

*Paupertatem voluntariam possidete:*

‘Possessing Poverty’ and the  
Development of Devotional Narratives  
in the Medieval Dominican Order, 1221  
- 1363.

Anna Milne-Tavendale

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## Abstract

This thesis explores the response of the Dominican Order to enduring questions regarding the meaning, purpose and presentation of religious poverty. From Christianity's inception, the Church has struggled with the question of how to deal with the fundamental Christian ideal of poverty in a religious institution that is not poor. Nowhere was this more prevalent than in the thirteenth century which saw the foundation of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders, who each placed poverty at the centre of an apostolic preaching ministry. While the Dominicans are considered essential agents of late-medieval religious change, their close historical and ideological proximity to Saint Francis has meant that sometimes the particularities of their engagement with poverty have been overshadowed. Scholarly analysis of Dominican poverty is somewhat fragmented, dispersed in broader histories concerning the order or its various intellectual and institutional activities, and in those which discuss the intense religious and social change that characterised the period. The picture that is currently available of poverty's role and meaning within the Order is accordingly limited in both scope and depth.

This thesis provides a concentrated and unified exploration of the way that the Dominicans constructed, navigated and articulated concepts of poverty in historical and hagiographical narratives composed in the Order's first one hundred and fifty years. The thesis moves beyond treating poverty exclusively as a material condition by tracing its development from its beginnings as a preaching tactic used to convert heretics to a multi-dimensional symbol and tool of religious authority and access to the divine. Augmenting the existing scholarly tradition, the thesis provides deeper insight into poverty's meaning to the Dominicans' self-presentation and in their devotional and spiritual lives. It establishes poverty as a dynamic devotional force, which collapsed and/or bridged boundaries between the spiritual and material worlds in conception and performance.

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It is certainly not an understatement to say the course of this thesis did not run smoothly nor as expected. In 2010, just weeks after registering to undertake my PhD research on the use of political prophecy in the Late Middle Ages, Christchurch was struck by the first of two devastating earthquakes. When things finally began to return to some sort of normality, I welcomed the birth of my first daughter. Just after resuming studies after an extended maternity leave, I discovered I was expecting my second child. At this time, Pope Benedict XVI made the surprising decision to resign and, even more unexpectedly, his successor chose Francis as his papal name. The combination of these events inspired a change of thesis topic. Thus, I am grateful for the patient supervision offered by Dr Chris Jones and Professor Klaus Oschema, who through all of these changes and upheavals continued to provide wise criticism and intellectual support.

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## Abbreviations

<i>Acta Canon.</i> ,	<i>Acta Canonizationis S. Dominici</i>
<i>AFP</i>	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i>
<i>EncMedChron</i>	<i>The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle</i>
<i>FOAED</i>	<i>Francis of Assisi Early Documents</i>
<i>Fontes</i>	<i>Fontes Vitae S. Thomae Aquinatis</i>
Jordan, Lib	Jordan of Saxony, <i>Libellus de principiis ordinis praedicatorum</i>
<i>LA</i>	<i>Legenda Aurea</i>
Lib. Apol.	Vincent of Beauvais, <i>Libellus apologeticus</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>MOPH</i>	<i>Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>
<i>RIS</i>	<i>Rerum Italicarum Scriptores</i>
<i>SH</i>	Vincent of Beauvais, <i>Speculum Historiale</i>
<i>VF</i>	Gerard de Frachet, <i>Vitae Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum</i>

## Introduction: Pope Francis, Saint Dominic and the Problem of Religious Poverty

Let us not forget that it is the first of the Beatitudes. Happy are the poor in spirit, those who are not attached to riches, to the powers of this world.

On 13 March 2013, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Jorge Bergoglio was elected the 266<sup>th</sup> Pope of the Catholic Church and took the name Francis. In doing so, Pope Francis eschewed tradition by not taking the name of a papal predecessor. He instead selected the nomenclature of the most popular medieval saint, Francis of Assisi. The choice signalled to the Church and to the closely watching global media, that the Pope, like his namesake, would promote poverty as the central theme of his pontificate.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, reports quickly surfaced that Pope Francis was abjuring the usual papal accoutrements such as the grand papal residence and Mercedes-Benzes used by his predecessor in favour of more simple accommodations at a Vatican hotel and a used Renault.<sup>2</sup> Practices such as these suggested that Pope Francis was intent on providing a modern gloss to the medieval Saint's approach to poverty.

Within six months, Francis was forced to confront his principles directly, when the scandal broke over the €31 million renovation of the episcopal residence of the Bishop of Limburg, Franz-Peter Tebartz van Elst, dubbed by the media as the 'Bishop of Bling'.<sup>3</sup> Accepting the

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<sup>1</sup> The choice of name also provided a direct contrast to the highly-intellectual, impersonal reputation of Bergoglio's predecessor Pope Benedict XVI. For the election: Marco Politi, *Pope Francis Among the Wolves: The Inside Story of a Revolution*, New York: Columbia University Press. For a general biography: Mario I. Aguilar, *Pope Francis: His Life and Thought*, Cambridge: The Littleworth Press, 2014. For works drawing connections to Saint Francis: Thomas R. Rourke, *The Roots of Pope Francis's Social and Political Thought: From Argentina to the Vatican*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016; Alan Schreck, *St Francis and Pope Francis: Prayer, Poverty, and Joy in Jesus*, Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2014; Andrea Tornielli, *Fioretti: The Little Flowers of Pope Francis. Heart-warming Stories of the Gospel in Action*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Nick Squires, 'Pope Francis Shunned Official Papal Apartments to Live "Normal Life"', *The Telegraph*, 29 May 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/10086876/Pope-Francis-shunned-official-papal-apartments-to-live-normal-life.html>. Accessed 31/8/2017; Mark Rice Oxley, 'Pope Francis: The Humble Pontiff with Practical Approach to Poverty', *The Guardian*, 13 March 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/13/jorge-mario-bergoglio-pope-poverty>. Accessed 31/08/2013; Courtney Subramanian, 'Pope Francis Gets a Used Car', *Time*, 13 September 2013, <http://newsfeed.time.com/2013/09/13/pope-francis-gets-a-used-car/>. Accessed 31/08/2013.

<sup>3</sup> See reports: Terrence McCoy, 'How the "Bishop of Bling" spent \$43 million renovating this house', *The Washington Post*, 28 March 2014, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/03/28/how-the-bishop-of-bling-spent-43-million-renovating-this-house/?utm\\_term=.f8984af66538](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/03/28/how-the-bishop-of-bling-spent-43-million-renovating-this-house/?utm_term=.f8984af66538). Accessed 29/08/2017; Tony Paterson, 'Tebartz van Elst: God knows what to



bishop's resignation in a private meeting, Pope Francis used the situation as a platform from which he could turn the spotlight on a crisis of materialism which manifested in the hypocrisy of Church representatives who speak of poverty while 'living the life of pharaoh'.<sup>4</sup> Underpinning his point of view was the idea that: 'Today's world stands in great need of witnesses, not so much of teachers but rather of witnesses. It's not so much about speaking but rather speaking with our whole lives.'<sup>5</sup> The concepts, language and performances employed by Pope Francis belong to a long tradition of intersection between religious and devotional development, and social and economic change. Indeed, often in the history of Christianity, the religious spotlight turns to poverty in the wake of perceived imbalances in, or in retaliation to, the wielding of political and economic power.<sup>6</sup>

The pope in this instance fulfilled his intentions by positioning the visibility of his pontificate, with its overt presentation of simplicity and humility, as a counterpoint to negativities surrounding the Church's use of wealth. He spoke about poverty in terms of 'the spirit of poverty, the spirit of detachment, the spirit of leaving everything to follow Jesus.'<sup>7</sup> Fundamentally, in the manner of myriad other charismatic leaders in the Christian tradition, from Christ, to Saint Augustine and Saint Bernard, Saints Francis and Dominic, Pope Francis responds to growing social and economic pressures by drawing attention to the material poverty from which a large percentage of the Catholic population suffers. At the same time, he describes poverty as an attitude towards the world, to self and as part of a life lived in

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do with €31m mansion of Germany's 'Bishop of Bling', *The Independent*, 23 February 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/tebartz-van-elst-god-knows-what-to-do-with-31m-mansion-of-germanys-bishop-of-bling-10065712.html>. Accessed 29/08/2017.

<sup>4</sup> From an interview with the Big Issue and Straatnieuws, 2 December 2015. <https://www.bigissue.com/interviews/pope-francis-interview-i-want-world-without-poverty-need-fight/>. Accessed 29/08/17. For analysis: Martin Schlag, *The Business Francis Means: Understanding the Pope's Message on the Economy*, Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017, esp. pp.119-23.

<sup>5</sup> Pope Francis, 'Vigil of Pentecost with the Ecclesial Movements', Saint Peter's Square, 18 May 2013. Transcription: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/may/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130518\\_veglia-pentecoste.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/may/documents/papa-francesco_20130518_veglia-pentecoste.html). Accessed 29/08/2017.

<sup>6</sup> For the general development of Christianity against political and economic structures: Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012; Allen Brent, *A Political History of Early Christianity*, London: T and T Clark, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Pope Francis, Homily delivered at Havana, Cuba 20 September 2015. Transcript available at, <https://aleteia.org/2015/09/21/pope-francis-goes-off-script-to-deliver-passionate-homily-on-poverty/>. Accessed 11/12/2017.

devotion and adherence to the teachings of Christ.<sup>8</sup> The issues to which Pope Francis responds and the approaches he employs are not dissimilar to those which the founding of the Order of Preachers in 1216 also sought to address: how to deal with Christianity's fundamental ideal of poverty in a religious institution that is not poor?

This thesis deliberates on the nature and role of religious poverty in the Dominican Order by investigating fundamental and enduring questions regarding the meaning, purpose and presentation of religious poverty. While the Dominicans are considered to be an essential element in the development of poverty, their close historical and ideological proximity to Saint Francis has meant that the particularities of their engagement have been sometimes overshadowed by the dynamism and radicalism that imbues the Franciscan response. Accordingly, scholarly analysis of Dominican poverty is somewhat fragmented, dispersed in broader histories concerning the order or its various intellectual and institutional activities, and/or in those which discuss the intense religious and social change that characterised the late-medieval period.<sup>9</sup> To address these gaps, this thesis seeks to provide a concentrated and unified exploration of the way that the Dominicans constructed, negotiated and expressed their relationship to concepts of poverty in historical and hagiographical narratives composed in the order's first one hundred and fifty years. Engaging and augmenting a strong scholarly tradition deliberating on questions concerning religious poverty, I argue that the Dominicans negotiated a median path between the socially and economically radical response of the Franciscans and the hermetical formulation put forward in traditional monasticism by

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<sup>8</sup> For the development of concepts of poverty in the monastic tradition: Giorgio Agambem, *The Highest Poverty: Monastic Rules and Form-Of-Life*, transl. by Adam Kotsko, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> For recent historiographical essays of the order: Donald S. Prudlo, 'The Friars Preachers: The First Hundred Years of the Dominican Order', *History Compass*, 8/11, 2010, pp.1275-1290; Robin Vose, 'The Dominican Order in Late Medieval and Early Modern History', *History Compass*, 11/11, 2013, 967-982. For a general history of the Dominican order: William A. Hinnebusch, O.P., *The History of the Dominican Order*, 2 vols., New York: Alba House, 1966-73. For comparative studies: Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1975; Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*, London: Paul Elek, 1978; C.H. Lawrence, *The Friars: The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society*, New York: Longman, 1994. The re-imagination and reactualisation of apostolic poverty is viewed as one of the most dominant forces driving religious change and development from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. The seminal work from which virtually all modern assessment of medieval religious movements have grown is: Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, transl. by Steven Rowan, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995. Grundmann's work can be supplemented with: Gert Melville, *The World of Medieval Monasticism: Its History and Forms of Life*, transl. by James D. Mixson, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2016, esp. pp.186-298.

undertaking a careful management of the performances and vocabularies associated with poverty so as to increase its spiritual, pastoral and devotional efficacy.

### The Dominican Order in Historical Context

From the many religious movements that sprung up in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Dominicans, along with the Franciscans, revolutionised the pastoral and spiritual life of medieval European society and beyond through their itinerant preaching.<sup>10</sup> The founder of the order, Dominic of Caleruega (d.1221), entered the Church at an early age and rose through the ranks as a canon regular in Spain.<sup>11</sup> The inspiration to found a new religious order, in essence, came from circumstances Dominic encountered in the Languedoc in France while on a diplomatic mission with the Bishop of Osma, Diego of Acébès (d.1207).<sup>12</sup> The authority of the papal preachers working in the area was being called into question by the Cathar heretics due to the dramatic divide that existed between the ostentation of the church representatives and the poverty of the heretics. In the first historical account of the founding of the order, Dominic's successor, Jordan of Saxony, described the way that Diego had immediately made

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<sup>10</sup> For the impact of the mendicant orders: Brooke, *Coming of the Friars*, pp.20-39, 89-116; Lawrence, *The Friars*; Little, *Religious Poverty*, pp.146-170; Melville, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp.200-06; Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006. On mendicant preaching and sermon construction: David D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris before 1300*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988; On the late-medieval preaching culture more generally: Carolyn Muessig, ed., *Preacher, Sermon and Audience*, Leiden: Brill, 2002. While Gert Melville ('System Rationality', p.381) argues that preaching constituted the foundation upon which the Dominican Order was constructed, there are few single studies which explore this theme. A recent thesis goes a long way to rectifying this lacuna: Anne Holloway, 'Early Dominican Exempla Collections: Defining a Method of Ethical Pedagogy', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 2015; see also Andrews, 'Preacher and Audience: Friar Veturino da Bergamo and 'Popular Voices' in *The Voices of the People in Late-Medieval Europe. Communication and Popular Politics*, ed. by Jan Dumolyn, Jelle Haemers, Hippólito Rafael Olivia Herrer, and Vincent Challet, Brepols: Turnhout, 2014, pp.185-204.

<sup>11</sup> Jordan, Lib., 10, pp.30-31. Jordan's text is translated in Simon Tugwell, ed., *Jordan of Saxony: On the Beginnings of the Order of Preachers*, Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1982. For biographical information for Dominic and his early career: Marie-Humbert Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and His Times*, Darton: Longman & Todd, 1964; Simon Tugwell, 'Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic', *AFP*, lxxviii, 1998, 5-116; Guy Bedouelle, O.P., *Saint Dominic: The Grace of the Word*, rev. edn., San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987.

<sup>12</sup> The narrative for the founding of the order can be found in Jordan, Lib., 19-22, pp.35-37. It can be supplemented by: Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, ed. by Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon, 3 vols., Paris: Champion, 1926-39, I, p.21. For mendicancy and the founding of the order: Anthony John Lappin, 'From Osma to Bologna, from Canons to Preachers, from the Preaching to the Preachers: The Dominican Path towards Mendicancy', in *The Origin, Development, and Refinement of Medieval Religious Mendicancies*, ed. by Donald Prudlo, Leiden: Brill, 2011, pp.31-58. For the relationship between the development of the order and the fight against heresy: Christine Caldwell Ames, *Righteous Persecution: Inquisition, Dominicans, and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, esp, pp.23-56.

enquiries as to the behaviour and habits of the heretics after being asked for his advice on the situation when he arrived by chance at a meeting of the papal delegates in Montpellier. Jordan continues that Diego learned ‘how the heretics were enticing people into their faithless party by arguing and preaching and by a feigned example of holiness.’<sup>13</sup> Similarly the bishop observed the way that the heretic’s practices and behaviours contrasted directly with the abundance and luxuriousness of the missionaries’ retinue, supplies and appearance.<sup>14</sup> Later, the Dominican historian, Étienne de Bourbon (d. ca., 1261) elaborated,

when heretics are refuted by scripture and reason, they have no stronger argument to defend their error and overturn what is pure than the bad examples of Catholics and especially of prelates; hence they run back to these when their other arguments fail them, saying: ‘See what these men are like, and those ones and the prelates especially; see how they live and swan about, not walking like the ancients, like Peter and Paul and the others.’<sup>15</sup>

Counselling the papal delegation on the futility of relying on rhetoric alone, Diego advised them to adopt the example of the Apostles and to ‘proclaim the faith in voluntary poverty.’<sup>16</sup> From this example, Dominic received the important lesson that to preach effectively required them to operate as ‘witnesses’ to the poverty marked out in Scripture. This decision provided the ideological foundations on which the Order of Preachers was formed.

The Order’s deep connectedness with the structures and mechanisms of the institutional Church provided the essential theological, linguistic and conceptual frameworks to delineate the distinction between material and spiritual forms of poverty. The Dominicans inherited (and continued) traditional narratives and metaphors of poverty through their origins among the canons regular at the same time as they augmented them through a special articulation and expression.<sup>17</sup> They founded their ministry on the principle of preaching salvation in word

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<sup>13</sup> Jordan, *Lib*, 20, p.36: ‘Ille [...] de ritu et moribus hereticorum cepit inquirere atque advertere modum, quo aliquos ad perfidie sue partem persuasionibus et predicationibus ac simulate sanctitatis exemplis allicere consueverunt.’

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*: ‘vidensque ex adverso grandem eorum, qui missi fuerant, et copiosum in expensis, equis et vestibus apparatus’.

<sup>15</sup> Translated by Holloway, ‘Early Dominican Exempla Collections’, p. 178. My thanks to Dr Holloway for the use of her translation and for bringing Étienne to my attention.

<sup>16</sup> Jordan, *Lib*., 22, p.37. Translated by Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.7. I analyse Diego’s speech more fully in Chapter One, pp.53-57.

<sup>17</sup> Melville argues that the Dominicans did not merely continue or build upon their predecessors such as the Premonstratensians but that they were ‘operating a new concept’ which he refers to as ‘system rationality’,

and deed, from which they derived their name, justification and purpose.<sup>18</sup> 'So that what the mouth puts forth, is confirmed in the merits of life' the Dominican friar Constantine of Orvieto wrote, 'they preached the poor Christ, equally poor and on foot.'<sup>19</sup> The concept of 'word and deed' was not a new or indeed radical idea, but received new emphasis as it was performed in and invigorated every aspect of the Dominicans' internal and external lives.<sup>20</sup> Predicating their devotional lives on the virtues of charity, humility and poverty, in what Constant Mews recently called an 'original synthesis', the Dominicans sought to preach and to live out (and inspire others to live), these three precepts.<sup>21</sup> The multi-dimensional fusion of charity, humility and poverty imbued and amplified the place, performance and expression of poverty in a devotional context, and, as this thesis demonstrates, ameliorated some of the inherent difficulties of adopting a wholly economic interpretation of poverty.

Like Jorge Bergoglio, Dominic was a career religious, a factor which had numerous implications for the form and appearance of his order's engagement with poverty. Dominic's lay contemporary, Saint Francis, however, is certainly more easily recognised as an exemplar of religious poverty, a factor which likely contributed to the Pope's decision to adopt his name. Francis of Assisi had made poverty the centre of his pastoral and spiritual agenda through a literal appropriation of the poverty of the streets, which was transmitted in a variety of texts that he had composed. Accompanying the detailed instructions found in the Franciscan Rule, Francis provided for his followers the *Admonitiones*, which Kajetan Esser describes as 'the Magna Carta of a life in the Christian Brotherhood, which is firmly rooted in

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'System Rationality', p.380. On the Canons regular: Bynum, 'The Spirituality of the Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century, in *Jesus as Mother*, pp.22-58; Melville, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp.125-35.

<sup>18</sup> Pope Honorius III's letter 'si personas religiosas' dated 11 February 1218 is the first papal letter to refer to the Dominicans as 'fratres Ordinis Predicatorum': *Monumenta Diplomatica S. Dominici*, ed. by Vladimir J. Koudelka, Rome: Angelicum University Press, 1966, no.86.

<sup>19</sup> Constantine of Orvieto, 'Legenda Sancti Dominici', ed. by H. C. Scheeben and M. H- Laurent, in *MOPH* 16, Rome: Institutum historicum FF. Praedicatorum, 1935, p.14: '...dum quod lingue vox promeret, vite meritum confirmaret [...] pariter Christum pauperem pedes et pauperes predicare.' All translations are my own unless specified.

<sup>20</sup> For a general survey see Ernst Curtius, who tracks the literary use of the concept back to Homer: *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, transl. Willard R. Trask, 7<sup>th</sup> Printing, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953; 1990, pp.57-61. For the tradition out of which the Dominican interpretation grew: Bynum, *Docere Verbo et Exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979.

<sup>21</sup> Constant J. Mews, 'Apostolic Ideals in the Mendicant Transformation of the Thirteenth Century', in *Poverty and Devotion in Mendicant Cultures 1200-1450*, ed. by Constant J. Mews and Anna Welch, London: Routledge, 2016, pp.13-31, at p.18. See also Bedouelle, *Saint Dominic*, p.243.

a life of sublime poverty.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, Dominic did not leave any verbal or written instructions on poverty apart from some clauses inserted in the order's adaptation of the Augustinian Rule and the order's early constitutions.<sup>23</sup> In these documents poverty was subordinated to the order's preaching vocation. Once the basic hierarchies were established in the Constitutions, the Dominicans could simultaneously negotiate poverty's spiritual and material dimensions as a mechanism of constructing and exercising authority and authorisation. Consequently, by not approaching poverty as a literal imitation of the involuntary poor, the Dominicans largely escaped the problems that the profession of poverty would cause for the Franciscans.<sup>24</sup>

The ostensible opposition between the rhetoric and practice of religious poverty has been one of the Church's most enduring problems. Religious and laity alike struggle to interpret and act upon Christ's counsel: 'if you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. And come; follow me,' Matt. 19.21.<sup>25</sup> Inconsistencies within Scripture itself exacerbated interpretative issues. Matt 5.3 states that Christ taught his disciples, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." While Luke 6.20 rendered the counsel, 'And, lifting his eyes towards his disciples, he said "Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven."' Through statements such as these, poverty was established as part of a discipleship to Christ and furthermore as a critical component of Christian salvation.<sup>26</sup>

The different emphases placed on poverty within the gospels of Matthew and Luke created some doubt as to who Christ's poor were and indeed how the term 'poverty' itself ought to be interpreted. Was it a material condition or did it refer to an inner attitude and way of

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<sup>22</sup> Kajetan Esser, *Origins of the Franciscan Order*, Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970, p.24. For a highly controversial reassessment of the meaning and role of poverty within the Franciscan order: Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *The Poverty of Riches: St Francis of Assisi Reconsidered*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Jordan, Lib., pp.45-47.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of the 'problem' of poverty in the Franciscan Order see Malcolm D. Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty: The Doctrine of Absolute Poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order, 1210-1323*, rev. and expanded edn., St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 1998.

<sup>25</sup> All biblical references are to the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate unless otherwise stated, 'The New Testament', in *The Vulgate Bible*, vol. VI, ed. by Angela M. Kinney, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.

<sup>26</sup> For early-Christian conceptions of poverty: David J. Armitage, *Theories of Poverty in the World of the New Testament*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016.

behaving? In the early-Christian tradition Christ's words were often taken literally, with a demonstrable and quantifiable poverty becoming a mark of personal holiness among the desert fathers.<sup>27</sup> At the same time that poverty linked the holy person directly to Christ, expressing and constituting religious authority, a parallel tradition grew in which gold and silver became a visual symbol of heaven.<sup>28</sup> The historical solution to the obvious contradiction between these two polar images of holiness within the Church was the gradual, yet definitive, institutionalisation of the expression and fulfilment of personal holiness into the confines of monasticism.<sup>29</sup> The ministry that Christ had built on and through poverty – the charisma that had been accepted as pivotal to both discipleship and salvation – was subsumed into a broad vow of personal poverty that did not apply to the institution, only the representatives. More broadly, Carolyn Walker Bynum comments that from the mid-eleventh century clericalisation promoted the relocation of 'supernatural power' from accessible mediums such as saints' relics to the eucharist, which was controlled by the Church alone.<sup>30</sup> The enclosure of monastic life meant that the moveable images of religious poverty were removed from the view and access of the laity as greater emphasis was placed on poverty as an attitude towards the world that was to be enacted behind monastery walls.

Encapsulating the paradoxes inherent in the institutional Church's approach to poverty was the increasing grandeur of Christianity's places of worship. The twelfth-century aggrandizement of the Abbey of St.-Denis is one of the most famous symbols of the shift from simplicity to opulence in the construction and adornment of churches.<sup>31</sup> The reconstruction

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<sup>27</sup> Still fundamental: Peter Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 61, 1971, 80-100. For poverty and wealth in Early Christianity more generally: Susan R. Holman, ed., *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008; Helen Rhee, *Loving the Poor, Saving the Rich: Wealth, Poverty and Early Christian Formation*, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2012.

<sup>28</sup> See: A. Edward Siencinski, 'Gilding the Lily: A Patristic Defense of Liturgical Splendour', in *Wealth and Poverty*, pp.211-220.

<sup>29</sup> For poverty in medieval monasticism in general: C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, fourth edition, London: Routledge, 2015, p.25, 144, 158; Melville, *Medieval Monasticism*, esp. pp.1-23.

<sup>30</sup> Carolyn Walker Bynum, 'The Religious Revival of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries and the Clericalization of the Church', in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, pp.9-21, at p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> Erwin Panofsky's introduction to his edition and translation of Abbot Suger's writings on the reconstruction of St.-Denis is dated but still useful: *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures*, second edition by Gerda Panofsky-Soergel, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, pp.1-37. See also the essays in Paula Lieber Gerson, ed., *Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986; Lindy Grant, *Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis: Church and State in Early Medieval France*, London: Longman, 1998

of the Abbey emerged from the austere milieu of Saint Bernard, who stipulated that crucifixes be made of wood alone and that no gold, silk or other ostentatious ornamentation be used in Christian devotion, writing: 'But we who, for the sake of Christ, have deemed as dung whatever shines with beauty, enchants the ear, delights through fragrance, flatters the taste, pleases the touch-whose devotion, I ask, do we intend to incite by means of these very things?'<sup>32</sup> The move away from the simplicity promoted by Saint Bernard is symbolised in the construction and gilding of St.-Denis undertaken under the guidance of Abbot Suger, whose activities are immortalised in his various, and detailed writings.<sup>33</sup> The paradoxes and divergences between the outlook and approaches of the two famous twelfth-century abbots are made explicit when Suger writes in regard to the devotional potentialities of religious ornamentation:

When sometimes out of my pure delight at the splendour of the house of God, the multicoloured beauty of the gems may call me away from ordinary concerns and indeed honest meditation may induce me to focus on the diversity of the virtues of the saints by transferring from the material to immaterial I seem to see myself to linger as though in some distant region of the world which may neither be wholly in the filth of the world nor wholly in the purity of heaven and that, by the grace of God, I can be brought across from this inferior to that higher by anagogical practice.<sup>34</sup>

Suger's words demonstrate the approach through which clerics attempted to reconcile and make sense of the material realities that occurred due to the growth of the Christian Church

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and Susanne Linscheid-Burdich, *Suger Von Saint-Denis: Untersuchungen zu seinen Schriften Ordinatio, De consecratione, De administratione*, Munich: De Gruyter, 2004. My thanks to Prof. Frances Andrews for bringing these last two volumes to my attention.

<sup>32</sup> 'Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem', in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. by J. Leclercq, C. Talbot and H.M. Roachias, 8 vols., Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957-1977, vol. 3, pp. 81-108, at p.105: 'Nos vero qui iam de populo exivimus, qui mundi quaeque pretiosa ac speciosa pro Christo reliquimus, qui omnia pulchre lucentia, canore mulcentia, suave olentia, dulce sapientia, tactu placentia, cuncta denique oblectamenta corporea arbitrati sumus ut stercora, ut Christum lucrifaciamus, quorum, quaeso, in his devotionem excitare intendimus?'

<sup>33</sup> Suger's writings in relation to the Abbey are transcribed and translated into English by Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, pp.39-138.

<sup>34</sup> Suger, 'De rebus in administratione sua gestis', in *Abbot Suger*, XXXIII, pp.62-63: 'Unde, cum ex dilectione decoris domus Dei aliquando multicolor, gemmarum speciositas ab exintrinsicis me curis devocaret, sanctarum etiam diversitatem virtutem, de materialibus ad immaterialia transferendo, honesta meditatio insitere persuaderet, videor videre me quasi sub aliqua extranea orbis terrarum plaga, quae nec tota sit in terrarum faece nec tota in coeli puritate, demorari, ab hac etiam inferiori ad illam superiorem anagogico more donante posse transferri.' The translation is my own with a close reading of Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, pp.63-65 and Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.39.



into a universal political power.<sup>35</sup> Poverty was couched in metaphor and its material signifiers confused to the point that it was privileged beyond the reach of the majority of Christian believers. The words and deeds of religious poverty, as well as the meanings that were attributed to them, were typically closely guarded by a clerical elite, who strongly influenced the production and reception of religious language, knowledge and significance.<sup>36</sup> Rather than placing a discernible, identifiable poverty at the centre of their spirituality, the emphasis shifted to the use of signs of wealth to reflect God's generosity.<sup>37</sup> Wealth and, by implication, poverty became conceptualised and articulated in predominately spiritual terms. While the assignation of anagogic, mystical meanings to wealth somewhat ameliorated the inherent paradoxes for the Church itself, it also had the effect of distorting the place and meaning of poverty as a pathway to Christ and salvation. And indeed, the cleric's role as Christ's disciple. From the eleventh century, however, the stable structures erected for the protection and regulation of religious life, including the place and purpose of poverty within religious practice and discourse, began to break down in changing social, political and cultural contexts.<sup>38</sup> The growth of literacy, towns and the economy created the exponential dynamism by which religious change was facilitated between the eleventh to thirteenth centuries.<sup>39</sup> Movements from within and outside the institutional church began to challenge the fundamental premises through which religious ideas and concepts had hitherto been mediated. The "worthiness" or personal authority of Christian priests was one of the defining aspects to

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<sup>35</sup> For context: Little, *Religious Poverty*, esp. pp.61-69.

<sup>36</sup> Still fundamental: Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978, esp. pp.112-30, 213-44, and Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. For the twelfth as the 'turning point' for the literacy of the laity: Malcolm B. Parkes, 'The Literacy of the Laity', in *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts*, ed. by Malcolm B. Parkes, London: Hambledon, 1991, pp.275-297. See also: Bynum, 'The Religious Revival of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries'.

<sup>37</sup> Suger's *De administratione* is filled with references to the extraordinary costs associated with the renovation of St.-Denis, which are often accompanied by anxious justifications, see for example, *Abbot Suger*, xxvii, pp.46-48, xxx, pp.52, xxxi, pp.54-56. For the influence of the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite on Suger: André Chastel, *French Art*, 3 vols., transl. by Deke Dusinberre, New York: Flammarion, 1994, vol. 1, p. 73.

<sup>38</sup> Melville, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp.186-205.

<sup>39</sup> For the links between outbreaks of 'heresy' and growing literacy: see the essays in Peter Biller and Anne Hudson, eds., *Heresy and Literacy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. For urbanisation and the growth of the 'profit economy' and its impact on religious life: Little, *Religious Poverty*, esp. pp.99-169.

which supporters and critics alike turned their attention,<sup>40</sup> in a way that reflected Jerome's words almost a millennium earlier:

“What an embarrassment, what a humiliation, to preach Jesus our Master, who was poor and hungry, with our own bodies stuffed full, and to proclaim the teaching of the fasters with our ruddy cheeks and mouths full! If we occupy the place of the apostles, let us not only imitate their words, but also their way of life and their abstinence.”<sup>41</sup>

Herbert Grundmann's seminal work on medieval religious movements illustrates that in this context religious poverty was placed under a microscope as it was both the word and deed that linked every church representative to Christ and the salvation that he embodied.<sup>42</sup> From this point, religious movements, including the orders founded by Saints Dominic and Francis, were characterised by an apostolic preaching that sought to 'return' Christianity to its roots by placing an overt and immediately discernible poverty at its centre.<sup>43</sup>

The circumstance in which itinerant preachers, who were classified as orthodox or heretic according to the perspective of the Church, proliferated, directed significant attention to the disparities between the appearance and comportment of the clergy and the images of Christ and the Apostles that were being preached to increasingly diverse and widespread audiences.<sup>44</sup> The itinerancy and indigence of preachers disrupted the traditional narratives

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<sup>40</sup> Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, p.7.

<sup>41</sup>Humbert of Romans, 'Liber de eruditione praedicatorum', in *Opera de vita regulari*, ed. by Joachim Joseph Berthier, Rome: A. Befani, 1889, XI, p.40: 'An non confusionis et ignominiae est jesum magistrum pauperem ac esurientem fartis praedicare corporibus? Et jejuniorum doctrinam rubenti vita, tumentique ore proferre? Si in Apostolorum loco sumus, non solum sermonem eorum imitemur, sed et conversationem quoque et abstinentiam'. Translated by Simon Tugwell, *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, New York: Paulist Press, 1982, p.222. Humbert quotes Jerome, *Commentariorum in Michæam Prophetam*, Lib. I, cap II, 457, in *PL*, 25:1172b: 'An non confusio et ignominia est, Jesum crucifixum, magistrum, pauperem atque esurientem fartis praedicare corporibus, jejuniorumque doctrinam, rubentes buccas, tumentiaque ora proferre? Si in Apostolorum loco sumus, non solum sermonem eorum imitemur, sed conversationem quoque et abstinentiam amplectamur.'

<sup>42</sup> Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, esp. pp.7-30. Grundmann's work was originally published as *Religiöse Bewegungen im Mittelalter* in 1935, it received a second edition in 1961, which significantly revised the original. Poverty became pivotal to the 'heretical' sect known as the Waldensians: Mark Amsler, *Poverty as a Mobile Signifier*, pp.227-252.

<sup>43</sup> Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, pp.17-30; Claire M. Waters, *Angels and Earthly Preachers: Preaching, Performance, and Gender in the Later Middle Ages*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, pp.3-4.

<sup>44</sup> The literature on the apostolic movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is extensive regarding both the general context and to specific movements. For the outline of both orthodox and heterodox precursors to the mendicant orders: Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, pp.7-68; Brooke, *Coming of the Friars*, pp.40-74. See also: Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical*

which had sequestered poverty to the spiritual sphere by refocussing attention to the material aspects to which the term 'poverty' was supposed to refer. The Dominican Order originated in the context of these interrelated circumstances. Their growth from within the ranks of the canons regular, however, distinguished the development of their conceptions of poverty from those of the Friars Minor. Delineating the specificities of the Dominicans approach to poverty and, particularly, uncovering the layers of poverty's relationship to the authority and authorisation of the Dominican religious is an express aim of this thesis.

### Historiographical and Methodological Considerations

Modern studies on the role played by poverty in the Dominican Order are generally marked by two commonly accepted viewpoints which effectively work as bookends to the order's first 150 years. Firstly, there is a general consensus that the Dominicans' engagement with poverty emerged as somewhat of a 'tactic' used to neutralise the popular appeal of the Cathar heretics.<sup>45</sup> An older view, advanced by Barbara Rosenwein and Lester Little, suggests that even though poverty had been held up as an ideal by Dominic, the order's failure to create from him an 'immediate, personal example' like the Franciscans, meant that 'poverty would always retain something of its original character as a tactic.'<sup>46</sup> More recently, two contributions to a collection of essays on the theme of medieval religious mendicancy subject this viewpoint to deeper scrutiny while in the end confirming it. Anthony John Lappin argues that poverty was ultimately Dominic's 'thing' and that it was grudgingly and inconsistently

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*Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, rev. edn., London: Pimlico, 2004, esp. pp. 37-52; Little, *Religious Poverty*, pp.97-145. On heretical movements: Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, third edn., Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2002. On the Waldensians: Peter Biller, *The Waldenses, 1170-1530: Between a Religious Order and a Church*, Aldershot: Variorum, 2001; Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c.1170-c.1570*, transl. Claire Davison, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. On the Cathars: John Arnold, 'The Preaching of the Cathars', in *Medieval Monastic Preaching*, ed. by Carolyn Muessig, Leiden: Brill, 1998, pp.183-208; Antonio Sennis, ed., *The Cathars in Question*, York: York Medieval Press, esp., Jörg Feuchter, *The Heretici of Languedoc: Local Holy Men and Women or Organized Religious Group? New Evidence from Inquisitorial, Notarial and Hagiographical Sources*, pp.112-30. On women: Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, pp. 75-88, 139-152; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Low Countries, 1200-1565*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania press, 2001, esp., pp.12-34.

<sup>45</sup> Rosenwein and Little, 'Mendicant Spiritualities', pp.20-21. See also: Michael D. Bailey, 'Religious Poverty, Mendicancy and Reform in the Late Middle Ages', *Church History*, 72, 2003, 457-483; Markus Schürer, 'Armut als Sinn und Zweck. Beobachtungen zur Wertigkeit der Armut im Selbstverständnis der frühen Franziskaner und Dominikaner', in *In propositio paupertatis*, pp.69-88, at pp.70-71.

<sup>46</sup> Rosenwein and Little, 'Mendicant Spiritualities', pp.20-21. See also: Bailey, 'Religious Poverty', pp.457-483.

accepted by those around him.<sup>47</sup> Donald Prudlo meanwhile maintains that '[s]tories about Dominic relegated poverty solely as a means to an end, with the concept playing little role in the lives of later saintly Preachers.'<sup>48</sup> Indeed, that the Dominicans were somewhat late to the party when it came to creating origin narratives, and the decade-long lacuna between Dominic's death and his canonisation in 1234, has solidified the modern view that his brethren were rather ambivalent to the brand of poverty that he promoted.<sup>49</sup>

The view that poverty was a relatively short-term strategy exclusive to the founder of the order is seemingly upheld in the set of circumstances in which poverty appeared at the close of the fourteenth century. Secondly then, and providing the closing bookend to the early-period of the order's history, were reports of friars and sisters retaining personal possessions and incomes in entering the order and the order itself receiving revenues from its communal properties.<sup>50</sup> These factors, combined with a general culture of disobedience and laxity, resulted in the reform movements of the fifteenth century, confirming for historians that the order had lost any association with the apostolicism that was exhibited in their early engagements with poverty.<sup>51</sup> The appearance of possessions in the order coupled with a dominant strand of theology placed an 'inner' poverty or poverty of the spirit at the centre of Dominican Christological devotion. This, in turn, displaced economic imitations of apostolic poverty.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Lappin, 'The Dominican Path towards Mendicancy', pp.31-58, see also: Simon Tugwell, 'Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic', *AFP*, 65, 1995, pp.5-169, at p.49.

<sup>48</sup> Donald Prudlo, 'Introduction', in *Medieval Religious Mendicancies*, pp.xi-xvii, at p.xv.

<sup>49</sup> Achim Wesjohann explores these themes in: *Mendikantische Gründungserzählungen im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert: Mythen als Element institutioneller Eigengeschichtsschreibung der mittelalterlichen Franziskaner, Dominikaner und Augustiner Eremiten Überschüsse an Armut*, Berlin: LIT, 2012, pp.311-498 and 'Mythische Grundlagen mendikantischer Armutsauffassungen,' in *In Proposito Paupertatis*, ed. by Gert Melville and Annette Kehnel, Münster: LIT, 2001, pp.169-201.

<sup>50</sup> James D. Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors: Ownership and Mortal Sin at the Origins of the Observant Movement*, Leiden: Brill, 2009, esp. pp.37-48.

<sup>51</sup> For the laxity and the lack of discipline in the fourteenth-century Order: Michael Vargas, *Taming a Brood of Vipers: Conflict and Change in Fourteenth-Century Dominican Convents*, Leiden: Brill, 2011. The historiography on the fourteenth and fifteenth century reform movements and poverty's role within it is quite extensive. Start with: Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors*. More generally: Kaspar Elm, ed., *Reformbemühungen und Observanzbestrebungen im spätmittelalterlichen Ordenswesen*, Berlin: Duncker and Humboldt, 1989; James D. Mixson and Bert Roest, eds., *A Companion to Observant Reform in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond*, Leiden: Brill, 2015.

<sup>52</sup> The distinction is articulated in the fourteenth-century works of Meister Eckhart, especially his famous 'Sermon 52: *Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum (Mt. 5:3)*', in *Meister Eckhart: Die*

This thesis nuances the accepted view by investigating the development of poverty from its formulation as a literal imitation of the lived poverty of Christ and the Apostles to a spiritualised, esoteric interpretation of 'inner poverty'. It fills some of the gaps, so to speak, that exist in the modern literature by applying a single, coherent approach to scrutinise some of the historical, literary and religious circumstances and contexts in which conceptions of poverty developed in the order. Part of this process involves revisiting and augmenting the current conceptual frameworks and vocabularies used by historians with regard to the Dominican Order and the wider context of religious and spiritual development.

The Dominicans' relationship to and with the Franciscan Order during the medieval period has shaped significantly both the historical and historiographical tradition and has been one of the more powerful influences on the analysis of poverty. From their similar beginnings in the early thirteenth-century, a certain level of competition existed between the orders, particularly over their interpretation of poverty.<sup>53</sup> This competition often resulted in a concerted effort to distinguish themselves at ideological, devotional and practical levels. Building on these trends, modern historians use a variety of descriptive and analytical binaries to frame their inquiries. Kaspar Elm, for instance, structures his analysis of the Franciscans and Dominicans with opposites such as 'dynamism and stasis ... constant renewal and intentional development ... utopianism and pragmatism.'<sup>54</sup> In older scholarship, the persistent use of binaries, which emphasise the Dominicans' intellectualism, their stability, and their administrative capabilities, over their charisma, their responsiveness, and their performativity, has contributed not only to the perception that Dominican poverty was a mere tactic, but that it was, in general, one-dimensional in the light of the Franciscans overt

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*deutschen Werke*, II, ed. by Josef Quint, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971, from here, *DW* II, pp.491-92. See Chapter Six of this thesis. For a discussion of the shift from apostolic to spiritual poverty embedded in conceptions of sanctity see André Vauchez's seminal work, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, transl. by Jean Birrell, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 387-412.

<sup>53</sup> This competition took many forms and had differing levels of impact: Kaspar Elm, 'Francis and Dominic: The Impact and Impetus of Two Founders of Religious Orders', in *Religious Life between Jerusalem, the Desert, and the World: Selected Essays by Kaspar Elm*, transl. by James D. Mixson, Leiden: Brill, 2016, pp.28-54, at p.40. For the debate between Thomas Aquinas and Peter John Olivi, in which poverty was deeply implicated, Jan G.J. van den Eunden, *Poverty on the Way to God: Thomas Aquinas on Evangelical Poverty*, Leuven: Peeters, 1994, pp.198-242.

<sup>54</sup> Elm, 'Francis and Dominic', pp.39-40.

dynamism.<sup>55</sup> While these binaries retain a certain usefulness as heuristic categories, exploring them in the context of ‘both ... and’ rather than ‘either ... or’ enables a more flexible approach to reveal how Dominican poverty consistently blurred boundaries between the material and spiritual, social and religious, practical and devotional.

The binary between charisma and institution is a particularly fertile area to approach in this manner. Not only have there been many studies that explore this dynamic in relation to religion and religious authority in the Middle Ages, but the concepts themselves have shaped both the form and structure of mendicant histories. In the context of mendicant scholarship, works that delineated the constitutional, regulatory and formal aspects of the religious practices of the orders at the beginning of the twentieth century, were, by its end, superseded by histories that explored the varied and interrelated expressions of devotion and spirituality.<sup>56</sup> As the leading proponents of this shift, Gary Dickson, Andre Vauchez and Gert Melville make it evident that an engagement with the concept of charisma has been essential at both methodological and contextual levels.<sup>57</sup> Vauchez writes that both he and Dickson share a ‘conviction [...] of the importance - long underestimated among historians – of the charismatic or supernatural power in the religious life of men and women in the Middle Ages.’<sup>58</sup> Thus an analysis of charisma as it intersects with Dominican conceptions and performances of poverty expands traditional views such as those advanced by Rosenwein and Little.

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<sup>55</sup> An older work upholding this image: Ralph Francis Bennett, *The Early Dominicans: Studies in Thirteenth-Century Dominican History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937. Melville argues, however, that the ‘rationality of the Order’s “methodological practices” need not be placed in opposition to religious zeal’, *Medieval Monasticism*, p.247. More recently Vargas directly challenges the use of traditionally inflexible categories in relation to the Order, *Taming a Brood of Vipers*, esp. pp.9-12.

<sup>56</sup> G. R. Galbraith’s 1925 work *The Constitution of the Dominican Order: 1216 to 1360*, might be contrasted with Mews and Welch’s recent *Poverty and Devotion*.

<sup>57</sup> Gary Dickson, ‘Charisma and Revivalism in the Thirteenth Century’, in *Religious Enthusiasm in the Medieval West*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000, pp.1-17; Vauchez, ‘Religious Enthusiasm’; see also: Giancarlo Andenna, Mirko Breitenstein and Gert Melville, ‘Vorbemerkungen’ in *Charisma und religiöse Gemeinschaften im Mittelalter*, ed. by Giancarlo Andenna, Mirko Breitenstein and Gert Melville, Munster: Lit, 2005, pp.xi-xx.

<sup>58</sup> Vauchez, ‘Religious Enthusiasm’, p.xvi. Katherine Jansen and Miri Rubin similarly affirm charisma’s importance in the context of the creation of religious communities: ‘Introduction’, in *Charisma and Religious Authority: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Preaching, 1200-1500*, ed. by Katherine L. Jansen and Miri Rubin, Turnhout: Brepols, 2010, p.12.

Derived from the early-twentieth century work of sociologist Max Weber, the concept of charisma has provided an important analytical framework, not only for historians of religion, but for political, social and cultural historians as well.<sup>59</sup> Weber defined the holder of charismatic power simply as having 'specific gifts of the body and spirit; and these gifts have been believed to be supernatural, not accessible to everybody.'<sup>60</sup> Weber's delineation of the concept of charisma is particularly significant for this thesis.<sup>61</sup> The prophet bears charisma individually and on his own merits. The prophet is contrasted to the priest who 'lays claim to authority by virtue of his service in a sacred tradition, while the prophet's claim is based on personal revelation and charisma.'<sup>62</sup> In other words, it is the place of the priest within the institution that gives him legitimacy to act in the world. The prophet, in contrast, derives legitimacy through the performance of acts that are perceived to have their origin in supernatural gifts. The priest/prophet dichotomy is often taken to mean the complete separation of the charismatic, with its essentially creative and personal attributes, and the institutional, which is characterized by routine, organization and mediated power.

As Shmuel Eisenstadt and later, Andre Vauchez note, the separation of the charismatic and the institutional in interpretations of Weber's fundamental concept causes difficulties for scholars.<sup>63</sup> Eisenstadt proposes that Weber did not, in fact, stress the dichotomy as is so often assumed and, in doing so, interpreters of the sociologist's concept remove its most important significance: the analysis of 'how they are continuously interrelated in the fabric of social life and in the processes of social change.'<sup>64</sup> Vauchez expands on this idea in a specifically medieval context:

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<sup>59</sup> There are too many works to name here. Most pertinent for this thesis: C. Stephen Jaeger, 'Charismatic Body – Charismatic Text', *Exemplaria*, 9, 1997, 117-137; Gary Dickson, 'Charisma and Revivalism in the Thirteenth Century', in *Religious Enthusiasm in the Medieval West: Revivals, Crusades, Saints*, Abingdon: Ashgate, 2000; Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*; the various essays included in: Andenna et al., *Charisma und religiöse*, and Jansen and Rubin, *Charisma and Religious Authority*.

<sup>60</sup> Max Weber, 'The Sociology of Charismatic Authority', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. & ed. by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, new edn., London: Routledge, 1991, pp.245-252, at p. 245.

<sup>61</sup> Weber, *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers*, transl. by S. N. Eisenstadt, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968, p.253.

<sup>62</sup> Weber, *On Charisma*, p.254.

<sup>63</sup> Eisenstadt, 'Introduction', in *On Charisma*, p.ix; Vauchez, 'Religious Enthusiasm', p.xviii.

<sup>64</sup> Eisenstadt, 'Introduction', in *On Charisma*, p.ix.

To be sure, supernatural or charismatic power in principle sets itself against institutional powers but during the Middle Ages they rarely confront each other openly [...] Let us be clear: we are not dealing with contrary entities but rather with two poles that generate a permanent dialectical tension whose intensity varies according to fields of interest and periods.<sup>65</sup>

While a distinction might be posed between the two forms of authority on a conceptual level, in practice, and specifically in the practices of the Dominican religious, a negotiation of the 'two poles' can be detected in many facets of their history. Werner Stark offered an interpretation which allows for this negotiation. Stark rejected the distinction that Weber made between the roles of prophet and priest, declaring, 'prophet and priest are two functionally complementary types that may co-exist within the original charismatic circle of disciples.'<sup>66</sup> Similarly, Clare Waters constructs her work on the duality of the medieval preacher within a more positive framework and teases out the intricate relationship between the charismatic and the institution in the negotiation of their vocation.<sup>67</sup>

The almost ubiquitous application of an 'intellectual' label on the order presents some challenges to viewing poverty as an expression of charismatic authority. The characterisation takes into consideration the advanced constitutional makeup of the order, their reputations as learned schoolmen and their apparently pragmatic attitude towards poverty.<sup>68</sup> Vauchez admits that with regard to their saints, the Preachers exhibited 'fidelity to a rule' more so than the 'imitation of a person'.<sup>69</sup> Even if the word 'intellectual' itself is not used, the idea that the Dominicans had a more scholarly, more serious and more controlled preaching style when compared with that of the spontaneous and popular Franciscans has been persuasive.<sup>70</sup> Whereas the Order of Preachers was the brainchild of a career religious and its origins

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<sup>65</sup> Vauchez, 'Religious Enthusiasm', p.xx.

<sup>66</sup> Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom*, vol. IV, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, p.109. For analysis: John L. Gresham, 'The Collective Charisma of the Catholic Church: Werner Stark's Critique of Max Weber's Routinization Theory', *The Catholic Social Science Review*, 8, 2003, 1-22.

<sup>67</sup> Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, esp. pp.31-56.

<sup>68</sup> Le Goff, *Jacques Le Goff, In Search of Sacred Time: Jacobus de Voragine and the Golden Legend*, transl. Lydia G. Cochrane, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014, pp. 5-6, argued that the intellectual representation of the Dominicans was essentially wrong: 'for the most part, they were simple friars, devoted to preaching and to informing themselves as much as that mission required [...] Intellectuals [...] were a minority within the Order.'

<sup>69</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.338.

<sup>70</sup> Daniel R. Lesnik, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Dominican and Franciscan Spirituality*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.



intricately intertwined with the long-standing regulations and traditions of the institutional Church, the Franciscans were predominantly a lay movement, at least at the beginning, guided by the personal genius of Francis of Assisi. Kaspar Elm observed, however, that the competition between the two orders during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries has often meant that their differences have been emphasised, sometimes to the detriment of critical analysis of their similarities.<sup>71</sup> In this respect, the tradition of the 1970s and 1980s tended towards distinguishing between the 'popular' Franciscan preachers and the 'intellectual' Dominicans.<sup>72</sup> While the underlying distinction is now, largely, debunked, the concepts themselves provide an important analytical tool and context in which to further understand the Dominicans particular negotiation of apostolic poverty. On the one hand, poverty needed to be performed to legitimise its efficacy within the salvation process and thus was essentially charismatic. On the other, it was professed in a religious vow, bound within the frameworks and routines of the institutional Church.

The Dominicans recognised that poverty had an essential relationship to the expression of Christ's charismatic authority as well as to the authority with which the institutional Church sought to transmit his message. They consequently deferred to both in the creation of their preaching vocation and the authoritative basis on which it rested. In acknowledging Weber's heuristic approach to charisma, and drawing on the approaches advanced by Stark and Waters, this thesis explores the intersection between priestly and prophetic roles in the construction of the religious authority embodied by the Dominicans.<sup>73</sup> A key point of

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<sup>71</sup> Kaspar Elm, 'Verfall Und Erneuerung des Ordenswesens im Spätmittelalterlichen: Forschungen und Forschungsaufgaben', in *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Sift*, ed. by J. Flackenstein, Göttingen: Vandehoeck and Ruprecht 1980, pp.189-238, at pp.219-25.

<sup>72</sup> For example: Carlo Delcorno, 'Origini della predicazione francescana', in *Atti del iv Convegno Internazionale sul tema: Francesco d'Assisi e Francescanesimo da 1216 al 1226 (Assisi, 15-17 ottobre 1976)*, Assisi; 1977, 125-60 and Lesnik, *Preaching in Medieval Florence*, p.135.

<sup>73</sup> This approach replaces the use of the popular/intellectual binary to distinguish between the preaching styles of the Franciscans and Dominicans proposed in somewhat outdated works such as Lesnik, *Preaching in Medieval Florence*, esp. p.135 and Delcorno, 'Origini della predicazione francescana', pp. 125-60. See also Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.15, n.37. Thompson ostensibly supports Lesnik's binary but he questions the range of the sermons that Lesnik considered to produce his conclusion. In contrast, historians such as Bataillon maintain that 'popular' and 'intellectual' distinctions are misleading: Bataillon, 'La predicazione dei religiosi mendicanti del secolo XIII nell'Italia centrale', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome: Moyen âge-temps modernes*, 89, 1977, 691-94.

consideration is the performances associated with the expression and assumption of voluntary poverty which underpins this intersection.

Studies produced within the order itself allow for a more fluid relationship between the charismatic and the institutional and thus present a slightly more dynamic view of Dominican poverty than is available in studies produced by scholars that are not members of the order. Yet, they too have their own complications.<sup>74</sup> First, and probably most significant, is the relative reticence of the Dominicans to delineate the terms of their spirituality and the place and meaning of poverty within it. Their reluctance is, in a sense, clarified by Paul Murray when he writes that,

the Dominican vocation is, in its essence, a *dynamic* vocation. It is shaped, therefore, not only by its own pre-established laws and constitutions, but by the demands of history and the needs of the hour. And thus, in contrast to a life of monastic enclosure, it has the right and even the duty not to always be consistent or predictable it is activity [...] For in the preacher's life, the pattern of religious observance is never static or fixed, but always forms part of a life lived in response to the needs of others and the demands of the Gospel at any given moment.<sup>75</sup>

The Dominican's preaching vocation thus provides an important context to their avoidance. It was certainly not practical for preachers to be encumbered by heavily laden spiritual and devotional imperatives when they needed to maintain an inherent flexibility and openness to change if the context demanded it.<sup>76</sup> In outlining the problems regarding the Dominicans' reluctance to pin down the nature of their spirituality, Murray also provides the solution for historians. The dynamic nature of their vocation requires an appraisal of poverty not just as a static marker of a socially and economically constructed condition, but also as a dynamic,

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<sup>74</sup> For examples of 'internal' studies that rebut the idea that poverty was a tactic, William A. Hinnebusch, 'Poverty in the Order of Preachers', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 45, 1960, 436-53; Hinnebusch, *History*, I, pp.145-68; Tugwell, *Way of the Preacher*, pp.12-21.

<sup>75</sup> Murray, *New Wine*, pp.43-44.

<sup>76</sup> This is reflected in flexibility that the Dominicans' incorporated into their way of life when they allowed for dispensations in order to focus their attention wholly on preaching and salvation: 'Ad hec tamen in conventu suo prelati dispensandi cum fratribus habeat potestatem, cum sibi aliquando videbitur expedire, in hiis precipue, que studium vel predicationem vel animarum fructum videbuntur impedire', Prologue, Primitive Constitutions, as edited in: A.H. Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties van de Dominicanen: Voorgeschiedensis, Tekst, Bonnen, Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling (1215-1237)*, Leuven: Bureel van de R.H.E Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1965, p.311

discursive force that remained susceptible to external forces and factors. This inclusive approach allows for a fuller contextualisation of the development of conceptions of and attitudes towards poverty over time and the circumstances in which change occurred.

Complicating the type of historical analysis that the Dominican vocation demands, however, is the strong providential bent to their narratives.<sup>77</sup> Holloway remarks that the order's 'internal history is characterised by progression and development, narrating the foundation of the Friars Preachers and the path they took to reach their final form, balanced out with a detailed analysis of the different factors which make up this progression.'<sup>78</sup> The foundational narratives of decline and reform underpinning Dominican historical development around the concept of poverty have the consequence of clouding the contingencies and failures in the development of their religious, spiritual and devotional practices and self-conceptions. Michael Vargas contends that '[w]hile distinguishing between unconscious obfuscation and wilful deceit is difficult, we should not doubt that Dominican history has come to comprise a set of generalizations propping up a number of pious fictions.'<sup>79</sup> The Dominicans' responsiveness to historical and social circumstances, as well as the nature of the external pressures themselves, undermines somewhat the continuity and cohesiveness of their internal progress narratives. This is particularly true of the diverse interpretations to which the concept of poverty was subject throughout the late-medieval period. The order's development did not occur in a vacuum and their progress was subject to significant disruption from outside forces. Additionally, there was significant diversity with the expression and performance of poverty itself and no unified nor unmitigated interpretation.

Considerable interpretive problems exist within the concept of poverty in the historiographical tradition external to the order that have multiplied many of the issues with which this thesis is concerned. The image of poverty as a multivalent concept with 'both a historical and analytical existence' that has an 'ongoing need to define its meaning in the

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<sup>77</sup> For a survey of some of the problems, complexities and resolutions of historical narrative: Peter Munz, 'The Historical Narrative', in *Companion to Historiography*, ed. by Michael Bentley, London: Routledge, 1997, pp.851-872.

<sup>78</sup> Holloway, 'Early Dominican Exempla Collections', p.2.

<sup>79</sup> Vargas positions his own work in response to these concerns, continuing that his 'book confronts the tendency ... to enumerate only the favourable circumstances, but to remember the high points while forgetting the foibles and follies is a common logical fallacy, one that imposed linear patterns on divergent and even contradictory historical truths', *Taming a Brood of Vipers*, pp.9-10.

context of clearly delineated historical situations' to borrow a phrase from Bert Roest,<sup>80</sup> is something that has gained traction in historiography more recently and directly informs the approach taken within this thesis. Diversifying from the seminal monographs on the medieval poor offered by Michael Mollat and Sharon Farmer, there has been a proliferation of collections in the past fifteen years that explore poverty's numerous manifestations in medieval life.<sup>81</sup> Works such as Gert Melville and Annette Kehnel's *In propositio paupertatis* (2001), Gerhard Jaritz's *Sign Language of Poverty* (2006), Anne Scott's *Experiences of Poverty in Late Medieval and Early Modern England and France* (2012) and Sharon Farmer's *Approaches to Poverty in Medieval Europe* (2016) each respond, in some way or form, to the myriad interpretive problems inherent in the concept.<sup>82</sup> These include issues such as the various ways in which the term 'poor' was used and to whom it referred, as well as the wild divergence between 'social' and 'religious' manifestations and representations of poverty.<sup>83</sup> Scholars contend with issues such as gender and class in these works, as well as the contradictions derived from its existence as both social and religious concepts, which are subject to diverse textual, material, literary and visual representations.<sup>84</sup>

These collections go a long way towards establishing the social and political world in which mendicant interpretations of poverty were shaped and existed, as well as the historical frameworks for understanding medieval poverty. The linguistic and visual markers of the involuntary poor reflected the shifting economic and social contexts in which the orders were

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<sup>80</sup> Bert Roest, 'Converting the Other and Converting the Self: Double Objectives in Franciscan Educational Writings', in *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, ed. by Guyda Armstrong and Ian N. Wood, Turnhout: Brepols, 2000, pp.295-302, at p. 295.

<sup>81</sup> Michael Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: An Essay in Social History*, transl. Arthur Goldhammer, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986; Sharon Farmer, *Surviving Poverty in Medieval Paris: Gender Ideology and the Daily Lives of the Poor*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. Anne Scott offers a good summary of the 'state' of poverty studies: 'Experiences of Poverty', in *Experiences of Poverty*, pp.1-18.

<sup>82</sup> Sharon Farmer, ed., *Approaches to Poverty in Medieval Europe: Complexities, Contradictions, Transformations, c.1100-1500*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016.

<sup>83</sup> See: Gábor Klaniczay, 'The Sign Languages of the "Pauperes Christi"', in *Sign Languages of Poverty*, pp.201-220; Amsler, 'Poverty as a Mobile Signifier', pp.227-252; Christopher Dyer, 'The Experience of Being Poor in Late-Medieval England', in *Experiences of Poverty*, pp.19-40.

<sup>84</sup> Patricia Skinner, 'Gender and Sign Languages of Poverty', in *Sign languages of Poverty*, pp.59-74; Katharina Simon-Muscheid, 'Socialer Abstieg im Mittelalter', in *Sign Languages of Poverty*, pp.95-118; Melitta Weiss Adamson, 'Poverty on the Menu: Towards a Culinary Vocabulary of Poverty in Medieval Europe', in *Sign Languages of Poverty*, pp.221-236; Samuel K. Cohn Jr, 'Rich and Poor in Western Europe c.1375-1475: The Political Paradox of Material Wellbeing', in *Approaches to Poverty*, pp.145-174; Kehnel, 'Der freiwillig Arme ist ein potentiell Reicher', in *In propositio paupertatis*, pp.203-28

formed and exerted considerable influence on the formation and expression of religious poverties. Yet modern predilections for ‘power, gender and class’, as James Brodman remarks, ‘have marginalized, and at times, dismissed as almost meaningless pious pronouncements’ the spiritual elements of medieval concepts and language, a trend that marks the analysis of Dominican poverty.<sup>85</sup> The Dominicans’ engagements in the universities and the Inquisition, as well as their advanced constitutional and governmental legacy has facilitated the separation that has occurred between their more practical achievements and their devotional and spiritual activities. They are habitually viewed as scholars and theologians and their documents mined for information about the institutions that they represented or wrote about.<sup>86</sup> In this context, poverty’s devotional or spiritual meanings or dimensions have been kept separate from strict historical analysis, relegated to the realm of theology instead.

This thesis is part of a recent move in modern historiography to reconsider the relationship between the disparate and sometimes diverging spheres of poverty in historical analysis. Constant Mews and Anna Welch, for instance, position their recent collection of essays, *Poverty and Devotion in Mendicant Cultures 1200-1450*, to address the ‘tendency to separate social history from religious and theological history, and to explore the interface between the two images of poverty ... one as an object of shame, the other as an ideal.’<sup>87</sup> The approach outlined by the editors takes into consideration the involuntary and voluntary and the ‘spectrum of attitudes’ that lay in between, situating devotional attitudes and practices as the location in which meanings about poverty were negotiated, produced, projected and expressed.<sup>88</sup> *Poverty and Devotion* offers a diverse but still fragmented picture of the role of poverty within the Dominican Order due to the assorted approaches and intentions of the individual authors who discuss the Dominicans in six out of the twelve papers.<sup>89</sup> This thesis

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<sup>85</sup> The recent collection of essays, *Poverty and Devotion in Mendicant Cultures 1200-1450*, goes some way to rectifying this, while being naturally limited by the diverse approaches and intentions of the individual authors.

<sup>86</sup> The Dominicans ‘intellectualism’ is generally embedded within the vast array of works on Thomas Aquinas and his legacy. See for example: Frederick J. Roensch, *Early Thomistic School*, Dubuque: Priory Press, 1964.

<sup>87</sup> Mews and Welch, ‘Introduction’, p.3.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>89</sup> For instance: Earl Jeffrey Richards, ‘The Prayer Anima Christi and Dominican Popular Devotion: Late medieval examples of the interface between high ecclesiastical culture and popular piety’, *Poverty and Devotion*,

utilises a similar conceptual framework as the editors to offer a single work that explores how poverty and devotion intersect dynamically to create and express meaning in the practice and conception of Dominican religious life. It works to address imbalances that exist in modern historiography between the spiritual and material aspects of poverty, while employing traditionally inflexible binaries as productive analytical tools. Even though Dominican theologians such as Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) and Meister Eckhart (d.1328) maintained a conceptual separation between poverty of spirit and material poverty, at a functional and expressive level these categories were blurred in the creation and performance of devotional narratives and practices.<sup>90</sup>

Several modern theoretical concepts inform, refine and amplify the methodological approach taken in this thesis to examine the Dominicans' responses to poverty. The first is the issue of 'narrative'. Throughout this thesis I treat narrative as both a phenomenon and a method.<sup>91</sup> As an observable occurrence in history, in the words of Roland Barthes, narrative 'is present at all times, in all places, in all societies'.<sup>92</sup> Molly Andrews, Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou note that narrative is 'susceptible to endless interpretation, by turns inconsequential and deeply meaningful'<sup>93</sup> because it is fundamentally connected to ways of communicating and making sense of human experience.<sup>94</sup> Due to these seemingly unlimited interpretative possibilities, however, narrative studies can produce an often unwieldy amount of 'data'. Examining narrative at the point where it intersects with performance offers a

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pp.105-127; Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen, 'Beggars in Silky Robes and Palaces': Dominicans preaching and practising poverty in medieval Scandinavia', *Poverty and Devotion*, pp.164-184.

<sup>90</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Gospel of Matthew*, transl. by John Henry Parker and J. Rivington, London, 1842, available at: <http://dhsprory.org/thomas/CAMatthew.htm> [Accessed 12/09/2017]; Meister Eckhart's famous sermon 52 on Poverty of the Spirit is translated in: Bernard McGinn and Edmund Colledge, ed. and transl., *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons*, New York: The Paulist Press, 1981, pp.199-203.

<sup>91</sup> The popularity of narrative studies has vacillated over the years and had been subject to extensive historiographical and theoretical debate. For an accessible overview of the main points of debate and the major 'players': Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, and Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004, pp.86-105. See also: Matti Hyvärinen, 'Revisiting the Narrative Turns', *Life Writing*, 7, 2010, 69-82.

<sup>92</sup> Roland Barthes, 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', transl. by Lionel Duisit, *New Literary History*, 6, 1975, 237-272, at p.237

<sup>93</sup> Molly Andrews, Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou, eds., *Doing Narrative Research*, second edn., Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 2013, p.1.

<sup>94</sup> Hans Kellner, 'Narrativity in History: Post-Structuralism and Since', *History and Theory*, 26, 1987, 1-29, at p.24.

modicum of control in this area.<sup>95</sup> Eric Peterson and Kristin Langellier write that ‘the performance turn emphasises narrative embodied in communication practices, constrained by situational and material conditions, embedded in fields of discourse, and strategically distributed to reproduce and critique existing relations of power and knowledge.’<sup>96</sup> The framework that Peterson and Langellier propose significantly expands the linguistic, discursive and conceptual frameworks through which poverty can be approached. It uncovers the interface between the spiritual and the economic as it informs and is embedded in the use of diverse vocabularies and narrative strategies.

Intimately related and essential to the proposed theoretical framework are concepts associated with discourse analysis.<sup>97</sup> Mona Livholts and Maria Tamboukou define discourse as ‘an analytical concept that acknowledges the active role of language in the production of knowledge and power through text and talk, genre and representation.’<sup>98</sup> Chris Weedon elaborates, stating that discourse refers

to ways of constituting knowledge together with social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are

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<sup>95</sup> For an historiographical overview of the intersection between medieval and performance studies: Seeta Chaganti, ‘The Plateau Pre- and Postmodern: A Landscape of Medieval Performance Studies’, *Exemplaria*, 25 (2013), 252-264. For useful works which situate performance in the medieval: Mary A. Suydam and Joanna E. Ziegler, eds., *Performance and Transformation: New Approaches to Late Medieval Spirituality*, Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999, esp. Mary Suydam, ‘Background: An Introduction to Performance Studies’, pp.1-26 and Robert Sweetman, ‘Thomas of Cantimpré: Performative Reading and Pastoral Care’, pp.133-68; Elina Gertsman, ed., *Visualizing Medieval Performance: Perspectives, historie, contexts*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008, esp. Carolyn Muessig, ‘Performance of the Passion: the enactment of devotion in the later Middle Ages’, pp.129-42; Klaus Oschema, ‘“dass” und “wie”. Performanz und performative Qualität als kategorien historischer Analyse’, in *Die Performanz der Mächtigen. Rangordnung und Idoneität in höfischen Gesellschaften des späten Mittelalters*, ed. by Klaus Oschema, Cristina Andenna, Gert Melville, Jörg Peltzer, Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2015, pp.9-32.

<sup>96</sup> Eric E. Peterson and Kristin M. Langellier, ‘The Performance Turn in Narrative Studies’, *Narrative Inquiry*, 16, (2006), 173-180, at p.173.

<sup>97</sup> Discourse analysis is inextricably linked to the work of Michel Foucault. See for example: *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, transl. by A.M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972; *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, transl. by Alan Sheridan, New York: Pantheon Books; ‘The Order of Discourse’, transl. by Ian McLeod, in *Untying the Text: A Post Structuralist Reader*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, pp.51-78. See also: Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. For works in medieval studies utilising discourse analysis which have direct applicability in this thesis: Gabrielle Spiegel, ‘History, Historicism and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages’, *Speculum*, 65, (1990), 59-86; Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, esp. pp.9-10; Alastair Minnis, ‘Nolens auctor sed compilator reputari’: The Late-Medieval Discourse of Compilation’, in *La méthode critique au moyen âge*, ed. by Mireille Chazan and Gilbert Dahan, Turnhout: Brepols, 2006, pp.47-63.

<sup>98</sup> Mona Livholts and Maria Tamboukou, *Discourse and Narrative Methods*, Los Angeles: Sage, 2015, p.4.

more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the nature of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern.<sup>99</sup>

While post-modern methodologies such as discourse analysis can cause interpretative problems around concepts such as agency, intention, action and empowerment, factors which are intimately connected to performance and performance theory,<sup>100</sup> constructing poverty as a discourse mitigates several historiographical problems in this thesis. For instance, it disrupts the idea that poverty has a straightforward signification as a material condition. This is through the 'critical stance' that discursive approaches take 'towards taken-for-granted knowledge.'<sup>101</sup> It also acknowledges the way that poverty was conceived and deployed in a variety of related, semi-related or even competing spheres of action, since it 'places the social relations and interactions between people and the active use of language as central to how "shared versions of knowledge are constructed".'<sup>102</sup> Approaching poverty as a discourse focuses attention on its effects and purposes. As Livholts and Tamboukou maintain, 'different discursive constructions of the world promote different actions. In other words, the question of what discourses achieve and what they *do* is central for discourse analysis.'<sup>103</sup> This focus is essential to understanding the variety of ways that poverty was represented in and by narrative and for what reasons.

Accordingly, underpinning this thesis is an awareness of poverty and narrative as interrelated instruments and expressions of religious devotion and authority. Poverty is both a constituent feature within Dominican narratives as well as a conceptual framework that informed the construction and negotiation of narratives, which, in turn, navigated and expressed tensions over religious authority. While conceptions of 'religious poverty' were embedded in, and referred to, material and social circumstances, the proposed methodology creates a space in which its devotional and spiritual boundaries can be investigated more fully. The social, economic, spiritual and devotional aspects of religious poverty are related phenomena since they share vocabularies and some physical manifestations. Yet, at the same time they are

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<sup>99</sup> Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1987, p.108.

<sup>100</sup> See my discussion in 'Franciscan Experience', pp.112-14.

<sup>101</sup> Livholts and Tamboukou, 'Discourse and Narrative Methods', pp.4-5.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, p.5.



independent in the sense that their performances derive from different conceptual frameworks and manifest distinctive narrative possibilities. The combination of performance, narrative and discursive theoretical frameworks enables a methodological approach that explores poverty's multi-dimensional, discursive elements and associations while simultaneously maintaining an awareness of its non-verbal modes of production and articulation. The identification of poverty as a medium of constructing identity is de-centred and its existence as a tool for devotional and spiritual development is underscored. This point is crucial for shedding light onto the specificities of Dominican responses to religious poverty at the points where their proximity to the Franciscans has cast the darkest shadows.

### Sources and Structure

The main source base to which this framework is applied consists of certain exemplary historical and hagiographical texts that were produced at integral times over the order's first 150 years. Providing the baseline for both this thesis and the Dominican narrative tradition is the *Origins of the Order of Preachers*, or *Libellus* as it is commonly known, written by Dominic's successor, Jordan of Saxony. Jordan's *Libellus* provides much of the empirical data for the order's early years as well as furnishing many of the ideological and devotional concepts and vocabularies, which were taken up by hagiographical and devotional writers.<sup>104</sup> Building on Jordan's seminal text, between the late-1230s and 1320s a number of lives of the founder and histories of the foundation of the order were produced by various friars from Peter Ferrand to Humbert of Romans and Bernard Gui.<sup>105</sup> These were completed either as stand-alone texts or were embedded within broader histories or devotional texts such as

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<sup>104</sup> On the development of the early tradition: David Haseldine, 'Early Dominican Hagiography and the Canonization of St. Dominic', *New Blackfriars*, 75, 1994, pp.400-414.

<sup>105</sup> Jordan's *Libellus*, Dominic's canonization proceedings and the Lives of Dominic compiled by Peter Ferrand, Constantine of Orvieto and Humbert of Romans are edited in *MOPH*, vol. 16, ed. by H. C. Scheeben and M. H-Laurent, Rome: Institutum historicum FF. Praedicatorum, 1935. Simon Tugwell has produced new editions of Humbert and Peter's works on Dominic, as well the miracle collection requested by Master General Bérengar de Landore (d.1330), and the Legends compiled by Bernard Gui and Peter Calo: 'Miracula Sancti Dominici mandato Magistri Berengarii collecta' and 'Petri Calo Legendae Sancti Dominici', in *MOPH*, 26, 1997. 'Bernardi Guidonis scripta de sancto Dominico', *MOPH*, 27, 1997; 'Humberti de Romanis Legendae Sancti Dominici, necnon materia praedicabilis pro Festis Sancti Dominici et testimonia minora de eodem, adiectis miraculis rotomagensibus Sancti Dominici et Gregorii IX bulla canonizationis eiusdem', *MOPH*, 30, 2008; 'Petri Ferrandi Legenda Sancti Dominici', *MOPH*, 32, 2015.

Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum Historiale*, Gerard de Frachet's *Vitae Fratrum* and the *Nine Ways of Prayer of Saint Dominic*.<sup>106</sup>

While the selection and preference given to the Dominican's most famous and exemplary texts and the exclusion of a broader source base might make the thesis susceptible to criticisms of 'cherry-picking', the production of these texts was firmly embedded in and by the order's struggles to define and negotiate their authority in changing social, political and religious settings. Hagiographies of the order's saints or origin histories which sought to explore the place and meaning of the order within the broader context of Christian salvation were each engaged, in some form or another, in the creation and expression of the providential narratives which sustained and stabilised the order. These narratives constituted both 'a making' and 'a doing' since through them the Dominican 'authors' aimed to create new realities and experiences from the telling of history and tales of their saints and other exemplary figures.<sup>107</sup> Documents such as these provided foremost vehicles for the transmission of the order's most important narratives, also manifesting the various external pressures to which interpretations of poverty were also subject. In this thesis, I consider the texts in their historical and literary context, both with regard to the Dominican tradition itself and also in terms of religious and devotional trends circulating within the institutional Church more generally to establish some of the broader trajectories and discourses in which conceptions of poverty developed.

The thesis structure is both chronological and thematic. The combination makes it possible to analyse the shifting interpretations of poverty across changing historical and religious circumstances in which the development of the Dominicans' devotional life occurred in the first 150 years of the order. Adding a thematic focus within the chapters also unsettles the linear version of history that chronology alone sometimes produces. The narratives in which

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<sup>106</sup> Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale*, in *Bibliotheca mundi, seu venerabilis viri Vincentii Burgundi ex ordine Praedicatorum, episcopi Bellovacensis, Speculum quadruplex, naturale, doctrinale, morale, historiale*, ed. by the Benedictines of Saint-Vaast of Arras, 4 vols, Douai: B. Belleri, 1624; Gerard de Frachet, *Vitae Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. B. M. Reichert, *MOPH*, 1, Louvain: Typis E. Charpentier and J. Schoonjans, 1896; Simon Tugwell, 'The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic: A Textual Study and Critical Edition', *Mediaeval Studies*, XLVII, 1985, pp.1-124.

<sup>107</sup> The concept of performative narrative as a making and a doing is central to section two of this thesis, as will be explored with more depth in Chapter Four. It is derived from: Peterson and Langellier, 'The Performance Turn', p.173.

ideas of poverty were expressed and forged did not flow smoothly or coherently from within the order. Outside forces such as the papacy, outbursts of popular devotion, and the universities each had a role in influencing the emphasis that poverty was given or received in diverse religious, spiritual and devotional contexts. Thus, the mixed framework allows me to explore the internal and external imperatives that impacted upon poverty's formulation and expression in the period under consideration.

The thesis is divided into two sections. Section One explores the narratives created around the founding of the order and its founder, exploring poverty's role in their formation, articulation and reception. Chapter One establishes the context in which Jordan of Saxony produced his *Libellus*. I situate the text in the context of the charismatic atmosphere of the early 1230s during a period of popular devotion known as the Alleluia. I demonstrate the ways in which issues that arose in the context of Alleluia preaching shaped the construction of Jordan's text and refined his approach to charismatic and institutional forms of authority and authorisation in his representations of the early-Dominican friars. The second chapter undertakes a closer textual examination of the *Libellus*, supplemented with letters that Jordan wrote as Master General. I probe the role that poverty plays in the formation and expression of the order's relationship to the divine and the making of Dominican religious as disciples of Christ. Chapter Three explores poverty's 'external' appearance and articulations, focussing on the construction of poverty's performative, discursive and linguistic aspects in Dominic's hagiographical tradition.

Section Two diversifies from the legends and histories of Dominic to explore the way that the framework of poverty that Jordan provided was received, implemented or adapted in changing devotional and spiritual contexts. Chapter Four, provides a framing chapter to the section, locating the impetus for many of the devotional development in the Dominican life in vitriolic debates between the mendicants and the seculars in the mid-thirteenth century. These disputes had the effect of propelling Dominican conceptions of poverty away from the material towards the spiritual and provide important context to the shifts in emphasis that poverty received in Dominican writing. Consequently, I investigate the interface between poverty and compilation in the Dominicans' extensive textual production. Focussing on texts such as Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum Historiale* reveals that poverty intersected with compilation not only discursively in the construction of the texts but was also imbricated in

the compiler's self-reflection of their authorial role and their purposes for writing. In Chapter Five, the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas in 1323 provides the opportunity to scrutinize the level to which external forces influenced or altered the order's internal progressive narratives on poverty. I assess the way that Pope John XXII supported Thomas's canonisation to service his own political agenda and encouraged a narrative that essentially continued the predominance of the Dominican tradition to focus poverty inward. Chapter Six establishes the effective metaphorical destination of Dominican poverty. Henry Suso, in his autobiographical/auto-hagiographical work *The Life of the Servant*, performs and expresses poverty in such a way that it brings the differing aspects of Jordan's conception each to their most spiritualised conclusions. I argue that Suso's approach to poverty intellectually precipitates the reforms of conceptions and practices of poverty that provides the temporal and thematic end-point of this thesis.



## Section One: Narrative Foundations



## Chapter One. 'Do what you see me doing': Charisma and the Early Dominicans

The Blessed Dominic was not yet canonized, but lay hidden under the earth, as is sung in the liturgical song: "The grain lies hidden, the star is darkened, but the Creator of all things commands the bones of Joseph to spring forth and the star to shine forth for the salvation of the people."<sup>1</sup>

In the years between the death of their founder in 1221 and his canonisation in 1234, the Dominican Order, under the leadership and guidance of Jordan of Saxony, experienced a period of growth and consolidation. By all accounts, Jordan was an extremely able administrator who built on the foundations of his predecessor to construct one of 'the most sophisticated constitutional organizations' of the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup> He was integral to the development of the educational system and was known as the 'harlot of the schools' for his relentless recruitment among the students at Paris.<sup>3</sup> During Jordan's time as master general, the Order of Preachers was marked by administrative centralisation and academic learning. This atmosphere later produced the theological giants such as Albert the Great (d.1280) and Saint Thomas Aquinas (d.1274), for whom the order became renowned, and laid the

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<sup>1</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.72: 'Nam beatus Dominicus necdum canonizatus erat, sed sub terra latebat, sicut in prosa cantatur: iacet granum occultatum, sudus latet obumbratum, sed plasmator omnium, ossa Ioseph pululare, sydus iubet radiare in salutem gentium'. Translation Baird, *Chronicle*, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Brooke, 'St Dominic and His First Biographer', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, 17, 1967, 23-40, at p.23. Older works on the order's government and constitution: Ernest Barker, *The Dominican Order and Convocation: A Study of the Growth of Representation in the Church during the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913; Galbraith, *The Constitution of the Dominican Order*; Bennett, *The Early Dominicans*, pp.157-175. More recently: Gert Melville, 'Die Rechtsordnung der Dominikaner in der Spanne von constitutiones und admoniciones. Ein Beitrag zum Vergleich mittelalterlicher Ordensverfassungen', in *Grundllagen des Rechts. Festschrift für Peter Landau zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by R. H. Helmholz and R. Henry, Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2000, 579-604; Simon Tugwell, 'The Evolution of Dominican Structures of Government. III: The Early Development of the Second Distinction of the Constitutions', *AFP*, 71, 2001, 5-138; John van Engen, 'From Canons to Preachers: A Revolution in Medieval Governance', *Domenico di Caleruega e la nascita dell'ordine de' Frati Predicatore: Atti del XLI Convegno storico internazionale, Todi, 10-12 ottobre 2004*, 2005, 261-95.

<sup>3</sup> Tugwell, 'Dominican Spirituality', p.17. For the period in general: Mulchahey, *Dominican Education before 1350*, pp.3-74. For Jordan's biography: H. C. Scheeben, 'Beiträge zur Geschichte Jordans von Sachsen', *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland*, 35, 1938; idem, *Jordan von Sachsen*, Vechta, 1937. These older works can be supplemented with: Tugwell, 'Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic', *AFP*, 68, 1998, pp.20-33.



groundwork for the ‘intellectual’ badge applied to Dominican preaching by modern scholars.<sup>4</sup> In this context and when compared to the ‘popular’ and often theatrical style cultivated by the Franciscans,<sup>5</sup> Dominican spirituality and preaching can certainly be seen to be orientated toward the cerebral. Yet, during the 1230s the nascent Dominicans found themselves in a dynamic situation in which their hitherto single-minded tendencies towards centralisation and institutionalisation would be challenged. The canonisation of the order’s founder, in conjunction with popular outburst of religious devotion in Northern Italy, motivated the Dominicans to recover the ‘radical roots’ of their preaching ministry.<sup>6</sup> In doing so they undertook a renewed engagement with the charismatic, which had been decentred in the years after Dominic’s death. The aim of this chapter is to explore the contexts from which Jordan of Saxony’s foundation history of the order was produced, paying particular attention to the negotiation between institutional and charismatic in his conception and construction of Dominican authority.

The religious revival and peace movement known as the Alleluia, or the Great Devotion, occurred in Northern Italy, beginning probably in the city of Parma.<sup>7</sup> Known by some as the ‘Dominican Devotion’,<sup>8</sup> the Alleluia quickly developed political overtones as preachers of the Franciscan and Dominican orders became engaged in the mediation of political disputes, the reform of city statutes and preaching against heresy, vice and usury.<sup>9</sup> The Alleluia was an important time for the Dominican preachers as it gave them an opportunity to extend and

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<sup>4</sup> See: Lesnik, *Preaching in Medieval Florence*, esp. p.135; see also Delcorno, ‘Origini della predicazione francescana’, pp. 125-60.

<sup>5</sup> See Anna Milne, *Sacerdos et Predicator: Franciscan Experience and the Cronica of Salimbene de Adam* unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Canterbury, 2010, pp. 54-59.

<sup>6</sup> My use of the phrase ‘radical roots’, borrowed from Clare Waters, refers to the examples of Christ and the Apostles and to the charisma of the order’s founder, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, pp. 56-69.

<sup>8</sup> Vito Fumagalli, ‘In margine all’ “Alleluia” del 1233’, *Bollettino dell’Istituto Storico per il medio evo e Archivio muratoriano*, 80, 1968, 257-72; Tugwell, ‘Introduction’, in *On the Beginning of the Order of Preachers*, p.ix; *Annales Maiores of Parma*, ed. by P. Jaffé, MGH, SS, XVIII, p.668.

<sup>9</sup> For the Alleluia and Revivalism in general: Anna Milne, ‘Great Halleluiah (the), peace-movement’, in *InternationalEncyclopaedia for the Middle Ages-Online. A Supplement to LexMA-Online*, Brepols: Turnhout, 2008, in *BrepolisMedieval Encyclopaedias* (<http://www.brepolis.net/bme>) [Accessed 17 November 2008]; D. A. Brown, ‘The Alleluia. A Thirteenth Century Peace Movement’, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 81, 1988, 3-16; Augustine Thompson, *Revival Preachers and Politics in Thirteenth-Century Italy: The Great Devotion of 1233*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992; Gary Dickson, ‘Encounters in Medieval Revivalism: Monks, Friars and Popular Enthusiasts’, *Church History*, 68, 1999, 265-293.

cement their influence in Northern Italy in religious, political and social senses.<sup>10</sup> The preaching that occurred in the context of the Alleluia had the effect of drawing attention to, and proliferating, the tension that the Dominicans encountered in the negotiation of the intellectual and charismatic elements of their preaching performances as they strived to find a balance between the political, social, theological and devotional within their sermons to predominantly lay audiences.<sup>11</sup> Significantly, the focus on charismatic preaching highlighted deficiencies, or rather gaps in the foundations on which the religious authority was constructed and exercised and the Alleluia would prove integral to prompting the Dominicans to canonise their founder.<sup>12</sup>

A variety of reasons were offered to explain the Dominicans' decision not to pursue the canonisation of their founder immediately following his death. Brother Ventura, prior of the convent of Bologna when Dominic died, testified during the canonisation trial that while 'a lot of miracles [were] worked that year' the brothers actively discouraged pilgrims placing further honours on Dominic for fear that they would be accused of greed and subvert the poverty of the order. As a result, they rejected offers of silk coverings for Dominic's tomb due to their perception that this would be inconsistent with Dominic's dedication to poverty and his humility.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the crowds that gathered in popular devotion were also seen to disrupt the peace of the convent and the Dominicans' prayer and study. David Haseldine surmises from these excuses that the friars attempted '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.'<sup>14</sup> Jordan indicated that the friars had a somewhat 'misguided' desire to follow Dominic's example by prioritising their work and consequently ignored the potential benefits to both the order and the wider Church in their neglect and inattentiveness to the

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<sup>10</sup> Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.110.

<sup>11</sup> For contemporary accounts of the Alleluia preaching: Salimbene, *Cronica*, pp. 56-69; *Annales Parmenses Maiores*, ed. by Georg Heinrich Pertz, *MGH, SS*, 18, 1863, pp.790-9; in the same volume: *Annales Placentini Guelfi*, pp.411-57 and Muzio of Modena, *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, pp.457-481. See also Rolandino of Padua, *Cronica in Factis et Circa facta Marchie Trivixiane*, ed. by Antonio Bonardi, *RIS*<sup>2</sup>, 8:1, 1905, pp.3-175.

<sup>12</sup> Both Salimbene, (*Cronica*, p.56) and the Dominican friar, Stephen of Spain, (*Acta Canon.*,39, p.158) connect Dominic's canonisation with the preaching of John of Vicenza during the Alleluia.

<sup>13</sup> Brother Ventura, *Acta Canon.*, pp.68-69.

<sup>14</sup> David Haseldine, 'Early Dominican Hagiography', *New Blackfriars*, 75, 1994, 400-414, at p. 403.

miracles of their founder.<sup>15</sup> The decade after Dominic's death had been dedicated to growth, centralisation and extending their influence at the universities. The interest that the Alleluia generated around the charisma and performance of the Dominican preachers, however, provoked them to effect the canonisation of their founder to support their religious authority. Through the retelling of his holiness and the recognition of his miracles, combined with the dynamism of Alleluia preaching, the Dominicans were inspired to re-imagine the boundaries of their work and the central tenets upon which their order was founded.

To explore the development of the order and the creation of its foundational text in the context of the charismatic atmosphere sparked by the Alleluia and Dominic's canonisation in 1234, this chapter is divided into four sections. In focusing on Jordan's *Libellus*, I move away from treating it as a document that provides information on the founder of the order and the development of the early constitutions. I instead explore the way that Jordan engaged with the charisma generated through the Alleluia and Dominic's canonisation and the way that this engagement influenced the production and purpose of the narrative. The first section considers the lacuna between Dominic's death and his canonisation as a symptom and outcome of the order's negotiation between charismatic and institutional forms of religious authority. In the second section, I look closely at the interface between the Alleluia and Jordan's writing of *Libellus*, examining the role that the charismatic, yet subversive, figure, the Alleluia preacher John of Vicenza, may have played in shaping the narrative. The third section examines how broader tensions between the charismatic and the institutional inform Jordan's writing. The concluding section draws attention to some of the narrative devices that Jordan employed to explore the interface between charisma and institution in his text. Ultimately, I sketch out the boundaries of the Dominicans' foundation narrative as a complex embodiment of the tensions between charismatic authority and institutional authorisation, which sets the groundwork upon which this thesis is built.

### Constitution and Charisma after Dominic's Death

While the role of Dominic in establishing the foundational structures, ideologies and practices of the Order of Preachers is well known, the role played by Jordan of Saxony in the growth

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<sup>15</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, p. 98.

and early successes of the order was equally pivotal. Christopher Brooke argues that while the Franciscan Order had descended into 'chaos' following the death of their founder, 'Jordan of Saxony was forming and establishing the tiny plant which he, scarcely out of novitiate, had taken over from the founder, and seeing it grow into a great Order.'<sup>16</sup> Exemplifying the internal historiographical tradition, William Hinnebusch suggests that 'Jordan built firmly on the original foundations, without departing in the least from the blueprint of Dominic' both with regard to the form and scope of poverty and governance in general.<sup>17</sup> Without the survival of any direct sources from Dominic himself, it is challenging to assess whether Jordan followed Dominic's lead or whether Hinnebusch's suggestion is the product of the Dominicans' internal progress narratives. Regardless, to read the biography included within the *Vitae Fratrum*, Jordan's charismatic appeal seems to have been almost solely responsible for the order's early successes in the recruitment and retention of friars.<sup>18</sup> Gerard de Frachet writes that one of Jordan's 'special graces' was that he never lost any of the novices under his care.<sup>19</sup> Jordan's personal testimony indicates that recruitment, particularly among the universities, was his key priority. Letters that he wrote to the Dominican nuns of Saint Agnes in Bologna are filled with requests and thanks for prayers to move scholars of universities such as Paris and Padua toward the order.<sup>20</sup> Jordan's activities strengthened the institutional and intellectual authority of the order through his almost monomaniacal focus on recruitment within the university milieu.

The augmentation and refinement of the order's constitutions reinforced the Dominicans' incursions into the universities and their resulting engagement with magisterial forms of authority. The earliest constitutions for the order were drafted by Dominic himself in 1216 and 'legislative work' was continued primarily in the chapters of 1220, 1221 and 1228.<sup>21</sup> The

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<sup>16</sup> Brooke, *St Dominic*, pp.28-29.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23; Hinnebusch, *History*, II, p.285.

<sup>18</sup> Gerard de Frachet dedicates a whole chapter within Jordan's vita to '[t]he vast number of students he drew to the Order', *VF*, III, xi, pp.108-09. On the discrepancies between the recruitment of the Franciscans and Dominicans as an indication of the latter's 'impersonality' and Jordan's development of the order on a model comparable to a university guild: Van Engen, 'Dominic and the Brothers', p.9.

<sup>19</sup> *VF*, III, xviii, p.114.

<sup>20</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, 11, pp.13-14; 16, pp.18-20; 26, pp.30-31; 27, pp.31-32; 34, 40-41; 39, 44-45; 50, p.58.

<sup>21</sup> The Primitive Constitutions are edited in: H.C. Scheeben, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland*, vol. XXXVIII, 1939, 48-80; A.H. Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties van de Dominicanen: Voorgeschiedensis, Tekst, Bonnen, Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling (1215-1237)*, Leuven: Bureel van de

only surviving manuscript of the Primitive Constitutions, as they are commonly referred to, is to a version dated to about 1238, prior to a reform of the constitutions undertaken by the third master general of the order, Raymond Peñaforte, between 1238-41.<sup>22</sup> The earliest surviving version consequently presents the evolution of the constitutions over twenty or so years. Vicaire showed that the first part of the Constitutions, as they have come down to us, represent legislation from 1216, while the second derived from the chapter of 1220, at which Dominic was present.<sup>23</sup>

The Dominican Constitutions were modelled closely on those of the Premonstratensian Order.<sup>24</sup> Melville maintains that the Dominicans' deference to an authoritative tradition did not come at the expense of originality. Meanwhile Tugwell adds that 'a closer comparison of the two texts shows that the Dominicans were creating a very different kind of order. They abandon almost all the fussy details regulating the way of life of the religious.'<sup>25</sup> The simplification and discernment that the Dominicans embedded within their constitutions would prove integral to their relative stability. This was particularly true with regard to the meaning and expression of poverty and presents a sharp contrast to the interpretative quagmire in which the Franciscans would find themselves.<sup>26</sup> After retaining the first part of the Premonstratensian prologue, including the justification for living under a Rule, 'so that the unity we are to maintain inwardly in our hearts will be fostered and expressed by the

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R.H.E Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1965 – all references will be to Thomas's edition. For a partial English translation and side-by-side comparison with corresponding texts of the Premonstratensian order: Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, pp.455-470. It is also partially translated into English in Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, pp.189-200.

<sup>22</sup> Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, p.189.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p.189.

<sup>24</sup> Donald S. Prudlo, 'The Living Rule: Monastic Exemplarity in Mendicant Hagiography', in *Shaping Stability: The Normation and Formation of Religious Life in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Krijin Pansters and Abraham Plunkett-Latimer, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, pp.229-244, at p.231 states: 'The urban canonical monasticism of the older orders gave Dominic the foundation that he needed to launch his new order.'

<sup>25</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.455. One example of this is the simplification of the prayer form for matins. Whereas the Premonstratensians state, 'When they come into the choir, they are to bow deeply before the altar, gathering their capes with both hands above the knee', the Dominic version is rendered: 'When they have reached their seats [...] they are to kneel down or bow deeply', p.458.

<sup>26</sup> Melville observes that the 'result as a whole was, so to speak, a fluid text that was anchored in a fixed framework. Alongside the rational composition of the corpus of laws itself, an extraordinarily refined legal procedure aimed at adapting to new needs and conditions contributed in essential ways to the stability of the order', *Medieval Monasticism*, pp.244-45. For the problems that the concept of poverty caused the Franciscans in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries: Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, esp. pp.149-214.

uniformity we observe outwardly in our behaviour’, Dominic added an entirely new section that gets to the heart of the order’s mission:

[T]he superior is to have the right to dispense the brethren in his own community whenever it seems useful to him, particularly in things which seem likely to obstruct study or preaching or the good of souls, since our Order is known to have been founded initially precisely of the sake of preaching and the salvation of souls, and all our concern should be primarily and passionately directed to this all-important goal, that we should be able to be useful to the souls of our neighbours.<sup>27</sup>

This statement makes it clear that everything in their devotional and pastoral lives was to be subordinated to their preaching vocation. The new section is placed between two traditional statements about the meaning and governance of religious life, providing a concrete textual representation of the way that Dominican innovation was marked by an engagement with their predecessors and of the pathway that they forged between novelty and tradition. The Premonstratensians ended their prologue: ‘Therefore, to provide for the peace and unity of the whole order, we have carefully compiled this book, which we call the Book of Customs’, to which the Dominicans add ‘we intend and declare that our Constitutions do not bind us on pain of sin, but only on pain of a penance, except in the case of contempt or of a formal precept’ demonstrating the way in which the Dominicans incorporated an element of flexibility into their way of life.<sup>28</sup>

The Dominicans’ simultaneous deference to the past and attention to their immediate historical circumstances shaped the place and expression of poverty in the constitutions. The balance that they sought between convention and innovation in turn informed the role afforded to poverty in the Dominican tradition prior to Dominic’s canonisation. Rather than occupying a definitive, marked out space within the text, references to poverty are interspersed throughout the Primitive Constitutions. In the constitution discussing the role and duties of the novice master it states that he should ‘teach them [...] to live without private property, to abandon their own will in favour of that of their superiors, to practise voluntary obedience in all things.’<sup>29</sup> Prior to profession, it is stipulated that all novices are to ‘free

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<sup>27</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.457.

<sup>28</sup> Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.457.

<sup>29</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 13, p.465

themselves from their debts and lay all that they have at their prior's feet, so as to free themselves of all possessions.'<sup>30</sup> Preachers 'are neither to accept nor to carry gold, silver, money or gifts of any kind, except for food, clothing, necessary equipment and books.' It continues that '[t]hose who are appointed to preach or to study are to have no concern or responsibility for temporal affairs, so that they will be free to fulfil their spiritual ministry better...'<sup>31</sup> Other constitutions which specify and detail bedding, building and clothing also reference poverty more subtly, while number twenty-six states explicitly that 'on no account may possessions or rents be received.'<sup>32</sup> Taken in isolation, these constitutions present poverty as a range of practices which are mainly related to possessions or the lack thereof. From a purely constitutional perspective poverty was a practical undertaking that the friars adopted to expedite their duties.<sup>33</sup>

The constitutions concerning poverty comprised the only 'narrative' to guide the order's ideological and practical engagements with poverty prior to the 1230s. It is thus hardly surprising that the friars' excuses for their inattention to Dominic's cult were framed in relation to upholding them. Jordan's testimony, offered a decade after Dominic's death, suggests that the friars were concerned that the considerable number of pilgrims would detract from their intellectual activities and disrupt the peace of the convent. At the same time, he indicates that the 'ingratitude' of the friars to the gift of divine grace (miracles) was effectively responsible for the delay. Jordan writes that many of the brothers at Bologna, who witnessed the miracles occurring after Dominic's death, did not want these broadcasted for fears that it could potentially be seen as a way to bring in revenue for the order and thereby undermine their poverty.<sup>34</sup> With no legend to portray the spiritual and devotional aspects of poverty and the Dominican liturgy still in nascent form, the friars of Bologna were wholly reliant on the constitutions. The concise nature of the instructions, however, left little room for developing the contingencies required for dealing with the implications of a saint's cult. At a fundamental level there seems to have been a miscalculation of the importance of not

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<sup>30</sup> Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, 15, p.192.

<sup>31</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 31, p.467

<sup>32</sup> Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, 26, p.198. Bedding: 10; Building: 35; Clothing: 19.

<sup>33</sup> Rosenwein and Little, 'Mendicant Spiritualities', pp.20-21.

<sup>34</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 98. This also could be taken as a dig at the Franciscans who had by then built the Basilica of San Francesco.

only a charismatic founder to the aims and objectives of the order but also the development of a corresponding narrative to engage poverty as an embodied form of charismatic authority as well as a series of practices.

The first history/hagiography of the Dominican Order, its founder and key charisms did not appear until over a decade after Dominic's death. Prior to this, the friars seemed to be wholly disinclined to engage in any sort of encomiastic story-telling of Dominic or the key principles and concepts by which he had established the order. In contrast, the speed with which the Franciscans worked to construct and manage Francis's cult was impressive.<sup>35</sup> A letter from Minister-General Elias publicising the secret of the stigmata that Francis had safeguarded for two years was produced within twenty-four hours.<sup>36</sup> During his stay in Umbria in summer 1228, Pope Gregory IX, patron to both Francis and Dominic, after consultations with the cardinal, instituted the process for Francis's canonisation. Although no documentary evidence has survived, testimony was gathered to provide evidence of the miracles that were being associated with Francis much in the same way as the process for Dominic some five years later.<sup>37</sup> A mere two months after the process was instituted at the Friars' request, Francis's canonisation ceremony was performed. Less than six months later Thomas of Celano's life of the new saint had been completed and approved by the Pope and the order, and Elias had begun construction on the Basilica.<sup>38</sup>

Traditionally, the Dominicans' decision to give precedence to the solidification and embellishment of their forms of governance rather than to engage in the development of a cult for their founder has seen them placed in diametrical ideological opposition to the Franciscans. The label 'intellectual' is commonly used, a concept which encompasses their

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<sup>35</sup> See Brooke, *Image of Saint Francis*, pp.31-76.

<sup>36</sup> Brother Elias, 'Lettera di frate Elia', in *Fonti Francescane: Editio Minor*, ed. by Feliciano Olgiati, Padova: Edizioni Messagero, 1986, p.95.

<sup>37</sup> For the narrative of Francis's canonisation see Book 3 of Thomas of Celano's *Life of Saint Francis*, edited in *Analecta Franciscana* 10, Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1926-40, pp. 1-117. It is translated into English in *FOAED*: 1, pp. 180-297. On canonization in the thirteenth century generally: Goodich, 'The Politics of Canonization', esp. pp.300-02 for a discussion of Franciscan saints.

<sup>38</sup> Elias's management of Francis's cult and the order more generally was met with criticism within the order. For a particularly virulent contemporary account see: Salimbene, *Cronica*, pp. 96-104. For analysis: Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, transl. Christine Rhone, London: Routledge, 2004, p.17. Rosalind B. Brooke's, *Early Franciscan Government*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1959, represents an early attempt to rehabilitate Elias's reputation. More recently see: Giulia Barone, 'Brother Elias Revisited', transl. by Giles Bello, *Greyfriar Review*, 13, Supplement, 1999, 1-18.



preaching style, their devotional and spiritual character and the basis on which they negotiated their religious authority. Analogously, descriptions such as ‘popular’, ‘affective’ and ‘charismatic’ are habitually used in relation to the Franciscans. While in the past twenty or so years these labels are approached with greater flexibility and nuance,<sup>39</sup> claiming ground for the Dominicans as charismatic or affective is nevertheless difficult particularly in the light of their initial ambivalence to the cult of their founder.

The long-standing competition between the two main mendicant orders has tended to exacerbate the ideological differences between the orders in contemporary and modern accounts alike.<sup>40</sup> Owing to the way that Elias has been seen to subvert the wishes of Saint Francis around the matter of poverty, it has become a historical commonplace, even among scholars outside the order, that the friars were fulfilling Dominic’s wishes or at least following his carefully laid out plan in not pursuing canonisation. The friars’ framed their excuses as their desire to emulate Dominic’s example in both his complete prioritisation of work and poverty: they were merely respecting their founder’s wishes to avoid personal popularity and worship.<sup>41</sup> Building on the internal tradition, the picture of Dominic as a wholly ‘self-effacing’ saint who ‘submerged’ his personality dominates modern scholarship.<sup>42</sup> Supporting this view is the fact that Dominic, in contrast to Francis, did not leave behind any personal writings to either define his views for posterity or to guide his followers other than the Primitive Constitutions.<sup>43</sup> Melville argues that the transference of authority from Dominic to the General Chapter and the passing of the Constitutions in 1220 effectively enacted a process whereby text replaced the founder’s living exemplar as the ‘guiding norms’ for the order. He continues that from this point the order did not need to define, even create his image,

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<sup>39</sup> See the discussion on pp.14-23 of this thesis.

<sup>40</sup> Elm, ‘Verfall Und Erneuerung’ pp.219-25.

<sup>41</sup> Brother Ventura, *Acta Canon.*, 2-11, pp.123-132. And when the Dominicans were finally prompted translate Dominicans remains in 1231/2, Jordan writes that Pope Gregory IX ‘took them [the friars at the Bologna convent] most hardly to task for having failed to attend to so great a debt of honour to their father’, adding a personal note that “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.” Jordan, *Lib.*, 125, pp.84-85.

<sup>42</sup> See for instance, Brooke, ‘Saint Dominic’, pp.38-39; Bedouelle, *Saint Dominic*, p..58-62; Lawrence, *The Friars*, p.67.

<sup>43</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, ‘Admonitions’, in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, ed. by Regis Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellman and William J. Short New York: New City Press, 1999, pp.128-137. See also: Robert J. Karris, *The Admonitions of St. Francis: Sources and Meanings*, St. Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 1999.

because the order's identity did not depend on it.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, he suggests that Jordan's *Libellus* supports his proposition by de-centring the founding saint.<sup>45</sup> Melville's framework goes some way in explaining the relative dearth of narrative interest in Dominic in the decade following his death. Yet, the subsequent growth of a historical and hagiographic tradition suggests that there was, at the very least, a subtle recognition of the deficiencies of a religious authority constructed solely through the institutional or intellectual. These tensions became amplified in the person of the Dominican preacher, as they navigated the varying spiritual, social and political dynamics that arose in the context of the Alleluia.

The account of the events leading to Dominic's canonisation by the thirteenth-century Franciscan chronicler, Salimbene de Adam, offers insight into the various dynamics at play as the Alleluia impacted on the Dominicans' negotiation between the poles of charismatic and institutional forms of religious authority.<sup>46</sup> Salimbene's report of Dominic's canonisation occurs at the beginning of his detailed account of the Alleluia and begins by reciting the liturgical song quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The references to the buried grain and the darkened star suggest that Dominic's charisma similarly lies dormant, unable to bear fruit or shed light as an agent of salvation. Salimbene continues,

And so it was that St. Dominic had been buried for some twelve years without the matter of his Sainthood being raised, but on the initiative of Brother John, who was preaching in Bologna at the time of the Spiritual awakening, his canonization was effected. The bishop of Modena, later Cardinal William lent his assistance to John in this matter [...] since he was a great friend of the Dominicans, he exhorted them about Dominic, saying, "The Friars Minor have their saint, and you ought to have one too, even if you have to make him out of straw."

There are many layers to Salimbene's depiction of events, not least of all hints of the competition that existed between the two orders. The suggestion that Dominic was not the equal of Francis in life or death can be viewed within this context. Nevertheless, the idea that the Dominicans needed to make a saint of their founder to service their work as agents of salvation is important. It implies that even from the

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<sup>44</sup> Melville, 'System Rationality', p.387.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.387.

<sup>46</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, pp.69-77.

outside it appeared that the constitutions alone did not provide a sufficient basis on which to construct and exercise religious authority.

Historically, the delay in canonising Dominic is seen to have smoothed the order's institutionalisation by divorcing the order's mission from a charismatic personality. Alternatively, I propose that it also created something of a deficit since there were no supplementary narratives to assist Dominican religious to embody or put into practice the charismata, to which the constitutions referred. The outpouring of religious devotion by which the Alleluia was constituted, as well as the prolific preaching, underscored the need for a more nuanced and accessible framework to supplement the constitutions. This caused Jordan, in particular, to rethink the boundaries of the order's authority and authorisation. Thus, Jordan was prompted to write the *Libellus* as a sort of remedy to the narrative and ideological deficiencies of the constitutions. He paid particular attention to the issues which concerned the expression and negotiation of the relationship of the Dominican religious to charismatic forms of authority embodied in the apostolic tradition.

### The Alleluia and Jordan's *Libellus*

Jordan's *Libellus* provided the framework for the entire Dominican historical tradition. It has been described, however, as 'disconcerting', 'strange' and 'peculiar'.<sup>47</sup> Rosalind Brooke labels it a 'curate's egg' mainly for the way that the work is structurally and generically confused.<sup>48</sup> She continues that Jordan's ambivalence to structural and generic formalities led to the production of an underwhelming historical narrative and a lacklustre portrayal of Dominic in particular.<sup>49</sup> Rather than making Dominic the centre of the narrative, Jordan appears to place him into the background as just one among many other friars. This is exemplified by the way that he opens the narrative with a description of Dominic's mentor Diego, a device which is a

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<sup>47</sup> See: Brooke, 'St. Dominic', pp.23-27; Tugwell, 'Introduction', *On the Beginnings*, vii-vviii.

<sup>48</sup> She argues that it is as if Jordan tried to fit a history of the order into the form of a life of its founder, *Image of Saint Francis*, p.43. See also Christopher Brooke's comments: 'St. Dominic', p. 26.

<sup>49</sup> Brooke, *Image of Saint Francis*, p.129. It is possible that historians' inflexible attitudes towards genre have limited their conclusions with regard to Jordan's *Libellus*. Tugwell writes that 'it is a curiously disconcerting book, and it will only disclose its real significance if we consider very carefully just what kind of book it is', 'Introduction', *On the Beginnings*, p.vii. In other words, trying to fit it into a fixed genre or characterisation misses the point of the narrative that Jordan was trying to create and what the book was meant to achieve.

chief cause of consternation in some circles.<sup>50</sup> The work is accordingly considered to be a failure as biography since Dominic appears dull and insignificant within Jordan's narrative. At the same time, it is thought that there is far too much missing to be considered a 'history'. Simon Tugwell states: '[Jordan] tells us next to nothing about the Dominican nuns [...] He makes no attempt to explain the expansion of the Order's apostolate from a local mission [...] to a world-wide, all-encompassing preaching mission. He tells us nothing worthwhile about what happened after the death of St. Dominic.'<sup>51</sup> At the same time, while Jordan notes the specific times at which poverty was regulated, he says very little about the material conditions produced by the order's adoption of poverty.

From another perspective, however, Jordan's de-centring of Dominic offered a solution to the problems that were facing the Franciscans regarding the almost inviolable image of Saint Francis. By portraying Dominican characteristics through multiple exemplars, Jordan was able to mediate and convey the order's constitutions through the presentation of 'living' principles that could be interpreted and adjusted according to the circumstances. In this sense, important Dominican ideals such as poverty were embodied and performed differently by each exemplar. Although Jordan's work may not have been a literary success when compared to the lives of Francis of Assisi by Thomas of Celano, it provided the conceptual and empirical blueprint for the Dominican historical and hagiographical tradition and was uniquely and specifically Dominican in its scope and intention.<sup>52</sup>

The set of circumstances in which Jordan of Saxony found his order in the early 1230s provided both immediate and long-term motivation for him to write the *Libellus*.<sup>53</sup> His choice to publish in 1233 at the exact time the Alleluia was being carried out across Northern Italy and the move to canonise Dominic began was significant.<sup>54</sup> The increasing prominence of Dominican preaching and a more mainstream engagement with Dominic's sanctity highlighted for Jordan the need to define the relationship between charismatic and

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<sup>50</sup> See the discussion in Brooke, 'St. Dominic', esp. pp.24-25.

<sup>51</sup> Tugwell, 'Introduction', *On the Beginnings*, p.vii.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, p.xi.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, p.viii.

<sup>54</sup> While there is some debate over the period in which Jordan wrote the *Libellus*, Tugwell agrees that early 1233, against the background of John of Vicenza's activities and the Alleluia preaching, likely provided context to its publication: 'Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic', 1998, p.15.

institutional authority as it was embodied by the Dominican friar. The public presence of John of Vicenza and the other Dominican Alleluia preachers coupled with the translation of Dominic's body and the instigation of his canonisation process meant that there was an extraordinary amount of attention on the Dominicans at the time that Jordan wrote.

John of Vicenza became one of the most visible and publicly renowned of the Dominican preachers in the early years of the 1230s through his activities as a leading proponent of the Alleluia.<sup>55</sup> John preached and undertook peace-making campaigns in Northern Italy during 1233 and his activities polarised commentators.<sup>56</sup> He was considered by some to be a prophet who brought Christ's words to life,<sup>57</sup> and he also became known as a skilful mediator for the disputes between the commune of Bologna and the bishop.<sup>58</sup> John's preaching was highly choreographed and, as Thompson argues, was specifically addressed to the city's most pressing economic, military, and political concerns.<sup>59</sup> He not only created dramatic processions and marches throughout the city, but he even went door to door to offer personal counsel to inhabitants.<sup>60</sup> He purportedly performed healing miracles, and pronounced visions revealing the themes of other Alleluia preacher's sermons being performed simultaneously, which were later corroborated by spectators.<sup>61</sup> Not everyone, however, was convinced of

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<sup>55</sup> Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.52.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, pp.45-80.

<sup>57</sup> Girolamo Albertucci De Borselli, 'Cronica Gestorum ac Factorum Memorabilium Civitatis Bononie', ed. by Albano Sorbelli, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores 2*, Città di Castello: 1912, p.22: 'taliter predicavit et cum tanta gratia verbum seminavit, ut cives, milites, rustici et omnes quos ad divinatorum mandatorum obedientiam traxerat, ita eum venerabatur ut quecumque dicebat tanquam a Christo fuissent dicta, suscipere devotissime.'

<sup>58</sup> For the narrative of John's activities: Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, pp.52-62, 63-80.

<sup>59</sup> Salimbene states that Alleluia preachers met to construct plans for their sermons, *Cronica*, p.78. For analysis: Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, pp.53-54.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, p.53.

<sup>61</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.78. For analysis: Milne, 'Franciscan Experience', pp.57-59.

John's holiness. He was regarded as a hypocrite by astronomer Guido Bonatti,<sup>62</sup> and mad by Salimbene.<sup>63</sup>

Labelled the 'great prophet of Bologna' by some contemporary sources, John walked a fine line between *imitatio Christi* and hubris in his preaching performances. Salimbene writes that John's hubris extended to the point that he claimed to be able to perform miracles independent from God's grace. When censured for this, he threatened that unless his brethren silenced their criticisms, he would render the saint, who he alone had created, worthless and to make public the order's internal matters.<sup>64</sup> Salimbene's description of the events may of course be entirely fabricated: he was certainly not one of John's supporters and his tone throughout the *Cronica* is, in general, critical of the Dominicans. Yet the transgressions of both charismatic and institutional authority that Salimbene attributes to John's preaching reverberated in many other contemporary texts.

A parody of John circulated among the movement's detractors, further demonstrating the extent to which his activities polarised commentators.<sup>65</sup> The author lampooned miracles performed by John that were documented by more sympathetic commentators, such as healing the sick, exorcisms and curing lepers. The only miracle that was not confirmed by other sources was the 'water made wine.'<sup>66</sup> The parody has the effect of highlighting John's hubris – as it was no doubt intended to do - and testifies to the liminal status that the preacher occupied between authority and authorisation; between the roles of prophet and priest.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Guido Bonatti, *De Astronomia Tractatus X*, ed. Nicolaus Prukner, Basel, 1550, col.210: 'reputabatur sanctus quasi ab omnibus Italis, qui confitebantur ecclesiam Romanam; mihi autem videbatur quod esset hypocrita.' Cited in Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, n.25, p.52.

<sup>63</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.78-79: '...frater Johannes de Vincentia...ad tantam dementiam devenerat propter honorem sibi impensum, et quia habebat gratiam predicandi, ut crederet etiam sine Deo se veraciter miracula posse facere.'

<sup>64</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, pp.78-79: 'Porro frater Iohannes de Vincentia, de quo supra fecimus mentionem, ad tantam dementiam devenerat propter honorem sibi impensum, et quia habebat gratiam predicandi, ut crederet etiam sine Deo se veraciter miracula posse facere. Que maxima stultitia erat, cum Dominus dicat Io. XV: *Sine me nichil potestis facere* [...] Cum autem reprehenderetur frater Iohannes a fratribus suis de multis fatuitatibus, quas faciebat, respondebat eis dicens: "Ego exaltavi Dominicum verstrum, quem XXII annis sub terra tenuistis absconsum, et nisi quieveritis, vilificabo sanctam verstrum et facta verstra publicabo."'

<sup>65</sup> The satire about the friars is thought to have been written by Pietro della Vigne, secretary to emperor Frederick II: *Poésies populaires latines du moyen âge*, ed. by Édéléstand du Méril, Paris, 1847, pp. 163-177, at p.170.

<sup>66</sup> Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.111, n.4.

<sup>67</sup> On the 'liminality' of the preacher: Waters, *Angels and Earthly Preachers*, esp. pp.31-56.

John's transgressions are further demonstrated by the relative lack of references to him in official Dominican sources. Only one of the witnesses in Dominic's canonisation trial mentions John, even though his preaching is believed to have been instrumental in initiating the process.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, Jordan was involved in directing John's movements but never mentions the 'great prophet' in his *Libellus*, a point to which I return shortly.<sup>69</sup> The parody also reveals, however, that the miracles worked by the Alleluia preachers represented the 'extraordinary, supernatural, divine power' of charisma at work and conformed the preachers more closely to Christ. According to Weber, miracle-working, exorcisms and the effectiveness of his preaching were crucial to proving Christ's charisma and his acceptance in the role as the messiah.<sup>70</sup>

The working of miracles was indeed a defining element of the Alleluia.<sup>71</sup> The miracles performed by the preachers were well publicised as a sign of their charismatic authority to act as agents of salvation and also in their peace-making activities as servants of God.<sup>72</sup> Augustine Thompson writes that by the mid thirteenth century, the famous Dominican preacher Ambrose Sansedoni coupled miracle-working 'with preaching and persecution as the marks of a true apostle.'<sup>73</sup> Alleluia preachers were compared with biblical prophets. Salimbene describes one of the imitators of the movement, Benedict 'the horn', as a new John the Baptist.<sup>74</sup> The miracles associated with the Alleluia broadcast not the sanctity of the preacher but rather his performances as a site of power because he enjoyed special grace bestowed by God. The public nature of the miracles produced in conjunction with Alleluia

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<sup>68</sup> Stephen of Spain states specifically that it was through John's preaching that Dominic's canonisation was brought about, *Acta Canon.*, 39, p.158. Salimbene also attests to John's involvement, *Cronica*, p.56. See also the discussion in: Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.58-60.

<sup>69</sup> On Jordan's involvement with John's career around the General Chapter of 1233: Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.60. John 'reappears' in the Dominican tradition in the 1250s in the *VF* and in Thomas of Cantimpré's *De apibus: VF*, I.III.XXXI, pp.175-76; *De apibus*, II.I, p.116.

<sup>70</sup> Weber, *On Charisma*, p.39.

<sup>71</sup> On miracles and thirteenth-century sanctity: Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp.35-37; Michael Goodich, *Lives and Miracles of the Saints: Studies in Latin Hagiography*, Burlington: Ashgate, 2004.

<sup>72</sup> Stephen of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, 39. Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.467.

<sup>73</sup> Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.110.

<sup>74</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.71.

preaching meant that the working of miracles was a 'live' experience which was immediately available to the audience as a sign of the charismatic power of the preacher.<sup>75</sup>

As Thompson succinctly argues, the general programme adopted by the Alleluia preachers was first the creation of an audience; they then 'gave that audience the sense of collective identity, and finally used this power-base to launch a social and political programme.'<sup>76</sup> Their charisma could be exercised and used to transform, exhort, compel and manipulate action and transformation. From a sociological perspective, charisma can be discerned by looking at the effects of preaching.<sup>77</sup> Miri Rubin and Katherine Jansen conclude:

It was, of course, the stock-in-trade of medieval and early-modern preachers, whose spectacular performances, many of which were alive with miracles, served to manifest the preacher's charismatic gifts. If properly persuaded by such performances, the audience reciprocated by validating the preacher's charisma, paving the way for the reception of his or her teachings.<sup>78</sup>

Salimbene writes that John of Vicenza 'was a man of little learning but with a great ambition for working miracles.' While he does not go into explicit detail, Salimbene connects John's predilection for miracles with his charismatic preaching, when he continues that 'at the time of the Halleuia,' John 'engaged in a great preaching campaign between Castelleone and Castelfranco.'<sup>79</sup> Other sources confirm the successful nature of John's preaching particularly in Bologna, the citizens of which went to extraordinary lengths to keep him in the city, solidifying his reputation as a charismatic.<sup>80</sup>

The production of miracles by revivalist preachers could be interpreted in two main ways: firstly, they might just be taken as part of a spectacle which aimed to attract attention to the

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<sup>75</sup> As Thompson points out, however, miracles were often just enjoyed for their spectacle and were not necessarily given any overarching meaning, *Revival Preachers*, p.113

<sup>76</sup> Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, p.21.

<sup>77</sup> This is the approach taken by Wesjohann in his discussion of the charisma of Saint Dominic: Achim Wesjohann, 'Flüchtigkeit und Bewahrung des Charisma', pp.227-260. Also on the relationship between charisma and preaching: Paul Gifford, 'Religious Authority: scripture, tradition, charisma', in *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. J.R. Hinnells, London: Routledge, 2005, pp.379-391.

<sup>78</sup> Jansen and Rubin, 'Introduction', in *Charisma and Religious Authority*, p.7.

<sup>79</sup> Salimbene, *Cronica*, p.72. Translation Baird, *Chronicle*, p.103.

<sup>80</sup> VF, 3.42.5, pp.138-39.



preacher. The second interpretation is where the ongoing effects of the miracles can be discerned. Numerous occasions are narrated within Dominic's *vitae* in which performance of miracles prompted the conversion of heretics or were performed in charity for other people.<sup>81</sup> These types of miracles not only demonstrated the preacher's authority as charismatic and as a vessel of God's grace;<sup>82</sup> they also acted as a tangible link to Christ, thus legitimising the performances in which the miracles were produced. The importance placed on the miracle-working of the Alleluia preachers, as well as the importance of miracles for canonisation, demonstrates that certain preachers were perceived to be the recipients of a special type of gift (*donum*), divine in origin and privileged in the respect that it was not available to an ordinary person.<sup>83</sup> While probably not indicative of all preachers, John's example highlights some of the potential problems that could be caused by an imbalance between charismatic and institutional forms of authority.

### Tensions between institutional and charismatic forms of authority

The 'live' and public nature of the Dominicans involvement in the Alleluia exacerbated pre-existing tensions concerning finding balance between institutional and charismatic forms of authority in preaching performances that the Constitutions simply could not address. Indeed, Jordan explains in the prologue to the *Libellus* that many questions were being asked at the beginning of the 1230s that he sought to answer. The questions ranged from how the order began, who figured prominently, how numbers increased and, importantly, how the brothers became strengthened in grace (*confortati per gratiam*).<sup>84</sup> It is this last question that gets to the heart of Jordan's purpose in writing the *Libellus* in the way that he did. How were the friars able to prepare themselves or make themselves worthy to receive God's gift? How were they better able to negotiate their hybridity as vessels of God's grace and as 'the human

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<sup>81</sup> For example: *LA*, p. 431, 432, 437.

<sup>82</sup> Weber notes that the holder of charisma's psychological recognition of their own charismatic authority is the key to genuine charisma, as is the way their leadership is of benefit to their followers: *On Charisma*, pp.49-50.

<sup>83</sup> Weber, *Social and Economic Organization*, pp.358-9.

<sup>84</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 2, p.25: 'Flagrantibus pluribus fratrum et scire cupientibus, qualiter hic Ordo Predicatorum, per quem horum temporum novissimorum periculis dispensatio divina providet, sumpserit institutionis exordium, qualesque extiterint qualiterve numero multiplicati fuerint et confortati per gratiam primitivi ordinis nostri fratres.'

embodiment of doctrine’?<sup>85</sup> Jordan was responding to the immediate needs of the friars under his guidance to create a picture, or indeed a pattern of Dominican life, authority and practice, as it was formed and was actualised in the experiences of the early friars. He re-channelled the somewhat unpredictable and uncontrolled charisma of the preachers being generated in the context of the Alleluia and Dominic’s canonisation to re-incorporate the charismatic into the intellectual, institutional and textual structures and formalisms of the order.<sup>86</sup> It may be that he needed to provide a set of exemplars more approachable or attainable than Dominic but less controversial than John of Vicenza and that this accounted for his de-centring of Dominic from the narrative.<sup>87</sup>

Evidence suggests that there were a number of friars who were exhibiting ignorance of the fundamental values of the order by actively trying to secure bishoprics.<sup>88</sup> Rulings from the General Chapters of 1233 and 1234 illustrate that Jordan at the time was attempting to curb activities of the friars that could be construed as acting in contrast to the order’s emphasis on humility and disassociation from temporal honours and secular politics.<sup>89</sup> In 1233 he ruled that no one could assume a bishopric without special permission from the papacy and in 1234 the friars were banned under the pain of excommunication from involvement in secular politics.<sup>90</sup> These events provide an indication of a failure of the official institutions and regulations to adequately convey the correct forms of acting, or patterns of behaviour of a Dominican friar. The Alleluia, and John of Vicenza’s indiscretions, highlighted for Jordan the need for formal regulations to be supported by the creation of narratives to communicate how the fundamental Dominican values of charity, humility and poverty could and should be

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<sup>85</sup> Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, p.ix.

<sup>86</sup> Tugwell proposes that, ‘in the spring of 1233, before the more extreme manifestations of John’s readiness to appropriate secular authority, there is reason to believe that Jordan worried about the various ways in which the brethren were acquiring their own power-bases outside the order’, ‘Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic’, 1998, p.15.

<sup>87</sup> On this point, Rosalind Brooke, in a passing comment writes that Jordan put forward examples ‘to whom the ordinary friar may have related themselves better.’ Brooke, *Image of Saint Francis*, p.129. See also Tugwell, ‘Introduction’, *On the Beginnings*, p.ix.

<sup>88</sup> ‘Acta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum. I. Ab anno 1220 usque ad annum 1303’, ed. B.M. Reichert, *MOPH*, 3, p.3. See also VF, III.42.10, pp.141-142.

<sup>89</sup> ‘Acta Capitulum Generalium’, p.3. For analysis: Tugwell, ‘Notes on the Life of Saint Dominic’, p.15.

<sup>90</sup> ‘Acta Capitulum Generalium I’, *MOPH*, 3, p.4.

experienced and embodied by the friars.<sup>91</sup> The inconsistencies of his text therefore can be viewed within the context of the tensions between the charismatic and intellectual as they pertained specifically to the Dominican religious.

As dedicated school-men and preachers, the Dominican friars embodied the tension between the charismatic and the institutional that historians have noted plagued late-medieval preaching.<sup>92</sup> Arguably one of the key issues for the mendicant friar was the negotiation between their personal authority and their institutional authorisation. Clare Waters reasons that as poverty and preaching surpassed contemplation in the reimagining of apostolic life that occurred in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Church faced significant problems due to the dual need to 'maintain its established power while remaining true to its radical roots.'<sup>93</sup> The anxiety found vivid representation in the way that mendicant preachers obediently represented official Church doctrine at the same time as they sought to recall the spontaneity and dynamism of the early Church. As Waters argues:

The preacher establishes his claims by re-presenting earlier models and above all the absent exemplar, Christ. This representation was simultaneously the heart of his office and its point of greatest vulnerability because the same absence that required the preacher's activity meant that it was exceptionally difficult to guarantee that activity or to exclude unlicensed practitioners from it.<sup>94</sup>

In other words, in the role of the preacher (and their human potential for sin) a constant tension existed between the texts of the institution to which they owed legitimacy and safety from accusations of heresy and their *imitatio Christi*. Waters establishes that the Dominicans in particular were the proud protectors of their 'license' to preach and constituted the authority for their sermons (the text and the event) through a long line of authorities that went back as far as Moses through to Christ and to Saint Dominic.<sup>95</sup> This emphasis partly

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<sup>91</sup> The final sentence in the main part of the *Libellus* states 'may we never turn aside from the right way', translation, Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.27. Jordan, Lib., 'nos quoque indeflexo tramite pertingere mereamur', p.77.

<sup>92</sup> See for example: Jaeger, 'Charismatic Body', pp.117-137; Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*.

<sup>93</sup> Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, p.4

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p.14.

<sup>95</sup> Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, p.15. See also: Silvana Vecchio, 'Dalla predicazione alla conversazione: Il *Liber de introductione loquendi* di Filippo da Ferrara, OP', *Medieval Sermon Studies*, 44, 2000, 68-86.

explains why it has seemed difficult to extricate the charismatic elements of the Dominican way of life from the intellectual and textual traditions in which it has been concealed.

### Signalling Charisma

Reading the *Libellus* as both a foundation story and guide for the members of the Dominican Order reveals the importance that its members placed on physical manifestations of poverty to move, persuade and convert audiences. Jordan writes that Dominic's mentor Diego of Acébès, Bishop of Osma (d.1207), had immediately recognised the benefit of combining the speaking of orthodoxy with its physical embodiment in the conflict with the Cathar heretics in the Languedoc.<sup>96</sup> As he was travelling through Montpellier on his way back to Spain, Diego happened on a council convened by the abbots and papal legate recently sent to the area by Pope Innocent III to preach against the heretics. His reputation preceding him, Diego was invited to join the council to offer his advice on the failure of the preachers to make any sort of headway against the heretics. His counsel was blunt and demonstrates the way that the interplay between personal authority and official authorisation needed constant attention. Diego declared that papal preachers were wrong to expect their words alone to be enough to win back people from the heresy. While the Cathars conducted themselves with feigned holiness, the Church's contingent contrasted starkly in their opulence and excess:

Brethren, I believe that you are going about things the wrong way. It seems impossible to me to bring back to the faith with words alone men who would be better supported by example. See how the heretics persuade simple people to their way of life, as they convey the appearance of piety, as they deceive with the false performance of evangelical deprivation and austerity. If you try to instruct them with anything different, you will achieve little, destroy much and they will never be won over. Drive out a nail with a nail, banish false holiness with true religious life, for the pride of the false apostles will only be exposed by true humility. So Paul was compelled to put himself on display, by counting up his true virtues, by publicizing the austerities and dangers he truly experienced, in order to show to be false the arrogance of those people, who were boasting of the merit of their own lives.

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<sup>96</sup> On Dominican preaching in the Languedoc: Karen Sullivan, *The Inner Lives of Medieval Inquisitors*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010; Ames, *Righteous Persecution*. See generally: Malcolm Barber, *The Cathars: Dualist Heresy in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2014; the essays in: Sennis, *Cathars in Question*; and Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

They asked him, “Good Father, what do you then counsel us to do?” To which he replied, “Do what you see me doing.” The Spirit of the Lord immediately came upon him, and he called to his companions to return to Osma with the horse, furnishings and the various goods they had brought with them, keeping only a few clerics with him as companions. He said that he proposed to stay in that land to spread the faith [...] The abbots heard his advice; and encouraged by his example, they adopted a similar approach sending away everything they had brought with them, keeping only the books that were necessary for the Office, for study and for debating, should the opportunity present itself. Furthermore, they proclaimed the bishop as their superior and indeed the head of the whole campaign, setting off on foot, without provisions, in voluntary poverty to preach the faith.<sup>97</sup>

This speech contains traces of the key ideologies on which the order was founded. Fundamental concepts such as poverty, humility and the winning of souls all germinate in Diego’s words, as well as the continuing and ever-present negotiation between authority and authorisation. Crucially, the extract demonstrates that the embodiment and performance of purposeful and authentic holiness lay at the heart of the Dominican way of life. This does not mean that the Dominicans placed the pursuit of charismatic authority above the intellectual. Guarantee of authenticity occurred mainly through learning and sanction from the Church. In this extract, in which he essentially situated the origins of the mission of the Order of Preachers in Diego’s words, Jordan advocates the careful, but essential, balance between charisma and doctrine, word and performance. The performances of the Dominican religious

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<sup>97</sup> Jordan, Lib., 20-22, pp.36-37: “Non sic” ait “fratres, non sic vobis arbitror procedendum. Impossibile mihi videtur, homines istos solis ad fidem reduci verbis, qui potius innituntur exemplis. En heretici, dum speciem preferunt pietatis, dum evangelice parsimonie et austeritatis mentiuntur exempla, persuadent simplicibus vias suas. Quamobrem, si contraria monstrare veneritis, edificabitis parum, destruetis multum et nullatenus acquiescent. Clavum clavo retundite, fictam sanctitatem vera religione fugate, quia fastus pseudoapostolorum evidenti vult humilitate convinci. Sic Paulus cogitur fieri insapiens, suas veras enumerando virtutes, austeritates et pericula proferendo, ut eorum tumorem refelleret, qui se devite merito iactabant.” Dicunt ei: “Quod ergo das consilium, pater bone?” Quibus ille: “Quod me videritis facere faciatis” Mox itaque insiliente in eum spiritu domini vocavit suos eosque Oxomam cum equitatuuris et supellectili et diverso, quem secum adduxerat, apparatu remisit, paucis clericis in sua societate retentis. Dixitque suum propositum in eo esse, ut in illa terra moram faceret causa fidei propagande. [...] Audito igitur abbates, qui missi fuerant, huiusmodi consilio et animati exemplo acquieverunt et ipsi simile aggredi, remittentes sinuli ad loca sua, que secum adduxerant retentis secum dumtaxat libris ad horas, ad studium atque ad disputationem, cum opportunum foret, necessariis, et habentes predictum episcopum super se maiorem et quasi caput totius negotii, pedes, sine expensis, in voluntaria paupertate fidem annuntiare ceperunt.’ I have interpreted the Latin: *sic Paulus cogitur fieri insapiens*, in the sense of the public performance component of a ‘performing fool’ much in the way that Saint Francis used *ioculatores dei*. Tugwell translates it as ‘Paul found himself obliged to play the fool’, but I feel that this does not go far enough to convey the sense intended. Compare this with Peter Ferrand’s concept of ‘Holy Hypocrisy’ discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

were integral to achieving this balance, in the sense that learned doctrine was not only made visible by them but was simultaneously authorised.

The poverty hinted at by Diego in the extract above provides an interesting lens through which to view the mutually authorising relationship between Church doctrine and the Dominican religious' pastoral and devotional performances. Jordan does an excellent job of building up Diego's credentials in the narrative preceding the narration of the speech. He even begins the *Libellus* by outlining Diego's attributes and through this device introduces many concepts which he deemed to be fundamental to the Dominican religious. He emphasises Diego's knowledge of Scripture, the integrity with which he fulfilled his role as a bishop and the way that he encouraged the canons under his leadership to follow the Rule of St Augustine. Interspersed among these markers of 'institutional authorisations' are also comments that attest to his charismatic gifts. Jordan writes that Diego's love for God was all-encompassing (*totus inheserat*), that he abandoned himself (*seipsum abiiciens*) to seek what is Christ's alone. Diego combined exhortation (*suadebat verbis*) with lived example (*invitabat exemplis*) to persuade and win over (*inclinaret*) even the most resistant to his purposes.<sup>98</sup> Jordan skilfully reveals that Diego's authority to speak orthodoxy is backed up by the way that he lives it. Diego's authorisation to preach orthodox doctrine, which is demonstrated at the beginning of the *Libellus*, in turn, authorises the forms of acting (poverty) that his speech to the council at Montpellier exhorts.

Significantly, it is not only the 'forms' of poverty advocated in the speech to which Jordan calls attention and effectively embeds within the history of the order's early years. As I establish further in subsequent chapters, Jordan's language and the metaphors that he chooses to describe important spiritual relationships establish important frameworks for the understanding of poverty and the myriad ways it could be expressed (and manipulated). Jordan is careful to employ authoritative textual traditions within his narrative and balance them with immediate and relevant patterns of behaviour and ways of acting. While it is Jordan who ultimately sets out to construct Diego's authority and authorisation within the narrative, Diego's reference to Paul has a similar function within the speech itself. There is of course no way to prove that the words that Jordan records are an accurate rendition of what Diego

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<sup>98</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, pp.26-27.

actually said; yet it is unlikely that the apostolic significance of the words he placed in Diego's mouth was lost on the *Libellus'* audiences. Rather than approaching poverty as an internal disposition performed in the sight of God such as in a monastic environment, Paul's example required it to be performed publicly as a form of charismatic authority.

References to forms of acting, ways of behaving and performing alongside the citation of authoritative phrases, scriptural glosses and the like, illustrate the great complexity involved in the construction and negotiation of authority and authorisation based on the *Imitatio Christi et Apostolorum*, which underpinned the mendicant movement. Most often the forms of acting that were called upon to authorise the friar or sister's performance were available only through texts. While Diego could say to his audience, "Do what you see me doing," and offer his own assumption of evangelical poverty as an immediate, tangible exemplar, the acts that the Dominicans were required to perform as a means of constructing and expressing a charismatic authority were no longer available to witness: namely the poverty of Christ and the poverty of Dominic.<sup>99</sup> As the constitutions offered a relatively disembodied series of practices to adopt, Jordan's *Libellus* supplemented them by offering a few 'living' examples of how charisma might be transmitted or constructed in relation to audiences.

Describing Dominic's somewhat meteoric rise after entering the Church as a canon regular, Jordan states:

He immediately shone with extraordinary brightness among his fellow canons; he was the least in internal humility but was the most in terms of his external holiness: for all he was the aroma from life to life, and was like incense smelling in the days of summer. Everyone marvelled that he had reached such heights of religious perfection at an unheard-of rate, and they made him sub prior, since placed at such a distinguished height he would shine bright to all who gazed upon him and summon them with his example.<sup>100</sup>

Jordan does a masterful job here of demonstrating the range of factors at work in the construction and exercise of personal authority. That he is discussing Dominic's charisma is

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<sup>99</sup> Humbert of Romans states in his 'De eruditione praedicatorum' that gazing upon the embodied acts of others is the ultimate way to learn, also citing: "'Do what you see me doing'": vii, p.393.

<sup>100</sup> Jordan, Lib., 12: 'Ille vero confestim inter suos canonicos velut singulare iubar emicuit, humilitate cordis imus, sanctitate precipuus, factus omnibus odor vite in vitam, et quasi thus reddens in diebus estatis. Mirantur tam celerem et invisum religionis apicem, et suppriorum eum constituunt, quatenus in eminentiori specula constitutus omnium splenderet obtutibus et omnes invitaret exemplis.'

confirmed with his repeated use of metaphors of light, smell and heights which indicate its divine origin and association. His charisma was not only plain to see, it had formative force in the fact that it moved people to action. Even though Dominic was part of the institutional Church it was on the basis of his charisma that he was recognised as a leader by his brethren at Osma.<sup>101</sup> Jordan's use of scriptural reference also makes clear Dominic's duality in terms of his agency in the salvation process and as a suitable vessel of divine grace. The reference to II Cor. 2:16, 'the aroma from life to life', signals that he is at the same time a representation of Christ and an embodiment of the Gospel preaching salvation and through his charisma, he has the ability to nourish and propel people toward eternal life.<sup>102</sup> Dominic's charismatic authority is acknowledged by his fellow canons as his promotion to the position of sub prior expressly demonstrates. Establishing Dominic in this role has the effect of legitimising his charisma at the same time that it harnesses it to the purposes of the Church.

Ayelet Even-Ezra argues that a new conception of charisma arose in the thirteenth century, specifically in the context of the 'new modes of interactions of leaders and preachers with their flocks.'<sup>103</sup> Grace, which she takes as the medieval conceptualisation of charisma, was increasingly conceived within a social framework, with the mendicants, in particular, focussed on directing their gifts (*donum*) 'for the benefit of others'.<sup>104</sup> This inherently public area of operation came with a multi-levelled objectification and hyper-particularisation of the preacher and their performances. These processes are reflected in the way that material designed to support preaching detailed not only sermons but sought to delineate their appearance, key attributes, embodied virtues and mannerisms of the preacher.<sup>105</sup> The mendicant orders revolutionised the preaching culture of the middle ages by pushing the speaking of orthodoxy beyond Church walls and into the daily lives and experiences of the

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<sup>101</sup> The canonisation testimony also reflects this balance between charismatic and institutional authorities. Stephen of Spain states that Dominic used 'to weep and show all the signs of a most intensely fervent love' during mass and in the next line writes of his love of the 'regular life' and observation of the order's Rule: *Acta Canon.*, 38, p.156.

<sup>102</sup> While a somewhat later exegesis, see Aquinas's interpretation of II Corinthians: *Super II Epistolam ad Corinthios lectura*, trans. Fabian Larcher, OP, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/SS2Cor.htm>. Accessed 3/06/17, cap.73-74.

<sup>103</sup> Even-Ezra, 'The Conceptualization of Charisma', pp.162-63.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.165-66.

<sup>105</sup> Humbert's, *De eruditione praedicatorum*, is perhaps the most notable reflection of this movement.



laity to whom they administered. Whereas public, popular preaching was typically the domain of the radical and often heretical preacher, orthodox preaching mainly took place in the privileged and hallowed spaces of Churches. This meant that religion was, for the great majority of the laity, only experienced on special occasions. Through their itinerancy and poverty, the mendicants blurred the boundaries of secular and religious spaces. No longer restricted to Church-based devotion, they visited people's homes to beg and to counsel thus enacting speech-acts and religious performances that elided the private and public spheres. The increasing availability of popular hagiographies to lay and religious audiences of life both paralleled and amplified the blurring of the public and private, religious and secular in devotional life.<sup>106</sup>

Hagiographies tend to objectify their subjects as a series of virtues as well as an empty container or vessel into which graces are placed by God. In Jordan's *Libellus*, subjective experience is often de-personalised and standardised into collective values to avoid the potentially destabilising consequences that the pursuit of individual authority could have, as in the example of John of Vicenza.<sup>107</sup> As well as in narrative, objectification also occurred through the audience's gaze. Jordan, for instance, writes repeatedly of the 'signs' which proved that his subjects were vessels of grace. Of his friend Henry he stated that, among other things, his prompt obedience, patience, cheerfulness, eloquence and beautiful personality were all signs of the grace that God had placed in his chosen vessel.<sup>108</sup> The compartmentalization of personality traits that occurs in Jordan's descriptions of Henry and their endowment with supernatural origins (as signs of grace) was essential to medieval conceptions of charismatic authority. As Jordan continues:

With such ease he affected the hearts of all (*cordibus omnium influebat*) and he displayed so much affability (*exhibuit socialem*) to all, that, if you spent only a little time with him, you

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<sup>106</sup> See Derek Kruger, *Writing and Holiness: the Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, esp. pp.1-14 and Catherine Sanok, *Her Life Historical: Exemplarity and Female Saints' Lives in Late Medieval England*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, esp. pp.x-xiii.

<sup>107</sup> Tugwell suggests that the General Chapter of 1234 put forth an admonition against brothers soliciting bishoprics and other powerful roles in reference to John: 'Notes', 1998, p.15.

<sup>108</sup> Jordan, Lib., 78: 'Et quidem in hoc vas electionis multa contulerat deus gratiarum insignia. Erat nempe obedientia promptus, patientia firmum, mansuetudine placidus, hilaritate gratus, caritate diffusus [...] inerat ei sermonis modestia, lingue facundia, acumen ingenii, gratia faciei, persone venustas, scribendi habitas, dictandi peritia, vocis angelica melodia.'

would think he liked you above all others. And it was inevitable, that he would be loved by all, because of the grace that God poured into him (*prefunderat deus gratia*). And although he excelled in every kind of way in all things mentioned before, so that he seemed to stand alone in every kind of grace, he nevertheless was unable to become conceited from these things, for he had learned from Christ to be gentle and humble in his heart.<sup>109</sup>

Jordan is essentially describing charismatic authority. His description of the grace Henry possessed fulfils Weber's definition since it had a divine origin, it is acknowledged and ratified by others and it inspires devotion. In neo-platonic tradition, Jordan conceives of grace primarily as a liquid as indicated by his use of the verbs *influere* (to run into) and *prefundere* (to pour into).<sup>110</sup> Henry's body is consequently a container or conduit from which the liquid, poured into Henry by God, exudes to affect others.<sup>111</sup> As well as being liquid-like, the use of *exhibuere* suggests that charisma/grace can also take on the quality of light. This is the case in Blessed Cecilia's tract on the miracles of Saint Dominic (written ca.1272-1288), when she wrote: 'There was a kind of radiance about his forehead and between his eyebrows, which attracted everyone to respect and love him.'<sup>112</sup>

Jordan's writing essentially provided a certain level of balance to the theological and social dimensions of charisma. At the end of the first part of the *Libellus*<sup>113</sup> Jordan sums up his narrative of Dominic:

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<sup>109</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 78. p.62: 'Tanta facilitate cordibus omnium influebat, tam se cunctis exhibuit socialem, ut, si cum eo conversareris ad modicum, dilectum te ab ipso pre omnibus extimares. Et necesse fuit, quem perfunderat deus gratia, ut ab omnibus amaretur. Et cum in predictis omnibus sic omnes excelleret, ut singulariter bonus in quacumque gratia videretur, de iis tamen nesciebat extolli, a Christo enim didicerat esse mitis et humilis corde.'

<sup>110</sup> On the medieval neo-platonic tradition: Dermot Moran, 'Neoplatinism and Christianity in the West', in *The Routledge Handbook of Neoplatonism*, ed. by Pauliina Remes, Svetla Slavera-Griffen, London: Routledge, 2014, pp.508-524. See also: P.L. Reynolds, 'The Essence, Power and Presence of God: Fragments of the History of an Idea, from Neopythagoreanism to Peter Abelard', in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeuneau*, ed. by Haijo J. Westra, Leiden: Brill, 1992, pp.351-380.

<sup>111</sup> Dr Jennifer Carpenter, Australian Catholic University, introduced me to this framework for understanding grace in a paper titled 'Thinking Through Embodied Grace: Metaphorical Understandings of Grace in the Thirteenth Century', presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Australian and New Zealand Medieval and Early Modern Association Conference, 14-18 July 2015, University of Queensland.

<sup>112</sup> Angelus Walz, 'Die 'Miracula beati Dominici' der Schwester Cäcilia,' *AFP*, 37, 1967: 5-45. Translated in: <http://opcentral.org/blog/the-miracles-of-st-dominic/>. Accessed 5/10/17.

<sup>113</sup> Tugwell ends his translation of the *Libellus* at this point. Although a description of the translation of Dominic's body is included in Scheeben's edition, Tugwell refutes Jordan's authorship of this addition, 'Introduction, p.xiv.

Who would be sufficient enough to reach the heights of each and every virtue of that man? We can only admire him and judge the inertia of our own time against his example. To achieve the things he did is not through human strength but through grace of a singular kind, unless perhaps God in infinite mercy judges someone else worthy enough to raise to a similar height of sanctity. But who is suitable for this? Nevertheless, Brothers, let us all make our best effort to follow our father's path and let us show gratitude to our Redeemer, who gave to his servants such a leader for this path that we are walking, baptizing us through him in the light of this way of life.<sup>114</sup>

This extract exemplifies the unique way in which Jordan of Saxony negotiated the issues raised by the Alleluia preachers and Dominic's canonisation. He makes clear that charisma is embodied by specific individuals but that it is situated beyond all material and worldly concerns: it is a gift from God.<sup>115</sup> At the same time he emphasises that the Dominican religious must conform to a way of life and not to the principles of an office. The tensions between charismatic authority and institutional authorisation that were highlighted throughout the Alleluia are in part responsible for the way that Jordan approaches his work in the *Libellus*. John of Vicenza's indiscretions, in particular, may have prompted Jordan to re-evaluate the place and boundaries of charismatic authority within the Dominican Order.

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Reading Jordan's *Libellus* in the context of charisma says a lot about his overall objective in writing. Jordan undertook a complex negotiation in integrating the charismatic and institutional into his origin story. The remaining chapters show that Jordan instituted strategies into the Dominican narrative tradition whereby focus could be maintained on the

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<sup>114</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 109: 'Quis huius hominis usquequaque virtutem imitari sufficiat? Mirari possumus et ipsius exemplo pensare nostri temporis inertiam. Posse vero quod ille potuit, non humane virtutis, sed singularis est gratie, nisi quem forte miserans dei bonitas in simile dignata fuerit prerogare sanctitatis fastigium. Sed ad hoc quis idoneus? Imitemur tamen fratres, ut possumus, paterna vestigia, simul et agamus gratias redemptori qui talem in via hac, qua ambulamus, ducem exhibuit servis suis, per eum nos in huius conversationis lucem regenerans.' Compare this with Jordan's letter to Diana, a nun at the Dominican Convent of Saint Agnes at Bologna, June-July, 1229, in which he describes grace specifically as a gift that originates with God alone, who he describes as the 'Father of all light' at the same time referring to grace itself as a light, *Epist.*, I, p.3; see Chapter Two of this thesis for an in-depth discussion of Jordan's use of light imagery.

<sup>115</sup> Stephen Jaeger concludes: 'the irreplaceable centre of charismatic culture is the human body', 'Charismatic Body', 122; Weber describes 'Charismatic authority is...specifically outside the realm of everyday routine and the profane sphere,' in, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, transl. A.M. Henderson and T. Parsons New York: The Free Press, 1947, p.361

formation of Dominicans as representatives of Christ, who engaged his poverty at charismatic and institutional levels. These strategies simultaneously highlighted the way their authority was constructed in their own charismatic performances and in the performances of others; the way that good works overflowed out of them at the same time that they drained the body of 'self' to make way for God's grace; and, above all, they drew attention to the way that poverty embodied the complexities of the charismatic and institutional and forms of acting that the tension prescribed.

In the following chapter, I turn to the charismatic boundaries of poverty more directly and the way they were developed in Jordan's writings. The 'militant' poverty conceived by Dominic, which 'conformed him to Christ' at the same time that it made him 'a soldier whose whole life preached by deeds as well as by word',<sup>116</sup> is generally seen to have been scaled back in the intellectual atmosphere of Jordan's time as master general. Poverty is viewed mainly as a device that removed potential distractions to their intellectual and pastoral agendas.<sup>117</sup> Building upon the conceptual framework of this chapter, I address more specifically the way that Jordan approached poverty in the *Libellus* and other writings. I assess its purpose, not only in relation to the early friars' personal authority but in their spiritual life more generally. This approach allows for an appreciation of the way that poverty not only had practical meaning in the early development of the order on a spiritual as well as an experiential level, but also of the ways it could be meaningful in the process of becoming a Dominican.

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<sup>116</sup> Hinnebusch, *History*, I, p.146.

<sup>117</sup> See: Lappin 'The Dominican Path Towards Mendicancy', pp.52-53; Bailey, 'Religious Poverty', pp.457-483; Rosenwein and Little, 'Social Meaning', p.21.



## Chapter Two. 'Bearing Christ, the poor and deprived, in his own body': Becoming Dominican.

[Evrard was] a man of many virtues, energetic in his work and prudent in his counsel; since he was a man of exceptional influence and was widely known in the world, many people were strengthened by the example of his assumption of poverty. [...] In every part of France and Burgundy through which we passed, *he had once been a very renowned man, now he preached, bearing Christ, the poor and deprived, in his own body.*<sup>1</sup>

Jordan of Saxony writes that around the time of the General Chapter of Bologna in 1221, Evrard, the archdeacon of Langres, entered the Dominican Order among the brothers at Paris. Even though Evrard was already a virtuous and prudent man of the Church, Jordan intimates that his entrance into the order produced many changes in his life, both visible and invisible. Exploring the way that poverty is expressed in this passage produces a virtual kaleidoscope of meanings. Even with his brief and straightforward style, Jordan manages to tap into and convey some of the dynamics at play when a religious entered the Order of Preachers and adopted voluntary poverty. One sense of poverty that stands out is the way that Evrard's transformation from the influential and worldly archdeacon to the poor and itinerant preacher had the potential to incite similar transformations in others. Second is the way that poverty established a direct connection with Christ which, more than mimesis or imitation, re-actualised or rather created a new purpose for Evrard.<sup>2</sup> Pre-empting Aquinas's later commentary on the passage, Jordan draws on ideas from II. Cor. 4:10, 'always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies'.<sup>3</sup> In this framework Evrard is at the same time a vessel in which a union with Christ is forged and articulated and an exemplar for others to gaze and reflect upon to produce their own

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<sup>1</sup> My italics. Jordan, *Lib.*, 89-90: 'Intravit autem tunc temporis apud Parisius frater Evrardus archidiaconus Lingoniensis, vir multarum virtutem, opere strenuus, consilio providus; qui cum esset auctoritatis eximie, quanto latius fuerat notus in seculo, tanto plures assumpte paupertatis edificavit exemplo. (90)[...] et per omnes partes Gallie et Burgundie quas mecum peregravit, in quibus ipse fuerat aliquando notissimus, Christum egenum et pauperem, in corpore suo circumferens, predicabat.'

<sup>2</sup> On the difference between the imitation and the following of Christ: Walter J. Ong, 'Mimesis and the Following of Christ', *Religion and Literature*, 26, 1994, 73-77.

<sup>3</sup> Aquinas, *Super II Epistolem ad Corinthios lectura*, trans. Fabian Larcher, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/SS2Cor.htm#43>, accessed 13/06/2017. See also the sermon of Ivo of Chartres, 'Sermon II de purificatione S. Mariae', in *PL*, clxii, 576bc.

charismatic 'union' with Christ. Drawing on the ideas reflected in this passage, this chapter investigate the way that Jordan of Saxony articulated and constructed in his various writings the processes and relationships that are created through the Dominican religious' assumption of poverty.

The atmosphere in which Jordan came to write of Evrards's conversion to the order was informed by the issues that proliferated around his attempts to reconcile the charismatic energy of the order's early ministry with its traditionally defined roles in the Church. While up until the 1230s, Jordan had been content to continue the order's resolute advancement into the universities, issues that manifested in the context of the religious revival movement of the Alleluia drew attention to the lack of exemplary narratives to support recruitment and proper practice. Significantly, pressures surfaced in relation to the authority of the Dominican preachers and the way it was being exercised. The narrative that Jordan accordingly produced was consequently subject to tensions between the charismatic and the institutional. Poverty was a constituent part of the authority on which the Dominican *vitae forma* and preaching ministry was based through its inextricable institutional, performative and spiritual relationship to Christ. While the Constitutions offered the order systemic coherence in the way that it subordinated all ideological claims and tensions to the order's preaching ministry, it did not resolve the issues that proliferated around the duality of the preacher as they negotiated the roles of prophet and priest.

In this chapter, I focus on the way that Jordan positions poverty at the centre of mutually authorising relationships between the friar or sister and the Trinity. In these relationships the aspects of poverty, which are understood solely in terms of material possessions and property, are decentred. As I demonstrate, Jordan constructs the adoption of voluntary poverty by Dominican religious as a wide-ranging, evolving process that involved the establishment and maintenance of a series of relationships that operated between and within temporal and spiritual spheres. This process resulted in the management of the friar or sister's physical appearance, behaviours and speech, as well as the performance and understanding of their own spirituality and relationships with God, their fellow Dominicans and the laity among whom they ministered. Even though mendicant poverty was constructed within and shaped by an ever-developing and complex economic and academic milieu (and of course this context cannot be ignored entirely), de-centring the economic and juridical contexts in this

present chapter allows for a more nuanced and wide-ranging understanding of Dominican poverty to develop. Rather than focussing on the details that Jordan and others provide for the order's constitutional assumption of poverty through regulations or the specific attitudes towards poverty found in the sources, I instead explore the different meanings that Jordan attributed to poverty and the effects that this had on broader narratives. As well as probing the letters Jordan wrote, I again utilise his *Libellus*. Jordan's writings, as I continue to demonstrate, recorded patterns of behaviours, forms of acting and examples of gestures and physical affectations. In doing so, he was able to provide a clear, but flexible, framework for poverty for the order going forward.

To delineate Jordan's approach to poverty, this chapter comprises three sections. The first explores the role played by Christ in the spirituality of the early-order as represented by Jordan. Christ is critical not only in the development of the conception and performance of poverty but to understanding the basis on which the 'original synthesis' between poverty, charity and humility, expressed later in Dominic's 'testament', was able to develop. The second surveys the concepts through which Jordan established Dominic's relationship to Christ. Specifically, I analyse Jordan's use of light imagery in the *Libellus* and the way it intersects with and expresses a charismatic authority that is comparable to Christ's. The final section, turns to the role of poverty in the formation of the Dominican religious as 'disciples of Christ.' I examine how poverty derives and attributes meaning in the experience of becoming Dominican in Jordan's narratives on the early brothers.

### *Imitatio Christi*

The *imitatio Christi* was central to Christian religious life from its beginnings. The Christian community responded to biblical precepts such as Matthew 19:21: 'if you would be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me', Luke 14:33: 'every one of you that does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be my disciple' and I Cor. 11:1: 'follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.' From Late Antiquity to the high medieval period a wide range of concepts, practices and interpretations were indicated in the phrases 'the imitation of Christ', 'to follow Christ' and



‘conforming to Christ’.<sup>4</sup> The use and application of these concepts were necessarily varied according to time, context and the personal stresses placed by interlocutors.<sup>5</sup>

Giles Constable draws out three principal areas of the *imitatio Christi* as it was performed in the medieval period: imitation of his divinity, imitation of his humanity and imitation of his body. In a nutshell, divinity related to Christ’s role as saviour, orientated by themes of resurrection in a process of imitation whereby, as Ambrose wrote, ‘you may rise again in His form and may live in the figure of Him who was crucified for sin and lives for God’.<sup>6</sup> Imitation of Christ’s humanity zeroed in on the minutia of his Incarnation; religious simulated not only his practices but also his behaviour, attitudes and appearance. The imitation of Christ’s body, as Constable argues, was embedded within his divinity and his humanity ‘since the passion and the crucifixion were the essential preparations of the Resurrection and thus set an example for all Christians.’<sup>7</sup> As I elaborate later in this thesis, certain parties generally conceived of as mystics both within and outside the Dominican Order performed an imitation of Christ’s wounds, particularising his body in ways that, as Karma Lochrie states, were ‘frighteningly literal’.<sup>8</sup> Constable’s analysis makes clear that each of the three general concepts were appropriated, publicised and adhered to, performed and interpreted, according to the needs of the moment: ‘As the Middle Ages progressed the term *imitatio Christi*, like *vita apostolica* and *paupertas*, took on new meanings without entirely losing its

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<sup>4</sup> Ong, ‘Mimesis and the Following of Christ’.

<sup>5</sup> Giles Constable produced a wide-ranging analysis of the *imitatio Christi* from Late Antiquity to the late medieval period: ‘The Imitation of Christ’, in *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp.143-248. See also: Sarah Beckwith, *Christ’s Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings*, London: Taylor and Francis, 1996; *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans*, ed. by Kent Emery and Joseph Peter Wawrykow, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998; for a discussion of how the mendicants performed an *imitatio* of Mary Magdalen: Katherine L. Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Constable, ‘The Imitation of Christ’, p.155, cites: Ambrose, *De sacramentis*, ed. by Henry Chadwick, London: Mowbray, 1960, p.47.

<sup>7</sup> Constable, ‘The Imitation of Christ’, p.194.

<sup>8</sup> Karma Lochrie, ‘The Language of Transgression: Body, Flesh, and Word in Mystical Discourse’, in *Speaking Two Languages: Traditional Disciplines and Contemporary Theory in Medieval Studies*, ed. by Allen J. Frantzen, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991, pp.115-140, at p.116. Much of the modern scholarship on the imitation of Christ’s body has been conducted in the context of female mysticism, see also: Carolyn Walker Bynum, ‘Women Mystics and Eucharistic Devotion in the Thirteenth Century’, *Women’s Studies*, 11, 1984, 179-214; Karma Lochrie, *Margery Kempe: Translations of the Flesh*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991; Molly Morrison, ‘Ingesting Bodily filth: Defilement in the Spirituality of Angela of Foligno’, *Romance Quarterly*, 50, 2003, 204-216.

old ones, and it would be impossible to know exactly when it lost one meaning and assumed another.<sup>9</sup>

Many factors were at stake in the imitation of Christ among the religious in the medieval west. Broad patterns emerge in alignment with shifting attitudes towards, or stresses laid upon, the importance of Christ's humanity as opposed to his 'superhuman qualities' or the aspects of his Incarnation that were to lead to the deification of man.<sup>10</sup> While the majority of these issues were worked out on a theological level, they informed not only religious ritual and performance but also material depictions of Christ in art and text.<sup>11</sup> Interpretations related to the roles that Christ assumed or invoked in his Incarnation, as well as to the forms that the imitation or modelling took on. Accordingly, Constable writes that '[s]uffering, love, obedience, poverty, and humility are human qualities, and it is often unclear whether they were praised as moral virtues which were of value in themselves or as the steps through which Christ went, as must His followers, in order to achieve eternal life.'<sup>12</sup> Instability plagued the concept of '*imitatio*' itself and he continues that 'the concepts of accompanying, following and imitating Christ tended to overlap as time went on.'<sup>13</sup> Clarity was not just an issue for the meaning, purpose and performance of the *imitatio Christi* in the early Church but also in the context of the mendicant movement more generally.

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<sup>9</sup> Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.146.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pp.147-168, (quoting: Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933). Constable traces the third century scholar Origen's influence not only on the fourth century desert fathers but also in the developments occurring in the twelfth century: 'For Origen imitation was essentially participation, and Christ was above all the "mediator of the mystical union of the soul with the hidden God"': Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.152, quoting Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition from the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, transl., J.S. Bowden, New York, 1965, p.16); see also, pp.170-171.

<sup>11</sup> Constable notes that Christ continued to be depicted wearing a royal crown until the thirteenth century when it was replaced by the crown of thorns, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.164; see generally: Joanna Cannon, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches: Art in the Dominican Churches of Central Italy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013; Trinita Kennedy, ed., *Sanctity Pictured: The Art of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders in Renaissance Italy*, Nashville: First Center for the Visual Arts, 2014, in particular, Holly Flora, 'Order, Gender, and Image: Art for Dominican and Franciscan Women', pp.63-76.

<sup>12</sup> Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.147.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 155. Constable quotes a sermon of Ivo of Chartres: 'innocence bears this image [of God], as does justice, truth, chastity, sobriety, and all honesty. For just as we have carried the image of the earthy, we shall also carry the image of the heavenly': Ivo of Chartres, Sermon. 11 'de purificatione s. Mariae', in *PL*. clxii, 576BC: Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.166.

A major shift in the place afforded to Christ's humanity in the spiritual landscape occurred in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This impacted not only the *why* and *what* of the imitation, following or obeying of Christ but also diversified the patterns of behaviour and practices by which it was accompanied.<sup>14</sup> Sarah Beckwith argues that along with the revision of the role of the body in religious performance, there 'was a new appreciation and re-evaluation of the role of experience, affectivity and emotion'.<sup>15</sup> The profound changes in the conceptions of the body that impacted in the *imitatio Christi* were integral to both the origins and purpose of the mendicant movement in both institutional and charismatic capacities.<sup>16</sup> From the eleventh century, itinerant preachers began to eschew traditional authorisation within the church and took it upon themselves to 'follow Christ'; a mandate that was subject to a variety of interpretations, many of which transgressed the boundaries that the Church hurried to establish.<sup>17</sup> At the same time impetus often came from within established religious communities.<sup>18</sup> Men and women alike sought to adopt the practices of Christ and the Apostles in order to recreate his ministry and the eleventh and twelfth centuries saw significant contestation over the interpretation of Christ's life and message.<sup>19</sup> Conflict was not only caused by the differences in the performances of the imitation, such as the issue of whether or not Christ allowed his followers to carry a money bag for their essential needs which became pertinent in the controversies of the thirteenth century, but also in questions related to the concepts of *imitatio* and *sequela* themselves, and the level of literality required to enact their inherent precepts.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', p.169; Beckwith, *Christ's Body*, pp.1-6.

<sup>15</sup> Beckwith, *Christ's Body*, pp.49-50.

<sup>16</sup> The development of the *vita apostolica* and the various forerunners to the thirteenth-century mendicant orders have been well documented in modern scholarship, see generally: Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars*, pp.40-88; Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen*, pp.49-99.

<sup>17</sup> Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, esp. pp.7-30; Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, pp.37-52.; Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', pp.182-83; Mews, 'Apostolic ideals'.

<sup>18</sup> On the *imitatio Christi* and the founding of the Premonstratensian Order: *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality*, ed. by Theolodore J. Antry and Carol Neel, New York: Paulist Press, 2007.

<sup>19</sup> See: Flora, 'Order, Gender, and Image'; Ewert Cousins, 'The Humanity and Passion of Christ', in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. by Jill Rait with Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff, New York: Crossroad, 1997, pp.375-391.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Karris, 'The Place of the Money Bag in the Secular-Mendicant Controversy at Paris', *Franciscan Studies*, 68, 2010, 21-38.

These sorts of questions and issues of interpretation found their most virulent form within the ranks of the mendicant movement. While at a fundamental level mendicant ideologies and practices were born in the context of ‘economic revolution’, equally important was the intense scrutiny of Christ’s humanity and the preoccupation with recreating his practices, behaviours and purpose for their own times and contexts. While the Franciscans are renowned for their literality, the boundaries of the engagement of the early-Preachers with the *imitatio Christi* are more complicated to map out. Simon Tugwell argues that although ‘the intellectual element was important’, it should not be forgotten that the imitation of Christ was pivotal to the order’s beginnings in the context of the preaching against the Cathars, and, through his experiences in this capacity, ‘Dominic retained a devotion to poverty that was almost as extreme as that of Saint Francis.’<sup>21</sup> Indicative of this is the way that Jordan embeds the *imitatio Christi* in the very creation of the order’s way of life through his narrative on Diego:

[Diego’s] love clung totally to God *that he renounced himself, seeking only that which is Christ’s*, turning his mind and will especially to this, as if he had been made a money-lender of many souls he would carry back to his master the talent credited to him with multiple interest. Therefore, he bustled about, searching wherever he could, to attract to himself by any means, men with honest, praiseworthy lives and characters and to give them benefices in the church over which he presided.<sup>22</sup>

Jordan’s decision to situate the origins of many of the order’s major precepts in the figure of Diego has caused consternation among modern scholars due to the way that Dominic’s role is seemingly de-centred.<sup>23</sup> Yet, as I argued in the previous chapter, his approach is very much in keeping with (and probably provided the pattern for) the Dominicans’ predilection for establishing long, authoritative ‘genealogies’ for their fundamental ideologies and practices.

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<sup>21</sup> Tugwell, ‘Dominican Spirituality’, pp.18-19.

<sup>22</sup> My emphasis. Jordan, *Lib.*, 4, p.27: ‘Huius amor sic Deo totus inheserat, ut seipsum abiicens et sola, que Iesu Christi sunt, querens ad id summopere animum intentionemque converteret, qualiter multarem animarum fenerator effectus talentum sibi creditum cum usura multiplici suo domino repararet. Satagebat igitur, ubicunque perscrutari posset, viros honestate vite moribusque laudabiles sibi modis quibus valebat attrahere et in ecclesia, cui preerat, beneficiando locare.’ My thanks to Elisabeth Rolston for her assistance with this translation.

<sup>23</sup> Equally demonstrative is the passage in which Diego advises the preaching in poverty in imitation of Christ and the Apostles, discussed in chapter one of this thesis and below. For an overview of the negative scholarly interpretations, see the discussion in Brooke, ‘St. Dominic’, esp. pp. 23-25, 40.

While the reference to Christ might at first glance appear rather innocuous, Jordan's text was crafted with purpose and intent. Indeed, in the previous chapter, I referenced this passage to demonstrate the way that Jordan masterfully balanced institutional and charismatic forms of authority. In this regard, Diego is at the same time a nascent progenitor to the way of life and *imitatio Christi et Apostolorum* that would be fully realised later in the form of Dominic, and he is a representational figure of the 'old' forms of constructing authority that are about to become subverted by apostolic poverty. This is indicated by the way that Diego sought to tie anyone with potential into a fixed role through the giving of benefices within his bishopric thereby indicating his deep embeddedness in the forms of authorisation of the institutional Church. It might be possible to view Diego as a John the Baptist-type figure to Dominic's Christ.<sup>24</sup> The passage serves a narrative function to orientate the history that follows firmly within the prevailing economic contexts, as the comparison of Diego with *generator* (money-lender) illustrates, a point to which I return in the following chapter. It is also indicative of the way that the order's relationship to Christ was, from its roots, predicated by theological, charismatic and institutional imperatives.

The genesis of the order that Dominic would eventually establish was to be found in Diego's speech at Montpellier: to preach against heresy in the poverty of Christ and the Apostles.<sup>25</sup> This episode provides the most literal example of the *imitatio Christi* in Jordan's *Libellus*. The form of imitation that Jordan attributes to Diego established the Dominican preaching style as highly-observant and responsive to immediate needs and circumstances as well as being grounded firmly within a life dedicated to Christ and the salvation of man.<sup>26</sup> To combat the *imitatio Christi* being performed (falsely) by the heretics, orthodox preachers needed to (truly) perform their own. The novelty of the situation demanded a mandate that was at the same time institutional and charismatic, thus the *imitatio Christi* was integral to the preachers' successes and their longevity. Constantine of Orvieto, writing some ten years after Jordan, nuances the events that followed the council of Montpellier. He is decidedly more

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<sup>24</sup> On the way that the prologues to the life of Saint Dominic, found in Ferrand, Constantine, Humbert and Dietrich, position Dominic in a John the Baptist role for Christ's second coming: Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.136.

<sup>25</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 20, pp.36-37.

<sup>26</sup> Peter of Les Vauz-de-Cernay states that initially Diego had advised the Cistercian preachers what to do, and it was after they revealed their reluctance to take such action without an authoritative example to follow, that he offered himself: *Hystoria Albigensis*, I, p.21.

explicit than Jordan in aligning preaching in poverty with the *imitatio Christi*. He also reiterates the importance of performing what they preach: ‘so that [...] what the mouth puts forth, is confirmed in the merits of life, [...] they began to preach the poor Christ, equally poor and on foot.’ Constantine is careful to diversify the exemplars to include ‘the heralds of the faith of Christ that have gone before’; suggesting that, even ten years after Jordan’s *Libellus* was produced, similar tensions still existed in relation to the charismatic basis of their preaching vocation.

The remaining references to Christ and his role in the development of the order’s spirituality and preaching vocation in the *Libellus* are relatively oblique but illuminating nonetheless. The key passage that illustrates Dominic’s relationship to Christ appears in the section in which Jordan established Dominic’s credentials in a way that balances the preceding discussion in which he had already authenticated Diego.<sup>27</sup> Jordan writes of Dominic’s special prayer to be granted true charity in order to be able to devote himself entirely to the winning of souls, ‘just as the saviour of all, the Lord Jesus had offered himself totally for our salvation’.<sup>28</sup>

While Jordan did not use verbs like *imitare*, *sequere* or *conformare*, the implication is nevertheless clear through the inclusion of the adverb *sicut*. In devoting himself entirely to salvation, Jordan aligned Dominic’s ‘sacrifice’ with that of Christ to make of the founder a living embodiment of charity. Directly following this sentence, Jordan relates how Cassian’s fifth-century text *Conferences of the Fathers* was pivotal to Dominic’s understanding of the ‘ways of salvation’, which he in turn ‘followed with all the power of his mind.’<sup>29</sup> The inclusion of the reference to the Desert Fathers, comparable to that made by Constantine to the ‘heralds of Christ’, has the effect of clarifying the terms of Dominic’s *imitatio*. In contrast to the way that Francis sought to literally reproduce only Christ’s practices, behaviours and performances, Dominic is revealed to be a follower of Christ, in the sense that he participates

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<sup>27</sup> See Chapter One. While older historiographical traditions have criticised Jordan’s decision to discuss Diego before Dominic, establishing Diego’s credentials first in no way undermines Dominic or his role in the formation of the order. Van Engen agrees, arguing that Jordan put Dominic forward as the paradigmatic exemplar: ‘Dominic and the Brothers’, p.12.

<sup>28</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 13, p.32: ‘sicut salvator omnium dominus Iesus totum se nostram obtulit in salutem.’

<sup>29</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 13, pp.32-33; for the influence of the desert fathers on Dominican spirituality: Williams-Krapp, “‘Nucleus totius perfectionis’: Die Altväterspiritualität in der ‘Vita’ Heinrich Seuses’ in *Festschrift Walter Haug und Burghart Wachinger*, ed. by J. Janota, 2 vols., Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992, I, 405-21; see also Chapter Six of this thesis.

in Christ's overall mission, but his devotional and pastoral style is drawn from multiple authoritative exemplars.<sup>30</sup> Walter Ong argues: '[b]y "following" Christ, a person participates in the life of Jesus not simply by replicating the historical life of Christ, but by entering into his or her own life so as to make it an extension of Christ's life.'<sup>31</sup> This point gets to the crux of Dominic's *imitatio Christi* as it is presented by Jordan of Saxony. Even though Christ, as a model, is mentioned specifically by name only a handful of times throughout the *Libellus*, Jordan extrapolates aspects of his story and purpose for the thirteenth-century world, in a way that diversifies the interpretation, construction and expression of the early Friars Preachers' relationship to the principal exemplar as more than mimesis.<sup>32</sup>

Tugwell argues that the Dominicans 'rapidly lose interest in the details of Luke 10', the text on which the Friars Minors' way of life was ostensibly predicated.<sup>33</sup> Tugwell's comments relate to the different emphases placed by the two orders in their conceptions of poverty and interpretation of the apostolic life. Whereas the Franciscans attempted to hold fast to the Gospel's instruction to take no purse nor shoes, the Dominicans placed more emphasis on the delineation and embodiment of the broader concepts in the passage such as discipleship and harvesting souls, which they, in turn, glossed according to their specific needs and purposes.<sup>34</sup> Jordan's writing demonstrates a firm desire to depict broader concepts and aims over the inclusion of detailed and highly imitable narrative that defines not only his approach to the *imitatio Christi* but also many other aspects of the *Libellus*.

As indicated above, salvation and charity are the most obvious of the Christ-like attributes that Jordan has Dominic embodying: '[f]or his part, brother Dominic, with all his energy and

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<sup>30</sup> Malcolm Lambert argues in fact that the major difference between Francis and the movements that preceded him in the twelfth century was that Francis aimed to recreate the life of Christ while others attempted to live as the apostles: *Franciscan Poverty*, p.62. Analysing artistic representations of Dominic, Joanna Canon concludes: 'Dominic appears in Dominican art as the agent of Christ, not his imitator': 'Dominic *alter Christus*', p.39

<sup>31</sup> Ong, 'Mimesis and the following of Christ', p.75. See also: Attisani, 'Franciscan Performance'.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Prudlo, *The Martyred Inquisitor: The Life and Cult of Peter of Verona (+1252)*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008, p.97, argues that the Dominicans found their 'alter Christus' in the figure of Peter Martyr. Due to the manner of his death at the hands of Cathar heretics they could represent him 'as a singular and matchless imitator of Christ himself.'

<sup>33</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.19.

<sup>34</sup> Luke 10.1-4. Jordan's favourite metaphor for the work of the order indeed relates to gardening and the natural world.

with passionate zeal, set himself to win all the souls he could for Christ. His heart was full of an extraordinary, almost incredible, yearning for the salvation of everyone.’ Jordan continues that the two times that Dominic offered to sell himself to alleviate the poverty of others was indicative of the way that he had ‘the greatest form of charity that a man can have, the charity to lay down his life for his friends.’<sup>35</sup> Interspersed in the narrative with charity and salvation, are also other central virtues, attributes, and symbols of Christ’s divinity, humanity and body. While I will return to poverty and humility shortly, Jordan employs a variety of imagery to represent the development of the early order’s relationship to the figure of Christ.

### Jordan’s Use of Light Imagery

A notable device through which Jordan expresses Dominic’s relationship to Christ is with imagery associated with light. Light accrued multi-layered symbolism during the medieval period in both devotional and spiritual senses.<sup>36</sup> It became one of the more important theological symbols in the later-medieval period due to the way that it connotes material and immaterial, interior and exterior relationships and experiences.<sup>37</sup> Driving its use was also the renewed focus on Christ’s humanity. This attention created what Michael O’Connell terms

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<sup>35</sup> Jordan, Lib., 34-35, p.42: [34] ‘Ipse vero totis viribus et zelo ferventissimo satagebat animas, quas posset, lucrifacere Christo; et inerat cordi eius mira et pene incredibilis salutis omnium emulatio. [35] Nec certe deerat ei caritas, qua maiorem nemo habet, ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis.’ Translation Tugwell, *On the Begginings*, p.9.

<sup>36</sup> See: *On Light*, ed. by K. P. Clarke and Sarah Baccianti, Oxford: The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 2014. For another use of light imagery in a Dominican context: Mechthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, transl. by Frank Tobin, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1998. God revealed the title and purpose of the book to Mechthild as ‘a flowing light of my Godhead into all hearts free of hypocrisy’, p.39.

<sup>37</sup> These meanings are reflected in the sermons of Bernard of Clairvaux. Sermon 26 on the Song of Songs states: ‘For the Lord is light; and so far as anyone is not in him, so far he is in darkness.’ In other sermons, Bernard positions God as the inner light and light itself as representing knowledge of God. ‘Sermon five: On the Same as Before’, in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Sermons for the Autumn Season*, transl. by Irene Edmonds, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2016, pp.41-52, at p.47; ‘On the Canticle: We have Received’, in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Sermons for Lent and the Easter Season*, transl. by Irene Edmonds, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2013, pp.3-7, at p. 4. Richard Terry Mount, ‘Ona’s Second Vision and Maria Rosa Lida’s Emendations’, *Critica Hispanica*, 3, 1981, 159-64, at p.160, summarises the meanings of light by the end of the thirteenth century: ‘(1) light is the principle being and excellence; (2) it is the substantial form of the universe that provides it with its continuity; (3) it is the highest and noblest of corporeal things; and (4) it is the principle by which the intellect understands. Everything good is of the nature of light or is light itself. Light takes the form of uncreated spiritual light (God), created spiritual light (the celestial host), intellectual light, and corporeal light.’ On the influence of Pseudo-Dionysian thought on later medieval imagery: Jason Crow, ‘The Sacred Stones of Saint- Denis’, in *Chora Six: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture*, ed. by Alberto Pérez-Goméz and Stephen Parcell, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011, pp.55-74, particularly, pp.60-62



‘an incarnational sense of religious experience’, whereby consumption and comprehension of the spiritual were mediated through ‘forms immediately accessible to human senses and emotions.’<sup>38</sup> In this context, sensory experiences such as light, fragrance, joy and gladness can all be representative of Christ’s presence. O’Connell continues that this is demonstrated in the theology of St. Bonaventure, in which he argues ‘light is the [...] central metaphor for all human knowledge: God is the source of light, himself invisible but becoming visible in the incarnation.’<sup>39</sup>

Jordan uses light imagery seven times during the *Libellus* to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the Dominicans.<sup>40</sup> While the meanings and symbolisms are multi-faceted in each of the references, three broad themes emerge. The most dominant, occurring in three of the references, is the use of light as a demonstration of Dominic’s charisma. The light that shone from him was indicative of the grace and gifts he received from God and through which he attracted attention: ‘Because his innocence of life shone out like the morning star in the midst of the clouds, making everybody marvel at him, his fame reached the Bishop of Osma’;<sup>41</sup> ‘He at once became conspicuous like a brilliant constellation’;<sup>42</sup> and quoting Job 29:24: “the light of his face never fell to the ground.”<sup>43</sup> Jordan diversifies the light imagery, often using astronomical metaphors that emphasise light against the darkness. The grace that God gave to Dominic was thus, to borrow a phrase from O’Connell, ‘incarnated’ as light, and it was unequivocally comprehended as such. Jordan’s use of the concept of light to demonstrate

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<sup>38</sup> Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theatre in Early Modern England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp.46-48.

<sup>39</sup> O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*, p.48. Compare with the meaning of light in the Prologue to the rule of St. Benedict: ‘apertis oculis nostris as deificum lumen’: La Règle de Saint Benoît, ed. by J. Neufville, Paris: Les Éditions du Cert, 1972; Translated in: *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*, ed. by Timothy Fry, O.S.B., Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982.

<sup>40</sup> He also refers to ‘enlightenment’ on several occasions, but these are not demonstrative of a particular relationship to Christ. On Aquinas’s conception of enlightenment as light: Patrick Quinn, ‘Aquinas, the Intellect, and Divine Enlightenment’, in *Christianizing People and Converting Individuals*, ed. by Guyda Armstrong and Ian N. Wood, Turnhout: Brepols, 2000, pp.277-282.

<sup>41</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 11, p.31: ‘inter quos quasi stella matutina in medio nebule per vite innocentiam rutilabat, mirabilis videretur, ad audientiam episcopi Oxomensis ipsius fama pervenit . . .’ Translation Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.2.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 12, p.31: ‘Ille vero confestim inter suos canonicos velut singulare iubar emicuit.’ Translation Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.2.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 103, p.74: ‘lux tamen vultus eius non cadebat in terram.’ Tugwell notes that the gloss on this scripture by Hugh of St. Cher indicates that he ‘never descended to petty worldly concerns’, *On the Beginnings*, n.32, p.32.

and express Dominic's charismatic authority is likely embedded in the push for Dominic's canonisation and the construction of narratives to support his holiness. For all the effusiveness with which he depicts other figures in the *Libellus* such as Diego, Reginald of Orléans and Henry of Cologne, he does not employ it with them. Accordingly, it was a symbol that he reserved for a highly privileged relationship to the divine.<sup>44</sup>

Light imagery is put forward as a symbol of the truth and knowledge of orthodox doctrine in a way that is related to its use as an expression of a charismatic authority that invokes a clear and productive relationship to the divine. Describing Dominic's preaching against the heretics in the Languedoc in the years between Diego's death in 1207 and the formal establishment of the order in 1216, Jordan writes that the heretics were unable to withstand the brilliance of Dominic's light.<sup>45</sup> He continues that while the heretics mocked and tormented Dominic, he nevertheless inspired the Catholic 'faithful' to live more holy lives. Furthermore, Dominic received acclamation from both church officials and powerful lay leaders such as Simon de Montfort, who gave him the castle of Casseneuil to help 'in the work of salvation which he had begun.'<sup>46</sup> On a similar note but with regard to the emerging order itself, Jordan writes that, 'Bishop Fulk of Toulouse, who had a most tender regard for Dominic, the beloved of God and men, seeing the religiosity, grace and fervour in preaching of the brothers, rejoiced at the appearance of this new light.' To show his regard and to support their mission he granted them a portion of the income from his diocese.<sup>47</sup>

Both passages were designed to show the way that important and powerful people responded to Dominic's charisma. The material support that both Simon and Fulk provided fits in with Weber's framework regarding the charismatic's economic support being largely

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<sup>44</sup> By the fourteenth century, the beatified were depicted in manuscripts with rays of light and the canonised with golden halos: Greg Buzwell, *Saints in Medieval Manuscripts*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005, p.25.

<sup>45</sup> *Jordan, Lib.*, 36, p.43: 'Quanto iste bonus erat, tanto nequior illorum oculus sua lippitudine radium lucis eius ferre non poterat.'

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 37, p.43-44: 'comes etiam Montisfortis, qui speciali ipsum devotione fovebat, cum assensu suorum castrum insigne, quod dicitur Cassanuel, dedit ei et suis sequacibus, quicumque ei in officio inchoate salutis assisterent.' Translation Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.10.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 39, p.45: 'At vero episcopus Tholosanus felicis memorie, Fulco nomine, qui tenerrime diligebat dilectum Deo et hominibus fratrem Dominicum, videns eorundem fratrum religionem et gratiam atque in predicatione fervorem, exsultans ad nove lucis exortum . . .' Translation Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.11.

maintained through gifts.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, Jordan's phrasing in each instance reveals that the charismatic authority of Dominic and his developing order was predicated on a careful negotiation of orthodoxy and institutional authorisation along with their novel way of participating in Christ's purpose. Jordan's use of light imagery in these contexts reveals the equal weight that he assigned to both the expression of institutional authorisation and a God-given charismatic authority. Light also establishes a direct link between how the Preachers should perform, with the how and the what of Christ's incarnation by way of light's association to righteousness, grace and a way of life dedicated to charismatic preaching.

Ideas relating to the charismatic, theological and institutional aspects of the Dominicans interpretation of the *sequela Christi* coalesce again in the third theme derived from Jordan's use of light: light as the embodiment of salvation. The first appearance, near the beginning of the text, states that Dominic's mother had a vision while he was still a child in which he appeared with the moon on his forehead:<sup>49</sup> 'signifying that he would one day be given to the world as a light for the nations, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.'<sup>50</sup> Drawing on Isaiah 49:6 and John 8:12, this positions Dominic as a direct agent of salvation, in the manner of Christ himself.<sup>51</sup> This is certainly a powerful use of the light metaphor; not only for the way that Jordan can comment on the prophecy's eventual fulfilment but also for the way that it conforms Dominic to Christ. Light appears again towards the end of the narrative in a brief, somewhat oblique reflection on the way that Dominic's 'virtues' are hardly imitable but instead might provide a path to follow, which in turn might provoke God to grant similar charismatic gifts:

To be able to do what he could, truly is not of human strength but is of a singular grace, unless the Mercy of God having deigned to elevate a similarly virtuous person to the peak of sanctity. But who is sufficient for this? Yet, brothers, let us imitate, as we are able, our father's path,

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<sup>48</sup> Weber, 'Charismatic Authority', p.247

<sup>49</sup> Moon and star are interchangeable in the manuscript tradition: Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, n.5, p.31

<sup>50</sup> Jordan, Lib., 9, p. 30: 'Denique matri sue visione monstratus est velut habens lunam in fronte, quo profecto prefigurabatur dari eum aliquando in lucem gentium, illuminare his, qui in tenebris et in mortis umbra sederent, ut rei postmodum probavit eventus.' Translation Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, p.2.

<sup>51</sup> On the interpretation of Isaiah: Robert Louis Wilken, ed. and transl., *Isaiah Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators*, Grand Rapids and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007; On John chapter 8: Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/John8.htm>. Accessed 24/06/2017.

and let us give thanks to the Redeemer, who has granted to his servants such a remarkable man to lead us along the path we are walking, giving us new birth through him into the clear light of this way of life.<sup>52</sup>

These concluding statements sum up the emphasis Jordan laid on participation over imitation, revealing his vision for the development of his order and its relationship to Christ. Dominic's charismatic authority was God-given and mediated by a holy life; it marked him out as a follower of Christ who participated in the salvation that Christ embodied. At the same time, by demonstrating Dominic's authoritative and productive relationship with the divine through light's multi-valent symbolism, Jordan put forward an image of Dominic for the religious of the Order of Preachers to follow, as Dominic followed Christ.

The *sequela Christi* was at the same time an external and internal impetus that influenced the way that Jordan constructed and purposed his text. He balanced an institutional engagement with Christ, inherited from the order's origins among the canons regular and their adoption of the Rule of St. Augustine, with the novelty of the way of life that grew out of their preaching against the Cathar heresy. His use of light imagery reveals the way that his narrative was orientated toward the construction and expression of the order's myriad connections to Christ's humanity, divinity and body on spiritual and material levels. Jordan generally eschewed precise detailing of Dominic's conformity to Christ in favour of painting a broad, adaptable pathway for his order that, largely orientated inward, began with the love of Christ and, by way of an intuitive following of his way of life, participation in the salvation that he embodied.<sup>53</sup> Thus the order's mission would not be inhibited by the rigid demarcation of patterns of action modelled on those of Christ or even of their founder. This is an indication of Jordan's responsiveness to the particular needs, circumstance and expectations not only

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<sup>52</sup> Jordan, Lib., 109, p.76: 'Posse vero quod ille potuit, non humane virtutis, sed singularis est gratie, nisi quem forte miserans dei bonitas in simile dignata fuerit prerogare sanctitatis fastigium. Sed ad hoc quis idoneus? Immitemur tamen fratres, ut possumus, paterna vestigia, simul et agamus gratias redemptori qui talem in via hac, qua ambulamus, ducem exhibuit servis suis, per eum nos in huius conversationis lucem regenerans.' I have followed Tugwell's translation from 'qui talem': *On the Beginnings*, 109, p.27.

<sup>53</sup> This is arguably a theologically traditional interpretation of the *sequela Christi*, since it aligns closely with the perspective taken by Origen in the third century and transmitted to Jordan probably through the *Vitas Patrum* tradition: Constable, 'The Imitation of Christ', pp.151-53. On the influence of the desert fathers see above n.33.

of the individuals within the order but also of their audiences.<sup>54</sup> While light was not the only symbol that Jordan made use of, (nor even his favourite), it was nevertheless a powerful tool to express his vision of the spiritual and devotional performances and objectives of his order.<sup>55</sup>

The balance that Jordan sought between the spiritual and material is given greater clarity in letters that he wrote to the sisters of the Dominican monastery of Saint Agnes in Bologna, in June or July 1229. Fifty letters from Jordan addressed to sister Diana d'Andalo and the nuns of the monastery of St. Agnes survive.<sup>56</sup> They provide an important source not only to explore the role of the *cura monialium* in the order's formative decades but also to paint a picture of Jordan's spirituality that is often far removed from his institutional and administrative activities. The letters are striking, not only for the less-mitigated access to Jordan, but for the friendship between the friar and the sister that is indicated within them. Diana's introduction to the Friars Preachers and her religious profession to their order occurred at the hands of Saint Dominic.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, it is for her relationship with Dominic's successor that she is now remembered. Jordan's letters to Diana were constructed to fulfil a similar didactic function to that of the *Libellus*. They were likely read out repeatedly and distributed among

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<sup>54</sup> The success of John of Vicenza's preaching in Bologna was likely the way that he preached directly to the most pertinent issues facing Bolognese society; see Chapter One and Thompson, *Revival Preachers*, pp. 52-62. Arguably, Gerard de Frachet's *Vitae Fratrum* constitutes the full realisation of Jordan's aims in the way that it seeks to defend the order's right to exist in the midst of the first onslaught by the secular clerics at Paris by illuminating as many as possible of the wondrous deeds and miracles occurring in the first thirty years of the order's history. At the same time as he offers an abundance of holy exemplars, both biblical and contemporary, he exponentially expands the use of light imagery to demonstrate the holy nature of the friars and their ministry but also to prove their divine right to exist and to participate fully in the salvation process. While a comparative analysis of Gerard and Jordan's use of light imagery would be interesting, it is slightly outside the aims of this current chapter. On the purpose of the *Vitae Fratrum*: Robert A. Sweetman, 'Exempla and the Promotion of Religious Identity: Gerard of Frachet's *Vitae Fratrum*', in *Weapons of Mass Instruction: Secular and Religious Institutions Teaching the World. Proceedings of a St. Michael's College Symposium (25-26 Nov, 2005)*, ed. by Joseph Goering, Francesco Guardiani, Guilio Silano, New York: Legas, 2008, pp.41-50. On the impetus provided by the secular-mendicant dispute on the text's construction: Edward Tracy Brett, *Humbert of Romans: His Life and Views of Thirteenth-Century Society*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984, pp.12-40.

<sup>55</sup> Jordan's favourite metaphors relate to growth and growing such as trees bearing fruit, sowing seeds etc., which I discuss later in this chapter.

<sup>56</sup> Jordan's Letters are edited in: A. Walz, O.P., ed., 'Beati Iordani de Saxonia Epist.', in *MOPH*, 23, Rome, 1951; For an English translation: Gerald Vann, *To Heaven with Diana! A Study of Jordan of Saxony and Diana d'Andalo with a translation of the letters of Jordan*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1960.

<sup>57</sup> Maria Pia Alberzoni, 'Jordan of Saxony and the Monastery of St. Agnese in Bologna', *Franciscan Studies*, 68, 2010, 1-19.

the sisters for meditation and spiritual support.<sup>58</sup> The survival of so many of Jordan's letters is fortunate. They provide an important supplement to the *Libellus* in their development and accentuation of many of his key ideas and images.

One passage provides an excellent example of Jordan's attempts to negotiate spiritual and material devotional objectives through light-imagery. Even though it is relatively long it is worth including in full:

Understanding your willingness for all things and that you have abandoned whatever you were able to abandon for the sake of your love for Jesus Christ, the spouse of your souls, but also that you have laboured faithfully every day, so that you can empty yourselves always more and more and throw your care on the Lord and to cleave to the love of your redeemer, to whom it is good to cleave. Understanding therefore these things about you all, not without gladness in my heart, I give thanks to him, who called you to the state of grace in which you stand, working to will and to perfect as befitting his good will. See to it, dearests, that you do not receive this grace in vain. Because this is a singular gift you have accepted from him, a perfect gift, which originated not from you, but came from above, descending from the father of light, who shined into your heart through grace, calling you into his own wonderful light. Therefore, while you have the light, walk in the light, so that the darkness does not seize you. Walk, I say, in the light of your God.<sup>59</sup>

Reflecting the hierarchy prominent in the pseudo-Dionysian thought on light discussed above, Christ, or rather spiritual marriage and devotion to Christ, is the material relationship through which the sisters access the light of God. Jordan uses light as a metaphor for salvation and a symbol of an experience of God, which are each expressed through grace.

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<sup>58</sup> See: Christian Høgel and Elisabetta Bartoli, eds., *Medieval Letters: between Fiction and Document*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2015, in particular: Walter Ysebaert, 'Medieval Letters and Letter Collections as Historical Sources: Methodological Questions, Reflections, and Research Perspectives', pp.10-62.

<sup>59</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, I, p.3: 'Propterea videns ego proptum animum vestrum per omnia et quod non solum reliquistis amore Iesu Christi, sponsi animarum vestrarum, quidquid pro ipso potuistis relinquere, sed et cotidie fideliter laboratis, qualiter magis semper ac magis exinanire vosmetipsas possitis et iactare cogitatum vestrum in Domino et soli adhaerere vestri redemptoris amori, cui adhaerere bonum est, haec igitur videns de vobis non sine gaudio cordis mei, gratias ago ei, qui vos vocavit in gratiam, in qua statis, operans in vobis et velle et perficere pro bona voluntate. Videte et vos, carissimae, ne in vacuum hanc gratiam recipiatis. Quod tam singulare donum accepistis ab eo, donum perfectum, quod non ex vobis sumpsit initium, sed de sursum venit, descendenda patre luminum, qui in cordibus vestris illuxit per gratiam, vocans vos in admirabile lumen suum. Igitur dum lucem habetis, in luce ambulate, ut non tenebrae vos comprehendant. Amulate, dico, in lumine Dei vestri.'

Written at least four years prior to the *Libellus*, this letter both anticipates and provides deeper contextual insight into the themes and imagery that Jordan attempted to translate into the lives and experience of the early friars. Due to the diverging audiences of the *Libellus*, directed mainly to the preaching friars, and the letters, which were composed as part of Jordan's *cura monialium*, the relationship that is expressed is necessarily different. Whereas Evrard bore the poor and needy Christ in his own body as an indication of his public preaching vocation as well as his spiritual relationship with Christ and which was discernible in his assumption of poverty, the sisters are denied any access to physical expressions of charismatic authority.<sup>60</sup> In this sense, while Jordan habitually used light-imagery as a sign of charismatic authority, in regard to the sisters of St. Agnes light exists as a demonstrable grace, but it is not comparably generative. Due to the sisters' claustration their productiveness was centred on the efficacy of their prayers.<sup>61</sup> Caution must therefore be exercised when using Jordan's letters to women as a supplement to the *Libellus*. It remains, however, that the letters provide access to Jordan's spirituality that is largely unencumbered by his institutional concerns. They also offer a broader view of the way that Jordan was continually preoccupied with delineating the terms and productiveness of the brothers and sisters' varied relationships to the divine.

Jordan uses light imagery in the above passage to great effect, implicating poverty in the giving and receiving of grace and experience of the divine. Two senses of poverty are expressed in this extract which serve to activate the sisters' relationship to Christ. The first is a somewhat oblique reference to material poverty 'you have abandoned whatever you were able to abandon.' Jordan's non-specificity here is predictable for several reasons.

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<sup>60</sup> While his command 'do not receive this grace in vain' might be placed in the context of the priority that Jordan placed on using of divine gifts for others (see Chapt. One), there is very little else within the passage to indicate Jordan's conception of the sisters' broader social purpose or the 'profit' that might be had from their relationships with the divine. John Coakley has written extensively on the relationship between friars and holy women: 'Friars as Confidants of Holy Women in Medieval Dominican Hagiography', in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991, pp.222-46; 'Gender and the Authority of the Friars: The Significance of Holy women for Thirteenth-Century Franciscans and Dominicans', *Church History*, 60, 1991, 445-60; *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> For the role of nuns in the Middle Ages, see the essays collected in: *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* ed. by Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, transl. by Deitlinde Hamburger, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. See also: Brenda Bolton, 'Mulieres Sanctae', in *Women in Medieval Society*, ed. by. Susan Mosher Stuard, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976, pp.141-58.

Fundamentally his ambiguity fits in with his overall programme to maintain flexibility towards the order's fundamental ideologies. It is also an indication of the dissimilarities in performances of poverty by male and female religious, at least from the perspective of the Friars. The unfortunate failure of the Friars to collect or protect Diana's letters to Jordan deprives us of an opportunity to analyse the differences in the expression and conception of poverty between the Dominican Friars and Sisters, and also of the opportunity to discern a potential negotiation between Jordan and Diana over poverty's meaning. Regardless, as women generally had neither land or possessions of their own, their poverty needed to be performed and expressed through symbols that were within their sphere of control.<sup>62</sup> The second reference points to a facet of poverty's conception that would become highly prominent among the so-called 'Dominican mystics' almost a century later: the idea of self-emptying to rely more fully on God's providence. The 'labour' that this involves is presumably the performance of ascetic acts, about which Jordan, later in the same letter, feels compelled to reiterate instructions for moderation. As I explore the links between poverty and ascetic acts more fully in the concluding chapter of this thesis, for now it is important to emphasise the causal link that Jordan posits between the dual performances of poverty and a relationship with the divine. These brief references to poverty indicate that Jordan at least, conceived of and sought to represent poverty as something integral to a union with Christ.

### Creating Disciples in Poverty

While poverty, as the basis for the spiritual authority of the mendicant orders, was a crucial and highly contested issue throughout the thirteenth century, analysis of the ways in which it

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<sup>62</sup> The exception to this was for widows. For example, the Dominican nun Ita von Hoenfels was able to effect a somewhat 'traditional' conversion by renouncing her land and possessions due to her status as a widow. On Ita: David Tinsley, *The Scourge and the Cross: Ascetic mentalities of the Later Middle Ages*, Paris: Peeters, 2010, pp.170-173. The edition of her life in the Oetenback sister-book: Heinrich Zeller-Werdmüller, *Die Stiftung des Klosters Oetenbach und das Leben der seligen Schwestern dasebst*, Zürich: S. Höhr, 1889, pp.237-256. My thanks to Prof. Tinsley for allowing me the use of his translation of Ita's life. On women's renunciation of food: Bynum, *Holy Fast*. For instance, the Dominican penitent Umiliana de Cerchi ripped her wedding sheets to provide alms for the poor, which can be seen consequently as a powerful symbol of the ideological rejection of her marriage and the material comforts that it entailed as well as a social service to her community: Vitus Cortonensis, 'Vitae beatae Humiliana de Cerchis', in *Acta Sanctorum*, May 4, 1685, pp.385-400. For modern studies of Umiliana: Bernard Schlager, 'Foundresses of Franciscan Life: Umiliana Cerchi and Margaret of Cortona', *Viator*, 29, 1998, 141-166; Anne M. Schuchman, 'The Lives of Umiliana de' Cerchi: Representations of Female Sainthood in Thirteenth-Century Florence', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 14, 2011, <http://www.illinoismedieval.org/ems/VOL14/schuchmn.html>. Accessed 15 May 2013.



functioned in Jordan's writings and in his vision for the order is perhaps one of the more underappreciated facets of its history. De-centring both Jordan and the early order in general from their administrative and institutional frameworks and agendas is integral to illuminating this aspect of his key work and enables a more dynamic view of what is typically viewed as a period of pronounced centralisation. Indeed, John Van Engen argues that viewing the Dominican Order through its structures fails to capture the vital energy that resulted in an often innovative and novel style.<sup>63</sup> With the Franciscan Order in particular, poverty has been a lens through which discussions on political issues relating to ownership and rights have often occurred.<sup>64</sup> Medieval mendicants themselves were concerned with the codification and regulation of poverty and what it meant philosophically, theologically and politically. Large-scale debates and conflicts plagued the universities in the late-thirteenth century on these precise issues. Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure and other leading theologians from each of the mendicant orders, all expended a significant amount of energy debating and defining the principles of poverty. These discussions, in turn, provided the context for a number of widespread controversies that plagued the late-medieval Church.<sup>65</sup> Peter Garnsey writes that while commentators could agree that Christ's words on poverty and renunciation and the lifestyle that he embodied based upon those principles provided a model for imitation, '[d]isagreement arose once one got past the generalities and penetrated into the detail.'<sup>66</sup> And as he continues, 'the details mattered', especially as variant interpretations of Christ's poverty could mean death as a heretic.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Van Engen, 'From Canons to Preachers'.

<sup>64</sup> For example: Virpi Mäkinen, *Property Rights in the Late Medieval Discussion on Franciscan Poverty*, Leuven: Peeters, 2001; Janet Coleman, 'Using, not owning-duties, not rights: the consequences of some Franciscan perspectives on politics', in *Defenders and Critics of Franciscan Life: Essays in Honour of John V. Fleming*, Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp.65-84.

<sup>65</sup> For instance, Aquinas's *Contra Impugnantes* and Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum* were written during the dispute with the seculars and the scandals that were caused by radical interpretations of the theologies of the twelfth-century Abbot, Joachim of Fiore: Bernard McGinn 'The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore', *Church History*, 40, 1971, 30-47. See more recently: Sven Grosse, 'Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, and the Critiques of Joachimist Topics from the Fourth Lateran Council to Dante', in *A Companion to Joachim of Fiore*, ed. by Matthias Riedl, Leiden: Brill, 2018, pp.144-189.

<sup>66</sup> Peter Garnsey, *Thinking About Property: From Antiquity to the Age of Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.85.

<sup>67</sup> As chronicler and Franciscan radical, Angelo Clareno reported, four Franciscans were burned at the stake in Marseille in 1318 for opposing papal stipulations regarding the storage of wheat and wine. Franciscan Spirituals, the group to whom Clareno and the victims belonged, argued that Saint Francis had specified that storage of goods undermined religious poverty and they stood out against the Church that would sanction this

In writing the *Libellus*, Jordan pointed to duplicatable pathways for the Dominican religious to negotiate authority and authorisation within their preaching and pastoral performances. He constructed a narrative that addressed theological and doctrinal imperatives by drawing on institutional traditions. His narrative clarified the basis of the Dominicans' charismatic authority to reconfigure Christ's preaching and poverty for their own circumstances. There are numerous indications in the text that Jordan actively sought to cast Dominic in a Christ-like role. The positioning of Diego as a forerunner to the Saint in the manner of John the Baptist, his use of light imagery that, in both subtle and obvious ways, aligned Dominic's work and mission with that of Christ and, as I now turn to, the way that he put forward imitable 'disciples'. While each of the early preachers included in the narrative possessed and exercised a rare charisma, it was generally constructed and connected in some way to Christ through poverty. The framework of poverty that Jordan expressed in his writings had many possibilities which were connected to the inner disposition of the subject and to their authority to act in the salvation process, as well as to their emotions and outward behaviours. The material conditions of Dominican poverty, the state of living in poverty or the creation and observance of the principles of Dominican poverty make only brief appearances in Jordan's *Libellus*. For instance, when he discusses the donations made to Dominic by Simon de Montfort, Jordan is careful to note that the order itself had not yet been founded and the constitutions relating to properties had not been implemented.<sup>68</sup> At another point he comments on the way that the first brothers sent to Bologna lived in dire poverty.<sup>69</sup> These lacklustre references would seem to indicate that poverty was not, in fact, important to Jordan or the early order after Dominic's death. Yet, the way that he approaches poverty in other contexts suggests that this was not the case.

In a letter addressed specifically to his spiritual daughter Diana, at the convent of Saint-Agnes, Jordan transmits the meaning that he attributes to *paupertas spiritus*, poverty of the spirit.

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practice among the Minors: Angelo Clarenò, *Liber Chronicarum sive Historiae septem tribulationum ordinis minorum*, ed. by G. Rossini, Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1999, p.433.

<sup>68</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 37, p.44: 'necdum enim Ordo Predicatorum fuerat institutus, sed solum de ordinis institutione fuerat tractatum, quamvis ipse pro viribus officio predicationis insisteret. Nec illa postmodum edita constitutio servabatur, ut nec recipere possessiones nec receptas iam retinere liceret.'

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*, 55, p.51: 'qui moram facientes Bononie magnam perpessi sunt ibidem paupertatis angustiam.'

Diana's assumption of poverty is expressed as a contract between her and Christ and as a conceptual inversion of contemporary social and economic understandings of poverty:

You have despised the kingdom of the world and all temporal embellishments, because of love of Jesus Christ, your beloved spouse and you have chosen and received his poverty; therefore, you will live in his halls and you will fill to overflowing in the goods of his house. But what do I speak of? Is it poverty you have received? On the contrary you have abandoned it and have chosen riches: for the poverty of Christ is voluntary (willed). This is poverty of the spirit...<sup>70</sup>

Key here is the way in which poverty is not only chosen but *received*, seemingly as part of the contract. Jordan gives the impression that Christ's poverty, once chosen and received by the brother or sister, will be transformed into an abundance of grace. Exemplifying the way that pseudo-Dionysian thought is deeply embedded in his theology, this grace fills and flows out of (*repleberis/abundas*) the body. Again, Jordan traverses the relationship between the material and the spiritual. In the context of the nuns that he counsels, poverty is not expressed or understood materially. The phrase despising 'the kingdom of the world and all temporal embellishments' suggests that for women poverty is mainly a conceptual shift manifested in their attitude toward the world and embodied in their decision to profess their vows as Dominican nuns.

Jordan's words to Diana demonstrate that poverty, as both an inner disposition and a material condition, influenced the self-perception of the religious in their relationships with and through Christ, as well as the specific and often personal forms of acting that are articulated in the *Libellus* for the male religious. Providing the linguistic and conceptual basis for Jordan's understanding of poverty is likely to be II Corinthians 8.9: 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich he became poor for your sakes: that through his poverty you might be rich.'<sup>71</sup> In this passage grace is linked with poverty, and the metaphor of poverty as heavenly riches is established. These two ideas are significant to Jordan's view of the meaning

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<sup>70</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, xvii: 'Regnum mundi et omnem ornatum saeculi propter amorem Iesu Christi dilecti sponsi tui contempsisti et paupertatem illius elegisti et assumpsisti et ideo habitatis in atriis eius et repleberis in bonis domus illius. Sed quid dico? Numquid paupertatem assumpsisti? Immo abiecasti, et divitias elegisti: Christi enim paupertas voluntaria est. Haec est paupertas spiritus . . .'

<sup>71</sup> 2 Cor.8.9: 'scitis enim gratiam Domini nostri Iesu Christi quoniam propter vos egenus factus est cum esset dives ut illius inopia vos divites essetis.'

and purpose of voluntary poverty, as well as the way that the passage alludes to poverty's role in the salvation process.

Jordan's narrative is generally directed towards delineating poverty's results and benefits. Poverty is prominent in his attempts to establish and highlight the relationships of the Dominican religious to Christ, as well as in the order's role in achieving the salvation of Christendom. Even though the words that he chooses are brief and ostensibly straightforward, the processes that he describes are relatively complex. In the passage on brother Evrard, with which this chapter began, Jordan's language implies that Evrard's authority only became charismatic through his assumption of poverty. While he was famous and well-known before, preaching Christ in word and deed added a new dimension to his authority. Jordan suggests that the moment of taking the vow of poverty established an instant and observable connection with Christ. The assumption of voluntary poverty was then a socially, culturally and politically transformative moment for the person adopting it. Poverty removed the taint of secular values from Evrard's reputation, or perhaps washed the worldly connotations from certain virtues and infused them with the power to influence others. This conversion itself had transformative power in the witnessing of it, since it could further the spiritual and intellectual progress (*edificavit*) of others.

Jordan's phrasing suggests that rather than being a container for his renown and influence, on his entrance into the Dominican Order Evrard's body became a receptacle for the poor and needy Christ. This was communicated in his appearance and in the words that he preached. His (charismatic) authority to act in the salvation process consequently shared a similar embodied basis as that of Christ. Even if the 'details' or material realities of poverty were not exactly the same as those of Christ, by conceiving of it in spiritual (and sometimes metaphorical) terms, Jordan was able to create a pathway whereby poverty could transcend the things that attempted to anchor it to the material world. The religious possessing poverty is authorised by the factors implied in II Corinthians 8.9, since they imitate Christ's forms of acting while they share (or seek to share) in Christ's defining grace. The mendicant's assumption and continued performance of voluntary poverty, within an institutionally authorised order, plays an important part in the process of authorising poverty's role in salvation.

Providing further insight into poverty's multifaceted roles in the process of 'becoming' Dominican is Jordan's description of Reginald, the dean of St Aignan in Orléans.<sup>72</sup> In the lengthy extract that Jordan devotes to Reginald, poverty is linked to Reginald's decision to enter the Dominican Order but also seems to provide the authoritative basis for his preaching that would ultimately give Jordan himself a final push towards the order. Reginald, the well-respected, learned and prominent cleric, had been struck by a serious illness as he was visiting Rome. There at the same time, Dominic visited him several times to recruit him for his order. After making a vow to Dominic that he would join him, Reginald was visited by the Virgin Mary, who readied him for his entrance into the order and for his new preaching role by anointing his body with oil.<sup>73</sup> Reginald recovered immediately and fully and became one of the Dominicans' leading preachers. Jordan states that Reginald preached first at Bologna where he had the whole of the city in ferment at his preaching and recruited a considerable number of friars to the order. Of his role at the convent of St Nicolas at Bologna, Jordan writes that 'he nourished into disciples of Christ, with care and diligence, a large community of friars.'<sup>74</sup>

Establishing a relationship to the authority of Christ (and to his humanity) in word and deed was perhaps the most critical aspect of the mendicant movement. And within this context, there are several aspects of Jordan's phrasing in his narration of Reginald's conversion to the order that are striking. First is the way that he describes the assumption of poverty. Very literally *et exhortans eum ad paupertatem Christi et ordinis sui consortium liberum et plenus ab eo suscipiende religionis huius consensum elicuit ita, ut se voto astringeret*<sup>75</sup> translates as: 'Exhorting him [Reginald] towards the poverty of Christ and membership in his own order, he [Dominic] elicited such a full and unrestricted agreement from him to take up their way of life, that he obliged himself with a vow.' *Ad paupertatem Christi et ordinis sui consortium*

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<sup>72</sup> On later emendations/alterations to Reginald's story: Tugwell, *Bernardus Guidonis*, pp. 209-27; On Reginald's vision: Cordelia Warr, 'Religious Habits and Visual Propaganda: The Vision of Blessed Reginald of Orleans', *Journal of Medieval History*, 28, 2002, 43-72.

<sup>73</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 56, pp.51-52: 'Hic igitur cum venisset Romam, gravi infirmitate corripitur; ad quem magister Dominicus aliquotiens, ut eum visitaret, advenit, et exhortans eum ad paupertatem Christi et ordinis sui consortium liberum et plenus ab eo suscipiende religionis huius consensum elicuit ita, ut se voto astringeret.'

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, 60, p.53: 'Apud sanctum Nicolaum magnum invenit fratrum collegium, quos sub disciplina Christi fratris Reginaldi cura diligentia nutriebat.'

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 56, p.51.

could however be interpreted in a different way.<sup>76</sup> Because *consortium* has a variety of meanings related to joint ownership, citizenship and membership,<sup>77</sup> poverty becomes the condition that is held in common among the brothers and between the brothers and Christ. The link between the order's poverty and Christ is a basis of authority which initiates the transformation of the nature and efficacy of Reginald's preaching from a well-respected, prominent teacher of canon law to a preacher that sets cities and hearts on fire.

The second element of interest in the passage is the phrase *quos sub disciplina Christi fratris Reginaldi cura diligentia nutriebat*: 'whom the attentive care of Brother Reginald nourished into disciples of Christ'. I follow Tugwell in interpreting *disciplina* as 'disciples' as the process that Jordan describes is meant to culminate in the creation of disciples of Christ through the use or imitation of the disciplines of Christ. As some scholars have pointed out, 'discipleship' seems to be a key concept through which the Dominicans conceived of and expressed their way of life.<sup>78</sup> It is also possible that *sub disciplina Christi* refers to poverty as this was a primary aspect to Christ's own disciplines but also one (among others) that he shared in common with his disciples. Regardless of the exact interpretation, poverty is crucial as a spiritual and material transformative tool. Poverty becomes a medium through which Reginald encounters the authority of Christ, both literally and metaphorically. Literally, Reginald is put on the pathway of discipleship through a material and spiritual assumption of poverty. The idea of submission reflected in the phrase *sub disciplina* is suggestive of the submission of will to which Jordan referred in his letter to the nuns of St. Agnes.<sup>79</sup> In a metaphorical sense, poverty very rarely refers to lack or need. Jordan habitually links poverty with gains or sustenance, even in language related to asceticism or abasement. Furthermore, poverty is generally active since it is put at the service of something, whether that be the perfecting of virtue, preparing

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<sup>76</sup> Tugwell renders the phrase: 'to follow the poverty of Christ and to join his Order', *On the Beginnings*, p.15.

<sup>77</sup> I rely on J.F. Niermeyer and C. Van de Kieft, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*, Leiden, Brill: 2002. On the difficulties of the term: David E. Fellhauer, 'The *Consortium totius vitae* as a Juridicial Element of Marriage', *Studia Canonica*, 13, 3-171.

<sup>78</sup> See: Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, p.8; Otto Langer, "'We ist ein gut wort, we ist ein gnadenreichez wort.' Zur Spiritualität der Dominikanerinnen im Spatmittelalter", in *Lerne Leiden, Leidensbewaltigung in der Mystik*, ed. by Wolfgang Bohme, Karlsruhe: Bohme, 1985, pp.21-34.

<sup>79</sup> I use this word with care to indicate that poverty requires a total physical and spiritual submission to the will of God, but not in the sense employed by critics of charismatic authority, who see it as 'a justification for domination': John Potts, *A History of Charisma*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp.3-4.

for grace or transformation.<sup>80</sup> Jordan's final words in the passage on Reginald distinctly illustrate the fluidity between the literal and metaphorical applications of poverty:

Thus, Brother Reginald of holy memory came to Paris and with tireless passion and purpose preached the crucified Jesus Christ in word and deed. But God soon took him from the world [...] and having been led to a physical death, he fell asleep in the Lord, entering the glorious riches of God's house, since, while he was living he had shown himself as an energetic lover of poverty and servility.<sup>81</sup>

The phrase: 'he preached the crucified Jesus Christ in word and deed' recalls the idea that Jordan uses in relation to Evrard: 'now he preached, bearing Christ, the poor and deprived, in his own body' (*Christum egenum et pauperem, in corpore suo circumferens, predicabat*) by zeroing in on the pivotal union between the speaking and embodiment of Christ's key messages.<sup>82</sup>

Jordan's narrative choices regarding language and structure in his exposition on Reginald reflect the way that poverty is bound in the processes that culminate in and enable grace to be put to work. Not only does poverty ready the vessel, into which God pours grace, but it gives the possessor agency, in the sense that it provides them with a form of empowerment to act in certain ways.<sup>83</sup> In the case of Reginald, the ways or forms of acting, are reconfigured through maternal metaphors, which adds to the understanding of the way that poverty operates.<sup>84</sup> In an often-intangible manner, poverty nourishes, forms and begets other things. This is crucial. As pointed out earlier, embedded in Jordan's letter to Diana is the idea that material poverty leads to spiritual wealth. In a metaphorical sense, this wealth refers to salvation and the reception of the person into heaven. And from a literal perspective, wealth

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<sup>80</sup> Tugwell notes that '[t]here can be no doubt that Jordan had a vivid sense of the novelty involved in the Dominicans's commitment to apotolic usefulness', *The Way of the Preacher*, p.93.

<sup>81</sup> Jordan, Lib., 63: 'Venit itaque sancta memorie frater Reginaldus Parisius et indefesso mentis fervore Christum lesum et hunc crucifixum verbo predicabat et opera. Sed cito de terra sustilit eum Deus et consummates in brevi explevit tempora multa. Denique pauco post tempore correptus infirmitate et ad moretem carnis usque perductus obdormivit in domino, pergens in gloriosus divitias domus dei, qui, dum hic viveret, paupertatis ac vilitatis sternum se exhibuerat amatorem.'

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 90, pp.67-68.

<sup>83</sup> For a defintion of agency: Sherry B. Ortner, ed., *The Fate of Culture: Geertz and Beyond*, Berkeley, 1999, p.5.

<sup>84</sup> For example, Jordan, Lib., 61, p.54: 'Transmisit autem inde Parisius fratrem Reginaldum non sine gravi desolatione filiorum illorum quos per, verbum evangelii recenter Christo genuerat, qui flebant a consuete matris piis uberibus sese tam festinanter avelli.'

often refers to the perfecting of virtue or perhaps greater productivity and efficacy of the virtue (and the gifts of grace received) when it is exercised for the benefit of others.<sup>85</sup> Conceptually, in approaching poverty as a point of origin for the construction of charismatic authority, the 'original synthesis' between charity, humility and poverty that appeared later in Dominic's 'testament' can be seen to coalesce in Jordan's framework.<sup>86</sup>

One final example exemplifies not only the way that Jordan constructed a duplicatable pattern of discipleship in the *Libellus* but also the way that poverty was continually subject to the tension between the charismatic and institutional. Perhaps invoking the approach of his predecessor, Jordan makes only few appearances himself in the narrative.<sup>87</sup> Yet as Tugwell indicates, the lengthy section in which he describes the entrance to the order and holiness of his close friend, Henry of Cologne, is likely to be quasi auto-biographical.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, Jordan's brief allusion to his own decision to enter the order appears in the passages that he devotes to Henry. Jordan states that as a student of theology, at the time brother Reginald began his preaching at Paris: 'with divine grace having arrived with me, I conceived and vowed within myself to take for myself his very order, thinking that I had found a safe path for my salvation, such as I had begun to consider before knowing the brother [Reginald].'<sup>89</sup> While he does not say so specifically, the implication is that Jordan witnessed Reginald preaching, which increased his readiness to receive divine grace and fortified the burgeoning idea that he held regarding the Dominican Order as the safest path to salvation. His use of language reveals the complex interaction that occurs between visual, auditive and divine forms of inspiration and

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<sup>85</sup> Increase, according to Aquinas does not refer to an amount, but rather a type of perfecting, see: 'Article, 11: Does Infused Virtue Increase?', in *Disputed Questions on Virtue*, transl. by Jeffrey Haus and Claudia Eisen Murphy, Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010, pp.64-73.

<sup>86</sup> In the religious' spiritual milieu poverty essentially replaces humility, which is the virtue through which monastic theologies were largely mediated: Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, transl. by Catharine Misrahi, New York: Fordham University Press, 1982, pp.29-34.

<sup>87</sup> Jordan principally only appears in the narrative as a 'witness' to the charisma of certain brothers, for example: *Libellus*, 57, p.52, 77, p.62, 90, p.67-68. He does however mention the 1221 General Chapter, at which he was made the Provincial Prior of Lombardy, commenting that: 'cum anni spatium peregissem in ordine, nondum fixis quantum oportuerat in altum radicibus, ut regendis aliis ante proficerer, quam meam imperfectionem regere didicissem', *Libellus*, 88, p.67.

<sup>88</sup> Tugwell, 'Christ as Model of Sanctity in Humbert of Romans', in *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans*, pp.92-99, at p.93.

<sup>89</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 69, p.57: 'Interea fratre Reginaldo, felicis recordationis, veniente parisiis et strenue predicante, ego divina preventus gratia concepi et vovi intra memetipsum ordinem istum assumere, arbitrans securam me reperisse salutis semitam, qualem et antefratrum cognitionem in animo meo sepe deliberando conceperam.'



the way that they individually and collectively coalesce in the crisis that often comes with the choosing of voluntary poverty.

Jordan delves much deeper in his exposition of Henry's fraught and protracted decision to enter the order. Poverty is placed at the centre of his crisis of spirit and Jordan can express fully its spiritually transformative purpose. Despite his careful upbringing in the Church, his 'aptitude for virtue', and his innate and divine gifts that Jordan recognised would make him a profitable preacher, Henry was quite hesitant to join the order. Jordan passionately questioned him: 'what is worthier of merit and a most glorious crown, than if we participate in that poverty which Christ himself exhibited and which his followers, the apostles, possessed, to spurn the whole world for love of him?'<sup>90</sup> The remainder of the passage casts Henry's intellectual understanding of poverty's merits and purposes as the antithesis to the 'sluggishness of his will'. Jordan notes that Henry had previously received a vision that had sparked his intellectual desire 'for the perfection which he saw to belong to poverty'. In this vision, he was standing before Christ's judgment, feeling relatively confident that he had not sinned, when someone called to him: "You there, tell us what you ever abandoned for the Lord?" The memory of this warning made Henry more eager for poverty, yet his will continued to be recalcitrant, as even spending the night in prayer did not shift Henry's belief that there was no place for him among Christ's poor.<sup>91</sup>

Exemplifying poverty's relationship to grace and to the divine, Jordan finally narrates the moment of Henry's conversion as a gift from Christ:

[...] as he was nearly ready to leave the church, melancholic and remonstrating himself, He, who cares for the humble, overturned [Henry's] heart from its foundations, and with tears appearing and his spirit released, he began to pour himself out totally before the Lord and the hardness in his wilful spirit was worn away, so that the sweet yoke of Christ, which he had a short time before considered to be most burdensome, was now destroyed by the anointing of oil (Isaiah X.27) to become wholly light and pleasant.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Jordan, Lib., p.71: 'Quidnam, queso, ad meritum ditius, quid gloriosus ad coronam, quam si paupertatis illius participes, quam in se ipso Christus exhibuit et sui sequaces apostoli tenuerunt, totum hoc seculum eius amore spreverimus?'

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p72.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.74: '...dum iam pene de ecclesia se ipsum redarguens et mestus abscederet, subvertit fundamenta cordis eius ille, qui humilia respicit, et obortis mox lacrimis ac resoluta spiritu, se totum coram domino cepit

Jordan's closeness to Henry, a relationship to which he continually referred, enabled him to delineate more fully the emotional and spiritual experience of becoming Dominican. And the narrative more than likely bears traces of his own feelings. Thus, he presents a concise 'snapshot' of his conception of poverty and its role in a Preacher's spiritual development. Jordan alludes to poverty's metaphorical wealth with the reference to the 'glorious crown' and simultaneously establishes it as a sacred imitation of and a pathway to Christ. Importantly, it is something more dynamic than a virtue through its existence as a type of grace and finally, poverty's expression or, rather, possession was integrally and unequivocally linked with the dissolution of self-will.

Even though it has been de-centred in many modern assessments of the Dominican Order, poverty was vital not only to its early growth and successes, but also to the spiritual experience of the religious themselves. Poverty highlighted and intensified issues regarding priestly authority, provoking significant questions among the religious and the laity alike.<sup>93</sup> These issues impacted upon the writing of history in a variety of ways and are partly responsible for the ways that Jordan wrote about his subjects. As only the second master general of the order, he was particularly sensitive to issues relating to the order's authority, even though the conflict with the seculars had not yet reached any sort of intensity. As well as choosing examples that were possibly more easily imitated than Saint Dominic, it also seems reasonable to suggest that they were also chosen because of their prior prominence and authority. The way that Jordan almost pedantically listed the existing credentials of his subjects such as Evrard, Reginald, Henry and, indeed, Diego and Dominic is both a convenient recruitment tool and a device connected with establishing the authority of the order within the context of the wider institutional Church. The means through which their authority was acknowledged and exercised prior to their joining of the order and the inversion of its worldly implications, advertises religious poverty as the foremost pathway to salvation of both the possessor and those to whom they minister. Poverty authorised the performances of the

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effundere, et contrita est omnis illa durities in spiritu vehementi, ut suave iugum Christi, quod paulo ante gravissimum existimaret, iam computrefactum a facie olei leve per omnia fieret et iucundum.'

<sup>93</sup> As well as the many texts already cited, see also the excellent analysis of the complex and tense reception of poverty as both a maligned social condition and an imitation of Christ in late-medieval English texts by Kate Crassons, *The Claims of Poverty: Literature, Culture and Ideology in Late Medieval England*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010.

religious as an expression of charismatic authority, which was comprised by a dynamic synthesis of grace and virtue, and in the way that the religious possessing poverty cited their direct relationship to Christ, both spiritually and literally. Jordan thus cast the Dominicans in the role of disciples of Christ narratively and historically, a role that would form the scaffolding for the creation and performance of future devotional narratives.

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While poverty had been a principle to which the developing Church had continued to speak during the medieval period, as an expression of religious authority it had progressively been sequestered behind the walls of monasteries and away from public view in the 1000-year period between the Desert Fathers and the rise of the mendicant orders. The renewed interest in Christ's humanity (and all the things that entailed) from the eleventh century coincided with new historical and textual techniques, which, somewhat paradoxically, resulted in a revived charismatic atmosphere. This atmosphere centred on religious who themselves embodied aspects of Christ's life to continue his precise work in their own time and place. They recovered Christ's poverty and suffering and sought to embody and connect with the physical and emotional aspects of his incarnation. The mendicant religious, above all, needed to represent their relationship to the divine and this was primarily enabled through poverty. At the same time, the texts they produced were designed to 'constitute and reconstitute' the terms of their authority (their poverty). In these terms, poverty was presented as a process in which the possessor could come into direct contact with the authority of Christ and was able to communicate and exercise this authority among the laity to whom they ministered. Jordan conceived of and purposefully constructed poverty as a space shared by the human and divine and in which were able to operate fluidly. Poverty was not simply a virtue or a set of practices but constituted an authoritative knowledge of and relationship with the divine.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> For a complimentary argument: Thomas O'Meara, OP, 'Interpreting Thomas Aquinas: Aspects of the Dominican School of Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century', in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. by Stephen J. Pope, Georgetown University Press, Washington DC, 2002, pp.354-373.

Dominican poverty was always placed at the service of their preaching effort and the negotiation of their individual and collective relationships with the divine.<sup>95</sup> The order's Primitive Constitutions emphasise the centrality and congruence of their preaching vocation as well as their determination for 'apostolic usefulness', to borrow a phrase from Simon Tugwell.<sup>96</sup> While important, statutes, laws and regulations, which are often taken as signifiers of Dominican poverty, cannot reflect the full 'spectrum' of poverty that was conceptualised, practiced and embodied by the friars and sisters of the order. Nor do they offer an accessible picture of the way that poverty could be meaningful in the experiences of being a Dominican friar or sister. In the following chapter, I explore more specifically how poverty, as an expression of charismatic authority, was shaped and expressed narratively through the figure of the founding Saint. It furthermore seeks to test the ways that the narrative and conceptual approach that Jordan employed in his *Libellus* was implicated and/or received in the development of later Dominican historical-hagiographical writing in general.

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<sup>95</sup> See for example: Christopher A. Franks, *He Became Poor: The Poverty of Christ and Aquinas's Economic Teachings*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, pp.132-57; Tugwell, *The Way of the Preacher*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979, esp. pp.22-33.

<sup>96</sup> 'Prologus', *De Oudste Constituties van de Dominicanen*, p.311: 'Ad hec tamen in conventu suo prelati dispensandi cum fratribus habeat potestatem, cum sibi aliquando videbitur expedire, in hiis precipue, que studium vel predicationem vel animarum fructum videbuntur impedire, cum ordo noster specialiter ob predicationem et animarum salutem ab initio noscatur institutus fuisse, et studium nostrum ad hoc principaliter ardentique summo opere debeat intendere, ut proximorum animabus possimus utiles esse.' Tugwell, *The Way of the Preacher*, p.93.



## Chapter Three. 'Let no-one know, keep it a secret': Poverty effaced and effacing.

[Dominic] was so rough with himself that he wholly observed the order's fasts while travelling [...] He loved poverty and I heard him urging the brethren to embrace and love poverty [...] And he loved poverty so much, that he wished that the brethren would not receive properties and live on alms instead. And this he had written into the Rule. He wanted them to have cheap houses and cheap desks for reading, so that they would display cheapness and poverty in everything.<sup>1</sup>

In the testimony gathered for the canonisation of Saint Dominic the narrative descriptions of his poverty are relatively generic and cursory. He is, for example, pronounced 'a lover of poverty', or as having 'a supreme love of poverty' but very few details are offered to explore the reasons for his 'love' of poverty or what relationship it had to his sanctity.<sup>2</sup> During the canonisation inquiry instituted for Dominic in 1233, many of his brethren coupled their comments regarding Dominic's great love of poverty with descriptions of his cheap, but always clean clothes.<sup>3</sup> To this commentary, a witness at the Bologna process, Brother Frugerio of Pennabilli, adds that Dominic wanted the order to '*display cheapness and poverty in*

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<sup>1</sup> Brother Frugerio, *Acta Canon.*, 47, p.166: 'Item dixit quod asper erat sibi in tantum, quod cum esset in via observabat integre ieiunia ordinis [...] Item dixit quod diligebat paupertatem et ad hoc hortabatur fratres suos [...] Et audivit eum hortantem fratres suos paupertatem amplectendam et diligendam [...] Et in tantum dilexit paupertatem, quod noluit quod fratres deberent recipere possessiones, sed de elemosinis viverent. Et hoc in fratrum regula fecit scribi. Volebat enim quod viles domos haberent et viles discos ad legendum, ita quod quasi in omnibus vilitatem et paupertatem pretenderent.'

<sup>2</sup> Two separate inquiries were undertaken in relation to Dominic's canonisation: one in Toulouse and the other in Bologna. References are to the 'Acta Canonizationis' in *MOPH: Sancti Patris Nostri Dominici*, 16, ed. by A. Waltz, 1935, pp.88-134. Brother Amizio of Milan, witness at the Bologna inquiry, describes him as: 'summus paupertatis amator tam in victu quam in vestitu fratrum et in cultu et in ornatu vestium ecclesiasticarum. Multum enim studuit ad hoc in diebus suis et operam dedit, quod fratres non uterentur in ecclesiis vestimentis purpureis et sericis tam super se quam in altaribus nec vasa aurea vel argentea haberent preterquam in calcibus.' For similar, see the testimony of Brother Stephen of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, 38, p.156 and Brother Frugerio, 47, p.166.

<sup>3</sup> Buonviso, *Acta Canon.*, 21, pp.139-140; Brother John of Spain testified that: [Dominic] had a great love of poverty, and he encouraged the brethren to love it too. He exulted in cheap clothes, though he liked them to be clean', 27, p.145; Brother Stephen of Spain also testified that Dominic 'had cheap clothes made out of coarse, though clean, material...' 38, pp.156-57; Paul of Venice states that Dominican wore 'the cheapest habit' 42. For Dominic's canonisation in general: Vicaire, *Saint Dominic*, pp.334-63; Thompson, *Revival Preachers*; Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp. 338-44.

*everything*.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, sources state that when Dominic returned to the convent at Bologna to find that the brothers were attempting to raise the roofs of their 'poor, mean, low cells' he commanded them to stop immediately, stating, '[d]o you so quickly want to abandon poverty and build great palaces?'<sup>5</sup> Anthony John Lappin suggests that this sort of testimony indicates that poverty was largely Dominic's 'thing' and that his brethren were somewhat reluctant to jump on the bandwagon.<sup>6</sup> Yet, the continued development and refinement of the constitutions governing poverty in the years following Dominic's death imply that Dominic's followers were both interested and active in constructing the terms through which the order's poverty was performed and communicated to observers, albeit with diverse interpretations and performances. This became particularly apparent in the establishment and creation of a narrative tradition for the order. This chapter explores poverty's role in the hagiographical tradition that developed in the wake of Jordan's *Libellus*. I examine the way that the representation and performance of poverty was shaped and articulated through the figure of Dominic.

In the previous chapter, I explored the context in which Jordan of Saxony's conception of poverty was formed and the way that he situated poverty within the purposes and meanings that he attributed to the still-developing order. Utilising a similar conceptual framework, this chapter casts a wider net to focus on how the Dominican historical/hagiographical tradition built on the foundations laid by Jordan in the making of their foundational narratives. Even though Dominic's cult had been largely ignored in the decade following his death, in the following one hundred years, he was the focal point for the negotiation of what it meant to be a part of the Order of Preachers and how their authority was to be expressed. Key to this was his image as a preacher who was dedicated to the salvation of souls and the way that poverty supported, enabled and strengthened this work. Anne Holloway proposes that for the Dominican preacher, 'preaching' was a continual act to the extent that the lines between

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<sup>4</sup> My emphasis. Frugerio, *Acta Canon.*, 46, pp.164-65: 'Volebat enim quod viles domos haberent et viles discos ad legendum, ita quod quasi in omnibus vilitatem et paupertatem pretenderent.' For similar see: Rudolph of Faenza, 32, p.150-51.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, 38, p.157: 'Vultis tam cito paupertatem relinquere et magna palatia edificare.'

<sup>6</sup> Lappin, 'The Dominican Path towards Mendicancy', pp.31-58.

public and private were blurred to the point of non-existence.<sup>7</sup> In these performances, poverty provided a highly malleable, 'powerful' component of a 'repertoire of virtues invoked by the preacher.'<sup>8</sup> In this respect, poverty cannot be reduced to a mere tactic.<sup>9</sup>

As the previous chapters have indicated, poverty's purpose extended beyond the conversion of heretics to influence not only the recruitment or religious to the order but to provide an important basis for the spiritual development of Dominican religious. At the same time that Dominican writers paid attention to poverty's spiritual and devotional dimensions in historical and hagiographical narratives, they were working through ideas about what role poverty had in their preaching performances and in, and on, the public persona of the preacher.

In contrast to the focus of the previous chapter which mainly examined poverty's spiritual and devotional aspects in the process of becoming Dominican, I now explore the way that Dominican hagiographers sought to define how their poverty ought to be expressed in the public persona of the Order's preachers through the figure of their founding saint. The chapter contains a comparative aspect to investigate why and how this 'look' was constructed. I consider the comparison and competition with the image of Francis and the poverty of his order, and the way that this impacted upon the self-presentation and representation of Dominic's poverty. Rather than viewing the 'contest' as antagonistic or somehow negative, I explore it as a dynamic and creative force on the presentation and representation of Dominican poverty. The parallel depictions of Francis and Dominic found in Jacopo da Varagine's *Legenda Aurea* provide an ideal vehicle for this.<sup>10</sup> Even though Jacopo's methods came under suspicion by later Dominican historians such as Bernard Gui, it was nevertheless the Dominicans' most famous devotional text and highlights the way that

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<sup>7</sup> Holloway, 'Performing Poverty', p.159. On public and private in the medieval period: Peter von Moos, *"Öffentlich" und "privat" im Mittelalter: zu einem Problem der Historisches Begriffsbildung*, Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2004. My thanks to Prof. Klaus Oschema for bringing this to my attention. See also comments in Shannon McSheffrey, 'Place, Space and Situation: Public and Private in the Making of Marriage in Late-Medieval London, *Speculum*, 2004, pp.960-90.

<sup>8</sup> Holloway, 'Performing Poverty', p.159.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p.152.

<sup>10</sup> The bibliography on the *Legenda Aurea* is extensive; see generally: Sherry L. Reames, *The Legenda Aurea: A Re-examination of its Paradoxical History*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985; Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*; Steven A. Epstein, *The Talents of Jacopo da Varagine: A Genoese Mind in Medieval Europe*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016.



Dominican writers sought to manipulate the charisma of their founder and his contemporary through representations and discourses associated with poverty.<sup>11</sup>

### Dominic's Testament

In Jordan's *Libellus* poverty was linguistically and discursively associated with the charismatic authority of the Dominican preacher as both a constituent feature and expression of the relationship that each member of the order shared with Christ. The second major hagiographical narrative of Saint Dominic, the *Legenda* of the Spanish Friar Peter of Ferrand not only augmented this tradition but firmly established poverty as a fundamental component of the Dominicans' defining charismata.<sup>12</sup> Peter's *Legenda* is the first appearance of the so-called last testament of Saint Dominic. Writing in the late 1230s, nearly twenty years after the saint's death, Peter inserts into the narrative tradition a dramatic deathbed scene in which the founder of the order leaves to his followers a spiritual testament: 'have charity, keep humility, possess voluntary poverty'.<sup>13</sup> Peter's commentary testifies to the inviolability of the testament and of its importance to the attainment of salvation. He continues that 'blessed are they who do not disregard, reject nor cast aside the incorruptible garment of charity, the fertile land of humility and the desirable treasury of poverty that the great father bequeathed to them.'<sup>14</sup> To this, he added that no one would argue that the saint himself possessed these virtues. After narrating Dominic's assurance to the assembled brothers that he would be far more useful to the brothers in death, Peter ends the scene by placing into Dominic's mouth a prohibition on anyone who would introduce temporal possessions into the order. Dominic apparently, 'terrifyingly called down God's curse and his own on he who would dare to darken with the dirt of worldly riches the profession of poverty that adorns the order.'<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> On the *Legenda's* reception in the Middle Ages: Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, pp.197-209.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Ferrand's identity is subject to debate. See: Angel D'Ors, 'Petrus Hispanus, O.P., Auctor Summulcrum', *Vivarium*, 35, 1997, pp.21-71 and Simon Tugwell's response: 'Petrus Hispanus: Comments on Some Proposed Identifications, *Vivarium*, 37, 1999, pp.103-117.

<sup>13</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, 43, p.349: 'caritatem habete, humilitatem servate, paupertatem voluntariam possidete'.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid: 'Beatus qui non negligit, qui non spernit vel abicit caritatis incorruptibile vestimentum, fertilem humilitatis fundum, desiderabilem paupertatis thesaurum tanti patris sibi traditione legatum.'

<sup>15</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, 43, p.351: 'Illud autem pater egregius quanta potuit districtione prohibuit ne quis in hoc ordine possessiones induceret temporales, maledictionem dei et suam terribiliter imprecans ei qui hunc ordinem quem precipue paupertatis decorat professio terrenarum divitiarum pulvere presumpserit obfuscare.'

The drama and detail with which Peter describes the scene has been downplayed by Simon Tugwell as a 'literary invention' or 'dramatization'.<sup>16</sup> Neither Jordan nor the bed-side witnesses that testified during his canonisation process describe Dominic's deathbed scene in such sensational detail. While several testify to Dominic's words about his virginity and the example that he would provide in death, there are no witnesses that confirm his 'last will' as Peter describes it. Rudolph of Faenza merely states that Dominic exhorted the friars 'to keep the observances of their religious life.'<sup>17</sup> It is likely that Peter developed the general sentiment provided by Rudolph and the testimony provided in Jordan's *Libellus* adding in detail for drama and effect. Whether Dominic spoke in the manner that Peter describes is more or less a moot point. The 'testament' fits in with the general approach taken by canonisation witnesses to highlight Dominic's love of poverty. Furthermore, it was quickly taken up by subsequent Dominican historians and hagiographers to become a fundamental expression of the place of poverty in the Dominicans' devotional life.<sup>18</sup>

Poverty has multiple meanings and significations in Peter's construction of Dominic's testament. The phrase *professio paupertatis* simultaneously refers to the traditional vow of poverty undertaken by religious as well as the communal vow specified by the order itself to not own property and not have money. More interesting, however, is the use of the verb *possidere* with *paupertas* and the way that this coupling seems to refer to something entirely different. In the Middle Ages, the verb *possidere* was often used in relation to land and conquest, as well as to an attribute, virtue or quality.<sup>19</sup> The implication from the varied treatments and applications is that to possess something meant to hold something as one's own. Nuancing this, interpreting *possidere* as 'to besiege' suggests that poverty needed to be worked at consistently and vigilantly, and that it had multiple fronts and aspects. The relationships between *possidere* and the holding of virtue and personal attributes have

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<sup>16</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.106, n.21. He revises this position somewhat in his edition of Peter's *Legenda* illustrating the way that the testament presents 'a dramatization of the eighth matins antiphon from the office of St. Dominic' (c.1234-35): 'Migrans pater filius vite firmamentum paupertatis humilis condit testamentum'', *Legenda*, p.253. Tugwell provides an edition of the Office in his edition of Ferrand's *Legenda*, pp.383-392.

<sup>17</sup> Rudolph of Faenza, *Acta Canon.*, 33: 'nolite plorare, quia ego utilior ero vobis ad locum, ad quem vado, quam fuerim hic.' Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.78.

<sup>18</sup> Jean de Mailly, *Abbreviato in gestis sanctorum. Supplementum hagiographicum*, ed. by Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, Firenze: SISMEI, 2013, pp.288-294.

<sup>19</sup> Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis*, M-Z, p.1065.

interesting implications for fleshing out the boundaries of poverty's relationship to charismatic authority since they open a window to devotional, spiritual and ideological understandings. In this regard, Peter clarifies his position somewhat when he refers to poverty and its metaphorical relationship to treasure and, secondly, as a virtue that Dominic himself possessed. This presents an interesting contrast to *professio paupertatis* and the idea of *sine proprio*, or to be without anything of their own, a concept which is generally perceived to underpin mendicant poverty.<sup>20</sup> The concept *Sine proprio* is broad enough to include the aspects of mendicant poverty which dictated the refusal of worldly honours and social rights - the aspects of poverty that were closely linked with humility – as well as its more spiritual connotations like being without one's own will. Yet, 'possessing poverty' goes beyond even this broad understanding. The idea that poverty could and should be 'possessed' raises critical questions such as how this was different to the general vow of poverty undertaken by Dominican religious; what possessing poverty could or should look like; and how the imperative to possess poverty impacted upon the creation and performance of the order's devotional narratives.

The answer to these questions are embedded in the linguistic and narrative strategies utilised by the Dominican hagiographers. In this sense, the testament was not a fragmented reflection of Saint Dominic's attitude towards poverty but rather a narrative construction in which Peter sought to establish key relationships between Dominic's performances, attributes and charisma and those of the religious who belonged to the order that he founded. Holloway argues that poverty was a constituent virtue in a 'tripartite approach to the core elements of Christian life' alongside charity and humility. She continues that they 'are the three virtues that are necessary for preaching the Word of God while maintaining the integrity of the preacher.'<sup>21</sup> Going slightly further, I argue that the narrative devices and linguistic strategies employed by Dominican historians and hagiographers approach this key triumvirate as more than virtues. They are presented as charismata in the fact emphasis is consistently laid on their role in effecting not only the salvation of the Preachers' audiences, but the way that they established and constituted relationships between the preacher and the divine. Peter's

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<sup>20</sup> See: Krijin Pansters, *Franciscan Virtue: Spiritual Growth and the Virtues in Franciscan Literature and Instruction of the Thirteenth Century*, Leiden: Brill, 2012, p.4. See also Mews, 'Apostolic Ideals', pp.13-23.

<sup>21</sup> Holloway, 'Performing Poverty', pp.153-54.

repetition of the canonisation testimony regarding Dominic's suggestion that he 'would be more useful in death' combined with the curse he invoked, on his own and God's behalf, for those contravening his testament are tangible indications of the relationships of charity, humility and poverty to the Dominicans religious, spiritual and devotional authority and self-presentation.

The historical and hagiographical works that were produced in conjunction with and following Dominic's canonisation, particularly that of Peter Ferrand, added greater clarification to poverty's religious boundaries and the intersection with the construction and exercise of charismatic authority. The refinement of what poverty meant to the ideal and presentation of the Dominican preacher also impacted on the historical and historiographical contest between the orders of Saint Francis and Dominic around the issue of poverty. The conceptual shift from a strictly material interpretation of poverty, or as a means to imitate Christ, to one that constructed poverty as an ideological imperative that operated interdependently with charity and humility invited greater comparison and differentiation between the Franciscan conceptions of poverty. The experience of both orders in their approach to poverty was one of both contrast and contradiction as they each sought, in their own ways, to find a balance between novelty and tradition in pursuit of their service to Christendom. There is little doubt that close historical and ideological proximity influenced their respective self-presentation and representation, particularly in the memorialisation and cults of their founding saints.<sup>22</sup> The relationship between the orders should not necessarily be viewed through the context of the combative opposition that the two orders came to take up in the later thirteenth and early-fourteenth century. It was not always a case of who could do poverty better.<sup>23</sup> Variances in the terminology, language, images and mediums through which each order communicated and understood their poverty suggest that the aims and meanings of their poverty, as well as the ways in which it was meaningful to the religious of the orders, were inherently different. The narrative representations of the Saints provide a complex but illuminating prism through which to view the other. This is especially true of the way that aspects of their public image,

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<sup>22</sup> See: Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, particularly pp.73-76.

<sup>23</sup> Although he was somewhat critical of the Dominicans on other issues, Salimbene viewed the two orders as equals with regard to poverty: 'Quod fratres Predicatores et nos multos docuimus mendicare', *Cronica*, p.254. He also states that: 'Et nota, quod abbas Joachim, cui Deus revelavit futura dixit, quod ordo Predicatorum debebat pati cum ordine clericorum, ordo vero Minorum durare usque ad finem', p.580.

which the two saints were able to cultivate intentionally either through their writings or in their deeds, impacted upon not only the historical fate of their followers but also upon the challenges the friars confronted in developing their authority as distinct but yet related communities.

### A Self-Effacing Saint?

As part of a continuing drive to delineate the underlying charisma of the founding saints of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, the description of Saint Dominic as self-effacing is relatively wide-spread in modern historiography.<sup>24</sup> Drawing on themes established in the excuses proffered in relation the delay in his canonisation the use of the term 'self-effacing' presents Dominic as the polar opposite of his larger than life contemporary. As I will now turn to, the current usage as description of Dominic's personality underestimates the term's value as an heuristic category.

In *The Image of St Francis* (2006), Rosalind Brooke writes emphatically that 'Francis was no self-effacing saint.' She argues that Francis self-consciously created a theatre from his life to express his message utilising a number of diverse methods in order to ensure his teachings were rendered 'vivid and memorable to his audience.'<sup>25</sup> Francis, furthermore, 'developed a mode; a character, an image of himself which he sought to project among his followers and before all who met him.'<sup>26</sup> Thirty years prior to the publication of this work, Brooke posed a direct distinction between the founding saints of the two major mendicant orders writing that: 'Dominic and Francis between them changed the Church and the world; their personalities are stamped on the history of the religious life in the thirteenth century. Yet Dominic was deeply and sincerely self-effacing.' And this self-effacement, she argues, is one of the keys to understanding both the man and his achievements. Brooke's definition of 'self-

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<sup>24</sup> For example: John Bonaventure O'Conner, *Saint Dominic and the Order of Preachers*, New York: Holy Name Bureau, 1919, p.10; Bedouelle, *Saint Dominic*, p.49, pp.58-62. Tugwell seems to suggest this when he describes Dominic as 'an unusually retiring kind of founder': *Early Dominicans*, p.51.

<sup>25</sup> Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, p.13. On the Franciscan theatre concept in a broader context see: Antonio Attisani, 'Franciscan Performance: A Theatre Lost and Found Again', in *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, 73, 2003, 48-60.

<sup>26</sup> Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, p.24.

effacing' seems to boil down to the way that Dominic 'preached and practised a humility akin to St Benedict's, and with like success.'<sup>27</sup>

Brooke is not alone in her use of self-effacement as a defining description of Dominic and the quality through which she contrasts the two saints. Clifford Hugh Lawrence states that the personal characteristics that appear most strongly in the testimony of Dominic's closest followers from the canonisation process 'was his humility and determined self-effacement.'<sup>28</sup> To support these ideas, Lawrence notes Dominic's attempts to abdicate and the repeated announcements he made regarding his inadequacies. A story often repeated during his canonisation trial is that while Dominic always travelled barefoot, he would replace his shoes upon entering a town. Interestingly, especially for the definition of 'self-effacement' that might be drawn from the example, Lawrence suggests Dominic's habit of wearing shoes in towns was to 'avoid publicity'.<sup>29</sup> In using the term 'self-effacing', both Lawrence and Brooke seem to conclude that Dominic attempted to remain as 'inconspicuous' as possible throughout his life. These kinds of interpretations or emphases do not, however, really fit in with the way that Dominic needed to conduct himself as the founder of a religious order that was ideologically and practically organised around charismatic preaching. As noted in the previous chapter, Jordan of Saxony extensively utilised light imagery to portray Dominic's conspicuity and later testimony indicates that Dominic favoured personal, and sometimes dramatic, intervention to recruit friars and to publicise his message.<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, it is difficult to reconcile the way that self-effacing is currently being employed in modern historiography with Dominic's role or persona as a charismatic preacher: a preacher whose 'zealous' mission was the salvation of souls.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Brooke, *Coming of the Friars*, p.90.

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence, *The Friars*, p.67.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, p.67.

<sup>30</sup> Personal intervention was the method Dominic used to attract Reginald of Orleans to the order: Jordan, *Lib.*, 56-57, pp.51-52. For similar: *Acta Canon.*, 3, p.124; 33, p.151; 36, p.154; 38, 156.

<sup>31</sup> Zealous, zeal, zealously are used habitually throughout the testimonies in Dominic's canonization trial by witnesses. For example, *Acta Canon.*, 18, 26; Jordan, *Lib.*, 34. Dominic's repeated and highly detailed references to his macabre desire for martyrdom (John of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, 29) or his attempts to sell himself as a slave might be taken as evidence of his zeal (Jordan, *Lib.*, 35).

Placing the analysis of Dominic as preacher in these terms has interesting implications for the modern perception of the self-effacing saint. To follow his calling as a public preacher, a highly effective public preacher at that, required Dominic not only to be heard but also to be seen. Public preachers sought to bring about the spiritual and bodily transformation of their audience, by moving them to confession and reconciliation with the Christian community. This required not only charismatic speech but also, and probably more importantly, the management of signs and expressions of grace and virtue to establish their credibility and sanctity.<sup>32</sup> During Dominic's canonisation process, Brother Stephen of Spain testified: 'When he [Dominic] preached, his words were so moving that they made both him and his hearers weep with compunction.'<sup>33</sup> The calling of the public preacher required them to be permanently on display and to maintain a constant awareness of how they were being perceived. As Denery argues: 'If all settings become preaching settings, then the preacher is enjoined at every moment to consider, adapt and adjust himself to his audience. Not only must he consider how he appears to his listeners but to his companions.'<sup>34</sup> It would then be counterproductive to Dominic's aims as a preacher and agent of salvation to 'avoid publicity' as Lawrence argued, or to habitually practice self-effacement in terms of its definition of remaining inconspicuous. At the same time, a tension exists between the methods of self-effacement practised by Dominic during his life-time, such as not leaving behind personal testimony, and the effacement of subjectivity and individuality as a method of constructing sanctity.<sup>35</sup>

Rather than abandoning the concept of self-effacement completely, by analysing it through a more performance orientated, critical lens, the term becomes more than just a useful word by which to differentiate between the public images or expression of personality of Saints Francis and Dominic. Instead, it can become indicative of a component of a preacher's performance and a method of religious expression, rather than an aspect of a saint's

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<sup>32</sup> Humbert of Romans, *Liber de eruditione praedicatorum*, VII:xxxv, p.455: 'Item praedicatorum interest procurare salute aliorum modis quibus possunt. Quandoque vero melius procurantur per bonam conversationem quam per verbum.' He reiterates this sentiment in a 1260 encyclical letter: 'Magistri Humberti piae exhortationes ad fratres', in *Litterae encyclicae magistrorum generalium ordinis praedicatorum ab anno 1233 usque ad annum 1376*, ed. by Benedict Reichert and Andreas Früwith, *MOPH*, 5, 1900, XII, pp.52-55.

<sup>33</sup> Stephen of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.80

<sup>34</sup> Denery, 'The Preacher and His Audience', p.21.

<sup>35</sup> On the generalising of saints see: Vauchez, *Sainthood*, esp. p.339.

personality. This is not to say that Dominic's humility was artificial in any way, but that his performances and actions were self-consciously styled to elicit intended responses from his audiences – whether the conversion of heretics, official approval from the Papacy or the recruitment of friars for his order. William of Monferrato, for example, joined the Dominican Order in 1219 because he 'thought [Dominic] was magnetic and the brother's way of life was pleasing to him, so he began to love him.' The testimony continued that:

Many times, he debated with [Dominic] matters related their own salvation and that of others. It seemed to the witness that [Dominic] was the holiest of any man he had ever seen, although he had spoken to many religious. Furthermore, it seemed to him that [Dominic] was a greater zealot for the salvation of humankind than any other he had seen.<sup>36</sup>

Dominic's personal charisma was central to the order's early successes. Along with the three hundred plus witnesses from the Toulouse process who 'asserted unanimously that they had never seen anyone so holy and so good',<sup>37</sup> many friars joined the order as a direct consequence of witnessing Dominic at work. As such, the pertinent questions are not related to whether Dominic *was* self-effacing. But rather what exactly was he 'effacing' (in the sense of something being erased from a surface) and what was the 'effacement' meant to achieve or produce?

It is in the light of these questions that Dominic's habit of putting his shoes on before coming under the gaze of the public should be interpreted. It was not just a practice that demonstrated his humility and austerity to his travelling companion and, through its retelling, to his entire order. Remaining unshod only in private was also a strategic and purposeful act that shaped how he (and his poverty) would appear to all observers, both intimate and distant, and what they should understand about it.<sup>38</sup> Travelling barefoot, especially through

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<sup>36</sup> William of Monferrato, *Acta Canon.*, 12, p.133: 'Unde ex tunc habuit notitiam eius et placuit sibi conversatio dicti fratris et cepit diligere eum. Et multotiens tractabat cum eo de his que pertinebant ad salutem eorum et aliorum hominum. Et videbatur ipse testi, quod esset multum religiosus magis quam aliquis homo quem umquam viderit, quamvis cum multis religiosus ipse testis loquutus fuisset. Et videbatur ei quod magis esset zelator salutis humani generis quam aliquis quem vidisset.'

<sup>37</sup> *Acta Canon.*, 19, p.185: '...dicentes una voce, quod nunquam tam sanctum tam honestum hominem viderunt in carne.'

<sup>38</sup> This can be compared with number 10 in the Primitive Constitutions regarding bedding: 'super culcitra non dormiant fratres nostri, nisi forte stramen vel aliquid tale, super quod dormiant, habere non possint [...] Super stramina et laneos et saccones dormire licebit. Extra domum autem iacere poterunt sicut fuerint eis stratum, ne hospites molestentur. Qui autem culcitram petierit, ieiunet unam diem in pane et aqua', pp.320-21.



a forest, was at the same time an ascetic act and an immediate sign of poverty.<sup>39</sup> Franciscans in particular were known as the ‘barefoot friars’ and Tugwell notes that during a dispute with the Franciscans about who was the most austere, the wearing of shoes became a pointed issue.<sup>40</sup> While the Franciscans were expected not to wear shoes, as the Dominicans developed the Rule of St Augustine to their particular needs, they chose to keep a policy instituted for canons at the Council of Montpellier in 1215 that ordered them to be shod to differentiate them from the Waldensians who went barefoot.<sup>41</sup> Bare feet were therefore thoroughly implicated in the discourses associated with religious poverty. They were imbricated in the rhetoric and performance of the Preachers’ work in the Languedoc at the same time that they were becoming a sign of the Holy Poverty espoused by the Franciscans. From the establishment of the order, Dominican poverty was meant to appear different – its ‘face’ was not the same as either the heretics, against whom they preached, or their Franciscan counterparts, as the wearing of shoes indicates. Nor did it bear resemblance to the involuntary poor among the laity. While Brother Frugerio testified that Dominic wanted poverty displayed in everything, it seems that this was not quite true.

Providing an indication of the way that the production of signs of their poverty was carefully managed is an exemplum from the *Vitae Fratrum*. Gerard de Frachet writes that a debate had been arranged between the preachers and the heretics in the Languedoc, to which the local bishop wished to arrive in his accustomed pomp and splendour. Reminiscent of the sentiment found in Diego’s speech at Montpellier, it is narrated that Dominic said to him that this was the wrong approach to take. The heretics would be better convinced, he said, by the display of humility and virtue. ‘Let us arm ourselves’, Gerard records the saint as saying, ‘with pious

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<sup>39</sup> A source describing the preaching of ‘proto-mendicants’ such as Robert of Arbrissel and Bernard of Tiron references their bare feet: Geoffrey le Gros, ‘Vita Beati Bernardi Tironiensis’, ed. by Godefroy Henskens, in *Acta Sanctorum*, April 2, 1866, pp. 222 – 255, at p.234. Cited in Thompson, ‘Origins’, p.6, who states: ‘[t]he marks of the hermit-preacher are [...]: poverty and asceticism (symbolized by their naked feet).’ Interestingly in Peter Martyr’s legend it is also implicated in the expression of his virginity: ‘He was a most pure virgin and so is called one who takes off his shoes because he removed and put off all earthly love from the feet of his affections and inclinations: in that way he was a virgin not only in his body but in his mind’, translated by Granger Ryan, *The Golden Legend*, pp.254-266. LA, p.421: ‘fuit virgo purissimus, et inde dicitur discalciatus, quia pedibus suarum affectionum omnem amorem mortuum discalciavit et exiit ut non solum corpore, sed etiam mente virgo esset.’

<sup>40</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.160, nn.119-20: ‘[o]ne of the silliest parts of the quarrel between the Dominicans and the Franciscans was about shoes (the Dominicans earning in the process the sobriquet of “shod friars”).’

<sup>41</sup> Mulchahey, *Dominican Education before 1350*, pp.14-17.

speech, and presenting ourselves in true humility, let us proceed against our enemy in bare feet.<sup>42</sup> Even if the event did not occur as presented, the exemplum nevertheless provides indication of a desire to choreograph performances of poverty, and suggests that poverty was not meant for permanent display.

Conversely, as both his own writings and descriptions of him illustrate, Francis was concerned to ensure that the poverty of his order was constantly visible and looked exactly the same as the involuntary poor; and he was very specific on this point. In the *Earlier Rule* he states: 'Let all the brothers wear poor clothes, and with the blessing of God, they can patch them with sackcloth and other pieces, for the Lord says in the Gospel: Those who wear expensive clothing and live in luxury and who dress in fine garments are in the houses of kings.'<sup>43</sup> Daniel Schultz comments, 'Francis's ragged tunic was the means by which he advertised the spiritual goods of religious poverty.'<sup>44</sup> Francis's imitation of, or rather immersion in, the culture of the involuntary poor has been the topic of inquiry, both negative and positive.<sup>45</sup> Recently, Kenneth Wolf controversially reinvestigated Francis's poverty, questioning the effects that the Saint's appropriation of the culture and appearances of the involuntary poor had and drawing attention to what he calls the 'ironies' inherent in Francis's brand of poverty.<sup>46</sup> Wolf describes Francis's appearance as a 'costume' that 'made the most sense for his new life of poverty.'<sup>47</sup> As he continues 'the level of self-consciousness and deliberation that the spiritually regenerated Francis came to exercise in his new choice of clothing is striking.'<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> VF, II.2, pp.67-68: 'Armemus igitur nos devotis oracionibus, et vere humilitatis indicia preferentes, discalciatiis pedibus contra Goliad procedamus.'

<sup>43</sup> 'The Earlier Rule', *FOAED*, I, p.65.

<sup>44</sup> Daniel J. Schultz, 'Histories of the Present: Interpreting the Poverty of St. Francis', in *The World of St. Francis of Assisi: Essays in Honor of William R. Cook*, ed. Bradley R. Franco and Beth A. Mulvaney, Leiden: Brill, 2015, pp.176-192, at p.189.

<sup>45</sup> For example: Gert Melville, 'What role did charity play in Francis of Assisi's attitude toward the poor?', in *Aspects of Charity. Concern for One's Neighbour in Medieval Vita Religiosa*, ed. by Gert Melville, LIT Verlag: Münster, 2011, pp.99-122; Schultz, 'Histories of the Present'; Christopher Ohan, "'You are Simple and Stupid": Francis of Assisi and the Rise of Merchant Capitalism', in *The World of St. Francis*, pp.1-19; See also: Crassons, *The Claims of Poverty*, esp. pp.1-20.

<sup>46</sup> Wolf, *Poverty of Riches*; see also Schultz's assessment of Wolf's theories: 'Histories of the Present', pp176-192.

<sup>47</sup> Wolf, *Poverty of Riches*, p.7.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p.17.

While Wolf is somewhat cynical in his assessments, his analysis nevertheless draws attention to the inherently performative nature of Francis's poverty.

Those that assumed a Franciscan way of life specifically and strategically sought to make their clothing and appearance distasteful to society. Thomas of Split (d.1268) commented after witnessing Francis preaching at Bologna that his appearance was disgraceful, his habit dirty and as an individual he was contemptible.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, the Franciscan Simon of Collazzone (d.1250), who practised an evident hatred of himself, was purposely dirty and unkempt.<sup>50</sup> Franciscan poverty was a theatre that was predicated on a deep and thorough immersion in the poverty that was seen and experienced on the streets. As Jacopo da Varagine relates in his *Legenda* on Francis:

He loved poverty in himself and in others so much that he always spoke of his Lady Poverty, and, when he saw someone poorer than himself, he envied him and was afraid he might be outdone by him. One day he saw a poor little man passing by and said to his companion: "That man's neediness puts us to shame; it makes a false show of our poverty. For my riches I chose my Lady Poverty, but you see that she is more glorified in him than in me."<sup>51</sup>

In contrast to the deliberately dirty and ragged appearance pursued by the Franciscans, while Dominic is said to have worn a tunic of cheap quality, it was nevertheless, said to be always clean.<sup>52</sup> As Le Goff notes, Jacopo da Varagine 'seizes the opportunity' to articulate the innate difference in Dominican poverty in his legend on Saint Bernard when he writes: 'In the manner of dress, poverty always pleased him, slovenliness never. The latter he took to be a sign of a careless mind or inordinate self-esteem or a will to attract other people's attention.'<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas Spalatensis, *Testimonia minora saeculi xiii*, ed. Leonardus Lemmens, Florence: Ex typ. Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1926, p.10: 'Sordidus erat habitus, persona contemptibilis et facies indecora.'

<sup>50</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.340. See also Goodich, 'Politics of Canonization', p.177.

<sup>51</sup> Translated by Granger Ryan, *The Golden Legend*, pp.608-09. *LA*, p.1020: Paupertatem in se et in aliis adeo diligebat ut paupertatem dominam suam semper vocaret. Si quando pauperiorem se ipso videret protinus invidebat et se ab illo vinci timebat. Nam et cum die quadam pauperulum quendam obvium habuisset ait socio suo: "Magnam verecundiam intulit nobis huius inopia et nostram paupertatem plurimum reprehendit. Nam pro meis diutiis pro mea domina paupertatem elegi; et ecce, amplius relucet in isto." '

<sup>52</sup> John of Spain, *Acta Canon.*, 27, p.145.

<sup>53</sup> Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*, p.147; *The Golden Legend*, p.487. On Bernard in medieval culture: Steven Botterill, *Dante and the Mystical Tradition: Bernard of Clairvaux in the Commedia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp.13-63. On Bernard's influence on the Dominicans: Denery, *Being Seen*, pp. 19-20.

Several stories found in the *Vitae Fratrum* reveal further the extent to which Dominican poverty was experienced and expressed in a way that seemed to deliberately distance themselves to that of the involuntarily poor. Gerard states that a holy woman, who had longed to see friars of the new preaching order, despised them as hypocrites when she saw that they were young, handsome and properly dressed.<sup>54</sup> According to Gerard, bitter poverty, that which caused outright dejection and impacted upon the appearance of the brothers, was not in fact a desired situation and certainly not one that was to be continued indefinitely.<sup>55</sup> Gerard was writing at the beginning of the dispute between the seculars and mendicants and this context shaped his reflections on poverty.<sup>56</sup> But it is hard to imagine that the cleanliness and ‘proper’ appearance of the Dominicans was contrived only as part of their attempts to differentiate themselves from the Franciscans. Jordan’s *Libellus* contains indications that abject poverty was not their ‘end-goal’ in his comment that the brothers ‘endured the great anguish of poverty’ when they first arrived at Bologna.<sup>57</sup> Dominican self-conceptions as *pauperes Christi* were expressed in terms of an observable discipleship, in which their authority was predicated on their relationship to Christ and not in the materiality of poverty itself. Accordingly, the strategy of effacing the signs of poverty usually associated with mendicant preachers went some way to achieving this objective. Their clean and tidy appearance placed them in the authoritative tradition of saints such as Bernard of Clairvaux and clearly differentiated their brand of poverty from that of those deemed heretical.

The reluctance of the Dominicans to assimilate their performances and experience of poverty with those of the involuntary poor is interesting in the contrast that it presents, particularly in the light of the evangelical movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As discussed by Karen Sullivan, in the specific context of the Languedoc, Diego and Dominic preached against the heretics in a public and immediately evident poverty. She notes that Dominic’s approach presented a dramatic contrast to the Cistercian preaching mission, which refused

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<sup>54</sup> VF, 1.6.4, pp.40-41.

<sup>55</sup> VF, 1.5.7, 1.5.8, 1.5.14, 1.6.3, 1.6.4.

<sup>56</sup> For the impact of the secular-mendicant dispute on the writing and content of the *Vitae Fratrum*: Sweetman, ‘Exempla and the Promotion of Religious Identity’, pp.41-50; ‘Of Bees and Brethren: The Making of an Order of Preachers’, in *Mendicant Cultures in the Medieval and Early Modern World: Word, Deed, and Image*, ed. by Sally J. Cornelison, Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, and Peter Howard, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, pp.3-21.

<sup>57</sup> Jordan, Lib., 55, p.51: ‘magnam perpessi sunt ibidem paupertatis angustiam.’

to engage the heretics on their own terms. She puts forward an exemplum from the timeframe in which a Cistercian monk named Bernard, is denounced by a heretic for riding a fine, well-fed horse.<sup>58</sup> Bernard is said to have retorted by displaying his own emaciated neck and reasoning that God cannot be offended by a 'brute' animal's natural appetite. Sullivan explains:

While Bernard makes reference to a monastic spirituality, where sanctity is determined by a private practice of asceticism, which may be hidden under a cowl, the heretic may well be alluding to a heretical spirituality, where holiness is determined by a public display of poverty, which may be exhibited by one's gaunt horse. While, for the one, a virtuous life is pursued on one's own, in isolation from lay society, for the other, a virtuous life is something pursued with other laymen and is therefore subject to their observation.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast to the Cistercians, she states Dominic is striking in his willingness to 'adopt whatever rhetorical technique he sees as necessary, in his actions as well as in his words'.<sup>60</sup> I would also add that beyond rhetoric, the presentation of Dominic's poverty and asceticism is conspicuous in the way that it performs the tensions between public and private, concealment and revelation, that manifested in the contest between traditional monasticism and evangelical movements from the twelfth century.<sup>61</sup> The emphasis that the Dominicans placed on the performative aspects of their preaching and, particularly, the role of poverty in their performances was informed by the energy of apostolicism saturating the medieval religious landscape. At the same time, the effacing strategies, such as those centred on the wearing of shoes and the management of external signs of poverty, seems to be influenced by the order's imbrication in the ascetic behaviours of traditional monasticism.

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<sup>58</sup> Sullivan cites: Conrad of Eberbach, *Exordium magnum cisterciense, sive narratio de initio Cisterciensis Ordinis*, ed. by Bruno Griesser, Rome: Editions Cistercienses, 1961, p.111.

<sup>59</sup> Sullivan, *Medieval Inquisitors*, p.62.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, p.63.

<sup>61</sup> See: Donald S. Prudlo, 'The Living Rule: Monastic Exemplarity in Mendicant Hagiography', in *Shaping Stability: The Normation and Formation of Religious Life in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Krijin Pansters and Abraham Plunkett-Latimer, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, pp.229-244.

## Manipulating Poverty in Word and Deed

'In word and deed' received new emphasis in the intellectual and preaching culture created by the Dominicans. The instruction was implicit in almost every exemplary narrative from the order's genesis in Diego's words at the council of Montpellier, 'Do what you see me doing' to the multitude of preaching manuals produced in the first century of the order's history.<sup>62</sup> At the same time, the alignment between word and deed was carefully and demonstrably implicated in the salvation process. Gerard de Frachet writes that Dominican preachers created 'vessels of honour' from weak and fragile people through their words and deeds.<sup>63</sup> Jordan delved slightly deeper when he wrote:

[Dominic] truly grasped everything with ease, his natural abilities, out of which saving works sprung, were irrigated by his affected piety, and his love and piety fertilized whatever he learned, so that it generated fruit in the form of saving works, the judgement of truth pronounces him blessed, as the gospel says: "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and preserve it." For there are twin custodians of the divine word: the first, what we receive we must retain in memory; the second, what we have heard we must deliver in performance and display in deed. There is no doubt that this latter kind of preservation is more praiseworthy, just like it is better to save a grain of corn by entrusting it to the earth than to put it in a box. This lucky servant of God was forsaken in neither; his memory was like a storeroom for God from which he cast forth most copiously and his outward behaviours and works exclaimed so manifestly that which had been stored away in safety in his holy chest.<sup>64</sup>

The dynamic interplay between word, deed, Christian truth and an identifiable charismatic authority in this excerpt is striking. Jordan reveals the way that the spiritual synthesis between

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<sup>62</sup> For example, Constantine of Orvieto rendered this idea: 'dum quod lingue vox promeret, vite meritum confirmaret', *Legenda Constantini Urbevetani*, 14, p.295. On the *Artes Praedicandi*: Marianne G. Briscoe and Barbara H. Jaye, eds., *Artes Praedicandi*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Age 61, Turnhout: Brepols, 1992.

<sup>63</sup> VF 1.3.9, p.16: 'qui fragiles infirmos verbis et exemplis formant, ut vasa in honorem faciant.'

<sup>64</sup> Jordan, Lib., 7: 'Ea nempe que facilitate capiebat, in genii piis irrigabat affectibus, et ex iis salutis opera germinabant beatus in hoc sane iuxta veritatis sententiam dicentis in evangelio: "Beati qui audiunt verbum Dei et custodiunt illud." Etenim cum gemina sit verbi divini custodia, una qua, quod aure suscipimus, memoria retinemus, altera vero qua et ipsum, quod audierimus, mancipamus effectui et exhibemus in opera, quod custodie genus commendabilius fore nemo quidem ambigit, quemadmodum granum frumenti melius conservatur terre mandatum quam in arca repositum, in neutro deficiebat felix hic Dei famulus, cuius memoria velut quoddam dei promptuarium ex hoc in illud eructabat uberius, forisque mores et opera, quid sacro reconditum lateret in pectore, manifestissime clamitabant. Ob hoc ergo, quod mandata domini tam fervido complectebatur affectu, gratiam ei deus scientiarum aduaxit ...'

'word and deed' in Dominic creates what can be thought of as a charismatic moment. Dominic's grasp of scripture entered into a reciprocal relationship with his pious behaviours and actions that not only demonstrated his love and grace but also increased them. Jordan continues that because Dominic 'embraced so fervently what God had entrusted, welcoming the voice of his spouse with his full will, piously and joyfully, the God of knowledge increased the grace in him.'<sup>65</sup> The fact that Dominic's grace is increased<sup>66</sup> through the 'process' of practicing what he preaches or rather by displaying God's word in his behaviours and performances is not the only indication that it is instrumental to the production and acknowledgement of his charismatic authority. The holy fusion between 'word and deed' acts as a medium through which Dominic's grace is increased and thus empowers him to act in the salvation process; and at the same time, the observation of that fusion in and on Dominic is a tool through which others are also made and saved.

The performance of religious truth and its demonstration in action and behaviour was subject to its own particular tensions. The often-minuscule lines between heresy and orthodoxy played a key role in the production of tensions within the performance itself due to often arbitrary or at least enigmatic reasons with which they were drawn. Crossing those lines or at least being seen to cross them was always a distinct possibility and this was particularly true with regard to the performance of poverty. Poverty was heavily implicated in the boundaries which delineated heresy and orthodoxy in the thirteenth century, and it was on its basis that interlocutors on both sides claimed authority.<sup>67</sup> The possibilities and dangers were played out constantly in both the preaching performances of the Dominicans and the texts that they produced. In their early decades, there seems to have been a concerted effort to acknowledge and address these tensions in text and performance. These efforts were subject to both real and conceptual discourses related to the production of religious truth, the salvation of souls and the hybridity of the preacher's body as one example from Peter Ferrand's *Legenda* demonstrates.

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<sup>65</sup>Jordan, Lib., 7: 'Ob hoc ergo, quod mandata domini tam fervido complectebatur affectu excipiens vocem sponsi tam pio bone voluntatis applausu, gratiam ei deus scientiarum adauxit ...'

<sup>66</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>67</sup> This is particularly true of heretical movements such as the Cathars, Waldensians, Spiritual Franciscans and followers of Joachim of Fiore: Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 52-96, 115-189, 208-236.

The basic overview of events proceeds that Dominic and an associate (*socius*) were staying with some wealthy women in Toulouse, who were sliding into heresy after having been deceived by the Cathars' false showing of holiness. Peter describes, in intricate detail, the extent of the deception created by the heretics and in doing so establishes the ideological and practical premise of the Dominicans' authority and authorisation to preach in the Languedoc: the knowledge that they must practice what they preach and that deeds were often more persuasive than words alone. He writes that ignorant people were dragged into heresy by the false performance of holiness, by veritable wolves in sheep's clothing, which only a demonstration of true holiness could negate.<sup>68</sup> The deception, he continues, was generated to such a high level that the heretics 'disfigured their own faces so as to appear to be fasting' and was carried out in such a way that most people would be fooled.<sup>69</sup> To display or rather perform 'true' poverty was not something that Dominic did seemingly naturally nor without some hesitation. Peter states that Dominic, along with his *socius*, with acknowledged guile, set out to entice (*illicere*) the women back to the true faith with his own displays of austerities and poverty, carried out to such extremes that they would have been unable to endure without God's grace.<sup>70</sup> They slept on bare tables, ate only sparingly and wore the cheapest clothes. When asked by the women exactly what clothes they wanted, Dominic replied 'hairshirts' adding 'let no one know, keep it a secret.'<sup>71</sup> Finally convinced that Dominic was truly holy, the women were led back to Catholic truth. Following the exempla itself, Peter launches into a highly detailed and lengthy 'defence' of Dominic's actions as a kind of holy hypocrisy that required a careful balance between interior and exterior, revelation and concealment. He did so to expose the foundation of lies, vice and corruption on which the poverty of the heretics was built.

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<sup>68</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, 22, p.255: 'Eo tempore sciens Dei famulus sceleratorum corda exemplis potius moveri quam verbis, ideoque quam plurimos subdola hereticorum superstition illectos pertrahi ad errorem, excogitavit exemplis exempla retundere, et veris virtutibus sophisticas expugnare. Evant si quidem persone quedam nobiles in partibus Tholosanis, quarum sibi familiaritatem lupi rapaces heretici pellis ovine superducto velamine vendicabant.'

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 22, p.225: 'Exterminant quippe facies suas, ut vidatur ab hominibus ieiunantes.'

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p.225: 'Igitur ut et ipse eas ostensione sanctitatis illiceret, tanta se ipsum cum societate sua austeritate cepit afficere, quanta sine auxilio divine gracie sustinere nequaquam humana infirmitas potuisset.'

<sup>71</sup> Jacopo da Varagine notes in his legend of Saint Bernard that he too sought to maintain secrecy around his wearing of a hairshirt, *The Golden Legend*, p.487.



Holloway comments that Dominic's extreme display of poverty was certainly not typical of the friars. She continues that in this case it was a rather 'ruthless' and 'eminently practical' rhetorical tool that expresses anxieties over the need of the Dominicans to effectively fulfil their preaching mission while not transgressing any orthodox boundaries.<sup>72</sup> Peter writes that Dominic in fact instructed his followers to display 'the appearance of virtue' through their words and gestures and the performance of abstinences and vigils in public in order to 'invite them gracefully to reverence, to faith and love of virtue through a sort of holy hypocrisy.'<sup>73</sup> Sullivan adds that 'it was not that he was pretending to a virtue that he did not possess but rather that he let the virtue he did possess become apparent (albeit in an exaggerated form).'<sup>74</sup> Building upon Holloway and Sullivan's formulations, I argue that Peter's thorough treatment is an emphatic statement of the highly managed nature of the appearance and face of Dominican poverty and its role in the salvation process. It was at the same time a virtue that could be manifested by certain behaviours and actions to produce a desired response and a form of *auctoritas* that was continuously subject to physical and textual manipulation. Combined with the anecdotal evidence presented elsewhere in the Dominican canon, Peter's narrative reveals that external manifestations of poverty as the exercise of charismatic authority was not meant to be continual.

Dominic's instructions for secrecy around his demonstration of poverty suggest that the manifestation of poverty in this instance was a preaching moment designed and carried out specifically for his immediate audience.<sup>75</sup> At the same time, it was also an expression of, and indeed a way to construct and legitimate his personal *auctoritas*, his charisma. As charismatic authority, Dominic's poverty could manifest (and be made manifest) in a variety of settings and ways. What distinguished it from the poverty of the heretics, and indeed the poverty of the involuntary poor was the demonstrable grace he received in, and because of, its

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<sup>72</sup> Holloway, 'Performing Poverty', pp.157-58.

<sup>73</sup> Peter, *Legenda*, 23, p.227: 'Ideo nonnunquam pater iste sanctus ammorebat fratres suos ut, cum apud seculares essent, ad proximorum edificationem aliquantum virtutis apparenciam ostenderent in se ipsius in abstinentiis, vigiliis, verborum ac gestuum disciplina, et sic sancta quadam ypocrisi ad fidei reverenciam et virtutis amorem propensius invitarent.'

<sup>74</sup> Sullivan, *Medieval Inquisitors*, p.65.

<sup>75</sup> There is an instance in the *Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions*, in which Francis, 'in order to conceal the divine grace he possessed' pretended to sleep on a bed in someone's home. It continues that he stopped pretending when 'that faithful mask of God's secrets, felt that Lord Bernard was sleeping deeply': *FOAED: III: The Prophet*, I, pp.435-438.

performance. As Weber defined, charisma is ‘a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities.’<sup>76</sup> Even though Dominican poverty could be highly choreographed and was often formalised in law, regulation or practice, it always reflected an engagement or relationship with the divine.

Through the figure of their founding saint, Dominican writers were able to create strategies, embodied in word and deed, to remove and, indeed, efface, poverty of many of its social implications. These activities implied that poverty was only to be revealed in highly managed and purposeful settings. By limiting the material manifestations of poverty in general, its purposeful demonstration was thus employed to maximum benefit in the saving of souls. While poverty and humility have a close relationship in Peter’s exempla, it might also be said that the reluctance that Dominic was said to have exhibited around public performances of poverty and indeed the secrecy he sought to impose, is an indication not only of the potentialities for mismanagement but also of the ‘antinomian and anti-institutional predispositions’ that could develop in (charismatic) poverty, to borrow a phrase from Shmuel Eisenstadt.<sup>77</sup> This factor likely informed Jordan’s writing of the *Libellus* and similarly may have shaped Peter’s construction of both the exempla and his representation of Dominic more generally. William Millar adds that ‘[w]earing a hairshirt, even in secret, is ostentatious in a way that other, less lurid kinds of devotion are not, especially back then, when the competition in matters of holiness was a political as well as a social and religious issue.’<sup>78</sup> This comment highlights not only the capacities for hypocrisy that Peter adamantly defends and explains but the way that heretical appropriations or expressions of poverty could be viewed in a solely political or secular, and not supernatural context. While the heretics performed their poverty as a deception of God’s favour, deceiving even themselves, for the Dominicans it is not deception at all. It is a carefully managed performance around the revelation of a previously (and purposefully) effaced charism. Because the poverty of the heretics is not

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<sup>76</sup> Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, p.329. See the discussion in the introduction of this thesis, pp.15-17.

<sup>77</sup> Eisenstadt, *Max Weber: On Charisma*, p.xix.

<sup>78</sup> William Ian Millar, *Faking It*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.22.

derived from nor expresses an inner state, it does not communicate or forge any connection to the divine.

### Dominic and Poverty in the *Legenda Aurea* and later Lives

The careful management of revelation and concealment, public and private manifestations of sanctity, particularly around the place and purpose of poverty in the relationship between the religious and the divine, is equally distinct in the twin legends of Saints Francis and Dominic found in the *Legenda Aurea* of the Dominican Jacopo da Varagine. Compiled in the 1260s, Jacopo's *Legenda* occupies a central position in the Dominican hagiographical tradition.<sup>79</sup> The sheer number of surviving manuscripts in Latin, estimated at over 800, indicates that it is hardly an exaggeration that 'medieval scribes produced more copies of the *Legenda*' than any other text with the exception of the Bible.<sup>80</sup> Yet as a compiler or even a hagiographer, Jacopo's reputation among contemporaries fell remarkably short of the heights reached by his text.<sup>81</sup> Within a few years of his death, fellow Dominican historian Bernard Gui was commissioned to produce a new collection of saint's lives at the behest of Master General Bérengar de Landore, who criticised Jacopo's work as 'mutilated and often dubious.'<sup>82</sup> History has proven that whatever Jacopo's scholarly deficiencies, they never impinged upon the text's popularity.

Jacques Le Goff's pivotal last work suggests that the purpose of Jacopo's *Legenda Aurea* was in fact wholly original in the context of late-medieval hagiography and, as such, belies traditional comparisons and considerations. He argues that Jacopo 'does not aim at practical utilization for his work, but rather conceives of it in a universal perspective, combining the history of salvation, liturgical history, and saint's lives.'<sup>83</sup> In this respect, it cannot be lumped in with the legendaries of saint's lives that Donna Trembinski argues was 'a peculiarly

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<sup>79</sup> Granger Ryan completed his authoritative English translation of the Golden Legend from the 1845 edition by Th. Graesse. Giovanni Maggioni has since completed a new modern edition to which all references in this thesis are made.

<sup>80</sup> Granger Ryan, 'Introduction', *Golden Legend*, p.xii. For the list of surviving manuscripts in Latin: Thomas Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum medii aevii*, 2 vols., Rome: Ad S. Sabinae, 1975, II, pp.350-59.

<sup>81</sup> For an older analysis of Jacopo's medieval and modern reputation: Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, pp.11-43. More recently see Epstein, *Jacopo da Varagine*, esp., pp.1-10.

<sup>82</sup> Tugwell, ed., *Bernardi Guidonis Scripta de Sancto Dominico*, MOPH, xxvii, p.22. For an in-depth evaluation of contemporary views of the *Legenda Aurea*: Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, pp.27-72.

<sup>83</sup> Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*, p.14.

Dominican invention.<sup>84</sup> Eschewing any sort of traditional announcements of method, purpose or intention, Jacopo announces his theme as ‘the whole time-span of this present life’.<sup>85</sup> Le Goff takes this to mean that

his aim is to construct a *summa* that explains the meaning of human time and makes it possible to experience it. The time in question in the Golden Legend is indeed the time of humanity but, as the author specifies, it is not chronological time. It is the time of the relations of humanity with the supreme God...<sup>86</sup>

As indicated in the previous chapter, poverty was integral to the relationships forged between Dominican religious and God. Accordingly, the meaning of poverty in the parallel lives of Saints Dominic and Francis can also be freed somewhat from its traditional comparative constraints and judgements within the ‘relational framework’ that Le Goff suggests for the *Legenda Aurea*. This move re-focuses attention towards what the representation and treatment of poverty says about the respective saints’ relationships to the divine.

Trembinski notes that in the earliest lives of Francis of Assisi penned by Dominicans, the first being Bartholomew of Trent’s *Liber epilogorum*, compiled ca. 1244 the saint is often painted in an unflattering light, with criticisms of the ‘erratic and possibly irrational’ path he took to poverty imbricated in the language and piecing together of the narrative.<sup>87</sup> She continues that both Jacopo and the mid-thirteenth century Dominican compiler, Vincent of Beauvais, were more sympathetic, writing within a ‘new spirit of reconciliation between the orders’, occurring as a consequence of the attack on the mendicant way of life occurring at the University of Paris in the mid-decades of the thirteenth century.<sup>88</sup> Jacopo repeats a legend originating in the *Vitae Fratrum* of the two saints meeting at Rome, in which Dominic is said to have declared to Francis: “You are my partner, you will run with me stride for stride. Let us

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<sup>84</sup> Donna Trembinski, ‘Non Alter Christus: Early Dominican Lives of Saint Francis’, *Franciscan Studies*, 63, 2008, pp.69-105, at p.71.

<sup>85</sup> *LA*, p.3: ‘Universum tempus presentis vite.’

<sup>86</sup> Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*, p.18.

<sup>87</sup> Trembinski notes that Bartholomew of Trent remarks that Francis was as a merchant ‘so full of vanity’ and did not immediately understand divine signs but was ‘finally prodded to understanding’: ‘Non Alter Christus’, p.73; Bartholomew of Trent, *Liber Epilogorum in Gesta Sanctorum*, ed. by Emore Paoli, Firenze; SISMEL, 2001, p.305.

<sup>88</sup> Trembinski, ‘Non Alter Christus’, p.73. For Humbert of Romans’ role in the improvement of relations between the orders: Brett, *Humbert*, pp.23-33

stand together and no adversary will prevail against us.” The narrative continues that the two saints were, from that moment, ‘of one heart and soul in the Lord, and they made it a rule that those who would follow them should live in the same harmony for all time.’<sup>89</sup> The general congenial atmosphere between the two orders that is suggested in the use of stories of the saints’ meeting did not however mean that differences in their *vita formae* or in the ideologies which underpinned their *raison d’être* were collapsed or elided. Jacopo delineated their individual distinctiveness as Saints and as founders of religious orders, particularly around the poverty each pursued and embodied.

Saint Francis’s poverty is presented in the *Legenda Aurea* in an unambiguous manner. It has clearly defined parameters, it is performed constantly, unwaveringly and with high visibility, and is remarkable for its literalness. By contrast, signs of a strictly material poverty are barely perceptible in the life of Saint Dominic and those that are present are by contrast bland and lifeless. Whereas Francis taught his followers ‘to put away the world’s vanities’ and ‘to embrace poverty’ by mimicking the appearance and behaviours of the involuntary poor,<sup>90</sup> the Dominicans added to the rule of Augustine ‘certain stricter practices that would be observed as constitutions.’<sup>91</sup> While Francis was found ‘clothed in rags and shivering with wintry cold’,<sup>92</sup> the Dominicans at Saint Sixtus at Rome ‘one day...found they had very little bread.’<sup>93</sup> And as Francis ‘threw his money on the ground, treating it as worth no more than dust’ and, on a different occasion, effected a miracle whereby coins were transformed into a viper, declaring “[t]o the servants of God [...] money is nothing but the devil and a poisonous snake”;<sup>94</sup> to a

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<sup>89</sup> Translation Granger Ryan, *The Golden Legend*, p.434. *LA*, pp.724-25: “Tu es socius meus, tu pariter curres mecum, stemus simul et nullus adversarius prevalebit” [...] est eis cor unum et anima una in domino. Quod et in posteris mandaverunt perpetuo observari.’ See also: *VF*, I, I, 4, pp.9-11.

<sup>90</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.607. *LA*, p.1019

<sup>91</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.433. *LA*, p. 723. Jordan states that the stricter observances were ‘in connection with diet, fasting, bedding and woollen clothing’ and that they decreed to not own property but to only accept revenues to provide for necessities: *Libellus*, 42, p.46; On the development of the Dominican Rule and Constitutions see Linde’s forthcoming collection, *Making and Breaking the Rules*, esp. Melville, ‘The Fixed and the Fluid: Observations on the Rational Bases of Dominican Constitution and Organization in the Middle Ages’, pp.19-36. On the Augustinian Rule and its apostolic inspiration: J. J. van Bavel, ‘The Evangelical Inspiration of the Rule of Saint Augustine’, *The Downside Review*, 93, 1975, 83-99.

<sup>92</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.607. *LA*, p.1018.

<sup>93</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.436. *LA*, p.729.

<sup>94</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.607, p.613; *LA*, p.1018: ‘coram ipso eam proiciens tamquam pulverem vilipendit.’; p.1028: “Pecunia seruis dei nihil aliud est quam dyabolus et coluber venenosus”.

boatman demanding a payment for a fare, Dominic said calmly 'that he himself was a disciple of Christ and carried neither gold nor money.'<sup>95</sup> The contrast in the vibrancy and language in the examples suggest that Jacopo may have engaged in a distinct 'dulling down' of Dominic's poverty, in a way that reflects the prevailing attitudes among Dominican hagiographers to carefully manage poverty's representation.<sup>96</sup> Certainly, Jacopo does not give the same emphasis to poverty as Peter Ferrand in relation to the expression of Dominic's authority to convert heretics. Yet amongst what could almost be considered as a lackadaisical attitude toward Dominic's poverty or at the very least a de-centring, Jacopo includes Dominic's 'testament' complete with the curses.<sup>97</sup> In retaining the prohibition against temporal possessions, he also preserves the distinction between poverty as a material condition and the more ambiguous, less measurable instruction to 'possess poverty'. The distinction also shapes the divergence in the appearance, meaning and implications of poverty in the lives of the two saints.

The differences in the nature of the poverty of the two saints, the variances in its purpose and the relationship it forged between the saint and Christ are further exemplified in examples, which run parallel to each other in the modern edition and relate to a step early along the path to sanctity.<sup>98</sup> In the life of Francis, Jacopo tells how Francis's kiss of the leper came about:

The ancient enemy tried to turn Francis aside from his virtuous intention and forced the image of a hunchback woman upon his mind, warning him that if he did not give up the way of life he had undertaken, the devil would make him as ugly as she was. Then, however, he heard the Lord comforting him and saying: "Francis, take the bitter instead of the sweet, and despise yourself if you long to know me!" then he found himself face to face with a leper, the sort of

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<sup>95</sup> *The Golden Legend*, p.437. LA, p.730

<sup>96</sup> For an assessment of how Vincent of Beauvais managed the charisma of Francis and Dominic over the two redactions of the *Speculum Historiale*: Thomas Zahora, 'Saint-à-porter: fashioning Saint Francis in the encyclopedias of Vincent and Ps.- Vincent of Beauvais', *Speciae, Cahiers de l'Atelier Vincent of Beauvais*, Nouvelle série, 2, 2012, 163-181.

<sup>97</sup> Tugwell emits similar surprise that the curse is retained in Bernard Gui's life of Dominic: *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.140.

<sup>98</sup> For the way that Jacopo expressed his views on poverty and the contempt of the world through Saints such as St Augustine: Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, pp.136-160. Reames concludes that: 'Jacobus consistently goes so far in condemning the love of this world that his teaching merits the label "puritannical"...', p.158.

man he utterly abhorred; but remembering the Lord's word to him, he ran and kissed the afflicted man.<sup>99</sup>

Holding self-contempt and being contemptible formed a major part of Francis's poverty and that which he bequeathed to his followers.<sup>100</sup>

In the passage on Dominican, which falls at the equivalent stage of the text, quite a few of his early acts from the traditional canon (at the time represented by Humbert of Romans' *Legenda*) are condensed in a way that provides important context to his later saintly acts. The section begins by narrating that as a child Dominic often climbed from his bed to lie on the bare ground. He was so fervent in his studies at Palencia that he did not drink wine and that he sold all of his possessions to aid the poor during a famine. Jacopo includes the passage regarding the spread of Dominic's fame that prompted Diego to recruit him for the canons regular, among whom he became a 'mirror of virtue' and his brethren appointed him subprior.<sup>101</sup> Jacopo then writes,

Ipsae autem nocte ac die lectioni et orationi vacabat assidue deum exorans ut sibi hanc gratiam infundere dignaretur qua se totum aliquando saluti posset impendere proximorum.

[He devoted himself day and night to reading and prayer, ceaselessly beseeching God to deign to give him the grace to spend himself totally for the salvation of his neighbour.]<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *Golden Legend*, pp.606-07. *LA*, p.1017: 'Antiquus hostis eum a salubri propositio conatur avertere et feminam quandam sue civitatis monstruose gibbosam cordi eius immittit et nisi respiscat a ceptis similem se facturam minatur, sed a domino confortatus audivit: "Francisce, amara pro dulcibus sume et te ipsum contempne, si me cupis agnoscere." Quendam igitur leprosum obvium habens cum huiusmodi homines multum naturaliter abhorreret, divini tamen memor oraculi accurrens in oscula eius ruit; et post hoc ille statim disparuit.'

<sup>100</sup> Saint Clare continued this theme and based the poverty of her order on that very principle, writing to Agnes of Prague: 'sed pauperem Christum, virgo pauper, amplectere. Vide contemptibilem pro te factum et sequere, facta pro ipso contemptibilis in hoc mundo.' Joan Mueller, ed., *Clare's Letters to Agnes: Texts and Sources*, St. Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 2001, 2.19-20, p.58.

<sup>101</sup> There is a divergence in the arrangement of paragraphs between Maggioni's Latin edition and Granger Ryan's translation. While Granger Ryan begins the paragraph with Dominic's studies in Palencia, I have followed Maggioni. On the problems with the production of modern editions of the *Legend Aurea* see the introduction to: Jacques de Voragine, *La Légende dorée*, transl. by Alain Boureau, Monique Goulet, Pascal Collomb, Laurence Moulinier, and Stefano Mula, Paris: Gallimard, 2004. My thanks to Dr Chris Jones for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>102</sup> *LA*, p.719; *The Golden Legend*, p.431.

The quoted extract had its origins in Jordan's *Libellus*. While 'poverty' does not immediately spring to mind when reading this episode, the selling of Dominic's possessions and care of the poor recalled at the beginning of the passage is the main signal that poverty has both a structural and thematic role in Dominic's path to sanctity.<sup>103</sup> His acts form part of his fame that attracts Diego's attention and indeed a constituent feature of what makes him a mirror of virtue. Jacopo's decision to continue to utilise the verb *impendere*, 'to spend' is indicative of the way that metaphors of poverty and economy, which posited bodies and souls as currency, were interwoven in Dominican conceptions of sanctity. Jacopo's choice is even more potent in juxtaposition with the verb *vacare* which could be interpreted to mean that Dominic was emptying himself, day and night in reading and prayer. This ties in with the link between poverty and the annihilation of self-interest and self-will that had formed in Jordan's spirituality. Poverty is thus implicated through the construction and ordering of the material in the section and in the specific language chosen.

The use of economic metaphors to describe the relationship between the religious and the divine was relatively common in the high medieval period.<sup>104</sup> One of the most exceptional uses of this language is the Franciscan text, the *Holy Commerce of Saint Francis with Lady Poverty* (*sacrum commercium sancti Francisci cum domina Paupertate*), which was probably written in 1227.<sup>105</sup> Jordan had begun the historical narrative in the *Libellus* by comparing Diego's role in the salvation process with that of a money-lender, who sought to return the Lord's investment in him (*talentum*) with interest in the form of souls, a method which was later employed by Bernard Gui in his life of Saint Thomas.<sup>106</sup> Jordan's formulation draws on

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<sup>103</sup> See also: Lappin, 'The Dominican Path Towards Mendicancy', pp.31-58.

<sup>104</sup> See the recent collection of essays: *Money, Morality, and Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Juliann Vitullo and Diane Wolfthal, London: Routledge, 2016; on the use of commercial metaphors and imagery in Anglo-Saxon homilies: Samantha Zacher, *Preaching the Converted: The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2009; for their use in *sermones ad status*: Birgit van den Hoven, *Work in Ancient and Medieval Thought*, Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1996, pp.204-12, 232-3, 243, 252-5; see also: Joerg O. Fichte, "For couthise after cros, þe croune stant in gold": Money as Matter and Metaphor in Piers Plowman' in *Material Culture and Cultural Materialism in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Curtis Perry, Turnhout: Brepols, 2001, pp.57-74.

<sup>105</sup> *Sacrum Commercium Sancti Francisci cum domina Paupertate*, ed. by Stefano Brufani, Assisi: Edizioni Porziuncula, 1990.

<sup>106</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 4: '... qualiter mutarum animarum fenerator effectus talentum sibi creditum cum usura multiplici suo domino reportaret.' Interestingly, Tugwell does not translate the comparison of Diego to a money-lender, rendering the passage: 'He was determined that his Master should receive back his talent with generous interest', *On the Beginnings*, p.1. Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, IV, p.170: '[...] cepit agente Deo secum



ideas in the parable of talents found in Matthew 25: 14-30.<sup>107</sup> In this parable, a lord, about to set off on a journey, gives his servants each an amount of talents. The first two double the talents left to them, while the third servant instead buries his out of fear. At this admission, the lord declares to his unprofitable servant (*inutilis servus*): ‘wicked and slothful servant, you knew that I reap where I do not sow, and I gather where I did not scatter. You should have therefore committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming, I should have received my own with usury.’<sup>108</sup>

The ideas pertaining to the growth and profit of investment found in this parable are reiterated in Dominican historiography in its first century. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, drew on Luke 10.35: ‘whatever you spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay you’ in his 1256 defence of the Dominicans against the attack by the seculars, *Liber Contra Impugnantes Dei Cultum et Religionem*. Against the criticism that it was not lawful for a mendicant to teach, he claimed that teaching was a work of supererogation such as that indicated in Luke’s gospel and as such ‘is rewarded by a peculiar recompense’.<sup>109</sup> Jordan of Saxony and Humbert of Romans take up the well-worn nomenclature, *inutilis servum* in the various texts they wrote, which can be conceived of as both a mark of humility and a reference to the role that they assumed as Christ’s disciple in the saving of souls.<sup>110</sup> In his *De eruditione praedicatorum*

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disponere, ut seculo renuntiaret omnimode et in ordine fratrum predicatorum talentum sibi creditum excellentis ingenii et intelligentie perspicacis domino redderet duplicatum’. Danuta Shanzer notes that a move to equate the poor and needy with ‘money-lenders’ of the Lord gained traction in the fifth century to get ‘the Lord off the hook for usury’, ‘Bible Exegesis, Literature, and Society’, in *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 18, 2008, 130-157, at p.138. She cites the fifth-century writer Salvian as the first to express this type of exegesis: ‘For since the money-lenders of the saviour are rightly understood as the poor and needy, because the money that is dispensed to such people is increased, there is no doubt that what-ever is paid out to the needy is returned to God with interest’, *ibid*, pp.138-39.

<sup>107</sup> Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Gospel of Matthew*, transl. by John Henry Parker, J. G. F. and J. Rivington, London: 1842, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/CAMatthew.htm#25>. Accessed 9/07/2017.

<sup>108</sup> Matt. 25: 26-27: ‘Serve male, et piger, sciebas quia meti ubi non semino, et congreco ubi non sparsi: oportuit ergo te committere pecuniam meam numulariis, et veniens ego recepissem utique quod meum est cum usura.’

<sup>109</sup> Aquinas, *Liber Contra Impugnantes Dei Cultum et Religionem*, transl. by John Proctor, London: Sands and Co., 1902, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/ContraImpugnantes.htm>, Accessed 2/8/2017, 2.1.1: ‘Quod enim primo dicunt, esse domini consilium de vitando magisterio, patet multipliciter esse falsum. Primo quia supererogationes, de quibus dantur consilia, habent praemium eminentius, ut patet ex hoc quod dicitur Lucae X, 35: et quodcumque supererogaveris, ego, cum rediero, reddam tibi: quod Glossa de supererogatione consiliorum exponit.’

<sup>110</sup> VF, Prologue, p.3.; Jordan, Lib., 1. Rudolph of Faenza quotes Dominic on his death bed as saying: ‘Ego sum dignus depositione, quia ego sum inutilis et remissus’, *Acta Canon.*, 33, p.151.

Humbert also mentions the way that preaching increases a household's goods and the 'fortune in souls' made by the Apostles.<sup>111</sup> Gerard de Frachet favours the use of terms related to the profit of and for souls, of the order's work in preaching, prayer and learning in the *Vitae Fratrum*.<sup>112</sup> One *exemplum* includes a vision describing the Virgin Mary's patronage of the foundation of the order, in which she reminds her son of the poverty and sufferings he endured and entreats him to not let the 'inestimable price that he paid' for human souls come to nothing nor let his precious blood be unprofitable by giving up on humanity.<sup>113</sup> Lester Little concluded that the 'friars ... reflected the society they entered by their frequent use of market-place vocabulary.'<sup>114</sup> At the same time, it also frequently structured and expressed the Dominicans' spirituality.

The passage describing the way that Dominic sought to 'spend' himself in the salvation of Christendom was utilised in most of the historical and hagiographical works produced in the order's first century in varying forms and with diverging additions and deletions.<sup>115</sup> The original passage from Jordan's *Libellus* reads:

It was [Dominic's] most frequent and special prayer, that God might think it worthy to bestow on him true charity, effectual for the caring and winning of mankind's salvation. He judged that he would only truly become a member of Christ, when he could spend himself entirely in the winning of souls, just as the saviour of all, the Lord Jesus, offered himself completely for our salvation.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Humbert, 'De eruditione praedicatorum', II, iv, p.383; see also: II, xxx where he includes the gloss on Job 28.8, which states: 'Pedlars are preachers who do spiritual business: they proffer preaching to their hearers, to win from them faith and good works.' He continues that '[b]y this kind of trading souls are won'. In II, xxxii, p.452, he expands on the metaphor to describe preaching as a form of trade 'profitable' for the head of a household. Translations in Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, pp.193-94.

<sup>112</sup> For example: *utiliter*, cap V, vii, p.33; *fructus*, cap. VI, xii, p.50

<sup>113</sup> *VF*, n.7, p.9: 'ob quam causam supplicio tue clemencie, Fili, quatenus, ne tam inestimabile precium pereat animarum, ne preciosus sanguis tuus inutiliter sit effusus, aliquod adhibeas consilium adhuc in animarum salutem.'

<sup>114</sup> Little, *Profit Economy*, p.200.

<sup>115</sup> I could not find it in Bartholomew of Trent's *Liber Epilogorum*, Thomas of Cantimpré's *De apibus* nor Martin of Troppau's *Chronicon*.

<sup>116</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 13: 'Fuit autem ei frequens et specialis quedam ad deum petitio, ut ei largiri dignaretur veram caritatem curande et procurande salutis hominum efficacem, arbitrans sese tunc primam fore veraciter membrum Christi, cum se totum pro viribus lucrificandis animabus impenderit, sicut salvator omnium dominus Iesus totam se nostram obtulit in salute.'

Peter Ferrand focuses more on elaborating the nature of Dominic's prayer rather than petition itself. In doing so, he removes the verb *impendere*, but retains the reference to Dominic's *imitatio Christi* when he writes that the saint battered divine ears with his frequent, special prayer for a charity comparable to Christ's.<sup>117</sup> The third to revise Dominic's *Legenda*, Constantine of Orvieto removed the references to Christ<sup>118</sup> but utilised *impendere*, multiplying the economic implications by also inserting the phrase, *nec fraudatus est* (nor would he be swindled).<sup>119</sup> Humbert of Romans was evidently using a version of Peter's *vita* of Dominic that included the phrase '*dignaretur infundere, qua proximorum salutem*' after *caritatem*.<sup>120</sup> Jacopo's version then was a highly compacted version of Constantine's. Jacopo lifts the phrase 'emptying himself day and night in prayer' from much earlier in the chapter from Constantine in which the remainder of the passage appears. Jacopo's rearrangement changes the sense of the passage from one that emphasised the ecstatic nature of Dominic's prayer to one that was decidedly more contemplative, passive even. This is possibly a reaction to the way that poverty was implicated in the secular mendicant dispute. While the spirituality offered in the passage had evolved somewhat from the framework established by Jordan, its analysis reveals the way that economic metaphors remained central to the expression of Dominic's spirituality and legacy. Furthermore, they continued to be employed even as interlocutors sought to remove the social implications of poverty through practices of effacement.

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<sup>117</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, X, pp.215-16: 'Frequenter aures divine clementie hac speciali petitione pulsabat, quatenus cordi eius illam caritatem posset efficacius procurare, illius exemplo videlicet, qui se totum nostram obtulit salutem.'

<sup>118</sup> This seems to support Tugwell's proposition that emphasising Dominic's *imitatio Christi* was important in the first decade or so of the order's history, it lost traction from the mid-thirteenth century: Tugwell, 'Christ as Model of Sanctity', p.97.

<sup>119</sup> Constantine, *Legenda*, XI, pp.292-93: 'Quapropter hoc apud se semper speciali desiderio pulsabatur, hac precipue et incessanter aures divine clementie pulsabat, quatenus hanc sibi gratiam dignaretur infundere, qua se totum aliquando saluti posset impendere proximorum, nec fraudatus est tandem a desiderio suo.' Jean de Mailly's legend, which appeared just prior to Constantine's does not employ the same language, although he does transmit the sense of the passage: '... et crebro in oratione pernoctans hoc a Domino frequenter petebat, ut daretur ei gracia qua saluti pereuntium subveniret', 'Dominic Confessoris', *Abbreviato in gestis sanctorum. Supplementum hagiographicum*, ed. by G iovanni Paolo Maggioni, Firenze: SISMELE, 2013, p.289.

<sup>120</sup> Humbert, *Legenda*, IX, p.376: 'Frequenter quoque et aures divine clementie hac speciale petitione pulsabat, quatinus cordi eius illam caritatem dignaretur infundere, qua proximorum salutem posset efficacius procurare, exemplo eius videlicet, qui se totum nostram obtulit in salutem.' On the discrepancies in Peter's manuscripts: Ferrand, *Legenda*, n.c, p.216; on the manuscript tradition: Ferrand, *Legenda*, pp.199-203 and Tugwell, 'Petri Ferrandi', pp. 17-70; On Humbert's use of Peter: Tugwell, *Humberti*, pp.53-64.

The relational framework that poverty entails and by which it is occasioned is perhaps articulated most completely in the version offered by Dietrich von Apolda in the 1290s.<sup>121</sup> Dietrich describes Dominic's desire to save souls as a powerful longing, that he entreated the Lord with frequent prayers and vows to be made worthy to act. Using the verb *impendere* twice, Dietrich states that, wishing to spend himself totally for the salvation of his neighbour, Dominic thought he would only truly be a member of Christ if he could spend himself wholly in the winning of souls in Christ's example. He adds the phrase from Constantine, 'nor was he swindled (*fraudatus est*) of his desire' and changes between verbs imbricated in discourses of growth and profit such as *suscitare meruit* and *auget frugum justitiae incrementa* when he describes the authority granted to Dominic and his resulting work in the world (including the foundation of the Order of Preachers), paraphrasing 2 Cor 9.10.<sup>122</sup> It is only towards the end of the century that the spirituality inherent in the passage seems to get closest to that expressed by Jordan.<sup>123</sup> This, in itself, is perhaps suggestive of the impact that the dispute with the seculars in the mid-thirteenth century had on the Dominican's spiritual development and expression.

Throughout the order's first century the issue of poverty was polarising the Franciscan Order and was embroiled in the waxing and waning tensions between the mendicants and the seculars at an intellectual level. These changing contexts impacted upon the linguistic choices made in each redaction of this passage. Yet, each one from the progenitor in Jordan's *Libellus* manages to demonstrate the role that poverty could play at a discursive level to express and make sense of Dominic's spiritual legacy. Within each text, poverty appeared not as a material condition but as an expression of a charismatic authority. At the same time, poverty's functions and meanings can hardly be disengaged from Dominic's other bequests: charity and humility. It is no coincidence that the use of economic metaphors forges an inextricable,

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<sup>121</sup> For the place of his work in the Dominican tradition see: Tugwell, 'Nine Ways', pp.6-22 and 'Bernardus Guidonis', pp.37-46.

<sup>122</sup> Deitrich, *Libellus*, 1.25, p.564: 'Vehemens erat in eius pectore desiderium salutis omnium animarum, quam ut procurare cum effectu dignus fieret, frequentibus precibus et votis specialibus a Domino flagitabat. Optabat se totum saluti impendere proximorum, arbitrates, tunc se veraciter membrum Christi, si se exemplo ipsius omnino lucrificandis impenderet animabus. Nec fraudatus est a desiderio suo: semen enim fratri suo defuncto, Christo videlicet cruxione, verbum ipsius disseminans et Praedicatores instituens, suscitare meruit. Et ecce granum seminis multiplans Deus, auget frugum justitiae incrementa.'

<sup>123</sup> I discuss the links between Jordan and the role of poverty in fourteenth-century spirituality further in Chapters Five and Six of this thesis.

inherently productive, relationship between the religious, the receiving and giving of grace, a personal connection with Christ and authority to act in the salvation process. Their use also positions the 'self' and 'self-will' as a commodity, possession or form of currency that could be abandoned and renounced as the assumption of poverty.

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Donald Prudlo writes that Saint Dominic 'was a difficult figure to get excited about [...] doing his best work in administrative, diplomatic, and organizational roles, he lacked the open and accessible charisma of St. Francis.'<sup>124</sup> In an indirect way, Prudlo manages to get to the crux of the matter. This chapter has shown the way that the Dominicans worked to limit the openness and accessibility of Dominic's charisma by managing the signs and expressions of his poverty. In effacing his poverty of its immediate and on-going association with the poverty of the laity, Dominican writers kept their narrative construction firmly within boundaries of orthodox sanctity established by the Church. In this sense, the role played by poverty within the developing Dominican historical/hagiographical tradition, as well as its appearance and purpose within and outside the narrative itself, was fundamentally connected to the negotiation and exercise of charismatic religious authority. Hagiographical narrative often employed seemingly innocuous statements regarding Dominic's 'love of poverty' as the basis on which his sanctity would be built. At the same time, Peter Ferrand has Dominic undertaking a highly-choreographed revelation of his 'inner poverty' to convert those verging away from orthodoxy. Even as Dominican writers effaced poverty of its material and social indicators, their continued use of economic metaphors which often posited the bodies and souls as currency to be traded or accumulated offers a glimpse into the way that concepts of poverty and wealth were embedded in their spiritual and devotional worldview.

The relationship between poverty and Dominican conceptions of authority did not progress smoothly or uniformly but was subject to significant historical and ideological pressure. Tensions between the seculars and the mendicants over issues to do with the latter's pastoral and academic rights and privileges in the mid-thirteenth century impacted heavily on the self-representation and stylisation of the Dominican religious at a personal and collective level.

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<sup>124</sup> Prudlo, *Peter Martyr*, pp.98-99.

This became apparent in the conception and writing of historical and hagiographical narratives, particularly those constructed with compilation techniques. Compilation can be considered as one of the most textualised performances in which the order was involved. During the thirteenth century, with the Dominicans quite often at the helm, compilation developed into a highly refined system of organising material. At the same time, it was a 'distinctive form of writing' that was creative and aligned the practitioner with the authorities from whom they 'borrowed'.<sup>125</sup> As the following chapter shows, compilation was one of the order's most important tools in the construction and negotiation of authority, thus providing an illuminating prism through which to explore the means and ways in which it intersects with the order's poverty.

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<sup>125</sup> Minnis, 'Late-Medieval Discussions of Compilatio and the Role of the Compiler', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 101, 1979, 385-421, at p.50.



## Section Two: Development and Adaptation





## Chapter Four. 'The least of all my brothers': Compilation and the negotiation of authority.

There are such a multitude of books, the time of life is so short, and the memory so weak, that the human mind cannot comprehend all that was written. For these reasons, and as an answer to a request made by my superiors to me, the least of all my Dominican brothers [...] I chose, according to my capabilities, extracts of almost all the books and writings that I have read [...] I united, summarised and ordered these extracts; keeping only those which serve a purpose for establishing Christian doctrine, defining morals, promoting attachment to charity, or else for displaying the mystical sense of Scriptures, or the literal or symbolic sense of their truth. So, imposing a sort of limit on my curiosity [...] I directed my attention to this one grand opus, so as to not refuse the fruit of my labour to those who were asking me and to satisfy myself in some small way.<sup>1</sup>

Dominican textual production was driven by their pastoral activities and by the need to address the education, spiritual and emotional needs of their potential audiences. The demand for manuals grew exponentially in the thirteenth century due to the quasi-professionalisation of preaching and confession that was occurring at the hands of the mendicant orders.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, encyclopaedia-like histories and hagiographies

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent of Beauvais, *Lib. Apol.*, c 1, p.465: 'Quoniam multitudo librorum et temporis brevitatis, memoria quoque labilitas non patiuntur cuncta, quae scripta sunt, pariter animo comprehendere, michi omnium fratrum minimo [...] ingenii me electos ex omnibus fere, quos legere potui, [...] et ordine summam redigere ex his dumtaxat precipue, quae pertinere videntur vel ad fidei nostrae dogmatis astructionem vel ad morum instructionem, sive ad excitandam caritatis devotionem, aut divinarum scripturarum mysticam expositionem, vel ad ipsius veritatis manifestam aut symbolicam declarationem, ut et studio meo quasi modum quandam imponens curiositati meae [...] per hoc unum grande opus, utcumque satisfacerem, et laboris mei fructum poscentibus non negarem.'

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Humbert's *De eruditione praedicatorum*; for an English translation and introduction: Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, pp.179-384. The literature on preaching and confession manuals is extensive. For the *Artes Praedicandi* generally: Briscoe and Jaye, *Artes Praedicandi*; Siegfried Wenzel, *The Art of the Preacher: Five Medieval Texts and Translations*, Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013; Siegfried Wenzel, *Medieval Artes Praedicandi: A Synthesis of Scholastic Sermon Structure*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. On the famous Dominican manual for confession, William Perardus's *Summa virtutum ac vitiorum*: Richard Newhauser, *The Treatise of Vices and Virtues in Latin and the Vernacular*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1993; Siegfried Wenzel, 'The continuing life of William Perardus's *Summa Vitiorum*', in *'Ad litteram': Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent Emery, Jr., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992, pp.135-163. On medieval confession generally: Peter Biller and Alastair Minnis, eds., *Handling sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, York: York Medieval Press, 1998. On the medieval book-trade: Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200-1500*, Turnhout: H. Miller, 2000.

flourished to service those same industries.<sup>3</sup> Within this explosion of textual production, issues and tensions concentrating on the authority of those who produced the texts began to emerge, which occurred as a consequence of the development and use of certain textual practices and techniques. The desire for brevity and simplicity combined with the need for transportable books to suit the mendicant lifestyle. The proliferation of itinerant preachers in the twelfth and thirteenth century required veritable portable libraries to be constructed as quickly as possible, which meant that they were often produced through compilation practices. *Compilatio*, described by Vincent of Beauvais above, is a process in which the compiler borrows from other authoritative works rather than creating something from scratch.<sup>4</sup> This process not only expedited the production of texts but diversified the sources and the acquisition of material. The ‘borrowing’ from a range of inherently different works, themselves composed with diverse intentions, purposes and processes, created works that were quite original in scope and organisation, as well as utilising a number of genres within a single text. This chapter suggests that the development of the compilation practices and oeuvres in the mendicant orders stand as witness to the transformation of patterns and discourses of authority in late-medieval literature and seeks to explore the role that poverty played in shaping the self-presentation and concepts of authority of the Dominican compilers.

Compilation seems to become increasingly popular and refined at the juncture when, in Jaeger’s words, ‘a rising intellectual culture came to terms with a fading charismatic culture’ which brought with it a shift in emphasis from presence to representation.<sup>5</sup> Compilation texts were the product of an intellectual culture that was concerned with the learning and dissemination of orthodox doctrine. Compilers purported to present knowledge in a factual,

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<sup>3</sup> I use the phrase ‘encyclopaedia-like’ in relation to the questions posed by Jacques Le Goff, regarding whether or not encyclopaedias carried the same meanings in the thirteenth century: ‘Pour quoi le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle a-t-il été plus particulièrement un siècle d’encyclopédisme?’, in *L’enciclopedia medievale: Atti del convegno “L’enciclopedia medievale”, San Gimignano 8-10 ottobre 1992*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone, Ravenna: Longo, 1994, pp.23-40, at p. 27. On medieval Encyclopaedism in general, start with: Peter Binkley, ed., *Pre-modern Encyclopaedic Texts. Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1-4 July 1996*, Leiden: Brill, 1997; Mary Franklin Brown, *Reading the World: Encyclopaedic Writing in the Scholastic Age*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012; On the problems of using the term ‘encyclopaedia’ for medieval texts: Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World*, pp.1-17.

<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Bernard Gui wrote with regard to the composition to his *Flores Chronicorum*: ‘...plurimum tractorum, historiographorum et cronicorum sepe perlegi libros et opera, ac gesta passionisque sanctorum, in quibus ipsorum pontificum nomina ac tempora sepius commemorantur’, Deslisle, ‘Notices’, p.392.

<sup>5</sup> Jaeger, ‘Charismatic Body’, p.126.

objective and unambiguous manner, using scientific methods and systems of organisation. In this intellectually focussed and expressed formulation, the obvious 'presence' of the compiler is virtually extinguished and their authority mediated principally through their texts and practices. This chapter seeks to explore if poverty intersected with the authority formulated and expressed in the proliferation of compilation texts in the Dominican Order in its first century. In the preceding chapters, I surveyed the effects of charismatic/intellectual dynamic in the expression and experience of poverty. I suggested that the Dominicans pursued a decidedly face-less poverty, a move that emphasised its devotional and spiritual dimensions. The re-imagination of apostolic poverty during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries became highly charged and contested as it encountered the emerging intellectual culture that both Jaeger and Clare Waters argued defined the thirteenth century. The legacy or residues of this clash can be seen in the Dominicans' textual productions during the thirteenth century.

Changing notions around the relationship between charismatic and institutional forms of authority that arose in the context and performance of mendicant poverty, were both informed and compounded by the series of conflicts that broke out between the mendicants and the seculars at the University of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century. Secular clergy at Paris, fronted by William of Saint-Amour, took aim at the mendicants for the way that they encroached on the seculars' traditional sphere of influence and authority. While the seculars' arguments were broad and complex, they basically centred on the authority of the mendicants to teach, to preach and to hear confession. Poverty, as one of the key foundations on which the mendicant friars constructed and exercised authority, was heavily implicated in the conflict.<sup>6</sup> The conflicts consequently created discernible tensions in Dominican texts particularly around the negotiation and presentation of authority. In this context, the compiler often appears as essentially effaced by, and in, their 'texts'. Similarly, their charismatic authority, often derived from performances such as preaching, is routinized by the structures erected to transmit their teachings to succeeding generations. I argue that the figure of the Dominican compiler reveals how the dynamic tensions created by the clash between charismatic and intellectual cultures converged in the creation of a textual authority that is connected to the experience and expression of the order's poverty. Effacing discourses,

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<sup>6</sup> Guy Geltner, ed., *William of Saint-Amour's De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum: An Introduction, Edition and Translation*, Leuven: Peeters, 2008. See pp.93-112 for the main thrust of his attack on the mendicants.

expressed in the order's texts and performances, converged with a widespread movement in medieval literature, which informed the establishment of an independently authoritative authorial persona.

To explore these interactions, the chapter is divided into three broad sections. The first introduces some of the order's key compilers and the techniques through which they were linked. The second section explores how the roles that Dominican religious performed in the context of their pastoral work, and how the broader contexts in which the order found itself, impacted on the general development of the content and the way the compiler positioned themselves within their text. Picking up the mantle of Dominic and Jordan, compilers transmitted the effacing culture of the order's early years both in practice, in the compilation and editing of their texts, as well as conceptually, in their self-presentation. The concluding section looks at the spiritual objectives of the *specula* tradition more generally as well as those of the compilers. I consider the position that they carve out for themselves (both literally and metaphorically) in the relationship that the *speculum* form posits between God and humankind. Throughout the chapter, Vincent of Beauvais and his *Speculum Historiale* will be used as a touchstone due to the level of his accomplishment, his somewhat prominent presence in his text and for the tensions that he exhibits around his authority and that of his text.

### Dominican Compilers and their Techniques

In the prologue to the first part of the *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas writes that his intention is to construct a work in which all the things of the Christian religion are propounded 'in a way consonant with the education of beginners.' He states that the preponderance of works related to sacred doctrine often caused confusion and apathy among 'beginners' who struggled to find a direct way through an array of often highly specified topics. He continues that with God's assistance he will put forward the sacred doctrine as briefly and simply as he is able.<sup>7</sup> Like Thomas's *Summa*, the majority of Dominican textual production in their first

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas Aquinas, 'Pars Prima Summa Theologica', *Opera Omnia*, vol. 4, Editio Leonina, Rome: Marietti, 1950, p.5: 'propositum nostrae intentionis in hoc opere est, ea quae ad Christianam religionem pertinent, eo modo tradere secundum quod congruit ad eruditionem incipientium [...] Haec igitur et alia huiusmodi evitare studentes, tentabimus, cum confidentia divini auxilii, ea quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinent breviter ac

century can be traced back to the needs of an ever-growing and evolving audience.<sup>8</sup> Jordan of Saxony wrote his *Libellus* at the request of his confreres desiring to know of the holy paths taken by the early brothers.<sup>9</sup> The *Vitae Fratrum* was produced in response to a general call following the General Chapters of 1255 and 1256 to collect and publish all of the miraculous stories from the order's short history.<sup>10</sup> Concerns about the quality of edification for the laity may have underpinned Bérengar of Landorra's request for Bernard Gui to produce the *Speculum Sanctorale* as a replacement for the *Legenda Aurea*.<sup>11</sup> The development of Dominican texts which placed an emphasis on addressing perceived deficiencies in the educational and spiritual development of religious and the laity existed in the same conceptual and performative milieu as that of their preaching vocation. Textual production was focussed on the progress, transformation and inspiration of all who came into contact with the texts - whether by reading, translating, extracting, hearing – including the writers themselves.

The writing of history and hagiography did not represent a separate duty or vocation in the Dominican Order.<sup>12</sup> Martin of Troppau and Jacopo da Varagine, for instance, both received

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dilucide prosequi, secundum quod materia patientur.' I have used Alfred J. Freddoso's translation, <https://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/summa-translation/TOC.htm>. Accessed 16/07/2017.

<sup>8</sup> On the relationships between Dominican texts and audiences: Denery, 'The Preacher and His Audience'; Eliana Corbari, *Vernacular Theology: Dominican Sermons and Audiences in Late Medieval Italy*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013. Lowe argues that 'at no juncture was the Dominican educational apparatus re-structured so as to produce brilliant academicians. But time and time again, provincial and general capitular *acta* overhauled this curriculum or that so as to better form the iuvenes', *Contested Theological Authority*, p.29.

<sup>9</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 2, p.25. Bartholomew of Trent similarly indicates that his *Liber epilogorum in Gesta Sanctorum* was compiled in response to the entreaties of his brothers, p.3: '... caritativis tamen fratrum precibus acquiescens...'

<sup>10</sup> See Tugwell, 'Introduction', *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, pp.30-39. Tugwell traces the imperative back to Gerard of Frachet, the compiler of the *Vitae Fratrum*. He argues that as the Provincial Prior of Provence, Gerard had instituted a call for the collection of miracles at the Provincial Chapter in 1252, p.30. Thomas of Cantimpré's *De Apibus* was also produced in response to this call: Holloway, 'Of Bees and Brethren', p.6.

<sup>11</sup> Reames, *A Re-examination*, pp.63-64. There is not, as yet, a modern edition of the entire *Speculum Sanctorale*. Simon Tugwell has produced an edition of the Life of Saint Dominic in, 'Bernardi Guidonis'; the Life of Saint Thomas has been edited in *Fontes vitae S.Thomae*, ed. by Prümmer, pp.161-263; the general prologue and the accompanying letters have been edited by Léopold Delisle in, 'Notice sur les manuscrits de Bernard Gui', pp.420-425. For an extensive historiographical appraisal: Agnès Dubreil-Arcin, *Vies de saints, légendes de soi: L'écriture hagiographique dominicaine jusqu'au Speculum Sanctorale de Bernard Gui († 1331)*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview of the Dominican chronicle tradition: Graeme Dunphy, 'The Dominican Chronicle Tradition', in *EncMedChron*, pp.542-545.

archbishoprics during their careers, although Martin died before he could take his up.<sup>13</sup> Gerard de Frachet and Bernard Gui similarly had impressive careers both within and beyond the order, holding numerous positions including provincial prior and several bishoprics for Gui.<sup>14</sup> Through the holding of bishoprics and other official positions, Dominicans were not only enmeshed within their order and the Church more generally, but in cities in which their benefices were located. Vincent of Beauvais was a lector in theology at the Cistercian Abbey of Royaumont and closely associated with the Capetian royal family,<sup>15</sup> while Jordan of Saxony and Humbert of Romans both reached the pinnacle of Dominican authority when they were voted Master General of the order. Somewhat tellingly, Dietrich von Apolda wrote that the compiling of his life of Dominic did not detract from the demands entailed by the observance of the regular life.<sup>16</sup> As diverse as the positions and roles that they assumed within the order and the Church, were the impulses that prompted each of these notable Dominican historians and hagiographers to write. Both Gerard and Bernard received official mandates to compile the *Vitae Fratrum* and the *Speculum Sanctorale* respectively, while, as noted above, Jordan bowed to the pressure of his confreres in the production of his *Libellus*.<sup>17</sup> The centralised governance of the order enabled them to not only guide the production of texts which, as Elizabeth Lowe writes ‘promoted Dominican doctrinal positions’ but to also intervene in times of crisis.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> On Martin see: Anna-Dorothee von Den Brincken, ‘Martin of Opava’, in *EncMedChron*, pp.1085-88.

<sup>14</sup> A brief biography can be found in *EncMedChron*, p.687 and in Bede Jarret’s introduction to Placid Conway’s translation of the *Vitae Fratrum*: [http://www.holyrosaryprovince.org/2011/media/essencial/lives\\_of\\_the%20brethren.pdf](http://www.holyrosaryprovince.org/2011/media/essencial/lives_of_the%20brethren.pdf), Accessed 20/10/17; for Gui’s: *EncMedChron*, pp. 170-72; for more in-depth: Guenée, *Between Church and State*, pp.37-70.

<sup>15</sup> For the few biographical details known about Vincent: *EncMedChron*, pp.1481-82 and Paulmier-Foucart, *Vincent de Beauvais et le Grand Miroir du Monde, avec la collaboration de Marie-Christine Duchenne*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2004, pp.10-21.

<sup>16</sup> Dietrich, *Libellus*, 6: ‘...nec propter hunc laborem aliquid, quod regularis observantia exigit, intermissi...’

<sup>17</sup> Tugwell, ‘Bernardi Guidonis’, pp.38-39, notes that Constantine of Orvieto’s Life of Dominic was commissioned by John of Wildeshausen, fourth Master General of the order, while both Jordan’s *Libellus* and Peter Ferrand’s life received ‘capitular approval’ after they were composed. While Dietrich of Apolda had begun his life of Saint Dominic ‘on his own initiative’, the Master General, Munio of Zamora later sent him a formal request: Tugwell, ‘Introduction’, *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, p.51.

<sup>18</sup> Lowe, *Contested Theological Authority*, pp.41-42. Tugwell comments that it was common for the General Chapter and Master General to ‘become involved in the development of the legenda and the updating of the miracula of the saints precisely at times when the order was facing some sort of crisis’, Tugwell, ‘Introduction’, *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, p.57.

The active supervision by the order's leaders in the production of texts relating the development and expression of Dominican interests is evident in the significant pressure exerted on Bernard Gui by the then Master General Bérengar of Landorra throughout the writing of the *Speculum Sanctorale*.<sup>19</sup> Nor did Gui let him down. In her extensive work on Gui's legendary, Agnès Dubreil-Arcin reveals that uniformities between Gui's text and other Dominican sources show the extent to which he positioned himself within a specifically Dominican hagiographical tradition, adding that his writing was subject to 'the weight of discourse of identity and/or the influence of the institution.'<sup>20</sup> This does not, however, mean that Gui is unoriginal or indeed 'servile' to his sources, as Simon Tugwell asserts.<sup>21</sup> Dubreil-Arcin concludes that the balance that Gui was able to achieve between novelty and tradition allowed for the birth of a hagiographical encyclopaedia.<sup>22</sup> Regardless of the precise means by which they came about, Dominican texts (the ones deemed significant by the order and/or posterity as in the case of the *Legenda Aurea*) and their writers were thoroughly embedded in the institutional and authoritative mechanisms of the order.<sup>23</sup>

The development and refinement of compilation techniques and discourses, often occurring at the hands of Dominican practitioners, supported the institutional goals to which historical and hagiographical textual production was often directed. The compilation process grew out of what Minnis describes as the late-medieval period's obsession 'with classification, valuing the universal over the particular and the typical over the individual.'<sup>24</sup> Through these themes,

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<sup>19</sup> In the preface to the *Speculum Sanctorale*, Gui writes: 'Inpultit quoque me ad hoc ipsum obediencie meritum et astrinxit auctoritas superioris mei prelati, magistri ordinis Predicatorum, reverendi in Christo patris fratris Berengarii, qui, dum adhuc in ordine magisterio fungeretur, a quo interim in Compostellanum archiepiscopum est assumptus, vive vocis oraculo id ipsum michi imposuit et injunxit, absens quoque cohortatus est me sepius literis iteratis', Delisles, 'Notices', pp.423-24. On the perceived deficiencies of the *Legenda Aurea* that prompted Berengar to commission Gui's replacement: Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, pp.40-43, 62-63.

<sup>20</sup> Dubreil-Arcin, *Vies de saints*, p. 199: '...tout point commun, tout élément vecteur d'uniformité du discours, peut témoigner du poids du discours identitaire et/ou de l'influence de l'institution. Ainsi, on verra d'abord que Bernard Gui s'appuie sur des éléments très classiques pour revendiquer son affiliation à l'écriture hagiographique dominicaine ...'

<sup>21</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.133-34.

<sup>22</sup> Dubreil-Arcin, *Vies de saints*, p.100: 'Au bout du compte, l'équilibre instauré par Bernard Gui, entre archaïsme, nouveauté et solution de continuité, permet de donner naissance à une encyclopédie hagiographique.'

<sup>23</sup> On the relationship between Vincent of Beauvais' texts and the interests of the Dominican order: Paulmier-Foucart, *Le Grande Miroir*, pp.10-21.

<sup>24</sup> Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, second edn., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988, p.2.



*compilatio*, as a discourse, was closely related, and complimentary, to the aims and outcomes of hagiography and was an important tool to authorise and justify the order's existence.<sup>25</sup> Yet, the ideological purpose or utility of compilation texts was criticised in some quarters of modern historiography due to the way that compilers ostensibly plagiarised their sources.<sup>26</sup> In this now largely out-dated view, the compiler, and the discourses in which they are involved, were placed in direct opposition to that of the medieval author (*auctor*).<sup>27</sup> This latter move, though probably a reasonable interpretation from both a medieval and modern perspective, sometimes fed into the negative stereotypes constructed around compilation by modern historians, since the compiler was not seen to exhibit a creativity comparable to that of the author. Compilations, therefore, were labelled as bland encyclopaedism, unoriginal, textual theft, naïve and devoid of ideological meaning.<sup>28</sup> These views, which, while now largely debunked, are nevertheless relevant to this discussion, particularly to establish the broader themes related to the purpose and authority of compilation texts.

In the early 1980s Bernard Guenée, along with Alastair Minnis, undertook what can be considered as a re-evaluation of compilation texts and practices that aimed to rescue their reputation and revive scholarly interest.<sup>29</sup> Guenée discredited the 'negative judgements to highlight the creativeness of the compiler and the processes that they utilised. It was not mere repetition, he argued, but recreation.<sup>30</sup> The creativity and 'authorship' of the compiler is exhibited in the selection of texts, the editing process, the additions and deletions of any given extract. This emphasis led Jacques Le Goff to call the *Legenda Aurea* 'a work of creation' despite Jacopo's obvious reliance on compilation.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the ideological beliefs held

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<sup>25</sup> For compilation as a discourse: Minnis, 'Nolens auctor', pp.47-48.

<sup>26</sup> For some of the more negative views of compilation: Neil Hathaway, '*Compilatio*: from plagiarism to compiling', *Viator*, 20, 1989, pp.19-44; Stephen Vanderputten, 'Typology of Medieval Historiography Reconsidered', *Historical Social Research*, 26, 2001, pp. 141-178, at p. 152.

<sup>27</sup> Minnis, 'Nolens Auctor', p.47.

<sup>28</sup> Vanderputten, 'Typology of Medieval Historiography', p. 152.

<sup>29</sup> Minnis, 'Late-Medieval Discussions of *Compilatio*', pp.385-421; Guenée, *histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident medieval*, Paris: Aubier-Montagne, 1980, p.55; Guenée, 'L'Historien et la compilation au xxiii<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Journal des Savants*, 1985, 119-135.

<sup>30</sup> Guenée, 'L'Historien et la compilation', p.126. He continues: 'Brièveté de l'œuvre, importance des choix, nouveauté de la construction, tout semble indiquer, dans les prologues du 13 siècle, que l'effort de l'historien tend pour l'essentiel à justifier et glorifier sa compilation', *ibid*, p.128.

<sup>31</sup> Le Goff, *In Search of Sacred Time*, p.9.

by the compiler and the purposes underpinning the creation of compilation texts can be brought to light through the examination of the very processes they utilised and their development of their predecessors' work.<sup>32</sup> Considering that medieval compilers often indicated this very fact in their prologues by drawing attention to high standards with which they undertook selection and editing, it is rather surprising that modern scholarship persisted in its misconceptions for so long.<sup>33</sup> Even as Vincent (seems to) disavow his authorial authority in the prologue to the *Speculum Maius*, the so-called *Apologia Actoris*, he nevertheless refers to his skill in source selection and the novelty of the structure that he constructed.<sup>34</sup> He uses a first-person pronoun when discussing the selection and arrangement of sources to emphasise his agency and references his '*studium et labor*'.<sup>35</sup> The compiler exhibits both creativity and agency through the tools, methods and processes of compilation.

Building upon the foundations laid by Guenée and Minnis, historians now explore the way that, in the words of Elizabeth Keen, 'each [compilation] reflects the cultural and political environment, focal concern, and personality of the compiler.'<sup>36</sup> And within this context, the disavowal or rather abdication of authority that is considered to happen in compilation texts is not as straightforward as it appears. By the thirteenth century, compilation practices and the compilers themselves had achieved a level of authority and academic influence that belied the ostensible lack of authorial presence in their texts. The authoritative discourses

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<sup>32</sup> I employ this approach with success in: 'John of Paris and the Apocalypse', pp.130-143.

<sup>33</sup> On the legacy of nineteenth-century positivism on this issue: Michael Bentley, *Modern Historiography: An Introduction*, London: Routledge, 1999.

<sup>34</sup> The only edition of the *Speculum Maius* is: Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale*, ed. by the Benedictines of Saint-Vaast of Arras in *Bibliotheca mundi, seu venerabilis viri Vincentii Burgundi ex ordine Praedicatorum, episcopi Bellocensis, Speculum quadruplex, naturale, doctrinale, morale, historiale*, 4 vols, Douai: B. Belleri, 1624. The text is, however, transcribed at: Atelier Vincent de Beauvais, <http://atilf.atilf.fr/bichard/>. Vincent wrote two versions of the prologue for the *Speculum Maius*. The first, written in the 1240s, was edited by: Serge Lusignan, ed., *Préface au "Speculum maius" de Vincnet de beauvais: Réfraction et diffraction*, Paris: Vrin, 1979. For the final version: Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, 'Geschichtsbetrachtung bei Vincenz von Beauvais. Die Apologia Actoris zum Speculum Maius', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 90, 1979, 410-499. All references are to von den Brincken's edition unless otherwise stated.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Lib. Apol., p.465. Bernard Gui similarly made reference to the tedium of compilation: Delisles, 'Notices', pp.425.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Keen, 'Shifting Horizons: the medieval compilation of knowledge as mirror of a changing world', in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. by Jason König and Greg Woolf, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 277-300, at p. 278. An example of this type of attention to the compilation process is Tomas Zahora's analysis of the shifting Franciscan influence between redactions of the *Speculum Historiale* and the compilation of the *Speculum Morale*: 'Saint-à-porter'.

embedded within compilation texts, moreover, were formulated and articulated in increasingly new, more technically creative manners. Changing contexts and external pressures significantly diversified the types of authority which historians drew on or expressed, authority that was furthermore complicated by the way of life of mendicant writers and by the myriad interpretations to which their expressions of poverty were subject.<sup>37</sup> On the one hand, the Dominicans stood at the forefront of developments within textual culture with regard to conception, technique and practice.<sup>38</sup> On the other, their poverty demanded a rejection of traditional mechanisms of constructing and negotiating authority and power. This paradox created a tension within compilation texts, particularly with regard to the personal presence of the compiler, between the need to establish the authority of the writer and the document and to maintain an authorial persona that was in alignment with the fundamental precepts of charity, humility and poverty.

### ‘Doing and Making’ Dominican Narratives

Dominican compilers were on the frontline of addressing issues over authority at both a macro and micro level and remained particularly concerned with their own authority and that of their texts as they were circulated and consumed by increasingly diverse and widespread audiences.<sup>39</sup> While Vincent, for instance, extensively utilises and references by name biblical and patristic phrases and formalisms, more ‘modern’ models and sources are used without specification.<sup>40</sup> This could potentially be reflective of broader anxieties over authority and legitimacy that were also indicated in the prologue to his life of Saint Dominic, when Peter Ferrand commented that although the foundation of the order was new, their authority was

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<sup>37</sup> For an analysis of the way that the mendicant way of life influenced the self-presentation of the Dominicans: Denery, ‘The Preacher and His Audience’.

<sup>38</sup> Rouse and Rouse, *Authentic Witnesses*, pp.221-338.

<sup>39</sup> The ‘history’ of Martin of Troppau’s *Liber Chronicorum* in England provides a useful case-study for the widespread appeal of Dominican universal chronicles: Wolfgang-Valentin Ikas, ‘Martinus Polonus’ Chronicle of the Pope and Emperors: A Medieval Best-Seller and Its Neglected Influence on Medieval English Chroniclers’, *The English Historical Review*, 116 2001, 327-341. For the history and popularity of the SM: Monique Paulmier-Foucart and Serge Lusignan, ‘Vincent de beauvais et l’histoire du *Speculum Maius*’, *Journal des Savants*, 1990, 97-124; J. B. Voorbij, *Het Speculum Historiale van Vincent van Beauvais. Een Studie van zijn onstaansgeschiedenis*, Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit, 1991.

<sup>40</sup> He establishes that Vincent’s prologue bears a striking resemblance, not only to those of Hugh and Richard Saint-Victor who he names, but also to Abelard’s *Sic et Non*. Yet, neither the twelfth-century work nor its author is mentioned by name: ‘Rhetorical Rules’, pp.47-52.

ancient.<sup>41</sup> Abdicating authority (and sometimes responsibility) in favour of that of their sources was a key method that compilers employed to negotiate between ostensibly antagonistic forces that impacted on the presentation of authority. Bartholomew of Trent indicated in his *Liber Epilogorum in Gesta Sanctorum* that by following in the footsteps of others, he would put aside his own authority.<sup>42</sup> Vincent stated that the *Speculum Maius* could not really be considered his own work but rather that of the ‘authorities’ whose extracts he had organised. To them he deferred the authority and accepted recognition for the organisation alone.<sup>43</sup> ‘Limiting and probably demeaning’ (to paraphrase Minnis)<sup>44</sup> disavowals such as these belied the authority that compilers accrued in the various roles that they assumed at pastoral, administrative and institutional levels and did not really resolve the problem they faced in reconciling the paradoxes inherent in negotiating authority as mendicant compilers. As Guenée and Minnis argue, by utilising this method the compiler was still engaging in the construction of authority in the sense that they became authoritative due to their recognition and naming of the authorities they included in their texts.<sup>45</sup> Compilers effectively enacted a ‘chain of citation’ in which they could establish themselves, often as authorities, at the same time.<sup>46</sup>

Even though compilers such as Bartholomew and Vincent sought to deflect attention from their own agency, their positions within the governing mechanisms of the order itself, as well as within Church and secular administrations, placed them firmly within the important decision-making processes. Additionally, they were responsible for constructing the texts and narratives which related or responded to political or religious controversy. The conflict

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<sup>41</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, I, p.209: ‘ordo novus, novus, inquam, pariter et antiquus, novus institutione, antiquus auctoritate, novus, immo novissimus spatium, primus autem officio.’

<sup>42</sup> Bartholomew, *Liber Epilogorum*, p.3: ‘...aliorum mallens sequi vestigia quam propria fingere et ad devia deduci.’

<sup>43</sup> Lib. Apol., Cap IV: ‘Ipsorum igitur est auctoritate, nostrum autem sola partium’. For similar see, Minnis, ‘Nolens auctor’, pp.48-49

<sup>44</sup> Minnis, ‘The Author’s Two Bodies? Authority and Fallibility in Late-Medieval Textual Theory’, in *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes and Readers: Essays Presented to M.B. Parkes*, ed. by P.R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim, Aldershot: Scolar, 1997, pp.259-79, at p.261.

<sup>45</sup> Minnis, ‘Late-Medieval Discussions of Compilatio’, pp.385-421; Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l’Occident médiéval*, Paris: Aubier-Montagne, 1980, p.55; Guenée, ‘L’Historien et la compilation au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Journal des Savants*, 1985, 119-135.

<sup>46</sup> For the term ‘chains of citation’ see: Waters, *Angels and Earthly Creatures*, pp.13-30.

between the mendicant orders and the seculars that exploded at the University of Paris in the 1250s proved to be a defining influence on Dominican historical and hagiographical production. Robert Sweetman argues that the content, approach and purpose of the *Vitae fratrum* was specifically informed by this controversy.<sup>47</sup> In this regard he sees the collection of the miraculous narratives as a way for the Master General at the time, Humbert of Romans, to bolster the morale of the Dominicans in the midst of the most virulent attacks from William of Saint-Amour and his counterparts. Stories of Dominican brothers whose ‘most urgent concern was preaching and the spiritual progress of others’ while neglecting themselves and who by their ‘holy behaviour [...] inspired all to love the order with its holy poverty and obedience’ countered William’s narratives which cast the friars in the role of Antichrist’s false prophets.<sup>48</sup> Sweetman concludes that

[s]tep by step these stories led the reader to the sense that here among the sons of Dominic was to be found a place touched by the power of God’s gracious hand, for here one saw over and over again the spectre of men whose opaque wills had been burned away to reveal that clarity that the contemporary Dominican Thomas of Cantimpré would term “the luminous rays of grace”.<sup>49</sup>

The atmosphere that Sweetman describes is suggestive of the way that historical-hagiographical texts were positioned to structure and influence narratives concerning both the internal and external authority of the Dominican religious.<sup>50</sup> While Paulmier-Foucart and Nadeau claim that Vincent’s *Speculum Maius* ‘embodies in book form the intellectual program laid out by the Dominican Order in its Constitutions and Chapters’, they extend long-standing

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<sup>47</sup> Sweetman, ‘Exempla and the Promotion of Religious Identity’, p.48. See also, Brett, *Humbert*, p.18.; and Holloway, ‘Of Bees and Brethren: The Making of an Order of Preachers’, in *Mendicant Cultures in the Medieval and Early Modern World: Word, Deed, and Image*, ed. by Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, and Peter Howard, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, pp.3-21 at, pp.6-13.

<sup>48</sup> VF, 4.3.1, p.155: ‘festinare ad predicacionem et fructum circa alios, se neglecto, plurimum approbat. Omnes sancta sua conversacione edificans ad amorem ordinis et sancte paupcrtatis et vere obediencie animabat.’ Geltner offers the Latin and an English translation of William’s *de periculis novissimorum temporum*, see esp., pp.93-112 for his attack on the mendicants’ right to preach, their mendicancy and his references to the false prophets foretold in Revelations.

<sup>49</sup> Sweetman, ‘Exempla and the Promotion of Religious Identity’, p.44. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Bonum Universale*, 2.53.34-35, pp.515-17

<sup>50</sup> Holloway argues that the *Vitae Fratrum* and Thomas of Cantimpré’s *De apibus* can be thought of as the ‘end result’ of the master-general’s call in 1255 for the collections of miracles and stories about the Order and its members: ‘Of Bees and Brethren’, p.6.

historiographical criticism of Vincent for his text's failure 'to reverberate' broader intellectual debates.<sup>51</sup> Even if particular controversies or debates are not mentioned or addressed specifically, it is tempting to see the disputes in which the order was embroiled exerting a subtle influence on compilers' editorial choices at least, if not thematically as with the *Vitae Fratrum*.

Recent research by Tomas Zahora and Isabelle Draelants draws attention to the way that the development of Vincent's *Speculum Historiale* over numerous recensions 'occurred', as Zahora states, 'in the context of a more focussed attention to a specifically Dominican audience'.<sup>52</sup> Between the 1244 and 1256 versions of the *Speculum Historiale*, Vincent had doubled the space he allocated for the discussion of his own order's founder.<sup>53</sup> In the 1244 version, Vincent had given more space to Dominic's famous contemporary, Saint Francis. Zahora investigates the increased attention to Dominic in the context of the order's lingering competition with the Franciscans over the holiness of their founding saints. He concludes that the resulting inclusion of eighteen further chapters dealing with Dominic and his order, was 'equivalent to a textual curbing of Francis's charisma.'<sup>54</sup>

While competition with the Franciscan very likely contributed to Vincent's editorial decisions concerning Dominic's presentation,<sup>55</sup> it might also be speculated that the new emphasis that

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<sup>51</sup> Monique Paulmier-Foucart and Alain Nadeau, 'The History of Christ in Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum historiale*', in *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans*, pp.113-26, at p.113.

<sup>52</sup> Zahora, 'Saint-à-porter', p.165. Isabelle Draelants, 'Libellus elegans satis contra Iudeos et Sarracenos: La rédaction du Dialogus dans le Speculum Historiale de Vincent de Beauvais', in *Petrus Alfonsi and his Dialogus: Background, Context, Reception*, ed. by Carmen Cardella Hartman and Philipp Roelli, Zürich and Firenze: SISMEL, 2014, pp.249-300. On Vincent's revisions in the context of his relationship with the Capetian dynasty: M. -C. Duchenne, 'Autour de 1254, une révision capétienne du Speculum historiale', in *Intentions et réceptions*, pp.141-166 and Elizabeth A. R. Brown, 'Vincent de Beauvais and the reditus francorum ad stirpem Caroli imperatoris', in *Intentions et réceptions*, pp.165-196, esp. pp.180-188. pink

<sup>53</sup> Zahora produces a table of the chapter headings for material concerning Dominic and Francis from the 1244 'Klosterneuburg' version and the late-1250s 'Douai 797' version. For general information of the manuscript tradition of the *Speculum Historiale*: J.B. Voorbij, 'The Speculum Historiale: some aspects of its genesis and manuscript tradition', in *Vincent of Beauvais and Alexander the Great: Studies on the Speculum Maius and its translation in to Medieval Vernaculars*, ed. by W.J. Aerts, E.R. Smits and J.B. Voorbij, Groningen: Egbert Forsten: 1986, pp.11-56, esp. 14-18.

<sup>54</sup> Zahora, 'Saint-à-porter', p.173.

<sup>55</sup> Tugwell documents in-depth the complete breakdown in relations between the two orders in the mid-1240s, which likely contributed to Vincent's increased emphasis on Dominic: 'any move to improve the public image of Francis and his order needed to be met with corresponding moves on the part of the Dominicans', 'Introduction', *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, pp.23-29, at p.27.

he placed on his order's founder was informed by the attacks made on the Dominican authority at the University of Paris, which reached a crisis point in 1254.<sup>56</sup> Several editorial choices that Vincent made in the 1256 version suggest that he was concerned with the authority of his order at both an institutional and charismatic level. In the 1244 version, the Papal confirmation of the Dominican order and Dominic's subsequent decision to send the friars out into the world to preach were discussed in the chapter titled: '*De confirmatione eiusdem ordinis et dispositione fratrum tam predicandum.*' Vincent developed the material contained in the chapter and separated it into three separate chapters dealing firstly with Dominic's meeting with Pope Innocent III, then the official confirmation of the order by Pope Honorius III and the dispersal of the brothers.<sup>57</sup> Separating the material under clearer chapter titles effectively added greater clarity and depth to the development of the Dominicans' institutional and charismatic authority. The specific reference to the two Popes, who each played a role in the institutionalisation of the nascent order, bolstered the order's authority and reputation at a time when their rights to preach, teach and hear confession were being eroded by a series of Bulls issued by Pope Innocent IV in 1254.<sup>58</sup>

Vincent's use of the universal history format similarly supported the order's institutional and charismatic authority. In the prologue, Vincent indicates that he is attempting to revive a historical format following a period in which it had fallen into neglect. He writes,

Particularly, all our brothers devoted themselves diligently to the mystical and historical commentary of the holy books, especially to clarify difficult questions; and in this context it seemed that the ecclesiastical histories, the simplicity of which is nourished by the milk of the ancients, was despised and had fallen into neglect: even though they contain many things for the pleasure and restoration of the spirit, as well as for its edification, since they describe first the infancy of the nascent Church with the Apostles, whom the Lord himself raised up and nurtured, as a mother with her sons [...] Then, the Lord clothed this church with virtue, by the spirit of his breath, and ushered in a more robust age, in trials and tribulations, not only for

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<sup>56</sup> Brett, *Humbert*, p.11.

<sup>57</sup> SH 31.65: 'Qualiter Beatus Dominicus ordinem suum peciit ab Innocentio Papa confirmari'; 31.66: "Qualiter idem ordo confirmatus est a Papa Honorio"; 31.67: 'De dispersione fratrum ad predicandum per mundum'.

<sup>58</sup> *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, I n.236, pp.263-64; and I, n.237, p.265.

the apostles but also for the other martyrs tortured in the course of time [...] and tested their endurance.<sup>59</sup>

While Vincent's comments regarding the work of his Dominican confreres have been interpreted as veiled criticisms of scholasticism,<sup>60</sup> this passage demonstrates that his engagement with the genre of universal history reveals not only the 'ancient authority' of the order's way of life but also the Friars' roles as originators and developers in the textual culture. As Graeme Dunphy aptly states, chronicles 'not only tell the past: they shape the way the present is conceived and processed. In short, they have to do with the exercise of power.'<sup>61</sup> Embedding both the development of his order, as well as its founding saint, in a universal history of the Church, and interspersing among the Church's most authoritative sources those of his own order, could provide both a much-needed boost to morale as well as a tool with which authority could continue to be constructed and negotiated. The emphasis that Vincent places not only on his proficiency but on the authority of historical narrative in general, might then be taken as a subtle indication of his responsiveness to the mounting concern presented in the order's dispute with the seculars at Paris.

Because of their proficiency and their largely effaced authorial presence, it is easy to forget that Dominican compilers were both the 'doers' and 'makers' of their order's pivotal and most authoritative narratives. But compilers such as Vincent of Beauvais often bore the ideological brunt of the fluctuating fate of the order's intellectual and religious authority as teachers, preachers and as writers. Over half a century after Vincent produced his final recension of the *Speculum Historiale*, in the first decades of the fourteenth century, frictions over the poverty of the mendicant orders sparked largely by the Spiritual faction within the Franciscan order

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<sup>59</sup> Lib. Apol., c.2, p.466: 'precipue fratres nostros assidue sacrorum librorum historicis ac mysticis expositionibus in super et obscurionibus questionibus enodandis insistere, inter hec autem historias ecclesiasticas, quarum lacte pascebatur antiquorum simplicitas, quodammodo viluisse et in neglectum venisse: cum tamen non solum utique voluptatis ac recreationis spiritus, verum etiam edificationis plurimum in se contineant, eo quod primum quidem Ecclesie nascentis infantiam in apostolis describant; quod ipse Dominus tamquam mater filios [...] deinde vero eandem *spiritu oris sui* virtute indutam et quasi iam in robustiorem etatem provectam, non solum in ipsis apostolis, sed etiam in ceteris martyribus eorum sequacibus [...] tempora tribulationibus exposuit, eiusque patientiam in illis exercuit.'

<sup>60</sup> Wingell, 'Rhetorical Rules', p.45.

<sup>61</sup> Graeme Dunphy, 'Perspicax ingenium mihi collatum est: Strategies of Authority in Chronicles Written by Women', in *Authority and Gender in Medieval and Renaissance Chronicles*, ed. by Juliana Dresvina and Nicholas Sparks, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, pp.166-201.



came to a head during the pontificate of John XXII.<sup>62</sup> This time the historian, inquisitor and bishop, Bernard Gui would ‘reverberate’ the broader tensions in his compilation of the life of Saint Dominic that appeared in the *Speculum Sanctorale*, which he began around 1312 and continued to work on until 1329. While the Dominicans were firmly entrenched on the ‘right’ side of the dispute this time, and Gui himself was acting as the papal representative, the controversy nevertheless influenced certain editorial choices that he made.

Simon Tugwell has analysed extensively the additions and deletions that Gui makes to the traditional canon of Dominic’s *legenda* composed during the thirteenth century. Yet there is certainly room to nuance his conclusions regarding the potential causes and purposes of Gui’s editorial interventions. Tugwell indicates that Gui rarely diverges from the *Vita* compiled in the early 1250s by Humbert of Romans. This is despite, as he says, the fact that Gui had an abundance of additional material ‘at his disposal.’<sup>63</sup> Tugwell is therefore slightly critical of the blandness of the life that Gui put together and indeed the servility that he suggests the inquisitor displayed toward his sources. Gui’s treatment of eschatological themes and poverty are two instances which fall under Tugwell’s probing gaze.<sup>64</sup>

Tugwell draws attention to the fact that Gui removes almost anything of eschatological significance. While Dominic’s life and the foundation of the order had been given apocalyptic emphasis in the life composed by Peter Ferrand, a theme that had been continued in those of Constantine, Humbert and Dietrich, Gui retains only the line that Dominic ‘appeared suddenly like a new constellation when the end of the world was approaching.’<sup>65</sup> Tugwell suggests that Gui’s compilation in this regard might represent ‘a proper’ Dominican response to broader concerns regarding the increasingly heretical ideas of the factions within the Franciscan Order. Or, as he speculates, not removing the reference to it as Jacopo da Varagine

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<sup>62</sup> See generally: David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis*, University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001. For a fuller bibliography of this dispute and its impact on the Dominican order, see chapter five of this thesis.

<sup>63</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, pp.130-131.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, p.134.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 2, p.237: ‘... appropinquante mundi termino quasi novum sudus...’

had done some years prior demonstrates that Gui was overall ‘unresponsive to all kinds of apocalyptic enthusiasm’.<sup>66</sup>

Certainly, the eschatological milieu among the Dominicans in the early-fourteenth century was far removed from that of Humbert’s generalate and that which produced Vincent’s *Speculum Historiale* and its final section devoted solely to Last Things.<sup>67</sup> In 1254, the scandal of the Eternal Evangel had broken out, in which the Franciscan Gerard of Borgo San Donnino, without the authorisation of his order, published an introduction to three tracts of the late twelfth-century Calabrian abbot Joachim of Fiore.<sup>68</sup> In this text, he pushed some of the abbot’s eschatological concepts to their most radical extreme to suggest that the authorities and institutions of the Old and New Testaments, which Joachim had maintained would survive Antichrist’s tribulations, would be overthrown completely in the new age: the Church would be superseded by the New Order of the *viri spirituales* and a new testament made up of Joachim’s works would replace the two former testaments.<sup>69</sup> In an attempt to defend their authority against the subsequent onslaught by their secular detractors both the Franciscan and Dominican orders quickly instituted new censorship rules<sup>70</sup> and the two heads issued a joint encyclical.<sup>71</sup> The minister general John of Parma and the master general Humbert of Romans sought to disassociate their orders from Gerard’s radical suggestions, aiming to prove that the orders were divinely sanctioned and that they were essential to effecting the salvation of Christendom in the Last Days.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p.136.

<sup>67</sup> ‘Epilogus specula historialis continens tractatum de ultimis temporibus’, *SH*, iv, bk. xxxi, c. 106-29, pp. 1323-32. On this book see: Eva Albrecht, ‘Epilogus speculi historialis continens tractatum de ultimis temporibus’: a first introduction to Vincent of Beauvais as compiler of the ‘*Speculum Maius*’, *Vincent of Beauvais Newsletter*, 20, 1995, 13-18.

<sup>68</sup> E. Randolph Daniel, ‘Exodus and Exile: Joachim of Fiore’s Apocalyptic Scenario’, in *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Carolyn Walker Bynam and Paul Freedman, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, p. 130. On the scandal of the Eternal Evangel: Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy*, pp. 59-70. Also: McLaughlin, *Intellectual Freedom*, pp. 186-89. On Gerard’s beliefs and condemnation: Heinrich Denifle, ‘Das Evangelium aeternum und die Kommission zu Anagni’, *Archiv für Literatur und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 1, 1885, pp. 49-142.

<sup>69</sup> Daniel, ‘Exodus and Exile’, pp. 130-31; McGinn, *Antichrist*, pp. 157-59.

<sup>70</sup> McLaughlin, *Intellectual Freedom*, p. 30.

<sup>71</sup> *Annales minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum, auctore A. R. P. Luca Waddingo*, 32 vols, 1731-1951, Rome: R. Bernabò, 1732, III, pp. 380-81; partially translated in: Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 164-65.

Prior to the quasi-apocalyptic atmosphere provoked by the Eternal Evangel scandal, the Dominicans had seemed relatively comfortable in constructing their authority in accordance with the imminent arrival of the apocalypse. Jordan had specified the role when he commented that the order was provided by 'divine providence [...] for the perils of these Last Days.'<sup>72</sup> Peter Ferrand subsequently picked up this somewhat matter of fact statement and expanded upon it aggressively, devoting three-quarters of his prologue to emphasising the order's eschatological role as well as the authority that it conferred upon them. The role that Peter constructs for the order, also continued in Constantine, Humbert and Dietrich of Apolda, bears more than a passing resemblance to the concept of the *virī spirituales* due to the repeated use of the phrase *novus ordo*. Joachite radicals believed that in the years preceding Christ's second coming, a new order would be created, the *virī spirituales*, who 'would raise individuals to the highest plane which would dominate human life with its sole aim that of *imitatio Christi*.'<sup>73</sup> The progression of this *Novus Ordo* would coincide with a period of tribulations instigated by Antichrist, and this new order would come to govern in the new age, toppling the institutional Church.<sup>74</sup> Marjorie Reeves shows that the term *virī spirituales* referred to both the *Novus Ordo* of Joachite radicals and also to the 'agents of God active in bringing the world through the great transition.'<sup>75</sup> Gui would have been well aware of the condemnation of the teaching at the council of Arles in 1263 and thus his removal of any potentially heretical residue is not surprising.<sup>76</sup> The Dominicans could not countenance the anti-institutional sentiment inherent in Borgo San Donnino's rendering of Joachim, even though some writers and theologians held fast to the idea of Preachers' special eschatological purpose.

Tugwell adopts the view that Bernard Gui, in the fourteenth century, had retreated from any sort of engagement with eschatological speculation. While Gerard de Frachet had specifically indicated that Joachim's prophecy of the *virī spirituales* referred to the Dominicans rather

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<sup>72</sup> Jordan, *Lib.*, 2, p.25: '...horum temporum novissimorum periculis dispensatio divina providit.'

<sup>73</sup> Delno West, 'Between Flesh and Spirit', p.342

<sup>74</sup> Delno West, 'The Re-formed Church and the Friars Minor: The Moderate Joachite Position of Fra Salimbene', *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 3, 1971, 273-84

<sup>75</sup> Reeves, *Influence*, p.141

<sup>76</sup> For the condemnation of Joachite ideas: Reeves, *Influence*, pp.28-36; for Joachim more generally see the recent essays collected in: Matthias Riedl, ed., *A Companion to Joachim of Fiore*, Leiden: Brill, 2018.

than the Franciscans, as was usually the interpretation, soon after, Thomas Aquinas completely rejected any radical eschatology in his *Contra Impugnantes*.<sup>77</sup> Yet, as I have explored elsewhere, at the turn of the fourteenth century, John Quidort of Paris, on his own initiative was among the first University masters to respond to the controversy sparked by the treatise *De tempore adventus Antichristi* by the layman Arnold of Villanova.<sup>78</sup> Traces of the Dominicans' expectation of their role in the End Times lingered in the tract that John produced. It is highly likely that it was the same for Gui.<sup>79</sup> He was, after all, a master historian and inquisitor, who was insistent in his pursuit of clarity and truth, as well as in the focus and purpose that he brought to each and every addition and deletion in his compilation of history and hagiography.<sup>80</sup> In other words, it is doubtful that he would have left it there had it not meant something. This suggests that even the smallest of editorial choices could be ideologically significant.

Even considering his heavy reliance on the traditional canon of Dominic's legendary, Gui made calculated and measured decisions that reflected and directed the order's position on important and high-risk matters. With regard to Gui's treatment of poverty in the Life of Saint Dominic, Tugwell draws attention to the way that Gui suppresses references to comments, originating in Jordan's *Libellus*, regarding the fact that the order had not yet been founded, nor had the brothers officially professed poverty when Dominic accepted properties from the likes of Simon de Monfort. Tugwell surmises that Gui does not apparently see a 'problem in

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<sup>77</sup> VF, I.III.XIII, p.17. For the Dominican perspective: Reeves, *Influence*, pp.161-74; On Thomas: Bernard McGinn, 'The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore', *Church History*, 40, 1971, 30-47.

<sup>78</sup> On this controversy see: Milne-Tavendale, 'John of Paris and the Apocalypse'; Robert E. Lerner, *The Powers of Prophecy: The Cedar of Lebanon Prophecy from the Mongol Onslaught to the Dawn of the Enlightenment*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, pp. 63-68; Reeves, *Influence*, pp. 314-17; Clifford R. Backman, 'The Reception of Arnau de Vilanova's Religious Ideas', in *Christendom and its Discontents: Exclusion, persecution, and rebellion, 1000-1500*, ed. by Scott L. Waugh and Peter D. Diehl, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 112-47. On Arnold of Villanova and the radical elements of his eschatology: Clifford R. Backman, 'Arnau de Vilanova and the Franciscan Spirituals in Sicily', *Franciscan Studies*, series 2, 50, 1990, pp. 3-29; Robert E. Lerner, 'Writing and Resistance among Beguins of Languedoc and Catalonia', in *Heresy and Literacy, 1000-1530*, ed. by Peter Biller and Anne Hudson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 186-204.

<sup>79</sup> For further instances of Dominican engagement with radical eschatology after the Eternal Evangel scandal, including Stephen of Salagnac's *De Quatuor in quibus Deus Pradicatum ordinem insignavit*, which Gui himself completed: Reeves, *Influence*, pp.161-174.

<sup>80</sup> For Gui as an inquisitor: Sullivan, *Medieval Inquisitors*, pp.124-45.

preachers holding properties.’<sup>81</sup> He continues that, ‘Gui certainly saw nothing sacrosanct in the order’s renunciation of *possessiones*, otherwise he would not have dropped *perpetue* from Humbert’s text, thereby eliminating the point that the 1220 chapter intended its ruling [on property] to remain in force forever.’<sup>82</sup> The replacement of *perpetue* with *debita executio*, he adds, ‘allows for all kinds of adjustments and concessions to circumstances.’<sup>83</sup> Tugwell expresses surprise, however, that within this context Bernard retains Dominic’s curse without softening it in any way.

I propose that Gui’s removal of *perpetue* with regard to possessions, while retaining Dominic’s curse fits the broader context of the Dominican approach to poverty and Gui’s role in its delineation. At a fundamental level, Bernard’s compilation upholds the discursive and conceptual separation between poverty and property indicated in the curse itself. Separating poverty’s associations from the non-ownership of property was particularly important in the papal agenda against the Spirituals and Pope John XXII attempted to use the Dominicans’ more relaxed attitude to ideological effect in their condemnation.<sup>84</sup> *Perpetue* locked poverty’s expression into a single material manifestation that Gui likely saw as destructive owing to his bird’s eye perspective on the position of the Franciscan Spirituals in his roles as inquisitor, bishop, historian and Dominican representative to the papal court. Gui certainly had his finger on the pulse, so to speak, and I suggest that it was through his duties in these roles that he derived the authority to implement and direct changes to the Dominican narrative accordingly. This device parallels Paulmier-Foucart’s argument that Vincent Beauvais’s role as *Lector* of his convent was instrumental to the authority that he demonstrated in his compilation.<sup>85</sup> She states that when Vincent seems to apply a caveat to his use of ‘pagan’

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<sup>81</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, pp.138-140, at p.139.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, p.140. Humbert’s text reads: (31) ‘Proposuerunt autem ex tunc, ne predicationis impediretur officium, a se terrenas possessiones abicere, quod post modum in primo capitulo generali ordinis, quod celebratum fuit Bononie anno domini millesimo duecentismo vicesimo affectu pariter et effectu per constitutionem perpetue fuit executioni mandatum (31).’ Gui’s version: ‘(30) Proposuerunt autem ex tunc, ne predicationis impediretur officium, a se terrenas possessiones abicere, quod post modum fuit affectus pariter et effectus per constitutionem executioni debite mandatum in primo capitulo generali ordinis Bononie celebrato anno domini M CC XX.’

<sup>83</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.140.

<sup>84</sup> See Chapter Five of this thesis.

<sup>85</sup> Paulmier-Foucart, ‘L’Actor et Les Auctores’ pp.152-53. For the broader context: Rita Copeland, ‘Producing the *Lector*’, in *Medieval and Early Modern Authorship*, ed. by Guillemette Bolens and Lukas Erne, Tübingen: Narr Verlag, 2011, pp.231-250.

texts, writing 'it is not because I want to give authority to apocryphal texts, which would be very haughty', what he actually says is 'I give' and that he actually has the power to give authority.<sup>86</sup> Through his position as Lector, Vincent thus had the power to judge the authority or value of a source with regard to the potential edification of the reader.<sup>87</sup> His position within the order and in convent life gave him the intellectual and moral capacity to give authority to certain pagan or contemporary sources. Bernard Gui similarly had both the moral and institutional authority to nuance the order's narratives around poverty due to the perspectives that he gained in the performance of his numerous administrative, pastoral and intellectual duties.

The development of certain forms in late-medieval writing paralleled and were informed by the specific, often religious, performances of the writer (or compiler). Dominican texts were thoroughly imbricated by the acts/actions their writers and compilers performed. Thomas of Cantimpré, for example, translated his experiences as a confessor into narrative and thematic strategies in his *Bonum universale de apibus* (c.1260). Alexander Murray concludes:

Thomas functioned [...] at the centre of a world of confessors. This fact affected the character of his book both in general and in particular. In general, it is what gave the book its principal quality: the quality of being down to earth. The constant hearing of confession, even more than constant preaching, focused a priest's mind on hard moral fact as distinct from tradition and convention.<sup>88</sup>

The connection that Murray draws between the role of the confessor and the form of their literary productions is compelling. He indirectly confirms the way that exploration of the broader performances and experiences of the author is one of the keys to understanding the texts that they produced and indeed their authorial decisions.

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<sup>86</sup> Paulmier-Foucart, 'L'Actor et Les Auctores', pp.147-48.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, pp.152-53.

<sup>88</sup> Alexander Murray, 'Confession as a Historical Source in the Thirteenth Century', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages*, ed. R.H.C. Davis & J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, Oxford; 1981, pp.275-322, p.291; Also: Sweetman, 'Thomas of Chantimpré', pp.133-67. Cesáreo Bandera argues 'Thomas' overriding intention is not that of a chronicler but of a moralist who feels deeply that his primary duty is to make the case fit the didactic purpose at hand, to serve as an illustration': 'From Mythical Bees to Medieval Anti-Semitism', in *Violence and Truth: On the Work of René Girard*, ed. by Paul Dumouchel, London: The Athlone Press, 1988, pp.209-226, at p.212.

As 'makers' and 'doers', Dominican religious recognised that each individual act contributed to the order and its purposes in the salvation process. As there seems to have been little conceptual distinction between the doing and the making, I would go as far as to argue that every act, activity, practice, expression and gesture made in the experience and expression of the Dominican charism, as well as in the compiler's work, can be considered 'artful' in the sense offered by Wendy James. James uses this term in recognition of 'the individual's consciousness that his or her specific acts contribute to wider outcomes involving responses from and judgement by others, within the expectations of what is assumed a shared project.'<sup>89</sup> This attitude functioned in the representation of Dominic's practices around footwear discussed in the previous chapter and how specific acts contributed to the development of ideas constructed and performed around poverty and humility. As well as informing their physical performances, the 'artful' nature of their actions influenced the writing styles and genres adopted by the Dominicans. Each text could be put at the service of their work in pastoral and spiritual, social and political spheres of operation, while their shared project shaped the nature of the work itself. For the authority and authorisation of the compiler specifically, each addition, deletion or alteration was imbricated in the experience and expression of their pastoral and spiritual work. Thus, the effacing discourses, within which many of their performances around poverty were constructed, influenced the self-presentation of the Dominican both in their pastoral and spiritual activities and the production of texts.

The moral, spiritual and doctrinal aptitude and care exhibited by Dominican compilers in their editing practices occurred in the context of a widespread shift in the nature and conception of authority that occurred in twelfth and thirteenth-century literary theory. This shift contributed to an elevation in authority of the compiler. The *translatio auctoritatis*, as Alastair Minnis refers to it, denoted an immensely powerful and far-reaching movement in which authority (auctoritas) 'moved from the divine realm into the human'.<sup>90</sup> Authority was no longer mediated solely through the relationship with the divine, but attention was paid to the very human roles in which the 'author' acted and performed. In this context, 'who' they were

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<sup>89</sup> Wendy James, 'Choreography and Ceremony: The Artful Side of Action', *Human Affairs*, 17, 2007, pp.129-37.

<sup>90</sup> Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, p.viii.

was becoming as important as ‘what’ they did.<sup>91</sup> The interest in the ‘humanness’ and morality of the author created a push for any writer to establish their credentials in writing and this was undertaken in a variety of ways, a full outline of which is slightly beyond the boundaries of the present work.<sup>92</sup> As Minnis concludes, consideration of moral activity was now placed side by side with literary activity and furthermore became embedded in the self-representation of the compiler as well as in their consideration of their ‘authorities’.<sup>93</sup> The *translatio*, furthermore, in which the medieval invention of the ‘author’ can be seen to have originated, occurred in the same milieu that was also evidencing the textual and performative effacement of mendicant authority.<sup>94</sup> Thus in Dominican compilation texts, the need to mute, efface or hide an independent authorial persona and voice often clashes with the production and negotiation of literary authority.

Vincent, Bernard, Martin of Troppau and other notable compilers of historical narrative rarely intrude personally into their texts beyond the prologues. Any self-reference is directly mediated by the duties and performances that they undertake in their pastoral and spiritual activities. In his prologue to his chronicle of Popes and Emperors, Martin of Troppau introduces himself as ‘I, brother Martin of the Order of Preachers, penitentiary and chaplain to the lord Pope.’ Following this statement, he inserts one verb in the first person to refer solely to his composition.<sup>95</sup> It could be argued that Martin was somewhat unusually unconcerned with his own authority.<sup>96</sup> Yet, more unusual is the fact that he inserted his own name, which could perhaps be indicative of the authority that he attributed to his text and, in turn, to himself. In this he was one of the very few Dominican compilers who did so in the order’s first century.<sup>97</sup> In contrast, the only time Peter Ferrand steps directly into the text of

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p.6.

<sup>92</sup> See: Peter Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999; Milne, ‘Franciscan Experience’; Sebastian Coxon, *The Presentation of Authorship in Medieval German Narrative 1220-1290*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001.

<sup>93</sup> Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, p.5.

<sup>94</sup> I thank Prof. Klaus Oschema for this observation.

<sup>95</sup> Martin of Troppau, *Chronicon*, pp.397: ‘deduxi componere’.

<sup>96</sup> Martin’s work was highly impersonal but extremely authoritative: Ikas, ‘Martinus Polonus’, 327-41.

<sup>97</sup> Jordan mentioned himself by name in the Prologue to the *Libellus*; Humbert mentioned himself by name in the prologue he wrote for the *Vitae Fratrum*, but not his life of Dominic (presumably because he used Peter Ferrand’s prologue verbatim). It is not clear whether Bartholomew of Trent is responsible for the inclusion of his name or whether it was added later as it is not accompanied by a personal pronoun or a verb in the first



his prologue is to emphasise his statement regarding the new foundation but ancient authority of the Order of Preachers.<sup>98</sup>

Additions, deletions, source appraisals and general editing in compilation texts constituted a demonstrable exercise of authority in accordance with compilers' institutional authorisation and membership of the Dominican Order. The very intellectual and textual mechanisms through which they expressed their authority collided somewhat with their vow of poverty. Scholars have seen a kind of self-effacement occurring in the apparent abdications or disavowals of authority made by compilers. Minnis, as noted earlier, described Vincent's disavowal of authority as 'probably demeaning.'<sup>99</sup> Yet this was essentially the point of mendicant authority as a virtual inversion of traditional forms of structuring and exercising power relationships. Mendicant writers were additionally constrained and empowered by their vow of voluntary poverty since it could necessitate a (sometimes) extreme excision or effacement of self and will, as becomes apparent with the 'Dominican mystics'. The Dominican Order's role in the salvation process and the ways in which they mediated poverty in their effaced and effacing spirituality attempted to bridge the roles of 'priest' and 'prophet' representing textual and charismatic authority respectively.

### Knowing and Seeing God in Compilation Texts

The vagaries to which mendicant authority was subject at an institutional level cannot be dismissed as a mitigating factor in the composition and compilation of Dominican hagiographical and historical works in the order's first century. The scandal of the Eternal Evangel in the mid-thirteenth century exacerbated the disputes with the seculars at Paris. Subsequently, the way that ideas about poverty expressed by Franciscan 'spirituals' were progressively labelled as heretical at the beginning of the fourteenth century compromised the charismatic basis of the authority and authorisation of the mendicant orders. While Dominican textual production was exposed to pressures and tensions proliferating within the

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person: Bartholomew of Trent, *Liber Epilogorum*, p.3. The failure to name themselves resulted in the confusion of the authorship of many thirteenth-century Dominican works such as Peter Ferrand's Life of Dominic and Thomas of Cantimpré's *De apibus*: Tugwell, 'Petrus Hispanus', pp.103-13.

<sup>98</sup> Ferrand, *Legenda*, I, p.209.

<sup>99</sup> Minnis, 'The Author's Two Bodies?' p.261.

Church, the authority claimed by the compiler through the order, the Church and their pastoral roles was subject to its own internal tensions. In this regard, across the medieval period voluntary poverty, as an, often unpredictable, expression of charisma, sought to invert, and subvert, the traditional forms and performances of authority.<sup>100</sup>

Multiple discourses of authority encountered each other in the self-reflection of the compiler and their work. While conventional views of compilation created antagonistic binaries, posing its appropriation against its innovation, praxis against ideology, they also failed to make room for the expression of spirituality within its pervasive textuality. As scholars more recently emphasise, the reality was certainly more diverse and dynamic than traditional binaries or the 'continuity and rupture' modes of analysis can convey. Within this context, Mary Franklin-Brown positions the encyclopedias of the thirteenth century as 'borderland' texts, 'neither an example of pure continuity with the old nor a clear rupture from it.'<sup>101</sup> The dialectic between old and new received new emphasis in the negotiation and exercise of Dominican authority and influenced the development and progress of compilation techniques and historical and hagiographical narratives more generally.<sup>102</sup> The balance between novelty and tradition was also implicated in the Dominicans' conceptions and expressions of poverty. In a sense, both compilation and poverty were forms of authority in which a balance was continually sought between often competing, but always dynamic, discourses. Within this framework, a major point of interaction between poverty and compilation occurs in the areas that traditional conceptions of *compilatio* have rendered redundant, artificial or, quite simply, false: the inclusion of self-deprecating, minimising statements that sit, somewhat incongruously, side-by-side with references to traditional forms of authority, literary and experienced, and the emphases compilers laid on their superior skills.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Sarah Beckwith argues that Franciscan spirituality, employed violent inversion tactics in order to enter into the experience of poverty of Cross. It replaced 'health with sickness, embracing the leprous and the maimed, the high with the low', it embraced 'filth and flesh' emphatically 'fetishizing...Christ's torn and bleeding body as the object, indeed subject of compassion and passion.': *Christ's Body*, p.55.

<sup>101</sup> Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World*, p.65.

<sup>102</sup> For the dialectic between old and new in Vincent specifically, see: Paulmier-Foucart, *le Grand miroir du monde*, pp.92-93.

<sup>103</sup> It is interesting to note that the word *compendium*, which Dominican compilers use in relation to their work is also used to refer to property, land, land tenure arrangement, prebend: Nieyermeier, *Mediae Latinitatis*, A-L, pp.296-297.

Self-deprecatory remarks about style, skills and aptitude were common in the prologues to medieval historical and hagiographical works.<sup>104</sup> Peter Ferrand, for example, makes reference in passing to his ‘crude but truthful’ style, which seems to have been a stock phrase in prologues to Saint’s lives.<sup>105</sup> In the prologue to the *Vitae Fratrum*, Humbert of Romans took up the appellation ‘unprofitable servant’, similarly claimed by Jordan of Saxony in the *Libellus*, while Bartholomew of Trent referred to himself as a miserable sinner in the explicit to his saint’s legendary.<sup>106</sup> Modern scholars, however, tend to reject the sincerity of compiler’s self-deprecation. Minnis, for instance, refutes Hathaway’s views to the contrary to argue that ‘there is little if any genuine humility in the self-presentations of many late-medieval compilers.’<sup>107</sup> Highlighting the limits of authority expressed in the *Libellus Apologeticus*, Paulmier-Foucart argues that Vincent’s ‘habitual expressions of the rhetoric of humility’ do nothing to conceal the authority with which he wields the compiler’s tools.<sup>108</sup> Whereas Wingell dismisses as ‘convention’ and a mere copy of St Paul’s ‘*minimus apostolorum*’ (I Cor. 15:19) Vincent’s assertion ‘*mihi omni fratrum minimo*’.<sup>109</sup>

Vincent’s most pronounced self-deprecating statement occurs in this passage:

I indeed (without mentioning these pure in heart who have the privilege of seeing God in himself and delighting in him), I, as I say, who acknowledge myself to be an unworthy sinner, whose mind doubtless lies yet in the impurities of its flesh and is wrapped round its filth, am nevertheless moved by a certain spiritual sweetness towards the Creator and Guider of the

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<sup>104</sup> See: Michael Goodich, ‘A Note on Sainthood in the Hagiographical Prologue’, *History and Theory*, 20, 1981, 168-174. For analysis of the relationship between the expression of ascetic behaviours and authorial self-deprecation in fourth to seventh-century Greek hagiographies: Kreuger, *Writing and Holiness*, pp.97-106.

<sup>105</sup> As well as those who used Peter’s prologue verbatim, such as Humbert and Dietrich, the phrase was also taken up by Constantine, *Legenda*, 2, p.286. John de Orta also employed it in his life of Saint Louis of Toulouse: ‘...in sermone [...] rudi ac simplici, brevi tamen admodum et veraci.’ ‘Vita S. Ludovico episcopi Tolosani conscripta a Iohannes de Orta’, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 9, 1890, p.281.

<sup>106</sup> Prologus, *VF*, p.3; Jordan, *Lib.*, 1, p.25. Bartholomew, *Liber epilogorum*, p.375: ‘Misserimo peccatore’.

<sup>107</sup> Hathaway, *Compilatio*, p.44; Minnis, ‘Nolens Auctor’, p.58.

<sup>108</sup> Paulmier-Foucart, ‘L’Auctor et Les Auctores’, p.153.

<sup>109</sup> Wingell, ‘Libellus Apologeticus’, p.37. Compare with Eckenrode, who argues that Vincent was not falsely self-deprecating, ‘Vincent of Beauvais’, p.354.

world, and I honour him with greater veneration and reverence when I gaze upon the greatness of his creatures together with their beauty and permanence.<sup>110</sup>

Indeed, it is this passage that captured Wingell's attention, and is largely responsible for his view that Vincent's self-deprecation lacks genuine substance. Even though much of the manner with which Vincent's statements were made was doubtless inherited from his predecessors as far back as Cicero as Wingell maintains, Vincent indicates in other parts of the *Libellus Apologeticus* that he was aware of the enormity of the task he had undertaken and of his successes and failures in this regard.<sup>111</sup> This suggests to me that there was still a creativity or affective quality in this passage that moves it beyond the realm of artifice or literary flourish.<sup>112</sup>

Vincent's recent models were the more authoritative of the twelfth-century universal historians such as Sigebert of Gembloux and Helinand of Froidmont.<sup>113</sup> Yet the very matter of his profession to the Dominican Order provided an 'additional challenge', to borrow a phrase from Graeme Dunphy, for the authority to which he laid claim.<sup>114</sup> In this sense, the level of his expostulation might be compared to feminine forms of self-deprecation.<sup>115</sup> The tenth-century female writer, Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, for instance, wrote: 'Behold the servile devotion of

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<sup>110</sup> Lib. Apol., cap 6: 'Ego quidem – ut taceam de mundis corde, quorum est proprium Deum videre et in ipso delectari – ego inquam – ut fateor – licet peccator indignus, cuius nimirum mens adhuc in fecibus carnis sue jacet eiusdem sordibus obvoluta quadam tamen spirituali suavitate in mundi creatorum ac rectorum afficio, ipsumque maiori veneratione ac reverentia prosequor: cum ipsum creature magnitudinem simul et pulchritudinem eiusque permanentiam intueor.' Translated by: Franklin Brown, *Reading the World*, pp.54-55.

<sup>111</sup> See for instance chapter 11, pp.482-83, where he poses the rhetorical question "Quis enim omnia, que de singulis rebus in tam infinita voluminum numerositate per orbem usque quaque dispersa reperiuntur, in brevi possit colligere, cunctaque perstringendo simul in unum volumen manuale redigere?" and 18, pp.493-95, when he expresses displeasure in his own work: 'Quod utique dum per imbecillitatem conatus mei vix facio, serenato quodammodo liberoque rationis oculo hoc ipsum opus intuens, et in staera discretionis appendens in parte quidem negligenter egisse, in parte vero modum excessisse me reperio ... Hec sunt ergo, in quibus sicut nec ipse mihi complaceo, sic etiam Deo et hominibus displicere formido.'

<sup>112</sup> Krueger notes that Christian professions of humility and their abdication of authority 'moved far beyond Roman aristocratic ideals of modesty': *Writing and Holiness*, p.10.

<sup>113</sup> Paulmier-Foucart, 'Écrire l'histoire au XIIIe siècle. Vincent de Beauvais et Hélinand de Froidmont', *Annales de l'Est*, 33, 1981, 49-70. M. -C. Duchenne, 'Un historien et sa source: l'utilisation de la chronique de Sigebert de Gembloux par Vincent de Beauvais', *Spicae*, 4, 1986, 31-79. Idem, 'Vincent de Beauvais compilateur et historien dominicain: la source Chronographus dans le Speculum historiale', *Annales de l'Est*, 47, 1997, 133-153.

<sup>114</sup> Dunphy, 'Strategies of Authority', p.197.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

my lowly mind is stirred to tell the beginnings of the fortunate monastery of Gandersheim.’<sup>116</sup> I am not suggesting that Vincent used Hrotsvit’s chronicle as a source or was even aware of her at all. The comparison merely indicates the way that poverty, as an inversion of traditional, masculine forms of authority may have broadly influenced or nuanced the vocabularies that mendicant compilers used to negotiate the boundaries of their textual authority. Vincent engages language and concepts traditionally associated with the ‘disempowered’ to whom the mendicants aligned themselves through the assumption and promotion of feminine, ‘womanly’ virtues like poverty, humility and obedience.’<sup>117</sup> As I explore further in the concluding chapter of this thesis, the discursive relationship between gender and poverty was complex. Whereas the Franciscans used language and terms gendered predominantly female almost without exception, the Dominicans could juxtapose self-deprecatory, feminised language with militant, militaristic, and undoubtedly masculine, expressions.<sup>118</sup> Regardless, dismissing Vincent’s statements as artifice, convention or meaningless misses a crucial opportunity in which to understand the ways and means the articulation and experiences of poverty and humility could intersect with the tasks, purposes and, importantly, the self-representation of the compiler. His authorial presence, like all medieval writers, reflected a multi-layered and multivalent system ‘of authorial self-construction’ in the sense that it existed in and was subject to a variety of discourses that each had different implications. As a mendicant writer, however, his authorial presence was

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid, p.169: ‘Ecce meae supplex humilis devotio mentis gliscit, felicitis primordia Gandeshemensis pandere coenobii ...’

<sup>117</sup> Claire Renkin, ‘A Feast of Love: Visual Images of Francis of Assisi and Mary Magdalen and late Medieval Mendicant Devotion’, in *Poverty and Devotion*, pp.92-104, at p.101. Katherine Jansen argues that the charismatic authority of the mendicants was gendered female: ‘Through the language and process of symbolic inversion, Dominic found a system to renounce power, prestige and authority, but at the same time, articulate the virtues of poverty, humility and inspiration. Symbolic disempowerment allowed the mendicants to construct an identity, gendered female, which was in and of itself a powerful critique of the wealthy, masculine institutional Church presented by Saint Peter’, *The Making of the Magdalen*, p.85. About the gendering of poverty more generally Patricia Skinner argues: ‘Poverty is gendered because the poor are, almost without exception, a powerless group and the categories thought of as poor and/or weak in Medieval society correspond closely with the categories of medieval individuals whom gender historians are most likely to be found studying’, ‘Gender and the Sign languages of Poverty’, p.60.

<sup>118</sup> For Francis and the feminine: Jacques Delarun, *Francis of Assisi and the Feminine*, St Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 2006. For an example of the Dominicans’ use of militarised language: VF, II.I, pp.67-68: ‘[...] pocius humilitatis et aliis exemplis virtutem sunt heretici convinciendi quam exteriori apparentia vel pugna verborum. Armemus igitur nos devotis orationibus, et vere humilitatis indicia preferentes, discalciatiis pedibus contra Goliad procedamus.’

nanced by concepts and vocabularies associated with the expression and performance of poverty as both a material and spiritual phenomenon.

Vincent's reference to, and engagement with, his own ontological poverty was a demonstrable negotiation of authority while it also prepared for spiritual transformation. In the passage quoted above, poverty, with its discursive and performative connections to humility and self-deprecation, is referenced by Vincent to claim and generate a series of relationships with the divine: for himself and for his readers. From a performance perspective, when Vincent writes that observing humanity in historical narrative increases his veneration of God, he is living the experience that he aims to create for his readers/listeners.<sup>119</sup> There was a notable spiritual dimension to the compilation of historical and hagiographical narrative and compilers often indicate the spiritual benefits, rewards, development in the composition as well as in the reading. The phrase 'I am moved by a certain spiritual sweetness towards the creator and guider of the world' can be interpreted as both the cause and the effect, or rather the doing and the making of Vincent's historical narrative. Mary Carruthers points out that spiritual 'sweetness' is one of the 'trickiest' concepts in the medieval lexicon, having positive and negative interpretations. In what she calls an 'experimental and provisional' analysis of its use and meaning in the medieval period, she connects the concept with knowledge,<sup>120</sup> persuasion and medicine;<sup>121</sup> offering an illuminating framework with which to understand Vincent's statement and the devotional dimensions he attributed to his text.<sup>122</sup>

The passage suggests that Vincent has come to know and experience God in the construction of his *Summa*.<sup>123</sup> This is achieved not only by observing God's work in the world through the material that he includes in the *Speculum Historiale*, but on a more personal and affective

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<sup>119</sup> Peterson and Langellier, 'Performance Turn', p.175.

<sup>120</sup> In his extensive treatment of Henry of Cologne's entrance to the order, Jordan uses the term to reveal the way that knowledge and experience of Christ turned poverty from a bitter to 'a sweet yoke', Lib., 74, p.60: 'suave iugum'.

<sup>121</sup> The anonymous writer of the first prologue for the *Vitae Fratrum* invokes these senses when they write that 'what is tasteless to one is sweet to another' when he attempts to pre-empt criticism of the text: Prologue I, VF, p.2.

<sup>122</sup> Mary Carruthers, 'Sweet Jesus', in *Mindful Spirit in Late Medieval Literature. Essays in Honour of Elizabeth Kirk*, ed. by Bonnie Wheeler, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, pp.9-20, at p.10.

<sup>123</sup> Paulmier-Foucart and Nadeau state that the *Speculum Maius* should be thought of as a *Summa* rather than an encyclopaedia, 'The History of Christ', p.113.

level. Carruthers posits that knowledge, communicated by the concept of sweetness is often identified as the experience of the presence of God.<sup>124</sup> She continues that an activity that is sweet, ‘creates a fully phenomenal knowing of God that is aesthetic – based in human sense – not only rational.’<sup>125</sup> In this context, Vincent uses the phrase to refer to his own knowledge and experience of God, while he positions his *Speculum* as a way in which he (and presumably his readers) can come into contact with and know God.

The positioning of spiritual development and transformation as the defining outcome of both the composition and receptions of their work was a common device among medieval hagiographers.<sup>126</sup> While not as eloquent perhaps, Bernard Gui states that his mind was drawn to the labour precisely because knowledge of the virtues and sufferings of the saints would further his own spiritual progress in the imitation and teaching of their examples.<sup>127</sup> He contributes to the Dominican pursuit of the knowledge and love of God as well as creating an opportunity for his readers and hearers to do the same. Robert Sweetman poses a distinction between scholarly and devotional readers that is particularly fitting to describe the spiritual work that the compilers performed and created: ‘what devotional readers have that differentiates their reading from the scholarly enterprise is that they knew in their bones where to look: there in the Good Book, in the *Summa*, in the Lives of the Saints – there one will encounter those words and patterns that transform life, that is, that enter, possess, and make one anew.’<sup>128</sup> It is in this context that Vincent’s doing and making can best be understood. He juxtaposes his ontological poverty with the wholeness of spiritual sweetness, the experiential knowledge of God, calling attention to the way that the authority of the compiler operated between those spheres by being moved by the divine to move others. Embedded in an encyclopedic text, ‘sweetness’ is moved beyond the individual experience to

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<sup>124</sup> Carruthers, ‘Sweet Jesus’, p.13.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, p.13.

<sup>126</sup> Krueger, *Writing and Holiness*, p.10.

<sup>127</sup> Delisle, ‘Notices’, p.424: ‘Allexit vero animum meum ad subeundum laborem desiderium sciendi sanctorum illustres agones et insignia gesta virtutesque preclaras ac exemplares vitas et perfectionum semitas, ad proficiendum in via dei, eorum exemplo, imitatione et doctrina, necnon ipsorum meritis michi suffragantibus valori ad perveniendum ad patriam, in qua ipsi sine fine vivunt et regnant cum Christo qui est sanctorum omnium gloria et corona.’

<sup>128</sup> Sweetman, ‘Thomas of Cantimpré’, p.135.

that of the universal. As Carruthers concluded, sweetness has a 'communal energy' that 'functions rhetorically to persuade another person to an action.'<sup>129</sup>

In this context, 'sweetness' is a discursive and experiential device which marks out the spiritual and devotional nature of the text. Vincent establishes the *Speculum Historiale* as a location for meditative and contemplative prayer. Contemplation, as it is defined by Margaret Miles, is 'strictly speaking ... the result of prayer and meditation that achieves prayer so concentrated that the person is absorbed in ecstasy.'<sup>130</sup> Or as Aquinas observes, 'the simple act of gazing on the truth.'<sup>131</sup> Frederick Bauerschmidt adds, 'by which [Thomas] means the divine truth that is God, but which, in an extended sense, also includes the divine effects of both nature and grace.'<sup>132</sup> These definitions, particularly that of Aquinas, reveal the way that contemplation was in itself conceptually linked to the encyclopaedic texts as both were effectively 'places of seeing.'<sup>133</sup> Encyclopaedic texts mimicked contemplation, because they are each, as William West argues, a 'blank space' that have the ability to release the things in it 'from the context in which they had been produced.'<sup>134</sup>

The decision of many compilers to classify their texts as *Specula* reflects the way that the encyclopedic 'genre' metaphorically acted as a mirror through which the temporal world could reflect the divine. The 'genre' was in fact 'a set of variations on an *imago mundi*' that had generally similar intentions to assist in salvation through the preservation and presentation of divine truths and to outline the scriptural version of the world's history.<sup>135</sup> Elizabeth Keen proposes that Isidore of Seville's *imago mundi* presented an 'amphitheater of

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<sup>129</sup> Carruthers, 'Sweet Jesus', p.14.

<sup>130</sup> Margaret R. Miles, *Practicing Christianity: Critical Perspectives for Embodied Spirituality*, New York: Crossroads, 1988, p.138.

<sup>131</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II<sup>a</sup>-II<sup>ae</sup> q.18 a.3 ad 1.

<sup>132</sup> Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, *Thomas Aquinas: Faith Reason, and Following Christ*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p.174.

<sup>133</sup> William N. West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 19.

<sup>134</sup> West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias*, p.19.

<sup>135</sup> Keen, 'Shifting Horizons', pp.277-78. See also Christel Meier, 'Organisation of Knowledge and encyclopaedic ordo: functions and purposes of a universal literary genre, in *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress*, ed. by P. Binkley, Groningen, 1-4 July 1996, Leiden, Brill, 1997.



life' that at times was striking for its theatricality.<sup>136</sup> She continues that Honorius Augustodunensis reflected St Augustine's 'model of spiritual peregrinatio' that could 'jolt the reader into closer attention' and 'situate the idea of the Christian traveler over the landscape as the dominant theme within the image of the world.'<sup>137</sup> As compilation reached 'a highly developed stage' in the thirteenth century, Keen argues furthermore that encyclopedias became increasingly appropriated for and by a lay audience.<sup>138</sup> Regardless of the changes over time, '[r]eflection is a common theme: as the mirrored self within the world, as meditation upon meaning, and as the obscure view of truth seen 'through a glass darkly'.'<sup>139</sup> The writing and reading of an encyclopaedic text can consequently be seen as a 'doing' and a 'making' in the way that it was conceptually and discursively linked to devotional experience.

Vincent's use of the concept of 'sweetness' is indicative of the way that the 'mirror' that his text offered could provide the meditative basis upon which a contemplative, mystical experience could be effected. Rather than expressing a false humility, he refers to and uses the discursive relationships between contemplation and the encyclopaedic text to build a devotional community, between himself and the readers/listeners/adapters of the *Speculum Historiale*. Both contemplation and compilation, as forms of authoritative engagement with the divine and divine truths, were predicated by the complete removal of an autonomous 'self' as the practice and performance of an inner, spiritual poverty. The acknowledgement of his ontological poverty as a type of preface to the construction of the *Speculum Historiale* as a meditative space was essential to his own contemplative experiences and to the formation of the community. In this, as 'doers' and 'makers' of historical narrative, compilers could attribute a similar function to their texts, as 'a making (of experience for listeners)' and as 'a doing (taking, telling, listening)'.<sup>140</sup> Personal interventions into the text, with their myriad shapes and forms, constructed the compiler as Walter Benjamin's 'Storyteller': 'the storyteller takes what he tells from experience – his own or that reported by others. And he, in turn,

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<sup>136</sup> Keen, 'Shifting Horizons', p.279, 283.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, pp.286-91.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, pp.291-98.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, p.298.

<sup>140</sup> Peterson and Langellier, 'Performing Narrative', pp.173-174

makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale.’<sup>141</sup> Compilers were at the forefront of the construction and shaping of Dominican authority, at both a collective and personal level. They simultaneously worked tirelessly to position their texts in a way that formed and expanded their devotional communities.

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The intersection between compilation and poverty was structured by a number of sometimes competing discourses. As forms of authority, they seemingly sit at opposite ends of the spectrum, with compilation characterised by its inherent textuality and poverty by its relationship to the expression of charisma. Vincent of Beauvais is somewhat unique in the sense that he openly delineates his terms of engagement with his text and with the compilation process itself. Yet it is precisely his openness and the way that it expresses and embodies myriad tensions, which proliferated as mendicant poverty intersected with the production of historical and hagiographical narrative, that makes him an ideal case study. In as much as compilation texts were far from being bland and unideological, Vincent, and to an extent, Bernard Gui, illustrate that the compilers themselves were not passive nor objective observers, nor did they fail ‘to reverberate’ external tensions and issues that impacted upon their authority and that of their order. It is no coincidence that compilation reached a highly developed stage in mendicant hands. As with the Dominican ministry itself, encyclopaedic texts essentially collapsed traditional distinctions between the active and contemplative, diversifying not only the authoritative discourses expressed and reflected in the texts themselves, but also the textual and devotional communities.

As the next chapter explores, the conceptual, discursive and performative links between poverty and contemplation that were expressed in Vincent’s prologue to the *Speculum Maius* reached a highly articulate and definitive stage during the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas in the early-fourteenth century. Drawing on both internal and external traditions, Bernard Gui constructed a narrative of the saint that not only reflected Thomas’s own teachings regarding

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<sup>141</sup> Walter Benjamin, ‘The Storyteller’, in *Illuminations*, ed. by H. Arendt, transl. by H. Zohn, New York: Schocken, 1969, pp.83-109, at p.87, quoted in Peterson and Langellier, ‘Performing Narrative’, p.173.

poverty but that attempted to reconcile competing perceptions of religious poverty that were circulating within the Church.

## Chapter Five: 'Life most exempt from external cares': Poverty and the Making of Saint Thomas.

[St Thomas] was of noble birth and could have had temporal wealth. Just as he despised wealth when he had it, he did not seek it when he did not. Rather, he followed the example of Solomon, seeking nothing other than the wisdom that he loved in prayer. From this, it was most fervently believed that Thomas deservedly obtained from God all that he taught, wrote, and dictated through his devoted prayer.<sup>1</sup>

The canonisation of Thomas Aquinas occurred in 1323 and has been viewed as an embodiment of a clerical culture which is seen to have reached an apogee in the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> During this time, the process of canonisation itself had reached full formalisation and institutionalisation as the papacy fulfilled twelfth-century imperatives to bring it firmly under its own influence.<sup>3</sup> Members of the Dominican Order at the University of Paris and beyond were embroiled in political and intellectual battles regarding Thomas's own theological authority and the very nature of papal power, as well as being heavily involved in the debates over Christ's poverty.<sup>4</sup> The bulk of their textual production during this time was

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Calo, *Vita S. Thomae*, 17, p.36: 'Qui cum esset de nobili genere et potuisset divicias temporales habere, sicut ipsas contempsit, cum habuit, sic cum non habuit, non petivit, sed exemplo salomonis nihil aliud quam sapienciam, quam amabat, in oracione petebat. Unde certissime creditur, quod merito sue devote oracionis a deo obtinuit, que docuit, que scripsit et que dictavit.'

<sup>2</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.392. For Thomas's canonisation: Leonardus V. Geruaitis, 'The Canonization of Saint Thomas Aquinas', *Vivarium*, 5, 1967, 25-24; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas, Volume 1: The Person and His Work*, Rev. Edn., transl. by Robert Royal, Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005, pp.317-326; Igor Salomão Teixeira, 'The Time of Sanctity: Reflections on a Concept', *Revista Brasileira de História. São Paulo*, 32, 2012, 209-225. The canonisation processes are edited in: Laurent, *Fontes*, IV & V. The lives of Thomas by William of Tocco, Bernard Gui and Peter Calo are edited in: Prümmer, *Fontes*, III. An updated edition of Tocco appears in: Claire Le Brunn-Gouanvic, ed., *Ystoria sancti Thome de Aquino de Guillaume de Tocco (1323). Édition critique, introduction et notes*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1996. Kenelm Foster translated into English Gui's Life and the testimony from the first canonisation enquiry as well as other pertinent biographical texts: *The Life of Saint Thomas Aquinas: Biographical Documents*, London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1959.

<sup>3</sup> On the development of procedural patterns and norms governing medieval canonisation: Thomas Wetzstein, *Heilige vor Gericht. Das kanonisationsverfahren im europäischen Spätmittelalter*, Köln, Weimar and Wein: Böhlau, 2004. My thanks to Prof. Klaus Oschema for bringing this to my attention. See also: Gábor Klaniczay, ed., *Procès de canonisation au Moyen Âge: Aspects juridiques et religieux/ Medieval Canonization Processes: Legal and Religious Aspects*, Rome: L'Ecole Française de Rome, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> The literature on these issues is extensive. Apart from those already listed above, see generally: David Burr, *Spiritual Franciscans*, p.208ff; for the works of specific Dominicans: Lowe, *Contested Theological Authority*, esp. pp.85-106.

consequently formed in the crucible of intense intellectual debate over the nature and exercise of institutional authority. Against this backdrop, this chapter explores the role and meaning of poverty in devotional narratives of the post-1300 order. I examine the literature associated with Thomas's canonisation, particularly the life penned by famous Dominican inquisitor, Bernard Gui. Both Thomas and Bernard have been accused of a less-than model adherence to poverty. Thomas for example seemed to have unlimited access to his family and thus his rejection of the wealth and status of his noble life seems slightly suspect. As indicated in the previous chapter, Bernard Gui is thought to have displayed an over-all 'insensitivity' towards the issue of poverty that modern commentators have taken to be a sign of his servility to the institutions in his life: namely, the Dominican Order, the French crown and the Church.<sup>5</sup> Both men can be viewed as embodiments of the clerical impulses that are seen to have prevailed in the early fourteenth century. The culture in which they operated seems to be clearly distinct from the evangelical, apostolic atmosphere of the thirteenth century and the mystical tendencies by which it was apparently superseded in the later decades of the fourteenth.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, this chapter proposes that narratives surrounding Thomas's canonisation, from a Dominican perspective at least, exhibit an overall continuity with those of the thirteenth century and provide a spiritual basis upon which the Dominican 'mystics' would build later in the century.

By the time of Thomas's canonisation in 1323, the reputation of the Dominicans had come a long way from the tumultuous period in which the order's rights and privileges for the performance of their pastoral duties and services had been withdrawn briefly by Pope Innocent IV's Bull *Etsi animarum* in 1254.<sup>7</sup> From the 1250s a steady program seems to have been launched to draw the Dominicans back from any potentially subversive teachings which had been implicated in the dispute: predominantly eschatological speculation and radical

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<sup>5</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, pp. 136-138. See also, Guenée, who calls him 'a mystic of obedience': *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages*, transl. by Arthur Goldhammer, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, p.60.

<sup>6</sup> For example: Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors*, pp.2-3.

<sup>7</sup> On *Etsi animarum* and its context: Mäkinen, *Property Rights*, pp.19-54; Andrew Traver, 'The Forging of an Intellectual Defense of Mendicancy in the Medieval University', in *Medieval Religious Mendicancies*, pp.157-196; J.M.M.H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris, 1200-1400*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998.

poverty.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, by the turn of the thirteenth century, through a series of events related to the esteem in which the order was held by Pope John XXII, the Dominicans had become firmly entrenched as the right-arm of the papacy.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, poverty had been largely quarantined to the realm of theoretical debate over issues of use and dominium. These were not isolated phenomena.

In the first three decades of the fourteenth century, the issue of poverty received significant attention largely due to the increasingly radical ways it was being interpreted among certain factions within the Franciscan Order. Franciscan Spirituals, as they are referred to, based their ideas of poverty on the view that Christ and the Apostles had owned nothing, either individually or in common. Taken to its extreme, this position could be seen to invalidate the authority of the institutional Church itself.<sup>10</sup> Upon his election as pope, the jurist John XXII made it his personal mission to quash any interpretations regarding the issue of Christ's poverty that varied from his own.<sup>11</sup> The Dominicans were heavily involved in the events leading up to the publication of his 1323 bull, *Cum inter nonnullos*, in which the Pope firmly

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<sup>8</sup> On the mid-thirteenth century anti-fraternal polemics: Geltner, 'Brethren Behaving Badly: A Deviant Approach to Medieval Antifraternalism', *Speculum*, 85, 2010, 47-64; Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition*, pp.11-61. Szittyá draws attention to a 1255 letter from the secular masters and scholars at the University of Paris to Pope Alexander IV, which denounces the friars as the false-prophets of Scripture that had informed the Dominicans own responses to the heretics in the Languedoc (discussed in Chapter Three): 'deceitful workers [the Gloss comments: "cunningly deceiving in the guise of religion"] seduce by their appearance of humility and religion as of the angels [the Gloss comments: "who seem to be messengers of God by their appearance and humility, as if leading the religious life"]': *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, I, no.256, pp.283-295, cited in Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition*, p.21. These false religious had also been prophesied by Hildegard of Bingen in a letter addressed to the clergy, in which she foretold of a group of heretics 'feigning piety and extreme asceticism, living a life of poverty and mendicancy', which had seemed to be fulfilled with the arrival of the Dominicans to the city in 1220: Katharine Kerby-Fulton, 'Hildegard of Bingen and Antimendicant Propaganda', *Traditio*, 43, 1987, 386-99.

<sup>9</sup> On the concepts of *usus* and *dominium* in the debates over poverty in the early-fourteenth century: Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp.221-269; Janet Coleman, 'Medieval Discussions of Property: *Ratio* and *dominium* according to John of Paris and Marsilius of Padua', *History of Political Thought*, 4, 1983, 209-28; eadem, 'Dominium in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-century Political Thought and its Seventeenth-Century Heirs: John of Paris and Locke', *Political Studies*, 33, 1985, 73-100; eadem, 'Using, Not Owning'; Mäkinen, *Property Rights*, pp.141-190; Roberto Lambertini, 'Poverty and Power: Franciscans in Later Medieval Political Thought', in *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity*, ed. by Jill Kraye, Risto Saarinen, Dordrecht: Springer, 2005, pp.141-163.

<sup>10</sup> This is certainly how it came to be viewed among the Fraticelli: Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent, c. 125—c.1450*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, pp.167-257; Gian Luca Potestà, *Angelo Clareno: Dai poveri eremiti a fraticelli*, Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990.

<sup>11</sup> Patrick Nold, *Pope John XXII and His Franciscan Cardinal: Bertrand de la Tour and the Apostolic Poverty Controversy*, Oxford: Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 2003; David Burr, 'John XXII and the Spirituals. Is Angelo Clareno Telling the Truth?', *Franciscan Studies*, 63, 2005, 271-87.

and unequivocally ruled that religious poverty, as based on Christ's model, did not preclude the ownership of property, thereby rendering the position of the Franciscan Spirituals heretical.<sup>12</sup> Malcolm Lambert argues that:

John's predilection for the juridical dictated the terms of the controversy and ensured that, instead of focussing on the issue of the role of poverty in the religious life and its relationship to the practices of the virtues, the major battle was fought over law, rights of use and of possession, and the relationship between natural and positive law.<sup>13</sup>

Lambert's comments could be used to describe the entire framework in which Dominican poverty was viewed in the early-fourteenth century. It is contextualised as a theoretical and legalistic construct, which was employed mainly as a basic indicator against which to compare and denigrate the Franciscan position. The bull itself appeared only months after the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas and, as this chapter shows, this event was implicated in the battles being waged over the issue of poverty. On a broader level, both *Cum inter nonnullos* and Thomas's canonisation can be seen to embody different but related aspects of the process in which material poverty became subsumed by 'the much vaguer concept of spiritual poverty'. Along these lines, André Vauchez argues that the outward markers of poverty, which had characterised thirteenth-century saints were internalised by those of the fourteenth. He concludes that by the beginning of the fourteenth century: 'a decisive turning-point had been passed: poverty in all its concrete and ostentatious aspects – the rejection of possessions, begging, wearing clothes of a certain type – was no longer an accepted test of the sainthood of a servant of God.'<sup>14</sup> The Dominicans had never fully subscribed to this image either in practice or in hagiographical narrative and thus their less flamboyant approach to poverty both drove and reflected broader cultural developments.

The exploration of the role of poverty in the construction of narratives surrounding the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas takes place in three broad areas. Firstly, I set the context by

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<sup>12</sup> For the narrative of events: Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 221-269. Lambert suggests that the impetus to address the issue of Christ's poverty may have originated in fact within the Dominican order, p.266. For the Bull: L. Duval-Arnould, 'La constitution "Cum inter nonnullos" de Jean XXII sur la pauvreté du Christ et des apôtres: rédaction préparatoire et rédaction définitive', *Archivum Franciscum Historicum*, 77, 1984, pp.406-20; Andrea Tabarroni, *Paupertas Christi et Apostolorum: L'ideale francescano in discussione (1322-1324)*, Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990, pp.83-87.

<sup>13</sup> Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, p.264.

<sup>14</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.396.

exploring internal developments concerning poverty and its role in the formation and articulation of Dominican narratives leading up to Thomas's canonisation. I discuss the devotional text the *Nine Ways of Prayer* and its contribution to shifts in the spiritual focus of Dominican poverty in the final decades of the thirteenth century. The second section marks out the external forces that exerted considerable pressure on the canonisation proceedings and the aspects of sanctity with which Thomas became associated. Many historians position Pope John XXII as the leading protagonist in Thomas's canonisation. Accordingly, the discussion takes place principally within the context of his conflict with the Franciscans over the issue of poverty. With this background established, the third section addresses the role of poverty in Gui's *Life of Saint Thomas*. Far from presenting a wholly intellectual or clerical saint, Gui's life paints a picture of an intensely spiritual contemplative that is entirely consistent with the trajectory established in the spiritual narrative of the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century order.

### Toward a Narrative of Detached Contemplation

As previous chapters have indicated, the core 'system rationality' of Dominican life, to borrow Melville's terminology, remained relatively coherent across changing contexts and situations.<sup>15</sup> With their principal ideologies relatively stable, Dominican writers were able to maintain a high-level of responsiveness to external stimuli that manifested in an ongoing development and refinement of their devotional narratives.<sup>16</sup> Notwithstanding the level of pressure that the secular-mendicant dispute exerted on the adjustments to canonical Dominican narratives, developments in the concepts and language of devotion and sanctity were similarly transformed by the increased status and privileges that coincided with the succession of magisters being produced in Dominican schools.<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Lowe writes that when the Dominicans initially entered the university environment they 'did not realize that their relationship with the universities possessed an intrinsic dynamism which would

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<sup>15</sup> Melville, 'System Rationality', p.381 states: 'The Order's *propositum* only consisted of one element: *praedicatio*, which served the welfare of the soul – the *salus animarum* – of all people, not just of the order's members.'

<sup>16</sup> See Tugwell, 'Introduction', *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, pp.21-60.

<sup>17</sup> Lowe, *Contested Theological Authority*, pp.29-33.



ultimately transform their perception of themselves and their charism.<sup>18</sup> At the same time that the negotiation of magisterial authority was a dominant imperative within the order and provided the discursive frameworks through which their self-presentation and authorisation was articulated, the order's active engagement in the augmentation of the authority of their saints and their ongoing deference to history and hagiography at times of crisis, conflict and instability reveals the extent to which intellectual and charismatic forms of authority constantly intersected.<sup>19</sup> Against this background, the devotional text *The Nine Ways of Prayer of Saint Dominic* presents as a type of counterpoint to the institutional authority embodied by the Dominican masters at the point when the magisters had ostensibly reached an apogee in the form of Thomas Aquinas.

The *Nine Ways* was likely produced in Bologna between 1274-1290.<sup>20</sup> The text became attached to Dietrich of Apolda's *Life of Dominic*, composed in the 1290s and for a long time it was considered to be the final chapter of his work.<sup>21</sup> Bernard Gui is known to have had a separate manuscript at his disposal by 1314.<sup>22</sup> The preface to the document states that it is not a traditional treatise on prayer. Whereas scholars like Thomas, Albert the Great and William de Perardus provided information on prayer's use, necessity and its preparation and performance, the writer of the *Nine Ways* states that text outlines:

the way of praying in which the soul uses the members of the body in order to rise more devotedly to God, so that the soul, as it causes the body to move, is in turn moved by the body, until sometimes it comes to be in ecstasy like Paul, sometimes in agony like our Saviour, and sometimes in rapture like the prophet David.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.33.

<sup>19</sup> Tugwell methodically documents the 'synchronicity between crises and calls for miracle-stories', 'Introduction', *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, pp.21-60.

<sup>20</sup> The manuscript tradition has been scrupulously documented by Simon Tugwell, who provides the background and critical edition: 'The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic: A Textual Study and Critical Edition', *Mediaeval Studies*, XLVII, 1985, pp.1-124, and an English translation: *Early Dominicans*, pp.94-103.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p.6-7. Tugwell cites a letter that Gui wrote to the Master General in which he references the document.

<sup>23</sup> Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.94. Tugwell, 'Nine Ways', p.82: 'Tamen de modo orandi secundum quod anima exercet membra corporis it ipsa devotius feratur in deum, ut anima movens corpus removeretur a corpore et fiat quandoque in extasi ut Paulus, quandoque in agonia ut salvator, quandoque in excessu mentis ut David propheta [...] Talis enim modus orandi incitat devotionem, alternatim ex anima in corpus et ex corpore in animam. Et iste modus faciebat sanctum Dominicum resoluti vehementer in lacrimas, et accendebat

Dominic, it continues, would 'dissolve utterly into weeping' praying this way, as 'it kindled the fervour of his good will that his mind could not prevent his bodily members from showing unmistakable signs of his devotion.'<sup>24</sup> Fundamentally, the *Nine Ways* demonstrates the performance of the prayer forms as the basis for anagogic contemplative experience as exemplified by the use of the verbs to rise, to move and to be in ecstasy in this passage.

The ways of praying documented in the *Nine Ways* engage a relationship between the body and the divine, between grace and virtue and are ultimately transformative both to the performer and the observer. Additionally, they suppose an integral relationship between virtue and the body, that is often revealed through the countenance of the saint.<sup>25</sup> 'The Fourth Way of Prayer', genuflection, reports:

Sometimes it seemed from the very way [Dominic] looked that he had penetrated heaven in his mind, and then he would suddenly appear radiant with joy, wiping away the abundant tears running down his face. At such times he would come to be in an intensity of desire, like a thirsty man coming to a spring of water, or a traveller at last approaching his homeland. Then he would grow more forceful and insistent, and his movements would display great composure and agility as he stood up and kneeled down.<sup>26</sup>

The narrator here acts as an eye-witness to Dominic's charismatic authority as it is expressed through his obvious connection to the divine. Furthermore, they seek to put forward Dominic's prayer form as an example to imitate in the hopes that it will produce similar effects for the practitioner. Prayer nurtures the relationship between the religious and the divine and produces ecstatic rapture as demonstrated by Dominic's appearance, negotiating and supporting a charismatic authority through performance. Within this context, hagiography in general and the *Nine Ways of Prayer* in particular function most effectively as performative narratives. They are equally focussed on shaping the inner and outer lives of their readers by

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feruorem bone voluntatis in tantum ut mens cohibere non posset quin devotionem membra corporis manifestarent certis inditiis.'

<sup>24</sup> Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.94

<sup>25</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>26</sup> Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.97. Tugwell, 'Nine Ways', p.85: 'Et aliquando videbatur in ipso modo aspectus eius intellectu penetrasse celum, atque cito videbatur exilaratus gaudio et extergens lacrimis defluentes. Et fiebat in magno desiderio, quasi sitiens cum peruenerit ad fontem, et sicut peregrinus cum iam est prope patriam. Et prevalebat et invalescebat et multum composite atque agiliter movebatur et sursum erigendo se et genuflectendo.'

establishing a connection to those of Dominic. Through this focus, the narrative of the *Nine Ways* is subject to an expressive, sometimes constraining interplay between literary form and devotional practices and the physical and metaphorical bodies that they each aim to generate. It is accordingly a performative narrative – a doing and making - in the sense that it seeks to form embodied prayer performances in others by describing those of Dominic.

The ‘Seventh Way’ is the only prayer form to specifically mention the word poverty. It describes a way of prayer whereby the body stands straight with arms raised directly above the head ‘like a choice arrow shot straight up from a bow.’ The hands are positioned ‘slightly open so as if to catch something from heaven’. The narrator continues that through this prayer position, Dominic is said to have received a great increase of grace and experienced rapture. He received the gifts of the Holy Spirit for his order and brethren so ‘that each one would consider himself blessed in the highest poverty, in bitter grief, in severe persecution, in great hunger and thirst for righteousness, in all the cares and worries of mercy...’<sup>27</sup> After praying like this Dominic ‘bore himself like a prophet’ (*more prophético se habebat*). The passage finishes with the statement that: ‘the Holy Father did not remain long in this kind of prayer, but returned to himself as if he were coming from far away, and at such times he appeared to be a stranger in the world, as could easily be seen from his appearance and behaviour.’<sup>28</sup>

This prayer form is deeply connected to the negotiation and expression of Dominic’s charismatic authority and the authority or rather legacy that he bequeathed to his order. He is likened to a prophet and one of the charismatic gifts that he received for his followers was the ability and grace to understand poverty’s purpose and meaning to spiritual development and religious authority. Poverty is presented as a tribulation comparable to and co-existing

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<sup>27</sup> Tugwell, ‘Nine Ways’, pp.88-89: ‘Inveniebatur nichilominus sepe orando erigi totus ad celum per modum sagitte electe de arcu extenso proiecte sursum in directum, elevatis manibus sursum supra caput fortiter extensis atque coniunctis invicem, vel aliquantulum ampliatis quasi ad aliquid recipiendum de celo. Et creditur quod augebatur ei gratia tunc et rapiebatur et impetrabat a deo pro ordine quem inceperet dona spiritus sancti et suavitates delectabiles in actibus beatitudinum sibi et fratribus, ut in altissima paupertate, in amaro luctu, in gravi persecutione, in multa esurie et siti iustitie, in anxia misericordia quilibet reputaret se beatum [...]’ I have mainly followed Tugwell’s translation but have interpreted *altimissa* as highest poverty’ where Tugwell renders it ‘most profound’: Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, pp.99-101.

<sup>28</sup> Translation Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.100. Tugwell, ‘Nine Ways’, pp.88-89: ‘Itaque sanctus pater in illo modo orandi non diu stabat, sed revertebatur in seipsum, quasi de longinquo veniens et velut peregrinus mundo videbatur, quod facilliter perpendi poterat in aspectu eius et moribus.’

with grief, persecution, and hunger and thirst for righteousness and is therefore nuanced by each. In this context, poverty presents as an external condition to be viewed as a blessing but with metaphysical connotations since the use of *altissima* adds an anagogical dimension whereby the attitude towards poverty is a sign of a divine gift.<sup>29</sup> Material connotations are furthermore blended out by the utilisation of concepts associated with pilgrimage and spiritual journey. The idea of being a ‘stranger in the world’ was discursively linked to material poverty in the Franciscan tradition, when in the 1223 Rule, Saint Francis wrote: ‘The friars are to appropriate nothing for themselves, neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else. As strangers and pilgrims in this world, who serve God in poverty and humility.’<sup>30</sup> In contrast to the Franciscan approach, the Dominican interpretation of ‘stranger in the world’, at least in this extract, is purely metaphorical. Poverty is figuratively connected to the negotiation of the charismatic authority of the prophet and is implicated in the contemplative, mystical engagement with the divine.

The *Nine Ways of Prayer* is somewhat of an outlier in the Dominican tradition. It does not follow traditional generic or structural forms, nor can it be easily contextualised within broader events or trends, literary or otherwise. Regardless of its origins or authorship, I do not think it a coincidence that the *Nine Ways* entered mainstream narratives at the time that it did.<sup>31</sup> Even though the document may have been based on or derived from material from the Order’s early years, the interest displayed in the text in the later decades of the thirteenth century suggest that it held intrinsic value for the Order as it moved into the fourteenth century. The text couples an attention on physical performance and gesture with mystical union in a way that retained the generative nucleus of Dominican devotion that Jordan of Saxony had conscientiously sought to integrate into the traditional narrative.<sup>32</sup> Yet, whereas Jordan continually focussed attention to the social dimensions of the order’s devotion, the

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<sup>29</sup> Hugh of St Victor defined anagoge as ‘est simplex allegoria, cum per visibile factum aliud invisibile factum significatur. Anagoge, id est sursum ductio, cum per visibile invisibile factum declaratur’, ‘De Scripturis et Scriptoribus Sacris’, in *Hugonis de S. Victore Canonici Regularis S. Victoris Parisiensis Tum Pietate, Tum Doctrina Insignis Opera Omnia*, I, PL vol. 175, at col. 12, loc. B.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Regula Bullata’ in *Fontes Francescani*, ed. by Enrico Menestò and Stefano Brufani, Assisi: Edizioni Porziuncola, 1995, pp. 169–181, at p.176: ‘Fratres nihil sibi approprient nec domum nec locum nec aliquam rem. Et tamquam peregrini et advenae in hoc saeculo in paupertate et humilitate Domino...’

<sup>31</sup> See Tugwell, ‘Nine Ways’, pp.6-22. Further analysis is offered in: Jean-Calude Schmitt, ‘Between Text and Image: The Prayer Gestures of Saint Dominic’, *History and Anthropology*, 1, 1984, 127-62.

<sup>32</sup> Schmitt, ‘Prayer Gestures’, p.133.

*Nine Ways* is less concerned with the salvation of others and more oriented towards the spirituality and devotion of the individual. This is signalled in the writer's treatment of poverty and the way that material connotations and senses are demonstrably elided in the linguistic structure.

*The Nine Ways of Prayer* is positioned at the intersection between historical, hagiographical and devotional which aimed to prompt and shape the spiritual development and experiences of the writer and reader alike. It is an evolution of the example offered by Vincent of Beauvais in the prologue to the *Speculum Maius*. The *Nine Ways* therefore provides a unique glimpse into the way that Dominican writers sought to position the founding saint in the devotional lives and experiences of the Dominican religious. The *Nine Ways* is indicative of the way that Dominican historical and hagiographical writing was consistently constructed by discourses of doing and making. It uses 'historical' depictions of Dominic's prayer forms to form the devotional practices of the readers and to influence the broader narratives regarding Dominican authority and agency. At the same time that the document is a quasi-hagiographical text related to the service and maintenance of Dominic's cult, it also signals a kind of shift in the place of contemplative prayer in the devotional narratives of the order, which as the previous chapter established, is both directly and indirectly related to the variable conceptions and place of poverty in Dominican ideology. External debates and friction over poverty seem to have pushed the Order towards an outwardly more traditional, contemplative spirituality, which intersected quite naturally with the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas, after all, coined the Dominican motto, *contemplata tradere aliis*.<sup>33</sup>

### Politics and Canonisation

From a modern perspective, Thomas is perhaps one of the more surprising saints of the later Middle Ages. He did not create a theatre from his poverty, like Saint Francis or Saint Louis. He did not kiss lepers or care for the poor; nor was he dramatic in his charity for others. Whereas Saint Dominic had offered to sell his own body to alleviate the poverty of others, his

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<sup>33</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, transl. by C.I. Litzinger, 2 vols., Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1964, book X, lecture 10, cap. VII, 2095-97, available online <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/Ethics10.htm> [Accessed 11/09/2017]. For the contemplative spirituality of traditional monasticism: Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, transl. by Catharine Misrahi, New York: Fordham University Press, 1982.

biographer, fellow Dominican Peter Calò (d.1348), writes that Thomas kept for himself nothing superfluous, knowing that anything extra should be given for the needs of others.<sup>34</sup> Thomas was a prolific theologian and thinker, and while he was called the 'angelic doctor', it is difficult to fit him into any of the more easily recognisable categories of sanctity, particularly those of the thirteenth century in which he lived and died. As a saint, Thomas essentially embodies multiple influences and expectations in a way that is reflective of a broader management of what it meant to be a Dominican saint by parties both within and beyond the order.<sup>35</sup>

Ambiguities exist concerning Thomas's place in the development of saintly ideals between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which are based primarily on perceived tensions between his prolific intellectual legacy and the charismatic aspects of sanctity.<sup>36</sup> Questions over the canonisation were raised at the time, but were related not to his perceived holiness, but rather to the canonisation's broader ideological significance.<sup>37</sup> Polemical literature produced within Franciscan Spiritual circles condemned the recently canonised Thomas as the spiritual 'murderer' of his brother Peter John Olivi. The claim, made by the beguine Prous Boneta during her trial as a heretic, likely references the debate between Olivi and Aquinas on poverty and, perhaps, the way Thomas's canonisation could be effectively read as the last word on the matter.<sup>38</sup> Broad socio-political pressures impacted significantly on the terms through which Thomas's canonisation progressed.<sup>39</sup> Declaring that Thomas's canonisation

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<sup>34</sup> Calò, *Vita S. Thomae*, 20, p.39: '...nichil sibi reservans de rebus superfluis, que sciebat esse danda pro suplendis defectibus alienis.' For the most up-to-date overview of the few biographical details known about Calò see Tugwell, *Petri Calo Legendae Sancti Dominici*, MOPH, XXVI, 1997, pp.129-133.

<sup>35</sup> For the broader development of concepts of mendicant sanctity: Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp.397-407.

<sup>36</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.392.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, n.39, p.121. Vauchez briefly references efforts by the Franciscans to have the canonisation stopped citing Martin Grabmann's 'Hagiographische Texte in einer Hs. Des Kirchenhist. Seminars der Universität München', *AFP*, 19, 1949, 379-82.

<sup>38</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, pp.322-23 and n.29. W.H. May, 'The Confession of Prous Boneta, Hetic and Heresiarch', in *Essays in Medieval Life and thought: Presented in Honour of A.P. Evans*, ed. by J.H. Mundy, R.W. Emery and B.N. Nelson, New York: Columbia University Press, 1955, pp.3-30, at p.24. On the debate between Aquinas and Olivi: Van den Eijden, *Poverty on the Way to God*, pp.198-242.

<sup>39</sup> See: Räsänen, 'St. Thomas Aquinas's Relics and Lay Devotion in Fourteenth-Century Southern Italy' in *Poverty and Devotion*, pp.128-148 and *Thomas Aquinas's Relics as a Focus for Conflict and Cult in the Later Middle Ages*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017. On the 'politicization' of the canonisation process more generally: Goodich, 'The Politics of Canonization', 294-307.

effectively came about because the Pope owed the Dominicans a favour,<sup>40</sup> Torrell demonstrates that global politics had a significant role in John XXII's decision to support Thomas over another equally qualified Dominican candidate, Raymond of Peñafort. The Pope's personal proclivity towards the House of Anjou ruled out the former-Master General due to his association with the King of Aragon.<sup>41</sup> It is within this context that Thomas's first hagiographer, the Dominican William of Tocco's repeated references to Thomas's nobility and the way it preordained him for holiness might also be read.<sup>42</sup> King Robert of Naples was present at the canonisation itself and Torrell writes that his 'political will [...] was thus well supported by a true groundswell of public opinion.'<sup>43</sup> The construction of Thomas's sanctity blurred religious, spiritual, social and political boundaries by serving the interests of a variety of lay and religious parties.<sup>44</sup>

For the Dominican Order, the canonisation resolved any lingering doubts over the authority of Thomas's teachings, which had been challenged in the condemnations of 1277 at the University of Paris.<sup>45</sup> Calò and Tocco's lives reverberate this tension, with both hagiographers paying particular attention to the authority of Thomas's theological works and his repeated and steadfast defences against heretical doctrine.<sup>46</sup> Calò includes a vision received by Brother Albert of Brescia, a student of Thomas's, in which Thomas appeared with Saint Augustine:

Behold, I show you clearly that I am Augustine, Doctor of the Church. I have been sent to you to make known the teaching and glory of Brother Thomas of Aquino, who is with me. For he is my son; he followed me and my apostolic teaching in everything. His teachings illuminate

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<sup>40</sup> This interpretation is derived from a note added by Pierre Gui to the life of Martin Donadieu of Carcassone written by Bernard Gui, which suggested that John XXII had offered to canonise one of the Order's brothers to show his appreciation: Vauchez, *Sainthood*, n.41, p.75.

<sup>41</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, p.317.

<sup>42</sup> Tocco dedicates an entire chapter to this theme: *Ystoria*, 37, pp.110-11. He writes: 'Fuit enim praedictus Doctor ad has virtutes ex natalium suorum antiqua nobilitate dispositus praecipue si generatio eius propinqua respicitur, quae adhuc in memoria recens habetur.'

<sup>43</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, pp.320-21.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, pp.317-26. See also: Gerulaitis, 'The Canonization of Saint Thomas Aquinas', 25-46.

<sup>45</sup> The literature on these condemnations is extensive. For example: J.F. Wippel, 'Thomas Aquinas and the Condemnation of 1277', *The Modern Schoolman*, 72, 1995, 233-72; R. Hissette, 'L'implication de Thomas d'Aquin dans les censures parisiennes de 1277', *Recherches de théologie de philosophie médiévales*, 44 1997, 3-31; Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy*, pp. 40-56.

<sup>46</sup> It is likely that both Gui and Calò utilised the final version of Tocco's life of Thomas: Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, xvi. See also: Albert Poncellet, 'Le legendier de Pierre Calò', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 29, 1910, 5-116.

the Church of God, as these valuable and precious stones signify: The one he wears on his chest designates right intention, which he had and displayed in the defence and declaration of the faith. The other precious jewels are the books and works that he composed. We are equal to each other in glory; just as I precede Thomas with the bishop's ribbon, he is worthier with respect to his golden virginity. Marvelling at the vision, Brother Albert felt compelled to broadcast it; he was frequently heard to assert that Thomas was the greatest saint in his country and he preached this in public, since none could doubt the glory of the doctor, as there was such incontrovertible testimony for his life.<sup>47</sup>

The reference to a patristic authority figure fits in with the usual Dominican tradition to situate the subject within a chain of authorities. The vision not only proclaims the authority of Thomas's works and life through Augustine's statements and the way that Brother Albert took it upon himself to broadcast Thomas's sanctity, but seems to reference the challenges to Thomas's intellectual reputation following his death and, in particular, tension that existed between the Franciscan and Dominicans over the interpretation of Thomas's teachings and his contested use of Aristotle.<sup>48</sup>

As with Dominic before him, Saint Thomas Aquinas was fashioned by many hands, for many purposes and within many contexts. Of the three interested parties, Pope John XXII is often seen to be the most dominant personality. Scholars have intimated that it was his interests

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<sup>47</sup> Calò, *Vita*, 13: 'Ecce nunc manifesto tibi, quod sum augustinus doctor ecclesie, qui missus sum ad te, indicare tibi doctrinam et gloriam fratris thome de aquino, qui mecum est. Ipse enim est filius meus, qui doctrinam apostolicam et meam in omnibus est secutus. Ecclesia dei sua doctrina illuminatur, quod signat lapides preciosi et precipue quem gestat in pectore, qui designat intentionem rectam, quam ad defensionem fidei habuit et declarationem ostendit. Ceteri vero lapides preciosi libros et opera sua, que conposuit. Sumus ei pares in gloria, licet thomam precedam pontificali infula, ipse autem super me polleat virginitatis aureola. Quam visionem dictus frater albertus admiratus comulsus est revelare, cum frequenter fuisset auditus assere, fratrem thomam magnum sanctum esse in patria et hoc publice predicare, quia nullus ostest de tanti doctoris dubitare gloria, cuius tam certa testimonia sunt de vita.' This vision also appears in the Florence manuscript of Tocco's *Vita*, which Prümmer dates to the mid-fourteenth century. It is not clear whether it was added by a later hand from Calò's manuscript or if Calò was copying from Tocco: *Fontes*, n.1, p.95.

<sup>48</sup> Vauchez also reaches this conclusion: *Sainthood*, n.60, p.403. On the controversy between: Lowe, *Contested Authority*, 49-53; Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, pp.296-316. On Aristotle in Thomas's thought: Joseph Owens, 'Aristotle and Aquinas', in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. by Norman Kretzman and Eleonore Stump, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp.38-59; Gilles Emery and Mathew Levering, eds., *Aristotle in Aquinas's Theology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. For a discussion of the origins of human knowledge as a main point of contention between Thomas's Augustinian-minded detractors and the nascent Thomists Lowe, *Contested Theological Authority*, pp.53-57. It must be said, however, that posing as opposition between 'Augustinians' and 'Thomists' is anachronistic, as Dominicans, particularly Thomas himself, continued to be influenced by Augustine; 'neo-Augustinian' might be better to refer to the school of thought that grew around John Pecham: Tugwell, 'Aquinas: Introduction', in *Albert and Thomas*, p.236.



that were in fact served through Thomas's canonisation – even more so than the Dominicans or the kingdom of Sicily.<sup>49</sup> Teixeira confirms that it was certainly not coincidental that Thomas's canonisation occurred directly following the debate on Christ's poverty and just prior to the publication of the bull *Cum inter nonnullos*.<sup>50</sup> Concluding that the canonisation itself related mainly to the articulation and exercise of papal power, he writes: 'the central theme is the question of the power of the popes and principally, how the pontiffs could use the resource of canonization to affirm their authority over the community of believers?'<sup>51</sup> Against this background, comparing Thomas's canonisation with that of the Franciscan, Louis, bishop of Toulouse, in 1317 reveals a lot about the level to which the Pope influenced and translated his own political agenda into the aspects of sanctity eventually embodied in the two saints.

Louis of Anjou (d.1297) was the son of Charles II of Naples and had rejected the Sicilian crown to make his profession to the Franciscan Order.<sup>52</sup> He was the only Franciscan to be canonised during Pope John XXII's pontificate, which raises certain questions considering the Pope's later condemnation of the Franciscan Spirituals and tense relationship with the order in general over the issue of poverty. Prior to becoming Pope John XXII, Jacques Duèse had been an advisor to the young Bishop and was a primary witness in the canonisation process. As a result, it is likely that Jacques's personal interpretation of Louis's sanctity was decoded into the canonisation bull.<sup>53</sup> The dual influence that Jacques was able to exert, firstly through his testimony and then in the bull of canonisation offers a constructive glimpse into the way that the charisma of the saint was manipulated and used in ways that he would probably not have recognised nor not have necessarily accepted.

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<sup>49</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, p.317.

<sup>50</sup> Teixeira, 'Time of Sanctity', p.210.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.210.

<sup>52</sup> The canonisation testimony is edited in: 'Processus canonizationis et legendae variae sancti Ludovici O.F.M. episcopi Tolosani', *Analecta Franciscana*, VII, 1951, p.1-274; for the analysis of the canonisation: Jacques Paul, 'Témoignage historique et hagiographique dans le procès de canonisation de Louis d'Anjou', *Provence historique*, 93-4, 1973, 305-17.

<sup>53</sup> Melanie Brunner, 'Poverty and Charity: Pope John XXII and the Canonization of Louis of Anjou,' *Franciscan Studies*, 69, 2011, 232-56, at p.233.

Louis is believed to have placed Franciscan values at the centre of his role as bishop.<sup>54</sup> He refused the vestments approved for a bishop in favour of his Franciscan habit.<sup>55</sup> It is said that he would only ride a mule and not a horse as per Franciscan tradition. Testimony states that he performed his Franciscan *minoritas* in his household by placing himself below others, washing friars' feet and performing other servile tasks.<sup>56</sup> The young bishop apparently had a 'crisis of conscience' after his appointment and died on the way to the Pope to offer his resignation.<sup>57</sup> Historical analysis suggests that there was a contest waged over the Saint's 'Franciscanism' that is evident in the canonisation testimony. Vauchez, on the one hand, raises questions over Louis's performance of Franciscan values, arguing that he purposely avoided engagement with the laity and women in a way that revealed an inherent 'moralism' rather than a commitment to Franciscan austerity. Vauchez comments that 'St Louis of Anjou is nearer to the monastic ideal than to that of the enthusiastic apostles of the Franciscan springtime.'<sup>58</sup> He suggests that the Franciscan values attributed to the saint within the canonisation testimony were somewhat 'forced' and that attempts to show him in the same light as Saint Francis were 'clumsy'. The construction of hagiographical testimony itself contributes to the tensions perceived to exist between the continuation of static ideals and the negotiation of broader cultural, social and political changes, which the image of the saint ultimately reflected. As Catherine Sanok claims, the 'genre is notorious for borrowing events from earlier narrative and for confusing, even collapsing, different persons to create largely – sometimes wholly – fictionalized ones.'<sup>59</sup> The tension exhibited within the Franciscan testimony, in a sense, reveals their knowledge of what was at stake in Louis's canonisation. To have a 'Franciscan' saint departing too far from the ideals established by the founder would certainly undermine their political position in the debates over poverty.

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<sup>54</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.308. See also: Jacques Paul, 'Evangélisme et Franciscanisme chez Louis d'Anjou', in *Les Mendicants en pays d'Oc au XIIIe siècle*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 8, Toulouse: Editions Privat, 1973, pp.375-401; M. H. Vicaire, ed., L'Épître de Pierre Jean-Olieu aux fils de Charles II de Naples en l'an 1295', in *Franciscans d'Oc: Les Spirituels*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 10, Toulouse: Editions Privat, 1975, pp.127-38

<sup>55</sup> *Processus canonizationis*, pp.15-16.

<sup>56</sup> See the examples recorded in *Processus Canonizationis*, p.16, 17, 76.

<sup>57</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.308.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, pp.344-346.

<sup>59</sup> Sanok, *Her Life Historical*, p.8.

From another perspective, Melanie Brunner highlights several instances during the construction of the canonisation testimony and the resulting bull in which Pope John XXII attempted to manipulate and efface the appearance and meaning of Louis's poverty and his 'Franciscanism' more generally. One of the main instances appears in regard to Louis's request for the review of the episcopal revenues to ascertain the amount which could be given away as alms.<sup>60</sup> This type of act from a thirteenth-century Franciscan would probably be construed as evidence not only of the saint's charity but also their desire to live in poverty. John, however, re-frames the gesture as a demonstration of Louis's savvy episcopal administration of charity.<sup>61</sup> While charity was an important facet of Franciscan sanctity, its presence in John's testimony is more obvious due to the relative dearth of poverty in the narrative and the repeated emphasis that John places on Louis's positive episcopal administration. Brunner concludes: 'John was careful to present the bishop's generosity and (implicit) love of poverty as a form of well-organised and sustainable charity rather than as an act of renunciation.'<sup>62</sup> She argues that John's construction in this sense presents a striking contrast to Louis's 'dramatic and very Franciscan' renunciation of his familial claims to the Kingdom of Naples. She goes so far as to propose that Louis's approach towards episcopal administration was effectively *usus pauper* in action. The varying viewpoints in modern scholarship, of which I have put forward only two, demonstrate that Louis's image as a saint is still subject to varied interpretations. In the context of the escalating tensions between the Franciscans and Church authorities, there is evidence to suggest that the Franciscans attempted to emphasise and, perhaps, exaggerate Louis's embodiment of Franciscan values and behaviours, while Jacques Duèse attempted to diminish it.<sup>63</sup>

Beyond Louis's canonisation, his brother, Robert of Anjou, king of Sicily, continued the apparent effacement of Franciscan imagery when he commissioned Simone Martini to produce the altarpiece of Robert himself being crowned by his brother. In this image, Louis's Franciscan habit was barely perceptible under his episcopal robes. Suzette Scotti writes,

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<sup>60</sup> *Processus Canonizationis*, pp.75-77.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, pp.75-77.

<sup>62</sup> Brunner, 'Poverty and Charity', p.252.

<sup>63</sup> Brunner, *ibid*, p.237, notes that the testimony of Jacques, as the bishop of Fréjus, alongside that of the former minister-general of the Friars Minor 'could be expected to produce radically different views on the qualities that made Louis a saint, and more specifically a Franciscan saint.'

'Louis' personality and *raison d'être* have been all but effaced. The image that remains, that of an aristocratic prince-bishop, is far removed from the humble Franciscan friar he aspired to be.<sup>64</sup> For Robert, dynastic imperatives were likely the main reason for the effective erasure of Louis's Franciscan poverty.<sup>65</sup> Conversely, Jacques Duèze's approach provides proof of a pre-existing attitude towards poverty which contextualises the position he would later adopt against the Franciscans as Pope John XXII. Brunner expresses surprise that, despite the imprint that he left on the saint's image, when the controversy with the Spiritual Franciscans reached boiling point six months after Louis's canonisation in 1317 John XXII did not actually turn to the saint that he had so carefully constructed to present an image of poverty in line with his own viewpoint. Perhaps the conflicting images within the testimony were too obvious and the resulting image was incongruent to his overall objectives. The saint's association with the Franciscan Spirituals, real or otherwise, no doubt voided his usefulness to papal imperatives.<sup>66</sup> John XXII's avoidance of Louis during the disputes may be indicative of the limits of papal agency in managing the reception of the cult and its most prominent associations. Franciscan imagery was, and always had been, highly literal and purposely closed off to change.<sup>67</sup> In contrast, the Dominicans had pursued a poverty that was effaced of the majority of the most common material expressions. This context suggests that the Pope's offer to canonise a Dominican was related to the eruption of the controversy, considering the Dominicans' obvious favour with the new pope and his pressing need for a less spiritually questionable exemplar, whose narratives were more receptive to projection.

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<sup>64</sup> Suzette Denise Scotti, 'Simone Martini's St. Louis of Toulouse and its cultural context', *unpublished MA thesis*, Louisiana State University; 2009, p.1; See also Holly J. Greico, 'In Some Way Even More Than Before: Approaches to Understanding St. Louis of Anjou, Franciscan Bishop of Toulouse' in *Center and Periphery*, ed. by Katherine L. Jansen, G. Geltner and Anne E. Lester, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp.135-56, at p.135.

<sup>65</sup> On the way that Robert used the patronage of art to service his dynastic agenda: Samantha Kelly, *The New Solomon: Robert of Naples (1309-1343) and Fourteenth-Century Kingship*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, esp. p.12. My thanks to Dr Chris Jones for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>66</sup> On Louis as a Franciscan 'Spiritual': Margaret R. Toynebee, *S. Louis of Toulouse and the Process of Canonisation in the Fourteenth Century*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1929; Jacques Paul, 'Saint Louis d'Anjou, Franciscain et Evêque de toulouse (1274-1297)', in *Les évêques, les clercs et le roi (1250-1300)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 7, toulouse: Editions Privat, 1972, pp.59-90.

<sup>67</sup> Francis was adamant in his Testament, that nothing should be altered or added: 'let the general minister and all the other ministers and custodians be bound through obedience not *to add to* or *take away* from these words', 'Testament', *FOAED: I*, p.127.

Mandonnet argued almost one hundred years ago that Thomas and his work became John's weapon of choice against the destructive powers that faced his pontificate.<sup>68</sup> John continued the manipulation of poverty evident in Louis's canonisation and made the move to reposition Thomas's 'life' as a perfect embodiment of mendicant poverty. His canonisation became an integral part of John's programme against the Spiritual Franciscans interpretation of poverty.<sup>69</sup> But rather than seeking to conceal and marginalise poverty, as he attempted to do in the case of Louis of Anjou, the Pope instead sought to turn Thomas into a political projection exemplifying his own views on the matter. In the sermon that he delivered on the day of Thomas's canonisation, John alluded to the saint's role in the controversy of the Franciscan Spirituals by directly referencing the order's policy on the ownership of property. While the sermon itself has not survived, two eye-witness accounts quote the pope as stating that Thomas had led an apostolic life within the order, whereby the brothers have nothing of their own, although, just like the apostles, they did have possessions in common.<sup>70</sup> The second anonymous eye-witness (possibly Bernard Gui),<sup>71</sup> adds that the pope stated specifically that this is what he judged to be the apostolic way.<sup>72</sup> Somewhat paradoxically however, by calling attention to Thomas's poverty, John virtually erases it. At the very least, he reduces it to the extent that 'apostolic poverty' solely concerned the possession of property to the extent that poverty's spiritual efficacy or meaning is totally removed.

John's aim centred on proving the legitimacy of property. Bernard Guenée writes that the pope 'had to show that even Christ and his disciples had had possessions, at least in common. And finally, he had to show that the essence of the matter was not poverty but charity.'<sup>73</sup> This

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<sup>68</sup> Pierre Mandonnet, 'La canonisation de Saint Thomas d'Aquin 18 juillet 1323', *Mélanges Thomistes*, 3, 1923, 2-48.

<sup>69</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, pp.322-23; see also Guenée, *Between Church and State*, pp.53-56.

<sup>70</sup> Frater Bentius, 'De canonizatione S. thomae', *Fontes*, ed. by Laurent, pp.513-518: '...dicens eum in sancto ordine Predicatorum apostolicam vitam duxisse; qui ordo, sive fratres, nihil habens proprium, licet aliquid habeant in communi sicut apostoli habuerunt, et apostolicam vitam ducunt . . .'

<sup>71</sup> Vauchez suggest that anonymous is likely to be Gui: *Sainthood*, n.62, p.79.

<sup>72</sup> 'Notitia anonyma de canonizatione S. Thomae', *Fontes*, ed. by Laurent, pp.513-518: 'Et mirabiles comendationes proposuit tam de predicatorum ordine quam de sancto. Inter cetera, dixit quod iste sanctus in ordine sancto Predicatorum gessit vitam apostolicam, quum ordo nihil habet in proprio in speciali, licet habeat in communi, addens: "Et hanc vitam apostolicam reputamus." Addidit etiam quod nullus haberet pro malo quod iste gloriosus doctor post apostolos et doctores primos plus illuminavit ecclesiam Dei.'

<sup>73</sup> Guenée, *Between Church and State*, p.53.

trajectory shines through in the canonisations of Thomas and Louis of Anjou alike. The negotiation of poverty that John undertook in the various narratives that he was able to personally influence throughout the canonisation processes presents him as a driving force behind the move to extricate radical poverty from the mainstream of religious practice. It is clear that he had no interest in defining poverty's role in the religious life or indeed its spiritual value. In this regard, his aims were intricately bound up with the issue of papal authority, and isolating the threat posed by the extremist policies of the Franciscan Spirituals. His words concerning poverty during the celebrations of Thomas's canonisation cannot be taken as anything other than a political statement directed at the Franciscans. They pre-empted *Cum inter nonnullos*, which was published only two months later.

More broadly, John's machinations to shift the interpretation and place of poverty within the institutional Church played a role in the process in which concrete, highly visible signs of poverty were blended into a poverty of the spirit. In this respect, the 'clumsy' attempts by the Franciscans to portray Louis of Anjou in the light of Saint Francis might be interpreted as a last attempt to maintain evangelical poverty's place within the mainstream of concepts of sanctity. It would account for the discernible tension between poverty and clericalisation within the testimony.<sup>74</sup> Thomas's prolific theological career and institutional obedience, as well as his condemnations of certain radical eschatologies borne from within the Franciscan Order, provided a less ideologically burdened surface onto which John could project his own interpretations of poverty.

Pope John XXII's efforts to efface, reduce and divorce poverty of its spiritual and affective meanings and its potentially subversive implications were ostensibly successful as far as its place within the broader narratives are concerned. Traditional signs associated with mendicant poverty such as the lack of property or possessions do not exist overtly in Thomas's canonisation literature. Donald Prudlo claims '[n]ot one allusion to either poverty or mendicancy appears in the *vitae* written by Dominicans after the death of Thomas Aquinas or in preparation for his canonization.'<sup>75</sup> Prudlo's assertion is based solely on the interpretation

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<sup>74</sup> The tension was likely exacerbated by the fact that none of the five procurators appointed to produce the *capitula generalia*, which was the summary of the saint's life and miracles composed prior to the inquiry itself to provide structure and boundaries to the testimony gathered, were Franciscans: Brunner, 'Poverty and Charity', p.238. On the *capitula generalia* generally: Toynbee, *S. Louis of Toulouse*, pp.164-168.

<sup>75</sup> Prudlo, 'Mendicancy Among the Early Saint's', p.116.

of poverty as it relates to the ownership of property and material possessions or in the context of begging (and potentially the need to beg). Certainly, within the witness testimonies and *vitae* there are no mentions of mendicancy. Furthermore, Tugwell suggests that, in his estimation, the two anecdotes that seem to show how Thomas's daily life was lived in poverty do not really illustrate this at all.<sup>76</sup> There is little indication that he was ever in need of anything. Apart from the fact that he rejected higher advancement within the Church and turned his back on temporal wealth and honours associated with his noble family (although not the family itself), he was for all intents and purposes the opposite to the image of Saint Francis that was being pushed by the Spiritual Franciscans.<sup>77</sup> I propose, however, that the place of poverty within the construction of Thomas's sanctity is not so easily disregarded. In fact, there was a greater process of negotiation over poverty than these 'omissions' seem to suggest.

While Thomas may have been an effective political tool for Pope John XXII against the Franciscan Spirituals, the Pope's use had definitive temporal and conceptual boundaries. In other words, the Pope capitalised on the Dominicans long-term effacing and erasing strategies exemplified in the *Nine Ways of Prayer* to use Thomas as an exclamation mark of sorts in his challenge of interpretations of religious poverty that he judged to be heretical or subversive. The Dominicans, on the other hand, delineated both long and short-term expectations and desires through the canonisation narratives. For the short-term, the canonisation helped to resolve lingering tensions regarding the Preachers' authority within the schools. Long-term, the construction of Saint Thomas offered a forum in which to clarify, express and direct their own conceptions, not only of the saint himself and the terms of his sanctity but of their spiritual authority and agency in general.

### Poverty between the Theologian and the Inquisitor

As indicated in Chapter Four, Bernard Gui combined inquisitorial, episcopal and multiple leadership roles. Far from the dour, foreboding character that appears in Eco's *Name of the Rose*, Gui's writings reveal him to be as equally sensitive and responsive to the needs of his

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<sup>76</sup> Tugwell, 'Aquinas: Introduction', in *Albert and Thomas: Selected Writings*, New York: Paulist Press, 1988, p.260.

<sup>77</sup> See Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, esp. pp.16-43, 197-214.

audiences as Jordan of Saxony. The literary and devotional context, in which Thomas's *legenda* tradition was being formed, was changing dramatically. External and internal dynamics impacted on conceptions of poverty, sanctity and the expression and experience of the order's charismata more generally. As with the testimony for Louis of Anjou's canonisation, Vauchez argues that the shift from evangelical to doctrinal ideals of sanctity, being forced on proceedings from above by the papacy, seemed to cause discomfort for witnesses during inquiries into Thomas's canonisation. 'Perhaps conscious of the novelty of this form of sainthood', he writes, 'many witnesses seem to have felt some unease.'<sup>78</sup>

Certainly narratives, both inherited and constructed specifically for his canonisation, emphasise Thomas's intellectual endeavours, contrasting him to thirteenth-century mendicant saints and their popular appeal. Vauchez continues that the tension also prompted the Dominican hagiographers to accentuate the more 'mystical' aspects of Thomas's life.<sup>79</sup> Because the contemplative or mystical characteristics were not taken up within papal narratives, in this section of the chapter, I suggest that the representation of 'mysticism' or qualities that could be interpreted as 'mystical', especially in the light of later developments, must be the product of an internal, Dominican tradition. Clerical attributes do not gain complete hegemony in internal Dominican narratives of sanctity and the 'rise of mysticism' drew on and was in fact complementary to the intellectual in the Dominican tradition. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that the some of the most famous Dominican proponents of mysticism in the fourteenth century, such as Meister Eckhart, Henry Suso and Johannes Tauler, came through the university system.<sup>80</sup> As I now turn to, the literature produced for Thomas's canonisation provided a narrative precedent for the highly-speculative interpretations of poverty advanced by 'mystics' such as Eckhart and Suso.

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<sup>78</sup> Vauchez cites the circulation of stories in which Saint Augustine materialises to reveal his support of Thomas: *Sainthood*, p.403.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, p.403.

<sup>80</sup> See: Bernard McGinn, ed., *Meister Eckhart: Teacher and Preacher*, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1986; Walter Jenner, 'Meister Eckhart's Life, Training, Career, and Trial', in *A Companion to Meister Eckhart*, ed. by Jeremiah M. Hackett, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp.7-84; Louis Gnädinger, *Johannes Tauler: Lebenswelt and mystische Lehre*, Munich: Verlag G.H. Beck, 1993; On the beginnings of late-medieval mysticism in general: Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200-1350)*, New York: Crossroad, 1998. 'Mysticism' was not, of course, new to the thirteenth-century. For its importance from the beginning of Christianity: McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century*, New York: Crossroad, 1991; Julia A. Lamm, ed., *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Christian Mysticism*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017.



As with Thomas Aquinas, the image of Bernard Gui that immediately springs to mind is not one of a pious mystic. While not a theologian at Thomas's level, nevertheless, Gui can equally be perceived as an embodiment of clerical culture.<sup>81</sup> Fulfilling roles such as prior, inquisitor, procurator general and bishop, Tugwell writes that Gui was 'conscientious' and 'competent' but 'uninspired'.<sup>82</sup> Gui was, however, an excellent historian and Tugwell writes: 'The one feature which [...] rendered his fame secure was his indefatigable historical curiosity, and his ability to coordinate the material which he spent most of his life accumulating and to present it in a clear [...] way for the benefit of his readers.'<sup>83</sup> I have preferred Gui's *Life of Thomas* over others who knew Thomas better not just for the clarity and erudition of his historical narrative alone. Throughout the time of Thomas's canonisation process, Gui was the Procurator for the Dominican Order to the Pope at Avignon.<sup>84</sup> This put him in the perfect position to be able to represent not only the Dominican point of view but also to be aware of papal interests. Furthermore, Gui inhabited a position within the order that required him to think beyond the political and intellectual circumstances of the canonisation and to elaborate the terms through which Thomas's cult could be developed and for what purposes.

As discussed in Chapter Four, Gui's approach to poverty is rather ambiguous, which is perhaps typical of the environment in which he worked. The intellectual and political battles being waged over the matter impacted upon Gui's presentation and representation of poverty within his hagiographical and historical texts. Dubreil-Arcin argues that Gui's *Speculum Sanctorale* develops the agenda set in Vincent's *Speculum Historiale* and continued in the *Legenda Aurea* to efface the choice of poverty from the criteria of contemporary sanctity.<sup>85</sup> This textual trend became exaggerated in the context of intellectual and political controversy, especially in the vitriolic debates between the secular and mendicants in the mid-thirteenth century. By the time that Gui wrote his own legend, the choice of poverty was no less

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<sup>81</sup> Guenée, argues that 'Bernard was a man of action. An administrator, happy in his heart of hearts to be an administrator', *Between Church and State*, p.44.

<sup>82</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.19; On Gui's life and career: Guenée, *Between Church and State*, pp.37-101.

<sup>83</sup> Tugwell, *Bernardi Guidonis*, p.19. For an indepth, detailed comparative study of Gui's methods and techniques in his historical works: Anne-Marie Lamarrigue, *Bernard Gui (1261-1331): un historien et sa méthode*, Paris: Honoré Champion, 2000.

<sup>84</sup> On his work in this role: Guenée, *Between Church and State*, pp.51-59

<sup>85</sup> Dubreil-Arcin, *Vies de saints*, p.345.

subversive but the Dominicans had drawn right back from its most radical potentials – publicly at least.<sup>86</sup> Despite the ‘effacement’ of its traditionally associated material signifiers, poverty nevertheless has a place in Gui’s life of Saint Thomas. Indeed, I argue that analysis of this text reveals what Vauchez terms the ‘internalisation of poverty’, and its re-actualisation within the complex intellectual and spiritual contexts of the fourteenth century.

Gui’s writing reflects the multiple positions that he occupied during his life and was imbricated by the variety of the texts with which he came into contact. He followed trends developed by Dominican writers such as Vincent de Beauvais and Jacopo da Varagine, at the same time that he crafted each of his works appropriate to his intended readership. Thematically, divine providence assumes a pivotal role throughout his historical and hagiographical works, as is probably expected of a friar so dedicated to his order. Gui notes that when Thomas reached Paris and began to lecture on the *Sentences*,

God filled him with such grace that the doctrine spreading from his lips induced wonder among the students and affected the atmosphere of the *studium*. For he came at things with a novel approach [...] that no one who heard him could doubt that his new approach had been achieved by God’s illumination. The divine splendour that had been hidden in his soul shone forth, and all wondered at the glory and clarity with which he spoke.<sup>87</sup>

In this passage, Thomas’s knowledge and teachings are put forward as charismatic gifts using well-known metaphors and concepts associated with holiness. Gui takes care to transmit Thomas’s charisma and show the Holy Spirit and divine grace at work in Thomas’s life by referencing the effects that Thomas had on the people around him. Metaphors of light, heights, divine glory pervade the *vita*, reflecting those utilised by the pope and others during the canonisation ceremony.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Milne-Tavendale, ‘John of Paris and the Apocalypse’, pp.137.

<sup>87</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, XI, p.178: ‘tantam sibi deus in labiis suis effundit gratiam in doctrina, ut scolares in stuporem adduceret et ad studium animaret. Erat enim in legendo novos [...] ut nemo audiens ipsum dubitaret quin ipsum deus novi luminis radiis illustrasset. Ibi itaque claruit splendor divinus in eius animo occultatus et mirati sunt universi de hiis, que gloriose et limpide proferebat.’ Compare with the Bull of canonisation, particularly pp.520-21.

<sup>88</sup> Anonymous and Brother Bentius note that Pope John XXII spoke of the way that Thomas’s teaching illuminated (*illuminavit*) the Church: *Fontes*, p.514. Similarly, Gui refers to Thomas as ‘a lamp on the candelabrum of the Church to light the way for those wandering in darkness’, p.171: ‘... lucerna super candelabrum ecclesie ad cuius lumen existentes in tenebris ambularent.’

Gui's repeated attempts to create a synthesis between Thomas's learning and its divine origins through language and metaphor, establishes Thomas's intellect as the basis of his charismatic authority. As indicated by the extract quoted above, it is the sphere in which the divine can most clearly be seen to operate. This differs from Dominic's hagiographical tradition which situated his charismatic authority in his preaching against, and conversion of, heretics. Poverty informed Dominic's work and representation at an ideological and performance level. In contrast, poverty's relationship to Thomas's charismatic authority is more difficult to delineate.

Gui's representation of Thomas's life deliberately and incrementally frames and relates key events in Thomas's life in, and to, the central ideological themes of the Order expressed in the synthesis between charity, humility and poverty. The *Life* begins: 'The holy Thomas of Aquino, extraordinary teacher of the Order of Preachers, was born into the noble house and illustrious lineage of the counts of Aquino, lords of the territory adjoining Campania and the kingdom of Sicily.'<sup>89</sup> By referencing the order and his nobility, Thomas is immediately cast in the role of the holy friar who rejected the land, wealth and honours of his family to join the Dominicans. In one of the anecdotes that follows, a holy hermit establishes a Dominican framework for his intellectual activities by prophesying that the yet-to-born Thomas would be famous for his learning and would enter the Order of Preachers.<sup>90</sup> In another, the Holy Spirit worked through Thomas to set him apart from his noble peers in his schooling at the Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino and protected the 'future shining light' from ever being 'corrupted by the ways of the secular world.'<sup>91</sup> Working in the tradition of Jordan of Saxony, these passages create a discursive relationship between Thomas's intellectual prowess, the poverty of the order and the saint's charismatic authority through metaphors of light, wealth and common metonymic phrases about the 'world' to refer to poverty.

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<sup>89</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, p.168: 'Sanctus Thomas de aquino ordinis praedicatorum doctor egregius, nobilibus ortus natalibus de domo ac illustri prosapia comitum aquinorum in confinibus campanie et regni sicilie duxit originem.'

<sup>90</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, p.168.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p.169: 'Hoc autem divino consilio agebatur, ne tam clarum luminare futurum ecclesie nutrireretur in tenebris et tam preclaruum vite speculum conversatio secularis aliquo modo inficeret cum mundanis.'

As Gui moves on through the narrative, the relationships between forms of poverty, Thomas's intellectual abilities and his special grace coalesce on increasingly complex conceptual and metaphorical levels.

And as he progressed in such a short time in grammar, logic and natural philosophy, with God guiding him, he began to think that he would renounce the world completely and in entering the Order of Preachers he could return with interest the talent of intelligence and perspicuity credited to him by the Lord. It seemed to a certain Dominican at that time, who was admiring the omens surrounding Thomas's genius, that shining forth from his face was a radiance, which spreading far and wide blazed in the eyes of his beholders.<sup>92</sup>

In this episode, poverty is implicated in the process whereby Thomas receives grace (charismatic authority) that manifests as supernaturally gifted intellectual genius and teaching abilities. His gifts are demonstrated to observers through Thomas's countenance and thus recognised as charismata. Furthermore, even if Gui had not been referring specifically to Thomas's decision to enter the order and the vow of poverty that it entailed, the way that he describes Thomas's intelligence as part of a 'transaction' with God, provides another example of how poverty was internalised within the language of the Dominicans.<sup>93</sup> As discussed in Chapter Three, while the use of this metaphor originated in Jordan's description of Diego in the *Libellus*, it seems that even one hundred years later it was still a useful way for the Dominicans to think about and reconcile their poverty with the various gifts they received. These sorts of passages, layered by text, metaphor and hagiographical formalisms, reveal the increasingly conceptual and discursive space in which poverty came to exist in the fourteenth-century.

While Gui adapts his language and metaphors to the specific circumstance and unique characteristics of Thomas's canonisation and sanctity, he inherited a great deal of the language and metaphors he used from the foundational texts written by the second Master General of the order. In 1233, around the time of the translation of Dominic's body, Jordan of Saxony wrote an encyclical letter to the members of his order to offer his encouragement and

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.170: 'cepit agente Deo secum disponere, ut seculo renuntiaret omnimode et in ordine fratrum predicatorum talentum sibi creditum excellentis ingenii et intelligente perspicacis domino redderet duplicatum. Nam cuideam fratri ipsius ordinis admiranti de tanta prerogativa ingenii visum fuit, quod de vultu eius splendentes radii procederent qui longe lateque diffusi intuentium oculis illucerent.'

<sup>93</sup> See Chapter Four.

advice in place of a personal visit.<sup>94</sup> He enumerates many of the potential abuses and misappropriations of the Dominican charism that centre predominantly on poverty, teaching and charity. The order's ancient predecessors, he wrote, existed on earth only for spiritual rewards and it was their single-minded pursuit of this 'kingdom' that Jordan believes was responsible for their endurance and strength in hardships and poverty. Dominic, he continues, can be counted among these. He did not fulfil 'the desires of the flesh' but 'walked by the Spirit'. His appearance, temperance and conduct displayed 'a true spirit of poverty'. The metaphor concludes in Jordan's statement that Dominic's greatness was revealed by the translation of his body 'to a more noble tomb' and the signs and wonders by which it was accompanied.<sup>95</sup> Jordan's skilled negotiation between the material and the metaphorical with regard to poverty is evidenced in this encyclical on a greater scale than even the *Libellus*.

Jordan's devotional framework was firmly grounded by, and was generally prefaced by, metaphors of worldly poverty and spiritual wealth. In this encyclical, he alludes to an additional aspect to poverty that is not demonstrably metaphorical, but nor does it have the usual material connotations. After writing how Dominic was loved by God for the 'true humility of his heart' that accompanied his 'freely chosen poverty', he writes:

Not so are those who glorify themselves, who are greedy for personal praise, whose opinions of themselves increase the more grace they receive for their neighbour. Not so are those who seek their own comfort and who wear poverty in word but not deed. Instead of *being detached from everything as they should be*, they occupy themselves feebly with trivial and unworthy things, and cannot endure to be without anything which their unruly will requires.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> T. Kaepeli, ed., 'B. Jordani de Saxoniae litterae encyclicae: 1233', *AFP*, 22, 1952, 177-185. The encyclical letter provides important context for the writing of his *Libellus*, which occurred contemporaneously. Specifically, he notes that he hopes to write more fully about the wonders associated with Dominic's translation later.

<sup>95</sup> Jordan, 'litterae encyclicae', p.183: 'dum nobiscum in carne viveret, spiritu ambulabat, desideria carnis non solum non perficiens'; 'et moribus veram in se exhibens paupertatem'; 'sacrum corpus eius a loco pristinae sepulture ad locum venerabilem transtulimus, manifestum est signis, probatum virtutibus, prout aliis vobis, ut confido, plenius innotescet.'

<sup>96</sup> My italicisation. Jordan, 'litterae encyclicae' pp.183-84: 'Non sic qui seipsos glorificant, qui private laudis avidi, quo plus gratiae preceperunt ad proximos, tanto sublimiora sentiunt ad seipsos. Non sic et hii, qui commoda sibi querunt, paupertatem gerentes professione, non opere; qui, cum contempsissent omnia debuerint, circa parva quedam etiam et indigna enerviter occupanter et nihil sibi deesse ex omnibus, quae improba voluntas exigit, paciuntur.' I find Jordan's choice of *gerere* with respect to poverty interesting and chose to interpret it as 'wear' to indicate poverty's performance and performative nature in a Dominican

I have chosen here to follow Tugwell's translation of *cum contempnisset omnia debuerint* as 'being detached from everything as they should be.'<sup>97</sup> While 'despising', 'scorning' or 'holding in contempt' might be more expected choices and have been used often for phrases such as 'contempt for the world', the sentence structure and the elaboration that follows supports the interpretation. Jordan's words here signal the way that poverty and detachment became increasingly blended in late-medieval theology. This fusion had significant implications for the metaphysical work of Meister Eckhart and Henry Suso, and also for the way that poverty was able to retain a place in devotional narratives even as material associations were increasingly effaced.<sup>98</sup>

In chapter XXXIV of his life of Thomas titled: *Qualiter contempsit divicias et honores et gloriam huius mundi*, Gui incorporates a wide range of Jordan's metaphors, associations and allusions in a succinct discussion of the boundaries and meanings of Thomas's poverty. Usual words and phrases such as 'renunciation', 'follow Christ in poverty', 'contempt of worldly things', 'freeing time', take their place alongside the less precisely articulated ideas such as detachment, indifference and singlemindedness: 'The Holy Teacher was so inebriated with the love of divine wisdom, which he had chosen for his spouse as a youth', Gui writes, 'that nothing of the world could ever attract his attention.' He continues that Thomas rejected his familial wealth and worldly honours to follow Christ in poverty.<sup>99</sup> When asked by a student if he would like to be lord of a city as fine as Paris, Thomas replied that he would lack time for contemplation and it would interfere with his study. He also spoke of the danger associated with this line of questioning, stating, 'there is a great danger that the more someone is overcome with a desire for temporal things, the more they will be drawn away from heavenly

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context. Tugwell translates the phrase 'those who profess poverty without the reality of it': *Early Dominicans*, p.123.

<sup>97</sup> Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.123. On detachment and poverty in a modern Dominican context: Reginald Garingou-Lagrange, O.P.' 'The Three Ages of the Interior Life', [www.christianperfection.info/tta63.php](http://www.christianperfection.info/tta63.php), accessed 23 April 2017.

<sup>98</sup> Detachment and poverty play an influential role in the thought of the fourteenth-century Dominican mystic Meister Eckhart: C.F. Kelley, *Meister Eckhart on Divine Knowledge*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, esp. pp.215-245.

<sup>99</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, XXXIV, pp.200-01: 'Sic autem sanctum doctorem divina sapientia que melior est cunctis opibus, quam ipse sibi a juventute sua sponsam acceperat, inebriaverat caritate ut nichil mundanum alliceret mentem ejus. Cum enim esset ipse de nobili genere et rerum temporalium copiam concupiscere et honorum gloriam potuisset ambire, divicias tamen magis sibi computavit et gloriam: sequi Kristum pauperem et humilem quam diviciis hujus seculi affluentem gradum temporalis glorie optinere sublimem.'

things.’<sup>100</sup> Blending poverty and humility, Gui continues that the same disdain for wealth and honours that Thomas displayed in renouncing his birthright continued throughout his life and was ultimately responsible for his refusal of any honours or promotions within the Church.<sup>101</sup> He concludes the chapter with the exclamation: ‘O happy teacher, despiser of the world, lover of heaven, who lived what he taught, who held in contempt earthly things, as if in trust for a stake in heaven’s possessions!’<sup>102</sup>

Numerous aspects of poverty are referenced in this passage. At a practical level, Thomas’s attitude advocates poverty’s utility to contemplation and the study of scripture. Conceptually, it promotes a detachment from the world that is borne out in a single-minded focus on the divine. Interwoven into the expression of poverty’s effect on Thomas’s external and internal experiences, is a metaphorical link between poverty and wisdom. This link would be materialised fully in the theology of Henry Suso. But at this nascent stage, the relationship likely yields from the need to negotiate and integrate the *auctoritas* being accrued by the order’s magisterial corps with their more evangelical forms of authority. Somewhat paradoxically, this convergence resulted in a renewed emphasis on contemplation, which is more reminiscent of a monastic rather than apostolic culture. In Gui’s conception, however, poverty supersedes humility as the major instrument (and effect) of the relationship between the religious and the divine.<sup>103</sup> The detachment, which Gui posits as part of poverty’s internal and external work, is linked with the friar’s contemplation in practical, theological and discursive terms.

The presentation of Thomas as a contemplative mystic, who continually practiced a worldly, social and emotional detachment and was single-mindedly focussed towards the divine is one of the most striking aspects of the *legenda* tradition. Indeed, the significance, the centrality of contemplation to Thomas’s life would be difficult to grasp from reading the theologian’s

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid, XXXIV, p.201: ‘Videte magister, quam pulcra civitas est parisius. Velletisne esse dominus hujus civitatis? [...] Qui respondit, [...] Civitas enim hec, si esset mea propter curam regiminis contemplacionem divinorum michi eriperet et consolacionem animi impediret, quam scriptura donaret. Quanto enim quis amore temporalium premitur, tanto periculosius a celestibus elongatur.’

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, XXXIV, p.201: ‘Quantum autem despexerit honores et divicias temporales, liquido patuit non solum cum omnia reliquit que concupiscere potuit, sed eciam cum magnitudine animi oblata despexit.’

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, XXXIV, p.201: ‘O felix, doctor contemptor seculi, amator celi, qui fecit quod docuit, qui sic terrena despiceret, quasi pignus haberet possessionis celestium que speraret.’

<sup>103</sup> For detachment realised in humility as the center of monastic theology: Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, pp.31-33.

works alone. Peter Calò, embeds contemplation into Thomas's life from the outset of his narrative by establishing its relationship to his name.<sup>104</sup> The historical tradition places significant emphasis on stories which demonstrate Thomas's 'abstractedness'. It is said that on several occasions Thomas would grow suddenly abstracted regardless of whether he was dining with the king of France or talking with other important people and had to be reminded of where he was: 'it was amazing to see a man using his senses, and on sensible matters, be suddenly snatched away and become mentally withdrawn, as if he was separated from human matter and elevated to the divine as if his mind did not cleave to where his body resided.'<sup>105</sup> The detachment that Gui alluded to in the chapter on Thomas's poverty is here given another dimension. It is not only a detachment to wealth or temporal honours; it is a detachment to anything of the world, be that conversation, social conventions or even eating. The level of detachment that Thomas managed to express translated into a rare absorption in contemplative prayer. Gui writes that such was his attentiveness in prayer that on several occasions he levitated.<sup>106</sup> He continues that the obedience of Thomas's body to his spirit was a grace given by God and revealed through that miracle.

The chapter on Thomas's poverty sheds some insight into Gui's thought process as he, in what was a tense intellectual and political context, thinks through what poverty was and how it related to, firstly the Dominicans work in the world, and secondly, their spiritual perfection. The voluntary nature of Dominican poverty is emphasised as is the effacement of material signs or signifiers as per the Dominican tradition throughout the previous one hundred years. There is subsequently no place for a real discussion of property or Thomas's views on the matter. The closest Gui comes to this is when he says that he 'lived by the doctrine he taught.'<sup>107</sup> While Vauchez suggests that the tension related to Thomas's mysticism within the canonisation literature was new in a sense, I argue that the 'affective' aspects of their spirituality were something that the Dominicans were consciously grappling with from the

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<sup>104</sup> Calò, *Vita*, p.17.

<sup>105</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, XXV, p.191: 'Erat autem mirabile videre hominem utentem sensibus et cum sensibilibus conversari subito rapti et mente abstrahi et quasi ab hominibus separari et ad celestia elevari quasi non esset ubi corporaliter resideret, sed ubi mentaliter inhereret.' See also, XV, pp.182-84.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, XXII, p.188: 'Erat autem sanctus thomas ita in orando attentus ut non solum spiritu sed et corpore a terra aliquando et a pluribus visus fuerit elevatus.'

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, XXXIV, p.201: 'fecit quod docuit.'



mid-thirteenth century to reconcile their growing intellectual authority with their apostolic charisms. These narratives formed an important part of the spiritual lives of their brothers and sisters. Thomas's legacy was, and always will be, orientated towards the cerebral and his cult never reached the heights of popularity, for which the order had probably hoped.<sup>108</sup> Yet there was a demonstrable movement towards the contemplative and mystical within the order's hagiographical and historical outputs of the later-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century that was more purposeful than modern historians often recognise.

One final example from Gui's *Life of Thomas* traces poverty's 'progress' not only on a specific level regarding his life and holiness but also on a broader, universal level for the development of the order. The section begins as an analogy, comparing and associating Thomas with Moses. It is linguistically framed in relation to poverty from the beginning by asserting that as another Moses, Thomas was taken from the waters of worldly vanity and the birthright of his family and nourished by the Church with the wisdom of God. As another Moses, God inspired him to lead his brethren and made this clear with signs and wonders. Charisma and doctrine are given equal weight as the narrative explores the metaphor of the twin columns of cloud and fire with which Thomas enlightens Christendom. God answered his humble prayers to clarify obscurities of Scripture; he ascends the mountain of contemplation, after which he is able to transmit the wisdom of the old and new Testaments.<sup>109</sup> From here the analogies are switched, first to Solomon and then to Thomas:

Just as he began his zeal for truth with his first breath, so in death, his writing and way of living were completed to their happy end. Is he also not another Thomas? Not like Didymus for he

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<sup>108</sup> Mews, 'Thomas Aquinas and Catherine of Siena', p.238.

<sup>109</sup> Gui, *Vita S. Thomae*, XIII, pp.180-181: 'Hic igitur quasi alter moyses erit et congrue dici potest, qui de aquis mundane vanitatis et proprie natiuitatis eductus quia de aquinorum illustri prosapia genitus miro modo quasi per pharaonis filiam matri ecclesie cui tollitur, redditur et uberibus ecclesiastice discipline lacte divine sapientie enutritur. Hic est moyses cui deus dum mentaliter loquitur ad fratres suos mittitur et non sine signis et mirandis prodigiis ductor populi delegatur. Hic est moyses qui duplici columpna nubis et ignis fideles de egypti tenebris duplicis scientie luce doctus eduxit. In columpna siquidem nubea que de terra oritur, intelligitur scientia secularium scripturarum humanis sensibus ex sensibilibus acquisitam. In columpna vero ignis lex illa ignea designatur quam ex dextera sedentis supra thronum domino sibi inspirante suscepit. Hic est moyses qui de petra difficilis intelligentie scripturarum fluenta divine sapientie dum oravit, humiliter obtinuit habundanter. Hic est moyses qui montem divine speculationis ascendens non sine stilo divini digiti scribentis in ejus animo sub duarum tabularum similitudinem scientiam duorum testamentorum dei summa divinorum speculatione portavit. Hic quoque ut alter Salomon disputavit a cedro que est in libano usque ad ysopum qui de pariete oritur, dum a dei filio qui est dei splendor et candor a deo patre genitus usque ad eundem de gloriosa virgine matre natum cum corpore nostre humanitatis.'

has no doubt but a resolute wisdom of divine things, but like he who is called Abyss on account of the depth of his nature, for which he was invited to enter into the abyss of Christ's side and admitted for the examination of divine secrets, to the extent that he wrote with inspired acquaintance as if he had touched with his hand what the finger of his intellect indicated.<sup>110</sup>

The entire section, from its beginning in the abandonment of worldly riches as another Moses to its end in a visceral, as well as cerebral, knowledge of Christ quoted above, is constructed in a way that intimates poverty's teleology as linked integrally and intrinsically to divine wisdom and contemplation.<sup>111</sup> In a way, it is both Thomas's life, and Gui's retelling of Thomas's life, in miniature. As Thomas's writing career and indeed his whole way of life was completed to their 'happy conclusion' in the knowledge and experience of Christ, this also seems to be true for poverty. It is as if poverty has a formative force in creating a space through which contemplation, or knowledge of God can occur. The experience of God that began with poverty worked on more than one level: on the practical, the friar lived in the manner of Christ and the Apostles, re-creating their ministry for the Dominicans' own time. On a spiritual level, it created a space in which the religious and the divine could forge a mutually beneficial relationship that was often expressed through metaphors of wealth and transaction. There was always a dynamic interplay between these experiences that played out in the metaphorical, discursive and physical relationships between poverty and contemplation.

The processes through which contemplation came to be associated with the expression and experience of poverty were mainly instigated by external factors. The secular-mendicant dispute, the Scandal of the Eternal Evangel and the papacy's incursions against the Spiritual Franciscans each contributed to the creation of, and an adjustment to, the Dominicans' devotional narratives. Prompted by these combative contexts, the renewed emphasis on contemplation had the additional effect of drawing the Dominicans away from their apostolic

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid, XIII, pp.181: 'sicut studium inspirate veritatis incepit, sic scribendi et vivendi terminum felici morte finivit. Hic est ut alter ille thomas non didimus nec dubius sed certus in scientia divinatorum, qui dictus est abissu» propter profunditatem ingenii, qua ad abissum Xristi latus invitatus ingreditur et ad secreta scrulanda divinatorum admissus tam certa notitia sibi inspirata scripsit in libris quasi manu ipsam contingeret que intelligentie digito indicaret.'

<sup>111</sup> Compare this with Saint Gregory's conception of Christian life described by Leclerq: 'The Christian life, according to St. Gregory, is, one might say, a progress from one humility to another; from acquired humility to infused humility, humility nourished by the desire for God in a life of temptation ad detachment, deepened and confirmed through loving knowledge in contemplation', *Love of Learning*, p.33.

roots and toward a more traditional monastic spirituality that, on the surface, seemed more concerned with the interior life than work in the world. In fourteenth-century hagiographies there is less emphasis on the utility of the Dominicans' devotions than there was one hundred years prior in the writings of Jordan of Saxony.<sup>112</sup> As an example of this shift, Tugwell documents textual emendations made to Dietrich of Apolda's *Life of Saint Dominic*, by 'someone whose interests indicate' that he was working under the instruction of the Master General, Nicholas Boccasino. The express involvement of the Order's Master General suggests that the retreat from their evangelical beginnings and 'their fundamental commitment to usefulness' was in fact intentional. The original statement (referring to the Primitive Constitution), 'principaliter ob predicationem animarumque salutem' was changed to 'principialiter post suam propriam salutem ob predicationem animarumque salutem.' Tugwell concludes: 'The primary apostolic orientation of the order is thus neatly jettisoned in favour of the conventual monastic priority of seeking one's own salvation'.<sup>113</sup> The movement inwards was not, however, total. As with Thomas himself who dedicated his life to teaching, the fourteenth-century Dominican mystics such as Meister Eckhart and Henry Suso, who are often seen to embody the totality of the turn inwards, were equally influenced by the pastoral and academic utility they could offer their varied audiences.<sup>114</sup>

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The making of St Thomas as a detached, contemplative mystic occurred in multiple contexts and was engendered by multiple hands. Internal and external struggles within the order over issues related to their poverty and their religious authority in general, played a key role in the

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<sup>112</sup> Tugwell, 'Introduction', *Miracula Sancti Dominici*, pp.167-68.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Many of Eckhart's teachings were condemned in John XXII's Bull *In agro dominico*, 27 March 'lest articles of this sort and their contents further infect the hearts of the simple among whom they were preached, and lest in any way, they should gain currency among them or among others'. Translation McGinn, *Eckhart*, pp.77-81, at p.80. Suso's utility and service to neighbour as an instrument of salvation is illustrated in his semi-autobiographical, *Life of the Servant*, discussed further in Chapter Six, which includes a vision received by one of his 'spiritual daughters', Anna. In this vision she sees Suso celebrating mass. Suspending from his figure were many people, about whom God said: "The countless number of children suspended from his are all those people who go to him to confession, who are taught by him, or, aside from this, who are particularly devoted to him. These people he has brought to me in such a way that I shall direct their lives to a good conclusion, and they shall never part from my happy countenance." Translated by Tobin, *Life*, 22, p.106. *Leben*, XXII, p.63: "dú unmessig zal dero kinden, dú an im hangent, daz sind ellú dú menschen, dú iu siner biht ald lere sind, ald in ane daz mit sunder trúwe meinent. Dú hat er mir also in getragen, daz ich ir leben uf ein güt ende wil richten, und sú von minem frölichen antlút niemer gescheiden son werden."

'finished' product. Tumultuous events in which the order's authority and *raison d'être* were threatened, accelerated the already inward trajectory of Dominican poverty. The life of Thomas penned by Bernard Gui is representative of an important period in which the last vestiges of poverty's more apostolic dimensions were blunted and merged into conceptualisations which emphasised its connections to contemplation and the drawing of attention away from the world to the divine. In the progressively 'mystical' atmosphere of the fourteenth-century, poverty was articulated and implicated in the process by which the 'self' became detached from the world and was emptied to enable one-ness with God.

The continued use and application of language and metaphors associated with poverty beyond the order's formative years increasingly conceptualised the self as a type of currency, of which its detachment, abandonment or sacrifice was seen to be essential to the meaningful experience of God in contemplation. The next chapter looks forward from 1323 to later in the century to developments in mystical contemplation and its relationship with vivid and expressive poverties, performed and conceptualised by the famous Dominican mystic Henry Suso.



## Chapter Six: 'Nothing was ever owned so much as God will be my own': Detachment, Asceticism and Gender.

If a person wants really to have poverty, he ought to be as free of his own created will as when he did not exist. For I tell you by the truth that is eternal, so long as you have a will to fulfil God's will, and a longing for God and for eternity, then you are not poor; for a poor man is one who has a will and longing for nothing.<sup>1</sup>

The mystical turn of the fourteenth century brought with it an emphasis on 'poverty of the spirit.' In the speculative theologies of the Dominican 'northern mystics' Meister Eckhart (d.1328), Johannes Tauler (d.1361) and Henry Suso (d.1366), poverty was separated from physical performances such as mendicancy, which had formed a bedrock to the poverty of Saints Dominic and Francis. In his famous 'Sermon 52' on 'inner poverty', from which the extract quoted above is taken, Eckhart distinguished between inner poverty, as a radical detachment from self and the temporal sphere which formed a union with God, and the external poverty which Christ had 'possessed' during his life.<sup>2</sup> The distinction was predicated on the understanding of poverty as a charismatic 'virtue' that was discernible in performance and as an internal condition of total detachment to the world, self and reason. In Eckhart's conception, 'true poverty', poverty of the spirit, was related to the concepts of *gelassenheit* and *abgeschiedenheit* through notions of detachment, letting go, emptiness and abandonment.<sup>3</sup> Embedded in these terms, however, were potentialities that could be

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<sup>1</sup> Meister Eckhart, 'Sermon 52: *Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum* (Mt. 5:3)' translated in *Eckhart: Essential*, pp.199-203, at p.199. 'Wan, sol der mensche armout haben gewærliche, sô sol er sines geschaffenen willen alsô ledic stân, als er tete, dô er niht enwas. Wan ich sage iu bî der êwigen wârheit: als lange als ir willen hât, ze ervülle den willen gotes, und begerunge hât der êwicheit und gotes, als lange ensit ir niht arm; wan daz ist ein arm mensche, der nict enwil und niht enbegert', *Meister Eckhart: Die deutschen Werke*, II, ed. by Josef Quint, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971, from here, *DW* II, pp.491-92

<sup>2</sup> *DW*, II, pp.486-87: 'wan er sie selbe hât gehabet ûf ertrîche.' Colledge translates the sentence 'for he himself used when he was on earth' (*Eckhart: Essential*, p.199); it could also be rendered as 'which he himself possessed while on earth'. Both interpretations capture the performative aspects of poverty as they are encapsulated in Peter Ferrand's telling of Dominic's holy hypocrisy' and in the Testament, which express material poverty as the revelation of an internal power. Catherine of Siena makes a similar distinction in *The Dialogue*, transl. by Suzanne Noffke, O.P., London: SPCK, 1980, 47, p.96.

<sup>3</sup> *Gelassenheit* and *abgeschiedenheit* are generally interpreted as synonyms in the work of Meister Eckhart: McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing*, New York: Crossroad, 2001, p.253, note 105; John D. Caputo, *The Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought*, New York: Fordham University Press, 1986, p.119. Dagmar Gottschall provides a small distinction arguing that *abegescheidenheit*, as well as conveying notions of the 'detachment and turning away from creatures and from one's own ego – also expressed in the concept of *Gelassenheit*' also means 'the detachment of the highest reason, and its intuitive knowledge of the truth', 'Eckhart's German Works', in *A Companion to Meister*

radically interpreted and practiced as a lack of distinction between God and creature – a kind of self-deification.<sup>4</sup> Some of the radical ways in which Eckhart's concepts could be construed led to the condemnation of some of his teachings in 1329.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, an emphasis on poverty as self-emptying and instrumental to accessing the divine was prominent among the so-called mystics of the fourteenth century. Over the course of the order's first one hundred years then, the use of poverty as a metaphor for heavenly wealth and riches became supplemented by metaphors of 'nothingness'. The aim of this chapter is to explore the confluence between the various theological and devotional shifts in Dominican spirituality during the fourteenth century and how they intersected with developing conceptions of poverty.

Primarily, I focus on Meister Eckhart's student, Henry Suso's semi-autobiographical/auto-hagiographical text the *Life of the Servant* as a case-study.<sup>6</sup> *The Life of the Servant* itself

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*Eckhart*, ed. by Jeremiah M. Hackett, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp.137-84, at p.180. Suso mainly uses the terms interchangeably, see for example, *Leben*, LIII, p.192.

<sup>4</sup> These potentials lead to the posthumous condemnation of many of the Meister's teachings. While the concept of *Gelassenheit* itself was not condemned, it formed the basis of the teaching on the 'nothingness' of creatures that was deemed heretical in Pope John XXII's Bull, *In agro Dominico*, edited in: M. H. Laurent, 'Autour de procès de Maître Eckhart, *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), Series III, 13, 1936, pp.435-447, at pp.442-443. The papal bull states that the reason for the condemnations was so that 'ne articuli huiusmodi seu contenta in eis corda simplicium apud quos predicati fuerunt, ultra inficere valeant, neve apud illos vel alios quomodolibet invalescant', *In agro dominico*, p.443. Possibly in reference to the bull, Suso comments on the 'hidden danger lurking behind them [the Meister's Teachings] for simple people and neophytes', *Life*, 33, p.133; 'Es lag aber etwas verborgen schaden da hinder einvaltigen und anvahenden menschen', *Leben*, p.97. For the broader context: Bernard McGinn, ' "Evil Sounding, rash, and suspect of heresy": Tensions Between Mysticism and magisterium in the History of the Church', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 90, 2004, 193-212; For the development of heresies involving self-deification: Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millenium*, pp.163-186; Robert E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages*, Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

<sup>5</sup> In the *Mirror of Simple Souls*, the beguine, Marguerite Porete (d.1310) writes: 'I used to be shut away in the servitude of captivity, when desire imprisoned me in the will of affection. There the light of ardor from divine love found me, who quickly killed my desire, my will and affection, which impeded me in the enterprise of the fullness of divine love', translated by Amy Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995, p.8. Similarly, God tells Catherine of Siena that the union with God comes 'with a knowledge of the truth that although you are mortal you seem in a sense immortal, because your selfishly sensual emotions are dead and your will is dead because of your union with me', translated by Noffke, *The Dialogue*, 89, pp.165-66. For a succinct overview of the centrality of self-will in late-medieval mysticism: Richard H. Jones, *Mysticism and Morality: A New Look at Old Questions*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004, pp.265-69, 271-72.

<sup>6</sup> The *Life of the Servant*, along with his other vernacular works, is edited as '*Leben Seuses*' in: Karl Bihlmeyer, ed., *Heinrich Seuse. Deutsche Schriften*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1907, pp.7-195. It has been translated into English in: Frank Tobin, transl., *Henry Suso: The Exemplar, with two German Sermons*, New York: Paulist Press, 1989, pp.61-204, all translations are from Tobin unless otherwise stated. There are fifty-five extant manuscripts which contain the *Leben*, some of which are incomplete, see: Rüdiger Blumrich, 'Die Überlieferung der deutschen Schriften Seuses. Ein Forschungsbericht', in *Heinrich Seuses Philosophia*

consists of a semi-biographical narration of Suso's experiences as a beginner in his spiritual journey. It is framed to offer instructions for the development of his 'spiritual daughter' Elsbeth Stagel (d. c.1360), the prioress of the Dominican convent of Töss.<sup>7</sup> Because of its basis in Suso's personal experiences, the *Leben* offers a unique glimpse into the place of poverty in the devotional life of a Dominican friar in the mid-fourteenth century. At the same time, exploration of the text opens a window into the way that poverty operated in the *cura monialium*, a sphere in which both Suso and his text were highly influential.<sup>8</sup> Suso combined prayer, ecstatic experiences and extreme asceticism, which were activities synonymous with the 'mystical turn', in order to 'know' God intimately.<sup>9</sup> Attention to these themes in the analysis of the *Leben* shows the myriad ways in which a renewed interest in 'mysticism' charged religious devotion in the late-medieval period.<sup>10</sup> Defined simply as the 'experience of direct communion with God',<sup>11</sup> the personal nature of late-medieval mysticism is sometimes viewed as a challenge to the intellectual structures that controlled and transmitted Christian dogma.<sup>12</sup> Taken to the extreme, mystics could abjure completely the institutions and

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*spiritualis. Quellen, konzept, formen und Rezeption*, ed. by Rüdiger Blumrich and Phillip Kaiser, Weisbaden: Reichert, 1994, 189-201. The German literature on the *Leben* is particularly extensive, see for example: Walter Blank, 'Heinrich Seuses 'Vita': Literarische Gestaltung und pastoral Funktion seines Schrifttums,' *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, 122, 1993, 285-311; in English, see: Werner Williams-Krapp, 'Henry Suso's Vita between Mystagogy and Hagiography', in *Seeing and Knowing: Women and Learning in Medieval Europe, 1200-1500*, ed. by Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, Turnhout: Brepols, 2004, pp.35-47.

<sup>7</sup> On Suso and Stagel's relationship and the authoring of the *Leben*: Frank Tobin, 'Henry Suso and Elsbeth Stagel: Was the Vita a Cooperative Effort?', in *Gendered Voices*, pp.118-35; Tinsley, *Scourge*, pp.117-152; Tinsley, 'The Spiritual Friendship of Henry Suso and Elsbeth Stagel', in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. by Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010, pp.477-500.

<sup>8</sup> For the popularity of Suso and his works: Blumrich, 'Die Überlieferung der deutschen Schriften Seuses', pp. 189-201. McGinn argues that Suso was the most widely read, influential, and representative of the fourteenth-century mystics: *The Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany (1300-1500)*, New York: Herder and Herder, 2005, p.195.

<sup>9</sup> For the use of space and environment in female spirituality: Erika Lauren Lindgren, *Sensual Encounters: Monastic Women and Spirituality in Medieval Germany*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> For Saint Augustine as the 'father' of medieval mysticism: McGinn, *Foundations*, pp.228-262.

<sup>11</sup> Grace M. Jantzen, *Power, Gender, and Christian Mysticism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.1; Elizabeth Petroff expands this somewhat: 'Mysticism is the direct experience of the real, an unmediated experience of God', *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p.4; 'Mysticism' is a very imprecise term that has a vast array of potential meanings and applications, for the debates over definition and approaches see: Edward Cuthbert Butler, *Western Mysticism, Second Edn*, London: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1926; McGinn, *Foundations*, pp.265-343; For a good introduction to mysticism from the thirteenth century see: McGinn, *Flowering*, pp.12-30.

<sup>12</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p.408.



authority of the Church by giving total precedence to their own mystical experiences.<sup>13</sup> Interpretative struggles over complex theological concepts, as well as debates between opposing factions coloured the spiritual landscape of the fourteenth century. Orthodox and deviant forms of mysticism grew from the eleventh century, each drawing on interpretations of neo-platonic teachings. Critics believed that theologies propounded in the fourteenth century by mystics such as Marguerite Porete, Jan van Ruusbroec (d.1381) and the communities that came to constitute the heresy of the 'Free Spirit' essentially promoted a form of self-deification and could lead to antinomianism.<sup>14</sup> While mysticism had many 'radical' attributes, especially in female religiosity, it was essentially progressive, remaking practices, behaviours and theologies that had their origins as far back as the patristic period.<sup>15</sup> At the basis of this process, for mystics labelled orthodox and heretic alike, was a conception of and engagement with poverty.

Suso's *Leben* transmits and engages many of the theological and spiritual influences circulating at the time, as well as embodying a distinct tension between the masculine and

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<sup>13</sup> Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millenium*, p.150.

<sup>14</sup> See for instance Jean Gerson's attacks on Jan van Ruusbroec: Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres Completes*, ed. by P. Glorieux, vol. VII, *L'Oeuvre Spirituelle et Pastorelle*, Paris: Desclée et Cie, 1960, pp. 615–635, 791–804. For analysis: Denys Turner, 'Dionysius and Some Late-Medieval Mystical Theologians of Northern Europe', *Modern Theology* 24, 2008, 615-665, esp. pp. 651-54. Kurt Ruh notes Eckhart as a proponent of the 'Free Spirit' heresy: 'Le Mirouer des simples âmes' der Marguerite Porete', in *Kleine Schriften. Band 2: Scholastik und Mystik im Spätmittelalter*, ed. By Kurt Ruh, De Gruyter: Berlin, 1984, pp.212-36, at p.220. Certain sections of Suso's *Leben*, however, seem to be directed towards disentangling the Meister's theologies from the heresy. He writes: 'Dien menschen beschiht als den binlin, die daz hong machent: so die zitig werdent und dez ersten us stürment usser den körben, so fliegent sù in verierter wise hin und her und enwissen nit war; etlichú missfliegent und werdent verlorn, aber etlichú werdent ordenlich wider in gesezzet. Also geschiht disen menschen: wan sù mit ungesaster vernunft got schowent al in nah ire unvolkomenr vernunft, so wen sù dis und daz lassen vallen, sù enwüssen wie. Daz ist wol war, es müß alles ab, dem reht sol geschehen; sù verstand aber noh nit, wie der abval sol gestellet sin, und wen ungelimpflich dis und daz lassen und sich und ellú ding got nemen, und wen dar us wúrken ane underscheid', *Leben*, XLVII, p.159. For studies on Eckhart's relationship with the heresy and with Porete: Wegener, 'Eckhart and the World of Women's Spirituality', esp. pp.425-41; Robert Lerner, 'New Light on the Condemnation of Meister Eckhart', *Speculum*, 72, 1997, 347-66. For antinomianism in fourteenth century heretical movements: Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millenium*, pp.163-76. On the Heresy of the Free Spirit: Lerner, *Heresy of the Free Spirit*.

<sup>15</sup> The influence of the pseudo-Dionysian tradition on Dominican mysticism cannot be underestimated. In addition to the studies cited in Chapter Two: Boyd Taylor Coolman, 'The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition', *Modern Theology*, 24, 2008, 615-32; David Burrell, C.S.C, and Isabelle Moulin, 'Albert, Aquinas, and Dionysius', *Modern Theology*, 24, 2008, 633-49; Elisa Rubino, 'Pseudo-dionysius the Areopagite and Eckhart, in *Companion to Meister Eckhart*, pp.299-309.

the feminine due to his role in the *cura monialium*.<sup>16</sup> Developments in literary and historical production in the previous century combined with the increasing centrality of contemplative prayer in narratives of sanctity. These advances expanded the use and application of poverty's metaphors in changing religious and political contexts. Not as theologically radical or speculative as his teacher Meister Eckhart, Suso's poverty of spirit or 'detachment' was accompanied by some very literal, extreme and unremitting ascetic behaviours. As this chapter demonstrates, ascetic practices, illness and suffering were discursively and materially associated with internal and external forms of poverty.<sup>17</sup> Ascetic practices, primarily in the case of women, often spilled beyond the careful management of the internal and external that had characterised performances of poverty through asceticism in the thirteenth century, such as the example of Dominic's 'holy hypocrisy' narrated by Peter Ferrand.<sup>18</sup> Attempts to control and order women's devotional and spiritual activities manifestly impacted on the nature of the friars' writings. A range of complex and sometimes competing discourses related to gender, spiritual and religious authority and agency converged in the pages of Suso's *Leben*. As this chapter argues, they had a dynamic conceptual and performative impact on the spiritual paths that he performed and prescribed for his spiritual daughters.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section establishes the literary, spiritual and devotional context of Suso's *Life of the Servant*. I consider the immediate and long-term influences that shaped the form, structure and content of the text. As indicated in Chapter Two of this thesis, the *cura monialium* and the corporeal spirituality of Dominican female religious provided an important backdrop to Jordan of Saxony's formulation of spiritual poverty, and this is also true for the fourteenth-century Dominican mystics.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, the

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<sup>16</sup> On the Dominicans and the *cura monialium* in the fourteenth century: Eugen Hillenbrand, *Nikolaus von Straßburg: Religiöse Bewegung und dominikanische Theologie im 14. Jahrhundert*, Freiburg: Albert, 1968, pp.61-78.

<sup>17</sup> On medieval ascetics and asceticism: Jerome Kroll and Bernard Bachrach, *The Mystic Mind: The Psychology of Medieval Mystics and Ascetics*, New York & London: Routledge, 2005; Vincent L. Wimbush & Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, in particular, Kallistos Ware, 'The Way of Ascetics: Negative or Affirmative?', pp.3-15 and Edith Wyschogrod, 'The Howl of Oedipus, the Cry of Heloise: From Asceticism to Postmodern Ethics', pp.16-32.; Bynum, 'The Mysticism and Asceticism of Medieval Women' in *Fragmentation and Redemption*, pp.53-78, and eadem, *Holy Feast*, pp.208-18.

<sup>18</sup> For the conception of poverty as an ascetical response: Mari Hughes-Edwards, *Reading Medieval Anchoritism: Ideology and Spiritual Practices*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012, p.69

<sup>19</sup> An older-view advanced by scholars such as Leclercq and Langer argues that Eckhart's concepts of *gelassenheit* and poverty of spirit were formed explicitly in the context of women's spirituality: Leclercq, 'German Spirituality in the fourteenth Century', in *A History of Christian Spirituality. 2: The Spirituality of the*

second section explores the dynamics of authority and power inherent in the performance and control of Dominican women's harsh asceticism. The third section focusses more specifically on the gender-blurring that Suso undertakes in relation to his devotion to Christ and to his primarily female audience. I consider what the gender of Christ, represented in the allegorical figure of eternal Wisdom, means for Suso's conception, not only of poverty, but of the spiritual path he delineates in his text.

### *The Life of the Servant as Devotional Narrative*

Despite the ostensible biographical nature of Suso's *'Life'*, few historical details can be gleaned from reading the text itself. Suso was born c.1295, probably in Constance where his noble family resided.<sup>20</sup> He expresses significant anxiety over the donation that his family made to the Dominican convent at Constance to secure his early entrance to the order at thirteen.<sup>21</sup> Following the regular education of a Dominican novice and friar, Suso was selected to study at the *studium generale* at Cologne, where he was taught by Meister Eckhart.<sup>22</sup> The remainder of his religious career seems to have been relatively 'ordinary'. He held the positions of lector and prior of his convent at Constance. The extended narration of Suso's interactions with women in the *Leben* and the *Little Book of Letters*, which also appears in the *Exemplar*, make it evident that he devoted most of his life to pastoral activities and spiritual direction, particularly in the *cura monialium* of Dominican nuns, communities of female tertiaries and Beguines.<sup>23</sup> Suso's interactions with women provided much of the material included in the *Leben* and were integral to his purposes in writing.

Suso situates the creation of the book in an act tantamount to 'spiritual theft'. In his duties in the *cura monialium* he counselled and directed a 'holy enlightened person' who furtively

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*Middle Ages*, ed. by Jean Leclercq, François Vandenbroucke, and Louis Bouyer, London: Burns and Oats, 1968, pp.373-406, at pp.379-388; Otto Langer, *Mystische Erfahrung und spirituelle Theologie. Zu Meister Eckharts Auseinandersetzung mit der Frauenfrömmigkeit seiner Zeit*, Munich: Artemis, 1987. Lydia Wegener nuances the view suggesting that Eckhart reacted to affective spiritualities in general, not just those practiced by women: 'Eckhart and the World of Women's Spirituality in the Context of the "Free Spirit" and Marguerite Porete' in *Companion to Eckhart*, pp.415-443, esp. pp.419-22.

<sup>20</sup> Tobin pieces together the biographical details from Suso's writings: 'Introduction', *The Exemplar*, pp.19-26.

<sup>21</sup> Suso felt that he would not go to heaven because his reception among the Dominicans had been procured by simony: *Leben*, XXI, pp.61-63.

<sup>22</sup> Tobin, 'Introduction', *The Exemplar*, p.22.

<sup>23</sup> For example, *Leben*, XXXVIII, pp.117-30; XLI, pp.135-41; XLII, pp.142-44.

wrote down all the things that he had told her in spiritual confidence ‘as a help for herself and for others’. On finding out, he demanded the material which he then attempted to burn but was prevented by a message from God. Suso states that the *Leben* itself is what (the, as yet, unnamed Elsbeth Stigel) ‘wrote in her own hand’, to which he added following her death a ‘good bit of instruction.’<sup>24</sup> Including these details effectively counters possible accusations of an excessive view of his own self-importance by placing the burden for compilation of his experiences on her. But, exactly what role Elsbeth had in the writing of the *Leben* is still subject to debate and is largely unresolvable.<sup>25</sup> Two things are relatively clear, however. Firstly, the coherence of the text and the fact that he attests to personal additions, indicate that he heavily edited the material and was likely responsible for the final form and finish. Secondly, as well as outlining her literary achievements in her own right as author of a ‘sister-book’ in her convent of Töss, Suso recalls that he had ‘no one else who has been as helpful with such industry and devotion to God, as you were while still in good health, in bringing my books to completion’.<sup>26</sup> The delineation of her literary ‘credentials’ and his repeated references to her holiness, suggests that her influence went beyond the compilation of the *Leben* in a way that related to the authority of the work itself. At the same time, much of the narrative and dialogue within the *Leben* is directed to her or at her request in her role as Suso’s spiritual daughter. Consequently, she exerted influence in the narrative itself and on its development beyond the text. Regardless, however, of Elsbeth’s impact as co-author or spiritual daughter, the *Leben* was ultimately Suso’s work with regard to both material itself, its organisation and the purposes for which it was published.

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<sup>24</sup> *Leben*, pp.7-8: ‘Er gewan kuntsami eins heiligen erlúhten menschen [...] Wenn er zû ir kom, do zoch si im us mit heinlichen fragen die wise sines anvanges und fúrgangs und etlich úbunge und liden, die er hat gehabt, dú seit er ir in gütlicher heimlich. Do si von den dingen trost und wisung bevand, do schreib si es alles an, ir selb und och andren menschen ze einem behelfen, und tet daz verstoln vor ime, daz er nût dur von wúste. Dar na neiswen, do er diser geischlichen dúpstal innen ward, do straft er si dar umbe, und múste im es her us geben [...] Und also bleib dis nagende unverbrennet, als si es den meren teil mit ir selbes handen hate geschriben. Etwaz gûter lere wart och na ir tode in ir person von im dur zû geleit.’

<sup>25</sup> On the debate: Tobin, ‘Henry Suso and Elsbeth Stigel’, pp.118-35; Tinsley, *Scourge*, pp.117-152; idem, ‘Spiritual Friendship’, pp.477-500.

<sup>26</sup> *Life*, 35, p.141. *Leben*, p.109: ‘der mir mit sôlichem flisse und gôtlichen trúwen behulffen sie minú búchlú ze volbringen, als du tet, die wil du gesund werd.’

Suso begins the *Leben* by grounding the narrative in his historical person, naming himself and his place of birth.<sup>27</sup> His personal experiences drive the narrative, a fact that is reiterated on many occasions. In the prologue to the *Exemplar* he states that it

describes by concrete example the life of a beginner and demonstrates in a veiled manner how a beginner should order his inner and outer self according to God's dear will. And, since good actions are, without a doubt, more instructive and uplift one's heart somehow more than words alone, it describes by many examples many holy deeds that really happened as depicted. It describes a person making progress: how through renunciation, suffering, and (ascetic) exercises one should break through one's unmortified animal nature to acquire great and praiseworthy sanctity.<sup>28</sup>

The reference to the importance of deeds over words places Suso's writings firmly in the Dominican tradition. Suso presents his work as a narrative of 'doing' and 'making' aimed at shaping the devotional and spiritual lives of its readers and hearers. Suso outlines in the introduction to the *Leben* that 'the holy enlightened person'<sup>29</sup> 'asked of him that he tell her from his own experiences something of his sufferings so that her own stricken heart might take strength from it.'<sup>30</sup> Later in the narrative, she (as he would have the audience believe) puts her intentions more clearly:

"Sir I think, you should treat me and nourish me, your thirsty child, with the spiritual food of your good teaching, not seeking things too far off but finding them close to yourself; for the closer it is to your own experience, the more attractive it shall be to the longings of my soul".<sup>31</sup>

As Jeffrey Hamburger succinctly argues, the emphasis on exemplarity and instruction in passages such as these 'invites interpretation as a discourse on the nature of imitation,

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<sup>27</sup> *Leben*, p.7: 'Hie vahet an daz erste tail dizz bûches, daz da haisset der Sûse. Es waz ein brediger in tûtschem lande, von geburt ein Swabe'.

<sup>28</sup> *Exemplar*, Prologus, p.3: Daz erst seit úberal mit bildgebender wise von eim auvahenden lebene und git togenlich ze erkennen, in weler ordenhafti ein reht anvahender mensch sol den ussere und den inren menschen richten nah gotes aller liebsten willen.

<sup>29</sup> Suso does not name Stigel until the beginning of part two of the *Leben*, XXXIII, p.96.

<sup>30</sup> *Leben*, p.7: 'Der mensch begert von im, daz er ir etwaz seiti von lidene usser eigenr enpfundunge, dar abe ir lidendes herz ein kraft môhti nemen'.

<sup>31</sup> *Life*, 33, p.134. *Leben*, XXXIII, p.99: 'Ach herr, und da mein ich, daz ir ze glicher wise also mir, úwer gûter lere fûrent, und nit ze verr sûchent, denn daz ir úch selb nahe grifent; wan so es úh ie ueher ist gewesen in usgewûrcker wise, so es ie enpfenklicher ist miner begirigen sele'.

understood in terms of the right relationship between models and copies.’ Hamburger continues: ‘Drawing on an extensive tradition of pastoral literature, Seuse represents himself as both a *speculum* and *imago*: a mirror in which his readers will find Christ’s example faithfully reflected and, at the same time, an exemplary model that they themselves reflect.’<sup>32</sup> In this context, the *Leben* is a narration of his own spiritual journey in the tradition of Augustine’s Confessions. Yet, due to repeated engagement with the medieval discourses of exemplarity and imitation, Suso does not entirely fulfil the, mainly modern, notions of an autobiographical protagonist within the text.<sup>33</sup> Richard Kieckhefer’s term auto-hagiography comes closer,<sup>34</sup> especially taking into account the inclusion of stories in which the Servant was seen to perform miracles.<sup>35</sup> But even this designation does not convey the complexity or the purposes with which Suso wove together a variety of courtly, saintly and devotional models, tropes and devices in the construction of the characters, the Servant and the spiritual daughter, and the narrative itself.

To put forward his own experiences as a model for reflection, guidance and imitation, required the construction of a discernible and effective charismatic authority. Suso does so on a series of levels. Elsbeth, he writes, ‘was drawn by God to his life and teachings with great devotion.’<sup>36</sup> In one of the few references to his preaching, a woman, ‘who had just recently turned to God’, witnessed him ‘preaching with great zeal in Cologne.’ He writes:

When this suffering woman looked at him intently, she saw with her inner eye that his face began to take on a pleasing brilliance. Three times it became like the dazzling sun when it shines its brightest. His face thereby became so limpid that she saw herself in it. This apparition comforted her very much and confirmed her in her holy way of life.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Jeffrey Hamburger, ‘Medieval Self-Fashioning: Authorship, Authority and Autobiography in Seuse’s Exemplar’, in *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans*, p.431.

<sup>33</sup> For the *Leben* in the tradition of Augustine: Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls*, pp.6-7; Tobin, ‘Introduction’, in *The Exemplar*, pp.38-42, who similarly questions whether the *Leben* can be called auto-biography (p.38).

<sup>34</sup> Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls*, pp.6-7.

<sup>35</sup> Suso writes that he and a *socius* stayed overnight at a Beguine convent, where there was only a small bottle of wine but twenty people. After Suso blessed it, the wine lasted until everybody present had drunk their fill: *Leben*, XLI, pp.140-41. See also, XLII, pp.145-44.

<sup>36</sup> *Life*, 33, p.132. *Leben*, p.97: ‘zû dez leben und lere ward si von gote mit grossem andaht getriben.’

<sup>37</sup> *Life*, 44, p.173. *Leben*, p.153: ‘Do sin der lidender mensch mit flisse war nam, do sah si mit den inren ogen, daz sin antlút sich begond verwandlen in ein wúnneklich klarheit, und ward ze drin malen glich der liechten

Not only does the light shining from Suso's face confirm his charismatic authority and the grace in preaching that he receives from God, but it turns his face into a mirror in which the woman can see her suffering reflected. At that moment, Suso assumes the role of the holy man, whose preaching edifies and forms the religious experience of his audience.<sup>38</sup> This has important implications for the authority of his text and its teachings. The *Leben's* ability to shape the devotional lives, bodies and experiences of its readers and hearers, as the naming of himself in the opening line of the book indicates, depends on his personal, as opposed to his textual authority. In other words, he needs to guarantee the value and efficacy of his teachings with concrete examples. Through this method, signs and recognition of his charisma are interspersed throughout the narrative, and are mediated mainly through women.

Suso's presentation of himself, Elsbeth and other women who recognise or attest to his charisma in the narrative is imbricated by discourses which construct and negotiate religious authority. He habitually uses verbs such as 'shape' and 'form' to highlight his role in the forming the devotional lives of his spiritual daughters:

After this holy daughter had been formed according to the good teaching of her spiritual father in every kind of holiness based on examples for the exterior man, just like a soft piece of wax near the fire that is able to take on the form of the seal, and had imitated for a long time the exemplary life of Christ, who is the surest way ....<sup>39</sup>

Suso here references the way that both his teachings, via his letters or words, and the concrete example of his experiences have been integral to her spirituality and holiness. The structure of the sentence suggests that he places himself as an intermediary between Elsbeth and Christ, recalling the Pauline stricture 'follow me as I follow Christ' (1 Cor 11:1). The passage quoted comes at the half-way point in Part Two of the *Leben*, which, as I explore further in the closing section of this chapter, was constructed as the 'female' path to spiritual perfection. In Part Two, the passage offers a break between the presentation of a narrative

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sunnen nah ire höhsten widerglaste, und ward im dar inne sin antlút als luter, daz si sich slber dar inne schowete. Und von diser gesiht ward si in ire lidene gar wol getröstet und gevestnet in einem heiligen lebene.'

<sup>38</sup> Suso states that Elsbeth had a vision of the Virgin Mary saying that the Servant preached Christ's name in the manner of the disciples, 'enkindling with desire many hearts through his name and leading them to their eternal happiness', *Life*, 45, p.173.

<sup>39</sup> *Life*, 46, p.174. *Leben*, p.155: 'Do disú heiligú tohter nah der gûten ler ires geischlichen vaters uf ellú stuk bildricher heilikeit wol waz nah dem ussere menschen geberret als ein lindes wehslí bi dem fúre, daz der forme dez insigels enpfenklich ist worden, und och dur daz spiegelich leben Cristi, der der sicherst weg ist'.

of (exterior) patient suffering and the explicitly theological dialogue on interior spiritual perfection, which is the culmination of the spiritual journey and the book itself. Suso writes,

Dear daughter, it is now time that you lift yourself out of the nest of consoling examples suited for a beginner and proceed to something more perfect [...] Do you know that Christ said to his disciples, who were too firmly attached to his physical presence, "It is beneficial for you that I leave you if you are to become capable of receiving the spirit"?<sup>40</sup>

Suso often casts himself in a Christ-like role to delineate and express his authority as edifier and fashioner of religious experience. In this instance, it was particularly important to his self-conception and authority in the *cura monialium* and for giving the narrative purpose, structure and authority.

Suso's relationships to the authority and work of Christ were methodically built over the course of parts one and two in implicit and explicit ways. Towards the beginning of the narrative in Part One, Suso outlines his prayer which he calls 'the way of the cross'.<sup>41</sup> The way of the cross is a performance incorporating a deliberate use of space, sensory perception, contemplative meditation and ascetic practices to facilitate Suso's access to and knowledge of the 'pure Godhead'.<sup>42</sup> It progresses the framework offered in the *Nine Ways of Prayer*, produced almost a century earlier. Situating the creation of the prayer in a youthful reluctance to contemplate Christ's 'suffering humanity' (*gelitnen menscheit*), the prayer allowed him 'to learn what he was unable to before and he surrendered himself to it with great detachment (*gelassenlich*).'<sup>43</sup> Very simply, in the 'way of the cross' Suso would progress from the chapter room into the cloister every night after matins, 'joining with Christ' from the Last Supper:

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<sup>40</sup> *Life*, 46, p.174. *Leben*, p.156: 'Fro tohter, es weri nu wol zit, daz du fúr baz in ein nehers giengist, un dich uss dem nest biltlichs trostes eins anvahenden menschen uf erlupftist [...] Waist du nit, daz Cristus sprach zû sinen jungern, die an siner biltlicher gegenwurtikeit ze vast kleptan: „es ist úch furderlich, daz ich von úch var, sond ir dez geistes enpfenklich werden“?'

<sup>41</sup> *Leben*, XIII, pp.34-37; *Life*, pp.83-86.

<sup>42</sup> While the *Nine Ways of Prayer* depicted Dominic praying in the form of a cross, Suso went further in the way that he imitated and was conformed to Christ through corporal prayer.

<sup>43</sup> *Life*, 13, p.84. *Leben*, p.34: 'und vie an ze lernene, daz er vor not konde, und gab sich gelassenlich dar in.' Compare with Eckhart's *Counsels on Discernment*, which were conversations he had with the brothers while Prior at Erfurt, 'Counsel 2': 'The most powerful prayer, and almost the strongest of all to obtain everything, and the most honourable of all works, is that which proceeds from an empty spirit' translated by Colledge, *Meister Eckhart: Essentials*, p.248.



‘suffering together with him from place to place until he accompanied him to Pilate.’<sup>44</sup> The prayer proceeded through four literal and metaphorical paths to Christ’s death; each path was performed in a different space in the cloister and was supplemented with prostrations and psalm recitations.<sup>45</sup> Suso accompanied Christ on the first path to death through his own desire to renounce friends and material possessions, and, he writes ‘to suffer hopeless abandonment and voluntary poverty in praise of him.’<sup>46</sup> On the second ‘he resolved to reject’ worldly honours. He willingly accepted the contempt and scorn of the world, as he realised the way that Christ had ‘become a worm and was scorned by all men.’<sup>47</sup> On the third path, symbolized in the way that he kissed the ground, he voluntarily rejected all bodily comforts, while he imagined how Christ would have lost strength as he approached the Cross. At the fourth path, Suso ‘surrendered his will’ (*sinen willen*) and as he physically came beneath the cross at the pulpit, he watched Christ being nailed to it: ‘[t]hen he took the discipline and with heartfelt agony nailed himself on the cross with his Lord, begging him that neither life nor death, joy nor sorrow be able to separate his servant from him.’<sup>48</sup>

The way of the cross was integral to Suso’s spiritual development and to the construction of his authority as a spiritual father and writer of devotional texts. It initiates the performance of a series of harsh self-injurious behaviours, which marked an important stage in his journey

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<sup>44</sup> *Life*, 13, p.84. *Leben*, p.34: ‘Er vie es an mit ime an dem jungsten nahtmale und leid sich mit ime von stat zû stat, unz daz er in brachte fûr Pylatus.’

<sup>45</sup> Compare with the Dominican tertiary: ‘Stefana Quinzeni’s ecstasy of the Passion’, in *Dominican Penitent Women*, ed. and transl. by Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner, New York: Paulist Press, 2005, pp.192-200. For analysis of these types of prayers: Sarah E. Lenzi, *The Stations of the Cross: The Placelessness of Medieval Christian Piety*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, esp. pp.10-16, 37-44, 121-133; also: June L. Mecham, ‘A Northern Jerusalem: Transforming the Spatial Geography of the convent of Wienhausen’, in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2005, pp.139-160, pp.157-58 for a discussion of Suso specifically, and Carolyn Muessig, ‘Performance of the Passion: The Enactment of Devotion in the Later Middle Ages’, in *Visualizing Medieval Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts*, ed. by Elina Gertsman, Burlington: Ashgate, 20018, pp.129-142.

<sup>46</sup> *Life*, 13, p.84. *Leben*, p.35: ‘Dis ersten gassen gieng er mit ime us in den tod in der begird, daz er baide, frûnden und zerganklichem gûte wolti us gan und liden im ze lobe trostloses ellende und willig armût.’

<sup>47</sup> *Life*, 13, p.35. *Leben*, p.35: ‘Zû der andren gassen hat er einen fûrsaz sich ze gebene in einen hinwerf nah zerganklicher ere und wirdekeit, in ein willeklich versmeht von aller diser welt mit der betrachtunge, wie er och waz worden ein wurm und ein hinwerf aller menschen.’

<sup>48</sup> *Life*, 13, p.85. *Leben*, XIII, p.36: ‘so nam er aber ein disciplin und negelt sich mit herzlicher begierde zû sinem herren an sin krûzz und bat in, daz sinen diener weder daz leben noh der tod, noch lieb noch leid niemer von ime gescheiden môhten.’

as beginner to his spiritual ‘breaking through’.<sup>49</sup> The ascetic performances are indicated as having a dual purpose, which was explicitly marked on Suso’s body. Firstly, following traditional tropes, the practices were designed to make his body the subject of his spirit.<sup>50</sup> In conceptualising ascetic practices in this way, Suso was not engaging in a hatred of self or of the body, but rather viewed the subjugation of his unruly nature as a prospect for spiritual development via chastisement of the body.<sup>51</sup> Secondly, acts such as the wearing of the cross created a direct link to Christ’s sufferings through physical and metaphysical acts since, as Suso states, he nailed ‘himself to Christ, never to leave him’.<sup>52</sup> The prayer deeply conceptualises Christ’s poverty and conformity to Christ’s poverty as one and the same with his experience on the cross. At a theological level, the relationship between poverty and the cross coalesced in the works of Thomas Aquinas.<sup>53</sup> Commenting on 2 Cor. 8:9-15, Thomas distinguished between poverty as a way of following Christ and participating in his sacrament. Regarding the sacramental aspect of poverty Thomas wrote:

Hence, just as by the fact that he endured death, we were delivered from eternal death and restored to life, so by the fact that he suffered need in temporal things, we have been delivered from need in spiritual things and made rich in spiritual things: “That in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge” (1 Cor. 1:5).<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Eckhart, from whom Suso received the concept, defines the breaking through (*Durchbruch*) in the context of true poverty in Sermon 52: ‘[...] in the breaking-through, when I come to be free of will of myself and of God’s will and of all his works and of God himself, then I am above created things, and I am neither God nor creature, but I am what I was and what I shall remain, now and eternally [...] Here God is one with the spirit, and that is the most intimate poverty one can find’, *Eckhart: Essentials*, p.203. ‘Mêr: in dem durchbrechen, dâ ich ledic stân mîn selbes willen und des willen gotes und aller sîner werke und gotes selben, sô bin ich ob allen crêatûren un enbin weder got noch crêatûre, mêr: ich bin, daz ich was und daz ich blîben sol nû un iemerme [...] Alhie ist got einz mit dem geiste, und daz ist diu nêhste armout, die man vinden mac’, *DW*, II, pp.504-05.

<sup>50</sup> *Leben*, XV, pp.39-40.

<sup>51</sup> In this conceptualisation Suso conforms to Bynum’s argument that the ‘body is not so much a hindrance to the soul’s ascent as the opportunity for it’, ‘The Female Body and Religious Practice’, in *Fragmentation and Redemption*, p.194. While Bynum’s thesis has been criticised by David Aers, ‘Figuring Forth the Body of Christ: Devotion and Politics’, *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 11, 1994, 1-13 in relation to its application to women, it holds for Suso’s representation of his practices. For another positive perspective of ascetic practices see: Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, Twentieth Anniversary Edition, New York: Columbia University, 2008, esp. pp.211-285.

<sup>52</sup> *Leben*, XVI, p.42.

<sup>53</sup> Christopher Franks stresses this aspect of Thomas’s thought in his analysis of Thomas’s ‘economic’ teachings: *He Became Poor: The Poverty of Christ and Aquinas’s Economic Teachings*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008, esp. pp.1-35, 132-156.

<sup>54</sup> Translated by Larcher, *Super II Epistolam ad Corinthios*, 8.2, 295: ‘Unde sicut per hoc quod sustinuit mortem, liberati sumus a morte aeterna et restituti vitae, ita per hoc quod sustinuit inopiam in temporalibus, liberati

The synthesis of charity, humility and poverty formed the basis of the perfection of religious life, which Aquinas describes as a ‘holocaust’ – a burnt-offering, in which the self is totally immolated.<sup>55</sup> None of these ‘charismata’ functioned alone - it was only together that perfection could be achieved.<sup>56</sup> In this context, van den Eijden argues that ‘[a]s an imitation [...] Mendicant Poverty is [...] a commemoration of the totality of Jesus’ self-offering and also a participation in the sacramentality thereof.’<sup>57</sup> The symbolism of Suso’s way of the cross reflects Thomas’s theology of ‘holocaust’ and the divisions that he made between Christ’s poverty as an example and as a sacrament in the way that it moves from the external renunciation of possessions, honours and health to the surrender of his will. Along the way, in sharing Christ’s experiences, Suso embodies Christ’s poverty, humility and, finally, his charity. By participating in his sacrament, Suso not only imitates Christ, but can assume a Christ-like role for his audience.

In the performance of the prayer, Suso seamlessly incorporates metaphor, symbolism, ritual and action in ways that are deeply embedded in Dominican devotional models and theologies about poverty.<sup>58</sup> Broadly, the way of the cross represents a solution to the problem of finding a purposeful place for poverty in a situation in which convent-life was becoming increasingly lax particularly around issues such as discipline and the ownership of possessions.<sup>59</sup> The progression of the prayer expresses poverty’s pivotal place in Christ’s offering, as well as the

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sumus ab inopia in spiritualibus, et facti divites in spiritualibus. I Cor. I, 5: divites facti estis in illo in omni scientia, et cetera.’ <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/SS2Cor.htm#81>. Accessed 14/11/2017.

<sup>55</sup> Aquinas, *De Perfectione*, Cap. XI. Compare with, *Contra Impugnantes*, 6; *Summa*, 2-2.186.3 ad6. For analysis of the place of the ‘holocaust’ in Aquinas’s thought: van den Eijden, *Poverty on the Way to God*, pp.183-197.

<sup>56</sup> *De Perfectione*, Cap. XI.

<sup>57</sup> Van den Eijden, *Poverty on the Way to God*, p.192.

<sup>58</sup> Werner Williams-Krapp and David Tinsley argue that the translation of the *vitas patrum* into vernacular languages during the fourteenth century had considerable impact on the production of Dominican devotional texts and performances. Williams-Krapp describes its significance for the development of Dominican identity as ‘extraordinary’, *Nucleus*, p.410. Tinsley also offers a good discussion of its importance to fourteenth century devotion and spirituality, *Scourge*, esp. pp.87-116.

<sup>59</sup> In the mid-fourteenth century, the Provincial Prior of Aragon, Nicolau Rossell described the Order: ‘Item, cum evidenter cernamus in Provincia nostra multiplicantur fratres discolos, deordinatos, scandalosos, pro dolor, et rebelles, qui maternae suae sanctae religionis latera velut viperiam progenies disruptentes fratrum aliorum sibi multipliciter proximorum crimina, punitiones, correctiones, delationes, divisiones, et Ordinis et Capitulorum sacrata propter quae Ordo noster venit apud alios in contemptum secularibus, et aliis a nostra obedientia alienis revelant crudeliter, impie, et maligne, idcirco praecipit Reverendus Pater Prior Provincialis’, edited in: Adolfo Robles Sierra, ‘Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia de Aragon de la Orden de Predicadores, Correspondientes a Los Años 1345, 1347, 1350 y 1351’, *Escritos de Vedat*, 23, 1993, 257-330, at pp.306-07.

burnt-offering required by religious perfection, but abjures material manifestation for symbolic, internal renunciations which are marked by the performance of self-injurious acts. Poverty's mystical role in the prayer and, indeed, in Suso's spiritual journey is exponentially increased by the reference to 'detachment'. Terms such as 'mystical emptiness', 'self-naughting' and 'radical detachment' have all been used in relation to the 'poverty of spirit' that was expressed in the theological traditions of the great fourteenth-century 'Dominican mystics', Eckhart, Suso, Tauler and Catherine of Siena.<sup>60</sup> The self was implicated in discourses of poverty in the founding narratives of the order's first generation. The detachment theologised by the fourteenth century 'mystics' was shaped by the language and performances of devotional narratives as much as by intellectual speculation. Margot Schmidt rightly suggests that Suso can be thought of as an heir to the Christological spirituality expressed in Jordan of Saxony's letters to Diana.<sup>61</sup> At a theological level, however, Suso was indebted to the thought and work of his teacher, Meister Eckhart, with whom the concept of *Gelassenheit* has become synonymous.<sup>62</sup>

Many instances in the texts that comprise *the Exemplar* betray the influence that the Meister had on Suso's personal and intellectual development. Discussions with Eckhart finally alleviated the anxiety Suso felt at the simony with which his entrance to the religious life was accomplished.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, Suso narrates a vision following Eckhart's death, in which the Meister told him that the most profitable exercise to achieve glorious union with God following death was to 'with respect to his selfhood (*selbsheit*), withdraw from himself in deep detachment (*gelassenheit*) and receive all things from God and not from creatures, and adopt an attitude of calm patience toward all wolfish men.'<sup>64</sup> While there is some debate over the identity of Eckhart in this vision, the reference to 'wolfish men' likely refers to the condemnation of some of the Meister's teachings and his posthumous reputation.<sup>65</sup> The

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<sup>60</sup> The term self-naughting comes from Dreyer, 'The Appropriation of Medieval Mysticism', p.160. For the others see: Woods, *Mysticism and Prophecy*, p. 93, 99, 102.

<sup>61</sup> Schmidt, 'The Importance of Christ', p.105.

<sup>62</sup> Frank Tobin, 'Eckhart's Use of Mystical Language: The Contexts of *eigenschaft*', *Seminar*, 8, 1972, 160-68.

<sup>63</sup> *Leben*, XXI, pp.61-63.

<sup>64</sup> Suso, *Life*, 6, p.75. *Leben*, p.23: „er sol im selb nah sin selbseit mit teifer gelassenheit entsinken, und ellú ding von got nüt von der creatur nemen, und sich in ein stille gedultkeit sezzen gen allen wúlfinen menschen.“

<sup>65</sup> There is some debate over the identity of the Eckhart referred to in this passage due to another 'Meister Eckhart', known as 'the younger' working and writing in Germany during Suso's lifetime. Based on evidence

message of the importance of detachment itself is reiterated in the narration of another vision received by Suso, this time of Brother John der Fuoterer.<sup>66</sup> John tells Suso that there is nothing 'more painful and profitable than for him, with an attitude of detachment, to go out from God with patience toward himself and thus leave God for the sake of God.'<sup>67</sup>

The concept of *gelassenheit* was crucial to Suso's devotional and spiritual life and the path that he outlines for his audience. In the passage cited above and, to a lesser extent, in its use in the narration of the way of the cross, detachment can be interpreted as an attitude toward material things, that could be manifested externally, and as providing the basis to internal processes whereby union with the divine was realised. Eckhart's Sermon 52 discursively and linguistically linked *gelassenheit* with poverty and Suso reiterates those connections by describing 'true poverty' in terms of 'an abandoning of spiritual nature', in which 'all foreign objects disappear.'<sup>68</sup> Eckhart's articulation of *gelassenheit* and *abegescheidenheit* occurred in the context of his sermons and theological treatises and therefore is largely speculative. By embedding and exploring the concept in narrative, Suso provides a performative dimension that is missing in the Meister's communications. Importantly, particularly for the way that Eckhart's teaching of the concept had been taken to radical, often heretical, extremes, and for the *Leben's* role in the spiritual direction of women, the grounding of the concept in 'images' allowed Suso to exert greater control over the potential interpretations of his words.<sup>69</sup>

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uncovered by Kaepelli, Colledge argues that Suso exploited this coincidence in way that enabled him to defend 'his teacher's good name' but to avoid opposing the papal bull which had condemned the Meister: Colledge, 'Historical Data', *Eckhart: Essential*, pp.18-19. Kaepelli, *Scriptores*, I, pp.358-60. Many other instances in the *Leben* where Suso explicitly defends some of Eckhart's teachings, however, suggest that he was in fact referring to his teacher in this vision.

<sup>66</sup> Not much is known about John. Tobin states that he resided at the Dominican house in Basel: 'Notes', p.384, n.31.

<sup>67</sup> *Life*, 6, p.75. *Leben*, VI, p.23: 'daz mit wetüunders und nüzers dem menschen weri, denn da der mensch in gelassenheit von got im selber gedulteklich us giengi und also got dur got liessi.'

<sup>68</sup> *Life*, 47, p.177. *Leben*, p.160: 'noh nit kan under gan nah sines geistenriches wesens ordenlichen entwordenheit in ein war armût, der da enpfellet in etlicher wise aller frômder gegenwurf'.

<sup>69</sup> A major part of Eckhart's theology of poverty involved the removal of images – while Suso acknowledges this, he attaches it to images as per his use of narrative to edify his audience and to prevent the distortions and misunderstandings that occurred in relation to the Meister's teachings: *Leben*, XXXIII, pp.97-98; LIII, pp.190-91.

Suso clarifies the antinomian dangers inherent in *gelassenheit* in the introduction to the second section of the *Leben*. He writes that Elsbeth had learned of some ‘lofty intellectual matters’, about which she asked him to elaborate further. These concepts, he continues, ‘were very high flown: the naked Godhead, the nothingness of all things, losing oneself in the nothingness (of God), the inadequacy of all images, and other similar teachings...’<sup>70</sup> In a manner not too dissimilar to the intention with which Aquinas began his *Summa*, Suso writes of the confusion that these theologies could cause among ‘simple people and neophytes.’<sup>71</sup> There is an inherent difference, he continues, in asking about these sorts of concepts to develop knowledge of the spirit or to shape the devotional life:

True blessedness does not consist of fine phrases. It consists in good actions. But if you are asking about such things in order to put them into practice, then give up asking about such lofty notions and take up such questions as are appropriate to you [...] [I]t is more useful to you and those like you to know, first of all, how one should begin, ascetic practices, good saintly models – how this or that friend of God also made a holy beginning; how they, first of all practiced living and suffering with Christ; what they, like him, suffered; how they conducted themselves inwardly and outwardly; whether God drew them to himself by sweetness or sternness; and when and how more images dropped from them.’<sup>72</sup>

As well as placing himself as the *definitior*, so to speak, of what actions constitute and lead to spiritual perfection, this passage reflects the way that Suso through the *Leben*, and to a lesser extent in other works collected in the *Exemplar*, situates the embodiment of speculative

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<sup>70</sup> *Life*, 33, p.133; *Leben*, p.97: ‘In irem ersten anevang wurden ir ingetragen von neiswem hohe und vernunftig sinne, die vil überswenk waren: von der blossen gotheit, von aller bilden bildlosekeit und von derley sinnen, die mit schönen worten bedaht waren un ddem menschen lust in trügen.’ Later in the chapter, Suso refers to Eckhart by name, p.99.

<sup>71</sup> Chapters 46 and 47 seem to specifically address the way that Eckhart’s teachings on *gelassenheit* were misinterpreted by ‘uneducated’ people or neophytes. In one instance he writes: ‘If I were to be annihilated in my consciousness and thus were to know nothing of myself, and if I wanted to perform all my material actions with no distinction between God and myself, as though uncreated being were performing them, that would be a mistake to end all mistakes’, *Life*, 46, p.176. It might be speculated that Suso refers not only to the way that Eckhart’s teachings were mutilated after his death by uneducated interpreters, but also to the Church’s condemnations of some of his teachings.

<sup>72</sup> *Life*, 33, p.133. *Leben*, p.98: ‘Rehtú selikeit lit nút an schönen worten, si lit an gúten werken. Fragest du aber nah den dingen dur ein lebliches erolgen, so la die hohen fragen noch underwegen und nim sôlich fragen her fúr, die dir gemesse sind [...] dar umbe dir und dinen glichen ist núzzer ze wússene von dem ersten begin, wie man súl an vahan, und von úbigem lebene und gúten heiligen bilden, wie diser und der gotesfrúnd, die och einen gôtlichen anvang haten, wie sich die des ersten mist Cristus leben und lidene úptin, waz sú eblich erlidden und wie sú sich von innen und von ussnan hieltin, ob sú got dur sússekeit ald dur hertikeit zugi, und wenn ald wie in dú bild ab vielin.’

theology in his own experiences as a basis for imitation or reflection. The narrative is accordingly, a 'doing' and 'making' of spiritual development. At the same time, through phrases such as 'give up asking about such lofty notions', 'take up such questions as are appropriate to you', and 'it is more useful to you and those you know', he reveals the discourses of paternal power that provided an undertone to his dialogues with his spiritual daughter.

The reference to 'you and those you know' is indicative of the way that Suso attempts to delimit Elsbeth's agency in the transmission of his spiritual direction. In the prologue to the *Exemplar* he notes the way that other works 'have long been copied in excerpt fashion by all kinds of unqualified copyists of both sexes, in such a way that one would add whatever he thought good while another in like manner leave things out', and with the fate of the Meister's teachings in his mind, Suso edited his works together to put forward an inviolable exemplar.<sup>73</sup> Yet, even as he built up Elsbeth's holy reputation to service the negotiation of his own authority, he used a number of devices and strategies to ensure that her holiness and breaking through was a reflection of his teachings. It might be suggested that he published the *Leben* precisely so that his example would be more widely available to prevent her becoming an exemplar to women in her own right. Only the male friar could present his person as an example to incite religious devotion and conversion. Nuns could share in the friar's work in salvation through their prayers alone.<sup>74</sup> His somewhat patronising tone when he comments on the impropriety of Elsbeth's interest in the lofty concepts is telling and attests to his strategies of control. As well as including demeaning and limiting phrases referring to women's weaknesses and the appropriateness of certain practices and concepts, the structure of the *Leben* itself reflects an anxiety over the relationship between male and female religious and their respective access to spiritual authority.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *Exemplar*, 'Prologus', p.4: 'Wan aber daz selb bûchli und etlichú me siner bûcher nu lange in verren und in nahen landen von mengerley unkunnenden schriben und schriberin ungantzlich abgesschriben sind, daz ieder man dur zû leite und dur von nam nach sinem sinne, dar umb hat sú der diener der ewigen wisheit hie zû samem gesezzet und wol gerihet, daz man ein gereht exemplar vinde nach der wise, ald sú ime dez ersten von gote in luhten.'

<sup>74</sup> A letter from Jordan to Dian expresses this relationship: *Epist.* XLV, p.51: 'Vos igitur ad orationis studium vos convertentes orate pro me [...] ut Dominus in beneplacito suo iter nostum dirigat et concedat nobis procurare per suam gratiam salutem animarum, pro qua intedimus laborare, ut et vos laboris nostri participes fiatis.'

<sup>75</sup> Suso states that he had sent Elsbeth a selection of sayings from the desert fathers that inspired him on his path as a beginner. He writes that she began to 'chastise her body' in the manner of the fathers. When he

## Asceticism and the Dialectics of Power in the *cura monialium*

The implementation of controlling strategies and devices through text, practice and regulation was not unique to Suso and his relationship with Elsbeth Stagel, but imbued the Dominicans' relationship to the *cura monialium* from the inception of the order. The power dynamics between the male and female religious of the Dominican Order manifested on a number of administrative, pastoral and spiritual levels.<sup>76</sup> Administrative practicalities such as financial support had a large role to play in structuring the relationships between the male and female religious.<sup>77</sup> Narrative sources such as Suso's *Leben*, Jordan of Saxony's letters to Diana and the nuns of Saint Agnes express moreover underlying anxieties over the issues of religious authority and access to the divine, which often manifested in relation to the performance of ascetic acts. These anxieties provide important context not only to the way that Suso's *Leben* was layered by his experiences in the *cura monialium*, but to his approach to poverty and asceticism more generally.

Ascetic practices and behaviours retained a prominent place in the devotional lives of mendicant religious as the emphasis of the spiritual life shifted from humility, as the mediating virtue of monasticism, to poverty.<sup>78</sup> Brother John of Spain testified to Dominic's

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found out he wrote to her: 'Dear daughter, if you intend to order your spiritual life according to my teachings, as you requested of me, then put aside such exaggerated severity because it is out of keeping with your weakness as a woman and your physical well-being', *Life*, pp.139-40.

<sup>76</sup> For Dominican religious women in the thirteenth-century: Julie Ann Smith, 'Prouille, Madrid, Rome: The Evolution of the Earliest Dominican instituta for Nuns', *Journal of Medieval History*, 35, 2009, 340-352; Roberto Rusconi, ed., *Il movimento religioso femminile in Umbria nei secoli XIII-XIV*, Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1984; Papi, 'Mendicant Friars and Female Pinzochere', pp.84-103; Coakley, 'Friars as Confidants', 222-46; idem, 'Gender and the Authority of Friars', 445-60. The bibliography for the relations between the male and female Franciscan orders in the thirteenth century is much more extensive: Patricia Ranft, 'An Overturned Victory: Clare of Assisi and the Thirteenth Church', *Journal of Medieval History*, 17 (1991), 123-134; Joan Mueller, *The Privilege of Poverty: Clare of Assisi, Agnes of Prague, and the Struggle for a Franciscan Rule for Women* Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006; Joan Mueller, 'Female Mendicancy: A Failed Experiment? The Case of Saint Clare of Assisi', in *Medieval Religious Mendicancies*, pp. 59-84, at p.81; Leslie S. Knox, *Creating Clare of Assisi: Female Franciscan Identities in Later Medieval Italy*, Leiden: Brill, 2008; Bert Roest, *Order and Disorder: The Poor Clares between Foundation and Reform*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, esp. pp.37-74.

<sup>77</sup> During the Generalship of John of Wildeshausen (1241-52), the order sought to cut all ties with the female orders, due to the way that the *cura monialium* was seen to distract from preaching and contemplation. However, Institutional and economic support for women's houses was secured under his successor, Humbert of Romans' administrative reorganisation of women's houses in 1257. For the narrative: Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, pp.106-07, 124-130.

<sup>78</sup> For humility in monastic life: Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, pp32-33. The continuity that exists between many of the monastic and mendicant ascetic practices and intentions, and much of the linguistic and discursive frameworks in which they existed, was enabled by the sustained interest that texts such as Cassian's



persistent use of harsh ascetic practices in the canonisation process, a theme that was taken up in the *Nine Ways of Prayer*:

Rising up from the ground, he used to take the discipline with an iron chain, saying, “your discipline has set me straight towards my goal.” This is why the whole order determined that all the brethren, out of respect for the memory of St. Dominic’s example, should take the discipline on their bare backs with sticks of wood every ferial day after Compline, saying the *Miserere* or the *De Profundis*. They were to do this either for their own sins or for those of others whose gifts supported them. So no one, however innocent, should withdraw himself from following this holy example.<sup>79</sup>

This passage establishes the performance of ascetic acts as a regular and routine part of Dominican devotional life. The reference to ‘my goal’ alludes to asceticism’s place in the achievement of mystical contemplation, confirming Nathan Jennings’s conclusion that ‘[t]he point of Christian asceticism [...] is that Christian practice and Christian intellectual thought [...] exist only to serve one ultimate goal which they may not themselves *put into practice*, but only *receive as a gift* – the contemplation of God.’<sup>80</sup> Discipline in this context is not an exemplary or privileged behaviour of a would-be saint, but something that is to be undertaken by every member of the order as part of their spiritual and devotional purpose and the service that they performed in society. Accordingly, within the Dominican tradition the performance of ascetic behaviours related to the access and reception of the divine and its gifts, as well as to the negotiation of charismatic (individual) and institutional (corporate) forms of authority.

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Conferences of the Desert Fathers received in the transition from a monastic to mendicant lifestyle. Jordan makes a special note of Dominic’s devotion to this work and writes that it was through the examples of the desert Fathers that Dominic developed his own ideas and ideals of spiritual perfection: Jordan, *Lib.*, 13, p.32. For the centrality of the model of the desert fathers to the responses to the ‘crisis’ in traditional monasticism in the eleventh century: Melville, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp.89-124. For the importance of the desert fathers to Dominican devotional life see the works reference in p.71, n.29 of this thesis..

<sup>79</sup> Translated by Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.96. ‘Ista de causa recipiebat surgens de terra de cathena ferrea disciplinam dicens, Disciplina tua correxit me in finem. Unde et totus ordo statuit quod omnes fratres memoriam exempli sancti Dominici venerantes et dicentes, Miserere mei deus etc. sive De profundis etc. reciperent omnibus profestis diebus post completorium de virgulis ligneis super dorso nudo disciplinam, sive pro suis culpis propriis sive pro alienis, quorum de elemosinis vivunt. Unde ab hoc sancto exemplo nullus quantumcumque innocens debet se subtrahere. Cuius exempli figura talis est’, *Nine Ways*, p.84. Compare with: Brother John of Spain’s testimony in, *Acta Canon.*, 25, pp. 142-43, and Brother Rudolph of Feanza, 31, pp.148-51.

<sup>80</sup> Nathan Jennings, *Theology as Ascetic Act: Disciplining Christian Discourse*, New York: Peter Lang, 2010, p.2.

In women's devotion, ascetic practices were conceived of in much the same way as the friars. The nuns of Unterlinden undertook bodily deprivations and tortures communally as part of their saving works:

In Advent and Lent, all the sisters, coming into the chapter house after Matins, or in some other suitable place, hack at themselves cruelly, hostilely lacerating their bodies until the blood flows, with all kinds of whips, so that the sound reverberates all over the monastery and sweeter than all melody rises to the ears of the Lord of hosts, to whom such works of humility and devotion are very pleasing, nor does he despise the groans of contrition. In turn, longing of divine love inflamed by these acts, they often spent the night before Matins eagerly in prayer...<sup>81</sup>

The communal and prescribed nature of the nuns' performance illustrates that ascetic practices were undertaken with specific intent and desired outcomes.<sup>82</sup> They were performed as an offering to God, preparing them for contemplative experience. The ascetic acts described in the Unterlinden sister-book were not perceived as an aberration of or indeed a distraction from religious life. They were framed as a pivotal way to effect communion with the divine.<sup>83</sup> For enclosed women such as the Sisters of Unterlinden, bodily mortifications were conceived of as good works, as they sought to supplant the suffering of those in purgatory with their own. Not allowed personal contact or engagement with the poor, penances could be conceived of in much the same way as charity. As testified by a fellow nun, Sister Agnes of Ochsenstein (d.1307) 'wore down and punished her innocent body most aggressively with vigils and fasts, constant prayers, and with no end of other such good works.'<sup>84</sup> Embedded in the performance of harsh disciplines was the notion that their 'good

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<sup>81</sup> J. Ancelet-Hustache, ed., 'Les "Vitae Sororum" D'Unterlinden', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 5, 1930, pp.335-509, at pp.340-42: 'In adventu Domini et per omne tempus quadragesime universe sorores post matutinas in capitulum divertentes, sive ad loca alia oportuna diversis flagellorum gneribus corpus suum usque ad sanguinis effusionem lacerantes crudelissime et hostiliter ceciderunt, ita quod sonitus verberantium se ubique per omne monasterium resonaret, ascendens in aures Domini Sabaoth suavior omni melodia, cui talia humilitatis et deucionis opera multum placent, nec despicit gemitus contritorum. Porro quedam ex eis, desiderio divini amoris succense, vehementer in oratione ante matutinas sepius pernoctabant, assistentes tamen matutinarum sollempniis alacriter et devote.'

<sup>82</sup> See examples discussed Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls*, pp.124-135.

<sup>83</sup> See, for example, the *Vita* of sister Agnes of Ochsenstein of Unterlinden, XI, pp.354-59; Jordan, *Epist.*, XXII, pp.25-26. For analysis: Lewis, *By Women*, esp. pp.128-75. See also, Muessig, 'Performance of the Passion'.

<sup>84</sup> Translated by Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.418.

works' had a social as well as spiritual purpose.<sup>85</sup> Their suffering, like that of Christ, ensured their own salvation as well as that of others.

The marks of penitential practices on the body had long been held as a sign of charismatic authority. Inspired by the same texts as the friars, women associated with the Dominican order sought to undertake ascetic acts as both an offering to God and a way to make themselves worthy for mystical contemplative experience. For instance, Raymond of Capua in his life of St Catherine writes:

[Catherine] confessed humbly to me, in my exceeding unworthiness, that she had learned, not from books or human teachers but from an infusion of the Holy Spirit, the life of the Desert Fathers of Egypt, and practiced in secret their customs and deeds, as well as those of the Saints and principally Blessed Dominic: her mind completely clung to the desire to imitate their life and acts, that she could not think of anything else. Many changes were wrought in the holy girl, which provoked admiration in all who discerned them. She sought hiding places, and secretly flagellated her small body with a cord [...] Many girls of a similar age were excited by her example, they flocked around her, eager to hear her saving words, and to imitate in some small measure her holy works. They came together in secret place away from the house, and with her, flagellated themselves, and repeating the Dominican prayer and Ave Maria, as many times as she instructed: all of which were but a presage of the future.<sup>86</sup>

As master general of the order and as the main proponent of Catherine's canonisation, Raymond's intentions in this extract are varied. He establishes her sanctity in her childhood, revealing (and portending) the way that her spiritual knowledge had divine origins.<sup>87</sup> He

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<sup>85</sup> See Bynum's discussion of this aspect of Catherine of Siena's spirituality: *Holy Feast*, pp.171-180.

<sup>86</sup> *Vita S. Catherinae*, I, Cap. I, p.870: 'Prout enim mihi nimis indigno ipsa humiliter est confessa, in secreto illo tempore vitam et mores sanctorum Patrum Ægyptiorum, necnon et gesta quorundam Sanctorum et potissime B. Dominici, nullo tradente hominum nulla praecedente lectione, sola sancti Spiritus infusione, didicit et cognovit: tantusque menti eius ardor inhaesera, imitandi vitam eorum et actus, quod nihil aliud poterat cogitare. Hinc provenire in sacra puella quamplurimae novitates, quae cunctos cernentes in admirationem ducebant. Quaerebat enim latibula; et secrete quadam chordula suum corpusculum flagellabat [...] Hec exemplo quamplures puellae eius coaetanae motae, ad ipsam congregabantur, audire gestientes salutifera verba eius, et iuxta suum modulum imitari sancta opera eius: unde et factum est, quod omnes illae cum ea in quodam domus eius loco secrete adunabantur, et cum ea pariter se flagellabant, ac iuxta mensuram per ipsam impositam, orationem Dominicam ac salutationem Angelicam repetebant: quae omnia, ut infra patebit erant praesagia futurorum.'

<sup>87</sup> Even Catherine's spirituality was not without suspicion as, at one point she appeared before the Chapter General to answer questions regarding her spirituality and ascetic practices: *Vita S. Cathrinae*, III, Cap. I, pp.944-45. See also: Mews, 'Thomas Aquinas and Catherine of Siena', p.241.

authorises Catherine's corporeal spirituality by acknowledging their privileged confessional relationship, of which he is equally a beneficiary.<sup>88</sup>

Importantly, Raymond situates Catherine's authority not only in the revelatory gifts she received from the Holy Spirit, but in her ascetic acts, which as imitations of the Desert Fathers and Saint Dominic, were embedded in the narratives of Dominican sanctity and devotion. She is a holder of charismatic authority in the way that she follows those, who follow Christ, and through this manner attracts followers, who not only seek to imitate her deeds but to hear her words and obey her directives. It is important to recognise, however, that the meanings that Raymond attributes to Catherine's ascetic activities are made in the context of her canonisation. In death, her acts were entirely controllable and were more susceptible to projection, so they could be shaped to suit the order's institutional needs and expectations. Nevertheless, the extract reveals the way that asceticism could be interpreted as a form of charismatic authority that was interpreted and depicted in a manner similar to the poverty of the friars. Whereas Jordan had predicated the friars' relationship with Christ on an embodied engagement with his poverty, for women, who were mainly denied access to preaching and forms of economic renunciation, harsh ascetic acts effectively provided a means through which they could replicate Christ's poverty on the Cross.

The fusion of poverty with Christ's death on the cross had become gradually connected with Franciscan spirituality from the mid-thirteenth century. One of the earliest texts to make this connection, the *sacrum commercium* states: 'You [Lady Poverty] did not abandon him even to death, death on a cross. And on that cross, his body stripped, his arms outstretched, his hands and feet pierced, you suffered with him, so that nothing would appear more glorious in him than you'.<sup>89</sup> These themes often found their most virulent expression in women connected to the Franciscan and Dominican orders.<sup>90</sup> In this context, the *Vita* of the Dominican tertiary Benvenuta Bojani (d.1292) states that 'she began fasting, vigils and other afflictions to debilitate her nature since she always wished to suffer something on her flesh

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<sup>88</sup> Bynum argues that the success of the Saint and their confessor was intimately connected: *Holy Feast*, p.23.

<sup>89</sup> Translated in *FOAED*:1, p.536

<sup>90</sup> See, in particular, Muessig, 'Performance of the Passion', pp.129-142.

for Christ, who had suffered such punishment for her, and to always carry around the death of Christ in her own body.’<sup>91</sup>

While a certain level of penance was expected of the friars, the excess with which women were seen to perform their ascetic acts became problematic for their male confessors and spiritual directors. These problems were predicated on immediate concerns and questions vis-à-vis how to integrate into the order a women’s religious movement that was equally inspired by the *vita apostolica* but was hamstrung by women’s perceived ‘institutional and ideological disabilities’ to borrow a phrase from Daniel Bornstein.<sup>92</sup> At the same time, they fed into more general anxieties regarding the role of the body in the construction and expression of religious authority that was based on an imitation of Christ. Of the fifty extant letters written by Jordan of Saxony to Diana and the Dominican nuns of Saint Agnes in Bologna, thirteen warn against their excessive practices: ‘Many times I have warned you in person and by letter, to very carefully avoid indiscrete excess in your penitential works. For that reason having received so many of these reprimands, if any among you still acts incautiously, she would be even more guilty of carelessness.’<sup>93</sup> The themes of discretion, caution and moderation articulated here permeate the letters Jordan wrote to the sisters and replicate well-worn tropes, which present female devotion as excessive and imprudent.<sup>94</sup> The excesses do not only pertain to their ascetic acts. Tears, fasting, vigils all come under Jordan’s

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<sup>91</sup> ‘Vita Benvenuta de Bojanis’, in *Acta Sanctorum*, Oct. 13, 1883, pp.145-85, at p.153: ‘Coepit jejuniis et vigiliis et aliis afflictionibus suam debilitare naturam quia semper volebat in carne sua propter Christum aliquid pati, tantam poenam pro ea erat passus, et semper Christi mortificationem in suo corpore circumferre.’

<sup>92</sup> Daniel Bornstein, ‘Women and Religion in Late Medieval Italy: History and Historiography’, in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Daniel Bornstein and Robert Rusconi, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp.1-27, at p.1. Most modern studies on the women’s religious movement begin from Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, esp. pp.89-137. See also: Elm, ‘The Status of Women in Religious Life and Heresy in the Era of St. Elizabeth’, in *Religious Life*, pp.220-249; Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Wordly Saints*, pp.26-55. For Dominicans nuns specifically: Julie Ann Smith, ‘An Apostolic Vocation: The Formation of the Religious Life for the Dominican Sisters in the Thirteenth Century’, *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality*, 47, 2011, 4-33.

<sup>93</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, XVI, p. 19: ‘Pluries vos super isto et praesens verbo et absens scripto admonui, ut indiscretam laborum nimietatem sollicite vitaretis. Ideoque toties huiusmodi admonitione recepta, si quae iam circa se incauta exstiterit, ad amplioem se neglegentiam obligat.’

<sup>94</sup> Compare with Abbot Suger’s description of women’s excesses on feast days in: ‘Libellus alter de consecratione ecclesiae Sancti Dionysii’, in *Abbot Suger: On the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. by Erwin Panofsky, Second Edn., Princeton: Princeton University Press, II, pp. 86-89.

scrutiny, emphasizing the need for the constant vigilance of the spiritual director to police the women's activities.<sup>95</sup>

Fundamentally at stake, Jordan indicates in one letter, are the appropriate relationships between the nun, Christ and the spiritual director:

The friend of your spouse speaks very different words to those that proceed from the mouth of the spouse himself. You, beloved daughters, have heard the sweet murmur of your spouse himself and you rejoice with happiness at his voice therefore it is insufficient what I write to you, even as I seem to be your spouse's friend, I am even less than that.<sup>96</sup>

Acknowledging the women's privileged relationship to Christ, Jordan works through questions over his own role in relation to the Bride of Christ and her Groom. Importantly, he aims to (humbly) establish an authoritative place in the relationship through the marriage metaphor by assuming the role of the *paranymph*, the person who effectively mediates the relationship, lest the nun presume to interpret Christ's messages independently. As he continues,

Nevertheless, I, who hold the duty of being friend of your spouse, who is appointed your paranymph by him, who is jealous with the jealousy of God, who has betrothed you to Christ to live chastely for him alone, I exhort you, I repeat, exhort you, to be worthy of his embrace, adorning the bridal chamber of your hearts to receive Christ the King [...] and sprinkling flowers on his bed [...] These flowers are virtues: humility is a good flower, patience is good, kindness is good, modesty is good, as are any similar virtues. Greater than these, however, is charity [...] Therefore, my most loving daughters in Christ, dedicate yourselves to acquire these virtues, since these pieties are beneficial for everything, whereas corporal exercises are not.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, 18, pp.22-23.

<sup>96</sup> Jordan, *Epist.*, XI, p.13: 'Dissimilia nimis ad invicem sunt verba, quae amicus sponsi loquitur et ea, quae ab ipsius sponsi ore prodeunt. Vos, filiae dilectae, ipsius sponsi vestri suavam audistis susurrum et gaudio gaudetis propter vocem eius ideoque parum est, quod vobis scribo ego, qui amicus sponsi, etsi minus sim, videor tamen esse.'

<sup>97</sup> Ibid: 'Suadeo tamen ego qui amici sponsis gero officium, qui ipso committente paranymphus vester sum, qui vos aemulor Dei aemulatione, qui vos despondi uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo, suadeo, inquam, ego ut dignas vos exhibeatis eius amplexibus, adornantes thalamum cordis vestri ad suscipiendum Christum regnes [...] sternentes ei lectulum floridum [...] Flores autem virtutes erunt. Bonus flos humilitas, bonus patientia, bonus oboedentia, bonus benignitas, bonus modestia, aut si quid simile est virtutis. Melior autem horum est caritas [...] Ideoque, amantissimae mihi in Christo filiae, virtutes vobis studete acquirere, quia haec pietas, quae ad omnia valet, corporalis autem exercitatio non ita.'

Through the marriage metaphor Jordan clearly delineates the boundaries of the network of dependent relationships that exist between the nuns, the friars and Christ. In assuming the role of the *paranymph*, Jordan not only acts as friend of the Groom and conducts the Bride to the wedding, but as he states is responsible for the betrothal itself.<sup>98</sup> The nuns are consequently limited in their agency to structure their relationship to Christ and dependent on their affiliation with the order to authorise the union. At the same time, however, the role that he creates for the nuns is privileged in their intimacy to Christ. By the fact of their gender and their effective death to the world, women achieved a somewhat honoured relationship to and with Christ that the friar with his activity in the world could not replicate.<sup>99</sup> In this and other letters, Jordan establishes the women's role as complementary but distinct from the friars. The order enables and directs their relationship to Christ to ameliorate their perceived spiritual deficiencies and to use their privileged relationship Christ to pray for the benefit of the order and its work in the world.<sup>100</sup>

The letter concludes by reiterating his warnings to not transgress the boundaries which secure their relationship to Christ<sup>101</sup> and, in doing so, articulates a spiritual framework that attempts to shift asceticism from the centre of the nuns' devotional and spiritual identity to the periphery:

For as I often warned and will warn you: it is easy to exceed due measure in vigils, in fasting, in tears too. Virtue, however, can never grow too much. I have confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ that you overflow in these, but I exhort you, nevertheless, to overflow in them more. There is nothing in this life perfected, that it cannot be made more perfect, until we reach that place, where deficiency finds no space, where each of us will be filled with such perfection

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<sup>98</sup> For a discussion of the roles of the paranymph in relation to its implication in John 3:29-30, George Townsend, *The New Testament, arranged in Chronological and Historical order with copious notes*, 2 vols., London: C and J Rivington, 1825, I, p.132.

<sup>99</sup> *Epist.* 25, p.29, references the nun's 'death to the world'. Jordan varies between a minimising tone (*Epist.* 27, pp.31-31) and one of reverence (*Epist.* 1, pp.3-4; 24, pp.28-29) in relation to Christ and the order.

<sup>100</sup> *Epist.* 11, pp.13-14; 12, pp.14-15; 46, pp.52; 51, pp.59-60.

<sup>101</sup> *Epist.* 18, p.93, reiterates the message: 'timeo, ne indiscrete vestra corpora affligatis, et [...] impediimini in via Domini.'

that he does not need anything more, since no privation can enter in where God will be most abundantly sufficient.<sup>102</sup>

Taken together with the letters which explicitly pertained to poverty discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, the process through which the framework arrives at a state of being, which is discursively linked to spiritual poverty through Jordan's choice of vocabulary and metaphor, was framed as a divine grace, a gift of God. The spiritual framework that Jordan articulates with its references to filling and nothingness offers a signal of the neo-platonic and Dionysian vocabulary that would form an integral component of Albert the Great's theologies and indeed Eckhart and Suso's use of the concept of *gelassenheit*. The warnings against 'bodily exercises' and the way that the letter concludes in spiritual poverty indicates that Jordan saw the role of the nuns as wholly passive and receptive. This was important to his personal vision of a high-functioning, well-organized religious order, as well as to the broader issues confronting the Church regarding what to do with women who were equally inspired to adopt the *vita apostolica* as men.

Jordan's attempts to minimise the place of asceticism in the achieving of the perfect union with God, where all external needs and wants disappear, are a product of a variety of long and short-term concerns related not only to broader notions of women and religious authority, but also to the integration of the *cura monialium* into the Dominican way of life. Deeply entrenched notions of women as lacking discernment and moderation, borne out in their excessive practices and failure to adhere to Jordan's warnings, informed the paternalistic dialogue between the spiritual director and the religious women.<sup>103</sup> Defending the Dominicans practice of strict enclosure and the rigid application of proper roles for women, Humbert of Romans commented that because women's 'feet are prone to useless gadding about, their eyes prone to inquisitive prying, their ears to idle gossip', enclosure

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<sup>102</sup> *Epist.* 11, p.14: 'Nam sicut saepe vos monui et monebo: in vigiliis et abstinentiis, in lacrimis quoque facile modus exceditur. Virtus autem nimis excrescere numquam potest. Confido autem in Domino Iesu Christo, quia in omnibus abundatis, sed exhortor tamen, ut abundetis magis. Nempe nihil adeo in vita ista perficitur, quod fieri non possit perfectius, quousque illuc perveniamus, ubi nihil ex his, quae deficiunt, locum habent, ubi tanta perfectione quisque nostrum replebitur, quod ampliore non egeat, quia nulla ibi egestas intrabit, ubi sufficientia abundantissima omnium Deus erit.'

<sup>103</sup> Discernment had been established as a divine grace in the Second Conference of Abba Moses in Cassian's *Conferences: John Cassian: The Conferences*, transl. by Boniface Ramsey, O.P., New York: Paulist Press, 1997, pp.77-112, at pp.83-84. On the misogyny of the desert fathers, Tinsley, *Scourge*, pp.95-98.



protected them 'from gadding about outside and from having too many visitors inside, and from seeing and being seen, hearing and being heard, giving and receiving presents, touching and being touched.'<sup>104</sup> In the *Opus Tripartitum*, which he prepared for presentation at the Second Council of Lyon (1274), he specifically called attention to the risks and dangers that itinerant 'religious' women pursuing a life of poverty posed for the Church.<sup>105</sup>

During the thirteenth century, the un-enclosed, informal Beguines communities caused significant consternation for the Church due to the way that they were seen to appropriate masculine forms of authority such as preaching and teaching.<sup>106</sup> Women were certainly inspired by the same texts, articles of scripture, and exemplars as men. The widespread circulation of stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, the Saints and Martyrs provided ample fodder for the performance of harsh self-injurious practices as a form of *imitatio Christi*. For women, who, by the very nature of their gender and their perceived inferiority, were unable to perform or enact an *imitatio Christi* through the rejection of economic and political power, the affliction of their bodies was a traditional way to imitate and access Christ while claustrated. Indeed, the continued rejection of Jordan's advice surrounding ascetic practices provides evidence of a deep-seated, pre-existing culture of asceticism underpinning the women's religious movement that was orientated towards union with Christ. In one of the singular occasions where a whisper of Diana's voice can be heard, Jordan urges her to not hasten her 'longing to be dissolved and to be with Christ' with 'immoderate devotion or inordinate corporal discipline'.<sup>107</sup> In other words he advises that it is a longing to be kept (passively) in the heart and not facilitated by intentional activity as God chooses the ways and

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<sup>104</sup> Sermon to Sisters in the Care of the Order of Preachers', translated by, Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, p.329.

<sup>105</sup> *Opus Tripartitum*, III 3, p. 224: 'Iterum sunt quaedam mulieres religiosae pauperes, quae occasione quaerendi necessaria discurrunt per villas et castra: quod est valde indecens, et etiam periculosum in mulieribus. Unde videtur expediens, quod nulla religio mulierum fieret nisi haberet unde quoquo modo posset sustentari in domo sine huiusmodi discursu.' The order had attempted to address these concerns in 1229 during Jordan's generalship when they instituted constitutions that restricted friars from receiving a vow of chastity from women outside the order or allowing them to receive the habit or tonsure, *Epist.*, XLVIII, p.54. Jordan also notes the *Diffinitors* instituted a constitution regarding women at the General Chapter at Paris 1232, which he rescinded immediately as it would have been detrimental to Saint Agnes: *Epist.*, XLVII, p.53.

<sup>106</sup> Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp.118-136.

<sup>107</sup> *Epist.*, XXIII, p.27: Scripsisti mihi, quod adhuc [...] cupis dissolvi et esse cum Christo. Volo quidem, ut hoc ex intimo corde desideres, sed nolo, quod immoderata compunctione vel inordinatio corporis labore ad hoc festines [...] Et ille benedictus Deus sic dignetur nos trahere post se, ut suavis et iucundius possimus currere in odorem unguentorum suorum. Et ipse utique in voluntate sua deducet nos et cum gloria suscipiet nos et apparebimus cum ipso in gloria'.

means of devotion. In Jordan's words, there is an implicit juxtaposition between the itinerant, active *imitatio Christi* that was based on an embodied participation with the poverty that he 'used' during his incarnation, with the wholly passive, receptive model he proposes for the women.

Reading between the lines of Jordan's repeated warnings to the nuns at Saint Agnes, it is evident that asceticism was viewed as fundamental to their 'mystical' experiences and this was the reason why the friars encountered so much resistance to their efforts to contain and delimit female ascetic spirituality. It required three different visionary visitations by Saint Dominic for Benvenuta Bojani to finally stop with her harsh ascetic practices and tell her confessor.<sup>108</sup> Despite the privileged space that holy women sometimes came to occupy, the articulation of their experiences was always constrained by clerical, masculine mechanisms.<sup>109</sup> In the writing of hagiographies of female saints, the male author is solely responsible for attributing meaning to her practices, as the case of Catherine of Siena cited earlier demonstrated. Once female ascetics started writing for themselves and created ways to generate and express meaning in vernacular devotional literatures, their activities became increasingly uncontrollable in the eyes of the male clergy.<sup>110</sup> Beyond the strict textual and confessional controls of male spiritual directors, the performance and narration of imitable self-injurious practices could indeed be interpreted as the attempt to claim an independent authority. Notably, when Suso found out that Elsbeth Stagel had secretly written down all of their conversation, his comments regarding 'the spiritual theft' suggest that his consequent burning of the material had more to do with the fact she had done so on her own authority than the memorialisation of his spiritual journey itself.<sup>111</sup> Male confessors and spiritual guides went to significant effort to try to control, with varying degrees of success, not only the

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<sup>108</sup> *Vita Benvenuta*, p.153.

<sup>109</sup> See also: Petroff, *Body and Soul*, pp.139-60; Ulrike Weithaus, 'Thieves and Carnivals: Gender in German Dominican Literature of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in *The Vernacular Spirit*, ed. by R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, N. Warren, D Robertson, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.209-318.

<sup>110</sup> Weithaus notes that the vernacular writings of medieval Dominican nuns grew as a consequence of the itinerancy of the friars and the difficulties in personal visitations. The proliferation of women's monasteries from the fourteenth-century, particularly in Germanic territories which she argues outnumbered male house two to one, exasperated the problem and stimulated the writing of letters in the vernacular: 'Once the itinerant preachers encouraged women to write to maintain their pastoral relationships, however, women's literary production took on a life of its own and became difficult to control', *Thieves and Carnivals*, pp.210-211.

<sup>111</sup> *Life*, p.63; *Leben*, pp.7-8. See the discussion by Wiethaus, *Thieves and Carnivals*, pp.220-222.

practices on which women's spiritual authority was constructed and negotiated but also the narratives they attempted to create.

Attempts to manipulate and impose controls on women's ascetic behaviors are revealed not only as the embodiment of tensions over access to the divine and the appropriate role for women to assume (or to be given) in relation to Christ and the order. But more fundamentally, they are suggestive of important questions being asked regarding the place of the (female) body in the negotiation of charismatic authority and the relationships between exemplars and imitators that would characterise Suso's *Leben* one hundred years later.<sup>112</sup> Jordan's letters provide important context regarding the use of controlling, paternalistic vocabularies and strategies in Suso's *Leben*. Equally, they establish the underlying concerns and pressures which enabled discourses of poverty to become not only uniquely fused in and with the performance of harsh ascetic practices in the way of the Cross but also masculinised in Suso's hands. While Jordan's warnings over the excessive application of penances does not seem overtly gendered in the sense that he viewed ascetic practices as a predominantly masculine activity, the way that he pushed women towards a passive, receptive relationship to Christ, as the concluding section of this chapter explores, effectively initiated a process whereby asceticism, and by association poverty, could be gendered masculine.

### Gendering and Ungendering Poverty

The devotional world of a Dominican friar had changed significantly in the one hundred years that lay between Jordan's death and the compilation of the *Exemplar*. While religious still strived to reconcile their ministry with a vastly changing social and economic milieu, the radicalism of voluntary poverty had been blunted in the process of institutionalisation and its associated struggles. It seems that Henry Suso, for instance, inhabited only two convents during his career and while the *Leben* verifies certain preaching performance and other pastoral activities in the near-by vicinities of the convents, there is no evidence to suggest that he was required either by circumstance or intent to demonstrate a material poverty. Other than the decade-long anxiety he felt at the donation his family made to secure his

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<sup>112</sup> *Epist.* 39, p.15: 'temetipsam primo prudenter custodias, ne vel languente spiritu vel deficiente corpore tollas corpori tuo boni operis effectum, spiritui affectum, proximo exemplum, honorem Deo et cetera, quae ex indiscretionis vitio mala solent occurrere. Experiaris quandoque idipsum quoque. Circa alias cautissimam te et providam esse volo, nam ut saepe vos monui, exercitatio corporalis ad modicum est utilis.'

entrance to the Dominican Order, Suso engaged with poverty on a mainly discursive level in the relationships he sought to forge with Christ. The way of the cross combined metaphor and metonymic devices that were fused with ascetic practices to express and connect with poverty in its teleological advancement towards true poverty. I propose that his involvement in the *cura monialium* was integral to the way that he formulated his response to the difficulties he faced in participating in Christ's suffering humanity at a conceptual and performative level. This was mainly with regard to the ascetic practices that he appropriated in the performance of Christ's poverty.

As well as using ascetic practices to imitate Christ's experiences on the cross and to enact the total denudation of self and external care that his death entailed, Suso undertook a complex gendering and ungendering of the vocabulary and allegorical concepts that he used to describe and facilitate his spiritual journey. Modern analyses of Suso's *Leben* inevitably lead scholars to the discussion of gender and its relationship to spiritual development and perfection.<sup>113</sup> The creation of a special role for the 'spiritual daughter' would seem to indicate that the text was indeed designed to carve out a privileged space for the devotional experiences of its female audience. Suso undertakes a demonstrable gender-blurring in his narration of the mystical experiences with Christ, in the guise of eternal Wisdom. At points, he uses language to feminise himself, and at others, it is Christ who is the bride to his groom.<sup>114</sup> Suso's reference, or perhaps exploitation, of the feminine has been subject to intense historical speculation. In some circles, he is considered to be a misogynist who, as Wiethaus claims, 'used the vernacular to discipline and contain women under his pastoral care and to demarcate female spirituality as inferior to his own.'<sup>115</sup> In others, his use of the

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<sup>113</sup> Tinsley, *Scourge*, pp.118-19; Carolyn Diskant Muir, 'Bride or Bridegroom? Masculine Identity in Mystic Marriages', in *Holiness and Masculinity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by P.H Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2004, pp.58-78; Meri Heinonen, 'Henry Suso and the Divine Knighthood', in *Holiness and Masculinity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by P.H Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2004, pp.79-92; Wiethaus, 'Thieves and Carnivals', pp.218-22.

<sup>114</sup> *Leben*, III, pp.11-15; *Buchlein*, V, pp.211-216; *Horologium*, ed. by Pius Künzle, Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1997, II.7, pp.590-91.

<sup>115</sup> Wiethaus, *Thieves and Carnivals*, p.226. Tinsley writes that 'the Vita appears to become a misogynist treatise in which Suso prescribes unequal paths for male and female mendicants in matters of auctoritas, conversion, suffering, discernment, and revelation', *Scourge*, p.120. See also: Heinonen, *Divine Knighthood*, p.81.

feminine, particularly in relation to the figure of eternal, is considered more positively as a reflection of his inherent affectivity.<sup>116</sup>

The mystical relationship of Henry Suso to eternal Wisdom is one of the more unusual of the late-medieval period, particularly for the shifting and ambiguous genders of both Suso and eternal Wisdom. The relationship is a major component in the collection of his vernacular works that he included in the *Exemplar*. The relationship forms part of the *Leben* and constitutes the focus of the *Little Book of Eternal Wisdom* or *Büchlein*. Suso also revised and developed the content of the *Büchlein*, in the Latin text the *Horologium Sapientiae*.<sup>117</sup> The present discussion is mainly focussed on the way that Suso expresses the relationship in the *Leben* and the impact this had on the meaning of poverty in the text. Certain elements of the gendering of eternal Wisdom and Suso himself that take place in the other two works offer further insight into the way that he appropriated feminine vocabularies and metaphors in order to negotiate his charismatic authority in a devotional culture in which the conception of poverty was shifting. In the *Leben*, Suso's relationship with eternal Wisdom is shared toward the beginning of the narrative, providing the impetus for his spiritual journey.<sup>118</sup> In the beginning, eternal Wisdom is gendered female: 'eternal Wisdom presented itself in sacred scripture as lovable as an agreeable beloved who gets herself up in finery to please male inclinations, speaking softly, as a woman does, so that she might attract all hearts to her.'<sup>119</sup> Embodied in Scripture, the female gendering of eternal Wisdom, with its connotations of beauty, joy and agreeability might be thought of as a Dominican version of Francis's Lady Poverty.<sup>120</sup> The main difference is that whereas Lady Poverty personifies one of the most

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<sup>116</sup> Bynum, *Holy Fast*, pp.102-03. See also Barbara Newman, 'Some mediaeval theologians and the *Sophia* tradition, *Downside Review*, 108, 1990, 111-30, at p.122; Muir, 'Bride or Bridegroom', pp.58-78.

<sup>117</sup> See Tobin, 'Introduction', pp.32-36. For an extensive discussion of Eternal Wisdom across the three texts: Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, pp. 190-244.

<sup>118</sup> *Life*, 3, pp.67-70; *Leben*, pp.11-15.

<sup>119</sup> *Life*, 3, p.67; *Leben*, pp.11-12: 'Nu erbütet sich dú ewig wisheit in der heiligen scrift als minneklich als ein lûtselígu minnerin, dú sich finlich uf machet, dar umb daz si menlich wol gevalle, und redet zartlich in fröwlichem bilde, daz si ellú hersen gen ir geneigen muge.'

<sup>120</sup> Newman, *God and Goddesses*, p.210. For Lady Poverty: Brufani, ed., *Sacrum Commercium*; translated in *FOAED*:1, pp.529-554; Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, pp.3-9.

important characteristics of Christ's incarnation and is a decidedly Franciscan invention, eternal Wisdom or Sophia was identified with Christ from the outset of Christianity.<sup>121</sup>

In both the *Leben* and the *Büchlein*, Suso uses the language, metaphors and anagogic concepts of contemplation to structure and conceptualise his experiences, which are essentially described as a 'meditation, in the light of sacred Scripture'.<sup>122</sup> In the *Leben* he writes that 'whenever he heard songs of praise being recited or sung, it happened regularly that his heart and mind were suddenly transported by a detached gazing (*abgescheiden inblik*) at his most dearly beloved from whom all good flows.'<sup>123</sup> Suso's use of *abgescheidenheit* in this context pre-empts the use of *gelassenheit* in the narration of the way of the cross where he proceeded to undertake the prayer *gelassenlich*.<sup>124</sup> Yet, it also goes beyond his relatively practical use of *gelassenheit* in relation to the performance of the way of the cross to reflect more completely detachment's links with the 'annihilation' of self-will and reason in the mystical union with the divine.<sup>125</sup> The kind of 'self-naughting'<sup>126</sup> indicated here is one of the more common, if not the most fundamental ideas of Dominican mysticism in the fourteenth century. Employed in relation to eternal Wisdom, it reflects the way that the development of ideas of self-naughting, *abgescheidenheit* and *gelassenheit* were inextricably and reciprocally connected

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<sup>121</sup> 1 Cor. 1:24: 'Christ is God's power and God's wisdom'; Matt. 11:19: 'Yet the Human One came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved to be right by her works.' For Christ as Wisdom in the Christian Tradition: Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, pp.190-244; M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970; William Gray, 'Wisdom Christology in the New Testament: Its Scope and Relevance, *Theology*, 89, 1986, 448-49.

<sup>122</sup> *Büchlein*, p.197.

<sup>123</sup> *Life*, 3, p.69; *Leben*, p.15: 'Hie mite kom er in ein gewonheit, wenn er loblieder horte <singen oder sùzzú seitenspil erklingen oder von zitlichem lieb hort> sagen ald singen, so wart im sin herz und mût gewintlich in gefürt mit einem abgescheiden inblik in sin lieplichostes lieb, von dem alles liep flúset.'

<sup>124</sup> *Leben*, XIII, p.34.

<sup>125</sup> In *Von abgescheidenheit* Eckhart states: 'And the human being who exists thus in total Abgeschiedenheit is caught up into eternity in such a manner that nothing transient can move him, that he feels nothing that is bodily, and that he is counted as dead for the world, since nothing that is earthly delights him. This is what Saint Paul means, when he said: "I live and yot I do not live; Christ lives in me," ', Gal. 2:20. Translated by Gottschall, 'Eckhart's German Works', at p.182, note 173. Catherine of Siena reiterates the idea of the 'death' of the will in mystical union: *Dialogue*, p.166.

<sup>126</sup> Dreyer, 'Whose Story Is It?' p.168

to the shifting conception of poverty from an aspect of *imitatio Christi* to a description of the condition of the religious in the devotional culture of convent life.<sup>127</sup>

The narrative continues to employ affective, mystical language in describing the myriad ways in which Eternal Wisdom appeared to him:

And to the extent that he was able to imagine her through the explanatory examples of scripture with his inner eyes, she presented herself to him thus: She was suspended high above him on a throne of clouds. She shone as the morning star and dazzled as the glittering sun [...] She was distant yet near, far above yet low, present yet hidden [...] She towered above the summit of heaven and touched the bottom of the abyss. She spread herself out sovereign from one end of the earth to the other and ordered all things sweetly. The minute he thought her to be a beautiful young lady, he immediately found a proud young man before him.<sup>128</sup>

Suso's use of expansive, mystical language, and terms and concepts typically associated with Christ such as abyss and sovereignty over heaven and earth explicitly connects the figure of eternal Wisdom with Christ.<sup>129</sup> Supporting the identification and exhibiting a somewhat unusual concern with gender is the ambiguity of Wisdom's gender. Scholars such as Bynum and Muir note that Suso's affective use of language and the gender-bending that he undertakes in this and in other works align him more closely with the women mystics of the century than with his Dominican confreres.<sup>130</sup> The imposition and use of male – female dichotomies, however, are relatively unstable in relation to the influence exerted by the opposite sex on the mystic and in the mystic's own relationship with the divine across the entire period, although the gendering of mystical language and concepts does appear to have become more prominent with the advent of the mendicant orders.<sup>131</sup> The indiscriminate

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<sup>127</sup> See Woods, *Mysticism and Prophecy*, esp. pp.77-91.

<sup>128</sup> *Life*, 3, p.69; *Leben*, p.14: Und als verr er si in den usgeleitē bischaften der schrift mit den inren ogen gesehen mohte, do zogte si sich ime also: si swepte hoh ob ime in einem gewülkten throne, si luhte als der morgensterne und schein als dú spilndú sunne [...] Si waz verr und nahe. Hoh und nider, si waz gegenwürtig und doch verborgen [...] Si reichete úber daz obrest dez hōhsten himels und rúrte daz tiefst des abgrundes; si zerspreite sich von ende ze ende gewalteklīch und richte ellú ding us sússeklich. So er iez wande haben ein schún jungfrowen, geswind vand er einen stolzen jungherren.'

<sup>129</sup> *Leben*, VIII, p.26 and XLI, p.140 explicitly refer to Christ as eternal Wisdom; see also *Büchlein*, 2, p.204.

<sup>130</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp.102-05; Muir, 'Bride or Bridegroom', pp.58-78

<sup>131</sup> Bynum, "And Women His Humanity", esp. pp.151-56. Suso studied with Meister Eckhart and his writings greatly reveal the theologian's influence: H. Piesch, 'Seuses "Büchlein der Wahrheit" und Meister Eckhart' in *Heinrich Seuse. Studien zum 600 Todestag 1366-1966*, ed. by E. M. Filthaut, Köln, 1966, pp.91-133. For women's influence on Meister Eckhart's thought: Amy Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife: Mechthild of*

identification of the soul as female magnified the instabilities and ameliorated some of the problems that male religious had with regard to delineating their mystical relationship with Christ. Both Jordan's attempts to establish an authoritative role in the mystical marriages of the Dominican nuns and the way that Suso interchanges both his own gender and that of Christ in his various works suggests that gender was an issue for the Dominicans. Indeed, in undertaking a spiritual marriage with Christ in the guise of eternal Wisdom, Suso provided a solution for male mystics by providing an authoritative relationship with Christ that did not have, in Newman's words, 'the psychological complications involved in the man's having to assume the female role.'<sup>132</sup>

Towards the end of the chapter in which the experience of the marriage is narrated, Suso thinks to himself: 'O Lord, if I were married to a queen, my soul would boast of it. But, alas, you are now the empress of my heart and the bestower of all graces. In you I have riches enough, and power as much as I want. I no longer want anything the world offers.'<sup>133</sup> In this passage, eternal Wisdom, like Francis's Lady Poverty, presents as an embodiment of 'poverty'; but, in Dominican fashion, she is both a metaphor for heavenly wealth and power and poverty as the annihilation of anything created (including the will). Suso engages the theme of poverty as it relates to spiritual wealth, worldly detachment and indeed the 'self-naughting' that is intimated in his way of the cross, throughout the *Leben*. But whereas poverty generated a multitude of spiritual and religious transformations or 'fruits' in the spiritual framework offered by Jordan, in Suso's *Leben* poverty seems to only generate itself, or in fact the wholly spiritualised version of itself. In the concluding remarks, which are framed to answer Elsbeth Stagel's request for a summary of the main points and 'concrete' images to accompany them, Suso outlines the process whereby the spirit loses its 'creatureliness'. In doing so, he provides a manifesto of poverty's place in the attainment of spiritual perfection:

The first image is a liberating rejection of worldly pleasures and of sinful weaknesses, enabling one to turn toward God in earnest prayer with detachment and prudent virtuous exercises in

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*Magdeburg, Marguerite Porete and Meister Eckhart*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1995; Bernard McGinn, ed, *Meister Eckhart and the Beguine Mystics*, Continuum, New York, 1994.

<sup>132</sup> Newman, *God and the Goddesses*, p.209.

<sup>133</sup> *Life*, 3, p.70. *Leben*, p.15: „owe herr, weri mir nu ein kúnegin gemehelt, dez gasti sich min sele; owe, nu bist du mins berzen keisrin und aller gnaden geberin! In dir han ich richtmus gnûg, gewaltes als vil ich wil. Alles des, daz ertrich hat, wôlt ich nit me haben!”



order to make the body subject to the spirit. The second image is: to offer oneself freely and patiently to suffer the countless amounts of adversity as they might befall from God or creature. The third image is that one should form the suffering of Christ crucified within oneself, his sweet teachings, his gentle conduct, and his pure life, which he led as an example for us to follow, and thus through him press further within. Afterward, as exterior preoccupations disappear, one should sit in the stillness of one's spirit in vigorous detachment, as though one is dead to oneself, never leading oneself or being one's own goal, but having Christ alone and the honor and glory of the heavenly Father as one's goal.<sup>134</sup>

From the rejection of the world and its pleasures, to the imitation of union with Christ and finally to the 'true poverty' of detachment, the process that Suso describes is initiated and concluded in poverty in a way that brings many of the metaphors used within the Dominican Order's first one hundred and fifty years to their determined conclusion: seeing, knowing and experiencing Christ.

While the mystical process that Suso presents is essentially ungendered, the path that he has laid out in the pages of the *Leben* is structurally and discursively orientated to the exclusion of the female religious. The discussion of Suso's relationship with eternal Wisdom is placed strategically before the delineation of the way of the cross. In this sense, his various interactions with eternal Wisdom, in the guise of a woman, the male Christ and the baby Jesus led to the development of the way of the cross because of the way that contemplative ecstasy was essentially spoiling him. From the point at which the way of the cross is narrated, the tone of the *Leben* changes significantly. Suso employs increasingly masculine language and imagery to construct ascetic suffering as singularly masculine enterprise:

Hence we, the seasoned knights of the imperial Lord, do not turn cowardly; the noble followers of our respected leader, we take courage and are not unhappy to suffer. For if there were no other advantage or good thing in suffering except that we become much more like

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<sup>134</sup> *Life*, 53, p.202; *Leben*, p.192: 'Nim och nu eben wa, wie der widerfluss dez geistes nah bittlicher wise in rehter ordenhafti geschafen ist. Daz erst bilde ist ein lidiger vonker von der welt lústen und von súntlichen gebresten, sich vermúgentlich ze keren uf ze gote mit emzigem gebete, mit abgeschiedenheit und mit tugentlichen bescheiden úbungen, uf ein undertenig machen den lip dem geiste. Daz ander bild daz ist: sich willeklich und gedulteklich dar biten ze lidene die unzallichen mengi aller der widerwertikeit, so im von got ald von creatur mag zú gevallen. Daz drit bilde daz ist, daz er daz liden dez gekrúzgeten Cristus sol in sich bilden und sin sússen lere und senften wandel und luters leben, daz er úns vor trúg, im nah ze volgen, und also dur in fúrbas hin in trigen; dar na mit einem enpfallene dez ussern gewerbes sich sezzen in ein stillheit sins gemútes mit einer kreftigen gelassenheit, als ob der mensch im selber tod sie, sich selb niene ze fúren noh ze meinen, denn allein Christus und sins himelschen vaters lob und ere meinen'.

Christ, our fair shining model, it would be well worth it. One thing seems true to me: if after this life God wanted to reward equally those who had suffered and those who had not, then certainly we should still choose suffering just because it makes us like Christ.<sup>135</sup>

By appropriating ascetic performances usually employed by women in their *imitatio Christi* and by using masculine images of knighthood and the normative language of political power, Suso effectively attempts to exclude women from an active participation in the imitation of Christ. In the *Büchlein*, Christ tells Suso that:

No one can reach the heights of the divinity or unusual sweetness without first being drawn through the bitterness I experienced as a man. [...] My humanity is the path one takes; my suffering is the gate through which one must pass who will come to what you are seeking. And so, away with the faint-heartedness and enter with me the lists of knightly steadfastness. Indulgence is not fitting for the servant when the lord is practicing warlike boldness. I shall clothe you with my armour because all my suffering has to be endured by you as far as you are able.<sup>136</sup>

After describing the many tribulations that would occur to the Servant in taking the path of his suffering humanity, eternal Wisdom tells the Servant: 'After this you shall be led out with me along the desolate way of the cross, as you withdraw from your own willing, give up yourself and all creatures, and become as truly free of all creatures in the things that can interfere with your eternal salvation.'<sup>137</sup> Thus Suso's attempts to exclude women is not only with regard to the performance of ascetic acts as a way and a means of conformity and union

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<sup>135</sup> *Life*, p.128. *Leben*, pp.91-92: 'Hier umbe wir, dez keiserlichen herren frumen riter, erzagen nit, wir, dez wirdigen vorgengers edlen nahvolger gehalten úns wol und liden nit ungerne! Wan weri nit anders nuzzes noch gútes an lidene, wan allein, daz wir dem schönen klaren speigel Christus so vil dest glicher werden, es weri wol angeleit. Mich dunket eins in der warheit: ob joch got glichen lon wólti geben den lidenden und den nit lidenden nah disem lebene, gewerlich, wir sóltin dennoch den lidenden teil uf nemen allein durch der glichkeit willen'.

<sup>136</sup> *Büchlein*, 2, p.205: 'Es mag nieman kómen ze góttlicher hocheit noch ze ungewonlicher súzikeit, er werde denn vor gezogen dur daz bilde miner menschlichen bitterkeit [...] Min menscheit ist der weg, den man gat, min liden ist daz tor, durch daz man gan múz, der zú dem wil kómen, daz du da súchest. Dar umbe tú hin dines herzen kleinheit und trittte zú mir in den ring ritterlicher vestekeit, wan dem kneht gezimt nit wol zartheit, da der herre stat in stritberlicher kúnheit. Ich wil dir minú wafenkleit an legen, wan alles min liden múz von dir nah dinem vermugenne werden gelitten.'

<sup>137</sup> *Büchlein*, 2, p.205: 'Dar nach wirst du mit mir us gerfúret den ellenden krúzgang, so du dines eigennen willen us gest, und dich din selbs verzihest und aller kretur alls warlich ledig stast in dines dinges, die dich dines ewigen heiles mügen ierren'.

with Christ, but his use masculinising language encroaches on the spiritual authority required to reach contemplative experience.<sup>138</sup>

Debate still exists over the basic nature of the *Leben* as instructional or biographical and this has tended to polarise interpretations over the meaning and purpose of the gender inversions applied to the Servant and eternal Wisdom. Arguing against Carolyn Walker Bynum's assertion of Suso's essentially feminine spirituality and piety, Meri Heinonen allows that while some parts of the religious life were the same regardless of gender in theory, Suso's use of knightly imagery reveals that the practices derived from the broad principles of holiness were inherently different for men and women. Far from subverting gender norms in spirituality then, as a didactic text Heinonen sees Suso's *Leben* as maintaining traditional gender stereotypes due to his 'extensive use of the theme of knighthood'.<sup>139</sup> I would add to this that Suso effectively develops and magnifies strategies employed by Jordan of Saxony in the order's early efforts in the *cura monialium* to relegate women to a wholly passive and receptive role. Structurally and discursively, the only spiritual path that remains open to women in Suso's framework, is the patient suffering of God-given illness.<sup>140</sup>

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Across the three texts that delineate Suso's experiences with eternal Wisdom, I propose that he appropriates not only the gender of the women to whom he undertakes the *cura monialium* but also concepts of suffering and the performance of harsh ascetic practice that women had employed in pursuit of the *imitatio Christi* to exclude them from the normative contemplative and spiritual narrative. Whereas Jordan had seemed to manipulate the discursive connotations of poverty to include women, Suso inverted and appropriated the concepts and performances that women had utilised to purpose poverty within their own spiritual and devotional landscapes, to bring them under male control and influence. Women

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<sup>138</sup> The path that Suso took from mystical experiences with eternal Wisdom to the performance of the way of the cross invokes, in a way, Max Weber's framework of asceticism: '[a]sceticism becomes the object of methodical practices as soon as the ecstatic or contemplative union with God is transformed, from a state that only some individuals can achieve through their charismatic endowments, into a goal that many can reach through identifiable ascetic means': Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, p.1169.

<sup>139</sup> Heinonen, 'Divine Knighthood', p.81.

<sup>140</sup> *Leben*, XXXV, pp.107-09.

are excluded not only from the practices and suffering which conform religious to Christ, but also from aspects of contemplative experience, in a way that extends the masculine sphere unequivocally. In the broader development of poverty within Dominican thought, however, Suso's formulation and use of poverty restricts it to an almost entirely speculative understanding. By engaging poverty through the performance of ascetic acts and accordingly discursively and linguistically divorcing it from its association with possessions, in Suso's hands it seemed to have lost much of the generative emphasis that it had received over a century earlier. In this respect, poverty became claustated by the devotional culture that was erected to protect and transmit it. Thus, I do not think that it is coincidental that *the Exemplar* was produced on the eve of conventual reform. The highly speculative, abstracted formulation presented poverty as a type of pastoral dead-end – the effective antithesis of the Dominican tradition which had specifically orientated poverty, charity and humility for the benefit of others.



## Conclusion: Possessing Poverty

Only in welcoming with humble gratitude the Lord's love do we free ourselves from the seduction of idols and the blindness of our illusions. Money, pleasure and success dazzle, but later they disappoint: they promise life but cause death. The Lord asks of us a detachment from these false riches to enter into true life, a full life, that is authentic and luminous.<sup>1</sup>

The primary aim of this thesis has been to trace Dominican engagements with conceptions of religious poverty over the course of the order's first 150 years as they informed, played out, were represented and articulated in the 'doing and making' of their devotional narratives. The inspiration for the thesis came from Jorge Bergoglio's decision to adopt as his papal name that of the famous medieval saint Francis of Assisi. His choice reignited attention on age-old questions regarding the meaning of poverty in the Church and how to live up to Christ's fundamental counsel of poverty when the institution erected to transmit his message is not poor. Immediately prior to the pope's comments on the rich young man of Mark 10:17-30 quoted above, he ruminated that the rich man 'has a heart divided between two lords: God and money, and he goes away sad. This shows us that faith and attachment to riches cannot coexist.'<sup>2</sup> Embedded in the way that Pope Francis speaks about poverty and acts in relation to the ideologies expressed therein are ideas, ideologies and concepts that have been worked out over two millennia and not just the from the movement inspired by his namesake. Consequently, I proposed that examination of the development of concepts of religious poverty within the medieval Dominican Order provides a broader context to Pope Francis's key messages on poverty, detachment and the emphasis he placed on 'speaking with our whole lives.'<sup>3</sup> The Dominicans' pragmatism as well as the way that they aimed to negotiate a path between novelty and tradition, charisma and institution, the spiritual and the social in

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, "Be detached from riches in order to follow Christ", *Angelus Address*, October 11 2015, <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=26378>. Accessed 29/08/2017

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis, 'Vigil of Pentecost'.

their engagements with poverty sheds significant light on the frameworks and vocabularies that Pope Francis employs in the present day.<sup>4</sup>

Complementing these broader aims is the nature of the modern scholarship on the role played by poverty in the Dominican Order. Historians largely attest to the important contributions that the Dominicans made to the religious landscape of the later Middle Ages. Despite this recognition, scholarship on the order remained largely fragmented. The close ideological and temporal proximity of the Dominicans to the Franciscans has aggravated the fragmentation, casting a long shadow over the order's engagements with poverty. There is little doubt that the respective orders grew and developed out of similar traditions and in competition and solidarity with each other. They consequently provide an illuminating and productive prism through which to view the other. At the same time, however, comparative studies often maintain a too rigid adherence to descriptive binaries which pose the Dominicans as intellectual, indifferent and eminently practical against the Franciscans' charisma, affectivity and spontaneity. As scholars such as André Vauchez, Claire Waters and Constant Mews and Anna Welch advance, boundaries between concepts such as charisma and institutional, affective and intellectual, were distinctively blurred in performance and ideology. Thus expanding on their work, in this thesis, I utilised post-modern frameworks taken from narrative, performance and discourse studies in order to tease out the individual tensions and dynamics of the concepts as they played out and inform the Dominicans' devotional and spiritual experiences. The combined attention to performance, narrative and the discursive aspects of poverty, enabled a wide-ranging analysis that revealed various intersections between poverty and the making and doing of devotional narrative. The interdisciplinary approach established poverty not only as a material condition or a spiritual ideal, but as a form and expression of religious authority in which tensions between charisma and institution played out dramatically.

Even as the thesis essentially confirms the use of concepts such as charisma, institution, tradition and innovation, as useful heuristic devices, it has nuanced significantly these frameworks, providing important insights into the nature and development of poverty's role in Dominican pastoral, spiritual and devotional life. Fundamentally, this thesis argued that

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<sup>4</sup> Oxley, 'Pope Francis'.

even as the Dominicans' public expressions of poverty were increasingly effaced of their social and economic implications, concepts of poverty nevertheless played an active and dynamic role in the development of their devotional narratives at both a macro and micro level. The Dominicans employed distinctive narrative strategies to decentre the economic and social aspects of poverty which allowed them to uphold generally the spiritual integrity of Christ's counsels on poverty while avoiding some of the difficulties that their Franciscan counterparts faced. Their approach was largely determined by their need to negotiate, engage and exercise a charismatic authority to work alongside institutional mechanisms and traditions to form the basis of their preaching and work as agents of salvation. By paying attention to poverty's discursive, spiritual and devotional dimensions this thesis has shown the way that poverty effectively acted as a conceptual meeting-point or interface for the sometimes competing 'theocentric, Christological, sacerdotal, monastic, contemplative and apostolic' discourses, which together comprised the framework of Dominican spirituality.<sup>5</sup> In taking this approach, I have been able to offer a more focused and unified picture of the Dominicans' engagement with, and development of, conceptions of religious poverty than has hitherto been available in modern historiography.

By shifting the focus from poverty's concrete, material manifestations and conditions, this thesis has established the order's conception of poverty as a flexible and multi-dimensional concept that had a range of observable and implied signifiers and purposes. The approach in this thesis shed light on poverty's dynamism as it operated between and as a material condition, a spiritual ideal and an exercisable form of charismatic authority in Dominican narratives. Building on existing scholarship, this thesis paid attention to the social and spiritual worlds in which the producers and performers of devotional narratives worked and explored the way the activities and experiences of Dominican writers in diverse roles impacted upon and were translated into the narratives that they produced. Such an approach consequently provides a bridge between the physical and the spiritual aspects of the Dominican *vitae forma*. As this thesis has maintained, poverty was far more than a tactic that was taken up or cast aside depending on the immediate circumstances, it had a dynamic and generative impact on the development of the religious, devotional and spiritual character of the order.

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<sup>5</sup> Hinnebusch, *Dominican Spirituality: Principles and Practice*, Eugene: WIPF and Stock, 1965, p.2.



Two historiographical commonplaces regarding the order's approach to poverty provided the temporal and thematic scope of this broad study. Firstly, modern scholarship generally accepts that poverty formed part of the ideological basis that informed the nascent-Dominicans' preaching and conversion of heretics in the Languedoc in the early-thirteenth century. Secondly, by the end of the fourteenth century, poverty is seen to have evolved into a purely spiritual, speculative concept that was largely divorced from any social and/or economic performances. Again, while these views effectively held true, I have filled in some of the gaps, so to speak, of how and in what circumstances developments occurred.

The analysis in Chapter One focussed on exploring the broader factors which informed the Dominicans early-engagements with poverty by establishing the social and devotional worlds in which Jordan of Saxony's text, the *Origins of the Order of Preachers*, was embedded and within which it operated. Jordan was a singularly able administrator and leader, who displayed a high-level responsiveness to and understanding of the diverse demands placed upon the early preachers. Jordan was instrumental in defining both the scope and intention of the order's approach to poverty. I argued that Jordan's shaping of crucial narratives such as the constitutions, the order's foundation, Dominic's holiness and the order's providential existence, constructed a devotional framework for Dominican religious in which poverty was variously inherited. Responding to the external stimuli presented by the Alleluia, a movement of religious revival, and the spotlight this cast on the integrity, authority and authorisation of the Dominican preacher, Jordan became engaged in refining the relationship between inner and outer, between the religious and the divine, not only discursively but performatively. He used his narrative to point to pathways that could enable Dominican religious to simultaneously represent and cite Christ, in text and performance, as they reactualised his message for their own times and contexts. In this sense, recovering the charismatic context of the early order proved to be vital not only to understand the context in which the Dominican's religious authority was forged but also to recognise the role that poverty had in its construction, negotiation and exercise.

It would be difficult to overstate Jordan's historical importance not only as a continuer of Dominic's work but as an innovator in his own right. In Chapter Two I established that way that Jordan was essentially the maker of 'Saint Dominic' and his legacy. Jordan not only collated the essential empirical data but provided the scaffolding for all future historical and

hagiographical production. While Dominic stated to his followers that he would be more useful to them after his death, Jordan, albeit with a small delay, was responsible for stipulating how and in what ways. Jordan used a variety of narrative devices to cast Dominic in a Christ-like role, effectively constructing him as not only a disciple but a continuator of Christ's work and message. At the same time, Jordan provided a pathway for every Dominican religious to access a similar role. In particular, I argued that he used light imagery and other generative metaphors in a way that embodied the synthesis of charity, humility and poverty. In his hands, they formed an indivisible triad through which the Dominican *vitae forma* was structured and expressed. The synthesis of these concepts relentlessly focussed Dominican devotion to the service of neighbour; it demanded an articulated subservience, and it generated and expressed a privileged relationship to the divine.

Chapter Two was primarily focussed on exploring the ways that Jordan used his *Libellus* to establish how the fundamental Dominican precepts of charity, humility and poverty were meant to structure and express the personal authority and inner lives of the Dominican religious. Chapter Three shifted focus to the representation of poverty's external manifestations and performances in the depiction and construction of Saint Dominic. I began by analysing the introduction of Dominic's testament to the narrative tradition to probe the way that the first and second-generation Dominican hagiographers worked out their conceptions of poverty through the representation of their founder. I argued that Dominican writers actively set about effacing poverty of its traditional social and material signifiers to differentiate their brand of poverty not only from that adopted by the heretics in the Languedoc but also from the Franciscans. Moreover, the exercise and performance of poverty was a highly-managed enterprise undertaken in accordance with the demands of preaching. Importantly, I demonstrated that even though the Dominicans sought to efface poverty of its social implications, its metaphors were imbricated in the language and narrative devices they employed to construct and express their spirituality and concepts of sanctity. This approach multiplied and diversified the purposes to which poverty could be directed and indeed the means of transmission.

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, the Dominican Order became embroiled in a series of disputes with the secular clergy at Paris that severely impacted on the construction, negotiation and reception of their religious authority but also the trajectory and form of their

devotional narratives. Against this background, I argued in Chapter Four that the effacing strategies engendered within the preaching culture converged in the Dominicans' textual product at both conceptual and practical levels. This convergence also spilled over into the self-presentation of the compiler. I cast poverty and compilation as essentially parallel forms of authority with multiple points of interaction and tension. This chapter importantly revealed Dominican compilation, a long-contested element of historiography, as highly engaged in the making and doing of the Dominicans' key narratives. The sculpting and articulation of the compilers' personal authority and that of their texts was proliferated by a series of internal and external pressures which impacted on the shape and form of the narratives at both a personal and collective level. In this regard, a balance was continually sought not only between charisma and institution, but also tradition and novelty and the material and the spiritual.

The interface between poverty and compilation converged primarily in the creation of encyclopaedic texts, specifically as they were conceptualised as *Specula*. Importantly, they combined to situate and establish contemplation as a space for the spiritual and metaphorical expression of poverty. This relationship would reach its most articulate form during the canonisation of Thomas Aquinas in the hands of one of the order's most prolific medieval makers and doers of historical and hagiographical narrative, Bernard Gui. In Chapter Five, I expressly demonstrated the way that external pressures intersected with a strong narrative tradition which attempted to fuse poverty within discourses of contemplation. In the canonisation literature produced in the making of Saint Thomas, poverty became almost completely unhinged from its traditional material signifiers and propelled inwards. From a performance perspective, working diffractively around contemplation, the expressions of poverty transformed from material deprivation to a discernible and visible detachment.

Chapter Six effectively presented the greatest challenges, and perhaps the most surprises. I had expected to find in Henry Suso's engagement with poverty, its end-point so to speak, the complete ontological poverty that occurred in the union with Christ. And in one sense this is true. Yet, in Suso's hands poverty also became a proscribed and protected space, in which it lost a great deal of the dynamism or generative powers that its inherent connection to charisma had allowed. Suso's example suggests that the discursive and performative relationships that were cultivated between poverty and contemplation, and that had been

expedited by a series of external events that occurred in the previous century, were naturally and fundamentally orientated toward atrophy. Suso worked hard to appropriate women's performances and concepts essentially to exclude female religious from authoritative participation in the making and doing of normative narrative. Yet, in the light of later developments it is difficult to see him being entirely successful. Certainly, it did nothing to halt the slew of female mystics who engaged with poverty as they performed an embodied, and often violent, *imitatio Christi* throughout the fifteenth century. At the same time, however, the internal Dominican narrative of poverty was wholly internalized, restricted to the expression of a highly subjective spirituality. Combined with the increasing appearance of personal possessions and incomes among Dominican religious, his narrative effectively embodied the 'crisis' and 'decay' against which reform was directed. In one sense, this observation seems to confirm and uphold the Dominicans' providential narratives that found form in the observant reform movement of the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Indeed, avoiding the teleological slant my conclusions took on in this chapter was its most difficult challenge; one in which I had mixed success.

At the beginning of the research process, I posed several related questions: what did religious poverty mean? How did it derive meaning? What purpose did it have in Dominican devotional life? Was it merely a tactic or opportunistic? In seeking to answer these questions, this thesis has essentially offered a small cross-section of the ways that poverty intersected with, and informed, the devotional experiences and practices of Dominican religious. As much as Dominican engagements with poverty were motivated by external pressures and concerns and thus were largely episodic, so too is the picture painted by this thesis. In this respect, this thesis presents a starting point for examinations of the meaning of poverty in the Dominican Order. Analysis of a broader source base would augment and solidify the conclusions reached in this thesis. For instance, exploration of the way poverty informed or became embedded in sermons would bring into play the perspectives and perceptions of the audiences to whom the Dominicans ministered. Along these lines examining the judgements afforded to the Dominicans' brand of poverty in secular chronicles would likely provide a useful challenge to their providential narratives. At the same time, whereas I have thus far considered female religious at the points at which the *cura monialium* impacted upon the construction and transmission of normative (masculine) devotional narrative, the next step would be to

consider poverty's impact on the development of female religious narratives. The vernacular works of Mechthild of Magdeburg and Catherine of Siena would provide an important source base, as would the multitude of 'sister-books' produced in female Dominican communities in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Future discussions might also subject one of the other Dominican concepts highlighted in Dominic's testament to a similar methodology. Charity and humility would offer equally constructive lenses through which to explore Dominican devotional life. As would subjecting the interface of the three vital charismata of the order to deeper scrutiny. Isolating conceptions and vocabularies associated with poverty from Dominican narratives has devalued somewhat their dynamic intersection.

Ultimately, this thesis departs from long-standing historiographical commonplaces which view Dominicans mainly in the context of their intellectual achievements and activities. It has demonstrated some of the ways in which poverty became inherited in the doing and making of the order's devotional narratives at both discursive and performative levels. While the intensity and depth with which poverty informed Dominican devotional, spiritual and pastoral experiences vacillated over the course of the order's first 150 years, it was nevertheless persistently present in the vocabularies and narrative strategies used by Dominican writers. The conclusions drawn from this discussion depict the development of Dominican poverty from its origins as a means to establish authority in the preaching and conversion of heretics, to the basis on which a speculative, mystical engagement with the divine was predicated. At the same time, they also make a decisive contribution to the relative 'Renaissance' of Dominican studies – or at least the movement in which the order's dynamism and innovation is being recognised by historians and scholars external to the order.

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