until after Jordan became Master: 'Antequam fratres Predicatores locum haberent in Lugduno, frater Iordanis, qui fuit magister secundus in ordine supradicto, misit apud Lugdunum sex fratres, ut procurarent quod fratres Predicatores locum haberent in civitate predicta' (*Miracula beate Marie Magdalene* #83, ed. J.Sclafer, Paris 1996, 178). It is just barely conceivable that this is correct, and that Lyons's place in the Parisian *ordo conventuum* was due to the importance of the city rather than the convent's actual date of foundation; but we know that the convent existed as part of the province of Provence by 1224, when it was transferred to Paris (*Memoralia* 25), and, if it was really founded by Jordan, it is not clear why he did not send friars there from Paris at the outset.

[40] This is suggested by the two options mentioned for the appointment of the parish priest: he is to be presented to the bishop either by the Master or by 'priore in dicta ecclesia a dicto magistro instituto'; this does not sound like an ordinary conventual prior, who, according to a constitution which was probably already in force, should have been elected by his community (PC II 24, dated by Thomas to 1220).

wrong to say that all three churches in the Midi were meant to be *prioratus*; but his mistake is entirely comprehensible if, at the time of writing, even Saint-Romain had become a dependency of Paris.

Paris was a natural place to establish a centre for the Order of Preachers; even if things had been allowed to evolve more calmly, there would probably have been a Dominican abbot of Paris in due course, as well as one in Toulouse. The situation in the Iberian peninsula was significantly different. There was no obvious place to choose for a Dominican motherhouse, no equivalent to Paris — there was, at the time, no functioning university, nor was there any single ecclesiastical or political centre; and the brethren who went there do not seem to have been given any very precise instructions. Their mission was presumably to explore possibilities.

Whatever dreams Dominic may have had for the future, it is almost inconceivable that the four friars he sent to Spain in 1217 were expected to, or even had the authority to, establish a central monastery with outlying *prioratus*. They no doubt had a superior of their own, chosen at the same time that Matthew was elected abbot of Paris; but there is no reason to suppose that he too was designated 'abbot'. Though there is no incontrovertible evidence from the early years, he was almost certainly called 'prior'.

There are two documents from Portugal concerning Sueiro, which may antedate the 1220 chapter.[41] In one, Sueiro is called 'domnus Suerius de Ordine Praedicatorum prior', in the other, 'S.Gomez prior de ordine predicatorum'. The use of 'prior' for the head of a group of religious professing the Rule of St Augustine is unsurprising in Portugal; even the canons regular of Santa Cruz, Coimbra, whose monastery has been described as 'le centre religieux et intellectuel le plus important du Portugal au Moyen Age', had a prior, not an abbot, as their superior.[42]

We also have Jordan's evidence that, when the other Dominic arrived in Paris, it was known that he had already been prior somewhere in Spain, even if Jordan did not accurately grasp the name of the precise place (*Lib.* 31). If it is correct to suppose that

---

[41] They are conveniently published together in A. do Rosário, *Primórdios dominicanos em Portugal*, Braga 1965, 33-35, and in F. da Gama Caeiro, 'Os primórdios dos frades pregadores em Portugal. Enquadramento histórico-cultural', *Arquivo Histórico Dominicano Português* 3/1 (1984) 161-173, esp. 166-167.

[42] Pierre David, DHGE XIII 207. For the title 'prior of S.Cruz' cf. F. de Almeida, *História da Igreja em Portugal*, new ed. D.Peres, I, Porto 1967, 133; Mansilla I #282 etc.

Dominic was prior in Madrid,[43] he was in much the same position as the prior of Prouille, since the house in Madrid was essentially intended for nuns.

The situation in Italy was different again. Here, as in France, there was an obvious university centre, to which Dominic unhesitatingly gravitated: Bologna. But there is no sign that the Bologna convent was ever envisaged as becoming a central abbey, with *prioratus* in other cities. By the time of the 1220 chapter there were already houses in Florence, Rome, Bergamo, Milan, Verona and, probably, Piacenza (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 155-160), and all of them seem from the outset to have existed in their own right, not as dependencies of Bologna; such an arrangement was much better adapted to the political situation in Italy, with its fiercely independent 'city-states'.

There does not appear to be any actual contemporary documentary evidence that Dominican superiors were called 'prior' in Italy before the 1220 chapter, but it would be exceedingly surprising if they were not. On this point there is, as Scheeben realised (309), true benefit to be gleaned from one of the notes in Schreiber, which Vicaire cited in vain to elucidate Matthew's title of 'abbot': 'Ebenso verdient es Beachtung, daß die italienischen Augustiner für gewöhnlich dem Klosteroberen den Titel Prior gaben ... Bermerkenswert ist ferner, daß die Camaldulenser, Vallombrosaner, Olivetaner, Cölestiner und andere Kongregationen der Benediktiner in Italien auf den Titel Abt verzichteten und sich mit dem Namen Prior begnügten' (op. cit. II 331 n.3). In this connection, it is interesting that Constantine of Orvieto considered 'prior' and 'subprior' to be normal titles for religious, whereas 'abbot' seems to have struck him as an innovation perilously close to the *vocum novitates* condemned by St Paul (1 Tim. 6:20). This can be seen in his comment on the order's abandonment of 'abbot' (Const. 26):

> Placuit namque fratribus postmodum ut qui toti preesset ordini non abbas sed magister ordinis diceretur, ceteri uero inferiores prelati priorum et suppriorum, comuni scilicet religiosorum uocabulo censerentur, deuitantes nimirum iuxta apostolum, etsi non prophanas, superstitiosas tamen uocum in omnibus nouitates.

---

[43] Jordan was perhaps informed that Dominic had been prior of 'Maioricum' and did not connect this unknown place with 'Madrid', where he knew that St Dominic had made a foundation (*Lib.* 59); 'Maioricum' must then have become garbled in his mind (or in his notes) to 'Maninum'.

Granted the prevalence of the title 'prior' in Italy, and that it was in Italy that the Order of Preachers knew its earliest significant expansion, and that it was more suitable in Italy to establish proper *conventus* in different cities rather than *prioratus* of a single, central monastery, it is not difficult to see why the title 'abbot' did not survive in the order. The circumstances which made its adoption natural in France were not repeated in Spain or in Italy; when the time came to make a choice, the outcome was pretty well a foregone conclusion.

4. *The formal establishment of titles*

(a) Proposed dates

Both Jordan and Ferrandus refer to a decision which the order took, at some stage, about the titles of its superiors ('placuit fratribus ...').

Malvenda (335-336) appears to be the first person who formally attempts to attach a date to this decision, which, in his view, involved all Dominican titles at once; at any rate, he cites no previous discussion of the point. He argues that it was 'institutum' at the 1221 general chapter 'vt Conuentuum præfecti vocarentur Priores, Prouinciarum vero Præsidentes, Priores Prouinciales, & supremus totius Ordinis moderator, Magister Ordinis appellaretur'. He gives two reasons for this date: the pope was still calling Dominic 'prior Ordinis Prædicatorum' after the 1220 chapter (323),[44] and the title for provincials cannot have been introduced earlier, since the order was only divided into provinces in 1221 (for which he cites the authority of Bernard Gui) (332).

Malvenda quotes no source for his inclusion of provincials, but Flaminius had already taken the same step (on his own initiative, so far as I can discover) in his version of the standard comment on abbot Matthew (f.XIV^{v}):

> Quod quidem præfecturæ nomen in ordine prædicatorum primum tunc fuit, & ultimum. Nam, qui toti deinceps ordini præfuere non abbates amplius, sed magistri ordinis cœpti sunt appellari. Qui uero

[44] He refers to the hybrid version of Koudelka #114 (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 55), though he himself conjectured that the date should be Dec. 1220 *or 1219*, and, rather more cogently, to Koudelka #141 and 148 (from January and March 1221).

singulis præerant prouinciis, uel monasteriis, eos Priores uulgato uocabulo, & qui secundum post illos tenerent locum Subpriores placuit nuncupari.

And he expressly ascribes, not just the division of the order into provinces, but the establishment of the provincials' title, to the chapter of 1221 ('quos Prouinciales appellari priores placuit') (f.LV^r).

We have already seen reason to doubt whether the institution of provinces first happened in 1221 (AFP 65 [1995] 32-35); we shall examine this question in detail in a later article. In any case, neither Ferrandus nor any other early source includes 'prior provincialis' among the titles on which the order is said to have made a decision; this part of Malvenda's argument is therefore worthless.

The evidence he cites from papal letters is more cogent, though, as we have seen, papal terminology is not necessarily a good guide to Dominican usage. But Malvenda's argument runs into one serious obstacle: the first papal document which addresses Dominic as *magister ordinis* is dated 28 April 1221 (Koudelka #159) and therefore precedes the general chapter of that year. Since all sources agree that it was the order, not the pope, which fixed the Master's title, it seems to follow, after all, that the choice of *magister ordinis* cannot have been made at the 1221 chapter.

Échard, without any discernible argument of his own, agrees with Malvenda that the decision to call the head of the order 'magister' was taken in 1221, implicitly suggesting that it was connected with the division of the order into provinces: 'ordine in octo provincias distributo totidem præfecti provinciales creantur, & ut supremum super eos caput magister deinceps vocaretur, injungitur' (QE, date-chart after I 84). The abandonment of 'abbas', however, in favour of 'prior', he dates to the 1220 chapter, on the grounds of the deed (Koudelka #160), dated 3 May 1221, in which John, dean of Saint-Quentin, makes over Saint-Jacques 'Matheo, priori, et fratribus ordinis Predicatorum et eorum ordini' (QE I 20).

Échard's position was adopted in the *Annales*, without any further evidence being supplied (Mamachi 592, 638), and it is still alive and kicking in Scheeben (309, 369, 376) and Vicaire (*Histoire* II 92, 291-292), both of whom explicitly present the decision concerning the head of the order's title as a shift from 'prior ordinis' to 'magister ordinis'.

The claim that two different chapters were involved in the establishment of Dominican titles does not, perhaps, formally contradict Ferr. 32 and all the many standard texts which derive

from it;[45] but it is more natural to take what is said there as referring to a single chapter. This is perhaps why Mortier (I 124), without giving any reason, states that both 'prior' (for local superiors) and 'magister' (for the head of the whole order) were adopted in 1220.

Koudelka, like Échard, treats Koudelka #160 as decisive evidence that it was in 1220 that 'abbot' was dropped in favour of 'prior' (AFP 33 [1963] 92), but the argument is not entirely watertight.[46] Koudelka #160 is the deed in which John of St Quentin made S.Jacques over to the order, and we must assume that he was aware that Matthew had in the past styled himself 'abbot'; on the face of it, then, it is significant that on 3 May 1221 he refers to him as 'prior'. Against this, though, we must recall the embarrassment which others had felt about calling him 'abbot', when he had no obvious abbey of which to be abbot; and we must note that as early as 11 Dec. 1219, when Matthew was certainly still calling himself 'abbot', Honorius referred to him as 'prior' (Koudelka #110), just as he did in 1220 (Koudelka #131-133), and, in particular, in a letter addressed to the university of Paris on 2 Jan. 1221 (Koudelka #137). It is thus possible that John of St Quentin referred to Matthew as 'prior' out of deference to papal terminology rather than because the Dominicans had already changed his title.

---

[45] Const. 26 (quoted in Vincent of Beauvais, *Spec. Hist.* XXX 67); Humb. 34 (quoted in Taegio, *Chron. Ampl.*, AGOP XIV 51 f.8^{v}, Bologna 1894 f.22^{v}); Dietrich 73 (quoted in Taegio, *De insig.*, AGOP XIV 54 f.27^{r}); Antoninus, *Hist.* III tit. XXIII cap. 4.3.

[46] Koudelka perhaps exaggerates the significance of the fact that, whereas in 1220 abbot Matthew and his community used two separate seals, in 1225 prior Matthew used the seal of the community. If the loss of his personal seal was a consequence of the abandonment of the title 'abbot', it was hardly 'une option décisive', as priors soon reacquired their own seals. In 1238 we find a reference to the seals (plural) of the prior and community of Lyons (M.D.Chapotin, *Histoire des Dominicains de la Province de France*, Rouen 1898, 277), and the prior of Paris certainly had a seal of his own by 1259, when he acted on behalf of Simon de Montfort in his negotations with Louis IX over his wife's dowry (*Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion*, selected by R.F.Treharne, ed. I.J.Sanders, Oxford 1973, 200; J.R.Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, Cambridge 1994, 93). A seal found at Sigtuna, attached to a document dated 1287, carries the legend 'S(igillum) prioris fra(trum) pred(icatorum) Sictunien(sium)'; see H.Arbman, ed., *Sigtuna Mariakyrka 1247-1947*, Halmstad 1947, 121-122. On the seals of the priors of Zürich, see M.Wehrli-Johns, *Geschichte des Zürcher Predigerkonvents*, Zürich 1980, 44-46.

(b) Ways of referring to Dominic

It is unfortunate that so much weight has been placed on papal nomenclature for the head of the order. The different titles used for Dominic by different people reflect the ambiguity of his order, which was a kind of amalgam of the old *predicatio* in the Midi and the *religio* of the canons regular; *magister* came from the former, but *prior* was better suited to the latter.

There is no evidence that Honorius was au courant with the steps his predecessor had taken with regard to the mission in the Midi, and when he first encountered Dominic and his brethren, he saw them simply as religious; only gradually did he come to acknowledge that they were also preachers (AFP 65 [1995] 36-37). In Feb. 1218, he took the important step of calling them 'ordo predicatorum' (ibid. 42-44), but he still commends them in the first place as religious, whom it is meritorious to respect ('si personas religiosas diligere ac honorare curetis ...'), though he goes on to say 'quorum utile ministerium et religionem credimus Deo gratam' (Koudelka #86); the balance is just beginning to shift. It is only in Honorius's final bull of commendation, first issued in Feb. 1221, that the Dominicans are presented first and foremost as preachers: to accept them is no longer a matter of proper treatment of religious, it is compared to welcoming a prophet; their religious life is only mentioned en passant ('fratres ordinis Predicatorum qui paupertatem et vitam regularem professi verbi Dei sunt evangelizationi totaliter deputati') (Koudelka #143).

Against this background, it is totally unsurprising that Honorius did not use the title 'magister', derived from the old *predicatio*, and that, when he needed to find a way of addressing Dominic as head of the *ordo predicatorum* he still found it natural to call him 'prior' of the order (Koudelka #109). There is no evidence that this was a title ever used either by Dominic or by any of his brethren. Fulk, at any rate, clearly went on thinking of him as *magister predicationis* (Koudelka #153).

We must not forget that the various ways in which people refer to themselves and to each other do not necessarily constitute formal titles. When Fulk signs himself 'Tolosanae sedis minister humilis' (Koudelka #73), he is using a conventionally modest — and, by comparison with the papal 'servus servorum', a *modestly* modest — way of identifying the rôle which entitles him to endorse the deed in question. The seal which Rechac found still attached to Koudelka #153 bore the inscription 'sigillum Dominici ministri predicationis' (AFP 65 [1995] 24-25); that is Dominic's modesty-formula. He

would surely have been as surprised as anyone if Reginald had replied, 'Yes, Minister', when Dominic told him to go to Paris. In the deed itself, notwithstanding the text of his seal, Dominic calls himself 'magister predicationis', which picks up the 'title' which Fulk gives him earlier in the same document; this too need not be anything more than a way of identifying the capacity in which Dominic is competent to receive Fulk's gift. And Dominic's willingness to repeat the 'title' which someone else has given him is the same here, when he calls himself 'magister predicationis', as it was in Koudelka #82, when he called himself 'prior sancti Romani'. Nothing can be inferred about the official status of such labels.

Dominic, in fact, however much he liked to call himself 'minister predicationis', seems to have been quite willing to let other people refer to him in any way they found appropriate. The only 'title' he does seem to have set some store by is 'frater'.

When Diego became involved in the mission in the Midi, Jordan tells us, he kept Dominic, his subprior with him (*Lib.* 21): 'Hic est frater Dominicus, primus predicatorum ordinis institutor et frater, qui ex eo deinceps tempore cepit non supprior sed frater Dominicus appellari.' This obviously implies that Dominic ceased to be subprior of Osma, which is no doubt true — a canon who had been seconded to a papal mission in the South of France could hardly continue to serve as subprior of the chapter; but Jordan seems also to have received a separate piece of information, that Dominic began to be called 'frater'.

I have been unable to find any direct evidence about contemporary practice in Osma, but certainly Jordan, in Paris, had no reason to consider it odd that a canon regular should be called 'frater'.[47] The subprior of a regular chapter could perfectly well be referred to as 'frater X., subprior'; the mere fact that Dominic resigned as subprior would therefore constitute no basis for saying that he *began* to be called 'frater'.

Whatever may have been normal in Osma, it certainly did not come naturally to people in the Midi to call Dominic 'frater'. Surviving documents confirm that he was never referred to as subprior of Osma after he became attached to the mission in the Midi and

---

[47] Cf. M.Guérard, *Cartulaire de l'Église Notre-Dame de Paris* I, Paris 1850, 111, 114, 115, 144, for examples of canons regular designated 'frater' in this period. Otherwise they are called 'magister', where appropriate, or their names are given without any introductory title. Secular canons, by contrast, are called 'dominus' (ibid. 394, 409).

that he usually styled himself 'frater' (Koudelka #8, 12, 61, 64),[48] and ecclesiastics also called him 'frater' from the outset (Koudelka #5, 9, 58, 63, 73, 82, 83); but hardly anyone else followed suit.[49] From 1207 right up to 1219, we find him more commonly referred to as 'dominus' (Koudelka #6, 13, 28, 29, 47, 48, 49, 50, 70, 74, 95).

That Dominic's preference for 'frater' was both known and hard to accept is suggested by the deed in which the Seilhan brothers divided their property (Koudelka #62). Dominic is referred to as 'frater Dominicus' once, 'dominus Dominicus' four times, and twice as 'dominus frater Dominicus'. From a story recalled by Bernard Gui (MOPH XXIV 59, MOPH XXVII 101), it appears that Peter Seilhan never gave up thinking of Dominic as 'dominus Dominicus', and the brothers' deed clearly reflects the same preference. The compromise, 'dominus frater',[50] is as absurd as the later formula, 'Reverendus Pater Frater'; and it is clear that, in each case, 'frater' is the artificial element. Left to yourself, you call the man 'dominus Dominicus' (or 'Father Blenkinsopp'); the insertion of 'frater' is a concession to propriety.

It should not be thought that 'dominus' was a particularly pretentious title for a priest. Vernacular usage is probably the best guide, and it is clear from the *Chanson* that there were two Occitan equivalents: 'dominus papa' becomes 'lo senher apostolis' (laisse

---

[48] Koudelka #29 illustrates yet again his habit of repeating what someone else has called him earlier in the same document, but this time there is an interesting difference: he picks up 'tibi domino Dominico, Oxomensi canonico' with 'ego Dominicus, canonicus Oxomensis'. He does not insist on *frater*, but he drops *dominus*.

[49] Koudelka #56, 60 and 71 are the only instances before the 'confirmation' of the order. Is it by chance that two of these deeds (#56 and 71) were written by Arnaldus Sancii de Lauriaco? He was 'scriptor publicus de Fanoiovis' (Koudelka #71) and, judging from the number of documents in MOPH XXV which he *scripsit*, he was closely involved with Prouille, and Raimundus Sancii de Lauriaco, who was a *donatus* there (Koudelka #95), was presumably a relation of his; he was probably in a position to know that Dominic did not want to be called *dominus*, and, as it happens, there are 9 documents which he wrote in which Dominic is simply called 'Dominicus, canonicus Oxomensis' (Koudelka #27, 33-37, 39, 46, 57), whereas he is called 'dominus' in only six (Koudelka #28-29, 47-50). Conversely, there are no documents not written by him in which Dominic is neither 'dominus' nor 'frater'. In May 1213 (Koudelka #50), Simon de Montfort was still calling Dominic 'dominus', but on 13 Dec. 1217 (Koudelka #84), he calls him 'frater' (there are incredibly complex textual problems surrounding this document, but 'frater' or the vernacular 'frayre' is in all versions of it).

[50] It is also found in a deed dated 28 Oct. 1216, making over some property 'domino fratri Dominico et fratri Bertrando, priori domus et ecclesie sancti Romani' (Koudelka #75).

208), and both a bishop and a cardinal can similarly be addressed as 'senher' (ibid.);[51] lesser ecclesiastics have to make do with the meagre Occitan derivative from *dominus*, '·n' ('en'), applied to the archdeacon ('prior') of Vielmorès 'n'Izarns' (laisse 84), the provost of Toulouse '·n Mascaro' (laisse 172) and even a mere 'dominus capellanus', 'n'Arbert lo capelas' (laisse 158).[52] It is clear that '·n' is no more portentous when applied to a priest than 'don' in Italian, as sported by Don Abbondio and Don Camillo, or 'sir' in Middle English.[53]

In literary Latin, no doubt, 'dominus' outranked 'frater',[54] but in ordinary parlance 'dominus' and its vernacular counterparts had become cheapened; if anything, 'frater' was a more pretentious title for a canon of Osma to adopt, since it aligned him with 'real' religious, like his Cistercian friend 'frater Aimericus' (Koudelka #12) and the legate 'frater Petrus de Castro novo' (as he is called, for example, by Bérenger of Narbonne [Devic-Vaissète VIII 509] and by Puylaurens [42-44]), and even such an important personage as 'l'abas de Cistels ... que ac nom fraire Arnaut' (*Chanson* laisse 4).[55]

---

[51] Cf. also laisse 202 ('e·l senher avesques' and 'que·l senher apostolis'), and 206 ('e·l senher apostolis').

[52] Pelhisson (114) refers to 'dominus Bernardus capellanus domini episcopi'.

[53] 14th-century English usage is conveniently illustrated by the prologue to the Nun's Priest's tale in Chaucer. The monk is prevented from continuing his tale, with an abrupt 'Good sir'; he can also be addressed as 'sir monk'. But his *name*, i.e. his proper mode of address, is 'dan Piers'. No unambiguous evidence has been produced for the application of 'dan' to a secular priest. The nun's priest is obviously not a man of any importance and 'our host' addresses him brusquely enough: 'Com neer, thou preest, com hider, thou sir John'. 'Sir' is simply the way a priest is addressed, it does not connote any particular respect for him. Later on, in the prologue to the Parson's tale, the parson is twice addressed as 'sir preest'; incidentally, the word 'parson' refers to a parish priest, the legal holder of a benefice, as distinct from a 'vikary', someone substituting for the 'parson'.

[54] Cf. G.Constable, ed., *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* I, Cambridge Mass. 1967, #110-111, where 'frater Bernardus Claraeuallis uocatus abbas' writes to 'domino Petro dei gratia Cluniacensium abbati', and 'frater Petrus humilis Cluniacensium abbas' writes to 'domino Bernardo Claraeuallis abbati'.

[55] The English tendency to treat the distinction between mendicant and non-mendicant as equivalent to a distinction between 'friar' and 'monk' is exaggerated even in English. In addition to examples already cited, we may note that the 13th-century Spanish poet, Gonzalo de Berceo, refers to the Benedictine, Dominic of Silos, as 'el fraire tan honesto' (*Vida de Sancto Domingo de Silos* stanza 90). For a canon regular in the Midi being called 'frater', cf. Devic-Vaissète VIII 1007: the deed of reconciliation between the viscount of Narbonne and the consuls of the borough in 1237 is witnessed, among others, by a canon of Cassan, 'frater Petrus canonicus de Caciano'.

We can only guess why Dominic was so keen on this particular label.[56] Vicaire (*Histoire* I 202) suggests that he was harking back to the gospel, which would be of a piece with his preference for 'minister'; more probably he wanted to present himself as a religious rather than as an official of the church.

However Dominic chose to present himself, his involvement in the papal mission in the Midi was official and gave him real authority. Later inquisition records preserve some references to Dominic reconciling heretics (MOPH XXV 177-180), but the chronological pointers which they contain are too imprecise to give us a clear picture of his activities. Otherwise, the continuing existence of the *predicatio* and Dominic's continuing rôle in it are attested by one document which survives from the period (Koudelka #12), and two more which are quoted in full (Koudelka #8 and 61).

Koudelka #8 is a formal declaration that 'frater Dominicus, Oxomensis canonicus, predicator minimus',[57] has reconciled a heretic 'auctoritate domini abbatis Cisterciensis, apostolice Sedis legati'. The document is undated, and Koudelka's '1208 circ.' is expressly just the mid point of the period during which Arnaud was both abbot of Cîteaux and papal legate. All that is certain is that the terminus ante quem is Arnaud's elevation to the see of Narbonne in 1212.

Koudelka #61 is a similar declaration that 'frater Dominicus, Oxomensis canonicus, Predicationis humilis minister', has authorised Raimundus Guillermi de Altaripa to lodge someone in his house in Toulouse, 'more aliorum hominum conversantem', who had at one time been a heretic. Dominic does not explicitly say that he is acting on the authority of the legate, but he does indicate that he has only made a provisional arrangement, 'quousque super hoc nobis vel sibi [sc. Raimundo] expressius mandatum faciat dominus cardinalis', i.e. the new legate, Peter of Benevento. This document too is undated, but the likeliest context for it is the anxiety of people in Toulouse to regularise their ecclesiastical situation after the

---

[56] One thing is certain, which it is perhaps necessary to underline in our own time: *frater*, in the Latin of the period, has not the slightest tendency to imply 'non-priest'; the distinction between *frater* and *dominus* is, in this regard, like the French distinction between 'père' and 'abbé'. There is no implicit disowning or downplaying of priesthood.

[57] Koudelka prints *predicatorum minimus*, but this is not the reading of most manuscripts.

reconciliation of their city in April 1214 (Cernai #507, with the editors' note). Dominic clearly envisages a future decision by the cardinal, so he must have dealt with the situation himself before the cardinal arrived in Toulouse in June 1215 (Cernai #566), and perhaps even before the council of Montpellier in January 1215 (Cernai #543).[58]

Koudelka #12 is the deed recording the bishop of Cahors's submission to Simon de Montfort on 20 June 1211; it was witnessed, among others, by 'frater Dominicus predicator'.

Fairly detailed descriptions are given of the seals which were attached to Koudelka #8 and 61 (they are printed by Koudelka in MOPH XXV), and it is clear that essentially the same seal was used on both occasions; Dominic was therefore acting throughout as an agent of the same *predicatio* (cf. AFP 65 [1995] 25). 'Humilis minister' is humble-speak for 'boss', so by 1214/1215 Dominic was the head of the *predicatio*; this is certainly why Fulk thought of him as 'magister predicationis'. It has been assumed that he was appointed to this position in 1214/1215, either by Fulk or by Peter of Benevento, the new legate (cf. AFP 65 [1995] 20, 25); but it is likely that he was already in charge some time before this. 'Predicator minimus' in Koudelka #8 probably implies that he was not yet the head of the mission; 'predicator' in #12 is more ambiguous. But, if the conversation between Dominic and a Cistercian laybrother is accurately reported in Const. 55, Dominic was already being addressed as 'magister' in the early months of 1213.[59]

---

[58] In his note, Koudelka says that Fulk and his clergy, including Dominic, entered Toulouse early in 1215, after the lifting of the interdict, but it is not certain that Fulk had not returned to Toulouse sooner than this. All that we know is that after the council of Montpellier, in January 1215, the legate sent him to Toulouse to take possession of the château Narbonnais (Cernai #549); there does not seem to be any evidence that this was the first time that he returned to the city since leaving it in 1211, much less that this was when his clergy returned. It is more likely that they returned soon after the lifting of the interdict, as suggested by Vicaire (*Histoire* I 331). In any case, there was nothing to stop Dominic operating in Toulouse any time after the reconciliation of the city.

[59] This is the occasion on which Dominic prophesied the death of king Peter of Aragy time after the reconciliation of the city.

ct, as suggested by Vicaire (o be any evidence that this was the first time that he returned to the city since leaving it in 1211,nd 24 March 1213 (in AFP 65 (1995) 67, I unfortunately allowed '1214' to go uncorrected). Dominic was at the time spending Lent in Carcassonne, as the bishop's vicar *in spiritualibus*, the bishop being 'in Francia'. 25 March 1212 was Easter Sunday, but in 1213 Lent began on 27 Feb., and bishop Guy was 'in Francia' for the whole of 1213, returning to his diocese in

After the death of Diego and Raoul, Cernai only mentions one head of the *predicatio*, his own uncle, abbot Guy (Cernai #51), who, he says, 'prior inter predicatores constitutus est et magister'; the implicit reason given is that the only remaining legate, Arnaud, went elsewhere to attend to other business. It is far from clear what 'constitutus' signifies and to what extent 'prior et magister' represents any sort of official title. Did Arnaud, before he left, say to Guy, in so many words, 'I hereby appoint you *prior et magister*'? It is unlikely; it is, indeed, quite possible that Guy was 'constituted' leader of the preachers simply by virtue of being the most senior ecclesiastic still involved in the mission.

Guy cannot have functioned for long as head of the *predicatio*; he did not even remain in the Midi. He was recalled there by Arnaud towards the end of 1209 (Cernai #128), but his new mission was to the crusaders, not the heretics, as is made clear in Innocent III's endorsement of Arnaud's orders on 9 Nov. (PL 216:157): 'Cum dilectus filius abbas Cisterciensis tibi dare providerit in mandatis ut ad terram nuper ab hæretica pravitate mundatam accedas, dilecto filio Simoni de Monteforti, cuius est commissa regimini, <et> aliis ibidem ad Dei servitium residentibus salutare consilium præbiturus ...'. Later, probably in 1211, he was chosen to be bishop of Carcassonne; he was consecrated some time in 1212 (Cernai, ed. cit. I p.XII).

Dominic must have been de facto head of what was left of the *predicatio* from 1209 onwards, and there is no reason why he should not have been recognised as such by Arnaud and other church leaders in the region. Whether there was a formal appointment or not is as unclear in his case as it was in that of abbot Guy.

God willing, we shall return later to Dominic's years in the Midi; but it seems tolerably certain that he exercised a function which made it suitable to call him 'magister' for several years before the developments which progressively transformed the *predicatio* into a religious order. It was, therefore, perfectly natural that he should continue to be thought of as 'magister' in the region, even

---

May 1214 (Cernai #508); he was in Paris by 3 March 1213, as was Fulk (Cernai #418). The source for the story is said to be Stephen of Metz, Dominic's socius in Carcassonne, who spoke about it so often that it became well known. Stephen was a member of the Toulouse community in the 1230s (Pelhisson 46), and there is no reason why genuine information from him should not have formed part of the material sent in by his province in 1246 and used by Constantine.

after he and his preachers had become canons of Saint-Romain. What is more surprising is that the title seems to have travelled with him to Italy.

Unfortunately, we have no strictly contemporary evidence; but the language of the Bologna canonization process is suggestive.[60]

John of Spain begins by relating his own entry into the order and his reception of the habit 'de manu fratris Dominici plantatoris ipsius ordinis et primi magistri', which is all very formal. Thereafter he calls him 'frater' except once: 'Item dixit se audiuisse a quibusdam de fratribus quod idem magister Dominicus faciebat se disciplinari ...' (*ACB* #25). He seems to know that, in the circumstances, it is proper to refer to 'frater Dominicus'; but when he starts to remember how people talked about Dominic, *magister* slips in. The brethren he was thinking of were presumably either people he knew in the Midi, or the survivors from the early days whom he met in Bologna, or members of the Paris community.

Stephen of Spain met Dominic in 1218, and knew the Spaniards who had been with him in the Midi; he joined the order in 1220 and lived with Dominic in Bologna for much of that year. He begins with a reference to 'magistrum Dominicum fundatorem et plantatorem ordinis fratrum predicatorum et primum magistrum'; thereafter, he calls him 'magister' or 'frater' indifferently (*ACB* #35-40).

Frugerius joined the order in Bologna in 1219 and made profession 'in manibus magistri Reginaldi', the year in which 'uenit frater Dominicus fundator ordinis sancti Nicolai et primus magister Bononiam'; having been absent for a while, by leave of Master Reginald, 'in kalendiis rediit Bononiam et inuenit ... dictum magistrum Dominicum' (*ACB* #46). The only other time he refers to Dominic by name, he calls him 'frater Dominicus' (*ACB* #48). His personal acquaintance with Dominic ended early in 1220.

Paul of Venice also entered in 1219, and he knew Dominic personally until 1221. He refers to 'magister Dominicus' or 'dictus magister' several times; 'frater' appears certainly only once, but the text of his deposition has suffered more than most from the intru-

---

[60] Most versions of *ACB* tend to jump the gun by referring to Dominic as *beatus*; the only texts which generally avoid this are those of Marciana IX 61 and the lost Carcassonne manuscript (backed by the Spanish translation in the Madrid codex). For some remarks on the textual tradition of *ACB*, and for a detailed examination of the dates for which different witnesses are evidence, see AFP 66 (1996) 59-137.

sion of 'beatus'. He also appears to refer to Dominic once as 'pater' (*ACB* #41-44).

Buonviso joined in 1219, and was with Dominic until June 1220. He generally calls Dominic 'frater', but 'magister' apparently slips in when he relates Dominic's response to his question why he once had to put his shoes on when walking in a particular place: 'ipse magister Dominicus respondit quia tunc pluerat' (*ACB* #21).[61]

Ventura joined early in 1220, and knew Dominic thereafter until his death. He too begins with a stately reference to 'fratris Dominici ordinis predicatorum fundatoris et primi magistri'; he then refers to him, in rapid succession, three times as 'frater' and once as 'magister' (*ACB* #2). Thereafter, he generally sticks to 'frater'.

Amizo, who probably just knew Dominic from his visits to Milan, calls Dominic 'magister' at the opening of his testimony (*ACB* #17),[62] and does not name him thereafter except in connection with the translation 'fratris Dominici' (#19).

William of Monferrato and Rudolph of Faenza stick to 'frater' throughout, except for William's reference to Dominic as 'ordinis predicatorum inuentor et primus magister', and Rudolph's to 'frater Dominicus primus magister ordinis predicatorum' (*ACB* #12-16, 30-34).

What is striking is that 'magister' appears to function in two quite different ways: it is a very formal title (Dominic was founder and *primus magister* of the order), but 'magister Dominicus' also seems to slip in quite casually as an everyday way of speaking about him. The commissioners responsible for the inquiry had been told to investigate the life of 'frater Dominicus, plantator Predicatorum ordinis et magister' (MOPH XVI 116), and it is in line with this directive that Dominic is called 'frater' and that several witnesses begin by alluding to his position as 'plantator et primus magister'. It is the casual use of 'magister Dominicus' which is out of line and presumably comes from the witnesses' instinctive habits.

---

[61] *Magister* is the reading of Marc.; Carcassonne has 'frater', and Madrid just has 'respondio'. The situation is even worse in #23, where, according to different manuscripts, Buonviso says that the tomb was re-opened after the translation 'beati fratris Dominici' or 'beati Dominici' or 'del beato santo Domingo'; on that occasion the brethren were shown the bones 'dicti magistri ordinis' or 'fratris Dominici magistri ordinis' or 'deste bendito fray Domingo que fue maestro e fundador de la orden'. At least it seems probable that Stephen identified the bones as being 'magistri Dominici', however he phrased it.

[62] This is confirmed by Dietrich 306.

That 'magister Dominicus' was simply what people called him, without meaning to allude to any title he had as head of the order, is shown by Koudelka #170 (dated 24 May 1221) and #174 (dated 7 June 1221), in which, respectively, Ugolino and Pietro Lovelli refer to him as 'magister Dominicus, prior'. This gives a certain credence to one narrative source, and perhaps sheds light on another.

Book II of the *Vitas Fratrum* contains two stories from the time immediately after Dominic's death. In one, Dominic's friend Albert embraces his dead body and then tells the prior, 'Boni rumores prior, magister Dominicus amplexatus est me dicens quod hoc anno ibo post ipsum ad Christum'; in the other, a student who had missed Dominic's funeral sees him in a dream and asks him, 'Nonne uos estis magister Dominicus qui mortuus estis?'. There is also a story about an old laybrother in Limoges, suffering from piles; hearing about Dominic's miracles, before his canonization, he prays, 'Domine Ihesu Christe, qui per magistrum Dominicum ad hunc ordinem me uocasti ...' (MOPH I 84-85).

According to Ferr. 33, when Ugolino drew Reginald's attention to the new Order of Preachers early in 1218, he added, 'Magister quoque ipsius ordinis in hac Romana urbe predicationis insistens officio iam moratur'. Obviously we are at several removes from the cardinal's ipsissima verba; Ferrandus is reporting what he had been told about what Reginald had said. Maybe the words ascribed to Ugolino only go back to Ferrandus. But Ugolino must have called Dominic something, to identify his position within the new order; so must Reginald, when he related his own story. It would be extremely significant if we could be certain that either Ugolino, in 1218, or Reginald, in 1219/1220, used the phrase 'magister ordinis', but, alas, we cannot be; it is not improbable, though, that, as he did later, Ugolino said 'magister Dominicus prior ipsius ordinis', and that this is what Reginald quoted him as saying. If only we could be sure!

Even without the evidence of Jordan of Saxony, which we have not yet considered, it seems that people started calling Dominic 'magister' within a few years of his involvement in the *predicatio* in the Midi, and that, thanks to his associates in the *predicatio* and to others who had been involved in it, like bishop Fulk, the same practice soon established itself in the young Order of Preachers, at first in the Midi, and then elsewhere. There were some, like Peter Seilhan, who had thought of Dominic primarily as a canon of Osma and who therefore found it difficult to stop calling him *dominus*; but once the preachers had become a religious order in their own

right, *frater*, in principle, ceased to be problematic. At least from 1216 onwards, then, those who were at all well acquainted with him probably thought of him either as 'frater Dominicus' or as 'magister Dominicus'.

(c) What was officially decided, and when?

It is becoming apparent that most of the evidence which might be expected to shed light on the nature and dating of the order's decision on its superiors' titles does not really help very much.

Dominic himself favoured 'minister predicationis', but there is no evidence that he ever persuaded anyone else to call him this except during his visit to Spain, where he is referred to by the archbishop of Toledo as 'fratri Dominico ministro ordinis fratrum Predicationis' (Koudelka #94). Since he seems content to let other people use whatever terms they like, we may take it that he did not consider 'minister predicationis' to be a formal title which, in principle it would be correct for everyone to use; it was simply his chosen way of identifying his own competence.

In the Midi, because of his rôle in the *predicatio*, he could naturally be designated 'magister predicationis' or 'predicatorum', and this seems to be the context in which people started calling him 'magister Dominicus'. But, outside this context, it is far from certain that 'magister Dominicus' was generally understood as identifying his position as head of the order. Even people closely involved with him or his brethren, such as Ugolino and Pietro Lovelli, could combine 'magister Dominicus' with 'prior', suggesting that they took 'magister' to be a personal, not an institutional, title; he was 'magister Dominicus', just as Reginald was 'magister Reginaldus' (cf. Koudelka #97). This must make it doubtful whether even Dominic's own brethren, except those who had been involved in the old *predicatio*, had a clear perception of why he was called 'magister'.

Even in the Midi, those who were more interested in Dominic's position as head of a group of religious found it natural to call him 'prior', in spite of the existence of other people with the same title, and this was the designation which found favour with Honorius III. In the bull of 8 Dec. 1219 (Koudelka #109), which, I have argued, was primarily intended to furnish a framework for the 1220 chapter (AFP 65 [1995] 45-48), Honorius for the first time intimates the existence of a superior of the Order of Preachers as a whole; just as he previously called Dominic 'prior of Saint-Romain', he now calls him 'prior of the Order of Preachers'. Thereafter, he uses the same title until 29 March 1221 (Koudelka #148), but on 28 April

(Koudelka #159), he calls Dominic 'magister ordinis predicatorum'; that is to say, the change in papal usage occurs well after the 1220 chapter, but before that of 1221.

Dominic was in close contact with the pope from mid January 1221 (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 118), so it can scarcely be due to him that Honorius started using a different title for him in April. Nor can it be fortuitous that the new title appears first in Honorius's confirmation of Fulk's gift of the church of Fanjeaux (Koudelka #153), in which both Fulk and Dominic use the phrase 'magister predicationis'; 'magister ordinis predicatorum' is Honorius's way of bringing 'magister predicationis' into line with the name he had been using for the order since 1218 (Koudelka #86).

The change in papal terminology thus provides no help in determining when the order adopted 'magister ordinis'. Fulk's deed may have provided Dominic with the occasion to inform Honorius of a decision taken in 1220; but it is equally possible that Honorius's use of 'magister ordinis' was derived simply from Fulk's deed, in which case it may itself have contributed to a decision taken by the order at the 1221 chapter. The most we can infer is that, if there was a decision in 1220, it was not of such a kind as to make it necessary to inform the pope straight away.

In support of 1221, Vicaire (*Histoire* II 292) also cites the difference in Ugolino's terminology between Koudelka #170 (24 May 1221) and #175 (14 June 1221). In the former, we find 'magistri Dominici, prioris ipsius ordinis', in the latter, 'fratris D. magistri totius ordinis'. The significance of this would be clearer if we knew exactly what Ugolino had said to Reginald in 1218; but in any case, it is doubtful if anything much can be deduced from it. If there was a decision in 1220, but Dominic saw no reason to make a fuss about it in the papal curia, why should Guala, for whom Koudelka #170 was issued, make a fuss about it with the papal legate? If John of Salerno, by contrast, did see fit to correct Ugolino's way of referring to Dominic (I have argued that it was John who procured #175: AFP 66 [1996] 74-75), that does not prove that the order's choice of title had only just been made at the recently finished chapter.

Dominic's own use of 'magister predicationis' in Koudelka #153 is equally unhelpful, as there Dominic was following his usual practice in contracts, of allowing the other party to decide what he should be called.

This means that the only evidence for Dominic's own adoption of 'magister' rather than 'minister' is his letter to the nuns of Madrid

(AFP 56 [1986] 12-13), in which he calls himself 'frater Dominicus magister predicatorum'. The letter presupposes that Mamés has already been in Madrid for some time, and that Dominic has received information about the completion of the monastery buildings. General chapters would provide an obvious occasion both for Dominic to receive news from Madrid and for him to send the nuns a letter; but, since Mamés was probably sent to Madrid during Dominic's visit to Paris in 1219 (AFP 65 [1995] 68), both 1220 and 1221 are equally possible dates.

We are left with only one more place to look for enlightenment, the primitive constitutions.

In 1216, as we have seen, the brethren adumbrated a customary with two distinctions, though they only composed the first of them; the second, as they probably stated at the time, was to be 'de prouinciali capitulo et generali et studio et predicatione' (AFP 65 [1995] 32-35). It was the task of the 1220 chapter to complete this legislative programme.

The oldest text that we possess of the Dominican constitutions comes in a fourteenth-century manuscript, the famous Rodez codex (AGOP XIV A 4 pp.55-93), and it is not entirely clear whether it reproduces the contents of an earlier manuscript or whether, to some extent, it represents some antiquarian's attempt to reconstruct the *constitutiones antique*. We also have a defective manuscript of the Sack Friars' constitutions (BL Cotton Nero A XII ff.155^{r}-174^{v}),[63] which were based on those of the Dominicans. The two manuscripts have several items in quite different places, which confirms what Humbert says in his *cronica ordinis*, that, until Raymund of Penyafort sorted them out 'sub certis distinctionibus et titulis', the constitutions 'sub multa confusione ... habebantur' (MOPH I 331).[64] In so far as we may speak of an earlier 'edition', Rodez seems to give us that of the most general chapter of 1236, in that the majority of the constitutions which Gui ascribes to that chapter (MOPH III 6-10) are fully incorporated; the Sack Friars were drawing on a similar edition. In both cases, therefore, we are a long way from the chapter of 1220.

---

[63] There is an edition in G.M.Giacomozzi, *L'Ordine della Penitenza di Gesù Cristo*, Rome 1962, 73-113.

[64] In my forthcoming *Shaping of the Vitas Fratrum* I reclaim authorship of Reichert's *cronica posterior* for Humbert.

Nevertheless, however much the text may have evolved, expanded and been re-arranged since 1220, we can still recognise a block of material which corresponds to the programme announced in 1216 (PC II 7-34 in Thomas's edition), and it contains several points for whose insertion in 1220 we have compelling evidence.

We know from the testimony of Ventura that he was present at the first general chapter when 'placuit ipsi fratri Dominico quod diffinitores constituerentur in capitulo, qui haberent plenam potestatem super totum ordinem et super ipso magistro et ipsis diffinitoribus, scilicet diffiniendi, ordinandi, statuendi et puniendi, salua reuerentia magistrali' (*ACB* #2). Although the actual wording of PC II 7-9 may not go back to 1220, these chapters must preserve the gist of what was decided in 1220: 'Isti ... diffinitores ... cum magistro ordinis omnia diffinient et constituent et tractabunt ... Isti diffinitores plenariam habeant potestatem super excessum magistri ordinis corrigendum ... Diffinitores predicti excessum magistri seorsum inter se corrigant et emendent.' The words may not be the ipsissima verba of the 1220 chapter; but the chapter cannot have decided anything at all on the subject without using some word to refer to the head of the order. From 1220 onwards, then, *some* title for him had acquired constitutional status.

We know from *Lib.* 87 that the 1220 chapter decreed that the general chapter should be held 'uno anno Bononie, altero uero Parisius'; this comes in PC II 13. Jordan also tells us that the same chapter formally forbade the brethren to hold 'possessiones uel reditus'; this comes in PC II 26 ('possessiones seu redditus nullo modo recipiantur').

Both Stephen of Spain and Paul of Venice testified that Dominic had the principle of only speaking 'de deo uel cum deo' inscribed in the constitutions (*ACB* #37, 41). It is found in PC II 31, which also contains the ban on carrying money, another point alluded to by Stephen (*ACB* #38). Stephen was competent to testify on things which happened in 1220, not 1221 (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 124), so it is reasonably certain that it was the 1220 chapter, not that of 1221, which created the relevant legislation.

However complex may have been the evolution of the constitutions between 1220 and 1236, we seem to be on solid ground in recognising a residue of 1220 legislation in this part of PC II. And included within the same block, between what is said about chapters and what is said about students and preachers, is a section not foreseen in 1216, but generally and plausibly dated to 1220: PC II 23-25. PC II 23 describes the conditions required for 'sending' a

convent: 'conuentus citra numerum duodenarium et sine licentia generalis capituli et sine priore et doctore non mittatur';[65] II 24 and 25 concern, respectively, the election of conventual priors and the appointment of subpriors.

By the end of the 1220 chapter, then, the order had constitutions which already contained a way of referring to the head of the whole order, the head of a convent and his second-in-command. What further decision was needed about their titles? This is surely when and how, as Ferrandus says, 'placuit ... ut ... is qui toti preesset ordini magister ordinis diceretur, ceteri uero minores prelati priorum uel suppriorum uocabulo censerentur' (Ferr. 32). There is no trace in the constitutions of any more explicit determination of titles.

If it was in 1220 that the titles for Dominican superiors were fixed like this, we can see what lies behind Ferrandus's attempt to interpret the appointment of abbot Matthew in 1217. He had heard that such a decision was made (including priors and subpriors, not just the Master), and that Dominic had grown a beard for a time (and then, evidently, removed it again), and that Dominic was planning to go on a mission to the Saracens. All this points to 1220. As we have seen, Dominic was hoping to embark on some foreign mission in 1219, and Saracens were mentioned as a possible objective; and he had probably grown a beard for the purpose, but he was beardless again in 1220. By the 1221 chapter, his missionary objective was probably Estonia, and we do not know whether he ever shaved off his last beard (AFP 66 [1996] 69-70, 68 [1998] 68-83). Ferrandus's mistake was to think that the information he had could be used to explain the events of 1217.

If the decision on titles was taken at the 1220 chapter, which Jordan himself attended, then his misunderstanding of its significance is particularly surprising; this is a problem to which we must

---

[65] As is noticed by Thomas (196-197), the Dominican text has a certain similarity to the chapter 'de construendis abbaciis' in the Praemonstratensian customary (IV 3 in Lefèvre-Grauwen, Krings): 'Hec itaque sunt que ... in construendis abbaciis volumus observari, scilicet non mittendum esse abbatem novum in locum novellum sine clericis ad minus duodecim, nec sine libris istis ... nec nisi prius instructis hiis officinis: oratorio, dormitorio, refectorio ... Quociens conventus ad abbaciam faciendam emittitur ...'; but the differences are much more striking. The new Praemonstratensian *conventus* is identified by its abbey, and it must have an abbey to go to; the new Dominican community is identified simply by itself, whether it has a building or not.

turn in a moment. But if we are right to surmise that the chapter issued no formal declaration on titles as such, but fixed them simply by using them, possibly after little or no discussion, it is not beyond belief that nothing occurred to correct whatever misconceptions he brought with him to the chapter. And one thing, at least, is certain: he could never have believed that *abbas* was dropped in favour of *magister ordinis* if, as Échard and his followers maintain, Matthew returned home from the 1220 chapter a mere *prior*, while Dominic remained without an official title; it would have been entirely obvious that *abbas* had been abandoned in favour of *prior*, not *magister ordinis*.

Finally, if Dominic's own title was determined in the way I have suggested, we can see both why he started referring to himself as 'magister', and why he did not feel it necessary to insist that the pope should stop calling him 'prior ordinis', or that Fulk should give up 'magister predicationis'. And the same applies to Guala's acceptance of 'magister Dominicus, prior' in 1221.

(d) Maior prelatus

There is still one obstacle in our path, to which Vicaire has repeatedly drawn attention as proof that the Master's title cannot have been fixed in 1220 (Mandonnet-Vicaire II 278; *Histoire* II 292): there appears to be a quite different title for the head of the order in some of the earliest Dominican constitutions, namely *maior prelatus*. This argument was apparently accepted by Thomas (74).

Maior prelatus is found in PC II 20 and 21, both plausibly dated to 1220;[66] they form part of the block concerning chapters, which was certainly on the legislative agenda for 1220. II 20 deals with the appointment of preachers, II 21 with questions referred to the chapter.

Vicaire assumes that *maior prelatus* must refer to the head of the order, and that its use is symptomatic of the lack of a more precise title for him; he also rightly points out (Mandonnet-Vicaire II 278 n.16) that the word *prelatus* is common in the first distinction of PC too, and that it is normally original to the Dominicans, not taken over from the Praemonstatensians. However, he fails to see the significance of the word.

---

[66] Thomas 356-357, with references to his discussion; Vicaire, *Saint Dominique et la Vie Apostolique*, Paris 1965, 141; A.Robles Sierra, in Galmés 720.

The Dominicans did not use *prelatus* because they lacked a more precise term; it was itself a very precise way of designating the superior in circumstances where it was not appropriate to specify *which* superior it might turn out to be. There is a good example in PC I 14, *De recipiendis*, which was largely derived from the Praemonstratensian customary.[67] The Praemonstratensians did not envisage a situation in which anyone other than the abbot would receive novices, so their text unambiguously refers to the abbot throughout; the Dominicans, on the other hand, could not be so explicit, because newcomers might be received by the local superior[68] or by Dominic himself or by his vicar.[69] It was not terminological imprecision, therefore, which prompted the Dominicans to substitute *prelatus* for the Praemonstratensian *abbas*; on the contrary, *prelatus* was itself the precise word to cover whatever superior might happen to be involved.[70]

For the same reason, the order continued to create new constitutions in which the word *prelatus* was used.[71] Particularly interesting in this regard is Humbert's correction of a text which goes back to PC I 1 ('... facto signo a prelato ... iterum facto signo a priore') and passed unchanged to I 2 in Raymund's revision:[72] he

---

[67] There is no surviving text of the Praemonstratensian customary which quite corresponds to the one which the Dominicans used; the version which the Dominicans used seems to represent a stage in between Lefèvre-Grauwen and Krings, in both of which the relevant chapter is I 16, though in Lefèvre-Grauwen it is entitled 'de noviciis probandis', whereas in Krings it is now entitled 'de novitiis recipiendis', which is closer to the title in the Dominican constitutions. Subsequently the Praemonstratensian text was even more drastically revised; see Lefèvre I 14.

[68] There is no direct evidence of this for the life-time of St Dominic, but it may surely be taken for granted.

[69] Reginald received various people into the Order in Bologna and two people in Paris (MOPH I 26, 170; Jordan, *Lib.* 65; *ACB* #41, 46). Dominic himself received William of Monferrato in Paris (*ACB* #12) and Ventura and Stephen in Bologna (*ACB* #2, 36), as well as accepting the profession of Diana (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 141).

[70] *Prelatus* serves the same purpose in Praemonstratensian terminology. Their way of life made it easier in most cases to specify which superior should do what, but if they needed a broader word, they used *prelatus*. E.g. 'Quicumque per conspiracionem vel coniuracionem vel per maliciosam concordiam adversus abbatem vel prelatos suos manifeste se erexerint ...' (Lefèvre-Grauwen, Krings III 7; Lefèvre III 6).

[71] E.g. I 18 in Raymund's edition of the constitutions (AFP 18 [1948] 44), where Raymund is responsible for 'si quis procuraverit quod ipse vel alius eximatur a potestate prelati sui'; MOPH III 69.18 [1254], 173.24, 30 [1274]).

[72] The text was taken over from the Praemonstratensian customary I 1, which referred to the *prior* in both places.

changed *priore* to *prelato* (ASOP 3 [1897] 40). *Prelatus* was clearly felt to be the more accurate term, because it did not exclude the possibility that some superior other than the prior might be presiding in choir.

If this is properly understood, then *maior prelatus* in PC II 20-21 is not evidence that the order had not yet fixed the title of the Master, but an indication that the capitulars in 1220 did not wish to exclude the possibility that the relevant major superior might be someone other than the Master.

II 20 is, in fact, almost unintelligible if *maior prelatus* is taken to refer exclusively to the Master:

> Post hec qui ydonei ad predicandum ab aliquibus estimantur presententur,[73] et illi qui de licentia et mandato sui prioris, necdum licentia maioris prelati uel capituli, predicationis officium receperint. Quibus omnibus diligenter seorsum examinatis ab ydoneis personis ob hoc et ob alias capituli questiones institutis et fratribus cum quibus conuersati sunt studiose inquisitis de gratia predicationis quam eis deus contulerit et studio et religione et caritatis feruore, proposito et intentione, et hiis de eis testimonium perhibentibus, consensu et consilio maioris prelati approbabunt quicquid ipsi utilius iudicabunt, utrum uidelicet ipsi fratres adhuc debeant in studio morari uel cum fratribus prouectioribus in predicatione exercitari uel ydonei sint et utiles per se predicationis officium exercere.

It is clear from *post hec* that this is part of a more general account of what happens at chapters, and as such it follows on from PC II 17, entitled 'de capitulo generali' both in the Rodez manuscript and in the constitutions of the Sack Friars. But are we really to believe that, in the early years of the order, no one could become a fully-fledged *predicator* without going to Bologna or Paris to be be personally examined at a general chapter? Even if we leave out of account the order's expansion after 1220, it is surely incredible that the capitular delegates from Spain, say, could be expected to escort a year's worth of potential Spanish and Portuguese preachers every year to Paris or Bologna, together with a bunch of *fratres cum quibus conuersati sunt* to comment on them, or that the host con-

[73] Raymund's edition of the text (II 12) has *capitulo uel diffinitoribus presententur*; the insertion of *capitulo uel diffinitoribus* was necessitated by his rearrangement of the material and, pace Thomas who accepts them into his edition of PC, the extra words should not be regarded as part of the primitive text.

vent would be able or willing to accommodate all these would-be preachers and their sponsors.

The block of material on chapters which runs from PC II 17 to II 21 certainly opens with the title 'de capitulo generali'; but its application is extended by the words which close II 21 in the Rodez manuscript: 'et hec eadem forma in capitulo prouinciali obseruetur'.[74] Thomas suggests that this sentence may have been added in 1225, at the same time as most of the legislation on provincial chapters with which Rodez begins the second distinction. I agree with this dating; but I also consider it highly probable that the beginning of II 17 was altered then, together with the title of the section, to make it apply specifically to general chapters. If this is correct, then PC II 17-21 originally applied to 'chapters' without further specification.

It is, at any rate, clear that PC II 20 was not taken to be exclusively concerned with general chapters, as, both in Rodez and Cotton Nero, it follows immediately after a passage concerning provincial visitators appointed by provincial[75] chapters (PC II 19). This in turn calls into question what kind of chapter is envisaged by PC II 18, which obviously forms part of the same block as II 20:

> Post hec uisitatores presentes uerbo, absentes scripto, referre debent de hiis quos uisitauerint fratribus ...

Certainly Raymund, in his edition (II 11), relocates this text and specifies that visitators must report *capitulo generali uel prouinciali* (AFP 18 [1948] 62). And the Sack Friars make it explicit that II 20 in particular concerns either kind of chapter:

> Post hec qui ydonei ad predicandum ab aliquibus estimantur, presententur capitulo generali uel prouinciali.

It is also worth bearing in mind, inasmuch as these chapter-appointed preachers were the ancestors of the *predicatores generales*,

---

[74] Thomas, in his edition, incorporates here an addition made in 1236 (MOPH III 6), forbidding the Master of the Order and provincials to change the acts of general or provincial chapters without good reason; this text is found here, slightly adapted, in the constitutions of the Sack Friars, but it is not in Rodez.

[75] The word *prouinciali* is missing in the Sack Friars' constitutions, but *ad uisitandam prouinciam* makes no sense unless the provincial chapter was meant; probably *prouinciali* was accidentally lost in the manuscript before *predicto*.

that, until very recently, preachers general were appointed by the provincial, not the general, chapter.[76]

The references to the *maior prelatus*, then, do not have to be taken as evidence of a stage of Dominican legislation before the Master's title was fixed; the term was used because, in principle, the licensing of preachers might depend on a provincial prior and chapter or on the Master of the Order and a general chapter. *Maior prelatus* means precisely 'major superior', i.e., as the text itself suggests, a superior ranking higher than a (conventual) prior; who the major superior is depends on the level of chapter: at a general chapter it should be the Master, but at a provincial chapter it should be the provincial prior. It was no doubt to retain this ambiguity that Raymund kept the phrase *maior prelatus* in his edition of the constitutions (II 12).[77]

It is for exactly the same reason that II 21 refers to the *maior prelatus*:

> De solutione et terminatione questionum, de correctione fratrum, de modo penitentiarum et de predicatoribus et eorum sociis ob predicandum et studendum mittendis et quando et ubi et per quantum tempus moraturis prelatus maior cum aliis qui ad hoc instituti sunt tractabit.

It is entirely in accordance with the programme announced in 1216 (cf. AFP 65 [1995] 32-35) that, in 1220, the brethren should compose legislation on chapters tout court, rather than elaborating separate instructions for general and provincial chapters. In these circumstances, the use of *maior prelatus* was both necessary and terminologically exact. And only when understood like this does PC II 20 make sense.

This will, no doubt, seem heretical to people accustomed to think that the creation of Dominican provinces in 1221 is as certain as the Apostles' Creed; I hope to demonstrate in next year's article that it is an unwarranted dogma. For our immediate purposes,

---

[76] This is still true in the Jandel constitutions (*Constitutiones Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Paris 1872, 492); the first time the constitutions laid down that preachers general were to be instituted by the general chapter or the Master of the Order was in 1932 (Gillet *Constitutiones* #763).

[77] It is in exactly the same sense that *maior prelatus* is used in the 'Directorium' contained in the Rodez codex, to specify the senior superior present at either a general or a provincial chapter (AFP 26 [1956] 109-110).

though, it is enough to have shown that *prelatus maior* is not an archaic and imprecise way of referring to the Master of the Order, and that its use is therefore irrelevant to the question when *magister ordinis* was adopted.

5. *Why did Jordan get it wrong?*

It only remains to ask how Jordan came to misunderstand what happened in 1217 and, more importantly, in 1220.

As we have seen (AFP 68 [1998] 18-28), the part of the *Libellus* which covers events up to 1219 was essentially written before Jordan decided to join the order; but, since Matthew was still calling himself 'abbot' when Jordan entered Saint-Jacques on 11 Feb. 1220 (*Lib.* 75), as is shown by Koudelka #120, he must have added his remarks on the substitution of 'magister ordinis' later. He seems to have resumed work on the *Libellus* when he left Paris in 1221, and to have revised the text during his first months as provincial of Lombardy (AFP 68 [1998] 30-33); it was presumably then that he enlarged on what he had already written about the events of 1217, unless he did so in 1233, when he prepared the *Libellus* for publication (ibid. 5-18).[78]

Whenever he wrote his comment in *Lib.* 48, his misunderstanding must go back to the chapter of 1220, at which he was present. As he points out (*Lib.* 86), he had, at the time, been a Dominican for less than two months; and his experience of the order so far had been confined to Paris, though he had heard a certain amount about its beginnings in the Midi, and he had received a little information about Bologna and Dominic's foundations in Spain. He was not a Dominican, not even thinking of becoming a Dominican, when Dominic and Bertrand visited Paris in 1219; they had no doubt discussed the situation of the order with Matthew, but Jordan was not privy to their discussion. Until he arrived at the 1220 chapter, he can have had little conception of how the order had

[78] In any case, Jordan evidently saw no reason then to change what he had written, nor, apparently, did anyone else when the *Libellus* was approved at a general chapter (and, seemingly, revised — this is the likely genesis of the substantial differences between the Osma manuscripts and the rest, which led Scheeben to postulate a second edition of *Lib.*); this shows that what Jordan says in *Lib.* 48 was not a glaring howler crying out for correction, but a misunderstanding which could pass muster while there were still people around who, in principle, knew what had happened in 1217.

developed, particularly in Italy. It is not, in itself, surprising that he was somewhat hazy about the structure of the order as a whole.

To arrive at the conclusion that *magister ordinis* was substituted for *abbas*, Jordan must have misconstrued the rôle of Matthew or Dominic or both.

The existence of abbot Matthew was the most obvious fact of Dominican government for an interested outsider in Paris, or for a new recruit at Saint-Jacques. And, as we have seen, Paris had an abbot because it was assumed in 1217 that the order was going to develop along traditional lines, with an abbatial motherhouse and dependent *prioratus*. As we have already suggested, Jordan thought that Saint-Romain in Toulouse was such a *prioratus*, and he may have been right, at least for a time. In principle, it could reasonably be inferred that, unless and until abbots were appointed elsewhere, *all* Dominican houses were *prioratus* of Paris, and, as such, subject to abbot Matthew. How was Jordan to know that this structure had already been de facto abandoned in favour of independent *conventus*, each headed by its own *prior*?

Notwithstanding Matthew's abbatial dignity, Jordan presumably realised, even before he joined the order, that Dominic, and even Reginald, in some way outranked Matthew; but he can be forgiven for not understanding how their respective positions were related to each other. It is, in fact, far from clear what canonical definition could be given of Dominic's rôle in the early years. In the Midi, he was *magister predicationis*, in charge of the whole operation, within which other people exercised the function of religious superior over the members of their particular houses (Prouille or Saint-Romain); but how did this affect Paris, where the brethren had no official status other than that of canons regular? In preparation for the 1220 chapter, Honorius gave Dominic special power over the whole order, which rather confirms that, so far, whatever authority he had was personal and outside the institutional structures of the order. In a very real sense, it was only at the 1220 chapter that his position at the head of the order was clarified and endorsed *within* the institution (cf. AFP 66 [1996] 79-89, 100-101). And things could have developed differently: if the abbatial structure had been maintained, there was no reason in principle why the Dominicans should not have adapted the model of Cluny or Prémontré, in which case there could have been an abbot as the supreme religious superior; and, once Dominic was out of the way, the director of the *predicatio* might have come to be a subordinate official, subject to the abbot. Granted the actual evolution of the

order before 1220, there was scant chance that anything of the kind would happen; but how was Jordan to know this when he set off for the first general chapter?

It is a great shame that we do not know exactly what Jordan said when he made profession to Reginald (*Lib.* 66) and whether he promised obedience to Dominic (or Reginald) and, if so, in what capacity. The formula contained in PC I 16 cannot have been formally adopted before 1220, since it presupposes the use of *ordo predicatorum*, which was initiated by Honorius III in 1218;[79] but, as I have argued (AFP 53 [1983] 42-44), its extreme peculiarity can best be explained if we assume that it evolved out of the oblate formula which had been used at Prouille; if so, it presumably goes back to the very beginning of the diocesan *predicatio* in Toulouse, when Peter Seilhan and Thomas 'obtulerunt se fratri Dominico' (*Lib.* 38), and we may take it that this is how John of Spain made his profession in 1215 (*ACB* #25), before the preachers had become a religious order.

Obviously people who 'obtulerunt se' for service in the *predicatio*, could not, as Prouille oblates did, give themselves to the monastery; but they could give themselves 'to God and to the blessed Mary and to the *predicatio* and to *frater Dominicus*' (cf. the oblate formula in Koudelka #15), specifying the content of their oblation as a promise of obedience to Dominic. But did they give themselves to Dominic expressly as *magister predicationis*? And how, if at all, was the formula adapted for use in Paris and elsewhere?[80]

---

[79] If, as seems likely, it was the 1220 chapter which fixed the formula, we can add PC I 16 to the constitutional texts which required that chapter to decide on its title for the head of the order.

[80] I should not care to bet that the formula was adapted, however unsuitable it may have been; Dominicans may be clever, but they are not always intelligent. When the 1918 codex introduced compulsory temporary vows for all religious (can. 574), the English Dominicans, at least, found a remarkably curious way of adapting the only profession formula available in the constitutions, as can be seen from the province's profession book. On 25 Sept. 1918, Brendan Gray made his first profession at Hawkesyard, in the hands of the provincial, Bede Jarrett. He solemnly recited the formula from the constitutions, including the promise of obedience 'usque ad mortem'; he then recited it again, substituting 'ad triennium' for 'usque ad mortem'. Both 'professions' were then signed by himself, the provincial, the prior (Austin Barker) and Hugh Pope STM. The same rigmarole was repeated on 23 Jan. 1919, when Alfred Swaby made profession in the hands of Austin Barker, with Vincent McNabb STM and Paulinus Sweeney as witnesses. The logic is that of Pooh-Bah wishing Nanki-Poo 'Long life to you till then' ('then' being his execution).

Only one things seems certain: if Jordan had made profession to Reginald as representing the *magister predicationis*, *magister predicatorum*, *magister ordinis* or any such phrase, he could not possibly have believed *magister ordinis* to be a title which the order substituted for *abbas*.

This does not mean that Jordan was unaware that Dominic was called 'magister Dominicus'.

In the early chapters of the *Libellus*, Jordan has no need to give any title to Dominic. At his first appearance, he is 'quidam adolescens nomine Dominicus' (*Lib.* 5), then he becomes 'uir dei' (*Lib.* 11, 14) and, in due course, 'supprior ille' or 'predictus supprior' (*Lib.* 15, 21). *Lib.* 21 notes that, from the time of his involvement in the *predicatio*, he was known as 'frater Dominicus', which, I have suggested, represents a distinct piece of information which Jordan had received;[81] Dominic is accordingly referred to as 'frater' from then onwards, up to the dispersal of the brethren in 1217 (*Lib.* 21-45), with the occasional 'beatus uir', 'uir dei' or 'seruus dei' thrown in (*Lib.* 24-25, 36, 46). From *Lib.* 49 onwards, he is always called 'magister Dominicus' (except for *seruus dei* in *Lib.* 95, the account of his death, and in the heading to *Lib.* 109, 'laus uiri dei beati Dominici'). The chapter-headings make the transition from *frater* to *magister* slightly earlier: though *Lib.* 40 describes how 'frater Dominicus' went with Fulk to the Lateran council, the heading is 'Qualiter magister Dominicus cum episcopo Tholosano ad dominum papam accessit'; it is, unfortunately, not clear when, or even by whom, these headings were inserted.

If the change in terminology represents another specific piece of information, then someone must have told Jordan that, at some point, Dominic stopped being called 'frater' and started being called 'magister'; and this would have to be related to his status as *magister predicationis*. As we have seen, there is evidence that Dominic

[81] Granted Peter Seilhan's difficulty in accepting it, it is more than likely that Dominic's insistence on *frater* was a topic of conversation in Toulouse; and since, as we have seen, Dominic's preference was known and respected from the outset by ecclesiastics, including Fulk, it would not have been difficult to discover that Dominic had always wanted to be called *frater* during his whole time in the Midi. John of Spain would have had a further opportunity to discover this during his short time in Bologna with Miguel de Uzero and the other Dominic (*Lib.* 49, 55). There is therefore no reason why Jordan should not have heard about it in 1218-1219.

was being called 'magister' rather earlier than the *Libellus* implies; but John of Spain, Jordan's probable informant, may not have known this.

There is, however, another possible explanation. Whether the significant shift to 'magister' occurs at *Lib.* 40 or at 49, we are entering the period for which John of Spain could speak from his own experience, so it is possible that Jordan simply echoed the terms in which successive parts of the story were communicated to him. It would not be terribly surprising if John, say, narrated what he had learned from hearsay in the language which he had been taught to consider proper (i.e. Dominic was 'frater'), but thereafter used 'magister Dominicus' because, in his experience, that was how Dominic was generally known, and that was what he had always called him himself.[82]

There is, sadly, no evidence for Parisian usage other than that of John and Jordan; but it is not unlikely that, in his contacts with Saint-Jacques and, in 1219, with Dominic's own entourage, Jordan heard him habitually referred to as 'magister Dominicus', and that he followed suit in composing his *Libellus*.

In any case, whatever prompted the shift in the *Libellus*, there is one passage which strongly suggests that Jordan did not connect the use of 'magister Dominicus' with Dominic's rôle as head of the *predicatio* (*Lib.* 10):

> Vendens itaque libros quos sibi oppido necessarios possidebat et elemosinam quandam instituens dispersit, dedit pauperibus. Cuius pietatis exemplo sic *aliorum theologorum ac magistrorum* animos prouocauit ut ex iuuenis liberalitate suam parcam segnitiem extimantes extunc largioribus habundarent.

The only possible reason for saying that Dominic's example inspired *other* divines and masters in Palencia was that Jordan thought Dominic too was *theologus ac magister* — as, of course, was Jordan himself (MOPH I 101-102). It is quite possible that Jordan went on believing till his dying day that 'magister Dominicus' was an academic title,[83] and that Dominic's evolution from 'magister

---

[82] *Lib.* 40 falls somewhere in between: John knew that 'magister Dominicus' had gone to Rome with Fulk, but he had to rely on what he was told for what 'frater Dominicus' did there.

[83] There has been a somewhat nebulous debate as to whether Dominic acquired an academic title at Palencia and whether he taught there before moving to Osma;

Dominicus' to 'frater Dominicus magister ordinis predicatorum' was exactly like his own.[84]

It is becoming apparent how Jordan came to misunderstand the 1220 chapter's decision on what superiors were to be called. If he arrived there not knowing that the abbatial model had already been superseded, unclear about Dominic's institutional position, and unaware that he was called 'magister' because of his rôle as head of the *predicatio*, it is not surprising that he received the impression that *magister ordinis* was a new title with no roots in the past, and that the main effect of its introduction was the abandonment of abbatial government. Indeed, he was not very far off the mark; his chief mistake was to assume that, until then, Matthew's writ, as the order's only abbot, had in some sense extended to the whole order. And there may have been two more factors which contributed to his misunderstanding.

First, we have seen evidence that, during his stay in Bologna in 1219, Dominic talked freely about his missionary hopes and plans (AFP 66 [1996] 69-70, 77-78; 68 [1998] 70-72); we may assume that he did the same in Paris. It was presumably in fulfilment of their earlier arrangement that Dominic received William of Monferrato into the order there (*ACB* #12), so it would be odd if they kept silent about their desire to go and convert pagans, now that, at last, it seemed to be on the verge of realisation. It is unlikely that Jordan

---

cf. V.D.Carro, *Santa Domingo de Guzmán, fundador de la primera orden universitaria*, Salamanca 1946, 10-15; id., *Domingo de Guzmán*, Madrid 1973, 289-291. A recent suggestion, by G.Celada, is that he did acquire an academic title, but did not teach there (C.Aniz Iriarte and L.V.Díaz Martín, edd., *Santo Domingo de Caleruega, Contexto cultural*, Salamanca 1995, 122-124). New evidence has been cited to show that, when Dominic was a student, Palencia was already functioning as a university (G.Martínez Díez, 'La universidad de Palencia. Revisidiscover that Do*Actas del II Congreso de Historia de Palencia IV*, Palencia 1990, 155-191), and we have seen reason to doubt the theory that Dominic did not complete his arts course (AFP 67 [1997] 36-37); so he might at least have become an MA (which is all that *Lib.* 10 implies), though what Carro and others have claimed is that he became a Master in Theology. Vicaire brusquely dismisses all such suggestions (*Histoire* I 235), and he is probably right; Jordan is not evidence, since he may have been mistaken, and other documentation suggests that is was only in the context of the *predicatio* that Dominic began to be called *magister*. Carro's assertion in 1946 that 'el título de *Magister* no se daba en la época a nadie que no hubiese sido profesor, *era un título académico*' is preposterous; there were master builders then, just as there are now.

[84] That Jordan was known as 'magister' while he was still provincial of Lombardy is shown by a document edited by V.Alce in AFP 42 (1972) 12.

knew much about this at the time, but he probably heard something about it after he entered Saint-Jacques.[85] It is therefore quite possible that he arrived at the chapter believing that Dominic's position in the order was not only unclear, but temporary; this may be one reason why he makes no comment on Dominic's attempt to get himself deposed.

Secondly, there is a large gap in the documentation cited to prove that Matthew ceased to be abbot in 1220. All it shows is that other people were calling him 'prior' before the 1221 chapter; but the pope was doing that even before the 1220 chapter. What we do not know is when Matthew stopped calling himself 'abbot'. The earliest evidence of him referring to himself as 'prior' comes from 1225 (Balme III 32),[86], and by that time, as we shall see in the next article, Jordan had intervened, as Master of the Order, to divide up the rôle which Matthew had previously played between a conventual prior of Paris and a provincial prior of France. If, as we have deemed likely, the 1220 chapter adopted the title 'prior' simply by writing it into certain constitutions — a choice which, in the circumstances, probably called for no discussion at all — there is no reason why Matthew or anyone else should infer that the abbot of Paris was in any way affected. For all we know to the contrary, Matthew may have gone on calling himself 'abbot' for several more years. If he did, then it would naturally not have occurred to Jordan, either in 1221 or in 1233, that it was, in principle, *prior*, rather than *magister ordinis*, which had replaced *abbas*; in 1221, on this hypothesis, Matthew was still abbot, and he later became *prior*, not by change of title, but by change of function.

Particularly if these last two conjectures are correct, we can see how Jordan came to perpetrate his somewhat inaccurate statement on abbots and Masters, and so to cause unnecessary puzzlement to generations of historians. As for his comment that it was 'ob humilitatis insinuationem' that the head of the order was called 'magis-

---

[85] He says nothing about San Sisto in the *Libellus*, so there is nothing to suggest he knew that Dominic had in the mean time been forced to shelve his own purpose in favour of the pope's plans for the Roman nuns.

[86] There is a mysterious 'PR' after 'prior', which could be interpreted as 'prouincialis', were it not for the fact that, as Balme points out, Peter of Rheims was provincial by 1225, the date of our document; it must therefore be taken as meaning 'Parisius', 'Parisinus' or 'Parisiensis'. Koudelka (AFP 33 [1963] 92) does not comment on this difficulty, but clearly takes Matthew to be identifying himself as prior of the convent of Paris.

ter' rather than 'abbas' (*Lib.* 48), that can only be a moral which he drew for himself. In 1220, the real choice was not between *magister* and *abbas*, as Jordan imagined, or between *magister* and *prior*, as some modern writers have supposed, but between *magister* and *minister*. Which of the two is more truly humble, it is not for me to say; but let us not forget the character in the old children's book who 'prided himself upon having no pride'.[87]

[87] Alas, the book was stolen long ago, and I have no recollection of its title or author; but this quotation was a favourite with the sage of my formative years, my grandmother.