

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon

ROBIN YOSE



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DOMINICANS, MUSLIMS AND JEWS IN THE MEDIÉVAL CROWN OF ARAGON

With their active apostolate of preaching and teaching, Dominican friars were important promoters of Latin Christianity in the borderlands of medieval Spain and North Africa. Historians have long assumed that their efforts to convert or persecute non-Christian populations played a major role in worsening relations between Christians, Muslims and Jews in the era of crusade and *reconquista*. This study sheds new light on the topic by setting Dominican participation in celebrated but short-lived projects such as Arabic language *studia* or anti-Jewish theological disputations alongside day-to-day realities of mendicant life in the medieval Crown of Aragon. Whether in old Catalan centers like Barcelona, newly conquered Valencia or Islamic North Africa, the author shows that Dominican friars were on the whole conservative educators and disciplinarians rather than innovative missionaries – ever concerned to protect the spiritual well-being of the faithful by means of preaching, censorship and maintenance of existing barriers to interfaith communications.

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CROWN OF ARAGON

ROBIN VOSE



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To Owen, Ryley and Kim
with love

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Barcelona
ADP	Arxiu Diocesà, Palma de Mallorca
AFP	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i>
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
ARM	Arxiu del Regne de Mallorca, Palma de Mallorca
ARV	Arxiu del Regne de València
AST	<i>Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia</i>
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
BN	Bibliothèque National, Paris
BUB	Biblioteca Universitaria de Barcelona
BUV	Biblioteca Universitaria de València
CHR	<i>Catholic Historical Review</i>
Diago	F. Diago, <i>Historia de la Provincia de Aragon de la Orden de Predicadores</i> (Barcelona, 1599; repr. Valencia, 1999)
EV	<i>Escritos del Vedat</i>
<i>Llibre dels fets</i>	James I of Aragon, <i>Llibre dels fets del rei en Jaume</i> , ed. J. Bruguera (Barcelona, 1991); tr. D. Smith and H. Buffery as <i>The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon</i> (Aldershot, 2003)
MOFPH	<i>Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica</i>
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, ed., <i>Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio</i> , new edn., 58 vols. (Paris, 1907–27)
<i>Opera Omnia</i>	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Opera Omnia</i> , 25 vols. (Parma, 1852–73; repr. New York, 1948–50)
Régné	J. Régné, <i>History of the Jews in Aragon: Regesta and Documents (1213–1327)</i> , ed. Yom Tov Assis (Jerusalem, 1978)
Ripoll	T. Ripoll, ed., <i>Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum</i> , 8 vols. (Rome, 1729–40)

List of abbreviations

Sbaralea	J. Sbaralea <i>et al.</i> , <i>Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum</i> , 7 vols. (Rome, 1759–1904)
SCG	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i> (Rome, 1888)
SSOP	J. Quéatif and J. Échard, <i>Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum</i> , 2 vols. (Paris, 1719–23; repr. New York, 1959–61)
ST	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i> , 5 vols. (Ottawa, 1941–5)

Biblical citations are taken from the Vulgate edition as printed at Paris by Berche et Tralin (1882); English translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

NAMES AND TERMINOLOGY

A book written in English about many different regions in a pre-modern time whose “national” boundaries were as fluid as its dialectical orthography is bound to offend readers with a special interest in linguistic consistency. Since I am not such a reader myself, making no claims to specialization in such fields as Catalan or Arabic onomastics, I have not felt compelled to dwell on the matter. My approach has rather been eclectic and practical, guided by a hope that the result will be comprehensible to primarily anglophone audiences. Personal names have for the most part been given in Anglicized form: James instead of *Jacme*, *Jaime*, *Jaume*, *Iacobus* or any of the other variants found in medieval and modern texts. Surnames are generally given as they surface in primary sources. Latin surnames seem more appropriate than vernacular versions for ecclesiastics who normally appear in Latin documents; vernacular alternatives are given in parentheses at times. I apologize in advance if I have caused any confusion by discussing Raymond Martini instead of *Raimundus/Ramon Martí*, or John of Podio Ventoso rather than *Johannes/Joan Puigventós*, to cite but two examples. No attempt has been made to transliterate Arabic or Hebrew according to modern scholarly norms, and diacritics have often been omitted. Given that my focus is on medieval Dominican perceptions of their world I felt it acceptable to err on the side of simplification as they tended to do (thus Ali for ‘*Alī*’). I have also included garbled medieval readings (“miramolin” for *amīr al-mu’minīn*) in some cases; to “correct” them would be to occlude part of the story.

I have sought to use place-names that would be reasonably identifiable to most readers. Rome for *Roma* is an obvious concession, and Cordoba for *Córdoba* is common; more contentious perhaps is my use of Catalan Lleida for *Lérida*, but then Bugia for Algerian *Bougie/Bijaya*. I did not mean to make any nationalist or other political points through toponymy; I merely used terms I personally found to be simple and recognizable, among the many variations available in each case. Wherever

Names and terminology

confusion might arise I have tried to provide alternative spellings in parentheses.

Most egregious undoubtedly are the problematic uses of “Aragon” and “Aragonese” which will be found herein. The “Crown of Aragon” is a historians’ fiction, conveniently designating territories united under kings of Aragon but including at various times such distinct polities as the kingdoms of Valencia, Mallorca, Sicily and Sardinia, the Counties of Barcelona and Urgel, and the Lordship of Montpellier.¹ “Aragon” and “Catalonia” were two of its regions, and today both are Autonomous Communities within the Spanish federation; each had an important and distinct medieval vernacular. To call medieval Catalans or Valencians “Aragonese” is strictly wrong, and potentially insulting to some, but they *were* subjects of the king of Aragon; furthermore, by the fourteenth century Dominicans from Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and even Mallorca (though no longer subject to the king of Aragon in the latter case) were all members of their Order’s Aragonese Province. To be consistent and accurate here would be extremely clumsy. In compromise, friars and others have often been called “Aragonese” simply as a means of identifying their belonging to that Province (formerly part of the Province of Spain) and/or being subject to a king who included “Aragon” among his titles. Similar difficulties emerge with designations of “Spanish,” “French,” “Almohad” or “Hafsid,” but I again crave the reader’s indulgence in glossing over any resulting oversimplifications.

Finally, a note about religious terminology. One person’s convert is another’s apostate or renegade. Archaic and potentially derogatory words such as “infidel,” “saracen,” “marrano” (and of course the subjective theological categories of “truth”/“error”) are inevitable in a study of medieval Dominican friars and their relations with non-Christian peoples. These relations, though sometimes relatively benign, were hardly egalitarian or open-minded by modern standards. Needless to say, I in no way mean to endorse medieval bigotry or intolerance of any form by repeating such words in the pages that follow. The sentiments presented here are those of historical characters who felt strongly about their belief systems. My goal is to present their world as fully and accurately as possible for the purpose of historical comprehension – not as fuel for anachronistic polemic or apologetic religious arguments.

¹ T. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford, 1986) provides a helpful introduction to the subject.

MAPS



Map 1. The Crown of Aragon and its neighbors, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (after O.R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 108)



Map 2. Dominican convents in the Province of Aragon, to 1330 (after R.I. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom of Valencia*, Harvard University Press, 1967. Reprinted in R.I. Burns and Paul Chevedden, *Negotiating Cultures*, Brill, 1999, p. 12)

INTRODUCTION

Baruch Teutonic, Jewish resident of Toulouse in southern France, was a desperate man in the summer of 1320. On the fifteenth of June he survived the devastating experience of being dragged from his study by an angry mob of Christian rioters, pushed through narrow streets past lifeless bodies of friends and neighbors and thrust into the imposing brick and stone cathedral of St. Stephen. There he was forced to accept baptism at knife point. A month later, Baruch stood before an inquisitorial tribunal trying to explain why he wanted permission from bishop Jacques Fournier to reject his baptism and return to the Jewish faith. After weeks of testimony and deliberation, Baruch's request was denied and he began to receive formal instruction in the beliefs of Christianity. By the end of September, he had publicly resigned himself to living the rest of his life as a Christian named John.¹

Baruch's case was tragic, but by the early fourteenth century incidents of violence against Jews – including forced conversions – were hardly a novelty in the Christian-dominated lands of western Europe. Historians such as R.I. Moore have suggested various factors which led to the emergence of a “persecuting society” in the medieval west, one in which Jews, Muslims and others deemed to be outside the normative boundaries of Christian society increasingly came to face persecution from their neighbors.² Whatever the causes, such a society can clearly be said to have existed by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As Baruch knew firsthand, persecution took both legal and extra-legal forms. It could aim to

¹ Trial record in J. Duvernoy, *Le registre de l'inquisition de Jacques Fournier* (Toulouse, 1965), vol. I, 177–90, tr. with analysis by S. Grayzel, “The Confession of a Medieval Jewish Convert” in *Historia Judaica* 17 (1955), 89–120. On the massacres of the so-called Shepherds or Pastoureaux see Y. Yerushalmi, “The Inquisition and the Jews of France in the Time of Bernard Gui” in *Harvard Theological Review* 63:3 (1970), esp. 328–33 and D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence* (Princeton, 1996), 43ff.

² R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (New York, 1987).

remove offending “alien” bodies by a whole variety of means, ranging from murder and physical expulsion to more or less peaceful efforts to promote conversion. Baruch managed to avoid death in 1320 only to face a ritualized obliteration of his Jewish identity by means of baptism and conversion, at first through naked force and finally (if the inquisition’s evidence is to be believed on this point) through a long process of preaching and catechesis. Whether Baruch ultimately became John willingly as a result of successful Christian proselytism, or despairingly, having exhausted all avenues for appeal, remains a matter for conjecture.³

There is more to the story, however. In the course of his testimony, Baruch mentioned several Christians who had expressed sympathy for his plight and others from whom he expected to receive protection. These included the Dominican friar Raymond of Junac, lieutenant to the Lord Inquisitor of Toulouse, whose advice was sought by Baruch and his friends after news of attacks on nearby Jewish communities first reached their city. In the midst of Baruch’s own ordeal, he claimed to have asked his tormentors to take him to the local Dominican convent – where he hoped to find a friar named Jacob Alamanni, “thinking to himself that if he could come into the hands of the said friar, who was a good friend of his, he would be saved from death without being baptized.”⁴ Of course Baruch may have exaggerated the extent of his friendship with the Dominicans to ingratiate himself with the court. Nevertheless it seems that he saw the friars at least potentially as allies who would oppose attempts to secure irregular forced conversions.⁵

We are thus presented with a complex situation. Some Christians in this period obviously felt justified in trying to rid their world of religious “outsiders” by any means necessary. Others, like Jacques Fournier, did not reject coercion in religious matters as long as this was kept within established legal bounds (the whole point of Baruch’s trial was to determine

³ According to the inquisition register, Baruch protested that “he did not know what the Christians believed and why they believed ... unless, therefore, it could be shown through his Law and Prophets that what the Christians believe is in accordance with the Law and the Prophets, he would not want to believe in or hold to the Christian faith and would rather die than give up Judaism” (Grayzel, “Confession,” 114). Bishop Fournier agreed to explain Christian theological principles in a series of debates; these are described in some detail and consistently depict Baruch as a vigorous advocate for Judaism. Still, in the inquisitors’ version of events the Jew was eventually brought around to a full and voluntary conversion. Grayzel is understandably skeptical, arguing that Baruch simply gave up after stalling for as long as he could (Grayzel, “Confession,” 103).

⁴ Grayzel, “Confession,” 106. Grayzel’s assumption that Alamanni was German, like Baruch, is incorrect – Alamanni is a common Occitan regional name. Jacob Alemanni (*Iayme Aleman*), perhaps the same man, served as Aragonese Provincial Prior from 1315–1320 (F. Diago, *Historia de la Provincia de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores* [Barcelona, 1599; repr. Valencia, 1999], fols. 27r–v).

⁵ Gaillard de Pomiès, Dominican lieutenant to the Lord Inquisitor of Carcassonne, was Fournier’s assistant at the trial and could easily have verified Baruch’s claim.

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whether he should be legally considered a duly baptized Christian, subject to compulsory indoctrination and acceptance of Christian dogmas; if he was still a Jew then the inquisitors would have little or no jurisdiction over him). Among the latter, there were still further divisions. Fournier, a busy Church official who would later become pope Benedict XII, was willing to devote a great deal of energy to completing Baruch's conversion through theological argumentation. He may have done so in the hope that other Jews could be similarly swayed to accept Christianity.⁶ Yet Dominican friars such as Raymond of Junac and Jacob Alamanni played no role in preaching to their non-Christian neighbors; at least nothing was said to that effect in the trial testimony, and Baruch's belief that friar Jacob would actually intervene to prevent his baptism certainly suggests that he did not see his "friend" as an over-zealous missionary.

This book examines the different ways in which members of an influential organization within the medieval Latin Church, the Dominican Order of Friars Preacher (OP), chose to interact with their non-Christian contemporaries. In particular, it asks whether, how and to what extent Dominican friars in the foundational first century of their Order's existence actually dedicated themselves to converting, persecuting or otherwise interfering with Jewish and Muslim populations in the multicultural lands of the western Mediterranean basin. How typical, for example, were friars Raymond of Junac and Jacob Alamanni with their apparently benevolent *laissez-faire* attitude toward Jews like Baruch? Were such approaches liable to change over time or in different circumstances? What were the ideological and practical factors underlying the friars' decisions? The topic is complex but important, providing as it does one of the keys to understanding medieval inter-religious and majority-minority relationships generally.

The Toulouse friars' apparent lack of missionary fervor might strike modern observers as odd, clashing as it does with their Order's nearly ubiquitous reputation. The Dominicans have long held a special interest for scholars concerned with the history of interactions between religious communities in the later Middle Ages. Along with the Franciscans, they have at times been presented as the "missionary" arm *par excellence* of the medieval Latin Church – a band of highly trained and innovative scholar-preachers dedicated to the conversion of all heretics, Muslims,

⁶ Baruch claimed that "he wielded no slight authority among the Jews of those parts," and so his (allegedly) voluntary conversion might have been expected to serve as a model for others. A Jew named "Master David" was indeed present during the disputations as Baruch's translator and religious advisor; several unnamed "recently baptized Jews" were similarly present in addition to the regular Christian officials, all of whom could have repeated the substance of the debate to other audiences (Grayzel, "Confession," 114).

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

Jews and pagans to the one “true” religion of orthodox Roman Catholic Christianity. Where brute force might characterize crusaders’ approaches to religious Others in the Holy Land, on the Iberian frontier or in combat against home-grown heretics, the legacy of the mendicant friars has offered a more intellectual alternative. A succinct but detailed statement of the Preachers’ presumed emphasis on study and dialogue is provided by fr. William Hinnebusch OP in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*:

Considering the evangelization of the pagans an essential part of the order’s apostolate, Dominic sent missionaries to the frontiers of Europe ... By 1225 the friars were in touch with the Moors and Jews of Spain and had gone into northern Africa. As a prerequisite for their missionary work they studied the oriental languages ... Urged by Raymond of Peñafort, the Spanish province established language schools at Tunis, Murcia, Játiva, and Barcelona ... Not only language schools but also books helped the missionaries. Thomas Aquinas wrote his *Summa contra gentiles* partly to assist friars who were preparing for the missions ... Raymond Martini, an outstanding orientalist, prepared treatises, especially *Pugio fidei* and *Capistrum judaeorum*, to aid the friars in their contacts with the Jews. Pablo Cristiani, a converted Jew, debated with his former coreligionists.⁷

Here we have the main pillars on which the medieval friars’ reputation for missionary work has been based. Further research by scholars such as Robert Chazan, Benjamin Kedar, Robert I. Burns and John Tolan has helped to clarify details of this work, insofar as it can be reconstructed from the available evidence.⁸ An important variation on the theme was also advanced by Jeremy Cohen, who argued in *The Friars and the Jews* that medieval Dominicans (and their close associates the Franciscans) developed a new concept of rabbinic Judaism as heresy. For these friars old rationales for tolerance could now be abandoned; their goal was henceforth the total elimination of Jews from Christian Europe. This could be achieved through conversion, but Cohen suggested that many friars were also content to fan the flames of religious hatred – working hand in glove with crusaders, inquisitors and the marauding Pastoureaux rioters of Baruch’s day to use violence where words failed.⁹

⁷ W. Hinnebusch, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1984), vol. IV, 252, s.v. “Dominicans.” More than two full columns fall under the subheading “missions.”

⁸ R. Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, 1989); B.Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton, 1984); R.I. Burns, “Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West: The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion” in *American Historical Review* 76 (1971), 1386–434; J. Tolan, *Saracens* (New York, 2002), esp. 233–55.

⁹ J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews* (Ithaca, 1982). Cohen does not discuss the Pastoureaux specifically, as his focus is on the thirteenth century. Nor does he focus on Dominican attitudes toward Islam, though these are discussed to some extent in his analysis of Raymond Penafort’s policies in the Crown of Aragon (pp. 106–7).

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Dominicans of the Iberian peninsula, and in particular those active in the eastern Iberian lands collectively known as the Crown of Aragon, have provided scholars with their most important examples of Christian approaches to Jews and Muslims in the “persecuting society” of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is in part because medieval Iberia presents a setting in which friars actually did find themselves facing significant Jewish and Muslim populations on a regular basis. If ever missionary ideals were to be worked out in practice, here was the opportunity. Researchers have therefore turned again and again to examine the careers of outstanding and intriguing Dominicans who can be shown to have had some degree of antagonistic contact with non-Christians in the region: in particular the above-mentioned Raymond Penyafort (*Peñafort*), Raymond Martini and Paul (*Pablo*) Christiani.

Penyafort, Martini and Christiani (among others) will be discussed at length in the following chapters, but I will also suggest that excessive attention to such exceptional characters has tended to distort the historical goals and activities of the medieval Dominican Order as a whole. Previous scholarship has tended to focus almost exclusively on a small body of polemical and apologetic writings associated with these friars, while important background details and contexts have been overlooked. It is only by closely studying all aspects of a period – its political, social and economic concerns as well as its religious ideals as stated in particular genres of literature – that one can hope to obtain a clearer understanding of Jewish–Dominican and Muslim–Dominican relations.

It is for this reason that I too have chosen to focus on the Dominican Order in its Iberian and broader western Mediterranean context. The Spanish Province of the Dominicans, and especially that portion which was to become the separate Province of Aragon after 1300, does indeed provide an important and relatively well-documented opportunity for a case study. The Province comprised intricate networks of friars who encountered Christians, Jews and Muslims in a variety of contexts. It will be noted, of course, that I do not intend to limit my study very rigidly to the geographical or politically defined Crown of Aragon, as my opening reference to Baruch of Toulouse (a city very much separated from the Arago–Catalan sphere of political influence by 1320 yet still related in cultural terms) should make clear. It was one of the Dominicans’ distinctive features that they were mobile and in regular contact with neighboring or even far-flung convents – thus Toulouse and Thomas Aquinas will be almost as much a part of this study as Barcelona and Raymond Martini.

The Franciscan Order offers an alternative avenue for analysis, though it does not occupy quite as emblematic a place in the historiography of Christian–Jewish and Christian–Muslim relations as the Dominican. I am

indebted to the important work of scholars such as E. Randolph Daniel and Jill Webster who have covered that particular field.¹⁰ The enigmatic “doctor of missions” Raymond Lull, with all his Franciscan connections, was also closely related to the Dominicans and cannot be ignored, having generated plenty of specialized studies.¹¹ These will be considered in their place. Similarly, I have taken into account a wealth of scholarship on contemporary mendicant missions to the Muslim and Mongol East, which provide important points of reference and comparison for the western Mediterranean experience.

Dominican activities in eastern Iberia, south-western France and the closely related North African Maghrib nevertheless remain the focus of this book. These lands witnessed a remarkable shift in the thirteenth century, as Christian forces gained territory and maritime dominance at the expense of Muslim rulers (the process known somewhat anachronistically as the *reconquista*).¹² The king of Aragon’s conquest of Mallorca (1230) and Valencia (1238) were two major milestones; like Castile’s seizure of Cordoba (1236) and Seville (1248) these established Christian regimes as leading powers in the region. They also hastened the decline of the Almohad caliphate which had previously dominated western Muslim territories on both sides of the Mediterranean. The result was a virtually unprecedented period in which Christian rulers began to rule over large populations of Muslims as well as Jews.¹³ As it happened, this thirteenth-century transition also coincided with the creation of the Dominican Order; it thus offers a rather special circumstance in which the first few generations of Iberian Friars Preacher were obliged to find their way and invent their own roles. It was a troubled yet exciting and intriguing time, when all possibilities were open.

¹⁰ E.R. Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (1975; repr. St. Bonaventure, 1992); J. Webster, *Els Menorets* (Toronto, 1993); J. Webster, “Conversion and Co-Existence: The Franciscan Mission in the Crown of Aragon” in L. Simon, ed., *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 1995), vol. I, 163–78.

¹¹ Including R. Sugranyes de Franch, *Raymond Lulle, docteur des missions* (Schöneck-Beckenried, 1954); cf. J.N. Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1971; references here are to the revised Abadia de Montserrat edition, *Ramon Lull i el Naixement del Lullisme* (2001); A. Bonner, *Selected Works of Ramon Lull* (Princeton, 1985) and H. Hames, *The Art of Conversion* (Leiden, 2000).

¹² The complexities of this term are analyzed in J. O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia, 2003), esp. 3–22.

¹³ Muslims had already been under Aragonese domination in the Ebro valley for over a century before the fall of Mallorca. Such *mudéjars* were also present in Castile, Sicily and the Levant (see J. Powell, ed., *Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100–1300* [Princeton, 1990]). The scale of subject Muslim population at Valencia, which continued to dwarf that of the immigrating Christians for generations to come, remains anomalous. Jewish status under Christian rule was also well established, yet subject to change in this new context.

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Conversions did occur in this setting, as they always have when different faith communities come into sustained contact with one another. Furthermore, some medieval Christians did entertain hopes that mass conversions were imminent – whether regionally as a result of political maneuvering, or globally as part of the divinely ordained sequence of apocalyptic events. Yet my research has revealed little if any evidence to suggest that medieval Dominicans encouraged such conversions by engaging in widespread or sustained campaigns of proselytism. Dominicans and other representatives of the institutional Latin Church in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries simply did not see conversion of Muslims or Jews as a significant part of their undertaking at the local level. Instead, when they took notice of local non-Christians at all, it was because they were concerned that fluidity of religious identity and experience should be more strictly limited and controlled.

Far from encouraging conversions, in other words, the medieval Church of the *reconquista* era sought for the most part to discourage over-familiar contacts from forming across religious divides. Policies of partial segregation were adopted in some cases. The writings and even verbal utterances of Jews and Muslims might be examined to ensure that they did not endanger Christians or the Christian faith by casting aspersions or raising theological doubts. If these measures did not suffice, polemics and apologetics might be composed and preached to challenge the unbelievers and defend the claims of Christianity for the benefit of the faithful. Medieval Dominicans were among the chief architects and executors of such efforts to protect the Christian community – their flock, as they saw it, or “the Lord’s Vineyard” – from any possible blight as a result of excessive exposure to unbelievers. From Christian Toulouse, Montpellier and Barcelona to newly colonized Valencia and Mallorca, and even in Muslim-ruled cities like Marrakesh and Tunis with their small Christian minorities, the Friars Preacher adapted their methods to local circumstances. In some areas Christian beliefs were considered secure enough to permit lesser degrees of division and scrutiny. Always, however, the friars’ primary aim was the protection and nurturing of the faithful rather than conversion of unbelievers.

My challenge to established notions of a medieval Dominican “missionary” movement will be presented on the basis of primary-source evidence in the chapters that follow, but it is also important to consider the historiographical origins of the more traditional view. A consensus that the Middle Ages were an important period for Dominican missionizing has developed over time. It began in the sixteenth century, when Dominicans (as well as Franciscans and, later, Jesuits) were first beginning to travel among previously unknown peoples in Africa, the

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Americas and Asia. Colonial conditions in some of these areas resulted in mass conversions, challenging friars like Bartolomé de las Casas to address the theology of mission with a growing sense of urgency.¹⁴ Newly developed humanist proselytizing techniques were even brought back to Spain itself, where they were briefly tried on Valencian Moriscos under archbishop Juan de Ribera (1568–1611).¹⁵

It was at precisely this same time that Dominican scholars began to undertake their first systematic studies of the Order's history. At the end of the sixteenth century, curious friars were turning to long-forgotten archival records in a quest for evidence of their predecessors' noteworthy achievements. Fired by the spirit of the times, these early modern Dominican researchers were naturally interested in finding medieval precedents for their own missionary activity. The Valencian friar Francisco Diago in particular saw mission as one of his Province's special callings, and he soon discovered signs to confirm that his forefathers in the Crown of Aragon had enjoyed a long and glorious history of preaching to Jews and Muslims. His harvest of evidence for such missions was poor and hard-won, consisting of no more than a few references to language study, visits to Africa and polemical exercises (a few written treatises and at least one public debate). It was enough, however, to ground the seemingly uncontroversial assumption that missionary work had always been a central element in the friars' lives.

Dominican mission history as initiated by Diago thus rested on a "maximalist" approach which has dominated the field ever since. Less a methodology than a tendency, maximalist research here involves careful sifting of available evidence in order to find any possible traces of mendicant involvement in mission work. Anti-Jewish disputations, anti-Islamic polemical tracts, programs for the study of oriental languages, visits to Muslim rulers – all have been marshaled to support the unquestioned idea that medieval Dominican missionary ventures must have flourished. Over the centuries, these evidentiary points have been passed down as *loci communes*, well known to every specialist.¹⁶ Having surveyed the resulting compilations, and with due regard for the fragmentary nature of surviving documentation, scholars working from a maximalist perspective further posit that these points represent merely the tip of an evangelical iceberg. For every known episode of language study or disputation, one

¹⁴ See for example Las Casas' *De unico vocationis modo omnium gentium ad veram religionem* (tr. F. Sullivan, *The Only Way* [New York, 1992]).

¹⁵ B. Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos: Juan de Ribera and Religious Reform in Valencia 1568–1614* (Baltimore, 2006).

¹⁶ All the points made by Hinnebusch in the passage cited above, for example, were already identified in Diago's *Historia*.

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can imagine that there must have been many more incidents that simply failed to be recorded.

The resulting myth remains powerful, for it fits well with a number of narratives. First of all, and as originally formulated, it contributes to the Dominicans' self-image as an intellectual vanguard at the forefront of Christian missions to unbelievers.¹⁷ In less positive terms, the same formulation was accepted by Edward Said when he identified the friars' studies as representing the first stage of Western Orientalism.¹⁸ For other observers the missions were relatively hopeful instances of medieval Christians transcending religious hatred to bring their gospel message to Muslims and others in a spirit of peace (if not understanding).¹⁹ The friars' presumed goal of eliminating religious difference by converting non-Christians has also been related to their wider role in the elaboration of a persecuting, inquisitorial and ultimately anti-semitic society in medieval Europe.²⁰ The friars' putative missionary activity thus forms a key part of discussions ranging from general medieval histories and histories of the Dominican Order to studies specifically examining Christian tolerance or intolerance of Jews, Muslims and other non-Christian peoples. Since the phenomenon of mendicant mission lends itself to so many interpretations, there has been little cause to question its existence in the first place.

Without seeking to overcompensate by adopting a "minimalist" position, I have revisited these *loci communes* in a more skeptical fashion by paying closer attention to their historical context. Rather than seeing isolated individuals and incidents as evidence of long-term realities, I suggest that they should most often be studied as discrete characters and events occurring in the midst of changing political, socio-economic, theological and intellectual circumstances. Taking these circumstances into consideration can reveal motivations and meanings behind any given episode of Dominican contact with Muslims and Jews which may

¹⁷ See for example the Dominican J.M. Coll's polemically tinged articles, written in the wake of the Spanish Civil War, on "Escuelas de lenguas orientales en los siglos XIII y XIV" in *AST* 17–20 (1944–7) and "San Raymundo de Peñafort y las Misiones del Norte Africano en la Edad Media" in *Misionalia Hispanica* 5 (1948), 417–57. A similar triumphalist (and colonialist) tendency can be found among Franciscans: A. López, *Obispos en el Africa septentrional desde el siglo XIII* (Tangiers, 1941). Hinnebusch's more balanced position, already clear in his *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* article, is elaborated in his two-volume *The History of the Dominican Order* (Staten Island, 1966).

¹⁸ E. Said, *Orientalism* (1979; repr. New York, 1994), 49–50.

¹⁹ Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 5–6. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, shows how peaceful mission could be interwoven with the violence of crusade.

²⁰ Heinrich Graetz, pioneer of nineteenth-century Jewish history, already wrote of "gloomy and evil-minded" friars like Raymond Penafort, dedicated to the conversion of Muslims and Jews because of their hatred for unbelievers (*History of the Jews* [1863; tr. B. Loewy, Philadelphia, 1894], vol. III, 597–605). Jeremy Cohen's work has greatly refined this approach.

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have little to do with proselytism. Such a methodology has already been adopted by several researchers working with the rich archival resources of the Crown of Aragon, though none has yet undertaken a close study of the Dominicans.²¹

My approach also stresses the importance of textual context. The medieval Dominicans' archival, narrative and other records must be read as much as possible in their entirety, as self-representations that convey a sense of their authors' own ideals, priorities and experiences. Instead of merely highlighting references to Dominican contacts with Muslims and Jews, I ask how these references fit into the larger framework of the friars' writings. Are they really signs pointing to a widespread phenomenon of missionary preaching? To what degree did the commitment of resources to missionary ventures actually emerge as an issue within the Order? What other dimensions to the friars' work among Muslim and Jewish populations may have been emphasized at the time? The answers to these questions reveal the mirage-like quality of modern appeals to an iceberg of missionary activity.

Records compiled by the first generations of Dominican friars, while in some instances surviving only in fragmentary form, substantially and accurately represent the reality of their work as they perceived it. The friars carefully recorded their deployments of manpower, educational and textual resources. They ensured the preservation of documents concerning their legal rights and financial dealings. They also compiled accounts intended to publicize exemplary achievements claimed by the Order and its saints. Finally, they expressed their theological ideals in written form. Taken together, these sources clearly illustrate the Dominicans' world as they saw it: an imagined landscape of pastors and flocks, vineyards and cultivators, withered deserts of infidelity and well-armed fortresses of faith. In such a world non-Christians were potentially threatening, but more often inconsequential and utterly marginal.

The Crown of Aragon boasts an exceptionally good fund of sources for the study of medieval Dominicans, especially when compared with neighboring regions such as Castile or Provence.²² The kingdom itself is unique in medieval Europe for having maintained a large-scale royal archive on paper from an early date, thus providing extensive background material

²¹ I have been much influenced by David Nirenberg's discussion of methodology in *Communities*, 3–17. Recent work by R.I. Burns, Jill Webster, Brian Catlos and others in this field continues to demonstrate the value of detailed and localized social histories based on archival research.

²² On the Castilian Dominicans see F. García-Serrano, *Preachers of the City* (New Orleans, 1997). For the Dominicans of Provence, see the articles in *L'ordre des Prêcheurs et son histoire en France méridionale*, special edition of *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 36 (2001) and M.-H. Vicaire, *Les prêcheurs et la vie religieuse des Pays d'Oc au XIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, 1998).

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for the study of Jewish–Christian and Muslim–Christian relations.²³ On occasion Dominicans appear in these royal registers, though the very infrequency of their recorded altercations with non-Christians is a preliminary hint that such contacts were rare. Episcopal archives are similarly important, and many have yet to be examined with the necessary thoroughness to determine their value in the study of medieval Dominican life.²⁴ Papal registers provide yet another set of data, very plentiful for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and conveniently available in a number of collections.²⁵

Medieval chroniclers occasionally mention Dominicans. In the Crown of Aragon one of the most interesting thirteenth-century chronicles was written by king James I himself (r. 1213–76) as a sort of autobiographical memoir.²⁶ This *Llibre dels fets* is revealing both for what it says about the Dominicans and for what it does not say; again there are no references to Dominican missions at all.²⁷ A further dimension to James' work was added after his death, however, when a Dominican friar named Peter Marsili was commissioned to translate the *Llibre* into Latin (1313). Peter apparently added an entire section to the royal chronicle in praise of his Order and its leading lights – especially the former master-general Raymond Penyafort, whose canonization was under consideration at the papal curia. If it is authentic, this early fourteenth-century addition provides important insights into the aspirations and self-perceptions of medieval Aragonese Dominicans.²⁸

²³ R.I. Burns, *Diplomatariu of the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia, the Registered Charters of Its Conqueror Jaume I, 1257–1276* (Princeton, 1985), vol. I, *Society and Documentation in Crusader Valencia*, provides an introduction to this resource.

²⁴ Episcopal registers, like royal ones, recorded local conflicts. Conditions in some Spanish episcopal archives have at times made it difficult to conduct extensive research; undoubtedly more evidence relating to the medieval Dominicans will be uncovered there in the future.

²⁵ Particularly relevant is the Dominican Order's four-volume *Bullarium*, compiled by master-general Thomas Ripoll (Rome, 1729–40). Some documents relevant to the Dominicans (including a few not found in Ripoll) are printed in the seven volumes of Sbaralea's *Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum* (Rome, 1759–68). Bulls from the Archivio Segreto Vaticano (on CD-ROM) were also consulted for this study.

²⁶ Critical edn. by J. Bruguera, *Llibre dels fets del Rei en Jaume* (Barcelona, 1991), vol. II; tr. D. Smith and H. Buffery, *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon* (Aldershot, 2003).

²⁷ The 1263 Barcelona disputation, for example, is not even mentioned in this chronicle despite the fact that the king is known to have initiated it and participated in it. Either James did not think it important enough to be included, or he deliberately sought to keep it from being associated with his memory. Most of his comments about the Dominicans involve their assistance to his forces in times of war, or their disapproval of his sexual exploits.

²⁸ Peter's questionable additions are the source of some key assertions regarding Penyafort's commitment to external mission (M.D. Martínez San Pedro, ed., *La crónica latina de Jaime I* [Almería, 1984], 401–70). The earliest surviving MS to contain additions concerning Penyafort and the Dominicans is now at the Biblioteca de Catalunya in Barcelona (MS 1018). The fact that this MS dates to the end of the sixteenth century (when Penyafort's sainthood was once more at issue)

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The Dominicans also left archives of their own, though unfortunately many of these were destroyed in subsequent upheavals and revolutions. Most Spanish monasteries survived the Napoleonic occupation only to be expropriated by government officials in the 1830s. Many of their archives suffered losses at this time. Those which remained were eventually nationalized and deposited in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, aside from documents retained at the last minute by the Valencian government which are now at the Arxiu del Regne de València in Valencia City. A noteworthy exceptional case is the archive from St. Dominic's convent in Mallorca. This collection of approximately 700 parchment documents (for the medieval period alone) has remained largely intact and is now preserved at the AHN in Madrid.²⁹ Though dealing for the most part with financial transactions, they provide a fascinating glimpse of the mundane side of life at the convent. Another exception is Barcelona, where the Aragonese Province's leading convent once stood. Only a few medieval manuscripts survived a devastating fire in 1835, but the Dominicans of St. Catherine's in Barcelona had taken the precaution of copying many of their earlier records into paper cartularies in the eighteenth century. These massive tomes escaped the fire and are today kept at the University of Barcelona.³⁰

Included among the Barcelona documents are crucial *acta* of the Aragonese Province's yearly Chapter meetings. These are not complete, but they do cover much of the early fourteenth century, and all have now been published.³¹ Provincial Chapter *acta* provide a record of educational assignments for the friars as well as other information such as deaths, promotions, conflicts, policy decisions and so on. They are an invaluable source for understanding Dominican life in the medieval Crown of Aragon, and they also show what types of information were deemed worthy of record by contemporary friars.

Dominican and other Church historians, beginning with Francisco Diago in 1599, preserved further medieval documentation by copying it into their texts. This is especially true of Mallorcan friar-historians such as Domingo Manera, whose 1733 *Relación histórica de los varones ilustres y*

raises suspicion that the additions are late. Further analysis is needed to explore the possibility that Francisco Diago, a zealous promoter of Penyafort's 1601 canonization, may have had something to do with the alteration.

²⁹ Section *clero*, carpetas 75–107 cover the period from 1212 to 1351.

³⁰ Especially important are the *Lumen Domus* (3 vols., BUB MSS 1005–7), and BUB MS 241.

³¹ *Acta* for thirteenth century Spain: R. Hernández in "Pergaminos de Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales del siglo XIII de la Provincia Dominicana de España" in *Archivo Dominicano* 4 (1983), 5–73 and R. Hernández, "Las primeras actas de los capítulos provinciales de la Provincia de España" in *Archivo Dominicano* 5 (1984), 5–41. *Acta* from the Province of Aragon (1302–51): ed. A. Nobles Sierra in "Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores, Correspondientes a los Años ..." in *EV* 20–3 (1990–3), 237–85.

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cosas memorables del Real Convento de Santo Domingo is a rich compilation of earlier materials.³² Important notes concerning medieval Dominican authors were further compiled by Jaques Quétif and Jacques Échard in their *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum* (1719–21). Friar Jaime Villanueva's twenty-two-volume *Viaje literario a las iglesias de España* (first published 1803–6) contains observations of many Dominican convents and their collections on the eve of expropriation, thus providing still more clues to reconstruct whatever documentation might have been lost.³³

Finally, there are the medieval Dominicans' own historical, hagiographical and theological compositions. These are again revealing both for what they say and for what they omit. Aside from Peter Marsili's possible additions to the *Llibre dels fets*, the earliest friars tended to record their order's history in the form of saints' *vitae*.³⁴ Of these only one, an anonymous *vita* composed in the early fourteenth century to help in the promotion of Raymond Penyafort's canonization, makes even a brief reference to possible missionary ventures in the western Mediterranean.³⁵ In terms of theological writings, Raymond Martini's corpus of apologetic and polemic works comprises the Aragonese friars' crowning achievement. Martini's arguments against Judaism (*Pugio fidei, Capistrum judaeorum*) and Islam (*Explanatio symboli apostolorum*, as well as the *De seta Machometi* and *Vocabulista in Arabico* if their attribution to him is accepted) make them especially relevant to this study. Better-known texts by Thomas Aquinas and Raymond Penyafort will also be examined to contextualize Martini's writings.

Non-Christian writers might be expected to provide views of the friars and their activities from another perspective. This is true to a limited extent, but it is the lack of comment on Dominicans and their alleged

³² Diago, *Historia*. Manera's manuscript is in the Biblioteca Bartomeu March in Palma de Mallorca. See also D. Moll and T. Febrer, *Historia de las Grandezas del Real Convento de Santo Domingo, Orden de Predicadores, de Palma, en la Ciudad de Mallorca* (c. 1754; now MSL 179–81 at the Arxiu Diocesà in Palma).

³³ Vol. XVIII, for example, includes a description of the Barcelona convent and its holdings (176–208). Villanueva was especially interested in medieval manuscripts; on his work see the article by L. Galmes in *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España* (Madrid, 1975), vol. IV, 2762.

³⁴ Most important are Jordan of Saxony's mid-thirteenth-century *Libellus de principis Ordinis Praedicatorum* (tr. S. Tugwell, *On the Beginning of the Order of Preachers* [Dublin, 1982]) and Gerard de Fracheto's slightly later *Vitae Fratrum* (ed. B. M. Reichert in *MOFPH*, vol. I). These are collective biographies or collections of *exempla* rather than *vitae* in the traditional sense, but they had a similar inspirational and didactic function; see J. Van Engen, "Dominic and the Brothers: *Vitae* as Life-forming *exempla* in the Order of Preachers" in K. Emery and J. Wawrykow, eds., *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans* (Notre Dame, 1998), 7–25. Later medieval quasi-hagiographical collections such as Bernard Gui's *Catalogus magistrorum* reveal little about the provinces of Spain or Aragon, and still less about mission or any other form of interaction between Dominicans, Jews and/or Muslims.

³⁵ *MOFPH*, vol. VI/1, 19–37.

mission that is once again most striking in these sources. Aside from Nachmanides' *Vikuach* and some rabbinic *responsa* such as those of Solomon Ibn Adret, there are few mentions of Dominicans in extant thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Hebrew literature. This may have resulted from fears of censorship, though refugees in Islamic lands could certainly have written more about Dominican preaching campaigns back home if they had seen fit to do so. The *Shevet Yehudah* (written in exile by a Spanish Jew c. 1520) does not shy away from mentioning persecutions suffered under Christian rule, including well-known instances of religious disputations at Barcelona in 1263 and Tortosa in 1412–16. It leaves the impression that the latter were remembered as rare and traumatic events rather than regular occurrences.³⁶ On the Arabic side, mentions of Dominican friars are practically non-existent. Treaties occasionally note the rights of Christians residing in Muslim cities to be attended by their monks (*ruhban*), and these probably included Dominicans at times. One polemical text by Muhammad al-Qaysi mentions a debate between a captured Muslim and a Christian priest, but the very unique and remarkably vague character of this literary work make it an exception that proves the rule.³⁷ Thus far I have found no clear, specific mention of mendicant preaching among Muslims of North Africa, Spain or elsewhere in the writings of Ibn Abi Zar', Ibn Khaldun or any other medieval Arabic chroniclers.³⁸

These varied sources have permitted a wide-ranging yet often detailed examination of the Aragonese Dominicans' lives and ideals. **Chapter 1** examines the overall Dominican concept of apostolic "mission" in the medieval period. Drawing on theological traditions, the first generations of friars elaborated a missionary theory which was universal in scope, leaving the question of target audience undefined. At the same time, the Order was founded with the explicit intention of combating sin and heresy among Christians and this was to remain ever its chief concern. Despite occasional efforts to promote "external" mission to

³⁶ Solomon Ibn Verga, *La Vara de Yehudah*, tr. M.J. Cano (Barcelona, 1991). Section 40 (*La Vara de Yehudah*, 168–89) focuses on the Tortosa disputation, with a brief interlude to describe the Barcelona disputation – summarized in vague terms and inaccurately dated by Ibn Verga to the reign of king James' father Peter (d. 1213).

³⁷ P.S. Van Koningsveld and G.A. Wiegers, "The Polemical Works of Muhammad al-Qaysi (fl. 1309) and their Circulation in Arabic and Aljamiado among the Mudejars in the Fourteenth Century" in *Al Qantara* 15 (1994), 163–99.

³⁸ Ibn Abi Zar' wrote c. 1326 on the history of Morocco where Dominicans are known to have been active on occasion (text ed. and tr. A. Huici Miranda, *Rawd al-Qirtas* [Valencia, 1964]). Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) is likewise silent on the subject, though he was quick to note instances of Christian intervention in Maghribi affairs. See for example his discourse on Christian mercenaries in *The Muqaddimah*, tr. F. Rosenthal (1958; rev. edn. Princeton, 1967), vol. II, 80–1 and passages in the *Kitab al-ibar*, tr. de Slane as *Histoire des Berbères* (1852–6; repr. Paris, 1925–56), vol. IV, 32–4, 37, 40 and *passim*.

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non-Christians (usually in conjunction with apocalyptic hopes concerning the Mongols), the most influential Dominican writers consistently focused on the need to provide Christian communities with orthodox teachings and access to the sacraments. When it came to considerations of Muslims or Jews, these writers did not prohibit missionizing, but they did warn of dangers and frustrations awaiting those tempted to make the effort. Most importantly, they regarded non-Christians as a potentially contaminating influence on the Christian laity, especially in regions like the western Mediterranean. As a result the Dominican friars were more likely to preach *about* the errors of the “infidel” (for the benefit of the faithful) than they were to preach *to* real Jews or Muslims.

[Chapter 2](#) turns to an analysis of the Dominicans’ social, political and economic position in the Crown of Aragon and its surrounding regions, mapping out and chronicling the establishment of their convents in order to gain some sense of their emerging purpose and potential. Part of this chapter is concerned with surveying the friars’ resources. The latter subject is further elaborated in [chapter 3](#), where I examine evidence for the Aragon friars’ book collections and study facilities, including the famous Hebrew and Arabic *studia linguarum*. The exceptional career and writings of Raymond Martini feature prominently here. In all cases, it is important to note the limitations which restricted even the most committed friars in every aspect of their work; failure to do so has too often led to exaggeration and unfounded assumptions.

Having noted the overall historical context in which the friars actually worked, the second half of the book turns to specific instances of contact. In [chapter 4](#), the friars’ few recorded efforts to preach among subject Jewish and (perhaps) Muslim populations are examined as possible instances of exceptional and short-lived conversionary zeal. The Barcelona disputation of 1263 and its aftermath (including renewed concessions for preachers to visit Muslim and Jewish communities) were spectacular incidents of Dominican preaching, but they were also closely linked to internal Christian theological concerns and intended above all for the edification of a Christian audience. Anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim polemics were produced in this same context, for similar reasons.

In [chapter 5](#) I turn to censorship, inquisition and disciplinary efforts – the friars’ strategies to “destroy error.” When the Church did show an interest in local Jews or Muslims it was often to seek prosecution for alleged offences against Christian society. These most frequently involved writings or verbal utterances deemed to be blasphemous attacks on Christian belief. Since the Dominicans’ own inquisitorial proceedings lacked jurisdiction over non-Christians, however, they could do little more than denounce culprits to royal authorities and hope for action.

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Friars could mandate punishment of *converts* for religious infractions (including apostasy or reversion to one's former faith), and this they did from time to time. Still, the Dominicans often seem to have been willing to ignore their Muslim and Jewish neighbors altogether.

Chapters 6 and 7 look across the religious, geographical and political divide to analyze Dominican involvement with the Islamic world. Here again, a number of relatively well-known documents (especially papal bulls, and some chronicles) make it clear that small numbers of friars traveled to Muslim lands in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In chapter 6 these documents are used to reveal the friars' emphasis on providing pastoral care to Christian communities in the region. Conversion of Muslims was once again a theoretical goal, but one that must be set alongside the more concrete and more regularly effected tasks of edifying, providing sacraments to and administering penitential discipline among the Dominicans' core flock. As king Louis IX of France and others discovered, moreover, these Dominicans could make themselves useful in the promotion of Christian interests abroad in other ways as well. Chapter 7 explores the possibility that some friars may have worked for the welfare of Christendom on the political front through diplomacy and espionage, as well as in the pulpit and the *studium*.

In conclusion, chapter 8 returns to the story of Baruch Teutonicus among other cases where Dominicans are known to have lived in constant and relatively cordial (though always limited and saturated with awareness of status inequalities) daily contact with Jewish and Muslim servants, neighbors and even friends. Mundane events rarely find their way into historical records, but examination of Dominican household accounts and other incidental sources suggests that the friars encountered non-Christian officials, traders and workers (including slaves) on a regular basis – apparently without subjecting them to constant harassment or proselytism. This observation does not lessen the importance of inquisitorial persecutions or polemical writings, but it does serve to contextualize them. The friars lived in a real world, where ideals of religious heroism unavoidably clashed with the exigencies of quotidian social and economic life.

The resulting revision of historical incidents and narratives is not without its caveats. There is in the end no sure way to know the degree to which medieval Dominicans really desired the “conversion” of Muslims, Jews and pagans to Christianity, as opposed to that of Christian sinners and heretics to orthodoxy.³⁹ Nor is it possible to reconstruct the history

³⁹ The word *conversio* was indeed normally (though not exclusively) used with reference to Christians seeking a more spiritual form of life in the Middle Ages; newly baptized Muslims and Jews on the other hand were generally referred to as *neophiti* or *baptizati*.

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of Dominican relations with Jews and Muslims in its entirety, on account of the fragmentary nature of surviving source materials. All that can be done is to evaluate those materials as conscientiously as possible, without being unduly swayed by previous interpretations, and to suggest the most plausible scenario as a thesis. It is my hope that the resulting suggestions will open doors for further research into the subject, and perhaps the emergence of new analyses in the future. This is a preliminary study, and it is submitted as such.

Nevertheless, I believe that the perspective offered here does have important implications for the general study of relations between religious groups in the Middle Ages. It suggests that in addition to outright persecution and efforts to bring dissenters into the fold of the dominant faith, such relations could and did take the form of theologically as well as legally sanctioned segregation. Internal enunciation of a limited missionizing discourse could serve to mask some of the contradictions inherent in a Christian society which maintained and exploited communal divisions in order to facilitate a lucrative division of labor. As would again (and more prominently) occur under colonial regimes in the modern era, the dominant Christian community in *reconquista* Spain imagined itself to be in some ways concerned for the spiritual betterment of its subject peoples while in fact maintaining barriers and divisions to keep those peoples in a subordinate position. In modern times, religious mission has been combined with a more secular *mission civilisatrice* but the effect is similar: the injustices of racial segregation and colonial exploitation are more easily overlooked when landowners and bosses can reassure themselves that such treatment actually benefits subject peoples in the long run.

Most of all, it is my hope that the research presented here will contribute to a more balanced and historically accurate account of the complexities surrounding inter-religious contacts in the Middle Ages. These contacts defy simple generalization. Dominican approaches to Jews and Muslims in the Crown of Aragon and its neighboring territories were varied and often nuanced. Christians in other social positions experienced their relations with non-Christian communities and individuals in markedly different ways. Brutality and violence were not lacking, but then neither were friendliness or absolute indifference. These contacts, approaches and experiences must be considered in all their diversity if the legacies of the past are to be more fully understood.

PART I

Context

Chapter 1

DOMINICAN CONCEPTS OF MISSION

Go out therefore and teach all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded of you. (Matt. 28:19–20)

Throughout the Order and from its very inception, Dominican friars saw themselves as imitators of the apostles. They therefore sought to “go out” beyond the cloister, providing all peoples with what they believed to be prerequisites for salvation: instruction in orthodox dogma and access to the ecclesiastical sacraments. In that sense the friars were always missionaries, and their mission field was universal. Nevertheless, in the medieval period, the Dominican Order as a whole did little to consciously or explicitly dedicate itself to any external mission of preaching among non-Christians. On the contrary, its leading administrators and theologians alike were quite consistent in maintaining a focus on internal missionary work dedicated to encouraging and preserving the spiritual health of the Christian faithful. This would prove true even in special frontier situations such as the Crown of Aragon and its environs, where contacts between believers and non-believers presented unique challenges.

Enthusiasm for proselytizing efforts among Muslims, Jews or other groups of “unbelievers” arose within the medieval Latin Church from time to time, but it was rarely if ever a dominant concern. Occasional initiatives, statements and policy documents advocating such missions must be understood primarily as the work of certain exceptional individuals, and for most of these individuals external mission comprised only a small part of wider theological–political visions. Some stood at the heart of the Dominican Order’s leadership structure, as did master-general Humbert of Romans, but more often they were figures of relatively marginal influence. A very few were Iberian Dominicans. Others were outside the Order altogether, and their ideas should not be too easily lumped together as some sort of widespread clerical (let alone mendicant)

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missionary movement. The most famous mission advocates developed innovative forms of “rational” argumentation which they hoped might somehow bring intellectual elites to conversion. Such ideas have inspired much interest among modern scholars, but they received a cooler reception from most medieval Dominicans. In the end, any missionary activism they inspired tended to be rare, marginal and short-lived.

THEOLOGY AND TRADITION

There was little in early Christian theological traditions to stimulate Dominican missionizing among Jews or Muslims at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Scripture itself is ambiguous with regard to external preaching, and the Dominicans inherited a conservative exegetical tradition which did not emphasize this aspect of the apostolic example. There was a basic concept of mission *ad gentes* [to the non-Jewish, pagan Gentiles] which developed in opposition to internal missions aimed at the faithful and/or those whose faith in God did not yet include a faith in Jesus Christ: the Jewish *perfidii*. An initial question of whether the Christian community (at first made up exclusively of Jews) should even admit Gentile outsiders was settled in the affirmative by Peter and Paul only after some debate.¹ Centuries later, patristic commentators were still wrestling with the tension between Jesus’ instructions to the apostles in Matthew 10:5–6 (“go not in the way of the Gentiles nor enter into the cities of the Samaritans, but rather go unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”) and in Matthew 28:19–20 (“go out therefore and teach all peoples”).²

The explanation offered by Jerome would become standard: Christ first preached the gospel message to the Jews so that they could reject it, and after his resurrection he permitted a broadening of the apostolic mission to include Gentiles such as the Greeks and Romans.³ Gregory the Great elaborated on this point, noting that Jewish rejection was indeed necessary to justify Christ’s turn to the Gentiles and hence the foundation of a universal (catholic) Church.⁴ The problem of accepting all

¹ Acts 10, 11 and 13:46–14:29.

² This is the so-called “Great Commission,” though it has only enjoyed that designation in theological circles since the nineteenth century (M. Arias and A. Johnson, *The Great Commission* [Nashville, 1992], 15–16). Cf. Mark 16:15–16, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”

³ Cited in Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea in quatuor Evangelia Expositio in Matthaeum* ch. 10, lectio 2 (*Opera Omnia*, vol. XI).

⁴ *Ibid.*

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peoples into the Church was thus resolved, but a noteworthy exegetical tradition was simultaneously established. For centuries to come, biblical passages concerning universal mission were interpreted merely as justifications for the very existence of a non-Jewish *ecclesia*. They were not generally seen (as they have been in modern times) as guidance for continuing Christian efforts to reach out to unconverted pagans – let alone to the Jews, whose rejection of Christianity was evidently part of the divine plan.⁵

Indeed, Paul's words to the Corinthians presented a further dilemma for later generations of Christians considering whether the Church should actively seek to reach out to unbelievers:

For what have I to do with judging outsiders [*iis qui foris sunt*]? Do you not judge those who are within [the Church]? But those who are outside, God judges [I Corinthians 5:12–13].

The Church might be open to all, but it was far from clear that it had an obligation to interfere in any way with the spiritual lives of those dwelling outside its bounds. In the early Middle Ages, when rulers (and hence their peoples) in practically all of western Europe were brought to accept Christianity by means of diplomatic and military pressure without recourse to widespread missionary preaching, Latin theologians did not feel a need to press the issue.

By the time of the Dominican Order's foundation in the thirteenth century, however, Church reforms had combined with new political realities to make a renewed consideration of "outsiders" unavoidable.⁶ In an age of crusade and *reconquista*, Christians could no longer ignore the fact that they lived in a world largely populated by unbelievers. Furthermore, one of the central arguments of the Gregorian reform was that the pope's status as heir to Peter and hence vicar of Christ on earth made him subject to none and master of all – Christians and non-Christians alike. It was a bold claim which would be fully elaborated only after decades of legal, political and theological wrangling.

In terms of canon law, later medieval theorists came to agree that the pope, as representative of the universal savior, had ultimate authority over

⁵ It is my sense that these gospel passages were not used to justify external mission until the sixteenth century. Francisco de Vitoria seems to have been breaking new ground when he chose Matt. 28:19–20 as his text in the first *relectio* of the discourse *De Indis* (1539) (*De Indis et de iure belli relectiones*, ed. E. Nys, tr. J. Bate [Washington, DC, 1917]). Further research on the history of exegesis concerning the "Great Commission," beyond the scope of this book, is needed to confirm the point.

⁶ On Cluny's leadership role in this process see D. Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion*, tr. G. Edward (Ithaca, 2002).

all people throughout the world. They were quick to add, however, that this authority was limited in practice, since secular rulers were also divinely sanctioned. Even sinful and non-Christian rulers were not normally to be challenged in secular affairs.⁷ What the papacy did have was universal jurisdiction over spiritual matters. For Christians, this meant final authority in cases involving sinful transgression of Christian norms. By extension, canonists argued that the pope should also be able to punish Jews for violating Jewish law and “pagans” (including Muslims) for violating the so-called “natural” law if their own leaders neglected to do so.⁸

This latter principle was a moot point most of the time, since a pope’s punitive options were generally limited to threats of excommunication or other spiritual sanction – which had no real effect on unbelievers. Forcible coercion in the form of crusade was a costly and impractical means of imposing policy in “infidel” territory. In cases involving Jews or Muslims who were actually resident in Christian lands, however, the pope or his representatives (including friars who had been assigned inquisitorial powers) might call on secular authorities to mete out more severe punishments. Non-Christians were in practical terms, then, only vulnerable to Church interference when they lived under Christian rulers and committed serious spiritual offences against their “own” religious laws – and then only when these offences were not dealt with internally. Historical examples illustrating this will be further examined in [chapter 5](#) below.

When it came to proselytism canonists ruled in theory that the pope had a legal right to send missionaries to all peoples, including those resident in non-Christian lands, and that military intervention was licit if these missionaries were harmed or prevented from making conversions.⁹ Again, however, this was an ideal emphasizing the universal supremacy of the Church rather than a practical policy initiative. Since it was well known that Christian proselytism was punishable by death in Muslim countries, popes always had a standing legal right to invade. Invasion was simply not a real option most of the time, however, and no medieval pope called a crusade purely for the sake of supporting missionary ventures.

⁷ J. Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels* (Philadelphia, 1979).

⁸ For medieval canonists all people who were neither Christian nor Jewish were considered “pagan,” even Muslims. Islam was not understood to be a monotheistic religion with its own scripturally based legal code. Its adherents, like other pagans, were believed to follow a basic “natural” morality (in sexual matters, for example) derived from human reason instead of divine revelation (Muldoon, *Popes*, 10–11).

⁹ Muldoon, *Popes*, 11 and 17. The corresponding right of Muslims or pagans to proselytize in Europe was rejected out of hand, “because they are in error and we are on the righteous path” (*ibid.*, 12 and 14).

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The option of preaching to Muslims and Jews was therefore always available in principle to medieval Dominicans (among others), whether overtly in Christian territory or covertly in other parts of the world. It was not an obligation, however, nor was it heavily emphasized in standard theological texts, and there were obstacles which made it all but impossible in many cases. At the same time, concern about the proper place and influence of Muslims and Jews in a post-redemption world was an issue pious Christians were increasingly likely to face by the turn of the thirteenth century – especially in frontier regions like the western Mediterranean. The resulting tension led to new calls for proselytism from some quarters, but also to the development of new ways of maintaining the status quo from others.

NEW METHODS

Because “external” mission theology inspired so little discussion in the early Church, there was no agreed-upon *modus operandi* to be followed by would-be missionaries. In principle the evangelical ideal could be carried out by simple and untrained zealots, willing to confront unbelievers and bluntly call for their immediate conversion. This strategy was justified by a belief that God himself, rather than mere human effort, ultimately determined how and when Christianity would be spread. Conversion should not be coerced, and free will was essential, but so too was grace. No one would fully grasp the truth of faith unless his or her heart were illuminated by divine intervention; specific theological arguments were therefore more or less irrelevant to the process. The widespread conversion of Jews in particular was seen as a matter far beyond the capacity of any preaching friars to bring about. It would occur only at the eschaton, when God would remove the “partial blindness” (*caecitas ex parte*) he had deliberately inflicted upon them.¹⁰ In this estimation missionaries simply had a duty to act as agents of God, spreading a gospel whose final reception was out of their hands.

Apocalyptic thinking was influential throughout the Middle Ages, but more humanistic or “philosophical” means of bringing non-Christians to accept Latin Church teachings were also developed by some intellectuals in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹¹ These mission advocates understood that effective preaching inevitably involves persuasive argumentation, and that auditors are unlikely to be convinced by unsupported assertions. Use of rhetoric and logic to convey theological ideas

¹⁰ Romans 11:25. ¹¹ Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 7–22.

was nothing new, of course, and Christian theologians had long used carefully structured polemical and/or apologetic discourse in support of their Scriptural interpretations, often holding them up against rival Jewish interpretations.¹² Such literature was generally intended for internal consumption, however, and so relied on exegetical arguments that took little heed of the fact that Jews themselves did not consider the New Testament to be an authoritative text. Still, it offered a model on which more effective missionary arguments could be eventually built, and twelfth-century writers such as Peter Alfonsi, Peter Abelard and Peter the Venerable brought the genre to a new level.

The Aragonese physician Peter Alfonsi (formerly a Jew known as Moses) provided an enticing example of how Christianity might successfully win over Jewish intellectuals by means of persuasive rational debate. In a series of Latin dialogues Alfonsi imagined his new Christian self engaging his former Jewish self in precisely this sort of conversion process.¹³ The result was a sophisticated presentation of real Jewish arguments against Christianity, based not only on biblical exegesis but on philosophical and Talmudic traditions as well. Moreover, Peter's text contained descriptions of Islamic beliefs and practices which were unprecedented in the West (along with some of the usual medieval anti-Islamic libels).¹⁴ By making more accurate knowledge of both contemporary Judaism and Islam available to a Latinate audience, Peter Alfonsi's work contributed to the possibility that rational argumentation might indeed provide a universal mode of proselytism.

Such argumentation was further explored by the Paris philosopher Peter Abelard, and later by his friend Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny. Abelard's *Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian* was cast as a fairly amicable three-way religious debate conducted along rational lines, with a *philosophus* standing in as a representative of Islam.¹⁵ It was not a work of proselytism, but it may have influenced Peter the Venerable's

¹² G. Dahan, *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, tr. J. Gladding (Notre Dame, 1999).

¹³ Peter's conversion occurred in 1106; his writings circulated widely, especially in England and northern France. The *Dialogus Petri et Moysi Iudaei* survives in some seventy-nine MSS, so that John Tolan has rightly called it "the preeminent anti-Jewish text of the Middle Ages" (*Petrus Alfonsi and His Medieval Readers* [Gainesville, 1993], 98–102). *Dialogo contra los judios/Dialogus contra Iudaeos*, ed. and tr. K.-P. Mieth and E. Ducay (Huesca, 1996).

¹⁴ *Dialogus*, tit. 5: *de Sarracenorum lege destruenda et sententiarum suarum stulticia confutanda*.

¹⁵ Peter Abelard, *Collationes*, ed. J. Marenbon and G. Orlandi (Oxford, 2001). At the time of his writing (1136–9) Abelard does not seem to have been familiar with Alfonsi's work. Abelard's "philosopher" is described as a pagan, but his Islamic identity is implied when he is told that "you undergo circumcision at the age of twelve, following the example of your father Ishmael" (*Collationes*, 48–9). Abelard's belief that Muslims were dedicated to philosophy also emerges in his *Historia Calamitatum*, when he claims to have pondered the option of emigrating to an Islamic

subsequent efforts to develop a novel sort of rational missionary argumentation. Thanks to his travels on the Iberian peninsula from 1141 to 1143, the abbot learned about key Jewish and Islamic religious texts, including the Talmud (perhaps indirectly via Peter Alfonsi's *Dialogue*) and the Qur'an.¹⁶ Decrying the fact that Islam in particular was so poorly understood in the Latin Church, he commissioned a team of translators to produce Latin versions of Arabic books for the express purpose of composing more accurate and hence effective polemical arguments than Abelard had been able to muster.¹⁷

Peter the Venerable's ambitious project was in some ways a harbinger of things to come in terms of Christian intellectual interest in Islam, but it did not immediately lead to any development of serious external missionary campaigns based on rational argumentation. The influential Bernard of Clairvaux declined to write a refutation of Islam using the new resources, and Peter's own polemical efforts (the *Liber contra sectam sive haeresim Saracenorum* and *Liber adversus Judaeorum inveteratam duritiam*) enjoyed little circulation outside Cluny's own library.¹⁸ Even Peter the Venerable had his doubts about whether anyone could really be converted by intellectual arguments. In the *Liber contra sectam*, he observed that

Although I think this [work] might not be of much use to the lost ones [Muslims], nevertheless it would be proper to have a suitable reply as a Christian armory against this pestilence [Islam].¹⁹

As James Kritzeck has pointed out, Peter thus had a "double purpose" in compiling and writing anti-Islamic tracts: to convert Muslims if possible,

land in hopes of enjoying intellectual freedom (ed. J. Monfrin [Paris, 1959], 97; *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, tr. B. Radice [London, 1974], 94).

¹⁶ The theory that Peter Alfonsi's *Dialogus* was Peter the Venerable's primary source for Talmudic knowledge has been subject to debate (*Adversus Iudeorum Inveteratam Duritiam*, ed. Y. Friedman [Turnhout, 1985], xiv–xvi). Even if a copy of Alfonsi's text was not available at Cluny by this time, though, similarities between it and Peter the Venerable's anti-Jewish arguments suggest that its ideas were.

¹⁷ On Cluniac interest in external mission (which may date back to 1074), see J. Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton, 1964), which includes an edition of Peter's *Liber contra sectam*. Also Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 45–6, 54–6, 99–103 and Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion*. On the Qur'an translation M.-T. D'Alverny, "Deux traductions latines du Coran au moyen âge" in *La connaissance de l'Islam dans l'Occident médiéval* (Aldershot, 1994), essay I; and T. Burman, "Tafsir and Translation: Traditional Arabic Qur'anic Exegesis and the Latin Qur'ans of Robert of Ketton and Mark of Toledo" in *Speculum* 73 (1998), 703–32.

¹⁸ Peter's *Adversus Iudeorum inveteratam duritiam* is discussed at length in the introduction to Friedman's edition; cf. Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (London, 1995) 87–8. The *Liber contra sectam* is preserved in only two MSS, while the *Adversus Iudeorum duritiam* survives in one late and three early copies.

¹⁹ Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable*, 44; cf. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 102–3.

to be sure, but also to “look after and provide for the weak ones in the Church, who are inclined to be tempted to evil.”²⁰ Internal and external missionary objectives were intertwined in Peter’s Cluniac concept of mission, with the former ultimately emerging as his top priority. A century later, the Dominicans would follow a similar course.

The idea of utilizing rational arguments to win over potential converts received a certain impetus in the middle of the thirteenth century as universities and other institutions of learning – including new mendicant *studia* – began to digest a newly translated corpus of Aristotelian writings. These texts encouraged studies of logic and natural philosophy among European intellectuals, and led to increased confidence in the power of reason. In addition, Aristotelian thought and philosophy in general were strongly associated with Islam and Judaism in the West, thanks to the influential commentaries of scholars such as Averroes and Maimonides (both, significantly, hailing from Muslim Spain).²¹ As a result, some scholars began to suggest that rational thought might indeed be able to provide insurmountable arguments in favor of the Christian faith – at least in conversation with other intellectuals.

Dominicans in university cities and towns would for the most part prove cautiously supportive of the new learning, especially at Paris, where Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas developed their novel “synthetic” interpretations of Aristotelian and Scriptural wisdom.²² The new texts and ideas were not universally welcomed, however. Efforts to control their dissemination culminated in bishop Stephen Tempier of Paris’ 1277 condemnation of 219 propositions said to have been based on “errors drawn from writings of the Gentiles” (*errores praedictos gentilium scripturis*).²³ Aquinas’ own writings came under critical scrutiny and even censure at this time.²⁴ Rational argumentation had its limits, and Dominicans tended to keep this in mind when evaluating proposals for philosophically based missionizing which began to circulate in the courts and classrooms of Europe in the second half of the thirteenth century.

²⁰ Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable*, 45.

²¹ The idea that Islam was equivalent to classical paganism, and that Arabic culture was essentially based on Greek philosophy, was understandable for Christians whose knowledge of the Islamic world came mostly from reading (or hearing about) translations of Arabic philosophical works: A. de Libera, *Penser au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1991), esp. 109–12. Texts written by Arabic-speaking Jewish philosophers were easily assimilated to this tradition.

²² M.M. Mulchahey corrects earlier exaggerations of the Dominicans’ whole hearted support for all forms of philosophy: “*First the Bow is Bent in Study ...*”: *Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto, 1998).

²³ J.M.M.H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris 1200–1400* (Philadelphia, 1998), 40.

²⁴ J.F. Wippel, “The Condemnations of 1270 and 1277 at Paris” in *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 7 (1977), 169–201.

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The most enthusiastic proponents of a rational approach to external mission tended to be associated to some degree with the Franciscan Order. This should not be taken to mean, however, that mainstream Franciscans were significantly more inclined toward such missions at this time than were the Dominicans.²⁵ Both Orders adopted a cautious approach, and proposals that threatened to skirt the bounds of orthodoxy could be censured. Such was the case with the Franciscan scholar Roger Bacon (c. 1214–94) and the lay mystic Raymond Lull (c. 1232–1316), who may have adopted the habit of the Franciscan tertiaries late in life after reconsidering his decision to join the Dominicans.

Bacon, an Oxford-trained Franciscan, was deeply influenced by contemporary studies of philosophy as well as by rumors of potential conversions in the Mongol East. Especially impressive was William of Rubroek's account of a three-way religious debate held before the court of Manghu Khan in 1254, in which monotheists (Christians and Muslims here forming a common front) were said to have proved more persuasive in their arguments than the idolatrous *tuins* (Buddhists).²⁶ Fired by the idea that such debates might someday result in mass conversions, Bacon began to envision a broad educational program whose implementation he believed would result in the realization of four goals:

For by the light of knowledge the Church of God is governed, the commonwealth of the faithful is regulated, the conversion of unbelievers is secured, and those who persist in their malice can be held in check by the excellence of knowledge, so that they may more effectively be driven off from the borders of the Church than by the shedding of Christian blood.²⁷

Though it was only one of four stated goals in his *Opus maius*, conversion of infidels was especially important to Bacon. He was troubled by the “unspeakable loss of souls” resulting from the Church's failure to bring Jews, schismatics, Muslims and pagans into its fold.²⁸ He therefore devoted the final sections of the work to explaining how these

²⁵ Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, argues that there was an essential Franciscan *religio* of mission focusing on good “works” rather than on “words” (ch. 3); still he concedes (p. 55) that this existed in parallel with strong apocalyptic and philosophical missionary trends within the Order.

²⁶ S. Easton, *Roger Bacon and His Search for a Universal Science* (New York, 1952), 114. Bacon's missionary ideas, and the debt they owe to early mentors Adam Marsh and Robert Grosseteste, are discussed in Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 55–66. For William's narrative see C. Dawson, *Mission to Asia* (repr. Toronto, 1980), 88–220; the debate is recounted on pp. 191–4. William and Roger met at Paris after the former's return from the East, sometime around 1260.

²⁷ *Opus maius* i:1, ed. John Bridges (1900; repr. Frankfurt, 1964), vol. III, 1.

²⁸ *Opus maius* III:13, ed. Bridges, vol. III, 120–1. The greatest barrier to communication with these peoples, Bacon argued, was linguistic. He prided himself on his knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, and the *Opus maius* argues repeatedly for missionaries to be trained in languages such as Hebrew, Greek and Arabic.

unbelievers' conversion could someday be achieved. Like Abelard, friar Roger was convinced that rational argumentation was a universally intelligible and effective means of communication – particularly well suited to the philosophically minded peoples of Islam.

Persuasion of the truth as alone contained in the Christian religion is a two-fold matter, since we may appeal to miracles which are beyond us and beyond unbelievers, a method in regard to which no man can presume; or we may employ a method familiar to them and to us, which lies within our power and which they cannot deny, because the approach is along the paths of human reason and along those of philosophy ... We are not able to argue in this matter by quoting our law nor the authorities of the Saints, because unbelievers deny Christ the Lord and his law and the Saints. Wherefore we must seek for reasons in another way which is common to us and to unbelievers, namely, philosophy.²⁹

This observation led the Franciscan to conclude that the best strategy for a campaign of mass proselytism would be to train multilingual missionaries in philosophical argumentation. These missionaries' objective would be to convince those elites "who are fitted to receive wisdom, who can be persuaded by force of reason," since "through them, the persuasion of the multitude is much easier."³⁰

Roger seems at times to have kept his work secret from his own Order, partly on the advice of the powerful cardinal, Guy Foulques (*Guido Fulcaldi*, himself something of an extremist who had established an interest in staging theological debates between Christians and Jews in his old see of Narbonne).³¹ When Guy was elected pope Clement IV in 1265, Roger had good reason to be optimistic that his time had come. Unfortunately, a copy of the *Opus maius* arrived at the curia only to find the pope fully occupied with wars against the imperial pretenders Manfred and Conradin – and within a month of Conradin's 1268 execution, Clement was dead. If he had lived longer, external missions of an intellectual cast might have received stronger encouragement from the curia. Instead Bacon's ideas received no sympathetic hearing, and he may have spent time in prison for disobedience. According to one later chronicle, his teachings were finally condemned by Jerome de Ascoli (Franciscan minister general 1274–9) on suspicion of containing *aliquas novitates suspectas*.³²

²⁹ *Opus maius* VII:1, ed. Bridges, vol. II, 373.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 374.

³¹ Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 59–60.

³² *Ibid.* 57 and 65. Daniel is dubious about the fourteenth-century *Chronica XXIV generalium*'s testimony on this matter. The question remains open to debate; see now A. Power, "A Mirror for Every Age: The Reputation of Roger Bacon" in *English Historical Review* 121 (2006), 657–92 (I would like to thank Dr. Power for her feedback on this matter).

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Roger Bacon's ideas had only minor influence on contemporaries, but they were echoed in the Crown of Aragon by the nobleman Raymond Lull. A former seneschal to prince James (later James II of Mallorca), Lull experienced a spiritual conversion sometime around 1263.³³ According to his semi-autobiographical *Vita coetana*, Raymond felt that he had been called

to give up his life and soul for the sake of [Christ's] love and honor; and to accomplish this by carrying out the task of converting to His worship and service the Saracens who in such numbers surrounded the Christians on all sides.³⁴

Like Bacon, Lull became convinced that the best means for bringing unbelievers to conversion universally was for missionaries to be trained in foreign languages and the techniques of philosophical disputation. On the advice of fellow Catalan and former Dominican master-general Raymond Penyafort, he gave up an initial impulse to attend the university in Paris and devoted himself instead to Arabic studies with the help of a Muslim slave at home in Mallorca.³⁵ He then took it upon himself "to write a book, the best in the world, against the errors of the unbelievers." Full of zeal, Raymond Lull went on to write not one but numerous books in which he laid out his own highly original system of logical argumentation.³⁶ Much of the rest of his busy career involved the refinement of this "art" (*ars*), amid efforts to convince Christian authorities (above all at the papal curia, royal courts and the University of Paris) to take up the task of teaching and preaching its precepts:

It then occurred to him that he should go to the pope, to kings, and to Christian princes to incite them to institute, in whatever kingdoms and provinces might be appropriate, monasteries in which selected monks and others fit for the task would be brought together to learn the languages of the Saracens and other unbelievers, so that, from among those properly instructed in such a place, one could always find the right people ready to be sent out to preach and demonstrate

³³ Most details about Lull's life come from the *Vita coetana*, written by admirers in Paris c. 1311 but based on Lull's own recollections: annotated English version in Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 13–45. The best overall discussion of Lull and his career remains Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull*.

³⁴ Lull, *Vita coetana* ¶5; tr. Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 15.

³⁵ According to the *Vita coetana*, Lull's slave ended up hanging himself after attempting to kill his master: Lull, *Vita coetana* ¶11–13; tr. Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 21–2.

³⁶ Lull's first attempt at writing a book "against the errors of unbelievers" was likely his *Book of Contemplation* (*Llibre de Contemplació en Déu*). Hillgarth suggests the work was written in Arabic c. 1272, but only Raymond's Catalan version and later Latin translations now exist (Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull*, 34, n. 31). The complexities of the *ars* and Lull's missionary strategy generally (which were not purely "rational") are examined by Mark Johnston in *The Spiritual Logic of Ramon Lull* (Oxford, 1987) and *The Evangelical Rhetoric of Ramon Lull ...* (Oxford, 1996).

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to the Saracens and other unbelievers the holy truth of the Catholic faith, which is that of Christ.³⁷

Llull's confidence in the efficacy of disputation, and of his own special methods, won him powerful support. His former employer, king James II of Mallorca, granted land and funding for the establishment of an Arabic school at Miramar on the coast of the island, where thirteen Franciscans at a time were to be trained in the language and arguments necessary to fulfill Raymond's evangelical vision.³⁸ He was given a favorable hearing by Philip IV of France, and by a succession of popes. He was even given royal letters of introduction which allowed him to visit the Maghribi ports of Tunis and Bugia. Here, according to the *Vita coaetana*, he put his missionary principles into practice by preaching to all who would listen – from theologians to jailers. After a brief incarceration (c. 1307) Llull was deported for his efforts. He lived to tell the tale, to write more treatises and even to make another trip to Tunis in 1314.³⁹ At the Council of Vienne in 1311, too, his proposal for the establishment of chairs in Hebrew, Arabic, Greek and Chaldean language study at five major European universities was endorsed.⁴⁰

Setbacks and opposition were also encountered, however. The foundation at Miramar left no discernible legacy of trained missionary friars, and its Arabic school may never have gone beyond the planning stage.⁴¹ Raymond was bitterly disappointed by the cold reception he faced at the University of Paris, where he was regarded as an ill-educated outsider and where his *ars* faced initial rejection.⁴² His relations with the

³⁷ Llull, *Vita coaetana* ¶17; Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. i, 16.

³⁸ Llull's *Vita coaetana* briefly mentions this (¶17), and a papal bull of October 17, 1276 confirms the foundation.

³⁹ See Llull, *Vita coaetana* ¶25–9 and 36–40; tr. Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 33–7 and 41–4. Texts inspired by these experiences include the *Petitio Raymundi pro conversione infidelium* and the *Disputatio Raymundi christiani et Homeri saraceni*; between voyages he also composed a *Liber praedicationis contra Iudaeos*. King James II of Aragon wrote two letters on Llull's behalf in November 1314: one to the Hafsid ruler and the other to his Christian translator Joan Gil (A. Rubió y Lluch, *Documents per l'Historia de la Cultura Catalana Mig-aval* [Barcelona, 1908], vol. I, 62–3 [¶54–5]; cf. the king's letter to Llull [¶55]). Without such high-ranking support Llull could have faced execution.

⁴⁰ B. Altaner, "Raymundus Lullus und der Sprachenkanon (can. 11) des Konzils von Vienne (1312)" in *Historisches Jahrbuch* 53 (1933) 190–219 (partial Catalan tr. in *Estudis Franciscans* 45 [1933], 405–8).

⁴¹ Llull was living in Montpellier instead of Mallorca after 1283, and it is unclear who would have taught Arabic at Miramar in his absence. The *Vita coaetana* makes no further mention of the project. From 1285–98, because his patron James II was exiled from Mallorca by his nephews Alfonso III (1285–91) and James II of Aragon (1291–1327), Llull avoided the Crown of Aragon (A. Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader* [Princeton, 1993], 20–1). Franciscan tenure of Miramar was confirmed by Alfonso in 1286 without any mention of an Arabic *studium* (doc. in Webster, *Els Menorets*, 310 [¶4]). It seems finally to have been abandoned altogether between 1292 and 1295 (Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 21, n. 63).

⁴² Llull's *Vita Coaetanea* mentions this experience in somewhat veiled terms (¶19; tr. Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 28–9). Despite his early rejection, Paris was to become a major center for the

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Dominican Order varied; despite his initial appeal to Penyafort for advice Llull later became highly critical of what he saw as the preaching friars' reluctance to use rational argumentation as a proselytizing tool. When faced with an apparently terminal illness in Genoa he sought to join the Order (1293), but changed his mind when he recovered and realized that the Franciscans were more sympathetic to his *ars*.⁴³ Though he ultimately gained royal and university approval for his schemes, Llull died without achieving any of his initial goals. His *ars* remained a learned curiosity rather than a widely used missionary technique, and even the Council of Vienne's endorsement could not bring language teachers and students into being *ex nihilo*. Years after his death there were still no chairs of language study, and by 1376 the Catalan inquisitor Nicholas Eymeric (a Dominican) was mounting a serious campaign to have Llull's teachings branded as heretical.⁴⁴

Roger Bacon and Raymond Llull thus represent different branches of an extreme tendency advocating universal proselytism through reason. They fascinated some with their extravagant plans, but they failed to win sustained institutional support when it counted most. Both spent time in prison (though on different sides of the Mediterranean) and eventually the orthodoxy of each writer was questioned. In the end their works and experiences reveal more about scholarly debates over the proper role of philosophy, then raging in and around medieval universities, than they do about contemporary missionary approaches to Muslims and Jews. Their example may have impressed some friars, but it does not seem to have been followed to any great extent by the Dominican Order as an institution, whether in the Crown of Aragon or elsewhere.

DOMINICANS AND MISSION

The Order of Friars Preacher emerged at an opportune time for experimentation with new missionary practices. First established in 1216, it was to be a monastic organization dedicated to the twin tasks of apostolic

diffusion of Llull's works thanks to the work of his disciple Thomas le Myésier (see Hillgarth, *Ramon Llull*, esp. 183ff.). Hillgarth points out that Llull's chief goal in visiting Paris was probably more to obtain royal support than to receive university approval (Hillgarth, *Ramon Llull*, 76).

⁴³ Llull, *Vita coetana* ¶21–4; tr. Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 31–3. Llull may eventually have joined the Franciscan tertiaries, but if this did happen it was sometime after 1304.

⁴⁴ Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 71–3. Eymeric's list of Llull's 100 most serious "errors" is in Alois Madre, *Die theologische Polemik gegen Raimundus Lullus* (Münster, 1973), app. 1, 147–57. Papal condemnation of Llull followed, but the Aragonese monarchy refused to accept it and debates over Llull's orthodoxy continued into the modern period.

“preaching and the salvation of souls.”⁴⁵ Precisely whose souls were to be saved was not a subject for discussion at the outset, however. There was in principle no limit to their mission, but neither was there a definite target group. The friars’ simple Rule, borrowed from that of the Augustinian canons, offers no further insight on the matter; it is typical of early monastic texts in emphasizing a common life of prayer, frugality and discipline, and makes no reference to conversionary preaching or any other sort of outreach to non-Christians.⁴⁶ The Order’s earliest *Constitutions* (addenda to the basic Rule) provide only a few further guidelines concerning the friars’ preaching vocation: practical admonishments for preachers to be adequately trained and of good character, and a directive that they should travel unostentatiously in pairs of *socii*.⁴⁷ In the years and decades which followed, supplementary articles proposed at General Chapters almost never raised the issue of proselytism.⁴⁸

Despite this lack of precision, the Dominicans’ original mission was clearly focused on Christians. As Herbert Grundmann has shown, mendicant friars were just part of a whole range of medieval Christian reform movements (beginning with the so-called “Gregorian reformation” of the eleventh-century papacy) which sought to “convert” Christian believers to more pious religious lives based on the biblical examples of Christ and his apostles.⁴⁹ These movements varied widely in their interpretations of the Bible, and concepts of piety therefore differed from one group to another – especially in terms of attitudes toward material wealth and the legitimacy of

⁴⁵ The prologue to the Dominican *Constitutions* notes that “cum ordo noster specialiter ob predicationem et animarum salutem ab initio noscatur institutus fuisse, et studium nostrum ad hoc principaliter ardenturque summo opere debeat intendere, ut proximorum animabus possimus utiles esse”: A. Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties van de Dominicanen* (Leuven, 1965), 311. Reference to the souls of “neighbors” (*proximorum*), though biblical in inspiration, may underline the friars’ lack of conscious interest in external foreign mission at this early date. The language of this passage suggests that it was added in retrospect, but it appears in the earliest extant MS, the Rodez MS, ed. H. Denifle: “Die Constitutionen des Prediger-Ordens vom Jahre 1228” in *Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchen-Geschichte des Mittel Alters* 1 (1885), 165–227, and so must date to within a few years of the Order’s establishment.

⁴⁶ The Augustian Rule is a very brief document which gives general precepts concerning a common life dedicated to prayer, frugality, abstinence and discipline. Latin text with analysis is in L. Verheijen, *La Règle de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1967).

⁴⁷ Dist. 2, cap. 20 and 31 of the *Consuetudines: De idoneis ad predicandum* and *De predicatoribus*, Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties*, 356 and 363–4. On the precise text of the *Consuetudines* as they evolved in the first decades of the Order’s history see Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties*, 383–94 (French summary).

⁴⁸ A rare mention of conversion appeared in the Bologna Chapter *acta* of 1233, which advised against accepting converted heretics into the Order (“illi qui ab heresi convertuntur. cum magna difficultate ad ordinem recipiantur”: *MOFPH*, vol. III/1, 4). The problem of Christian heresy was still central. Most of the other business raised at this and other Chapters involved disciplinary and liturgical issues.

⁴⁹ *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages* (1935; tr. S. Rowan, Notre Dame, 1995).

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Church authority structures (including the fundamental division between laity and clergy). Some were denounced as heretics, charged with seducing followers into deviant versions of Christian belief and practice. Yet since even the papacy wanted to promote reform and apostolic examples, efforts were made not only to crush such heresies but also to ensure that well-meaning Christians received the guidance necessary to channel their piety into proper forms. This was the intention behind many of Innocent III's canons at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, including canons 9 and 10 (instructing bishops to ensure that "suitable men" were available to provide orthodox sacraments and preaching to all Christians).⁵⁰

Dominic of Osma and his followers thus offered themselves at precisely the right time, as a group of orthodox and pious "suitable men" devoted to public preaching in full obedience to their local bishop – and ultimately to Rome. Amid the violent confrontations of a papal crusade against Albigensian heretics, bishop Fulk of Toulouse laid out Dominic's and his associates' initial responsibilities in a privilege of 1215:

Be it known to all, now and in the future, that we, Fulk ... institute Brother Dominic and his associates as preachers in our diocese for the purpose of stamping out the perversion of heresy, uprooting vice, teaching the rule of faith, and instructing the people [*homines*] in sound morals. They propose to travel on foot and to preach the word of the Gospel in evangelical poverty as religious.⁵¹

It was on this understanding that pope Innocent III granted Dominic and his followers the right to form a religious Order the following year, though he insisted they respect the Fourth Lateran moratorium on new foundations by adopting an existing monastic Rule. Confirming the Order's privileges in 1217, Honorius III wrote of his expectation that the friars would "zealously spread the word of God, whether welcomed or not, and so laudably complete the work of the evangelist."⁵² Pope Honorius had already noted the Dominicans' dedication to struggle with heretics, calling them "boxers of the faith" (*pugiles fidei*) in a letter of 1216; now he continued to employ martial imagery but also alluded to their work in medicinal terms.⁵³ Combating religious error within the Church

⁵⁰ Lateran IV full text in Mansi, vol. XXII; tr. H. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis, 1937), 236–96. It should be noted that the Council did not expressly call for missions to Muslims or Jews; canon 70 calls, rather, for additional precautions to monitor allegedly insincere existing converts from Judaism. Much more important were issues concerning Greek and other "schismatic" Christians.

⁵¹ *MOFPH*, vol. XV, 66–7 (#60); tr. Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 40–1.

⁵² Letter of Honorius III dated January 26, 1217; ed. Ripoll, vol. I, 4 (#3).

⁵³ The pope thus calls the friars "studiosi medici, spirituales mandragoras" and "Christi Athletae" in this same letter (#3 in Ripoll, vol. I, 4). The *pugiles fidei* reference is in a letter of December 22, 1216 (*Ibid.* [#2]).

and healing the spiritual wounds it caused were twin dimensions of the friars' vocation from the very beginning.

Combativeness, and a concern for the salvation of souls, were only natural under the circumstances. Though the universalizing norms of curial rhetoric discouraged mention of specific situations in the letters cited above, the story of Dominic and the opposition he directed against Cathar heretics in Toulouse and other parts of Languedoc is well known.⁵⁴ The murder of papal legate and inquisitor Peter of Castelnau by militant Cathar supporters in 1208, and the ensuing violence of a papal crusade which crushed the heretics and devastated much of the Languedoc, ensured that the friars' mission would be a dangerous one. The Dominican friar Peter of Verona was similarly murdered for his inquisitorial activities against Lombard heretics in 1252; he would ultimately be lauded as the Order's most exemplary martyr.⁵⁵

The Dominicans' active preaching ministry thus began in the context of a major initiative to combat Christian heresy, in the heartlands of Christian Europe. The earliest friars ventured forth into potentially hostile communities, calling for heretics and their sympathizers to abandon sectarianism and return to the beliefs and practices of the Roman Church. In this sense they were missionaries, but their mission was an internal one. It aimed to reform the "faith and morals" of people who, however misled or rebellious, were nevertheless baptized sons and daughters of the *mater ecclesia*.

A possibility remained that Muslims, Jews and other non-Christians might also be eventual recipients of mendicant evangelism. The Franciscans set early precedents in this field, though without practicing "rational" strategies of mission dialogue. Francis of Assisi made his famous yet fleeting visit to the Ayyubid sultan al-Kamil in 1219, where he bluntly called for that eastern ruler's conversion.⁵⁶ The same year a small group of Italian

⁵⁴ J. Strayer, *The Albigensian Crusade* (1971; new edn. Ann Arbor, 1992) 22, 41–2 and 146–7; M. Barber, *The Cathars* (Harlow, 2000), 119. A summary of the Dominicans' role is in Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 21–32.

⁵⁵ Peter was not actually canonized until 1553, but his veneration began almost immediately. On his cult, see C. Caldwell, "Peter Martyr: The Inquisitor As Saint" in *Comitatus* 31 (2000), 137–73. Aragonese inquisitors Ponce de Planedis, Bernard de Travesseres and Peter de Cadireta were also murdered in the course of their inquisitorial duties, but they failed to attract the same sort of attention in the Order (Diago, fols. 7v–12r; Caldwell, "Peter Martyr," 143, n. 20).

⁵⁶ According to Jacques de Vitry, Francis "came into our army, burning with the zeal of faith, and was not afraid to cross over to the enemy army. There he preached the word of God to the Saracens but accomplished little" (R.B.C. Huygens, ed., *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry* [Leiden, 1960], 132–3 [#6]). Thomas of Celano elaborated on the story, asserting that Francis' mission to Egypt came after an earlier attempt to visit Muslim Spain failed because of illness (*Legenda Prima*, bk. 1, ch. 20; tr. in M. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi Writings and Early Biographies* [1973; rev. edn. Quincy, 1991], vol. I, 274–7). This hagiographical version of the tale was recorded and circulated in the context

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Franciscans imitated his gesture by traveling through Islamic Spain and Morocco, loudly denouncing Muhammad and Islam. Like Francis, these friars spoke no Arabic, but their basic point was understood well enough to result in their swift execution for blasphemy.⁵⁷ The Order's first Rule itself counseled friars to preach by means of pious example alone, or with simple calls for conversion and baptism, without going into details about linguistic modes of communication or cultural context:

The brothers who go [among Muslims] can conduct themselves spiritually in two ways. One way is to avoid quarrels or disputes and *be subject to every human creature for God's sake* (I Peter 2:13), so bearing witness to the fact that they are Christians. Another way is to proclaim the word of God openly, when they see that is God's will, calling on their hearers to believe in God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Creator of all, and in the Son, the Redeemer and Savior, that they may be baptized and become Christians, because *unless a man be born again of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God* [John 3:5].⁵⁸

This lack of concern for effective communication suggests that divine aid was expected to be forthcoming, but perhaps also that Francis and the friars in Morocco sought martyrdom for themselves as much or perhaps more than conversion of others.⁵⁹ Deliberate efforts to achieve martyrdom were disturbingly similar to suicide, however, so the confrontations at Damietta in 1219 and Marrakesh in 1220 were not widely imitated. Concern over the orthodoxy of seeking martyrdom through reckless preaching reached the highest levels, and in 1223 the Franciscans' own Rule was emended to counsel greater discretion. The missionary instructions cited above were removed and replaced with a much more restrictive passage:

Whosoever of the brothers may wish, by divine inspiration, to go among the Saracens or other unbelievers, shall seek permission to do so from their Provincial ministers. The ministers however shall give permission to none save only those whom they see are fit to be sent.⁶⁰

of Francis' canonization proceedings (successfully concluded in 1228). Bonaventure further developed the story in his later *Legenda Maior*, ch. 9:4–9 (tr. in Habig, *St. Francis*, vol. I, 701–5). Cf. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 117–33 and Tolan, *Saracens*, 214–21 on this and related episodes.

⁵⁷ The friars made only one known "convert": a Portuguese Augustinian (later St. Anthony of Padua), who joined the Franciscan Order after viewing their bodies (Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 42–3).

⁵⁸ *Regula non bullata*, ch. 16; tr. in Habig, *St. Francis*, vol. I, 43. Cf. Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 37–54.

⁵⁹ Thomas of Celano discussed Francis' desire for martyrdom at length, concluding that although he did not find death at the hands of the Muslims his sufferings made him a sort of martyr after all (Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 41–6; also Tolan, *Saracens*, 214–21).

⁶⁰ *Regula bullata*, ch. 12; tr. in Habig, *St. Francis*, vol. I, 64. The Rule is not clear in specifying what makes one unfit for mission, but the goal was presumably to distinguish the truly pious from unbalanced or suicidal extremists. The earlier *Regula non bullata* (1221) had further read "The Lord says: 'Behold, I am sending you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be prudent as serpents

Dominicans for their part were aware of these Franciscan initiatives. They showed even less inclination to court martyrdom at the hands of Muslims, but a corresponding kernel of interest in extending missionary appeals to non-Christians likely also existed among the Preachers from their earliest days. As with the Franciscans, however, evidence for this is almost impossible to disentangle from later hagiography. A tradition had already begun to emerge by the 1230s to the effect that Dominic himself had once intended to travel beyond the confines of Christendom and proselytize among either the pagans of eastern Europe or the Muslims of his Iberian homeland. This was recorded in testimony before the commission deciding on Dominic's canonization in 1233, a little more than a decade after the founder's death.⁶¹ According to friar Rudolph of Faenza,

[Dominic] longed for the salvation of all souls, not only Christians but also Saracens, and especially Cumans, and others; and he was more zealous for souls than any other man he had ever seen. And he often said that he wanted to go to the Cumans and to other infidel peoples.⁶²

Rudolph's words were echoed by the more junior friars Paul of Venice and Frugerio of Pennabilli.⁶³ The story of Dominic's unfulfilled desire to proselytize was repeated in Jordan of Saxony's *Libellus* soon after the canonization was completed.⁶⁴ It was not clearly understood by some friars, however, since copyists differed with respect to whether Dominic had in fact wanted to convert pagan Cumans or Muslims.⁶⁵ It passed into the hagiographical compilation of Jean de Mailly nonetheless, and by

and simple as doves' [Matt. 10:16]. Therefore, any brother who desires to go among the Saracens and other unbelievers should go with the permission of his minister and servant. And the minister should give [these brothers] permission and not oppose them, if he shall see that they are fit to be sent" (*Regula non-bullata*, ch. 16, tr. Habig, *St. Francis*, vol. I, 43).

⁶¹ On the problematic manuscript tradition of Dominic's canonization proceedings, see S. Tugwell, ed., *Early Dominicans* (New York, 1982), 474–5 and the sources cited therein. In the absence of any reliable text, the following observations are not conclusive with regard to the 1230s. Nevertheless, these documents have played a major role in the Dominican Order's and its historians' perceptions of the formative years, and so they must be taken into account.

⁶² *MOFPH*, vol. XVI/2, 149–50; I have expanded the translation in Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 77. Cf. N. Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom* (Cambridge, 2001), 213–19.

⁶³ *MOFPH*, vol. XVI/2, 83–4; cf. Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 83–4. Both friars had known Dominic only in his last months. Paul claimed to have spent two years, and Frugerio four months, in the founder's company.

⁶⁴ Jordan's version of the story claims that Dominic's bishop, Diego of Osma, had already begged the pope in 1206 (unsuccessfully) for permission to devote energies to proselytism in Muslim lands (*MOFPH*, vol. XVI/2, 35–5 [ch. 17]; tr. Tugwell, *On the Beginnings*, 4–5).

⁶⁵ The precise object of Diego and Dominic's missionary fervor was confused from an early date, since all MSS of the *Libellus* except "O" (the more primitive text according to Tugwell) have *conversioni Comanorum* instead of *Saracenorum*. Later Dominican chroniclers were split on the issue (V. Koudelka, "Notes pour servir à l'histoire de saint Dominique II" in *AFP* 43 [1973], 5–11).

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mid-century it had become an established (though still quite minor) part of the Order's institutional memory.⁶⁶

The idea that Dominic was particularly interested in external mission is placed in some doubt by the testimony of friar John of Spain – one of the original members of the Toulouse community received at the hands of Dominic himself. At the canonization proceedings John observed that

Dominic was loved by everybody, rich and poor, Jew and pagan [i.e., Muslim] (and there were many of these in Spain), in fact by everybody except for the heretics and the enemies of the Church whom he pursued and refuted in debate and in preaching.⁶⁷

John seems here to imply that Dominic was exclusively concerned with evangelization among Christian heretics, explicitly contrasting the founder's unswerving zeal on that front with his more tolerant attitude toward Spanish Muslims and Jews. If John's testimony is to be taken at face value (and there is no clear reason to reject it) then assertions about Dominic's intention of someday going off to preach among Cumans and/or Saracens must be understood as reflecting pious posthumous sentiment more than actual planning. In seeking the canonization of their founder, the Dominicans could not help but note the precedent established by Francis' hagiographers, and they may have adjusted their interpretation of Dominic's words and deeds accordingly.

The anecdote about Dominic's desire to convert far-off pagans or Muslims – which, if not altogether apocryphal, remained ill-defined and unconsummated at the end of his life – is characteristic of the Order's approach to external missions in the earliest decades of its existence. Such missions were always theoretically possible, but they were not articulated explicitly as part of any Dominican agenda. The earliest friars were more concerned with preaching orthodox doctrine and setting good examples for the sake of their Christian flocks. Like Rudolph, Paul and Frugerio (and like Jordan and Jean de Mailly later on), John of Spain was much more interested in recording Dominic's abstinence, his strictness and other laudable monastic traits than in noting his alleged desire to convert unbelievers. The potentially universal dimensions of Dominic's preaching mission were only an incidental part of the overall saintly package. They were beside the point, in effect, and so the contradictions between

⁶⁶ Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 56. On Jean de Mailly (c. 1243), see Antoine Dondaine's introduction to his French translation of Jean de Mailly, *Abrégé des gestes et miracles des saints* (Paris, 1947), 7–22.

⁶⁷ *MOFPH*, vol. XVI/2, 145; tr. Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 74–5.

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John's testimony and that of the other friars went entirely unnoticed by contemporaries.

“NOW IN THE ELEVENTH HOUR ...”

The years following Dominic's death in 1221 saw important developments which led to changes in the way educated people in the Latin West – such as Dominican friars – conceived of their relations with non-Christians. This period combined ongoing concerns over the fate of the Holy Land with new hopes and fears engendered by Mongol advances, dismay over a worsening papal-imperial conflict and novel accusations directed at the Jews. All this developed amid anticipation in some quarters of an impending eschaton, to be heralded by mass conversions of non-Christian peoples and the suppression of heresy and schism among believers. The friars, increasingly threatened by conflicts of their own with hostile local clergy, were among those affected by these currents. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that a new emphasis on external mission emerged as a possible focus for the mendicant Orders from the 1230s to the 1260s. The importance of the shift should not be exaggerated, however. The missionary ventures which resulted remained quite limited, and only a minority seem to have involved work in the western Mediterranean.

Some have seen a turning point in 1235, when pope Gregory IX issued the bull *Cum hora undecima*. This document, “the basic statement of the church's missionary function,” did indeed set important precedents.⁶⁸ Throughout the later thirteenth century subsequent popes would reissue the bull to affirm the mendicant friars' theoretical ability to preach among non-Christians as well as Christians. At the same time it was really quite a vague statement which left the Church's “missionary function” largely undefined. Characteristically, it was phrased in universal language so that both internal and external mission could be covered by its terms. Yet there are indications to suggest that internal mission remained the dominant paradigm for Dominicans and others who received its mandate – even at a time of deepening apocalyptic speculation, as reflected in the ominous *incipit*.

Originally addressed to William of Montferrat, an isolated Dominican envoy-preacher to the Nestorian and Jacobite Christians of “Mesopotamia and Persia,” *Cum hora undecima* was written with the exciting prospect of

⁶⁸ Muldoon, *Popes*, 36–7. Text of the 1235 version is in A. Tautu, ed., *Acta Honorii III et Gregorii IX* (Rome, 1950), 286–7 (#210).

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unification between Eastern and Western Churches in mind.⁶⁹ Gregory's *arenga* implies that he saw friar William's work in apocalyptic terms, as contributing to the conversion of the *plenitudo gentium* which was expected to signal the advent of the end times:

Since the eleventh hour has come in the day given to mankind ... it is necessary that spiritual men [possessing] purity of life and the gift of intelligence should go forth with John [the Baptist] again to all men and all peoples of every tongue and in every kingdom to prophesy because, according to the prophet Isaias, the salvation of the remnant of Israel will not occur until, as St. Paul says, the *plenitudo gentium* enters first [into the kingdom of heaven].⁷⁰

William was to be sent as a "worker in the vineyard of the Lord," preaching to any who might benefit from his ministrations: the "blind," "false heretics" and the "wavering faithful."⁷¹ In other words, the *plenitudo gentium* was here understood to include the conversion of erring and sinful Christians as well as that (potentially at least) of non-Christians.

In order to accomplish his task in a land at a great distance from the normative Latin system of episcopal and parochial organization, William of Montferrat was granted extremely wide authority. Alone he was to

expound the word of God, and in order that men might be converted to the unity of the Christian faith through your exhortation, to receive, baptize and join them unto the sons of the holy Church; to hear confessions, to enjoin salutary penance; and (with the counsel of bishops, if these should be Catholic and present) to absolve the excommunicate according to the ecclesiastical form, as well as those irregulars whose cases would normally fall to the dispensation of the Legate of the Apostolic See; and to reconcile, and free from the chains of anathema by which they have been bound, those who in any way have strayed from the faith or the unity of the Roman Church, if they should wish to return, and to make amends for their crimes in whatever way you see fit for the sake of their souls; also to assume responsibility for Orders and other ecclesiastical sacraments from Catholic patriarchs, archbishops and bishops; to bless sacerdotal vestments, altar cloths and corporals according to your need wherever there are few Catholic bishops, and indeed to do other things which are for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, as appropriate to the time and place.⁷²

⁶⁹ Richard, *La papauté*, 56–7. Cf. Tautu, *Acta*, 306–7 and Altaner, *Die Dominikanermissionen*, 4. Latin control of Constantinople (1204–61) encouraged this optimism; William was operating in a region just beyond the frontiers of crusader Antioch, with populations of Armenian and other non-Latin Christians in towns such as Mosul and Edessa. The Christian kingdom of Georgia may also have been part of William's concern.

⁷⁰ Tautu, *Acta*, 286; partial tr. in Muldoon, *Popes*, 36–7. Cf. Matt. 24:14 and Mark 13:10; also Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 12–13).

⁷¹ Tautu, *Acta*, 286.

⁷² Tautu, *Acta*, 287. This bull is comparable in intention but textually unrelated to *Vineae domini custodes* (1225), which will be discussed in chapter 7 below.

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Essentially, Gregory granted full pastoral autonomy to William and his west Asian mission, without imposing any specifics as to who he should focus on converting, or how such conversions might be encouraged.

The same *carte blanche* was issued to the friars more broadly by Innocent IV in 1245. Its terms were repeated by Alexander IV in 1256–8, Urban IV in 1263 (for Franciscans working in Greece), Nicholas IV in 1288 (and a second time in 1291, to a pair of Franciscans), and Benedict XI in 1304 (addressed only to the Dominicans of the Hungarian Province); it would continue to be reissued in one form or another in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as well.⁷³ The main difference in the later bulls' content was a slight increase in specificity with regard to the missionaries' powers. Converts with problematic marriages could be granted the Pauline privilege, for example, while schismatic clergy who submitted to Rome might be allowed to retain their offices.

As James Muldoon has noted, Innocent IV's 1245 version of *Cum hora undecima* (addressed this time to the Franciscans) was also more specific in finally providing an actual list of those who were liable to be targeted for missionary activity.⁷⁴ The list reflects the Church's universalism, in that it strives for inclusion of all known peoples who were not in communion with Rome.⁷⁵ It should not be taken as an indication that friars were really stationed in all the named territories. Still, Innocent was careful to leave a door open for later initiatives. Any peoples who might have been omitted from the list were covered under the heading "other infidel nations of the East or of any other region." Though the ultimate intent was universal, Innocent and his successors' immediate focus was clearly on religious and political struggles in the volatile East.

⁷³ Muldoon, *Popes*, 36–8. A full examination of the bull's later history would be revealing; Muldoon's assertion that it was simply "continually reissued" glosses over a great deal of detail in how its addressees, contents and circumstances changed over time. Editions of the later thirteenth-century versions (often incomplete, and taken only from Vatican registered copies) can be found in the *Pontifica Commissio ad redigendum Codicem Iuris Canonici Orientalis*: Fontes, ser. 3 (Vatican City): *Acta Innocentii PP. IV (1243–1254)*, ed. T. Haluscynskij and M. Wojnar (1962), 36–42 (#19); *Acta Alexandri PP. IV (1254–1261)*, ed. Haluscynskij and Wojnar (1966), 73 (#38); *Acta Urbani IV, Clementis IV, Gregorii X (1261–1276)*, ed. A. Tautu (1953), 26–8 (#7); *Acta Romanorum Pontificum ab Innocentio V ad Benedictum XI (1276–1304)*, ed. F. Delorme and A. Tautu (1954), 42–4 (#79), 184–5 (#110) and 252–5 (#153).

⁷⁴ Muldoon, *Popes*, 37.

⁷⁵ The published version of Innocent's bull is addressed "Dilectis filiis fratribus de Ordine Fratrum Minorum in terras Saracenorum, Paganorum, Graecorum, Bulgarorum, Cumanorum, Ethyoporum, Syrorum, Iberorum, Alanorum, Gazarorum, Gothorum, Zicorum, Ruthenorum, Jacobinorum, Nubianorum, Nestorinorum, Georgianorum, Armenorum, Indorum, Mesolitorum aliorum infidelium nationum Orientis seu quarum cunque aliarumque partium proficiscentibus" (Haluscynskij and Wojnar, *Acta Innocentii* 1962, 36). The other peoples listed are identified in *ibid.*, 39–42; cf. Richard, *Papauté*, 65.

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In all its recensions, *Cum hora undecima* was a document concerned above all with internal missions aimed at bringing heterodox Christian communities into the Roman observance and alliance. Among Innocent's twenty specified target groups the clear majority were oriental Christian communities traditionally hostile or ambivalent to Latin supremacy: Greeks, Bulgarians, Ethiopians, Syrians (including Maronite Christians), Caucasian "Iberians" (that is, Georgians), Alans, Crimean Goths, Zichs (Circassians), Rutheni (Russians), Jacobites, Nubians, Nestorians, Georgians and Armenians.⁷⁶ "Indians" likely refers to the Nestorians of the Malabar coast, while "Mosulites" for the most part were Christian Kurds. Many Cumans and Khazars were non-Christians, but Mongol pressure had recently pressed the Cumans in particular to begin accepting Hungarian religious tutelage.⁷⁷ "Saracens" rounded out the list, along with the catch-all term "pagans." Jews, whether under Latin rule or not, were apparently not considered to be subject to this particular regime of mission *ad gentes*.

It was not until 1256 that a version of *Cum hora undecima* can be shown to have been drafted with missions to western Muslims specifically in mind. Alexander IV's 1258 recension of the bull (addressed to the Franciscans, and adding Tartars, "Hungarians of Greater Hungary" and "Christian captives of the Turks" to the existing list), was the one ultimately registered in his name at the Vatican archive, but a lesser-known version by the same pope dated June 27, 1256 was received by the Dominican Provincial Prior of Spain.⁷⁸ Spanish Dominicans were instructed in this document to direct their attentions "to the lands of the Spanish Saracens, throughout all the kingdom of Tunis, and to any other infidel nations."⁷⁹ At mid-century, papal promotion of mendicant travels to both eastern and western frontier zones had finally been brought together in a unified statement of missionary intent.

AMBIVALENCE AND HUMBERT OF ROMANS

The timing of Alexander's bull was no accident. An increased but still quite cautious Dominican interest in the idea of proselytism among

⁷⁶ P. Jackson, *The Mongols and the West* (Harlow, 2005), 17 and 60–2, shows that the Jacobite hierarchy was negotiating acceptance of Roman primacy in 1237; by 1247–8 they had confirmed this alliance as did their Nestorian and Russian counterparts (*ibid.*, 94–7).

⁷⁷ On conversions of Cuman chiefs see *ibid.*, 17 and 61. An episcopal see of "Cumania" existed by 1228, and mass baptisms were common by 1239.

⁷⁸ The text of this version is printed in J.-M. Coll, "Escuelas de lenguas" in *AST* 17 (1944), 136–8; also Ripoll, vol. I, 309–10 (#105). The Prior in 1256 was Arnold de Segarra, who would play an important role in the 1263 Barcelona disputation (see [chapter 4](#)).

⁷⁹ Coll, "Escuelas de lenguas," 136.

non-Christians reached its height under the master-generalship of Humbert of Romans (1254–63). Humbert placed the issue squarely on his Order's agenda for the first time, though he failed to maintain his initial enthusiasm and ultimately chose to side with crusade proponents against the idealism of his more optimistic confrères. Examination of the corpus of Humbert's extensive writings also reveals that external mission still held a relatively minor place in his overall conception of the Order's apostolic duty. Moreover, what interest he did have was again generally related to concerns about the eastern situation, not to Dominican proselytism in Spain.

Humbert was keenly aware of contemporary conflicts with Muslims and Jews, and he evinced a special concern with events in the East. Though he was not present for the Paris Talmud trials of 1242–4, he returned to France in time for the 1245 ecumenical Council at Lyons and was apprised of its resolutions.⁸⁰ He served as Provincial of France from 1244 to 1254, prior to and during Louis IX's failed Egyptian crusade (1248–54), and so probably authorized the assignment of French Dominicans who accompanied the venture – including the Arabic translator Yves le Breton.⁸¹ Humbert was also the one who selected friars Andrew of Longjumeau and Ascelin for their perilous mission to explore a possible Franco-papal alliance with the Mongol khan in 1245–7.⁸² As if to highlight where his priorities lay, Humbert of Romans' election was confirmed at the Dominican Order's first General Chapter ever to be held in Buda, Hungary (1254).⁸³

As master-general, Humbert decided early on to make conversion of non-Christians one of the Order's priorities. In 1255 he issued an encyclical letter to this effect:

among the many heartfelt desires aroused within me because of the leadership I have undertaken, there is one which is of no small importance: that is, that the ministry of our Order should both recall schismatic Christians to the unity of the Church and bring the name of the lord Jesus Christ to the perfidious Jews, the Saracens who have for so long been so deceived by their pseudo-prophet,

⁸⁰ Humbert headed the Roman Province from *c.* 1240 until November 1244, when he was made Provincial of France. Lyons was his home convent, however, where he had previously served as lector and prior, and where he later retired (E. Brett, *Humbert of Romans* [Toronto, 1984], 6–10).

⁸¹ Yves is mentioned in Joinville, *Histoire de Saint Louis*, ch. 87 (ed. Natalis de Wailly [Paris, 1874], 197).

⁸² Gerard de Fracheto, *Vitae Fratrum*, bk. 4, ch. 1 (*MOFPH*, vol. I, 151). On this mission (and its Franciscan counterpart), see Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, xviii–xxi; Richard, *La papauté et les missions*, 45 and 69–86; and Jackson, *Mongols*, 87–103.

⁸³ *MOFPH* vol. 3, 66–71. Previous chapters had been confined to Paris, Bologna, Montpellier and the Rhineland.

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to the idolatrous pagans, to all the barbarians and peoples of the world (*barbaris et gentibus univervis*), so that we might be its witnesses, and the salvation of all to the very ends of the earth.⁸⁴

This was breaking new ground. St. Dominic may have made casual remarks about missionary ambitions to his companions, but now for the first time a clear and relatively forceful written statement had been issued stating that evangelism should henceforth be directed toward unbelievers of all types, including Jews, as well as to “schismatic Christians.”

The master-general went further still, calling for volunteers to take the concrete steps of studying foreign languages and/or moving to frontier areas. Singled out for special attention were the eastern Provinces, where schismatics, pagans and Muslims abounded:

If anyone, inspired by the grace of God, should find within his heart that he is prepared (in accordance with the will of the leadership) to learn the Arabic, Hebrew, Greek or other barbaric languages, through which he might acquire rewards for himself in undertaking the work of salvation in a timely manner; or indeed if he should find himself disposed to depart the fortress of his own nation, passing over to the Province of the Holy Land or of Greece or to other [Provinces] bordering infidel regions, which without doubt greatly lack in friars prepared to suffer for the Order, for the faith, for the salvation of souls and for the name of our lord Jesus Christ – I admonish him not to refrain from writing to me concerning the disposition of his soul on this matter.⁸⁵

Humbert knew his call for external mission was unusual within the Order, and he anticipated opposition. Noting that to date friars had been reluctant to preach to non-Christian peoples because of their lack of linguistic expertise and their connections to their own homelands, he admonished his readers to recall the example of the apostles:

Were they not all Galileans? And which of them remained in Galilee? Did not one travel to India, another to Ethiopia, another to Asia, another to Achaya [Greece]? Thus they all were spread far and wide among the various peoples (*diversas naciones*), and produced the fruit which we now see in the world.⁸⁶

This call to external mission was consistent both with Scripture and with the evangelical spirit of the times, but it was also at least in part a consequence of unrelated internal pressures. Shortly before Humbert’s letter was drafted, the mendicant–secular conflict had reached a crisis point.⁸⁷ In November 1254 pope Innocent IV sided decisively with the secular

⁸⁴ *MOFPH*, vol.V, 18–19. ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 19.

⁸⁷ D.Douie, *The Conflict between the Seculars and the Mendicants at the University of Paris in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1954); on Humbert’s role see Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 12–40.

clergy, withdrawing privileges from both Franciscans and Dominicans by means of the bull *Etsi animarum*. After less than forty years of existence, the mendicants were facing an imminent termination of their ministry.

Humbert's encyclical must be understood at least in part as a response to this threat. The situation ameliorated somewhat when Innocent died in December 1254, for the new and more sympathetic pope Alexander IV suspended execution of *Etsi animarum*. The mendicants were still in danger, however, and they faced the crisis head-on at the General Chapter of 1255. In addition to the above encyclical, Humbert thus issued another letter at the same Chapter outlining the controversy and his point-by-point response to it – which mainly consisted of advising the friars to avoid conflict by humbly withdrawing from contested pastoral duties wherever necessary.⁸⁸ Diverting Dominican energies instead into the new and unchallenged field of external mission was part of this plan. Humbert prefaced his 1255 call for language study and proselytism with a general exhortation that can only be understood in this context:

Let not the world, which we have now trodden under foot as dirt, re-flourish in our hearts. Let the wicked enemy find us men of force and powerful warriors amidst his insults. Let us walk in wisdom toward those who are outside (*qui foris sunt*), so that we might keep away from the scandals of those who, alas, so easily impugn our way of life. Let us show ourselves to be obedient to our superiors, agreeable to our fellows, in all things a mirror of life and an exemplar of sanctity, pure and simple before God.⁸⁹

The encyclical letter of 1255 thus made external mission an explicit part of the Dominicans' overall evangelical program both in imitation of the apostles and as part of a wider pragmatic effort to secure an uncontroversial place for the Order in the clerical community of the Latin Church.⁹⁰ Humbert was aware of the fact that some isolated moves in this direction already existed, especially in the East, and he hoped for continuing and expanding efforts in the future.

The master-general was not initially to be disappointed, as friars from all over Europe hastily informed him of any and all foreign adventures they had undertaken. Humbert was impressed with their accounts of successful proselytism, most of which seem to have previously escaped

⁸⁸ *MOFPH* vol.V, 21–4. A few months later Humbert issued a related circular letter in collaboration with the Franciscan minister-general, calling for cooperation between the two Orders in the face of their common perils (*ibid.* 25–31).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 17.

⁹⁰ The point should not be exaggerated, however, as Humbert issued at least fourteen circular letters calling for broad reforms in the Order during his brief tenure as master-general (*MOFPH*, vol.V, 15–63). For the most part these exhort friars and nuns to piety, prudence and obedience and make no specific mention of external mission.

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his attention. In 1256 he issued a new encyclical letter to publicize their good example:

A great multitude of the Cumans, concerning whom the friars had been solicitous, were baptized. The Maronite people, who for a long time were schismatics and subversives, are said to have offered up their books to be corrected in all things according to the will of the brothers of the Province of the Holy Land, who had been very concerned about their rectification. The friars who set out to visit the Tartars, too, have sent word to me of their successful voyage. Our brothers of great authority, men of wonderful power, who have for eighteen years and more now been leading lives of the greatest asperity among the Georgians in the remotest regions of the Orient, reproach our miserable lack of activity in their letters full of burning love and wonderful examples. In the regions of Spain the friars, who have now for many years been studying Arabic among the Saracens, have not only laudably progressed in the language; even more to be praised, their cohabitation has yielded (*cedit*) these same Saracens up to salvation. This can be seen in the many who have now received the grace of baptism. [Concerning] the most grand nation of the Prussians, newly submitted to the dominion of Christians, many of them have abandoned the rite of the pagans and are rushing to the grace of baptism.⁹¹

Such claims reveal Humbert's and perhaps his informants' optimism. They were taken up by pope Alexander IV, who wrote to congratulate and encourage the Spanish Dominicans in particular for their efforts in Tunis and elsewhere among the Muslims.⁹² Rhetoric and hyperbole, however, are evident in these letters. The Tartar mission was hardly "successful," the Cumans were still largely pagan in the fourteenth century and the Prussians apostatized *en masse* in a 1261 rebellion against the oppression of the Teutonic knights.⁹³ Humbert's communications were intended to inspire his friars with pious *exempla*, not to provide objective historical data.

The 1256 encyclical also indicates the master-general's Christian (internal) and eastern-focused priorities. Out of six groups specifically mentioned as recipients of missionary attention, three were eastern pagans (Cumans, Tartars and Prussians) while two were eastern Christian schismatics (Maronites and Georgians). No mention was made of any

⁹¹ *MOFPH*, vol.V, 40. Significantly, the letter also contains news on continuing problems faced by the Paris friars in their conflict with secular clergy.

⁹² "Significasti nobis, & Nos liberter audivimus, quod Fratres Predicatores, missi de mandato nostro Tunisium, & ad alias barbaras nationes, tam in conversione infidelium, quam etiam in corroboratione fidelium, operantur fructum non modicum per gratiam Jesu Christi. Quia vero tibi a dilecto filio Priore Provinciali Fratrum Predicatorum Hispanie commissum dicitur, ut possis hujusmodi Fratres mittere ad terras Saracenorum, & ad alias infidelium nationes ..." (Ripoll, vol. I, 395 [#275]).

⁹³ Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 56.

inroads (or even attempts) in the matter of converting Jews, despite the fact that they were probably the most easily accessible non-Christian audience for the vast majority of friars dwelling in the convents of western Europe. Islam does not seem to have been a major target for the friars up to this point either. Aside from the allusion to Arabic study and baptized Muslims in Spain, Humbert mentioned no news of friars' successes among the many other Muslim communities they would have encountered throughout the Mediterranean and beyond. Nevertheless, external mission to the western Muslims had emerged as an explicit goal for the Spanish Province of the Order, and it was likely this realization that caused Alexander IV to issue his new recension of *Cum hora undecima* to them at precisely this time.⁹⁴

Apparently satisfied that his friars were making good progress, Humbert turned in later years to more general issues, including ongoing conflicts with the secular clergy and with rival mendicants. The remainder of his tenure as master-general was dedicated to reforming all aspects of life in the Order, from the liturgy to education and discipline. Humbert was a conscientious administrator, and he went to great lengths to describe the duties of each member of the Dominican hierarchy in exacting detail.⁹⁵ His treatise on the duties of the master-general included a single passage arguing for continued emphasis on missionary work, support for language schools and the composition of polemical tracts against the "errors of the non-believers," but otherwise the issue received little attention in the vast bulk of his writings.⁹⁶

Humbert remained active in Church affairs after his retirement in 1263. His zeal for external missions faded, however, and the former master-general ultimately found himself arguing against advocates for the cause of converting non-Christians, or at least that of converting Muslims. Instead Humbert turned his attention to the crusades, endorsing a renewal of crusading fervor at a time when Louis IX was planning his own last campaign against the Muslims and when events in the Holy Land seemed to be going from bad to worse for the Latins. Between 1266 and 1268, he wrote a treatise entitled *De praedicatione sanctae crucis contra*

⁹⁴ Humbert's letter was dated at the General Chapter in Paris, which began on Pentecost (June 4). Alexander's bull was dated 27 June, and was probably intended either as an addendum or perhaps a response to Humbert's letter.

⁹⁵ On Humbert's many administrative texts (*Expositio regulae, Instructiones de officiis ordinis*, etc.), see Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 117–50 and 195–201. His extensive liturgical program is discussed in the same work, pp. 80–102.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 56, n. 55. The *De officiis ordinis* was written some time after 1257; in 1259 the Dominican commission set up to propose a new educational regime included the establishment of a *studium arabicum* at Barcelona as one of its *desiderata* (see chapter 3).

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saracenos in hopes of inspiring a new generation of crusade preachers.⁹⁷ Here he waxed martial in his arguments for the justice of offensive war against Muslim enemies, making no mention at all of their possible conversion. Ever the educator, Humbert did advise friars to inform themselves about the Holy Land and about Islam before undertaking crusade-related preaching campaigns. Far from a preparation to engage Muslims in conversionary dialogue, however, such readings were selected to provide homilists with damning *exempla* concerning the Prophet Muhammad and his followers' allegedly sinful behavior – to edify and provoke the indignation of potential crusaders.⁹⁸

Near the end of his life, Humbert was invited along with other high-ranking Church officials to submit a position paper to the papal curia in the months leading up to the second Council of Lyons in 1274.⁹⁹ The lengthy *Opusculum tripartitum* resulted from this invitation, and in its first section Humbert returned to the issue of crusade. Despite a rising tide of popular opposition to the crusading movement, and despite the fact that some other Dominicans such as William of Tripoli were submitting briefs counseling evangelization rather than violent campaigns against the Muslim world, Humbert remained a supporter of military action. In the end, his arguments carried the day.¹⁰⁰

Unlike the hortatory encyclicals of 1255–6 the *Opusculum tripartitum* was a private communication, and its author expressed his mature opinions on the subject with frank realism. Islam was the greatest threat to Christendom ever, he stated, and Muslims would never be voluntarily converted. The very few who had ever been baptized were captives, and their conversions were generally not sincere.¹⁰¹ War was therefore inevitable, and any scruples which might be raised over unconverted Muslims facing eternal damnation when killed by crusaders must be put aside: like convicted thieves, they had only brought righteous punishment on themselves.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 167–75.

⁹⁸ Humbert's list of ideal reading for crusade preachers included the Qur'an, along with relevant passages in Peter Alfonsi's *Dialogi*, the *Gesta Caroli magni in Hispania* of Pseudo-Turpin, Walter the Chancellor's *Historia Anthiocena* and Jacques de Vitry's *Historia transmarina* (Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 173).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 176–94.

¹⁰⁰ According to Palmer Throop, Gregory followed Humbert's suggestions most closely (*Criticism of the Crusade* [Amsterdam, 1940], 261).

¹⁰¹ *Opusculum tripartitum*, pt. I, ch. 6; ed. Orthuinus Gratius, *Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum & Fugiendarum* (London, 1690), vol. II, 188. Humbert reasoned that Islam was irresistibly attractive because of its alleged permissiveness.

¹⁰² Humbert answered his own rhetorical objection, “quando vincimus & eos occidimus, mittimus eos ad infernum, quod videtur esse contra charitatem,” with the argument that “dicendum est,

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These words clashed resoundingly with the earlier encyclicals, but Humbert had not abandoned all his conversionary hopes.¹⁰³ He contrasted Muslim intransigence with a claim that “according to history many Jews, idolaters, philosophers and heretics have turned away from their errors and frequently converted to the Catholic faith.”¹⁰⁴ He therefore counseled patience, recalling the Pauline doctrine that “it was prophesied concerning the Jews, that their remainder shall be converted in the end” and adding that the “Tartars, Cumans and other barbarians” would also eventually be converted “as it was prophesied that every tongue shall serve Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁵ Some faint hope might even be held out for those Muslims who had been brought under Christian rule (as in Spain):

So it is also even now with the Saracens who are subjected to us. For they, willing or not, can be forced to hear preaching, through which even now some are occasionally converted. Hence their situation is not so hopeless as it is for the others [unconquered Muslims].¹⁰⁶

In the end, Humbert’s influential concept of mission *ad gentes* tended to stress the inevitable, predetermined will of God rather than human effort. Jews and pagans would eventually convert because it was their destiny. Human agents, like the Dominican friars, could gain merit by piously following in the footsteps of the apostles and undertaking to be God’s instruments in this grand design. Their preaching might even reach some few conquered Muslims, though Humbert was hardly enthusiastic about this prospect when he wrote the *Opusculum*. The change in tone and attitude between his encyclical letters of 1255–6 and the proposals submitted to Gregory X in 1274 may represent disillusionment or merely a shift from public to private speech. Either way, Humbert’s writings suggest that the Dominican Order approached the ideal of external missionary activity in the later thirteenth century with a mixture of interest and ambivalence. His successors had nothing further to say on the matter; as the enthusiasm of the fifth master-general’s early letters faded away it was up to the Order’s theologians and other intellectuals to work out precisely what that ideal entailed.

quod Christiani non intendunt hoc, sed facere de eis, quod justum est, sicut iudex de latrone” (*Opusculum tripartitum*, pt. 1, ch. 16; ed. Gratius, *Fasciculus Rerum*, vol. II, 196).

¹⁰³ The complexities of Humbert’s position on crusading violence and missionary preaching (categorized as “harsher than Innocent [IV]”) are explored in Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 184–7.

¹⁰⁴ *Opusculum tripartitum*, pt. 1, ch. 6; ed. Gratius, *Fasciculus Rerum*, vol. II, 188.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* ch. 15; ed. Gratius, *Fasciculus Rerum*, vol. II, 195. The allusion is to Daniel 7:13–14.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

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MISSION THEOLOGY AND THOMAS AQUINAS

While Humbert of Romans directed the business affairs of the Order and laid out his programmatic statements, and while Parisian students discussed the new Aristotle, other friars were hard at work developing what was to become the Dominicans' proudest legacy to future generations: their theological writings. Theological inquiry was truly at the heart of the Order's vocation, and Scriptural exegesis permeated every aspect of its members' lives and works. The master-general could call for individual friars to go and preach doctrinal beliefs to non-Christians, but it would be up to the Order's theologians to explain just how this might be done in practice.

Dominican theologians of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries were by no means univocal, but they did tend to avoid the mystical and enthusiastic tendencies which occasionally emerged in Franciscan circles.¹⁰⁷ Dedicated from their inception primarily to the suppression of heretical ideas, Dominican friars were sensitive to the dangers of Joachimism and related doctrines. The generally pragmatic writings of Thomas Aquinas were more representative of the Order, and soon after his death in 1274 steps were taken to privilege Aquinas' doctrines. By the time of his canonization in 1323 these doctrines were very widely distributed and highly influential, especially within Dominican circles.¹⁰⁸

Thomas is best known today for his *Summa theologiae*, but he was also an accomplished exegete whose understanding of Scripture undergirded his systematic theological writings.¹⁰⁹ It is to the saint's biblical commentaries, therefore, that one must look for the foundations of his thinking on apostolic mission. These reveal a generally conservative approach of looking back to the Church Fathers, especially in the *Catena aurea*

¹⁰⁷ The example of German Friars Preacher such as Meister Eckhart would indicate that mysticism was not necessarily absent from Dominican circles; their influence does not seem to have impacted convents of the Iberian peninsula, however.

¹⁰⁸ On efforts to promote Aquinas' doctrine and memory – culminating in his being named *communis doctor* by the university of Paris in 1319 and a saint in 1323 – see J.-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas* (1993; tr. R. Royal, Washington, DC, 2005) 296–326. The prevalence of Thomistic writings in the Dominican convent libraries of medieval Spain will be discussed in chapter 3. For Aquinas' reception generally, see J. Hillgarth, *Who Read Thomas Aquinas?* (Toronto, 1992).

¹⁰⁹ Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, 136–40 gives background on the composition of the *Catena Aurea* (1263–8). Torrell further notes that these gospel commentaries were widely read (existing still in many dozens of MSS) and he repeats Weisheipl's assertion that the work marks a "turning point" in Thomas' thought. Yet aside from a few articles cited by Torrell, this aspect of the Thomistic *oeuvre* has been neglected. Even studies of Thomas as a theologian tend to avoid his exegesis in favor of systematic theology (as for example T. O'Meara, *Thomas Aquinas Theologian* [Notre Dame, 1997]).

(commentaries on the four Gospels).¹¹⁰ At times, however, Thomas was not averse to formulating his own position – as he did with regard to the Church’s responsibilities vis-à-vis non-Christians in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians*.

Commentaries on the so-called “Great Commission” of Matthew 28:19–20 and related passages in the *Catena aurea* are typical of Aquinas’ normal approach. Citing Bede and Jerome, Thomas summed up a traditional position: that the concluding lines of Matthew simply relate to the shift from an exclusively Jewish apostolate during Jesus’ lifetime to a post-resurrection Church in which all peoples could be saved.¹¹¹ Nothing further was added to suggest that this passage should be used to inspire contemporary Christian missionary initiatives. The same went for Thomas’ treatment of Mark 16:14–16, where Augustine, Gregory and Theophylact joined Bede and Jerome as authorities for a series of reflections on the meaning of Christ’s injunction to “go out and preach the Gospel to all creation [*omnis creaturae*].”¹¹² Far from considering an ongoing task of universal preaching, the Fathers chose to focus on a broader lesson derived from the biblical episode in its narrative context: the apostles had just been chastised for their incredulity, and the command to “go out and preach” was followed by a reminder that “he who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” The *Catena aurea*’s reading of this passage thus completely avoided discussion of apostolic mission *per se* and turned instead to making a basic theological point that belief and baptism are together necessary to secure salvation.¹¹³

Even when Aquinas saw fit to break new exegetical ground, his commentaries show no more than a passing interest in external missionary ventures. Reading Paul’s key statement on *iis qui foris sunt* (I Corinthians 5:12–13), for example, Thomas chose to echo contemporary canon law instead of the Fathers. “Indirectly,” he conceded, “the prelates of the Church have power over those who are outside (*eos qui foris sunt*), insofar as they prevent the faithful from making contact with them

¹¹⁰ W. Principe, “Thomas Aquinas’ Principles for Interpretation of Patristic Texts” in *Studies in Medieval Culture* 8 and 9 (1976), 111–21.

¹¹¹ Aquinas, *Catena aurea in quatuor Evangelia Expositio in Matthaem*, ch. 28, lectio 4 (*Opera Omnia*, vol. XI, 333–4).

¹¹² *Ibid.* ch. 16, lectio 3 (*Opera Omnia*, vol. XI, 440–1).

¹¹³ Thus Theophylact: “vel omni creaturae, idest credenti et non credenti. Sequitur qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit. Non enim sufficit credere: nam qui credit et nondum est baptizatus, sed catechumenus, nondum est perfecte salutem adeptus” (*ibid.*, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XI, 440). See in addition Aquinas on Jesus’ celebrated encounter with the Samaritan women in John 4, which is similarly handled (Aquinas, *Catena aurea in quatuor Evangelia Expositio in Ioannem*, ch. 4, lectiones 1–3 [*Opera Omnia*, vol. XII, 302–6]).

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on account of their guilt.”¹¹⁴ The emphasis here was again on defense of the faithful rather than making converts. Going further, Aquinas came close to dismissing the issue of infidel conversion altogether:

Those who are outside, that is the infidels, will be judged by God, that is in a judgment of condemnation, not a trial; because (as Gregory says in the *Moralia on Job*) the infidels will be damned without a judgment of discussion and trial.¹¹⁵

Concluding his *lectio*, Aquinas granted that those who were most “firm in faith” could indeed go out as missionaries to pagans in order “to communicate with them, and to effect their conversion.”¹¹⁶ He cautioned that this was dangerous, however, and that other Christians should avoid all contact with unbelievers “lest they be seduced.” Overall then, Dominicans trained in the Thomistic exegetical tradition were not prohibited from preaching to Jews, Muslims or pagans; but neither were they encouraged or given specific counsel on how to proceed.

In fact Thomas Aquinas wrote no treatise devoted to mission in any form. A persistent myth, originating in the writings of the fourteenth-century Catalan Dominican Peter Marsili, claims that the *Summa contra gentiles* was written expressly for use as a missionary manual by Spanish preachers facing Muslim audiences.¹¹⁷ An examination of the work’s structure and contents makes it clear that this was not the case, except perhaps in the very broad sense that all preachers could benefit from its

¹¹⁴ Aquinas, *Super I Epistolam B. Pauli ad Corinthios*, ch. 5, lectio 3 (*Opera Omnia*, vol. XIII, 192–3)].

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XIII, 193.

¹¹⁶ “Est ergo considerandum ex praemissis apostoli verbis, quod non prohibemur communicare infidelibus, qui numquam fidem receperunt propter eorum cautelam ... Illi vero qui sunt firmi in fide, possunt eis licite communicare, et dare operam conversioni eorum” (*ibid.*). Note that here Aquinas was specifically concerned with those pagans who had “never received the faith”; his words thus do not apply to Jews or to heretics. He made no explicit reference to Muslims, who might presumably be included under the heading of “pagans.” Heretical and apostate Christians were to be avoided by the faithful as a punishment, but also with a view to preventing any propagation of error.

¹¹⁷ The myth has been convincingly refuted by R.-A. Gauthier (Introduction to R. Bernier and M. Corvez’s French translation of the *Contra gentiles* [Besançon, 1961], 60–9) among others, but it continues to circulate. See *inter alia* Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law* (Berkeley, 1999), 372; also Tolan, *Saracens*, 242. The relevant passage in Marsili reads: “Conversionem etiam infidelium ardentem desiderans rogavit Eximium doctorem sacre pagine magistrum in Theologia fratrem Tomam de Aquino eiusdem ordinis, qui inter omnes huius mundi clericos post fratrem Albertum, philosophum maximus habebatur; ut opus aliquod faceret contra infidelium errores, per quod et tenebrarum tolleretur caligo, et veri soli doctrina credere volentibus panderetur. Fecit Magister ille quo tanti patris humilis deprecatio requirebat, et summa que contra gentiles intitulatur, condidit, que pro illa materia non habuis parem credatur” (*Crónica*, bk. 4, ch. 47; ed. Martínez San Pedro, 403). It is only one of the pious tales recorded in three chapters devoted to recalling Raymond’s sanctity. These chapters were among Marsili’s additions to the original Catalan version of the *Llibre dels fets*, which originally had nothing to do with Raymond.

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wide-ranging wisdom.¹¹⁸ Indeed, Aquinas himself acknowledged in the second chapter of the book that he had no intention of writing a treatise aimed at overcoming any particular “error” such as Islam:

To proceed against individual errors, however, is a difficult business, and this for two reasons. In the first place, it is difficult because the sacrilegious remarks of individual men who have erred are not so well known to us so that we may use what they say as the basis of proceeding to a refutation of their errors ... In the second place, it is difficult because some of them, such as the Mohammedans and the pagans, do not agree with us in accepting the authority of any Scripture, by which they may be convinced of their error.¹¹⁹

Thomas thus excused himself from the task of writing a work dedicated to the specific purpose of guiding potential missionaries in their efforts to convert non-Christians – in part because he felt himself unqualified to meet such a challenge. Thomas claimed no special knowledge of Islam, and he made no reference to the Qur’an which he did not consider to be a “Scripture” in any way comparable to the Jewish or Christian Bible. His educational background, like that of all friars, equipped him instead for analysis of biblical Judaism, classical heresies and a range of philosophical schools.¹²⁰ The *Summa contra gentiles* (also known as the *De veritate fidei catholicae*) was written primarily to serve as a guide for Christians in their efforts to discern and combat dangerous teachings associated with these traditions.

The concept of combating theological “error” had been fundamental to the Dominicans since the earliest days of their struggle with Cathar and Waldensian heretics. It also lay at the heart of how medieval Dominicans came to understand their apostolic mission. The problem as they saw it was not so much to convert individuals or groups from one religion to another as to uphold the truth of Catholic doctrine and oppose errors which contradicted it. The Dominican Order’s educational reforms of 1259 (co-developed by Aquinas himself) were designed to accomplish this task, and the *Summa contra gentiles* was written in the years immediately following with that goal firmly in mind.¹²¹ It was a task appropriate

¹¹⁸ M. Jordan, “The Protreptic Structure of the ‘Summa Contra Gentiles’” in *The Thomist* 50 (1986), 173–209.

¹¹⁹ *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 1, ch. 2; tr. A. Pegis (1955; repr. Notre Dame, 1975), vol. I, 62.

¹²⁰ On Aquinas’ minimal knowledge of Islam see Tolan, *Saracens*, 242–4. Thomas may have known something of the Talmud, but he did not exploit it to any significant extent in his writings. Cohen points out two exegetical passages in which the Dominican made disparaging references to the Talmud, but it would be an exaggeration to suggest that anti-Talmudic literature greatly influenced the *SCG* (*Living Letters*, 371–2). See further J. Hood, *Aquinas and the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1995).

¹²¹ The first fifty-three chapters of the *SCG* were probably drafted during the summer of 1259, at a time when Thomas was contributing ideas to the Dominican special commission on education

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to internal and external mission alike, and thus congruent at least in theory with the ideal of universal apostolic evangelism.

Choosing the text of Proverbs 8:7 as the keynote for this *Summa*, Thomas Aquinas reflected on the duties of the wise man. These were particularly suited to an Order dedicated to study, education and preaching:

“My mouth shall meditate truth, and my lips shall hate impiety” (Prov. 8:7) ... Appropriately is the twofold office of the wise man shown from the mouth of Wisdom in our opening words: to meditate and speak forth of the divine truth, which is truth in person ... and to refute the opposing error.¹²²

His goal, in other words, was “to make known, in our limited way, the truth that the Catholic faith professes, and to remove the errors that are opposed to it.”¹²³

Thomas next set out to explain how this goal could best be achieved when dealing with different audiences. He was cautious on this point, arguing that in fact certain issues were not really appropriate in conversations with adversaries – that is, with non-Christians. He divided theological truth into two parts: one which was comprehensible by means of rational thought and another which was not.¹²⁴ All people, whether Christian or not, could be taught to recognize the first sort of truth but the second was limited to those who had already embraced the Christian faith. Thomas’ advice was therefore also twofold:

Now, to make the first kind of divine truth known, we must proceed through demonstrative arguments, by which our adversary may become convinced. However, since such arguments are not available for the second kind of divine truth, our intention should not be to convince our adversary by arguments: it should be to answer his arguments against the truth; for, as we have shown, the natural reason cannot be contrary to the truth of faith. The sole way to overcome an adversary of divine truth is from the authority of Scripture – an authority divinely confirmed by miracles. For that which is above the human reason we believe only because God has revealed it. Nevertheless, there are certain likely arguments that should be brought forth in order to make divine truth known. *This should be done for the training and consolation of the faithful, and not with any idea of refuting those who are adversaries.* For the very inadequacy of the arguments would rather strengthen them in their error, since they would

(the General Chapter at Valenciennes met that same summer). The rest of this *Summa* was completed by 1265 at the latest (Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, 101–4). Aquinas was simultaneously working on his *Catena aurea* – the commentary on Matthew was composed between 1263 and 1264 while the rest were completed by 1268 (*ibid.*, 200). On the reforms of 1259 and medieval Dominican education in general see Mulchahey, “*First the Bow.*”

¹²² SCG, bk. 1, ch. 1; tr. Pegis, vol. I, 59–61.

¹²³ *Ibid.* ch. 2; my translation differs slightly from Pegis’.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* ch. 9; tr. Pegis, vol. I, 77.

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imagine that our arguments of the truth of faith was based on such weak arguments.¹²⁵

This is Thomas' clearest statement of methodology for those interested in preaching truth and combating errors, and it has important implications for the practice of Dominican external mission in particular. It bespeaks a strikingly limited vision of the preacher's prospects for proselytism among non-Christians, especially among Jews and Muslims. These may indeed be brought to admit "rationally provable" dogmas such as that there is a God, that he is one and so on – issues on which the three monotheistic religions already agreed – but the wise man/friar was explicitly cautioned to limit discussion of any further "truths" to Christian audiences already disposed to accept them on the authority of Scripture.

Thomas' arguments and analyses in the *Summa contra gentiles* were thus primarily intended for those engaged in internal missionary work ("the training and consolation of the faithful"). While in principle his text might also serve missionaries engaged in intellectual discussions aimed at drawing people away from polytheism or atheism, such contingencies were not his main concern. Refutation of anti-Christian arguments (including those raised by Muslims or Jews) was the real point, and it is in this defensive posture that other Dominican writings concerning non-Christian beliefs must likewise be understood. Thomas' preoccupation with protecting the faith from infidel "errors" was evident. It was founded on his conviction that even if some truths concerning the faith could not be rationally proved, neither could any arguments against Catholic doctrine:

Whatever arguments are brought forward against the doctrines of the faith are conclusions incorrectly derived ... such conclusions do not have the force of demonstration ... and so, there exists the possibility to answer them.¹²⁶

Thomas did precisely this around 1265, shortly after completing the *Summa contra gentiles*, in his *De rationibus fidei*. The latter brief apologetic work, responding to a request from an anonymous "Cantor of Antioch," sought to help Latin Christians in the Holy Land respond to Muslim mockery of their religion. It also contained arguments designed to counter criticisms from Eastern (Greek or Armenian) Christians over theological points such as the existence of purgatory. As in the *Summa contra gentiles*, to which the Cantor is explicitly directed for further guidance,

¹²⁵ SCG, bk. I, ch. 9; tr. Pegis, vol. I, 77–8 (my italics).

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* ch. 7; tr. Pegis, vol. I, 75.

Thomas here argues that Christian faith can only be defended but not proven.¹²⁷ Such advice would not be lost on Dominicans facing similar challenges in the western Mediterranean.

Thomas continued to ponder the overall question of infidelity, and of how non-Christians were to be understood from a theological point of view, in his later works. Though it comprises only a minute portion of the massive *Summa theologiae*, question 10 of the second part of the second book (*De infidelitate in communi*) examines a wide range of issues in some detail. Articles 1–6 of this question define “unfaithfulness in general” and its various permutations (including paganism, Judaism and heresy but making no explicit reference to Islam, which was understood to fall into the first category). Articles 7–12 were more practical, laying out concrete principles for cohabitation with and/or conversion of non-Christian populations.

In accordance with established norms of canon law, Thomas argued here that forced conversion of infidels (*infidelium quidam ... sicut gentiles et Iudaei*) was to be avoided. Heretics and apostates, having broken faith with Christianity, were a different case and subject to physical force.¹²⁸ On the specific question of whether Jewish children could be brought to baptism without the consent of their parents, Thomas reiterated the stance he had taken earlier in quodlibetical disputations: such baptisms were not to be condoned.¹²⁹ He was more evasive on the issue of whether non-Christians should be allowed to practice their rites. Jewish religious practice was to be permitted because it was an edifying “testimony to [the Christian] faith from an enemy.” Thomas left the question open with regard to Muslims and pagans:

The rites of others of the unfaithful, which bring neither truth nor usefulness, are not to be tolerated in any and every way, unless perhaps for avoiding some evil, namely, to avoid the scandal or dissent that might come from this, or the impediment to the salvation of those who slowly, if tolerated, are converted to the faith. On account of this, even the Church sometimes tolerated the rites of heretics and pagans, when there was a great multitude of the unfaithful.¹³⁰

Concerning actual disputations with non-Christians – seemingly essential to any rational attempt at proselytism, as formulated by thinkers such

¹²⁷ Tr. J. Kenney, “Saint Thomas Aquinas, Reasons for the Faith against Muslim Objections (and One Objection of the Greeks and Armenians) to the Cantor of Antioch” in *Islamochristiana* 22 (1996), 31–52. Cf. Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, 124–5.

¹²⁸ *ST* 2–2 q. 10, art. 8.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* art. 12. Cf. R. Spiazzi, *Quaestiones quodlibetales* (Turin, 1956), 28–9 and G. Dahan, “Juifs et judaïsme dans la littérature quodlibétique” in J. Cohen, ed., *From Witness to Witchcraft* (Wiesbaden, 1996), 221–45.

¹³⁰ *ST* 2–2 q. 10, art. 11; tr. M. Jordan, *On Faith* (Notre Dame, 1990), 207.

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as Bacon and Llull – Thomas’ position remained complex. First of all, he wrote, such discussions had to proceed with the *a priori* assumption that the Christian faith was not in question. Next, they should only take place in front of an appropriate audience. Here, the Dominican’s assumptions speak volumes about his concept of mission. He took it for granted that disputation audiences would be Christian, though potentially with varying degrees of sophistication:

On the part of the hearers one ought to consider whether those who hear the disputation are instructed and firm in faith, or simple and hesitant in faith.¹³¹

Wise and firm Christians (Thomas presumably had in mind his peers among the educated clergy, university professors and similarly well-trained senior Dominicans) might profitably listen to these sorts of disputations. “The simple” were another matter altogether. Thomas therefore further distinguished between two sorts of less-educated Christian auditors:

Either they are solicited and buffeted by the unfaithful, such as Jews or heretics or pagans, who try to corrupt faith in them; or they are not solicited at all about this, as happens in lands in which there are none of the unfaithful.¹³²

The first type, which might include virtually any urban population in western Europe at the time (especially in cities of Spain where Jews and/or Muslims were permitted to practice their rites more or less openly), was what Thomas had in mind when contemplating the usefulness of holding religious disputations with unbelievers. At issue once again was internal rather than external mission:

In the first case it is necessary to dispute publicly about faith, so long as there are found some who are sufficient and upright for this, who can [in fact] confute errors. Through this the simple will be made firm in faith, and the capacity of deception in the unfaithful will be taken away ... In the second case it is most dangerous to dispute publicly about faith before the simple. Their faith is firmer because they have heard nothing different from what they believe. And so it is not expedient for them to hear the words of the unfaithful in conversation against the faith.¹³³

The apostolic mission undertaken by the Dominican Order was thus universal in principle, but in Aquinas’ writings it was understood to be first and foremost an internal campaign aimed at ensuring that the Christian faithful received truth and avoided error. Non-Christians might “slowly, if tolerated, be converted to the Catholic faith”; in the meantime it was

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 194. ¹³² *Ibid.* Cf. Hood, *Aquinas and the Jews*, 98.

¹³³ *ST* 2–2 q. 10, art. 7; Jordan, *On Faith*, 194–5.

the friars' duty to combat their teachings for the sake of the faithful. This limited conception of the missionary project was well suited to the practical realities of the friars' daily lives, and it was widely shared throughout the Order. It was especially significant in frontier regions, including the Iberian peninsula and the western Mediterranean generally.

Proselytism among the infidel was ideally part of the Dominicans' universal goal of saving souls, and it was explicitly advocated as a desirable vocation by leaders such as Humbert of Romans for a brief time in the mid-thirteenth century, but it was also understood to be an inherently very difficult and even a dangerous task. Some friars, especially in the East but also in the western Mediterranean, might find ways to communicate with Muslims and/or Jews and eventually to invite their conversion. Their efforts would be more profitably expended, however, in a defensive posture as pastors and moral guides among Christians living in regions where non-Christian religious beliefs proliferated. By and large, the friars of the Dominican Order seem to have agreed with theologians like Thomas Aquinas in concluding that efforts to proselytize by means of active disputation and preaching could only be minimally successful. The "rational" argument strategies of Peter the Venerable, Roger Bacon or Raymond Llull had little resonance. Conversion would take a long time, and until it came it was up to the friars to protect the faithful from "infidel" error.

This basic concept of mission places the historical activities of Dominicans in the medieval Crown of Aragon in their appropriate context. As the friars studied truth and error, they occasionally delved into Jewish and Muslim languages and texts. As they struggled to teach and maintain orthodoxy among their various Christian flocks, they sometimes used linguistic and other special skills to keep what they saw as Muslim and Jewish errors at bay. They may also at times have served to bring Christian doctrine to those *qui foris sunt*. There were limits to their external mission, however, and reasons for their priorities. The following chapters will examine in greater detail how Dominican missionary ideals and other approaches to non-Christians played out in practice, in the specific field of the western Mediterranean in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

Chapter 2

THE COMING OF THE FRIARS

Bernard loved the valleys, Benedict the hills,
Francis the towns, Dominic the cities of renown.¹

One of the fundamental tasks facing the Dominican Order in the early thirteenth century was simply the establishment of its first convents as organizational bases. In this regard, the Iberian peninsula did not emerge as a major priority. Despite the fact that Dominic himself was Castilian and his second successor (Raymond Penyafort) a Catalan, Spain remained something of a backwater for the Order when compared with centers of activity such as France or Italy. Few resources were directed to the region by the Order's central leadership, few convents were actually built, and it would take decades in some cases for conventual life to exhibit any signs of vitality. The multi-religious frontier lands of Spain presented a challenge, and mendicant outposts there might have been expected to attract adventurous souls driven by a passion for missionary work – but within the larger Dominican family they merely comprised one of the least important of twelve Provinces.² The relatively slow, erratic pace of convent formation in Castile and the Crown of Aragon ensured that the friars' impact on local populations was generally limited. They were able to provide teachings, counsel and spiritual discipline for some segments of Christian society in a few selected urban settings, but neither their prominence nor their resulting “missionary” efficacy (whether internal or external) should be overstated.

¹ Quoted in Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 260. Other versions make the same point about the Jesuits, replacing Dominicus with “Ignatius.”

² The second General Chapter of 1221 divided Europe into five Provinces (Spain, France, Provence, Lombardy and Rome). Under Dominic's guidance, the same Chapter also projected the swift formation of a further seven in the north and east (England, Scandinavia, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Greece and the Holy Land) – an indication of contemporary priorities (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 92–3).

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The Order of Preachers established its houses according to two criteria. Both were pragmatic. Since the mendicants were supposed to live from pious donations rather than from the revenues of large landed estates or the fruits of their own labors, a basic necessity was funding. As a result, convents tended to be created wherever and whenever generous donors made themselves available. In the Crown of Aragon as in many other regions the most important donors were royal (kings above all, but also queens, princes and princesses) and episcopal. Noble and burgher lay support was also forthcoming, especially as the friars established themselves in the influential position of providing the laity with pastoral care (delivery of public sermons, hearing of confessions, burials, etc.) and other services. Pious contributions were the *sine qua non* of the friars' ministry and mission.

The second, related necessity was a community to serve. Urban areas were generally favored by mendicants in part because larger concentrated populations ensured a more reliable supply of income but also for idealistic reasons: they provided larger numbers of people in need of their services. It has long been recognized that the friars' inception itself was a response to the increasingly urbanized nature of European society in the thirteenth century. For the most part they were themselves drawn from the ranks of the urban upper middle class or lower nobility, and their familial connections were an important source of patronage.³ Elite city-dwellers received pastoral attention from the friars in return, and in principle at least (if not always in fact) this courtesy was extended to the lower classes as well. As preachers, the Dominicans were commissioned to live the *vita activa* by speaking and ministering to large audiences. They were not cloistered monks devoted solely to liturgical recitation, though liturgy remained an important element of their devotional practice. To the extent that the Order made any active decisions to establish its members in a given location, therefore, cities or large towns which promised to combine generous support with large Christian populations were generally given first priority.

Large and wealthy cities such as Barcelona and Valencia existed in the Iberian peninsula as elsewhere in Europe. As a result of the circumstances

³ The friars' social roles and origins have been explored for medieval Castile (García-Serrano, *Preachers*); France (J. Le Goff, "Apostolat mendiant et fait urbain dans la France médiévale; l'implantation sociologique et géographique des ordres mendiants, du XIII^e au XIV^e siècle" in *Revue d'Histoire de l'Église de France* 54 [1968], 69–76 and "Ordres mendiants et urbanisation dans la France médiévale" in *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 25 [1970], 924–46); Germany (J. Freed, *The Friars and German Society in the Thirteenth Century* [Cambridge, MA, 1977]); and Tuscany (D. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence* [Athens, GA, 1989]). For the Franciscans of Aragon-Catalonia, see J. Webster's *Els Menorets* (Toronto, 1993).

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of the *reconquista*, however, episcopal and parochial organization were underdeveloped or wholly lacking in some regions. When the Dominicans and their sponsors considered the establishment of new convents, such factors had to be taken into consideration. In some cases friars would themselves be appointed as frontier bishops. As the following survey demonstrates, Dominicans of the Crown of Aragon served important roles in both established Christian centers and newly conquered frontier zones. On the other hand, analysis of these foundations reveals that nowhere in medieval Iberia did proximity to non-Christian populations encourage the foundation of convents dedicated to external missionizing. In fact convents in new settlement areas were few and far between, with small numbers of friars contributing to a Church presence that was partly real and partly symbolic, but always intended above all for the benefit of the Christian faithful.

QUIET BEGINNINGS

The Dominican presence in Spain began in the Order's first decade. After consolidating his position at Toulouse, Dominic undertook a preliminary expansion in 1217. That year saw a group of seven friars being sent to the great university center of Paris with explicit instructions to study, preach and found a priory there, while four others (all either Castilian or Portuguese) set off for Iberia.⁴ Meanwhile Dominic traveled to Milan, Bologna and Rome. After a stay of several months in the latter city he embarked on a whirlwind tour of Europe which resulted in the establishment of Dominican convents in Bologna, Lyons, Montpellier, Bayonne, Limoges and perhaps Reims and Metz in addition to Toulouse and Paris.⁵ The Order was to grow by leaps and bounds throughout Europe thereafter, with over 400 priories listed in its first complete census of 1277. The vast majority were in France, Italy and Germany, with less than 10 percent (thirty-five convents) situated in Iberia.⁶

It was only natural that Dominic should have sought to spread the Order to his native Spain as well. The effort was not intensive, however, since the founder's priorities were clearly focused instead on the heresy-infested Midi of France and Italy and on major intellectual centers such as Paris. The increasing importance of the East in contemporary

⁴ The friars sent to Spain at the "Dominican Pentecost" were Suero Gomez, Peter of Madrid, Michael de Ucero and Dominic (of Segovia, also known as Dominic the Less) (Jordan, *Vitae Fratrum*, chs. 13–15).

⁵ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 49–52 and 57–62.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 262.

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political and apocalyptic imaginations may also explain the Order's early establishment of a third of its Provinces in places like Poland, Hungary, Greece and the Holy Land.

In contrast, and despite the fact that friars were sent to Iberia from the very beginning, the Dominican Order established itself only very gradually in the kingdoms of Portugal, Castile and Aragon. Two of the original four Preachers dispatched to Iberia in 1217 failed to achieve anything and immediately traveled back to Rome and Bologna. The other pair stayed in Castile but founded no permanent communities. According to Jordan of Saxony, the Spanish mission was abandoned by Michael de Uzero and Dominic of Spain because they had not been able to reap the harvest of followers in Spain that they had hoped for.⁷ It was only later, during Dominic's visit to Castile (via the Aragonese city of Zaragoza) in the winter of 1218 and spring of 1219, that a small house for nuns at Madrid and a priory for men at Segovia were organized.⁸ This was to be the saint's last sojourn in the region, but a handful of new Castilian convents did begin to emerge in the decade after 1219. The major centers of Palencia, Santiago de Compostela, Zamora, Toledo, Burgos and Salamanca all had convents by 1230; it will be noted that none of these were founded in regions bordering Islamic lands.⁹

Meanwhile, the first Dominican convent in the Crown of Aragon was founded almost fortuitously by a separate group of friars. According to Dominican tradition, bishop Berenguer de Palou of Barcelona decided to bring the Order to his diocese after a chance meeting with some pious Friars Preacher at Bologna in 1218.¹⁰ Other evidence confirms the bishop's role in bringing the first Dominicans to Barcelona, but suggests that he brought them from Paris rather than Bologna.¹¹ Either way,

⁷ *Libellus*, ch. 49. Spain had less of an educated aristocratic or urban middle class at this time than did other parts of western Europe, which probably explains why the activist reforming ideas of the Dominicans did not attract many recruits.

⁸ García-Serrano suggests that Dominic founded the first six convents on this Spanish tour, but this is unlikely (García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 26). Dominic did receive a house at Brihuega (Castile) from a local clergyman at this time, a gift confirmed soon after by the archbishop of Toledo, but no convent was founded there (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 60).

⁹ García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 23–6 gives a brief overview of this period.

¹⁰ Diago underlines the alleged (but undocumented) foundational role of Raymond Penyafort, then a student at Bologna (fols. 113r–114r). His main source was the medieval *Liber anniversariorum et obitus Conventus Sanctae Caterinae*, now part of BUB MS 241; cf. *MOFPH*, vol. VI/2, 7–8 (#5). It is possible that emphasis on a connection to Bologna has more to do with devotion to the memory of Penyafort than to historical fact. Bishop Berenguer's alleged visit to the Bologna convent was not noted in Jordan of Saxony's version of early Dominican history, but Jordan did underline the poverty and zeal of the brethren there under the guidance of master Reginald (*Libellus*, chs. 58 and 60).

¹¹ The epitaph on bishop Berenguer's grave in Barcelona Cathedral states that he brought the friars from Paris ("item conventum Predicatorum de Parisio Barchinonam adduxit") (J. Rius Serra,

in 1219 a small group of Dominicans traveled from a major European university city to Barcelona, the most populous (and wealthy) city in the Crown of Aragon, as a result of episcopal patronage.

These friars were housed temporarily in a building owned by the prominent Barcelona citizen Peter Gruni (*Grony*).¹² With the bishop's help, they soon obtained land for a church and convent dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria (*Santa Catalina*).¹³ The size and design of the original St. Catherine's is unknown as it was destroyed by fire in 1254, but the rebuilt monastery was splendid enough to attract disapproval from the Dominican General Chapter which met at Barcelona in 1261.¹⁴ Located just east of the old city walls, between the affluent mercantile suburb of Santa María del Mar and the palaces of bishop and king, St. Catherine's remained an important landmark until its destruction in the nineteenth century.¹⁵

It is unclear whether the second Dominican convent in the Crown of Aragon owed its origins to Dominic himself, to the friars then newly resident at Barcelona or to friars Peter of Madrid and Gomez (sent from Toulouse in 1217).¹⁶ Whatever the case may be, there was at least a nominal Dominican presence in Zaragoza – the chief city in Aragon proper, where kings were traditionally crowned – by late 1219. Dominican tradition insists only that the convent of *Predicadores* was established in the former Church of Nuestra Señora del Olivar in that year, before the Franciscans

Diplomatario [Barcelona, 1954], 8 [notes to doc. #4]. More credence should probably be given to this thirteenth-century source than to Diago's later account.

¹² Gruni appears in king James' account of the conquest of Mallorca as spokesman for all the citizens of Barcelona (*Llibre dels Fets*, ch. 54). His family and their role in Barcelona city politics are discussed in S. Bensch, *Barcelona and Its Rulers* (Cambridge, 1995), esp. 189–90, 256 and 277 (where Bensch notes James' error concerning Peter's role at the gathering).

¹³ Bishop Berenguer provided a Bible and wine, in addition to land (*MOFPH*, vol. VI/2, 7–8 [#5]). His epitaph also records this assistance: "et dedit eis alodium in quo domus eorum est fundata, et magnam partem ecclesie eis fecit, et vinum, dum vixit, eis quolibet die, quantum necesse habent, et per unum annum post mortem suam eis donare fecit." It goes on to note the bishop's similar support for Franciscans and Mercedarians (Rius Serra, *Diplomatario*, 8).

¹⁴ The Chapter particularly condemned the excessive height of the dormitory at St. Catherine's, and assigned punishments to the ex-prior responsible (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 111). Nevertheless, Dominican regulations were significantly relaxed after the retirement of master-general Humbert of Romans and strictures on construction were abandoned in 1297.

¹⁵ Details on the architecture of St. Catherine's, which was burned in 1835 and utterly razed in 1837 as part of the general exlaughter, are in J. Ainaud et al., *Catálogo Monumental de España: La Ciudad de Barcelona* (Madrid, 1947), vol. I, 93–100. Archeological excavations have now begun on the site.

¹⁶ Diago (fol. 142r) was undecided between the Toulouse and Bologna hypotheses. García-Serrano states that Dominic founded the Zaragoza convent on his tour through Spain in 1219 (García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 26). Rosa María Blasco Martínez unravels the legend more thoroughly, showing that a string of early modern Dominican historians vacillated between theories that Dominic himself, the Toulouse friars, or the Bologna friars founded the convent ("Contribución a la Historia del Convento de Predicadores de Zaragoza a través de los Apuntes del Maestro Fray Tomás Domingo 1219–1516" in *Jerónimo Zurita Cuadernos de Historia* 23–4 [1970–1], 10–15).

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arrived in Zaragoza but after the Dominicans were already in Barcelona.¹⁷ Royal rather than episcopal support may have been the deciding factor in the convent's early success, though evidence is scant; Diago merely affirmed that James I was the convent's main patron, and later historians have followed him. Bishop Arnold de Peralta would further support the convent by granting indulgences to its visitors in 1250.¹⁸

The Preachers thus enjoyed high-ranking support from the beginning in the two main cities of the Crown, and they cultivated ties with the monarchy most carefully. Patronage was forthcoming from humbler sources as well. In 1229 a third convent (initially known, like that of Zaragoza, simply as the convent of *Predicadores* but later dedicated to St. Dominic) began to be organized at Lleida; its earliest donors are unknown, but by mid-century it was receiving contributions from a laywoman named Gueralda as well as the king, the queen, count Alvaro of Urgel and the local bishop.¹⁹ It may have been planned as a base for inquisitorial activities against nearby heretical communities of the Pyrenees, since its first prior, Ponce de Planedis, was a leader on this front.²⁰

1229 also saw king James' decision to bring the Aragonese Dominican Michael Fabra and his Catalan *socius* Berenguer de Castellbisbal along as military chaplains for his expedition to conquer the Muslim emirate of Mallorca.²¹ The pair's reputation for holiness and zealous preaching on that campaign (proudly remembered and no doubt embellished by later Dominican historians such as Marsili and Diago) ensured that the Dominicans were widely credited for inspiring the troops to victory.²² King

¹⁷ Diago, fols. 141v–142r; Blasco Martínez, “Contribución,” 12. Establishing precedence for conventual foundations was something of an obsession among early mendicant historians, so claims must be read with caution.

¹⁸ Diago, fols. 143r–v; Blasco Martínez, “Contribución,” 14.

¹⁹ Diago, fols. 147v–148r; A. Collell, “Ayer de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragon” in *AST*, 39 (1966), 221 and 224. Like many of the early foundations, little contemporary evidence remains concerning this convent's first years. It is likely, given the later date of all extant donation records, that 1229 reflects a nominal planning stage more than a true foundation.

²⁰ Friar Ponce was an inquisitor and allegedly found a martyr's death in 1242 while serving in that capacity in the troublesome see of Urgel (Diago, fols. 7v–8v and 147v).

²¹ Fabra had been one of the first Dominicans, trained at the university of Toulouse and sent by Dominic to Paris in 1217, but his roots were in the Aragonese aristocracy and his family was well known to the king (M. García Miralles, “?El beato Miguel de Fabra, castellano, catalán o aragonés?” in *AST* 38 [1965], 309–14).

²² Regarding Fabra's fame Marsili wrote that “Iste frater Micael erat, in exercitu tam dilectus, tantus notatus, tantum requisitus ut post nomen Dei, et beate Virginis, eius nomen sepius dicebatur. Unde processu Temporis, senes sarraceni captivi, et multi de primis facti neofiti, qui in insula postea remanserunt, quos nos vidimus, interrogati de captione terre, dicere consueverant, quod Maria et Micael ceperunt Mayoricarum” (*Chronica*, bk. 2, ch. 24; ed. Martínez San Pedro, 187–8); cf. Diago, fols. 157v–158r. James' original version of the story noted the Dominicans' contribution to the siege of Mallorca (they helped organize the artillery, after first hearing confessions

James repaid their efforts in May 1231 by granting the Order of Preachers a favorable site for a new monastery in the heart of Mallorca City (modern Palma) near the royal Almudayna palace and the future cathedral.²³ His *locum tenens*, prince Peter of Portugal, followed this up with a generous donation of revenues from all the homes in the Almudayna neighborhood in 1236, including those of the Jewish quarter.²⁴ The resulting convent was thus founded in close proximity to populations of Muslims and Jews as well as Christians. There is no evidence to suggest this was a factor in selecting the location, however. In terms of patronage, the Dominican presence at Mallorca was indistinguishable from mendicant houses anywhere in Europe.

The Order experienced slow but steady growth on the island. Only a minimal presence of two Dominicans existed there in 1229; it took several years before sufficient numbers of friars could be recruited to build and occupy their new quarters.²⁵ Construction was ongoing in the mid-1230s, and it was supported by funding from a variety of sources. A 1234 donation of 200 Melgorian *solidi* from a Catalan noblewoman was made contingent on completion of the Mallorcan convent; if this did not come about her money was instead to be divided between the Dominicans of Barcelona and the Franciscans of her Pyrenean hometown of Castellón.²⁶ King James' 1236 donation referred to the "*Sancto Ordini Predicatorum et domui eorundem quae modo de novo construitur*," and even in 1238 a contribution from the local bishop (consisting of 10 percent of all episcopal revenues from the Almudayna) was directed to the "Order of Friars Preacher of Mallorca, and the monastery which they are to build."²⁷

and granting absolutions) and afterward (they helped guard the king's share of the booty) in less spiritual terms (*Llibre dels fets*, chs. 69 and 87).

²³ Manera, *Relación*, 50.

²⁴ Peter's grant included "omnes et universas domos quae sunt in praedicta Almudaina Civitatis Maioricarum, quas universitas et tota aljama judeorum ... nobis solvunt et diffiniunt in perpetuum per allodium franchum prout predictae domus sunt de domibus quae fuerunt de Raymundo Berengario Dager quae modo sunt nostrorum, usque ad cantonem quarundam, domorum quae aspiciunt ad Almudaynam, quas tenent judei nostri, et est carraria publica, et de cantone ipsarum domorum vadit recta linea usque ad portam Ferrissam quae aspicit versus rieriam [*sic*]" (AHN, *clero*, perg. carpeta 77, #8; cf. J. Rosselló Lliteras, "El Convento de Santo Domingo de Mallorca S. (XIII-XV)" in *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Lul·liana* 41 [1985], 119).

²⁵ The Dominicans received an average of less than one novice a year at Mallorca in the first decades (ADP, MSL 185, fols. 2r-v).

²⁶ AHN *clero*, carpeta 76 (#15). The proviso may reflect fears that Islamic rule might return to the Balearics. Another lay donation came in 1236: a widow named Beatrice, resident in the Santa Eulalia neighborhood adjacent to the Almudayna, left the friars two *solidi* and two capes (J. Rosselló Lliteras, *Els Pergamins de l'Arxiu Parroquial de Santa Eulàlia* [Palma, 1999], vol. I, 56-7 [#18]).

²⁷ Rosselló Lliteras, "Convento," 119; L. Pérez i Martínez and B. Coll i Tomás, *Ramon de Torrelles* (Mallorca, 1988), 15 (#1). Note that a *domus* or *locus* generally referred to a mendicant foundation

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The convent was fully functional by 1250 at least, when a class of students was assigned to study Arabic there.²⁸ Progress continued to be made at the end of the thirteenth century and throughout the fourteenth, with the building of a conventual church from 1295 to 1359 and improvements to the library and refectory in the mid-fourteenth century.²⁹ The *domus* of Mallorca City thus grew only gradually into the thriving convent of St. Dominic's (*Santo Domingo de Mallorca*), a unique center for all Dominican activities in the Balearic islands. Despite a royal grant of revenue-producing property at Minorca in 1288, the friars would establish no new convents on the islands for over 300 years.³⁰

Back on the mainland a fifth convent was created, like that of Mallorca, as a consequence of royal favor in the wake of a successful campaign of conquest. This time a contingent of five Dominican military chaplains, once more led by Michael Fabra, accompanied royal forces in their war against Muslim Valencia from 1236 to 1238.³¹ Friar Peter of Lleida (*de Ilerda*) especially was fondly remembered in the memoirs of James I as an informer who kept him abreast of discontent among aristocratic forces in the army and helped foil a mutiny.³² Dominican legend further holds that when Valencia surrendered in 1238 it was Fabra who led the triumphant

which housed fewer than the twelve friars required by the Constitutions for a proper priory or *conventus* (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 251–2).

²⁸ See below, chapter 3.

²⁹ The friars' church was built in roughly the same affluent period as the nearby cathedral, whose magnificent gothic structure still stands. Improvements to the refectory and library came as a result of patronage from cardinal Nicholas Rosell, a former member of the Mallorcan convent. The choir of the Preachers' church was also renovated in the late fourteenth century (Rosselló Lliteras, "Convento," 120–1, 126). The convent of St. Dominic was destroyed in the turmoil of the 1830s and few sources remain to document its actual construction; Juan Rosselló Lliteras' suggestion that it was a humble place, in keeping with medieval Dominican ideals, is only an assumption (Rosselló Lliteras, "Convento," 116–18).

³⁰ The grant was made in the wake of the Aragonese conquest of Minorca (C. Parpal y Marqués, *La Conquista de Menorca en 1287 por Alfonso III de Aragon* [Barcelona, 1901], 66–7 and xxii [#xxxvii]). It was accompanied by donations of Muslim slaves. A second Dominican convent was only built on Mallorca in 1576, at Manacor; a third was taken over from the Franciscans at Orito in 1583 (Diago, fols. 292r–293r). The rest of the Balearics were ignored by the Order until the foundation of a convent on Ibiza in 1580 (Diago, fols. 293r–v; cf. generally P. Adrover Rosselló, *La Orden de Predicadores en la Historia de Baleares* [Palma, 1995]). The fourteenth-century kingdom of Mallorca's center of gravity was in its mainland territories (where monarchs normally resided), a fact that led to Dominican convent-building at Montpellier, Perpignan, Colliure and Puigcerdà.

³¹ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 204.

³² *Llibre dels Fets*, chs. 236–7. In addition to his grant to the Order generally, James made a further land donation through Peter himself: "Frater P. de Ilerda ad opus domus Predicatorum: realem, ante Valentiam, d'Alarif, qui est inter portam de Exarea et de Bibacachar, quam vendidit ad rayç Aboabdile Abuçequi" (M. de los Desamparados Cabanes Pecourt and R. Ferrer Navarro, eds., *Libre del repartiment del regne de Valencia* [Zaragoza, 1979], vol. I, 47 [#211]; cf. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 203–40).

entry.³³ The Dominicans were rewarded for their participation in April 1239, receiving land for a *domus* (which would soon, again in imitation of Mallorca, be expanded into a convent dedicated to the newly canonized St. Dominic).³⁴ It was located along the walls of the city near the Guadalaviar (Turia) river and some parts are still standing today.³⁵

The Mallorcan and Valencian convent foundations, coming as they did in the wake of impressive military victories, occasioned grandiose statements on the part of the king in which he enunciated his pious motives. In 1231 his donation charter read as follows:

Desiring that the new tree of the Order of Preachers should thrive and flourish, thrusting and spreading strong roots into the earth, so that in time a most plentiful harvest of souls might be gathered in, especially in these parts where the pagans and the Mallorcan Saracens have been defeated and made captives, and their kingdom happily obtained through their submission and the power of our rule, We, James ... for the remedy of our soul and that of our parents, freely give and concede this place in the Almudayna of the City of Mallorca ... in perpetuity to our lord God and to his most blessed mother Mary and to saint Dominic and to his Order of Preachers ... for the building and construction of a monastery and church of the said Order of Preachers.³⁶

In 1239 the tone was similar:

Not only do We endanger our body so that the lilies of the Christian name might grow in pagan lands, but We also labor so that the new plantation of the Order of Preachers might flourish in the pagan city We have newly acquired. Therefore, We, James ... for the remedy of our soul and the salvation of our parents, hereby freely grant and concede this place in Valencia ... in perpetuity to the lord God and to his blessed mother Mary and to saint Dominic and to the Order of Preachers. And all this is for the tenure and construction of a church and residences.³⁷

These statements, brief and rhetorical as they are, provide a glimpse of the role the Dominicans' major sponsor in the Crown of Aragon expected

³³ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. II, 470, n. 47 is appropriately skeptical. The *Llibre dels fets* makes no mention of anyone upstaging the king in his moment of triumph (ch. 284).

³⁴ *Santo Domingo de Valencia* was completed by mid-century, with its new church being dedicated in 1252. Bishop Andres de Albalato had the convent surrounded with a broad plaza and protective walls in the years which followed (V. Gascon Pelegrí, *El Real Monasterio de Santo Domingo* [Valencia, 1975], 27–9). Burns argues that this site was chosen only after 1241, when the friars were moved from an original location near the cathedral (Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 204 and n. 47).

³⁵ Surviving portions of the convent now house a military barracks. Full details on the convent's architectural history, along with numerous illustrations, are in Gascon Pelegrí's *Real Monasterio*.

³⁶ Manera, *Relación*, 50. Dominic was not canonized until 1234, so the words "sancto Dominico" were a little premature – if they do not imply a later copyist's error or even a forgery.

³⁷ Diago, fols. 156r–v.

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them to play in his newly conquered kingdoms. The grants were in part formulaic, echoing thousands of pious donations made to monasteries of all sorts “*ob remedium animae nostrae et salutem parentum nostrorum*” by monarchs and lords all over Christian Europe throughout the Middle Ages. Insofar as James cared that his donation involved land seized from Muslims (or pagans, in his words), it was mainly to note with pride that his efforts were furthering the expansion of the Church’s presence. In its broadest sense this might include the ideal of bringing Muslims to conversion; the Mallorcan charter’s optimism that “in time (*temporibus suis*) a most plentiful harvest of souls might be gathered in” likely refers in part to such conversions. James’ words are ambivalent, however, and there is no clear differentiation between converted and *ab initio* Christian souls in his vision of future salvation. The twin convents of St. Dominic, so pointedly planted on formerly Muslim soil, thus existed partly as a the result of traditional expressions of royal piety and partly to serve as symbols of a new Christian status being bestowed on conquered cities (from which most Muslim residents were soon physically removed).³⁸ Both in the Balearics and in Valencia, their symbolic quality is underlined by the existence of a single Dominican house at the heart of a whole kingdom.

Besides the flourishing priory in Valencia city, and a small convent eventually established at Xàtiva in the 1290s, very few Dominican foundations were made in the extensive and rich lands of the kingdom of Valencia before the sixteenth century.³⁹ The Order entered Valencia as a consequence and symbol of Christian crusading and colonization, and it had practically nothing to do with the local Muslim population thereafter.

Even the Dominicans’ establishment at Xàtiva, a city in the midst of heavily Muslim southern regions of Valencia, apparently generated little missionary enthusiasm. The Order had an early interest in the region but hesitated for decades before actually committing friars to reside there. Soon after its capitulation in 1244, land outside the walls of Xàtiva was set aside for the Dominicans by a royal grant in the *repartimiento* (1248).⁴⁰ This

³⁸ See James’ account, *Llibre dels fets*, ch. 86 (Mallorca) and chs. 277–86 (Valencia). A reduced Muslim presence remained in or near both cities, however.

³⁹ A single convent, San Mateo, was founded in the north of the *reino* in the fourteenth century (1359). In the fifteenth century there were two more foundations (Collell, “Ayer de la Provincia,” 236–9).

⁴⁰ The property at issue was described as “quendam campum in raveli Xative, versus Montesam, sicut protenditur a domibus inferius sive alfondicis quos hactenus consueverunt tenere Gomicius Muyoç et Eximinius de Tovia; et quadam tapia transversa sub ipsis domibus usque ad aliam tapiam sive vicum ante reallum nostrum; et habeatis ipsos duos ortuculos qui sunt supra campum in quorum uno est quedam magna palma; et habeatis illum ortum qui est inferius et contiguatur predicto

land was never used for convent-building, however. As with the Order's possessions in Minorca, the property was held as a revenue generator.⁴¹ It was not until the end of the century, after decades of wars, a major revolt and subsequent waves of repression had devastated the region and emptied it of most of its Muslim inhabitants, that the Dominicans decided to settle in Xàtiva.⁴² The new Dominican convent of St. Philip was officially recognized by the General Chapter in 1291; there was no need for construction as the Xàtiva friars simply occupied a monastery they inherited from the disbanded Order of the Sack.⁴³

Language study was promoted at the new convent for a few years, as will be seen below, and its proximity to Arabic-speaking lands was undoubtedly seen as something of an asset in this connection. Nevertheless the Xàtiva convent was one of the smallest and poorest in the Spanish Provinces, apparently ranking rather low in the Order's list of priorities. In 1303, for example, the Provincial Chapter allowed the friars of Xàtiva (along with those of similarly impoverished convents at Sanguësa in Navarre, Calatayud, Murcia and Urgel) to pay a reduced rate in the dues they owed to the diffinitor.⁴⁴

By the middle of the thirteenth century, then, the several realms which had been brought together to form king James' expanded Crown of Aragon contained a total of only five Dominican convents – not including those in the trans-Pyrenean enclaves of Montpellier (c. 1220) and Perpignan (c. 1242–5).⁴⁵ Each served as a center for the Order, keeping

campo sicut voluitur tapiis et viis publicis circumquaque." Franciscans received a similar gift, but unlike the Dominicans their grant specified that its purpose was *ad hedificandum monasterium* (Cabanes Pecourt and Ferrer Navarro, *Libre del repartiment*, vol. II, 90–1 [#546 and 549]; cited in I. O'Connor, *A Forgotten Community* [Leiden, 2003], 53). O'Connor's assertion that the mendicant Orders generally chose to live and proselytize close to Muslim communities "in all conquered towns immediately following the Christian conquest" is unsupported by the evidence.

⁴¹ The Dominicans had earlier made arrangements to establish themselves as landowners in the Xàtiva region. In 1244, while the town was still under siege, "Martin, master of the Dominicans" joined with the Valencia Cathedral Chapter to purchase the village of Albal from Gil de Atrossillo (E. Olmos y Canalda, *Inventario de los Pergaminos del Archivo Catedral de Valencia* [Valencia, 1961], doc. #146). Cf. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 204.

⁴² O'Connor, *Forgotten Community*, 146–70.

⁴³ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 263; cf. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 205. The Friars of the Sack were disbanded by Gregory X in 1274, and their Xàtiva monastery was sold to the Dominicans by pope Honorius IV in 1285 (L. Robles Carcedo, "El convento de predicadores de Xàtiva" in *Xàtiva* [August 1981], 60 and 66).

⁴⁴ Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV 20* (1990), 252.

⁴⁵ The five were Barcelona in coastal Catalonia, Zaragoza in Aragon, Lleida in the heart of Catalonia with access to the Pyrenees, Mallorca in the Balearics and Valencia in the kingdom of Valencia. Though subject to the Aragonese monarch, and founded with the personal support of king James (in a former leprosarium, shortly after he sponsored a Franciscan house in the same city), the Perpignan convent, like Montpellier's, fell within the Provençal Dominican Province (see A. Escarra, "Le convent, des Frères Prêcheurs de Perpignan" in *Cahiers de Fanjeux* 36 [2001],

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it close to the lay and ecclesiastical leaders whose patronage was so vital. Given their small numbers, the friars' initial impact on most of the surrounding society could not have been great. A nucleus had been created around which further expansion might someday develop, but there was no sign at all in these early days that the Preachers were poised to carry out any sort of extensive missionary or other work in neighboring Jewish or Muslim communities.

MODEST GROWTH

In the 1240s the Dominican Order began to move from the periphery to the center of ecclesiastical politics in the Crown of Aragon. Peter de Albalato, a reformer whose agenda included support for inquisitorial discipline and expansionist crusades, was elected archbishop of Tarragona in 1238.⁴⁶ He worked closely with Raymond Penyafort to bring the churches of eastern Spain into line with the demands of the papal legate, John of Abbeville, who had visited the region in 1228–9.⁴⁷ As vacancies opened in various sees Peter helped to ensure that they were filled by pious Dominicans or like-minded prelates who supported the friars in their pastoral efforts.⁴⁸

The first such an appointment came immediately, with Raymond de Torrelles' installation as bishop of Mallorca (1238–66).⁴⁹ The Mallorcan see, after a heated dispute between the rival archdioceses of Toledo and Tarragona, was exempted from archiepiscopal authority and answered directly to pope Gregory IX. Gregory delegated the selection of its first bishop to a special commission led by Peter de Albalato and Raymond Penyafort.⁵⁰ Though not a Dominican himself, Raymond de Torrelles was friendly to the Order and helped to ensure the success of its implantation

99–122). Another Dominican convent, at Pamplona, was established in 1242 by king Theobald I of Navarre; it was the first in that kingdom, and was included in the Spanish (later Aragonese) Province.

⁴⁶ Peter de Albalato created the diocesan inquisition at Lleida with Dominican assistance while serving there as bishop from 1236–8. In his capacity as archbishop, he contributed 5,000 silver marks in addition to a military detachment and his own presence to the Valencia campaign (Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 39).

⁴⁷ P. Linehan, *The Spanish Church and the Papacy in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1971), 54–82.

⁴⁸ Medieval Spanish bishops are listed in A. Ubieto Arteta, *Listas Episcopales Medievales* (2 vols.; Zaragoza, 1989).

⁴⁹ Bernard, abbot of San Feliu de Guixols and one of the original crusaders to land at Mallorca, was initially named bishop in 1232 by James I but never consecrated (M. Ferrer Flórez, "Mallorca y la teocracia pontificia" in *AST* 23 [1950], 19; Ubieto Arteta, *Listas Episcopales*, vol. I, 224).

⁵⁰ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 255; Ferrer Flórez, "Mallorca y la teocracia," 15–30. The 1237 document appointing Peter (at the time still bishop of Lleida), Raymond and bishop Bernard Calvo of Vic is in *MOFPH*, vol. VI/2, 69–70 (#38).

on the island.⁵¹ The new bishop's first recorded act was a donation of a tenth of all his revenues from the wealthy Almudayna neighborhood to the Dominicans (October 12, 1238); other sources show his regularly having documents witnessed in *domibus fratrum predicatorum*. Finally, at a time when rivalries between mendicants and secular clergy were exploding in other dioceses, Raymond signed an agreement with the friars in 1250 concerning their rights to perform burials.⁵²

Also in 1238, seeking once more to forestall Toledan attempts to impose a Castilian candidate, Peter de Albalato assigned friar Berenguer de Castellbisbal (former *socius* of Michael Fabra) to Valencia as interim bishop.⁵³ Berenguer was not consecrated, but his eventual replacement Arnold de Peralta (1243–8) was friendly to the Dominicans. When Arnold was transferred to Zaragoza in 1248, he continued to support the Preachers there.⁵⁴ Arnold de Peralta, finally, was replaced by Peter de Albalato's own brother. Friar Andrew de Albalato was a Dominican, and he remained an active reforming bishop of Valencia from 1248 until his death in 1276.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, an episcopal election at Barcelona in 1241 pitted Berenguer de Castellbisbal, who had given up the see of Valencia to become prior of St. Catherine's, against a reformist archdeacon of the Barcelona cathedral called Peter de Centelles. Peter won, but fulfilled a vow he had already made to join the Order of Preachers; he thus became the first Dominican bishop south of the Pyrenees when he was confirmed in 1243.⁵⁶ The Dominican friar Bernard de Mur became bishop of Vic in December of the same year, Berenguer de Castellbisbal finally attained the episcopal dignity in 1245 as bishop of Girona and friar William de Barberan was elected bishop of Lleida in 1248.⁵⁷ With five Dominican bishops, and with the support of several others including the archbishop himself, the Order had thus reached the zenith of

⁵¹ According to Domingo Manera, Torrelles was a twenty-five-year-old priest in 1230 when he made his profession to the Order of Preachers, becoming the first friar to be created on the island (Manera, *Relación*, 41). This claim is unsubstantiated in other sources and has generally not been taken seriously, but it may reflect his perceived closeness to the Order.

⁵² Pérez i Martínez and Coll i Tomàs, *Ramon de Torrelles*, 15, 19–20 and 97–98 (#1, 11–14, 221).

⁵³ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 203. His Castilian rival for the post was Ferrer de Pallarés.

⁵⁴ Blasco Martínez, "Contribución," 14.

⁵⁵ Andrew de Albalato's first Valencian Synod asserted support for the mendicants in no uncertain terms: "item mandamus, quod Fratres Praedicatores et Minores honorifice a Clericis recipiantur" (R.I. Burns, "Journey from Islam: Incipient Cultural Transition in the Conquered Kingdom of Valencia (1240–1280)" in *Speculum* 35 [1960], 354–5).

⁵⁶ Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 70. Castellbisbal was never confirmed as bishop of Valencia.

⁵⁷ Castellbisbal's election would have been beneficial for the Dominicans of Barcelona as well, if it is true that he donated some of the Girona diocese's lands in that city for the expansion of St. Catherine's (Ainaud *et al.*, *Catálogo Monumental*, vol. I, 93). This tradition may rest on a confusion of Berenguer de Castellbisbal with his namesake bishop Berenguer de Palou, however.

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its influence in the Crown of Aragon around mid-century. Given the evident contrast between this situation and that of embattled mendicants elsewhere in Europe at the time, master-general Humbert and the pope's sudden interest in the Spanish Dominican achievements becomes all the more comprehensible.⁵⁸

The friars could not rest on their laurels. Peter de Albalato died in 1251, and his successor Benedict de Rocaberti soon showed he was no friend to the Dominicans or to pietist reform movements of any sort.⁵⁹ The hapless Berenguer de Castellbisbal too soon fell out with the king: the oft-repeated story goes that Berenguer, who was also James' confessor, made an indiscrete revelation concerning royal confessions and had his tongue cut out as a result in 1246.⁶⁰ His influence as Dominican bishop of Girona and patron of the new Girona convent evaporated, and he spent his remaining career at the papal curia, where he died in 1255.⁶¹ Solid archiepiscopal and episcopal support thus played a major but somewhat fleeting role in establishing the Preachers. After 1251 such support came and went in different cities from one year to the next.

Albalato's legacy of well-placed reforming bishops and other officials remained strong for some time, and the number of convents held in the Crown of Aragon by the Order of Preachers doubled within a few years of his death. Tarragona and Girona attracted a Dominican presence in 1253.⁶² Royal patronage likewise proved reliable. In Aragon, where James faced repeated aristocratic challenges to his authority, the king planted a second Dominican convent near that of Zaragoza: St. Peter Martyr in Calatayud (1253).⁶³ His rebellious son and heir to the throne, prince Alfonso, founded his own Dominican house in his personal stronghold of Huesca the following year (1254). This convent was intended to be used as the prince's burial place, and after his untimely demise in 1260 James took over its patronage.⁶⁴ At the same time, the neighboring king

⁵⁸ Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 78–9.

⁵⁹ Rocaberti tended to favor the Franciscans when he needed mendicant support. Penyafort and other Dominicans prosecuted his friends for corruption and eventually contributed to his fall from grace at the papal curia, but he held on to the archbishopric until his death in 1268 (Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 86–95).

⁶⁰ The ensuing scandal reached the ears of Matthew Paris (*Chronica Majora* [1872, ed. H. Luard, Rolls Series #57; repr. Wiesbaden, 1964], vol. IV, 578); cf. Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 80.

⁶¹ Linehan has him fleeing to the curia in 1246, immediately after the incident (*Spanish Church*, 80).

⁶² Collell, "Ayer de la Provincia," 224–6. Cf. J.M. Coll, "Miscelanea Dominicana Gerundense" in *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Gerundenses* 8 (1953), 229–40.

⁶³ The foundation of convents at Calatayud and Huesca are described in Diago, fols. 266–9.

⁶⁴ Collell, "Ayer de la Provincia," 232; cf. T. Echarte, "Huesca. Convento de Predicadores (1254–1835)" in *Argensola* 98 (1984), 315–32. Alfonso's will was disregarded and his body was retained by the Cistercians of Veruela, despite vigorous opposition from the Huesca Dominicans (*ibid.*, 316).

Theobald II of Navarre had a second Dominican convent built in his realm at Estella in 1259.⁶⁵ A convent was also established in the town of Urgel, nestled in the Pyrenees on the French border, between 1266 and 1273.⁶⁶ The citizens of Urgel had supposedly petitioned for the convent in memory of two Dominican inquisitors martyred there more than twenty years previously.⁶⁷ Obviously the friars were not popular with everyone, but some welcomed the friars in hopes that they could put an end to years of rampant corruption. By 1254 Raymond de Penyafort had capitalized on this support to secure the suspension of bishop Ponce.⁶⁸

After a modest surge of new foundations, decades passed with practically no further Dominican expansion in the Crown of Aragon. James II of Mallorca (recently defeated by his nephew king James II of Aragon and confined to his mainland territories in Languedoc) established Preachers' convents in Puigcerdà and Colliure around 1290.⁶⁹ Both of these came under the jurisdiction of the Order's Provençal Province, and communications with Spanish colleagues were presumably limited while the rival kings were at daggers drawn. Otherwise, consolidation rather than expansion marks the Order's organizing activity in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Aside from their above-mentioned takeover of a small convent from the Friars of the Sack in Xàtiva around 1291, Dominicans made no new foundations in Iberia until the second decade of the fourteenth century, when a series of relatively minor convents were set up in the inland counties of Catalonia. The count of Ampurias, Ponce Hugo, founded one at Castellón de Ampurias in 1317.⁷⁰ King James II of Aragon granted several houses to the Order for the establishment of a small convent in Cervera the following year, which

⁶⁵ Diago, fol. 14v.; J. Goñi Gaztambide, "Historia del convento de Santo Domingo de Estella" in *Príncipe de Viana* 22 (1961), 11–64.

⁶⁶ First authorized by the General Chapter of 1266, the convent's foundation was still being discussed at that of 1273 (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 135 and 170).

⁶⁷ Collell, "Ayer de la Provincia," 11. Ponce de Planelles ("de Blanes" in Lea) and Bernardo de Travesseres were murdered during an especially brutal period of persecution against the Cathars in the late 1230s and 1240s (H.C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages* [New York, 1887], vol. II, 165–7). Urgel had been an alleged hotbed of Cathar heresy since the 1220s at least (Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 55–6).

⁶⁸ Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 88–9; cf. "La Carrera del Obispo Abril de Urgel" in Linehan, *Spanish Church and Society 1150–1300* (London, 1983), essay IV.A 1613 source specifies that Penyafort himself obtained approval for the convent at the Dominican General Chapter of 1266 (Collell, "Ayer de la Provincia," 227), but there is no mention of this in the Chapter *acta* as edited by Reichert (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 135).

⁶⁹ Diago, fols. 271r–273r.

⁷⁰ Ponce's motives in founding his own Dominican convent were both pious and practical. In 1317 he was close to death, and the fate of his family fortune was in doubt. As will be seen below the Dominicans played an important role in executing his will and preventing outright royal seizure of Ampurias.

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also saw Dominicans arriving in Manresa (both named for Peter Martyr, 1318). Count Hermangando of Urgel planned to endow a convent at Balaguer as early as 1314, but his legacy was transferred to the royal family, and it was king James II of Aragon who ultimately patronized the project in 1323.⁷¹

Thus more than a century of Dominican presence in the Crown of Aragon saw the foundation of only fifteen convents.⁷² This compares poorly with other Dominican Provinces. A list compiled by the Order in 1303 shows that there was a total of 590 convents: 108 in France, 100 in Germany, 89 in Italy and 86 in England. The now-divided Spanish and Aragonese Provinces combined had only 48, and 35 of them were on the Castilian side. Poland, even after losing 22 convents to the newly organized Bohemian Province, still boasted 35; Scandinavia had 27 and Hungary 33. Compared to these the Aragonese Province (which had only 13 convents in 1303, including the three Navarrese) seems almost pitiful.⁷³ It also compares poorly with the Franciscans, who had twice as many convents as the Dominicans in the Crown of Aragon by 1270.⁷⁴

There were still only three convents in Aragon proper: Zaragoza, Huesca, and Calatayud. These were essentially royal foundations, bastions of royal power in the major cities of a territory long dominated by a rebellious nobility. Mercantile Catalonia witnessed a more gradual growth of the Dominican presence with a wider base of support: five convents by the 1260s in the main episcopal cities (Barcelona, Lleida, Girona, Tarragona and Urgel), with four more added somewhat later by nobles and kings in smaller inland communities (Castellón, Cervera, Manresa and Balaguer). The convents of Mallorca, Valencia and Xàtiva were planted by James I and nurtured by his successors as free-standing colonial outposts, representing the Latin Church in what had until recently been Muslim territory.⁷⁵

Preaching to non-Christians nowhere emerges as a consideration in the Dominicans' convent-building, though the Lleida and Urgel convents were intended to further a struggle against Cathar heresy. Jews and

⁷¹ Diago, fol. 27v; Collell, "Ayer de la Provincia," 227. There had been Franciscans in Balaguer and Castellón de Ampurias for years at this point (Webster, *Els Menorets*, 47–9).

⁷² Not counting the three in Navarre and four in Mallorcan-ruled areas of Languedoc.

⁷³ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 262–3.

⁷⁴ Webster, *Els Menorets*, 39. Franciscans tended to recruit from a slightly less affluent and so more numerous sector of the population.

⁷⁵ Dominicans also seem to have established a *domus* or convent in the newly conquered city of Murcia sometime in the late 1260s or early 1270s; this poorly documented foundation's role in Arabic studies will be discussed in chapter 3.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

Muslims were certainly accessible to the friars in most of the convents if they had intended to proselytize among them, but nowhere do the Preachers seem to have planned their establishments with this in mind. Nor is it even clear that Dominicans were always drawn to the major cities of the realms. Most of their convents were indeed in urban centers, but many important cities never received Dominican attention in the medieval period: Barbastro, Daroca, Teruel, Tortosa and Vilafranca are but a few examples. The diocesan city of Vic had a Franciscan convent by 1226 but the Dominicans did not move there until 1571.⁷⁶ The Navarrese friars located in villages like Estella and Sanguësa, and later the Catalanian convents of Cervera and Balaguer, prove that size was not necessarily the determining factor in establishing Dominican communities. Patronage was ultimately the crucial element: friars went where they were invited, and they were invited for the most part by the king. Occasionally they served the purposes of archbishops, bishops and even nobles. As mobile and well-trained religious, the Preachers quickly proved their usefulness to these patrons as preachers, military chaplains, judges, confessors, administrators and ambassadors.

AN EDUCATED ELITE

Dominican friars, like other clergy in medieval Europe, were esteemed by many of their Christian neighbors for their relatively high levels of education, along with the inherent trustworthiness and special prerogatives of the sacerdotal office. Being literate and multilingual (having a command at the very least of local vernacular dialects and Latin), they possessed basic skills which were increasingly valued in the mercantile and notarial societies of the western Mediterranean.⁷⁷ Furthermore, as religious authorities versed in the theological underpinnings and practical applications of canon law, the Dominicans' counsel and blessing were of potential benefit to all Christians. From business matters to spiritual concerns, the friars quickly integrated themselves within the affairs of the urban Christian communities whose needs they were devoted to serving.

⁷⁶ Webster, *Els Menorets*, 27.

⁷⁷ For an overview of mercantile society in the medieval Mediterranean see R. Lopez, "The Trade of Medieval Europe: The South" in M. Postan and E. Rich, eds., *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1987), vol. II, esp. 330–79. H. Pirenne, "L'Instruction des marchands au moyen âge" underlines both the importance of literacy and the contribution of clerical expertise to mercantile life (in *Histoire économique de l'occident médiéval* [Bruges, 1951], 551–70). Nevertheless, mendicant participation in medieval economic life has tended to be overlooked by historians.

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Yet, as has been noted, relatively few convents of Dominican friars were founded in the medieval Crown of Aragon to impart such benefits to the faithful. Even in the select urban areas where convents did exist, all but the flagship priories at Barcelona, Valencia and Zaragoza tended to be rather small in terms of human resources. The numbers of friars in a given convent are difficult if not impossible to calculate with precision, but approximate figures will give some sense of their scale. Estimates have ranged from an average of 25 friars per convent to a (surely exaggerated) maximum of 250 for the greatest convents of Europe.⁷⁸ The Order generally mandated that no convent could exist without a minimum of 12 members.⁷⁹ For the Spanish Province specifically, Francisco García-Serrano has suggested a rough formula by which the largest convents (such as Barcelona) might be supposed to have housed approximately 120 residents, while smaller ones such as Mallorca would have had only about 30.⁸⁰ All of these figures are problematic, however, and probably for the most part too high; convents sustaining more than 100 friars would have been extremely rare, and in all cases such numbers would include a significant proportion of novices in various stages of their training.⁸¹

Whether numbering a dozen or several score in a given convent, friars combined the demands of traditional monastic life with those of their active pastoral apostolate. They therefore faced a wide variety of tasks, from sublime observance of liturgical routine to the mundane chores of daily life. Without the ceaseless fulfillment of liturgical, administrative and custodial duties no convent of any size could function properly, and these duties must have been quite taxing for all but the largest and best-organized convents. Any consideration of the Dominicans' history and activities in the Crown of Aragon must take the real limitations imposed by such quotidian demands into account.

⁷⁸ D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (London, 1953), 363, proposed the average of 25. This was accepted by Richard Emery as being equally valid for France (*The Friars in Medieval France* [New York, 1962], 4–5). Hinnebusch has higher estimates (*History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 280–1).

⁷⁹ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 251–2.

⁸⁰ Numbers generated by taking the handful of extant thirteenth-century Spanish Provincial Chapter *acta* which record deaths in individual convents and multiplying those death tallies by thirty to arrive at an estimate of total convent population. García-Serrano arrived at the factor of thirty by studying death rates in better-documented early modern Spanish monasteries as well as other medieval communities (*Preachers*, 33–7). Obviously small convents not reporting any deaths cannot be considered by means of this formula.

⁸¹ If St. Catherine's had over 100 friars in residence then it was indeed one of the largest convents in the entire order; a 1299 source states that Milan's San Eustorgio was exceptional with its population of 140 (T. Kaeppli, "La bibliothèque de Saint-Eustorge à Milan à la fin du XVe siècle" in *AFP* 25 [1955], 11–12).

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

The liturgical office, in particular, was a serious commitment. Struggles over its reform and standardization dominated discussion to a surprising extent at General Chapters for more than twenty years, from the 1240s until 1267, when pope Clement IV formally approved Humbert of Romans' formulation.⁸² Even though abbreviated, proper performance of the liturgy was a major undertaking which required mastery of at least fourteen books: the ordinary, the antiphony, the lectionary, the psalter, the collectarium, the martyrology, the processional book, the gradual, the missal for the main altar, the book of the Gospels, that of the Epistles, the missal for side altars (for private mass), the pulpitary and the portable breviary.⁸³ Friars had to be well trained to read and chant these Latin texts; their constantly repeated phrases permeated every mind.

Dominicans framed their days in an ongoing schedule of ritual recitations, prayer and atonement for sins. They rose at midnight (or two in the morning in winter) for matins and lauds, and paused from other activities at least six more times in the course of the day to recite the canonical hours; in addition they attended community mass in the afternoon.⁸⁴ Most days a Chapter of Faults was also held in the early hours of the morning, at which individual members' confessions of misbehavior were heard and punishments meted out. Humbert of Romans advised friars to imitate the example of St. Dominic by accepting further nightly beatings after compline as part of their spiritual regimen.⁸⁵ Efforts were made to ensure that time was left for study and ministry, and the rigor of daily monastic life was undoubtedly tempered by habit, but even Humbert acknowledged that duties such as the midnight office were "exceedingly painful." Stories of friars who overslept or neglected their offices – and received punishments in consequence – abound in medieval Dominican literature.⁸⁶

Many of the friars' remaining waking hours were taken up with less spiritual affairs, according to their designated offices. Even the smallest convent had its prior, subprior and vicar responsible for leadership and discipline. In addition, Humbert of Romans prescribed a total of

⁸² Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 347–9. Humbert's work on the subject is discussed in Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 80–102; cf. William Bonniwell, *A History of the Dominican Liturgy* (New York, 1944).

⁸³ Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 85.

⁸⁴ Prime was at six in the morning (again, later in winter), followed by terce, sext and none at three-hour intervals. Community mass was celebrated around noon, before dinner, and was followed by vespers and compline (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 349–50).

⁸⁵ C. Caldwell, "Doctors of Souls" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2002, 84–101). Humbert's admonition is in his *Expositio in constitutiones (Opera de vita regulari* [ed. J.J. Berthier; Rome, 1889], vol. II, 145–8).

⁸⁶ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 350; Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 98–9.

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thirty-two offices to be filled within each Dominican house.⁸⁷ Naturally in smaller priories these positions would have been less onerous, but qualified friars would have had to accept responsibility for more than one. Lay brothers, servants and even slaves were employed wherever the friars found themselves unable to keep up with basic housekeeping duties.⁸⁸

Management of the convent's revenues was perhaps the most important and most complicated of offices, with ultimate responsibility resting on the prior. As mendicants, Dominican friars theoretically depended on the charity of fellow Christians and they rejected personal wealth.⁸⁹ In practice however, they received charity in many forms – from major donors' lucrative grants of regular rental or harvest revenues to small contributions (in cash or kind, one-time or periodic) as noted in the wills of local citizens.⁹⁰ These grants effectively made some convents quite wealthy as corporate landlords over houses, fields and vineyards as well as proprietors of significant sums of money (portions of which might be invested in still more real estate).⁹¹ In addition to caring for their own buildings and garden plots, therefore, the Dominicans had to exercise vigilance to ensure that their rights and interests in a great number of dispersed properties were maintained. At times this vigilance resulted in the pursuit of legal actions.⁹²

⁸⁷ These include the novice-master, cantor, subcantor, sacristan, librarian, custodians for the dormitory, refectory and wardrobe, procurator, almoner, infirmarian, porter and guest-master (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 344–5).

⁸⁸ Lay brothers (*conversi*) could serve as cellarers, tailors, cobblers and gardeners (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 345). On Dominican use of servants and slaves, including Muslims and recent converts from Islam, see below, chapter 8.

⁸⁹ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 145–63.

⁹⁰ Examples of wills bequeathing modest sums to the Dominicans of Mallorca have been preserved in the archives of the St. Eulalia parish in Palma. In 1236, as mentioned above, the widow Beatrice left two *solidi* and two linen cloaks for the friars; similar amounts of cash were left by William Bou (1247), Arnold Llobera (1271) and Ferrer Servià, a cotton-worker (1327) (Rosselló Lliteras, *Els Pergamins*, vol. I, 56–7, 64, 77, 172 [#18, 36, 66 and 294]). A wide variety are also recorded for Valencia (ARV, *clero*, legajos 195–208). More substantial testamentary donations naturally came from wealthier patrons, such as the Mallorcan landowner John Bennazar (1331) or queen Blanche of Aragon (1308) (see respectively P. de Montaner and M.M. Riera Frau, “Los Bennisser d’Alfàbia: del clan andalusí al llinatge catalán” in *Homenatge a Antoni Mut Calafell, arxiver* [Palma, 1993], 175–208, and J.E. Martínez Ferrando, ed., *Jaime II de Aragón* [Barcelona, 1948], vol. II, 34–9 [#57]).

⁹¹ Thus, for example, in April 1236 the Mallorcan convent bought properties valued at more than 500 Melgorian *solidi* (through an intermediary named Raymond de Podio) from a number of lay citizens (AHN, *clero*, carpeta 77 #7 and #10–14). In 1254 the friars of St. Catherine's purchased land in the suburbs of Barcelona from the abbey of Ripoll (BUB MS 241, 305–10). In 1263 they exchanged land for a vineyard with the bishop and canons of Barcelona (*ibid.*, 257–60). Such transactions were apparently a regular occurrence.

⁹² Disputes over precious water resources (“the universal problem of urban monasteries”) occasionally led to litigation (P. Greene, *Medieval Monasteries* [Leicester, 1992], 165). At Barcelona, conflict between Dominicans and the neighboring Benedictines of St. Peter Puella over use of an aqueduct simmered for more than a century before making its way to the courts (BUB MS

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

The friars' expertise in money management and preservation of financial documents attracted attention from local businesspeople, so that Dominican priories in the Crown of Aragon were regularly visited by those seeking to have transactions witnessed, validated and/or recorded.⁹³ Sometimes they witnessed contracts indebting Christians to Jews, with no apparent reservations.⁹⁴ Their assistance may have been especially useful in post-conquest Mallorca and Valencia, where Dominican friars were among the first clerics to become permanently established. The mendicants offered a secure and permanent repository for contracts, receipts and other important documents, some of which remain in conventual archive collections today.⁹⁵ Royal officers were aware of monasteries' value as safe repositories for documents; indeed one of the first recorded acts of the friars at St. Dominic's in occupied Valencia was to take charge of an instrument recognizing the Templars' 48,000 *solidi* debt to the Crown in 1240.⁹⁶

Though notaries were widely used, literate friars could also help with the drafting of documents. This was particularly the case with wills, where the proper distribution of one's wealth might seriously affect prospects for salvation; the Dominicans' advisory role in such matters was thus pastoral as well as legal or technical. The wills (and funerals) of wealthy and important people naturally received the greatest attention from the

1005, fols. 36v–37r and 39v [grant of 1223]; BUB MS 241, 161–2 [dispute of 1326, mentioning aid received in the matter from royal confessor friar Peter de Portello and the existence of a volume of related documents entitled the *Llibre de la canonada*]. The friars of Huesca similarly took pains to preserve documentation validating their water rights (Diago, fol. 269r; Echarte, "Huesca," 317). At Valencia a dispute between the friars and a miller "super ... decursu acquarum" went to arbitration in 1271 (cited in Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. II, 471, n. 55).

⁹³ A number of extant land transactions were witnessed and notarized "in domo fratrum predicatorum" (examples in Pérez i Martínez and Coll i Tomàs, *Ramon de Torrelles*, 19–20 [#11–14]).

⁹⁴ A 1283 Perpignan agreement between John P. de Sancto Laurentio and the Jew Samuel Asser de Lunello, for example, was signed by three witnesses including "frater Br. Miafredi de ordine fratrum predicatorum" (R. Emery, *The Jews of Perpignan* [New York, 1959], 166 [app. 4, #97]).

⁹⁵ The *Constitutiones* made provisions for such activities, specifying that "fratres non sint dispensatores alienarum rerum vel pecuniarum nec fideicommissarii" but that "depositorum esse possunt" (dist. 2, ch. 35; ed. Thomas, *De Oudste Constituties*, 367). Some private financial documents in the archive of St. Dominic's (Mallorca) antedate the Mallorcan conquest and indeed the foundation of the Dominican Order, suggesting that they were brought to the island and entrusted to friars as part of a larger portfolio (AHN, *clero*, carpeta 75, #1 and #3–8 [1212–27]). Such documents can be found scattered throughout the hundreds of medieval parchments in this archive (AHN, *clero*, carpetas 75–107). They should be compared with similar holdings of private documents in the Valencian Dominicans' archives (ARV, *clero*, legajos 195–208).

⁹⁶ Though some royal archives were maintained at the royal palace in Barcelona from the twelfth century and probably earlier, James I regularly left documents in the care of monks. Hospitallers were particularly well-suited to the task, since they combined monasticism with security based on armed force (Burns, *Diplomatarium*, vol. I, 15–25). The Valencian Preachers' custody of the Templar debt file is mentioned in *ibid.*, 20–1 along with a similar service provided by the Dominicans of Zaragoza c. 1263.

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best-qualified friars.⁹⁷ Thus in 1243 the Preachers Raymond Penyafort and Raymond de Fluviano (accompanied by the Cistercian William de Bauciarennis) took it upon themselves to ensure that Ponce Peter de Banyeres' deathbed instructions should be translated into a properly notarized will (in sworn testimony at the altar of St. Dominic in the local Dominican convent).⁹⁸ Ponce Peter was a rich man, leaving 8,000 *morabetins* to his daughter alone. In 1251, when bishop Peter de Centelles of Barcelona decided to compose his very extensive and complex last will and testament, he enlisted the aid of a number of prominent Dominicans including Raymond Penyafort and the prior of St. Catherine's.⁹⁹ Queen Blanche similarly drafted her will under the guidance of her confessor, friar Andrew de Albalato, and she chose friars William de Aranyon and Raymond de Ponte (then bishop of Valencia) to serve among its executors in 1308.¹⁰⁰

Giving good counsel to Christians – especially to leading members of urban Christian society – was clearly an important part of the Dominicans' overall pastoral mission, one which took many forms in addition to advising on wills.¹⁰¹ The sacramental act of hearing confessions and assigning penance was one of the friars' functions, one which was carefully regulated by the Order to ensure it was undertaken only by fully trained senior Preachers.¹⁰² Less formal advising on both spiritual and worldly matters (which were often considered to be inseparable) was also forthcoming to those who cultivated a relationship with the friars. A large part of the mendicant Orders' success was in fact

⁹⁷ The friars' right to perform funerals (a lucrative activity previously confined to the parochial clergy) was hotly contested. It was established by papal fiat in 1216 (Honorius' bull *Religiosam vitam*, in Ripoll, vol. I, 2–3 [#1]), but acceptance by local clerics took longer. At Mallorca a relatively early agreement on the subject was reached with the bishop and his Chapter in 1250 (Pérez i Martínez and Coll i Tomàs, *Ramon de Torrelles*, 97–8 [#221]). Burials in Dominican convents were available only to the wealthy; several members of the Mallorcan royal family, for example, chose the Perpignan convent as their final resting place (Escarra, "Le couvent," 101).

⁹⁸ F.Valls i Taberner, *Diplomatari de Sant Ramon de Penyafort* (repr. Zaragoza, 1990), 21–2 (#4).

⁹⁹ Witnesses included "fratri Raymundo de Pennaforti, et fratri Arnaldo Segarra, et fratri Arnaldo Salamonis, et aliis fratribus ordinis fratrum Praedicatorum" (Valls i Taberner, *Diplomatari*, 31–5 [#11]; BUB MS 241, 371–7). The will also indicates that this bishop kept personal documents in the convent (Valls i Taberner, *Diplomatari*, 32). It must be noted, of course, that this was a special case, in that bishop Peter was himself a friar of St. Catherine's.

¹⁰⁰ Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. II, 35. This was not the same Andrew de Albalato who had earlier been bishop of Valencia (d. 1276).

¹⁰¹ In these duties the Dominicans were far from being the only, or even the most commonly employed Order. Franciscans outnumbered them in the Crown of Aragon, and enjoyed much support from commoners and royalty alike (Webster, *Els Menorets*). James II of Aragon's second wife, Mary de Lusignan of Cyprus (who chose a Franciscan confessor, and whose will clearly favored Franciscans over Dominicans), provides merely one example of this (Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. I, 271–4; vol. II, 197–200 [#278]).

¹⁰² Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 193–203.

due to the authoritative yet personalized attention they dedicated to members of the increasingly prominent urban upper and middle classes, among whom piety and concern over prospects for salvation were widespread.¹⁰³

As priests independent of the parochial benefice system, the friars were also mobile and liable to be supportive of their immediate benefactors. This made them particularly valuable as royal confessors capable of accompanying the itinerant court, an office filled by Raymond Penyafort, Michael Fabra, Arnold Segarra and Berenguer de Castellbisbal in the reign of king James I alone.¹⁰⁴ These same considerations made the friars useful as military chaplains during extended campaigns far from Christian soil, such as the Mallorcan and Valencian campaigns where Michael Fabra and his colleagues performed so prominently, as noted above.

The usefulness of Dominican friars in the entourage of a prince is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the case of a Castilian magnate who was intimately connected to the Crown of Aragon: Don Juan Manuel.¹⁰⁵ An enthusiastic and vocal supporter of the friars, Juan Manuel founded his own Preachers' convent at Peñafiel in 1318.¹⁰⁶ In a didactic treatise written for his son, he highlighted the importance of having the right Dominican confessor at one's side:

Do not choose an already designated confessor but rather ask the provincial prior of the Friars Preacher and the Order to provide you a confessor, a friar who, to the extent of their knowledge, fulfills all the requirements to be in your house.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ A. Vauchez, *Les laïcs au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1987); also L. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1978).

¹⁰⁴ Diago included more of these in his index, under the heading *Confessores de Reyes*. He conveniently left Berenguer de Castellbisbal (whose relations with James I were far from salutary) off the list. King James describes a 1266 exchange of views between himself and his confessor, Arnold Segarra (on the subject of royal sinning) in the *Llibre dels Fets* (chs. 426–7). Friar Andrew de Albalato, bishop of Valencia, also served as James' chancellor (Burns, *Diplomatarium*, vol. I, 31).

¹⁰⁵ A close relative to the kings of Castile and sometime candidate for the throne, Juan Manuel spent much of his career seeking to further his position by forming alliances with different branches of the Aragonese royal family. To this end he married in succession the daughters of both James II of Mallorca (Isabel) and James II of Aragon (Constance) (H. Sturcken, *Don Juan Manuel* [New York, 1974]; also R. Ayerbe-Chaux, *Yo, don Juan Manuel* [Madison, 1993]). His collected works are in *Obras Completas* (ed. J. Manuel Blecuá; Madrid, 1982).

¹⁰⁶ García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 95–115; J.L. Martín, "Don Juan Manuel fundador del convento de San Juan y San Pablo de Peñafiel" and J. Valdeón Baroque, "Don Juan Manuel y Peñafiel" in *Don Juan Manuel VII Centenario* (Murcia, 1982), 177–85 and 385–95. It will be noted that this coincides with the Catalan nobility's brief period of convent foundation at Castellón and Balaguer.

¹⁰⁷ *Libro enseñado* I, 1, 151; cited in García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 95. The son was Fernando, born in 1329 to Juan Manuel and his third wife, Blanca Núñez.

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The “requirements” were generally to be a wise and discrete counselor at all times, an office in which Juan Manuel’s Dominicans excelled. Friar John Alonso was apparently a close confidant and literary advisor who encouraged Don Juan in his writing and may have served as his confessor.¹⁰⁸ In 1302 friar Gil de Giscón represented the prince in his truce negotiations with king James II of Aragon, and by 1313 other friars had helped to arrange a marriage alliance between the two parties.¹⁰⁹

Catalan aristocrats too saw the benefits of close ties to the Dominican Order, though they did not immortalize these ties in literature. As noted above, the count of Ampurias, Ponce Hugo, established a small convent for the Preachers on his own land at Castellón in 1317 – a year before Juan Manuel’s similar grant to Peñafiel. He died soon afterwards, leaving his sole heir, count Malgaulin, in the friars’ capable hands. When Malgaulin died in 1321 without male issue, the Ampurian legacy was hotly contested between prince Peter (the future king Peter IV of Aragon, who claimed the land by means of a complex arrangement with a Hospitaller uncle of Malgaulin’s) and Hugo de Cardona (Ponce Hugo’s great-nephew). It was thanks to intervention by the Dominicans of Castellón de Ampurias, who had preserved the wills of Ponce Hugo and Malgaulin in their archive, that a royal usurpation was prevented. By 1325 the prior of Castellón, along with the Aragonese Provincial Prior Bernard de Podio Cercoso (*Puigcercós*), managed to arrange a compromise by which the prince would compensate Hugo for the loss of Ampurias by means of equivalent lands in other parts of the kingdom.¹¹⁰ It may be assumed that Ponce Hugo’s original hope had been that the friars would provide spiritual as well as practical guidance for his son; this they likely did in the few years

¹⁰⁸ Alonso is known only from Juan Manuel’s writings; he may have been a fictional character (García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 101). If so, he was likely based on one or more of Juan Manuel’s real Dominican confessors such as Ferrant Jaimes (L. Pascual Martínez, “Los oficios y la cancillería en el señorío de don Juan Manuel” in *Don Juan Manuel VII Centenario*, 279). The Preachers’ influence on Juan Manuel’s intellectual and spiritual life is explored in M.R. Lida de Malkiel, “Tres notas sobre don Juan Manuel” in *Romance Philology* 4 (1950–1), 155–94, as well as García-Serrano’s *Preachers* (ch. 5).

¹⁰⁹ Juan Manuel married princess Constance in 1313, as a result of negotiations which had begun soon after the death of his first wife in 1301 (when Constance was still a minor) (García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 103–4). One of Juan Manuel’s most effective Dominican agents was Raymond de Masquefa, who taught at the Order’s convents in Barcelona (1299, 1310, 1312), Valencia (1302, 1303) and Girona (1307). De Masquefa also served as prior in Barcelona and Valencia, where traces of his financial dealings still survive (Valencia Cathedral, *pergaminos* #1799 and 3031 in Olmos y Canalda, *Inventario*). Friar Raymond was clearly a very enterprising man, combining these offices with a career as a tireless diplomat regularly crossing the Castilian–Aragonese border.

¹¹⁰ The bare bones of this complicated story are in Diago, fols. 29r–30r. Malgaulin’s will had named the Dominican Ponce de Monclus and the prior of Castellón as co-executors along with the guardian of the local Franciscan convent, but it appears that the latter was somehow excluded from proceedings.

before his death, though of course it is their material aid to the family which has best been documented.

King James II of Aragon (Ponce Hugo's sovereign and Juan Manuel's father-in-law) made similar use of his own loyal Dominicans at court. A number of friars thus emerge from his records as emissaries of the Crown to various rulers of Christian Europe and beyond. In addition to Raymond Masquefa, for example, James employed friars Peter Marsili (envoy to the papal curia at Avignon 1309–10) and Arnold Amill (envoy with Marsili to Juan Manuel in 1312) as official representatives.¹¹¹ Preachers also served the king as court intellectuals whose tasks might include everything from the purchase and copying of liturgical books to the translation of royal memoirs. Dominican friars Peter Alegre, Bernard de Tolosa, Martin de Casuis, Martin de Pertusia, Martin de Aranda, Sancho de Mur, Bernard de Solanes, Peter de Portello, William Peregrini and James de Olzina were all named in court documents as recipients of substantial royal funding for purchasing, copying and emending books destined for the king's collection.¹¹² Finally, friars served the king as his personal confessors, as they did his predecessors and his wife, Blanche of Anjou.¹¹³

Part of these friars' pastoral ministry at court included advising the king on how to make reparations for his personal misdeeds, and their advice culminated in the proclamation of James' 1318 *ordinaciones*. These were a sort of political testament in which the king appointed a commission of four theologians and four legal authorities (including Dominican inquisitors Bernard de Podio Cercoso and John de Lotgerio) to examine duly notarized claims and honor any debts or reparations from the royal store of jewels and other movable treasures. The treasury in question was moved from the Benedictine monastery of Holy Crosses (*Santes Creus*) to the Dominican convent of St. Catherine's in Barcelona in 1319. Its

¹¹¹ Martínez San Pedro, *Cronica*, 18–21; cf. Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. I, 50–1 (#40). In 1319 the royal confessor friar Peter de Portello served as a conduit for negotiations between the king and his rebellious son, prince James (Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. I, 90; vol. II, 218 [#295]). In 1320 the king received two more Dominicans, Bernard Cathalani and Simon Angelicus, who had traveled to Valencia as envoys of Castile (*ibid.*, vol. I, 262). In 1324 friar Philip Umbal accompanied Raymond Masquefa on yet another royal mission, this time to contract a marriage for prince Peter (the future king Peter IV of Aragon) in France (BUB MS 1001, fols. 49v–50r). Dominican ambassadors to Islamic lands are discussed in chapter 7.

¹¹² Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. I, 27 (#22) and vol. II, 19–21 (#21, 24, 25, 27). In 1313 Peter Marsili was paid 130 Barcelona *solidi* to translate and expand the Chronicle of James I, which James II wanted to send to his cousin Sancho of Mallorca (Martínez San Pedro, *Cronica*, 21; Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. I, 57–58 [#46 and 47]).

¹¹³ James' confessors included the Dominicans William Aranyon (or *de Aragon*), Martin de Ateca and Peter Portello (Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. I, 16, 74, 257 and 291). The above-mentioned Peter Alegre and Bernard de Tolosa also served as royal chaplains.

The coming of the friars

maintenance there, which was challenged by bishop Ponce de Gualba, was a significant undertaking in its own right.¹¹⁴

Dominicans of the Crown of Aragon served in other non-conventual offices, at the royal court but also abroad. A handful went to Rome, where they rose to positions of prominence at the papal curia: Raymond Penyafort (papal chaplain and penitentiary, as well as master-general of the Order), Raymond Corsavino (master of the Sacred Palace), Raymond de Ponte (auditor of the Sacred Palace) and Nicholas Rosell (the Aragonese Province's first cardinal in 1356) are prominent examples. Others served at the Provincial level, as priors, diffinitors and visitors.¹¹⁵ In the period under review, at least a dozen became bishops and one an archbishop.¹¹⁶ These tended to be closely connected to the king, especially under James II of Aragon; thus James' confessors William de Aranyon and Peter de Portello became bishop of Lleida (1313–21) and archbishop of Torres (1327–49) respectively, while Raymond de Ponte (who took the Dominican habit after first serving at the papal curia and later becoming bishop of Valencia in 1291) also served as the king's chancellor.¹¹⁷

THE INQUISITORIAL OFFICE

A few Dominicans, including the most prominent and highly-respected, dedicated a portion of their time to working with local bishops as inquisitors. The medieval inquisition emerged gradually as an institution during the course of the thirteenth century, with the traditional bishops' duty to investigate and extirpate heresies among their flocks being taken over more and more by specially appointed legal and theological experts drawn for the most part from the ranks of the mendicant Orders.¹¹⁸ The

¹¹⁴ The *ordinaciones* are discussed in Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. I, 57–59. Other members of the commission included Franciscans and members of the secular clergy.

¹¹⁵ These positions, all of which involved much onerous travel on a yearly basis, were assigned at regular intervals by the Provincial Chapters (Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 205–42).

¹¹⁶ Listed in Diago's index under the headings *Arçobispos* and *Obispos*.

¹¹⁷ See Diago, fols. 15r–16r, 149r, 163v. Portello's role at Torres, on the newly conquered and politically sensitive island of Sardinia, must have been similar to that of military chaplain Michael Fabra at Mallorca and Valencia (H. Finke, *Acta Aragonensia* [Berlin, 1908–22], vol. I, 431, n. 1 and vol. II, 805; also J. Trenchs Odena, "La Chiesa di Alghero, Pietro IV e l'arcivescovo di Torres" in A. Mattone and P. Sanna, eds., *Alghero, La Catalogna, il Mediterraneo* [Sassari, 1994], 105–6). Friars were prominent in occupied Sardinia. An Italian Dominican named Laurence was bishop of Cività (Tempio) there in 1329; he was succeeded by the Franciscan Bernard Rubei in 1344 and the Dominican Raymond in 1349 (F. Miquel Rosell, *Regesta de letras pontificias del archivo de la corona de Aragón sección cancillería real (pergaminos)* [Madrid, 1948], #536).

¹¹⁸ For an overview of the medieval inquisition and its history the three volumes of Lea's *History of the Inquisition* remain indispensable. The inquisition in the Crown of Aragon specifically has yet to be adequately studied. E. Fort i Cogul, *Catalunya i la inquisició* (Barcelona, 1973) is a basic introduction,

Preachers, with their dedication to orthodox doctrine and their origins in the crucible of the anti-Cathar crusade, were well suited to the task. Rooting out heretical errors among the Christian faithful was always central to their pastoral mission.

The medieval inquisition was by no means as active in the medieval Crown of Aragon as it was in nearby southern France and northern Italy – the heartlands of the Cathar and other heterodox movements – but it did constitute a fairly demanding element in the friars' ministry at some times and in some areas. King James I, reacting to an influx of refugees provoked by the Albigensian crusades in Languedoc and perhaps also to similar legislation of emperor Frederick II, issued edicts banning heretics from entering his realms and depriving them of the public peace in 1226 and 1228.¹¹⁹ Thanks to the mediation of Raymond Penyafort (then a friar at the papal court, but with close ties to his Catalan homeland) Gregory IX soon moved to endorse the king's initiative, and took the further step of recommending Dominican inquisitorial expertise to the archbishop of Tarragona in his 1232 bull *Declinante*.¹²⁰ By 1237 at the latest, friars had begun to move against heretics in the Crown of Aragon. In 1242 a council meeting under the new reforming archbishop Peter de Albalato of Tarragona and his advisor Raymond Penyafort drafted guidelines for the conduct of inquisitions, ensuring that such moves would continue in the future.¹²¹

The first generation of Aragonese inquisitors focused almost exclusively on extirpating remnants of Cathar and Waldensian communities which had escaped crusader violence by taking refuge in the remote valleys of the Spanish Pyrenees.¹²² From 1237, when inquisitors were invited to conduct investigations in the viscounty of Castellbò in the diocese of Urgel, a complex series of operations kept the region's few friars busy on and off for many years.¹²³ These operations were based first at

but only pp. 17–119 deal with the medieval period. M. Pegg, *The Corruption of Angels* (Princeton, 2001) provides a detailed examination of the inquisition as it existed in Languedoc c. 1245.

¹¹⁹ Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 163–7. Nuño Sanchez of Roussillon had earlier outlawed heretics in 1217 (*ibid.*, vol. I, 319–22).

¹²⁰ Ripoll, vol. I, 38 (#52). ¹²¹ Mansi, vol. XXIII, 553–9.

¹²² Inquisitions were also organized in Barcelona and the kingdom of Navarre at this time, but little evidence of their activities has survived (Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 166–7). E. Le Roy Ladurie's *Montaillou* (tr. B. Bray; New York, 1978) famously describes life in a Pyrenean heretic community somewhat later, at the turn of the fourteenth century.

¹²³ The situation was deeply politicized: the viscount of Castellbò was none other than count Roger Bernard of Foix, whose father had been one of the chief opponents of the anti-Cathar crusaders and who himself had stood against Louis VIII in the 1220s. Though finally reconciled to the Church, his orthodoxy remained suspect. His claim to Castellbò was contested by the viscounty's overlord, bishop Ponce de Vilamur of Urgel, with whom Roger Bernard had recently fought a bitter war. In order to outmaneuver his episcopal foe, the count passed Castellbò to his son

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Lleida but soon moved to Urgel. In 1237 inquisitors burned the bones of eighteen deceased heretics, destroyed two houses and imprisoned forty-five suspects. The alleged poisoning of Dominican inquisitor and prior of Lleida, Ponce de Planedis (c. 1242), was followed by still harsher measures, including a siege against Castellbò and the burning or imprisonment of its defenders. Inquisitorial activities clearly generated violent hatred for the Dominicans among certain groups at certain times; at around 1277 friars Bernard de Travesseres and Peter de Cadireta were similarly killed by angry residents of the see of Urgel while acting in this capacity.¹²⁴

A second wave of sustained inquisitorial activity did not take place in the Crown of Aragon until the fourteenth century, when campaigns against Christian heretics (especially members of enthusiast movements known variously as Beghards, Beguines or Fraticelli) claimed numerous victims at Barcelona. A series of heretic-burnings took place there in 1302 and 1304, and again in 1314, 1317 and 1320–1.¹²⁵ Special inquisitorial actions took place when king James II of Aragon ordered the bishops of Valencia and Zaragoza (the Dominican Raymond de Ponte and Ximeno de Luna respectively) to oversee trials against the Templars in 1308,¹²⁶ and later when the Preachers' conflict with Arnold de Vilanova ended in a posthumous general condemnation of his writings (1316–17).¹²⁷

By the 1330s, Dominican inquisitors had come to occupy more-or-less permanent offices in all corners of the lands controlled by the royal house

Roger and invited inquisitors (both Dominican and Franciscan), the archbishop of Tarragona and an assembly of bishops at Lleida to oversee its maintenance and return to orthodoxy. As a result bishop Ponce's excommunication against Roger Bernard as a defender of heretics was overruled by the archbishop (Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 165–6).

¹²⁴ Diago, fols. 7v–9r and 11r–12r. The various inquisitorial campaigns in the diocese (centering on Berga after the destruction of Castellbò, but also extending to other regions) are detailed in Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 165–9 and Font i Cogul, *Catalunya*, 46–65; cf. documents in Valls i Taberner, *Diplomatari*, 37, 40–4, 46 (#13, 17–20, 22).

¹²⁵ Diago, fols. 27v–29r; Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 170; Font i Cogul, *Catalunya*, 80–3. On related pietist groups see D. Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans* (University Park, 2001). Their trials in Catalonia are recorded as *exempla* in Eymeric's *Directorium Inquisitorum* (q. 11); the persecutions coincided with those led by Jacques Fournier in Languedoc (Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*).

¹²⁶ Diago, fols. 17r–v; Font i Cogul, *Catalunya*, 69–73. On the Templars of Aragon and Catalonia see A. Forey, *The Fall of the Templars in the Crown of Aragon* (Aldershot, 2001).

¹²⁷ Font i Cogul, *Catalunya*, 74–9. Dominicans such as the Valencian inquisitor William Cotlliure and the royal confessor Martin de Ateca had been trying for years to bring Arnold to trial (Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. I, 290–1). As was customary in such a sensitive case, the final judgment involved a number of eminent figures representing different branches of the clergy: the Dominican inquisitor John de Lotgerio was aided by a theological commission whose members included Bernard Domingo (Dominican lector at Barcelona), Bernard del Pino (Dominican lector at Lleida) and Bernard Simon (Dominican lector at Tarragona) but also the vicar general of Tarragona (in lieu of the archbishop), the Franciscan lectors of Barcelona, Lleida and Tarragona, and the Benedictine lectors of Poblet and Santes Creus (Diago, fols. 26v–27r).

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

of Aragon and its cadet dynasties. Friar Raymond Dufort was the first inquisitor of Mallorca (1332), while his fellow Mallorcan William Lluþia served in Sicily (1331).¹²⁸ At the same time, in Barcelona, friar Bernard de Podio Cercoso was inquisitor-general for the mainland crown of Aragon from 1320 to the 1340s. He was assisted by fellow Dominicans such as Berenguer Saiol and Sancho de Turre Alba (inquisitorial commissaries responsible for Valencia and Aragon respectively).¹²⁹ The activities of these inquisitors varied widely and included occasional prosecution of accused apostates from Christianity to Judaism, as will be seen in [chapter 5](#).

Even in non-inquisitorial legal proceedings, mendicant expertise in the closely related fields of theology and law was highly valued and regularly called upon in the Crown of Aragon. In 1247, for example, the Dominican prior of St. Catherine's in Barcelona (along with the sacristan of Girona) was named procurator in a lawsuit pitting king James against the master of the Templars; in 1321 friar Anthony de Castroverdun played a similar role in a dispute between noble factions.¹³⁰ In 1307 friar Peter Thome was called before the bishop of Barcelona to serve as an expert theological witness in the witchcraft trial of a healer named GERALDA DE CODINES.¹³¹ Testimony on purely economic points could also be forthcoming from qualified friars; thus in 1355 friar William Angles advised a group of executors concerning the value of the deceased Bernard Mascaró's Valencian rental properties.¹³² Such consultations must have been fairly routine for the more senior members of the Order.

THE PREACHING OFFICE

Given the small numbers of friars in the Crown of Aragon, and the various demands for their time and services both within the convent itself and at the highest levels of lay and ecclesiastical society, the Dominican

¹²⁸ Both were alumni of St. Dominic's convent in Mallorca (Manera, *Relación*, 91). The inquisition existed under Angevin rule in the mainland portions of the Sicilian kingdom by 1269, but inquisitorial activity was limited at best on the island under the Aragonese (Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, 245–9).

¹²⁹ Bernard combined his duties as inquisitor with those of Provincial Prior from 1324–33 (Diago, fols. 29r–30r). The previous Aragonese Provincial Prior Arnold Burguet had similarly been responsible for inquisitorial affairs (Diago, fols. 27v and 29r).

¹³⁰ Miquel Rosell, *Regesta*, #141 and 441.

¹³¹ This case (which began in 1304 and was revisited in 1307) appears in the Barcelona bishop's records of pastoral visitations. Peter's role was that of an expert theological witness rather than an inquisitor; the other expert witness was a physician. GERALDA was released and permitted to continue her medical practice after promising not to resort to the use of incantations (ADBVP 1/1, fols. 42v–44r; J. Martí Bonet, *Ponç de Gualba obispo de Barcelona* (a. 1303–1334) [Barcelona, 1983], 136–8).

¹³² Valencia Cathedral, *pergamino* #1932, in Olmos y Canalda, *Inventario*.

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Order was limited in the extent to which it could minister effectively to less exalted individual members of the local populace – and it could not do so at all in regions where it had no regular presence. Yet friars were called to teach orthodox “truth” and to correct heretical “errors” not only among themselves and the mighty but for the benefit of all Christians. This they undoubtedly strove to do whenever possible. They could perhaps intervene from time to time when informed of particularly serious cases of heresy, but they could not afford the manpower to counsel each craftsman and laborer, to hear their confessions and draw up their wills. In any case by doing so they would have further exacerbated existing tensions with a secular clergy traditionally entrusted with such pastoral care. As a result, they tended to focus primarily on the task of ensuring that truthful and salvific doctrine should be placed before the masses by means of public preaching.

Dominicans raised the art of preaching to a new level throughout Christendom, and the Crown of Aragon was no exception. Orthodoxy of doctrine was their primary concern, and great care was taken to maintain purity of discourse. The Constitutions of the Order specified that only properly trained, mature preachers should be allowed to speak in public, and the special office of *praedicator generalis* was created to ensure that only duly licensed friars were allowed to do so. These *praedicatores* had to have completed at least three years of theological study, though in many cases they were also teachers of long standing.¹³³ Nevertheless in 1301 the General Chapter at Cologne registered its alarm at proliferation of the office (claiming that there were approximately 170 *praedicatores generales* in the Spanish Province) and ordered a total overhaul of the system.¹³⁴ As a result all such titles were revoked; the thirty most highly qualified scholars in the new Province of Aragon were allowed to resume their preaching duties thereafter, but that number was not to be exceeded.¹³⁵

Elite preachers were only the cream of a larger crop, however. It was they who were entrusted with delivery of the most important public sermons, before large crowds in city squares or cathedral churches during Lent and on major feasts such as the Nativity. Most other days of the

¹³³ *Constitutiones*, dist. 2, ch. 31 (ed. Thomas, 363). Certain areas were designated “solemn preaching territory” (*praedicatio sollemnis*) and required additional qualifications of their preachers; the Italian convents of Pisa, Rome and Florence enjoyed this status by 1250 (Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 183–4 and 189–90).

¹³⁴ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 309–10.

¹³⁵ The thirty *praedicatores* were to be distributed as follows: sixteen in the Catalan convents (including Mallorca and Valencia), seven in the Aragonese and seven in the Navarrese (Robles Sierra, “*Actas de los Capítulos*” in *EV* 20 [1990], 250–1).

year saw unlicensed friars honing their craft by delivering sermons in less demanding circumstances. “In-house” sermons, delivered by Dominicans for the benefit of their confrères, were regularly heard in the convents and at all the Order’s gatherings – including the Chapter of Faults held daily in the small hours of the morning – or indeed at any convenient time as determined by the prior.¹³⁶ Organized theological disputations were also held regularly both inside the convents and out, to provide friars with still more opportunities to practice their skills in publicly defending the orthodox faith.¹³⁷ Preaching was an ongoing concern for all members of the Order, inside and outside of the convent walls.

Although the Preachers’ actual words are for the most part lost, a great deal can be reconstructed from extant model sermons and *artes praedicandi* manuals.¹³⁸ These sources demonstrate medieval friars’ versatility in preaching to a wide range of audiences, from the Latinate university students of Paris and Oxford (and later Lleida) to local merchants and craftspeople of both sexes who needed to hear the word of God in their own vernaculars.¹³⁹ Crusade preaching was a special occasional genre, in which the friars also excelled.¹⁴⁰ Depending once again on their intended audience and the setting, more common sermons could be designed to teach everything from Scriptural exegesis to basic catechistic and ethical principles.¹⁴¹ One of the very few extant manuscript sermon collections whose Catalan Dominican provenance is assured (bearing the distinctive *ex-libris* stamp of St. Catherine’s) thus provided aspiring preachers with

¹³⁶ Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 184–93.

¹³⁷ Even in-house disputations were open to the public and so careful preparation was crucial; open disputations at major university centers were especially well-attended (Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 167–75). In the Crown of Aragon other locales such as palaces and churches would have been used for this latter purpose before the foundation of Lleida university c. 1300.

¹³⁸ T.-M. Charland, *Artes Praedicandi* (Paris, 1936); M. Briscoe, *Artes praedicandi* and B. Jaye, *Artes orandi* (Turnhout, 1992). Examination of relevant sections in the *Typologie des Sources* volume on sermons reveals that very little research has been done on Spanish Dominican preaching before the age of Vincent Ferrer (B. Kienzle, ed., *The Sermon* [Turnhout, 2000], 40–52 and 104–15). Nevertheless extrapolations may be made from scholarship dedicated to mendicant preaching in general; see esp. D. D’Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars* (Oxford, 1985), who also notes the lack of data on Spanish preaching.

¹³⁹ M.-M. Davy, *Les sermons universitaires parisiens de 1230–1231* (Paris, 1931); P. Glorieux, “Sermons universitaires parisiens de 1267–68” in *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 16 (1949), 40–71; B. Smalley, “Oxford University Sermons, 1290–1293” in J.J.G. Alexander and M. Gibson, eds., *Medieval Learning and Literature* (Oxford, 1976), 307–27.

¹⁴⁰ C. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology. Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000).

¹⁴¹ L.-J. Bataillon, “Early Scholastic and Mendicant Preaching as Exegesis of Scripture” in Mark Jordan and Kent Emery, eds., *Ad litteram* (Notre Dame, 1992), 165–98; J.-P. Torrell, “La pratique pastorale d’un théologien du XIIIe siècle Thomas d’Aquin prédicateur” in *Revue Thomiste* 82 (1982), 213–45.

The coming of the friars

guidance in developing a wide range of themes, in alphabetical order from *abstinentia* to *vita eterna*.¹⁴²

The friars' pious messages were not always welcomed wholeheartedly, even by Christian townsfolk. Anonymous Catalan poetry, including verses apparently composed by women or at least written in a woman's voice, could protest against strictness in mendicant attitudes toward aristocratic fashions:

Worthy goldsmiths and silversmiths,
ladies and maidens who are of their guild,
let us send a messenger to the apostle [the pope]
that he excommunicate advice and advisors:
the friars Minor
are great blamers,
as are the Preachers,
and those of Penitence
are full of malevolence,
as are the other Orders
who ever preach thus.
Go, *sirventes*, to the good king of Aragon
And the pope that they might lift the decree,
For they have acted basely – God bless me ...¹⁴³

In addition to teaching and admonishing their Christian neighbors by means of sermons, friars became involved in public education programs by the middle of the fourteenth century. Casual lay attendance at conventual theology lectures had always been a possibility, as Dante's Florentine experience famously attests.¹⁴⁴ Permanent institution of public

¹⁴² BUB MS 164 (*Summa predicantium, secundum ordinem alphabeti*). The MS dates from the later fourteenth century. Another (thirteenth-century) collection of sermons by the Franciscan Conrad Holtznicker, now Vat. Lat. MS 1279, has an *ex libris* showing it once belonged to the Barcelona Dominican Anthony Poncii (T. Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barcinonensia – assignationes librorum professiones novitorum (s. XIII–XV)" in *AFP* 37 [1967], 53).

¹⁴³ "Senhors dauraires e los daurivellers, donas e donzelas qu'es de lur mestier a l'apostoli mandem un messatgier que ecumenie cossells e cosselhiers; e los fraires menors en son en gran blasmors, e los precizadors, e selh de penedensa ne son en malvolensa e li autre reglar c'o solon precizar. Vai, sirventesca, al bon rey d'Arago e a la papa quel sagramen perdo, car vilanesca an fag – si Dieus bem do ..." (C. Nappholz, *Unsung Women* [New York, 1994], 34–5; my translation differs from Nappholz's). This poem, identified by the incipit *Ab greu cossire*, is set in the time of a king James of Aragon – so either James I (1213–76) or James II (1291–1327). The *sagramen* here refers to a ban on finery.

¹⁴⁴ The poet's statement in the *Convivio* (II, xii, 1–7) that he frequented "le scuole de li religiosi and le disputazioni de li filosofanti" sometime after Beatrice's death in 1290 has generally been accepted as a reference to the Dominican and Franciscan convents of Florence (S. Bemrose, *A New Life of Dante* [Exeter, 2000], 22–6; cf. C. Davis, "Education in Dante's Florence" in *Speculum* 40 [1965], 415–35). Arnold of Vilanova's possible attendance at friar Raymond Martini's Barcelona Hebrew classes c. 1281 provides another example (see chapter 3, below).

theology classes led by Dominicans in cathedral churches was another matter. In 1345 bishop Raymond Gaston of Valencia decreed that such classes were to be the prerogative of the Order.¹⁴⁵ Friar William Angles began to lecture there in 1345 and continued until his death in 1368, when he was replaced by John Mateo.¹⁴⁶ Dominican lectors (or at least frequent preachers) have also been noted at the Mallorcan cathedral in the fourteenth century, though it is unclear whether their role there had been institutionalized.¹⁴⁷ A similar arrangement to the one at Valencia was apparently made at the see of Tortosa by 1365, with friars being dispatched from Barcelona and Tarragona to teach in the cathedral.¹⁴⁸ Opportunities to teach orthodox theology to fellow Christians in the cathedrals provided friars with yet another means by which their primary pastoral goals could be accomplished, at least among committed members of the intellectually inclined laity.

As will be seen in the following chapters, there were instances in which medieval friars would be sent to reach out beyond religious boundaries, offering theological teachings and ultimately baptism – or in some cases punitive discipline – to non-Christian residents of the Crown of Aragon and its neighboring territories. It would be incorrect, however, to suggest that the Dominican Order as a whole at any point established its convents and assigned its human, financial or other institutional resources with a view to achieving these ends. Ease of access to Jewish and/or Muslim populations was never an evident factor in determining locations for convent-building. On the contrary, just as they did in other parts of Europe, the Dominicans of the Iberian peninsula tended to congregate wherever wealthy and appreciative Christian patrons invited them to do so.

What remains most remarkable about the Order's presence in the western Mediterranean region is rather the fact that it was comparatively

¹⁴⁵ Bishop Andres de Albalato had established a (Latin) grammar school at Valencia Cathedral in 1259, but it was not linked with the Order. The 1345 document establishing the theology chair is in Diago, fols. 40v–41r.

¹⁴⁶ Diago, fol. 41v. Angles' lectures on Scripture and the Sentences apparently failed to satisfy some members of his audience, who also wanted classes to prepare them for legal careers; the Cathedral Chapter was obliged to pass a constitution specifically prohibiting the teaching of canon or secular law by holders of the Dominican chair (J. Teixidor, *Estudios de Valencia (historia de la universidad hasta 1616)* [ed. L. Robles; Valencia, 1976], 94).

¹⁴⁷ Diago names friar William Llobet as *lector de la Seo de Mallorca* (fol. 46r) but gives no further details. Manera makes note of four friars (Raymond de Corsevino, James Pasqual and William Lupia [*Llupia*] in addition to Llobet) alleged to have been cathedral lectors before 1350 but he is similarly short on specifics. Lupia was apparently paid by the cathedral Chapter in 1330 for services rendered, as was Pasqual for the delivery of a dozen Lenten sermons in the cathedral by 1347 (the year when he was prior of St. Dominic's); they may also have taught there, but the evidence cited by Manera is inconclusive (*Relación*, 47, 72 and 91).

¹⁴⁸ Diago, fol. 53v.

The coming of the friars

quite feeble. Friars did not flock to Castilian and Aragonese borderlands in order to realize their missionary longings, and even local recruits were not as plentiful as in other parts of Europe. The Spanish provinces boasted few convents, and several of these were poorly staffed, yet this was not seen as a matter for serious concern or action by the leadership of the Order. For most medieval Dominicans, despite the Castilian origin of their own founder and his alleged interest in missionary work, the Iberian peninsula remained something of an unimportant backwater.

This is not to say that the friars had no impact on their society. Despite their small numbers, several Dominicans in both Castile and the Crown of Aragon occupied high ranks in royal and ecclesiastical milieux. In their capacities as advisors and educators, they enjoyed a level of influence among Christian elites that in some areas and at some times could be quite decisive. In the latter case especially, through theological scholarship and writings which occasionally touched upon the subject of non-Christian peoples (see the next chapter), their influence could contribute to popular anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim sentiments. The demanding nature of their many activities in such Christian settings, however, must be taken into serious consideration when evaluating the extent of the friars' overall involvement in relations with local non-Christians. For the most part they lacked both the resources and the interest to pursue such thankless relations, whether for missionary or other purposes.

Chapter 3

STUDIES AND WRITINGS

Books must be kept with reverence as containers of holy materials; with diligence as containers of most precious treasure; and with care as containers of most useful things.

Humbert of Romans, *De vita regulari*¹

Because so many of the friars' duties demanded relatively high levels of education, it was only natural that their convents should serve not only as monastic residences and bases of operations but also as training centers. Indeed, as members of an Order expressly devoted to the propagation of true orthodox doctrine by means of sermons and other forms of public teaching, the Preachers considered thorough education of their own brethren to be among their most important pursuits.² Teaching and learning went on among the Dominicans at all times and at all levels, with friars being obliged to devote at least part of their daily routine to regular study. In addition a significant proportion of the population in many convents was dedicated to full-time tasks of delivering or hearing lectures on specialized topics.³

Fortunately, this dimension of Dominican life is relatively well documented, especially for the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries

¹ *De vita regulari*, ch. 141 (ed. Berthier; vol. I, 425).

² The most comprehensive study of medieval Dominican education to date is Mulchahey, "*First the Bow is Bent in Study*." Much of the following is congruent with her findings, except as noted, where the practices of the Spanish and Aragonese Provinces seem to have deviated from norms current in the rest of the Order.

³ For example, an average of more than twenty-five friars a year were assigned to the Barcelona Preachers' convent solely as students or teachers in the first decade of the fourteenth century (Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 20 [1990], 242–3, 256, 265 and 273). The same period saw average annual assignments of more than sixteen and ten such friars going to the much smaller convents of Lleida and Urgel respectively (*ibid.*, 243–4, 255–6, 265–6 and 275). These are significant numbers, even if it is assumed that the busy Barcelona convent had a population of about a hundred.

in the Crown of Aragon. Order-wide educational legislation has been preserved for all periods in the proceedings of the General Chapters.⁴ Details concerning specific assignments of students and teachers can also be gleaned from surviving Chapter *acta* of the Spanish and Aragonese Provinces. Only a few of these *acta* exist for the Spanish Province, but they do provide snapshots of individual convents' programs at regular intervals in the second half of the thirteenth century.⁵ With the inception of the Aragonese Province at the turn of the fourteenth century, more of the *acta* (including complete documentation for several consecutive years) survive to give a fuller picture of Dominican educational assignments in this period.⁶ Some of the data provided by these sources are depicted in the Appendix, [Figure 1](#).

Understanding the structures, goals and methods of the Order's training regime is key to understanding the work that its members were expected to perform throughout their careers. Thus a strong emphasis on providing each friar with a basic education in theology (especially Scriptural exegesis) and sacramental practice (especially with regard to hearing confessions and granting absolution) underscores the pastoral dimension of the Dominicans' apostolic mission. The general education of Dominican friars was designed to prepare them for the cure of Christian souls, which they regularly undertook in the cities and courts of the Crown of Aragon, as elsewhere.

Much has been made of specialized higher education programs available to individual Dominicans, and some of these have been considered central to the friars' external proselytizing mission to Muslims and Jews. *Studia* devoted to the teaching of Hebrew and/or Arabic in medieval Dominican convents, especially, are widely seen as evidence of the

⁴ The General Chapter *acta* are in *MOFPH*, vol. III (for the period 1220–1303) and *MOFPH*, vol. IV (covering the years 1304–78).

⁵ The earliest surviving Chapter *acta* for Spain cover the years 1241–4, 1249, 1250 and 1256 but these provide few details; only the *acta* for 1250 list name students and teachers (Hernández, “Primeras *actas*,” 17–41). *Acta* for 1275, 1281 and 1299 are much more comprehensive (Hernández, “Pergaminos”). They can also be compared to those of the nearby Provençal and Roman Provinces (ed. C. Douais, *Acta capitulorum provincialium ordinis fratrum Praedicatorum. Première Province de Provence, Province Romaine, Province d’Espagne* [Toulouse, 1894]). Editions of other Provinces' *acta* are listed in Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 417–18.

⁶ Edited by Adolfo Robles Sierra in a series of articles in *Escritos del Vedat*: “*Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón, correspondientes a los años 1302, 1303, 1304 y 1307*” in *EV* 20 (1990), 237–85; “*Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón, correspondientes a los años 1310, 1312, 1314 y 1321*” in *EV* 21 (1991), 105–54; “*Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores, correspondientes a los años 1327, 1328, 1329, 1330 y 1331*” in *EV* 22 (1992), 131–78; and “*Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores, correspondientes a los años 1345, 1347, 1350 y 1351*” in *EV* 23 (1993), 257–321.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

friars' involvement in external missionary projects. It must be underlined, however, that higher studies of all sorts were controversial within the Order and generally restricted to a minority of friars. Also, Hebrew and Arabic language studies were quite rare and never comprised more than a fraction of the friars' educational program in any region. Their pursuit by a select few should be understood within the overall context of Dominican learning.

CORE CURRICULUM

At its most basic level, the Dominican system of education was concerned with ensuring that each friar had a clear understanding of orthodox Christian beliefs and practices as formulated by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. To this end, the Order's primitive *Constitutiones* established the principle that each convent had to have a qualified doctor of theology who would hold classes on the true meaning of Scripture. General Chapters repeatedly admonished all friars to consider lifelong daily attendance at these classes as their most rigid obligation.⁷

The format of individual doctors' curricula might vary from convent to convent, but generally they were expected to teach the same texts used in the theology faculty of the University of Paris and in mendicant *studia generalia*.⁸ Thus at almost all Dominican convents by the later thirteenth century at least, two theological lectures were delivered daily: one on a portion of the Bible (with the goal of eventually covering the entire text) and the other on passages from Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*.⁹ Lessons were reviewed at the end of each day and again at the end of the week, when their content would also be rehearsed in the form of a theological disputation. If for any reason a convent found itself unable to sustain such a program of theological lectures, it was at minimum expected to provide informal readings in theology (such as the Lombard), Biblical history (such as Peter Comestor's *Historia*) and confessors' manuals (such as Raymond Penyafort's *Summa de casibus*), or similar subjects. This was

⁷ Only the very aged or infirm were exempt from regular attendance at theology classes; conventual officers from the prior down needed special dispensations if they wished to be excused. Missing choir was a less serious matter than missing class (Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 130-4; cf. L. Boyle, "Notes on the Education of the *Fratres communes* in the Dominican Order in the Thirteenth Century" in *Pastoral Care, Clerical Education and Canon Law, 1200-1400* [London, 1981], vi). The *Constitutiones* requirement concerning doctors is in dist. 2, ch. 23 (ed. Thomas, 358).

⁸ H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (1895; rev. edn. by F.M. Powicke and A.B. Emden, Oxford, 1997), vol. I, 474; Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 134.

⁹ A. Walz's view that lectures on Scripture and the Lombard were reserved for advanced students ("S. Raymundi de Penyafort auctoritas in re penitentiali" in *Angelicum* 12 [1935], 346-96) is refuted by Mulchahey ("First the Bow," 135-7).

Studies and writings

to aid in the formation of effective preachers and pastors, while keeping them from growing unaccustomed to study.¹⁰

Such was the education of *fratres communes* – those friars who were not selected for special higher studies. They made up the backbone of the Order by performing the routine tasks of conventual life, and often by providing pastoral care and counsel to humble members of the Christian laity.¹¹ Their duties might call for less subtlety than those of a royal confessor or diplomat, but nevertheless they required practical knowledge on how to perform the sacraments – in particular how to properly hear confessions and assign penance. Daily reviews of Scripture and *Sententiae*, combined with the rapid dissemination of pastoral manuals composed by fellow Dominicans like Raymond Penyafort, ensured that the needs of these common friars were met.¹²

ADVANCED STUDIES

More talented Preachers could go further in their studies. Since the Dominicans had originally been founded as an intellectual Order, and deliberately targeted university campuses in their recruitment campaigns, they were able to attract some of the finest scholars of the day to their ranks.¹³ Early generations of friars in particular were largely composed of educated men with a thorough grounding in the basic subjects of the university curriculum: the liberal arts.¹⁴ Some had graduate training as well, in theology (the specialty at Paris), law (for which Bologna was famed) or medicine (taught most prominently at Salerno and Montpellier). Friars of the early Spanish Province were less likely to boast such high qualifications since university training was rare in the Iberian peninsula, but Dominic himself attended classes in Palencia, and a few others received educations abroad.¹⁵ The university at Montpellier may have educated

¹⁰ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 99. ¹¹ Boyle, “Notes,” 253–4.

¹² Boyle, “Notes,” 252–3 and 257–67. Cf. Leonard Boyle, “The *Summa confessorum* of John of Freiburg and the Popularization of the Moral Teaching of St. Thomas and Some of his Contemporaries” in *Pastoral Care, clerical Education and Canon Law, 1200–1400*, (essay III).

¹³ Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 26–34. Numerous anecdotes concerning the recruitment of students and masters in the early days of the Order have been preserved in Dominican sources. The Paris master of theology John of St. Giles, for example, is said to have publicly entered the Order in 1230, in the middle of a sermon he was preaching on voluntary poverty (*ibid.*, 81).

¹⁴ Rashdall, *Universities of Europe*, vol. I, 439–50.

¹⁵ The university of Palencia had existed since the turn of the thirteenth century but it closed permanently in 1263 through lack of funding (Rashdall, *Universities*, vol. II, 65–9). Other universities at Valladolid (Castile) and Salamanca (Leon), both founded in the 1220s or later, were more successful (Rashdall, *Universities*, vol. II, 69–90). Dominicans became involved with the university of Salamanca around 1243 (García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 57 and 61). For Catalan students such as Raymond Penyafort, however, Italian universities were more prestigious and just as easily reached

some future Catalan and Aragonese friars, but it was not until the turn of the fourteenth century that organized university-level studies were established in the Iberian territories of the Crown of Aragon itself.¹⁶

In 1220, capitalizing on the fact that some of its new recruits already held chairs of theology at the famed University of Paris, the Order began sending promising younger friars to live and study at the Parisian convent of St. Jacques.¹⁷ For many years, all who desired to advance beyond the theological studies they received from local conventual lecturers had no choice but to hope for an assignment to the *studium* at St. Jacques. Then in 1248 the General Chapter decided to open four new *studia generalia*, deliberately fashioned in the image of the St. Jacques *studium*, in the Provinces of Germany (Cologne), England (Oxford), Lombardy (Bologna) and Provence (Montpellier).¹⁸ Henceforth theology would be discussed at the highest level in these key regions, with a greater number of theologians being trained to spread their learning throughout the Order. The Spanish Province was conspicuously left behind, however, and Dominicans from the Crown of Aragon continued to make the journey to France or Italy if they wanted to become doctors of theology. No *studia generalia* would be formed in Spain until 1293 and 1299 (first at St. Catherine's in Barcelona and then St. Stephen's, Salamanca).¹⁹

Theological training at Paris and the later *studia generalia* differed from conventual lectures in terms of quality and sophistication but not subject matter. Scripture and the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard remained basic

(Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 102; cf. J. Miret y Sans, "Escolars catalans al estudi de Bolonia en la xiiiia centuria" in *Boletín de la real academia de buenas letras de Barcelona* 8 [1915], 137–55). Penyafort was an alumnus of the university of Bologna and an established canon lawyer before joining the Order c. 1223 (F. Valls Taberner, *San Ramón de Penyafort* [Barcelona, 1936], 13–16).

¹⁶ Despite persistent claims to the contrary (as in M.P. Rábade Obradó, *Las universidades en la Edad Media* [Madrid, 1996], 50), James I's apparent intention to found a university at Valencia c. 1245 never bore fruit (Rashdall, *Universities*, vol. II, 107; but cf. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 101–6). The first real university in the Crown of Aragon apart from Montpellier was established at Lleida c. 1300 (Rashdall, *Universities*, vol. II, 91–6). Many more years were to pass before university foundations were laid at Perpignan (planned 1350, active c. 1379) and Huesca (planned 1354 but chronically understaffed) (Rashdall, *Universities*, vol. II, 96–100).

¹⁷ *Constitutiones*, dist. 2, ch. 28 (ed. Thomas, 362); Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 351.

¹⁸ Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 351–78. The proposal was initially made in 1246, with confirmation in 1248 (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 34–5 and 41).

¹⁹ Barcelona was chosen as the location for the first Spanish *studium generale* in 1291, with confirmation in 1293 (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 261 and 268). In 1299, after the General Chapter initiated the division of the Aragonese from the Spanish Province, the Provincial Chapter of Spain moved to ensure that it had its own *studium generale*. Authorization of *studia* for all Provinces except Dacia, Greece and the Holy Land was granted in 1304 (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 48; *MOFPH*, vol. III, 314 and *MOFPH*, vol. IV, 2). Cf. Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 262 (omits mention of the Salamanca *studium*) and García-Serrano, *Preachers*, 61 (omits mention of the Barcelona *studium*).

fare. Students learned their contents thoroughly in daily lectures and discussions before going on to review in a regular series of *disputationes*.²⁰ As in the convent schools, Peter Comestor's *Historia* was recommended reading.²¹ Being assigned to a term in a *studium generale* instead of a conventual *schola* was mainly valuable for bringing young friars into contact with innovative exegetes and teachers such as Thomas Aquinas or Albert the Great, as well as with a cadre of fellow students chosen for their superior talents. For the Spanish and Aragonese Provinces in particular, *assignationes* to *studia generalia* in far-off centers of learning like Paris and Bologna were highly prized (see Appendix, Table 1).

Unless even a gifted friar had previously attended lectures in a university arts faculty before entering the Order, he might never study any non-theological subjects at all. Philosophy in particular, considered to be an essential part of the university arts curriculum, was frowned upon by many in the Order as an unnecessary and potentially dangerous distraction from the real business of refining one's understanding of Scripture. The early Constitutions specifically advised that

[Dominican students] may not study the books of the Gentiles and of the philosophers, although they may examine them briefly. They may not pursue the secular sciences, nor even the arts which they call liberal, but both young friars and the others shall read only theological books.²²

The ban was not total. Exceptions personally authorized by the master-general could be (and were) made. The point was that learning for its own sake, or for any worldly purpose, was incommensurate with the Order's object of saving souls. Non-theological studies were acceptable for friars only if they could be shown to contribute to that goal by facilitating their task of comprehending and teaching the truths of Christian theology.²³

Changes in attitude were forced by the growth of interest in Aristotelian learning which swept through Latin intellectual circles by the mid-thirteenth century. Many respected masters and doctors, including some friars, could now argue that these writings and the ideas they contained had to be taken into account – either as threats to orthodox

²⁰ Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 378–84.

²¹ *Constitutiones*, dist. 2, ch. 28 (ed. Thomas, 361).

²² *Ibid.* This was the 1220 text; in 1228 the General Chapter added the provision that the liberal arts were only to be avoided "nisi aliquando circa aliquos magister ordinis vel capitulum generale voluerit aliter dispensare" (Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 55–6).

²³ G.G. Meersseman, "In libris gentilium non studeant. L'étude des classiques interdite aux clercs au moyen âge?" in *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 1 (1958), 1–13. A partial prohibition on studying "pagan" works was already in place for the clergy generally: Gratian, *Decretum* 37.1.1 (ed. E. Friedberg, *Corpus iuris canonici* [Graz, 1959], vol. 1, 135); see Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 56–7.

doctrine which must be combated, or as aids to a fuller comprehension of theological truth. If the Dominicans were to be taken seriously as scholars they had to take measures to incorporate some teaching of the philosophical arts within their own educational programs.

Master-general John of Wildeshausen therefore granted dispensations for some friars to study the arts in Provence by the 1240s.²⁴ It was in the far-off Spanish diocese of Santiago, however, that the first specialized Dominican schools for secular studies were organized at the Provincial level. At the 1250 Provincial Chapter in Toledo five friars were assigned to study logic in the convent at Compostela, while four others went to Zamora for the same purpose.²⁵ In spite of – or perhaps as a result of – its being home to only a few relatively isolated Dominican convents (and even fewer universities), the Iberian peninsula was beginning to emerge as a place where experiments in new educational directions might be safely undertaken. Yet opposition to secular studies continued within the Order, and friars who undertook them without special permission risked having their books permanently confiscated.²⁶ The Spanish Provincial Chapter *acta* for 1256 noted that “friars who have hitherto studied logic should [now] turn to the remainder of theology,” and reminded the Provincial Prior that dispensations for special studies should still be restricted to those who were most adept and pious.²⁷ Institutionalization of Dominican logic *studia* was clearly sporadic, especially at first, and even in Spain not all Dominicans were enthusiastic advocates of “rational” approaches to the dissemination of religious truth.

It was Humbert of Romans who managed to regularize the situation by developing a formal educational plan for the whole Order, one which would permit limited secular studies where these were deemed useful for the promotion of theology while preventing indiscriminate exercise of idle curiosity.²⁸ Humbert established a special educational committee of five friars, all Paris theologians who had distinguished themselves as pioneering yet fully orthodox masters of the new Aristotelian philosophy: Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Peter of Tarentaise (a.k.a. Peter of Spain, who served as pope John XXI from 1276 to 1277), Bonihominis of

²⁴ Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 220–6.

²⁵ Hernández, “*Primeras actas*,” 28–9. The Dominicans of Provence had similar logic schools at Bayonne and Marseilles by 1252 (Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 221).

²⁶ Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 228–9.

²⁷ Hernández, “*Primeras actas*,” 40. The brief Chapter *acta* for 1257 and 1275 make no mention of logic studies (Hernández, “*Primeras actas*,” 41; Hernández, “*Pergaminos*,” 13–25).

²⁸ Humbert’s essentially conservative role in the formation of the Dominican *ratio studiorum* is convincingly laid out by Mulchahey, in opposition to traditional scholarship which has seen him as a radical proponent of philosophical studies (“*First the Bow*,” 229–38; the older line is taken in Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 41–56).

Brittany and Florence of Hesdin.²⁹ At the General Chapter held in 1259 at Valenciennes this committee recommended a series of general educational policies which were to provide guidance for future generations of Dominicans.³⁰

Most of the 1259 reforms were actually no more than conservative admonitions to keep up basic theological studies in all convents, with the implication being that such studies were perceived to be lagging in some regions. Conventual theology teachers (*lectores*) were to concentrate on their work and not be assigned other duties, for example, while the Provinces were admonished to ensure that each convent did have a lector. If this was impossible, younger friars at least were to be transferred to those which were so provided. Friars who avoided their lessons were to be severely punished (*dure puniantur*).

A subtle shift toward specialized higher studies was perceptible nevertheless. Teaching of the secular arts was endorsed by the Valenciennes Chapter, and thereafter enjoyed an established place in the Order's educational program.³¹ Logic studies in particular were to become widespread among Dominicans of the Crown of Aragon by 1281, with *assignationes ad logicam* being made in that year to the convents of Girona, Mallorca, Huesca and Zaragoza.³² The most recently translated corpus of Aristotelian writings on logic (the so-called *logica nova*) was being taught at Girona by 1299 at the latest.³³

Other branches of philosophy fared similarly, grudgingly accepted as useful subjects for elite students only after decades of debate and experimentation. Thanks to the reforms of 1259 and further efforts on the part of Albert the Great, natural philosophy was introduced on a trial basis in the Provençal Province in 1262.³⁴ Though no further teaching on this subject was recorded until 1271, *studia naturarum* were ultimately to become regular features of Dominican higher education. They were always reserved for a very few of the most talented and privileged friars,

²⁹ Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 222–36. Cf. Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, 96–8.

³⁰ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 99–100.

³¹ For details concerning the progress of and opposition to studies of logic within the Order, along with analysis of their emerging curriculum (heavily based on Aristotle), see Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 220–52.

³² Six students of logic went with a lector to Girona, twelve to Mallorca, ten to Huesca and fourteen (or twenty, depending on how the assignation is understood) to Zaragoza. A further nineteen were assigned to Pamplona in Navarre, while smaller classes of three to five students were held at Burgos, Valladolid, Segovia, Toledo, Murcia, Seville, Salamanca and Compostela (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 28–37).

³³ Seven students were assigned to study both the *logica nova et tractatibus* and the more traditional *logica veteri* under two separate lectors at Girona in 1299 (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 59).

³⁴ Mulchahey discusses natural philosophy and its emerging place within the Order, with emphasis on the role played by Albert ("First the Bow," 252–77).

however, especially in Spain. In 1281 a lone *studium naturarum* for eight students existed at Leon.³⁵ Mallorca's convent hosted seven more students in 1299; in later years similar low numbers were assigned to pursue the topic in a half-dozen other convents of the Aragonese Province.³⁶

A third type of special class catered to the needs of friars at the opposite end of the educational spectrum. Literacy and a mastery of Latin grammar had originally been considered prerequisites for admission to the Order, but the realities of recruitment and an increasing tendency for wealthy parents to commit their sons to established Dominican convents at an early age soon led to relaxation of entry requirements.³⁷ As a result, many novices had to be taught the basic art of grammar before they could even begin to follow their mandatory conventual theology classes. Signs of this phenomenon emerged as early as the mid-thirteenth century, when Dominicans of Auxerre made arrangements for a secular master to teach Latin to boys who had been dedicated to the Order but who were as yet too young to make their professions. It would not be long before similar pre-postulancy schools began to appear in other regions.³⁸

Acceptance of underaged and/or undereducated Dominican novices seems to have become especially problematic in the Iberian peninsula by the fourteenth century. In addition to any pre-postulancy training that may have been available, full-fledged grammar *studia* for professed friars existed throughout the Spanish Province in 1299.³⁹ By the 1320s so many friars in the Aragonese Province needed remedial Latin instruction that individual *assignationes* to grammar *studia* were discontinued in several cases; in 1328 the Provincial Chapter ruled that all convents should simply provide regular Latin lessons to all those who needed it.⁴⁰ Both the most and the least gifted friars thus benefited from development of specialized *studia* organized at the Provincial level.

³⁵ Hernández, "Pergaminos," 36.

³⁶ For the assignation of 1299 see Hernández, "Pergaminos," 58. Later *studia naturarum* were held at Lleida (eleven students in 1302, nine in 1303 and eight in 1304), Zaragoza (thirteen in 1304), Barcelona (thirteen in 1307), Valencia (seven in 1310) and Calatayud (ten in 1310) (Roble Sierra, "Actas de los capítulos" in *EV* 20 [1990] and *EV* 21 [1991], *passim*). By 1329 the Province was assigning a record number of friars *ad studium naturarum* (nine to Lleida, eight to Valencia, five to Zaragoza and eight to Pamplona), but they were still a minority.

³⁷ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 282–8; cf. Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 75–85.

³⁸ Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 85–97 (omits mention of Spanish schools).

³⁹ The first Aragonese *studia* of this type were located in Calatayud, Valencia, Xàtiva and Urgel. There were others in Navarrese, Castilian and Portuguese convents as well, all first attested in 1299 (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 45–59).

⁴⁰ Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 22 (1992), 148. This explains the otherwise misleading drop in *assignationes ad gramaticam* at this time; see Appendix, Figure 1.

Studies and writings

For those who successfully completed each level and received recommendations for further study, the Dominican *cursus studiorum* could last for the best part of a lifetime, with periods of discipleship interspersed with teaching assignments. In 1297 for example, having completing his required year of probation, Bernard de Pinu's profession was received by the prior of St. Catherine's in Barcelona.⁴¹ After two years of basic lessons on Scripture and the Lombard, and having no need of further tuition in Latin grammar, the young friar was assigned in 1299 *ad logicam* to the Order's convent in Lleida.⁴² By 1302 he was sufficiently advanced in this subject to teach it for two years back at his home convent in Barcelona.⁴³ Next came a transfer to the Dominican *studium naturarum* meeting at Zaragoza (1304).⁴⁴ Three years later Bernard returned once again to put his new skills to use teaching natural philosophy at St. Catherine's (1307) before finally moving on to enroll in the Order's elite Parisian theological *studium* (1311).⁴⁵ On returning from Paris he was made doctor of theology in the convent of Tarragona (1314).⁴⁶ By 1321 he had been promoted to the rank of doctor in the Province's *studium generale* at Barcelona, and in that same year he received the title of *praedicator generalis*.⁴⁷ Bernard's final years were spent as prior of St. Catherine's (1323–5).⁴⁸ Thus by the time he was granted the *licentia praedicandi* Bernard de Pinu had spent more than two decades alternating between study and teaching at convents throughout the Province of Aragon and abroad.

Between exceptional figures like Bernard and the more mediocre *fratres communes*, the Dominican Order filled its ranks with theologically informed men who could be trusted to provide literate and orthodox guidance to all levels of Christian society. In some cases this guidance might be enhanced by up-to-date training in the liberal arts and natural sciences, and perhaps even by experience gained in travels throughout Christian Europe in the pursuit of knowledge. For the most part, however, the Dominicans were careful to restrict their educational resources to fields where they could most confidently count on rich yields: the timeless truths of Scripture, which could best be comprehended through a life of constant prayer and study.

⁴¹ BUB MS 241, 17. ⁴² Hernández, "Pergaminos," 56.

⁴³ Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 20 (1990), 243 and 256.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 267.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 276. The assignment to Paris was for one year, and was funded by the friar's home convent of St. Catherine's (*ibid.* *EV* 21 [1991], 116 and 128).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 132.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 148 and 153.

⁴⁸ BUB MS 241, 18. Bernard was listed among the *nomina fratrum defunctorum* in 1327 (Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 22 [1992], 143).

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

Regular studies of theology, combined with extraordinary training in the ancillary sciences of logic and natural philosophy for the Order's intellectual elite, equipped medieval Dominicans above all for their apostolic mission as preachers and pastors to the Christian faithful. These studies show no signs of having been consciously designed for the special and more challenging purpose of preparing for missionary or other contacts with the "infidel." External proselytism was certainly never mentioned as a goal in programmatic Dominican statements on education such as the *Constitutiones* or the 1259 recommendations tabled at Valenciennes. Nor were standard texts in the Dominican curriculum likely to provide any real insights into the beliefs of contemporary Jews or Muslims. No familiarity with either the Qur'an or the Talmud could result from a curriculum based on the Lombard's *Sentences*, the Comestor's *Historia* (whose narrative ends with the Acts of the Apostles) and the Vulgate Bible with its patristic commentaries.

STUDIA LINGUARUM

Another special type of Dominican *studium*, this time devoted to non-Latin languages, emerged in certain convents of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: the celebrated *studia arabica* (Arabic schools), *studia ebraica* (Hebrew schools) and *studia linguarum* (presumably a composite of the first two). Almost all evidence for these language *studia* comes from Catalan-dominated regions of the Spanish (later Aragonese) Province, which was apparently seen as the most propitious place for providing friars with access to qualified teachers of Arabic and Hebrew.

The existence of medieval Dominican Hebrew and Arabic *studia* has been a point of pride within the Order ever since it was brought to light by Francisco Diago in 1599.⁴⁹ The prevalence of the phenomenon has regularly been exaggerated as a result, and proselytism is normally taken for granted as the *raison d'être* for any such language studies. A more critical approach to the evidence suggests instead that these *studia* never functioned as anything other than temporary and relatively informal programs for the edification of a small intellectual elite. Furthermore, their original purpose (or purposes) remains uncertain. Arabic and Hebrew may have been useful to missionaries, but along with Greek and Latin these were also the languages *par excellence* of medieval philosophy and theology. Arabic, too, was an international language which could be invaluable in any number of circumstances ranging from daily interactions with

⁴⁹ "Estudio de lenguas" was one of the first subjects of discussion in Diago's *Historia* (fols. 4r-v); the topic is absent from histories of his immediate precursors such as Baltasar Sorío.

neighbors to high-level diplomacy – in addition to scholarly and pastoral work. When seen in the context of other contemporary Dominican interests and activities, these brief forays into the languages of Judaism and Islam reveal more about the Order's uneasy approach to high-level studies of theological "truth" and "error" than about actual contacts with unbelievers.

Aside from the requirement that all friars be fluent in Latin, language study first arose as an issue within the Dominican Order at the General Chapter of 1236. An admonition was issued that "in all Provinces and convents the friars should learn the languages of their neighbors."⁵⁰ This seemingly obvious principle, especially for an Order dedicated to preaching, was understandable in areas where multiple linguistic communities might overlap. The point was that friars were not to ghettoize themselves but instead to reach out to all who needed their services. In the Holy Land, for example, Dominicans might well find themselves preaching before Christian audiences whose maternal languages ranged from Italian and French dialects to Greek and Arabic. It was not surprising, then, that prior Philip of the Holy Land Province wrote in the following year to inform the rest of the Order that his friars were making an effort to study and preach in Arabic.⁵¹ Their target audience may have included Muslims, but contacts between Dominicans and Arabic-speaking Jacobites, Nestorians, Maronites and members of other local Christian sects were probably much more common.

In the absence of Provincial Chapter *acta* from the Holy Land, it is impossible to tell whether Philip and his brethren pursued their language studies in formally organized *studia*. Still, their example probably helped to inspire such an organization in Spain some years later.⁵² The first known Dominican Arabic *studium* was organized in 1250, as tersely recorded in the *acta* of the Spanish Provincial Chapter:

Desiring to satisfy the command of the master, and anticipating the usefulness of the matter in the present and especially in the future ... we assign fr. Arnold de Guardia, fr. Peter de Cadireta, fr. Raymond Martini, fr. Peter Arie, fr. Peter de Puteo, fr. Peter de Sancto Felice, fr. Diego Stephani, and fr. Peter de Canellis to

⁵⁰ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 9. The importance of ministering to different linguistic groups had already been raised at the Fourth Lateran Council (canon 9).

⁵¹ J. Richard, "L'enseignement des langues orientales en occident" in *Revue des Études Islamiques* 44 (1976), 158, citing Matthew Paris' *Chronica Majora*.

⁵² According to Bernard Gui's *De tribus gradibus prelatorum* (c. 1300), Philip was removed from office as prior of the Holy Land in 1238 and traveled to Barcelona with a Dominican contingent to inform Penyafort of his election as head of the Order (*MOFPH*, vol. VI/1, 9). He could well have shared his experiences supervising Arabic studies with Penyafort at this time.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

the study of Arabic [*ad studium arabicum*], with the aforesaid fr. Arnold assigned over the others as prelate. God willing, we shall bring their number up to twelve as soon as we are able.⁵³

A total of only eight friars were thus assigned to study Arabic at the behest of master-general John of Wildeshausen, since twelve candidates could not be found.

The master-general's motives are a mystery. Around 1250, as noted in [chapter 1](#), some limited Dominican optimism about external missionary prospects had already begun to emerge. This was also a time of educational reform in the Order, however, when the master-general was granting dispensations for advanced philosophical *studia* in the Provinces – and especially in Spain. Fluency in Arabic would have benefited missionary preaching and philosophical scholarship in equal measure.

Frustratingly, extant Chapter *acta* provide no further references to this particular *studium* and the whole episode remains obscure. Even such important details as its precise location, content and duration are subject to speculation. It has long been widely believed that the first western language *studium* was located in Tunis, because of Peter Marsili's vague claim that Raymond Penyafort sent friars to Tunis and Murcia for the purpose of language studies and missionary work (*studium linguarum pro fratribus sui ordinis Tuniciæ et Murciæ statuit*).⁵⁴ Marsili's statement, however, seems to be based on his interpretation of Penyafort's earlier claim that the friars were having many successes among the "Saracens" of Tunis and Murcia.⁵⁵ More recent research points to Mallorca as an alternate site, though the most frequently cited evidence is still largely circumstantial.⁵⁶ One new source may settle the question in Mallorca's favor: a neglected profession list, now housed in the Palma diocesan archive, reveals that four of the

⁵³ This passage can be found in a wide range of publications, including Diago, fols. 4r–v; *SSOP*, vol. I, 396; Robles, "Studium Arabicum," 45; Hernández, "Primeras actas," 32; and Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 345. My translation begins with the Latin in Hernández's semi-critical edition, and so differs slightly from Mulchahey's (based on Quétif-Echard's *SSOP* version, itself a Latin translation of Diago's Castilian translation from the Latin original). All extant copies are late, however, so no serious debate concerning the precise wording can be sustained; see Robles, "Studium Arabicum," 25–6.

⁵⁴ Marsili, *Chronica*, bk. 4, ch. 47 (ed. Martínez San Pedro, 403). Cf. Coll, "Escuelas" in *AST* 17 (1944), 120–4.

⁵⁵ *MOFPH*, vol. I, 310. Marsili probably also read Humbert's letter of 1256, which linked the friars' language studies to their claims of success in converting Spanish Muslims (*MOFPH*, vol. V, 40).

⁵⁶ The Mallorca thesis was suggested by Garcías Palou (*El Miramar de Ramon Llull* [Palma, 1977], 269–80) and has been widely accepted, though some continue to suggest that there was a *studium* in Tunis as well (Robles, "Studium Arabicum," 23–47; R. I. Burns, *Muslims, Christians and Jews in the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia* [Cambridge, 1984], 95–6; A. Bonner, "L'aprenentatge intel·lectual de Ramon Llull" in Carlos Alvar *et al.* (eds.), *Studia in honorem prof. M. de Riquer* [Barcelona, 1987], vol. II, 11–20).

Studies and writings

eight assigned friars (including their leader, Arnold de Guardia) were active on the island *c.* 1239–53.⁵⁷

Whatever teaching of Arabic there was in the Mallorcan convent (or elsewhere) around 1250 left few traces. As will be seen below, the well-documented medieval library collection at St. Dominic's convent in Mallorca was wholly lacking in textual materials for the study of Arabic or Islam. Organized studies of Arabic certainly seem to have ceased on the island by the early 1260s, when Raymond Llull was casting about for a means of learning the language and finally resorted to the purchase of a Muslim slave-tutor. Since Llull consulted with Raymond Penyafort before beginning his studies, he would undoubtedly have been made aware of locally available Dominican Arabic classes had these existed at the time.⁵⁸

In 1255, master-general Humbert of Romans wrote his celebrated encyclical letter to encourage broader study of languages such as Arabic, Hebrew and Greek.⁵⁹ Informed of existing Spanish efforts in Arabic studies, Humbert expressed his satisfaction the following year.⁶⁰ Whether this is merely a reference to the 1250 *studium*, or an indication that Arabic studies in the Province were in fact more widespread, cannot be known for certain. Nevertheless it seems likely that such studies (wherever they were located) had already ceased or were drawing to a close. In 1259 Humbert, apparently motivated by this knowledge, commanded the Spanish Provincial Prior, Giles of Portugal, to “establish a *studium* for the learning of the Arabic language, in Barcelona or somewhere else.”⁶¹ The vagueness of the order is striking; and if anything came of the project it is unrecorded by any Dominican source. In 1261 the General Chapter was actually held in Barcelona, but encouragement for studies in logic was on the agenda at this meeting – not studies in Arabic or other languages.⁶²

⁵⁷ The prior at Mallorca in the first half of 1250 was Ponce de Vilanova, promoted to the rank of preacher-general at the Provincial Chapter of that year (Hernández, “Primeras actas,” 34), but Arnold de Guardia is listed in the profession list as prior for the convent from 1250–3; he received novices in that capacity in 1252 (ADP MSL 185, fols. 2v, 8v). Peter de Puteo was received at the Mallorca convent in 1239 while Diego Stephani (*Didacus* or *Dominicus Esteva*) and Peter de Canellis made their profession there together in 1247. The ADP profession list is an eighteenth-century copy of a medieval document, but there is no reason to doubt its accuracy on these points.

⁵⁸ Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 21–2. ⁵⁹ *MOFPH*, vol. V, 19–20.

⁶⁰ *MOFPH*, vol. V, 40–42.

⁶¹ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 98. It will be noted (*contra* Mulchahey, “*First the Bow*,” 347) that this was not part of the educational program set forth by Humbert's panel of experts at Valenciennes, but rather an independent initiative (*admonicio*) of the master-general's. The Valenciennes *ratio studiorum* proper is isolated in some MSS; ed. H. Denifle and Ae. Chatelain, *Chartularium universitatis parisiensis* (Paris, 1889), vol. I, 385–6 (#335).

⁶² The Provincial Prior of Spain was also dismissed at this General Chapter, while the former prior of St. Catherine's in Barcelona was given thirteen days on bread and water as well as a series of

José María Coll, and others following his lead, believed that a bilingual Hebrew and Arabic *studium* was organized at Murcia soon after its conquest by James of Aragon in 1266. Once again, however, the claim rests entirely on the dubious testimony of Peter Marsili.⁶³ Very little is known about the Dominicans' activities in Murcia. They were there by 1275 at least, when the Provincial Chapter assigned a lector in theology to the convent.⁶⁴ Authorization for two new Dominican convents was granted to the Spanish Province at General Chapters held in 1264, 1269 and 1270, any one of which may have been intended for Murcia, but no mention was made of plans for language study.⁶⁵

A single piece of evidence suggests that some sort of Arabic lessons were indeed held at Murcia: a manuscript of medical treatises (especially concerning diseases of the eye) translated in that city from Arabic to Latin by a layman named Rufinus of Alexandria *c.* 1271.⁶⁶ According to the manuscript's *explicit*, Rufinus was assisted by a Dominican *magister in arabico* named Dominic Marrothini.⁶⁷ Friar Dominic may have given classes or private tutorials to students such as Rufinus, but it is impossible to say if he was part of a formal *studium arabicum*. In any case, the nature of Rufinus' work shows how training in Arabic could be valued for intellectual purposes – quite apart from any possible conversionary applications or other direct contacts with Arabic-speaking Muslims.

After 1250 more than three decades passed before formal Arabic studies can be shown to have reappeared in the Order, and again the appearance is fleeting. In 1281, eight (or perhaps five) friars were assigned to study

disciplinas (penitential whippings) for having built the dormitory too grandly (*MOFPH*, vol. III, 106–12).

⁶³ Coll, "Escuelas" in *AST* 17 (1944), 132–5. Coll cited no sources in making his arguments about Murcia, aside from D. Mortier's *Histoire des Maîtres Généraux de l'Ordre de Frères Prêcheurs* (Paris, 1903), vol. I, 519–20. Mortier's statement here relies on the same dubious passage in the chronicle of Peter Marsili which gave rise to beliefs that the friars had a *studium* in Tunis.

⁶⁴ Hernández, "Pergaminos," 15. Murcia's *assignationes* for 1281 included a doctor of theology and several students of logic, but again no language studies (*ibid.*, 34).

⁶⁵ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 126, 150 and 154.

⁶⁶ Tentatively identified as the *Kitab tadhkirat al-kahhalin* by 'Ali ibn 'Isa: Jesu Haly, *Epistola de cognitione infirmitatum oculorum* (ed. P. Pansier, *Collectio ophthalmologica veterum auctorum*, fasc. 3; Paris, 1903–33). I am indebted to Charles Burnett for this information.

⁶⁷ "Explicit iohannicus translatus a Rufino alexandrino cum adiutorio magistri suo in arabico fratris dominic marrothim [*sic* for marrothini?] de ordine fratrum predicatorum in Murcia de arabico ad latinum deo gracias" (M. Steinschneider, *Die Hebraeischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher* [Graz, 1956], 711 [#457]). Steinschneider suggests that Rufinus was from Alexandria in Italy, not Egypt. Robles, *Escriores*, 107–8 lists other MSS and several secondary sources, but the latter all ultimately depend on Steinschneider. The suggestion that Dominic Marrothini could be identical with bishop Dominic of Baeza is not credible (D'Alverny and Vajda, "Marc de Tolède," 112; this bishop is discussed in [chapter 6](#), below). Further research is needed on the subject.

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Arabic in Valencia under friar John de Podio Ventoso (*Joan Puigventós*).⁶⁸ Once more details are lacking, and if the *studium* functioned for more than a few years it left no further records. By 1291 the Dominican General Chapter had again become involved, ordering the Spanish Province to establish a permanent language *studium* in both Arabic and Hebrew at the newly projected Xàtiva convent (*quod semper sit studium in hebraico et in arabico*).⁶⁹ The resolution was in some ways a restatement of longstanding policy, but its wording implies that language studies in the Spanish convents had hitherto been less than permanent. Arabic and Hebrew were now, ideally, to be taught with renewed intensity.

Records for the resulting Xàtiva *studia* provide the clearest available picture of how Dominicans managed to conduct their language classes in practice, and the results are not impressive. In 1299 a class of nine friars was sent to study at Xàtiva, but their course was in introductory Latin grammar, not Arabic.⁷⁰ Willing and qualified teachers of Arabic were apparently difficult to find. In 1303 (twelve years after the General Chapter's initial directive) the Provincial Chapter had to order the prior of Xàtiva's Dominicans to "hire an Arabic-speaking Jew, or some Saracen" to teach the language to an unspecified number of potential students.⁷¹ The following year's *assignationes* show only two new students being sent "for the study of languages ... with the others who are there," under subprior Peter de Mora.⁷² Whether the required Jewish or Muslim Arabic teacher had actually been found is left unstated. Reference to a *studium linguarum* may imply that both Hebrew and Arabic (along with Latin!) were indeed being taught at Xàtiva c. 1304 as per the order of 1291, but the apparently low enrollment and uncharacteristic vagueness of the 1304 *assignationes* suggest that the program was in difficulties.⁷³ Contemporaries

⁶⁸ "Item ad studium arabicum [assignamus] fratrem P. Terterii, fratrem Natalem, fratrem Martinum de Serrione de eodem conventu. Item fratrem Iohannem Serranum de conventu Cordubensi, fratrem Garciam Arcii et fratrem Iohannem de Podio Ventoso qui legat eis, fratrem P. Augerii, fratrem An. de Fraga, fratrem Simonem Iordanis" (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 30). It is unclear whether the last three were assigned to the Arabic *studium* or not. Podio Ventoso had recently been deputed to supervise the religious education of Valencian converts from Islam (see chapter 5).

⁶⁹ *MOFPH*, vol. III, 263. The 1291 General Chapter actually met at Palencia, so issues involving the Spanish Province may have received special attention in this year.

⁷⁰ Hernández, "Pergaminos," 57.

⁷¹ Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV 20* (1990), 255.

⁷² "Conventui Xativensi [assignamus] ... ad Studium Linguarum fratrem Paschasium Tholosani, fratrem P. de Alcoleya cum aliis qui sunt ibi, et Suprior frater P. de Mora legat eis" (Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV 20* [1990], 266). Six more friars were sent in the same *assignatio* to the ongoing Latin grammar *studium* at Xàtiva.

⁷³ The two friars of 1304, and five more in 1312, are the only ones known for certain to have attended this *studium*; one can only speculate as to how many others were designated by the word *aliis*. Normally the *assignationes* were punctilious about naming names, so the omission is noteworthy.

were certainly aware that the Xàtiva *studia linguarum* was unlikely to be a permanent undertaking. Queen Blanche of Aragon's 1308 will thus included an annual payment to the "Preaching friars studying Hebrew and Arabic in Xàtiva" but stipulated that when these studies should cease [*quo cessante*], the money was to go instead to the Valencia nunnery of St. Mary Magdalene.⁷⁴

Finally, in 1312, five named friars were sent *pro studentibus* to a renewed *studium arabicum* in the Xàtiva convent.⁷⁵ No teacher was specified. The *assignatio* was likely yet another attempt to comply with the language-education policies of the 1291 General Chapter, but by now the idea had gained even more widespread support. In 1310 the General Chapter repeated its desire to see studies in Hebrew and Arabic (and Greek also) established at the Provincial level, without specifying precisely where such studies might actually be sustained.⁷⁶ The Council of Vienne (1311–12) likewise included a call for studies of Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldean (Syriac/Aramaic) and perhaps Greek in its canons – partly inspired by the advocacy of Raymond Lull, as noted earlier.⁷⁷ These language *studia* were to be located throughout Christendom, in the university centers of Oxford, Paris, Bologna and Salamanca as well as at the papal court in Avignon.⁷⁸ The re-emergence of language studies at the Dominican convent of Xàtiva in 1312 must be seen as part of this broader initiative; it could even be that some Dominicans were concerned that their Order's monopoly on such language studies was in danger of being usurped.

Like the ambitious Vienne plan, however, the language school at Xàtiva was quickly abandoned and permanently forgotten. The *assignatio* of 1312 is the last known record of any organized Arabic or Hebrew *studium* in medieval Spain. As for the Council of Vienne resolution, it had no tangible results at all – unless the brief appearance of classes in Hebrew and Syriac *pro scholaribus erudiendis* at the university of Paris in the years 1319–20 (led by a French convert from Judaism named John Salvati de Nova Villa Regis) was a result of its inspiration.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II*, vol. II, 36. The gift was only one of many, to a wide variety of religious houses. The queen died on October 14, 1310 and the execution of her will may have provided further incentive to the friars' *assignatio* of 1312.

⁷⁵ Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 21 (1991), 122.

⁷⁶ *MOFPH*, vol. IV, 50.

⁷⁷ Though Greek was not mentioned in early MSS, Altaner has noted its inclusion in later editions of the Vienne canons and in correspondence of John XXII (Altaner, "Raymundus Lullus und der Sprachenkanon," 216, n. 118).

⁷⁸ Hefele, *Histoire des Conciles*, vol. VI/2, 688–9.

⁷⁹ Denifle and Chatelain, *Chartularium*, vol. II, 228–9 and 237 (#777 and 786). In 1326 John XXII wrote to the bishop of Paris to ask whether any language teachers or students were in fact active there (*ibid.*, vol. II, 293–4 [#857]); no reply has been preserved. Heinrich Denifle discovered

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Thus when it comes to Arabic studies, over a period of sixty-two years we know the names of only twenty-one (or perhaps eighteen) scholars, in three classes separated by a gap of thirty years each – an entire generation in every case.⁸⁰ Some Arabic lessons may have been held in years for which the Chapter *acta* are missing, as Coll and others have maintained, but this is pure speculation. More than half the surviving *acta* for this period show no such *assignationes* (in 1275, 1299, 1302, 1303, 1307 and 1310).⁸¹ Arguments from silence are unavoidable either way, but taken in the larger context of the Dominicans' history in the region there is little here to suggest a widespread commitment to Arabic studies for missionary purposes.

The teaching of Hebrew, which has often been lumped together with Arabic in scholarly discussions of *studia linguarum*, was apparently even more rare and sporadic among the medieval Dominicans. It probably also stemmed from different motivations. Hebrew could be useful in constructing convincing Biblical arguments for use in disputations with Jews, as Raymond Penyafort's anonymous biographer pointed out.⁸² It was hardly necessary for actual preaching to Jews, however, since they would generally have been equally if not more fluent in local vernaculars – Romance dialects in Christian Iberia, Arabic in Muslim al-Andalus and the Maghrib. Whereas Arabic had practical value for basic communication, as well as for scholarship, Hebrew was mainly a tool for arriving at sophisticated theological insights.⁸³

Pursuit of Hebrew learning in the Latin West pre-dated and developed independently of whatever interest the mendicant friars may have

mention of an obscure *magister linguarum* at the papal curia c. 1317, but it is unclear what this title would have entailed (*Die Entstehung der Universitäten des Mittelalters bis 1400* [Berlin, 1885], 306–8).

⁸⁰ Eight students in 1250 (under Arnold de Guardia), five or eight students in 1281 (under the teacher John de Podio Ventoso), and five in 1312 (under an unnamed teacher, assuming one was indeed found). See Appendix, Figure 2.

⁸¹ The years 1303–4 are uncertain, since the *acta* at least suggest that efforts were then being made to hire an Arabic teacher. Coll's argument that only initial *assignationes* were recorded, leaving second-year language classes undocumented, is misleading (Coll, "Escuelas" in *AST* 17 [1944], 134–5). The Chapter *acta* regularly assigned friars to the same *studia* in consecutive years; see for example the *assignationes* to study theology at Barcelona 1302–4 (Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 20 [1990], 242–3, 256 and 265).

⁸² According to his *vita* Raymond Penyafort counseled and favored friars who studied Hebrew "quod possunt Judeorum convincere malitias et errors ... ad eorum maximam confusionem et confirmationem fidei christiane" (*MOFPH*, vol. VI/1, 32; cf. Cohen, *Friars*, 107–8).

⁸³ The same might also be said for "Chaldean," if it was studied in dialects suited to deciphering Aramaic portions of the Talmud or Targumim. An alternative explanation for Christian interest in Chaldean was its usefulness for communicating with Asian Nestorians; these were potential missionary targets but also commonly employed as envoys to western Christian lands by the Mongols. Greek had similar uses, as a scholarly and Scriptural language (in the New Testament) and for international contacts.

had in converting Jews to Christianity. It was in centers for Christian theological studies like Paris and Oxford that scholars such as the Victorines, Nicholas of Lyra and Nicholas Trivet began to delve more fully into what they saw as the *Hebraica veritas* – the “Hebrew truth” which promised to unlock some of the more mysterious meanings of Scripture. Their study of the language was generally dependent on the goodwill of Jewish teachers, though in some cases converts from Judaism brought knowledge of Hebrew directly into ecclesiastical circles.⁸⁴ For the most part Christian study of Hebrew in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries was undertaken privately, and it only seldom went beyond an introductory level.

Despite the friars’ concentration on theological studies, knowledge of Hebrew was never singled out as a major priority for the Dominican Order. In 1255 Humbert did mention it (along with Arabic, Greek and the “barbarian” tongues) as a *desideratum* for missionaries, but progress in Hebrew was not one of the successes he praised in his encyclical letter of 1256. Neither the educational commission nor the General Chapter of 1259 made any reference to Hebrew, though later in the thirteenth and early in the fourteenth century it would again be listed with Arabic (and sometimes Greek or Chaldean) as a direction in which the friars might ideally focus their studies. Because of this comparative lack of emphasis, Dominican *studia ebraica* are even more sparsely documented than the *studia arabica*. Innovative exegetical writings by a small handful of medieval mendicants demonstrate their authors’ interest in Christian Hebraism, but debate continues over the degree to which Dominican scholars like Hugh of St. Cher and Nicholas Trivet worked from original Hebrew texts as opposed to secondhand sources or translations.⁸⁵

The Catalan Dominican Raymond Martini therefore represents a rather exceptional case, both as one of the best Hebraists of his Order

⁸⁴ A. Grabois, “The *Hebraica Veritas* and Jewish-Christian Intellectual Relations in the Twelfth Century” in *Speculum* 50 (1975), 613–34. The role of converts in transmitting Hebrew knowledge to medieval Christians is underlined by B. Altaner, “Zur Kenntnis des Hebräischen im Mittelalter” in *Biblische Zeitschrift* 21 (1933), 288–308; also B. Blumenkranz, “Jüdische und christliche Konvertiten im jüdisch-christlichen Religionsgespräch des Mittelalters” in P. Wilpert and W.P. Eckert, eds., *Judentum im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1966), 264–82.

⁸⁵ The *postilla* of Hugh of St. Cher show familiarity with Hebrew exegesis, but much of this was taken from Andrew of St. Victor (B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* [1940; repr. Notre Dame, 1978], 182–3 and 272). Nicholas Trivet (*Trevet*, d. 1330), who produced a commentary on the Hebrew Psalter with references to the original Hebrew text, shines as an example of an English Hebraist school (*ibid.*, 346–7; cf. A. Kleinhans, “Nicholaus Trivet, o.p., Psalmorum Interpres” in *Angelicum* 20 [1943], 219–36). Ruth Dean’s research on Trivet has tended to de-emphasize whatever Hebrew knowledge the friar might have had, showing how incidental the Psalter commentary actually was to his long and rich career (“Cultural Relations in the Middle Ages: Nicholas Trivet and Nicholas of Prato” in *Studies in Philology* 65:4 [1948], 541–64).

and as the first of only three medieval friars known to have taught the language to others. Shortly before his 1250 *studium arabicum* assignment, Martini was probably educated in the Dominicans' Paris *studium* (perhaps under Albert the Great, as was his compatriot Arnold de Segarra).⁸⁶ If so, he would have been a firsthand witness to debates surrounding the Talmud trials then taking place in the city; he certainly cannot have been unaware of the sensation they caused. If Martini's appetite for Hebrew language study was whetted at this early point in his career, he would have profited from contact with the subprior of St. Jacques at the time, a convert from Judaism known as Theobald de Sexannia (*Thibaut de Sézanne*). Theobald knew Hebrew, and he helped to make portions of the Talmud available to his fellow friars by means of Latin translations.⁸⁷ He may also have given classes (formal or informal) in Hebrew to promising young students such as Martini.⁸⁸

However obtained, friar Raymond's Hebrew training qualified him for membership on a committee charged with censorship of Hebrew books in 1264.⁸⁹ It also allowed him to compose two polemics incorporating Talmudic texts: the *Capistrum judaeorum* (c. 1267) and *Pugio fidei* (c. 1278). By the end of his career, Martini could offer formal Hebrew instruction

⁸⁶ P. Ribes Montané, "San Alberto Magno, Maestro y Fuente del Apologeta Medieval Ramon Martí" in *Doctor Communis* 33 (1980), 169–93. If Raymond was at St. Jacques for any one of the 1245–8 academic years he would have met the young Thomas Aquinas (Torrell, *Saint Thomas*, 18–24). It is possible that Martini did not attend an advanced theology *studium*, or that he attended one outside of Paris after 1248 (such as Montpellier, where he could have met Paul Christiani); based on the quality of his writings, however, a Paris education seems likely.

⁸⁷ G. Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au moyen âge* (Paris, 1990), 250 and 258; cf. T. Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi* (Rome, 1993; cont. E. Panella), vol. IV, 292–6. Theobald was one of the witnesses to a 1248 condemnation of the Talmud (Denifle and Chatelain, *Chartularium*, vol. I, 211 [#178] and n. 12). His duties as subprior may have included a certain amount of teaching, as did John of Podio Ventoso's at Valencia (1281, in Arabic) and Peter de Mora's at Xàtiva (1304, in Hebrew). Theobald was also heavily involved in the Dominican project of revising the Latin text of the Bible (Kaeppli, *Scriptores*, vol. IV, 295–6; G. Dahan, "La connaissance de l'hébreu dans les correctoires de la Bible du XIIIe siècle," in *Revue théologique de Louvain* 23 [1992], 178–90).

⁸⁸ At least one other Dominican at St. Jacques, Henry of Cologne, was known as a Hebraist at this time. Theobald may have taught him and/or Raymond Martini, or at least facilitated contacts with other Hebrew teachers (converted or not). An alternative thesis, that Martini was himself a converted Jew, rests solely on Peter Marsili's rhetorical reference to friar Raymond as a *Rabinus et magister in hebrayco, et in lingua caldaica multum doctus* (Marsili, *Chronica*, bk. 4, ch. 25; ed. Martínez San Pedro, 379). Jeremy Cohen rightly points out that the title of "rabbi" here merely means that Raymond was a teacher; it was most unlikely he received rabbinic training (*Friars*, 129–30).

⁸⁹ H. Denifle, "Quellen zur Disputation Pablos Christiani mit Mose Nachmani zu Barcelona 1263" in *Historisches Jahrbuch der Goerres Gesellschaft* 8 (1887), 238 (#7). Raymond was apparently the only trained Hebraist; other members of the committee (bishop Arnold de Gurb of Barcelona, former Dominican master-general Raymond Penyafort and the heads of the Barcelona Dominican and Franciscan convents [Arnold de Segarra and Peter de Janua respectively] were more senior and likely appointed *ex officio*; see chapter 5).

to others as well. In 1281 he was assigned to teach in an apparently unprecedented *studium ebraicum* at his home convent in Barcelona.⁹⁰ The class consisted of up to eight named Dominican students.⁹¹ Martini also taught Hebrew to interested lay scholars, as friar Dominic Marrothini was apparently doing with Arabic at Murcia around the same time. The mystically inclined physician Arnold de Vilanova, for one, allegedly wrote that “the zeal of friar Raymond Martini sowed the seed of the Hebrew language in the garden of my heart.”⁹² Vilanova was in Barcelona c. 1282, so he likely attended the Dominican *studium* in an informal capacity.⁹³ Aside from these few records, there is little to indicate that Raymond’s zeal for Hebrew studies had any lasting influence among his fellows.

After 1281 the only further record of a medieval Dominican Hebrew school comes from the above-mentioned dual language *studium* at Xàtiva. In 1297 the friars there hired a local Jewish teacher (*magister*) named Yom Tob to give Hebrew lessons, with compensation including relief from royal taxes.⁹⁴ The duration of Yom Tob’s tenure at the convent was brief, however, and the names of his students (if any) are unknown. The Aragonese Provincial Chapter *acta* for 1302 and 1303 show that friar Peter Scarramat (or *Carcamato*) was ordered “to read Hebrew to the friars who are there,” presumably as a replacement for Yom Tob.⁹⁵ Peter’s students

⁹⁰ Claims that Martini taught Hebrew at Montpellier in 1269 seem to be based on misattribution of a quote to friar Raymond De Medullione (*de Mévouillon* or *de Meullon*, later bishop of Embrun) (M.-H. Vicaire, introduction to *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 18 [1983], 9 and n. 3); Gilbert Dahan’s skepticism on the matter is therefore justified (*Intellectuels*, 260–1).

⁹¹ “Assignamus ... conventui Barchinonensi ... ad studium ebraicum fratrem Ia[cobum] de Gradibus, fratrem Sancium de Boleia, fratrem R[aimundu]m Fabri eiusdem conventus, fratrem Nicholaum Segobiensem et frater R. Martini legat eis. Item fratrem Iacobum de Angularia et fratrem G[uillelmu]m de Traverseriis, fratrem Ia[cobum] de Villa et fratrem Berengarium de Spapiol” (Hernández, “Pergaminos,” 28). It is impossible to know whether the last four *assignments* should be taken as part of the *studium* or not.

⁹² The phrase is absent from an early MS (Vat. Lat. 3824, dated 1305) but appears in a later Greek translation (St. Petersburg, Russian Public Library MS 113). The latter has been widely quoted in a modern Latin translation: “pluries affectavi, karissime pater, ut semen illud hebraice lingue, quod zelus religionis fratris R. Martini seminavit in ortulo cordis mei, prodesset non michi solum, sed ceteris etiam fidelibus ad salutem eternam” (J. Carreras Artau, “La *Allocutio super tetragrammaton* de Arnaldo de Vilanova” in *Sefarad* 9 [1949], 80–1; cf. D. Romano, “Penseurs chrétiens catalans vis-à-vis des Juifs” in Cohen, *From Witness to Witchcraft*, 309–10). The Greek MS, a result of Arnold’s contact with monks from Mount Athos at Marseilles in 1308, is described in J. Carreras Artau, “Una versió grega de nou escrits d’Arnau de Vilanova” in *AST* 8 (1932), 127–34. Carreras Artau suggests that the Greek actually reflects an earlier recension of the work (and that Vilanova eliminated praise of Dominican friars from other copies of his works after falling out with the Order).

⁹³ Berthier, “Un maître orientaliste,” 277.

⁹⁴ F. Baer, *Die Juden im Christlichen Spanien* (Berlin, 1929), vol. I, 157 (#141).

⁹⁵ Robles Sierra, “Actas de los Capítulos” in *EV* 20 (1990), 244 and 255. Since the 1303 *acta* also prescribed the possible hiring of a Jew to teach Arabic, it would be interesting to know whether that same Jew would also have been consulted regarding Hebrew teaching – or why not.

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were not listed, so we have no idea of their number. Then in 1304, again as noted earlier, subprior Peter de Mora of the same convent was assigned as lector to two named students of a *studium linguarum* (whether in Arabic, Hebrew or both is not specified) along with the “others who are there.”⁹⁶ Hebrew studies are nowhere mentioned in Dominican Chapter *acta* after 1303, despite the brief revival of interest in Arabic at Xàtiva around 1312.

Therefore, as was the case with Arabic *studia*, evidence for organized Hebrew studies in the medieval Dominican Order is scant. A single assignment of eight or fewer students in 1281, along with a vague reference to some unnamed students around 1302–4, hardly adds up to a sustained endeavor. Undoubtedly there was more language learning in the Province than the sources explicitly record. Raymond Martini, Peter Scarramat and perhaps subprior de Mora certainly seem to have learned Hebrew, though there is no record of their having attended a formal *studium*.⁹⁷ The same is true of the Arabist friars John de Podio Ventoso and Dominic Marrothini. Family origins or recourse to private tutors were perhaps factors, and there may well have been other ephemeral language *studia* which have escaped documentation. Nevertheless, maximalist assumptions of a deliberate, widespread and long-lasting network of Dominican Hebrew and Arabic schools cannot plausibly be upheld.

BOOKS AND LIBRARIES

Another body of evidence may shed further light on the friars’ intellectual tastes and concerns: the books they chose to collect, write and copy. All Dominican convents prized their books, and by the time of master-general Humbert of Romans most had well-organized libraries.⁹⁸ Books were considered to be the Order’s chief “weapons” (*arma nostrae militiae*) against heresy and unbelief, and therefore objects to be revered and preserved at all costs.⁹⁹ Novices were taught “to take good care of the monastery’s books,” and “to read or meditate on something by day and by night, in the house or while traveling.”¹⁰⁰ Conventual librarians

⁹⁶ Robles Sierra, “Actas de los Capítulos” in *EV* 20 (1990), 266.

⁹⁷ The latter two may conceivably have been trained by Martini, or perhaps by the Jewish teacher Yom Tob at Xàtiva.

⁹⁸ Humbert’s advice on assembling and maintaining a conventual library is in *De vita regulari*, chs. 140–1 and 149; also the *Instructiones de officiis ordinis*, ch. 13 (ed. J.J. Berthier [Rome, 1888], vol. I, 419–25 and 448–50; vol. II, 263–6). On Dominican libraries generally see Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. II, 197–230; K. Humphreys, *The Book Provisions of the Medieval Friars* (Amsterdam, 1964) and E. Brett, “The Dominican Library in the Thirteenth Century” in *Journal of Library History* 15 (1980), 303–8.

⁹⁹ *MOFPH*, vol. XX (1257 Chapter *acta* of the Roman Province), 21.

¹⁰⁰ *Constitutiones*, dist. 1, ch. 13 (ed. Thomas, 323–4).

who followed Humbert of Romans' advice took special precautions to keep books safe in special wooden cabinets, and maintained scrupulous records (including a detailed catalogue) to ensure that nothing was alienated from their collection.

As was the case with educational records, extant data regarding medieval Dominican libraries is somewhat incomplete but still worthy of examination. In Mallorca, for example, the 1485 library catalogue of St. Dominic's lists 260 volumes. Many of these were acquired in the later fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, but the list also includes books which had been preserved from the earliest days of the convent.¹⁰¹ The medieval contents of the library at St. Catherine's in Barcelona are more difficult to identify, since the earliest extant catalogue there dates to the eighteenth century.¹⁰² Fortunately, data from this inventory can be checked against other medieval documentation, including *assignatio* records granting books to individual friars for personal long-term use. Using these sources, it is at least possible to trace the broad outlines of two key Dominican book collections in the medieval Crown of Aragon.¹⁰³

The results of such an enquiry are revealing. The medieval libraries of both St. Catherine's and St. Dominic's were generally quite conservative, overwhelmingly filled with precisely the sorts of liturgical, theological and canon law tomes which made up the bulk of recommended daily reading throughout the Order. By the fifteenth century and undoubtedly long before, the Dominican library at Mallorca thus contained all seventeen items on a list of basic texts compiled by Humbert of Romans: multiple copies of the Bible (glossed and un glossed), the *Summa de casibus* of Raymond Penyafort, the *Summa* of Godfrey of Trano, William de Peyraut's *De vitiis et virtutibus*, a *Summa de quaestionibus*, Scriptural concordances and *interpretationes*, Gratian's *Decretum*, the *Decretals* of Gregory IX, *Distinctiones morales*, sermon collections, Peter Comestor's *Historia*

¹⁰¹ The catalogue is now ARM, AH 521, fols. 128r–133v and 287r–290r. Transcription in J. N. Hillgarth, *Readers and Books in Majorca 1229–1550* (Paris, 1991), vol. II, 343–51. Since St. Dominic's experienced no major disasters between its foundation and 1485, it is reasonable to assume it suffered no major losses of books. If anything, the collection was smaller and less diverse in its earlier days.

¹⁰² Now BUB MS 768. Since there were no disasters at St. Catherine's between the fires of 1255 and 1835, it again seems reasonable to suppose that a fair proportion of the medieval library's holdings survived into the eighteenth century. A number of medieval manuscripts from St. Catherine's are indeed still extant and in good condition at Barcelona University (F. Miquel Rosell, "Manuscritos de la Orden de Predicadores Conservados en la Biblioteca de la Universidad de Barcelona" in *AST* 15 [1942], 325–60).

¹⁰³ The library of the Valencian Dominicans was also famed as a place where medieval manuscripts were carefully preserved. Unfortunately, few survived the upheavals of nineteenth-century expropriation and twentieth-century civil war; a handful are now at Valencia University (A. Robles Sierra, "Manuscritos del Archivo del Real Convento de Predicadores de Valencia" in *EV* 14 [1984], 349–402).

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scholastica, Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*, chronicles, *Passiones* and *Legenda sanctorum* and a *Historia ecclesiastica*.¹⁰⁴ The evidence of *assignationes librorum* at Barcelona suggests the same overall picture; by far the majority of manuscripts assigned to friars at St. Catherine's in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries consisted of Bibles, breviaries, theological treatises and canon law texts.¹⁰⁵

In Mallorca, it is even possible to observe key stages in the evolution of a mendicant book collection. The first friars took Bibles, Breviaries and a *Doctrinale* with them to found the library at St. Dominic's.¹⁰⁶ Later donors provided more Bibles and canon law texts.¹⁰⁷ The friars themselves complied with their Order's early fourteenth-century endorsement of Thomas Aquinas' teachings by purchasing and/or copying his most important books, including the *Summa theologiae* and *Summa contra gentiles*.¹⁰⁸ By 1485, volumes listed in St. Dominic's catalogue could almost all be arranged in a few major categories: Bibles, exegetical and legal works, sermon collections, books on logic and natural science (for use in the corresponding special *studia*) and standard schoolbooks by the Lombard, Comestor and Thomas Aquinas.¹⁰⁹ This accords well with evidence from St. Catherine's, where theological and legal treatises, sermon collections and schoolbooks likewise account for the vast majority of the eighteenth-century library catalogue's 816 pages of entries.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Humbert of Romans, *Instructiones*, ch. 13 (ed. Berthier, vol. II, 265); Brett, *Humbert of Romans*, 144. Compare Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 343–51.

¹⁰⁵ Bibles were distributed to friars Peter de Puteo and Peter de Sancto Felice, for example; the latter also regularly consulted a copy of the *Decretales*, a *Summa de virtutibus*, and a volume containing both a *Summa de dispensationibus et impedimentis officiorum ecclesiasticorum et beneficiorum* and a *Summa de censuris ecclesiasticis, excommunicatione, suspensione et interdicto* (Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barcinonensia," 55, 58, 60 and 62 [#7, 29, 42, 56, 57]).

¹⁰⁶ Four early cases of friars transporting books from Barcelona to Mallorca are recorded in St. Catherine's *assignationes librorum* (Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barcinonensia," 54 and 59; Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 342–3).

¹⁰⁷ The family of Bernard d'Olzet contributed a Bible and money for book purchases on at least three occasions in the thirteenth century; the Mallorcan Dominican cardinal Nicholas Rossell left ten books (almost all on canon law) to his home convent in the mid-fourteenth century (Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 342–3).

¹⁰⁸ *ST*: #206 and 209–13; *SCG*: #194; Aquinas' commentaries on the *Sententiae*: #216–20 (Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 349–50).

¹⁰⁹ Bibles: #136, 138, 139, etc.; Patristic and other standard Christian exegetical works: #76–125, etc.; canon law: #148–60, etc.; logical works: #239, 242, etc.; philosophical and scientific works: #225–34, etc.; *Sententiae* and related commentaries: #183–93, 201, 203 and 214–24; *Historia scolastica*: #134, 143; works by Aquinas: #197, 200, 202, 206–13, 216–20, etc.; sermon collections: #2–8, 26–9, 34–40, 52–62, etc. (Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 343–51).

¹¹⁰ Nearly 100 pages (123–207, 217–31, etc.) of BUB MS 768 are dedicated to sermon collections alone. Only ten pages (238–48) list copies of the Lombard's *Sentences* and their commentaries but well over a hundred deal with other aspects of Christian theology (heavily weighted towards Aquinas: 249–375, etc.). Seventy-five pages list legal texts (424–99; 410–13 also relate to

What is equally striking about these collections, located as they were in the multicultural world of the medieval Crown of Aragon and in convents that at least briefly hosted *studia ebraica* or *arabica*, is their apparent lack of emphasis on books that can clearly be related to studies of Judaism, Islam, Hebrew or Arabic. This is especially true for Mallorca. Not a single volume in either language was recorded as being preserved there in 1485. Polemical texts dealing with non-Christian traditions were likewise utterly non-existent at St. Dominic's. Even writings by Raymond Martini (a one-time resident and student in the convent) and Raymond Llull (a long-term neighbor and probable visitor) were absent from the friars' library at the end of the fifteenth century.¹¹¹ The closest thing to a polemical text in the 1485 Mallorca inventory is a copy of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles*.¹¹² At least a portion of Aquinas' brief on legal treatment of Jews (*De regimine iudaeorum*) was also available for consultation – perhaps indicating the Dominicans' practical focus on legal and financial aspects of Judeo-Christian relations.¹¹³

The situation was slightly different in medieval Barcelona, where the Dominicans' library was undoubtedly larger, and studies were more regularly carried on at a high level (especially after the establishment of a *studium generale* at the convent in 1293). Yet even here, as at Mallorcan St. Dominic's and despite the long residence of an Arabic scholar like Raymond Martini, there is no sign that any Arabic books or books on Islam entered the permanent collection before the end of the fifteenth century.¹¹⁴ This supports the conclusion that the General Chapter's hopes

inquisition) and more than a hundred list textbooks in the arts and sciences (526–622, 741–57, etc.). The rest of the catalogue covers history, literature and politics – mostly post-medieval.

¹¹¹ The Mallorcan Dominicans did acquire a copy of Martini's *Pugio fidei* some time between 1485 and the compilation of their next extant library catalogue in 1548 (ADP, MSL 176, fols. 1–35v [ed. Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 352–60]). The latter catalogue shows the recent acquisition not only of the *Pugio* (#131) but also Alfonso de Espina's *Fortalium fidei* (#130) and the *De predicatione crucis contra sarasenos* (#144, probably by Humbert of Romans or Riccold de Monte Croce) (Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 356). A *Manuscriptus Maioricanus* was consulted for the 1651 Paris edition of the *Pugio fidei* (see the marginal note on p. 2 of that edition) and later noted by Quétif (*SSOP*, vol. I, 397). If Llull's books were ever found at St. Dominic's, they may have been purged as a result of suspicions of heterodoxy – especially during the late fourteenth century, when Nicholas Eymeric launched his inquisitorial offensive against Llull.

¹¹² Hillgarth, *Readers*, vol. II, 349 (#194, shelved in *scannum* 6).

¹¹³ *Ibid.* 350 (#208, shelved in *scannum* 7). The listed title, "An liceat exactiones ponere in Judeos" corresponds to the first of eight questions in the *De regimine* and so may refer to the whole work; alternately the Dominicans may only have possessed a single excerpt. The short treatise supported royal rights to tax Jews at will, though it prescribed leniency in normal circumstances (Hood, *Aquinas and the Jews*, 101–9). The issue was quite topical in early fourteenth-century Mallorca, as will be seen in [chapter 5](#), below.

¹¹⁴ Both the Mallorca and Barcelona convents seem to have begun collecting anti-Islamic treatises in the late fifteenth or sixteenth centuries – a development which requires further research. Volumes in the *adversus gentiles* section of BUB MS 768 such as Juan Andres' *Confusione de la*

of establishing a *studium arabicum* at Barcelona after 1259 came to naught. There is, however, reason to believe that Hebrew books attracted a somewhat greater degree of interest among readers at St. Catherine's.

By the eighteenth century, a whole section of the Barcelona Dominicans' library was devoted to Hebrew and other language study. Most of these books were collected in the early modern period, due no doubt to the growth of Renaissance-era Christian Hebraism.¹¹⁵ One title however is of clear medieval origin: a version of David Kimchi's *Sefer ha-Shoreshim* ("Book of Roots"), listed in Latin as *Radicas Vocabulorum Hebraicorum*. Since this very book was cited by Raymond Martini in his *Capistrum judaeorum*, we can be reasonably certain that this manuscript (or an earlier copy) was available at the convent in the 1260s.¹¹⁶ Five other anonymous texts, identified only as *Cartilla Hebraea*, *Dictionarium trilingue (Latinum, hebraicum et grecum)*, *Carta Hebraea*, *Concordantie hebraeae* and *Grammatica Chaldaica* may also have been medieval, but this is by no means certain. It should be noted, furthermore, that no Hebrew Talmud, Bible or other non-grammatical Hebrew text can be documented in the St. Catherine's library at any time.

More certain is the existence of medieval anti-Jewish polemical materials at St. Catherine's. The convent's eighteenth-century catalogue lists these in a section for books *adversus gentiles et supersticiosos*.¹¹⁷ Peter Alfonsi's twelfth-century *Dialogi contra judaeos*, an anonymous *Altercatio sinagoge et ecclesie*, Raymond Martini's *Capistrum judaeorum* and *Pugio fidei* and a Latin copy of Rabbi Samuel's letter *De messia* (translated 1339) are all titles in this section which are readily identifiable as being of medieval origin.¹¹⁸ Though there is no way of knowing precisely when some

Secta Mahometana (1537) and Luigi Marracci's *Aloorani textus, et Refutatio* (1698) refer to early modern treatises. A copy of the *Fortalitium Fidei* of Alfonso de Espina (late fifteenth century) is also noted on p. 397. Another post-medieval work dealing with (converted) Muslims, archbishop Ribera's sixteenth-century *Catechismo para los nuevamente convertidos de los Moros*, is listed in the "Catechism" section (pp. 376–81). A compendium of works by Raymond Lull, including the *Disputatio Raimundi, christiani, et Hamar, saraceni*, was once owned by St. Catherine's and is still extant (now BUB MS 728); it too dates to the late fifteenth century.

¹¹⁵ The section is entitled *Qui de grammaticae Hebraeae, Syriacae Chaldaicae, et Graecae scripserunt* (BUB MS 768, pp. 758–64). Identifiably early modern texts by Christian Hebraists such as Reuchlin account for twenty-eight of the thirty-four texts in this section.

¹¹⁶ BUB MS 768, p. 759. Both Kimchi's *Sefer ha-Shoreshim* (the second part of the larger *Mikhlol*) and his *Dikduk* appear in the *Capistrum judaeorum* (i.e., ratio 1:4, ratio 2:13 and ratio 2:16; nequitia 1:3, nequitia 2:3 and nequitia 2:5, etc.; ed. Robles Sierra, vol. I, 70, 82, 88; vol. II, 26, 70, 76, etc.).

¹¹⁷ BUB MS 768, pp. 397–409. The vast majority of the entries concern early modern texts dealing with contemporary problems of Protestantism and witchcraft.

¹¹⁸ BUB MS 768, pp. 397, 404 and 407. The *Altercatio* MS may be a copy of an anonymous tenth-century dialogue concerning the messiah, though there were other polemics appearing under similar names throughout the Middle Ages including the pseudo-Augustinian *De alteratione* (Cohen, *Friars*, 23; Dahan, *Christian Polemic*, 69).

of these entered the conventual library, it seems likely that Raymond Martini's works were kept in his home convent during and after his lifetime.¹¹⁹ The fact that the *Pugio fidei* drew on Peter Alfonsi's *Dialogi* suggests that the latter too was available at St. Catherine's by the 1270s at least.¹²⁰ A compilation entitled *Authores varii contra varios errores*, on the other hand, probably dates to the late fifteenth century.¹²¹

There was one other anti-Jewish polemic which probably circulated among some of the friars at St. Catherine's, though it went unrecorded in library catalogues. Two or more separate manuscripts with the title *Faretra* ("Quiver") appear in the convent's records of *assignationes librorum*, as personal copies held by a total of five individual Dominicans in the later thirteenth century.¹²² If this *Faretra* can be identified with polemical treatises known as *Pharetra judaeorum* or *Pharetra fidei*, then the appearance of multiple copies at St. Catherine's around the year 1263 is especially significant.¹²³

¹¹⁹ The *Pugio* was certainly at St. Catherine's in 1340, according to a document in the Barcelona Arxiu Capítular (Bernat de Villarrubia, *Capibrevium rogationum sive notularum* 3 Aug. 1340 to 14 Dec. 1340, vol. XXXIX, fol. 141v; ed. J. Hernando, *Llibres i lectors a la Barcelona del s. XIV* [Barcelona, 1995], vol. I, 161–2 [#93]). It records a transaction whereby Blanca, widow of Berengar Albanelli, contracted with the prior to copy the first volume of the convent's *Pugio*, in quo sunt tres partes sive tria volumina, et facit contra iudeos. One can only assume that the *Pugio* (or at least its first part) had some commercial value in the mid-fourteenth century as Blanca paid the Dominicans 15 *libras Barchinone de terno* for the privilege of borrowing it.

¹²⁰ See *Pugio fidei*, bk. 3, dist. 3, ch. 4. The slightly earlier *Capistrum* does not cite Alfonsi.

¹²¹ BUB MS 768, p. 397. This MS may be identical to one described by Jaime Villanueva prior to the destruction of the library in 1835 as a *Collectorium seu Compendium super Sacram Scripturam, inchoatum anno Domini MCCCCXCII*, which contained *quosdam flores ... ex Lyrano, Pugione fidei Raymundi Martini aliisque* (cited in Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barchinonensia," 53).

¹²² Since these books were essentially private property, they did not enter the regular conventual library collection. The *assignationes* are recorded in BUB MS 241, pp. 205–24 (ed. Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barchinonensia," 54–80). They show that one copy of the *Faretra* was first held by friar John de Stamarito; on his death (before July 1264 according to *assignatio* #19; ed. Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barchinonensia," 57) it went to F de Villa Rubea (#41; ed. Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barchinonensia," 60; also #21). Other *assignationes* from about the same time mention a *Faretra* with the incipit *Ab initio* in the possession of friar Bernard Aculei, and another "better" copy (*Faretram unam optimam*) held by friar Martin de Algayra after the 1281 death of Bernard de Bacho (#84 and 85; ed. Kaeppli, "Dominicana Barchinonensia," 66). At least five friars are thus known to have had this text available for regular consultation.

¹²³ The matter is somewhat complicated by the fact that a completely different text with a similar name is also known to have existed in medieval Barcelona. The *Pharetra divini amoris* was an unremarkable collection of patristic sayings later falsely attributed to Bonaventure (ed. A.C. Peltier, *S. Bonaventurae ... Opera Omnia* [Paris, 1866], vol. VII, 3–231). A copy of this text, identifiable by its incipit *In conversionis mee primordio*, was owned by the Barcelona lawyer Raymond Vinaterii (d. before 1356) (Hernando, *Llibres*, vol. I, 290 [#179:141]). Such a text would have made a very ordinary addition to a mendicant library's theological collection, so it is possible that the St. Catherine's *Faretra* manuscripts were not anti-Jewish texts at all. The question cannot be resolved with any certainty, though the circumstances of their appearance in Barcelona argue for these texts being connected with anti-Jewish agitation.

The more notorious *Pharetra judaeorum* is a collection of anti-Jewish arguments and allegedly offensive Talmudic quotations in Latin translation, compiled at the time of the Paris Talmud trials (c. 1240).¹²⁴ It has been attributed to Theobald de Sexannia, the converted Jew who served as subprior of the Dominican convent of St. Jacques.¹²⁵ It would have been easily accessible to Catalan friars, several of whom went to study at Paris in the mid-thirteenth century.¹²⁶ A relatively brief work, covering only about twenty folios in most manuscripts, the *Pharetra* provided interested friars with a simple introduction to the Talmud and the case being made for and against its burning at Paris.

As will be seen in [chapter 4](#), the Talmud controversy erupted in Barcelona for the first time c. 1263. The St. Catherine *Faretras* may have had an important impact on this, forming Dominican opinion and perhaps influencing Raymond Martini in his polemical use of the Talmud. Nevertheless the work does not seem to have entered the conventual library as a text for the whole community to share, either in Barcelona or Mallorca. Its influence was therefore limited to a small group, presumably the intellectual elite, with consultations at specific periods in which the Talmud's fate was being decided. The *Pharetra judaeorum* never became part of the friars' general curriculum, even at Barcelona.

Acquisition of a Hebrew grammar text, along with a handful of anti-Jewish polemical works, indicates that some friars at Barcelona were taking steps to prepare themselves for serious disputational and/or preaching encounters with local Jews – or at least with Jewish ideas. By 1263 these friars could have had a general if selective and biased knowledge of the Talmud, gleaned from sources such as Peter Alfonsi's *Dialogi* and the *Pharetra judaeorum*, in addition to oral reports received from their brethren at Paris. For a short time after 1263, amid memories of the Barcelona disputation, the few capable of reading Hebrew might also

¹²⁴ Yet another obscure text is identified in its explicit as a *Pharetra judaeorum: explicit liber contra Judeos nomine Thalamoth vel nuncupatur pharetra Judeorum* (ed. S. Shachar, "Dialogus inter Judeum et Clericum" in *Michael* 4 [1976], 37–60). This brief Latin polemic focuses mainly on standard anti-Jewish arguments, with the Talmud being quickly dismissed as a point of discussion (p. 56).

¹²⁵ See Cohen, *Friars*, 78 and G. Dahan, "Les traductions latines de Thibaud de Sézanne" in Dahan, *Le brûlement du Talmud à Paris 1242–1244* (Paris, 1999), 95–120; also Kaeppli, *Scriptores*, vol. IV, 293–5 for a list of the many surviving MSS. The *Pharetra's* contents are summarized in *SSOP*, vol. I, 738–9; it is closely related to another late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century MS now at Girona Cathedral (J.M. Millás Vallicrosa, "Extractos del Talmud y alusiones polémicas en un manuscrito de la Biblioteca Catedral de Gerona" in *Sefarad* 20 [1960], 17–49).

¹²⁶ It is tempting to speculate that Raymond Martini may have brought one of the MSS back from Paris in the 1240s; other Barcelona friars such as Arnold Segarra and Francis Cendra also travelled to Paris before 1264 (Ribes y Montané, "San Alberto," 174). Of course Paul Christiani could have brought the text when he visited Catalonia in 1263.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

have consulted seized copies of the Talmud and other Hebrew books, including works by Moses Maimonides.¹²⁷ Within a few more years Raymond Martini's writings were available to provide further guidance in refutations of Jewish doctrine. After Martini's death *c.* 1284, however, no further developments in medieval Hebrew studies can be traced at St. Catherine's.

SYMBOLS, MUZZLES AND DAGGERS

Raymond Martini's studies make him a unique character, both among friars of the Crown of Aragon and in the history of the Dominican Order generally. Apart from being the only medieval friar known for certain to have been trained in both Arabic and Hebrew, he was also the only thirteenth-century Spanish Dominican to leave any writings at all dealing specifically with either Islam or Judaism.¹²⁸ It is therefore worth taking a closer look at his educational career and at the content of the resulting writings, despite the fact that these were apparently so poorly received and so little distributed.¹²⁹ Even if they were marginal to the more normative interests of friars based in academic convents such as St. Catherine's, the fact that such treatises were created at all indicates the sorts of sophisticated information on non-Christian religious beliefs, including knowledge of original Hebrew and Arabic texts, which were at least potentially available there in the second half of the thirteenth century.

A first mention of Raymond Martini in the documentary record occurs in the above-mentioned Spanish Chapter *acta* for 1250, where he was one of eight friars assigned to learn Arabic.¹³⁰ His studies must have been successful, for by the end of the 1250s he authored a pair of treatises (*Explanatio simboli apostolorum* and *De seta Machometi*)

¹²⁷ This may have provided Raymond Martini with his opportunity to study Maimonides. No copies of Maimonides' writings are listed in the St. Catherine's catalogue, but the *Moreh Nevuchim* ("Guide for the Perplexed") is cited in nequitia 2:3 of the *Capistrum judaeorum* (ed. Robles Sierra, vol. II, 68).

¹²⁸ Aside from Martini the first Iberian Dominican known to have penned such a work was the Castilian Alfonso Bonihominis, who produced his alleged translation of the "Letter of Rabbi Samuel" in the early fourteenth century (G. Meersseman, "La chronologie des voyages et des oeuvres de frère Alphonse Buenhombre O.P." in *AFP* 10 [1940], 77–108). Paul Christiani, the Occitan Dominican who undertook the famous Barcelona disputation in 1263, left no writings of his own to posterity.

¹²⁹ On Martini's career, see Cohen, *Friars*, 129–69; also Berthier, "Un maître orientaliste, 267–78" and Robles, *Escritores dominicos*, 68–77. A list of extant MSS by friar Raymond is in Kaeppli, *Scriptores*, vol. III, 281–3.

¹³⁰ Ed. Hernández, "Primeras actas," 32.

displaying a great deal of knowledge concerning Islam.¹³¹ An anonymous thirteenth-century Latin–Arabic dictionary, often ascribed to this same friar, may provide further evidence of his proficiency in the language.¹³² From these works it is evident that Martini closely studied not only the Qur’an but also a number of supplementary Islamic texts available only in Arabic. The *Sahih* of Al-Bukhari, Muslim’s *Kitab al-Iman*, and the *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq are all quoted extensively (in accurate Latin translation), especially in the *De seta Machometi*.¹³³

Raymond was thus a fairly skilled Arabist with a real interest in Islam. His involvement with external missions aimed at converting Muslims is less certain. As its subtitle clearly indicates, the *Explanatio symboli apostolorum* was intended for the edification of the Christian “faithful” (*institutionem fidelium*). The book’s content confirms this authorial intent: the *Explanatio* is a detailed and wide-ranging defence of Christianity in response to the sorts of arguments which Iberian Christians might have heard from their Muslim neighbors.¹³⁴ Raymond did not deny the universality of apostolic evangelism, and his arguments for the superiority of Christian doctrine might well have been effective in preaching to any audience. His primary concern, however, was with fulfilling the wise man’s duty as laid out by Thomas Aquinas: “to meditate and speak forth

¹³¹ The *Explanatio symboli apostolorum ad institutionem fidelium a fratre R. Martini de Ordine Predicatorum edita* is preserved in a single late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century MS at Tortosa Cathedral (ed. J.M. March, “En Ramón Martí y la seva ‘Explanatio Symboli Apostolorum’” in *Anuari de l’Institut d’Estudis Catalans* [1908], 443–96). Its composition can be dated on internal evidence to the year 1256 or 1257 (*ibid.*, 447). Llull apparently believed that this work was also written in Arabic (“*ecce symbolum in arabicum expositum*”) but there is no other evidence to support this (E. Longpré, “Le B. Raymond Lulle et Raymond Marti O.P.” in *Estudios Lulianos* 13 [1969], 197–200, citing the *Liber de acquisitione Terrae Sanctae*, dist. 3). The *De seta Machometi*, also known as the *De origine, progressu et fine Machometi et Quadruplici reprobatione prophetiae eius*, was edited by J. Hernando i Delgado (“*De Seta Machometi ...*” in *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia* 4 [1983], 9–63), who also established Martini’s authorship. It cannot be dated precisely, but stylistic similarities suggest it was composed around the same time as the *Explanatio*.

¹³² Ed. C. Schiaparelli, *Vocabulista in arabico* (Florence, 1871). The work is ascribed to Martini because it includes apparent Mozarabisms and Berberisms which would indicate a western origin, because it includes an anecdote mentioning him by name, and because there are so few other known medieval Arabists who might have written it (D. Griffin, “Mozarabismos del ‘Vocabulista’ atribuido a Ramon Marti” in *Al-Andalus* 23 [1958], 251–337; 24 [1959], 85–124 and 333–80; 25 [1960], 93–170). Griffin does not insist on Martini’s authorship, and in fact argues that variant spellings of Catalan words may suggest Mallorcan authorship (1958, pp. 271–4); cf. F. Corriente, *El Lexico Arabe Andalusi segun el ‘Vocabulista in Arabico’* (Madrid, 1989).

¹³³ On Martini’s use of Islamic sources, see A. Cortabarría: “Les sources arabes de l’‘Explanatio Symboli’ du Dominicain catalan Raymond Martin” in *Mélanges de l’Institut dominicain d’études orientales* 16 (1983), 95–116; and Cortabarría, “La connaissance des textes arabes chez Raymond Martin, O.P. et sa position face de l’Islam” in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 18 (1983), 279–300.

¹³⁴ The accusation of *tahrif* (falsification of Scripture), for example, is dealt with in great detail (*Explanatio*, 452–5; cf. C. Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible* [Leiden, 1996]).

of the divine truth ... and to refute the opposing error,” in a land where Christians might be “solicited and buffeted by the unfaithful ... who try to corrupt faith in them.”¹³⁵

Josep Hernando i Delgado, in his efforts to prove Raymond Martini’s authorship of the *De seta Machometi*, has argued that its purpose was essentially parallel to that of the *Explanatio*.¹³⁶ The *De seta* sets out to prove that Muhammad was not a real prophet, but rather a sinner and a charlatan. It ends, however, with arguments intended to combat Muslim accusations that the text of the Bible had been altered (*tahrif*) – precisely the issue Martini addressed at the beginning of the *Explanatio* before going on to discuss various elements of the Latin Creed. The *De seta* thus provides further anti-Islamic arguments absent from the *Explanatio* and could be read as a sort of introduction to the latter work.

Like the *Explanatio*, the polemical *De seta* could potentially have been used by preachers looking for arguments to convince Muslims that they were in error. Its immediate audience was again assumed to be Christian, however, as the tone and content of the opening sentence makes clear:

In order to demonstrate that Muhammad was not a prophet or messenger sent by God, as argued by the Saracens who miserably perish following his blasphemies and errors, it must be noted that the Lord, in speaking of false prophets and warning the faithful to beware of them, spoke as it is written in [chapter seven](#) of Matthew: “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.”¹³⁷

Similarly belligerent references to Muslims, supported by appeals to Christian Scripture, abound in both the *Explanatio* and the *De seta Machometi*.¹³⁸ If these and other arguments were actually intended to help Dominican preachers develop conversionary sermons for preaching to Muslim audiences, Martini left the niceties of translating polemic into persuasion entirely in the hands of his readers.

Friar Raymond’s training in the Qur’an and Islamic legal writings provided him with the rare ability to proceed against “individual errors” of the Muslims, the very task Thomas Aquinas had not been able to

¹³⁵ SCG, bk. 1, ch. 1; ST, 2–2, q. 10, art. 7.

¹³⁶ Ed. Hernando i Delgado, “*De Seta*,” 11; but cf. Hernando i Delgado, “Le ‘*De Seta Machometi*’ du Cod. 46 d’Osma, oeuvre de Raymond Martin (Ramón Martí)” in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 18 (1983), 360.

¹³⁷ Ed. Hernando i Delgado, “*De Seta*,” 14.

¹³⁸ In the *Explanatio*, Martini announced his intention to base his arguments on Christian Scriptural authority: “De quibus in sequentibus ostendetur auctoritatibus veteris et novi testamenti, et etiam alicubi rationibus et similitudines secundum modum parvitatís nostre” (ed. March, *Explanatio*, 452). As Aquinas had pointed out in the SCG (bk. 1, ch. 2), Muslims accepted the authority of neither and so were hardly likely to accept such arguments.

undertake.¹³⁹ Martini's approach was, however, fully compatible with Aquinas' viewpoint; indeed the concordance between Aquinas' theory and Martini's practice makes it likely that one was somehow influenced by the other. Absent of any direct quotes, it is impossible to say which way the influence went, but this is perhaps beside the point.¹⁴⁰ Ideas laid out in the *Summa contra gentiles* were undoubtedly shared and discussed by friars who met regularly in *studia* or General and Provincial Chapters throughout Europe, ultimately forming something of a common Dominican discourse by the later decades of the thirteenth century. It should therefore come as no surprise to find an Iberian friar making good use of his unique familiarity with Islam (and later Judaism), yet pursuing goals which were perfectly familiar to his counterparts in Italy or France.

Like Aquinas, then, Martini framed his writing in terms of a broad intention to uphold "truth" and oppose "error" generally. Muslims might ideally be brought by these arguments to see the error of their ways and the truth of Christianity, but active proselytism was not Martini's expressed primary concern. Aside from the *Explanatio* and the *De seta* (both relatively brief works), Martini's writings hardly make any mention of Islam.¹⁴¹ If he was indeed the author of the *Vocabulista*, this too would confirm his interest in contacts with the Arabic-speaking world but not the specific purpose of those contacts. The lexical content of the dictionary provides very little guidance as to whether its author intended it to be used by preachers, since Arabic would have been useful to so many Europeans operating in the western Mediterranean at this time – missionaries, scholars and merchants.¹⁴² Ultimately, there are few solid

¹³⁹ See chapter 1.

¹⁴⁰ Speculation has gone both ways; see *inter alia* A. Huerga, "Hipótesis sobre la génesis de la 'Summa contra gentiles' y del 'Pugio fidei'" in *Angelicum* 51 (1974), 533–57, and Jordan, "Protreptic Structure," 178–9.

¹⁴¹ Islamic sources appear in a single section of the *Capistrum judaeorum*, where the Qur'an and Muslim hadith collections – in addition to the Arab Christian polemicist al-Kindi – are cited to show that the messiah was awaited by all peoples (ratio 6, section 12; *Capistrum judaeorum*, vol. I, 254–60). The *Pugio fidei* claims to be directed "principaliter contra Judaeos; deinde contra Saracenos, & alios quosdam verae fidei adversarios" (*Pugio fidei*, preface; ed. J. De Voisin and B. Carpov [Leipzig, 1687], 2) but Islam itself is never at issue; Martini instead discusses positions held by various philosophers including (but not confined to) the Muslims Averroes, Avicenna and Al-Farabi (A. Cortabarría, "Los textos árabes de Averroes en el 'Pugio Fidei' del dominico catalán Raimundo Martín" in *Actas del XII Congreso de la VEAJ* [Malaga, 1984], 185–204; Cortabarría, "Las fuentes árabes del 'Pugio Fidei' de Raimundo Martí: Algazel (1085–1111)" in *La Ciencia Tomística* 112 [1985], 581–96).

¹⁴² The *Vocabulista* covers numerous terms which would have been especially useful to merchants, including multiple Arabic words for *capa* (*atrabasayra*, *kabba*, etc.) – a commonly traded garment (see O.R. Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain* [Cambridge, 1994], 223–9 on textile exchange in this period). Other words such as *katuliqi* for Catholic, *matran* for archbishop, etc. might be used by preachers; like *zallayr* (= *fornicatio*), however, they might be used in a wide range

indications to suggest that Raymond Martini's Arabic knowledge and readings in Islamic texts resulted in anything more than the composition of a few poorly diffused Latin diatribes.

Instead of continuing to attack Islamic beliefs, Martini turned more and more of his attention in later years to doctrinal threats posed to Christians by Judaism – especially in the wake of the 1263 Barcelona disputation and subsequent campaigns to expurgate Hebrew texts of their allegedly anti-Christian passages. As has already been noted, Raymond Martini was one of five respected clerics appointed to examine confiscated Talmud manuscripts in 1264, and by 1281 he was expert enough to teach Hebrew at the Dominican *studium* in Barcelona. His later and most extensive writings provide additional evidence for his knowledge of the languages and texts of rabbinic Judaism.

Martini's first treatise to exploit Hebrew knowledge was the *Capistrum judaeorum* ("Muzzle of the Jews," c. 1267). The preface to this work sums up its intentions and methodology; it was to be

a collection of certain authorities from the Old Testament, by which first and foremost the coming of Christ will be proved; and incidentally, certain other articles of the Christian faith; in order to illuminate the blindness of the Jews and break the hardness of their hearts, or to bridle their malice and to confound their perfidy.¹⁴³

Friar Raymond here once again found himself in accordance with Thomas Aquinas ("against the Jews we are able to argue by means of the Old Testament"),¹⁴⁴ but his training in Hebrew and Talmudic literature allowed him to go further. Observing that Jews often confounded Christian attempts to explicate the "truth" by appealing to their superior understanding of the Hebrew Bible against Jerome's Latin Vulgate (perhaps a reference to the recent Barcelona disputation), he sought to provide more literal translations of Scriptural passages along with rabbinic explanations:

With the aid of God, I will translate these authorities word for word (*verbum ex verbo*), and I will occasionally add the concordance and explanation of their rabbis in the midst of my exposition or in the margin ... I [also] collected certain sayings of their ancient teachers concerning these authorities, and other words of the prophets, which I believe serve our purpose by divine disposition rather than their intention.¹⁴⁵

of contexts. A complete analysis of the *Vocabulista's* lexical (as opposed to linguistic) content will have to be undertaken before any further generalizations can be made.

¹⁴³ *Capistrum judaeorum*, preface; ed. A. Robles Sierra, vol. I, 54.

¹⁴⁴ SCG, bk. I, ch. 2.

¹⁴⁵ *Capistrum judaeorum*, preface; ed. Robles Sierra, vol. I, 54.

Studies and writings

More than a decade later, Raymond completed a larger treatise which shared many features of the *Capistrum* but took the project of meditating truth and combating error to yet another level. The *Pugio fidei* (“Dagger of Faith,” c. 1278) was described by its author as primarily

[compiled] from those books of the Old Testament, which the Jews uphold, and also from their Talmud and fragmentary writings which are considered authentic among them, a work which may serve as a sort of dagger for preachers and worshippers of the Christian faith, both for slicing the bread of the divine word in Jewish discourse and also indeed for cutting the throat of their impiety and perfidy.¹⁴⁶

The *Pugio* was indeed the greatest collection of Talmudic materials yet compiled by a Christian author. It expanded greatly on those presented in the *Capistrum*, and even more impressively it presented them (in one extant manuscript at least) in fully vocalized Hebrew script along with a Latin translation and pronunciation guide. As a medieval Christian treatise dedicated to careful analysis of Jewish religious writings and beliefs, the *Pugio fidei* stands alone. Nevertheless its erudition and complexity ensured that it remained a book accessible only to a small elite of educated friars. It was very rarely copied (still more rarely in complete form) and soon sank into oblivion.¹⁴⁷ The more accessible *Capistrum judaeorum* met with a similar fate, and today survives in only three manuscripts. It was long believed lost altogether.¹⁴⁸ Medieval Dominicans, it seems, found the content and presentation of Aquinas’ widely circulated *Summae* more suited to their needs and interests when it came to theological polemics.

Whether, or to what degree, Martini’s writings were ever intended as missionary manuals to aid in real proselytizing efforts among the Jews of Catalonia or other regions is a matter for debate. Conversion of Jews was mentioned as an explicit goal in both the *Capistrum* and the *Pugio*, but Martini never lost sight of the need to protect Christians from Jewish

¹⁴⁶ *Pugio fidei*, preface; ed. De Voisin and Carpvov, 2. Note the use of martial imagery, which was a hallmark of the Order in its foundational documents.

¹⁴⁷ Only one complete medieval MS of the *Pugio* now exists: Paris Ste. Geneviève MS 1405 (thirteenth or fourteenth century). There are two partial early copies, now BN MS lat. 3357 (fourteenth or fifteenth century) and Salamanca University MS 2352 (fourteenth century) (Kaeppli, *Scriptores*, vol. III, 283). The BN MS ends with part two and contains no Hebrew at all. A handful of later MSS were produced, but again most were partial copies lacking Hebrew portions of the text; further evidence of the limits to Hebrew training in the Dominican Order.

¹⁴⁸ Quétif reflected eighteenth-century opinion when he wrote that the work was lost, “hoc & alicubi jacet neglectum, nam se vidisse nullus nomenclator asserit” (*SSOP*, vol. I, 397). Surviving MSS are listed in Kaeppli, *Scriptores*, vol. III, 283. One (Bologna University MS 1675 [thirteenth or fourteenth century], fols. 1r–92r) was possessed by the Bolognese Dominicans but misattributed to a “friar Martin of Spain.”

“error” as well. Once again, his position recalls the Church’s universalism and Aquinas’ insistence on the need to preach truth and combat error generally. The *Capistrum*’s stated aim of “illuminating the blindness of the Jews and breaking the hardness of their hearts” was thus accompanied by that of “bridling their malice” in order to protect others from falling into Judaizing error. Raymond’s choice of title implies that bridling or muzzling was in fact his primary goal, as does his continued explication of the theme:

In addition, since it is written: “with bit and bridle, bind the jaws of those who will not approach you”; until God should bestow the bridle [which] he is preparing, this little work may serve not so much as a bridle but rather as a muzzle, since of course it is an unsophisticated and roughly formed thing – whence it may be called the “Muzzle of the Jews.”¹⁴⁹

The *Pugio fidei* provides further insight concerning friar Raymond’s understanding of his mission. He relates (in terms reminiscent once again of Aquinas) that he was asked to compose the work above all for the edification of the Christian faithful:

Since according to the blessed Paul it is most fitting and beautiful if the preacher of the truth is “able to exhort the faithful in sound doctrine, and to refute those who contradict the truth” [Titus 1:9]; and according to blessed Peter, “one should always be prepared to give satisfaction to all who ask, giving them an account of that which he believes and preaches in hope and faith” [I. Pet. 3:15]; the contrary is indeed very shameful.¹⁵⁰

Turning to his decision to single out Jewish beliefs for the most extensive refutation, Martini was clear in his emphasis on the defensive nature of his work:

Moreover since according to the saying of Seneca, “no plague is more dangerous than the well-known enemy”; and no enemy of the Christian faith is better known and more unavoidable to us than the Jew; it has therefore been ordered that I should compose such a work.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ *Capistrum judaeorum*, preface; ed. Robles Sierra, vol. I, 60. The citation is from Psalm 31:9, “Be ye not as the horse, [or] as the mule, [which] have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.” Cf. Job 30:11, “for He opened His quiver (*faretram*) and loosed [arrows] at me, and placed a bridle into my mouth.” Interestingly, Nachmanides used the latter passage in his complaint against the French rabbis and their ban on Maimonides’ *Guide to the Perplexed*: “why, righteous judges, did you not put a curb on the mouth of your writings, and [why] did you not cast the bridle of your humility on the face of your words ...?” (Ramban, *Writings and Discourses* [tr. C. Chavel; New York, 1978], vol. II, 377). Martini’s transformation of the Scriptural bridle into a muzzle is presented as a claim of humility, but it also had mocking and insulting overtones.

¹⁵⁰ *Pugio fidei*, preface; ed. De Voisin and Carpzov, 2. ¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

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For Raymond Martini, Jewish beliefs and the threat they posed to Christians were thus to be decisively eliminated. He contributed to this both by censoring Hebrew books and by collecting arguments opposing the errors they contained.

In the late thirteenth century, then, thanks largely to the exceptional scholarship of Raymond Martini and a few others, Barcelona briefly emerged as something of a center for Dominican studies of “oriental” languages and non-Christian religious texts. This may have been partly in hopes of furthering external missionary ventures, whether at home among local Jews and Muslims or abroad in the heartlands of the Dar al-Islam. It was also a consequence of the relatively fleeting leadership role taken by certain prominent friars at St. Catherine’s in subjecting Jewish writings to inquisitorial scrutiny such as they had already received at the Paris Talmud trials. Actual instances of “missionary” preaching and book censorship undertaken by Dominican friars in the Crown of Aragon and its neighboring territories will be examined more fully in the following chapters.

Perhaps most importantly though, at least one of these elite friars – Raymond Martini once again – used his specialized knowledge to compile *Summae* that methodically scrutinized and attacked Muslim and Jewish beliefs for essentially internal, pastoral purposes. The potential benefit of such texts was universal, but as Thomas Aquinas had argued, their polemic message was necessary above all to reassure Christians living in close proximity to non-Christian influences. Convincing critical arguments were powerful weapons in the struggle between truth and error, and friars operating in the multi-religious regions of the western Mediterranean would have numerous occasions to wield them in their ongoing battle to shore up the resolve of the faithful.

Whatever the purpose – or cluster of interrelated purposes – which inspired Martini and his colleagues in their advanced studies, these take on a more nuanced significance when considered in the fuller context of contemporary Dominican academic pursuits. Very few friars ever learned Arabic or Hebrew, even in the Crown of Aragon. Fewer still put those linguistic skills to work in the composition of anti-Jewish or anti-Muslim polemics. By far the vast majority confined their reading to an orthodox regimen of Biblical, Patristic and pastorally oriented texts (including canon law and casuistry), leavened in a few cases by special courses in philosophy or science. The Order of Friars Preacher here as elsewhere was first and foremost a pastoral organization devoted to the daunting task of helping the friars themselves and other Christians to live in the light of Scriptural truth and hopes of ultimate salvation. Every aspect of the friars’ lives, from their constant prayers and repetitions of

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tried-and-true glosses on the Bible to their interactions with merchants and kings, was intended to contribute to that goal. From tiny convents like Castellón and Balaguer in the aristocratic rural uplands of Catalonia to the busy urban monasteries of Barcelona, Mallorca and Valencia, the Dominicans of the Crown of Aragon worked and prayed for a plentiful harvest of souls. Only in a few exceptional cases would this entail interactions or actual confrontations with the Jews and Muslims who dwelt on the peripheries of their neighborhoods and of their imaginations.

PART II

Contacts

Chapter 4

TEACHING TRUTH

Sheltered from the stench of old Barcelona's narrow streets, in the stony darkness of the Aragonese royal palace, a remarkable scene began to unfold in the summer of 1263. It was described by an anonymous scribe whose report was subsequently registered in the crown archive:

In the year of the lord 1263, on the thirteenth day of the kalends of August [Friday July 20], the lord king of the Aragonese and many other barons, prelates, religious and knights were present in the palace of the lord king at Barcelona. Since Moses, called "the *magister*," a Jew, had been called by the same lord king at the request of the friars Preacher from Girona, and was himself present in the same place with many other Jews reputed to be the most expert among the other Jews, friar Paul (after deliberation with the lord king and certain other friars Preacher and Minor who were present) ... proposed to the said Jewish *magister* that with the help of God he would prove the following points by means of commonly known and authenticated Scriptures in use and authenticated by the Jews.¹

Thus began the celebrated "Barcelona disputation," which has become one of the best known of all medieval theological confrontations between Christianity and Judaism. On (perhaps) four separate occasions, spread out over a week or more, the converted Jew turned Dominican friar Paul Christiani and the venerable rabbi Moses ben Nachman of Girona (also known as Nachmanides, or the Ramban) met before the king and others to debate theological issues. Their agenda revolved around key issues from the Christian point of view, including the question of whether the messiah had arrived and whether he was in fact Jesus of Nazareth. Arguments involved interpretations of passages in the Hebrew Bible but also, significantly, passages from the Talmud itself – which friar Paul used

¹ Latin text in H. Denifle, "Quellen zur Disputation," 231. Slightly different English tr. in H. Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial* (Rutherford, 1982), 147.

in support of his Christian beliefs. No violence erupted, but the debate seems to have ended abruptly as a result of popular pressure.²

The drama of this high-profile debate between Christian and Jew in the royal presence highlights the general problem of relations between the Church and non-Christians in the medieval period. The Barcelona disputation also provides a strikingly rare example of actual recorded contact between Dominicans and Jews in the thirteenth-century Crown of Aragon. This noteworthy event unfolded more or less publicly in the heart of their shared home territory, the city of Barcelona, site of one of the greatest and oldest Dominican convents and one of the leading Jewish communities in the Iberian peninsula. Yet questions of interpretation remain. Can the Barcelona disputation be understood as part of the Dominicans' apparently normative approach to religious difference as discussed in previous chapters, i.e. avoidance of disputes with Jews or Muslims unless these could be used to reinforce the faith of Christian auditors? Or should this episode instead be taken as evidence for truly widespread Dominican missionizing campaigns in western Mediterranean regions? Overall, what do such specific instances of preaching and theological confrontation across religious boundaries tell us about the Dominican Order and its history of relations with Muslims and Jews in the medieval Crown of Aragon?

As with so many aspects of Dominican activity in the region, the disputation of 1263 has frequently been interpreted from a maximalist perspective. It has been portrayed as the tip of an iceberg of widespread missionary work, directed toward the conversion of Jewish communities. It has even been assumed to form part of a wider master plan developed by leaders of the Order such as Raymond Penyafort, aimed at securing mass conversions not only of Jews but of Muslims as well.³ Yet proselytism *per se* was not the only or even the chief purpose of the Barcelona disputation, judging both from the records left by each side and from events which followed it. Furthermore, Paul Christiani was an atypical friar whose personal animus toward and interest in effecting conversions among the Jewish communities of the Midi were not necessarily shared by many of his colleagues. His mission to Catalonia was in any case quite short-lived and subject to multiple challenges. If the 1263 campaign was intended to be an experiment in conversionary preaching, it was an unsuccessful one which affected no more than a handful of Jewish communities. As far as can be determined from existing records, there

² Y. Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain* (Philadelphia, 1966), vol. II, 152–3 provides a convenient summary of events.

³ See for example Cohen, *Friars*, 105–8; Chazan, *Daggers*, 29–30; Tolan, *Saracens*, 234–5.

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were only sporadic and equally unsuccessful efforts to follow up in later decades with further mendicant preaching or debating campaigns among the Jews. Significantly, too, no equivalent public disputations between Dominican friars and prominent Muslims seem to have been staged at any time.

The Barcelona disputation and related events can thus more appropriately be placed within a context of ongoing Dominican emphasis on internal concerns – the defensive teaching of theological truths to Christian audiences – with only occasional, limited efforts being made by certain individuals or small groups of friars to confront unbelievers as well. The latter friars' exceptional efforts to “teach truth” more widely by presenting conversionary arguments to unbelievers were presumably inspired by a personal calling to proselytism. Some were influenced by their own life experience, as in the case of Paul Christiani, where the friar was himself a convert. At the same time though, as Thomas Aquinas and his contemporary readers well knew, carefully managed displays of orthodox doctrine triumphant over infidelity also had value for the edification of Christians. The Dominicans' rare preaching actions among non-Christians in the Crown of Aragon reflect an awareness at multiple levels that there was indeed a periodic need to counteract non-Christian influence among the faithful in a multi-religious society.

LICENSE TO PREACH

Just a few years after the establishment of their first convents, mendicant friars were explicitly licensed to preach before non-Christian audiences in the Crown of Aragon.⁴ Royal permission was renewed several times thereafter, and occasional papal encouragements were also forthcoming. The precise nature and meaning of these licenses, however, merits further examination. Taking a maximalist approach, one could simply assume that the friars always did what they were legally permitted to do. Each reiteration of preaching privileges by royal or papal authorities could be taken as a signpost along a more or less straight historical path of constant mendicant proselytism. Records of actual episodes of Dominican preaching, in a small number of Christian and Jewish (though not Muslim) sources, might then be used to fill in the blanks by providing concrete examples of that proselytism. This is an approach

⁴ J. Riera i Sans, “Les Llicències Reials per Predicar als Jueus i als Sarraïns (Segles XIII–XIV)” in *Calls 2* (1987), 113–43.

which has characterized much scholarship on missionary preaching in the Crown of Aragon.⁵

Yet statements of legal principle were mitigated by historical circumstance. When apparent episodes of mendicant missionary preaching are examined as discrete events rather than as examples of a presumed ongoing phenomenon, a more complex picture emerges. Royal and papal preaching endorsements were generated at specific times, in response to internal Christian religious concerns and political events above all. They therefore point to more than simply a pious desire to bring about conversions; in fact these endorsements were often embedded as relatively unimportant clauses within larger sets of policies where conversion does not seem to have been the main point at all. Furthermore, in the few special cases where friars did seek to preach to Jews in the Crown of Aragon, extant documentation reveals that their efforts were regularly and effectively opposed by Jewish communities. Key to the success of Jewish resistance was royal recognition of the need to protect subject communities from undue impositions, and for the most part this was forthcoming – though often at a price and always with an eye to preserving the king’s claims to Christian piety. A contextualized survey of mendicant preaching privileges thus illustrates some of the complexity facing Dominican friars in the “missionary” field.

The ideal of universal proselytism first became a subject for legislation in the Crown of Aragon in 1242. In March of that year king James I, flushed with his recent victories at Mallorca and Valencia and cognizant of his new responsibilities as lord over unprecedented numbers of unbelievers, passed an edict designed to remove some of the financial and social barriers which had previously existed – in defiance of canonical principles – that actively discourage conversions to Christianity.⁶ At the end of this document James also included the following clause granting royal support to preachers of conversionary sermons:

Likewise, we desire and we hereby decree, that whenever the archbishop, bishops, or Dominican or Franciscan friars visit a town or a place where Saracens or Jews dwell, and whenever they want to preach the word of God to the said Jews or Saracens, these shall gather at their call, and shall patiently listen to their

⁵ For example Y.T. Assis, *The Golden Age of Aragonese Jewry* (London, 1997), 52–8 and 208–9. Riera i Sans, “Llicències Reials” is more cautious.

⁶ Records for the 1242 Corts of Lleida are no longer extant, and James made no mention of the legislation in his memoirs – skipping over several months between his conquest of Xàtiva and his return to Valencia “after we had been a year or longer in Aragon and Catalonia” (*Llibre dels fets*, ch. 328; ed. Smith and Buffery, 255). The edict is known only because it was quoted in later documents such as a letter of Innocent IV and the 1311 Corts of Barcelona (see below). It would thus perhaps be wrong to assume it was of great importance to the monarch at the time.

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preaching. And our officers, if they want to attain our favor, shall, heedless of excuse, compel them to do this.⁷

James was doubtless influenced by his entourage of reform-minded legalist clerics, including the recently elected archbishop Peter de Albalato and newly repatriated friar Raymond Penyafort, who met at Tarragona to hammer out details of a new inquisitorial system later that same year. These men were well versed in canon law (Penyafort himself was responsible for its reorganization in the *Decretales*), and deeply conscious of developments at the papal curia concerning the universal right of the Church to proselytize in non-Christian lands.⁸ Christian missionaries in theory should have been permitted to make converts even in Muslim-dominated Mallorca or Valencia, so it was all the more incumbent on those lands' new Christian ruler to ensure that such rights were respected. Pope Innocent IV made a point of endorsing James' unprecedented move at the 1245 Council of Lyons, in a letter addressed to archbishop Peter de Albalato.⁹ A door was thus certainly open for missionaries to preach to Muslims and Jews throughout the realms of Aragon – “whenever” they might wish to do so.

It was one thing to receive permission for conversionary preaching in principle, however, and quite another to actually perform it. As discussed in earlier chapters, the mid-thirteenth century was a crucial period for the Dominican Order in the Crown of Aragon – a time in which friars struggled to establish a viable place for themselves in various cities of the realm, and stretched their human resources to the limit by founding a whole series of new convents. Some zealous Dominicans may have managed to try their hands at mounting preaching campaigns before captive Jewish or Islamic audiences at this inopportune juncture, but if so their efforts went unrecorded.

The silence is noteworthy, for it was precisely in the middle of the thirteenth century that Dominican leaders felt their most pressing need to make claims of proselytizing achievements. Master-general Humbert of Romans' encyclical letter of 1255, again as noted in [chapter 1](#), called for friars to take up the novel challenge of bringing Christian wisdom to

⁷ S. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (rev. edn., New York, 1966), vol. I, 256–7.

⁸ Muldoon, *Popes*, 10–11. The principle was articulated by Sinibaldo Fieschi in his commentary on the *Decretales* of Gregory IX: “tamen mandare potest Papa infidelibus quod admittant praedicatores evangelii in terris suae iurisdictionis, nam cum omnis creatura rationabilis facta sit an Deum laudandum ... si ipsi prohibent praedicatores praedicare, peccant, et ideo puniendi sunt” (*Commentaria doctissima in Quinque Libros Decretalium*, cited in Muldoon, *Popes*, 166, n. 36). Fieschi (Innocent IV 1243–54) had not yet been elected pope at the time of James' edict, but he had already established many of his future policy positions in his capacity as a prominent canon lawyer.

⁹ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 254–7 (#105, dated August 20, 1245).

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“those who are outside” (*eos qui foris sunt*).¹⁰ Despite his clear emphasis in this letter on the situation in the East, Humbert was pleased to announce a year later that he had received encouraging news from the West as well. The passage bears repeating:

In the regions of Spain (*Yspaniis partibus*) the friars, who have now for many years been studying Arabic among the Saracens, have not only laudably progressed in the language; even more to be praised, their cohabitation has yielded these same Saracens up to salvation. This can be seen in the many who have now received the grace of baptism.¹¹

Humbert’s source was probably Raymond Penyafort, whose letter to the previous master-general had made a similar point and who could now also report on progress at the 1250 *studium arabicum*. Penyafort’s letter to John of Wildeshausen (d. 1252) is extant only in outline, but it contained some geographical details that Humbert saw no need to include. After listing five types of internal missionary work that Spanish friars had been performing among the Christians of Spain and Africa, Raymond had stated in closing that:

The sixth fruit is among the Saracens, to whom the grace and favor of God has so much been brought (and especially to the powerful, and even to the Miramolin [caliph] or king of Tunis) that at the time of the present writing the gate is now open to nearly inestimable fruits, provided the harvesters do not abandon their task; and even now many of them, especially in Murcia, have been converted to the faith both secretly and openly.¹²

These claims, while suspiciously vague and clearly crafted to boost morale rather than to report dispassionately, are interesting both for what they say and for what they do not say. Neither mentions public preaching of the type James had legalized in 1242. Instead, Humbert was pointing to quiet private conversions of Muslims who were in daily contact with Dominican students of Arabic – presumably as their teachers and quite probably as slaves.¹³ Penyafort for his part specified only that the friars had been successful making a few converts, some secretly, in Islamic Murcia and (perhaps) Tunis. He said nothing about preaching to Muslims in king James’ or any other Christian-ruled territories.¹⁴ At issue in these two

¹⁰ *MOFPH*, vol. V, 17. ¹¹ *Ibid.* 40. ¹² *Ibid.* vol. I, 310.

¹³ The *stidia linguarum* are discussed in chapter 3 above. On Dominican use of slaves, see chapter 8. If the Mallorca convent employed slaves as Arabic teachers, as Raymond Llull would do a few years later (on the advice of Raymond Penyafort), then small numbers of conversions from their ranks would not be surprising.

¹⁴ Murcia was in turmoil during the late 1230s and early 1240s, and a Christian force was allowed to take control of its main citadel in 1243 as will be further discussed in chapter 6. During Humbert’s master-generalship it was functioning as a semi-independent Islamic protectorate of Castile with a

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letters was the Dominicans' hoped-for success in promoting the spread of a Church presence into lands held by the forces of Islam, rather than James' license to preach at home.

By the 1250s then, despite a royal license and encouragement from ecclesiastical authorities, there were still no visible signs of external missionizing being performed by Dominicans in the Crown of Aragon itself. This was especially true with regard to missions aimed at the Jews. Yet significant, documented episodes of contact between Catalan friars and local Jews – such as the 1263 Barcelona disputation – were on the immediate horizon. Judaism, rather than Islam, would indeed soon emerge as the main target for Barcelona's leading Dominican polemicist, Raymond Martini. These shifts did not merely evolve from patient decades of undocumented mendicant preaching. What evidence there is suggests an entirely different set of causes rooted more in defensive and apologetic, not missionary, approaches to theological teaching.

PARIS TO BARCELONA

When the Dominican Paul Christiani traveled from French to Aragonese royal territory for his 1263 debate with rabbi Moses ben Nachman, he initiated a new phase in the Iberian friars' relations with their non-Christian neighbors. It must be noted, however, that the events of 1263 took place amid ongoing efforts elsewhere in the Christian world to restrict and/or destroy rabbinic writings, stemming in part from accusations leveled more than twenty years earlier against the Talmud. Concern over perceived threats to Christianity from Jewish theological teachings in particular, rather than a generalized desire to convert local Muslims and Jews, provides the best explanation for friar Paul's visit. It is worth pausing to re-examine the Barcelona disputation and its connections to the Paris Talmud trials in order to make the point more clearly.

For centuries, Christians had been both fascinated by and fearful of Jewish expertise in Biblical exegesis. By the thirteenth century, as previously noted, Paris had become an established setting for Christian studies of the so-called *Hebraica veritas*.¹⁵ At the same time Paris university was also emerging as a center for the Church's inquisitorial proceedings against heterodox or "false" teachings in theological texts.¹⁶ The

resident Christian garrison (L. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250–1500* [Chicago, 1990], 44–8; cf. the *Llibre dels fets*, chs. 429–55).

¹⁵ Smalley, *Bible*, esp. 329–55; Grabois, "Hebraica Veritas" and Dahan, *Intellectuels*, esp. 239–70.

¹⁶ The complexities of inquisitorial jurisdiction and censorship at Paris are laid out in Thijsen, *Censure and Heresy*.

two specialties merged when formal denunciations were made against the Jewish Talmud in the late 1230s. Christian experts in Hebrew and Scripture, including some Dominicans, were called on to evaluate the text. The resulting trial and condemnations came at a time of rising popular anti-semitism and increasingly ruthless royal exploitation of French Jewry.¹⁷ Their impact on later medieval Christian–Jewish relations would be deep and long-lasting.

The Paris Talmud trials were initiated by a converted French Jew, christened under the name of Nicholas Donin. Whether inspired by bitterness toward his former coreligionists, by genuine belief that the Talmud was theologically dangerous (perhaps inspired by exposure to Karaite teachings) or both, Donin denounced its contents in a letter to the papal curia *c.* 1236.¹⁸ His thirty-five charges alleged that the Talmud was a dangerous book full of lies, absurdities and blasphemous insults against Christianity. He may also have suggested that Jews who followed its teachings were guilty of heresy against their own Biblical faith.¹⁹ These charges were taken seriously by Gregory IX, who passed them along to the bishop of Paris, William of Auvergne, in 1239 with a command to seize all available copies of “Jewish books.” After an inquisitorial investigation and a public disputation between Donin and a panel of four rabbis, twenty-four wagonloads of confiscated Talmudic texts were burned in 1242.²⁰ Concerted efforts by Jewish leaders resulted in a brief stay in proceedings after a second wave of confiscations in 1244, but a

¹⁷ On the emergence of irrational “anti-semitism,” including absurd ritual murder and blood libel accusations in the twelfth century, see G. Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley, 1990). Louis IX (who reached his majority in 1234) was especially notorious for combining anti-Judaism with Christian piety (W.C. Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews* [Philadelphia, 1989], esp. 136–41, and B. Blumenkranz, “Louis IX ou Saint Louis et les juifs” in *Archives juives* 10 [1973–4], 18–21. Louis’ character is analyzed at length in J. Le Goff, *Saint Louis* [Paris, 1996]; see esp. 793–814). The king’s famous comment that the proper way for a layman to dispute with a Jew is to “stab him in the belly” is in Joinville, *Histoire*, ch. 10.

¹⁸ Donin was apparently a former Talmud student at La Rochelle, formally excommunicated by local rabbis in 1225. He subsequently converted to Christianity and may even have been responsible for a ritual murder accusation in 1235 (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 339–40 [app. A]; Grayzel doubts the ritual murder connection). The impact of Karaism *per se* on Donin and other anti-Talmud activists is considered but largely dismissed by Daniel Lasker (“Karaism and the Jewish-Christian Debate” in B. Walfish, ed., *The Frank Talmage Memorial Volume* [Haifa, 1993], vol. II, 323–32).

¹⁹ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 238–43 (#95–8). The accusations are summarized by Jeremy Cohen, who argues that the key accusation was that of heresy (*Living Letters*, 317–30). Cohen’s thesis has been opposed by Robert Chazan and others, who see the real issue as having more to do with the Talmud’s alleged absurdities and anti-Christian blasphemies than with actual heresy (see *inter alia* Chazan, “Condemnation of the Talmud Reconsidered”).

²⁰ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 29–33. The burned books included commentaries by Rashi and others as well as Talmudim. Details on the burnings are somewhat hazy, with some sources claiming that only fourteen wagonloads were burned.

committee of university and other theologians reviewed the case and upheld the original sentence. The Talmud was again publicly burned at Paris in 1248.²¹ The case was primarily a French affair, but Gregory advised bishop William to send copies of his original accusation and confiscation order to the kings and archbishops of England, Aragon, Navarre, Castile, Leon and Portugal as well.²² A clear message had been sent throughout Christendom: rabbis and their books were everywhere under suspicion and threat of prosecution for disseminating allegedly harmful beliefs.

King Louis' rival James of Aragon studiously ignored Gregory's initial denunciation of the Talmud, but it was probably no coincidence that Aragonese mendicants received their first license to preach among Jews (and Muslims) at precisely the same time that their brethren in Paris were making preparations to burn wagonloads of Talmud manuscripts. James' 1242 legislation was a carefully worded display of royal piety and compliance with canon law, and it achieved the desired result: as noted above, Innocent IV overlooked non-compliance on the Talmud issue in his eagerness to praise the king's new policies on preaching and conversion. Louis would not allow the issue to fade away, however, and his differences with James took on added significance years later as France and Aragon renewed their competition over the County of Provence.²³ After his 1254 return from crusade and captivity in the East the French monarch ordered yet another confiscation of Hebrew books, this time extending beyond Paris to his lands in Languedoc (1255).²⁴ This was followed by a series of judicial inquests in Carcassonne and Béziers (between the Aragonese enclaves of Montpellier and Perpignan, in close proximity to the Pyrenean border zone) from 1258–62.²⁵ Louis was asserting his authority as well as

²¹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, 250–2 and 274–81 (#104 and 119), with n. 3 on pp. 275–9. Cf. Rembaum, “The Talmud and the Popes” and the rebuttal in Cohen, *Living Letters*, 326–30.

²² Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 240–3 (#96–7). None of these rulers acted on the order.

²³ The treaty of Corbeil (1258) temporarily resolved the conflict, but sovereignty over the wealthy trading cities of Occitania remained an important issue. James' interest in the region (where his father was killed by French crusaders in 1213) is evident throughout his *Llibre dels fets*.

²⁴ The Talmud and other “blasphemous” books were ordered burned in legislation for Provence passed in conjunction with a 1255 Provincial Council held at Béziers (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 33, n. 66, and 336–7 [#XLIII]). Jewish moneylending was also denounced (Mansi, vol. XXIII, cols. 875–84 has complete text of the Council's canons and Louis' edicts). Similar confiscation orders were renewed by pope Alexander IV in 1258 for Anjou and Burgundy; like the Béziers edicts, Alexander's bull *In sacro generali* lists Talmud confiscation as only one of several actions (including enforced wearing of the Jewish badge) to be taken in order to limit possibly harmful contacts between Jews and Christians (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 33 and vol. II, 64–6 [#7]). As Grayzel notes, the bull sent to Louis in 1258 actually omits reference to the Talmud – perhaps because elimination of the Talmud in the Île-de-France was considered complete.

²⁵ The French king's anti-heretical concerns (which might encompass his anti-Talmudic stance) and regional administrative goals are highlighted by Joseph Strayer (“La conscience du roi: les

his piety, posing as an ideal Christian king, and James was not one to back down from such a challenge.

Royal treatment of Jews in the Crown of Aragon had hitherto contrasted with the harsh policies so evident in France.²⁶ Popular anti-semitism was somewhat less evident as well, and the ritual murder allegation does not seem to have surfaced south of the Pyrenees until the fourteenth century.²⁷ Jewish communities in cities such as Girona and Barcelona were large, successful and prominent in comparison with their French counterparts. They could also boast a number of rabbis whose knowledge of Torah and Talmud was acknowledged throughout the Jewish world.²⁸ For Christian zealots these were problematic realities. Left unchecked, the fame and prestige of rabbinic scholarship threatened to pose exactly the sort of threat to Christian confidence Thomas Aquinas had in mind as he composed his *Summa contra gentiles*. At a time of growing lay piety and interest in religious affairs (in part stimulated by the friars themselves), unsophisticated and impressionable Christians might well grow unduly curious about these descendants of Biblical Israel. It was thus only a matter of time before discussions of current Jewish beliefs, practices and Scriptural wisdom would have to be addressed in the local public sphere as well as the theological classroom. As it happened, time and events would soon bring the arrival of an outside specialist, entirely devoted to the presentation of Christian theological arguments against Judaism.

The origins of Paul Christiani's personal involvement in anti-Jewish activity are untraceable. As a young Jew named Saul he had apparently been well trained in the Talmudic traditions of his day, perhaps even studying under the respected rabbi Eliezer of Tarrascon.²⁹ Like Nicholas Donin, he may have been influenced to some extent by Karaite ideas and

enquêtes de 1258–1262 dans la sénéchausée de Carcassonne-Béziers” in *Mélanges Roger Aubenas* [Montpellier, 1974], 725–36) and Jacques Le Goff (*Saint Louis*, 225–8). International politics should also be taken into account, however.

²⁶ On James' generally good relations with his Jewish subjects, see Baer, *History*, vol. I, 138–47 and Assis, *Golden Age*, esp. 19–34. On at least one occasion the king had himself taken up arms to prevent Good Friday rioting against the Jews of Girona (Nirenberg, *Communities*, 203).

²⁷ Though it remained a serious threat; E. Lourie, “A Plot which Failed? The Case of the Corpse Found in the Jewish *Call* of Barcelona (1301)” in her *Crusade and Colonisation* (Aldershot, 1990), essay X.

²⁸ Baer, *History*, vol. I, ch. 6 (pp. 243–305) gives an overview; cf. Assis, *Golden Age*, 308–14. Individual rabbis such as the Ramban or Rashba are discussed below.

²⁹ Nachmanides would claim that the convert “publicly disgraced his education” (perhaps implying a high degree of learning), but this is a Talmudic phrase applicable to all apostates (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 657). Nachmanides' intention throughout his account of the disputation was to impugn the friar's qualifications (“woe to him who knows nothing and thinks that he is wise and erudite”) (*ibid.*, vol. II, 692). The claim of apprenticeship under rabbi Eliezer was made by the Provençal rabbi Isaac ben Jacob Lattes' *Kiryat Sefer* (cited in Chazan, *Barcelona*, 25) during the fourteenth-century.

moved toward Christianity in part as a result of his rejection of Talmudic authority.³⁰ Alternatively, he may have converted for other reasons (spiritual, material or both) and developed his thinking on the Talmud under the influence of Dominicans or other Churchmen.³¹ Either way, as a convert, friar Paul was moved by some combination of resentment and concern both to restrict the activities of faithful Jews and/or bring them to accept his own new-found Christian beliefs. According to what is perhaps the earliest known source to mention Christiani, a letter attributed to rabbi Jacob bar Elijah, the convert formerly known as Saul began his activist career with denunciations of Jewish moneylending. He also soon became notorious for having corpses removed from Jewish cemeteries (presumably in cases where the deceased was alleged to have been an apostate from Christianity), as well as for his public attacks on Judaism itself.³²

These attacks, in the form of theological disputations, were Paul Christiani's specialty. Before traveling to Catalonia in 1263 he had already acquired notoriety for disputing with prominent Jews in his native Languedoc.³³ Such disputations were favored by the then bishop of Narbonne, Guy Foulques (later pope Clement IV). On one noteworthy and partially recorded occasion Christiani may have faced rabbi Meir ben Simeon at the synagogue in Narbonne.³⁴ Just before moving

³⁰ Lasker's skepticism regarding Karaite influence on medieval Ashkenazic Jewry ("Karaism," 326) is perhaps less applicable to a Montpellier native like Christiani (neglected in Lasker's study).

³¹ Many medieval French converts from Judaism were young males, who may have rejected their Jewish communities in part because of social or familial conflicts (W.C. Jordan, "Adolescence and Conversion in the Middle Ages: A Research Agenda" in M. Signer and J. Van Engen, eds., *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-century Europe* [Notre Dame, 2001], 77–93). Still, Paul's zeal suggests that he was a true believer.

³² An edition of rabbi Jacob's letter (by J. Kobak) is in *Jeschurun* 6 (1868), Hebrew section, 1–31; cf. R. Chazan, "The Letter of R. Jacob bar Elijah to Friar Paul" in Walfish, *Frank Talmage Memorial*, vol. II, 51–63 (summarized in Chazan, *Barcelona*, 25–7). On the burial issue see J. Shatzmiller, "Paulus Christianus: un aspect de son activité anti-juive" in G. Nahon and C. Touati, eds., *Hommages à Georges Vajda* (Louvain, 1980), 203–17.

³³ The precise extent of Paul's travels and the number of his debates is unknown, but Nachmanides knew him by reputation: "I have heard that while friar [Paul] traveled in Provence and many [other] places, he made a similar statement [about the Talmud's teaching on the messiah] to many Jews" (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 658).

³⁴ Chazan argues that friar Paul was the "preaching prostitute" (*ha-qadesh ha-dorsh*) who debated with Rabbi Meir some time in the mid-thirteenth century ("Confrontation in the Synagogue of Narbonne: A Christian Sermon and a Jewish Reply" in *Harvard Theological Review* 67 [1974], esp. 445 and 456–7; also Cohen, *Friars*, 109, n. 14). *Doreshim* is a term used by Nachmanides when referring to Dominicans in his *vikuach* account, but identification of Paul with the Narbonne disputant remains speculative. It should be noted that non-mendicant Christian disputants such as archbishop William de la Bruce were also active in theological debates with the rabbis of Narbonne at this time, and that they employed converted Jews as translators of Hebrew. Topics in the Narbonne debates included the ethics and legality of Jewish moneylending as well as accusations against the Talmud. These Occitan disputations are known only from rabbi Meir's wide-ranging and largely

on to Barcelona, the Dominican had also challenged Nachmanides in some sort of preliminary theological confrontation at Girona.³⁵ Thus the Barcelona episode, while unique in many senses, was also a single stop in a broader international public speaking and debating tour by a mendicant specialist in rabbinic theology and anti-Jewish activism.

BARCELONA REVISITED

Documents produced by representatives of each side in the debate have survived to describe the genesis and proceedings of the 1263 Barcelona disputation (Hebrew *vikuach*): one in Hebrew and the other in Latin. The merits and flaws of the two sources have been endlessly discussed, with the conclusion finally being that both provide valuable evidence as long as their differing literary genres and circumstances of composition are taken into account.³⁶ The Hebrew *vikuach* narrative purports to have been written by Nachmanides himself, the Jewish protagonist of 1263.³⁷ It is a relatively brief summary of the event, in which rabbi Moses recalls the circumstances as well as the polemical content of the debate. As Robert Chazan has demonstrated, this text was carefully crafted to provide a general Jewish audience with defensive reassurance that contemporary Christian theological doctrines posed no serious ideological

unedited *Milchemet Mitzvah*, and they deserve further study (S. Stein, *Jewish-Christian Disputations in Thirteenth Century Narbonne* [London, 1964]).

³⁵ This is noted in both the Hebrew and the Latin accounts of the Barcelona disputation: “cum frater Paulus venisset Gerundam causa conferendi cum ipso [i.e. Nachmanides]” (Denifle, “Quellen,” 232); “friar Paul asked me in Girona if I believe in the trinity” (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 695). Unfortunately neither gives any further details so it is impossible to determine whether the encounter took place as a formal public debate or a semi-private conversation. The fact that it was noted in both accounts implies that it was of some importance.

³⁶ Chazan strikes the most sensible note: “In any serious study of the Barcelona disputation, both extant sources must be utilized. Rejection of one in favor of the other will inevitably skew the results. The issue is not to determine which source is accurate and which mendacious; the issue is to understand each source in its own right” (*Barcelona*, 13).

³⁷ Biographical details in Chazan, *Barcelona*, 35–8; also I. Twersky, ed., *Rabbi Moses Nahmanides* (Cambridge, MA, 1983). Citations here will refer to Chavel’s English translation (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 656–96); M. Steinschneider’s edition of the Hebrew text (*Nachmanidis Disputatio* [Berolini, 1860]) may also be consulted. Chazan and others have noted that a critical edition of this text is a “serious *desideratum*”; further research into the paleographical dating and codicological history of the eleven extant MSS (mostly quite late) would surely provide useful information concerning the reception of Nachmanides’ text (Chazan, *Barcelona*, 213–15, n. 9). Jaume Riera i Sans’ suggestion that the Hebrew text was actually composed at the turn of the sixteenth century, for example, cannot be seriously contemplated in the absence of such detailed studies on the manuscript tradition (introduction to E. Feliu, *Disputa de Barcelona de 1263* [Barcelona, 1985], cited in R.I. Burns’ review article “The Barcelona ‘Disputation’ of 1263: Conversion and Talmud in Jewish-Christian Relations” in *CHR* 69 [1993], 490–1).

challenge to the Jewish position.³⁸ Not surprisingly, Nachmanides' report puts his own arguments in a favorable light and implies an overall Jewish victory, with the king allegedly praising the rabbi's performance and remarking that "I have never seen a man who is not right argue his case as well."³⁹ It culminates in king James' alleged gift of 300 *solidi* to rabbi Moses, who departs in peace.⁴⁰

The second account, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, is even shorter. It consists of a terse Latin summary of events surrounding the disputation, and provides only a few cursory examples of the arguments raised therein. Ostensibly a notarial testimony authorized by the king, it was registered in the archive of the Crown soon after the disputation ended but bears no date.⁴¹ It may have been created by royal clerks in part as a straightforward record of a royally sponsored event, but its litigious tone suggests that it was also intended for use in subsequent disputations or even legal proceedings.⁴² In contrast with Nachmanides' Hebrew version, the Latin text – again not surprisingly – claims victory for the Christian side and a humiliating defeat for the rabbi. According to this witness, Nachmanides broke his promise and fled Barcelona before the end of the debate in clear evidence "that he neither dared nor could defend his erring belief."⁴³

Despite their contrasting perspectives and stark differences with regard to the disputation's outcome, the two accounts agree on certain details

³⁸ Chazan, *Barcelona*, 100–41. Cf. the observations of Hyam Maccoby (rejected by Chazan), who suggests that the Hebrew account was composed in at least two stages – with or without Nachmanides' personal oversight (*Judaism on Trial*, 97–101).

³⁹ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 694.

⁴⁰ A document in the ACA (reg. 14, fol. 70r; cf. Régné, 57–8 [#319]) records James' debt of 300 *solidi* to a Jewish *magister* of Girona named Bonastrug de Porta, payable from the taxes of the Barcelona Jewish *aljama* and transmitted via someone named Isaac. The document, though dated February 25, 1265, has been taken as proof of Nachmanides' historical accuracy on this point. Moses ben Nachman may indeed be identical to Bonastrug de Porta, but this is uncertain; furthermore the transaction occurred long after the end of the debate and in a context of Bonastrug's (ultimately successful) defense against criminal charges at the royal court. There could be many explanations for the payment, including the possibility that the king was assuming some of rabbi Bonastrug's legal expenses or merely repaying a loan.

⁴¹ It must have been composed before September 28, 1263, at which time a copy was made for the cathedral archives in Girona. The latter dated copy was published by E. Girbal in *Los Judios en Gerona* (Girona, 1870), 66–8 (#2). The undated but otherwise unremarkable registered copy (ACA reg. 12, fols. 110–11) is discussed in Burns, "Barcelona 'Disputation'," 492–3. Citations here will be from the ACA version, edited by Heinrich Denifle ("Quellen," 231–4 [#1]); there is a serviceable English translation in Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial*, 147–50.

⁴² Chazan notes that the Latin text was not intended for public consumption, and suggests that it "was intended to serve as a summary statement of the disputation that would in some fashion serve to undergird the royal orders for ongoing Christian missionizing" (Chazan, *Barcelona*, 41). This may be true, but it is at least equally possible that concern over the disputation's immediate legal fallout was a more decisive factor in crafting the record.

⁴³ Denifle, "Quellen," 234.

which, since no dissenting evidence exists, may reasonably be considered as historically accurate.⁴⁴ Other details attested in only one version but consonant with and not contradicted by the other may also be tentatively accepted in the absence of any further data. When interpreted in light of events preceding and subsequent to the disputation itself, these sources point to some new conclusions regarding the origins and purpose of the Barcelona disputation.

Both Hebrew and Latin sources make it clear that Paul Christiani was a primary instigator and major actor in the disputation, without whose personal presence it would not and could not have taken place.⁴⁵ Yet Paul's motives for leaving his own Dominican Province (Provence) and crossing into the Order's Spanish district are not clearly stated in either record.⁴⁶ He may simply have planned to extend his anti-Jewish agitation campaign. He may also have been invited to visit by fellow Dominicans eager to benefit from the convert-friar's unique theological insights. Such a visit would likely have appealed to friar Paul as an opportunity to test his religious ideas in conversation with prominent Dominicans like Raymond Penyafort as well as the great Ramban. Moving on to the royal presence and a major public disputation at Barcelona was another matter, however. Like other mendicant preachers friar Paul was dependent on the goodwill of local civil and religious authorities for permission to hold forth in public.

Both the Hebrew account of the *vikuach* and its Latin counterpart agree, in fact, that it was direct royal intervention which brought Paul Christiani and his traveling theological spectacle to Barcelona in the summer of 1263. Nachmanides provides few details, stating simply that "our lord king commanded me to discuss with friar Paul in his presence in his palace in Barcelona" without mentioning any reason beyond the friar's fortuitous presence.⁴⁷ According to the Latin document, James acted "at the request of the Preachers" (*ad instantiam predicatorum*) when he called the rabbi forth from Girona to his palace. This has led some to conclude that James acted out of fear of Raymond Penyafort and

⁴⁴ My approach here follows Chazan (*Barcelona*, 44–5).

⁴⁵ Further insights on Paul Christiani may be found in Baer, *History*, vol. I, 150–9; also J. Cohen, "The Mentality of the Medieval Jewish Apostate: Peter Alfonsi, Hermann of Cologne, and Pablo Christiani" in T. Endelman and J. Gurock, eds., *Jewish Apostasy in the Modern World* (New York, 1987), 35–41; Chazan, *Daggers*, 43ff. and 70ff.; Chazan, *Barcelona*, 24–7 and J. Shatzmiller, *La Deuxième controverse de Paris* (Paris/Louvain, 1994), 15–31.

⁴⁶ Paul was presumably based at a convent in his native MontPELLIER, or perhaps in a post-conversion adopted home such as Narbonne. Either way he was something of an outsider to the friars of the Spanish Province.

⁴⁷ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 657.

his inquisitorial minions.⁴⁸ The king did respect the friars and he was generally concerned with maintaining his own (rather idiosyncratic) reputation for Christian piety, but it would be going much too far to think that he was under the thumb of the Dominican Order or indeed that he could be coerced by any clerical pressure.⁴⁹ A monarch who did not hesitate to cut out a (Dominican) bishop's tongue when displeased, and who flouted excommunication as a matter of course, was not easily swayed by awe of the Church.⁵⁰

James may not have initiated Paul's visit, but he had plenty of reasons to patronize the friar and his project in 1263. In addition to Louis' recent posturings and provocations across the border, James was being roundly condemned in papal circles for marrying his son and heir Peter to Constance, daughter of the excommunicated imperial pretender Manfred and eventual heiress to the Hohenstaufen cause.⁵¹ It was thus an opportune moment to demonstrate royal concern for proper dissemination of theological truth and a correspondingly stern attitude toward the Jews. Similar motives might explain the king's decision some weeks earlier (June 7, 1263) to donate a former Jewish cemetery to the theological school of the Valmagne Cistercians, situated in his own Languedocian territories.⁵² Acknowledging a prominent Dominican convert-preacher's presence in his realms and even welcoming him into his own court

⁴⁸ Isidore Loeb, following Graetz, saw Penyafort as a "fanatic" whose "terribles Frères Prêcheurs faisaient peur à tout le monde" ("La Controverse de 1263 à Barcelone" in *Revue des Études Juives* 15 [1887], 6 and 11). The assumption that Ramon Penyafort was the mastermind behind the disputation has since been largely taken for granted (as in Cohen, *Friars*, 104–8). The retired master-general was present at the disputation but no documents exist to confirm that he organized it or played any major role in it.

⁴⁹ Martin Cohen's assertion that James was devoted to an "alliance" with the Dominicans is an overstatement ("Reflections on the Text and Context of the Disputation of Barcelona" in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 35 [1964], 186). The Aragonese monarchy's sometimes close yet hardly exclusive contacts with the Order are discussed in chapter 2.

⁵⁰ As noted in chapter 2, James cut out the Dominican bishop of Girona, Berenguer de Castellbisbal's tongue in 1246 as punishment for revealing royal confidences. James was also happy to badger his Dominican confessor Arnold Segarra into granting him absolution on the eve of a major battle in 1266, while bluntly refusing to give up his extramarital activities (*Llibre dels fets*, ch. 426). Nachmanides even claimed that the same friar Arnold was publicly rebuked by the king in the midst of the 1263 disputation for insulting the memory of Maimonides (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 684). James' "independent" attitude toward the Church, which coexisted with a certain personal piety, is evident throughout the *Llibre dels fets* (R.I. Burns, "The Spiritual Life of James the Conqueror King of Arago-Catalonia, 1208–1276: Portrait and Self-Portrait" in *CHR* 62 [1976], 1–35).

⁵¹ B. Reilly, *The Medieval Spains* (Cambridge, 1993), 167.

⁵² The Jewish *aljama* of nearby Montpellier acquiesced to the donation on the understanding that the monks would pay for transferring Jewish remains to another site (Régné, 196 [#195]). Such an agreement was in accordance with Jewish law; my thanks to Michael Signer for making this observation.

would have been seen as a grand, magnanimous and pious move on James' part.

It is also likely that James and his courtiers were genuinely interested in the prospect of hearing an innovative and celebrated visiting preacher in disputation with one of his cleverest rabbis. Theological debates were a regular and entertaining feature of medieval academic life, and the Dominicans had made them a central part of their didactic mission to the Christian faithful.⁵³ It was rare for such debates to pit Jews against Christians, but not unheard of. Jews, after all, had frequently provided Christian preachers with negative *exempla* or case studies for the edification of their flocks. Literary accounts of interreligious debates circulated widely and may occasionally have inspired pious imitations, especially in the thirteenth-century Crown of Aragon.⁵⁴ Nachmanides himself was acquainted with these traditions, as he notes in his *vikuach* text.⁵⁵

James took a keen interest in religious issues, and liked to think of himself as an intellectual of sorts; he was also a sporting man who enjoyed a good joust.⁵⁶ Friar Paul's challenge to the Ramban would have been well suited to the king's taste for dramatic clashes, and if Nachmanides is to be believed James did not hesitate to throw himself into the thick of things. The Hebrew account describes James taking an active role in the disputation, intervening on multiple occasions to express his own opinions on theological points such as the longevity of the Jewish messiah or

⁵³ On the *disputatio* genre, see B. Bazàn et al., *Les questions disputées et les questions quodlibétiques dans les facultés de théologie, de droit et de médecine* (Turnhout, 1985). The place of the *disputatio* in Dominican intellectual life is discussed in chapter 2 above; cf. Mulchahey, "First the Bow," 167–75.

⁵⁴ Dahan, *Christian Polemic*, provides a concise overview of the genre. Many earlier "Dialogues" such as Gilbert Crispin's *Disputatio Iudei et Christiani* were learned Latin treatises inspired by Patristic models, circulating among northern clerics who would have had little if any real contact with Jews. A similar tradition of religious polemics intended for internal consumption existed in Jewish circles; see D. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics against Christianity in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1977) and H. Trautner-Kromann, *Shield and Sword: Jewish Polemics against Christianity and the Christians in France and Spain from 1100–1500* (tr. James Manley; Tübingen, 1993). Audiences seem to have been especially eager for such literature in the Mediterranean region, if the anonymous account of the "Inghetto Contardus" debate in Mallorca and Barcelona (c. 1286) is any indication (G. Dahan, ed. and tr., *Disputatio contra iudeos* [Paris, 1993]).

⁵⁵ Nachmanides' account begins with mention of "previous disputations between gentiles and Jews" (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 658). See Chazan, "Confrontation," 440, for notes on some other Hebrew literary debates in circulation at this time (including those of rabbi Meir); rabbi Moses may have been familiar with previous disputations at least in part through such a textual medium.

⁵⁶ An example of James' self-perception as a clever, pious and dashing Christian knight is in chs. 525–35 of his *Libre dels fets* – where he revels in the tale of how he appeared before the pope at the second Council of Lyons in 1274, quoting the Bible in Latin and haranguing the assembled prelates on their crusading duties before galloping off with a chivalric flourish. Earlier in the same book the king revealed his fondness for jousts – even across religious barriers – by interrupting his narrative of the siege of Valencia to describe a contest between Christian and Muslim champions (*Libre dels fets*, ch. 273).

Teaching truth

the exegesis of a Psalm.⁵⁷ Again according to Nachmanides, James may later have visited a Barcelona synagogue to try his hand at delivering a sermon. Even if somewhat exaggerated, these characterizations of the king's enthusiasm were apparently plausible to the rabbi and his audience. The charged encounter between friar Paul and rabbi Moses, initiated at James' request in his own court room on a hot summer day, must thus be understood largely in light of this singular monarch's complex character.

In terms of content the disputation itself was something of a set-piece encounter, well suited to a mixed audience of (mainly Christian) laity and clergy. Both our primary sources agree that ground rules were imposed to ensure that no blasphemies against Christianity were uttered, and that the truth of the Christian faith should at no time come into serious doubt.⁵⁸ The sources also agree in broad terms on the basic points of the disputational agenda:⁵⁹

Hebrew:

Thus, we agreed to speak first on the subject of the messiah, [that is], whether he had already come, which is the belief of the Christians, or was still to come, which is the belief of the Jews. Afterwards, we would discuss whether the messiah is really God or is really mortal, born of a man and a woman. We would then discuss that the Jews hold the true Torah, or whether the Christians fulfill it.⁶⁰

Latin:

[Friar Paul Christiani] proposed to the said Jewish *magister* that with the help of God he would prove the following points ... to wit: that the messiah, who is understood to be Christ, and whom the Jews have been awaiting, has undoubtedly come. Also that the same messiah, as was prophesied, must be one man and God. Also that the same truly suffered and died for the salvation of humankind. Also that the laws and ceremonies ceased and should have ceased after the coming of the said messiah.⁶¹

As Nachmanides put it in his narrative, these points addressed “matters upon which the entire [Jewish–Christian] controversy is contingent.”⁶² For the Dominicans, the disputation offered an opportunity to make “the truth of the faith manifest so that the errors of the Jews might be thrown down and the confidence of many Jews removed.”⁶³ The subject matter was thus compelling but traditional. Dozens of polemical treatises had provided previous generations of Jewish and Christian audiences

⁵⁷ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 667–8 and 687–8.

⁵⁸ Denifle, “Quellen,” 231; Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 657.

⁵⁹ See Cohen, *Friars*, 111, although Chazan disagrees on this point (*Barcelona*, 123). Clearly, the sources do differ as to who took the initiative in proposing this agenda.

⁶⁰ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 658. ⁶¹ Denifle, “Quellen,” 231.

⁶² Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 658. ⁶³ Denifle, “Quellen,” 231.

alike with food for thought on their opposing claims regarding messianic expectations, Christology and the divine covenant with *verus Israel*. The Barcelona disputation rehearsed some of these arguments, with invocations of well-known Scriptural passages such as the messianic prophecies of Genesis 49:10 (“the scepter shall not depart from Judah ...”) and Daniel 9:24 (“seventy weeks have been decreed ...”).⁶⁴ This sort of exegetical discussion was a far cry from the rational-philosophical strategies of mission advocates like Roger Bacon or Raymond Lull.

One exciting novelty was presented to the audience at Barcelona, when friar Paul proceeded to make the very unusual claim that post-Biblical Jewish writings actually corroborated Christian messianic beliefs. This claim appears in both accounts, though it was not necessarily seen as the central point of the whole debate. The Latin alludes to it only in general terms, with friar Paul stating his intention to prove his points “with writings well known and authoritative among the Jews” (*per scripturas communes et autenticas apud Iudeos*) before going on to discuss both Biblical and Talmudic texts.⁶⁵ Nachmanides noted at the beginning of his Hebrew text that “friar Paul commenced by asserting that he would prove from our Talmud that the Messiah, whom the prophets foretold, had already come.”⁶⁶ Later, rabbi Moses claimed to have rebuked the Dominican in words clearly intended to downplay the novelty of his overall approach and hence its apparent interest for the king:

I turned my face to friar Paul and said, “are you the Jewish scholar who discovered this argument and who was so moved by it as to become converted? Is it you who advises the king to gather the Jewish scholars to yourself [so that you can] dispute with them about these new finds that you have discovered? Have we not heard all this before?”⁶⁷

Hebrew and Latin accounts agree that Talmudic literature was invoked by friar Paul to show the ancient rabbis’ acceptance of Christian doctrine on at least two specific points: that the messiah had indeed already come (against Nachmanides’ contention that even if he had been born, he had not yet come into his messianic role) and that the messiah should indeed have suffered and died as did Jesus.⁶⁸ These were claims which might

⁶⁴ The same passages are mention in the Latin (Denifle, “Quellen,” 232–3) and Hebrew accounts alike (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 660–4 and 677–80).

⁶⁵ Denifle, “Quellen,” 232.

⁶⁶ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 658. Nachmanides’ account goes on to depict Paul’s use of a wide range of Jewish sources, from Biblical and Talmudic texts to the *Mishneh Torah* of Maimonides.

⁶⁷ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 688. The immediate issue under debate at this point was in fact exegesis of a Psalm, but Paul soon supported his position with another Talmudic reference.

⁶⁸ Denifle, “Quellen,” 232–3; cf. Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 664–8, where these same issues are raised. According to Nachmanides further use of the Talmud was made regarding other related points, such as whether the messiah is man, God or both (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 688–93).

ultimately have encouraged Jewish conversions, if accepted. More immediately, however, they were of great interest and potential reassurance to Christians themselves.

The disputation was conducted before an audience primarily composed of Christian clerical and lay elites. Some Jews were also present, but no apparent effort was made to force their attendance in any numbers. The Latin account describes “many barons, prelates, religious [friars] and knights” gathered to hear the disputation with their king in his royal palace.⁶⁹ It further states that rabbi Moses was accompanied by “many other Jews, who were seen and believed to be the most skilled of all the Jews” – presumably a coterie of fellow Talmud scholars – but makes no mention of their having been coerced.⁷⁰ Nachmanides’ version of events corroborates this report, noting the initial palace setting and the presence of distinguished figures such as the bishop, princes, knights, friars and royal judges.⁷¹ The Hebrew account also mentions a Jewish presence, including “a throng of [Jewish] people” which came forward on the last day to urge the rabbi’s withdrawal from debate.⁷² Aside from the royal command to Nachmanides himself, no forced attendance is described here either.

The Hebrew account of the *vikuach* provides additional details concerning setting and audience which, if accurate, may serve to flesh out the Latin text’s rough sketch. According to this source the disputation took place on four separate occasions and in at least two different locations. The first session was held “in [the king’s and his councilors’] presence in his palace in Barcelona.”⁷³ The second was held “on the following Monday” in

one of the cloisters of the city, and all the people of the city, gentiles and Jews, were gathered there. Among them were the bishop [of Barcelona] and all the priests, Franciscan scholars, and preachers.⁷⁴

A third session returned to the royal palace on a Thursday but it was “held without ostentation ... near the entrance” (presumably with few

⁶⁹ “presentibus domino rege Aragonum et multis aliis baronibus, prelatibus, religiosis et militibus in palacio domini regis Barchinone” (Denifle, “Quellen,” 231).

⁷⁰ “cum multis aliis Iudeis, qui videbantur et credebantur inter alios Iudeos periciores” (*ibid.*).

⁷¹ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 657, 668, 683 and 685.

⁷² *Ibid.* 685–6. This “throng” may be equivalent to the *multis aliis Iudeis* described in the Latin version (above).

⁷³ *Ibid.* 657.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 668. The rabbi’s failure to identify this cloister as that of the Dominicans (which in any case was outside the city walls) or the cathedral itself leaves the precise nature of this location open to speculation.

auditors) on James' own orders.⁷⁵ Finally, again according to the testimony of Nachmanides, the king presided over a grand convocation in his throne room before a number of dignitaries but also "many townspeople and the poorest of the people."⁷⁶

If Nachmanides is to be taken as a reliable witness on the matter, then, large crowds (including some humbler persons) gathered to hear at least half of the debate. "All the people of the city" surely did not squeeze into a cloister, let alone into the relatively close confines of the palace throne room, but commoners (both Jews and Christians) were presumably permitted to attend some of the sessions.⁷⁷ A number of Jewish scholars were also generally present. As in the Latin record, however, the overall sense in Nachmanides' account is that the disputation was intended for a primary audience of Christian "princes and prelates." The Barcelona disputation was thus a special presentation of conflicting ideas concerning Jewish messianic beliefs. It was organized by Christians, and for the chief benefit of Christians – for whom messianic prophecy and its Jewish interpretation were matters of great import. Even Nachmanides seems to have been conscious of this didactic purpose, since his account has him repeatedly offering to give more extensive lessons on Jewish exegesis "if you [Paul] and your friends wish to learn and have the mind to understand."⁷⁸ These sorts of discussions might optimistically have been expected to encourage conversions in the long run, but the disputation's immediate missionary dimension was extremely limited.

Friar Paul evidently hoped on some level that his debate with rabbi Moses would serve as the springboard for a wider preaching campaign, however, and some initial efforts were made to bring this about. According to Nachmanides, king James entered a Barcelona synagogue one Sabbath morning shortly after the end of the official disputation (presumably on August 4 or 11) in order to "lecture vigorously that the Nazarene was the deliverer."⁷⁹ Accompanying the king on this extraordinary mission were

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 683.

⁷⁶ "And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon the seat by the wall. Present were the bishop and many princes, Guilles de Sargon, Pere Bargo, numerous knights, many townsfolk, and the poorest of the people" (*Ibid.* 685). As Chavel notes, Nachmanides was quoting from I Samuel 20:25 here in his effort to underline the grandeur of the event.

⁷⁷ Details concerning the layout and history of the palace (now a tourist attraction) can be found in A.M. Adroer i Tasis, *El palau reial major de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1978).

⁷⁸ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 679. Nachmanides may have intended the offers somewhat sarcastically, but his entire narrative shows him making efforts to explicate Jewish beliefs for the benefit of his Christian audience (as in *ibid.*, 669, where he explains the differences between Torah, Talmud and Midrash). The Latin record takes some pains to summarize the rabbi's arguments.

⁷⁹ The episode is described by Nachmanides in some detail (with an emphasis on his own tactful rebuttal of James' and the friars' preaching) (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 694–6).

some “preachers,” including Raymond Penyafort and Paul Christiani, who also took the opportunity to lecture on the Trinity. Whether such an event actually took place is an open question. No Christian source mentions it, and Nachmanides’ narrative obviously contradicts the Latin record, which claims that he fled Barcelona in defeat. Nevertheless the endeavor would have been in keeping with James’ self-confident and adventurous nature, so the possibility remains that some sort of high-level synagogue visit did indeed transpire.⁸⁰

The Barcelona disputation had broken new ground for the Spanish Dominicans, and with continuing royal interest and support an effort could also finally be made to act on the preaching privileges James had granted more than twenty years previously. As if to make this point, the edict of 1242 was reissued on August 26, 1263. In this new recension James asserted that his regime remained theoretically supportive of whatever conversionary preaching the Dominicans might wish to undertake:

[To all officials and subjects]. We inform and order you that, when the friars of the Order of Friars Preacher should come to you and desire to preach to the Jews or Saracens, you must receive those friars kindly. You must oblige and if necessary force the Jews and Muslims, young and old, male and female to gather before the friars wherever and whenever and however they desire it; and they should listen to the words of the friars carefully and in silence. Those who refuse to gather as ordered are to be punished with monetary and other penalties.⁸¹

There were further indications that serious action would indeed now be taken in this direction. Three days after issuance of the above edict, on August 29, a message was sent to all Jewish *aljamas* (communities) of the realm; in it the king advised that

our beloved friar Paul Christiani of the Order of Friars Preacher, whom we are sending to you in order to show you the way to salvation, shall come to you in your synagogues or your homes or some other suitable place, to preach the word of God or dispute or discuss holy Scripture with you ... [you are] to come to him and to listen calmly and favorably and to humbly and reverently, without any calumny or subterfuge, respond to his questions about faith and the holy Scriptures according to your knowledge; and to show him your books, which he requires to show you the truth.⁸²

⁸⁰ Preaching was undertaken on occasion by other Aragonese and Neapolitan kings in this period, but if James really did preach at the Barcelona synagogue his efforts were truly *sui generis* (D. Pryds, “*Rex Praedicans*: Robert d’Anjou and the Politics of Preaching” in J. Hamesse and X. Hermand, eds., *De l’homélie au sermon* [Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993], 239–62; James is not mentioned in this article. See also S. Cawsey, “Royal Eloquence, Royal Propaganda and the Use of the Sermon in the Medieval Crown of Aragon, c. 1200–1400” in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 50 [1999], 442–63).

⁸¹ Denifle, “Quellen,” 234–5 (#2). ⁸² *Ibid.* 235–6.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

The order went on to reiterate that attendance was compulsory and enforceable by royal officials. Taken on its own, it seemed to indicate that Jews in the Crown of Aragon were now faced with a major proselytizing assault.⁸³

No such assault ever materialized, however, since the king rescinded the most important clause of his edict after only one day. As of August 30, 1263, Jews were no longer under any compulsion to attend the sermons of Paul Christiani or anyone else. Instead, James stipulated that

if any friar of the Preachers should wish to enter their Jewish quarter or synagogues in order to preach to them there, they should listen to him if they so desire; for we concede this to the Jews, that they should not be obliged to go outside their Jewish quarter to hear anyone's preaching nor yet to hear that preaching in any place by force. And we concede this to them despite any contradictory letter previously conceded by us to the Preaching friars.⁸⁴

This suggests a rather a stunning change in policy. Yet in fact king James had never stopped granting privileges to his Jewish subjects and protecting their religious rights. Even at the height of Paul Christiani's agitation, James had defied canon law by permitting the construction of a new synagogue by Bonanast Salamo of Barcelona (August 24, 1263).⁸⁵ The surprise is not so much that James cancelled the Dominicans' preaching campaign but that he authorized it in the first place. One can only speculate that James was playing a subtle game. The situation allowed him to make gestures of piety and support for the canonical position on preaching rights on the one hand, only to follow these with gestures of lordly benevolence on behalf of his loyal Jewish subjects. The king undoubtedly received financial contributions from those subjects in return for his protection, and it is possible that he deliberately manipulated the threat of Christiani's planned synagogue invasions with this in mind.

Assertions of royal protection for Aragonese Jewry continued thereafter. On January 3, 1264, James repeated a standard warning that violence against Jews would not be tolerated during Good Friday celebrations.⁸⁶ In October 1268 the privilege of August 30, 1263, along with many others, was confirmed in a flurry of pro-Jewish edicts.⁸⁷ As will be discussed in

⁸³ Another order was issued on the same day authorizing Paul Christiani and a panel of Dominican experts to seize and examine Hebrew books. This censorial dimension of the friars' mission is discussed in chapter 5.

⁸⁴ Denifle, "Quellen," 237.

⁸⁵ Régéné, 40 (#208). Construction of new synagogues was theoretically forbidden by canon law (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 70–1).

⁸⁶ Régéné, 44 (#236). The warning not to stone Jews appears regularly in the charters of the ACA (Nirenberg, *Communities*, 202–30).

⁸⁷ Régéné, 69–71 (#386–400).

chapter 5, these may have been intended to send admonitory messages to the clergy at a time when Jews were clashing with overzealous friars over inquisitions and book censorship. Life in the *aljamas* of Barcelona and elsewhere in the realm thus continued after 1263 for the most part as before, with only limited interference from local mendicants. Paul Christiani's actions in the Crown of Aragon c. 1263–5 ultimately constituted more of a discrete and passing series of historical events than a manifestation of long-term Dominican policies and practices in the region.

PREACHING AFTER BARCELONA

Efforts to mount further preaching campaigns with Jewish attendance (whether forced or not) were revived on perhaps a handful of occasions in the decades following James' death in 1276. Once again these were of limited duration and success. They also seem to have been spearheaded by radical minorities within the mendicant communities – anonymous Franciscans for the most part but also, apparently, some Dominicans who may have been followers of Paul Christiani and/or Raymond Martini. Owing to a dearth of descriptive sources comparable to the 1263 *vikuach* accounts, it is impossible to determine conclusively the extent to which these were genuine exercises in proselytism, blunt instances of anti-Jewish persecution or apologetic theological demonstrations aimed primarily at Christian audiences. What is clear from the sources, however, is the fact that when such campaigns did emerge they were regularly met with stiff and effective resistance from Jewish communities. This suggests that preaching across religious boundaries was episodic and marginal rather than central to the ongoing mission of the Dominican Order.

On August 4, 1278, the newly elected pope, Nicholas III, advised members of both mendicant Orders to go out and preach to Jews in the bull *Vineam sorec*.⁸⁸ Nicholas made no mention in this bull of a corresponding need to preach to Muslims, referring only to the specific sadness he felt at the ongoing failure of “the Lord's disappointing vineyard,” the House of Israel, to accept the truths of Christianity. King Peter III of

⁸⁸ “Judeos eosdem in terris, et locis, in quibus habitant, generaliter, et singulariter convocando, semel, et pluries, ac toties repetitis instantiis, quoties proficere posse putaveris, prout melius fieri poterit, predicationibus, salutaribus monitis, et discretis inductionibus, evangelicis doctrinis, informans ipsos, studeas juxta datam tibi a Domino gratiam, fugatis tenebrarum nubibus, ad viam reducere claritatis, ut renati fonte Baptismatis, relucent in lumine vultus Christi, et exinde chorus Angelicus delectetur” (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 142–5 [#42]). The bull was originally sent to Lombardy and may not have been specifically intended for Iberia, but it seems to have circulated widely.

Aragon took note of the papal commission in April 1279 and used the occasion to repeat his father's 1242 legislation, ignoring the contradictory privilege of August 30, 1263. Royal officials were once more instructed to compel Jewish cooperation with missionary preachers, and to protect the rights of converts.⁸⁹

The impact of *Vineam sorec* must not be exaggerated, however. Nicholas' bull was issued two days after his proclamation of *Sicut judaeis*, the now more or less traditional statement of papal protection for Jews.⁹⁰ A copy of the latter was sent to the Jews of Pamplona, among others, who subsequently used it to protect their right to pray undisturbed by the preaching of Franciscan friars. It is unclear whether this was missionary or regular preaching – Isidore Loeb thought it might simply have been a conflict over volume levels in adjacent houses of prayer – but either way it is striking that the same pope simultaneously issued both a theoretical call for proselytism and a practical brake on the effectiveness of that proselytism.⁹¹ As Solomon Grayzel and Kenneth Stow have suggested, *Vineam sorec* was probably never intended to authorize forced Jewish attendance at mendicant sermons; rather it was a simple and fairly traditional encouragement of moderate universal preaching from a pope who had long considered himself a fervent supporter of the mendicant Orders.⁹²

Peter, for his part, though known for his ambivalent treatment of Jews, had every reason to endorse *Vineam sorec*'s principles at a time of rising popular anti-Jewish sentiment in the Crown of Aragon.⁹³ Violence had already erupted at Girona in 1278, when a number of clerics attacked the Jewish *call* (quarter) with stones during the Easter season.⁹⁴ Royal officials retaliated, but the king had no reason or wish to be seen as excessively friendly to Jews in such a climate. In Huesca and Calatayud further anti-Jewish rioting broke out in 1279.⁹⁵ As may have happened around the same time at Pamplona, the royal license to force Jewish sermon attendance was used by some Aragonese mendicants as a new excuse and means to bully local Jews. Dominicans at Huesca and

⁸⁹ Régné, 131 (#723).

⁹⁰ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 139–42 (#41). Clement IV had been exceptional in not issuing *Sicut judaeis*.

⁹¹ A note on the Pamplona *Sicut* parchment reads “Hoc est translatum littere que (quam) habuimus a domino papa, ratione fratrum minorum qui impediabant orationes nostras ratione sermonis” (quoted and discussed in Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 141, n. 1).

⁹² *Ibid.* Nicholas had been named Protector of the Franciscans under Urban IV (H. Mann, *The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages* [London, 1932], vol. XVI, 145–6).

⁹³ Baer, *History*, vol. I, esp. 166–71.

⁹⁴ Nirenberg, *Communities*, 203.

⁹⁵ Baer, *History*, vol. I, 168; Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 130–1 (#117, dated June 19, 1279).

Zaragoza were certainly involved, as were Franciscans in a number of other cities.⁹⁶

The volatile summer of 1279 may also have provided Raymond Martini with a special opportunity to try out theological arguments from his newly (or nearly) completed *Pugio fidei* in actual debates with local Jews at Barcelona. Inconclusive evidence suggests that some sort of interreligious discussion did occur around this time, pitting Christian spokesmen against leading Jewish scholars such as the Barcelona rabbi Solomon Ibn Adret (also known as Rashba, a one-time student of Nachmanides), who was active by the 1270s and died in 1310.⁹⁷ Rashba wrote a number of polemical responses to Christian arguments, which Joseph Perles saw as reflections of real disputations. Heinrich Graetz identified some of these as responses to points raised in the *Pugio fidei*, arguing that Raymond Martini was one of rabbi Solomon's interlocutors. On the other hand there is Raymond Lull's anecdote (written c. 1310), in which an unnamed *frater* is said to have "frequently disputed in Barcelona" (*Barcinone frequentius disputabat*) at sometime in the past with a similarly unnamed *quondam Judaeo*. Ephraim Longpré connected this passage with Martini, and Jeremy Cohen later used it to argue that Martini was the Rashba's main (or only) Christian opponent. The thesis has been accepted by Chaim Hames, among others, and though details are lacking (including precise dates, circumstances, frequency and purpose of such disputations) there is no reason at this point to doubt it.⁹⁸

The full significance of Martini's (and perhaps his fellows') having somehow, at some point around 1279, preached to or debated with rabbis like Solomon Ibn Adret remains open to question. It may have been intended in part as a conversionary exercise, and arguments in the *Pugio* were apparently taken seriously enough to generate a Jewish response. Jews may in fact have been forced to attend mendicant sermons at Barcelona as mandated by the king; in any case there was undoubtedly at least a sense of danger in the air as pogrom rumors circulated about the region. Like Nachmanides before him, rabbi Solomon thus wrote to

⁹⁶ Riera i Sans, "Llicències Reials," 117–18.

⁹⁷ Rabbi Solomon, b. 1235, was probably too young to have been one of the "learned Jews" present at Nachmanides' side in the Barcelona disputation of 1263. He would nevertheless have followed the event closely and may have attended in an informal capacity. See J. Perles, *R. Salamo b. Abraham b. Adereth: Sein Leben und seine Schriften* (Breslau, 1863); I. Epstein, *The "Responsa" of Rabbi Solomon Ben Adreth of Barcelona* (repr. as the first part of *Studies in the Communal Life of the Jews of Spain*, New York, 1968) and A. Neuman, *The Jews in Spain* (Philadelphia, 1948).

⁹⁸ See Perles, *R. Salamo*, 54–6; Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. III, 622–3; Longpré, "Le B. Raymond Lulle," 198; Cohen, "Christian Adversary"; Hames, *Art*, 252–3, esp. n. 21.

bolster the confidence of his coreligionists in a time of perceived threat and need.⁹⁹

Lest the place of anti-Christian polemic be seen to take too great a place in Ibn Adret's *oeuvre*, however, it should be recalled that the vast majority of his more than 3,500 extant *responsa* dealt rather with internal questions of Jewish law. He also wrote against the eleventh-century Muslim theologian Ibn Hazm and on Kabbalah.¹⁰⁰ No doubt rabbi Solomon saw Ibn Hazm and Raymond Martini (not to mention Raymond Lull) as interesting and challenging intellectual foes, worthy of written rebuttal. There is no *a priori* reason why the existence of such rebuttals should indicate that he was motivated by imminent fear of missionary pressure from contemporary Dominicans, however – any more than he had reason to fear such pressure coming from the long-dead Islamic luminaries of the Andalusi Taifa period.

It seems unnecessary to suppose that either high-level scholarly debates in Barcelona or the bullying behavior of mendicants in towns like Huesca and Calatayud were linked to any sort of extensive and coordinated mission strategy. What the sparse evidence shows is simply that some Dominicans in some regions intimidated and humiliated Jewish communities at a particular time of popular unrest, forcing them to attend sermons in the presence of threatening Christian mobs; and that around the same time one or more of the leading Dominicans and rabbis probably argued over their theological differences. In the broader scheme of Dominican activity within the Crown of Aragon neither is surprising, and both could just as well have been motivated by the desire to edify Christians as by the desire to convert Jews. The friars' rabbinic contacts, furthermore (which may well have begun before 1279, and/or extended into the 1280s), could equally stem from exceptional scholars' personal interest in expanding their Scriptural expertise through discussions with local Jews. Given the rhetorical tone of the *Pugio* we may assume that such discussions could be fairly tense and unpleasant, and that more or less veiled threats were in force, but it is also conceivable that Martini and/or his brethren could be more polite in person than on parchment. Conversions might ideally result from such exchanges, but

⁹⁹ Ibn Adret's refutation has been printed as a unified treatise, but Hames argues that it was originally produced piecemeal in response to "a series of exchanges with different Christian scholars" (Hames, *Art*, 251; cf. Cohen, *Friars*, 157). For the refutation text see Perles, *R. Salamo*, Hebrew section, 24–56.

¹⁰⁰ C. Adang, "A Jewish Reply to Ibn Hazm. Solomon b. Adret's Polemic against Islam" in M. Fierro, ed., *Judíos y musulmanes en al-Andalus y el Magreb* (Madrid, 2002), 179–209. Hames, *Art*, discusses Rashba's Kabbalistic writings (esp. in ch. 5) and the likelihood that they were at least partly intended to respond to Raymond Lull's mysticism.

improved theological teaching for the edification of the faithful likely remained a larger and more immediate goal – for both sides.

Whatever forced Jewish attendance at mendicant sermons did take place in the summer of 1279, the crisis was short-lived. As rabbi Solomon responded by composing defensive theological texts, Jewish communal leaders were also swiftly mobilized to defend against the preachers' incursions. By October 1279, king Peter was forced to respond to vigorous complaints that friars were inciting Christian thugs to disrupt synagogue services. The friars themselves were accused of resorting to illegal threats of violence in their sermons to the Jews; the situation at Calatayud seems to have been especially dire. Royal officials were consequently ordered to prevent friars from entering synagogues with large retinues, and the Franciscans in particular received an admonition to tone down their preaching.¹⁰¹ The theoretical right of mendicant preachers to deliver conversionary sermons survived, and it would continue as a serious annoyance for Jewish communities in the future whenever it was exercised. Still, Peter's crackdown apparently dampened much of the friars' enthusiasm, and no further references to mendicant conversionary preaching emerge from the archival record for the remainder of his reign or that of his son, Alfonso III (1285–91).¹⁰²

The resilience of Jewish communities in the Crown of Aragon was further demonstrated seventeen years later in a scenario very similar to that of 1279. On August 27, 1296, king James II of Aragon issued a lengthy decree which consolidated and renewed earlier legislation on the conversion of non-Christians. Echoing James I's original 1242 policies once again, this edict was for the most part concerned with protecting the rights of existing converts, which had apparently been threatened by resentful Jewish and Christian communities alike. In an ominous new development (discussed in the following chapter), James also added clauses promising inquisitorial *correcciones* and *pena corporali* for converts whose orthodoxy might be called into question. Finally, the king repeated the provision for compulsory attendance

whenever the friars of the Order of Preachers should wish to expound the word of God to Jews or Saracens of either sex, by preaching, disputing or discussing for the sake of expanding the Christian faith.¹⁰³

This renewal of the Preachers' existing right to proselytize before captive audiences aroused no recorded response on the mainland, but in Mallorca (which remained under the rule of James II of Aragon until 1298) it led

¹⁰¹ Régné, 135–6 (#746–8). ¹⁰² Riera i Sans, "Licències Reials," 117–18.

¹⁰³ Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. II, 11 (#12).

to a now-familiar series of events. Sometime in September, Jews of the Mallorcan *aljama* were in fact obliged to hear missionary sermons in a Christian church.¹⁰⁴ Bridling at such treatment, they quickly appealed to the king. By October 3, 1296 an order had once more gone out to royal officials, instructing them to ensure that Jews were not subjected to any preaching outside the safety of their *call* and strictly limiting the number of Christian attendants allowed to accompany preachers inside the Jewish quarter.¹⁰⁵ The potential threat of mendicant evangelism remained, but the full force of its immediate impact had been successfully challenged and blunted.

Isolated complaints registered at the royal court, along with Solomon Ibn Adret's *responsa*, thus show that Dominican missionary preaching did occur on rare occasions among Jews in the later thirteenth-century Crown of Aragon and that sometimes coercion was used.¹⁰⁶ Given the nature of the evidence it seems unlikely that further unrecorded episodes of mendicant preaching to the Jews could have appeared with any frequency. When they did occur these episodes were disruptive and they provoked a response. Any attempt by the friars to act on their canonical right to preach among Jews quickly resulted in appeals to royal authority, and such appeals left paper trails in the late thirteenth-century Crown of Aragon.¹⁰⁷

The legal right to demand non-Christian attendance at conversionary sermons continued to be recognized in principle by fourteenth-century kings of Aragon.¹⁰⁸ Some individual preachers were even granted special royal licenses permitting them to enter synagogues for this purpose. Raymond Llull received royal permission in 1299 to preach "in

¹⁰⁴ James' edict of August 27 was given at Valencia, as was his follow-up order of October 3. Allowing time for communications between Valencia and Mallorca, the missionary sermon and subsequent Jewish protest were both delivered within a matter of days.

¹⁰⁵ Régné, 488 (#2624); cf. A. Isaacs, *The Jews of Majorca* (London, 1936), 239 (#75). The document does not specify whether Dominicans took part in this preaching event.

¹⁰⁶ Rabbi Solomon also wrote an undated letter, likewise preserved in his *responsa*, offering advice to the Jews of Lleida on the occasion of a conversionary sermon by an unidentified Christian preacher (Trautner-Kromann, *Shield and Sword*, 133). No similar letter direct to the Mallorcan Jews *c.* 1296 is known to exist.

¹⁰⁷ Nirenberg, *Communities*, 36, makes this point in explaining why archival documents in the medieval Crown of Aragon tend to record some incidents more than others: "violence involving Jews interested the royal bureaucracy more than other types because it represented an opportunity for relatively effective bureaucratic action."

¹⁰⁸ The usual royal edict to this effect, again based on the prototype of 1242, was issued once more at Barcelona on September 5, 1311 (Régné, 543 [#2934]; full text of the 1311 document in B. Oliver y Esteller, ed., *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de Aragón y Valencia y principado de Cataluña* [1896, repr. Madrid, 1974], vol. I, 216–30, with the excerpt from James I's 1242 Cortes on pp. 217–19). The 1311 Cortes were held at a time of heightened tensions over apostasy and conversions to Judaism, as will be seen in chapter 5.

synagogues of the Jews on Saturdays and Sundays, and in mosques of the Saracens in Fridays and Sundays” throughout the Crown of Aragon.¹⁰⁹ More common were the cases of James Perez (1308) and John of Huesca (1320), converts who received royal licenses to preach to both Muslims and Jews as they saw fit.¹¹⁰ Whether and to what extent these licenses were actually used is obscure, however; the lack of recorded outcry may imply that they were not deployed with any vigor. Moreover, none of these fourteenth-century “private” licensees were mendicants. After the stalled preaching initiatives of 1263, 1279 and 1296, the Dominicans showed little inclination to pursue this troublesome *modus operandi*. They had other priorities.

PREACHING TO MUSLIMS

Given that Friars Preacher in the Crown of Aragon had every opportunity to preach to vulnerable subject populations not only of Jews but also of Muslims, it seems telling that they did so only rarely, and then only among the former. Even in places like Xàtiva or Zaragoza, where Dominicans lived in close proximity to large numbers of unconverted but defeated Muslims (the so-called *mudéjars*), conversionary preaching does not seem to have occurred. No examples of actual preaching or disputations comparable to Christiani’s 1263 offensive are known to have taken place among Muslims. As has been noted, Penyafort and Humbert of Romans claimed that some foreign Muslims were converted (“both secretly and openly”) through conversation or cohabitation with the friars around the mid-thirteenth century. Otherwise, the total absence of contemporary evidence for mendicant–Islamic dialogue at home is unmistakable.

A single Arabic text from the early fourteenth century may provide an exception, but it is one which also serves to prove what seems to have been the rule. The *Kitab miftah al-din wa-‘l-mujadala bayna ‘l-nasara wa-‘l-muslimin* is a little-known Arabic religious polemic, apparently written by one Muhammad al-Qaysi.¹¹¹ If we set aside ongoing debates about authorship, provenance and the possibility that it is largely a work of fiction, this

¹⁰⁹ Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. II, 13–14 (#14). Lluç claims to have preached to both Jews and Muslims (the latter in his native Mallorca) at intervals throughout his peregrinations along the Mediterranean littoral (Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 32).

¹¹⁰ For James Perez (*Jaume Pere*), apparently a former Muslim, see Régné, 89 (#2862). Riera, “Llicències Reials,” 119–24, discusses these and similar examples of “llicències particulars,” including those of Raymond Lull. Pious intentions notwithstanding, the licenses seem to have been used by some converts above all to extort money from non-Christian communities.

¹¹¹ I am grateful to John Tolan for drawing my attention to this reference. See his *Saracens*, 340, n. 9.

treatise may be the only surviving Islamic witness to a theological debate between friars and Muslims in the medieval Crown of Aragon.¹¹² Indeed, the author himself suggests that his book was very unusual, though he does compare it to a similar work by an otherwise obscure Abd Allah al-Asir (“the Captive”).¹¹³ Both Abd Allah and Muhammad al-Qaysi were apparently prisoners of war languishing in Christian captivity around the turn of the fourteenth century – Abd Allah in France and Muhammad in Catalonia (according to one version of the text, in Lleida). Nothing further can be said about Abd Allah, but Muhammad claims to have been forced into a debate with an unnamed “wicked cleric” (*rahīb fajir*) over the respective claims of Islam and Christianity in the presence of “an infidel [i.e. Christian] leader” (*za‘im kafir*).¹¹⁴

What is striking about this source is that, once more, it suggests only a mild and occasional interest in religious disputation among some individual Christians rather than a context of ongoing missionary efforts directed against Muslims in general by mendicant friars. Indeed, contemporary theological dialogue is far from being the author’s main focus, as it is only mentioned in the last of three sections. After meditating on the early history of Christian failures to embrace Islam, Muhammad goes on to describe (and condemn) more recent events such as the expulsion of Jews from France and persecution by the knights Templar throughout Europe. When he finally does mention his personal experience, it is briefly presented as an unusual occurrence in which the Muslim captive is invited to explain his beliefs to the ruler. A monk – who may or may not be a Dominican – then criticizes anthropomorphic passages in the Qur’an. After a short exchange, the ruler allegedly terminates the disputation, saying “this Muslim teaches you every aspect of your religion which concerns you. I know [now] that you cannot produce evidence against him.” Like Nachmanides in his own version of the Barcelona *vikuach*, al-Qaysi is then allowed to depart; he wanders off to a local synagogue in the company of a Jew and two monks for further (relatively amiable) religious discussions.¹¹⁵

The account is probably fictive to a great degree, but if it does in any way reflect real experience (and given the absence of any other evidence) then it must be considered seriously. Muhammad al-Qaysi did not enjoy his religious disputation, but his main complaint was that the occasion forced him to speak inappropriately of divine matters before

¹¹² Details in Van Koningsveld and Wiegers, “Polemical Works of Muhammad al-Qaysi,” 163–99.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 183.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 179. My thanks to Samira Faroud for her assistance with al-Qaysi’s Arabic text.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 182–3.

people who were incapable of comprehending them. He did not imply that he was being subjected to regular preaching visits from mendicant friars, nor that this was a fate regularly awaiting Muslim prisoners in Christian hands. Instead he was treated as something of a curiosity by his captors, as a relatively well-educated man who could provide information and entertainment, rather than as a target for potential evangelization.

Overall, then, the history of Dominican preaching and theological disputations among non-Christians reveals at least two sides to the situation in the medieval Crown of Aragon. The friars, true to the universal nature of their mission, presumably hoped for an eventual conversion of all unbelievers to the Christian truth they held so dear. To this end they expected and received full rights to evangelize with sermons and theological arguments whenever and wherever they wished. Occasionally, a friar trained in Hebrew and Jewish Scriptural exegesis might even present himself to initiate contacts with local Jewish communities, and conversions might ultimately be expected to result from his efforts.

Such friars were few and far between, however, and for the most part the Dominicans were content to leave Jews and Muslims to their own devices. The Preachers were, after all, busy enough trying to bring believing Christians safely to salvation by instructing them in orthodox doctrines. In this work, they were challenged not only by the various heretical movements whose teachings had arisen within the Christian communities of the western Mediterranean; in the Crown of Aragon they also had to consider the perceived dangers of cohabitation with unbaptized infidels. In a cosmopolitan city such as Barcelona, educated Christian layfolk and clergy were at special risk of falling prey to theological doubts or misunderstandings. The brilliant reputations of Jewish scholars like Moses ben Nachman or Solomon Ibn Adret, in particular, might well lead some to question the firmness of Christian claims to ultimate truth. It was at least partly for this reason that scholars like Paul Christiani, and then Raymond Martini and undoubtedly others, put Thomas Aquinas' suggestions into practice by engaging these Jews in debate – whether by means of carefully staged public disputations or in the still more secure confines of Latin theological texts like the *Pugio fidei*.

The friars' near-exclusive focus on debating with Jews, rather than Muslims, probably stems from this aspect of their work. Jews, and Jewish command of a shared Scripture, were a more imposing concern for Christians than Muslims and Islam. They were also more easily confronted by members of an Order devoted to Biblical studies. In a few

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

exceptional cases friars did study the Qur'an and Islamic beliefs, in part to facilitate evangelism but also to benefit those Christians who might come into extended contact with Muslims, as will be seen in [chapter 6](#). For the most part though, the friars' work of "teaching truth" kept them focused on their primary duty of providing theological instruction and pastoral care to baptized Christians. Contacts with unbelievers were generally incidental to this focus.

Chapter 5

DESTROYING ERROR

Our intention is to make known, in our limited way, the truth that the Catholic faith professes, and to remove the errors that are opposed to it.

Thomas Aquinas, *SCG*, bk. 1, ch. 2

If teaching orthodox “truth” led some Dominicans into contact and at times into conflict with Muslims or (more often) Jews, the second part of Aquinas’ *Summa contra gentiles* dictum provoked further complications in the medieval Crown of Aragon. The friars sought to root out and destroy what they saw as theological “error” – disbelief of Christian truths, heretical misbelief and sinful behaviors deemed offensive to God. This would include all aspects of Islam and Judaism which deviated from Christianity, and so the ultimate elimination of non-Christian communities remained a theoretical goal. Practically speaking, however, medieval Church authorities and Dominican leaders generally understood that a total purge of this nature was both impossible and undesirable.¹ Until they converted in the divinely appointed fullness of time, Jews and Muslims would remain significant minorities within some Christian territories. If sufficiently isolated, they could be left in peace to suffer the consequences of their own errors; meanwhile the mendicant Orders could put all their energies into working for the salvation of Christian souls. In regions such as the Iberian peninsula where contacts between Christians and non-Christians were unavoidable, however, the friars’ pastoral work with the faithful would occasionally have a negative impact on local Muslim and Jewish populations.

The Dominicans had two main priorities in monitoring and controlling religious conduct in society at large. First and foremost was the suppression of heretical ideas. These varied from firmly and self-consciously

¹ Aquinas suggested ideal limits for Catholic toleration of unbelievers in *ST*, 2–2 q. 10, art. 8, 9 and 11.

sectarian theological positions to relatively simple misunderstandings or passing moments of doubt. Ideas could also be conveyed in a variety of forms, from verbal communications to written scholarly treatises. The latter were most serious, for if widely disseminated they might conceivably spread doctrinal error far and wide to the endangerment of untold numbers of souls. Constant study, preaching and teaching of orthodoxy were thus the friars' first line of defence in preventing misbelief from arising in the first place. When this proved insufficient further measures were called for, including heresy trials and the censorship or destruction of books. As acknowledged experts in orthodox Catholic interpretation of Scripture, Dominicans were especially well suited for the identification and evaluation of questionable theological content in both speech and writing. The friars were similarly qualified to pass judgment on whether blasphemies (again either in written or oral form) had indeed been uttered in contempt of the Christian faith.

Normally all this would have little impact on Jews, whose Bible was venerated as part of the Christian Scriptures, or on Muslims, whose Qur'an was not regarded by Dominicans as an authoritative religious text.² Problems arose however, as in the Paris Talmud trials, when suspicions emerged regarding the contents of non-Biblical Jewish writings. If these contained blasphemous insults against Christianity they would not be tolerated. Any Jewish theological writings which Church authorities considered to go beyond traditionally accepted, "orthodox" Jewish teachings might also be liable to censorship and destruction. The same concerns might theoretically apply to Muslim writings, but in practice the friars' attention in the Crown of Aragon as elsewhere seems to have been focused almost exclusively on Jews. Islamic veneration of Jesus and Mary precluded one category of deliberate blasphemies.³ It also seems that the friars and other Christian theologians simply devoted more attention to what they knew best and considered most important: proper interpretation of the Bible. The subtleties of Islamic philosophy and theology were taken seriously at the University of Paris, and they were undoubtedly discussed at mendicant *studia* in Barcelona, as elsewhere. At a local pastoral level, however, such writings were meaningless compared to the broad impact Jewish exegetical pronouncements might potentially have on flocks of average Christians.

The other major problem Dominicans felt a need to monitor and control was apostasy. Legal conversion was a one-way street in the Middle

² Hence Aquinas' simplistic remark that "the Mohammedans ... do not agree with us in accepting the authority of any Scripture" (SCG, bk. 1, ch. 2; tr. Pegis, vol. I, 62).

³ Nirenberg, *Communities*, 193-9.

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Ages; all the Abrahamic religious traditions had policies of accepting incoming converts but also of punishing their own renegades with the strongest available sanctions. In Christendom, rejection of one's membership in the Church was a serious form of heresy punishable by death. Still, illicit conversions of baptized Christians to Islam or Judaism did happen from time to time. In rare cases such converts were raised as Christians but later experienced fundamental shifts in belief, perhaps as a result of exposure to non-Christian teachings. More commonly, however, these apostates were relatively recent converts to Christianity; their decision to revert to a formerly abandoned religion was facilitated by nostalgia, family ties and continuing sympathy toward a non-Christian tradition. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Church all apostates were equally guilty of betraying their baptismal promise. Any Muslim or Jew who encouraged or assisted such heretics also committed a serious crime. For the Dominicans, each and every instance of apostasy represented a soul lost and a dangerous example to others. Apostasy was everywhere a potential threat, but it was especially important to combat it in regions where Christians, Jews, Muslims and recent converts lived in close contact with one another.

In their chosen role as enforcers of orthodoxy, Dominicans in the Crown of Aragon did occasionally take steps to have Jewish books purged, to prosecute non-Christian blasphemers and to ensure that all parties involved in cases of apostasy were duly punished. At times these episodes led to formal inquisitorial tribunals, but there was no sustained inquisitorial policy of singling out non-Christians for systematic persecution. Dominican-led prosecutions across religious boundaries were in fact generally sporadic and limited in their extent. Nearly all involved Jews; as with their preaching and their studies, the friars paid only minimal attention to Muslim communities when it came to anti-heresy or apostasy investigations. It should be noted, too, that actions against Jews represented only a small portion of their disciplinary work. Books by Christians were much more likely to be examined and censored, while Christians could more easily be caught and punished for their occasional blasphemous outbursts.⁴ Practical linguistic and social barriers made it difficult for friars to detect misdeeds taking place outside their own communities. There were also strict limits to mendicants' legal ability to proceed against non-Christians, whether as inquisitors or otherwise. Dominican disciplinary actions had an effect on Muslims and Jews in the Crown of Aragon, but to a lesser extent than has sometimes been supposed.

⁴ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, vol. I, 123 notes that the Valencian Church made a great deal of money by fining Christian blasphemers.

JUDGING OUTSIDERS

Two principles stood in the way of the friars' full participation in prosecuting those who were not members of the Christian *ecclesia*. First, as discussed in [chapter 1](#), there was the canonical interpretation of Paul's words in I Corinthians 5:12–13:

For what have I to do with judging outsiders [*iis qui foris sunt*]? Do you not judge those who are within [the Church]? But those who are outside, God judges.

This suggested that pagans, Jews and Muslims should be left to their own devices, especially in spiritual matters. Normally, the trial and punishment of a non-Christian accused thus did not fall within the purview of the Church or its inquisitorial tribunals. In the Crown of Aragon, this principle was reinforced by royal policies which left most judicial questions to the duly appointed internal religious authorities of each non-Christian community or *aljama*. There were exceptions and variations, but for the most part Muslim and Jewish subjects of Aragonese kings enjoyed the right to be tried only by legal experts from their respective religious traditions.⁵ Dominicans and other Christian clergy had no Scriptural basis from which to question that arrangement.

Secular Christian authorities also claimed legal jurisdiction over their Jewish and Muslim subjects. Any failures of internal self-regulation could thus be appealed or arrogated to the appropriate “feudal” overlord. Normally this was the king. Royal authority over Jews and Muslims remained for legal (if not taxation) purposes when the king granted rights over non-Christian communities to barons, bishops or religious corporations such as the Knights Templar.⁶ “Free” individuals might be independent of their local *aljamas* for tax purposes, but they too were answerable to the king in legal matters.⁷ Individual slaves for their part were more directly subject

⁵ Exceptions included crimes that crossed religious boundaries, for example. On Jewish communal organization see Baer, *History*, vol. I, ch. 5 (pp. 186–242); also Assis, *Golden Age*, 9–48. For Islamic communities see R.I. Burns, “Muslims in the Thirteenth-Century Realms of Aragon: Interaction and Reaction” in J. Powell, ed., *Muslims under Latin Rule 1100–1300* (Princeton, 1990), 57–102; E. Lourie, “Anatomy of Ambivalence” in her *Crusade and Colonisation*, (Aldershot, 1990), essay VII, and J. Boswell, *The Royal Treasure* (New Haven, 1977). R.I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders* (Princeton, 1973), 220–70, and B. Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished* (Cambridge, 2004), 125–78, provide extensive detail on legal aspects of life in Muslim *aljamas* of Valencia and the Ebro valley respectively. For the special situation of Mallorcan Jews and Muslims see D. Abulafia, *A Mediterranean Emporium. The Catalan Kingdom of Majorca*, (Cambridge, 1994), 56–99.

⁶ Catlos, *Victors*, 131–2 and 175–6.

⁷ Muslims of Mallorca had no officially constituted *aljama* in any case (E. Lourie, “Free Moslems in the Balearics under Christian Rule in the Thirteenth Century” in her *Crusade and Colonisation*, essay VI). Their situation was different from the *franquitas* claimed by many mainland Muslims,

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to the *de facto* control and discipline of their owners. Still, ultimate legal control over non-Christians remained in the hands of the king – or his delegates, who might be Jewish, Muslim or Christian depending on the case. Thus even Muslims accused of blaspheming or mocking Christianity were routinely arraigned before Muslim judges, until 1281, when Peter III decided this might lead to abuse. King Peter subsequently transferred jurisdiction (and revenues) of such cases to his Christian royal officials.⁸ The right to control, tax, fine and discipline non-Christians subjects was a lucrative prerogative monarchs were loath to give up.

Church officials nevertheless claimed some limited rights to coerce Jews or Muslims on their own authority. Legislation had been imposed indirectly on non-Christians by popes and Church Councils for centuries, though enforcement was left to secular rulers.⁹ Canon lawyers of the thirteenth century insisted that the principle of universal papal authority allowed for three cases in particular where Church officials could themselves justifiably take action – or demand action by secular authorities – against “those who are outside.” As has already been noted, unbelievers could theoretically be forced to listen to conversionary sermons even if they were not subject to the authority of a Christian ruler. They could also be punished for violating the so-called “natural law,” for example in cases of sexual morality, if their own leaders did not take appropriate action.¹⁰ Jews furthermore were subject to punishment on Church authority in cases where they could be shown to have contravened “their own law” (*suam legem*); that is, Biblical Mosaic law as defined by Christian theological experts (with little or no regard for rabbinic viewpoints).¹¹ It was perhaps this latter sort of alleged transgression which

which exempted them from contribution to royal taxation of the *aljama* (Catlos, *Victors*, 129–30 and 136–8). Neither circumstance implied freedom from legal jurisdiction.

⁸ Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 266. Catlos, *Victors*, 164–5 points out the complexities of local situations, but notes that most criminal matters were indeed taken over by Christian royal officials from Muslim authorities by the late thirteenth century.

⁹ At Lateran IV in 1215, for example, canon 68 prescribed sumptuary laws for Jews to prevent their illicit mingling with Christians; canon 69 repeated the Gregorian prohibition against allowing Jews to hold public office and extended this to include “pagans,” i.e. Muslims (Mansi, vol. XXII, cols. 1055–8). However, popes had to continually badger rulers to actually enforce these laws. Kings of Aragon were notorious for their non-compliance (many examples in Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*).

¹⁰ Muldoon, *Popes*, 165, n. 34. Since Christian theologians did not recognize the Qur’an as a holy text, and canon lawyers were generally ignorant of Shari’a, Muslims were categorized along with pagans as coming under natural law alone – again as defined by Christian canon lawyers (Muldoon, *Popes*, 10–11). Sunna and Shari’a (*aquna et exarea*) were known to legal specialists in the Crown of Aragon however, and enjoyed official status as the royally sanctioned internal law of Muslim *aljamas* (Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 220–48).

¹¹ B.Z. Kedar, “Canon Law and the Burning of the Talmud” in *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 9 (1979), 80. Again, Church intervention in such cases was only permitted if Jewish leaders did not

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allowed ecclesiastical rather than lay authorities to initiate prosecution of the Talmud in the 1240s.¹² Significantly, though, the Paris Talmud trial was also endorsed and closely overseen by queen Blanche; as a result possible disputes between royal and ecclesiastical juridical claims were avoided. Actual scope for independent disciplinary action against non-Christians by mendicant friars or other clergy remained questionable and limited indeed.

CENSORSHIP

In the Crown of Aragon, conflict over jurisdiction seems to have arisen in the course of the very first recorded instance of Dominican intervention against local Jews. In the complicated aftermath of the 1263 Barcelona disputation, Dominicans took part in a series of efforts to censor Jewish books and in one case to punish a living Jewish author. In this they were instigators, but they never managed to monopolize proceedings; along with Franciscan and episcopal representatives, they served more in an advisory capacity as translators and theological experts than as chief prosecutors or judges. Throughout the process, too, king James was careful to retain control. In the end his word was final, despite criticism from some friars and even from the pope. Events from 1263 to 1268 thus demonstrate a series of rare examples both of Dominican efforts to control Jewish writings and of the fairly strict limitations which would continually be imposed whenever they tried to do so.

From the beginning of his days in Catalonia, Paul Christiani seems to have drawn royal attention to alleged blasphemies contained in certain Hebrew writings. On August 28, only two days after the first royal order of 1263 concerning missionary sermons, James instructed his officials to seize all copies of a Hebrew book called *Soffrim* (*sic* for *Shofetim*), by Moses Maimonides. These were to be publicly burned because of

punish offenders themselves. These provisions are further discussed in Grayzel, "Popes, Jews, and Inquisition," 12–13; Muldoon, *Popes*, 11–12 and 22. The assertion that Jews were also liable to punishment for crimes *contra legem Evangelii* is based on a text which found its way into sixteenth-century printed editions of Innocent's *Commentaria*, but which must be revised in light of Kedar's discovery of alternative readings in early MSS. As Kedar points out, the idea that Jews would be responsible for punishing crimes against Christian law would be "a far-fetched expectation indeed" ("Canon Law," 80).

¹² Kedar's revision of the Innocentine text on jurisdiction over Jews (cited above) supports Cohen's position that the trial was essentially based on the Talmud's allegedly heretical deviations from Biblical Judaism. One suspects, however, that the precise distinction between intolerable blasphemy and intolerable heresy was something of a moot point to jurists at Paris, whose conclusion in any case was that the Talmud was not to be tolerated.

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derogatory statements concerning Jesus Christ.¹³ As Robert Chazan has noted, Maimonides' work does contain passages stating that Jesus and Muhammad were mere precursors to the true messiah, and this might have been sufficiently offensive to have the text condemned to the flames.¹⁴

The friars' role in condemning the book is not revealed in the royal edict of 1263, but the circumstances of James' action lead to an inevitable conclusion that Dominicans were involved. Nachmanides' Hebrew account of the Barcelona disputation describes a heated exchange concerning Maimonides on the third day of the debate (the private session at the palace gate), which may suggest that friar Arnold Segarra was at least partly responsible. According to Nachmanides, friar Paul quoted from the *Shofetim* to show that some Jewish sages believed the messiah would die a human death. The rabbi countered first by impugning the accuracy of the quotation, and then by reading another passage from the same work: "king messiah is destined to arise for Israel, and he will build the Temple and gather the banished of Israel."¹⁵ Arnold became enraged at this and denounced Maimonides for uttering anti-Christian "lies."¹⁶ Whether or not this exchange actually occurred, a month later the king was clearly convinced of the text's blasphemous content.

This was only the beginning, however. On August 29, one day after denouncing the *Shofetim*, James wrote to inform his Jewish subjects that Dominican friars Paul Christiani, Ramon Penyafort and Arnold Segarra had been authorized to participate in an inquest aimed at discovering and eliminating any and all blasphemies against Christ and his mother from "Jewish books" throughout the realm.¹⁷ The friars were to assist in the process by identifying passages for removal, but they had no other

¹³ "ut omnes libros, qui vocantur Soffrim, compositos a quodam Iudeo, qui vocabatur Moyses filius Maymon egipciachus sive de Alcayra, Ihesu Christi blasfemias continentes, vobis sine mora et difficultate remota qualibet excusatione ostendant et tradant, quos mox in conspectu populi causa blasfemarum exposita comburi faciatis" (Denifle, "Quellen," 235 [#3]). The book of Judges (*Shofetim*) is the last of fourteen sections in Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* (translated selections are in I. Twersky, ed., *A Maimonides Reader* [New York, 1972], see esp. 189–221 for Judges).

¹⁴ Chazan, *Barcelona*, 89–90. ¹⁵ Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 683–4.

¹⁶ Rabbi Moses goes on to write that James rebuked friar Arnold for his outburst, and then (less believably) allowed Nachmanides to explain the passage at length before abruptly ending the day's proceedings (*Ibid.*, 684–5).

¹⁷ Denifle, "Quellen," 236 (#5). The Talmud was not mentioned explicitly, though it would have been another likely target. Paul was probably chosen because of his knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish books; Penyafort and Segarra (the latter recently retired as Dominican Provincial prior) were not Hebraists, but they would have supported Paul with their theological expertise and authority. Segarra was trained at Paris in the 1240s and so had personal memories of the Talmud trials there; he may also be the "Arnold de Guardia" who supervised Dominican Arabic studies in 1250 (see chapter 3, above).

authority to act. Jews themselves (under the supervision of royal bailiffs) were charged with responsibility for ensuring that the royal order was carried out within three months.¹⁸ Those who failed to comply were liable to pay hefty fines of 1,000 *morabetins* each, and their books were to be summarily burned.¹⁹

The situation at Barcelona was thus quite distinct at this point from the Talmud trials and burnings in France. The difference likely stems from the Dominicans' growing familiarity with Hebrew writings and their appreciation of the Talmud's potential theological significance for adherents of their own faith. Christian scholars had now had more than twenty years to consider the contents of the Talmud; friars had also been actively involved for decades in the study of Maimonides.²⁰ Thus whereas at Paris Nicholas Donin had denounced the Talmud alone as a heretical book (which was also full of absurdities, lies and anti-Christian blasphemies), Paul Christiani twenty years later chose to use Talmudic passages as part of his argument that even rabbinic writings supported Christian theological doctrines when properly interpreted.²¹ The Talmud had its uses, and was therefore to be carefully expurgated rather than eliminated outright. Paul's position proved influential in the Crown of Aragon, and Raymond Martini would follow a similar tack in his own writings.²²

We cannot know the extent to which the censorship campaign of 1263 was actually executed, or the impact it had on Jewish communities. At the very least it must have been a chilling threat, and books may in fact have been mutilated – though there was apparently no question of mass book-burnings as had earlier occurred at Paris and other parts of France. The process of submitting countless Hebrew books from dozens of communities would have been most arduous and complicated. Each

¹⁸ Denifle, "Quellen," 236. Later in the same letter James called for his *baiulis* to select twenty or thirty Jewish leaders from each *aljama* to oversee the process (*ibid.*, 237).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Pro-Maimonidean rabbis alleged that their opponents invited Dominicans to intervene in the Jewish "Maimonidean controversy" of 1230–2. Though details are scarce it appears that the friars investigated Maimonides' writings and ordered some to be banned at Montpellier in 1232 (D. Silver, *Maimonidean Criticism and the Maimonidean Controversy (1180–1240)* [Leiden, 1965]; I. Dobbs-Weinstein, "The Maimonidean controversy" in D. Frank and O. Leaman, eds. *History of Jewish Philosophy* [London, 1997], 331–49).

²¹ See chapter 4. The Latin record of the 1263 disputation makes no explicit allegation that the Talmud was heretical or blasphemous; however Nachmanides is alleged to have stated that it contained "passages in which their [Jewish] scholars often lied for the sake of exhorting the people" ("sermões erant, in quibus doctores eorum ad extortacionem populi multociens mentiebantur") (Denifle, "Quellen," 233; cf. Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial*, 149). As will be seen below, pope Clement IV was more eager to revive the case against the Talmud. Paul Christiani too may have adopted a harsher stance by the time of his preaching at Paris (where he was subject to less royal interference) c. 1270; see Cohen, *Living Letters*, 330–58.

²² Martini's *Capistrum judaeorum* and *Pugio fidei* are discussed in chapter 3.

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manuscript had to be examined initially by Paul Christiani alone; dubious passages were then submitted to the committee as a whole. Three months were hardly enough time to complete the task properly.

James consequently repeated his order for the compulsory examination and censorship of Hebrew books on March 27, 1264 (seven months later). The king noted that protests and confusion had arisen. He therefore clarified the limits of his command in a letter addressed to Jewish community leaders:

now, since We understand that some of you are uncertain with regard to the said fine of 1,000 *morabetins*, whether you are yourselves obliged to remove anything from your books, We hereby recognize and declare that you need not remove or denounce anything from these books nor will you incur the said fine, until friar Paul or some other should show you the passage with the said blasphemy; once it has been shown to you, if you are able to explain that it is not a blasphemy against our Lord Jesus Christ and his mother the blessed Mary, according to the understanding and judgement of those assigned by Us ... then you will not have to condemn or remove anything from them.²³

This right of response may have been a new concession, or simply a restatement of James' original intention. Either way the censorship campaign was clearly being affected by Jewish resistance. It was also now endowed with new personnel: bishop Arnold de Gurb of Barcelona, the Hebrew- and Arabic-trained Dominican Raymond Martini and the Franciscan Peter of Genoa.²⁴ The shuffle was significant, as it imposed a new leader (the bishop), a new Hebrew expert (Martini) and a Barcelona friar whose sympathy for Nachmanides emerges from both accounts of the 1263 disputation (Peter of Genoa).²⁵ James was perhaps already deliberately moving away from a hard line advocated by some Dominicans, in a matter which had dragged on too long. The king's waning patience for tedious mendicant-inspired prosecutions against his Jews was soon to become still more evident.

At some point before the spring of 1265, a new legal issue was brought before the king and a panel of royal judges by the original Dominican censorship tribunal of Penyafort, Segarra and Christiani.²⁶

²³ Denifle, "Quellen," 238 (#7).

²⁴ *Ibid.* 238. The bishop would have become the senior figure on the committee; Martini was likely the most junior.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 234; Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 663-4 and 686.

²⁶ The case was judged by James along with a distinguished group of lay and ecclesiastical experts (again headed by Arnold de Gurb): "venerabili episcopo Barchinonensi, Berengario A. de Anglaria, magistro Berengario de Turri archidiacono Barchinon., magistro Bernardo de Olorda, sacrista Barchinonensi, Bernardo Vital, Ferrer de Minorisa et Berengario de Vico iureperitis, et pluribus aliis" (Denifle, "Quellen," 239 [#8]).

Their accusation this time was directed against one Bonastrug de Porta, a Jewish *magister* of Girona who is usually assumed to be none other than Nachmanides himself.²⁷ Bonastrug was charged with having uttered “certain words disparaging our Lord and all the catholic faith” (*quod in Domini nostri vituperium et tocius fidei catholice dixerat quedam verba*) while in disputation with friar Paul, a crime made worse by the fact that he had later committed these words to writing in a book.²⁸ The book in question was presumably Nachmanides’ still-extant *vikuach* narrative with its extravagant claim of Jewish victory, though this is not absolutely certain.²⁹ In consultation with his advisors (none of whom were mendicants), James decided on April 12, 1265 to have the book burned because of its offensive contents. He also assigned Bonastrug a preliminary sentence of two years in exile.³⁰ The Dominicans dissented against this verdict, however, and the *magister* was subsequently set free with a safe conduct.³¹ It was a hollow victory, perhaps even an insult, for those advocating the harsh and exemplary punishment of Jewish blasphemers.

The failure of Paul Christiani’s efforts against Bonastrug de Porta, combined with his failure to implement a missionary preaching campaign and the slow progress of his Hebrew book censorship, finally led him to abandon the Crown of Aragon sometime between 1265 and

²⁷ Many medieval Jews had “Romance” names as related alternatives to their Hebrew ones, and the congruence between Nachmanides’ and Bonastrug’s experiences suggest that they were one and the same (see analysis in Chazan, *Barcelona*, 199–203; also Burns, *Diplomatarium*, vol. I, 101–2).

²⁸ Denifle, “Quellen,” 239. The charge was perhaps a result of the original 1263 book investigation, if the text was in Hebrew; nevertheless James’ document avoids use of the word “blasphemy.”

²⁹ Chazan, *Barcelona*, 93–9. The fact that Bonastrug’s text was written “at the request of the bishop of Girona” raises the possibility that this was a separate Latin account of the disputation. It seems unlikely that Nachmanides would have written the Hebrew *vikuach* account for a bishop.

³⁰ Denifle, “Quellen,” 239–40. The sentence was mitigated by Bonastrug’s defence that he had been granted freedom of speech in the disputation by James and Raymond Penyafort (“licentia dicendi omnia, quecunque vellet in ipsa disputatione”); the counterargument was that this did not extend to the writing of a book. The point recalls Nachmanides, who described a discussion over freedom of speech at the beginning of his debate (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 657–8).

³¹ The Dominicans’ objection, and James’ consequent dismissal of the case, was noted in the same 1265 document immediately after the verdict: “quam quidem sententiam dicti fratres predicatorum admittere nullo modo voluerunt. Quapropter nos Ia. Dei gratia rex predictus concedimus tibi dicto Bonastrugo de Porta ... quod de premissis vel aliquo premissorum in posse alicuius persone non ... (tene) aris tempore aliquo respondere nisi tantum in posse nostro et presentia” (Denifle, “Quellen,” 240). Nachmanides left Girona some years later to travel to the Holy Land, and his departure may have resulted from mendicant pressure, but this does not mean that he was formally exiled (M. Cohen, “Reflections on the Disputation,” 189). While in Palestine he composed a “Prayer at the Ruins of Jerusalem” (Ramban, *Writings*, vol. II, 702–25) in which exile is indeed an important theme, but this is hardly surprising in a piece of Jewish poetry and need not be a literal allusion to the author’s personal circumstances.

1267.³² King James was probably happy to see him go, and turned his royal attention away from Jewish affairs toward a field of action in which he was much more comfortable: quarrels with his nobles and wars against Muslim foes.³³ No further actions are known to have been taken by friars against the Jews of the realm during the remaining decade of James' reign, and censorship of Jewish books seems to have petered out after Paul's departure. As with the Barcelona disputation itself, the king apparently did not consider the Dominicans' maneuvers to be particularly important or worthy of recording, as he chose to make no mention of them in his autobiographical *Llibre dels fets*.

There is a sequel to this story, which further demonstrates the limits of Dominican influence in Jewish affairs when deprived of royal backing. The year 1265 also saw the installation of a new pope with the name Clement IV, a very promising development for anti-Jewish activists like Paul Christiani and his like-minded mendicant colleagues. Clement was of course none other than the former archbishop of Narbonne, Guy Foulques, whom we have already met as a patron of Roger Bacon and of friar Paul. News of his election may well have precipitated the latter's return to Italy from Barcelona.³⁴ This pope was deeply concerned with the problem of protecting Christian souls from Islamic and Jewish influences, and his hard-line stance against Jews was especially evident in the fact that he refrained from issuing the traditional protection bull *Sicut judaeis*.³⁵ Clement soon showed his support for Paul Christiani's campaign against "blasphemous" Jewish writings by attempting to influence royal policies in the Crown of Aragon. Indeed he seems to have pressed harder for specific actions against Iberian Muslims and Jews than any previous pontiff.

³² The 1265 sentence against Bonastrug is the last document to mention friar Paul's presence in the kingdom, though he may have left earlier. He was at the papal curia by July 1267 at the latest.

³³ An anti-Castilian revolt broke out among the Muslims of Murcia by May of 1264, and in July James held a council of war to organize Aragonese intervention on behalf of his son-in-law, Alfonso X. Many Aragonese nobles opposed the proposal and had to be subdued by force. The trial of Bonastrug therefore took place in the midst of James' efforts to win support for a new military campaign, which culminated in an assembly at Exea (April 1265). The king was in Murcia with his army by the fall of 1265 and received the city's submission in January 1266. All these events are described at great length and with some relish in the *Llibre dels fets*, chs. 378–455 (cf. J. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* [Ithaca, 1975], 365–7). James' reliance during the campaign on his Jewish translator and secretary En Astruch also clearly emerges from his account (*Llibre dels fets*, chs. 436–7).

³⁴ Guy was elected pope on February 5, 1265; word of this would have reached Barcelona shortly before the release of James' verdict concerning Bonastrug (Mann, *Lives of the Popes*, vol. XV, 221–3).

³⁵ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 85. In a letter of December 23, 1267 Clement advised the archbishops and bishops of southern France that he was in fact willing to revoke all traditional Church protections enjoyed by the Jews if they did not comply with his directives (*ibid.*, 108).

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

In a lengthy undated letter to James of Aragon Clement expressed his strong disapproval for the monarch's lenient treatment of conquered Muslims and Jewish subjects.³⁶ After a brief *captatio benevolentiae* lauding James for his piety and successes *contra Sarracenos* (presumably a reference to the fall of Murcia in January 1266), the pope railed against royal toleration of *mudéjar* residence in the Crown of Aragon and warned that even keeping Muslims as slaves was like "feeding a serpent in one's lap or a fire in one's bosom."³⁷ Clement was especially exercised over continuance of the muezzins' call to prayer, which had been permitted in conquered Murcia.³⁸ Having warned the king that he risked divine displeasure, the pope then turned to what was perhaps the real heart of the missive: a call for James to cease taxing his churches and instead devote himself to funding the beleaguered episcopal see of Valencia.³⁹

Almost as a postscript, Clement reminded the king of his duty to keep Jews out of public office and to prevent them from uttering *blasphemias incorrectas*. The first was an old issue in the Crown of Aragon, where many Jews held prominent positions at the royal court.⁴⁰ The second had undoubtedly been tabled at the papal curia by a recently arrived Paul Christiani. As an example of concrete action to be taken, the pope asked that the author of a certain "book of lies" (*mendaciis librum*) concerning a disputation with friar Paul should be properly punished for his audacity – preferably by death or mutilation.⁴¹ Despairing of the Barcelona Dominicans' efforts to obtain an effective royal prosecution against Bonastrug de Porta, friar Paul had invoked papal assistance.

No royal response was forthcoming, however, and on July 15, 1267 Clement sent copies of the more sharply worded bull *Damnabili perfidia judaeorum* to James and all the prelates of his realm.⁴² Dispensing with pleasant formalities, Clement here launched immediately into a vicious

³⁶ The letter is in Denifle, "Quellen," 240–3 (#9) and Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 92–7 (#24) with extensive notes. It has generally been dated to 1266, though Kenneth Stow suggests that it might have been issued in 1267 along with the bull *Damnabili perfidia judaeorum* (discussed below) (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 102, n. 7).

³⁷ *Ibid.* 93. Perhaps this sentiment explains the Dominicans' tendency to purchase baptized slaves (see chapter 8).

³⁸ *Ibid.*; cf. *Libre dels fets*, chs. 440 and 445.

³⁹ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 94.

⁴⁰ Including, as noted above, the translator and secretary En Astruch who served James on the Murcian campaign. Cf. Assis, *Golden Age*, 13–16.

⁴¹ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 94–5. The pope's claim that the book in question was being widely circulated is perhaps confirmed by the existence of a summary of Nachmanides' Hebrew *vikuach* text, including verbatim quotes, in a Paris MS of 1269 (Shatzmiller, *Deuxième controverse*, 36–43).

⁴² Briefly summarized in Denifle, "Quellen," 243–4 (#10–11); text with partial translation and notes in Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 97–102 (#25).

denunciation of Jews and Judaism – again applying the proverb about “a serpent in the lap and a fire in the bosom” previously used to characterize the *mudéjars*. Having made this point, the pope appealed for the king and his nobles to immediately force Jews to turn in all their books for inspection – especially Talmud manuscripts and Talmudic commentaries.⁴³ Writings found to be licit (such as Bibles) were to be returned to their owners, but those containing “blasphemies, errors or falsehoods” were to be sealed and stored for future investigation by papal authorities.⁴⁴ Judging from the pope’s use of phrases drawn from earlier Talmud denunciations, it seems that he was inclined toward harsher treatment for Talmudic literature than had previously been sought in the Crown of Aragon.⁴⁵ Clement’s letter was actually delivered by Paul Christiani, and it specified that Paul along with other Dominican and Franciscan friars should be assigned to supervise the proceedings.⁴⁶

Clement thus shared the mendicant’s impression that royal censorship campaigns in Aragon (begun almost four years earlier) had been stalled if not terminated altogether. Still he was willing to send Paul Christiani back to make another attempt at convincing James to proceed against alleged Jewish blasphemies – and especially those contained within the Talmud. It is unlikely that he received much of a hearing from the temperamental king, however. On the contrary a whole series of royal edicts were issued on October 25, 1268 for the benefit of prominent Jewish *aljamas* in Barcelona, Girona, Perpignan and Montpellier, with clauses that blatantly defied Clement’s and Paul’s agenda. These included exemptions from most investigations concerning Hebrew books, dispensations from onerous sumptuary laws, permission to collect interest on loans at the rate of four *deniers* per pound per month, and a renewal of the prior exemption from forced attendance at conversionary sermons.⁴⁷ Perhaps in response, Paul once more took his leave of the Crown of Aragon and moved on to Paris. There he resumed his

⁴³ “ut a Judaeis tibi, et eis subditis totum Talamud cum suis additionibus, et expositionibus, et omnes eorum libros ipsis faciatis liberaliter exhiberi” (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 100).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* The decision to preserve and study the Talmud rather than simply burn it suggests that friar Paul and his colleagues had reversed or at least challenged earlier thinking on the Talmud’s heretical nature (but cf. the objections of Cohen, *Living Letters*, 331–2).

⁴⁵ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 99–100. *Damnabili perfidia judaeorum* contains a clear echo of words used by Innocent IV in *Impia judaeorum perfidia*, including its *incipit* (*ibid.*, vol. I, 250; the similarity was noted by Kenneth Stow in *Alienated Minority*, 258–9; cf. Cohen, *Living Letters*, 331–2).

⁴⁶ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 100–1.

⁴⁷ Régné, 69–70 (#386–92, 394–5). On the same date the king also chastized his officials at Montpellier for proceeding in an unauthorized legal action against Jews there (Régné, 70 [#396]). The Jews of Lleida were granted similar rights two weeks later (Régné, 71 [#400]).

anti-Jewish preaching and disputational activities with the support of a more compliant French monarchy.⁴⁸

Paul Christiani and the Dominicans of Barcelona thus had little overall success in their attempts to bring Jewish authors and Hebrew books to trial in the period following the 1263 disputation. They were allowed to bring blasphemy allegations to the king's attention. They were also assigned to receive, examine and make recommendations concerning the contents of confiscated Hebrew books, though after March 1264 they shared these duties with a bishop and a Franciscan. Control of the ensuing trials remained a purely royal affair, and by 1265 royal opinion was no longer inclined to heed the suggestions of those calling for strict punishment of alleged Jewish blasphemers, or for regular and widespread investigation of their books. An inquisition had been held but it was under royal auspices; independent inquisitorial action against Jews by friars or other Church authorities, even when backed by explicit papal authorization, was apparently not yet a possibility in the Crown of Aragon.

BLASPHEMY

Dominican friars remained concerned with the possibility that Jewish (and presumably Muslim) blasphemies might be going unpunished, and when they became aware of such cases they took what actions they could. In one instance, a Dominican named Sancho de Canis (*de las Caynas*) of the Huesca convent accused an Aragonese Jew named Açac Çalema (from Biel) of publicly uttering blasphemies against the incarnation of Jesus and against the Virgin Mary in 1305.⁴⁹ The friar did not himself undertake to prosecute Açac, however, leaving this instead to the royal court as usual. What led him to act at all was his belief that the Jew's wealth and local influence might otherwise prevent his being brought to justice.⁵⁰ Friar Sancho de Canis was a respected and influential member of the

⁴⁸ According to one anonymous chronicler, a Dominican answering closely to Paul's description arrived in Paris en route from Lombardy at Pentecost (9 June) 1269; there he commenced a program of anti-Jewish agitation and preaching (Shatzmiller, *Deuxième controverse*, 15–22). If this is correct then Paul must have returned from Aragon to the papal curia between late 1267 and early 1269. Friar Paul's decision to leave the curia may have followed Clement IV's death on November 29, 1268, but the lead up to Louis IX's final 1270 crusade was in any case a propitious time for his Parisian debut.

⁴⁹ Sancho laid his complaint before the king in a letter dated April 30, 1305 (Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 184–8 [#157]; cf. Assis, *Golden Age*, 60).

⁵⁰ In his denunciation, Sancho claimed that he was preaching Lenten sermons in Biel with his *socius* when they were informed that Açac had committed blasphemy: "que dixo mal de sancta Maria e de Jesu Cristo, su fillo, non en desputacion ... mas en danario e publicament [sienes] miedo ninguno" (Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 185). It is interesting to note Sancho's passing reference to *desputacion*, which suggests that informal religious discussions between Christians and Jews were

Order, and he succeeded in attracting the king's attention.⁵¹ The resulting enquiry was purely secular, however, and in the end even Sancho's pious indignation did not secure a conviction. James II of Aragon examined the charge personally and dismissed it as false after receiving a substantial payment from the accused.⁵²

Only when royal jurisdiction was somehow limited did the friars even attempt to avail themselves of the theoretically universal claims of canon law against misbehaving non-Christians. One rare case took place in 1302, when three Jewish merchants (Bonsenyor and Cento de Forn, along with Mosse Toros) were investigated by the Dominican inquisitor John de Lotgerio and bishop-elect Ponce de Gualba of Barcelona for allegedly "having spoken certain contumelious words, and laying violent hands on the image of the glorious virgin and spitting in her face."⁵³ The accusation thus involved a particularly egregious instance of blasphemy. In this instance, moreover, the alleged crime took place in Mamluk Alexandria – a Muslim territory where the king of Aragon's writ did not run.⁵⁴ It was therefore a crime which might reasonably have been expected to go unpunished by the Jews' usual disciplining authorities (whether *aljama* or royal officials). Bishop and inquisitor therefore stepped in to assert the universal authority of the Church.

Even with these special circumstances, though, James II of Aragon was unwilling to allow a precedent to be set in the delicate matter of jurisdiction over his Jews. Despite inquisitorial and episcopal efforts, all three Jews were freed upon payment of a large sum to the king – who declared them absolved of any alleged "excesses" and closed the case without deciding one way or the other on their guilt.⁵⁵ Royal authority thus ultimately trumped that of an ecclesiastical inquisition, and the Dominicans were reminded once more that they had no power over the king's non-Christian subjects.

occurring at this time, in which a certain license of speech was expected as long as they were not too public and scandalous.

⁵¹ He had already studied at Bologna, and was named visitator to the Order's Catalan convents in 1310 (Hernández, "Pergaminos," 65; Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 21 [1991], 115). Royal attention was undoubtedly also stimulated by the prospect of deriving a large fine from a wealthy suspect.

⁵² A note following the verdict (dated September 29, 1305) confirms that 2,000 *solidi* of Jaca were paid to the royal curia (text appended to doc. #157 in Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 188). Sancho had estimated the Jew's net worth at more than 40,000 *solidi*, so this was a large but hardly a devastating fine.

⁵³ Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, vol. III, 111–12 (#49). Cf. Assis, "Papal Inquisition," 396–7.

⁵⁴ The Jews were denounced by a Catalan consul at Alexandria, accompanied by other merchants.

⁵⁵ The three paid 6,000 *solidi* of Barcelona (comparable to the sum paid by Açac in 1305) (text from the treasury register partially given in Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, vol. III, 112; cf. Assis, "Papal Inquisition," 397, n. 27).

APOSTASY

The situation was quite different when it came to converts. Both as pastors and as inquisitors Dominicans did have jurisdiction over the spiritual transgressions of baptized Christians. This included converts from Judaism or Islam, along with their descendants. It may be presumed that the friars acted from the beginning of their establishment in the Crown of Aragon, whenever it was possible and convenient, to monitor converts for heretical tendencies. Reversion to Judaism had already emerged as a contemporary problem at Lateran IV in 1215, and Innocent IV called for punishment of such apostates at the first Council of Lyons (1245–7).⁵⁶ Converts rarely occupied the affluent social strata in which the friars tended to circulate, however, and whatever Judaizing or apostasy took place in this early period largely aroused little comment. Events later in the thirteenth century placed the discipline of converts more squarely at the centre of the friars' agenda, and by the fourteenth century it had become an important, if still somewhat sporadic, activity which at times resulted in mendicant-led prosecutions of Jews as well.

Apostasy among converts was highlighted on July 27, 1267, when Clement IV issued the bull *Turbato corde*. This was less than two weeks after, and probably closely related to, the release of *Damnabili perfidia judaeorum*. Addressing himself to mendicant friars throughout Christendom who were charged with inquisitorial duties, Clement called their attention to what he saw as a most disturbing development:

With troubled heart we heard and relate that many faithless Christians, rejecting the truth of the Catholic Faith, damnably transferred themselves to the Jewish rite ... we [therefore] order you ... inquiring both of Christian and of Jewish [witnesses] ... to proceed diligently with an inquisition and a care for the truth, against those Christians who you find to have committed such [blasphemous acts of conversion] just as you would against heretics; you should also punish Jews who you discover to have led any Christians of either sex into their execrable cult ... with the appropriate punishment ... calling upon the aid of the secular arm if the case requires it [for corporal or capital punishment].⁵⁷

There may have been a rising trend in apostasy cases in the 1260s, or Clement's concern may have been more of a chimera inspired by his own peculiar anti-Jewish anxieties; it is impossible to determine real numbers since by their very nature these illegal reversions were secretive. Papal awareness was stimulated in any event by the recent experiences of

⁵⁶ See canon 70 of Lateran IV (Mansi, vol. XXII, col. 1058). For Innocent IV see S. Simonsohn, ed., *The Apostolic See and the Jews* (Toronto, 1988), vol. I, 182–3 (#172).

⁵⁷ Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 102–4 (#26).

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Dominican friars like Paul Christiani, then resident at the curia. It will be recalled that Christiani was notorious in Languedoc for removing bodies from Jewish cemeteries; Joseph Shatzmiller's research shows that this was probably part of a growing effort to keep suspected apostates segregated from Jews even after death.⁵⁸ The apostates in question were presumably former Jews who had been surreptitiously restored to their former communities. A few may even have sought to do so openly, challenging the validity of forced baptisms, as Baruch Teutonici would do at Toulouse in 1320.⁵⁹ In some isolated cases there were claims that non-converts or "old Christians" risked capital punishment by embracing Judaism, as will be seen below. No matter how few these latter may have been in reality, Gregory X reissued *Turbato corde* in 1274 with the addition of a special warning that not only *conversi* but also "born" Christians were adopting the Jewish faith.⁶⁰ Martin IV renewed Gregory's version of the bull in the 1280s, as did Nicholas IV on two separate occasions.⁶¹ Inquisitors and other friars were thus reminded with some regularity in the late thirteenth century to keep converts from Judaism under close surveillance. Part of their task would involve paying increased attention to Jewish communities as well. The best place to find apostates and their accomplices was in a *call*, among the members of an *aljama*.

Though ignored by James I, the principles of *Turbato corde* were endorsed by later Aragonese kings who welcomed the prospect of having friars take on the catechism and discipline of converts from both Judaism and Islam. Converts from Islam were especially difficult to reach for most parish priests. Some were privately held slaves living in isolation from wider communities, while others continued to reside in their old Muslim neighborhoods after baptism. Many (especially on the

⁵⁸ Shatzmiller, "Paulus Christiani." In Jewish communities apostasy was also viewed as a serious transgression, though special circumstances (forced baptisms, for example) were taken into consideration (J. Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance* [London, 1961], 68–70). Many Christians were convinced that Jews would stop at nothing, including murder, to prevent such apostasies from their ranks; legislation was enacted to punish those who harmed or killed new converts to Christianity (*Siete Partidas* part 7, tit. 24, ley 6; a similar law was issued by James II of Aragon in 1297. See Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 20).

⁵⁹ Grayzel, "Confession."

⁶⁰ "quod non solum quidam de Judaicae coecitatis errore ad lumen Fidei Christianae conversi ad priorem reversi esse perfidiam dignoscuntur; verum etiam quamplurimi Christiani veritatem Catholicae Fidei abnegantes se damnabiliter ad ritum Judaicum transtulerunt" (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 122–3 [#33]). Kenneth Stow points out in a note to this text that the Christians in question here may have been children of *conversi*.

⁶¹ Martin IV seems to have issued *Turbato corde* on March 1, 1281 (but see Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. II, 147 for doubts about this). Nicholas IV's September 5, 1288 reissue of the bull is more certain; a copy was also sent by the same pope to the Franciscan inquisitors of the Romagna on September 9, 1290 (*ibid.*, 171–2 [#56] and 181 [#61]).

Valencian and Murcian frontiers) were likely Arabic-speakers with an imperfect grasp of the Romance vernacular.⁶² The heightened danger of apostasy in such circumstances was evident to all.⁶³ When large numbers of Valencian *mudéjars* were baptized in the wake of anti-Islamic riots in 1276–7, therefore, Peter III ordered the local Dominican friar John de Podio Ventoso “to visit, instruct and correct” the neophytes – by force if necessary.⁶⁴ John was probably chosen because he had a knowledge of Arabic, and he was later assigned by the Order to teach the language to others in a Valencia-based *studium arabicum*.⁶⁵

Friar John (and his successors, if there were any) may have continued to preach to the converted, while always keeping an eye out for heterodoxy or apostasy, for decades to come. In 1296, king James II of Aragon made a point of noting that all converts (from both Islam and Judaism) had an explicit duty to observe the “preachings, admonitions and corrections” of the Dominican friars – on pain of physical punishment inflicted by the secular authorities.⁶⁶ Unfortunately there is no further evidence to show how, or to what extent this legal principle was actually put into practice; presumably converts were quite rare, and instances of punishment for apostasy rarer still.

Aside from the Dominicans’ pastoral and inquisitorial work among converted Muslims in Valencia City, there is in fact very little to indicate that either *Turbato corde* or James’ 1296 legislation inspired serious scrutiny of non-Christian or convert communities in the Crown of Aragon

⁶² On enduring monolingual use of Arabic in *mudéjar* Valencia, see R.I. Burns, “The Language Barrier: Bilingualism and Interchange” in Burns, *Muslims, Christians and Jews*, esp. 190–2.

⁶³ R.I. Burns has documented several examples of thirteenth-century Valencian apostates from Christianity who either returned to Islam or (less frequently) converted to it. William Raymond, for example, “returned it is said to the sect of Mafumet” and so had his shop in the Muslim quarter of the city of Valencia confiscated by the king, who transferred it to his loyal Muslim subject Muhammad de Sale in November 1279 (Burns, “Renegades, Adventurers, and Sharp Businessmen” in *CHR* 58 [1972], 345–7). Such apostates generally fled to Muslim territory where they could expect good treatment; apostates who converted to Judaism had no such guarantee.

⁶⁴ From a privilege of king Peter, dated 1279: “curam habere de neophitis in Regno Valentiae visitandis, instruendis & etiam corrigendis vt per ipsius diligentiam praefati neophiti in gratia susceptae fidei confirmentur & a criminibus sui erroris pristini reuocentur ... & si necesse fuerit compellatis quod ad ipsius praedicationes conueniant & monita atque correctiones eius audiant humiliter & obseruent. Punientes transgressores poena qua ipse illos nouerit puniendos” (Diago, fol. 161r).

⁶⁵ John was subprior of the Valencia Dominican convent in 1280; he was assigned to give Arabic classes to five Dominican students at Valencia in 1281 (Diago, fols. 161r–v; Hernandez, “Pergaminos,” 30). It remains a possibility that his experience as a pastor among converted Arabic speakers allowed him to learn the language, rather than the other way around.

⁶⁶ Rubió y Lluch, *Documents*, vol. II, 9–11 (#12). This clause was inserted at the end of James’ expanded version of the traditional laws concerning Jews, Muslims and converts as established by his grandfather in 1242.

Destroying error

before the second decade of the fourteenth century.⁶⁷ It was at that time, as seen in [chapter 2](#), that a more permanent inquisitorial office based at Barcelona began to replace previous *ad hoc* inquisitions aimed for the most part against Pyrenean Cathars. The momentum generated by this new institutional development may explain why James II of Aragon decided to renew his 1296 laws on converts and their obligation to accept Dominican pastoral care in 1311.⁶⁸ By 1312, too, a series of scandals had occurred to refocus attention once again on the issue of Christian apostasy.

Beginning in the summer of 1311 or 1312, the Jewish *aljamas* of Catalonia were racked by allegations that they had provided illegal aid and counsel to two German fugitives, Christians who had apostatized and converted to Judaism.⁶⁹ The pair had apparently been circumcised at Toledo and fled to seek a more out-of-the-way milieu in which to pass the rest of their days.⁷⁰ On the way, according to the accusation, they were helped by Jews from Tarragona and other communities. An initial sentence for this “crime” was passed by the archbishop of Tarragona on September 22, 1312, in which ten Jews of Tarragona were sent into exile from the kingdom while their *aljama* and that of neighboring Valls were given large fines. Perhaps in a bid to avoid more serious punishment, three members of the Tarragona community accepted conversion to Christianity.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Yom Tov Assis suggests that inquisitors’ efforts to act against the Jews “became more frequent and more dangerous at the beginning of the fourteenth century,” but gives no references to actual examples of any such efforts before 1311 (Assis, *Golden Age*, 60). His mention of a case at Tarragona in 1303 probably results from a misprint in Finke (*Acta Aragonensia*, vol. II, 859–60 [#540], where the date is given first as 1323 and then as 1303; the first must be accurate as the inquisitor in question was still a teacher in 1303 and only became an inquisitor c. 1320). On the Alexandrian blasphemy trial and the 1305 denunciation by Sancho de Canis at Huesca, also cited by Assis, see above.

⁶⁸ Summarized in Régné, 543 (#2934). The 1311 legislation may also have been intended as a show of piety to coincide with the meeting of a major Church Council at Vienne.

⁶⁹ The case is documented in a royal acknowledgement of sentences passed by the archbishop of Tarragona on September 22, 1312 (Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 204–6 [#166]; Régné, 546 [#2952]). The Barcelona inquisitor John de Lotgerio had already begun proceedings against a Jew named Jucef Maçana (also from Barcelona) before June 17, 1311, however. Jucef was accused of involvement in cases of apostasy by both “old Christians” and converts from Judaism. Though he was granted a royal safe-conduct and freedom from further inquisitorial prosecution, it is possible that Jucef’s indictment was connected to the later developments at Tarragona and/or Montblanch as suggested by Baer.

⁷⁰ The plan may have been to reach Islamic Granada or North Africa via a Catalan port; they seem to have reached Mallorca at least. Since no extant document mentions the ultimate fate of the two Germans, it is possible that they made good their escape.

⁷¹ Conversion was a common option for those convicted of serious crimes (see Nirenberg, *Communities*, 132 and 150 for examples from the Crown of Aragon).

While investigating allegations that Jews of Montblanch had also been involved in the flight of the two Germans, the archbishop decided to lay further charges. As a result, the Montblanch *aljama* was accused of aiding both the German “old Christians” and an apostatized convert named John Ferrandi – who was also suspected of killing yet another Jewish convert to Christianity. Indeed, according to one royal document, John may have been something of a hero in the region, known by the curious Hebrew title *bahall teçuva* [*Ba’al Teshuvah*], “lord of repentance.”⁷² If local Jews really bestowed such a moniker on Ferrandi as a result of his return to Judaism and/or his killing of an unrepentant convert then reversions were indeed a matter of pride, and actively supported by some in the community. The Montblanch Jews were found collectively guilty and given crippling fines, though king James later intervened to lessen the sentence. He did not challenge the archbishop’s overall right to act as “spiritual judge” in this complicated matter.⁷³

The case of the German apostates also spread beyond the boundaries of mainland Catalonia to the now-autonomous kingdom of Mallorca, but here king Sancho (1311–24) was less willing to allow bishops or mendicants any freedom to act without strict royal supervision. At sometime before 1314, after allegedly fleeing Lleida and Girona, the Germans arrived in Mallorca and were harbored by the city’s Jewish *aljama*.⁷⁴ What followed is obscure. According to one late source, the bishop conducted an inquisition and demanded a massive fine of 150,000 *florins* from the community.⁷⁵ Dominican and/or Franciscan friars may also have been involved in some capacity.⁷⁶ Subsequent documentation shows that the

⁷² Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 207–8 (#168); Régné, 548 (#2966) transcribes the name as *Bahall Recuna*.

⁷³ Of the 20,000 Barcelona *solidi* originally seized from Montblanch, 12,300 were ordered to be returned on 26 March 1313 (Régné, 548 [#2966]; Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 207–8 [#168]). The archbishop’s partial pardon of eight of the ten original defendants in the case of the German apostates, issued on March 31, 1313, is recorded in James’ confirmation letter of April 17, 1313 (Régné, 549 [#2971]).

⁷⁴ The fact that accusations encompassed the *aljamas* of so many Catalan cities (Valls, Tarragona, Montblanch, Lleida and Girona en route from Toledo to Mallorca) may reflect a desperate and erratic flight from pursuers, or it may instead stem from efforts to ensure as wide a prosecution as possible. The Mallorcan case was resolved by 1315, but that the Germans’ arrival on (and perhaps departure from) the island must have occurred before the storm broke in Catalonia c. 1311–12.

⁷⁵ The Mallorcan phase of the case is unfortunately known only from a brief reference in Vicente Mut’s *Historia del reino de Mallorca* (1632; repr. Palma, 1841), vol. III, 384 and 685) (cited in F. Fita, “Los Judíos Mallorquines y el Concilio de Viena” in *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 36 [1900], 248–9 [#5]; cf. Isaacs, *Jews of Majorca*, 42–5). Mut claimed that the Germans arrived in 1314, and that the Jews were fined by bishop William de Vilanova (100,000 *florins* for the king and 50,000 for the conversion of the Jews’ synagogue into a church). Primary source documentation for this was no longer extant for Fita to consult by 1900, however.

⁷⁶ According to a document transcribed by Jaime Villanueva in the nineteenth century, an inquisitor named “fray Bernardo Guilla” seized 500 *libras* from a Jewish merchant named Lope Xoqui sometime before March 7, 1316 (when the king issued an order to reclaim the money for the

Jews of Mallorca suffered a total loss of their possessions and privileges *ex certis criminibus* at this time, including a synagogue which was transformed into the Christian chapel of Santa Fe, though no further mention of the German apostates has survived.⁷⁷

Whatever the precise nature of the trial and punishment which occurred in 1314, it is clear that the king soon took steps to seize (or retain) control of the situation. Sancho left his mainland territories and arrived in Mallorca early in 1314, remaining there until September 1315.⁷⁸ The actions he took while on the island are unrecorded, but instructions sent to officials on the island after his departure have been preserved. These include a lengthy document in the vernacular which details the king's plan for a total reorganization of the Mallorcan *aljama*.⁷⁹ After establishing taxes and tributes he expected to receive from the Jews, Sancho went on to specify that Jews were henceforth to be spared from any undue pressure to convert, especially at the hands of "any Dominican or Franciscan friar or priest" who might visit condemned prisoners in jail.⁸⁰ Conversions of Jewish adolescents were to be especially carefully monitored to ensure that they resulted from free choice rather than coercion.⁸¹ Furthermore, no inquisition "against any Jew or Jewess in matters of the faith" was henceforth to be conducted

without the [participation of] the royal court, and as soon as he [or she] should be arrested, the Jew or Jewess should be placed in the prison of the lord king, and the inquisition should take place there. And whenever the inquisitor should wish to speak with him or her, the [royal] bailiff or his lieutenant must be present. And

royal fisc) (Villanueva, *Viaje literario a las iglesias de España* [Madrid, 1803–6], vol. XXI, 172; cited in Fita, "Judíos Mallorquines," 256–7; note Fita's correction of the date given by Villanueva). This inquisitorial seizure may have been connected to the general expropriation of 1314. No inquisitor named Bernard Guilla is recorded either by Diago or Manera, however, and the closest name to appear in Provincial Chapter *acta* is Bernard Gili – assigned to study Latin grammar at Mallorca in 1307. The first known inquisitor of Mallorca to serve as a regularly appointed permanent official was Raymond Dufort (1332) (Manera, *Relación*, 91; Isaacs, *Jews of Majorca*, 215). Guilla may have been a Franciscan and so escaped the attention of Dominican chroniclers, but the episode remains mysterious. Certainly some mendicant action against the Jews (or at least a perceived threat) is implied by the royal settlement document of 1315.

⁷⁷ See Fita, "Judíos Mallorquines," 249–57 (#6, esp. items 14 and 15 on p. 253); also F. Fita, "Privilegios de los Hebreos Mallorquines en el Codice Pueyo" in *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 36 (1900), 126–7 (#20). The new chapel of Santa Fe is mentioned in documents of 1323 and 1324 (*ibid.* 139–42 [#31] and Fita, "Judíos Mallorquines," 257–8 [#7]).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 247. The king may have come in response to news of the episcopal inquisition, or simply to initiate a royal investigation of his own.

⁷⁹ This document, drafted at San Felú de Guíxols on September 26, 1315, was printed in *Revue des Études Juives* 4 (1882), 42–50 as well as in Fita, "Judíos Mallorquines," 249–57 (#6). Reorganization included mitigation of fines to more reasonable levels, restoration of all lost rights and the donation of a new site for a synagogue.

⁸⁰ Fita, "Judíos Mallorquines," 251–2 (item 2). ⁸¹ *Ibid.* 252 (item 6).

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when the inquisition takes place, the Jew or Jewess must be allowed a defense and a lawyer to defend their rights.⁸²

This royal legislation, enacted at the specific request of the Jewish community in an attempt to re-establish a viable existence for the *aljama* on the island, implies that the prosecutions of 1314 had led some of the accused at Mallorca (as at Tarragona two years earlier) to convert in an effort to avoid heavy punishment and perhaps death.⁸³ They were apparently visited in prison by friars or others who put pressure on them to take this course. Children too may have been targeted for conversionary efforts. Whether this was indeed the case, or merely a plausible and frightening scenario, such conversionary tactics were discouraged and severely limited by the end of 1315.

The Dominican-led inquisition *per se* is not known to have been directly involved in the Aragonese investigations of 1311–12 or the Mallorcan case of 1314, but a wider ecclesiastical crackdown on alleged Jewish support of Christian apostasy (and perhaps other religious misdeeds) soon followed on the mainland. Dominican inquisitors do not seem to have played a consistent leading role. Eight Jews thus appeared before bishop Ponce de Gualba at Barcelona alone from 1315 to 1316, in what was almost certainly a series of related cases. Six of the defendants were denounced by a single convert, Bonanat Torner, who had traveled throughout Catalonia (to Lleida, Manresa and Urgel as well as Barcelona), pursuing arrests and convictions. The recorded charges are vague: Jews were accused of knowing “that a heresy had been committed” and of being “aiders and abettors” to that heresy.⁸⁴ Bonanat’s net was wide and his motives unclear. His targets included four “poor Jews from Castile,” as well as the brother of another Catalan *neophytus* (convert) named William de Bell Loch.⁸⁵ Internal rivalries and old grudges may have been at work here, stirring up conflict among the Jews and converts of Catalonia. The affair ended swiftly, with bishop

⁸² *Ibid.* 252 (item 5). *Inquisicio* here must be understood to include all ecclesiastical investigations, particularly those led by the bishop, as opposed to a special office performed by the Dominicans (though they might participate as assistants to the bishop).

⁸³ Item 3 of the royal settlement specified that Jews were in future to be hanged by the neck when executed, rather than by the feet (since the latter punishment could cruelly delay death by two or three days) (*ibid.* 252). If this clause was inserted as a result of recent experience, then clearly some Jews had faced with the death penalty; it is unlikely to refer to an inquisitorial sentence for apostasy or other heresy, however, since death in such cases would have been by fire.

⁸⁴ Assis, “Papal Inquisition,” 406–7 (#1). It is possible that Bonanat’s investigation was intended as a follow-up to the Germans’ apostasy case, but there is no way to confirm this.

⁸⁵ Juceph Correu, Abraam Adriylo, Gariffa Mesatger and Niçaach Enreyra were all described as *Judei pauperes de partibus Castelle* (*ibid.*, 407 [#2]).

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Ponce granting certificates of innocence to the accused and publicly denouncing Bonanat as a liar on June 12, 1315.⁸⁶

The undefined “heresy” in these cases was probably apostasy – a field the convert Torner would have been particularly adept in exploring, since he was acquainted with both Jewish and convert communities in the region. Certainly apostasy was at issue in a case similarly dismissed by bishop Ponce, this time along with the Dominican inquisitor John de Lotgerio, about a month after Bonanat Torner’s fall from grace. On July 14, 1315 the bishop and inquisitor announced a verdict of innocence for several Jews including Haym Quiç of Barcelona, accused of providing aid and counsel to an apostatizing convert named Bonafos.⁸⁷ Yet another case involving both bishop and inquisitor ended several months later in a verdict of innocence for the Jew Jucef Levi (alias Jucef Galiana), accused of converting a Navarrese Christian woman named Johana to the Jewish faith. Johana was explicitly described as *filia christiani et christiane que se judeam fecit* rather than a recently baptized convert from Judaism.⁸⁸

Thus the years 1311–16 saw Dominican inquisitors finally beginning to take action against those accused of facilitating apostasies from Christianity, including Jews, in accordance with principles laid out decades before in *Turbato corde*. Across the Pyrenees, Bernard Gui included examples of Provençal cases when he wrote the *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (c. 1321).⁸⁹ Friars did not have a monopoly on apostasy prosecutions, however, and an archbishop or bishop could decide to proceed without formal assistance from a mendicant inquisitor. The kings of Aragon and Mallorca, though now willing to accept some ecclesiastical intervention, continued to keep a hand in all matters concerning their Jews. They did not hesitate to commute sentences in many cases, when they believed it to be in the best interests of the realm. In trials held by the bishop and inquisitor of Barcelona in 1315 and 1316, acquittals were readily forthcoming and so no royal intervention was necessary.⁹⁰ It should also be noted that cases involving apostasy to Islam rarely if ever

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 408 (#3). Torner’s initial denunciations probably occurred earlier in the same year.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 409 (#5); cf. *ibid.*, 408 (#4).

⁸⁸ This case was concluded on March 16, 1316 (*ibid.*, 409–10 [#6]). If the conversion did take place, it raises intriguing questions. Did Johanna, like the two Germans before her, see Catalonia as a place where she could more safely live out her life as a Jew – perhaps because its strong Jewish communities offered the promise of security, or because further flight to Islamic Africa was an option if the need arose? Or did she convert to marry Jucef Levi?

⁸⁹ Several examples, including those found in Gui’s manual, are discussed in K. Utterback, “‘Conversi’ Revert: Voluntary and Forced Return to Judaism in the Early Fourteenth Century” in *Church History* 64 (1995), 16–28.

⁹⁰ These acquittals may have been paid for, but their regular occurrence is significant nonetheless.

ended up in these sorts of high-level (and therefore archivally recorded) legal proceedings.

PURGED BY FIRE

Efforts to challenge royal jurisdiction in cases where Jews or Muslims were accused of aiding and abetting Christian apostasies from the faith did lead on occasion to successful inquisitorial prosecutions and convictions in the fourteenth century. A final example of Dominican-led inquisitorial proceedings against Jews will serve to demonstrate this, while also acknowledging that such proceedings did not always end with exonerations (royally imposed, purchased, or otherwise).

On August 11, 1342 a series of sentences was publicly read out in the cemetery of Santa María del Mar, a wealthy suburban church near the Dominican convent of St. Catherine's in Barcelona. A prominent Jew from Calatayud named Jucef de Quatorze was condemned to be "relaxed to the secular arm" (for burning), while his alleged accomplices Janto and Jamila Almuli were sentenced to life in prison. The sentences were passed by the Dominican inquisitor Bernard de Podio Cercoso and they were intended as punishment for a whole series of events in which the accused had allegedly conspired to encourage acts of apostasy and blasphemy on the part of baptized Christian converts from Judaism.⁹¹

The complex affair began with the self-denunciation of a convert named Peter (*Pere*), previously known as Alatzar, son of Açach Camariel when he was still a practicing Jew. According to Peter's testimony (recorded by the inquisitors' notary), after his conversion and baptism he was convinced by several Jewish acquaintances (including most prominently Jucef, Janto and Jamila) that he had made a terrible mistake. The only way to rectify it and to assure himself of salvation, they argued, was for Peter/Alatzar to go through an elaborate purification ritual. This included self-martyrdom, a sort of suicide achieved by publicly blaspheming Christianity and then accepting the resulting sentence of death by fire.⁹² Accordingly Peter was alleged to have traveled

⁹¹ For summary of the case, along with a description of ACB MS 126 (a set of notarial records, the only extant primary sources for this case) and transcripts of four key documents, see J. Perarnau, "El Procés Inquisitorial Barceloní contra els Jueus Janto Almuli, la seva Muller Jamila i Jucef de Quatorze (1341–1342)" in *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 4 (1979), 309–53. The case is more briefly described in Utterback, "'Conversi' Revert," 21–5.

⁹² The notion that one could only "purge by fire the sin he had committed by water [baptism]" appeared more than once in apostates' testimony; it was clearly known to inquisitors, and current in certain radical Jewish circles. A Parisian convert named Jean (formerly Mutlot) confessed to having made this statement publicly before the Châtelet in 1307 (*Continuationis Chronici Guillelmi de Nangiacio*, ed. H. Geraud [Paris, 1843], vol. I, 363ff; cited in Yerushalmi, "The Inquisition and the

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to Calatayud and spoken the following words before the chief Justice of the city:

The Christians believe in a vain thing, for they think that God went into her whom the Christians call the Holy Mary; and they believe in a dead thing; and that he, whom the Christians call Jesus Christ and whom they believe to be God, was not God, but rather a liar.⁹³

Peter was condemned to death as expected for blasphemy, but apparently had a change of heart as the flames began to rise around him.⁹⁴ He was freed from the stake at the last minute and denounced the Jews who (he claimed) had coaxed him into his actions; in return for his full testimony and a solemn promise never to deviate from the Christian faith again his death sentence was commuted to life in prison.⁹⁵ After another trial the three main defendants were found guilty; two were given the opportunity to plead for mercy and subsequently received prison sentences, while Jucef de Quatorze's sentence of death resulted from the fact that he was a repeat offender. According to records from the Calatayud diocese which were presented at the trial, Jucef had been sentenced to life in prison nearly twenty years previously in another apostasy case; he and many other Jews had allegedly witnessed the circumcision of an "old-Christian" knight's son (*fill d'un caualler qui era cristià de natura*).⁹⁶ In accordance with canonical norms, a sentence of death was therefore a foregone conclusion.

The trial of Janto and Jamila was at first contested by king Peter IV of Aragon, who accepted a payment of 10,000 Barcelona *solidi* from their son Jucef and granted them a "remission of all crimes and excesses they may have committed" on January 16, 1342 – several months prior to the final sentencing.⁹⁷ The trial went ahead in this case, however, and no further royal actions to prevent it have been recorded. The inquisitors must have felt strongly about the matter, but they did not take their authority for granted; in deliberations held between the fifth and seventh of

Jews of France," 322). The idea would not have been accepted by mainstream Jewish scholars, and this may explain why Jucef Quatorze named rabbi Isaac of Calatayud as one of his chief enemies (Perarnau, "El Procés," 314 [#5]). Rashba for one ruled that apostates remained Jewish and needed no specific reversion rituals (cited in Utterback, "Conversi' Revert," 25).

⁹³ Perarnau, "El Procés," 339.

⁹⁴ "dictus Justicia, audiens verba predicta prolata per dictum Petrum ... condempnaverat dictum Petrum ad mortem ignis iuxta sui petitionem, et fuerat datus ad incendium dicta die et positus in incendio ita ut cremaretur et iam ignis arderet et inciperet corpus eius cremari, quod fuerat liberatus a dicto igne et morte predicta" (*ibid.*).

⁹⁵ The sentence was recorded in the vernacular: "ell se penadí d'açò que hauia feyt e demanà e requès que fos reconciliat a la fe cathòlica e a la lig de crestians, e abjurà e renegà tota heretgia e fo absolt de sentència de vet e per açò és estat condempnat a càrrec perpetual" (*ibid.*, 349).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 351. ⁹⁷ Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 296–7 (#213).

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August 1342 they compiled several arguments in support of their claim to jurisdiction over Jewish misdeeds.⁹⁸ The king's pardon was consequently ignored, and sentences were apparently carried out as originally announced.

Dominicans took their duty to "destroy error" seriously, and inevitably this led to conflict with non-Christian communities in multi-religious regions such as the Crown of Aragon. Apart from the inherent distaste or outright hostility some friars may have felt for Islam and Judaism, as examples of what they took to be utter perversions of faith, there were practical issues at stake. Intelligent and articulate non-Christians threatened to inspire doubt among the faithful; there was therefore a need to silence them or otherwise limit their contacts with Christian believers. Disrespectful unbelievers might blaspheme against Jesus, Mary or the Church itself; these too had to be silenced and punished if possible. Faithless and heretical Christians, apostatizing against their Church and seeking refuge among the infidel, had to be tracked down and punished for their sins along with all their accomplices. Finally, though this was rarely mentioned at the time, regular harassment of Jews and Muslims might also pressure unbelievers in due course to consider giving in and accepting the "true" faith of Christianity. All these considerations led Dominican friars from time to time to impose varying forms of coercive discipline such as censorship, punitive fines and even capital punishment on non-Christian subjects of the realm.

Such prosecutions were relatively few and far between, however. Neither the Dominican Order, nor the inquisition it so strongly supported, devoted more than a small portion of its resources to persecuting or otherwise applying pressure to Jews or Muslims in the Crown of Aragon. For the most part their interventions were incidental consequences of pastoral work directed toward the perceived spiritual benefit of Christians. They were also limited in most cases by jurisdictional issues, and especially by a monarchy committed to maintaining its undisputed control over non-Christian affairs.

Still the interventions took their toll. Individuals such as Bonastrug de Porta and Açac Çalema certainly suffered the consequences of Dominican-inspired legal difficulties, and even though they escaped the

⁹⁸ The arguments were recorded in the notarial record in the form of a scholastic *quaestio disputata*: "Nunc queritur utrum predicti iudei inducentes christianos ad predicta crimina cum effectu et alia predicta comiserunt, si de hoc convicti legitime fuerint vel confessi, possint per inquisitores sine periculo relinqui Curie seculari; et pono quedam motiva. Et primo supponendum est quod isti iudei possunt puniri per inquisitores, quia de hoc est expressum rescriptum papale missum inquisitoribus, quod possint tales iudeos sic delinquentes pena debita castigare" (Perarnau, "El Procés," 343 [app. 3]). The papal *rescriptum* probably refers to the bull *Turbato corde*.

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most serious punishments in the end their ordeals proved costly. Jucef de Quatorze was less fortunate in his run-in with a Dominican inquisitor. It is difficult, perhaps impossible in the end, to measure the actual impact of the friars' actions on Jewish and Muslim communities as a whole. Fines and other punishments imposed on individuals obviously affected their families and friends, but they were also chilling examples to all. It is perhaps not surprising that the friars developed a more or less sinister reputation for themselves among contemporary Jews and Muslims – even if this reputation was not as wholly negative as that which would emerge in the historiography of later centuries. For all its limitations and ambivalent intentions, the Dominican Order's mission to impose purifying discipline on the spiritual lives of others in the medieval world was its most harmful legacy.

Chapter 6

WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD
OF THE LORD

The gate is now open to nearly inestimable fruits, provided the harvesters do not abandon their task.

Raymond Penyafort to John Teutonicus, c. 1245¹

Medieval Dominicans were normally based in their home convents as fully integrated members of local social networks. Being members of an international preaching Order, however, Dominicans could also be expected to travel far and wide – even at times crossing over the divide between Christendom and the “Land of Islam” (*Dar al-Islam*). Their presence in the medieval Islamic world was never numerically impressive or especially visible to contemporaries, but it was a significant early phenomenon which has tended to strike later historians as yet another indication of the friars’ commitment to proselytization among unbelievers. Dominicans, along with some Franciscans, are often assumed to have gone abroad to Muslim-dominated territories in the misguided yet idealistic hope of inspiring mass conversions by bringing “infidel” Saracens to see the error of their ways.² Dismayed by sectarian differences at home, they were presumably equally if not more anxious to confront non-Christian religious beliefs in regions where these were most prevalent. For missionary-minded friars based in the Iberian peninsula, conscious of their close proximity to the Muslim emirates of al-Andalus and the Maghrib, this challenge would have been especially enticing.

The idea of zealous medieval friars braving all dangers to preach among non-Christian inhabitants of Islamic Spain and North Africa makes intuitive sense to modern minds, familiar with exotic tales of more

¹ *MOFPH*, vol. 1, 309–10.

² What Robert Burns has aptly called “The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion” (Burns, “Christian-Islamic Confrontation”). Of course there were small Jewish communities in Islamic regions as well, but the friars do not seem to have paid them any notice.

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recent European missionary-explorers and their travels throughout the colonized world. Yet upon closer examination, it turns out that contemporary evidence for proselytism by medieval Dominicans in Muslim territory is just as scarce as evidence for such proselytism among subject *mudéjars* in the Christian-ruled Crown of Aragon. Instead, much like their colleagues who remained at home, friars assigned to work in Islamic regions tended to focus almost exclusively on providing pastoral care for existing Christian populations. They did this at the highest official level as bishops and more humbly as chaplains confined to Christian expatriate enclaves. On some occasions they may also have served as informal, clandestine ministers to captive or similarly vulnerable Christians and pseudo-Christians clinging to remnants of their faith at the margins of Islamic society. Dominican friars probably did long to win over and baptize *bona fide* foreign Muslims as well, but the (admittedly scanty) records of their activities suggest that this sort of external missionary work was a secondary objective at best.

The internal focus of the Dominicans' work in the Islamic West was consonant with their Order's theological and institutional priorities as outlined in earlier chapters. It also suited local conditions, which were both promising and daunting at the same time. Opportunities for travel beyond the limits of Christendom were not lacking, especially as the fortunes of Aragon and Castile continued to rise in the western Mediterranean from the early thirteenth century onward. Despite serious ongoing religious tensions and frequent military clashes, communication between Iberian Christian kingdoms and neighboring Muslim polities increased noticeably in the first decades following the creation of the mendicant Orders. Diplomatic and mercantile ties developed, with cross-frontier contacts becoming more or less normalized at both official and private levels.³ Links were strengthened by Muslim rulers' employment of imported Christian mercenaries.⁴ Nevertheless, relations were problematized (from the Christian point of view at least) by Muslim exploitation of Christian captives and slaves. Neither captive-taking nor slavery was a new phenomenon for members of either religion, of course, but they took on increased visibility and significance in an age of growing preoccupation among Church reformers over the spiritual welfare of all believers.⁵

³ Richly described in C.-E. Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane et le Maghrib aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles* (Paris, 1966).

⁴ J. Alemany, "Milicias cristianas al servicio de los sultanes musulmanes del Almagreb" in E. Saavedra, ed., *Homenaje á Don Francisco Codera* (Zaragoza, 1904), 133-69.

⁵ Verlinden, *L'esclavage* remains a standard text. See also O.R. Constable, "Muslim Spain and Mediterranean Slavery: The Medieval Slave Trade As an Aspect of Muslim-Christian Relations" in S. Wagh and P. Diehl, eds., *Christendom and Its Discontents* (Cambridge, 1996), 264-84.

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For the most part expatriate friars continued in the same roles they would have filled in other settings and subject to the same sorts of limitations. Service in Islamic Iberian and Maghribi territories in fact presented similar challenges to those faced at home by friars of the Spanish Provinces, though magnified by several degrees. It had always been difficult in practice to act on canonical rights to preach missionary sermons and make converts, as we have seen; in Islamic lands the open exercise of such rights was punishable by death. Even when caliphs or emirs granted mendicant friars leave to minister to resident alien Christian populations, their practical powers to discipline blaspheming, heretical or apostatizing members of those populations were also severely curtailed. Excessive zeal in prosecuting sinners might actually backfire, since renegades driven out of the fold could seek protection from sympathetic Muslims and so be lost to the Church forever. Dominican and other friars were left, then, with the nearly exclusive task of teaching theological truth, eliminating doctrinal error and otherwise ministering to the spiritual needs only of those Christian expatriates – and perhaps indigenous Christians as well in some cases – who actively sought out their services and submitted to their authority.

Along with limited scope for their activities, friars faced logistical problems in attempting to locate, contact and serve their coreligionists abroad. In principle they sought to ensure the salvation of all Christians through their ministry; when it came to isolated, transient or socially invisible populations such as individual captives or slaves, however, this would require a very large commitment of extremely dedicated and resourceful personnel. More easily reached were the coteries of free Iberian, Italian or other European Christians whose work brought them to urban centres as diplomats, merchants, soldiers and sailors. These were also the sorts of elite and middle-class people who normally constituted the friars' main sources of patronage, so it would be no surprise to find that they received the most attention. Even in ministering to these clearly defined groups, however, the mendicants seem to have been reluctant or unable to provide more than a skeleton contingent at any given time. Islamic al-Andalus and northern Africa were seen by many as hardship posts, far from the Orders' more comfortable and/or prestigious European bases.⁶

The friars' presence in Islamic territory – no matter how thin on the ground and no matter how marginal the mission may have been to the rest of their Orders' activities – was significant nevertheless. Dominicans and Franciscans alike wanted to keep at least a symbolic presence there

⁶ As acknowledged by Humbert of Romans (*MOFPH*, vol.V, 19).

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from their earliest days, and this undoubtedly reflected the universal quality of their self-perception as apostolic missionaries. They would keep a door open to possible conversions of Muslims abroad, just as that door always stood theoretically open at home. At the same time, and more importantly, Iberian friars in particular perceived the changing reality of Christian spiritual needs in their Mediterranean region. If believers were going to dwell among unbelievers, cut off from regular parochial networks, then some gesture at least had to be made to provide them with adequate pastoral care until those networks could be expanded.

FLOCKS WITHOUT SHEPHERDS

Christians residing in the medieval Muslim West were a diverse lot, and diversity presented challenges to their would-be spiritual guides. Indigenous Christians known as the *ahl al-dhimma* or dhimmis (“people of the [surrender] pact”) had existed as subject communities under Islamic law since the earliest days of Muslim expansion; their established social and spiritual conditions stood in contrast with those of the Latin Christian expatriates who increasingly came to take up short-term or semi-permanent residence in the Dar al-Islam after the eleventh century. Rights and obligations of new alien Christians were subject to negotiation on all sides. Under Islamic law the status of non-*dhimmi*, unsubmitted Christians, was anomalous and uncertain. Hardliners might argue that all non-Muslims were obliged to accept the traditional limitations and burdens of their subjugated coreligionists; the reality was, however, that foreign mercenaries and merchants were often valued guests and so compromises had to be made to accommodate them.⁷ From the very different viewpoint of Christian law, such expatriates remained theoretically subject to two other sources of authority: secular rulers of their own homelands and the overarching spiritual power of the universal Church. A balance between the demands of these multiple jurisdictions had to be worked out if cross-frontier relations were to be correctly maintained.

This was especially true when it came to religious matters. As so often happens in frontier settings, confusion over jurisdiction and the difficulties of long-distance enforcement, combined with unaccustomed pressures and temptations, tended to facilitate all sorts of transgression: heterodox

⁷ Sumptuary laws, for example, and restrictions on construction of churches went unenforced in some expatriate enclaves. On the legal status of *dhimmis*, which was never standardized in practice, see A. Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-Musulmans en pays d’Islam* (1958; new edn., Beirut, 1995); also A.S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and Their Non-Muslim Subjects* (1930; repr. London, 1970).

behavior, blurring of religious identities and even outright rejection of the faith through apostasy. All these could be expected to, and did, occur. Delicate oversight was therefore required to ensure the integrity of Christian belief and practice in Islamic lands. As long as there was an active Church hierarchy of bishops and priests in the region (duly approved by local Muslim rulers), responsibility for this oversight would rest in their hands. However, by the thirteenth century historical events in the western Almohad empire had transpired to remove most ecclesiastical officers from the scene. Mendicants would be among those assigned to fill the resulting pastoral vacuum.

When Dominican and other friars first began to turn their attention to the Islamic West in the early thirteenth century, they were aware that the Latin Church had a long history in southern Iberia and northern Africa.⁸ In the glory days of St. Augustine, 800 years earlier, most inhabitants were at least nominal Christians. Consolidation of Muslim rule had led to change, however. As Christians increasingly found themselves in a disempowered minority position, cultural assimilation and conversions to Islam were all but inevitable.⁹ The ninth-century “Martyrs of Cordoba” stood against these trends in one urban center, but they represent an ineffective, exceptional case.¹⁰ Smaller rural communities, perhaps only marginally Christianized to begin with and rarely visited by clergy, were especially liable to accept the new dominant religious identity over time.¹¹ For those who chose not to do so, emigration to Christian lands was a constant temptation – especially as *reconquista* victories moved the frontier steadily southward across the Iberian peninsula in the eleventh century.

To make matters worse, with their numbers already shrinking, western *dhimmi*s’ indigenous Church structure became contracted and ravaged by internal conflict. By 1053 there were only five remaining bishops in the Maghrib, and ordination of replacements was proving difficult. It was in

⁸ Raymond Martini wistfully remarked on the Christian architectural legacy in Tunisia (*Capistrum judaeorum*; ed. Robles Sierra, vol. II, 178–81 [nequitia 5:4]). According to his Dominican confessor, Louis IX also fondly recalled the past glories of the African Church (Geoffroy de Beaulieu, *Vita et sancta conversatio piae memoriae Ludovici quondam regis Francorum*, ch. 41; ed. Daunou and Naudet, *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France* [Paris, 1840], vol. XX, 22).

⁹ J. Cuoq, *L’Église de l’Afrique du Nord du deuxième au douzième siècle* (Paris, 1984).

¹⁰ K. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain* (Cambridge, 1988). This extremist movement was led not by bishops (who advised collaboration with Islamic rulers) but rather by lower-level priests, monks and educated laymen.

¹¹ Departing only slightly from Richard Bulliet’s influential thesis that conversion to Islam in Muslim-dominated countries increased rapidly in the period from 800–950 (*Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period* [Cambridge, MA, 1979], esp. 114–27), Miquel Barceló has suggested that the majority of villagers in the vicinity of Cordoba were already Muslims by the mid-ninth century (“Un estudio sobre la estructura fiscal y procedimientos contables del emirato omeya de Córdoba (130–300/755–912) y del califato (300–366/912–976)” in *Acta Medievale* 5–6 [1984–5], 51).

response to this problem that popes Leo IX and Gregory VII, conscious of their claims to final authority throughout the universal Church, intervened to settle disputes between the remaining indigenous African bishops.¹² Gregory even wrote directly to the Hammadite emir al-Nasir sometime around 1076 regarding the preservation of a bishopric in the latter's territory. Significantly, Gregory also used this communication to endorse visits by a Roman delegation to the emir's court, apparently for the promotion of diplomatic and/or trade relations.¹³ After a long period of neglect, circumstances had led the papacy to take a renewed interest in the fortunes of its *dhimmi* coreligionists across the sea.

Gregory's letter was not immediately followed by any serious effort to promote expansion of the Church's presence in Islamic Spain or Africa, however, and a century later it suffered a nearly fatal blow. According to the thirteenth-century chronicler Ibn al-Athir, invading Almohad forces ordered Jews and Christians in Tunis to convert or die in 1159; by this time war, famine and pestilence had in any case already encouraged many to flee to the nearby Norman kingdom of Sicily.¹⁴ The period which followed is obscure, but it seems that forced conversions to Islam swept through the whole region as part of an official if erratic Almohad policy of religious intolerance. Regular consecration of bishops ceased, and the official Church structure collapsed altogether throughout the caliphate. Sixty-six years later, when the first Dominican friars were assigned to work in Almohad territory, they must often have looked out over a landscape lacking any discernable traces of indigenous Christian survivals.

Yet Dominicans had reason to suppose that remnants of Christian belief, and even practice, might remain under Almohad rule in some quarters. They were of course familiar with peninsular *mozarabs*, former residents of al-Andalus who flourished in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Christian Spain after generations of Arabic cultural assimilation.¹⁵ Alternatively known as *al-rumi* or "aramos," some of these

¹² M.L. de Mas-Latrie, *Traité de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations des chrétiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique septentrionale au moyen âge* (1866; repr. New York, 1963), vol. II, 1–8 (#1–7).

¹³ Mas-Latrie, *Traité de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations des chrétiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique septentrionale au moyen âge*, vol. II, 7–8 (#7); *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII*, tr. E. Emerton (New York, 1932), 94–5. Al-Nasir ruled from Bugia, in modern-day Algeria. The letter is undated but refers to Gregory's consecration of bishop Servandus (c. 1076), which was apparently performed at Al-Nasir's request.

¹⁴ Cited in Cuoq, *L'Église de l'Afrique du Nord*, 171; cf. R. Le Tourneau, *The Almohad Movement in North Africa in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Princeton, 1969), 57–8.

¹⁵ Precise definitions of the term "mozarab" are problematic. See *inter alia* M. de Epalza, "Mozarabs: An Emblematic Christian Minority in Islamic al-Andalus" in S.K. Jayyusi, ed., *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden, 1992), 149–70; F. Simonet, *Historia de los Mozárabes de España* (1897–1903; repr. Madrid, 1983); T. Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c. 1050–1200* (Leiden, 1994) notes the achievements of a mozarabic scholarly class which would likely have attracted the Dominicans' attention.

Arabic-speaking Christians were recruited to the friars' own ranks.¹⁶ It was surely possible that there were discrete quasi-mozarabic survivals in al-Andalus and the Maghrib as well after 1159. Very little is known about the precise nature and extent of the Almohads' forced conversion policies, but (as Spanish Christians would find centuries later in their own efforts to enforce mass conversions among Jews and Muslims) no wholesale purge of a deeply rooted religious tradition could ever be completely effective.¹⁷ Even where Christians were resigned to accept forced conversion as a group, a span of two or three generations might not be long enough to wipe out all memories of their former identity. Many families must have retained a certain awareness of and perhaps sympathy for their Christian heritage.

In exceptional cases individuals or small groups may have continued to cling to their faith as "crypto-Christians." Imported Christian slaves, too, and their descendants, likely retained elements of their religion for decades or even generations in some cases. Unfortunately, such secretive and unofficial survivals left few records. Hints gleaned from contemporary sources point only to the possible small-scale existence of isolated Christian or pseudo-Christian communities in both urban and rural settings, without providing any details.¹⁸ Dominicans believed in their existence, as will be seen below, but judging from the paucity of data in their own records they too understood the situation only in vague (perhaps even theoretical) outlines.

THE SENDING OF THE FRIARS

By the first decades of the thirteenth century the stage was set for a new round of interventions by representatives of the Latin Church in these once fruitful, now spiritually barren lands. Papal interest in the Islamic West had increased since the days of Leo IX and Gregory VII. In part

¹⁶ Peter Bennazar, who entered the Order from a prominent Mallorcan mozarab or "rumi" family c. 1275, is one example of a Dominican with such a background (ADP MSL 185, fols. 9r-v.; on the Bennazars see Abulafia, *Mediterranean Emporium*, 72-4, and A. Santamaría, *Ejecutoria del Reino de Mallorca* [Palma, 1990], 201-20).

¹⁷ On the later medieval and early modern phenomenon of "crypto-Jews": D. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit* (Philadelphia, 1996); also J. Jacobs, *Hidden Heritage* (Berkeley, 2002). For "crypto-Islamic" survivals see L. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain 1500 to 1614* (Chicago, 2005).

¹⁸ Ibn Khaldun suggests that some Nefzaoua tribesmen southeast of Tozeur (in modern Tunisia), descendants of Sardinian dhimmis, may have remained Christian in the fourteenth century (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. III, 156). Signs of Christian practice among nominal Muslims in urban Ceuta, on the Moroccan north coast, have also been detected for the thirteenth century (M. Mosquera Merino, *La señoría de Ceuta en el siglo XIII* [Ceuta, 1994], 61-2). The case of Murcia will be discussed below.

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this resulted from evangelical desires to spread Christianity. Like their secular contemporaries, however, thirteenth-century popes were also quite aware of the western Mediterranean region's immediate strategic and economic value. The slow collapse of the Almohad empire and the formation of its successor-states opened up new opportunities for kings, adventurers and merchants alike, and the Church had a strong interest in overseeing their activities. Furthermore, as attention continued to be directed to the region it became ever more clear that less fortunate Christians such as slaves and captives, not to mention descendants of apostates, were languishing under Muslim control with practically no opportunity to receive orthodox pastoral care. With the disappearance of indigenous *dhimmi* bishoprics, papal representatives could argue that they were justified and indeed required to take a direct role in ensuring that Christians and lapsed Christians alike received proper spiritual guidance.

Given the mobility, enthusiasm and direct obedience to the papacy which characterized the newly founded mendicant Orders, it was natural that they would be among the first to be charged with this task. What remained uncertain was precisely what sort of presence the friars could actually establish in an Islamic setting. Missionary options ranged between two extremes: from an uncompromising and vocal public apostolate, reaching out regardless of risk to bring the gospel to all peoples; to a quieter mission of preaching and providing pastoral care solely to existing Christians, within the narrow bounds legally permitted by Muslim authorities. Despite occasional efforts in the first direction by Franciscan zealots, and some clandestine activities undertaken by Dominicans from time to time, the latter was to become the normative *modus operandi* for a majority of friars working in western Islamic lands by the middle of the thirteenth century.

A first mission to Almohad territory famously ended in disaster when the Franciscan "Martyrs of Morocco" courted death by denouncing Islam and calling for immediate conversions to Christianity in the public market squares of Seville and Marrakesh.¹⁹ Their executions by Almohad authorities in 1220 were hardly unexpected, and their passage was in many ways no more than a fleeting spectacle. They succeeded in personal goals of self-sacrifice, and presumably their example of devotion was not lost on Muslim audiences, but their mission resulted in no known conversions and only a couple of later imitators.²⁰ Future generations of

¹⁹ On martyrdom as an ideal among the early Franciscans, see Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 39–54, and Tolan, *Saracens*, 214–32.

²⁰ In 1227 seven Franciscan friars were also killed at Ceuta (Mosquera Merino, *Señoría de Ceuta*, 241–4). Two Italian friars were similarly killed at Valencia in 1228 (L. Amorós Payá, "Los Santos

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

Franciscans would embellish their legend and elevate them to the status of revered saints, but Dominicans do not seem to have ever contemplated following this early lead. Still a precedent had been set for mendicant involvement in al-Andalus and the Maghrib, and a less confrontational position was developed some years later by friars drawn from both the Franciscan and the Dominican Orders.

The first document to explicitly mention Dominican missionaries operating in Islamic territory was Honorius III's bull *Vineae domini custodes* ("caretakers in the vineyard of the Lord") of June 10, 1225. It was addressed to "friar Dominic prior of the friars Preacher and friar Martin, assigned by the Apostolic See to the kingdom of Morocco (*regno Marrocano*)."²¹ Dominic and Martin were ordered in very broad terms to "evangelize," to "convert unbelievers, encourage the lapsed, support the weak, console the humble and (no less) to comfort the mighty."²² Their commission thus envisioned the possibility of making converts, but it left the method of proselytism undefined. Presumably, since no Dominican martyrdoms occurred in this period, they did not choose to take the route of their Franciscan predecessors. Whatever external missionary work they actually did, if any, must have taken place in strictest secrecy among people who could be trusted not to denounce them to the Almohad regime.

Conversion of Muslims was only one of the friars' four or five assigned tasks, however. *Vineae domini custodes* went on to grant a number of important powers relating specifically to pastoral care for Christians. If Dominic and Martin were somewhat optimistically expected to "to preach, to baptize Saracens new to the Faith," they were also

to reconcile apostates, to assign them penance, to absolve those excommunicants who are unable to travel conveniently (*commode*) to the Apostolic See to be absolved and ... to promulgate sentence of excommunication against those who are found to be heretics.²³

Martires Franciscanos B. Juan de Perusa y B. Pedro de Saxoferrato en la Historia de Teruel" in *Teruel* 15 [1956], 5–142). Like the five Franciscans killed at Marrakesh as part of a civil war in 1232, however, these friars' deaths had as much to do with political score-settling as they did with religion.

²¹ ASV reg. 13, fol. 70v. (not 71v. as in Mansilla), #387; ed. D. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia de Honorio III* (Rome, 1965), 416–17 (#562). It is impossible to know whether the friars were meant to go to Morocco proper or simply to any land subject to the Almohads; "Morocco" and the Almohad capital of Marrakesh share the same Latin name.

²² *Ibid.* 417.

²³ Text from the second recension of *Vineae* (see below). The word *commode* is found in this version of the bull; its addition was perhaps intended to emphasize that the friars could absolve excommunicants without demanding proof of their inability to travel to Rome.

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Honorius thus anticipated the possibility that Dominican missionaries would come into contact with dubious Christians as well as Muslims on their travels. Whether he imagined these Christians to be misbehaving mercenary troops, fugitives from Europe, indigenous *dhimmi*s long cut off from orthodox practice, or some combination, remains open to speculation. What is clear is that he wanted to ensure all friars in the region were duly appointed with authority to act in a wide variety of cases which might arise. He also expected the mission to grow. *Vineae domini custodes* was reissued four months later, on October 7, 1225, and this time Honorius addressed himself more generally to any and all “Preaching and Minorite friars assigned by the apostolic see to the kingdom of the Miramolín [the Almohad caliph, or *amir al-muʿminin*].”²⁴

At first glance, Dominic and Martin’s mission seems quite extraordinary. With a few strokes of the pen, members of a newly created and quite untested – even controversial – Order had been assigned to work in a potentially hostile and treacherous foreign environment. Furthermore, the pope left their pastoral duties and powers as broadly defined as possible, with no little or no oversight on the ground. With no consecrated bishops or recognized ecclesiastical hierarchy functioning in the Almohad caliphate, these obscure friars (even their nationality and status within the Order are unknown) were apparently free agents acting solely at the behest of the pope.

Twenty days after the second issue of *Vineae*, however, on October 27, came the bull *Gaudemus de te* – mysteriously addressed to a “bishop Dominic, residing in the kingdom of the Miramolín (*Dominico episcopo in regno Miramolini commoranti*).”²⁵ Presumably, this was the same friar Dominic mentioned in *Vineae*, now suddenly promoted in rank. If his see was indeed located somewhere in Almohad territory, with wide responsibility for Christian affairs throughout the entire caliphate, this was the first indication that such an “Obispado de Marruecos” had ever been contemplated. It must have lacked the usual accoutrements of cathedral and Chapter, at least in its early days, and even its urban base was left unspecified. The tone of *Gaudemus* suggests that Honorius himself was not directly responsible for the development, and that he looked on it as something of a surprise. Expressing his joy that someone had agreed to take up episcopal duties in such perilous territory, the pope encouraged

²⁴ ASV reg. 13, fol. 95r., #99 bis; Mansilla, *Documentación*, 435 (#579); this is the version given in Ripoll, vol. I, 16 and Sbaralea, vol. I, 24.

²⁵ Mansilla, *Documentación*, 442–3 (#588).

bishop Dominic to continue his pastoral and conversionary labors even unto death.²⁶

Honorius' pleasure at this turn of events may not have been entirely genuine, or he may swiftly have reconsidered the validity of the consecration. That would explain why Dominic (again assuming we are still dealing with the same man) was addressed less than two weeks later as “*rector* of the Christians in Morocco” rather than as a full-fledged bishop in the bull *Ea que nuper* (November 8, 1225).²⁷ The whole episode remains subject to any number of alternative interpretations. Were there two or even three different men being assigned in 1225 to a succession of posts in Almohad territory, each coincidentally bearing the name of Dominic? Or was one single friar named Dominic sent first as a missionary with universal powers, then as bishop responsible for Church interests throughout the Almohad empire, only to be reassigned once more as a simple chaplain – all between June and November of the same year? If so, did these multiple commissions result from confusion, or even conflict, between Honorius III and other interested parties?

Ambiguity (if not outright confusion) in the pope's own documents may in fact accurately reflect the status of the Dominican mission at the time. A brave pair of friars had set out in the spring of 1225 to perform a commendable service to Christendom, but precise details of their function within the ecclesiastical structure were still in flux by autumn. There was also likely more at stake than the papal documents would suggest. Whatever Honorius may have originally intended, another powerful figure with a traditional interest in the region undoubtedly played a role in defining the friars' commission. The archbishopric of Toledo had a history of claiming jurisdiction over newly conquered Andalusi territories, and its incumbent in 1225 had been eyeing parts of the collapsing Almohad empire ever since its defeat at Las Navas de Tolosa.²⁸ Any move to place Church representatives in the midst of the

²⁶ “Gaudemus de te in Domino et letamur, quod sicut accepimus divine sapientie sano consilio et eruditus cogitationibus acquiescens ... velut electus Christi athleta in tam excelenti opere semper proficere ac intrepide perseverare nitaris existens minister fidelis usque ad mortem” (*Ibid.* 442–3). The duties mentioned in this document closely echoed those listed in *Vinea*: “pro incredulis convertendis, apostatis revocandis, confirmandis nutantibus et fidelibus roborandis.”

²⁷ ASV reg. 13, fol. 95, #100 (ed. Mansilla, *Documentación*, 444–5 [#590]). *Rector* was a deliberately ambiguous term; it could be used to refer to a bishop (or even a pope, or a king), but it was also appropriate for a simple priest (see Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* [Graz, 1954], vol. VI, 61). The fact that Dominic was not explicitly referred to as a friar may also mean that he was not the same man, but the coincidence between names and circumstances is striking.

²⁸ L. Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence* (Ann Arbor, 2004), 21–70. Burns, “Christian-Islamic Confrontation,” 1389–90, notes that popes from Urban II to Celestine III had urged Toledan archbishops to convert Muslims to Christianity; precedent for sending missionaries was thus on their side.

caliphate would have held great interest for Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada of Toledo.

It is possible that Jiménez de Rada was the prime mover behind Dominic and Martin's venture all along, or that he quickly appropriated that position. Archbishop Rodrigo (r. 1209–47) struggled throughout his career to promote his archiepiscopal see's claims to pre-eminence on the Iberian peninsula.²⁹ He directed and profited from annexations of Muslim land. He was also careful to secure Toledan dominance, whenever possible, over the religious affairs of conquered regions through strategic placement of suffragan frontier bishops.³⁰ Deployment of two reliable Dominicans, capable of serving first as chaplains in an invading army and then as bishops once occupation was complete, would perfectly suit his plans for expansion along the Castilian–Almohad frontier.

In this he naturally faced opposition from many quarters, not least within the Church hierarchy itself. Rival primates such as the archbishops of Tarragona (in the Crown of Aragon) had colonial interests of their own; conquered Mallorca and Valencia were but two examples where Toledo and Tarragona clashed over the right to establish a new bishopric.³¹ The 1225 initiative to place a new bishop across the Almohad border, if directed by Toledo, might in part have been a means of ensuring that no such conflict arose in areas Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada had designated for future occupation. The vague and pious language of Honorius' commissions to bishop Dominic, inspired though they may have been by abstract and long-term "external" missionary thinking, must not be allowed to mask the more immediate practical impact these developments would have on the internal affairs of the Iberian Church.

Archbishop Rodrigo's central role in the project became evident when Honorius issued the bull *Urgente officii nostri* on February 20, 1226. Addressing himself directly to Jiménez de Rada in Toledo this time, the pope underlined one point above all: he had finally decided that an episcopal presence was indeed now required in Almohad lands. His avowed motive for this was to prevent further Christian apostasies; he was especially concerned about captives who faced punishment or

²⁹ On this important figure (who knew pope Honorius personally but opposed him on occasion) see Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence*; also M. Ballesteros Gaibrois, *Don Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada* (Barcelona, 1936).

³⁰ Lucy Pick discusses de Rada's strategic ambitions in setting up such bishoprics, but without mentioning either the establishment of a see at Baeza or any Dominican involvement (*Conflict and Coexistence*, 60–3).

³¹ See chapter 2.

death at the hands of “Saracens” for refusing to accept Islam.³² These unfortunates needed an official Church advocate to defend them, as well as pastoral care to support them in their time of trial. Honorius therefore authorized the archbishop of Toledo to send selected Dominican and Franciscan friars across the frontier and to consecrate one or two of them as bishop(s) with responsibility for the whole caliphate if this was deemed appropriate.³³ Coming several months after Dominic’s first installation, Honorius’ bull was perhaps little more than validation of a *fait accompli*; or it may have marked a reversal of the demotion implicit in *Ea que nuper*. Either way it was significant; Rodrigo now had the suffragan he wanted. The archbishop may have overstepped the mark at first in his haste to name a bishop for the region, but he and Honorius found ways to make their agendas overlap.

Dominic (whoever he was, and however his nomination was effected) soon settled into his role as bishop, and as it turned out this did involve overseeing the transformation of a formerly Muslim city into a newly conquered Christian frontier outpost. By the summer of 1228 his see had become fixed at Baeza, a nominally “Almohad” town which in 1225 had been in the midst of a gradual takeover by Castilian forces. Baeza’s break-away Muslim ruler, Abdallah al-Bayyasi, concluded an anti-Almohad alliance with king Fernando III in 1224. Fernando’s troops occupied its citadel a year later.³⁴ When al-Bayyasi was assassinated in 1227, the citadel garrison seized Baeza outright and the Muslim population fled. Baeza thus became a Christian city almost overnight, complete with resident bishop. On July 13, 1228, Gregory IX wrote to Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada in confirmation that Dominic, a Dominican friar, was the duly acknowledged bishop of Baeza. The new pope made it quite clear that this was in fulfillment of Honorius’ bull *Urgente officii nostri*.³⁵

Though ambiguity remains, the above documents together suggest that a Dominican mission to Islamic lands was successfully launched between

³² “Ut cum in regno Miramolini plures Christiani captivi terrore poenarum, & mortis apostatasse dicantur” (ASV reg. 13, fol. 121v, #249; ed. Sbaralea, vol. I, 24–5 [#24]; Mansilla, *Documentación*, 450–2 [#595]).

³³ *Ibid.* 451.

³⁴ O’Callaghan, *History of Medieval Spain*, 338. These troops could well have benefited from the services of Dominican military chaplains such as friars Dominic and Martin, just as their Aragonese fellows were to do at the 1229 invasion of Mallorca.

³⁵ “Cum olim bone memorie H[onorii] pape predecessoris nostri mandatum receperis, ut in episcopum consecreres aliquem de Ordine fratrum Predicatorum Marrochiis mittendum qui christianis ibi morantibus, spiritualia ministraret et eos in fide instrueret orthodoxa [an obvious allusion to *Urgente officii nostri*], tu, sicut intelleximus, fratrem D[ominicum] de ordine supradicto ad titulum de Baeciense Ecclesie, que tunc detinebatur ab inimicis fidei xpiane in episcopum consecrasti” (quoted in López, *Obispos*, 8–9).

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1225 and 1228, complete with papal privileges. It may have consisted at first of little more than a pair of friars attached to a conquering Christian army. These could not escape being sidetracked by local ecclesiastical politics, and bishop Dominic's preoccupation with the internal affairs of his own nascent diocese likely eclipsed the possibility of his continuing on with missionary outreach to the "kingdom of Morocco" proper. Still, others followed in his footsteps. Over the coming years more friars would visit the Almohad empire and its successor-principalities. Some, like Dominic, would serve largely administrative roles as bishops. Others found different ways to test the limits of their pastoral responsibilities as outlined in the foundational text of *Vineae domini custodes*.

In *Urgente officii nostri*, as in *Vineae* and *Gaudemus*, Honorius III permitted friars to convert the infidel if possible; but he also advised them to help Christians whose faith had lapsed, "the doubting" as well as "the strong."³⁶ Perhaps recalling the case of the 1220 Franciscan martyrs, the pope cautioned that any preaching to non-Christians (those *qui foris sunt*) should be done only with the utmost caution and discretion. A consensus that preaching to Muslims in Muslim lands was tremendously difficult and dangerous – if not altogether impossible – was well established. It was therefore inevitable that the friars' duties to their fellow Christians should have tended to take precedence over external proselytizing missions.

When, in March 1226, the bull *Ex parte vestra* granted permission to friars "dwelling in the kingdom of Morocco" to go about in disguise it was not so that they might blend in and fraternize with local Muslims (compared in the bull to the "fierce barbarians" of old) with any view to securing their baptism. Conversion of those *qui foris sunt* was not even mentioned in *Ex parte vestra*. Instead, the friars were allowed to grow long hair and beards and neglect regular wearing of monastic habits

so that [they] might freely visit Christians in prisons, and other places, in order to assign them penance, to remind them of salvation, and to provide them with the ecclesiastical sacraments.³⁷

The Christian-focused prerogatives of mendicant missionaries to the Islamic West were exercised and further developed under Honorius' successor Gregory IX (1227–41). Having confirmed friar Dominic as bishop of Baeza, Gregory named one or perhaps two new bishops

³⁶ Mansilla, *Documentación*, 451.

³⁷ Ripoll, vol. 1, 16–17; Mansilla, *Documentación*, 452–3 (#596). The bull also allowed friars to use money on a regular basis, since they could not rely on daily charity as they did in larger Christian communities.

with responsibility for Christians resident in Almohad (and formerly Almohad) territories. Their work remained obscure and poorly documented. According to one surviving papal letter, a Franciscan named Agnellus was named bishop of Fez (*Facensi Episcopo*) by the spring of 1233.³⁸ This would seem at first glance an unlikely choice; Marrakesh was the Almohad capital, and so a more logical centre for an episcopal see with responsibility for the caliphate as a whole. Marrakesh also normally hosted a large number of Christian mercenaries, whom Franciscan friars could serve as chaplains. A turning point had come in 1232, however, when violence between Almohad factions led to a massacre of Christians and Jews in Marrakesh.³⁹ Gregory's decision to send friar Agnellus and his comrades to Fez was a response to this event: the pope wanted to ensure that clerical authority was re-established in Morocco, but Marrakesh no longer held a Christian community to be served. In contrast, Christian mercenaries were still plentiful in Fez.

Order was restored in the Almohad capital soon after the 1232 massacre, and new Christian mercenary units were redeployed. This led to the establishment of a bishopric in Marrakesh by the summer of 1237, if evidence of another single letter is to be taken at face value. This document, dated June 12, 1237, was addressed to the "bishop of Marrakesh" (*Marochium*) with the name left blank.⁴⁰ The meaning of the appellation is difficult to discern. It is possible that *Marochium* was here used in the looser sense of "Morocco," and that the letter was actually intended for Agnellus in Fez; alternatively Agnellus himself may already have been reassigned to Marrakesh from Fez at some point between 1233 and 1237. The latter hypothesis is supported by Innocent IV's reference to the late "Agnellus, bishop of Marrakesh" (*Agnello Episcopo Marochitano*) when assigning a new bishop with the same title a decade later (1246).⁴¹

Whether Agnellus was moved or his diocese was simply renamed, the Fez bishopric *per se* disappeared at this point. A fifteenth-century series of "bishops of Fez" were all absentees resident in Spain or Portugal.⁴² Other Franciscan bishops seem to have been assigned to the key Moroccan port city of Ceuta in later decades of the thirteenth century, although this too is obscure. Scant and often confusing documentation makes

³⁸ *In aliis litteris*, May 27, 1233; Sbaralea, vol. I, 106–7. The document notes that Agnellus was accompanied by a retinue of Franciscans.

³⁹ P. de Cenival, "L'Église Chrétienne de Marrakech au XIIIe siècle" in *Hespéris* 7 (1927), 75–7. Yahya ibn al-Nasir sacked the Christian church at Marrakesh, massacring Jews and Christian *Banu Farkhan* mercenaries, in retaliation against his uncle caliph al-Ma'mun.

⁴⁰ López, *Obispos*, 15–17 (cf. Sbaralea, vol. I, 255).

⁴¹ Sbaralea, vol. I, 444. ⁴² López, *Obispos*, 152–5.

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passing reference to a Portuguese bishop Laurence (*Lorenzo*) of Ceuta, active *c.* 1266. Ceuta was an ancient Roman see, but its medieval (re-) foundation date is unknown and the title may have been a mere honorific. Furthermore, after Laurence no bishops of Ceuta are known to have occupied the post until the fifteenth century.⁴³

Frustrating *lacunae* in the evidentiary record may again point to ongoing confusion at the papal curia. A certain episcopal presence was needed to serve Church interests in Almohad lands, but the changing Maghribi political situation made it difficult to determine precisely where a bishop would be most safely and effectively located. At Fez, at Marrakesh and/or in other locations, Moroccan bishops seem to have existed in a state of some flux. This was acceptable to the pope as long as someone, preferably a mendicant like Agnellus, was able to oversee pastoral care and other Church interests in the turbulent *partibus sarra-cenorum*. Lack of precision, combined with the overall lack of documentation generated by this Maghribi project, also suggests that it was not a top priority amid all the other matters preoccupying papal officials in the thirteenth century.

Gregory did show enthusiasm for the possibility of effecting conversions among Muslims, but his sentiment was expressed more in words than in actions. In February 1233 he dispatched the bull *Celestis altitudo consilii* to Muslim leaders throughout the world, from the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad to petty emirs in Anatolia, lecturing them on theological principles and calling for their conversion.⁴⁴ The same letter reached the Almohad caliph al-Rashid in Morocco, and here there was additional cause for optimism. Al-Rashid had only recently been placed on the throne, and he owed his position to support from Christian mercenary forces. Furthermore his mother Habab, herself a Christian, was thought to be the real power behind the scenes who had orchestrated al-Rashid's accession.⁴⁵ Gregory made sure that his May 1233 letter of recommendation for Agnellus contained references to *Celestis* and a renewed call for the caliph to accept Christianity.⁴⁶ Al-Rashid's conversion would

⁴³ López, *Obispos*, 42–53 and 182–3; cf. Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 202–4, who suggests that Laurence too had a palace at Seville.

⁴⁴ ASV reg. vat. 16, fols. 88v–90r. Ed. K.-E. Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste zu Islamischen und Mongolischen Herrschern im 13. Jahrhundert anhand ihres Briefwechsels* (Vatican City, 1981), 120–7 (#7–12); cf. Sbaralea, vol. I, 93–6. As discussed in chapter 1, Gregory was interested in signs of conversions among the eastern Muslims which might presage the coming of the apocalypse; his issue of *Cum hora undecima* dates to 1235.

⁴⁵ The circumstances of al-Rashid's contested succession to the Almohad caliphate, including the 1232 massacres at Marrakesh and a discussion of Habab's influence, are recorded in Ibn Abi Zar's *Rawd al-Qirtas*, vol. II, 493–5.

⁴⁶ *In altis litteris*, May 27, 1233 (Sbaralea, vol. I, 106–7).

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certainly have been a coup, but even if that was unattainable Gregory was apparently interested in developing closer relations with his regime. When missionary correspondence failed to bear immediate fruit, the pope showed little inclination to follow up with new commissions to mendicant preachers, but he did ensure the continuation of an effective episcopal presence in Morocco with his creation or reorganization of the Marrakeshi bishopric in 1237.

SLAVES AND CAPTIVES

This is not to say that mendicant missionaries were idle after 1233. On the contrary, they had their hands full dealing with a wide range of ethical, spiritual and legal problems among the Christians of al-Rashid's domain. Nor were they limited to the shrinking Almohad caliphate; friars left traces in Hafsid-ruled Tunis, and they may have traveled to other Maghribi centers as well. The broad dimensions of their work tending fragile spiritual shoots "in the vineyard of the Lord" are suggested in a remarkable letter drafted by none other than the Dominican papal penitentiary Raymond Penyafort, sometime in the mid-1230s.⁴⁷ A group of mendicants based in Tunis had written to ask for papal advice on a number of points; Penyafort's lengthy reply repeats the friars' questions in its text. Taken together, the implications of the questions and responses are clear. These missionary pastors were interested above all in ministering to the needs of Christian captives, mercenaries and merchants.

Conversion of Muslims was evidently less of a concern. No questions in the letter mentioned preaching to non-Christians, and all but one of the more than three dozen points under discussion pertained exclusively to the pastoral care of Christians. The exception, a single passage concerning baptism of Muslim children, is telling:

Item, since certain male and female Christian captives have contact with Saracens having small children, we ask whether we might advise such Christians to secretly baptize them [the children] without the conscious will of the parents, in the hope that being thus baptized, if the children should die before reaching the age of discretion they might be saved; although it may be presumed concerning those

⁴⁷ Text in *MOFPH*, vol.VI/2. Penyafort served Gregory IX as penitentiary from 1230–8, the period in which he edited the *Decretals*, and his letter has traditionally been dated to c. 1234–5. It seems reasonable to presume that the Tunis mission was governed by the terms of *Vineae domini custodes* and dispatched around the same time as that of bishop Agnellus. The Tunis friars' independence of bishops in Fez and/or Marrakesh (let alone Baeza), however, is made evident by their direct appeal to Rome.

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baptized, that once they reach the age of discretion it will displease them that they were baptized, if they should discover that they were subjected to baptism?

We answer: these are to be baptized.⁴⁸

Contact with Christian captives thus provided the friars' sole and rather dubious opportunity to produce "conversions" among the Muslims of Tunis. How many surreptitious baptisms were actually achieved with the aid of slaves and wet-nurses can only be imagined.⁴⁹ The mendicants' willingness to sneak into the homes of wealthy Muslims to perform such acts certainly explains their need to go about in disguise.

Even if no Muslim infants were available, however, the friars had ample reason to visit captives and slaves. Efforts to redeem Christian souls from Muslim captivity were important acts of piety, and they had developed into a large-scale industry by the thirteenth century. New religious Orders such as the Trinitarians and the Mercedarians were specially devoted to the task of collecting ransom funds and arranging prisoner exchanges.⁵⁰ Redeeming prisoners could be quite profitable, and entrepreneurs were eager to combine such transactions with their mercantile ventures.⁵¹ Dominicans were also involved in these tasks, as will be seen below, and Raymond Penyafort is said to have played a role in the foundation of the Mercedarian Order.⁵²

Yet many captives were not redeemed, and they spent the rest of their lives as slaves. These unfortunates lived on the margins of society, as uprooted individuals. Even when quartered in groups, their diverse origins and languages along with low and potentially transient status (being subject to sale and relocation at any time) often prevented establishment of strong communal bonds or links to a larger local Christian community. The precise conditions of their captivity varied, but they were generally not good.⁵³ Even when physical treatment was adequate,

⁴⁸ *MOFPH*, vol.VI/2, 32. William of Rennes, commenting on Penyafort's *Summa de Casibus*, went farther still and licensed the kidnapping of non-Christian children in order to secure their baptism (B. Z. Kedar, "Muslim Conversion in Canon Law" in Kedar, *The Franks in the Levant, 11th to 14th Centuries* [Aldershot, 1993], essay XIV, 330).

⁴⁹ Some "captives" involved with these secret baptisms may in fact have been mothers of the children concerned. Under Islamic law all children born to a Muslim father were *ipso facto* Muslim, so anxious Christian mothers (whether slaves or free wives) may have sought the friars' aid in providing their offspring with the possibility of salvation. Thanks to Remie Constable for making this observation.

⁵⁰ J. Brodman, *Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain* (Philadelphia, 1986).

⁵¹ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 76–82.

⁵² A claim supported by Penyafort's anonymous fourteenth-century *vita* (*MOFPH*, vol.VI/1, 36).

⁵³ Dufourcq notes that Christian slaves filled every imaginable function in Maghribi cities like Tlemcen, where they could be found by the thousands at the turn of the fourteenth century (Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 74–5, citing Ibn Khaldun and an Arabic letter from emir Abu

Christian slaves were unlikely to have any means of participation in the spiritual life of their Church. Conversion to Islam would have presented an attractive opportunity, especially since it might lead to ameliorated circumstances and even manumission. There were cases in which it was forcibly imposed, despite the norms of Islamic tradition.⁵⁴ Cut off from any prospect of redemption, many long-term Christian slaves must evidently have chosen to accept the dominant religion – just as did Muslim slaves in similar situations on the other side of the Mediterranean.

Those slaves who wished to cling to their faith were rarely in a position to do so in anything but a rudimentary fashion. Christian lay folk might pray and even perform imitations of sacraments such as confession and last rites among themselves if no priest were available. Their chances of receiving communion on an annual basis (as required by the Fourth Lateran Council) were slim, however. Worse still in the eyes of the Church was the situation facing any children these slaves might raise in captivity. Children born to enslaved Christian mothers and Muslim fathers would automatically be raised as Muslims. If both parents were Christian slaves, the offspring would almost certainly grow up with little or no understanding of their ancestral faith and no access to the mass or other essential rites – including baptism at the hands of a priest.⁵⁵ What religious education there was had to be passed on orally and surreptitiously by fellow slaves whose own knowledge might be limited and/or infused with Muslim ideas.⁵⁶ Knowledge of European languages likely also waned as slaves and their children adapted to life in an Arabic-speaking milieu, further accelerating the assimilation process and cutting such Christians off from contact with Latinate coreligionists and their liturgy.

Those who were eager or at least lukewarm Christians would therefore welcome opportunities to receive the sacraments and orthodox doctrinal

Tashfin now in ACA, *cartas árabes*, caja 2 #72). The same sources contain anecdotes pointing to ill-treatment of slaves (i.e.: Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, vol. III, 305).

⁵⁴ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 75, n. 5 cites a letter of 1324 in which Raymond Verdagner informed James II of Aragon that a Moroccan sultan (presumably the Marinid Abu Sa'ïd) had recently presented a number of slaves with the option of conversion or death. Forced conversion was condemned by normative Islam but occurred nonetheless, often doubtless in unrecorded episodes.

⁵⁵ Dominicans taught that belief without proper baptism was not enough to save one's soul; see for example Aquinas' commentaries on Matthew 28 (lectio 4) and Mark 16 (lectio 3) (*Catena aurea in quatuor Evangelia Expositio* in *Opera Omnia*, vol. XI, 333–4 and 440–1). Still, baptism by laity was permitted *in extremis*.

⁵⁶ The situation facing Christian slaves struggling to maintain their religion in captivity can again be compared with that of crypto-Jews practicing a clandestine, partial and frequently garbled form of Judaism or *marranism* in early modern Spain; in addition to Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit* and Jacobs, *Hidden Heritage*, see C. Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (1932; repr. New York, 1974), 168–94 and R. Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel?* (Oxford, 1999). The latter emphasizes the role played by Marrana women in transmitting religious knowledge to their offspring, a role perhaps shared by Christian slave women.

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teachings at the hands of Dominican or other Christian missionaries. In order to reach them friars sought and received papal permission to celebrated secret masses before dawn, with further allowances made for improperly blessed vestments or chrism.⁵⁷ Pastoral mission to slaves and captives was an important and potentially a fulfilling occupation, but it evidently had its challenges. The friars' efforts to learn Arabic, to refute Islamic teachings and to compose simple catechetical treatises conveying basic tenets of the faith to Christian audiences were probably developed by second- and third-generation missionaries as responses to those challenges.⁵⁸

MERCENARIES AND ADVENTURERS

Christian mercenaries, unlike slaves, worked more or less voluntarily for Muslim rulers and were generally free to practice their religion wherever they were billeted.⁵⁹ Western Muslim rulers had long employed Christian mercenaries, the most famous being the eleventh-century "Cid" Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar.⁶⁰ The so-called "Farfanes" (possibly from the pejorative Arabic *Banu Farkhan*) were a hereditary band of Christian warriors, stationed in Morocco, who apparently served successive Muslim regimes for 300 years before emigrating to Seville in the 1380s.⁶¹ Under the Almohads the Catalan Reverter and Castilian Castro families rose to particular prominence as mercenary leaders at the turn of the thirteenth century.⁶² Christian troops filled garrisons in Hafsid Tunis, Bône, Bugia

⁵⁷ The question, with Penyafort's reply, is in *MOFPH*, vol. VI/2, 32–4. The friars' previously granted right to wear disguises would also have facilitated clandestine visits to slave quarters.

⁵⁸ Raymond Martini's *Explanatio symboli apostolorum* and *De seta Machometi* had catechetical applications, as did the Romance vernacular *Biblia Parva* of Peter Pascual, a Mercedarian bishop of Jaén executed by Muslim authorities in Granada c. 1300 (ed. and study by J. Costa Catala, *Biblia Parva* [Valencia, 1998]).

⁵⁹ Some of the first mercenary units were prisoners of war, but later recruits were mostly volunteers. See S. Barton, "Traitors to the Faith? Christian Mercenaries in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, c. 1100–1300" in R. Collins and A. Goodman, eds., *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict and Coexistence* (Houndmills, 2002), 23–45.

⁶⁰ The Cid served the emir of Zaragoza during his first exile 1081–6 (R. Menéndez Pidal, *The Cid and His Spain* [tr. H. Sutherland; London, 1934], 159–89; R. Fletcher, *The Quest for El Cid* [New York, 1990], 125–42).

⁶¹ The Farfanes are mentioned in Lopez de Ayala's *Crónica del Rey Don Juan, Primero de Castilla é de Leon* (ed. C. Rosell in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* [Madrid, 1953], vol. LXVIII, 143 [año 1390, ch. 20]; cited in López, *Obispos*, xi–xiii. Cf. Alemany, "Milicias cristianas," 154–5). If they are in any way related to Ibn Ferkan or the Banu Forcan, the connection is ignored by Ibn Khaldun (see *Histoire des berbères*, vol. III, 48, 141, 202 and *passim*).

⁶² On the Castros, J. González, *El Reino de Castilla en la Epoca de Alfonso VIII* (Madrid, 1960), vol. I, 321–36 and S. Barton, "From Mercenary to Crusader: The Career of Álvaro Pérez de Castro (d. 1239) Reconsidered" in J. Harris and T. Martin, eds., *Church, State, Vellum and Stone* (Leiden, 2005), 111–29. The Reverters were noblemen from Barcelona and at least one, Ali ben Reverter, converted to

and Constantine before 1257, remaining well into the fourteenth century.⁶³ The arrangement was considered a distinctively Maghribi practice by Arab chroniclers such as Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun – the latter noting that heavily armored Christian troops were valued for their ability to “hold firm in close formation” in conflicts with rival Muslim armies but that they could not be used reliably against fellow Christians.⁶⁴ Christian troops served under their own Christian officers, with oversight in some cases by a Muslim delegate.⁶⁵

Permission to practice Christianity was a long-standing feature of mercenary life under the Almohads. By the thirteenth century, if not before, contracts insisted explicitly on the troops’ access to regular communal worship and pastoral care – including chapels where bells could be rung in some cases, and where chaplains could say mass.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, soldiers faced similar problems to those of slaves after long years of service in a Muslim land. Assimilation was to some extent inevitable, and lax attitudes toward religion might eventually turn into mortal sin or even apostasy. In 1223, for example, papal absolution was required when news spread that a group of “five of the most religious and highly regarded Christians” in Marrakesh (presumably mercenaries) had sinned by feasting on meats and other delicacies to celebrate the caliph’s recent victory over his enemies – despite the fact that it was a Friday, during Lent.⁶⁷ Such

Islam. Ali is mentioned in Ibn Khaldun’s *Kitab al-‘Ibar* as Ibn Zoborteir (Dufourcq, *L’Espagne catalane*, 160; cf. Ibn Khaldun, *Histoire des berbères*, vol. II, 88, 96, 208, 210 and 218). Another Reverter later joined the Templars; interestingly, he could read only Arabic.

⁶³ Dufourcq suggested that mercenaries were already employed at Tunis by sultan Abu Zakariya Yahya in the 1240s, but no evidence survives. The first documented reference concerns seventy Catalan knights sent to serve the Hafids under William de Moncada in 1257; these seem to have been reinforcements however. Other Christian troops could also be found in Tunis at the time, in particular Castilians under the command of princes Henry and Frederick (*L’Espagne catalane*, 101–4).

⁶⁴ References in Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. I, 32–3; also Dufourcq, *L’Espagne catalane*, 21. Ibn Khaldun’s remarks are in the *Muqaddimah*, vol. II, 80–1.

⁶⁵ William de Moncada was given the title of *sayyid* and was responsible for all the Hafids’ Christian troops. A renegade ex-Christian known as Abu Abdallah shared the same title and presumably played some leadership role, perhaps as Moncada’s liaison with the Hafid court (Dufourcq, *L’Espagne catalane*, 101).

⁶⁶ A 1274 clause specified that “these knights [serving the Marinids in Morocco] should have church and prayer, according to the Christian usage” (Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 285 [clause #4]). In 1285 the Hafids of Tunis extended this permission to include ringing of bells (*esquelles*): “Item, que les esgleyes dels Crestians, è les esquelles els oficis dels Crestians que no sien embargats; ans puschen fer complimentament lur ofici” (*ibid.*, vol. II, 289 [clause #36]). Later contracts were generally conservative, referring to the way things were done “in the time of the said lord William de Moncada, and according to custom” – that is, in the 1250s (*ibid.*).

⁶⁷ Mansilla, *Documentación*, 319 (#439). Joinville had a similar experience of finding himself eating forbidden meats on Friday while being held prisoner on crusade in the 1250s; he accepted the comforting words of his Muslim captor (“que Dieu ne m’en saurait pas mauvais gré puisque je ne l’avais pas fait sciemment”) rather than seeking papal absolution (Joinville, *Histoire*, ch. 65; ed.

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casual fraternization might be polite, and politic, but it was decidedly not pleasing to the pious.

Conscious of these problems, pope Honorius III intervened to safeguard and supervise mercenaries' religious lives. In 1219, even before Dominic and Martin's mission began, Honorius sent the Hospitaller Gonzalo (*Gonsalvus/ Gundisalvus*) to Marrakesh with a letter on the subject addressed to Almohad caliph Yusuf al-Mustansir (*Albuiaçob Miralmomelin*). Gonzalo's stated objective was to secure the right of all Christians to practice their religion as a people apart in Almohad lands.⁶⁸ His emphasis was clearly on mercenaries, however, and the need to keep them carefully insulated from Muslim religious or cultural influences. Visiting their segregated and fortified Marrakeshi quarters (known as *Elbora*), Gonzalo forged new ties between these soldiers and the institutional networks of Latin Christendom when he received their dying leader don Fernando to the habit of the knights of St. John.⁶⁹

Separate quarters for Christian mercenaries could be found in a number of Maghribi cities. Outside of Fez, the Marinids built a fortress for Christian mercenaries (*Rabad al-nasara*) into their walled and moated palace complex at Fez Jadid (New Fez) in the late thirteenth century.⁷⁰ In Tunis the Christian militia was stationed on the southern outskirts in the Bab Jazira quarter from the later thirteenth century onward.⁷¹ Such living arrangements provided a partial deterrent for social contacts between Christians and Muslims, as well as a base from which missionaries might serve the pastoral needs of both resident soldiers and neighboring slaves. If it were not for segregation and surveillance, the 1223 incident of illicit feasting probably would have passed unnoticed and unabsolved.

Residence in mercenary quarters could be long-term, and families were raised within their confines – providing still more varied needs for pastoral

de Wailly, 145). It would have been difficult for laymen to keep track of feasting and fasting days when separated from clerical influence, even assuming they were at liberty to select their own food.

⁶⁸ ASV reg. 10, fol. 127v. (#559); ed. in Mansilla, *Documentación*, 185 (#243); cf. Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 18.

⁶⁹ The exclusivity of Elbora is underlined in a medieval source: "ca en aquel varrio ... non moraua otro sinon cristianos solos" (Alfonso X, *Primera Crónica General* [ed. R. Menéndez Pelayo; Madrid, 1906], 717, para. 1033). Gonsalo was back in Spain acting as papal nuncio by 1222 (Mansilla, *Documentación*, 306 [#413]), perhaps leaving an opening for the Dominicans in Morocco.

⁷⁰ R. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat* (1949; repr. New York, 1978), 64–6 with map. Segregation was considered normal, even when not required for religious reasons: a separate quarter in New Fez (known as *Homs* or *Hims*) was similarly set aside for Muslim archers from Syria (R. Le Tourneau, *Fez in the Age of the Marinides* [tr. B. Clement; Norman, 1961], 15–16 and 73–4; map on p. 4)

⁷¹ R. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsidés* (Paris, 1940), 448–9; map on p. 339.

care.⁷² Domestic conflicts and dilemmas arose on a regular basis to complicate the missionaries' work, according to the questions in Penyafort's Tunis correspondence: Could Christians resident in the close confines of a Maghribi enclave be permitted to dwell with family members who were considered renegades and heretics? What should be done about marriages within forbidden degrees of consanguinity?⁷³ In one extreme example, the friars despairingly asked whether debt-ridden soldiers who pledged family members to Muslim creditors deserved excommunication.⁷⁴ Penyafort's answer was "no"; even in this case the friars' goal was to save souls and keep a door open for repentance – not to drive baptized Christians from the ranks of the Church and into the arms of the infidel.

MERCHANTS AND SAILORS

Provision of pastoral care to merchants generated still more sustained interest among the Dominicans. The majority of Penyafort's letter was in fact taken up with questions relating to Christian merchants and their professional activities in Muslim lands. Again and again, the papal penitentiary clarified exactly which products could not legally be transported to Muslim lands: saddles and food could be sold in peacetime, for example, but lumber and weapons were always banned.⁷⁵ Selling Christian slaves to Muslims was not cause for excommunication, even when it led to forced apostasy, but it was a mortal sin.⁷⁶ Merchants' and sailors' need for absolution – especially when faced with the dangers of a sea voyage – was addressed, as was the question of whether poverty-stricken sailors shared in the guilt when they signed on to work in ships carrying illicit goods.⁷⁷ Judging from this source, the bulk of the friars' work in North Africa involved supervision of Christian trading practices and the correction of those involved.

⁷² *The Chronica XXIV Generalium ordinis Minorum* (ed. PP. Collegii Bonaventurae; Quarrachi, 1897) 33 notes that Christians of both sexes were executed when rebels captured the garrison at Marrakesh in 1232. Where Christian soldiers and women cohabited there were undoubtedly also Christian children requiring baptism.

⁷³ *MOFPH*, vol.VI/2, 32–4. These questions did not necessarily apply only to mercenaries, of course. Kedar, "Muslim Conversion," 323 points out that related issues of consanguineous marriages among converts from Judaism and Islam had already been addressed by Innocent III in 1198.

⁷⁴ "Item utrum sunt excommunicati milites christiani vel alii qui conversantur cum Sarracenis et obligant viros vel feminas de familiis suis Sarracenis, necessitate compulsi, et maxime qui eos obligant non credunt se posse sufficere ad redemptionem ipsorum?" (*MOFPH*, vol.VI/2, 31–2). The answer was that they were not to be excommunicated but that they sinned mortally.

⁷⁵ *MOFPH*, vol.VI/2, 30–1, 35–6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 31. This is a variation on the ruling for soldiers' pledging of family members; it seems the practice was not unusual.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

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Like their mercenary compatriots, thirteenth-century Christian merchants were attracted to the Islamic west in pursuit of lucrative business prospects. Genoese and Pisan trade in the region was especially important.⁷⁸ The thirteenth century also saw the arrival of a thriving Catalan mercantile community. The emergence of independent Maghribi city-states, committed to a mercantile economy and in regular contact with the newly dominant Crown of Aragon, stimulated this development. Trade negotiations were explored by the Barcelona official Marimon de Plegamans when he visited Tunis in 1235 – shortly after Catalan rule was established in the Balearic islands and just before the Hafsids took their final steps in declaring secession from Almohad rule.⁷⁹ The Dominicans were fully aware of such ventures – a 1235 *commenda* contract detailing shipments to Ceuta can be found in the Mallorcan friars' own archive.⁸⁰ Coincidentally or not, these dates coincide with the composition of Raymond Penyafort's letter to the mendicant friars of Tunis. Trade flourished thereafter, and Catalan merchant colonies (*funduks* or *fondacos*) complete with hostels, trading houses and other essential services could be found along the Maghribi coast by 1253 at the very latest.⁸¹

Thus by the mid-thirteenth century many Christian merchants were dividing their time between the coasts of the Christian Crown of Aragon and the western Muslim emirates, accompanied by attendant coteries of sailors, service providers, bureaucrats and diplomatic agents. Their commerce was diverse, and large profits could be made.⁸² The merchants' numbers and revenues guaranteed government attention, so that consuls were appointed to rule over Catalan trade outposts in matters ranging from legal disputes to taxation. At first these consuls might

⁷⁸ Documents illustrating this early trade can be found in Mas Latrie, *Traités*, vol. II, 22–30 (#1–4) for Pisa and *ibid.*, vol. II, 106–18 (#1–6) for Genoa. Marseilles too had an early presence in Ceuta, where a “sacerdos major” named Hugo ministered to that city's expatriate merchants in 1227 (J. Caille, “Les Marseillais à Ceuta au XIIIe Siècle” in G. Marçais, ed., *Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Occident musulman* [Algiers 1957], vol. II, 29–30).

⁷⁹ Plegamans' diplomatic mission, which was conducted on behalf of the king as well as the city, is discussed in Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 93–4. Trade between Barcelona and Almohad Ceuta was already common by this time; see the 1227 edict of James I on the subject in Mas Latrie, *Traités*, vol. II, 279–80 (#1).

⁸⁰ AHN *clero*, carpeta 77, #1.

⁸¹ The first treaty mentioning a royally administered Catalan *fondaco* (in Tunis) dates to 1253 (Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 99–101). On these trade colonies see O.R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World* (Cambridge, 2003).

⁸² Dufourcq's *L'Espagne catalane* remains invaluable; also Constable, *Trade and Traders*, ch. 8. On the special role of Mallorca in this trade see Abulafia, *Mediterranean Emporium*. All sources note the importance of African exchanges of gold, spices and slaves for European foodstuffs and textiles.

be selected from within the ranks of the merchants themselves, but a royal ordinance of 1266 reserved the right of selection to members of the oligarchic Barcelona Council of One Hundred – themselves delegates of the king.⁸³ The consuls, serving in pairs, ensured that merchants residing abroad remained subject to the policies and laws of the Crown of Aragon.

Religious discipline was another matter. Here another type of authority was needed, one vested in duly consecrated representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. At minimum, a priest should be on hand to perform the daily liturgical office and provide sacraments to merchants and their crews (including last rites and burials when necessary).⁸⁴ Notarial records document the activities of a priest named Tealdus who served as chaplain for the Genoese *fondaco* at Tunis c. 1288; his activities include witnessing documents, conducting funerals, acting on behalf of absent or deceased merchants and serving as a neutral third party in disputes.⁸⁵ Similar individuals could be found in Catalan *fondacos* as well.⁸⁶ The latter were theoretically appointed by the archbishop of Tarragona, but evidently with input from the king.⁸⁷

No *fondaco* chaplains existed in Tunis in 1235, however, and even if they had they would not have possessed authority to absolve the most serious crimes – such as breaking papal embargoes against trade with Muslim regimes. Cross-border trafficking in war materiel had long been forbidden, in the belief that this might have an impact on the crusades.⁸⁸ Potential profits were simply too large for all Christian merchants to respect the ban, however. When they failed to do so their souls (and those of their crews) were in peril. The problem continued

⁸³ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 69. By the fourteenth century selections were increasingly under the personal control of the king.

⁸⁴ The renewed Catalo-Tunisian treaty of 1271, for example, stipulated that the Tunis *fondaco* should be enlarged and that Christians dwelling within “should not be prevented from saying their hours and burying their dead” (Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 282 [clause #17]).

⁸⁵ Tealdus appears in the registry of Pietro Battifoglio (1288–9) (G. Pistarino, *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare Atti Rogati a Tunisi da Pietro Battifoglio (1288–1289)* [Genoa, 1986], docs. #1, 6, 61, 79, etc.).

⁸⁶ Other Italian chaplains in Tunis include a Pisan priest named Opitho, based at his countrymen’s chapel of St. Mary as of 1259. Jaffero was forced to abandon the same chapel in 1270 as a result of the French attack on the city (Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 37 and 47–8 [#8 and 12, respectively]). Dufourcq cites the Barcelona priest Pere de Soler and his Girona counterpart Berenguer Aymerich as Catalan equivalents, sent to Tunis as chaplains in 1252 (or 1253) and 1256 respectively. Another Catalan priest named Giral de Argilet was serving at the chapel of Notre Dame in the Tunis *fondaco* by 1261, followed by Bertran de Canals in 1272 (*L'Espagne catalane*, 104–6).

⁸⁷ The king, for example, confirmed Berenguer Aymerich and Bertran de Canals’ duties and revenues (to be derived from benefices and rents on rooms in the *fondaco*) (*L'Espagne catalane*, 106).

⁸⁸ Canon law on the matter was based on earlier Roman legislation limiting trade with hostile “barbarians” (E.A. Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians* [Madison, 1982], 10).

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to grow despite all efforts at legislation, and by the fourteenth century a technical term for merchants transporting contraband to Islamic lands had been coined: they were known as the *Alexandrini*, after their favorite port of call.⁸⁹

Absolution for such sins was normally reserved to the papacy – but thanks to *Vineae domini custodes*, this power was also very deliberately extended to the friars. Franciscan and Dominican missionaries could therefore provide vital spiritual medicine for believers, even in ports like Tunis, before they set sail. By doing so the friars simultaneously saved souls and prevented *de jure* heretics and excommunicants from coming into contact with believers back in Europe. They could also collect fines.⁹⁰ Dominicans and Franciscans thus served as the ministering hands (but also the eyes and ears) of the papacy and its universal Church along the Islamic frontier zones of the West, ensuring that Christian merchants and their crews were not unduly harmed by their contacts with unbelievers. Penyafort's Tunis correspondence proves that this was one of their most pressing concerns from the very beginning of the mission.

THE WORKERS AND THE HARVEST

Pastoral care aimed at satisfying the spiritual needs of three distinct types of Christian (captives, merchants and mercenaries) was thus the friars' main *raison d'être* when abroad in the Muslim West. Raymond Penyafort further underlined this when he wrote to the Dominican master-general (his own replacement, John Teutonicus) sometime around 1245–50. This letter, though surviving only in outline, enumerates the achievements of Spanish Preachers in Muslim lands as he saw them. It has been partially cited in earlier chapters but must here be quoted in full:

To the master of the order, Raymond of Penyafort sends greetings. The fruits of the friars' ministry in Africa and in Spain can be briefly ascertained from the following:

First, among the Christian soldiers residing there, who are in great numbers, who hunger for the word of God.

⁸⁹ The first prosecution of a merchant for this offence took place in 1227; Gregory IX was especially vigorous in his efforts to punish transgressors (J. Trenchs Odena, "Les 'Alexandrini', ou la désobéissance aux embargos conciliaires ou pontificaux contre les Musulmans" in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 18 [1983], 169–93).

⁹⁰ Absolution was dependent on the merchants' payment of a fine. In theory, fines should have equaled the total profit from the crime; under Boniface VIII, however, they were reduced to a fourth or fifth part of the profit, and so became essentially a smuggling tax (Trenchs Odena, "Alexandrini," 182–4). Either way such payments represented a significant revenue.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

Second, among the *Aramos*,⁹¹ who are Christians, but slaves of the Saracens, who understand nothing but the Arabic language, and the friars greatly desire that they should be taught and strengthened by them.

Third, among the apostates, who through the diligence of the friars have been brought back to the faith; and many Christians who were on the verge of apostasy, whether because of great poverty or because of the Saracens' seduction, have been retained and preserved in the faith thanks to the solicitude of the friars.

Fourth, since not only the Saracens but also many Christians seduced by them believe that all Christians are idolaters on account of the images which they worship in Church, by the grace of God through the teaching of the friars they have been recalled from their error.

The fifth fruit is among captive Christians, who are instructed and strengthened by the friars and frequently freed altogether.

The sixth fruit is among the Saracens, to whom the grace and favor of God has so much been brought (and especially to the powerful, and even to the Miramolin [caliph] or king of Tunis) that at the time of the present writing the gate is now open to nearly inestimable fruits, provided the harvesters do not abandon their task; and even now many of them, especially in Murcia, have been converted to the faith both secretly and openly.⁹²

It will be noted that pastoral work among Christians accounts for five of the six areas in which the former master-general claimed success. His letter outline thus confirms what has already been noted concerning the Dominicans' goals in the lands of the Muslim West: the theoretical possibility of converting the infidel (especially in foreign lands) remained ever a *desideratum*, but one which was generally subsumed by the wide range of pressing pastoral demands mendicants faced as they ministered to growing Christian expatriate populations. Penyafort's sixth, rather vague claim that the friars had made "many converts" (some of them in secret) among foreign Muslims shows that this was still a goal, though his words were probably intended as an optimistic exhortation to further effort rather than a dispassionate assessment. Still the point deserves further scrutiny because of its specific references to Murcia and Tunis.

It must be recalled that Murcia was a strategic base on the Iberian frontier, where competing armies of Castile and Aragon met the splintered forces of post-Almohad emirs. The Dominicans' early experiences there, though very poorly recorded, strongly recall the situation at

⁹¹ From the Arabic term for Christians, *al-rumi* (pronounced *ar-rumi*). *Rum* (Rome) usually referred to Byzantium, but could also be taken to mean Christendom generally.

⁹² Text taken from *MOFPH*, vol. I, 309–10, where it appears as one of the appendices to Gerard de Fracheto's *Vitae Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*; repr. with slight variations as appendix 2 of Coll, "Escuelas de lenguas orientales" in *AST* 17 (1944), 138.

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Baeza. Like al-Bayyasi in 1225, Murcia's breakaway ruler Abenhudiel (also known by the title *Baha' al-dawla*) was forced to accept partial Castilian occupation in 1243.⁹³ Dominican friars (perhaps a single pair) must have either accompanied the troops as chaplains or arrived soon after; this would explain Penyafort's reference to the "fruits" of their harvest in his letter to John Teutonicus a few years later. From then until 1266, when the entire city fell to James the Conqueror in the wake of an unsuccessful rebellion, Christian forces continued to be garrisoned in the citadel.⁹⁴ Furthermore, it was soon discovered that Murcia contained a church and a small community claiming to be made up of indigenous Christians. These alleged mozarabs somehow maintained their own quarter known as the Arreixaca (*al-Rashaqa*), along with a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but otherwise their history is entirely obscure.⁹⁵ One can imagine that in terms of theological education, liturgical norms and sacramental practices (if any) they would likely have struck Dominican observers as distressingly heterodox and in need of guidance.

Two separate Christian constituencies, then, were resident at Murcia and in need of pastoral care at mid-century. The Dominicans' arrival in the city was almost certainly a response to this situation. Given the political pressures facing local Muslims, it is also possible that conversions were forthcoming from time to time ("both secretly and openly"). Still the bulk of the friars' work must have been taken up in providing pastoral care to enclaves of Arabic-speaking Christians (or perhaps pseudo-Christians, from the Dominican perspective), as well as to segregated Castilian soldiers. After 1266 the city was more fully Christianized, and missionary activities of all sorts were gradually replaced by regular episcopal and parochial life – as well as by studies of theology, eye disease and perhaps the Arabic language.⁹⁶

Tunis presented another set of circumstances. Capital of the independent Hafsid caliphate after 1236 (and claiming legitimate succession to the Almohads), this was no frontier outpost in imminent peril of annexation

⁹³ H. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal* (London, 1996), 265–71.

⁹⁴ Murcia's two decades as a Castilian protectorate are discussed in Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 44–8. James later returned Murcia to his son-in-law, Alfonso X of Castile.

⁹⁵ The community is briefly discussed in V. Lagardère, "Communautés mozarabes et pouvoir almoravide en 519 H/1125 en Andalus" in *Studia Islamica* 67 (1988), 103. Also C.-E. Dufourcq, "Le christianisme dans les pays de l'Occident musulman, des alentours de l'an mil jusqu'aux temps almohades" in *Études de civilisation médiévale (IXe-XIIIe siècles): Mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande* (Poitiers, n.d.), 240, n. 21.

⁹⁶ Though Penyafort's letter suggests a (minimal?) Dominican presence by the 1240s, Spanish Provincial Chapter *acta* first mention Murcia when assigning a theology lector to the convent in 1275; on this, as well as friar Dominic Marrothini's 1271 role in the translation of Arabic medical texts and the possibility of a Murcian *studium arabicum*, see chapter 3, above.

by a neighboring Christian power. Nor did it have an organized population of indigenous Christians comparable to the Arreixaca mozarabs. It did have a significant garrison of resident Christian mercenaries, however. It also had large populations of Christian slaves and of expatriate merchants, as we have seen; these groups would undoubtedly have been the focus of pastoral care as outlined in the letters of Raymond Penyaafort.

Hafsid Tunis was distinctive for larger political reasons too. Easily accessible from both Sicily and the Balearics, Tunis had the potential to dominate trade between eastern and western halves of the Mediterranean. It was economically and strategically important to the Holy Roman Empire, to the papacy, and eventually to France and the Angevins, as well as to various segments of the Crown of Aragon. The fact that it had a Dominican mission embedded in its garrison by 1235 and perhaps in its merchant *fondaco* after 1253 was not lost on these players. However small their numbers, highly trained missionary pastors could serve political as well as religious ends, just as they did at home. They might even play a role in fulfilling the most extravagant of millennial expectations; at the least they might neutralize one of Islam's leading powers and open "the gate ... to nearly inestimable fruits" by bringing Christianity "even to the Miramolin or king of Tunis." As always, however, such ideal ambitions had to be pursued amid the complexities and limitations of historical reality. Rumors of converted caliphs will be discussed further in [chapter 7](#).

By the middle of the thirteenth century, then, a small and mainly pastoral missionary presence had been established in at least some leading cities of Islamic Spain and North Africa. Only a few of the missionaries were Dominicans. Despite the early commission granted to friars Dominic and Martin, most mendicants at work in Maghribi mercenary barracks, merchant *fondacos* and slave quarters after 1225 were apparently secular clergy or Franciscans. Likewise, after Dominic's appointment to Baeza all bishops known to have been assigned to western Islamic lands before the fourteenth century were Franciscans. When Innocent IV recommended a new bishop to the Christians of Morocco in 1246 he underlined that Order's suitability for pastoral work.⁹⁷ Whatever small contingents of Dominicans there were at any given time and location in the western Dar al-Islam, they would have been subject to direction from these bishops, as well as from their Provincial leadership and directly from Rome. This was likely yet another factor restricting the extent of their cross-frontier activities.

⁹⁷ *In eminenti specula*; ed. Sbaralea, vol. I, 439.

Workers in the vineyard of the Lord

Though few and far between, Dominicans stepped in to fill vacancies in some important Islamic settings. Their overall impact is impossible to calculate. Yet hints remain that cross-frontier missionary work was at times a defining aspect of the Preaching friars' presence in the western Mediterranean. The porous nature of these frontier regions created complex milieux where religious traditions merged and clashed; in such situations the friars' ability to define and explain orthodox Roman Christianity, to counsel the erring and absolve the repentant, could be invaluable. Perhaps they converted some Muslims. More likely, they recovered or retained numbers of already baptized Christians within the fold of the Church. Successes along these lines were crucial in a world where Christendom was slowly expanding in military, economic and demographic terms into the domains of a rival faith whose sophistication and piety struck many as equal if not superior. Dominican "boxers of the faith" fought to prevent their coreligionists from falling prey to such doubts, for the sake of individual salvation and for the good of the Church as a whole, both at home in the Crown of Aragon and abroad, wherever their wandering compatriots could be found. Work in Islamic lands allowed them to fight for the interests of the faith in more overtly political ways too, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

Chapter 7

DIPLOMACY AND ESPIONAGE

In September 1269, an aging and somewhat embittered king James the Conqueror found himself cast up on the shores of southern France. Against the wishes of his sons and subjects (most of whom stayed sensibly at home), James had decided to relive his past glories by leading a small crusading fleet to the Holy Land. Unfortunately, the storms and contrary winds of an early Mediterranean autumn forced abandonment of his plans as a result of seasickness long before contact could be made with the “infidel.” In his *Llibre dels fets* James later recalled the day he was blown ashore:

And while we were in that port [Agde, about a day’s march south-west of Montpellier], our head cook said to us that outside in a boat were Fra Pere Cenra and Fra Ramon Martí, who had arrived from Tunis. And they asked what ship it was and they said to them that it was the ship of the king, who had returned because of the bad weather. And we thought that they would wait there for us, but they went from there to Montpellier.¹

James’ memory was inaccurate on at least one point. The Dominican friar Peter Cendra (also Cenra, lat. *Cineris*) had died many years previously, and it was his brother Francis – then prior of St. Catherine’s in Barcelona – who so rudely neglected his king at Agde.² Nevertheless, the incident made an impression and stuck in James’ mind.³

¹ *Llibre dels fets*, ch. 490; ed. Bruguera, vol. II, 346; tr. Smith and Buffery, 342.

² James made a similar mistake when he wrote that Peter Gruni (d. 1227) was present at a 1228 meeting to plan the conquest of Mallorca (Bensch, *Barcelona and Its Rulers*, 277). Petrus Marsili’s translation and expansion of the *Chronica* corrects the king’s error regarding Francis Cendra in bk. 4, ch. 25. He also gives a brief biographical sketch for Martini and both Cendra brothers (ed. Martínez San Pedro, 379–80).

³ The incident fits a pattern in the *Chronicle*. James was interested in recording his encounters with Church and lay dignitaries, carefully listing who was present, whether they supported or opposed his wishes, and how negotiations were concluded. His memoirs thus serve not only as a self-aggrandizing apology but also as a series of *exempla* for his successors. The *Chronicle*’s style

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On first reading this anecdote may not provide much insight into Dominican activities in the Islamic world. Yet it has become a central element in maximalist claims that medieval Dominicans worked tirelessly to bring Muslims to conversion throughout the western Mediterranean. Recalling that Raymond Martini was an alumnus of the 1250 *studium arabicum* (wrongly believed to have been located in Tunis, as discussed in [chapter 3](#)) and that Cendra was an intimate of both king James and the French king Louis IX, Charles-Emmanuel Dufourcq expanded the Conqueror's simple narrative as follows:

Two illustrious Catalan religious of the thirteenth century were part of the “Tunis school”: friar Raymond Martini and friar Cendra . . . in 1250 [Martini] arrived in the Hafsid capital [Tunis] with seven other Dominicans; he left it with Cendra in 1269 to go and meet James the Conqueror as he was preparing to leave for the Holy Land; the following year, after the abandonment of this Aragonese sovereign's project, Martini found himself in the entourage of St. Louis at Aigues-Mortes; he was one of those who incited him most to believe in the possible conversion of the Hafsid caliph al-Mustansir . . . it was a resurgence of the hopes nurtured 25 years previously by Saint Raymond of Penyafort.⁴

For Dufourcq, James' chance near-encounter with two friars on the seashore thus hints at decades of steady missionary work by the so-called “Tunis school.” He further concludes that the missionaries' efforts culminated with a campaign to divert Catalo-Aragonese and/or French crusaders to the Maghrib, in order to pressure a wavering Hafsid caliph into conversion. Others have proceeded along the same lines. André Berthier, for one, argued that Peter III of Aragon's 1282 expedition to the Maghribi port of Collo was similarly inspired by Raymond Martini (Penyafort having died in 1275) and his fellow Dominicans' unshakeable belief that Islamic North Africa was ripe for evangelism. The ensuing drama of the Sicilian Vespers, according to Berthier, merely forced an impromptu reorientation of this essentially missionary venture.⁵ After all, if Catalan friars such as Raymond Penyafort and Raymond Martini did manage to instigate a French invasion of the Maghrib in 1270, then surely they could influence their own monarch in the years which followed. Might

is discussed in R. González-Casanovas, *Imperial Histories from Alfonso X to Inca Garcilaso* (Potomac, 1997), 66–8; cf. Burns, *Muslims, Christians and Jews*, app. 1.

⁴ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 109. Penyafort's “hopes” that “the gate is now open to nearly inestimable fruits, provided the harvesters do not abandon their task” were expressed in his letter to John Teutonicus, as noted above in chapter 6.

⁵ A. Berthier, “Les Écoles de Langues Orientales” in *Revue Africaine* 73 (1932), 102–3. The fleet was immediately rerouted to Sicily, suggesting to most observers that a strike against the new Sicilian monarch Charles of Anjou was Peter's goal all along (S. Runciman, *The Sicilian Vespers* [Cambridge, 1958], 243–5).

this sort of militant proselytizing confrontation with Islam have been a main focus of Dominican aspirations in the West after all?

Evidence presented in previous chapters would seem to argue the contrary, and this episode too proves open to alternative readings. Dufourcq's assertion that the friars went "to meet James the Conqueror" in the midst of his 1269 crusade, as if to report on the progress of some long-standing and perhaps royally backed conversionary campaign, is contradicted by James' own revelation that the friars actually took steps to avoid him at Agde. Furthermore, neither Raymond Martini nor Francis Cendra had been based in Tunis since 1250; other documents place them in Barcelona in 1264 and early 1269 respectively.⁶ There is in fact no reason to suppose *a priori* that they had ever been to the Maghrib before the summer of 1269. The friars on the beach are significant, but the full implications of their behavior have yet to be deciphered.

The very casualness of James' reportage confirms that Catalan-Aragonese Dominicans were known by the king to be fairly routine visitors to Muslim lands. This is not surprising; we have already seen that friars sought to promote the spiritual well-being of faithful Christians in general, and that on occasion this involved some limited deployments to Islamic cities with significant Christian populations such as Tunis. While there, they fulfilled all their regular functions as best they could. They provided pastoral care among Christians to be sure, and they may even have found some converts in exceptional circumstances; but as it turns out they also worked hard to promote diplomatic initiatives on behalf of their most valued Christian patrons (whether secular, ecclesiastical, or both). This was an equally essential duty at home and at caliphal or other Islamic courts.

Dominican friars could be especially effective diplomatic agents abroad, as elites gifted not only with literacy and sound training in legal matters but also with travel experience and linguistic skills. A few (especially those with real fluency in Arabic) might even be qualified to serve either formally or informally as spies, a role which would explain at least part of Martini and Cendra's 1269 voyage on the eve of St. Louis' last crusade. It is also possible that contacts and conversations with high-ranking Muslims raised the prospect of conversion from time to time, but such optimistic

⁶ Martini was assigned to censor Jewish books in 1264 at Barcelona, as noted in [chapter 5](#). Acting as prior of St. Catherine's, Cendra received the profession of a friar Albertus in March 1269 (*VII Non. Martii 1268* in BUB MS 241, p. 14; cf. Diago, fol. 137r). Cendra was absent from Barcelona (probably en route to Tunis) by May of 1269, when friar Bertran Clavell's (*Bertrandus Clauelli*) profession was received by subprior "G. Sancius" (*II Cal. Maii 1269* in BUB MS 241, p. 14). According to the same profession list he had been replaced as prior by 1271, perhaps because he was still in France – or was now with king Louis' army on crusade.

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rumors must be considered as they were received by contemporaries: within a broader context of political machinations, intrigues and skepticism. Though a religious frontier divided Islamic South from Christian North, leading players from both sides often proved to have a remarkably sophisticated grasp of current events as they unfolded throughout the medieval Mediterranean world. For all their piety and scholarship, the friars were political actors in this world as well.

OF BISHOPS AND POPES, CALIPHS AND KINGS

Papal concern for affairs in the Islamic West waxed and waned with the region's relevance to European political interests of the moment. We have already seen how Honorius III's and Gregory IX's passing expressions of missionary enthusiasm coincided with events such as the Castilian takeover of Baeza and the accession of a potential ally at Marrakesh. The Maghrib once more seems to have emerged as a priority, albeit something of a transient one, at mid-century. In 1246, pope Innocent IV decided to assign a new Franciscan bishop named Lupus Ferdinandus (*Lope Fernández*) de Ain to the see of Marrakesh. Bishop Agnellus had evidently died some time before this date, but Innocent was not routinely filling yet another vacant post.⁷ The illustrious Council of Lyons was in session, and the pope was dealing with his most urgent priorities – such as making alliances to support yet another crusade in the East and continuing the struggle against emperor Frederick II at home.⁸

Innocent's appointee in Marrakesh was to be an important man, a friar and a bishop but also a papal legate with responsibility for all of North Africa. The emphasis initially placed on Lupus' mission is suggested by a flurry of letters and bulls emanating from the curia in the months surrounding his appointment. All Christians, from kings and members of religious Orders to the common citizens of European port cities, were commanded to lend him their utmost support. The new bishop was recommended to Muslims too, from the Almohad caliph al-Murtada himself

⁷ On Lupus' career, see Eugène Tisserant and Gaston Wiet, "Une lettre de l'Almohade Murtadâ au pape Innocent IV" in *Hespéris* 6 (1926), 41–53, and López, *Obispos*, 18–39. The literary value of having a bishop "Wolf" follow in the tracks of bishop "Lamb" was not lost on Franciscan chroniclers (Gonzaga cited in L. Waddingus, *Annales Minorum* [1625–54; repr. Quarrachi, 1931], vol. III, 149).

⁸ Louis IX took his crusading vow on recovering from an illness in 1244, even before he received news that Jerusalem had again fallen. Innocent announced convocation of the Lyons Council only days after learning of Louis' recovery, and it was from this Council that diplomatic missions to the Mongols were launched (Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 157–68). On Frederick II (formally deposed by Innocent at Lyons in 1245) and his struggles with the papacy, see D. Abulafia, *Frederick II* (London, 1988).

to the newly independent emirs of Tunis, Bugia and Ceuta.⁹ All had trade relations with Italian merchants, and any one of these rulers might prove a valuable ally against Frederick. Failing that it was at least important to ensure their neutrality, both for the sake of the coming crusade venture and to prevent their providing assistance to imperial forces.

Lupus naturally had pastoral duties as well. Endowed with special powers to absolve Christian criminals who had fled to Saracen lands (and who might otherwise convert to Islam), Christian merchants involved in illicit trade and Christians who had married within prohibited degrees of consanguinity, the new bishop was well prepared to serve the special needs of his flock.¹⁰ But he also served political patrons, both secular and ecclesiastical. Originally hailing from Zaragoza in the Crown of Aragon, by 1246 he had long been resident at the papal curia and was very much Innocent's creature. Apparently rejecting his Aragonese loyalties, Lupus also dedicated much of his later career to promoting the interests of Castile. Upon setting out for his African see, he visited the Castilian ruler Fernando III at the siege of Seville and took care to obtain his support.¹¹

When he finally arrived in Morocco in 1247 or 1248, accompanied by a retinue of Franciscans, Lupus made an official appearance at the Almohad court in Marrakesh. The bishop's mission to Africa was short-lived, however. By 1251 Lupus de Ain had permanently abandoned Morocco. No clear reason for this has emerged. If there were local problems in Almohad Marrakesh one would have expected the bishop to visit his other charges in Tunis or Bugia, but instead he returned directly to Christian Spain – perhaps an indication that he faced opposition from Catalan-dominated Christian communities in the latter cities. James of Aragon had invested a great deal in developing his own relations with the Hafsids, and by 1246 he was busy securing papal guarantees that Tunis would not be attacked by any crusade ventures.¹² Secular ambassadors represented James' interests there, but the king likely also preferred to keep Tunisian Church

⁹ These letters, carefully composed and sent out over a period of several weeks, are printed in Sbaralea, vol. I, 430 and 434–6. They are impressive when compared to the vague and disorderly documentation available for Lupus' predecessors at Baeza and Fez.

¹⁰ Power to absolve criminals, including those who have violently attacked the Church: *Ut in adventu tuo* (Sbaralea, vol. I, 434–5). Here the pope expressed special concern for those “Christiani ... pro suis mercimoniis exercendis, qui contra periculosos animarum morbos fomentis indigeant consilii salutaris.” Power to absolve those contracting marriage within four degrees of consanguinity: *Ad hoc Deus* (Sbaralea, vol. I, 442–3). Lupus was further empowered to grant crusade indulgences, and given a special dispensation absolving him from making regular visits to Rome (Sbaralea, vol. I, 451 and 441 respectively).

¹¹ Lupus' itinerary is discussed in Tisserant and Wiet, “Une lettre,” 49–50, though they erroneously identify Ferdinand as “king of Aragon.”

¹² J. Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period* (Cambridge, 1987), 121.

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affairs in the hands of “his” Barcelona-based Dominicans rather than in those of a bishop with suspiciously close ties to Castile.

Lupus’ sudden repatriation raises the further possibility that papal initiatives in Morocco lost their main *raison d’être* around 1250, perhaps as a result of Frederick II’s death at the end of that year. Maintenance of a legate in North Africa had seemed more urgent in 1246 than it did in 1251, by which time Innocent IV was confident enough to return from Lyons to Italy (though not yet to Rome).¹³ At the same time, back in Iberia a new archbishop of Toledo was about to be installed in 1251, and the spoils of conquered Seville were still being divvied up.¹⁴ It was an opportune moment for an ambitious clergyman to be in Castile, whatever his previous commitments in Morocco.

There are other possible explanations, but all revolve around politics in some way. Almohad religious intolerance was not to blame; while the caliph was happy to see Lupus go, he welcomed the sending of further envoys. The bishop’s move must have been motivated either by his own sense that he would henceforth be more useful on the European scene, or by an otherwise undocumented failure of diplomacy – perhaps involving unmet expectations or even a scandal. Clues can be sought in a letter of al-Murtada’s, written to the pope on the occasion of Lupus’ departure, but given its careful wording this is a difficult exercise. With only a hint of veiled disapproval, the caliph suggested that in future Innocent should

send a man to these Christians in the service of the Muslims (may God strengthen them!), who will take care of their religious interests and press them to observe their accustomed laws; choosing one with superior intelligence and good conduct ... We expect that you will not be sparing in supporting him with gestures derived from your generous inspiration, and that you will strive to procure for him the desired level of respect ... Then we will acknowledge the sincerity of your good intentions on our behalf.¹⁵

Whatever his motives may have been, when bishop Lupus returned to Castile he renewed his connections at the royal court. There he found a willing patron in the newly crowned king Alfonso X – himself a candidate for the imperial throne after 1254. Alfonso granted revenue-producing lands near Seville, and so established a financial base in peninsular exile

¹³ In reference to Frederick’s death, Innocent wrote optimistically in January 1251 that “the fearful tempest ... would appear by God’s great mercy to have changed in to a dewy breeze” (Mann, *Lives of the Popes*, vol. XIV, 120–1).

¹⁴ Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada was followed in quick succession by Juan Medina de Pomar (1248) and Gutierre Ruiz Dolea (1249–50). In 1251 king Ferdinand’s son Sancho became archbishop, with responsibility also for Seville.

¹⁵ My translation from the French version in Tisserant and Wiet, “Une lettre,” 37.

for the now essentially titular diocese of Marrakesh.¹⁶ Lupus' place in European politics was soon confirmed. In 1255 the bishop was asked to undertake a preaching campaign in Castile and Gascony to promote Alfonso's crusade plans.¹⁷ That same year saw his arbitration in a boundary dispute between the bishops of Cartagena, Silves and Badajoz, and he had further dealings in Navarre and Aragon (though not, apparently, involving the Aragonese monarchy).¹⁸ The bishop also had assistance in his diplomatic tasks: an "archdeacon of Marrakesh" named García Pérez was employed as negotiator for Alfonso X in Marseilles in 1255.¹⁹ The absentee bishop of Marrakesh and his staff thus had a variety of roles to play in the medieval West, pastoral perhaps at times but above all diplomatic. None of them involved conversionary approaches to Muslims, and few of them even involved Morocco.

The brief and obscure episode of Lupus' tenure in Morocco sheds a few rare glimmers of light on the sorts of occasional roles played by high-ranking mendicants in Muslim North Africa as well as Christian Europe. Rulers in the mid-thirteenth century – in this case the pope and kings of Castile – were evidently aware of the valuable roles friars might play on an international scene. Like his Castilian rivals, James of Aragon took note of their travels abroad; he used his own Dominicans as envoys from time to time, and he certainly wanted to meet with Cendra and Martini in 1269 to hear their news. James may not personally have enjoyed Lupus' loyalty, and he may not always have realized the full potential of his specially qualified Catalan Dominicans. Other monarchs did, however, and some friars were clearly willing to serve more than one master in what they took to be the interests of Christendom as a whole.

FRIARS ON THE BEACH, REVISITED

Raymond Martini and Francis Cendra's activities must be reinterpreted in light of these observations. Like friar Lupus, Francis Cendra was more than a humble mendicant. He was a man of prestige, with an international profile. As prior of a major Dominican convent in Barcelona

¹⁶ R. Lourido Díaz, "L'Église au Maroc du XIIe au XIXe siècle" in Teissier, ed., *Histoire des chrétiens d'Afrique du nord* (Paris, 1991), 90–1. After Lupus' death his estate was taken over c. 1265 by the Bonsignori company of Siena, acting on behalf of the papacy (Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 130, n. 7).

¹⁷ Sbaralea, vol. I, 46–7.

¹⁸ López, *Obispos*, 33–9; also Linehan, *Spanish Church*, 202–4. López thought that Lupus returned to Morocco sometime in 1255 because he received renewed permission to postpone his *ad limina* visit to Rome, but it is more likely that he was simply busy with European affairs.

¹⁹ López, *Obispos*, 30.

he was well known to the Aragonese royal family (despite the elderly king James' confusion over his first name). He was also on good personal terms with king Louis IX of France. In 1262 Louis had bestowed a very precious relic (a thorn from Christ's crown) on the Dominicans of St. Catherine's, and it was Francis Cendra who enjoyed the honor of delivering it to its new home.²⁰ Cendra was undoubtedly the leader of the 1269 expedition; his polyglot junior associate Martini would have made an ideal traveling companion and interpreter.²¹ This was no pair of *fratres communes* assigned to visit captives or hear confessions in pious obscurity among the Christians of Tunis.

Cendra and Martini may have paid an official visit to whatever Preachers were resident in the Tunisian mercenary barracks or *fondaco* (assuming that a missionary presence had indeed been kept up there since the days of Penyafort's earlier letters) – and this was presumably what king James thought they were doing – but there was likely a more important purpose to their mission. There can be little doubt that they were working for Louis in some capacity. This is the obvious explanation for their failure to visit their own sovereign, king James, after encountering his cook near Agde; it also explains why the friars landed in a French port and immediately set off “in the direction of Montpellier” (i.e. north-east, on the road to the French court) rather than heading south-west towards their home convent in Barcelona. Louis was finally claiming a return on the investment he had made in 1262 by giving Cendra the relic from Christ's crown of thorns.

Why would two Dominicans from Barcelona be needed in the service of the king of France? Diplomatic communication, perhaps accompanied by espionage, seems the best answer. The French king, unlike the Aragonese Crown and the Italian city-states, had hitherto maintained no regular treaty relations with Hafsid Tunis. The merchants of Marseilles enjoyed *fondaco* privileges in the city, but Marseilles was subject to Louis' brother, Charles of Anjou, and it was perpetually in revolt against Charles. Neither its consuls nor its clerics' discretion and loyalty could be relied upon.²² In any case the arrival of a French diplomat in Tunis would

²⁰ Marsili, *Chronica*, bk. 4, ch. 25 (ed. Martínez San Pedro, 380). Diago, fol. 136v, records the donation and transcribes Louis' letter which accompanied it. The letter specifically names F. Cineris (Cendra) as bearer of the gift. Christ's crown of thorns was one of Louis' most prized possessions, and such a gift must have sealed a very close relationship between convent and ruler.

²¹ Following the guess of Coll, “Escuelas” in *AST* 18 (1945), 63, Dufourcq (*L'Espagne catalane*, 109) thought that Francis Cendra too was an alumnus of the “Tunis” *studium arabicum*. In fact there is no hint in Marsili or anywhere else to suggest that he ever learned Arabic.

²² Documents regarding thirteenth-century Marseilles–Tunis trade are in Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 89–92 (#2–4). For Charles' contentious relations with his vassals (including his execution of

immediately have been noticed and commented upon by Aragonese and other interested parties. If Louis wanted to negotiate quietly with the caliph, perhaps offering him an ultimatum or making inquiries, he might well have used a couple of trustworthy foreign mendicants – Dominicans whose own government enjoyed stable relations with the Hafsids, whose confrères were regular visitors to the Maghrib, and one of whom had expertise in Arabic – to get the message across and take a good look around without attracting much fanfare.

Reliable Arabic translation was a special problem for the French king. Rulers with long-standing interests in the Mediterranean, such as James of Aragon, employed numerous *torcimani* (interpreters and go-betweens who facilitated communications between speakers of Arabic and Romance or Latin) on a daily basis. The best candidates were often Jews, whose multilingualism was famed throughout the region, though bilingual renegade Christian converts to Islam might also fill the office.²³ By 1220, however, Honorius III was warning kings of Aragon, Leon, Castile and Navarre to stop relying so heavily on these non-Christians – especially in their dealings with Muslim rulers.²⁴ Honorius' admonition had little effect in Aragon, where Jews can be found translating Arabic texts and documents for a succession of kings well into the fourteenth century.²⁵ The opposite was true in France, however, where Louis IX's legendary antipathy toward Jews made Honorius' words almost superfluous; the king was similarly unlikely to employ renegades. When Louis needed an Arabic-speaking translator or envoy, he often had no choice but to look to the mendicant Orders. Joinville noted this tendency on at least two occasions in his *Histoire de Saint Louis*.²⁶

twelve prominent Marseilles merchants in 1263) see J. Dumbabin, *Charles I of Anjou: Power, Kingship and State-making In Thirteenth Century Europe* (New York, 1998), esp. 41–54.

²³ Both can be glimpsed repeatedly in the *Llibre dels fets*: at the siege of Mallorca, for example, James negotiated officially through his Jewish interpreter Don Bahiel and unofficially through the apostate Mahomet – formerly a Christian known as Gil de Alagón (chs. 74–5).

²⁴ *Ad audientiam nostram* in Mansilla, *Documentación*, 246–7 (#333), dated November 4, 1220.

²⁵ See Burns, *Diplomatarium*, vol. I, 125–33 (on the chancery and its Jewish translators of Arabic). Paul Chevedden has suggested that a Jewish scribe drew up the bilingual 1244 treaty between al-Azraq and James I (Burns and Chevedden, *Negotiating Cultures*, 56–7); if so, the king ignored Honorius' advice in every detail. Peter III cut back on employment of Jews, but during his absence in 1283 a Jewish "Grand Secretary of Arabic Writings" named Jahuda Abenmenasse assisted prince Alfonso in many of his dealings with conquered Xàtivan Muslims (J.E. Martínez Ferrando, *Catálogo de la Documentación Relativa al Antiguo Reino de Valencia contenida en los registros de la Cancillería Real* [Madrid, 1934], vol. II, docs. #1664, 1666, 1674 and 1697).

²⁶ Louis used "deux frères prêcheurs qui savaient le sarrasinois" during his first crusade; he also selected Yves le Breton, a Dominican "qui savait le sarrasinois," to accompany a royal embassy to the sultan of Damascus (Joinville, *Histoire*, chs. 29 and 87 respectively; ed. de Wailly, 60 and 197).

Diplomacy and espionage

Louis was certainly in negotiations with the Hafsiids. A near-contemporary account by the French Dominican and royal confessor Geoffroy de Beaulieu claims that caliph al-Mustansir of Tunis sent “many” envoys to Paris around 1268–9, and that Louis responded in kind.²⁷ The identity of his French envoys is uncertain, but some were probably Dominicans, as later in the same text Geoffroy mentions “a certain friar of the Order of Preachers, who had been there [to Tunis] before and was known to the king of Tunis.”²⁸ Another source confirms Louis’ continuing recourse to Arabic-speaking friars, noting that a “friar of the Order of Preachers, who knew [Arabic] well” was available at the scene of the 1270 crusade to translate prisoners’ testimony for the royal *bouteillier* Jean d’Acre.²⁹ These early French chroniclers’ unwillingness to mention names is striking. They may never have found out the friars’ identities, or perhaps they did not want them to be widely known; either way there is a suggestion of a mission that was somehow covert. By 1312, as he translated James’ *Llibre* into Latin, the Catalan friar Peter Marsili had no reason to be so coy. Friar Raymond Martini, he wrote, was “most close and dear to not only to the king of Aragon, but also to St. Louis king of France and to the good king of Tunis.”³⁰ Taken with James’ own observations at Agde, Geoffroy and Peter’s evidence all but proves that Martini and Cendra made at least one visit to the Hafsid court, in the service of France, in the months leading up to the attack of 1270.

Louis’ motives for mounting an unprecedented and ill-starred crusade against Tunis instead of the Holy Land has puzzled scholars for centuries, just as it puzzled his contemporaries.³¹ The pious explanation, accepted by Dufourcq and others, was that Louis was duped into believing that his invasion would be welcomed by the Hafsiids as an opportunity to accept Christianity.³² Evidence for this comes from only one contemporary

²⁷ Beaulieu, *Vita*, ch. 41; ed. Daunou and Naudet, 21.

²⁸ *Ibid.* ch. 44, 23.

²⁹ *Chronique de Primat traduit par Jean du Vignay*, ch. 32; ed. N. de Wailly, L. Delisle and C. Jourdain in *Rerum Gallicarum et Francarum Scriptores / Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France* (Paris, 1894), vol. XXIII, 49.

³⁰ Marsili, *Chronica*, bk. 4, ch. 25; ed. Martínez San Pedro, 379–80. Martini has generally been identified as Beaulieu’s unnamed friar but there are other possible candidates, including Andrew of Longjumeau, M. Lower, “Conversion and St Louis’ Last Crusade” in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 58 (2007), 227.

³¹ For an overview see J. Strayer, “The Crusades of Louis IX” in K. Setton, ed., *A History of the Crusades* (Philadelphia, 1962), vol. II, 487–518. Jacques Le Goff’s recent publications have little to add; see his “Saint Louis and the Mediterranean” in *Mediterranean Historical Review* 5 (1990), 36–9 and *Saint Louis*, 291. While still accepting maximalist theses, Lower, “Conversion,” 211–31 thoroughly reviews the historiography and raises interesting new points.

³² Charles Julien is typical in stating that “The determination of St. Louis is more intelligible, inspired as it was by the friar Raymond Martin, professor of Hebrew and Arabic at the Dominican house

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

source, however, and it is hardly an unbiased one. Geoffroy de Beaulieu, writing his hagiographical biography of the recently deceased king, sought to explain his master's seemingly eccentric decision by underlining an evangelistic theme:

For he had it on good authority that the said king of Tunis favored the Christian faith, and that indeed he might easily be made a Christian, if he could only find an honorable opportunity; and that if his honor [or office] were preserved, and if he did not fear his Saracens he would do so ... he [Louis] thought therefore that if such a famous army could suddenly besiege Tunis, then the king of Tunis would have ... a reasonable occasion to accept baptism.³³

Even Geoffroy admitted that there were other good reasons for invading a North African principality. If the caliph did not convert, the friar insisted that Louis thought Tunis would be easy to conquer, that it was rich, and that its strategic location along the supply route to Egypt would facilitate future crusading endeavors. On the Muslim side of the conflict, Ibn Khaldun similarly argued that financial issues and the prospect of an easy conquest were the crusaders' primary motivations.³⁴ The new ruler of Sicily (since 1266), Charles of Anjou, may also have played a role in influencing Louis' decision: Charles would be much better served by having Louis help subdue his troublesome Tunisian neighbors rather than dragging the flower of French chivalry once more off to the Levant.³⁵ The Hafsids were refusing to pay tribute to him as they had to the Hohenstaufens, and they harbored a number of Charles' political opponents, who used Ifriqiyya as a base from which to harass Sicily.³⁶

Whatever the cause, Louis kept his decision a close secret until after his fleets had already set sail. No rumor of an impending Tunisian mass conversion filtered down to the rank and file crusaders, and many were shocked when they learned of their destination at a rendezvous in the Sardinian port of Cagliari.³⁷ There Louis made a show of holding a council, but the very fact that he chose to land at Sardinia instead of Sicily

in Tunis, and a friend of the caliph. The king of France was informed, or thought he understood, that al-Mustansir had decided to become a convert ...” (*History of North Africa* [1931; tr. J. Petrie, London, 1970], 143).

³³ Beaulieu, *Vita*, ch. 41; ed. Daunou and Naudet, 21–2.

³⁴ According to Ibn Khaldun, the French were angry that outstanding debts to their merchants were in default (cited in Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 142).

³⁵ R. Sternfeld, *Ludwigs des Heiligen Kreuzzug nach Tunis 1270 und die Politik Karls I. von Sizilien* (Berlin, 1896) is still fundamental.

³⁶ Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 142.

³⁷ Louis' Genoese sailors certainly expected to sail for the Levant, and some made prior financial arrangements with this in mind (Strayer, “The Crusades of Louis IX”, 515).

implies that he had settled the issue in advance.³⁸ Louis was no simpleton, and the Tunis crusade was neither a whim nor a farcical miscalculation.

The king's death from fever in 1270 came as a shock; his initial landing at Carthage had gone exceptionally well and victory was at hand.³⁹ Aside from this unforeseeable disaster, which has colored later views on the campaign, the crusade was remarkably successful. When prince Philip (III) and Charles of Anjou finally returned home with their troops, they had secured not only trade concessions from the Hafsid caliph (for France, Sicily and their ally the king of Navarre) but also the reinstatement of tribute payments.⁴⁰ Whatever communications and/or intelligence-gathering efforts had gone into the preparations for the venture, they paid off in the final analysis.

When Francis Cendra and Raymond Martini traveled to Tunis in 1269, then, they were likely on an exceptional and secretive political mission, preparing the way diplomatically and strategically for a French intervention the following year. They were acting on Louis' orders, not the other way around. It was an intriguing episode in crusade as well as mendicant history, and its dramatic qualities ensured that the story would be recorded – even if details were initially veiled and/or misunderstood in some contemporary accounts. Other, less momentous instances of Dominican involvement in the tangled webs of western Mediterranean international politics may have occurred behind the scenes. If they did, they remain unknown to modern scholarship. Unfortunately but understandably, records detailing sensitive points of medieval diplomacy, especially when espionage or compromised loyalties were involved, are hard to come by.⁴¹ Still, political considerations must be taken into account as an important possible motivation in any apparent contacts between medieval Dominican friars and leaders of the Muslim world.

³⁸ Strayer has convincingly argued that Louis was a careful planner who left little to chance; it is hardly conceivable that a detour to Tunis came about as a last-minute whim. Cagliari was an ideal launching point for an invasion of Tunis, but crusaders en route to the East would have been much better off landing in friendly Sicily, or Crete, or Cyprus rather than in Pisan-ruled Sardinia – where they were repeatedly denied provisions (*ibid.*, 512).

³⁹ The crusaders executed a well-planned lightning attack on the castle at Carthage, described in detail by Primat (*Chronique de Primat*, chs. 30–1; ed. de Wailly *et al.*, 45–8). This may further suggest that they benefited from accurate intelligence regarding Tunisian fortifications.

⁴⁰ Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 93–6 (#5; French translation of the Arabic). Clause #20 details the Sicilian tribute payments.

⁴¹ Little research has been done on medieval spies, largely because of this inherent lack of sources. Some initial studies include F. Dvornik, *Origins of Intelligence Services* (New Brunswick, 1974) and J.R. Alban and C.T. Allmand, "Spies and Spying in the Fourteenth Century" in C.T. Allmand, ed., *War, Literature and Politics in the Late Middle Ages* (Liverpool, 1976) 73–101; also C. Marshall, *Warfare in the Latin East* (Cambridge, 1992) 262–271. These note that spying was generally not a profession; instead rulers benefited from and rewarded the reports of observant diplomats, merchants, pilgrims and other travellers – including mendicants.

DREAMS OF CONVERSION

International political maneuvering does not exclude the possibility of a simultaneous dedication to religious goals such as external missionary proselytism, of course. Dominican friars may well have found that royal connections, assignments and resources provided valuable opportunities for spreading the gospel in otherwise unreachable settings – preaching not only to the faithful but to prominent and influential “infidels” as well. Rulers such as the passionately religious Louis IX or the zealous crusader James I, not to mention popes, saw political and religious offensives against the Islamic West as parts of a symbiotic whole. It is therefore important to examine not only the political context of the friars’ work among elite Muslims but also any evidence that may clarify the missionary dimensions of that work.

This evidence is generally fragmentary, inconclusive, and difficult to disentangle from later pious legend or wishful thinking. Overall, though, it tends to suggest that medieval friars approached the possibility of converting Muslim rulers in much the same way they approached external mission to unbelievers of all sorts: that is, they welcomed the prospect but they did not take significant steps to actively pursue it. *Vineae domini custodes* (1225) had authorized them to “convert unbelievers” without distinction, and *Celestis altitudo consilii* (1233) showed Gregory IX’s optimism that Almohad caliph al-Rashid might be willing to accept baptism; Geoffroy de Beaulieu suggests that Louis IX may have transposed such optimism to the Hafsīd caliph al-Mustansir thirty years later. But optimism and a constant willingness to accept conversions (especially conversions that could amount to strategic political realignments) must be carefully distinguished from active “missionizing.” Furthermore, unfulfilled reports of impending spectacular conversions by Muslim rulers may in fact have become so commonplace by the middle of the thirteenth century that they ceased to inspire much enthusiasm in the everyday planning of a pragmatically minded organization such as the Dominican Order.

Conversion fantasies abounded in the Middle Ages, as a natural theme inspired by religious conflict.⁴² It was only natural for believing Christians, Muslims and Jews alike to wish that opponents would abandon the struggle and come to see the light of their particular “truth” claim. The more fraught the conflict, the more appealing such fantasies became.

⁴² Perhaps the best-known versions involve sex: Muslim women being baptized to marry Christian knights “as a trophy of war and a token of Christian domination” (L. Mirrer, *Women, Jews and Muslim in the Texts of Reconquest Castile* [Ann Arbor, 1996], 17). Converted Jewish women (“the beautiful Jewess”) were similarly favored subjects of Christian troubador fantasy (*ibid.*, 31–44).

The notion of bringing an opposing leader to conversion in times of war or persecution thus became something of a trope in medieval literature, and it affected all sides of the religious divide. Judah ha-Levi's twelfth-century *Khuzari* is a masterpiece of Jewish conversion literature, laying out the theological wranglings that finally led the king of distant Khazaria to Judaism.⁴³ Nahmanides' suggestion that he brought James the Conqueror to praise Jewish arguments (in the midst of the Barcelona disputation) may also be an example of this sort of apologetic wishful thinking.⁴⁴ In Islamic historiography, al-Tabari and others recorded a claim that the Byzantine emperor Heraclius secretly adopted Islam in the time of Muhammad.⁴⁵ Christian writers were equally eager to speculate that Muslim rulers, just across the frontier, were on the verge of accepting baptism.⁴⁶

There were some grounds for this sort of speculation, as elite conversions did occur from time to time – especially in border zones such as the Iberian peninsula. Not surprisingly these tended to have motives that were more venal than spiritual. They normally came in the wake of Christian military victories, for example, with Muslim lords choosing to become Christian lords and thus to retain their lands rather than taking their religious identity with them into exile.⁴⁷ James I of Aragon describes the actions of Ben Abet (*Ahabet*) for example, one of twelve leading lords of Mallorca, who promptly switched sides and collaborated with the invaders once he had evaluated their prospects for victory.⁴⁸ Ben Abet's actual baptism is not recounted in the *Llibre* (indeed, James' narrative shows no interest at all in the conversion of any Muslims), but tradition relates that his Christianized children married into the Catalan nobility and enjoyed a great posterity.⁴⁹ The defeated *wali* of Mallorca's thirteen-year-old son,

⁴³ *Kuzari* (tr. N. Korobkin; Northvale, 1998). Jewish polemicists writing under Christian or Islamic domination had to be careful not to be too offensive in their treatment of majority religion; there are thus no equivalent medieval tales of Muslim or Christian princesses being seduced and converted by Jewish warriors. Ha-Levi brilliantly displaced his criticism of Islam and Christianity (as well as Aristotelian philosophy and Karaimism), culminating with the inevitable royal conversion, to a pagan court in the far reaches of Asia.

⁴⁴ See chapter 4. Again, the narrative prudently avoids claiming outright conversion of a Christian king.

⁴⁵ Cited in Fattal, *Statut légal*, 6–7.

⁴⁶ Rumors spread of impending conversion by Muslim rulers in Seljuq Rum (1234) and Ayyubid Syria (1239) as well. In both cases they turned out to be political deceptions in times of war (Jackson, *Mongols*, 12).

⁴⁷ Conversion for material benefit was common on all sides; see Burns, "Renegades," for multiple Christian examples.

⁴⁸ *Llibre dels fets*, ch. 71.

⁴⁹ In one version his son John converted to Christianity and took the surname "Bennasser" (*Bennazar*); his descendants ruled as lords of Alfabia and mingled with the noble Santacilia and Zaforteza families (J. Dameto, *Historia General del Reino de Mallorca* [1632; ed. J. Guasp y Pascual,

initially seized as a hostage, also converted and so won his freedom; he went on to marry a lady of the house of Alagón and took over estates at Illueca and Gotor on the Iberian mainland.⁵⁰ The emir or *sayyid* Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman (*Aceyt abu Ceyt*, etc.) of Valencia provides yet another example of this phenomenon. Converting sometime around 1236, after nearly a decade of political maneuvering and military collaboration with Christian forces, the newly baptized “Vincent” retained the fictive title “king of Valencia” (adding the word “former” by 1247) as well as very real castles and fiefs throughout his former realm. Though his fortunes declined to some extent, he and his descendants continued to be privileged members of the Christian nobility.⁵¹

Strikingly, none of these elite political converts had any recorded dealings with the mendicant Orders in the course of their spiritual transformation. Dominican friars accompanied James on his campaign to Mallorca, as we have seen, yet no medieval source even hints that they played a role in approaching Ben Abet, *wali* Abu Yahya of Mallorca or the adolescent prince “James” with proselytizing arguments.⁵² Abu Zayd of Valencia did encounter a pair of Franciscans at Valencia in 1228, but he immediately had them executed for blaspheming the prophet Muhammad.⁵³ Abu Zayd’s case is particularly noteworthy as an instance of religio-political opportunism: within months of these executions, fearing he might be overthrown by rival Muslim factions, the emir began to negotiate possible conversion with papal legate John of Abbeville – though he put off baptism until he was in fact deposed and a permanent alliance with James became unavoidable. Perhaps because of their patriarch’s past sins, Abu Zayd’s new Christian family went on to patronize the Franciscan Order as well as the knightly Order of Santiago; so far

Palma, 1840], vol. II, 621, n. 59). Others have, in the maximalist tradition, had Ben Abet’s son joining the Dominicans as a missionary friar named Michael (for example Adrover Rosselló, *Orden de Predicadores*, 41; but cf. de Montaner and Riera Frau, “Los Bennàsser,” 178).

⁵⁰ The prince was first mentioned in *Llibre dels fets*, ch. 87; his post-conversion career is described in J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragon* (Zaragoza, 1610), vol. I, bk. 3, ch. 8, fol. 132v.

⁵¹ Abu Zayd is mentioned repeatedly in the *Llibre dels fets* as an ally and vassal to James but never as a convert (i.e.: chs. 25, 136, 137, 360). He “converted” secretly at first to avoid conflict with his subjects, but he was openly Christian by mid-century at least (R.I. Burns, “Almohad Prince and Mudejar Convert: New Documentation on Abū Zayd” in D. Kagay and J. Snow, eds., *Medieval Iberia* [New York, 1997], 171–88, with an important 1264 letter from pope Urban IV to Vincent [illustri regi quondam Valencie], congratulating him on his family’s conversion).

⁵² Zurita, writing at the turn of the seventeenth century, says nothing at all about mendicant involvement. Yet the tendency to maximalism regarding Dominican missions is so strong that it has infected modern editions of the *Llibre dels fets*; thus following an unsubstantiated 1883 claim by Pascual de Gayangos, Damian Smith and Helena Buffery claim that James was brought up “under the tutorship of a Dominican Friar, who converted him to Christianity” (*Book of Deeds*, 109, n. 137 – wrongly citing Zurita).

⁵³ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 199–200; cf. Amorós Payá, “Los Santos Martires,” 28–46.

as is known, however, they were never subjected to mendicant missionary sermons, whether Dominican or otherwise.⁵⁴

To what extent, then, can mendicants be said to have actively engaged in attempts to enter into religious dialogue with, preach to and ultimately convert Muslim elites in the course of their diplomatic missions? Maximalist glosses aside, there is very little evidence to suggest that they did so at all. Indeed, only in one or possibly two specific cases are there any grounds to suspect mendicant involvement. Once these are examined more closely, it soon becomes evident that they are just as likely to indicate a total lack of mendicant participation in – or perhaps even mendicant opposition to – such fantastical proselytizing gambits.

The nearest thing to an overt claim of Dominican connections to an elite conversion effort comes in the context Geoffroy of Beaulieu's above-cited assertion that St. Louis sought the baptism of Hafsid caliph al-Mustansir around 1269–70. This is the episode which lies at the root of all later historians' statements on the subject. Still, Geoffroy never actually claimed the Dominicans planned the venture – rather, as part of his overall contribution to the king's canonization campaign, he would have us believe that Louis was the project's saintly mastermind.⁵⁵ What he does suggest is merely that Louis used his last breath to designate certain Dominican friars as his successors in the Tunis missionary field:

When it became clear that he was approaching the end, he cared for nothing but those things properly pertaining only to God and to the exaltation of the Christian faith. Therefore, since he could now only speak very softly and seriously we stood close by and listened closely to his words. The man, full of God and a true Catholic, said: "Let us strive on behalf of God, so that the Catholic faith might be preached and planted in Tunis. O may he who is best suited be sent there to preach!" And he named a certain friar of the Order of Preachers, who had been there before, and who was known to the king of Tunis.⁵⁶

Louis' alleged whisper must not have carried very far, for other sources fail to mention this royal command. Neither Joinville (who was disgusted by the whole venture) nor Primat recount Louis' alleged final call for a

⁵⁴ Legend has naturally exaggerated Abu Zayd's supposed repentance and dedication to the Order (Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 200). Friar Raymond Despont witnessed the ex-king's daughter's will in 1299, but this was in his capacity as bishop of Valencia and royal chancellor rather than as a Dominican. Her will includes a small donation to the Preachers, but most bequests went to a convent of Franciscan nuns (R.I. Burns, "Daughter of Abū Zayd, Last Almohad Ruler of Valencia: The Family and Christian Seigniorship of Alda Ferrándis 1236–1300" in *Viator* 24 [1993], 143–87).

⁵⁵ Papal enquiries were held into Louis' sanctity in 1273, 1278 and 1282. The canonization was finalized in 1297 by Boniface VIII (Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 298–305).

⁵⁶ Beaulieu, *Vita*, ch. 44; ed. Daunou and Naudet, 23.

Dominican mission to Tunis. Instead they transcribe Louis' well-known written instructions to his heir, which are likewise silent on the issue. Primat includes a letter from Louis' son Philip III, stating that his father's *derrenière volonté* was instead for his Dominicans (including Geoffroy) to go back to Europe and order all the clerics of France to pray for his soul.⁵⁷ Geoffroy may therefore have been putting a few good words into Louis' mouth, words intended to illustrate not only the king's piety but also the quality of the Dominican Order. His version of events proved influential, however. Later French chroniclers chose to see the 1270 treaty with the Hafids as proof that St. Louis' alleged dream of converting the infidel lived on, with mendicant participation.

William de Nangis' *Chronicle* (completed shortly before 1300) thus describes the scene:

Seeing this [the arrival of Charles of Anjou with his siege engines], the Saracens were forced by fear to request a treaty with the Christians, among whose provisions these are said to be the most important, namely: that all Christian captives in the kingdom of Tunis were to be freed; and that, having built monasteries for the honor of Christ in all the cities of the kingdom, the Christian faith was to be freely preached by the Preachers and Minorites and others; and that those wishing to be baptized should be baptized.⁵⁸

William reflects what had become common opinion in France by the turn of the fourteenth century, after Louis had been canonized: that the Tunisian crusade had indeed been intended to foster conversions among the Muslims, and that the mendicant Orders were expected to contribute to this goal with their preaching skills. Since neither French nor Latin versions of the treaty have survived, William's summary went unquestioned by generations of historians. An extant Arabic copy of this document, however, makes no concessions to mendicant proselytism. Instead it grants religious privileges which had become standard in all *fondacos*, privileges intended to facilitate the residence of foreign merchants on Muslim soil:

Christian monks [*ruhban*] and priests may remain in the realm of the amir al-mu'minin, who will give them a place where they might build monasteries and churches and bury their dead; the said monks and priests will preach and

⁵⁷ Joinville, *Histoire*, ch. 145; ed. de Wailly, 328–33. Primat, *Chronique de Primat*, chs. 39–43; ed. de Wailly *et al.*, 57–63. Geoffroy de Beaulieu included a similar testament (in Latin) in his *Vita* (ch. 15; ed. Daunou and Naudet, 8–9).

⁵⁸ William de Nangis (*Nangiaco*), *Continuationis Chronici Guillelmi de Nangiaco* (ed. H. Gérard; Paris, 1843), vol. I, 238, an. 1270. The treaty does provide for the liberation of all prisoners of war by both sides, but not for wholesale emancipation of Christian slaves and certainly not for missionary preaching tours (Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 94).

pray publicly in their churches, and serve God according to the rites of their religion, as they are accustomed to do in their own countries.⁵⁹

Stories about St. Louis and his alleged support for Dominican proselytizing efforts in Tunis dovetail conveniently with testimony from Raymond Lull. Lull employed the following narrative repeatedly in his works to support his own special form of conversion strategy:

It is said that a certain Christian religious, well-read in Arabic, traveled to Tunis to debate with the king, who is called king Miramolin. That friar proved to him by his conduct and by means of parables that the law of Mahomet was erroneous and false; the said king of the Saracens, who was learned in the logical and natural sciences, understood these proofs to be true and thus agreed with his teachings, saying “I no longer wish to be a Saracen, so prove your faith to me and I will desire to become a Christian and I will also desire to make all of the people of my kingdom into Christians on pain of decapitation.” Then that friar said, “The Christian faith cannot be proved, but behold, the explanation of the symbols [of the faith] in Arabic; believe in it.” ... Then the king said, “I would not give up believing for the sake of believing, but I would be very glad to give up believing for truly understanding. And thus you have done ill, because you reproved the law which I once held but afterwards you could not prove your [law] to me with rational arguments, so that henceforth I will remain without any law.” And then he had [the friar] and all his companions ignominiously expelled from the kingdom.⁶⁰

The point was of course that if only Lull’s preaching style (based on his philosophical *ars*) had been employed, a spectacular conversion would undoubtedly have resulted.

Though Lull named no names, his description of the missionary’s refusal to employ philosophy in discussing Christian mysteries clearly recalls the Dominican theological position elaborated by Aquinas and Martini.⁶¹ Maximalists have therefore been quick to consider this anecdote as yet another illustration of real mendicant missionary preaching. Ephrem Longpré’s identification of Lull’s “friar” with Raymond Martini has been widely accepted, and it is consonant with the claims of Geoffroy de Beaulieu and Peter Marsili – that the Catalan friar and the caliph were

⁵⁹ Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 93–6. Arabic text published anonymously under the initials “P.G.G.”: “Documents divers relatifs à la croisade de saint Louis contre Tunis (1270)” in *Revue tunisienne* 91 (1912); repr. in *Les cahiers de Tunisie* 25 (1977), 258–62. The French translation of de Sacy (which was used by Mas Latrie) is also included in this article.

⁶⁰ *Liber de acquisitione Terrae Sanctae* (dated 1309–10); ed. Longpré, “Le B. Raymond Lulle,” 197–8. The basic story appears in *Blanquerna* (1295?), the *Liber de fine* (1305) and four other Lullian works (Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 96, n. 12).

⁶¹ Lull’s theoretical conflicts with Dominicans are discussed in [chapter 1](#). See also Bonner, “Ramon Lull and the Dominicans,” 377–92.

on intimate speaking terms. Anthony Bonner has argued that the debate actually took place as Lull described it, even suggesting that Martini's shameful failure was the real reason why he and Cendra avoided meeting king James on the beach at Agde in 1269.⁶² The fact that Lull's tale fits suspiciously well with the rest of his fictionalized writings and with his dominant rhetorical purpose, however, suggests that historical accuracy was not necessarily his first concern. The anecdote can be accepted as a parable, but probably not as a reliable witness to the events of Louis' Tunisian crusade – let alone to normative Dominican practice in the Maghrib as a whole.⁶³

Lull's story would be more convincing, and significant, if there was corroborating evidence for Dominican preaching in the Maghrib after 1270. Conditions were certainly promising. The Crown of Aragon continued to develop its political and mercantile interests in the region, to such an extent indeed that by the turn of the fourteenth century Tunis could almost be considered a Catalan colony.⁶⁴ Different factions among the Hafsid nobility jockeyed for support from their powerful Christian allies in this context, and so it was perhaps not surprising that rumors of impending conversions once more began to circulate. Dominican friars also continued to maintain a presence in Tunis at least, and they could have taken steps to encourage elite conversions from Islam if that had really been one of their chief objectives.⁶⁵ Yet not a single document exists to suggest that any friars involved themselves in the so-called “al-Lihyani” affair, or in other proselytizing ventures throughout the course of the fourteenth century. If the mendicant Orders did in fact have anything to do with the débâcle of 1270, it would seem that they had learned their lesson by the turn of the next century.

Abu Yahya Zakariyya Ibn al-Lihyani was a Hafsid self-promoter and sometime caliph whose promises of conversion apparently went

⁶² *Ibid.*, and review of an article by C.J. Lavajo in *Estudios Lulianos* 29 (1989), 87. Cf. Bonner, “Ramon Lull and the Dominicans.”

⁶³ The evolution of the tale through Lull's *oeuvre* is itself suspicious. As Bonner notes, Lull was obsessed with the idea that conversions should be accomplished by means of logical proofs rather than appeals to Scriptural authority (Bonner, “Ramon Lull and the Dominicans,” 382–3). When the present anecdote first appeared to prove the point (in chapter 84 of *Blanquerna*) it was quite vague – a brief *exemplum* sandwiched between similar conversion tales involving a Jew and an African pagan from Ghana, with protagonists identified only as *un sarrai* and *un crestià*. More specific placement of the story in Tunis, and its connection to a friar, only appeared in later writings. Lull's story of the friar and the caliph thus has every indication of being a tale that grew in the telling.

⁶⁴ See generally Dufourq, *L'Espagne catalane*; cf. Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 122–4.

⁶⁵ Friar Sancho de Boleya was stationed in Tunis from 1299 (Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, vol. II, 743). At least two more Preachers were sent there in 1306 (Dufourq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 438). See further below for discussion of the contemporary vicariate of Africa, then being organized in Morocco.

beyond the vague hints of al-Rashid or al-Mustansir. From about 1301–6, as vizier to sultan Abu 'Asida, he engaged in written correspondence with the Aragonese king James II on matters of taxation and trade between the two kingdoms. He also negotiated treaties and prisoner exchanges.⁶⁶ During this period he fostered personal relations with Christian officials; he may even have discussed religious ideas with some of them. It is unlikely that he had any contact with Dominican friars, however, and if he did the encounter has not been documented.

By 1306 al-Lihyani's larger political ambitions became evident. Leading a mixed force of Muslim warriors and Christian mercenaries in his capacity as supreme military leader of the Hafsid Almohads (*shaykh al-muwahhidin*), he attempted to assert control over southern regions of the caliphate.⁶⁷ In the complex shuffling of alliances which ensued, al-Lihyani's bid failed and he decided to make an impromptu pilgrimage to Mecca. By 1309, however, he had begun to engineer a comeback. Taking full advantage of Aragonese backing, al-Lihyani finally made himself sultan in 1311 and began paying hefty tributes to his Christian patrons. At the same time, coded messages were being passed back and forth among the various Christian powers regarding al-Lihyani's apparent baptismal intentions. Though these were never spelled out with complete clarity, it seems that conversionary overtures had been made, and that some at the various royal and ecclesiastical courts actually believed Abu Yahya might be sincere.⁶⁸

Yet when the time came to send Christian spiritual advisors, presumably to assist al-Lihyani in overcoming his remaining theological doubts if not to perform an actual baptism ceremony, friars were nowhere in evidence. King James was apparently satisfied in 1313 that al-Lihyani's personal Christian *torcimanus*, a Catalan painter by the name of Joan Gil, was qualified to serve in this capacity.⁶⁹ A few months later, perhaps in response to further hints from the sultan, a non-mendicant chaplain named Galvany de Verdaguer was dispatched to Tunis.⁷⁰ By the fall of 1314 Raymond Llull had also traveled to Tunis with royal

⁶⁶ Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 124–6.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 125–7; Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 430–3.

⁶⁸ Like al-Rashid, his mother had also been a Christian slave (Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 125). Various documents relating to the affair may be found in Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 489–95 and Dufourcq, "Documents inédits sur la politique Ifrikiyenne de la Couronne d'Aragon" in *AST* 25 (1952), 265–78.

⁶⁹ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 490.

⁷⁰ Verdaguer's presence in Tunis is attested only by the appearance of his signature on a treaty dated February 21, 1314; involvement in missionary work is Dufourcq's speculation (*ibid.*).

letters of introduction to Joan Gil and to al-Lihyani himself (called the *molt noble e molt honrat Miralmomonin Bujahie Zacharie, rey de Tunis, fill de almir Abhalabber*). There Lull may once more have put his distinctive preaching theories into practice.⁷¹ Raymond Lull eventually called for assistance from the Franciscan Simon de Podio Ceritano (*Simó de Puigcerdà*), but not in the role of auxiliary missionary preacher – rather the educated friar’s services were required to translate Lull’s newest disputation writings into Latin, for clerical consumption back in Europe.⁷² Lull may well have been hoping for a Hafsîd conversion, but even while resident abroad he too considered the edification of Christians to be among his most important tasks.

Dominicans thus played no apparent role in the al-Lihyani affair, perhaps deliberately excluded by Raymond Lull and his royal backers. Perhaps, too, they were suspicious that the scheme lacked real merit. Rumors of elite Muslim conversions had after all proved to be disappointing more often than not. Stories of al-Mustansîr’s and other falsely rumored conversions of 1270, whatever their basis in fact, had by now become part of the historical record.⁷³ Dominicans were familiar with Humbert of Romans’ arguments in the 1274 *Opusculum tripartitum*, to the effect that Muslims were highly unlikely to ever be voluntarily converted.⁷⁴ They also knew Aquinas’ dictum, that preaching generally could best “be done for the training and consolation of the faithful, and not with any idea of refuting those who are adversaries.”⁷⁵ In the end such skepticism proved justified, for al-Lihyani too did not convert. Falling from power in 1317, he fled to Libya (along with his Christian mercenaries) and then to Egypt, where he and his son Muhammad Abu Darba continued to cultivate Aragonese support with more hints of their impending conversions. By 1326 prospects for a return to power had been finally dashed and al-Lihyani ended his days as a guest of the Mamluk sultanate and a (more or less) faithful Muslim.⁷⁶

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 490–2; Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 42–3; James’ letters are in Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. I, 62–4 (#54–6).

⁷² James noted that Lull was “disputando cum Sarracenis Tunicii” but failed to mention conversion of the caliph in his letters concerning friar Simon (Rubio y Lluç, *Documents*, vol. I, 65–7 [#58–9]). Lull’s last works were in fact dedicated to al-Lihyani at Tunis in 1315 (Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull*, 163).

⁷³ Primat and Nangis for example tell the cautionary tale of Hafsîd soldiers tricking French troops into an ambush during the crusade with their false requests for baptism (cited in Lower, “Conversion,” 229).

⁷⁴ *Opusculum tripartitum*, pt. 1, ch. 6. ⁷⁵ SCG, bk. 1, ch. 9.

⁷⁶ James II of Aragon apparently believed that al-Lihyani was baptized around 1314, but it seems the conversion (if it did take place) was not sincere (Dufourq, *L’Espagne catalane*, 493–5). Papal, Sicilian and Angevin envoys also held discussions with the resourceful ex-sultan.

The Dominicans' diplomatic involvement in Muslim North Africa, like their pastoral work, thus seems to have been fairly limited and even sporadic. Often, indeed, their presence in places like Marrakesh and Tunis went undocumented aside from incidental meetings or appearances on witness lists.⁷⁷ Neither the General Chapter *acta* (the normal forum for such proposals) nor the surviving Provincial Chapter *acta* of the Dominican Order mention a permanent convent having been established in Tunis or any other Muslim-ruled city. Despite the rhetoric of Raymond Penyafort, the tales of Raymond Llull and a handful of papal bulls, the friars' presence in the region developed haphazardly, with little administrative support or structure, throughout the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

A new development briefly arose in the fourteenth century, when the now-separate Dominican Province of Aragon recruited a small number of friars to serve in a "Vicariate of Africa." The idea of subdividing Provinces into vicariates had been gaining ground for some time within the expanding and increasingly wealthy Order.⁷⁸ It allowed for more effective bureaucratic management of properties and coordination of activities on a regional basis. The Province of Aragon's main vicariates as of 1302 were Aragon proper, Navarre, Catalonia and a catch-all known as "Mallorca, Valencia, Murcia and Xàtiva."⁷⁹ Establishment of a separate vicariate for Africa might conceivably have been a sign that the Aragonese Dominicans were beginning to take their long-term duties in the Islamic Maghrib more seriously.

Unfortunately, documentation for this vicariate is extremely scarce, and again one is left with the impression that it may have had more of a symbolic and passing than a real and sustained importance within the Province. Only two Dominicans are actually known to have been assigned to its ranks. The first notice of its existence comes in a letter from pope Clement V to an unnamed *Vicario Magistri Ordinis Predicatorum in*

⁷⁷ Franciscan friars, for their part, are known to have witnessed documents at Tunis on rare occasions in the decades following St. Louis' crusade. Friar Arnold de Furno and Bernard de Sala witnessed a trade deal between Aragon and Tunis in 1271; their comrades William Guitar and James performed a similar function in 1314 (Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 280-4 [#2] and 306-10 [#14]; cf. López, *Obispos*, 61-2).

⁷⁸ Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, vol. I, 173-4. The Spanish Province was divided into five vicariates as early as 1275.

⁷⁹ See for example Robles Sierra, "Actas de los Capítulos" in *EV* 20 (1990), 250. Each vicariate had its own visitator; one was usually shared by Aragon and Navarre. Note that even though Mallorca had regained its political independence as of 1298, its Dominicans remained tied to their Valencian brethren rather than to Provençal mendicant networks.

Africa dated August 1, 1310.⁸⁰ Two years later, at the Aragonese Provincial Chapter of 1312, a friar named Peter Scarramat (*Carcamato*) – vicar of Africa and presumably the recipient of Clement’s recent letter – was formally replaced by a colleague named Peter Ferrer of Manresa (*Petrus Ferrarii de Minorissa*).

The language of the 1312 *acta* implies that the vicariate had only just received final sanction from the master-general of the Order, and that it was now ready to accept volunteers.⁸¹ It had a promising start. Peter Scarramat was formerly a Hebrew teacher at the Dominicans’ Xàtiva convent and may also have known some Arabic; the fact that this highly educated and senior friar was made vicar of Africa implies that it was considered to be a post of some importance.⁸² The vicariate is not mentioned in any Provincial Chapter *acta* subsequent to 1312, however, and it likely ceased to exist within a matter of years – if it ever really got beyond the planning stage at all.

Whatever the fortunes of this particular organizational structure, other signs emerged around the same time to indicate that Dominican involvement in Muslim North Africa was becoming somewhat more intense. In large part this was due to king James II of Aragon, who appreciated the friars’ erudition and diplomacy more than had his predecessors. He personally renewed the Dominican mission to Hafsid Tunis by sending friar Sancho de Boleya, one-time resident of St. Catherine’s in Barcelona and an elite student of Hebrew, “to visit and console the Christians (*Christicolas*) dwelling in Tunis” in 1299.⁸³ Another Barcelona Dominican known as Francis de Relat (*Pilaco*) was sent to Bugia on the same king’s orders in 1309. There he was responsible for redeeming captives.⁸⁴ Little

⁸⁰ Transcribed in López, *Obispos*, 66–8. The fact that Clement did not name the vicar may mean that he did not know the post’s occupant, or perhaps that the post had yet to be filled at time of writing.

⁸¹ “Denuntiat Prior Provincialis fratribus universis, quod habet potestatem a Reverendo Patre Magistro Ordinis mittendi fratres in Africam, et faciendi Vicarium in eadem; ideo ego frater Romeus de Brugaria Prior Provincialis absolvo fratrem Petrum Scarramat a Vicaria Africa, et loco eius facio Vicarium in eadem Provincia Africe fratrem Petrum Ferrarii de Minorissa, dans ei plenam potestatem super omnes fratres qui in illa sunt, vel pro tempore fuerint, de quibuscumque Provinciis venerint ad eandem. Unde si qui fratres devotionem habuerint ad predictam Provinciam denuntiare mihi debent, vel Vicario supradicto” (Robles Sierra, “Actas de los Capítulos” in *EV* 21 [1991], 130). Permission for the vicariate may have been obtained in the context of the Council of Vienne (1311–12).

⁸² Peter taught Hebrew at the Xàtiva convent in 1302 and 1303 (Robles Sierra, “Actas de los Capítulos” in *EV* 20 [1990], 244 and 255). The Xàtiva *studium* was supposed to teach Arabic as well in this period, and Scarramat may well have learned both languages (see chapter 3).

⁸³ Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, vol. II, 743. Sancho was a student of Raymond Martini’s at the Barcelona *studium hebraicum* in 1281; like his teacher he may also have studied Arabic but this cannot be known for certain (*contra* Coll, “Escuelas” in *AST* 18 [1945], 60–1).

⁸⁴ Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 301 (#11, clause 3).

by little, James managed to position reliable Preachers in all the leading Islamic courts of the Maghrib.

Significantly, too, Dominicans from James' realms now came to replace Castilian Franciscans in the post of *episcopus Marrochitane*. The see had inspired little paperwork at the papal curia in the decades following Lupus' brief visit to Marrakesh around 1250. A succession of obscure Franciscans was appointed to replace him, but there is little to hint that any of them ever left Europe.⁸⁵ All that would change as Aragonese Dominicans began to take a more active role in Maghribi affairs. Reasons for the change are not hard to find. The desire to help Christians abroad and convert Muslims (if possible) never diminished; but now the king of Aragon's political interest in the region was steadily growing. As in the day of Raymond Martini and Francis Cendra, the Preachers once again proved useful to a powerful patron.

In 1307, apparently for the first time in history, a Dominican received papal authorization to occupy the see of Marrakesh. This was friar Bernard, lector of theology at Murcia, pastor, missionary and Arabist. According to Clement V's letter of appointment, Bernard was chosen by "the noble soldiers and other Christians of Africa" and given the now-traditional objectives of a bishop *in partibus sarracenorum*, "communicating with the faithful and converting the infidel."⁸⁶ He was supposed to be consecrated by the archbishop of Seville, but there is no record so show that the pope's wishes were carried out. This is not surprising; after all, Bernard's precedent-setting appointment at this particular juncture was no ordinary matter. Influence in Morocco remained a highly charged political issue, and the last thing Castilian monarchs or their Churchmen wanted to see in 1307 was the placement of an Arabic-speaking Aragonese Dominican at the Marinid court.⁸⁷

Where Castilian diplomacy and mercenaries had once dominated in Morocco, the Aragonese began to enjoy a rapprochement with the

⁸⁵ Bishop Blanco (1260–67), bishop Lorenzo of Portugal (1266?) and bishop Rodrigo de Gudal (1289–1307?). The latter was a Zaragozaan like Lupus. Bishop Rodrigo may have visited Morocco, and Ibn Khaldun seems to have had him in mind when recording the deeds of one "Er-Rik-Rikcen, a great one of that nation" who served as Castilian envoy to Tlemcen in 1293 (*Histoire des Berbères*, vol. IV, 138). Still, most documents place him in Seville, where he must have had relations with Castilian elites (see López, *Obispos*, 40–60).

⁸⁶ "Dilecti filii nobiles viri milites et ceteri Christiani in Africa commorantes ... Destinatus in conversatione fidelium et conversione infidelium" (López, *Obispos*, 64).

⁸⁷ Coll, "San Raymundo de Peñafort," 433–4 suggests that Bernard was Castilian, but the arguments he advances are not convincing. Murcia had been in Aragonese hands politically since 1296, and it would be surprising if James II had not taken steps to fill its Church offices with his own supporters whenever possible. The fact that Bernard was trained in Arabic may mean that he was a recent import, educated in the Xàtiva *studium arabicum*.

Marinid sultans in the later thirteenth century. In 1274, king James I of Aragon leased out 500 knights (led by his bastard son, Peter Fernández de Híjar) and a fully manned fleet of ships to the sultan Abu Yusuf.⁸⁸ Aragonese ties to Morocco grew closer still after Sancho IV came to the throne of Castile in 1285. The last years of Alfonso X's reign had been marred by a bitter conflict between the king, supported by his Marinid allies, and prince Sancho – who found common cause with the Nasrids of Granada. When Alfonso died Sancho inherited his crown but not his warm relations with the Marinid dynasty. Aragonese troops therefore began to win contracts which had once gone to their Castilian rivals.

The situation became still more complicated when James II of Aragon seized Murcia and its environs from Castile in 1296. This move brought Aragon into direct confrontation not only with Sancho's young heir Fernando IV but also with the Nasrids, who were now directly threatened by an Aragonese–Marinid alliance. Despite a number of complications, the basic division between Castilian–Granadan interests on the one hand and Aragonese–Moroccan interests on the other would have an impact on politics in the western Mediterranean for decades to come.

In 1306, with the issue of Murcia temporarily settled by arbitration, Castile and Aragon enjoyed an uneasy peace.⁸⁹ Within a year, however, Morocco was in an uproar: the key port city of Ceuta had been captured by Granada, sultan Abu Ya'qub was assassinated and his heir died soon afterward. According to Ibn Abi Zar', a number of Christians also fell victim to uprisings in Marrakesh at this time.⁹⁰ In 1308 the new sultan, Abu Rabi'a, turned to Aragon for help. A naval flotilla and thousand-strong mercenary army was recruited, and Ceuta was soon recaptured thanks to the Aragonese.⁹¹ Life in Morocco became more stable under Abu Sa'id 'Uthman, who took the throne in 1310 and lived until 1331 – for the most part in cooperation with Aragon.

When Bernard of Murcia was selected as the new bishop responsible for Morocco, along with all its mercenaries and other Christian residents,

⁸⁸ Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, 164–8. The text of the contract is in Mas-Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 285–6 (#3). Abu Yusuf's target was Ceuta – despite the fact that James had signed a treaty with that city in 1269.

⁸⁹ The arbitration, judged by king Denis of Portugal and the bishop of Zaragoza, left Aragon in possession of Orihue-la, Alicante and Elche as well as all lands north of the river Segura (O'Callaghan, *History of Medieval Spain*, 402).

⁹⁰ Ibn Abi Zar', *Rawd al-Qirtas*, vol. II, 712.

⁹¹ B. Lúgan, *Histoire du Maroc* (Paris, 1992), 113–14. Documents are in Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, vol. II, 297–300 (#10).

he was thus being given a major task at a sensitive time. Whether his consecration was blocked by opposition from Castile, or whether he simply died soon thereafter, the change could not be avoided. Aragonese interests now dominated the Church in Africa, such as it was, and an Aragonese bishop would be expected to facilitate relations between the sultan and his countrymen. The effort to organize an Aragonese Dominican vicariate of Africa less than three years later must be seen as part of this development.

Bernard was replaced by another bishop of Marrakesh named Peter (1310–11), who had Dominican and presumably Aragonese loyalties. According to one papal letter, there were few if any non-Dominican clergy left in the region by this time. Peter himself was not a friar when first chosen for the post, but he soon petitioned for and received papal authorization to adopt the habit.⁹² A failed attempt to oppose Peter's election, made by a Benedictine monk known as John de Palmela, may have had political origins, but if so these are obscure.⁹³

The Aragonese-dominated vicariate of Africa coexisted with (or perhaps was identical to) an episcopal Chapter at Marrakesh by 1312. In that year the Chapter consisted of a deacon Ponce and archdeacon Raymond.⁹⁴ Together they secured the election of more erudite Aragonese Dominicans to the see: Francis de Relat in 1312 and then John Ferrandi (*Fernandez*) in 1327.⁹⁵ These were men well equipped to serve their sovereign and their fellow Christians in Marinid Morocco. Francis, for one, was a veteran of the Maghribi scene and a royal familiar (having previously served the king at Bugia in 1309, as noted above).

Dominicans thus played a small but important role in Aragonese efforts to access the tangled world of North African politics in the first decades of the fourteenth century. When available, their Arabic language skills were especially valued. Yet even those who had nothing more than a keen eye and a ready ear to the ground could be of great value. Such may have been the case with a mysterious bishop-elect of Marrakesh named Peter Comte, toward the end of the period under review. Peter

⁹² López, *Obispos*, 66–8.

⁹³ John was in turn accused of having illegally abandoned the Franciscan Order, and the pope ordered the archbishop of Seville to take action against him (López, *Obispos*, 70).

⁹⁴ López, *Obispos*, 68.

⁹⁵ The educational background of both is well documented in the Chapter *acta* of the Aragonese Province. Neither can be shown to have studied any Arabic, though both had exceptional theological training. Relat studied at the *studium generale* of Barcelona (1302–3), while Ferrandi studied at Barcelona (1302–3), Naples (1307) and Florence (1310) before teaching at Lleida (1314). See the *acta*: Robles Sierra, “Actas de los Capítulos” in *EV* 20 (1990), 243 and 256 for Relat; *EV* 20 (1990) 242, 256, 282 and *EV* 21 (1991) 116 and 132 for Ferrandi.

was probably a Dominican; he was certainly a friar, and loyal to the Crown of Aragon. According to documents in the Crown archive, he passed secret information on in 1337 to a very appreciative king Peter the Ceremonious, regarding Marinid troop movements.⁹⁶ Comte raised no fuss, inspired no martyrs or polemics and is otherwise unknown. He may have been a very good bishop, but from king Peter's point of view at least he was an even better spy. Sixty-eight years after king Louis' invasion of Tunis, missionaries situated in Muslim cities were still providing valuable information to their royal patrons in times of war.

Involvement in diplomacy never became a focal point of the Dominican Order's self-perception, and it was seldom recorded by medieval chroniclers. Even remarkable figures such as Peter Scarramat and Francis de Relat received scant praise from their colleagues; Dominican sources barely record their exploits in Africa, while lavishing attention instead on Peter Martyr's struggles against home-grown Christian heretics or Thomas Aquinas' achievements in clarifying theological points for generations of preachers destined for the pulpits of Rome and Paris. Even Raymond Martini's linguistic and intellectual achievements lay buried for centuries, known only to a few of his most scholarly countrymen. The varied history of these mendicants' ventures into Muslim lands has to be reconstructed from occasional letters and privileges instead of chronicles or the regular series of administrative documents generated by other Dominican activities. As a result, educated guesses and caveats are unavoidable.

The whole truth behind Martini and Cendra's 1269 voyage, or Dominican involvement in the alleged conversion of al-Lihyani, may never be known. Yet the simple assertions of maximalist scholarship cannot be sustained. Conversion of Muslims was only one consideration for the friars who found themselves called to labor in the *vineae domini* of the western Mediterranean world. Pastoral care for Christians was a much bigger issue, and it provided the real impetus for most of the known missionary initiatives of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Political objectives, though often not clearly separable from religious intentions, were also frequently at the root of the Dominicans' missions. These friars were sophisticated men with extensive training and often enviable links to the courts of Europe. Their interventions on

⁹⁶ Reference to Comte's espionage was made in an exchange of letters between king Peter and his ambassador to the papal curia, Peter Boyl (López, *Obispos*, 73-4). Unfortunately López neglected to properly cite his source for this information, making reference only to copies of certain ACA documents he received from a fellow Franciscan who was subsequently killed by the "*hordas marxistas*." Further research in the registers of Peter IV may yet reveal more examples of friar Peter's exploits.

Diplomacy and espionage

the religious frontier, even if few and far between, reflect an age when Christians had come to understand that the emirates of the Muslim West were important and alluring places. Alliances and fortunes could be made there, but souls could also be lost. It was up to the friars to make sure that contacts between the two worlds redounded to the financial and political benefit of Christendom while keeping the possible spiritual dangers of such contact to a minimum.

Chapter 8

THE COMPLEXITIES OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Throughout this book, examples have been provided to highlight and examine the various ways in which medieval Dominicans sought to approach, address, coerce or otherwise interact with Jewish or Muslim populations in the Crown of Aragon and its surrounding territories. Starting with their basic ideals of universal evangelical mission in imitation of the apostles, these mendicant friars set out to preach what they took to be theological truth to all who would listen. At the same time they wanted to destroy what they took to be opposing theological errors, protecting the less well-educated or less wholly faithful from their pernicious effects. At certain specific times and under certain specific conditions this meant approaching Jews and/or Muslims, whether directly in person or through written argument, hoping such unbelievers could somehow be brought to see the light of Christian faith. Yet it has also become apparent, I hope, that this sort of external mission was the exception rather than the norm. For the most part medieval Dominicans were neither able nor particularly willing to work toward the conversion of non-Christians. It would be a distortion of history to take their few theoretical statements on mission, combined with an equally few actual examples of proselytizing behavior, and conclude that “serious missionizing” characterized relations between Dominicans and non-Christians throughout the Middle Ages and into the Modern period.

For every episode of apparent external preaching, inquisitorial intervention or cross-frontier ambassadorial work, it must also be kept in mind that there were countless banal days of co-existence in which the vast majority of friars, Jews and Muslims simply ignored one another – even while rubbing shoulders in the close confines of medieval cities. *Alltagsgeschichte* (history of the everyday) is of course notoriously difficult to reconstruct for the medieval period, because of a lack of sources.¹

¹ Nirenberg, *Communities*, 13, has wise reservations on the matter, which has been controversial in Holocaust historiography.

The complexities of everyday life

Documents were for the most part generated to record conflict and policy, not regular occurrences; hence the extreme brevity of this chapter. Yet realities of daily life must be considered if the historical significance of more spectacular events such as the Barcelona disputation or the trial of Jucef Quatorze are to be properly understood in their social context. This should in no way trivialize the seriousness of traumatic confrontations between powerful majority and persecuted minority. On the contrary, the shock which impacted on non-Christian communities each time their normal routines were interrupted by mendicant or other intervention becomes all the more evident. Furthermore, however unremarkable daily relations may have been, it is evident that they were based on fundamentally inequitable and coercive systems of power.

If Dominican friars had relatively few occasions to proceed against Jews or Muslims in the context of conversionary preaching or inquisitorial hearings, they did inevitably share space with non-Christian neighbors in the Crown of Aragon on a more or less regular basis. This was especially true when it came to Jews; different cities had different layouts but often (as at Barcelona) friars' convents and Jewish *calls* were situated in close physical proximity. Interactions could thus be daily in some cases, and they often took place on the mundane level of economic or service transactions. Jews and Muslims occupied distinct positions in the economic life of the realm, and the friars were generally happy to benefit from the profits and services each provided. Dominican friars therefore approached their non-Christian contemporaries – when they approached them at all – not only as missionaries but also as seigneurial landlords, employers and masters.

The frequency of personal contacts between Dominicans, Jews and Muslims should not be exaggerated. Most of the friars' business and income revolved around transactions with their Christian flocks, as discussed in [chapter 2](#), and some convents at some times may have deliberately sought to limit their dealings with non-Christians. Nevertheless, in a colonial society such as the Crown of Aragon, labor and revenue provided by subject populations was ubiquitous. Indeed, the nature of the documentation which has survived to describe Dominican economic or service relations with Muslims and Jews suggests that these were not seen as remarkable or irregular.² Far from being constantly at odds with their Jewish and Muslim neighbors, or seeking ways to bring about their conversion, it seems that friars simply accepted these non-Christians'

² With the possible exception of the friars' alleged use of Jewish doctors, which did cause some resentment as will be seen below.

presence as a normal and even a useful fact of life in the medieval Crown of Aragon.

As has already been noted, the Jews of Christian Europe were technically considered to be royal property – a principle which was extended by analogy to the *mudéjar* Muslims of the Crown of Aragon as well. Royal possession of large numbers of revenue-producing Jewish and Muslim subjects was key to the Aragonese monarchy's financial solvency, and these subjects' special skills were much appreciated. Thus Jewish doctors, scholars, administrators and translators were frequently to be found in the company of the king, as were Muslim craftsmen (especially master carpenters) and soldiers (especially light cavalry *jinetes* and crossbowmen). Ultimate lordship over these non-Christian subjects was reserved to the king, but rights to the services and/or incomes derived from them might be sold or given away whenever the monarch saw fit to do so.

Clergy and laity alike benefited from the resulting partial alienations. In 1212, for example, Peter II of Aragon granted lordship over the Zaragoza Jew “Alazrach son of Abulfath Abenalazar” and his family to the Order of Knights Hospitaller. Alazrach was severed from ties to the wider Zaragoza *aljama* (thus being freed of tax and other communal obligations) and ordered instead to pay tribute to the Hospitallers and submit to their judgment in legal matters.³ A similar arrangement provided the church of St. Mary de Salis in Huesca with three Muslim vassals (Monferreg, Muçat and Mahometus, sons of Cige de Malull and his wife Solis de Tardon) thanks to the generosity of James II of Aragon.⁴

Dominicans also owned rights to the services of individual Muslims who had been “enfranchised” from their communities (*sarraceni franci*) and so answered to their lords alone – an arrangement which may have been especially prevalent in Aragon.⁵ In Zaragoza, the Muslim Abraham Bellido and his descendants were thus granted by the king of Aragon as vassals to the countess of Bigorre around the turn of the thirteenth century. She in turn passed them on to the bishop of Zaragoza. By 1292, responding to the friars' “need” for the Bellidos' services, the bishop obtained royal authorization to give the family permanently to the local

³ Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 74–80 (#79).

⁴ The Malull brothers' descendants were still subject to the church in 1361 and yet remained true to Islam (M.B. Basañez Villaluenga, *La Aljama Sarracena de Huesca en el siglo XIV* [Barcelona, 1989], 172–3 [#39]).

⁵ These Muslims are discussed by Elena Lourie, who notes that “the evidence comes only from Aragon, although this may well be accidental” (Lourie, “Anatomy of Ambivalence,” 33). Further research needs to be done on the question, but highly-assimilated and demographically unthreatening Aragonese Muslims like the Bellidos (and the Malulls mentioned above) would probably have been more easily integrated as individuals serving among Christian clergy than, say, recently conquered and unilingual Valencians.

The complexities of everyday life

Dominican convent.⁶ These transactions had nothing to do with any desires to convert the family, which was still Muslim in the mid-fifteenth century.⁷ The Bellidos were simply master carpenters, and the Zaragoza convent needed renovations.

In the period after the Black Death, when friars were hard-pressed to find sufficient labor to keep their lands productive and their convents tidy, Muslim labor was especially appreciated. Documents dating to 1371 refer to three “Moorish house-maids” (*moras de casa*) employed at the Zaragoza convent and to the annual bonus they were to receive for their services (paid in cherries).⁸ Muslim grave-diggers are documented working for the same convent in 1424 and 1425.⁹ Clearly the friars of Zaragoza had a tradition of employing Muslims, and they felt comfortable with the long-term presence of non-Christians in and around their convent.

Individual Jews were also employed from time to time by convents as a result of the friars’ appreciation of their special skills, though this was probably more exceptional. Like Alazrach and the Bellidos, Jews might be enfranchised from their *aljamas* and made uniquely answerable to Christian patrons (saving always, of course, the ultimate jurisdiction of the king). Such was the case of the Jewish *magister* Yom Tob, temporarily enfranchised from the Xàtiva *aljama* in 1297 so that he could take up duties as a Hebrew teacher in the local convent of Friars Preacher.¹⁰ Other Jewish professionals such as doctors might simply be paid fees for their occasional or regular services. Despite occasional conciliar prohibitions and claims that non-Christian physicians posed a threat to the faithful, Jews were regularly employed in this capacity at the royal court

⁶ Lourie, “Anatomy of Ambivalence,” 34, mentions the Bellidos and provides basic details, though her dating is erroneous since the Dominicans did not exist as an Order in 1212. That date probably refers to the original grant to the bishop. A 1328 copy of the 1292 royal charter authorizing the Bellidos’ transfer to the Dominicans was kept in the Order’s archives at Zaragoza (AHN, *clero*, perg. carpeta 3816, #12); see also ACA reg. 192, fol. 90. As Lourie notes, the Dominicans defended their vassals’ rights against the Zaragoza Muslim *aljama* in 1344. Catlos has further data on the Bellidos, “the best-known and wealthiest of thirteenth-century *mudéjar* clans” (*Victors*, 217–18).

⁷ In 1430 *Bellito, un sarraceno* emerges from the Zaragoza convent’s fiscal records, due to expenses allotted to fund his crafting a cabinet for the infirmary (Blasco Martínez, “Contribución,” 77). The family trade was obviously still being practiced.

⁸ The documents were copied by the eighteenth-century Dominican historian Tomás Domingo, whose manuscript has been extensively analysed by Rosa María Blasco Martínez (“Contribución,” 77). These *moras*’ precise terms of service are unclear; they may have been wage laborers, *sarracenaes franchae* tied to the convent permanently, or slaves.

⁹ One of the payments was to *un moro, Juan García* (1424), while another went to *el sarraceno* (perhaps the same man) in 1425 (Blasco Martínez, “Contribución,” 77). The record of their service suggests that they were day laborers, though long-term connections to the convent cannot be ruled out.

¹⁰ Baer, *Die Juden*, vol. I, 157 (#141).

of Aragon and by many nobles and clergy as well.¹¹ Dominicans of the realm also tended to turn to Jewish doctors when they fell ill – or at least they were accused of doing so by an embittered Arnold de Vilanova, who listed this as one of the friars' many alleged hypocrisies.¹²

Like many middle- and upper-class members of society in the medieval Mediterranean, Dominicans benefited from the use of slaves. Ownership of slaves (both Muslim and Christian) was common at all levels of the clergy as well as the laity in the Mediterranean region.¹³ It was especially evident among the Dominicans of Mallorca. In 1287, along with other clerics and religious Orders, the friars of St. Dominic's received a present of Muslim slaves from king Alfonso III of Aragon.¹⁴ A few years later, the same convent purchased slaves on at least two occasions. On July 30, 1295, prior Peter Scuder bought a "white baptized slave" whose name is given only as "G" for twelve Valencian pounds.¹⁵ On April 10, 1301 the Dominicans of St. Dominic's purchased a baptized blond slave named Bertrand for fourteen Mallorcan pounds.¹⁶

It is possible that the friars chose deliberately to buy *baptized* slaves when they could. After all, slaves were expected to live in the convent

¹¹ Assis, *Golden Age*, 15–16; Assis, "Jewish Physicians and Medicine in Medieval Spain" in S. Kottek, ed., *Medical Ethics in Medieval Spain* (Jerusalem, 1996), 33–49. On accusations that Jewish and Muslim doctors might poison their Christian patients, see Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 74. Jews were forbidden from practicing medicine at the Council of Treves (1227), and Christians seeking medical attention from Jewish doctors were threatened with excommunication at the Councils of Béziers (1246) and Albi (1254) (Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, vol. I, 318–19 and 332–7 [#19, 37 and 41]). Jews were also forbidden from performing surgery on Christians by the medical faculty at Paris in 1271 (Denifle and Chatelain, *Chartularium*, vol. II, 489). Despite these local rulings, the matter remained a grey area in canon law.

¹² "Et qui consueverunt secundum canones ecclesie predicatione publica detestari eos, qui Judeos et infideles ad curam sui corporis introducunt, iam ordinarie quaque die solum eos habere volunt suarum egritudinum corporalium curatores in expressam et publicam contumeliam salvatoris" (Arnold's 1304 letter to pope Benedict XI [a Dominican] in H. Finke, *Aus den Tagen Bonifaz VIII* [Münster, 1902], clxxxiv; cf. C. Backman, "The Reception of Arnau de Vilanova's Religious Ideas" in Waugh and Diehl, *Christendom and Its Discontents*, [Cambridge, 1996] 125). The polemical character of this letter must of course be taken into consideration: Arnold's accusations covered all sorts of hypocritical behavior ("et qui predicant non adulandum, suavius adulantur ..."). The point about using non-Christian doctors is more specific than the rest, however, and so may reflect actual practice. Arnold was himself a physician and a fervent proponent of prohibitions against his Jewish rivals.

¹³ L. Simon, "The Church and Slavery in Ramon Llull's Majorca" in Simon, ed., *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 1995), vol. I, 345–63. See also Boswell, *The Royal Treasure*, 37–40 for examples (including Franciscans but not Dominicans) from the fourteenth-century Crown of Aragon.

¹⁴ They were first fruits of the mass enslavement king Alfonso had just initiated on the defeated island of Minorca (Verlinden, *L'esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale* vol. I, 257, n. 40). The document, dated February 26, 1287, refers to John de Speluncis, who was ruling superior of the convent at this time (see Hernández, "Pergaminos," 29, and ADP, MSL 185, fol. 2v).

¹⁵ AHN clero, perg. carpeta 91, #12; cited in Simon, "Church and Slavery," 352–3.

¹⁶ AHN clero, perg. carpeta 94, #8; cited in *ibid.* 353. The document goes on to guarantee Bertrand's health.

and Christian slaves might be more agreeable company to the friars than unconverted Muslims.¹⁷ There is no reason to suppose, however, that the Dominicans made these purchases as part of a conversion strategy or that they were any more likely to emancipate their baptized property than were other medieval slave-owners.¹⁸ Nothing in the purchase contracts for “G” and Bertrand say anything like this, and no documents supporting such a claim can be found in the rich archives of the Mallorcan convent. Baptism was often sought by slaves in hopes of receiving better treatment from their masters, and the widespread existence of baptized slaves in the Christian lands of the Mediterranean was accepted as a social and economic reality.¹⁹

The Order of Preachers benefited from non-Christians’ rental payments and other tributes as well as their labor. As has already been noted, revenues from the entire Jewish *aljama* of Mallorca city, held by prince Peter of Portugal in his capacity as *locum tenens* for the absent king James I, were granted to the newly established Dominican convent of St. Dominic’s in April 1236.²⁰ In this case, the king maintained seigneurial rights over those he considered *judei nostri*, but the friars would have had regular contacts with their tribute-paying neighbors (whose quarter was within a stone’s throw of the convent itself).²¹ The friars of Valencia, with their properties in Xàtiva, may also have had revenue-producing Muslim tenants in the mid-thirteenth century.²² If so, however, personal contacts

¹⁷ Clement IV’s warning that keeping Muslim servants was like “feeding snakes in one’s lap or fire in one’s bosom” (see above) may have been taken seriously by some, though it was apparently ignored by the friars at Zaragoza.

¹⁸ Two hypotheses raised by Simon, “Church and Slavery,” 353, but abandoned because of lack of evidence. The will of John Bennasser, drawn up with Dominican counsel c. 1330 on Mallorca, provides one example of how even pious slaveowners made no evident distinction in treatment of their baptized and non-baptized slaves (de Montaner and Riera Frau, “Los Bennasser,” 195–202).

¹⁹ Muslim slaves who converted to Christianity might be freed if their owners happened to be Jewish, since Church law prohibited Jews being in positions of power over Christians; to mitigate the potential disruptions of this law in a slave-owning society, however, secular authorities demanded that such converts pay their former masters a fair redemption price. Slaves converting to Christianity under Christian masters received no such change in their status, although owners of Christian slaves were enjoined to treat them with fraternal kindness (such slaves in turn were expected to work more diligently for their Christian masters). Greek slaves, whose Church was considered heretical in the West, were also subject to enslavement when captured (Verlinden, *L’esclavage*, vol. I, 290–315; also A. Mas i Forners, *Esclaus i catalans* [Palma, 2005]).

²⁰ AHN *clero*, perg. carpeta 77, #8; also Rosselló Lliteras, “El Convento de Santo Domingo,” 119.

²¹ Both the Preachers’ convent and the *aljama* were located in the central Almudayna district. The Mallorcan Jews’ *aljama* was later moved a short distance away, near the quarters administered by knights of the Temple and Calatrava, with the approval of James II of Mallorca in March 1300 (doc. in Villanueva, *Viaje literario*, vol. XXII, 332–3; cf. Isaacs, *Jews of Majorca*, 240 [#78]).

²² These properties are discussed in chapter 2; see Cabanes Pecourt and Ferrer Navarro, *Libre del repartiment*, vol. II, 90–1 (#546 and 549) and Olmos y Canalda, *Inventario de los Pergaminos*, doc. #146.

Dominicans, Muslims and Jews

between the convent of St. Dominic's and its distant vassals would have been few and far between.

As landlords, masters and employers of non-Christians, some Dominicans were in a powerful position from which they could have acted on their theoretical aspirations for universal mission. Friars inevitably met Muslims and Jews whose business took them into close proximity with or even inside the Preachers' convent walls. Some even became friends, as did the Jew Baruch Teutonici and friar Jacob Alamanni of Toulouse.²³ These Dominicans may have sought the conversion of their workers, tenants and friends in quiet ways which have escaped documentation. It is certainly likely that salutary words and examples were offered from time to time by friars passing a Muslim servant sweeping the halls of the Zaragoza convent, or a Jewish doctor making his way through the narrow streets of the Mallorcan Almudayna. This is a far cry from the concept of "serious missionizing," however. If serious and dedicated efforts had been devoted to converting people like the Bellidos on a regular basis then the social and economic fabric of the friars' own homes and communities would have been difficult to maintain. Instead, the Dominicans accepted the income and services they needed to effectively manage convent life while pursuing their primary goal of serving the spiritual needs of the Christian community.

²³ See Introduction.

CONCLUSIONS

The first century or so of Dominican presence in the medieval Crown of Aragon saw the friars' engagement in many different activities. Most were unremarkable, in that they involved pastoral duties common to mendicants throughout Christendom. The friars' primary mission was to nurture and protect Christian souls, and this was all the more true in a border region where non-Christian influences were relatively strong. Indeed, the Aragonese Dominicans' greatest achievement was perhaps the part they played in transforming what had once been deeply Islamic cities like Mallorca and Valencia into colonial centers whose ambience and amenities were barely distinguishable from those of an old Christian metropolis.¹ They did the same thing, though to a far lesser extent, in special enclaves set aside for Christian use in the Muslim principalities of North Africa. It was no small matter to provide burgeoning immigrant populations of soldiers, merchants and their families with all the spiritual comforts (and restrictions) of home. In this sense, medieval Dominican friars could indeed rejoice in the knowledge that they were planting "lilies of the Christian name" in once fruitless "pagan" lands throughout the western Mediterranean.²

Agricultural metaphors reveal only one dimension of a complex reality, however. Dominicans in the Crown of Aragon could not ignore the fact that they lived in close proximity to Muslim and Jewish populations with vibrant religious traditions of their own. A few friars therefore undertook to study and refute non-Christian beliefs, in part perhaps as a

¹ This included the built environment, as Jews and Muslims living in the shadow of Dominican churches could attest (J. Howe, "The Conversion of the Physical World: The Creation of a Christian Landscape" in J. Muldoon, ed., *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages* [Gainesville, 1997], 63–78).

² Recalling James' donation charter to the Dominicans of Valencia, as discussed in [chapter 2](#) (Diago, fols. 136r–v).

means of bringing unbelievers to see the errors of their ways but above all to ensure that such errors did not spread to Christian society. Aided by secular laws and cultural barriers, these friars also sought to maintain the purity of their faith by limiting what they took to be undesirable personal contacts between Jews, Muslims and their Christian neighbors whenever possible. Yet segregation and avoidance did not prevent Christian feelings of antagonism, fear and resentment toward Jews and Muslims from simmering beneath the surface. In the mid- and later fourteenth century especially, these feelings would erupt into violent expressions of religious intolerance.³ The most serious episodes occurred in 1391, when attacks on Jewish communities throughout the Iberian peninsula resulted in numerous deaths and forced conversions.⁴

Amid such violence, some friars found themselves taking on new roles. In 1320, Baruch Theutonicus of Toulouse had looked (unsuccessfully) to his Dominican friend friar Jacob Alamanni for assistance in preventing a forced conversion at the hands of a mob. Seventy years later, according to at least one pious source, it was the Dominican (later saint) Vincent Ferrer who gladly received Jews to the baptismal font in Valencia cathedral when they sought shelter from a similar mob.⁵ Vincent soon left Valencia to take up a series of posts in royal and papal courts, but he eventually returned to press Jews in the Crown of Aragon once more to convert.⁶ Forcing a group of rabbis into public disputations before the pope at Tortosa in 1413–14, he also encouraged the imposition of new legal handicaps on Jews in the hope of bringing them to baptism.⁷ Hagiography has grossly overestimated the extent of St. Vincent's mission

³ On the general decline of majority–minority relations in Iberia in the wake of the Black Death (which saw several massacres of Jews in particular) see Nirenberg, *Communities*, 231–49.

⁴ Philippe Wolf, “The 1391 Pogrom in Spain: Social Crisis or Not?” in *Past and Present* 50 (1971), 4–18. 1391 is widely seen as a turning point in the history of Spanish Jewry.

⁵ The story, which comes in the midst of a section devoted to Ferrer and his deeds, suggests that Jews converted willingly under St. Vincent's guidance after seeing miraculous visions (Diago, fols. 170v–172r). Diago was a devotee of St. Vincent's, as is evident in all his writings but especially his *Historia de la vida, milagros, muerte y discipulos del bienaventurado predicador apostólico valenciano San Vicente Ferrer de la Orden de Predicadores* (1600; repr. Valencia, 2001).

⁶ Ferrer served as confessor to the queen of Aragon in 1391, then as a papal functionary at Avignon, and finally as a preacher of penance (after 1399), calling for audiences in France, Switzerland and Italy to convert from their sinful lives. He returned to Spain only in 1408 after failing in his attempts to end the Church schism, and died while preaching in Brittany (1419). There is as yet no satisfactory scholarly biography of Vincent Ferrer; basic details of his careers can be found in Henri Ghéon, *St. Vincent Ferrer* (New York, 1939) and J.M. de la Garganta and V. Forcada, *Biografía y escritos de San Vicente Ferrer* (Madrid, 1956), as well as in Diago.

⁷ On the Tortosa disputation, which Ferrer organized with the help of a convert named Jerome de Santa Fé, see Gemma Escribà's *The Tortosa Disputation: A Regesta of Documents from the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón* (Jerusalem, 1998) and Hyam Maccoby's translation of the disputation proceedings in *Judaism on Trial*.

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to the Jews (and Muslims), but this was still a significant and ominous incident of external proselytism – a full century after the discontinuation of *studia linguarum* in the Crown of Aragon.⁸

The mass conversions which began in 1391 mark the beginning of a wholly new stage in the history of Iberian inter-faith relations. Over the following two centuries and more, medieval paradigms of co-existence with segregation along religious lines would be recast to suit new realities. Non-Christians had finally been converted to Christianity on a large scale, though generally as a result of popular and legal coercion rather than missionary persuasion. The resulting communities of *conversos* (chiefly converted Jews) were welcomed by some like Vincent Ferrer, but many others began to fear that these often unwilling “New Christians” would disrupt those carefully constructed defensive barriers which had so long protected the integrity of the Christian Church. The problem only grew more troubling as further mass conversions of Muslims and pagans – employing varying degrees of force – took place under Iberian colonial regimes worldwide in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The prospect of universal conversion was more enticing than ever before, but external missionary efforts had ever to be balanced against the Church’s continuing emphasis on internal orthodoxy and unity.

It was in this later context that modern missionary concepts and practices emerged, and it was in this context that the myth of the medieval missionaries began to take shape. Tensions between universal missionary ideals and practical impulses toward the segregation of subject peoples (especially in a colonial setting) were never truly resolved, and early modern Dominicans were placed in a difficult position as they struggled to find a viable middle ground. Some sought guidance in the past by examining their Order’s medieval history. Given their preoccupations, it was only natural for these friars to highlight what they saw as early instances of missionary and conversionary activity. In the process, however, modern concepts of mission were projected back, and the specific circumstances of medieval relations between Jews, Muslims and Christians were largely forgotten.

Christian efforts to come to terms with a *converso* presence in the fifteenth century were varied and hotly debated. It was clear that Church

⁸ Claims that St. Vincent converted thousands of Muslims (including the king of Granada, as in Diago, fols. 180r and 193r) can easily be dismissed, but further research is necessary to discern fact from myth in this case. Apart from his possible baptism of refuge-seekers in 1391, Ferrer’s campaigns of external mission seem to have been limited to his stay in Spain from 1408 to 1416. Even then he was deeply involved in papal politics, and conversionary preaching was only one of his many projects. He also acted for the most part on his own and with papal support, not as part of a concerted Dominican missionary movement.

traditions could not condone any *a priori* distinction between “New” and “Old” Christians, but equally certain that perceived differences between the two groups would not always be overlooked in practice. As a result, religious divisions came to be replaced by racial ones. The infamous statutes of *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity), first enacted in the context of a Toledo rebellion in 1449 but revived at intervals thereafter, mark the emergence of a new kind of racism in the Iberian peninsula.⁹ These created unheard-of legal barriers to keep converts from Judaism and their descendants from achieving positions of power within Christian society. Though opposed by many in the Church, they also found prominent supporters among the mendicants.¹⁰ In 1496 Tomás de Torquemada, prior of St. Thomas Aquinas’ in Ávila, obtained a papal privilege to exclude *conversos* from his Dominican convent; by 1531 *limpieza de sangre* policies applied to the entire Dominican Order in Spain.

The Spanish Inquisition’s establishment and gradual expansion in the years following 1480 was another sign that divisions in Iberian society were no longer based solely on religion. Though the Inquisition (largely led by Dominicans, including Tomás de Torquemada) remained in principle dedicated to the extirpation of sins and heresies among all Christians, its primary target at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries was the investigation and punishment of *conversos* who remained loyal to Jewish practices. The need to treat *conversos* no differently from other Christians continued to be debated and enunciated in theory, but in reality the Inquisitors now targeted people on the basis of their racial origin as much as their religious practice.¹¹ Even after all remaining Jews were expelled from Castile, Aragon and Portugal at the end of the fifteenth century, mendicant preachers continued to emphasize the unchanging racial “Jewishness” of *conversos* in their writings and sermons.¹²

⁹ A. Sicroff, *Los estatutos de Limpieza de Sangre* (1979; tr. M. Armiño, Madrid, 1985).

¹⁰ The Franciscan Alfonso de Espina’s *Fortalitium Fidei* (c. 1460) was especially influential in advocating anti-Jewish and anti-*converso* legal policies (A. Mehuyas Ginio, *La forteresse de la foi* [tr. Zvi Rabi; Paris, 1998]). Opposition to *limpieza* laws is discussed in H. Kamen, “A Crisis of Conscience in Golden Age Spain: The Inquisition against ‘Limpieza de Sangre’” in Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, 1993), essay VII.

¹¹ Suspicions had been leveled against converts since the days of *Turbato corde*, as discussed in chapter 5, but these focused more on fears that Jews might revert to Judaism altogether rather than that they would seek to live as insincere and heretical Christians. On inquisitorial practices in early modern Spain see E. Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley, 1989), ch. 3. The “Spanish” Inquisition varied by region; see J. Blázquez Miguel, *La Inquisición en Cataluña* (Toledo, 1990) for data specific to the Catalan Inquisition, which was based at Barcelona after 1487.

¹² See my “The Inquisition in Its Own Words: The Portuguese Auto-da-fé Sermon As a Historical Source” in W. Van Bekkum and P. Cobb, eds., *Strategies of Medieval Communal Identity: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. (Leuven, 2004), 87–108 for one Franciscan Portuguese example from the

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At the same time, paradoxically, ideals of universal mission and conversion remained compelling to many Christians. This was especially true for those influenced by humanist intellectual circles, where the ideas of earlier mission advocates such as Raymond Lull enjoyed a new vogue at the end of the fifteenth century.¹³ The discovery and colonization of new peoples throughout the world after 1492 provided further fuel for the imagination in this regard. Columbus famously saw his discoveries as an opportunity for promoting conversions, as did pope Alexander VI (a native of Xàtiva) in his 1493 bull *Inter caetera*.¹⁴ After initial hesitation, Dominicans too began to show a new interest in missions to these New World pagans.

According to Bartolomé de las Casas, the Order's first move in this direction came only after friar Antonio Montesinos delivered a sermon to a lay audience on the Spanish-controlled island of Santo Domingo one Sunday before Christmas in 1511. Montesinos chided his auditors for their cruel treatment of the local native population, and in particular for their absolute lack of interest in bringing these "rational souls" to conversion.¹⁵ The sermon was unanimously and angrily denounced by colonists, but las Casas himself took it as a revelation. He went on to join the Dominican Order and dedicated his life to publicizing the cause of mission among the so-called Indians of the New World.

Las Casas' writings resonated with humanist intellectuals back in Europe. As a result, new approaches to external mission were developed by members of several religious Orders, including the Dominicans but

1640s. The conflation of "converso" and "Jew" was common in such discourses; cf. F. Bethencourt, *L'Inquisition à l'époque moderne* (Paris, 1995), 268.

¹³ Nicholas of Cusa was one of these (J. Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa's De pace fidei and Cribratio Alkorani: Translation and Analysis* [Minneapolis, 1994]). On Lullism in this period see Bonner, *Selected Works*, vol. I, 76–80; also Hillgarth, *Ramon Llull*. Dominicans tended not to participate in the trend, perhaps because of the lingering suspicion of heresy attached to Lull's works within their Order.

¹⁴ Columbus arranged for six Indians to be baptized in Barcelona Cathedral on his return to Spain in 1493, but he set up no permanent missionary foundations. His expressed desire to make converts (as well as slaves) is discussed in M. Zamora, *Reading Columbus* (Berkeley, 1993), 17, 45–6. The papal bull *Inter caetera* (1493), by which Spain and Portugal were given permission to seize lands in the New World, insisted on the conversion of native peoples without specifying how this was to be achieved (text in F. Davenport, ed. and tr., *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies to 1648* [Washington, DC, 1917], vol. I, 72–8; cf. A. García Gallo, *Las bulas de Alejandro VI sobre el nuevo mundo* [Madrid, 1992]).

¹⁵ The sermon was recorded by Las Casas in his *Historia de las Indias* (c. 1560) (ed. A. Millares Carlo [Mexico City, 1951], vol. II, 441–4 [bk. 3, ch. 4]). The sense of novelty in Las Casas' account, as though no one in the Dominican Order had really contemplated this sort of mission before, is striking. Las Casas' *Historia* was not printed until 1875, but oral accounts of Montesinos' message would have reached contemporary Dominicans such as the mission theorist Francisco de Vitoria.

also the Franciscans and Jesuits. These new-model missionaries looked less to divine grace and apocalyptic events, and more to human effort as a means of effecting conversions. Communication across cultural barriers was seen as the key, and later sixteenth-century missionaries were distinguished by their efforts to learn a multitude of native languages. In Peru, for example, Dominicans such as Domingo de Santo Tomás broke new ground in studying Quechua.¹⁶ They used this linguistic knowledge to provide pastoral care to converted native peoples, assisted in some cases by the conveyance of religious messages in specially designed pictorial formats.¹⁷

Peoples of the New World were seen as especially promising candidates for conversion because they were reported (in frequently misleading and exaggerated terms) to be pious monotheists whose morals and humility were supposed to be close to Christian ideals.¹⁸ Furthermore, they seemed to have no initial objections to accepting baptism. In this respect, they contrasted positively with Spanish perceptions of Muslims and Jews of the Old World.¹⁹ Nevertheless, enthusiasm for the new humanist missionary methods was such that they were even briefly deployed in Iberia itself. Thus in the later sixteenth century Dominicans joined archbishop Juan de Ribera in his efforts to catechize the Moriscos of Valencia – descendants of converted Muslims who were still widely reputed to practice Islam.²⁰

Missionary optimism had its limits, however, and these were quickly revealed in Valencia. By the turn of the seventeenth century the Moriscos were still regularly accused of remaining loyal to Islam, and archbishop Ribera had decided that they were racially incapable of becoming good

¹⁶ See his *Grammática, o, Arte de la lengua general de los indios de los reynos del Perú* (facsimile edn., Madrid, 1994).

¹⁷ S. MacCormack, *Religion in the Andes* (Princeton, 1991), and MacCormack, “Art in a Missionary Context” in Jonathan Brown, ed., *The Word Made Image* (Boston, 1998), 103–26.

¹⁸ This was already mentioned in *Inter caetera*, which noted that “these very peoples living in the said islands and countries [of the New World] believe in one God, the Creator in heaven, and seem sufficiently disposed to embrace the Catholic faith and be trained in good morals” (Davenport, *European Treaties*, 72–6). Las Casas made the moral superiority of the natives a keynote of his many writings, as seen in the preface to his widely read *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542; tr. N. Griffin, London, 1992), where they are portrayed as “the simplest people in the world – unassuming, long-suffering, unassertive, and submissive – they are without malice or guile, and are utterly faithful and obedient ... particularly receptive to learning and understanding the truths of our Catholic faith and to being instructed in virtue; indeed, God has invested them with fewer impediments in this regard than any other people on earth” (pp. 9–10).

¹⁹ Montesinos referred with disdain to the “Moors or Turks who lack and do not want the faith of Jesus Christ,” implying that he did not see Muslim conversion as a viable option (Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, ed. Millares Carlo, vol. II, 442). Las Casas’ writings are full of similar rhetorical comments contrasting the easily converted “Indians” with stubborn Jews and Muslims.

²⁰ See Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos*.

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Christians. His calls for proselytism were transformed into advocacy for expulsion, and from 1609–14 the Moriscos were removed as a group from Spanish soil. Similar second thoughts about the capacity of colonized indigenous peoples in the Americas had already emerged across the ocean. Many members of the Spanish laity and clergy alike became convinced that native peoples were simply ineligible for full membership in the Christian Church by virtue of their alleged racial inferiority and that they were better suited to slavery.²¹ Like converts from Judaism after 1391, converts from Islam and paganism now found that their baptism was not enough to make them full members of the dominant society. Religious divisions between peoples were no longer effective in a time of mass conversion and racial ones emerged to take their place.

Even while missionary programs were being developed and debated, too, the Dominican and other religious Orders' core mission in colonial American, Asian and African lands remained largely tied to the establishment of a traditional pastoral regime for the benefit of European settlers. Internal mission of this sort was less awe-inspiring than visits to exotic tribes, and it generated less attention from outside observers, but it was still the friars' chief responsibility in the early modern period. Sermons in indigenous languages formed only a minute portion of the religious writings produced by Spanish friars in places like Peru or Mexico in the sixteenth century. For every example of artistic and architectural adaptation to local cultural norms, many more impressive examples evince the colonists' desire to recreate the European world they had left behind.²² This extended even to the creation of colonial inquisitions dedicated to the extirpation of Old World "heresies" such as Lutheranism and Judaizing, rather than local beliefs.²³

The nature of the Dominicans' obligation to "go out and teach all peoples" was therefore still contentious centuries after their foundation. Global mission was widely accepted as a normative ideal, and its practice

²¹ L. Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians: A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World* (London 1959); Hanke, *All Mankind Is One: A Study of the Disputation between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians* (1974; new edn., DeKalb, 1994). Portuguese attitudes to Africans followed a similar course; see C. Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire* (Oxford, 1963).

²² Samuel Edgerton's richly illustrated *Theaters of Conversion* (Albuquerque, 2001), for example, demonstrates the ways in which native artists were marshalled to produce both hybrid and purely traditional European constructions in colonial Mexican religious architecture.

²³ R. Greenleaf, *The Mexican Inquisition of the Sixteenth Century* (Albuquerque, 1969) describes the situation in Mexico, where an inquisition targeting indigenous beliefs existed only from 1544 to 1547. After long debate, the conclusion was reached that "Indians" could not be held to the same religious standards as their European masters – even after baptism. Efforts to eliminate indigenous belief systems continued, but not as part of the Inquisition *per se*.

was heartily advocated by friars like Montesinos and las Casas, but many of their colleagues cautioned that premature full acceptance of peoples as diverse as Jews, Muslims, American Indians, Africans and Filipinos into the Church had to be avoided. Until and unless these peoples could become completely assimilated to European Christian norms (something widely believed to be impossible), they posed a threat of contamination and could be considered only second-class Christians at best. From this perspective, compromises adapting Christianity to non-European cultures were greeted with suspicion, as evinced by the Chinese Rites controversy.²⁴ It was in part as a result of these sorts of dilemmas that Dominican scholars at the turn of the seventeenth century began to look to the history of their Order for answers.²⁵

Medieval concepts and practices of external mission were transformed only gradually in the early modern period. The story is complex but important, and better comprehension of its nuances can only help to shed light on the various ways in which human populations have managed to negotiate their differences, for better or for worse, throughout history. It is particularly important to recognize that discourses of universalism could and often did coexist in uneasy tension with practical policies designed instead to maintain divisions between religious, racial or other groups. In the medieval period, ideals of Christian mission were limited in practice by defensive efforts to prevent excessive Islamic or Jewish influence among believers. It was a time when conversions were unlikely to occur in overwhelming numbers, and when Christians had good reason to fear the cultural superiority of their “infidel” neighbors. In the early modern period, when a new situation of mass conversions, colonialism and claims of European racial superiority led to the development of new exclusionary measures, new missionary discourse had to be developed. This early modern legacy, with its implicit presumption that outward-looking missionary ambitions were something of a timeless and essential element in European Christianity, has long served as a lens through which earlier realities are seen in a distorted fashion. It is now time to set aside that lens, and seek a fuller understanding of how different religious groups really did interact in the medieval period.

²⁴ Dominicans tended to oppose the more permissive views of the Jesuits in this particular debate (D. Mungello, ed., *The Chinese Rites Controversy: Its History and Meaning* [Nettetal, 1994]; G. Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy: From Its Beginning to Modern Times* [Chicago, 1985]).

²⁵ This is not to say that Dominican historical research and writing began simply as an attempt to elucidate the Order’s mission history. Mission was only one of many themes examined by early Dominican historians, and it was often very much overshadowed by their interest in saintly friars known for their miracles and piety.

Appendix

DOMINICAN STUDIA

Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1 are intended to illustrate Dominican educational priorities. Data are taken from Provincial Chapter *acta* for Spain (Aragon after 1301) and so are not complete for all years.

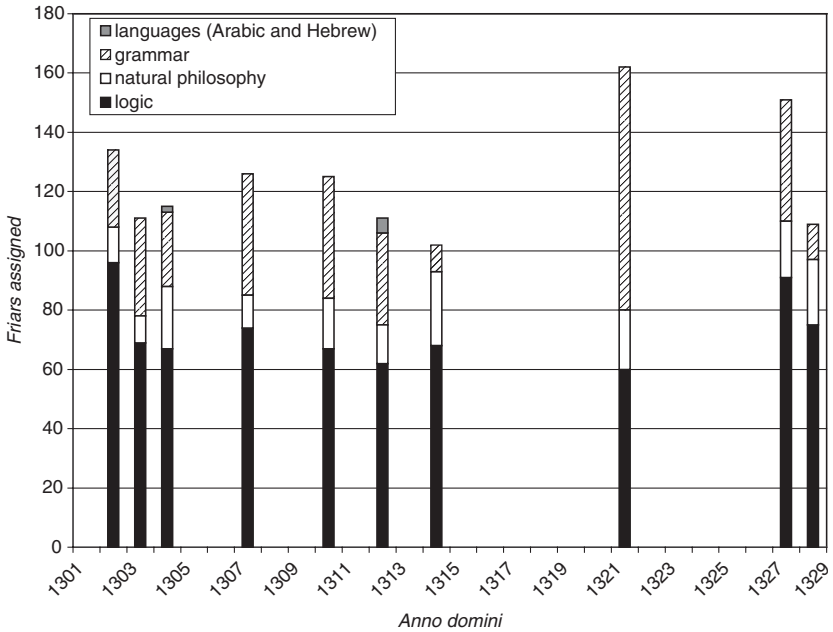


Figure 1. Known assignments to studia, Province of Aragon (after 1301).

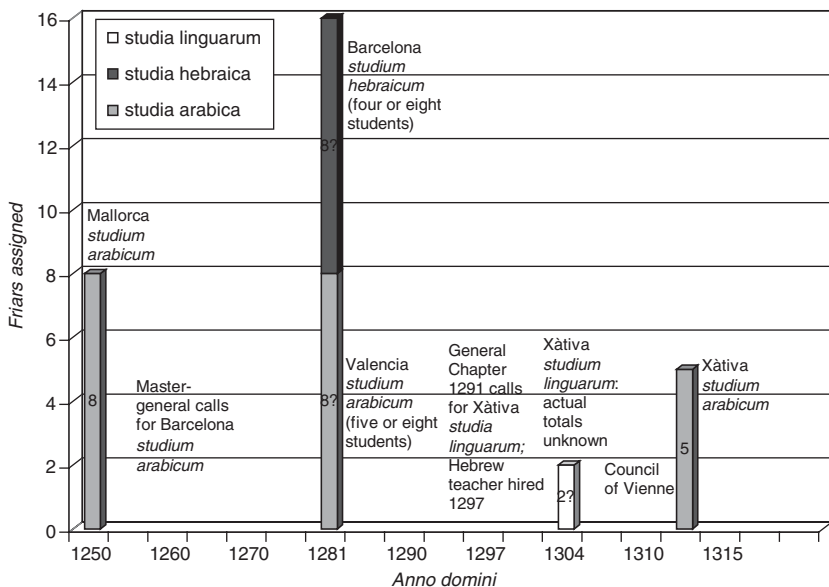


Figure 2. Known assignments to studia linguarum, Provinces of Spain and Aragon.

Table 1. Dominican friars assigned to study in foreign studia generalia, Province of Aragon (to 1321)

1275:	Paris (2 recalled, 1 assigned); Montpellier (1 assigned); Cologne (1 assigned)
1281:	[fragmentary acta, assignationes to studia generalia lost?]
1299:	Paris (2 recalled, 5 assigned); Florence (1 recalled, 2 assigned); Bologna (2 recalled, 2 assigned); Cologne (2 assigned)
1302:	Paris (4 recalled, 2 assigned); Bologna (1 assigned); Florence (1 assigned)
1303:	Paris (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Montpellier (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Naples (1 assigned)
1304:	Paris (3 recalled, 4 assigned); Bologna (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Montpellier (1 assigned); Toulouse (1 assigned); Studium Generale Provincie Hispanie (Salamanca? – 1 assigned)
1307:	Paris (2 recalled, 2 assigned); Bologna (1 assigned); Naples (1 assigned); Florence (1 assigned); Salamanca (1 assigned); Genoa (1 assigned)
1310:	Paris (1 recalled, 2 assigned); Montpellier (1 to be assigned by Provincial); Bologna (1 assigned); Genoa (1 assigned); Florence (1 assigned)
1312:	Paris (2 recalled, 2 assigned); Toulouse (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Cologne (1 assigned); Genoa (1 assigned); Florence (1 assigned)
1314:	Paris (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Montpellier (1 recalled, 1 assigned); Bologna (1 assigned); Salamanca (1 assigned, already in situ); Cologne (1 assigned)
1321:	Paris (3 assigned); Bologna (1 assigned); Milan (1 assigned); Naples (1 assigned)

¹ Possibly sent on to Paris.

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