

# Early Dominican Hagiography

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This paper purports to deal with a non-existent subject in holding that there was no Dominican hagiography before the canonization of St. Dominic nor for some time afterwards.

Dominic Guzman died and his obsequies were presided over by his friend and patron Cardinal Ugolino on 6th August 1221.<sup>1</sup> The same Ugolino, having ascended the papal throne as Gregory IX, issued a bull on 3rd July 1234 ordering annual celebration of the feast of St Dominic and likening the Order of Preachers he founded to those of St Benedict and Citeaux as an historic achievement for the faith.<sup>2</sup> The first life of St. Dominic written by a Dominican (or by anyone) is the *Legenda S. Dominici* of Peter of Ferrand composed between 1235 and 1239 for liturgical use in the new office of St. Dominic which was established throughout the Order in the latter year.<sup>3</sup>

It is at first sight astonishing that no earlier Dominican life exists and that none was produced specifically for submission in the canonization proceedings as had become standard practise at this time: these facts this paper seeks to explain. To do so will involve answering two questions: 1. What was the procedure which had become established for the canonization of saints by 1234 and what factors affected its operation in the case of St. Dominic? 2. What material had in fact been produced from Dominican sources about Dominic up until his canonization and why did this not include a life of the saint?

Canonization developed as a formal process from episcopal and later synodal oversight and approval of the *de facto* status bestowed upon a dead holy man by local popular devotion to his relics, until inevitably the papacy began to be involved in the late tenth century.<sup>4</sup> In 993 in a council in the Lateran palace, John XV examined accounts of the life and miracles of Ulric of Augsburg (d.973) presented to him by Liudolf, Bishop of Augsburg, and ordered his memory to be venerated with pious and faithful devotion 'As we adore and venerate the remains of the martyrs and confessors'.<sup>5</sup> In a letter to the higher clergy of France and Germany, he bound them to such observance by the authority of St. Peter and promulgated a bull of canonization undersigned by several

bishops, cardinals and deacons. Subsequently papal approval was regularly sought for the building of shrines and veneration or translation of the relics of saints, not as being required by canon law but to share in the reflected glory of the papacy.

The eleventh century Gregorian reform saw the centralization of papal authority, and Urban II felt able to refuse canonization to St. Urloux in c.1088 'For no one should be included in the canon of saints unless there are witnesses who testify to having seen his miracles with their own eyes and he is approved by the common agreement of a full synod'.<sup>6</sup> He thereby at once assumed pontifical authority for such a decision and set out the criteria of miracles authenticated by testimony and conciliar approval. On another occasion, having accepted as genuine the life and miracles of a candidate he remitted the case to its promoter for further local deliberation.

Papal canonizations multiplied in the twelfth century with the growth in power and prestige of the papacy, and under Alexander III (1159-81), naturally cautious and a canon lawyer by training, the process was practically and theoretically formalised. The practice of canonization in council ceased and the pope relied on the advice of his cardinals, confidently exercising what he saw as his exclusive authority. He established the employment of a commission of inquiry and his bulls use flowery and formulaic language in reference to both the theory and practice of canonization.

Innocent III (1198-1216), who restored the Church's link with the apostolic movement and was a vital and sympathetic force in the prehistory of the friars, established, at least theoretically, the ideas of papal monarchy and *plenitudo potestatis*<sup>7</sup> and expressed them in the language of his bulls. He was also innovative in requiring depositions from the witnesses of miracles, some of whom should testify at Rome, in addition to the report of a commission. Honorius III's pontificate (1216-27) was principally occupied with imperial politics although he was a great supporter of Dominic. Such, then, was the process of papal canonization which had been established by the time of the death of St. Dominic and before the accession of Gregory IX. Vicaire characterises it as a process in three stages:<sup>8</sup> commencement, at the request of the petitioners led by the procurer (nowadays the promoter) and supported by the witnesses; examination, conducted on behalf of the pope by a commission of inquiry and its deputies; and a judgement issued by the pope in a bull of canonization. How did this process commence and how was it conducted in the case of St. Dominic?

Dominic's relationship with the papacy was always one of mutual help and encouragement. He had first found his inspiration on a mission

for Innocent III<sup>9</sup> and was later prominent in papal plans for diocesan preaching missions, as part of which Innocent approved his apostolate as appearing in answer to his call.<sup>10</sup> Dominic sought express papal approval for every step he took and found a friend at the curia in Cardinal Ugolino, who acted as his advocate before Honorius III when he sought confirmation of the Order of Preachers and whose reforming party favoured his use of learning as a weapon against heresy.<sup>11</sup> Both Ugolino, promoter of new religious foundations and cardinal legate to Lombardy, and William of Sabina, head of the papal chancellery, assisted Dominic with a flood of letters and encyclicals endorsing the Order. Honorius personally liked and trusted him,<sup>12</sup> appointed the Order on a mission against heresy in Ugolino's territory in north Italy, gave it the church of St. Sixtus and set up a convent under Dominic's charge in his family property of Santa Sabina, with Ugolino to assist him in its reform.<sup>13</sup> When his last illness overtook him Dominic had just returned to Bologna from consultations with Ugolino in Venice about the extension of the Order and the renewal of its mission in Lombardy. Jordan reports that the cardinal:

who came as soon as he learned that master Dominic had departed this life. He had known him intimately and loved him with great affection, knowing him to be a just and holy man. He personally conducted the funeral with many persons present who knew in their hearts that this was the happy passing of a blessed man and of the holiness obvious to all which he had had while alive . . .<sup>14</sup>

St. Francis had been canonized within two years of his death in 1228 and his life written by Thomas of Celano quickly merited a second edition. How was it that St. Dominic, servant and friend of popes and cardinals, had to wait thirteen years for canonization and up to eighteen for his brethren to produce an official life? Popular devotion quickly arose around the saint's shrine and miraculous cures were reported, from earliest times the first assurance of the sanctity of the deceased. Jordan tells us:

Among the common people, a great feeling of devotion and reverence sprang up, and many of them came along, who had been troubled by all kinds of diseases, and they stayed there for days and nights on end telling everyone that they had been entirely cured. . .<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, the Order's mission against heresy in Lombardy, the territory of Ugolino, carried on despite the saint's death; its provincial in Lombardy, Jordan of Saxony, succeeded Dominic as Master and Brother Stephen, who took over Lombardy and its eighteen priories, spearheaded the apostolic mission with episcopal and curial

backing from Ugolino and the former vice-chancellor William of Piedmont.<sup>16</sup> Yet it was the very assiduity of the surviving brethren in carrying on their Master's work which led them to neglect him personally for more than ten years after his death. Dominic himself had never sought secular or political influence, had twice refused election to a bishopric<sup>17</sup>, and many witnesses affirm:

that it was his custom to be speaking always about God or with God whether at home or abroad or on the way. And he urged the same habit upon the brethren and also put it in their constitutions.<sup>18</sup>

The Order remained faithful to his memory, lived by his example and spread its mission through the great universities and nations of Europe to Greece and the Holy Land, concentrating on preaching and learning, avoiding ecclesiastical office and resisting even the pope's wish to appoint its preachers as bishops. The General Chapters of 1233 and 1234 legislated to forbid involvement in political activities and non-religious litigation (although they could not resist co-option by Gregory IX into his politico-religious and inquisitorial programme.)<sup>19</sup> Dominic had been rigidly subservient to the work of the Order and its work preoccupied his children. The evidence of the *Acta* shows that they retained vivid and fond memories of his sanctity in life<sup>20</sup> but they were disturbed in a double sense by the popular devotions which his shrine attracted after his death. Practically, the shrine was in the conventual church of St. Nicholas in Bologna and the attention of the crowds disrupted the peace of the place, devoted to study and the liturgy. Moreover, as Jordan says:

But during these events [the miraculous cures, n. 15 above] there was hardly anyone among the brethren who met this divine grace with fitting gratitude. Many considered that the miracles should not be accepted in case they appeared to be looking for profit under the cover of piety. But while they were so keen to protect their good name in their misguided holiness they ignored the common good of the church and buried the divine glory.<sup>21</sup>

Jordan, writing as we shall see somewhat after the events, is chiding in his tone but in no way impugns the good faith of the brethren in attempting to stifle a cult of their leader which they saw would be contrary to his wishes and potentially disruptive to the work and good standing of the Order. They were successful for some ten years and only a concatenation of accidents again raised Dominic's profile and led to his canonization.

Between 1228 and 1231 the number of religious in the Bologna convent had increased so that it was desirable to rebuild the church of

St. Nicholas and naturally the question of a translation of Dominic's remains arose. An earlier reconstruction had left the original shrine open both to the elements and the public gaze, situated in a depression that often held standing water. By contrast, St. Francis had just been canonized and the Preachers must have been on their mettle with regard to their rival Friars Minor. Translation of relics was frequently a prelude or complement to canonization; it is hard to know to whom the latter idea first occurred in Dominic's case but it surely grew out of the former. Jordan clearly attributes the initiative to Gregory IX when the brethren consulted him about the translation. The brethren did not require pontifical permission to move their founder's relics but it may have been, as Vicaire suggests, that a party in favour of canonization decided the pope should be consulted, shrewdly confident of a favourable reaction which would disarm resistance among their more conservative brothers.<sup>22</sup> Gregory's reaction was emphatic:

He indeed, as he was a man of great zeal and faith, took them most hardly to task for having failed to attend to so great a debt of honour to their father. He added moreover, "I knew him as a man who followed completely the rule of life of the apostles and there is no doubt that he is joined with them in their glory in heaven."<sup>23</sup>

This was by implication to place Dominic among the saints and Gregory conceived the translation as a canonical rather than a merely conventual act, clearly a prelude to canonization. He arranged for the ceremony to take place during the General Chapter at Bologna on Pentecost, 25th May 1233, and appointed the Archbishop of Ravenna, the Metropolitan of Bologna, to represent him.

Meanwhile, the work of the Order in recalling the people from heresy to the faith had enjoyed growing success, especially in northern and central Italy, and by the time of Jordan's return to Lombardy the brethren were expressing their new-found enthusiasm for their founder and for their own history. As we shall see, it was to satisfy their desire for knowledge of these things that Jordan wrote his *Libellus*. The Order began to address Dominic in its prayers, and to preach about and encourage devotion to him, at last availing itself of his dying promise, 'I shall be more useful and fruitful to you after death than I would have been alive.'<sup>24</sup> John of Vicenza, a maverick friar of undoubted demagogic abilities, took the lead in preaching the life, miracles and virtue of Dominic around Bologna. Following upon the Treaty of San Germano of 1230, which ushered in a period of peacemaking between pope and emperor, and the success of the mission in north Italy in winning back the faithful, John prompted a climactic outburst of popular piety and devotion. This spiritual

uprising, known as 'the Great Alleluia', spread through the Italian cities and inspired acts of peacemaking, reform and reconciliation over which the friars were called upon to preside. At its centre was devotion to Dominic who even in death seemed to fulfil the dreams of popes, for the Alleluia constituted the religious revival of Lombardy and the Marches for which Gregory IX had longed as cardinal legate. It was in this atmosphere that he enthusiastically approved the translation of Dominic's remains.

On the day of and for days before the ceremony, massive crowds had assembled around the church of St. Nicholas and a civil guard was posted to keep order. Amid such wild expectation and at last about to honour their founder, the practical friars were anxious that, since the remains had lain in a water-logged tomb for some years, the opening might reveal a putrid relic which would destroy the people's faith. For this reason the sarcophagus was opened late at night. To the wonderment and joy of all, a fragrance of heavenly beauty pervaded the entire church, Dominic's miraculous sanctity was proclaimed in the streets and a delegation of the clergy, town and university set off from Bologna to request the pope to open the case for canonization.<sup>25</sup>

We cannot look at the canonization process itself without at the same time addressing our second question: what material did Dominicans produce about their founder before his canonization and why did it not include a life? The first part is shortly answered — Jordan wrote the *Libellus* and other Preachers gave evidence to the committee of inquiry in the proceedings; that is all about Dominic we have from Dominican lips or pens before Peter of Ferrand's conventional *Legenda*.<sup>26</sup> To say why this material does not include a life we must ask how the canonization process was conducted and why no life was produced for its purposes; and what is the *Libellus* and how does it differ from a saint's life of the sort we would expect? The *Libellus* appeared first and we shall take it first.

The book was written after the death of Bishop Fulk in 1231,<sup>27</sup> before the canonization and almost as surely before the translation, the section covering that event being added later, possibly to a revised edition and possibly originating in an encyclical letter by Jordan on the subject. It may be dated to 1232–3, setting it, as we saw earlier, against the background of the Order's new interest in itself and its foundation, John of Vicenza's preaching of Dominic and the Alleluia.<sup>28</sup> Vicaire succinctly states its significance:

[*The Libellus*] is the basis of early Dominican historiography. It is so by virtue of its date: no other written account of the life of St. Dominic and the foundation of the Order went before it and all others derive subsequently from it.<sup>29</sup>

In his prologue Jordan says of his occasion and reasons for writing it:

Many of the brethren have been pressing and desirous to know how this Order of Preachers . . . had its foundation and what sort of men the earliest brothers of our Order were and how their numbers increased...I have decided, I say, to set down in writing matters concerning the life and miracles of the blessed an Dominic, our father, and certain other brethren also so that the brothers...shall know about the origins of this Order.<sup>30</sup>

He had known Dominic, albeit that their meetings were few and brief, and as Master had regular contact with men who had known him intimately in the early days.<sup>31</sup> Clearly he felt he was the best person to write what was a necessary book — it is notable that he does not even pay lip service to the convention of apology, that the work has been pressed upon him by others and is beyond his meagre powers. These are the bare facts; what kind of book exactly it was that Jordan wrote, and with what public and private motives, has been much discussed and it will be well to pass over the main trends of opinion before answering those questions here.

Scheeben in his edition points out that although Jordan gave his book no title he described his theme in the prologue and on this basis the major manuscripts call it *in descriptionem principii ordinis predicatorum* or *de initio O.P.*. He believes Jordan's theme is the origin of the Order, not the life of St. Dominic (he adopts the title *de principiis O.P.*) and that its genre is chronicle, not *legenda*, panegyric or saint's life, one of which forms Jordan would undoubtedly have used if he had meant his book as propaganda for the translation and canonization, which Scheeben thinks improbable.<sup>32</sup>

Rosalind Brooke tendentiously refers to the *Libellus* as 'alias Life of St. Dominic' and calls Jordan an 'official biographer', more plausibly adding that he was crucial in selecting and presenting his information.<sup>33</sup> Even this is misleading, however, for while Jordan's is obviously not a comprehensive biography, he does in the course of his work take Dominic from birth through the major episodes of his life as founder of the Order (which was his stated viewpoint) to his death, and includes after it an account of a majority of the miracles recounted by witnesses in the *Acta*, in a drier and more objective tone than that of the Blessed Celia.<sup>34</sup>

Tugwell thinks that the *Libellus* is not a life of St. Dominic, giving as it does a meagre and drab picture of him in contrast to the lives of St. Francis, but that equally it is not a history of the early Dominican Order, for while it is framed within the life of Dominic and closes with a



conventional panegyric yet it begins not with his birth but an extensive account of the career of his mentor Diego, Bishop of Osma.<sup>35</sup> Christopher Brooke shares these views in finding the book 'surprising above all for its dullness' and afflicted by a confusion of genres in that Jordan tried to write both a life and a chronicle with the anomalous result that down to Dominic's death the Order has centre stage, though its history is framed within his life, while after his death we hear nothing more about the Order but find only panegyric and an account of the miracles and translation.<sup>36</sup>

It is apparent then that, whatever the *Libellus* is, it is something other than a conventional piece of hagiography of the type to be read to a pope wishing to know more of the man he was being invited to enroll in the catalogue of saints. Better sense can be made of Jordan's work by regarding it in its historical context and looking at its larger purpose, and its context we have already examined. Of Jordan's purpose there are two opposed views; either he was writing Dominican propaganda designed to ensure the Order's status and hold on the popular imagination by the canonization of its founder amid a ground swell of devotion which would achieve parity with St. Francis and the Friars Minor or, conversely, he was trying to foster the Order's recent interest in its history and the spirit of St. Dominic in a way which would be consistent with his character and intentions and with the continued flourishing of the Order as he had conceived it.

The former view is untenable. There is no evidence of Jordan intending the work to stand as the primary evidence in or by way of a petition for the canonization; its form alone argues against this and, moreover, it was written prior even to the translation, at the request of the newer brethren, and is addressed to the Order by its Master.<sup>37</sup> Only some seventy of its one hundred and thirty paragraphs deal either with Dominic exclusively or in relation to the Order, the balance dealing with Bishop Diego and stories of the early brethren. The Preachers were not disciples of Dominic, as the Friars Minor were of Francis, but regarded him as a colleague, a man of exceptional holiness certainly but a Preacher like themselves,<sup>38</sup> and their interest in him, even when it revived, was as the protagonist in the apostolic mission which they were still pursuing in the world. They wanted his example to follow, not his relics to pray over, and we have seen how they felt devotions at his shrine to be against his spirit and the interests of the Order. However, at about the time Jordan was writing, the preaching of John of Vicenza, the successes in Lombardy and the Marches, the friars' involvement in the Great Alleluia, and the proposed translation were all exciting interest in and devotion to Dominic to an unprecedented level, among



both the people and the brethren. Jordan's task as Master was to respond to and capitalize upon this phenomenon in a manner which would be in accordance with the spirit and interests of the Order.

Christopher Brooke has argued, most interestingly and plausibly among the commentators, that Jordan's work was one of characteristic diplomacy, a piece of 'decorous propaganda' which escaped the dilemma of remaining true to a master to whom a personality cult would have been anathema, while at the same time responding to the growing feeling, which extended even to Pope Gregory himself, that Dominic should be proclaimed and recognized by devotions and canonization.<sup>39</sup> This reconstruction of his situation accords with the facts and has truth in it; it also gives an account of why Jordan did not write a straightforward panegyric life, but it ignores the equally important fact that his work is wholly of and for the Order of Preachers.

To encourage a cult of personality would have been unDominican in the extreme; rather, Jordan's purpose was to establish, by showing how the Order had grown and how its founder and his companions had lived, the definitive pattern of Dominican life and to renew Dominic's relationship with the Order. In life Dominic had pushed himself into the background, disclaiming personal authority or administrative control; he had felt himself to be a worker at a task given him by God and at which his children would work on after him with the aid of his prayers. It was the task and the way of doing it which Jordan sought to define, by showing how it had first been done and what manner of men had done it. By understanding this simple purpose we are able to see why he made the *Libellus* the sort of book it is and the apparent anomalies of genre become irrelevant; he succeeded in precisely achieving the end he had in mind. We may give the last word to Vicaire:

So the *Libellus* is in reality what it justly claims to be. Not a *legenda* of St. Dominic, even less a panegyric, but the history of "the origins of the establishment of the Preachers".<sup>40</sup>

Since the balance of the material produced by Dominicans about St. Dominic before his canonization consists in their evidence in the canonization process itself, we can now consider both matters together in answering our outstanding questions as to how the process was conducted and why no life was produced for its purpose. More often than not it had been the practice in the past of any community which suspected it had harboured a man of such holiness as to merit canonization, to commission, usually at the instance of its higher clergy, the writing of an account of his life by some able clerk. This was submitted to the pope with or by way of a petition and constituted the

commencement of the process of investigation. As we have seen, things were rather different in Dominic's case. His sanctity had been asserted by Pope Gregory IX himself in response to the Order's overture about the translation, which itself had taken place to the accompaniment of an evident miracle and amid elaborate liturgical ceremonies over the night of 23rd-24th May 1233. The days immediately following were taken up with the business of the General Chapter of the Preachers, and shortly after its close, a week later, a delegation representing the estates spiritual and temporal of Bologna arrived in Rome to demand that the pope open Dominic's case.<sup>41</sup> Some have held that the canonization was long planned for and that Jordan's *Libellus* was propaganda for it. On the contrary, while the pope's formal declaration of Dominic's sanctity may have been a foregone conclusion, the move to petition for it was a spontaneous reaction of the clergy, people and scholars of Bologna to the miracle at the translation. Not only was there no time to produce a life for submission to the pope, since the brethren had not so far written one, but more than this, there was no need to present one to Gregory, who as Dominic's friend and advocate in life knew and loved him as well, and was as sure of his holiness, as anyone.

We do not know exactly what form the petition of the Bolognese delegation took, and it is not recited in the pontifical mandate issued on 13th July 1233 which nominated three commissioners for the inquiry in Bologna.<sup>42</sup> The mandate itself, however, speaks amply of Gregory's full knowledge and approval of Dominic:

brother Dominic, founder and master of the Order of Preachers, by the aid of God's mercy, has been gathered among the saints in heaven and marvellous signs show that he has been granted a glorious beatitude, for the magnificent Lord has worked a great number of various kinds of miracles for many persons at his tomb and in other place by the invocation of his name in sincerely devout prayer.<sup>43</sup>

This is a statement not even qualified by such conventional locutions as 'beyond doubt' and using strongly assertive language (e.g. *existat*) to set out the already accepted facts of Dominic's sanctity and the efficacy of invoking him for the divine mercy of miracles — everything, in fact, of which the commission needed to satisfy itself. It expressly states the pope's confidence in these things and instructs the commission diligently to ascertain that the life and miracles are truly pleasing to God in order to satisfy the doubts of those who are slower to believe in them. The promoter of Dominic's case was Philip of Vercelli, Dominican prior of St. Nicholas, and during 6–15 August he presented his witnesses to the three commissioners, Master Tancred, archdeacon

of Bologna, Friar Thomas, prior of Sta. Maria di Reno and Friar Palmerio, canon of Campagnola.

Evidence was obtained in a way designed to facilitate the inquiry; Philip prepared a list of articles which characterised Dominic's sanctity and this formed the skeleton of the depositions. His system excluded irrelevancies but somewhat stifled the spontaneity of the testimony, although student friends of Dominic such as Brother Stephen and William of Montferrat record deeply personal memories, including the saint's final confession and dying promises. The depositions in the *Acta* constitute an invaluable, informed and objective record by men who had known Dominic well and understood his spirit. The structuring of testimony also kept in focus that the end of the process was not to obtain biographical information but to prove his sanctity by chosen examples. As more of these came out in evidence so Philip extended the list of articles to be put to new witnesses the following day, the completed list forming the basis of an agenda of twenty-five virtues or traits on which further witnesses, who had known Dominic during his early days in southern France, were examined.<sup>44</sup>

This second examination was carried out at Toulouse by a sub-commission and its mandate of instruction from the chief commissioners recites the circumstances of the Bolognese petition and Gregory's original mandate, again asserting Dominic's sanctity and adding that the commissioners understand there are further miracles to which the French witnesses can add proof.<sup>45</sup> The twenty-five men and women who gave evidence between 16 and 19 August largely confined themselves to the matters on the agenda, and their evidence was confirmed by three hundred countersignatories to their deposition, epitomised by a notary. A separate report on Dominic's miracles, upon which Jordan drew in composing the account he added to a revision of the *Libellus*,<sup>46</sup> was prepared and sent to Rome with the evidence of the commission and the first half of 1234 was occupied in an individual examination of the miraculous incidents. Finally, on 3rd July 1234 Gregory gave his verdict and issued a bull of canonization.<sup>47</sup>

The bull itself is at first sight disappointing, employing flowery language with a wealth of Scriptural allusion to pass in review the historical stages of the Church's apostolic evangelization of the world, culminating in the coming of the friars. This occupies some three quarters of the text before it turns more directly to St. Dominic and recites in conventional terms his merits and entitlement to a place among the saints. At last however, near the close, Gregory himself again speaks out, fondly recalling his own friendship with Dominic and reaffirming his personal belief in and experience of his sainthood:

In his frequent intimacy with us while we occupied a humbler office we had evidence of his sanctity in the testimony of his remarkable life and afterwards complete faith in the truth of the aforesaid miracles confirmed by reliable witnesses . . .<sup>48</sup>

So, having reviewed and examined the process of St. Dominic's canonization and the material produced about him by his brethren up until that time, we are now able to understand why it was that no official Dominican life was written in anticipation of his enrolment in the catalogue of saints. Jordan's *Libellus* tells of St. Dominic but is in no sense a conventional work of hagiography; rather it is, as Dominic would have wished, a portrait not of the saint himself but of Dominican life as it was lived by the earliest brethren, for the edification of the brothers who came after and were keen to live out the apostolic mission by their father's example. It was not written with the aim of having Dominic canonized. That that would come about, it may be thought, was inevitable, given his intimacy with successive popes and especially with Cardinal Ugolino (as Dominic knew him), whose friend and protégé he was and whose vision of the religious renewal of his beloved Lombardy his Order was to realise; and yet as pope, Gregory IX was scrupulous in his formal examination of Dominic's life and works and, though himself sure of his sanctity, did not allow even the spontaneous demand of the whole city of Bologna to short cut the due process of inquiry. It was that very spontaneity however, overtaking the circumspection of the Preachers, which combined with Gregory's own knowledge of Dominic to render an official life not only impossible of production in the rush of events but also unnecessary. Finally, that same caution on the part of his brethren with regard to the cultivation of Dominic's memory, and their determination soberly to show their devotion by carrying on his work rather than parading his relics, explains at once why they had not produced a life of their father before he was canonized and why Jordan only got it half right when he chided them:

they were so keen to protect their good name in their misguided holiness they ignored the common good of the church and buried the divine glory.<sup>49</sup>

*Translation of foreign sources is by the writer unless otherwise acknowledged.*

1 Jordan of Saxony *Libellus de principis O.P.*, ed. D.H.-C. Scheeben, MOPH XVI (1935) cited below as 'Jordan' p. 1–88, paras. 92–6. R.B. Brooke *The Coming of the Friars* (London 1975) p. 104–5. B. Cahill O.P. *Dominic the Preacher* (London, 1988) p. 108–9. S. Tugwell, O.P. ed. *Early Dominicans — Selected Writings* (New

- York, 1982) p. 58–9, 60, 68–9, 70, 78, 92. M.–H. Vicaire O.P. *St. Dominic and his Times* (London, 1964) p. 371–75. *Jordan and the Acta Canonizationis S. Dominici* ed. R.P.A. Walz, O.P., MOPH XVI (1935) p.91–194, are the principal primary sources on St. Dominic. Vicaire 1964 is the standard modern life.
- 2 *Acta* p. 191f, trans. F.C. Lehner *St. Dominic — Biographical Documents* (Washington, 1964).
  - 3 Peter of Ferrand, ed. Laurent MOPH XV (1933) p. 204; see also Lehner 1964 p. 3, Vicaire *S. Dominique de Calereuga d'après des documents du XIII<sup>m</sup> siècle* (Paris 1955) p. 19. Constantine of Orvieto wrote a second life, based on Peter of Ferrand and commissioned by the General Chapter of 1245; Humbert of Romans, fifth Master of the Order, drew on both of these in compiling his definitive *Legenda* which was approved by the three General Chapters of 1254–56.
  - 4 On this and what follows see E.W. Kemp *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (Oxford, )1948 where all references may be found except where otherwise given.
  - 5 Kemp 1948 p. 57.
  - 6 Kemp 1948 p. 67.
  - 7 'Absolute authority', see C. Morris *The Papal Monarchy* 1989 p. 450.
  - 8 Vicaire 1955 p. 196.
  - 9 Vicaire 1964 p. 46–60.
  - 10 Vicaire 1964 p. 80–114, J.G. Bougerol 'La Papauté dans les sermons médiévaux français et italiens' in RRP p. 248, I.S. Robinson *The Papacy 1079–1198* (Cambridge, 1990) p. 211.
  - 11 Osmund Lewry O.P. 'Papal Ideals and the University of Paris' in RRP at p. 368–71.
  - 12 Bas reliefs by Nicholas Pisano on the shrine in Bologna to which he was transferred in 1267 depict Dominic in Innocent III's dream supporting the Lateran palace and Honorius confirming a book of constitutions. Neither are accurate history but both reflect the true feelings of the papacy as expressed in the bull of canonization. Plates and comment in J. Gardner 'Patterns of Papal Patronage c. 1260—c.1300' in RRP at p. 444f.
  - 13 H.K. Mann ed. *The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages* 18 vols., Vol. XIII. (London, 1925) p. 199–200.
  - 14 Jordan 96.
  - 15 Jordan 97, trans. S. Tugwell O.P. *Jordan of Saxony* (Dublin 1982).
  - 16 Jordan 92–9 and 120–26 constitute the primary source and Vicaire 1964 p. 376–95 gives a full history of the period from death to canonization with full source references; see also Vicaire 1955 p. 195–8.
  - 17 The bishopric of Conserans offered by the archbishop of Auch, see Pons, abbot of Boulbone, in *Acta* p. 177.
  - 18 Brother Stephen, *Acta* p. 155; identical evidence is given by Paul of Venice p. 161 and Frugiero of Penne p. 165 and William, abbot of St. Paul, remarks on his contempt for all temporal glory p. 182–3. Brother Ralph (or Reginald) stated:

quod nolebat quod fratres intrmitterent se de temporalibus, nec de facto domus, nec de consiliis temporalium...sed volebat quod alij semper essent intenti lectioni, orationi vel predicationi. Et si quem fratrum sciret utilem ad predicationem, nolebat quod iniungitur ei aliquid officium aliud. *Acta* p. 150–1.

'that he did not want the brethren to involve themselves in temporal affairs, nor domestic matters, nor in the business of this world ...but desired the rest [those not concerned with domestic business] to be always devoted to study or prayer or preaching. If he found one of the brothers to be an able preacher he wanted no other kind of duty to be imposed upon him.'

- 19 Morris 1989 p. 456, 460 discusses papal support for the Order and argues that Gregory was sensitive to their ideals in his recruitment of them.
- 20 See Tugwell *The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic* (Dublin, 1978) p. 5–7 and *Acta passim*.
- 21 Jordan 98. See also C.N.L. Brooke *Medieval Church and Society* (London, 1974 p. 231–2, R. Brooke 1975 p. 104.
- 22 Vicaire 1964 p. 381–2. It is clear from Jordan 121–3 that mixed feelings existed among the brethren but there was a growing awareness that neglect of their founder's sanctity was doing nothing for the glory of the Order or of the Church, and his comments suggest that as Master he was prominent among the active party:

Sique factum est, ut beati patris Dominici gloria absque omni sanctitatis veneratione per annos fere XII sopita permaneret. Iacebat nempe thesaurus absconditus, carens utilitate, et subtrahebantur beneficia desuper a virtutum largitione. ...Prodidit sepius virtus Dominici sed suffocabat eam incuria filiorum. Jordan 123.

'So it was that the glory of blessed father Dominic remained neglected and without veneration of his utter holiness for nearly twelve years. Indeed he lay as a treasure hidden, wanting its usefulness, and the gifts from the heavenly largesse of virtues were lost....The virtue of Dominic often went forth but the neglect of his children smothered it.'

- 23 Jordan 125.
- 24 *Acta* p. 129, cf. Jordan 93.
- 25 q.v. herein. Jordan 121–30 and *Acta* p. 131–2, 135–6, 138, 141–2, 152–3, 158–60 are the principal sources on the translation. Vicaire 1964 p. 380–4 argues that the miraculous fragrance was the proximate cause without which the other factors would not have ensured canonization and rejects suggestions that Jordan as Master contrived the events to achieve this end.
- 26 There is also Jordan's Encyclical Letter, see n. 28 below.
- 27 Jordan 39.
- 28 Discussed in Lehner 1964 p. 2, Tugwell *Early Dominicans* p. viii–ix, Scheeben in Jordan at p. 5. The 'Encyclical Letter' edited by Kaeppli was probably written by Jordan on 25th may 1233, the day after the translation. It is not a life or hagiography but cites Dominic as the prime example of Dominican life for the brethren; it is not to be identified with the putative encyclical appended to the *Libellus*. See also Vicaire 1955 p. 16–18.
- 29 Vicaire 1955 p. 15. See also Scheeben in Jordan at p. 22–3.
- 30 Jordan 2–3.
- 31 C.N.L. Brooke 1974 p. 215, Lehner 1964 p. 2.
- 32 Jordan p. 4–5, 20–21, 25 n. a.
- 33 R. Brooke 1975 p. 91, 97, 103.
- 34 Blessed Celia 'The Miracles of St. Dominic', ed. A.Walz, AFP XXXVII (1967) p. 21–44. See also Tugwell *Early Dominicans* p. 391–3, 473. Jordan's account of the miracles was added to his revised edition after the canonization, see p. 17 *infra*.
- 35 Tugwell *Jordan of Saxony* p. vii.
- 36 C.N.L. Brooke 1974 p. 214–32. This paper includes a worthwhile discussion and a useful contrasting of SS.Francis and Dominic.
- 37 Jordan 1.
- 38 R. Brooke 1975 p. 103–4. Tugwell, in his Foreword to Cahill 1988 p. vii, says 'Unlike his spectacular contemporary, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic was a much more unobtrusive man, whose life was to a great extent hidden by his devotion to the

various tasks it fell to him to perform and by his readiness to work with other people.'

39 C.N.L. Brooke 1974 p. 231–2.

40 Vicaire 1955 p. 19.

41 See Vicaire 1964 p. 376–95 for a full narrative of the canonization process and sources.

42 *Acta* p. 114–17.

43 *Acta* p. 116.

44 See Vicaire 1955 p. 197–8 for an analysis of this process.

45 *Acta* p. 169.

46 See Vicaire 1964 p. 387, n. 44.

47 *Acta* p. 190–4.

48 *Acta* p. 193.

49 Jordan 122.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

MOPH — Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica (Louvain-Rome-Paris 1896—).

RRP — C. Ryan ed. *The Religious Roles of the Papacy: Ideals and Realities, 1150–1300* (Toronto 1989).

## Religious in the Local Churches: Pointers from Aquinas

Robert Ombres OP

### I

The saint we are honouring today would have found the theme of this lecture all too familiar.<sup>1</sup> St Thomas Aquinas was personally involved in the lively, indeed fierce, medieval debates that surrounded the first appearance of the Franciscan and Dominican friars in the life of the Church. Then, as before and since, religious did not always fit in immediately or obviously into the established patterns of diocese and parish. At the time of St Thomas some argued that all the attributes of the antichrist and his ministers were to be found in the new Mendicant Orders.<sup>2</sup> In Cambridge there survives a medieval manuscript with an