

Renaissance Inquisitors

*Dominican Inquisitors
and Inquisitorial Districts
in Northern Italy,
1474-1527*



Michael Tavuzzi

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Renaissance Inquisitors

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Michael Tavuzzi



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Cover illustration: miniature: Pope Clement IV grants bull of privileges to inquisitors of the Dominican Province of Lombardy. Ms. *Privilegia Inquisitorum Ordinis Praedicatorum Provinciae Lombardiae* (Rome 1491). Rome, Convent of Santa Sabina, AGOP, II, 63.

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PREFACE

*And of those who went to stay in Rome with the cardinal I make no mention, other than the bishop of Adria, the bishop of Comacchio, the bishop of Cervia, and Master Zanetto inquisitor of Saint Dominic in Ferrara.*¹

Bernardino Zambotti's contemporary report of the churchmen who were among the party, led by Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, that left Ferrara on 9 December 1501 to attend the proxy wedding in Rome of Lucrezia Borgia to Alfonso d'Este, son and heir of Duke Ercole I of Ferrara and Modena, and then escort the bride to her new home, might be puzzling at first reading. For how could *Master Zanetto*—the Dominican friar Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara who held the post of inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena for more than thirty years, from 1481 to 1514—do something presumably so unusual for an inquisitor as to tear himself away from his instruments of torture for weeks on end and be so frivolous as to attend a wedding feast, even one for a pope's own daughter? But, then, was Rafanelli really so unusual and did he indeed leave behind him an array of mangled victims when he set off for Rome in late 1501?

These questions raise an issue that scholars have not yet addressed: the typology of inquisitors during the Renaissance—a period notoriously difficult to define but that, for the purposes of this book, will be taken to comprise the fifty years or so preceding the Sack of Rome of 1527. Inquisition scholarship has generally overlooked this period, other than for its preoccupation with the entirely *sui generis* phenomenon that was the Spanish Inquisition founded in 1478. It has tended to deal with the thirteenth-century beginnings of the Inquisition (the 'Medieval Inquisition') and then to jump without further ado to the Roman Inquisition founded by Pope Paul III in July 1542 with the bull *Licet ab initio*, or to some other, later inquisition such as, for example, the peculiar

¹ "Et de quelli che sono andati a stare in Roma cum il Cardinale non ne faccio mentione salvo' che del vescovo de Adria el vescovo de Comachio et vescovo de Cervia et Mastro Zanetto inquisitore di Sancto Dominico in Ferrara." Zambotti, *Diario ferrarese*, p. 278.

amalgam of ecclesiastical and secular authorities that was the Venetian Inquisition as refurbished in 1547. It is instructive that in the rich bibliography included in a very recent work on the Roman Inquisition (2002), G. Romeo was able to point to only four works that deal expressly with the Inquisition in northern Italy at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and even these concern themselves solely with particular episodes.²

The subject of this book is Renaissance inquisitors, and not at all some imaginary Renaissance Inquisition, for, as E. Peters suggested and R. Kieckhefer argued, if we leave aside the Spanish Inquisition, there was no Inquisition in the sense of a centralized, overseeing organization till 1542, but only inquisitors.³ I consider, moreover, only inquisitors drawn from the Dominican order, and only those who were active within a confined geographical area: the central part of the overlapping territorial jurisdictions of three administratively and ideologically distinct Dominican corporate entities—the Province of Upper Lombardy or of St. Peter Martyr, the Province of Lower Lombardy or of St. Dominic, and the Observant Congregation of Lombardy—corresponding roughly to today's Italian regions of Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna. It might have been worthwhile to deal as well with inquisitors drawn from the Franciscan order who functioned in present-day Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Valle d'Aosta, or with those, both Dominican and Franciscan, active in other parts of Italy and even other parts of Europe, especially France and Germany, but this would have made the book unwieldy and presupposed a wide-ranging expertise that I do not possess.

The approach that I have followed in the composition of this book is entirely unusual for Inquisition studies, for these, paradoxically, have hitherto generally neglected the inquisitors themselves. Accordingly, rather than starting with pieces of abstract legislation or largely theoretical inquisitorial manuals, which would be appropriate in a book dealing with the minutiae of inquisitorial juridical procedure, I preferred to move from the grass-roots level up, focusing on the men who were called upon to serve as inquisitors.⁴ I began by compiling

² Romeo 2002, pp. 123–124.

³ Peters 1988, pp. 67–68; Kieckhefer 1979, p. 5; Kieckhefer 1995.

⁴ This approach seems to be at least implicitly suggested for further research on the Roman Inquisition in Tedeschi 1991, pp. 60–64; it is even more pertinent to a period when there was no Inquisition in the sense of a centralized organization but only inquisitors.

as accurate as possible a list of inquisitors from the records of inquisitorial appointments made during the Renaissance contained in the still mainly unedited, and still largely unexploited, registers of the Dominican masters general preserved in the order's archive in the convent of Santa Sabina in Rome. This determined my chronological point of departure, for the extant registers begin as a continuous series only in 1474 with the generalate of Leonardo Mansueti da Perugia (1474–1480)—and even then there is the serious ten-year gap represented by the loss of the second register (1513–1518) of Master General Thomas De Vio ('Cajetan') and by the loss of the two registers of Master General Garcia De Loaysa (1518–1524). I then reconstructed the lives of as many of these inquisitors as I could and, on the basis of almost a hundred biographies (some quite rich, others extremely meagre), sought to identify the elements common to them all, as well as those that distinguished them insofar as they were members of one or other of the three Dominican entities mentioned above and insofar as they were active at different tasks and in different localities.

I did not choose to end my account in 1527 solely because the Sack of Rome is often taken by historical convention as the closing event of the Renaissance in Italy. That a new era began soon thereafter, especially for inquisitors, is evidenced by the first brief addressed by a pope to an inquisitor concerning the proliferation of Lutheranism in northern Italy: that issued in mid-July 1528 by Clement VII to the inquisitor of Brescia, Pietro Cattanei da Provaglio.⁵ Moreover, as has been observed by A. Prosperi, the imperial legislation promulgated at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 opened the way to the appropriation by the secular powers of the prosecution of heresy, making the papacy aware of the need to rebooster and reorganize completely its own inquisitorial activities.⁶ It was then that commenced that series of tentative measures that eventually climaxed in 1542 with the promulgation of *Licet ab initio*.

Since the order of discovery and that of effective exposition only seldom coincide, the contents of this book are presented in a sequence directly opposed to that followed by the research that led to its composition. I begin, then, by presenting in chapter 1 the elements common to all Renaissance inquisitors. In each of the following chapters I employ a series of representative biographies to illustrate the various

⁵ BOP, vol. 4, pp. 464–465 (*Placuit intelligere*, 13 July 1528).

⁶ Prosperi 1996, p. 51.

issues at stake. The inquisitors that I have chosen for this are heretofore almost completely forgotten ones. I have intentionally avoided those who are comparatively well-known insofar as they subsequently became Dominican masters general or made other significant ecclesiastical careers, for entries on such as these are to be found readily in standard works of reference. I have also intentionally avoided those who have already received considerable scholarly attention because of their involvement in celebrated controversies, such as Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio ('Prierias'), who is chiefly remembered for his seminal clash with Martin Luther in 1518–1519 and his intransigent stand on witches, or Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale, who has been discussed often because he played an important role in the case of Pietro Pomponazzi and took an independent stand on King Henry VIII of England's Great Matter. I believe and hope that by focusing on admittedly second-rank figures, I have done greater justice to the type of the Renaissance Inquisitor than if I had limited myself to their more famous colleagues.

Chapter 2 considers the differences between inquisitors drawn from the unreformed, 'conventual' friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic and those drawn from the 'regular life' friars of the reformed Observant Congregation of Lombardy. Chapter 3 looks at the transformation by so many friars during the Renaissance, both conventual and observant, of the office of inquisitor into a largely nominal one, a mere stage in the customary *cursus honorum*. Chapter 4 deals with the inquisitors' involvement with the two principal religious minorities of Renaissance Italy: the unenthusiastic participation by the friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr in the persecutions of Waldensians launched in south-western Piedmont during the second half of the fifteenth century and the opening decades of the sixteenth; the minimal, passing attention that inquisitors paid to Jews and Judaizers. Chapter 5 focuses on inquisitors involved in witch-hunting, for in northern Italy the major witch-hunts took place principally during the Renaissance, well over a century before they reached their peak in northern Europe and in areas far beyond the sway of the Roman Inquisition. It traces the sporadic witch-hunts carried out by the friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr in Piedmont and northern Lombardy during the second half of the fifteenth century and the harsh witch-hunts conducted by the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy in northern and north-eastern Lombardy till the turn of the second decade of the sixteenth century. In the epilogue I turn very briefly to the controversial question of the continuity between the Renaissance

(or 'late medieval', if one wishes) inquisitors and the Roman Inquisition established in 1542.

I have added two appendices: a biographical register of Dominican inquisitors active in northern Italy between 1474 and 1527—to which one can turn for brief accounts of inquisitors mentioned but not expressly dealt with in the body of the book; a calendar of the known witch-trials conducted by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy during the Renaissance. These assemble material that lends further credence to the argument of the book, but could not be incorporated in it without altering its structure as a selection of cameos or burdening it excessively with lengthy footnotes. They should also be an aid to further research on the Inquisition in northern Italy on the eve of the Reformation.

An extremely kind reviewer of my biography of Prierias (1997) said of its subject "the man who emerges is not just bones but flesh and blood". If I have succeeded in achieving anything like that for at least some of the Renaissance inquisitors who are the subject of this book, I should be very pleased indeed.

CHAPTER ONE

INQUISITORS AND INQUISITORIAL DISTRICTS

1. *Dominican Administrative Divisions*

The late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century inquisitors who are the subject of this book were all Dominican friars. The Dominicans first developed as an informal group of mendicant preachers assembled by Dominic Guzman to respond to the threat posed by the Albigensian version of the Cathar heresy that he encountered while preaching in southern France at the turn of the first decade of the thirteenth century. In 1215 they were formally recognized as a permanent clerical institute in the diocese of Toulouse and the following year held their first legislative assembly ('general chapter') that adopted the Rule of St. Augustine and drew up a set of constitutions. The institute obtained papal approval in late 1216 from Honorius III who soon thereafter, in January 1217, confirmed its name as the Order of Friars Preachers and its mission as world-wide evangelical preaching. The order expanded so rapidly that, by the time it held its second general chapter in Bologna in 1221, it comprised some sixty houses ('convents') dispersed through most of Western Europe, from Spain to Hungary and from Sicily to England. The general chapter of 1221 recognized the need to subdivide this administratively unwieldy lot of houses into smaller, territorial units and formally acknowledged the incipient tendency to the formation of roughly national units called 'provinces', whose superiors were accordingly known as 'provincials'. In 1221 the Dominican order was deemed to consist of eight provinces: Spain, Provence, Lombardy, Rome, France, England, Hungary, and Germany. To these, four further provinces were added by 1228 at the latest: Dacia, Poland, Greece, and that of the Holy Land.¹

The Province of Lombardy in 1221 encompassed almost the whole of northern Italy, with the Alps as an almost continuous northern bor-

¹ See Tugwell 2000.

der, and extended down the Italian peninsula to roughly the northern boundaries of the present-day regions of Tuscany and Marche, where the territory of the Roman Province began. Its territory corresponded, therefore, to today's regions of Liguria, Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and protruded a little into that northern part of the Istrian peninsula that currently forms part of Slovenia. In 1301 the general chapter of Cologne suggested that this vast province, that by that time numbered some fifty-five convents, be divided into two provinces.² The proposal was confirmed by the following general chapter, held in Bologna in 1302,³ and made definite by the general chapter held in Besançon in 1303, that created the Province of Upper Lombardy (*Provincia Lombardiae Superioris*) in the western half of the original province and the Province of Lower Lombardy (*Provincia Lombardiae Inferioris*) in the eastern half.⁴ The Province of Lower Lombardy was renamed Province of St. Dominic by the general chapter held in Udine in 1401;⁵ the Province of Upper Lombardy was renamed Province of St. Peter Martyr by Master General Tommaso Paccaroni da Fermo in 1410, and this was subsequently confirmed by the general chapters of 1413, 1414 and 1417.⁶

A third, juridically distinct, Dominican corporate entity appeared on the scene in mid-fifteenth century as the result of the movement of Dominican reform that had been fostered by Master General Raymond of Capua (1330–1399) during the second half of the fourteenth century and had led to the establishment in northern Italy in 1393 of a reformed vicariate by Giovanni Dominici (1356–1419). In 1459 Pope Pius II transformed this hitherto rather loose association of reformed convents into the Observant Congregation of Lombardy, which had as its superior a vicar general. The houses of the Congregation were mostly scattered throughout the territories of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic, but some, such as the renowned convent of San Marco in Florence and that of Santa Sabina in Rome, were located in the territory of the Roman Province. The Congregation of Lombardy grew rapidly during the second half of the

² MOPH, vol. 3, p. 304.

³ MOPH, vol. 3, p. 313.

⁴ MOPH, vol. 3, pp. 318–319.

⁵ MOPH, vol. 4, p. 104.

⁶ See Forte 1971.

fifteenth century and the opening decades of the sixteenth. It did so not only by founding new convents but, primarily, by annexing and reforming houses that belonged to the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic. These provinces, consisting of houses that refused to be reformed and continued to lead the 'common life', came to be known as 'conventual provinces' and gradually shrank throughout this period. Finally, in 1531, Pope Clement VII reconstituted the Congregation of Lombardy as the Province of Both Lombardies of the Regular Life (*Provincia Utriusque Lombardiae Regularis Vitae*) and demoted the two conventual provinces to the status of vicariates.⁷

2. Medieval Dominican Inquisitors

The appointment of individual Dominican friars by the Holy See to carry out inquisitorial tasks went back to almost the very foundation of the order. This certainly began to be the case in northern Italy well before the end of the first half of the thirteenth century as part of the papal response to the emergence of a wide variety of heterodox movements. Pope Gregory IX commissioned in 1231 the superior ('prior') of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence to proceed against the heretic Paternon,⁸ and in a brief issued in late 1232 already referred to a certain friar Alberigo as "inquisitor of the heretical depravity in Lombardy".⁹ A little later, in 1233, he commanded Giovanni da Vicenza to carry out inquisitorial tasks in Bologna, Florence, Siena, Verona, Padua and Vicenza.¹⁰ In May 1237, Gregory IX addressed to the provincial of the Province of Lombardy the brief *Ille humani generis* that had been sent previously, in November 1231, to the priors of the Dominican convents of Regensburg and Friesach, in late 1232 to the priors of the convents of Mainz and Strasbourg, and in April 1233 to the provincial of the Province of Provence.¹¹ This important document, that has often been considered the "birth certificate" of

⁷ On the history of the Congregation of Lombardy see: Creytens and D'Amato 1961; Creytens 1962.

⁸ Potthast, n. 7931.

⁹ BOP, vol. 1, p. 41 (*Cum dilectus filius*, 3 October 1232).

¹⁰ Potthast, n. 9294.

¹¹ See Dossat 1959, pp. 325–329.

the Inquisition, contained only minor differences in its various issues, always in line with the peculiarities of its destinations. When it was addressed to the provincial of the Province of Lombardy in 1237, it committed to him in rather general terms the selection of a number of friars to preach and proceed against heretics, but specified that they were to do so exclusively within the territory of that province.¹² This brief represents the very first step toward the commitment of inquisitorial responsibilities in northern Italy to the Dominican order as such, as opposed to merely some individuals recruited from it. Yet, one wonders about the effective assumption of this onus by the provincials of the Province of Lombardy, for Gregory IX's successor, Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254), continued to entrust inquisitorial tasks directly to several Dominicans who were to function as inquisitors *ad expurgendum hereticos et hereticam pravitatem* during the late 1240s and the early 1250s: Giovanni da Vicenza was appointed in June 1247 to do so in Lombardy with the insistence that he could not be removed or substituted in the task even by the order's master general without permission from the Holy See;¹³ Pietro da Verona and Viviano da Bergamo were appointed in June 1251 to carry out the *negotium fidei* in Cremona and other cities of Lombardy.¹⁴

In late September 1251, with the brief *Tunc potissime*, Innocent IV urged the provincial of Lombardy and his subordinates who were acting as inquisitors in Lombardy and Romagna to intensify their work in these regions.¹⁵ Furthermore, he spelt out the *modus agendi* that was to be followed by these inquisitors and insisted that they would be acting *apostolica auctoritate*—that they would be doing so officially on the pope's behalf and with powers delegated by him. This document represents a further step, and probably a far more effective one than *Ille humani generis* of 1237, toward the entrusting of inquisitorial duties in northern Italy to the Dominican order as a corporate responsibility. After the murder by Cathars of Peter of Verona on 6 April 1252, the pope instructed the various civic entities of Lombardy, the March of Treviso and Romagna to integrate in their statutes the four constitutions emanated by Emperor Frederick II in 1239,¹⁶ and to assist the inquisi-

¹² BOP, vol. 1, p. 95 (*Ille humani generis*, 20 May 1237).

¹³ BOP, vol. 1, p. 174 (*Inter alia*, 13 June 1247).

¹⁴ BOP, vol. 1, p. 192 (*Misericors et miserator dominus*, 13 June 1251).

¹⁵ BOP, vol. 1, p. 199 (*Tunc potissime*, 27 September 1251).

¹⁶ Potthast, n. 14762.

tors of the Friars Preachers prosecuting heretics in their territories.¹⁷ In May 1252 he delegated to the provincial of the Dominicans in Lombardy the authority to appoint and dismiss inquisitors as required.¹⁸ At the same time, he instructed the provincial and his friars involved in the *negotium inquisitionis* to make sure that the various civic entities did indeed insert the constitutions of Frederick II and his own decretal *Ad extirpanda* in their statutes and abided by them.¹⁹ Similar injunctions were issued repeatedly to the Dominicans acting as inquisitors in Lombardy, the March of Treviso and Romagna during the following months and well into 1253.²⁰

On 20 May 1254 Innocent IV, with the bull *Licet ex omnibus*, committed to the provincial of the Province of Lombardy the task of appointing, and if need be of dismissing and replacing, precisely four inquisitors who were to work in Lombardy and the March of Genoa.²¹ This is a fundamental document and might well be considered the charter whereby Dominicans were to serve as inquisitors in northern Italy well into the late sixteenth century. It is here that we find for the first time the formula that would remain standard during the following three centuries of appointments of Dominicans as inquisitors as being in *Provincia Lombardiae, a Bononia et Ferraria inclusive usque ad ultimos fines superiorum partium eiusdem Provinciae, ac Marchia Ianuensi* (thereafter usually abbreviated to *in Provincia Lombardiae ac Marchia Ianuensi*) and as exercising the *officium inquisitionis iuxta formam, quam eis per alias literas nostras expressimus* (thereafter usually abbreviated to *iuxta formam*)—that is, presumably, *apostolica auctoritate* as prescribed in the brief of 27 September 1251 and in line with the norms for the appointment and dismissal of inquisitors by the provincial of the Province of Lombardy indicated in the brief of 12 May 1252.

There is, however, no mention in the bull of 29 May 1254 of Dominicans functioning as inquisitors in the March of Treviso and Romagna, as well as in Lombardy and the March of Genoa, as had been invari-

¹⁷ BOP, vol. 1, p. 205 (*Orthodoxae fidei*, 27 April 1252).

¹⁸ BOP, vol. 7, p. 28 (*Cum tibi*, 15 May 1252).

¹⁹ BOP, vol. 1, pp. 208 (*Cum vos inquisitores*, 13 May 1252; *Orthodoxae fidei*, 14 May 1252), 209 (*Ad extirpanda*, 25 May 1252).

²⁰ BOP, vol. 1, pp. 213 (*Cum adversus haereticam*, 28 May 1252), 214 (*Cum literae nostrae*, 13 June 1253), 224 (*Significantibus dilectis*, 3 February 1253), 231 (*Ad aures nostras*, 2 April 1253).

²¹ BOP, vol. 1, p. 246 (*Licet ex omnibus*, 29 May 1254).

ably the case before, for by then these inquisitorial territories had been reassigned to the friars of the Franciscan order.²² Indeed, a few days later, on 8 June, Innocent IV promulgated the bull *Cum super inquisitione* whereby he divided the whole of Italy into eight inquisitorial provinces. In addition to that of Lombardy and the March of Genoa, which corresponded in its territorial extent, with the exception of significant parts of Italy's north-east, to the Dominican Province of Lombardy and for which he had made provision on 29 May, he assigned to the Dominicans the territory of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The remaining, central part of the peninsula was divided into six provinces—March of Treviso, Romagna, Tuscany, March of Ancona, Umbria, Lazio—and assigned to the Franciscans.²³ Of these six inquisitorial provinces entrusted to the Franciscans only one, that of the March of Treviso, fell within the territory of the Dominican Province of Lombardy, and it comprised, as well as the March of Treviso in a strict sense, the patriarchate of Aquileia (that included the territory of the republic of Venice) and the diocese of Trent.

The provision made by Innocent IV in 1254 for the appointment of inquisitors in the Province of Lombardy was repeated on 20 March 1256 by Pope Alexander IV who raised the number of inquisitors who were to function *in Provincia Lombardiae ac Marchia Ianuensi* and exercise their office *iuxta formam* from four to eight.²⁴ This provision was subsequently reiterated by Alexander IV himself on 2 December 1260,²⁵ by Urban IV in March 1262,²⁶ and by Clement IV in October 1265.²⁷ In January 1302 Boniface VIII reassigned the inquisitorial districts of Padua and Vicenza from the Franciscans to the Dominicans, largely on account of allegations of financial improprieties directed against the former Franciscan inquisitors.²⁸ Finally, following the division of the Dominican Province of Lombardy in 1303 into the two provinces

²² On the gradual involvement of the Franciscans in inquisitorial tasks in Italy at this time see Mariano da Alatri 1960. Innocent IV's bull of 12 May 1254 *Super extirpatione* is already addressed to the Franciscan inquisitors in the March of Treviso, see BF, vol. 1, p. 740.

²³ BOP, vol. 1, p. 248 (*Cum super inquisitione*, 2 June 1254).

²⁴ BOP, vol. 1, p. 300 (*Olim persentiens*, 20 March 1256).

²⁵ BOP, vol. 1, p. 399 (*Cum super negotio*, 2 December 1260).

²⁶ BOP, vol. 1, p. 419 (*Licet ex omnibus*, 23 March 1262).

²⁷ BOP, vol. 1, p. 460 (*Licet ex omnibus*, 18 October 1265).

²⁸ BOP, vol. 2, pp. 64–65 (*Ab exordio*, 22 January 1302). See Mariano da Alatri 1952 and Bonato and Becciga 2002.

of Upper Lombardy and Lower Lombardy, Benedict XI accorded in 1304 to each of the provincials of the two new provinces the power of appointment and dismissal of inquisitors that had been conceded previously to the provincial of the original province and raised the total number of inquisitors from eight to ten, seven of whom were to operate in the Province of Upper Lombardy and three in that of Lower Lombardy.²⁹

3. *Renaissance Rebolstering*

Almost two centuries later, on 14 October 1477, Pope Sixtus IV abrogated the bull of January 1302 of Boniface VIII and restored the inquisitorial districts of Padua and Vicenza to the friars of the Franciscan order.³⁰ Otherwise, and except for some late-fifteenth-century and some early-sixteenth-century briefs addressed to the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy encouraging the prosecution of witches, there were no further general provisions made by the popes specifically for Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy till the mid-1520s, when Pope Clement VII began to take measures against the proliferation of Lutheranism.³¹ But even these, which were merely exhortative in character, left the established inquisitorial organization untouched. Indeed, the inquisitorial territorial divisions established by the beginning of the fourteenth century remained in force till well after the promulgation by Pope Paul III of the bull *Licet ab initio* that inaugurated the Roman Inquisition in 1542. This is evident from later reassignments of inquisitorial districts and provinces from the Franciscans to the Dominicans that presuppose the continuance of the thirteenth-century divisions: Pope Pius IV reassigned the inquisition of Venice from the Franciscans to the Dominicans in 1560;³² Pope Pius V reassigned from the Franciscans to the Dominicans the inquisitorial province of Romagna (*Romandiola*) in 1567,³³ the inquisitorial districts of Verona and Vicenza

²⁹ BOP, vol. 2, pp. 87–88 (*Licet olim*, 16 February 1304).

³⁰ BF, New Series, vol. 3, p. 496 n. 1001.

³¹ See, for example, the brief of Clement VII *Cum sicut ex relatione* of 15 January 1530 encouraging the vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy, Paolo Bottigella da Pavia, to make sterner efforts against Lutheranism (BOP, vol. 4, pp. 471–474).

³² Paschini 1959, pp. 124–129; Pullan 1983, pp. 29–30; Del Col 1988, p. 280.

³³ BOP, vol. 5, p. 176 (*In multis gravibus curis*, 4 October 1567).

in 1569,³⁴ and, also in 1569, the inquisitorial provinces of the March of Treviso and the March of Ancona.³⁵

It is reasonable to presume that inquisitors continued to be appointed in northern Italy through the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth, but documentary evidence for this is scarce, and it is not unlikely that this was done in an increasingly perfunctory and even haphazard or nonchalant manner. There are certainly some intriguing pieces of Dominican legislation about which one would want to know more, such as the prescription of the general chapter held in Udine in 1401 for the dismissal from their posts of all inquisitors incapable of preaching effectively.³⁶ There are a few early, usually eighteenth-century, lists that claim to present unbroken successions of inquisitors for some inquisitorial districts, such as that for Bologna compiled by Ermenegildo Todeschini and that for Savigliano compiled by Giuseppe Maria Gallateri, but they are usually far from reliable.³⁷ Moreover, general lists of inquisitors, such as those compiled by Cipriano Uberti (1586), Vincenzo Maria Fontana (1666) and Domenico Muzio (1720s), quickly reveal themselves, when examined closely and confronted with archival sources, exasperatingly imprecise. Whatever the case, it is possible to reconstruct the series of inquisitors during this period for only a very few districts and even for these only tentatively and approximately.³⁸

No matter what might have been the case with the continuity of inquisitorial appointments in northern Italy during the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth, the pontificate of Callixtus III (1455–1458) witnessed the beginning of rebolstering. This might simply have been occasioned by a petition (*supplicatio*) addressed to the pope in late 1456 or early 1457 by two inquisitors of the Province of Upper Lombardy, Bertrando di Pietro and Ludovico da Soncino, who complained about the lack of cooperation that they experienced in the

³⁴ BOP, vol. 5, pp. 206–207 (*In multis gravibusque curis*, 23 March 1569).

³⁵ BOP, vol. 5, p. 210 (*In multis gravibusque curis*, 15 April 1569).

³⁶ “Absolvit reverendus magister... Omnes alios inquisitores in quibuscumque provinciis, qui sufficienter non sciunt proponere verbum dei.” MOPH, vol. 8, p. 107.

³⁷ The list of Bolognese inquisitors compiled by Ermenegildo Todeschini is extant in two copies (in AGOP in Rome and ASD in Bologna). That of the inquisitors of Savigliano compiled by Giuseppe Maria Gallateri is reproduced in Turletti 1879, vol. 2, p. 330.

³⁸ See, for example, Merlo 1977 for a reconstruction of the series of inquisitors active in Piedmont and Biondi 1982 for the inquisitors of Ferrara and Modena.

carrying out of their inquisitorial tasks and about the fact that some people even claimed that their “old patent letters” were no longer valid. The pope replied immediately, in January 1457, encouraging them in their efforts and supplying the appropriate legal backing.³⁹ It might also have been the result of the alarming news that the pope received at that time of the spread of heretical doctrines and superstitious, magical practices in the area of Brescia and Bergamo.⁴⁰ Then, in July 1458 and once again in response to a petition from inquisitors of the Province of Upper Lombardy, Callixtus III renewed the apostolic constitution of Innocent IV *Ad extirpanda*.⁴¹ Thereafter inquisitorial appointments seem to have been made with increasing regularity, and they certainly were so made by the beginning of the term of office of Master General Leonardo Mansueti da Perugia (1474–1480), the time from which we begin to have solid documentary evidence of inquisitorial appointments in the form of the records of these in the extant registers of the Dominican masters general.

The records of inquisitorial appointments made for northern Italy during 1474–1527 annotated in the masters general’s registers number well over a hundred, a total that probably falls short of the effective appointments, for many of these are unknown because of the loss of the first register (1513–1518) of Master General Cajetan and of the two registers (1518–1524) of Master General Loaysa, and because some appointments failed to be recorded in the registers due to the inadvertence or carelessness of the masters general’s secretaries. The total number of inquisitorial appointments made for northern Italy during 1474–1527 is likely, then, to have been significantly greater. These appointments, however, represent not only inquisitors’ first appointments but also their subsequent, periodic and frequent reappointments to their posts. The total number of individual Dominicans appointed inquisitors in northern Italy in this period is likely to have been approximately a hundred—an estimate that coincides fairly well with the ninety-four inquisitors that it has been possible to identify and who are enumerated in the biographical register presented as appendix 1.

³⁹ BOP, vol. 3, pp. 359–360 (*Votis humilium*, 29 January 1457).

⁴⁰ See Callixtus III’s commission of 28 October 1457 to Bernardo da Bosco in Hansen 1901, pp. 19–20.

⁴¹ BOP, vol. 3, pp. 368–369 (*Injunctum nobis*, 9 July 1458).

Furthermore, in the mid-fifteenth century, the Dominican order itself began, once again, to concern itself with facilitating and regulating the carrying out of inquisitorial duties. The general chapter held in Novara in 1465 insisted that inquisitors were not to be elected conventual priors so that they would be left entirely free to dedicate themselves to their inquisitorial tasks and anyone who held both posts had to resign one of them; they were, moreover, bound to give an exact account of their financial administrations to the provincial or vicar general.⁴² The general chapter held in Perugia in 1478 prescribed that Dominican inquisitors were not to depute as inquisitorial vicars persons drawn from outside the order.⁴³ The general chapter held in Milan in 1505 allowed inquisitors to have permanent rooms in different convents,⁴⁴ while the general chapter held in Rome in 1508 insisted that even in reformed convents inquisitors were allowed to keep money privately.⁴⁵

4. *The Appointment of Inquisitors in the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic*

Throughout the Renaissance inquisitorial appointments in the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic were made employing the formula found in the bull *Licet ex omnibus* (1254) of Innocent IV as being *in Provincia Lombardiae ac Marchia Ianuensi* and *juxta formam*. More precisely, and in line with the provision of Benedict XI following the division of the old Province of Lombardy into two provinces, they were usually made as being either *in Provincia Lombardiae superioris ac in Marchia Ianuensi* or *in Provincia Lombardiae inferioris ac in Marchia Ianuensi*—thereby producing a somewhat ambivalent formula, for it alluded in a confused manner to both the papal inquisitorial province of Lombardy and the March of Genoa and the two Dominican provinces of Upper Lombardy and Lower Lombardy. Numerous annotations of such appointments are to be found in the registers of Master

⁴² MOPH, vol. 8, p. 295.

⁴³ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 341.

⁴⁴ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 36.

⁴⁵ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 84.

General Leonardo Mansueti (1474–1480),⁴⁶ Salvo Cassetta da Palermo (1481–1483),⁴⁷ and Gioacchino Torriani da Venezia (1487–1500).⁴⁸

The last record in the registers of an inquisitorial appointment that employs the classic formula is from the beginning of 1489.⁴⁹ One must be wary, though, of rushing to draw conclusions from this, for it is likely that in their subsequent entries in the registers the masters general's secretaries simply did not bother to repeat the customary formula which would have continued to appear, nonetheless, in the formal letters of appointment for quite some time. After all, many of the very abbreviated records of inquisitorial appointments in the registers which precede this date make themselves no mention of the formula. Moreover, the standard formula continues to appear in official documents thereafter and at least as late as the documents issued by two inquisitors drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy, Girolamo da Lodi, inquisitor of Brescia, and Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza, inquisitor of Como, dated 1518 and 1523 respectively.⁵⁰ It is reasonable, however, to suspect that, outside official documents, the formula did indeed

⁴⁶ For example: "Magister Dominicus de Cremona fuit institutus inquisitor in Lombardia superiore et Marchia Ianuensi et specialiter in civitate Cremonensi pro loco principaliori cum auctoritate et gratiis consuetis." (10 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 193^r.

⁴⁷ For example: "Magister Aymo conventus Saviliani habuit confirmationem officii inquisitionis provincie Lombardie superioris et Marchie Ianuensis et principaliter in oppido Saviliani, in civitate Albensi, Salutii et Charasce et Montis Regalis cum terminis conventuum eorundem... Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agata conventus Vercellensis fuit confirmatus inquisitor in Lombardia superiori et Marchia Ianuensi et specialiter in civitatem Vercellensem, Novariensem, Cumanam et Iporegiensem cum terminis eorundem conventuum." (10 January 1483) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 191^v.

⁴⁸ For example: "Magister Michael de Madeis conventus Astensis fit inquisitor in provincia Lombardie et in Marchia Ianuensi citra Iuga Ianue habens pro titulo civitatem Casali et pro loco Tridinti cum terminis eorundem... Magister Blasius de Monte Regali fit inquisitor heretice pravitate in eandem provincia et assignatur sibi pro loco principali civitas Montis Regalis cum eius dyocesi cum terminis que spectant conventus Montis Regalis." (30 December 1488–5 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^r.

⁴⁹ "Magister Laurentius de Solerii prior Vercellensis confirmatur inquisitor in Lombardia et Marchia Ianuensi cum terminis consuetis, civitatem Casalensem cum terminis conventuum Casalensis et Tridini dumtaxat exceptis." (10 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 243^r.

⁵⁰ Girolamo da Lodi is designated "Inquisitor di Lombardia et de la riviera de Zenoa, et specialmente ne la città de Brexa" in the sentence pronounced on Benvenuto Pincinello in Brescia in 1519, see Sanudo, *Diarî*, vol. 25, col. 647. Modesto Scrofa is designated "in Lombardia e nella Marca genovese, spetialmente nella città et tutta diocesi et vescovado di Como... inquisitore" in the sentence pronounced on Santina Landini in Sondrio in 1523, see Cantù 1829–1831, vol. 2, p. 111.

fall into disuse from about the beginning of the 1490s, for by then it had become entirely anachronistic due to two factors that will be considered below when we turn to the development of inquisitorial districts: (1) the ever-accelerating appropriation of inquisitorial posts by the Congregation of Lombardy; (2) the tendency at this time to redraw inquisitorial districts along political rather than diocesan or conventual lines.

Inquisitorial appointments in the two conventual provinces were made in the first instance by their provincials; these had to be confirmed, however, by the order's master general, who could refuse to do so and appoint someone else. The case of the appointment of Matteo dell'Olmo da Como (at times, da Morbegno) illustrates very well this interplay between provincial and master general. Dell'Olmo was first appointed inquisitor of Milan and Lodi by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Paolo Moneglia da Genova, on 8 July 1487,⁵¹ and was subsequently confirmed by Master General Torriani on the following 7 October.⁵² A further, very pithy, example of this interplay is provided by the record of Master General Torriani's confirmation on 25 June 1495 of the appointment of Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi da Cremona as inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona that had been made previously by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata.⁵³

5. *The Appointment of Inquisitors in the Congregation of Lombardy*

The procedure of inquisitorial appointment followed by the Congregation of Lombardy from its inception in 1459 was significantly different from that followed in the two conventual provinces, although it too invoked the classic formula *in Provincia Lombardiae ac Marchia Ianuensi juxta formam*. The reason for this was that in the course of its development the Congregation had been granted many privileges by the popes in order to foster and safeguard the movement of Dominican reform. These concessions were so extensive that the Congregation of

⁵¹ The letter of appointment is partially reproduced in Fumi 1910, pp. 27–28.

⁵² AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 234^v.

⁵³ “Confirmatur litera inquisitionis magistri Ioanni Antonio de Papia facta per provinciale cum omnibus que concedi solent inquisitoribus...” (25 June 1496) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 245^v.

Lombardy gradually became, for all practical purposes if not in theory, almost independent of the order's master general.⁵⁴ For this reason, too, the registers of the Dominican masters general yield very little information on inquisitors drawn from the Congregation, while they represent rich sources on inquisitors drawn from the conventual provinces.

Furthermore, within the Congregation of Lombardy itself the norms that governed inquisitorial appointments changed radically over time. This development can be divided into two phases that have as their dividing point precisely the year 1500. The procedure in force before 1500 is well summed up in a privilege conceded by Pope Alexander VI on 23 January 1499, that simply recapitulated and confirmed the situation that had held sway since the founding of the Congregation in 1459.⁵⁵ In the Congregation of Lombardy inquisitors were appointed by the governing authorities (the prior and the conventual council) of the convents in which they were based. They were then proposed to either the order's master general or one of the order's general chapters, but these had no choice but to confirm the nominees and, once appointed, could not dismiss (*absolvere*) them without the consent of those same authorities. There is an interesting, early example of this procedure. On 20 May 1465 the house council of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna was convened in order to determine who should be appointed inquisitor of Bologna. The council unanimously decided to propose three names to the forthcoming general chapter that was to be held in Novara in 1465 and, with great courtesy since it need not have done so but could have proposed a single candidate that the general chapter would have had to confirm, left it to the general chapter to decide. The friars proposed were Paolo da Bologna, Tommaso da

⁵⁴ An early collection of the privileges and graces conceded to the Congregation of Lombardy by the popes and the Dominican masters general is *Privilegia...*, Milan 1505.

⁵⁵ "Et quia quandoque quo ad fidei et religionis christiane fundamentum defensionem et exaltationem pro futurum existimamus, oporteatque propterea heretice pravitate inquisitores non solum doctrina sed etiam vite sanctimonia et odore bone fame dotatos et probatos existere, eadem etiam auctoritate statuimus quod predictus generalis magister pro tempore existens aliquem inquisitorem heretice pravitate in domibus dicte congregationis in quibus dicti inquisitores deputari consueverunt instituere aut deputare seu alias electum confirmare non possit nisi quem prior dicte domus de consilio et assensu suorum patrum discretorum seu eorum maioris partis elegerit seu postulaverit. Et etiam sic deputatum et institutum seu confirmatum absque eorum consensu amovere aut an offitio commisso inquisitionis absolvere." *Privilegia*, sig. V^r.

Lecco and Girolamo Parlasca da Como and the general chapter subsequently settled on Parlasca.⁵⁶

On 18 February 1500 Alexander VI, at the request of the Congregation's vicar general, Onofrio Calestani da Parma, altered the procedure of inquisitorial appointment.⁵⁷ Thereafter inquisitors were not to be appointed by conventual authorities but by the Congregation's vicar general in unison with the Congregation's council. The order's master general continued, nonetheless, to function as a mere "rubber stamp": he had to confirm whomsoever was appointed by the vicar general and could not dismiss an inquisitor without the vicar general's consent. It seems that in practice the vicar general usually made inquisitorial appointments in the course of the Congregation's annual chapter when its council was assembled. Thus, for example, Bartolomeo da Mortario was appointed inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo in 1530 at the chapter held in Rimini.⁵⁸ Some of the houses of the Congregation seem, however, to have resented and resisted the shifting of the onus of inquisitorial appointment from conventual authorities to the

⁵⁶ "1465. madii. Propositum fuit in consilio quem in capitulo generali in inquisitorem conventus Bononie petere deberemus et conclusum fuit ut peteretur mag. Paulus de Bononia, vel fr. Thomas de Leuco, vel fr. Hieronymus Parlascha, casu quod not fiat regens in conventu ipso." *Lib. Cons. Conv. Bon.*, fol. 13^r.

⁵⁷ "Dudum per alias nostras in forma brevis literas statuimus et ordinavimus quod generalis magister ordinis fratrum predicatorum pro tempore existens non possit aliquem inquisitorem heretice pravitatis in domibus congregationis Lombardie dicti ordinis in quibus inquisitores deputari consueverunt instituere aut deputare seu alias electum confirmare nisi quem prior dicte domus de consilio et assensu patrum discretorum seu eorum maioris partis elegerint seu postulaverint, ac etiam sic deputatum et institutum seu confirmatum absque eorum consensu seu maioris partis amovere seu ab officio inquisitionis absolvere, pro ut tu in illis plenius continetur. Cum autem sicut tu nobis nuper exponi fecisti contingere posset quod prior et patres predicti eligerent ad dictum inquisitionis officium fratres tibi ad alia officia magis necessarios et forte ad illud minus idoneos, non sine ipsius congregationis dedecore et detrimento, pro parte tua nobis fuit humiliter supplicatum ut in premissis opportune providere de benignitate apostolica digneremur. Nos huiusmodi supplicationibus inclinati tibi et aliis dicte congregationis pro tempore existentibus vicariis generalibus, quod generalis magister totius ordinis predicti pro tempore existens non possit aliquem inquisitorem heretice pravitatis in domibus prefate congregationis deputare aut instituere seu alias electum confirmare nisi quem tu seu alii vicarii generales eiusdem congregationis pro tempore existentes, de consilio et consensu aliquorum patrum discretorum duxeritis eligendum seu postulandum, neque sic deputatum et institutum absque tuo et aliorum vicariorum pro tempore existentium consensu amovere aut ab officio inquisitionis huiusmodi sibi commisso absolvere tenore presentium concedimus pariter et indulgemus." *Privilegia*, sig. VII^{r-v}; BOP, vol. 4, p. 158.

⁵⁸ Creytens and D'Amato 1961, p. 295.

vicar general. The convent of San Domenico in Brescia went ahead on its own in early 1517 and, without any reference to the Congregation's vicar general, Paolo Bottigella da Pavia, appointed one of its friars, Agostino Mori, inquisitor of Brescia. Probably following upon the vicar general's remonstrations, Pope Leo X quickly intervened, invoked the standing legislation and dismissed Mori.⁵⁹ The vicar general subsequently appointed another friar, Girolamo da Lodi, inquisitor of Brescia.

This procedure of inquisitorial appointment was continued after 1531 when the Congregation of Lombardy was reconstituted by Pope Clement VII as the Province of Both Lombardies. Inquisitors were appointed by the provincials in the course of the annual provincial chapters and automatically confirmed by the masters general. An example of this (almost on the eve of Pope Paul III's promulgation of *Licet ab initio* in 1542) is in the register of Master General Agostino Recuperati (1538–1540): on 8 July 1539 the master general confirmed in the post of inquisitor of Brescia Domenico Marchetti da Castenedolo who had been appointed to it previously by the provincial and the council of the Province of Both Lombardies in the course of the provincial chapter held in Mantua a month or so earlier.⁶⁰ Moreover, this procedure would remain in force even well after 1542, till the definitive appropriation of inquisitorial appointments by the Congregation of the Holy Office—in the mid-1500s in the case of major inquisitorial districts and only in the early 1590s in the case of minor ones.

The Congregation of Lombardy, furthermore, promulgated in its annual chapters special regulations for the inquisitors drawn from its ranks. The chapter held in Vicenza in 1501 prescribed that the friars of the Congregation could not accept appointments as inquisitorial vicars from inquisitors belonging to the conventual provinces. The chapter held in Mantua in 1516 ordered that inquisitors were to render an account of their personal expenses to their conventual priors and of the expenses incurred in their inquisitorial activities to the vicar general. The chapter held in Ferrara in 1524 insisted that friars appointed as inquisitors had to be efficacious preachers. Finally, the chapter held in

⁵⁹ BOP, vol. 4, p. 339 (*Accepimus non sine animi displicentia*, 6 April 1517).

⁶⁰ "Reverendus pater frater Dominicus de Castanedolo electus inquisitor de consensu reverendo provincialis et diffinitorum capituli provincialis Mantue celebrati instituitur inquisitor in civitate et diocesi Brixienti cum gratiis solitis dari de iure inquisitoribus." (8 July 1539) AGOP, IV, reg. 25, fol. 67^v.

Rimini in 1530 conceded that inquisitors, unlike other friars, had no need to present to local superiors testimonial letters from their priors while travelling from convent to convent in the performance of their duties.⁶¹

6. *Papal Confirmation of Inquisitorial Appointments and Extraordinary Interventions*

After being appointed according to the different norms in force in the conventual provinces and the Congregation of Lombardy, it seems that inquisitors were eventually issued by the papal chancellery briefs that formally ratified their appointments. Several of these briefs are extant and many more are likely to be discovered by further archival research. Some samples of these have been edited in the *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum* (8 vols. Rome, 1729–1740).⁶² All these briefs are identical except for the name of the pontiff, the date of issue, the name of the inquisitor and that of the inquisitorial district. As such, they reflect the normal, regular working of the papal bureaucracy and do not imply any particular, extraordinary papal intervention. The only question that arises is of how soon such a papal brief was issued after the inquisitor had been appointed by the authorities of either the conventual provinces or the Congregation of Lombardy and had been confirmed by the master general, for in none of these cases it has been possible to align chronologically the papal brief with a corresponding record of appointment in the registers of the order's masters general.

However, no matter the procedure of inquisitorial appointment in force in the conventual provinces and in the Congregation, inquisitors could always be appointed directly by the pope himself (*de mandatu apostolico*). The records of two such cases of extraordinary papal intervention appear very early in the register of Master General Leonardo

⁶¹ Creytens and D'Amato 1961, pp. 282, 288, 292, 296.

⁶² For example: brief of Sixtus IV (1471) appointing Biagio Berra da Mondovì (of the Province of St. Peter Martyr) inquisitor (no specification of inquisitorial district), BOP, vol. 3, p. 487; brief of Innocent VIII (9 March 1489) appointing Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara (of the Province of St. Dominic) inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, BOP, vol. 6, p. 6; brief of Alexander VI (7 July 1493) appointing Matteo dell'Olmo da Como (of the Province of St. Peter Martyr) inquisitor of the duchy of Milan, BOP, vol. 4, pp. 102–103; brief of Alexander VI (22 October 1494) appointing Antonio Pezzotelli da Brescia (of the Congregation of Lombardy) inquisitor of Brescia, BOP, vol. 4, p. 103.

Mansueti and they both implicitly refer to Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484) and explicitly to the same inquisitorial district, although there is no explanation of the pope's motives: on 4 June 1474 he appointed Ugo Albini da Chieri inquisitor of Asti, but a year later, on 1 June 1475, reappointed Michele Valenti da Torino to the same post.⁶³ More often than not, though, direct papal interventions in inquisitorial appointments were made at the behest of some secular ruler, and at times even very much against the wishes of the Dominican masters general. This was certainly the case with Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena from 1481 to 1514, who enjoyed particular patronage at the court of the Este. This inquisitor will be considered in detail in chapter 3 and at this point it suffices to mention the record in the register of Master General Cassetta of his first appointment as inquisitor on 18 July 1481 as the result of the intervention of Pope Sixtus IV.⁶⁴

7. *Tenure and Dismissal of Inquisitors*

Many inquisitors enjoyed remarkably long tenures of their posts. To give but a few examples: Niccolò Constantini da Biella served as inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como from at least 1460 to 1483 and his successor, Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata, from 1483 till 1505; Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano was inquisitor of Savigliano from well before 1465 to 1495; Biagio Berra da Mondovì was inquisitor of Mondovì from 1471 to at least 1510; Niccolò Bonini da Reggio was inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, with a few brief, temporary interruptions, from 1477 to 1505; Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara was inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena from 1481 to 1514, while his predecessor, Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara, had held the post from 1462 to 1481. Other examples of remarkably long tenures could easily be given so that it seems that,

⁶³ "Die iiii mensis Junii fuit institutus inquisitor Astensis magister Ugo de Albinis conventus Cherii de mandatu summi pontificis..." (4 July 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 37^r; "Magister Michael de Valentibus ex mandatu apostolico fuit restitutus ad officium inquisitionis in Provincia Lombardie et Marchia lanuensi amoto quaecumque alio in inquisitione Astensi." (1 July 1475) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 198^r.

⁶⁴ "Magister Zanettus Ferrariensis fuit autoritate apostolica de speciali mandatu Sixti IV institutus inquisitor in civitatibus Ferraria et Mutina et earum districtibus et terminis, et fuit absolutus magister Thomas, eodem mandatu Pontificis, qui dispensavit cum magistro Zanetto super aetate minori quadraginta annorum, et ipse Papa etiam oraculo vive vocis postea confirmavit dictum inquisitorem." (18 July 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 33^r.

once ensconced, inquisitors tended to remain such and in the same place—at least in the case of inquisitors drawn from the conventual provinces of St. Peter Martyr and St. Dominic, for the Congregation of Lombardy tended to move inquisitors from post to post, especially after 1500. No doubt such lengthy tenures aided them considerably in their work, for over such long periods of time they must have acquired an intimate, thorough knowledge of the inquisitorial districts entrusted to their surveillance. Such long tenures entailed the possibility, however, that at any one time the inquisitorial corps might consist largely of comparatively inactive geriatrics.

In a very few instances, on the other hand, inquisitorial appointments must have been intentionally short-term and temporary, probably occasioned by some special set of circumstances. There is no other way of explaining, for example, Paolo Moneglia da Genova's appointment as inquisitor of the March of Genoa in April 1494,⁶⁵ at a time when he already held the prestigious curial post of master of the sacred palace and on account of it was normally resident in Rome, and a possible explanation of this will be suggested when he will be considered in detail in chapter 4. Whatever the case, he held the office of Genoese inquisitor for less than three years, till he was replaced in early 1497. But all inquisitors, with the obvious exceptions of those who voluntarily resigned for positive reasons, such as promotion to some high administrative post in the Dominican order or to the episcopate, and those who died in office, were sooner or later released from their posts. The same norms that governed the appointment of inquisitors also governed their dismissal (*absolutio*). In the provinces of St. Peter Martyr and of St. Dominic inquisitors were dismissed by the provincial and this had to be confirmed by the order's master general; in the Congregation of Lombardy (from 1531 the Province of Both Lombardies), inquisitors up to 1500 were dismissed by conventual authorities and thereafter by the vicar general (from 1531 the provincial) and this was "rubber stamped" by the master general. In both the conventual provinces and the Congregation there was also, as with appointments, the possibility of dismissal by direct papal intervention—the record of Rafanelli's appointment as inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena mentioned above indicates that his predecessor, Tommaso dai Liuti, was dismissed at papal command.

⁶⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 247^r.

Even though long inquisitorial tenures must have been considered preferable by the order's superiors, some inquisitors were dismissed after comparatively brief terms of office. Some were dismissed because of their inability to fulfil their tasks due to old age or sickness. An entry in the register of Master General Mansueti concerning Giovanni da Gandino, the inquisitor of Bergamo from at least 1476 till 1479, illustrates this rather well, for it tells us that on 7 December 1479 Giovanni was relieved of his post because of his illnesses and consequent inability to preach.⁶⁶ At other times inquisitors were dismissed because of their apparent lack of enthusiasm for their duties. Here there is no better example than that of Biagio Berra, to whom I shall turn at length in chapter 4, who was briefly dismissed as inquisitor of Mondovì in October 1487 by Pope Innocent VIII for his reticence at becoming even minimally involved in the great persecution of Waldensians unleashed at the time—after the frightening experience of having his house burned down and one of his servants killed by them. Still other inquisitors were dismissed because of supposed misdeeds. Giovanni Domenico da Cremona was dismissed as inquisitor of Pavia, Cremona and Piacenza in mid-1475, less than a year after his appointment in late 1474, after being accused of some such (falsely as it turned out) by his predecessor in the post, the elderly Paolo Folperti da Pavia, who was probably resentful at having been replaced.⁶⁷ Gaspare Rossetti da Varazze, who succeeded Paolo da Moneglia as inquisitor of the March of Genoa in early 1497,⁶⁸ was dismissed from office in 1518 by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr for some alleged wrongdoing, a move that must have been surely justified since it was subsequently ratified by the general chapter held in Rome that same year.⁶⁹ Inquisitors were at times dismissed simply as a result of changes of the powers that be or for some other reason that now escapes us. After the death of Master General Torriani in late 1500, the government of the order till the following election was assumed by the vicar general, Francesco Mei da Firenze. Mei immediately filled the inquisition of Asti that had become vacant with the death of its incumbent, Michele Madei da Asti, with Biagio

⁶⁶ “Frater Iohannes de Gandino propter infirmitates et impotentia predicandi fuit absolutus ab officio inquisitionis Bergomensis.” (7 December 1479) AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 216^r.

⁶⁷ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 193^r, 206^v.

⁶⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 144^f.

⁶⁹ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 27.

degli Imperiati.⁷⁰ When Vincenzo Bandello di Castelnuovo was elected master general in early 1501 one of his very first acts was to dismiss Biagio degli Imperiati and appoint another friar, Paolo Asinari da Asti, as inquisitor—one wonders why.⁷¹

But the by far most important motive for the dismissal of inquisitors was the spread of the Congregation of Lombardy. I shall turn to this matter more fully below. At this point it suffices to say that when the Congregation annexed and reformed a house that had formerly belonged to the Province of St. Peter Martyr or that of St. Dominic and happened to be the base of an inquisitor, without further ado it dismissed the conventual inquisitor and replaced him with a friar of the Congregation. This happened twice, for example, to Graziadio Crotti da Cremona. In 1483 he was deprived of the inquisition of Pavia, Cremona and Piacenza, to which he had been appointed in 1481, after the convent of Cremona was seized by the Congregation; in 1511 he was temporarily deprived of the inquisition of Milan and Lodi, to which he had been appointed in 1497, after the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan was briefly occupied by the Congregation. A more pathetic case is that of Maffeo da Parma who was inquisitor of Parma and Reggio during 1505–1507: he lost the post when the Congregation reformed the convent of Parma in 1507 and spent the rest of his long life transferring from convent to convent, trying to get out of the reach of the movement of reform. I shall focus on these two inquisitors in chapter 2.

8. *Inquisitorial Districts*

The legislation made by the medieval popes specifically for northern-Italian inquisitors concluded with the provision of Benedict XI of 1304 for ten inquisitors envisaged as functioning in the inquisitorial province of Lombardy and the March of Genoa as divided between the territories of the Dominican provinces of St. Peter Martyr and St. Dominic. These, at the time, do not seem to have been tied to any particular locality within these territories but, presumably, were meant to go anywhere within them where the need was felt for their presence. During the course of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century inquisitors tended, however, to gradually abandon this profes-

⁷⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 144^r.

⁷¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 255^v.

sional nomadism and to choose particular places as their permanent bases and limited their activities to rather well-defined areas surrounding these. In this manner fixed, well-demarcated inquisitorial districts developed and the principle adopted for such territorial units seems to have been that of a grouping of dioceses or, and perhaps most often, of the territories (*termini*) assigned to different Dominican convents. The locations chosen as permanent inquisitorial bases were normally cities that were episcopal sees, but at times it was other localities that, nonetheless, hosted particularly important Dominican convents such as, for example, Savigliano. Whatever the case, the standard formula whereby inquisitorial appointments were made *in provincia Lombardiae (superioris or inferioris) ac Marchia Ianuensi* thereafter came to be qualified by the specification a particular district such as *et specialiter in civitate... cum terminis consuetis*.⁷²

The annotations of inquisitorial appointments in the registers of the Dominican masters general clearly reveal the details of this division into districts by 1475. At this time there were still only ten inquisitors in the inquisitorial province of Lombardy and the March of Genoa as envisaged by the provisions of Benedict XI, for the two additional inquisitors were responsible for the districts of Padua and Vicenza that had been reassigned from the Franciscans to the Dominicans by Boniface VIII in 1302 and fell within the inquisitorial province of the March of Treviso. I shall list the districts existing at the beginning of 1475, just after the spate of inquisitorial appointments that were either confirmed or newly made by Master General Mansueti at the very beginning of his term of office in late 1474, and indicate the incumbent inquisitors when possible.

Province of St. Peter Martyr (Upper Lombardy)

1. March of Genoa: Giovanni da Chieri
2. Savigliano-Saluzzo-Mondovì-Alba-Acqui: Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano
3. Asti-Chieri-Turin-Alessandria-Tortona: Ugo Albini da Chieri
4. Vercelli-Ivrea-Novara-Como: Niccolò Constantini da Biella
5. Milan-Lodi: Francesco della Riva da Milano
6. Pavia-Piacenza-Cremona: Giovanni Domenico da Cremona

⁷² See the examples in notes 46–49 above.

Province of St. Dominic (Lower Lombardy)

1. Ferrara-Modena-Guastalla...: Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara
2. Parma-Reggio: Vincenzo Pessotti da Parma
3. Padua: Giacomo della Porta de'Valenza da Ferrara
4. Vicenza: Gioacchino Torriani da Venezia

Congregation of Lombardy

1. Bologna: Michele di Olanda
2. Bergamo-Brescia-Crema: Giovanni da Gandino

This division of inquisitorial districts, though reasonably fixed, subsequently proved quite flexible in many ways. A section, usually a diocese or a convent's territory, would at times be separated from one district and attached to another, and then might be returned some time later to the district of which it had formed part previously. Furthermore, the years following 1475 often saw the creation of almost personal inquisitorial districts, that subsequently became permanently independent. Biagio Berra was appointed in 1474 substitute inquisitor in the diocese of Mondovì which was thereby separated, in practice if not in theory, from the inquisition of Savigliano until it was restored to it in 1488 and then separated from it once again, this time definitively, in 1493. Antonio Ghislandi da Torino was appointed around 1480 inquisitor in the city and part of the diocese of Turin which was thus separated from the inquisition of Asti, a separation that became permanent with the appointment of Cornelio da Beiasco as Ghislandi's successor in 1510 and Girolamo Rachia da Chieri in 1519. Also by 1483, Lorenzo Butini da Alessandria was appointed inquisitor solely of Alessandria and Tortona that had formed part previously of the inquisition of Asti. Michele Madei da Asti was appointed in 1488 inquisitor of Casale and Trino, which corresponded to the northern third of the marquisate of Monferrato, which were thereby separated from the inquisition of Vercelli and when the inquisitor of that district, Lorenzo Soleri, was reappointed to it a little later, his loss of Casale and Trino was clearly spelt out to him. The vast inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como was split in 1505 into the three smaller districts of Vercelli and Ivrea, Novara, and Como. A further sign of flexibility was that the inquisitor responsible for a district did not always necessarily reside in the same convent or make the same locality his principal base. This happened very often particularly in the inquisitorial district of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona,

where the inquisitor might be at one time a friar of the convent of Pavia and make that his base, while at another time he might be a friar of either the convent of Piacenza or that of Cremona and would make his base in the one where he resided at the time of his appointment.

The division of inquisitorial districts in 1475, being founded on groupings of dioceses or conventual *termini*, still largely transcended secular, political boundaries. While the district of the March of Genoa covered exclusively the territory of the Genoese republic, the district of Savigliano covered the southern half of the principality of Piedmont, a domain of the dukes of Savoy, the marquisate of Saluzzo and the southern territories of the marquisate of Monferrato. The district of Asti, Chieri, Turin, Alessandria, Alba and Acqui, covered the county of Asti, a possession of the House of Orleans, the central part of the principality of Piedmont and the central third of the marquisate of Monferrato. The vast district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, swept in a broad arc across the northern part of the principality of Piedmont, some northern parts of the duchy of Milan and the northern third of the marquisate of Monferrato, while the district of Milan and Lodi covered the principal part of the Milanese duchy. The district of Parma and Reggio comprised the *signoria* of Parma, that belonged to the Sforza dukes of Milan, and that of Reggio, that belonged to the Este, dukes of Ferrara and Modena. The district of Ferrara and Modena comprised mainly possessions of the Este, but it did not include all of them for Reggio, as we have just seen, was attached to the inquisition of Parma. The district of Bologna covered not only the area around Bologna, officially part of the Papal States but in fact a *signoria* of the Bentivoglio, but also the marquisate of Mantua. The districts situated in Venetian territory, those of Bergamo and Brescia, Vicenza, and Padua, did not embrace the entire territory of the Republic, for its eastern half was entrusted to inquisitors of the Franciscan order.

The most striking feature of the division of inquisitorial districts in 1475 is the paucity of districts entrusted to the Congregation of Lombardy: Bologna; Bergamo, Brescia and Crema. Bologna was the first inquisitorial district appropriated by the Congregation, for the convent of San Domenico in Bologna had been reformed as early as 1426 and belonged to the Congregation from its inception in 1459. The district of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema is not likely to have been taken over with the foundation in Brescia of the convent of San Floriano as a reformed house in 1418; this probably happened with the reform of the

old convent of San Domenico sometime after 1426 or, at the latest, with the reform of the convent of Bergamo in 1448, certainly well before 1459.

It is the subsequent, accelerating expansion of the Congregation of Lombardy that was the first reason for the disintegration of the comparatively large inquisitorial districts of 1475 and the consequent multiplication of districts and inquisitors. For, with its rapid spread, the Congregation did not only take over more and more convents of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic endowed with inquisitors (such as Parma in 1507, Milan in 1512, Ferrara in 1514), but as it occupied convents that did not formerly have inquisitors of their own, but had been part of a large inquisitorial district entrusted to an inquisitor belonging to one of the two conventual provinces, it asserted the independence of these convents from the conventual inquisitor and founded new, smaller inquisitorial districts. This did not necessarily happen overnight, but it did eventually take place almost everywhere. For example, after the reform and annexation of the convents of Piacenza in 1474 and Cremona in 1486, the two dioceses in which these convents were situated were separated from the old inquisitorial district of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona and set up as an independent district in 1502 under a friar of the Congregation, Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale, as inquisitor. The long-standing inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona, Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi da Cremona who had held the post for at least a decade, protested to the master general at this but was quickly put in his place and reassured that he still had at least the district of Pavia.⁷³ On the other hand, the district of the convent of San Giovanni di Pedemonte in Como, that had been reformed as early as 1422 and was one of the founding houses of the Congregation in 1459, continued to form part of the large inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como till 1505, when it was finally separated, made into an independent district and supplied with an inquisitor drawn from the ranks of the Congregation, Bernardo Retegno da Como. Furthermore, possibly for reasons of workload, the Congregation tended to split its own large inquisitorial districts into smaller ones: the district of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema, entrusted to a single inquisitor, Antonio Pezzotelli da Brescia, till 1499, was then split into

⁷³ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols., 258^r, (25 April 1502), 258^v (24 May 1502).

the two separate districts of Bergamo, entrusted to Cristoforo Alzani da Bergamo, and Brescia and Crema, entrusted to Angelo Faella da Verona.⁷⁴

The second reason for the gradual disintegration of the large inquisitorial districts of 1475 into an increasing number of smaller units in the following years was the tendency for inquisitorial districts to align themselves more and more with the political boundaries that had established themselves in northern Italy and had remained, all in all, unchanged from the time of the Peace of Lodi of 1454. The tendency, that is, for inquisitors to become responsible not for largely apolitical groupings of dioceses or conventual *termini*, but for the surveillance of well-defined political domains. They tended, then, to become “state-inquisitors”, not in the sense of becoming formally state officials and being appointed by the secular ruler (in the manner of the Spanish inquisition), but in the sense that their inquisitorial districts tended to conform to political boundaries. Thus, a desire on the part of the marquis of Mantua for an inquisitor peculiar to his own state, might well explain the creation in 1485 of a Mantuan inquisitorial district separate from that of Bologna. It is instructive that Matteo dell’Olmo who, as we have seen, was first appointed in 1483 inquisitor *in provincia Lombardie ac in Marchia Ianuensi* with responsibility for the dioceses of Milan and Lodi, was designated *inquisitor in Ducatu Mediolanensi* in the bull of Alexander VI issued following his reappointment to the post some ten years later in 1493.⁷⁵ Also of interest is Master General Torriani’s ruling in 1492 that the extent of the inquisitorial subdistrict of Modena (a duchy belonging to the Este) halted, not on diocesan or conventual lines, but at the political boundaries of the neighbouring states of Parma (a *signoria* of the Sforza dukes of Milan) and the marquise of Mantua of the Gonzaga.⁷⁶

But the most telling examples of this trend toward the establishment of “state-inquisitions” are provided by the founding of independent inquisitorial districts even in what were surely the least politically significant states in northern Italy at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In May 1505 Angelo Rizzardi da Savigliano was appointed by Master General Bandello inquisitor of Casale, Alba and Acqui, that corre-

⁷⁴ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r (10 July 1498), 142^r (18 September 1498).

⁷⁵ BOP, vol. 4, pp. 102–103.

⁷⁶ “Declaratur quod officium inquisitionis Mutine extendere quantum extendere auctoritas domini temporalis Mantuani et Parmarum.” (18 May 1492) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 60^v.

sponded to all the fragmented territories of the marquisate of Monferrato, that had previously been divided among the three large inquisitorial districts of Vercelli, Asti, and Savigliano. Subsequent appointments to this new inquisitorial district, such as that of Sebastiano Pastorelli da Taggia in succession to Rizzardi in 1510, are explicitly indicated as being *in omnibus locis marchioni Montisferrati subiectis*.⁷⁷ A little later, surely for reasons of prestige, the nearby marquisate of Saluzzo was separated from the large inquisitorial district of Savigliano and set up as an independent district (even before its establishment as a new diocese in 1511) with the transfer and appointment of the same Angelo Rizzardi in 1509 as *inquisitor totius marchionatus Salutiarum*. There too, subsequent inquisitorial appointments, such as that of Agostino da Pavia in late 1510, were made to the temporal domain as such.⁷⁸ But, even independently of such flagrant politicization of inquisitorial districts, the type of the state-inquisitor who was essentially a courtier who owed his inquisitorial appointment—in fact if not in theory—to the influence of the secular ruler and acted primarily at his behest, certainly became ensconced from 1474 onward. I shall look in detail at a paradigmatic example of such when I deal with Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara in chapter 3.

The redistribution and new division of inquisitorial districts that gradually took place in the four decades or so after 1475 reflects, then, both this political alignment of inquisitorial districts and, even more so, the new, preponderant role assumed by the Congregation of Lombardy in comparison with the modest position it had held till then. Most striking is the complete disappearance from the inquisitorial scene of friars belonging to the Province of St. Dominic, for its inquisitorial districts of Padua and Vicenza reverted to the Franciscans in October 1477 and its districts of Parma and Reggio, Ferrara and Modena were appropriated by the Congregation in 1507 and 1514 respectively. I shall now list the inquisitorial districts as they were in mid-1515, just after the general chapter held in Naples in May of that year, and indicate their incumbents—when possible, for they are often difficult to identify due to the loss of the second register (1513–1518) of Master General Cajetan.

⁷⁷ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 262.

⁷⁸ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 263.

Province of St. Peter Martyr (Upper Lombardy)

1. March of Genoa: Gaspare Rossetti da Varazze
2. Savigliano: Pietro Sereni da Savigliano
3. Mondovì: ?
4. Asti: Paolo Asinari da Asti?
5. Turin: Cornelio da Beinasco
6. Vercelli-Ivrea: Paolo da Finale?
7. Novara: Domenico Visconti da Novara
8. Milan-Lodi: Martino Giustiniani da Genova
9. Pavia: Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia

Congregation of Lombardy

1. Bologna: Eustachio Piazzesi da Bologna
2. Mantua: Domenico Pirri da Gargnano
3. Como: Antonio da Casale
4. Bergamo: Giovanni da Soncino
5. Brescia-Crema: Giovanni da Soncino
6. Cremona-Piacenza: Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale
7. Saluzzo: Vincenzo da Codogno
8. Monferrato:?
9. Ferrara-Modena: Antonio Beccari da Ferrara
10. Parma-Reggio: Donato da Brescia

9. *Inquisitorial Vicars*

In the performance of their inquisitorial duties inquisitors availed themselves of a variety of resources. These were in the first place human resources: inquisitorial vicars and lay auxiliaries. Inquisitorial vicars were usually other Dominican friars that the inquisitors appointed as their assistants and often seem to have done the great bulk of the day-to-day work. These vicars usually aided the official, or titular, inquisitor in the conduct of trials by serving as procurators, notaries and scribes: Lorenzo Butini da Alessandria, who would later become inquisitor in his own right of Alessandria and Tortona from around 1483, is recorded as acting as a notary in the witch-trials held in Levone in 1474 conducted by the priest and jurist Francesco Chiabaudi on behalf of the inquisitor of Asti and Turin, Michele Valenti da Torino.⁷⁹ At times these

⁷⁹ See Vayra 1970.

vicars even conducted trials on their own, albeit officially on behalf of the titular inquisitor: Giovanni Domenico da Cremona was largely responsible for the witch-trial conducted in Salussola, near Biella, in 1470 on behalf of the inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, Niccolò Constantini da Biella;⁸⁰ Battista da Pavia and Michele di Aragona conducted the witch-trials held in Venegono Superiore in 1520 on behalf of the inquisitor of Milan and Pavia, Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia.⁸¹ Inquisitorial vicars were also often made responsible for the long-term surveillance of inquisitorial subdistricts: Gregorio da Modena acted as the vicar of the inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, in the subdistrict of Modena during 1499–1503; Lazzaro da San Colombano, Antonio da Brescia, Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa and Tommaso da Vicenza were successively responsible for the same inquisitorial subdistrict during 1514–1523 as vicars of Rafanelli's successor as inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Antonio Beccari da Ferrara.⁸² Moreover, inquisitors frequently appointed vicars to carry out their inquisitorial functions in their stead altogether while they themselves served in an administrative post in the order: in 1529 the prior of the convent of Modena, Domenico da Ancona, and the theological lector there, Angelo da Modena, were appointed inquisitorial vicars in Modena and in early 1530 Vincenzo Villa da Piacenza was appointed inquisitorial vicar in Ferrara while the inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Paolo Bottigella da Pavia, served as vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy.⁸³

Accordingly, the registers of the Dominican masters general repeatedly record instances of inquisitors being allowed to appoint inquisitorial vicars: for example, Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata, the inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, was permitted to choose two vicars in 1492,⁸⁴ and soon after his own appointment as inquisitor of Asti in early 1494, Michele Madei da Asti was also allowed to name two vicars.⁸⁵ It seems, therefore, that each inquisitor was responsible for the selection and appointment of his vicars and did not tend, all in all, to “inherit” such from his predecessor in the post. The question

⁸⁰ Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54.

⁸¹ See Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1991.

⁸² Duni 1999, pp. 22–23.

⁸³ AGOP, IV, reg. 21, fols. 33^v (18 July 1529), 33^v (23 September 1529), 35^v (18 February 1530).

⁸⁴ AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 240^r (4 May 1492).

⁸⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 248^r (24 May 1494).

raised by R. Kieckhefer "...whether notaries, scribes, *familiares*, and so forth, were personal aides to the inquisitor or employees of an institution together with the inquisitor,"⁸⁶ certainly deserves to be answered in terms of the first alternative in the case of inquisitorial vicars—and *a fortiori* in the case of other inquisitorial personnel as well. At times, and in different places, inquisitorial vicars could be quite numerous: historians have often cited Bartolomeo Spina's claim made in *Quaestio de strigibus* (1523) that, at the time of writing, the inquisitor of Como, Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza, was aided in his prosecution of witches by from eight to ten vicars.⁸⁷

Occasionally, the Dominican inquisitors drew the men that they appointed as vicars, notaries, and scribes from outside the Dominican order itself. This, at least in the case of inquisitorial vicars, seems to have been frowned upon by the order's authorities and, at times, to have been expressly prohibited—as was done, for example, by the general chapter held in Perugia in 1478.⁸⁸ These non-Dominican inquisitorial vicars, notaries and scribes were usually diocesan clergy with legal training and many examples could be given of such and their activities. Thus, the diocesan priest and jurist Francesco Chiabaudi was the principal prosecutor in the witch-trials held in Forno-Rivara in 1474 and Levone in 1474–1475 under the, probably, merely nominal supervision of the inquisitor of Asti and Turin, Michele Valenti.⁸⁹ Perhaps the most striking example, that will be discussed in chapter 5, is the prosecution of witches carried out by six diocesan clergy in Valcamonica in 1518 under the rather loose supervision of Lorenzo Maggi, the vicar in Brescia of the titular inquisitor of Brescia, Girolamo da Lodi, who at the time was effectively serving as the prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. An example of a diocesan priest acting as notary is furnished by Francesco Vialardi who participated in the witch-trial of Giovanna Monduro held in Salussola in 1470 and conducted by the inquisitorial vicar Giovanni Domenico da Cremona on behalf of the inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, Niccolò Constantini da Biella.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Kieckhefer 1995, p. 55.

⁸⁷ Spina, *Quaestio de strigibus*, p. 37.

⁸⁸ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 341.

⁸⁹ See Vayra 1970.

⁹⁰ Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54.

10. *Lay Auxiliaries*

As well as the clerics that inquisitors employed in various roles, they often called upon laymen to act as notaries and scribes, and these usually held the office of imperial notary. Of particular importance were also the lay auxiliaries who formally committed themselves to be of service to inquisitors and, especially, to furnish financial support to the inquisitorial office. These lay auxiliaries were usually organized in confraternities that, insofar as they were granted by the Holy See spiritual benefits and various privileges analogous to those conferred upon crusaders, were usually known as ‘societies of the Holy Cross’ and its members as *crucesignati*.⁹¹ At times, though, they were also known as ‘societies of St. Peter Martyr’, since they were placed under the protection of the patron saint of inquisitors. The history, organization and activities of these confraternities have been studied in detail by G. Meersseman.⁹² Whatever might be the case of their historical continuity with similar, thirteenth-century organizations, these confraternities experienced a marked development from 1450 onwards.⁹³ The inquisitor of Bologna, Corrado di Germania, revived the local confraternity in 1451, after more than a century of inactivity.⁹⁴ The inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona, Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale, refounded the *Compagnia della Santa Croce* in his inquisitorial district in 1507 and obtained from Pope Julius II a brief conceding it numerous privileges.⁹⁵ The inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Antonio da Casale, established the *Compagnia* in his inquisitorial district in 1509.⁹⁶ Occasionally, however, these confraternities failed to be unquestionably subservient to inquisitors. The *Compagnia* of Bologna, for example, engaged itself in a protracted conflict with the local inquisitors during the second half of the fifteenth century until it was finally brought to heel by the inquisitor Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia, who had to have recourse to several papal interventions in order to do so.⁹⁷ Similarly in Modena, during 1516, the inquisitorial vicars Lazzaro da San Colombano and Antonio da Brescia had to

⁹¹ BOP, vol. 1, pp. 249–250 (Innocent IV, *Malitia huius temporis*, 19 May 1254).

⁹² See Meersseman 1951 and 1977.

⁹³ The continuity is asserted in Paolini 1979, pp. 199–200, but is questioned in Terpstra 1995, p. 43.

⁹⁴ D’Amato 1988, vol. 1, p. 394.

⁹⁵ BOP, vol. 4, pp. 240–241.

⁹⁶ Meersseman 1951, p. 71.

⁹⁷ D’Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 396–399; Terpstra 1995, pp. 43–47.

threaten with excommunication the members of their local confraternity to ensure its financial resources were readily available to them.⁹⁸ On the other hand, some inquisitors managed to harness the resources of their confraternities even for tasks with very little direct bearing on inquisitorial concerns: the inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, was successful in enlisting his *Compagnia* to be of service to the Dominican general chapter held in Ferrara in May 1498 after it was snubbed by the great bulk of Ferrara's citizens, who in this way sought to express their disapproval of Master General Gioacchino Torriani's condonation of the execution in Florence of their fellow citizen Girolamo Savonarola.⁹⁹

11. *Buildings, Archives, Handbooks*

From almost the very beginning inquisitors felt the need for physical spaces to be set aside, at least on an intermittent basis, for inquisitorial pursuits. These were known as *domus inquisitionis* and, when they took the form of permanent buildings, often consisted of a hall where inquisitorial trials could be held, jails for the incarceration and judicial torture of suspects, and sometimes even residential quarters for the inquisitor and his assistants. Some of these, such as that in Bologna, were acquired very early, during the second half of the thirteenth century.¹⁰⁰ By mid-fifteenth century they seem, however, to have been usually rather modest and often consisted of no more than a room or two set aside in the local Dominican house. Indeed, at times, the appropriation by inquisitors of quarters in a convent gave rise to conflicts with the Dominican community. Even when these facilities were more substantial and physically independent of the Dominican house, there was certainly nothing as yet that could be compared with, for example, the monumental and even elegant edifice that would be built gradually during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan,¹⁰¹ or the still-existing, rather

⁹⁸ Duni 1999, pp. 22–26.

⁹⁹ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 437.

¹⁰⁰ The earliest extant records of the inquisition of Bologna, dated 1291–1301, repeatedly indicate that inquisitorial activities were held “in domo officii inquisitionis” which is itself indicated as being “in domo fratrum praedicatorum” and “posita iuxta ortum fratrum praedicatorum”, see Paolini and Orioli 1982–1990, vols. 1–3, *passim*.

¹⁰¹ A description is in Fumi 1910, pp. 11–12.

magnificent *domus inquisitionis* attached to the convent of San Domenico in Bologna, built in 1568–1569 and further expanded and embellished during the seventeenth century.¹⁰² Nevertheless, as with the confraternities of the Holy Cross, there was a surge in the construction of inquisitorial buildings during the second half of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth. The inquisitors of Bologna built new jails there in 1452, to which was added a separate section for women in 1472, and were further enlarged in 1482;¹⁰³ the inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Antonio da Casale, built a new *domus inquisitionis* with two jails in Reggio in 1509;¹⁰⁴ the inquisitorial vicar of the subdistrict of Modena, Antonio da Brescia, built a new *domus inquisitionis* in 1517 to replace the ramshackle tower at the edge of the convent of San Domenico's garden that had housed the inquisitorial offices till then.¹⁰⁵ The continuing haphazard character of inquisitorial facilities is well illustrated, however, by the intriguing case of Vito Beggiami, inquisitor of Savigliano during 1495–1502. In early 1500, Beggiami's inquisitorial quarters in the convent of San Domenico in Savigliano were broken into, some of his personal belongings stolen, and his garden, stable and jail dishevelled. The incident was brought to the attention of Master General Torriani, but the inquest that followed failed to identify the culprits and it is uncertain whether they were Waldensians or some other disaffected object of Beggiami's inquisitorial zeal or, more prosaically, some of his Dominican confreres who resented his appointment or were irritated by his posturings.¹⁰⁶

The most important content of an inquisitor's quarters was the inquisitorial archive, for it was the archive that enabled the prosecution of heretics to be carried out persistently and effectively by a succession of inquisitors in the same post. The quality and consistency of these archives varied greatly from district to district. Indeed, some districts might not even have had a central archive, as seems to be intimated by Giovanni Domenico da Cremona's refusal in 1479, while serving as a vicar of the inquisitor of Pavia, to send to the duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, the records of some inquisitorial trials on the alleged

¹⁰² D'Amato 1988: vol. 1, pp. 608–609; vol. 2, pp. 738–741. The jails were demolished in 1797, see Paolini and Orioli 1982–1990, vol. 1, p. xxv.

¹⁰³ D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 393, 396, 402.

¹⁰⁴ Meersseman 1951, p. 79.

¹⁰⁵ Duni 1999, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 141^r (15 January 1500).

ground that these were held by different notaries.¹⁰⁷ When it did exist, the archive might have taken the form of a loose bundle of papers kept in a stout leather bag, or of a substantial accumulation of documents preserved in a wooden chest in the inquisitor's own cell or in a special cupboard in the *domus inquisitionis* or in the conventual library.

Unfortunately, very little material from the inquisitorial archives of our period has survived, for it was almost completely, intentionally destroyed at the time of the general suppression of the tribunals of the Roman Inquisition toward the end of the eighteenth century. For example, the archive of the inquisition of Milan, that contained documentation dating from 1470 onward, was burned in the garden of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie on 3 June 1788,¹⁰⁸ and that of the inquisition of Bologna, that preserved documentation harking back to the fourteenth century, was largely destroyed in 1797.¹⁰⁹ Other inquisitorial archives were destroyed accidentally even earlier: the archive of the important inquisition of Savigliano was lost while it was being transferred from Savigliano to Turin in 1571;¹¹⁰ the archive of the inquisition of Piacenza was destroyed around 1650 when the library of the convent of San Giovanni in Canale, where it was kept, was burned down.¹¹¹

It is probable, however, that by the end of the fifteenth century at least some of the inquisitorial archives of northern Italy contained significant holdings, at least if we are to go by the often-cited, tantalizing reference made by the inquisitor of Como during 1505–1513, Bernardo Retegno da Como, who alleged that his search of the inquisitorial archive in Como furnished him with ample evidence that witch-trials had been conducted by his predecessors during the previous 150 years.¹¹² Be that as it may, the only inquisitorial archive that has survived with documentation from the period 1474–1527 is that of the subdistrict of Modena.¹¹³ Although itself rather scant, dating only from 1495–1500 and 1517–1523, this material has been already the object of considerable scholarly attention.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ Fumi 1910, pp. 109–110.

¹⁰⁸ Fumi 1910, pp. 11–12.

¹⁰⁹ Paolini and Orioli 1982–1990, vol. 1, p. xxxvi.

¹¹⁰ Turletti 1879, vol. 2, p. 313.

¹¹¹ Forte 1971, p. 423.

¹¹² Bernardus de Como, *Tractatus de strigiis*, p. 145.

¹¹³ An analytical inventory of the extant documents of the archive of the inquisition of Modena is in Trenti 2003.

¹¹⁴ See Ginzburg 1966, Bertolotti 1979, Biondi 1982, Duni 1999.

The archives contained papal documents that authorized, directed and fostered inquisitorial activities, handbooks of inquisitorial procedure and, especially, the transcripts of inquests and trials carried out by inquisitors as well as the sentences pronounced at their conclusion. The papal documents in question largely corresponded to the bulls and briefs already mentioned in the second section of this chapter. They included as well documents that recorded the series of provisions governing inquisitorial practice by inquisitors in general made by the popes during the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Their prescriptions were gradually incorporated into canon law and are to be found scattered throughout the great collections made at the time: the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX and Pope Boniface VIII, the Constitutions of Pope Clement V, and the Constitutions ('Extravagantes') of Pope John XXII. These injunctions closely regulated inquisitorial practice and dealt, for example, with such, at times vexed, questions as the relations between inquisitors and the bishops in whose dioceses they operated and the partition of goods confiscated from the condemned between inquisitors, bishops and secular authorities.

The manuals of inquisitorial procedure spelt out the details of the juridical process whereby inquisitors were to engage in the repression of heresy. The juridical process *per viam inquisitionis* whereby inquisitors had to undertake the *negotium fidei* had its roots in Roman law and is to be distinguished from the accusatorial juridical process characteristic of the early middle ages. It was further developed and refined during the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and came to be widely adopted by episcopal courts and lay magistrates as well. The details of inquisitorial juridical procedure have been already the object of several scholarly studies and there is little need to consider them here.¹¹⁵ The manuals of inquisitorial procedure actually employed by northern-Italian inquisitors during the Renaissance were not so much the now well-known medieval handbooks that, like Bernard Gui's *Practica inquisitorum hereticae pravitatis* (written about 1325 but only first printed in Paris in 1886), seem to have had little, if any, diffusion in manuscript form. Nor was it a matter of even such a celebrated inquisitorial manual as Nicolas Eymeric's *Directorium inquisitorum* (written in 1368 and destined to become a fundamental work of reference for

¹¹⁵ See: Douais 1906, pp. 145–249; Guirard 1972, pp. 83–130; Reviglio della Veneria 1951, pp. 81–177. For a recent discussion of the development of inquisitorial procedure see Errera 2004.

the Roman Inquisition after its 1571 printing with the commentary of Francisco Peña), for it, too, seem to have been little-known in Italy before its early printings in Seville in 1500 and in Barcellona in 1503. It is instructive that the catalogues of the library of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan, compiled in 1494, and that of San Domenico in Bologna, compiled in 1510, do not include these works, and these were not only exceptionally rich libraries but also those of the two convents that housed the most important inquisitors in northern Italy at the time.¹¹⁶

Rather, the handbooks seem to have been locally produced, often well-constructed compilations of papal documents addressed to inquisitors, canonical decrees and imperial legislation on the prosecution of heretics. An excellent example of such is *De officio inquisitionis*, compiled in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, which is extant in two copies that were used by the inquisitors of Ferrara and those of Bologna throughout the fifteenth and the early-sixteenth centuries. The Ferrarese copy is preserved in the Vatican Library and has been exhaustively analysed by A. Dondaine;¹¹⁷ the Bolognese copy is preserved in the library of the University of Bologna and has been edited by L. Paolini.¹¹⁸ Both copies show evidence, in the form of numerous additions and marginal annotations, of having been used by some of the Bolognese and Ferrarese inquisitors who are the subject of this book. For a representative exposition of inquisitorial juridical procedure as it was actually followed by northern-Italian inquisitors during the Renaissance, one may turn in the first place to this manual. The influence of Eymeric's *Directorium* from the turn of the first decade of the sixteenth century is disclosed, however, by the three chapters dedicated to juridical procedure in Prierias' *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis* (1520). Prierias outlines inquisitorial procedure as it is to be followed in cases of trials for witchcraft and follows a scheme evidently inspired by Eymeric's treatment in the third part of the *Directorium*.¹¹⁹

Very few records of inquisitorial trials dating from 1474–1527 conducted by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy are extant. Of the documentation of the Modenese inquisition, consisting of a total of nine incomplete trial records for 1495–1500 and thirty-one for 1517–

¹¹⁶ See Kaeppli 1955, Laurent 1943.

¹¹⁷ Dondaine 1947, pp. 117–112, 167–170.

¹¹⁸ Paolini 1976. The *De officio inquisitionis* was first printed in 1571.

¹¹⁹ Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, book 3, chapters 3–4, pp. 222–262.

1523, one, that of the priest Guglielmo Campana for magical practices conducted by Antonio da Brescia in 1517, has been edited,¹²⁰ and another, that of the trial of Chiara Signorini for witchcraft conducted by Bartolomeo Spina in 1518, has been described at length.¹²¹ A very few records of inquisitorial trials are to be found in contemporary chronicles—such as that of the trial for witchcraft of Benvenuta Pincinillo conducted in 1518 by the inquisitorial vicar for Brescia, Lorenzo Maggi, reproduced in the *Diarii* of Marin Sanudo.¹²² Other records of inquisitorial trials were discovered by scholars since the late 1800s, but not all have been the object of competent attention.¹²³ Three very recent editions of records of witch-trials deserve to be mentioned: (1) that of the trial of Giovanna Monduro held in 1470 in Salussola, near Biella, by the inquisitorial vicar Giovanni Domenico da Cremona on behalf of the inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, Niccolò Constantini da Biella;¹²⁴ (2) that of the several trials for witchcraft held in 1520 in Venegono Superiore, near Varese, by the inquisitorial vicars Battista da Pavia and Michele di Aragona on behalf of the inquisitor of Milan and Pavia, Gioacchio Beccaria da Pavia;¹²⁵ (3) that of three of the several trials conducted in 1495 in Rifreddo and Gambasca, near Saluzzo, by the inquisitor of Savigliano, Vito Beggiani, under the supervision of Michele Madei da Asti, inquisitor of Asti and councillor and confessor of Ludovico II, marquis of Saluzzo.¹²⁶

12. *The Secular Arm*

Inquisitors exercised their office on the basis of the authority that was delegated to them by the Holy See. Yet, to be able to carry out their tasks they also had to have recourse to secular authorities, for only these could furnish them the manpower and other means that they required for the pursuit, arrest, incarceration and, when deemed necessary, the

¹²⁰ Duni 1999, pp. 279–338.

¹²¹ Ginzburg 1966 (reprinted in Ginzburg 1986, pp. 3–28, and in English translation in Ginzburg 1990, pp. 1–16).

¹²² Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 632–650.

¹²³ Vayra 1874 (reprinted 1970), Bazzi 1890 and Poma 1913 present loose paraphrases in Italian translation instead of editions of their sources.

¹²⁴ Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54.

¹²⁵ Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1999.

¹²⁶ Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004.

judicial torture of their suspects. Furthermore, if the suspects were indeed found guilty, the inquisitors themselves could not administer to them any kind of punishment other than salutary spiritual penances or, at the very most, brief terms of imprisonment, for as clerics they were forbidden by canon law from shedding blood. Punishments such as the confiscation of goods, banishment, long-term imprisonment, execution by burning at the stake, could only be administered by secular officials, to whom the inquisitors "released" the indicted at the end of their trials, usually with the customary, formal recommendation that they be treated compassionately. The appeal to the secular arm was, then, indispensable to the inquisitorial enterprise.

The legal basis that made this appeal possible was a series of provisions emanated by both church and secular authorities that had been gradually integrated in the communal statutes of the various political entities of northern Italy during second half of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth. There is little need in the present context to enter into a detailed history of this legislation. Let it simply be said that the initial important step is represented by a canon promulgated by the Fourth General Council of the Lateran (1216) that ordered civic authorities to commit themselves to the prosecution of heretics and prescribed that they were to punish them by confiscating their goods. This was followed by several measures against heretics taken by Emperor Frederick II. Immediately upon his election as emperor in 1213 he promised to assist with the extirpation of heresy and in 1220, on the occasion of his imperial coronation in Rome, he promulgated the Constitution of Rome that largely reproduced the provisions of Lateran IV, but had the added effect of transforming the spiritual sin of heresy into a civil crime. In 1224 he issued from Catania a further constitution that envisaged specifically the situation in Lombardy and was addressed to his legate there, the bishop of Magdeburg, that for the first time explicitly prescribed for heretics the penalty of death by burning. Several constitutions against heresy were promulgated during the 1220s and 1230s and were reiterated and made binding on the whole empire in Padua on 22 February 1239. All of this legislation, ecclesiastical as well as imperial, was then summed up in the Apostolic Constitution *Ad extirpanda* of Pope Innocent IV on 15 May 1252, that was addressed to the civic authorities of Lombardy, Romagna and March of Treviso, and repeated soon thereafter in the Apostolic Constitution *Cum adversus haereticam*. The inquisitors in northern Italy were then instructed to ensure that these two constitutions were inserted in the communal

statutes of the cities of northern Italy and this gradually took place over the following century: in Como in 1255, in Bergamo in 1267, in Ferrara in 1268, in Padua sometime between 1265 and 1276, in Milan by 1330, in Parma by 1337, in Vercelli by 1341.¹²⁷

Accordingly, to avail themselves of the secular arm in any particular place Renaissance inquisitors usually needed, in theory at least, to do no more than turn to whomsoever happened to be the local civic authority in charge of the then equivalent of a force of police—be it a podestà, or a capitano del popolo, or a capitano della giustizia—and invoke the local communal statutes. In practice, however, the matter was rarely so simple, for in many places by mid-fifteenth century the medieval legislative provisions against heretics were believed to have fallen into disuse. Even after Pope Callixtus III reissued the Apostolic Constitution *Ad extirpanda* in July 1458, the secular arm was often far from readily forthcoming. In some places the imperial legislation against heretics was renewed at the instigation of the local inquisitor, as happened in Mantua in 1486 and again in 1492.¹²⁸ Whatever the case, the appeal by inquisitors to the secular arm often led to tension and even serious clashes with civic authorities, who were jealous of their prerogatives and resented the heavy-handed manner of some inquisitors, and we shall turn to some of these below when considering the witch-trials held in Parma in 1509–1510 and, especially, the great witch-hunts conducted in Valcamonica in 1485 and 1518–1521.

13. *The Inquisitor's Profile*

Is it at all possible to provide a composite portrait of the kind of friar who was called upon to serve as an inquisitor during the Renaissance? Here, of course, it is not at all a matter of attempting a psychological profile, for the almost complete lack of personal, intimate documentation—such as letters and diaries—revelatory of subjective, character traits makes this impossible and, moreover, no one profile could possibly do justice to an entire, numerous category of men. What is possible, however, is an attempt at profiling in terms of objective, personal qualifications and its results are straight-forward: a middle-

¹²⁷ For a detailed history of the integration of the ecclesiastical and imperial legislation against heretics in the communal statutes of northern Italy see Scharff 1996.

¹²⁸ Davari 1879, p. 560.

aged to elderly friar with considerable academic training and not a little experience in the governance of men.

At the time of his first appointment as inquisitor a friar had to be at least forty years old, This was a well-established canonical requirement and was generally abided by.¹²⁹ A few exceptions did occur, but they were very rare and were invariably the result of papal extraordinary interventions. The only known instances of this among the almost one hundred inquisitors appointed in northern Italy during 1474–1527 are the cases of Bartolomeo Commazio da Bologna, appointed inquisitor of Bologna in 1478,¹³⁰ Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena in 1481,¹³¹ and Melchiorre Crivelli da Milano, appointed inquisitor of Milan in 1518 or, at the latest, by 1521.¹³² As they were all already masters of theology and had served as regent masters, even in their cases the age requirement must have fallen short by only a few years, if not a few months. Friars who served as inquisitors were never, then, impulsive young men; if anything, given the customary long tenures, they are far more likely to have been sedate geriatrics.

Before appointment as inquisitor a friar normally completed a lengthy academic curriculum that led to his graduation as master (or doctor) of theology from the theological faculty of a university. Members of the Province of St. Peter Martyr did so overwhelmingly from that of the University of Pavia and, occasionally, from that of the University of Turin. Members of the Province of St. Dominic usually did so from those of the universities of Padua, Ferrara or Parma. Members of the Congregation of Lombardy invariably did so from that of the University of Bologna. A much smaller proportion of the inquisitors drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy did, however, graduate masters of theology before their first inquisitorial appointment, if at all, than those drawn from the ranks of the two conventual provinces. To explain this, it is necessary to consider briefly the academic training undertaken by

¹²⁹ *Constitutiones Clementinae*, lib. 5, tit. 3, cap. 2. see Friedberg 1877–1881, vol. 2, col. 1182.

¹³⁰ “Magister Bartholomaeus de Bononia fuit institutum inquisitor in civitate Bononiensis et diocesi cum terminis consuetis et fuit dispensatus in deficientia aetatis auctoritate apostolica.” (7 June 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 343^r.

¹³¹ See note 64 above.

¹³² Crivelli's appointment as inquisitor of Milan in 1518 is doubtful, for although there is a brief of Leo X appointing him such (BOP, vol. 4, pp. 373–374), there is considerable documentary evidence that as late as 1521 the inquisitor of Milan was still Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia.

Dominicans during the Renaissance and the marked differences in this between the conventual provinces and the Congregation of Lombardy.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a young man usually entered the Dominican order at the age of fifteen or sixteen and was expected to have acquired at least a rudimentary education in grammar (that is, Latin) beforehand. After a year spent as a novice—a period of spiritual and liturgical formation—he made his religious profession—took solemn, permanent vows of obedience, poverty and chastity—and thereby became a permanent member (*filius*) of the convent where he had been received and, indirectly, a member of the province or congregation of which that convent formed part.¹³³ The average friar, who of course corresponded to the great bulk of friars known as *fratres communes*, then completed a number of years of philosophical and theological studies in his own convent, proceeded to holy orders at the age of twenty-three or so and thereafter devoted himself to apostolic work.¹³⁴ An intellectually promising friar, on the other hand, was sent to complete his philosophical and theological studies in a larger convent that housed a studium that specialized in one of those disciplines. Such a friar, after receiving holy orders, was sent to continue his theological studies in a still more important convent that was the site of a studium generale. He then matriculated as a *studens formalis* in the studium generale which was integrated in the theological faculty of a university, and began the course of studies that led to the taking of university degrees. After two or three years as a *studens formalis*, he served a year as master of studies (*magister studiorum*), supervising the students who had matriculated in the years following him. He then served a biennium as bachelor of the Bible and a biennium as bachelor of the Sentences. This last step had not merely to be carried out, but also to be officially approved by the order's authorities as leading to the master's degree (as being *pro gradu et forma magisterii*). At its completion, the recognized bachelor (*baccalaureus formatus, baccalaureus theologiae*) had to secure permission (be *licentiatus*) from either the order's master general or a general chapter to be examined and graduate as master in the faculty of theology of an approved university. Finally, the new master of theology had to have his magisterial promotion formally recognized (*approbatio*) by a general chapter of the order. Only after this approval was a friar allowed to style himself *magister* and enjoy the rights and privileges conceded by

¹³³ See Creytens 1952.

¹³⁴ On the category of *fratres communes* see Boyle 1978.

the order to its masters of theology. This was usually followed by a triennium as regent master in one of the order's studia generalia and, often, participation in the academic life of the university faculty of theology in which the studium was integrated. It was usually only after completion of this triennium as regent master that a friar was finally free to turn to other activities and was considered qualified for appointment as an inquisitor.

While both the friars of the conventual provinces and those of the Congregation of Lombardy followed this basic pattern of academic formation and promotion, the entire process was far more arduous in the Congregation than in the provinces. A much greater number of friars made academic careers in the provinces than in the Congregation, for while each of the two conventual provinces had three studia generalia,¹³⁵ the Congregation had only that in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna.¹³⁶ In the conventual provinces the periods spent as bachelor of the Bible and bachelor of the Sentences could be as short as a single year each and either one alone could suffice *pro gradu et forma magisterii*; the Congregation insisted on a full biennium for each and both had to be completed. Furthermore, in the Congregation, a friar's academic ascent was never chronologically continuous, for it was always interrupted after each stage by lengthy periods of apostolic activity. Between being a *studens formalis* and serving as biblical bachelor and between acting as biblical bachelor and serving as bachelor of the Sentences, a friar of the Congregation normally spent several years as a preacher or lecturer or, indeed, as an inquisitorial vicar in some minor convent. Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa, for example, as well as engaging in other activities, served as inquisitorial vicar in Modena during 1517–1519, well after serving as master of studies in the Bolognese studium in 1513–1514 and long before returning there as bachelor of the Sentences in 1524–1526 and graduating master of theology in 1530.¹³⁷ It is interesting that while Spina was eventually appointed to the important post of master

¹³⁵ The Province of St. Peter Martyr had studia generalia in the convents of San Tommaso in Pavia, San Domenico in Turin and Sant'Eustorgio in Milan; the Province of St. Dominic had studia generalia in the convents of Sant'Agostino in Padua, San Domenico in Ferrara and Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice.

¹³⁶ The Congregation of Lombardy had the explicit policy of avoiding the multiplication of masters of theology in its ranks, see Borselli, *Chronica magistrorum generalium*, fol. 230^r. When it annexed and reformed a convent that had been the site of a studium generale (such as Ferrara in 1519 and Pavia in 1530) it immediately suppressed the studium.

¹³⁷ Piana 1969, pp. 199, 226–229, 237–238.

of the sacred palace in the Roman curia in 1545, at no stage was he appointed inquisitor in his own right.

Accordingly, friars who were masters of theology were much fewer in the numerous Congregation than in the comparatively small conventual provinces, and they tended to be significantly older when they did finally graduate such. For example, Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, who was a *filius* of the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara and belonged to the Province of St. Dominic, graduated master of theology from the University of Ferrara at the age of twenty-eight, several years before his first appointment as inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena in 1481. On the other hand, as eminent a scholar as Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale, who was a member of the Congregation of Lombardy, was first appointed inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona in 1515, a year before graduating master of theology from the University of Bologna in 1516, at the age of forty-six.

An even greater abuse was rife among the friars of the conventual provinces than the acquisition of the master's degree by means of accelerated courses of studies. This was the practice of being promoted to the degree without any academic effort whatsoever (*ex saltu*) by means of papal bulls procured through the intercession of influential notables or simply purchased.¹³⁸ An interesting example of such *magistri bullati*, *magistri per bullam*, is Francesco Colonna, the celebrated, alleged author of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), a *filius* of the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice and a member of the Province of St. Dominic. While not entirely lacking in theological expertise, since he served one year during 1473–1474 as bachelor of the Sentences in the studium of the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua that was part of the faculty of theology of the University of Padua,¹³⁹ it seems that he simply bought a papal bull in 1482 creating him a master of theology along with several other friars of his convent.¹⁴⁰ Be that as it may, the phenomenon was so widespread as to provoke its unequivocal condemnation by several general chapters, such as that held in Ferrara in 1494.¹⁴¹ It should be noticed, though, that none of the conventual friars appointed inquisitors between 1474 and 1527

¹³⁸ On graduations *ex saltu* and *per bullam* see Grendler 2002, pp. 180–183.

¹³⁹ Menegazzo 1966, pp. 441–452.

¹⁴⁰ Casella and Pozzi 1959, vol. 1, pp. 25–30.

¹⁴¹ “Ordinamus, quod magistri in theologia per bullas aut brevia apostolica sine licencia et favore magistri reverendissimi nostri ordinis vel capitulorum generalium promoti et indocti nullis libertatibus, exempcionibus, graciis, privilegiis eisdem ab ordine

seem to have acquired their master's degree in this way. Indeed, there seems to have been only two instances of friars who became inquisitors who were ever questioned about the legitimacy of their degrees and both cases were settled favourably by the master general's intervention long before their first inquisitorial appointments: Vito Beggiami, inquisitor of Savigliano during 1495–1902;¹⁴² Gaspare Rossetti da Varazze, inquisitor of Genoa during 1497–1518.¹⁴³ The only friar of the Congregation of Lombardy who became an inquisitor after graduating master of theology other than by regular examination in the University of Bologna was Vincenzo Bandello di Castelnuovo who served as Bolognese inquisitor during 1490–1493. But in Bandello's case his graduation *per bullam* was a mark of exceptional distinction rather than a transgression, for he was created master of theology by Pope Innocent VIII after holding a brilliant disputation in his presence during the general chapter held in Rome in 1484.¹⁴⁴ The friars who were appointed inquisitors during the Renaissance usually possessed, then, a sound academic formation. Some of them are even still celebrated for their learning, especially in the scholastic, Thomistic tradition: Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara, who served as inquisitor of Bologna during 1519–1526, published his renowned commentary on Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles* (1523–1524) during his term of office; Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale, inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona during 1515–1543, composed his massive series of Aristotelian commentaries while inquisitor.¹⁴⁵

The friars who were called upon to serve as inquisitors were not only learned, they usually also brought to the post considerable experience as administrators of properties and overseers of men. Practically every inquisitor appointed between 1474 and 1527 had previously served as the prior of one or more Dominican houses, and not a few had also served either as provincials of the Province of St. Peter Martyr or that

concessi gaudere debeant, sed solum pro simplicibus conventualibus habeantur." MOPH, vol. 8. p. 418.

¹⁴² "Magister Vitus de Beiannis prior conventus Saviliani declaratur verus magister in theologia eo quod fecerit fidem de suo magisterio, et potest uti omnibus gratiis magistrorum." (27 December 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^v.

¹⁴³ "Magister Gaspar Rosetus conventus Ianuensis qui per magistrum Alzatum fuit promotus ad baccalaureatum et magisterium in universitate Aquensi habuit confirmationem sui magisterii cum omnibus gratiis..." (15 July 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 239^r.

¹⁴⁴ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 382; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fols. 7^v, 48^v.

¹⁴⁵ See Chrysostomus Javellus Canapicius, *Opera omnia*, 3 vols., Lyon 1580.

of St. Dominic or as vicars general of the Congregation of Lombardy. The efficacious exercise of these offices is not to be underestimated as indicative of the possession of both toughness and prudence, for Renaissance friaries, far from being idyllic, were plagued by internal turmoil. Indeed, the typical friary seems to have been a microcosm of the society of the time and, accordingly, included members that ranged from saintly ascetics and learned scholars to poltroons and incorrigible culprits: thieves, lechers, syphilitics. The registers of the masters general of the period contain numerous records of commissions being given to priors, provincials and vicars general whereby they were even to call upon the secular arm so as to apprehend and punish wayward friars. Finally, it should be noticed that the posts of prior, provincial and vicar general occupied by so many friars before their appointments as inquisitors, were posts to which they had been elected by their fellow friars and this surely indicates a certain measure of confidence and trust in them on their part.

The men who were appointed inquisitors in northern Italy during 1474–1527 were, clearly, well above the run-of-the-mill friars. It is not surprising, then, that many of these inquisitors rose to high administrative positions in the Dominican order and in the Church. Many became provincials of the conventual provinces and vicars general of the Congregation of Lombardy. Five became Dominican masters general: Bartolomeo Commazio da Bologna, Gioacchino Torriani da Venezia, Vincenzo Bandello di Castelnuovo, Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara, Paolo Bottigella da Pavia. Three were appointed to the key post of master of the sacred palace in Rome: Paolo Moneglia da Genova, Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio. Several were elevated to the episcopate. But even outside the narrow world of ecclesiastics, these inquisitors were usually respected, sought as spiritual directors, and frequently called upon for all kinds of engagements. The populace often preferred to have them, even at their most intransigent, rather than lay magistrates to conduct prosecutions for witchcraft as well as other practices that were held to be civil crimes as well as sins. Civic authorities often appealed to them to compose or revise their communal statutes and other laws, to adjudicate local squabbles, and even settle disputes between conflicting political entities; princes made them their preachers, chaplains, confessors, counsellors and councillors.

14. *Renaissance Inquisitors as Men of the Renaissance*

To what extent were the friars who served as inquisitors in northern Italy during 1474–1527 men of the Renaissance in a deeper sense than mere chronological coincidence? By training and cast of mind, and probably conviction, they were scholastics of the Thomist kind. This of itself could qualify them as Renaissance men, for the development of Thomism as a school was peculiar to the Renaissance rather than the Middle Ages. It was only from the first half of the fifteenth century that students of the thought of Aquinas began to think of themselves as members of a school and began to refer to its putative founder no longer as *frater* Thomas, but as the Doctor Sanctus and, in a characteristically Renaissance manner, as Divus Thomas. The revival of Thomism that took place at this time was, perhaps, a consequence of the movement of Dominican reform, that sought to restore what it believed to be an authentic Dominican life style. In matters intellectual this was taken to entail a return to the study and, especially, the very texts of Aquinas—a typically Renaissance preoccupation with the rediscovery of the purported sources of a tradition.

If any one place is to be indicated as the most likely, initial foyer of this revival, it is surely the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna, which became the centre of a renewed, vibrant Thomism especially during the long teaching career, begun in 1461, of Pietro Maldura da Bergamo (d. 1482). Maldura was the author of the great index to all Aquinas' works known as the *Tabula aurea* (pub. 1473). He instilled in his students, who included several of the inquisitors considered in this book, a renewed interest for the sources of the Thomistic tradition and he stressed the importance of Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* over his *Commentary on the Sentences* that till then, primarily for didactic reasons, had been the almost exclusive focus of attention. He imparted a punctilious, exegetical approach to the texts of Aquinas, and a concern for the establishment and editing of sound texts and the discrimination between authentic and spurious works, that reflected the philological concerns of the time.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, the revival of Thomism during the Renaissance was not confined to the Dominican order. Aquinas acquired at this time a greater prestige than he had ever enjoyed during the Middle Ages, and this not solely among the

¹⁴⁶ See Colosio 1961.

churchmen of the Roman curia,¹⁴⁷ but also among lay, university-based scholars, such as Agostino Nifo, and even those who were otherwise notoriously anti-clerical, such as Pietro Pomponazzi.¹⁴⁸ It is instructive that it was precisely during the second half of the fifteenth century that chairs devoted to the teaching of Aquinas' metaphysics and theology were first established in the faculties of arts of the universities of Padua (1465) and Pavia (1479).

Yet the question whether Renaissance inquisitors were men of the Renaissance seems to demand something more than merely pointing out that the Thomism to which they adhered was an integral and lively component of the intellectual life of the time.¹⁴⁹ The crucial issue is, surely, that of their attitude to the humanism that many scholars have argued to have been the essential, defining feature of the Renaissance. The term 'humanism' is best taken here as it was defined by P.O. Kristeller: "a cultural orientation bearing on the study of the languages, the literature, the history and philosophy of Greek and Latin antiquity and on a renewal of poetry and oratorical prose, of historiography and moral thought—all of these finding inspiration, both for their form and content, in the models furnished by the ancient authors."¹⁵⁰ Even when 'humanism' is taken in this minimally ideological sense, the question is difficult to answer, for to be able to do so convincingly would be needed much more information than we have on these inquisitors, ranging from the character of their literary works and the content, style and vocabulary of their public sermonizing, to their private cultural interests and reading. There can be little doubt, however, that the Dominican milieu in which they were formed and lived was sympathetic, rather than antagonistic, to the humanist movement.

Even though earlier Dominicans, such as Giovanni Dominici (1356–1419), had been suspicious of and had even strongly attacked the study of pagan authors,¹⁵¹ well before the end of the fifteenth century Dominican houses, especially San Domenico in Bologna, Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, seem to have transformed themselves into "open houses" for local humanists, such as, in Bologna, Giovanni Garzoni (1419–1505).¹⁵² Many of the friars were

¹⁴⁷ See O'Malley 1974.

¹⁴⁸ See Mahoney 1974 and 1976.

¹⁴⁹ See Kristeller 1967 (partially reproduced in Kristeller 1992, pp. 27–91).

¹⁵⁰ Kristeller 1992, p. 55.

¹⁵¹ Kristeller 1992, p. 56.

¹⁵² See Lind 1992.

themselves prominent members of the humanist movement, even if one considers solely those who became inquisitors. The inquisitor of Bologna during 1493–1494, Girolamo Borselli, is chiefly remembered today for his work as an historian, a scholarly activity that was indulged in by both the inquisitor of Asti from 1494 till 1500, Michele Madei da Asti, and the long-standing inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Giovanni Rafanelli. Leandro Alberti's *De viris illustribus* (1517), as well as being an important source on several Renaissance inquisitors contains significant contributions by contemporary humanists—especially Giovanni Antonio Flaminio (1464–1536). Alberti himself, although he eventually served as inquisitor of Bologna in the 1540s and the beginning of the 1550s, is today the object of scholarly attention primarily on account of his authorship of *Descrittione di tutta Italia* (1550).¹⁵³ The inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona from 1515 till 1543, Crisostomo Iavelli, was notorious in his time for his preference for Plato over Aristotle. Even an otherwise as intransigent an inquisitor and scholastic as Prierias (1456–1527) dabbled in versifying and concluded his *Vita* of St. Mary Magdalen (1499) with a *canzone* modelled on Petrarch.¹⁵⁴ Both Iavelli and Prierias were very well acquainted with the works of Marsilio Ficino and, as will be seen in chapter 4, the inquisitor of the March of Genoa in 1494–1497, Paolo Moneglia, was instrumental in Alexander VI's abrogation of the condemnation of Pico della Mirandola. Vincenzo Bandello, who was inquisitor of Bologna during 1490–1493 and who as prior of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan commissioned Leonardo da Vinci to paint the Last Supper in that convent's refectory, insisted, once he became master general in 1501, that the key to the renewal of the intellectual life of the order was the study of both Aquinas and the *litterae humaniores*.¹⁵⁵

One must be wary, then, of the exaggerated, largely rhetorical claims of the most polemical, overwhelmingly northern-European, anti-scholastic humanists of the opening decades of the sixteenth century, in the manner of the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*. A rigorous distinction between 'obscurantist scholastics' and 'enlightened humanists', as well as any facile attempt to present inquisitors as the former's standard-

¹⁵³ See the forthcoming acts of the congress held in Bologna, 27–29 May 2004: 'L'Italia dell'Inquisitore. Storia e geografia dell'Italia nella *Descrittione* di Leandro Alberti'.

¹⁵⁴ See Tavuzzi 1997, p. 34.

¹⁵⁵ See the Acts of the general chapters of Rome 1501 and Milan 1505, MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 14, 39.

bearers, reveals itself as largely artificial when compared with the situation in northern Italy at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Certainly, northern-Italian Dominicans did not look upon humanists as doctrinal foes, and found such primarily in the advocates of competing, university-based scholastic traditions: Scotism, Nominalism, and lay radical Aristotelianism. The issue, then, certainly merits further, independent investigation. Particularly intriguing is the extent to which Renaissance inquisitors shared in the general Renaissance fascination with the occult in all its forms, for it might well be that their witch-beliefs, that impelled the great witch-hunts discussed in chapter 5, owed as much to their familiarity with works of classical antiquity, such as Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, with their preponderance of female practitioners of magic, as to their study of Aquinas' sober, abstract demonology. Be that as it may, it would certainly not be farfetched, for examples could readily be given, to imagine a typical Renaissance inquisitor as spending his mornings disserting on some abstruse topic of philosophy or theology in the dreary Latin of the schools, his afternoons conducting interrogations at witch-trials in the local vernacular, and his evenings penning, for his delectation and in an impeccable Ciceronian style, a history of his native city or a biography of his favourite *beata*.

Of course, the men who served as inquisitors during the Renaissance were not all cut from the same cloth. Some of them looked upon the inquisitorial office as a sinecure or a mere status-symbol and preferred to concentrate on administrative tasks, or academic work, or on being in attendance as some princely court. Others failed to live up to their responsibilities altogether or became themselves culpable of some wrongdoing, as was suggested above when some of the reasons why some inquisitors seem to have been dismissed prematurely were intimated. Many, believing sincerely that by doing so they were serving their God and were under the special protection of St. Peter Martyr, the patron saint of inquisitors who is often invoked in the records of inquisitorial trials, set about their duties diligently, be it the prosecution of heretics, the surveillance of Judaizers, or the hunting of witches. A few may have performed their inquisitorial tasks with zeal but for selfish, ulterior motives, such as self-aggrandisement or monetary gain. At this point, though, generalizations are of little use, and each inquisitor has to be considered individually. Accordingly, the following chapters will present a series of cameos of hitherto little-known inquisitors that, taken together, should cast some light on the multifaceted phenomenon of the Renaissance inquisitor.

CHAPTER TWO

CONVENTUALS AND OBSERVANTS

1. *Unreformed and Reformed Dominicans*

The factors that gave rise to the movement of Dominican reform in northern Italy during the last decades of the fourteenth century are complex and historians have as yet even to begin fathoming them. They might have included the desire of the succession of Dominican masters general of the Roman obedience to acquire, by fostering the movement, a certain degree of legitimization in the face of the juridical continuity rightly asserted by the succession of Dominican masters general of the Avignonese obedience in the context of the struggle between them engendered by the split within the Dominican order entailed by the Great Schism (1380–1418). More prosaically, they might have included the push on the part of newly-developing social classes for changing property-relations, for even the convents of mendicant friars were only rarely immune from such interests in their local contexts. Certainly the continuing, further spread of the reform movement during the course of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth was often aided by the intervention of secular authorities—princes and civic entities—concerned with an envisaged extension of political influence.¹ Whatever the case, the movement of reform as it manifested itself in northern Italy with the founding, encouraged by Master General Raymond of Capua (1380–1399), of the reformed vicariate by Giovanni Dominici in 1393 that Pope Pius II reconstituted as the Observant Congregation of Lombardy in 1459, claimed to be inspired, in the first place, by a desire to return to an authentic Dominican life style.

Raymond of Capua expressed this, somewhat laconically, by claiming that the intention of the reformed Dominicans that he promoted

¹ See, for example, the discussion of the political calculations that informed the attitude of the Visconti and Sforza dukes of Milan to the spread of the Congregation of Lombardy in Fasoli 1992.

was simply to fulfil the letter of the Dominican constitutions.² In practice, however, the fundamental point of divergence between reformed and unreformed friars was the interpretation of the vow of poverty. The conventual friars accepted a certain measure of individual ownership of such things as books and clothing and, especially, the custom of friars being allowed to have a personal fund (*peculium*) for approved, day-to-day expenses—funds of which the order, at least in theory, retained radical ownership. This entailed a degree of economic independence of individual friars from their communities—the situation often referred to as the ‘private life’ and, in the somewhat paradoxical terminology of the fifteenth century, as the ‘common life’ (*vita communis*), meaning not a life lived in common but the Dominican life as then commonly lived. This state of affairs had developed in the order from its very beginning. Whether it deserves to be judged entirely adversely remains a moot point, for it seems to have been the inevitable result of both the emphasis that Dominicans placed on studies, with its implication of expensive needs such as books, and the undesirable obstacles that a rigid adherence to mendicancy would have placed on apostolic activities such as itinerant preaching.³ Accordingly, fifteenth-century defenders of conventuality, such as Raffaele da Pornassio (d. 1467), argued that the way of life of the conventuals was, in fact, even more authentically Dominican than that of the observants, since it had been followed in the order since its earliest days, was allowed for by the Dominican constitutions with their stress on the necessity of apposite dispensations, and had been practised by such eminent confreres as Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas.⁴ Be that as it may, the situation had certainly deteriorated in the aftermath of the Black Death, and the consequent economic insecurity of communities, and, once ensconced, the practice of conventuality perpetuated itself.

Perhaps the conventuals’ preoccupation with, in effect, earning their own separate living—often by the acquisition of benefices outside the order—had a deleterious influence on their performances, whether academic or apostolic. But one must be wary of rushing to conclusions. Certainly, whether there was in fact a marked difference between conventuals and observants in such matters as apostolic fervour and efficacy or academic dedication and prowess remains to be seriously inves-

² *Raymundi Capuani... opuscula et litterae*, p. 55.

³ See the discussion of this issue in Tugwell 1992, pp. 334–367.

⁴ See Creytens 1979 and 1980.

tigated and shown. Whatever the case, popular preachers and learned academics, especially in the Thomistic tradition but not exclusively so, were to be found among both groups—as were saintly ascetics and incorrigible knaves. It is instructive that even the reformed Observant Congregation of Lombardy had to prescribe in its chapters held in Florence in 1485 and in Venice in 1492 that each of its convents had to have a jail with a securely locked door and furnished with stock, chains and fetters, so that recalcitrant friars could be suitably disciplined.⁵ Most of all, one must be careful not to accept, without further ado, the largely undocumented claims as to the unqualified superiority of the observants over the conventuals that were made by writers of Dominican history during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. Their works—and here Antonin Mortier's celebrated, monumental history of the Dominican masters general (8 vols., Paris 1903–1920) may be taken as paradigmatic—seem to have been not a little influenced by ideological preoccupations, in the first place the desire to defend the character that had been assumed by the Dominican revival at the time of Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (1802–1861) and, especially, during the term of office of Master General Vincent Jandel (1855–1872). Consequently, their renderings of Dominican history largely limit themselves to accounts of the reform movements in which the conventual provinces, and their friars, if they receive any attention at all, are mentioned solely in order to illustrate situations in dire need of correction.

Was there, then, a significant difference of performance between friars who were called upon to serve as inquisitors insofar as they were recruited from the ranks of the conventual provinces of St. Peter Martyr and St. Dominic or the Congregation of Lombardy? The accounts of inquisitors presented in this chapter will show that this probably was the case, and that conventual friars tended, all in all, to be less earnest when entrusted with inquisitorial duties than the friars of the Congregation. This might well have been the result of the different procedures of appointment that held in the conventual provinces and the Congregation outlined in chapter 1, for among the conventuals appointments tended to be at the whim of the provincial and, consequently, far more likely to be arbitrary and, even, sullied by cronyism. These accounts will also disclose, however, that it was often at least in part the conse-

⁵ Creytens and D'Amato 1961, pp. 254–255, 268.

quence of the deleterious effects of the expansionist policy of the Congregation of Lombardy as the result of the conventuals' alleged worldly preoccupations. There can be little doubt, though, that when the friars of the Congregation assumed responsibility for an inquisitorial district that had been staffed previously by conventual friars, inquisitorial activities, that hitherto had been languishing if not entirely absent, often increased remarkably. Most importantly, the friars of the Congregation brought a professionalism to the task largely absent from the vagarious performances of many conventuals.

2. *Graziadio Crotti da Cremona, Inquisitor of Pavia, Cremona
and Piacenza 1481–1483, Inquisitor of Milan 1497–1511, 1513–1515*

Perhaps the most traumatic event experienced by the Dominican order in the course of the fifteenth century was the deposition of Master General Martial Auribelli by Pope Pius II during the general chapter held in Siena in 1462, motivated by the pope's suspicion that Auribelli was hindering, rather than aiding, the progress of Dominican reform. Pius II subsequently appointed master general a friar of the Congregation of Lombardy, Corrado da Asti, who in turn dealt summarily with Auribelli's staunchest supporters. Among these were the provincial of the Province of St. Dominic, Gioacchino Castiglioni di Marcanova, who was deposed, and the newly elected provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Girolamo Visconti, whose election Corrado da Asti refused to confirm. So strong, though, was resentment within the order at what was considered to be Pius II's unwarranted interference with its traditional prerogatives, as well as Corrado da Asti's heavy-handed manner, that, following Pius II's death in mid-August 1464, his successor, Pope Paul II, immediately suspended Corrado da Asti's powers as master general. At the following general chapter, held in Novara in 1465, Corrado da Asti felt compelled to resign as master general and the capitulars unanimously reelected Auribelli. Both Gioacchino Castiglioni and Girolamo Visconti were then reappointed provincials of their respective provinces.⁶

During Corrado da Asti's brief generalate (1462–1465), Gioacchino Castiglioni had bid his time in Milan, for he had close ties with its

⁶ See Creytens 1975.

duke, Francesco Sforza.⁷ The earliest reference that we have to Grazia-dio Crotti da Cremona indicates him as being at that time Castiglioni's assistant (*socius*) in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan and as preaching there in his stead on several occasions.⁸ The time spent in service to the dispossessed Castiglioni must have made Crotti well aware already at that stage of the negative consequences for many a conventual friar of the expansionist agenda of the Congregation of Lombardy, something that he would himself repeatedly experience for the rest of his life. Given his preaching activities in Milan, Crotti must have been already a priest by 1462 at the latest, and had probably entered the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Cremona, which formed part of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, some eight or so years earlier, in the mid-1450s. After Castiglioni's reappointment as provincial of the Province of St. Dominic in 1465, Crotti spent a number of years as a student *in artibus* in Florence, where he probably resided in the unreformed convent of Santa Maria Novella. Perhaps he undertook such studies at the behest of his former mentor Castiglioni, who had at one time been a student of Guarino da Verona and always maintained close contacts with humanist circles.⁹ Be that as it may, while in Florence Crotti studied with John Argyropolus, and the copies that he made for his personal use of the originals of Argyropolus' Latin translations of Aristotle's *On the Soul* and *Posterior Analytics* are still extant.¹⁰

After studying in Florence, Crotti might have returned to his convent in Cremona for a few years. Whatever the case, in mid-1474 he was sent by Master General Leonardo Mansueti to continue his theological formation in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia which was integrated in the theological faculty of the University

⁷ See Fumagalli 1986.

⁸ Kristeller 1965–1997, vol. 6, p. 29.

⁹ On Gioacchino Castiglioni's humanist formation and leanings see Gargan 1971, pp. 76–83.

¹⁰ Crotti's copies of Argyropolus' translations are in the Hauptstaatsarchiv in Stuttgart: Ms. HB, X, 6, fols. 5–47 and 50–105. They have the colophons "Ex ipsius traducentis primario exemplari per eum scripto hunc testimonium... exscripsi ego frater Gratiadeus Cremonensis or. pre. dum actu studio operam darem Florentiae..." (fol. 47) and "...ex primario originali ipsius traducentis manu ipsius scripto exemplum hoc libri posteriorum resolutivorum Aristotelis, exscripsi ego frater Gratiadeus Crottus Cremonensis dum actu Florentiae in studiis litterarum vitam agerem illudque explevit die prima Februarii MCCCCLXX..." (fol. 105). See Kristeller 1965–1997, vol. 3, p. 710.

of Pavia.¹¹ He must have arrived there, though, with an advanced theological education for during the academic year 1474–1475 he was already serving as biblical bachelor, as we learn from a declaration of the master general, dated November 1474, that Crotti was entirely innocent of some accusations that had been brought against him by some other friars of the convent of Pavia.¹² At the same time Crotti was reassured about his standing as a member of the community of the convent of Cremona.¹³ At the end of the academic year 1474–1475, in late July 1475, Crotti was permitted to proceed to the degree of master of theology after serving as bachelor of the Sentences during the following academic year, 1475–1476.¹⁴ He then graduated master of theology in the University of Pavia in mid-1476.¹⁵

Soon after his graduation, Crotti returned to Cremona where, and this may be taken as an indication of the status accorded him, he was given the cell that had been formerly reserved for the use of the provincial and master general whenever they happened to visit the convent.¹⁶ But he did not remain in Cremona for very long, for in late 1483, when he attended the chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr held in Savigliano, he did so as the prior of the convent of San Giacomo in Lodi, a post to which he must have been elected a little earlier. Moreover, the list of participants at the chapter indicates him as holding as well the post of inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona.¹⁷ Crotti's appointment as inquisitor of the district that covered the territories of the diocese of Cremona and Piacenza as well as that of Pavia was a consequence of the visitation of the Province of St. Peter Martyr carried out by a commissary, Tommaso Nanni da Viterbo, appointed by

¹¹ "Frater Gratiadeus de Crottis conventus Cremonensis habet assignationem in conventu Papiensi pro anno 1475 et cameram suam et licentiam predicandi..." (9 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 183^v.

¹² "Frater Gratiadeus de Cremona biblicus fuit absolutus ab omni macula sibi impositam et iustificatus ab omnibus sibi obiectis..." (3 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 192^r.

¹³ "Frater Gratiadeus de Cremona habuit primam cameram vacantem in suo conventu Cremonensi cum omnibus utensilibus et confirmationem omnium gratiarum magistri Leonardi et predecessorum..." (3 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 192^r.

¹⁴ "Frater Gratiadeus de Cremona baccalaureus habuit licentiam assumendi insignia magistralia in quacumque universitate voluerit post lecturam sententiarum et rigorosum etc." (23 July 1475) AGOP, IV, 3, fol. 199^v.

¹⁵ Negruzzo 1995, p. 328.

¹⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 234^v (10 July 1476).

¹⁷ "R. Mag. Gratiadeus de Cremona prior Laudensi et inquisitor Papie." AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81.

the master general in mid-1481, and which culminated in the dismissal of the provincial, Michele Madei da Asti. There is little need to discuss this episode here, for it will be dealt with in chapter 3. At this point it suffices to say that one of Tommaso Nanni's other acts was to depose the previous inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona, Arcangelo Fontana da Vicenza who had been appointed to the post by Madei in 1479, and replaced him with Crotti.¹⁸

Dominicans had been active as inquisitors in Pavia, as in other locations in northern Italy, since the late 1230s,¹⁹ and the best documented of the early inquisitors is Lanfranco da Bergamo, who was responsible for the district from 1292 to 1305.²⁰ They had been similarly active in Piacenza since 1238, where the first inquisitor is believed to have been Rolando da Cremona and where a *domus inquisitionis* seems to have been built by 1272,²¹ and are likely to have begun doing so in Cremona at roughly the same time. It is not known when the grouping of the dioceses of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona as a fixed, self-contained inquisitorial district first took place, but it had certainly happened by the beginning of the fifteenth century at the latest. The inquisitors responsible for the district did not have any particular convent as their base, but seem to have adopted as such whichever of the three they were resident in at the time of their appointment. The entire series of the inquisitors of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona is far from well known,²² but Crotti's predecessors from about 1460 were probably Paolo Folperti da Pavia till 1474, the notorious Giovanni Domenico da Cremona till 1479, and Arcangelo Fontana till 1481. Crotti himself did not remain inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona for very long, possibly for only a few years, even though it has not been possible to discover the precise date of his release from the post and that of the appointment of his successor, whose very identity is doubtful. The next inquisitor of Pavia who can be named with certainty is Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi da Cremona

¹⁸ "Magister Gratiadeus de Cremona confirmatur in officio inquisitionis in dyocesy Placentina prout fuit institutum a magistro Thoma Nannis de Viterbio vicario et commissario reverendissimi magistri super tota provincia Lombardie et de novo fuit absolutus magister Archangelus de Vincentia ab eodem officio..." (7 October 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 187r.

¹⁹ See Muselli 1989.

²⁰ On Lanfranco da Bergamo see: Rossi 1989; Benedetti 2004.

²¹ Piò 1615, p. 487.

²² The list of the inquisitors of Pavia in Majocchi 1895, pp. 165–166, largely taken from Ghisoni 1669, vol. 1, p. 83, only begins with the appointment of Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia in 1509.

who held the post from at least 1495 till 1509. During Savarezzi's term of office the dioceses of Piacenza and Cremona were separated from that of Pavia and set up as a separate inquisitorial district entrusted to the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy, commencing with Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale. The inquisition of Pavia was then entrusted to Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia. The last conventual incumbent of the inquisition of Pavia was probably Tommaso da Alessandria, who was appointed in May 1527,²³ for it was taken over by the Congregation of Lombardy when the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia was reformed and annexed by the Congregation in 1530.

Indeed, Crotti's own demise as inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona was probably due to the reforming zeal of the Congregation of Lombardy. At the end of his term as prior of the convent of Lodi, only a short time after the chapter of Savigliano of 1483, he would have been due to return to his convent in Cremona, but soon thereafter, in 1484, the convent of Cremona was reformed and aggregated to the Congregation, a move decided by Master General Bartolomeo Com-mazio.²⁴ Crotti must then have left the Cremonese convent, willingly or otherwise, for it was the custom of the Congregation upon reforming a convent to expel any friar who was not disposed to accept its version of Dominican life.²⁵ It seems likely that at this point, with Crotti's departure from Cremona, the post of inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona was given to a friar of the convent of Pavia.

During the following four years or so Crotti seems to have been on the loose and on the lookout for a suitable convent where he could settle. Master General Barnaba Sansoni made provisions in 1486 to help him find such a convent,²⁶ but these do not seem to have led anywhere. Master General Gioacchino Torriani eventually resolved the matter

²³ AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 139^r (27 May 1527).

²⁴ Domaneschi 1777, pp. 30–32, 427.

²⁵ The excesses committed at times by the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy is well illustrated by the case of the reform of the convent of Lodi which resulted in the forceful condemnation by the general chapter held in Ferrara in 1498 of their manner of "reforming", see MOPH, vol. 8, p. 413.

²⁶ "Magister Gratiadeus Crottus Cremonensis potest per totam Italiam discurrere predicando et ubi invenerit conventum sibi gratum in quo maior pars patrum de consilio voluerunt eum habere in filium potest ibid acceptari et confirmatur ex novo eius filiatio ibidem atque assignatur cum omnibus gratiis etc., non obstantibus de quibus omnibus derogatur et mandatur presidenti conventus ubi si acceptatus fuerit ut eum benigne recipiat etc., et provideat de camera competenti." (7 July 1486) AGOP, IV, reg. 7, fol. 134^r.

by appointing him in 1487 regent master in the studium generale of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan for the academic years 1487–1489,²⁷ and then, in late 1488, reappointing him to the post for the two academic years 1488–1490.²⁸ Finally, in 1491, Crotti was officially transferred from the convent of Cremona to Sant'Eustorgio, where he was entrusted with the teaching of grammar and logic to the convent's junior students and, possibly, lay outsiders as well—and granted an appropriate emolument.²⁹ Thereafter he served in Sant'Eustorgio in various capacities till 1497: in 1492 he was appointed the convent's principal preacher,³⁰ in 1493 he was its theological lector,³¹ in 1497 he was granted the cell that had once belonged to his former mentor, Gioacchino Castiglioni, and was made responsible for the convent's school of grammar,³² and he was often asked by the master general to adjudicate difficult cases.³³ In May 1497 he resumed inquisitorial duties when the master general confirmed him inquisitor of Milan.³⁴

²⁷ "Magister Gratiadeus Crotus conventus Cremonensis... assignatur regens Mediolani pro duobus annis cum gratiis..." (11 June 1487) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 233^v.

²⁸ "Concessa est licentiam magistro Gratiadeo de Cremona quod possit commorari extra ordinem cum uno socio et ministrare etc. Item confirmatur in regentem Sancti Eustorgii de Mediolano pro duobus annis et expleta regentia est assignatus in eodem conventu..." (18 November 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 237^v.

²⁹ "Magister Gratiadeus de Crottis de Cremona de consilio et assensu reverendi provinciali et omnium magistrorum et patrum conventus Sancti Eustorgii de Mediolano transfertur de conventu Cremonense ad conventum Mediolanense cum omnibus bonis suis et in eodem assignatur et conceditur sibi prima camera magistralis vacans sibi placita. Et debet docere iuvenes in grammaticalibus et logicalibus. Et conventus obligatur sibi dare singulis annis duodecim ducatos auri. Et mandatur presidenti et patribus pro tempore quod sibi debeant dare in festum Sancti Martini sex ducatos et in festum Pentecostes alios sex. Et solvitur ab obligatione docendi singulis annis a septuagesima usque ad octavam Pasce inclusive." (1491) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 239^v.

³⁰ "Magister Gratiadeus Crottus assignatur in praedicatorum conventus S. Eustorgii de Mediolano ad instantiam magistrorum et patrum conventus..." (1492) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 244^r.

³¹ "Magister Gratiadeus habet licentiam legendi in scholis conventus S. Eustorgii de Mediolano supra portam conventus positus tam festibus quam ferialibus..." (5 May 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 245^v.

³² "Magistro Gratiadeo de Cremona confirmatur et roboratur concessio camere quondam magistri Ioachini de Casteliono... Mandatur patribus conventus sancti Eustorgii de Mediolano ut de novo reforment scolam grammaticae, et cura scole committitur magistro Gratiadeo in illa parte ut alias reverendissimus ordinavit et est Palacio, quia non est iustum ut tam sollemnibus conventus careat lectionem grammaticae." (20 April 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 136^r.

³³ AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 148^r (13 June, 31 August, 7 September 1495).

³⁴ "Magister Gratiadeus fit inquisitor Mediolani cum plena potestate." (24 May 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 136.

The office of inquisitor of the district of Milan and Lodi was perhaps the most prestigious and important inquisitorial post in northern Italy. The city of Milan was the capital of the homonymous duchy, possibly the most economically prosperous and politically influential of the Italian states following the peace of Lodi of 1454, and its inquisitors enjoyed the patronage bestowed upon them by the powerful Sforza dukes. Furthermore, the Dominican convent of Sant' Eustorgio, where the inquisitor was based, had been founded as early as 1220 and for almost three centuries had housed an important *studium generale*.³⁵ It also possessed an exceptional library, as is disclosed by its catalogue, compiled in 1494, which lists 797 volumes.³⁶ Significantly, the Dominican community of Sant'Eustorgio saw itself as the principal bearer of the tradition of Peter of Verona who, after he had been murdered by Cathars in 1252 and had been canonized by Pope Innocent IV in 1253, came to be known as St. Peter Martyr and acquired the status of patron saint of inquisitors.³⁷ His mortal remains were preserved in a monumental tomb, carved by Giovanni di Balduccio Pisano in 1336–1339, now situated in a fine Renaissance chapel (the Capella Portinari) attached to the magnificent romanesque basilica that served as the conventual church.³⁸

The Dominican friars of Sant'Eustorgio were continuously engaged as inquisitors in Milan from the mid-1230s, commencing with Guidotto da Sesto.³⁹ By mid-fifteenth century the Milanese inquisitors would have had very few heretics to deal with and, perhaps, their typical activities are best represented by Pietro da Cairate who was inquisitor from sometime before 1474 till 1477 when he was replaced by Francesco della Riva (*de Ripa*): in 1474 Pietro condemned to be burned an allegedly well-known hermit, one Rolando, for necromancy and sacrificing a small child to the devil.⁴⁰ The stuff of which the late-fifteenth-century inquisitors of Milan were made is well exemplified by Della Riva's successor, and Crotti's immediate predecessor, who held the post from 1487 till 1497. Matteo dell'Olmo da Como resigned as Milanese inquisitor in 1497 when he was appointed titular bishop of Laodicea and auxiliary bishop in Milan and Como. He died in Milan in 1512, after

³⁵ See Airaghi 1984.

³⁶ See Kaeppli 1955.

³⁷ BOP, vol. 1, pp. 228–230.

³⁸ See Dell'Acqua 1984.

³⁹ Piò 1615, p. 245.

⁴⁰ Villa and Benedicenti 2002, p. 126.

being threatened with banishment by King Louis XII of France, who had occupied the duchy of Milan since 1501, for steadfastly refusing to adhere to the *conciliabulum* of Pisa-Milan.

Very little is known of Crotti's activities as inquisitor of Milan, for the archives of its inquisition were completely destroyed in 1788.⁴¹ That he was not inactive as such is indicated, however, by the permit to travel throughout the duchy in order to carry out his inquisitorial duties that he received from Duke Ludovico Maria Sforza in 1498.⁴² It is likely that from 1497 till 1510 he carried out his duties conscientiously and, since there is no extant evidence of any major inquisitorial trial in Milan during this period, he was probably engaged with comparatively minor matters, such as cases of popular superstitious practices and blasphemy. Once again, though, Crotti's tenure of his inquisitorial post was brought to an end by the machinations of the Congregation of Lombardy. The Congregation forcefully occupied the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in March 1510 and expelled its conventual friars, so that eventually, on 5 August 1511, Master General Thomas De Vio replaced Crotti as inquisitor of Milan and Lodi with a friar drawn from the Congregation, Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio.⁴³

There is little need here to enter into the details of the rather complicated episode of the attempted annexation of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio by the Congregation of Lombardy, for the protracted sequence of events that led up to and constituted it has been reconstructed adequately elsewhere.⁴⁴ It will suffice to recall that the Congregation found the annexation of Sant'Eustorgio no easy task, for it met with the forceful, at times armed, resistance of its conventual inmates. It ultimately failed, however, as the result of a radical turn in the broader, political situation of the duchy of Milan. Following the successes during the first half of 1512 of the forces of the Holy League, the French gradually evacuated Lombardy and after their defeat at the battle of Pavia on 14 June, Pope Julius II's Swiss mercenaries, who were commanded by Cardinal Matthias Shinner, entered Milan on 20 June. The conventual friars then immediately reoccupied Sant'Eustorgio and, in their

⁴¹ Fumi 1910, p. 12.

⁴² The document is partially reproduced in Fumi 1910, p. 86.

⁴³ "Magister Sylvester de Prierio fit inquisitor in civitatibus Mediolanensi et Laudensi et locis, ad quae huiusmodi inquisitio hactenus se extendit, quibus additur civitas Placentina et eius diocesis, destituto omni alio, si quis forte in aliquo locorum hactenus fuisset inquisitor." (5 August 1511) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 268.

⁴⁴ See Tavuzzi 1997, pp. 60–66.

turn, expelled the friars of the Congregation. Finally, in early September 1512, Cardinal Shinner ordered the restoration of Sant'Eustorgio to the conventuals and its definitive reintegration in the Province of St. Peter Martyr. Prierias' own tenure of the post of inquisitor of Milan was soon over, since Crotti, for once having the better of the Congregation, was reinstated in it in early 1513 and held it till 1515 when, probably at the general chapter held in Naples in May of that year, he was replaced by another friar of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Martino Giustiniani da Genova. Unfortunately, nothing is known for certain of his inquisitorial activities during this period. Even though there are traces of a trial being conducted in Milan in 1515, and the accused, a certain Giovannina, being burned in the square in front of Sant'Eustorgio, the documentation is insufficient to enable the identification of either who conducted it or the nature of the alleged crime.⁴⁵

Crotti died in 1517,⁴⁶ well before the final appropriation of the inquisition of Milan by the Congregation of Lombardy (by then reconstituted as the Province of Both Lombardies) in the late 1550s. Pope Paul IV first transferred it from the convent of Sant'Eustorgio to the observant convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in 1554, in an attempt to settle a conflict that had arisen between the archbishop of Milan, Giovanni Angelo Arcimboldi, and the then inquisitor, Melchiorre Crivelli da Milano.⁴⁷ Although it was restored to Sant'Eustorgio soon after, following the remonstrations of its conventual friars and the appointment of a new inquisitor, Ambrogio Barbavaro da Milano,⁴⁸ it was transferred definitively to Santa Maria delle Grazie by Pope Pius IV in 1558 and entrusted to an observant friar, Giambattista da Crema.⁴⁹

3. *Maffeo da Parma, Inquisitor of Parma and Reggio 1505–1507*

The history of the Dominicans in Parma, and especially of their inquisitorial deeds, is colourful to say the least, at times reaching the level of the notorious. The Friars Preachers first began to work in Parma

⁴⁵ It consists of a bare reference in the *Registro delle sentenze capitali* of the Confraternita di San Giovanni Decollato, copied by Benvenuto da Milano (Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms. S.Q. + I. 6), vol. 1, pp. 60–61, cited in Paccagnini 1988, p. 67.

⁴⁶ Domaneschi 1767, p. 402.

⁴⁷ Fumi 1910, p. 27.

⁴⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 31, fol. 241^r (13 September 1554).

⁴⁹ Fumi 1910, p. 29.

as early as 1221, when they were summoned there by the bishop of Parma, Obizzo I Sanvitali (d. 1224). Their first convent was founded in 1246 at the behest of Pope Innocent IV, at the time when the bishop of Parma was his nephew Alberto Sanvitali. It was founded as a kind of act of reparation by the descendants of the Ghibelline (that is, pro-imperial and anti-papal) nobles who, more than a century earlier, had deeply offended Cardinal Bernardo degli Uberti.⁵⁰ After the division of the original Province of Lombardy in 1303, the convent of Parma formed part of the Province of St. Dominic and would remain so, as will be seen, until it was reformed and aggregated to the Congregation of Lombardy in 1507.

The Dominicans in Parma began to carry out inquisitorial tasks by the mid-1200s at the very latest, and became so identified with these that they became popularly known as 'the friars of the Inquisition'. The earliest inquisitor recorded as functioning in Parma is Florio da Vicenza, whose zeal for the *negotium fidei* was such that it rapidly came to be considered altogether excessive by its inhabitants.⁵¹ Accordingly, in 1279, after he condemned a local woman to be burned as a heretic, the populace of Parma rebelled, demolished the Dominican house, killed one of the friars, and drove out the others who fled to Reggio.⁵² Echoes of this episode are to be found in many contemporary documents; one suspects that the turn of phrase 'to do as was done in Parma' became a cliché among people resentful of inquisitors and their activities.⁵³ The Dominican refugees from Parma then appealed to Cardinal Latino Orsini Frangipani Malabranca (d. 1294) who excommunicated the podestà and other authorities of Parma. These were then convinced by the bishop of Parma, Obizzo II Sanvitali, to beg pardon of the pope. Honorius IV expressed his willingness to do so, on the condition of their building a church dedicated to St. Peter Martyr and a new convent for the Dominicans. This was agreed to, and the Dominicans returned to Parma in 1282 and occupied their new convent of San Pietro Martire in 1287. They then immediately recommenced their inquisitorial activities which led to the burning ordered

⁵⁰ See Forte 1971, pp. 417–419.

⁵¹ Piò 1615, p. 493; Dosi, *Raccolta*, fol. 35^v.

⁵² Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica II*, p. 764; *Chronicon Parmense*, pp. 35–36.

⁵³ See, for example, the statements made in Bologna to the inquisitor Guido da Vicenza in 1299 and to the inquisitor Manfredo da Parma in 1301 in Paolini and Orioli 1982–1990, vol. 1, pp. 164, 226; vol. 2, p. 321.

by the inquisitor Manfredo da Parma of four members of the sect of the Apostolici in 1294 and of its leader, Gherardo Segarelli, in July 1300.

Thereafter, very little is to be had on the inquisitors of Parma till the middle of the fifteenth century. By then the inquisitorial district of Parma had been consolidated and included as well the subdistricts of Guastalla, Brescello and Borgo San Donnino. The subdistrict of Reggio was also added to it when it was separated from that of Ferrara and Modena around 1468. The inquisitor of Parma from at least 1468 till 1477 was Vincenzo Pessotti da Parma and his successor was Niccolò Bonini da Reggio who held the post, with a few brief interruptions, from 1477 till 1505. In 1505 Master General Vincenzo Bandello appointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio Maffeo da Parma who was not destined to hold it for long, for he was replaced in it by a friar of the Congregation of Lombardy as early as 1507.

Maffeo da Parma is an elusive figure: while his patronym, 'di Galvano', is known, his surname is not.⁵⁴ After entering the Friars Preachers in the convent of San Pietro Martire in Parma he first studied grammar in the studium of the convent of San Niccolò in Treviso.⁵⁵ At the beginning of the academic year 1493–1494 he was assigned student *in artibus* in the studium generale of the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara,⁵⁶ at which time provision was made for his upkeep from income accruing to the convent of Parma.⁵⁷ During the academic year 1496–1497 he began his academic career by being appointed master of studies in the Ferrarese studium.⁵⁸ The following academic year, 1497–1498, he was appointed bachelor of the Sentences there with the permission to proceed to the degree of master of theology.⁵⁹ He did not do so in Ferrara, however, for at the end of that academic year, in mid-1498, he graduated master of theology from the University of Parma,⁶⁰ where

⁵⁴ Piana 1963, p. 481.

⁵⁵ Piana 1963, p. 51.

⁵⁶ "...frater Maphheus de Parma... omnes assignantur Ferrarie in studentes artium ..." (8 May 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 63^v.

⁵⁷ "Fratrī Maphēo de Parma conceditur proventus ecclesie cathedralis Parme conventui Parmensi pertinens in subsidium studii sui quod est unius ducati cum dimidio ..." (31 October 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 67^v.

⁵⁸ "Frater Maphheus de Parma fit Ferrarie magister studentium." (2 July 1496) AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 55^v.

⁵⁹ "Frater Maphheus de Parma habet licentiam legendi sententias Ferrarie pro gradu et forma magisterii." (9 August 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 28^r.

⁶⁰ Piana 1963, pp. 481–482.

he had as his promoter the then provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Pietro Cavalcanti da Udine.⁶¹ At the same time Maffeo was also aggregated to the *collegium doctorum* of the theological faculty of the University of Parma, and he is recorded as acting as the promoter of several candidates for the master's degree there during 1498–1507 as well as serving as the faculty's vicedean in 1503 and 1507 and as its dean in 1502 and 1505.⁶² The only negative record in his regard concerns the likelihood of his having been involved in February 1505 in some mismanagement of his convent's finances.⁶³ Be that as it may, Master General Bandello appointed him inquisitor of Parma and Reggio only a few months later, in May.⁶⁴ There is no trace whatsoever of Maffeo's inquisitorial activities, if any. But this is not surprising, for he remained in the post only until August 1507, a little over two years. On the other hand, nor are there any traces of the inquisitorial doings of his immediate predecessor as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Niccolò Bonini, who had held the post during the previous thirty years. It might well be, then, that by Maffeo's time the post had become a sinecure that entailed little, if any, work.

The brevity of Maffeo's tenure of the post of inquisitor of Parma and Reggio was the result of the decision of Master General Jean Clerée to reform the convent of San Pietro Martire in Parma and hand it over to the Congregation of Lombardy. Such a move had been solicited already some nine years earlier, in 1498, by the duke of Milan, and lord of Parma, Ludovico Maria Sforza. He had first petitioned Pope Alexander VI to reform the convent of Novara, but the pope refused to intervene, pointing out that such a task was not his concern but that of the order's master general, Gioacchino Torriani, and its cardinal protector, Oliviero Carafa. When it came to the reform of the convent of Parma, then, the duke contacted Carafa and stressed that his plea for the reform of the convent was at the behest of the citizens of Parma who were dissatisfied with its community that consisted of only seven friars, several of whom had been expelled from other convents, and

⁶¹ On Pietro Cavalcanti da Udine see Gargan 1971, pp. 134–135.

⁶² Piana 1963, pp. 331, 483, 488; Piana 1966, pp. 513, 525–526, 538–539, 543.

⁶³ “Magister Mapheus conventus Parme absolvitur ad cautelam si forsit incurrit in sententiam excommunicationis directe vel indirecte faciens vel defraudans butinum conventus Parme.” (1 February 1505) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 49^r.

⁶⁴ “Magister Maffeus de Parma instituitur inquisitor Parmensis, cum limitibus et terminis, praecipue Civitatae Regii, et cum omnibus aliis.” (20 May 1505) AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 43^r.

included only two masters of theology of little reputation—one of these being, presumably, Maffeo. But Cardinal Carafa deferred the matter to the order's following general chapter, that was to be held in Rome in 1500, by which time Ludovico Maria had been ousted as duke of Milan by the French, and nothing came of it.⁶⁵

Clerée, a rigorous observant friar and former confessor of King Louis XII of France, had been elected master general after the death of Vincenzo Bandello, at the general chapter held in Pavia in 1507.⁶⁶ He arrived in Rome on 1 July and, after a brief courtesy call on Pope Julius II, set off to visit the order's houses in northern Italy, arriving in Parma by 19 July. The situation he encountered in the convent of San Pietro Martire must have shocked him, for the convent was described by a near-contemporary chronicler as *valde deformatum*.⁶⁷ Already on the following day, 20 July, he issued a brief to the vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy, Antonio Porcellaga da Brescia,⁶⁸ whereby he withdrew the convent of Parma from the jurisdiction of the Province of St. Dominic and entrusted it to the Congregation to be reformed.⁶⁹ According to a contemporary chronicler, Leone Smagliati, the friars of the Congregation occupied San Pietro Martire already on 25 July.⁷⁰ On 1 August Clerée deprived Maffeo of the post of inquisitor of Parma and Reggio and appointed a friar of the Congregation, Tommaso da Vigevano, in his stead.⁷¹ The master general then left Parma and arrived in Pavia on 7 August, where he died a few days later on 10 August. As he was only fifty-two years old, and had shown no previous sign of illness, it was commonly believed at the time that he had been

⁶⁵ For the details of this episode see Fasoli 1992, pp. 468–472.

⁶⁶ On the brief generalate of Jean Clerée see Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 128–140.

⁶⁷ Olmeda, *Chronica*, p. 185.

⁶⁸ See Creytens 1962, pp. 251–252.

⁶⁹ “Hon. P. Fr. Andreas de Brixia, vicario congregationis (Lombardie) et suis successoribus datur conventus Parmensis et eximitur a iurisdictione provincialis et adiungitur aliis conventibus congregationis cum gratiis et privilegiis.” (20 July 1507). MOPH, vol. 21, p. 65. A copy of the brief is in AGOP, IV, liber HHH, fols. 287^r–288^v.

⁷⁰ “A 25 luii (1507) il dì de S. Iacobo, nel monasterio di S. Pietro Martire entrarono gli frati Osservanti in procession con alquanti frati di S. Giovanni Evangelista, de quelli di maggior dignità con gli anziani de Parma et molti nobili: e hebe consolacion la città intendendo diti frati eser homini da bene, perché gli altri eran a suo modo.” Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 94.

⁷¹ “Mag. Mapheo de Parma ab officio inquisitionis absoluto, instituitur inquisitor fr. Thomas de Vigevano, congregationis Lombardiae, in civitate Parmensi, Regii et aliis locis illi inquisitioni subiectis, cum gratiis et privilegiis, etc. et praecepto ut infra diem naturalem a notitia acceptet.” (1 August 1507) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 65.

poisoned by the conventual friars of San Pietro Martire that he had so manifestly antagonized.⁷²

After Clerée's death, Tommaso De Vio became vicar general of the order and was elected master general in June 1508. From the beginning of his term of office he attempted to take in hand the deteriorating situation in Parma: in early September 1507 he ordered the convent's prior to expel from the convent, and if need be to punish and imprison, even with the help of the secular arm, the recalcitrant conventuals.⁷³ According to Smagliati, the few conventuals still remaining in San Pietro Martire were finally driven out on 22 December 1507, and Louis XII's governor in Lombardy threatened with heavy fines any lay person who gave them refuge.⁷⁴ Still in late July 1508 Cajetan had to repeat his severe injunctions to the prior of San Pietro Martire, Domenico da Murano.⁷⁵

Our erstwhile inquisitor, Maffeo da Parma, must have been among the friars who either willingly left or were forcibly expelled from their former convent. On 8 July 1508 Cajetan allowed him to return to Parma for eight days to visit his family and to call on the Dominican nuns in the monastery of San Domenico—albeit he was to do so only from behind the grill in the visitor's parlour, thereby ensuring that he did not enter the private, residential parts of the monastery.⁷⁶ In late September 1509 Cajetan approved his translocation from the convent of Parma to the unreformed convent of San Domenico in Ferrara,⁷⁷ where he still was in early 1513 when Cajetan confirmed his occupancy of a

⁷² Olmeda, *Chronica*, p. 185.

⁷³ "Presides conventus Parmensi potest fratres discurrantes per civitatem et territorium Parmense, sine licentia vicarii generalis aut futuri generalis, expellere, castigare, incarcerare, invocato si opus fuerit brachio saeculari." (6 September 1507) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 68.

⁷⁴ "A 22 (decem)bre (1507), fu caciato gli frati di S. Pietro Martire per sua dionesta vita e in quel loco fu messo gli Osservanti... E fu, per bando, fata una pena che chi tenese deti frati caciati gli dovesi denuntiar, soto pena di 1000 scudi, in fra 2 di e che non si potese dar loro recapito." Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 110.

⁷⁵ "Fratrī Dominico de Murano, priori conventus Parmensis, et eius successoribus, datur facultas et auctoritas super quoscumque inhoneste et irreligiose vivente in diocesi et civitate Parmensi." (26 July 1508) MOPH, vol. 21, pp. 73–74.

⁷⁶ "Fratrī Mapheo, magistro, data est licentia visitandi suos apud Parmam per octo dies, et eundi ad monasterium Sancti Dominici colloquendi gratia, ob quaedam sua negotia peragenda cum monialibus, quibuscum tractandum illi est ad cratem ferream dumtaxat." (8 July 1508) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 85.

⁷⁷ "Magister Mapheus de Parma transfertur de conventu Parmensi ad conventum S. Dominici de Ferrara, quoniam plures ultra medietatem filiorum conventus assensum praebent, et illius fit filius natus..." (30 September 1509) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 116.

cell there, as well as in mid-1513 when the general chapter of Genoa ratified his new affiliation.⁷⁸ The convent of Ferrara was itself, however, reformed and aggregated to the Congregation of Lombardy around 1519, and we find Maffeo moving once more in 1523, this time to the unreformed convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Modigliana.⁷⁹ After the reform of the convent of Modigliana in 1526 Maffeo moved again, for the last time as far as is known, to the unreformed convent of San Domenico in Ravenna.⁸⁰ Although he spent his whole life fleeing from the reform and the Congregation of Lombardy, Maffeo seems to have remained in fairly good standing, for the last record that we have of him indicates him as being appointed by Master General Francesco Silvestri in early 1527 to supervise the election of a new prioress in the monastery of Dominican nuns in Imola.⁸¹

4. *Antonio da Casale, Inquisitor of Bergamo 1501–1508, Inquisitor of Parma and Reggio 1508–1513, Inquisitor of Como 1513–1515*

Maffeo's immediate successor as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Tommaso da Vigevano, did not hold the post for very long, possibly because at the time he seems to have been rather old and, as there is no further record of him, might even have died in office. Whatever the case, Master General Cajetan appointed another friar of the Congregation of Lombardy, Antonio da Casale, inquisitor of Parma and Reggio on 17 June 1508.⁸² It will be worthwhile dwelling a little on the doings of Antonio da Casale, for they illustrate rather well the kind of radical change that tended to take place when an inquisitorial district formerly staffed by conventual friars was taken over by friars of the Congregation.

The earliest record of Antonio da Casale places him as a student in the studium of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1487.⁸³

⁷⁸ "Approbamus translationes... Fratris Matthaei (*sic*) de Parma de conventu Parmensi ad conventum sancti Dominici de Ferrara." MOPH, vol. 9, p. 116.

⁷⁹ "Magister Mapheus de Parma, est deputatus Mutilianae, ut posset ibi pro tempore vitae suae manere salva obedientia P. Provincialis istius provinciae." (30 May 1523) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 151.

⁸⁰ "Magister Mapheus de Parma transfertur de conventu S. Mariae de Mutiliana ad conventum S. Dominici de Ravenna..." (26 May 1526) AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 42^r.

⁸¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 48^v (30 January 1527).

⁸² "Frater Antonius da Casali, congregationis Lombardie, instituitur inquisitor hae-resis in Parma, Rhegio et aliis locis spectantibus." (17 June 1508) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 70.

⁸³ Piana 1963, p. 270.

There he would have had as his teachers Vincenzo Bandello, destined to become inquisitor of Bologna during 1490–1493 and Dominican master general during 1501–1506, and Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, then serving as inquisitor of Bologna and who would later be inquisitor of Mantua from 1490 till 1520. Among his fellow students were both Prierias and Girolamo Savonarola. He was ordained a priest in Bologna in 1488,⁸⁴ but he does not seem to have made an academic career. Rather, he must have been selected very early for inquisitorial work, at first serving as inquisitorial vicar somewhere, for prior to his appointment as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio he had held the post of inquisitor of Bergamo, from approximately 1501 till early 1508.⁸⁵ Upon his arrival in Parma in mid-1508 Antonio da Casale was, then, an experienced, professional inquisitor.

Very soon after his arrival in Parma, in December 1508, Antonio da Casale immediately set to work: he conducted a trial for witchcraft and made quite a public show of it. In the course of a sermon he presented the indicted witch and, in her presence, gave an extended account of the crimes that she had confessed, all symptomatic of diabolic witchcraft: she had given herself to the devil, with whom she consorted sexually on a regular basis, and had been given by him the power to harm others. He then formally condemned her to be burned, but spared her life on the condition that thereafter she wore penitential garb. Finally, he insisted that if she were to fail to do so even on a single occasion, he would make sure that full justice took its course.⁸⁶ During the following year, 1509, he managed to coax the local Confraternity of the Holy Cross into building a new *domus inquisitionis* with two jails in Reggio.⁸⁷ But it was in 1510 that Antonio da Casale showed his true mettle. After holding along with three local jurists the trial of another witch, a certain Lucia Cacciarda, he managed to have her condemned to be burned. But the podestà of Parma, whom he called upon to execute the sentence, refused to do so, while the vicar of the bishop of

⁸⁴ Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 205.

⁸⁵ Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

⁸⁶ “A 17 (decem)bre (1508), in domenica, un inquisitore di S. Pietro Martire a una sua predica apresentò una strega al popolo e lese in sua presenza di lei, il processo al popolo de suoi deliti confesati: come era data al demonio et usava con lui in forma di giovine a dava lei posanza di guastare e conzare; poi havendola condanata al foco, la asolse con pato che sempre dovesi portare un sua patientia con la croce, avente e dietro gialda, e caso non la portasi, era lei pena eser presa et justitiata se fosi una volta trovata senza.” Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 120.

⁸⁷ Meersseman 1951, p. 79.

Parma demanded that he be shown the records of the trial before giving his approval to its being carried out. Antonio da Casale promptly excommunicated both the podestà and the episcopal vicar, who was banished from Parma as well.⁸⁸ He then took the matter to the court in Milan of Louis XII's governor in Lombardy and, after a protracted litigation, managed to have his way. The purported witch was burned in Parma in early September 1510, and she was burned alive, something that—Smagliati assures us with a sense of shock—had never happened before in Parma in living memory.⁸⁹ One wonders if by this stage the citizens of Parma had started to have second thoughts about the enthusiasm they had displayed some three years earlier when the conventual friars, including Maffeo da Parma, had been suddenly driven out of their convent of San Pietro Martire by the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy. Whatever the case, Antonio da Casale left Parma in 1513 when he was appointed inquisitor in Como where, during the last year before his death in 1515, he succeeded in having thirty heretics, probably presumed witches, burned at the stake.⁹⁰

5. *Girolamo Armellini da Faenza, Inquisitor of Parma and Reggio 1518–1526, Inquisitor of Mantua 1531–1540*

The severe, unyielding behaviour of Antonio da Casale does not seem to have been unusual for the inquisitors drawn from the ranks of the Congregation of Lombardy. This is confirmed by that of his eventual successor as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Girolamo di Gianfrancesco Armellini da Faenza, who held the post from roughly 1518 till

⁸⁸ “A 23 zugno (1510) fu bandito il vicario del episcopo nostro per litere regie: e questo per una strega qual era stata condanata ala morte da 3 dottori di migliori della città... insieme con lo inquisitore di S. Domenico; et era bisogno del nostro podestà la justitiase onde non volendo far tal justitia, fu dal inquisitore uno con lo vicario excommunicato, perché volea veder il proceso e quelli non consentivano per non eser solito così, onde fu bandito.” Smagliati, *Cronaca*, pp. 148–149.

⁸⁹ “A 8 (sette)mbre (1510), fu arsa una strega in Ghiara per comision del inquisitore, qual era stata in prigion et fu questa per la qual fu scomunicato il potestà. Hora, per forza di ragione, dopo longa lite a Milano, la condanò al foco e fu arsa viva, cosa che mai si ricorda alcuno haver veduto, e disi in fine ‘Jesu’ e chiamò Maria Virgo, e si chiamò Lucia Cacciarda.” Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 151.

⁹⁰ “Antonius Casalensis anno elapso (1515) per se ac vicarios suos ultra triginti existens inquisitor Novocomi, ubi vita functus est, igni tradidit.” Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^r.

1526. It is certain that Armellini was not Antonio da Casale's immediate successor, for the post was held by Donato da Brescia in 1516,⁹¹ and by Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza in 1517.⁹² Armellini is likely to have been appointed to it sometime after 1517 and well before 1520, although there is no documentary evidence of the precise date of the appointment.⁹³

After entering the Dominican order, probably in the convent of Sant' Andrea in Faenza, Armellini completed his initial theological studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. It was there that he received tonsure and minor orders on 17 December 1491, subdiaconate on 7 April 1492, diaconate on 23 March 1493, and was ordained priest a year later, probably in mid-1494.⁹⁴ Two years later he began his advanced theological studies when he was assigned *studens formalis* of theology in the Bolognese studium on 9 September 1496.⁹⁵ In 1506 he was in the Congregation of Lombardy's convent in Viterbo, Santa Maria ai Gradi; it was there that he wrote his *Expositio moralis super Psalmum 'Dixit Dominus Domino Meo'* (Psalm 109) that he dedicated to Cardinal Adriano Castellesi.⁹⁶ Soon thereafter he was transferred to the convent of San Domenico in Mantua and appointed vicar of the long-standing inquisitor of Mantua, Domenico Pirri da Gargnano. As such he went to Rome in 1511 to represent Pirri at the deliberations of the commission charged with examining a curious heresy propagated by Pietro da Lucca, a matter that will be considered in detail in chapter 3.⁹⁷ He was moved from Mantua in 1512 when the chapter of the Congregation of Lombardy held in Cremona appointed him master of studies in Bologna for the academic year 1512–1513, an appointment ratified by Master General Cajetan on 19 June 1512.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 148^v.

⁹² Biondi, G. 1986, p. 47; Duni 1999, pp. 80, 277, 303–304.

⁹³ The loss of the second register (1513–1518) of Master General Thomas De Vio and of the two registers of Master General Garcia de Loaysa (1518–1524) makes it difficult to determine with precision the chronology of inquisitorial appointments during 1513–1524.

⁹⁴ Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 203, 205, 208, 215–218.

⁹⁵ *Moderatores*, fol. 8^r.

⁹⁶ D'Amico 1983, p. 301 n. 20. The work is preserved in BAV: Ms. Vat. Lat. 3899, fols. 93^r–97^v.

⁹⁷ Armellini's intervention in the proceeding is mentioned in the *Sententia* pronounced by the commission (see BOP, vol. 4, p. 268 n. 1) and was praised by Leandro Alberti (1516), *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^f.

⁹⁸ "Assignatur in conventu Bononiensi... in magistrum studentium pro hoc anno frater Hieronymus de Faventia." (19 June 1512) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 66.

Although Armellini certainly completed the year as master of studies,⁹⁹ he did not progress any further in his academic career: there are no traces of his serving as biblical bachelor or bachelor of the Sentences, let alone of graduating master of theology from a university.¹⁰⁰ It is quite likely, then, that only a little time after the end of the academic year 1512–1513 spent in Bologna, Armellini returned to his work as one of Pirri's inquisitorial vicars in Mantua and was then transferred to Parma and appointed inquisitor there, in succession to Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza, in late 1518 or early 1519.

Some of Armellini's inquisitorial activities are comparatively well known, for they have been already the subject of important scholarly contributions. In the first place, there is his dogged, but ultimately unsuccessful, pursuit of the heterodox Calabrian philosopher Tiberio Russiliano Sesto (Tiberio Rosselli).¹⁰¹ Armellini first came across Russiliano's provocative *Apologeticus adversus cucullatos* soon after it was published clandestinely in Parma in 1519. The fact that it was published under his very nose probably riled Armellini as much as its reproposal of the more daring, magical theses first presented in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *Conclusiones*. Armellini ordered the confiscation and burning of the book, excommunicated its readers and attempted to have Russiliano arrested. By then, however, Russiliano was back in Tuscany, where he had been previously already accused of heresy but had been let off rather lightly in June 1519 by the local Franciscan inquisitor, who contented himself with an abjuration followed by a few words of admonishment. Although Armellini went himself to Florence, his plea for Russiliano's apprehension fell, then, on deaf ears, and Russiliano was able to get away and continue his meanderings through Italy and, after teaching a number of years in Palermo till at least 1526, died in North Africa where he was assassinated by one of his slaves. Unable to get his hands on Russiliano, Armellini vented his spleen by writing in 1523 his *Jesus vincit. Pernecessarium opus contra Tiberianicum Apologeticum*,¹⁰² in which he recapitulated the affair and dissected Russiliano's theses.

⁹⁹ "Ego frater Hieronymus de Faventia assignatus fui ex Mantua in conventu Bononiensi magister studentium in congregatione Cremonensi, regente rev. p. fr. Hieronymo de Vigevano... Coepi officium exercere die 20 maii 1512—Receptus fuerat in studentem 9 sept. 1496." *Moderatores*, fol. 8r.

¹⁰⁰ In the preface to *Jesus vincit* (written 1523) Armellini still styles himself merely *Artium ac S. Theologiae alumnus*.

¹⁰¹ See Zambelli 1977 and Zambelli 1994.

¹⁰² Published in Faenza, 1525.

In the second place, there is Armellini's involvement in the witch-hunt launched in Mirandola during 1522–1523.¹⁰³ In the course of 1522 it had come to the attention of the lord of Mirandola, Giovan Francesco Pico, and of Armellini, whose inquisitorial district of Parma and Reggio included Mirandola, that alarming gatherings were being held at night by large groups on the banks of the river Secchia. Armellini consequently decided to investigate and concluded that these were in fact reunions of witches and involved devil-worship as well as unbridled sexual activities. He then had one of his inquisitorial vicars, Luca Bettini da Firenze, conduct several trials, closely followed by Pico, which resulted in the condemnation of several people to be burned. At least one burning, that of a lascivious old priest found guilty of diabolic witchcraft, was carried out well before the end of 1522 and another six in 1523. These proceedings caused such widespread resentment among his subjects that Pico felt compelled to attempt to justify them. He composed in Latin an apologetic tract, *Dialogus in tres libros divisos: Titulus est Strix sive de Ludificatione Daemonum*, which was immediately translated into Italian and published in May 1524 by the Dominican Leandro Alberti, another friar of the Congregation of Lombardy and destined to become inquisitor of Bologna in the mid-1540s and the early 1550s.¹⁰⁴ The *Libro detto Strega o delle illusioni del demonio* had wide diffusion and has since become a classic of demonological literature. It seeks to justify the severe punitive measures already taken in Mirandola, as well as those that were about to be taken, by attempting to establish the reality of diabolic witchcraft. Written in the form of a dialogue, it has four interlocutors: *Fronimo* ('learned') represents Pico himself; *Dicasto* ('judge') represents Armellini; *Apistio* ('unbeliever') probably represents an imaginary sceptic; the *strega* who is interrogated. By the end of the dialogue *Apistio* has become convinced of the reality of diabolic witchcraft and is renamed *Pistico* ('believer').

A complication arose in the proceedings, however, because some of the accused did not live in Mirandola but in Concordia. The latter district was ruled on behalf of her young son, Galeotto II Pico, by the widowed Francesca Trivulzio, who had placed herself under the protection of the marquis of Mantua, Federico II Gonzaga. When Armellini and his vicar Bettini attempted to arrest the suspects living in Concordia, Federico II's governor there objected on jurisdictional grounds.

¹⁰³ See Biondi 1977, Biondi 1984 and Biondi 1989.

¹⁰⁴ On Leandro Alberti see Redigonda 1960 and Dall'Olio 1999, pp. 59–64.

The result was a major tug-of-war between Armellini and the marquis of Mantua in which, ultimately and by invoking the prerogatives of the Holy See in matters of heresy, the inquisitor had the better of the marquis and resulted in another burning in June 1523. A further difficulty arose because three of the accused managed to escape and took refuge in Bologna. Armellini appealed to Pope Clement VII who on 18 January 1524 issued a brief commanding the governor of Bologna, Bishop Altobello Averoldi da Pola, and the inquisitor of Bologna, Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara, to assist Armellini in every way possible.¹⁰⁵

Soon thereafter, though, Armellini must have finally overreached himself in some way, for in May 1527, when he addressed a distressed and servile letter pleading for help to the prince-bishop of Trent, Bernardino Cles, he was imprisoned in the jail of the Doge's palace in Venice.¹⁰⁶ It is not known what had brought this about, but he was certainly eventually released, and it does not even seem to have entailed the end of his inquisitorial career, for we find him in a list of the inquisitors of Mantua as holding that post from 1531 to 1540.¹⁰⁷ The last record we have of him indicates him as the theological lector in his convent of Sant'Andrea in Faenza in 1549–1550.¹⁰⁸

6. *Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale, Inquisitor of Cremona and Piacenza 1502–1511, Inquisitor of Brescia, Crema and Cremona 1511–1512, Inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia, Crema and Cremona 1512–1515*

A further example of an inquisitor drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy who revitalized an inquisitorial district that had languished under its previous, conventual incumbents is Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale. Cacatossici takes us back, moreover, to the inquisitorial district that some time earlier had been committed to the conventual inquisitor with whom this chapter began, Graziadi Crotti da Cremona, for his first inquisitorial appointment was as inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona. We saw that at the beginning of 1502 the inquisitorial district of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona was still entrusted to the conventual Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi da Cremona who had held the post since

¹⁰⁵ Hansen 1901, p. 36.

¹⁰⁶ Zambelli 1977, p. 527; Zambelli 1994, pp. 37–38.

¹⁰⁷ AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 598.

¹⁰⁸ D'Amato 1997, p. 93.

at least 1495. But the subdistricts of Piacenza and Cremona were then withdrawn from his jurisdiction by Master General Bandello in April 1502, set up as an independent inquisitorial district, and entrusted to Cacatossici.¹⁰⁹ When Savarezzi remonstrated with Bandello about this, he was curtly told that he should be content that he still had at least the district of Pavia.¹¹⁰

We first encounter Cacatossici as a student of theology in the studium of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in late 1479.¹¹¹ He was ordained priest in Bologna on 13 March 1482.¹¹² Two years later, on 15 December 1484, he began his advanced theological studies when he matriculated as *studens formalis* in the Bolognese studium generale.¹¹³ He must then have left Bologna for a few years, for in May 1490 he attended the chapter of the Congregation of Lombardy held in Como as the *socius* of the prior of the convent of San Marco in Florence.¹¹⁴ Master General Gioacchino Torriani reassigned him to the studium in Bologna when he appointed him master of studies there for the academic year 1490–1491.¹¹⁵ In 1491 the general chapter held in Le Mans appointed him biblical bachelor in Bologna for the biennium 1493–1495,¹¹⁶ and he served as bachelor of the Sentences there during the following biennium, 1495–1497.¹¹⁷ The general chapter held in Ferrara in 1498 approved his lecturing on the Sentences as being *pro gradu et forma magisterii* and permitted him to proceed to the master's degree,¹¹⁸ and he did so in the theological faculty of the University of Bologna on 2 April 1499.¹¹⁹ The general chapter held in Rome

¹⁰⁹ "Civitas Placentina et Cremonensis cum suis diocesibus separantur a civitate Papiensi et diocesi quo ad officium inquisitionis, et magister Georgius de Casali instituitur inquisitor in civitate Placentina principaliter, deinde in civitate Cremonensi et diocesibus earum, cum auctoritate solita etc..." (25 April 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 258^r.

¹¹⁰ "Significatur magistro Ioanni Antonio de Cremona inquisitor Papiensis qualiter civitates Placentina et Cremonensis cum suis diocesibus et terminis subtracte sunt et divise quo ad inquisitionem a conventui Papiensi et in predictae civitatibus Placentina et Cremonensi institutus sit magister Georgius de Casali..." (24 May 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 258^v.

¹¹¹ Piana 1963, p. 200.

¹¹² Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 196.

¹¹³ Piana 1963, p. 214.

¹¹⁴ D'Amato 1956, p. 262.

¹¹⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^v (20 March 1490).

¹¹⁶ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 402.

¹¹⁷ *Moderatores*, fol.

¹¹⁸ Taegio, *Chronica*, vol. 2, fols. 241^v–242^r.

¹¹⁹ Ehrle 1932, p. 126.

in 1501 finally assigned him regent master in the Bolognese studium generale for the biennium 1501–1502,¹²⁰ but he held the office for the entire triennium 1501–1504.¹²¹ While serving as regent master in the Dominican studium he also participated fully in the activities of the faculty of theology of the University of Bologna and served as its dean in 1504.¹²²

It was, then, during the second year of his Bolognese regency, and in addition to all the academic chores that the office entailed, that Cacatossici was appointed inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona in 1502. That he set himself immediately to the task is evident, though, from an intriguing report in Prierias' *Summa silvestrina* (1514).¹²³ Prierias recalls an incident that had taken place during the chapter of the Congregation of Lombardy held in Piacenza in 1503 and is probably writing as an eyewitness since he was one of the participants at the chapter. He tells us that a "major superior of a certain order of mendicant friars"—a circumlocution by which he meant to refer to a Franciscan provincial—bitterly attacked the local inquisitor, Cacatossici, over his prosecution of witches and pompously invoked the *Canon episcopi* while doing so. Prierias adds that it was rumoured at the time that this Franciscan did so because he had been unduly influenced by the relatives of a young woman that Cacatossici had recently had burned as an alleged witch. Prierias concludes his account with a further remark that, for him, must have encapsulated the moral of the anecdote: before the end of 1503 the Franciscan superior was viciously set upon and strangled by a large group of his own fellow friars.

There is further evidence of Cacatossici's earnest commitment to his inquisitorial duties at this time in a brief that he impetrated from Pope Julius II. Although there seems to be no extant copy of this brief, its contents are known for it is reproduced almost in its entirety in the brief *Dudum, uti nobis* that Pope Adrian VI addressed on 10 July 1523 to the inquisitor of Como, Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza,¹²⁴ who will be considered in chapter 5. In the brief, Julius II gave full support to Cacatossici's witch-hunting. In the supplication that he must have addressed beforehand to the pope in order to receive the brief, Cacatossici had pointed

¹²⁰ Kaeppli 1935, p. 291.

¹²¹ Piana 1963, p. 206.

¹²² Piana 1963, pp. 236–240, 271.

¹²³ Prierias, *Summa silvestrina*, vol. 1, p. 490.

¹²⁴ The brief has been reproduced often, it is most accessible in Hansen 1901, pp. 34–36 and, in English translation, in Kors and Peters 2001, pp. 246–247.

to the alarming situation that he had found in his inquisitorial district of Piacenza and Cremona: the presence of a widespread sect of diabolic witches. Cacatossici also complained that when he had begun to investigate and to hold trials of several suspects, he had met with strong opposition from lay people and churchmen alike. These had claimed that the inquisitor had no business involving himself with such matters and had spread such vicious rumours about him as to render him odious to the people, so that Cacatossici had no choice but to have recourse to the Holy See. Further proof of Cacatossici's inquisitorial zeal at this time is a second brief obtained from Pope Julius II in 1507, that conceded several privileges and indulgences to the members of the Confraternity of the Holy Cross that he founded in Cremona to assist him with his inquisitorial duties.¹²⁵

Cacatossici served a second term as regent master in the Bolognese studium generale during 1511–1512. He had been assigned to the post by the general chapter held in Rome in 1508 for the year 1510–1511,¹²⁶ but on 2 January 1509 Master General Cajetan rescinded the assignment to respect the wishes of the officials of the Bolognese studium who preferred Prierias,¹²⁷ and then reappointed Cacatossici to the post for the following year.¹²⁸ It was at this time that Cacatossici had as a student Leandro Alberti da Bologna, whom we have already met as the translator in 1524 of Giovan Francesco Pico's *Strix*. Alberti later lavishly praised Cacatossici in both *De viris illustribus* (1517),¹²⁹ and in *Descrittione di tutta Italia* (1550).¹³⁰ Perhaps it was from Cacatossici, as well as from his other teacher at the time, Prierias, that Alberti first learnt the hard-hitting inquisitorial style that he manifested years later, when he became inquisitor of Bologna in the mid-1540s and the early 1550s.

¹²⁵ BOP, vol. 4, pp. 240–241 (*Exponi Nobis fecisti*, 11 January 1507). See also Meersseman 1951, p. 76.

¹²⁶ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 90.

¹²⁷ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 80.

¹²⁸ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 91.

¹²⁹ "Georgium Casalensem virum doctrina omnifaria ornatum, et ingenio pergrandi litteris Grecis, hebraicis, latinis, non minus quam philosophia, theologia, ac oratoria summa pollentem, eum scito esse. Qui superioribus annis Congregationis nostrae licet corpore invalidus praeftuit." Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 142^r.

¹³⁰ "Giorgio Cacatossico dell'ordine de i predicatori, gran theologo, philosopho et ornato di lettere Grece, latine, Hebraice e Caldaice. Invero era huomo di tal ingegno che pareva ad ogni generatione di scientia essere disposto. Et però egli è riputato da esser annoverato fra i primi huomini scientiati di nostra età. Son io molto obligato à tanto huomo, essendo egli stato mio honorando precettore ne la dottrina teologica." Alberti, *Descrittione*, fol. 341^r.

A little before he began to function in his second Bolognese regency, Cacatossici's inquisitorial responsibilities were somewhat altered: on 8 August 1511 Master General Cajetan deprived him of the inquisition of Piacenza, which was attached to that of Milan and Lodi and entrusted to Prierias, but named him inquisitor of Brescia and Crema as well as Cremona.¹³¹ At the end of the year as Bolognese regent master a new, major task was thrust upon Cacatossici, for in April 1512 he was elected vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy, thereby assuming responsibility for a corporation of some fifty convents and perhaps a thousand friars.¹³² Moreover, in late October 1512, Master General Cajetan offered him the Rome-based post of procurator general of the entire Dominican order—in effect, the order's representative to the Holy See—in succession to Nicholas Schomberg.¹³³ But Cacatossici refused the post and remained vicar general of the Congregation till the opening months of 1514. In the meanwhile, though, his inquisitorial jurisdiction had been changed once more: Master General Cajetan had appointed him inquisitor of Bergamo, as well as Brescia, Cremona and Crema, on 19 June 1512.¹³⁴

Cacatossici was still alive when Leandro Alberti mentioned him in *De viris illustribus* written in 1516, even though Alberti does refer to some kind of debilitating infirmity. He was no longer so, however, by the time that Adrian VI addressed his brief to the inquisitor of Como, that recapitulated Julius II's brief to him. Whatever the case about the precise date of his death, at the general chapter held in Naples in 1515 the Master General entrusted the inquisition of Cremona, along with that of Piacenza, to Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale,¹³⁵ and the inquisition of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema to Giovanni da Soncino.¹³⁶ It is likely, therefore, that Cacatossici was inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona and Crema for a period of four years or so, roughly from 1512 till early 1515. The major witch-hunts that were unleashed in the inqui-

¹³¹ "Magister Georgius de Casali instituitur inquisitor in Brixia et Cremona et earum dioecesisibus et in oppido Creme, auctoritate apostolica, cum omnibus gratiis et privilegiis consuetis, destitutus omnibus, si quis alii forent inquisitores etc." (5 August 1511) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 268.

¹³² For his activities as vicar general see Creytens 1962, pp. 253–255.

¹³³ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 276.

¹³⁴ "Magister Georgius de Casali instituitur inquisitor super Bergomo, Cremona, Crema et Brixia cum earum districtibus, cum solitis gratiis et privilegiis." (19 June 1512) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 96.

¹³⁵ Piò 1615, p. 488.

¹³⁶ Piò 1615, p. 273.

sition of Brescia in 1510 and between 1517 and 1521 were not his responsibility, then, but of either his immediate predecessor (Prierias) or his eventual successors (Agostino Mori and Girolamo da Lodi) as inquisitors there. There can be little doubt, though, that he would have agreed with their severe and thorough repressive measures. There seems to be no extant documentation of his own inquisitorial activities from 1511 onward.

That the reassignment of an inquisitorial district from one of the conventual provinces to the Congregation of Lombardy usually entailed an intensification of inquisitorial activity is corroborated by the case of the subdistrict of Modena. At the conclusion of the term of office in 1514 of its last conventual incumbent—Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, who will be discussed in chapter 3—the inquisition of Ferrara and Modena was entrusted to Antonio Beccari da Ferrara, a friar of the Congregation. Beccari himself does not appear to have been an excessively zealous inquisitor, for he confined himself to a role of overseer and final judge.¹³⁷ Yet, whereas Rafanelli's vicar in the subdistrict of Modena at the turn of the fifteenth century (1499–1503), the rather nonchalant Gregorio da Modena, failed to conclude even one of the very few inquests that he had initiated, Beccari's vicars there brought a previously unimaginable earnestness to their task. The successive vicars during 1517–1523, Antonio da Brescia, Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa and Tommaso da Vicenza, initiated no less than thirty-one inquests and brought several to conclusion, such as those of the diocesan priest Guglielmo Campana for magical practices and of the purported witch Chiara Signorini.¹³⁸ The scholars who have already paid considerable attention to these prosecutions have all remarked on the intensification of inquisitorial activity that they represented. Yet, surely due to their lack of interest in the inquisitors themselves, they have failed to notice that it was a direct and immediate consequence of the reassignment of the inquisitorial district of Ferrara and Modena from the conventual friars of the Province of St. Dominic to the observant friars of the Congregation of Lombardy.

¹³⁷ Ginzburg 1990, p. 1, talks of his “only occasional and hasty participation” in the inquests and trials conducted by his vicars.

¹³⁸ See Ginzburg 1966, Bertolotti 1979 and Duni 1999.

CHAPTER THREE

ADMINISTRATORS, COURTIERS, ACADEMICS

1. *Desultory Inquisitors*

It has been claimed by some scholars that northern-Italian inquisitors at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were generally slumbering.¹ While this is far from correct, this chapter will present three cases of inquisitors that tend to confirm this impression of dilettantism and lack of inquisitorial zeal. That this was not the case solely with conventual friars will be evident in that while the first two were conventual friars, of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Province of St. Dominic, the third belonged to the Congregation of Lombardy. Perhaps a majority of conventual friars during the Renaissance, and not a few even of the observant friars of the Congregation, looked upon the post of inquisitor as an honorific title, a customary further step, after the acquisition of a university degree in theology, on the ladder of ecclesiastical preferment and social promotion, sought for the status, privileges and prestige that it conferred within the Dominican order, within the Church and at princely courts, rather than as an appointment that entailed full-time dedication and effective work. Their primary concerns, as these three cases show, lay elsewhere: the ascent of the rungs of the administrative hierarchy of the order, the subservient attendance at a princely court in expectation of the bestowal of patronage, an overriding preoccupation with academic pursuits. That such men were appointed inquisitors need not surprise us, for, insofar as inquisitorial appointments were largely in the gift of the provincials, they seem to have been reverted to often as rewards for the provincial's supporters, as consolation prizes for ambitious friars who failed to be elected to administrative posts within the order, or as concessions to insinuating friars who managed to gain the favour and harness the influence of secu-

¹ Romeo 2002, p. 7.

lar rulers. That some inquisitors managed to do remarkably little in the way of inquisitorial activities is, moreover, perfectly coherent with there being at the time no centralized inquisitorial organization in the manner of the post-1542 Roman Inquisition. Once appointed and endowed with powers delegated by the Holy See, each inquisitor was supreme in his own district and usually was neither monitored by, nor accountable to, any higher authority concerned with his doings or lack thereof.

2. *Michele Madei da Asti, Inquisitor of Casale
and Trino 1488–1490, Inquisitor of Asti 1494–1500*

There is no trace of Michele Madei di Felizzano da Asti prior to his graduation as master of theology from the University of Pavia in mid-1465,² but it is likely that he had entered the Dominican order in the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Asti that formed part of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. His family had long-standing connections with the convent of Asti, for some his forebears were buried in its chapter room and others had been even members of the conventual community. One of these, Stefano Madei da Asti, is recorded as having held the post of inquisitor of the vast inquisitorial district of Asti, Chieri and Turin and as having been engaged in the prosecution of Waldensians in the marquisate of Saluzzo in 1417.³ Almost as if he were continuing a family tradition, Michele Madei appears next in 1474 as the inquisitorial vicar responsible for the subdistrict of Asti. On 4 June 1474 Master General Mansueti, upon the direct intervention of Pope Sixtus IV, appointed Ugo Albini da Chieri inquisitor of the entire district of Asti, Chieri and Turin.⁴ At the same time he insisted that although Albini was to have full control of the inquisitorial district entrusted to him, Madei was to continue to be responsible for the subdistrict of Asti in which he was to function as Albini's vicar,⁵ and

² Negruzzo 1995, p. 327.

³ Muletti 1828–1836, vol. 5, pp. 6–7; Savio 1937, pp. 117–118.

⁴ “Die iiii iunii fuit institutus inquisitor Astensis magister Ugo de Albinis conventus Cherii de mandatu summi pontificis et consensu totius diffinitorii.” (4 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 37r.

⁵ “Magistro Hugoni de Albinis conventus Cherii inquisitori Astensi fuit commissa totalis executio sui officii preter quam in civitate Astensi cum terminis suis qui termini

the master general reiterated this provision toward the end of 1474.⁶ Madei's tenure as inquisitorial vicar of Asti came to an abrupt end, though, in mid-1475. In July of that year the master general, again as the result of the direct intervention of Pope Sixtus IV, restored the post of inquisitor of Asti, Chieri and Turin to Michele Valenti da Torino, who must have been its incumbent before the appointment of Albini in June 1474, and Valenti's reappointment entailed the dismissal of any inquisitor who might have been deputed to the subdistrict of Asti.⁷ Thereafter Madei was to have nothing further to do with the inquisition of Asti till his own appointment to the post of inquisitor there almost twenty years later in 1494, after Valenti had held it from 1475 to 1483 and his successor, Stefano Bandini da Alba, from 1483 to 1494.

Madei's loss of the post of inquisitorial vicar of Asti did not imply, however, any diminution of his personal prestige or of his career prospects. The master general often appointed him to adjudicate difficult cases,⁸ and at the end of 1475 sent him to set things right in the convent of San Giovanni Battista in Saluzzo, even with the power of dismissing its prior if it proved necessary and of disciplining obstreperous friars with the aid of the secular arm.⁹ Madei was then himself elected prior of the convent of Saluzzo and held the post till 1477.¹⁰ Madei seems to have been well on the way, then, to making a significant administrative career in the order and the master general often had him acting in concert with the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr in disciplinary matters.¹¹ At the death of the provincial, Girolamo Visconti da Milano, in late 1477, the master general appointed Madei vicar of the province till the election of a new provincial.¹² Madei himself was

fuerunt concessi magistro Michael de Madeis conventus Astensis vicario dicti inquisitori." (4 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 182^v.

⁶ "Magister Michael de Madeis conventus Astensis habuit commissionem officio inquisitionis in civitate Astensi cum terminis eius sicut alias Rome sibi fuit concessum ut patet supra (fol.) 182." (6 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 190^v.

⁷ "Magister Michael de Valentibus ex mandatu apostolico per suum breve fuit restitutus ad officium inquisitionis in provincia Lombardie superioris et in marchia Ianuensi amoto quocumque alio deputato in inquisitione Astensi." (1 June 1475) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 198^r.

⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 190^v (2 November 1474).

⁹ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 206^v (20 December 1475).

¹⁰ Mangione 2002, p. 247; Mangione 2005, pp. 164–166.

¹¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 319^v (9 January 1477).

¹² Traces of Madei's activities as provincial vicar: AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 324^r (23 November 1477), 324^r (5 December 1477), 324^v (29 December 1477).

then elected provincial at the chapter held in Saluzzo in April 1478 and confirmed as such by the master general the following May.¹³

Madei's term as provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr did not last the customary period of four years but only for a little over three years, till he was dismissed from office during the second half of 1481. His activities as provincial are well documented and he seems to have implemented a policy of firm government.¹⁴ Probably because of this, however, his term as provincial was also particularly troubled. On several occasions the friars who were his subjects felt treated too harshly and even unjustly and appealed to the master general who, in some cases, did not hesitate to reverse Madei's decisions.¹⁵ At least one of these cases is of interest, for it concerns the then inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona. Giovanni Domenico da Cremona had been dismissed as inquisitor there by Madei following certain accusations made against him by his predecessor in the office, Paolo Folperti da Pavia. Master General Mansueti intervened and quashed Madei's sentence against Giovanni Domenico when it was discovered that Folperti's charges were fabrications.¹⁶

That Madei's performance as provincial was considered problematic is disclosed, furthermore, by the intriguing series of events that followed the death of Master General Mansueti in late 1480. A new master general was to have been elected at the following general chapter, that originally had been scheduled by the general chapter held in Perugia in 1478 to be held in Florence in 1481.¹⁷ In mid-1479 Mansueti had decided, however, that the chapter of 1481 was to be held in the convent of Asti instead.¹⁸ Since the convent of Asti formed part of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Madei, as its provincial, automatically became vicar general of the entire order upon the death of Mansueti, for the legislation of the Order of Preachers prescribed that at the death

¹³ "Reverendus magister Michael de Madeis de Ast qui unanimiter fuit electus in provincialem provincie Lombardie in capitulo provinciali apud Salutias celebrato die 13 mensis Aprilis 1478 fuit confirmatus cum plenaria auctoritate in forma quam habuit reverendus Romanus magister Matthyas Angeli de Viterbio." (7 May 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 326^r.

¹⁴ Traces of Madei's activities as provincial: AGOP, IV: reg. 3, fols. 326^r (14 May 1478), 326^v (18, 20, 21 May 1478), 327^r (18 May 1478), 327^v (16 June 1478); reg. 4, fols. 210^r (21 May 1479), 214^v (26 June 1479).

¹⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 212^r (25 January 1479).

¹⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 216^v (4 May 1480).

¹⁷ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 351.

¹⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 74^r (14 May 1479).

of a master general its government, until the following general chapter, was to be assumed by the provincial of the province in whose territory the chapter was scheduled to be held. Nothing whatsoever is known of Madei's performance as vicar general of the entire order, since there is an interruption in the series of the masters general's registers from mid-July 1480 to June 1481, but this lacuna may itself be taken as a sign that things were not running smoothly.¹⁹ Whatever the case, in early 1481 Pope Sixtus IV felt it necessary to intervene: he transferred the general chapter of 1481 from Asti to Rome and imposed on the order two commissioners, thereby effectively terminating Madei's term as vicar general.²⁰ The general chapter held in Rome in June 1481, that Madei attended as provincial,²¹ elected master general one of Sixtus IV's two commissioners, Salvo Cassetta da Palermo. One of Cassetta's first acts was to appoint an observant friar of the Roman Province, Tommaso Nanni da Viterbo, vicar general and visitor of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.²² The master general justified this in terms of the many complaints that he had received from the friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and gave Nanni the power to dismiss Madei from office.²³ Nanni then carried out the visitation and dismissed Madei from the post of provincial in late July 1481.²⁴ It is quite likely that Madei resisted this in some way, for the master general felt it necessary a little later to call upon Sixtus IV to issue a brief investing Nanni's mission with explicit papal authority.²⁵ The master general then reiterated Nanni's dismissal of Madei in early October 1481.²⁶

Madei seems to have withdrawn, perhaps embittered and resentful, from the mainstream of the life of the Province of St. Peter Martyr after

¹⁹ See Creytens 1962, pp. 237–238.

²⁰ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 368.

²¹ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 353.

²² On Tommaso Nanni da Viterbo see Gargan 1971, p. 113.

²³ "Reverendus magister Thomas Nannis de Viterbio vicarius observantie romane fuit institutus vicarius generalis et visitor totius provincie Lombardie propter querelas auditas cum plenaria potestate etiam absolvendi provincialem et celebrandi capitulum pro futura electione ubi et quando soli videbitur et potest cogere omnes obligatos omnibus modis etiam cum invocationem auxilii brachii secularis et datur sibi tota auctoritas magistri reverendissimi." (12 July 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 184^r.

²⁴ "Magister Michael de Madeis de Ast habuit literas sue gratiose absolutionis a provincialatu." (23 July 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 184^v.

²⁵ BOP, vol. 3, pp. 605–606 (*Facti certiores fide*, 22 August 1481).

²⁶ "Confirmata fuit absolutio provincialis Lombardie magistri Michaeli de Amadeis facta per magistrum Thomam de Viterbio vicario et commissario rev. mi magistri..." (10 October 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 187^r.

his dismissal as provincial—as well as his earlier dismissal as vicar general of the entire order, a position in which he had been tantalizingly well placed for election as master general. In March 1482 he was in the convent of Saluzzo; in 1483 he participated at the chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr held in Savigliano when, unlike all the other senior capitulars, he did not hold some office in the order; in March 1485 he was again in the convent of Saluzzo.²⁷ It is likely that he spent these years at the court of the marquis of Saluzzo, Ludovico II, with whom he seems to have been in very good standing: a few years earlier, in April 1475, he had preached at the obsequies of the marquis' father, Ludovico I.²⁸ In 1479 he had petitioned the Holy See on the marquis' behalf for the right of patronage over the abbey of Santa Maria in Casanova and in August 1481 represented the marquis in the Roman curia when the parish church of Santa Maria in Saluzzo was raised to the status of a collegiate church.²⁹ Probably as a reward for his services, in 1482 Ludovico II appointed him chaplain of the abbey of Villar San Costanzo of which he took possession in March 1483.³⁰ Moreover, some members of his family had established themselves in Saluzzo by this time, and Madei bought on behalf of a Tommaso Madei da Asti some landed property in Saluzzo in late 1481.³¹ It was at this time, too, that another close relative, Giovanni Madei di Felizzano, began to acquire, possibly through marriage into the prominent family of the Enganna, proprietary rights over a chapel, dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas, in the church of the Dominican convent of San Giovanni Battista in Saluzzo, a matter that will be finally settled with the assistance of Madei in 1497.³² It is instructive that before his death in 1500 Madei bequeathed his money and his properties in the marquisate of Saluzzo to continue the work being done on the chapel and, as well, to reimburse the convent of Saluzzo for the expenses that it had incurred when he had resided there. Moreover, immediately after Madei's death the Marquis Ludovico II intervened with Master General Torriani to ensure that his final wishes were carried out.³³ It seems,

²⁷ Mangione 2005, pp. 182, 195; AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81.

²⁸ Muletti 1828–1836, vol. 5, pp. 143–144.

²⁹ Canobbio 2006, p. 60 n. 15.

³⁰ Canobbio 2006, p. 73 and n. 90.

³¹ Mangione 2002, pp. 247–249; Mangione 2005, pp. 176–177.

³² Vacchetta 1931, pp. 199, 252–253; Mangione 2002, pp. 255–257; Mangione 2005, pp. 239–246.

³³ “Confirmatur ultima voluntas et legatio bonorum facta per magistrum Michaellem

then, that Madei spent the years from 1481 till 1487 in the convent of Saluzzo and at the service of the Marquis Ludovico II. It was probably at this time that he composed the *Genealogia Marchionum Salutarum*, a work no longer extant but regularly consulted by historians well into the eighteenth century when it was to be found in Grenoble.³⁴ The end of Madei's stay in Saluzzo and likely return to the convent of Asti was probably caused by the flight of the marchional family to France in 1487, after the marquisate of Saluzzo was invaded and temporarily occupied by the duke of Savoy.

By mid-1488 Madei seems to have mended his relations with the order: in late December 1488 he was restored his rights of electing and being elected a superior, notwithstanding that he still enjoyed the privilege of holding some benefice outside the order—probably the chaplaincy of the abbey of Villar San Costanzo that he had obtained in 1482.³⁵ Elaborate arrangements were also made whereby he was to be refunded the sum of two-hundred gold ducats that he had spent out of his own pocket while serving as provincial between 1478 and 1481.³⁶ More importantly, on 30 December 1488 he was appointed inquisitor of Casale and Trino.³⁷ This minute inquisitorial district, that covered the northern third of the fragmented territory of the marquisate of Monferrato, seems to have been created especially for him, for till then its territory formed part of the vast inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como. Indeed, when a little later, on 10 January 1489, the master general reappointed Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, it was spelt out to him that he was reappointed to the entirety of his district with the exception

de Madeis conventui Salutarum de bonis inventis penes eum et in marchionatu Salutarum, et hoc ad instantiam marchionis, ut ex dictis bonis edificatur cuiusdam capella per dictum magistrum executi et de reliquis conventui per eum gravato pluribus annis subuematur pro aliquali compensatione damnorum..." (15 November 1500) AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 145^r.

³⁴ See Quètif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 1, p. 903 and Muletti 1828–1836: vol. 3, pp. 386–387; vol. 5, p. 264.

³⁵ "Magister Michael de Madeis conventus Astensis recipitur ad omnes et singulas gratias ordinis et vocem activam et passivam non obstante habilitationem ad beneficia ecclesiastica." (29 December 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^r.

³⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 243^v (15 January 1489).

³⁷ "Magister Michael de Madeis conventus Astensis fit inquisitor in provincia Lombardie et in marchia Ianuensi citra Iuga Ianue habens pro titulo civitatem Casali et pro loco Tridinti cum terminis eorundem." (30 December 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^v.

of Casale and Trino.³⁸ It is not known for how long Madei remained inquisitor of Casale and Trino, nor is there any trace of his activities as such, if any. Perhaps the appointment was not meant to be taken too seriously as a task and was simply a sinecure granted him as part of the effort made by the master general to reintegrate him in the life of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. Whatever the case, he certainly did not reside in his inquisitorial district, for both the convent of Casale and that of Trino belonged to the Congregation of Lombardy. Instead, he lived in the convent of Asti, where, by April 1489, he was elected its prior and was guaranteed by the master general that he could not be removed from the post even by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.³⁹

In August 1489, at the end of Paolo Moneglia's term as provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Madei was once again appointed by the master general vicar of the province till the following election.⁴⁰ The following month Madei was elected provincial for a second term.⁴¹ He soon set to work, trying to put some order in the convents of his province: at the beginning of January 1490 he handed the convent of Lodi over to the Congregation of Lombardy to be reformed,⁴² but managed to have the convents of Genoa, Turin and Savigliano restored to his full jurisdiction.⁴³ Perhaps he once again attempted to impose some basic discipline on the province, thus showing a certain coherence with the policy that had probably alienated so many of its friars during his first term as provincial (1479–1481). In mid-April 1492 he reappeared in Saluzzo, where he witnessed a formal act in the marchional palace, for by then Ludovico II had returned from exile in France and had been restored to his marquisate in 1490.⁴⁴ Madei served his second term as provincial for the customary period of four years and was honourably

³⁸ "Magister Laurentius de Solerii prior Vercellensis confirmatur in Lombardia et in marchia Ianuensi cum terminis consuetis, civitate Casalensi cum terminis conventuum Casalensi et Tridini dumtaxat exceptis." (10 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 243^r.

³⁹ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 245^r (3 April 1489).

⁴⁰ "Absolvitur magister Paulus de Monelia ab officio provincialatus et instituitur vicarius magister Michael de Madeis cum plenaria potestate." (7 August 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^r.

⁴¹ "Magister Michael de Madeis confirmatur in priorem provincialem." (13 September 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^r.

⁴² AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^v (11 January 1490).

⁴³ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 249^v (19 September 1490).

⁴⁴ Mulletti 1828–1836, vol. 5, p. 259.

released from office in late August 1493.⁴⁵ He then returned to the convent of Saluzzo and is recorded as participating at a meeting of its council in early January 1494.⁴⁶

On 2 February 1494, Madei was appointed inquisitor of Asti.⁴⁷ It is not certain, though, whether the appointment envisaged the original, large inquisitorial district of Asti, Chieri and Turin or the subdistrict of Asti alone. If we are to go by the terms of appointment of his predecessor, it probably included both Asti and Chieri but excluded Turin, that had been entrusted to Antonio Ghislandi da Torino in the early 1480s and had gradually acquired the character of a separate, independent district. Very little is known of the inquisitorial district of Asti and Chieri, even though Chieri in particular was the scene of important prosecutions of heretics, both Cathars and Waldensians, during the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth.⁴⁸ Politically, the district encompassed both the central part of the principality of Piedmont, a domain of the dukes of Savoy, and the county of Asti, a fief of the House of Orleans. Madei succeeded in the post Stefano Bandini da Alba who had held it since 1488. Bandini was allowed, however, to continue and conclude the inquisitorial trials that he had begun during his term of office,⁴⁹ a concession that, perhaps, reflected Madei's own lack of interest in such work. Be that as it may, Madei was reconfirmed in the post in late 1498, with the proviso that he could not be removed from it by anyone inferior to the master general—in effect, by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.⁵⁰ He then remained in this inquisitorial post till his death in mid-1500 when the vicar general of the order, Francesco Mei who took charge upon the death of Master General Torriani, filled it by appointing Biagio degli Imperiati

⁴⁵ “Magister Michael de Madeis absolvitur ab officio provincialatus et magister Laurentius de Vercelli fit vicarius generalis provincie cum plenaria potestate et usque novus provincialis electus fuerit et confirmatus et presens fuerit in provincia.” (27 August 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 246^v.

⁴⁶ Mangione 2005, p. 330.

⁴⁷ “Magister Michael de Madeis fit inquisitor heretice pravitate conventus Ast cum auctoritate et privilegiis et per absolutionem magistri Stephani de Alba.” (2 February 1494). AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 246bis,r.

⁴⁸ See Esposito 1947 and Merlo 1977.

⁴⁹ “Magister Michael de Medeis fit inquisitor Astensis et committitur magistro (Stephano) de Alba ut causas inquisitionis suo tempore inceptas determinare et perficere possit non obstante sua absolutione.” (3 April 1494) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 247^r.

⁵⁰ “...Magister Michael ut supra confirmatur in officio inquisitionis et non potest absolvi ab aliquo inferiore sine expressa licentia...” (7 October 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 142^v.

da Asti.⁵¹ Once again, nothing is known of Madei's inquisitorial activities, if any. It is quite possible that he did not concern himself directly with the day-to-day tasks entailed by the post, for in May 1494 he was permitted by the master general to assume several friars as inquisitorial vicars.⁵² Perhaps the post was granted him by the master general primarily as a prestigious reward for his long-standing services to the Province of St. Peter Martyr.

As far as can be known, Madei's last years, even though they corresponded to his years as inquisitor of Asti (1494–1500), were spent primarily in administrative tasks. After his appointment as inquisitor he at first remained in the convent of Saluzzo and served again as its prior from the beginning of 1495 till his resignation on 18 March 1495.⁵³ However, and despite the election of a new prior, he continued to be effectively in charge of the convent of Saluzzo as the master general's vicar there till at least the beginning of 1498.⁵⁴ Moreover, he was once again prior of the convent of Asti during 1495–1497,⁵⁵ and was reappointed to the post by the master general in late 1498 and occupied it till his death.⁵⁶ During this time he was also commissioned by the master general, along with the inquisitor of Pavia, Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi, to examine the financial accounts of the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Matteo dell'Olmo, at the end of his term of office in late 1497.⁵⁷ Soon thereafter the master general employed him for the implementing of disciplinary measures that were considered too arduous for the newly-elected provincial, Pietro Andrea degli

⁵¹ "Magister Blasius conventus Astensis fit inquisitor Astensis cum potestate." (1 September 1500) AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 144^r.

⁵² "Magistro Michaeli inquisitore Astensi datur licentia substituendi unum vel duos vicarios in ipso officio inquisitionis non obstantibus." (24 May 1494) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 248^r.

⁵³ Camilla 1991, p. 115; Mangione 2005, pp. 234–236, 330–333.

⁵⁴ Mangione 2005, pp. 333–335.

⁵⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 149^v (14 March 1495).

⁵⁶ "Magister Michael de Madeis fit prior conventus Astensis cum potestate plenaria etc." (7 October 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 142^v.

⁵⁷ "Mandatur presidentibus conventuum reformatorum Lombardie ut magistro Mattheo de Lulmo episcopo olim provinciali suas solvant contributiones et magistro Michaeli Medei et magistro Ioanni Antonio de Cremona committitur videre eius ratiocinia." (17 October 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 138^v; "Renovantur litere concesse magistro Mattheo de Lulmo nunc episcopo date eidem quia ratiocinia sua videantur per magistrum Michaellem et magistrum Iohannem Antonium de Cremona, et dantur videri et examinari per vicarium provincie et patres in capitulo provinciali proximo futuro quia cum fuerit provincialis ista ratiocinia tangunt totam provinciam." (14 April 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 139^v.

Inviati: in August 1498 he was commanded to invoke the aid of the secular arm and incarcerate some turbulent friars of the convent of Saluzzo.⁵⁸

Madei must also have continued his close relationship with the marquis of Saluzzo, Ludovico II, whose confessor as well as councillor he had become soon after the return in 1490 of the marchional family from its exile in France. Interestingly, even though there are no traces of Madei's own activities as inquisitor of Asti, in late 1495 he is recorded as being commissioned by the Marquis Ludovico to oversee a series of witch-trials being conducted in the small villages of Rifreddo and Gambasca by the inquisitor of Savigliano, Vito Beggiami, whose vast inquisitorial district then still included the territory of the marquisate of Saluzzo. Madei attended several sessions of the trials, deemed them to have been conducted correctly and finally approved their verdicts whereby at least three alleged witches were condemned to be burned. The minutes of the trials are still extant and contain several autograph contributions made by Madei in the form of letters to the inquisitor Beggiami and several annotations.⁵⁹ In 1496 Ludovico II sent him to the marquisate of Monferrato to settle a dispute over the dowry of the marquis' first wife, Giovanna Paleologo di Monferrato who had died in 1490.⁶⁰

From the beginning of 1498 till his death in mid-1500 Madei was largely taken up with personal financial issues. In April 1498 he settled a dispute with a goldsmith in Saluzzo who owed him the repayment of a loan,⁶¹ and late that year he was still attempting to be refunded his expenses from his first term as provincial (1478–1481), that obviously had still not been done despite the elaborate arrangements made in 1488, and the master general was called upon to intervene once more.⁶² Indeed, it is with money, rather than inquisitorial pursuits, that are

⁵⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 141^r (17 August 1498).

⁵⁹ Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004 provides an edition of the minutes. Madei's signature appears in a photographic reproduction of one of the pages of the manuscript, p. 91.

⁶⁰ Grillo 2006, p. 23.

⁶¹ Mangione 2005, pp. 249–251.

⁶² "Mandatur reverendo provinciali magistro Petro Andree de Inviatis in virtute Spiritus Sancti et sancte obedientie quod videat quid magister Michael de Madeis habuit de ducentis ducatorum quod habere debebat a provincia occasione sui provincialatum ut visum fuit dum magister reverendissimus visitaret quosdam conventus illius provincie tempore provincialatus magistri Pauli Monelie, et de eo quod restat habere sibi satisfaciatur secundum quod magister reverendissimus sententiavit per literas suas

concerned the last records to be had of Michele Madei da Asti. The intervention of Ludovico II of Saluzzo, of 15 November 1500, in the matter of Madei's bequests in favour of the chapel of St. Thomas in the Dominican church in Saluzzo as well as of the convent there, has been mentioned already. Negotiations for finally settling the issue occupied the friars of the convents of Saluzzo and Asti throughout 1500–1501,⁶³ and connected arrangements were still being finalized by Master General Vincenzo Bandello almost two years later, in September 1502.⁶⁴

3. *Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara,*
Inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena 1481–1514

Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara had been inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena long before he set off on 9 December 1501 with the Ferrarese party that went to Rome to collect Lucrezia Borgia, for he had been appointed such for the first time in 1481. When Rafanelli was appointed he stood in a long succession of Dominican inquisitors active in the region, since the Friars Preachers had begun to act as inquisitors in Ferrara by 1279,⁶⁵ a little earlier than in Modena in 1292.⁶⁶ The chronological priority in this is, however, of little import, for, at this early stage, it was most likely a matter of individual friars being entrusted with temporary inquisitorial tasks, rather than any fixed inquisitorial organization. That a permanent inquisitor was already based in Ferrara by 1287 seems to be intimated, nevertheless, by the contemporary statutes of the commune of Ferrara,⁶⁷ and there is documentary evidence of a permanent *domus inquisitionis* in Modena by 1299.⁶⁸ Ferrara eventually, perhaps by well before the beginning of the fifteenth century, became the prin-

patentes datas tunc Ast die xv Januarii 1489." (8 October 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 143^r.

⁶³ Mangione 2005, pp. 265–267, 336–337.

⁶⁴ "Committitur magistro Dominico de Cherio et magistro Gabrieli de Salutiis inquisitio bonorum magistri olim Michaelis de Madei." (20 September 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 295^v; "Praecipitur presidenti conventus Salutiensis et patribus ut infra nativitatem anni proximi futuri conventus Salutiensis dat quindecim florenos conventui Astensi pro solvendis debitis magistri Michaelis Madei, et quod de excessis bonis que reportent fiat equa divisio." (21 September 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 260^r.

⁶⁵ Dondaine 1947, p. 164.

⁶⁶ Biondi 1982, p. 74.

⁶⁷ *Statuta Ferrariae anno MCCLXXXVII*, pp. 360–361.

⁶⁸ Biondi 1982, pp. 74–75.

cial base of an inquisitor whose jurisdiction included the domains of the Este (Ferrara, Modena, Reggio) and was assisted by vicars in the secondary locations (Modena, Reggio). Curiously, the inquisitorial sub-district of Reggio was subtracted from the jurisdiction of the Ferrarese inquisitor and subjected to that of Parma by 1468 at the latest.⁶⁹ It is interesting that Bernardino Zambotti in 1476, echoing a not too distant past, anachronistically designated the then inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara, *Inquisitore Generale de Lombardia e de Ferrara e Modena e de Rezo*.⁷⁰

It is likely that there was a chronologically fairly continuous series of inquisitors of Ferrara and Modena during the late-thirteenth, the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries. It is known that Florio da Vicenza was inquisitor there from at least 1279 till at least 1281,⁷¹ that a certain Egidio was appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena by the Provincial of the Province of Lower Lombardy in 1365,⁷² and that a Simone da Ferrara was appointed inquisitor there by Master General Raymond of Capua in 1395.⁷³ While further research could well result in the compilation of a fuller catalogue of the Ferrarese inquisitors, it is probably impossible to reconstruct the entire series on the basis of the still-extant documentation. What is certain, however, is the identity of Rafanelli's two immediate predecessors: Antonino da Alessandria, who held the post of inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena from well before 1456 to 1462; Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara who held it from 1462 till 1481.

Before his inquisitorial appointment in 1481, Rafanelli had pursued an academic career. The earliest record that we have of him is a mention in the Acts of the chapter of the Province of St. Dominic held in Novara in 1465.⁷⁴ Rafanelli is listed there as being a deacon at the time and as assigned to the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara. He features in this document with the nickname Zanetto, perhaps an allusion to his being rather short or, perhaps, simply to his being the youngest

⁶⁹ Vincenzo Pessotti da Parma was appointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio by Master General Martial Auribelli in 1468 and was confirmed such by Master General Leonardo Mansueti on 12 November 1474 (AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 194^r). Thereafter the subdistrict of Reggio was always subordinated to the inquisitor of Parma instead of that of Ferrara.

⁷⁰ Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 28.

⁷¹ Dondaine 1947, pp. 164–166.

⁷² Biondi 1982, pp. 76–77.

⁷³ MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41.

⁷⁴ Creytens 1959, pp. 160–161.

of his peer group that included several other friars named Giovanni. Whatever the case, this sobriquet, perhaps much to his annoyance for he never employed it himself, seems to have stuck to him throughout his life and even after his death, and appears at times even in the most solemn, official documents.⁷⁵ Because Dominicans at this time were usually ordained deacons at the age of twenty-two, it is likely that he was born around 1443 and this is corroborated by another piece of evidence that shows him as being younger than forty in 1481.⁷⁶ It is probable that he entered the Dominican order in his mid-teens, around 1459. When he did so, he was received in the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara that formed part of the Province of St. Dominic. This Ferrarese convent would only be reformed and aggregated to the Congregation of Lombardy a few years after Rafanelli's death in 1515, sometime during Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara's term as vicar general (1518–1520).⁷⁷

After the completion of his initial studies and ordination to the priesthood, probably around 1466, Rafanelli began his academic career in earnest. It is not known where he was *studens formalis* and served as master of studies and biblical bachelor, but it is likely he did all this in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara.⁷⁸ We do know, however, that he served as bachelor of the Sentences during the biennium 1468–1470 in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua.⁷⁹ Rafanelli's regular participation at the meetings of Sant'Agostino's conventual council, of which was an *ex officio* member as bachelor of the Sentences in its studium, is attested by his signature that accompanies the minutes of these meetings recorded in the still-extant *Liber consiliorum*. Rafanelli features there as *Joannes de Ferraria* on 22 and 24 October 1468, 23 November 1469 and 23 February 1470. During his term as bachelor of the Sentences the regent master in Sant'Agostino's studium generale, which was integrated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua, was the renowned Francesco

⁷⁵ For example, Rafanelli is called *Janettus de Ferraria* in Leo X's brief of 16 December 1515 appointing Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio his successor as master of the sacred palace. The brief is in Kalkoff 1905, pp. 173–174.

⁷⁶ When Rafanelli was first appointed inquisitor in 1481 he was dispensed the requirement that an inquisitor be at least forty-years old. See above, chapter 1, note 64.

⁷⁷ This is reported by Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 261, and is evidently derived from Piò 1620, vol. 2, p. 145.

⁷⁸ There is a summary outline of the history of the Ferrarese studium generale in Tavuzzi 1997a, pp. 121–128.

⁷⁹ Gargan 1971, p. 123.

Securo da Nardò.⁸⁰ Securo was at the same time the incumbent of the chair of metaphysics *in via Thomae* in the university's faculty of arts and had held the post since its foundation in 1465 and would continue to occupy it, with a few brief interruptions, till his death in 1489. He would later often be remembered by Pietro Pomponazzi as one of his teachers in Padua. It is possible that at the very time that Rafanelli was lecturing on the Sentences under his direction, Securo was preparing the *editio princeps* of the first part of Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, published in Padua in 1473,⁸¹ and he might even have helped him with this. Be that as it may, Securo and Rafanelli are recorded as acting in unison, along with the other officials as well as some of the students of the Paduan studium, on at least one occasion: on 12 April 1469 all these held a meeting of the studium's council and determined that, in conformity with the order's constitutions and the privileges granted by the masters general to the Paduan studium, it would no longer accept students who had not previously completed at least a triennium of studies *in artibus*.⁸²

Rafanelli did not proceed to the master's degree in Padua but returned to Ferrara immediately after the completion of his term as bachelor of the Sentences. He then graduated master of theology from the University of Ferrara on 26 February 1471.⁸³ It is not known when Rafanelli was incorporated in the Ferrarese *collegium doctorum*, but it took place well before 1476.⁸⁴ Thereafter he often exercised his right of examining and presenting candidates for the master's degree and acted as the promoter of at least seventeen candidates between 1479 and 1502.⁸⁵ He served as dean of the theological faculty several times and during 1472–1474 also held the chair of theology in the university's faculty of arts.⁸⁶ Although Rafanelli was a very prominent figure in the University of Ferrara, the greater part of his theological teaching would have been done in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico. He lectured on the Sentences there during 1473–1474 and on 6 June 1474 the prior of the convent of San Domenico was instructed

⁸⁰ For a brief account of Francesco da Nardò see Gargan 1971, pp. 114–115.

⁸¹ Thomas de Aquino, *Summa theologiae*, Pars Ia, emend. ab excellentissimo magistro Francisco de Neritono ord. pred., per magistrum Albertum de Stendael, (Padue) 1473 die 5 mensis Octobris.

⁸² The document (Vicenza, Biblioteca Bertoliana, Ms. 3.II.9, fols, 158–159) is in Gargan 1971, p. 24.

⁸³ Pardi 1900, p. 52.

⁸⁴ Pardi 1900, p. 198.

⁸⁵ Pardi 1900, pp. 78–100.

⁸⁶ Borsetti 1735, vol. 2, p. 60; Pardi 1903, p. 142.

by Master General Mansueti to pay him the twenty gold ducats that were due to him for doing so.⁸⁷ On 17 September 1474 Mansueti appointed him as the studium's regent master for the triennium 1474–1477.⁸⁸ He was granted privileges identical with those of the regent master of the studium in Padua, which included the right of compelling the friars who served under him as bachelors of the Sentences to deliver his lectures in his stead. On 8 May 1476 the master general ordered the Ferrarese convent to consign to Rafanelli for his personal use one of its library's copies of Aquinas' commentary on the first book of Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* in partial payment of the emolument of twenty ducats that he should have received each year as regent master, but that at that time the convent could not afford.⁸⁹

After his triennium as regent master, Rafanelli left Ferrara to serve as the prior of the convent of San Domenico in Ancona, a post from which he was released by Master General Mansueti on 27 January 1480.⁹⁰ He then returned to Ferrara and resumed his duties as a member of the Ferrarese theological faculty and, probably, his teaching in the studium in San Domenico. It is likely that he continued these didactic activities for the next twenty years or so, till his final departure for Rome at the beginning of 1503. It was soon after his return from Ancona, on 18 June 1481, that Rafanelli was first appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, a post that he would continue to hold for the following thirty-three years until 1514, even after his appointment as master of the sacred palace and move to Rome in 1503. His appointment as inquisitor in 1481 was made neither by the provincial of the Province of St. Dominic nor by the Dominican master general, Salvo Cassetta. It was made directly by Pope Sixtus IV who also dispensed

⁸⁷ "Priori conventus S. Dominici de Ferraria fuit factum praeceptum sub poena absolutionis ab officio quod infra 15 dies debeat satisfecisse magistro Joanni de Raphanellis de Ferraria de ducatis 20, vel cum eo composuisse, quos debet habere ex consuetudine illorum qui legunt Sententias." AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 37^v.

⁸⁸ "Magister Johannes Ferrariensis fuit institutus regens studii in conventu Sancti Dominici de Ferraria cum gratiis et privilegiis regentis Paduani et quod possit cogere baccalarios et alios ad legendum lectiones suas, et habeat omnia alia privilegia que dantur regentibus studii Paduani ac si his dentur expresse de verbo ad verbum; nullus inferior potest impedire vel ista cassare." (17 September 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 39^v.

⁸⁹ "Magister Johanni de Raphanellis de Ferraria datur ad usum primus Sententiarum sancti Thome pro parte ducatorum 20 quos debet habere quilibet magister conventus. Non potest vendere dictum librum." (8 May 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 163^v.

⁹⁰ "Magister fr. Johannes de Raphanellis de Ferraria habuit literas sue gratiose absolutionis ab officio prioratus Anchonitani cum eas legi fecerit in capitulo." (27 January 1480) AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 45^r.

him from the usual canonical requirement that inquisitors be at least forty years old.⁹¹ It is evident that Rafanelli must have enjoyed great patronage and that the appointment was probably made at the behest of the duke of Ferrara, Ercole I d'Este. This alone explains how he managed to hold on to the office for such a long time, through three pontificates and, it seems, at times very much against the wishes of the Dominican master general.

Rafanelli's tenure of the post does not seem to have been contested at first and there is documentary evidence of his serving in it during October 1482.⁹² But soon after the death of Sixtus IV (12 August 1484) and the election of Pope Innocent VIII (29 August) Master General Bartolomeo Commazio dismissed Rafanelli and replaced him with another friar, the more senior Vincenzo Mentini da Ferrara.⁹³ Commazio seems to have anticipated some resistance and threatened Rafanelli with excommunication if he did not abide by his decision.⁹⁴ We do not know the details of what followed, but it is likely that Mentini did his best to extricate himself from the unenviable situation, for Commazio had to appoint yet another friar, Giacomo Ognissanti, to the post only a few months later, on 4 March 1485.⁹⁵ Rafanelli's pow-

⁹¹ See above, chapter 1, note 64.

⁹² Entry dated 27 October 1482 in the manual of the inquisitors of Ferrara (*De officio inquisitionis*) discussed in chapter 1: "Mccccxxxii, xxvii octobris. Gerardus de Confaloneriis dicto da Laforza suum ultimum condidit testamentum, et hoc Mcccxvxxxxxxxxv et in coetera legata voluit et ordinavit quod ex bonis suae hereditatis edificaretur una capella in ecclesia cathedrali sub titulo sancti Augustini... Heredes autem et patronis huius capelle reliquit Dominum inquisitorem civitatis Ferrariae et dominum videdominum civitatis venetiarum qui sunt vel qui pro tempore est; reliquit etiam alios patronos sed omnes mortui sunt. Ego magister Joannes de Rafomelis ferrariensi et inquisitor ferrariae et mutine vidi hoc testamentum Mccccxxxii, xxvii octobris. Et presentavit dominum Joannem Martinum cantorem illustrissimi Ducis Herculis, Et fui solus patronus hoc anno, eo quia erat maximum bella inter venetos et Ducem ferrariae, scilicet Dominum Herculem. Canonici autem civitatis ferrariae habent potestatem investire." Quoted in Dondaine 1947, p. 168.

⁹³ "Mag. Vincentius conventus Ferrariensis instituitur inquisitor in diocesis Ferrariae et Mutinae et absolvitur omnis alius inquisitor ibidem..." (18 December 1484) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41.

⁹⁴ "Magistris, patribus et fratribus conventus Ferrariensis denunciatur institutio magistri Vincentii in inquisitionis officio et mandatur eis ut eum in talem acceptent, ac etiam praecipitur Magistro Ioanni Raphanellis de Ferraria sub excommunicatione latae sententiae, ut infra quinque dies a notitia omnia ad dictum officium pertinentia reddat et restituat praedicto." (18 December 1484) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41.

⁹⁵ "Magister Iacobus de Omnibus Sanctis Ferrariensis fit inquisitor Ferrariensis et Mutinensis et absolvitur omnis alius quomodolibet institutus; et mandatur omnibus sub excommunicatione etc., quatenus infra competentem terminum ab illo statuendum

erful patrons must then have entered the fray, for Commazio reinstated him as inquisitor on 1 July 1485, albeit with the face-saving proviso that Ognissanti first be allowed to complete a full year in the post.⁹⁶ Rafanelli must have been restored to the office by the beginning of March 1486 and he was left undisturbed in it thereafter. Certainly Master General Torriani reappointed him to the post without further ado four years later, on 9 March 1490.⁹⁷ When Rafanelli was finally released from the post in 1514 it was not as a result of a decision of the Dominican master general but, as had probably been the case with his appointment in the first place, the consequence of ducal intervention. On 15 March 1514 Master General Cajetan finally dismissed Rafanelli from office at the request of the duke of Ferrara, Alfonso I d'Este, and of his consort Lucrezia Borgia, who felt that his absence from Ferrara impeded him from devoting to the task the attention it deserved.⁹⁸ Rafanelli was then replaced as inquisitor, once again in conformity with the wishes of the duke and the duchess of Ferrara, by a friar drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy, Antonio Beccari da Ferrara.

It is disappointing that there are only very few traces of Rafanelli's inquisitorial activities, but this is not surprising for the archive of the Ferrarese inquisition is entirely lost. There is, however, some documentation covering the period 1495–1503 of the activities of Gregorio da Modena, who was Rafanelli's vicar in the subdistrict of Modena,⁹⁹ and

resignet eidem fideliter omnia a dictum officium pertinentia." (4 March 1485) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41.

⁹⁶ "Magister Zanettus Ferrariensis fit inquisitor Ferrariensis et Mutinensis cum P. Mag. Iacobus de Omnibus Sanctis compleverit annum integrum in inquisitione; et mandatur omnibus fratribus sub poena transgressionis praecepti, quatenus post dictum annum omnia a dictum officium pertinentia infra quindecim dies a notitia resignent eidem fideliter." (1 July 1485) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 42.

⁹⁷ "Magister Johannes de Raphanellis de Ferrara fit heretice pravitate inquisitor in civitate Ferrariensi et Mutinensi et earum diocesibus, cum plenaria autoritate." (9 March 1490) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 61^r.

⁹⁸ The reason for Rafanelli's dismissal is stated in Cajetan's letter appointing his successor: "Racionabilibus ac piis petitionibus illustrissimi ducis ac ducissae Ferrariae officiique mei debito satisfacere cupiens, continuatam et diuturnam absentiam reverendi sacrae theologiae professoris magistri Joannis Ferrariensis inquisitoris, impediti ab officium Magistri Sacri Palatii in Curia Romana, non tolerandum amplius duxi, sed desiderium dictorum illustrissimorum principum morem gerendo, aliquem ex vita regulari Ferrariensi dicto officio subrogare." The letter, preserved in the Archivio di Stato in Modena, is quoted in Duni 1999, pp. 17–18.

⁹⁹ On Gregorio da Modena's designation as Rafanelli's vicar in Modena see Duni 1999, pp. 18 n. 52, 19 n. 59.

consists solely of eight cases of sorcery and one of blasphemy, none of which were brought to conclusion.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the very silence of such sources as the contemporary chronicles that recount some of the doings of his predecessor as inquisitor, Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara,¹⁰¹ makes one suspect that Rafanelli was a mild if not totally inactive inquisitor and certainly not one given to any ostentatious, public manifestation of his responsibilities. Certainly Rafanelli's most conspicuous, public duties were due to his ties with the ducal court. In November 1485 he travelled to Rome where he delivered the panegyric at the funeral of Cardinal Giovanni d'Aragona in the church of Santa Sabina.¹⁰² This is instructive, since the cardinal was a brother of the duchess of Ferrara, Eleonora d'Aragona, and reveals the kind of well-placed connection that must have enabled Rafanelli to have the better of Master General Commazio over the Ferrarese inquisition a few months earlier. Analogous engagements took place in July 1487, when he preached at the funeral of Paolo Antonio Trotti who had been the duke of Ferrara's influential secretary for many years,¹⁰³ and in January 1490, when he preached at the obsequies of Camilla Contrari, the dowager of an important Ferrarese noble family.¹⁰⁴

Rafanelli's other activities during his time as inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena were connected in the first place with the office of prior of the Ferrarese convent that he held for some ten years, from perhaps as early as 28 October 1489, when Ludovico Valenza da Ferrara ended his term,¹⁰⁵ till the end of February 1500 when he was replaced by Agostino da Ferrara.¹⁰⁶ As prior of the convent of San Domenico, Rafanelli had the onerous task of hosting the dominican general chapter that was held in Ferrara in May 1494. Perhaps his close connections with the

¹⁰⁰ Duni 1999, p. 22.

¹⁰¹ Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 28, reports in detail the punishment meted out on 24 March 1476 by Tommaso dai Liuti to Vincenzo di Ambrosio da Lendinaria who had been found guilty of profaning the sacraments and other superstitious acts.

¹⁰² "Sabbato, XIX dicti mensis novembris (1485), paratis ex more omnibus, incepte sunt exequie bo: me: cardinalis de Aragonia in ecclesia sancte Sabine. R. mus d. cardinalis Agriensis celebravit missam publicam. Sermonem fecit frater Joannes de Ferraria, ordinis Praedicatorum." Burckard, *Liber notarum*, p. 125.

¹⁰³ Zambotti, *Diario*, pp. 187–188.

¹⁰⁴ Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 212.

¹⁰⁵ "Data est absolutio prioratus dicti conventus (Ferrariensis) magistro Ludovico da Ferraria." (28 December 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 60^v.

¹⁰⁶ "Magister Johannes prior conventus Ferrariensi habet litteras sue absolutionis; et quotiescumque legerit coram patribus in capitulo aut aliter quomodocumque declaratur absolutus ab officio suo prioratus." (19 February 1500) AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 22^f.

Este stood him in good stead at the time, for the Acts of the chapter stress the opulent generosity shown to the capitulars by the duke of Ferrara, the local bishop and even many ordinary citizens.¹⁰⁷ The following general chapter, that of May 1498, was also held in Ferrara. The mood of the Ferrarese had changed by then, for they generally resented that the Dominican master general had condoned the execution of their fellow citizen Girolamo Savonarola in Florence only a few months earlier, and contemporary chronicles stress the antagonism of the Ferrarese toward the capitulars.¹⁰⁸ It is not surprising, then, that other than a perfunctory reference to the duke, the Acts of the chapter of 1498 make no glowing mention of Ferrarese generosity. They do mention, however, that the capitulars had been particularly well cared for by the Society of the Holy Cross.¹⁰⁹ Rafanelli must have made the best of a difficult situation by enlisting the help of the lay auxiliaries who were subject to his orders as inquisitor.

The significant architectural modifications and extensions carried out in the church attached to the convent of San Domenico during Rafanelli's term as prior are also indicative of his good standing with the ducal court. In March 1496 Ercole I decided to rebuild its Capella Grande and this involved as well the restructuring of the east end of the church, so that its apse could be extended in order to accommodate the friars' choir stalls that had been located previously in the nave. The work was financed equally by the duke and by the Contrari family, who contributed a thousand ducats each, and was completed by Christmas day 1496. Several other chapels of the church were subsequently rebuilt, such as that of the Society of the Holy Cross completed in 1498. The library of the convent of San Domenico was also rebuilt at this time, and the result was a typically Renaissance edifice, very much like the magnificent, contemporary libraries that may still be admired in the Dominican convents of San Marco in Florence and San Domenico in Bologna.¹¹⁰

As prior of the convent of San Domenico Rafanelli was entrusted with several delicate tasks by the Dominican master general; some of these, though, invoked just as much his status as Ferrarese inquisitor. On 15 June 1497 Master General Torriani commissioned him to inves-

¹⁰⁷ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 21.

¹⁰⁸ Anon., *Diario Ferrarese*, pp. 211–212.

¹⁰⁹ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 37.

¹¹⁰ For fuller accounts see Tuohy 1996, pp. 174, 178, 374–375.

tigate the accusation made by the nuns of the Dominican monastery in Imola that a friar, Giovanni Domenico da Padova, had murdered one of the sisters.¹¹¹ Rafanelli must have handled the case rather efficiently as well as expeditiously, for as early as 3 September the master general acknowledged that as the result of his investigations the friar had been shown to be quite innocent. It seems that during the interrogations conducted by Rafanelli the nuns denied that they had made any such allegation to begin with.¹¹²

Another case entrusted by Master General Torriani to Rafanelli is worth dwelling on, for it shows that the inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena was far more beholden to Duke Ercole than to the Dominican master general. On 17 June 1498 Torriani ordered Rafanelli to capture and imprison a friar, Timoteo Toti da Modena, if he happened to turn up in Ferrara.¹¹³ To understand the unfolding of the case one needs to know a little of Toti's background. He was born in 1462 and was received into the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 5 May 1479.¹¹⁴ In Bologna he received minor orders on 23 December 1480, subdiaconate on 17 March 1481, and diaconate on 13 March 1484.¹¹⁵ But in the course of 1485 he withdrew from the Congregation of Lombardy and left Bologna, and did so following a similar course of action on the part of Ludovico Valenza da

¹¹¹ "Magister Johannes prior et inquisitor Ferrariensis habet comissionem investigandi et examinandi moniales Sancti Dominici de Ymola super infamia et inculpatione fratris Johannis Dominici de Padua et facto processu de justificatione vel condemnatione sub sigillo suo fideliter ad me debet transmittere." (15 June 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 35^r.

¹¹² "Ex informatione habita per viam processus formati per reverendum magistrum Johannem de Ferraria ad hoc specialiter deputatum et missum declaratur quod frater Johannes Dominicus de Padua est innocens ab infamia que contra eidem de morte cuiusdam monialis monasterii Sancti Dominici de Ymola inferebatur et hec declaratio fundatur super dictis ipsarum monialium per viam et modum processus redactis quibus ipse se nihil scire asserunt ut patet per processum transmittum ab eodem magistro Joanne ut supra..." (3 September 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 36^v.

¹¹³ "Mandatur magistro Johanni inquisitori et priori conventus Sancti Dominici de Ferraria in virtute Spiritus Sancti et sancte obedientie et sub pena precepti etc., quod si magister Thimoteus de Mutina venerit in terminis civitatis Ferrarie vel intra ipsam civitatem debeat diligenter attendere quod capiatur et captus ponatur ad carceres Ducis et examinetur de duobus: primo si Dux eum miserit ad sororem Luciam apud Viterbium; secundo de excessu facto in monasterio Sancti Dominici de Florentia, et potest invocare auxilium brachium secularis et potest ei precipere sub penis et censuris etc., etiam ad veritatem dicendam potest eum ponere ad torturam et alia genera tormentorum, et potest eidem precipere." (17 June 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 33^v.

¹¹⁴ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 76.

¹¹⁵ Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 186-187, 214.

Ferrara who seems to have been his mentor and to whom he attached himself.¹¹⁶ Valenza transferred to the Province of St. Dominic and was assigned to the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara, graduated master of theology from the University of Ferrara in 1486 (with Rafanelli as his promoter), obtained the chair of theology in the university's faculty of arts, and was elected conventual prior. Meanwhile, Toti was ordained to the priesthood in Rome on 25 March 1486,¹¹⁷ was himself assigned to San Domenico in Ferrara in 1487 where he was appointed bachelor of the Sentences for the biennium 1489–1491.¹¹⁸ When Valenza was appointed procurator general of the Dominican order and moved to Rome in mid-1491, Toti followed him there and acted as his assistant and there are records of his preaching at the papal court on several occasions during 1495 as a stand-in for Valenza,¹¹⁹ at the time when Valenza was dispatched to Florence by Pope Alexander VI to attempt to convince Girolamo Savonarola to mend his ways.¹²⁰ After Valenza's death in September 1496, Toti preached at his funeral in Viterbo and the eulogy was published in Rome in May 1497.¹²¹ Toti then returned to Ferrara and was appointed regent master in the studium in San Domenico on 6 October 1497.¹²²

Now, when Master General Torriani ordered Rafanelli on 17 June 1498 to imprison Toti if he happened to show up in Ferrara, he added that this was to be done in Duke Ercole's jail in the Castello Estense and with the help of the secular arm if need be. Rafanelli was to interrogate Toti, with the use of torture if necessary, to find out from him whether Ercole had indeed commissioned him to become involved in the matter of Lucia Brocadelli da Narni, the Dominican *beata* that Ercole had been trying for some time to have transferred to Ferrara from Viterbo. Torriani also requested that Toti be interrogated about some wrongdoing he was alleged to have committed in the nunnery of San Domenico in Florence. Nothing can be discovered now about Toti's supposed Florentine trysts, but the nature of his involvement with

¹¹⁶ On Ludovico Valenza da Ferrara see Kaeppli and Panella 1970–1993, vol. 3, pp. 92–94.

¹¹⁷ Kaeppli 1964, p. 173.

¹¹⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 52^v, 60^v, 62^v.

¹¹⁹ O'Malley 1979, pp. 106, 155–158, 254–255.

¹²⁰ De Maio 1969, pp. 77–78; Ridolfi 1997, pp. 138, 338.

¹²¹ Timotheus de Totis de Mutina OP, *Oratio de funere Rev. p. ac dignissimi doct. mag. Ludovici de Ferrara, totius Ord. Praed. procuratoris dignissimi*, Eucharius Silber, Rome 1497.

¹²² AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 29^r.

Lucia da Narni is clear from several letters exchanged between Ercole and two of his Ferrarese contacts in Rome: Alessandro da Fiorano, one of his military officers, and Monsignor Felino Sandei, a secretary to Pope Alexander VI.¹²³

Toti had left Ferrara and gone to Rome toward the end of March 1498 and had asked Master General Torriani for permission to go to Viterbo to attempt to convince Lucia da Narni to flee to the Dominican convent of Santa Maria della Quercia in Viterbo and from there to Ferrara. In doing so, Toti had claimed to the master general that he was acting in accordance with the duke's instructions, so that Torriani willingly agreed and furnished him with a letter for Lucia. But nothing came of Toti's scheme, that he had concocted without the duke's knowledge and in collusion with Lucia's confessor, Martino da Tivoli, probably in order to ingratiate himself with Ercole. When the duke came to know of Toti's machinations, he had become extremely irate, for Toti's false claim that he had been acting on his behalf was not only reprehensible in its own right, but it had also further complicated the matter of Lucia's move to Ferrara, with which Ercole had become quite obsessed. Immediately upon Toti's return to Ferrara in mid-April, well before Torriani's instruction to Rafanelli to imprison Toti issued in mid-June, Ercole had already ordered Rafanelli to have Toti imprisoned and tortured in the dungeon of the Castello Estense and had decided to keep him there until Torriani's arrival in Ferrara for the general chapter due to be held there in June 1498.¹²⁴

The synopsis in Torriani's register of his letter of mid-June, whereby he ordered Rafanelli to imprison and torture Toti, gives the impression that at that time the master general was still uncertain about the

¹²³ Gandini 1901: see letters of Alessandro Fiorano to Duke Ercole (30 March 1498 and 6 April 1498), pp. 79–82; letter of Duke Ercole to Felino Sandei (16 April 1498), pp. 82–83. Gandini 1901 needs to be handled with caution, see the remarks in Forin 2001, p. 270.

¹²⁴ "Ricordandovi che essendo a Nui dispiaciuto che quello frate Thymoteo se sia andato a intrometere in questa pratica senza nro consentimento et volontà et essendo epso capitato qua a Ferrara lo havemo facto mettere in prigione ben però col. il mezo de lo Inquisitore qui suo superiore et pare che lhabia confessato che quella litera che gli fece il R.mo Generale directiva a Sor Lucia il non lhabia data a Lei ma a quello frate Martino suo confessore il quale è stato quello che sempre ha disturbato la cosa et per conseguenza pensamo che la andate de frate Thymoteo a Viterbo non habia potuto partorire alcuno bono fructo ma più presto disturbo... Epsò frate Thymoteo sarà tenuto cussi in prigione insino a la venuta qua de prefato R.mo Generale quale venirà qua al capitolo... Ferr. XVI Aprile 1498." Letter of Duke Ercole to Felino Sandei, Gandini 1901, p. 83.

entire affair, and especially about the veracity, or otherwise, of Toti's representations of his doings to him in Rome at the end of March as well as about Toti's whereabouts. It also gives the impression that he was totally unaware that what he was ordering Rafanelli to do, commencing with the incarceration and torture of Toti in the Castello Estense, had already taken place two months earlier in mid-April. But this is impossible, for when Torriani sent his letter to Rafanelli on 17 June he was actually in Ferrara and, indeed, had been there since the beginning of the general chapter on 10 June. Furthermore, on the very first day of the chapter there must have been a public discussion of the case, since Torriani approved a declaration made by the capitulars, surely in order to appease Ercole, that Toti had never been a member of the convent of San Domenico and had never even graduated master of theology. This was, of course, quite false, for we saw that Toti had been assigned to San Domenico since 1487 and had been appointed the regent master of its studium as recently as late 1497, but the declaration was subsequently vouched for by the convent's entire community.¹²⁵

It is evident, then, that with his letter of 17 June Torriani was not, in fact, asking Rafanelli to do anything at all. He was simply setting his seal of approval on what Rafanelli had already done at Duke Ercole's command. Perhaps the purpose of Torriani's letter was to enable him to obtain retroactively a measure of control of the situation. But it could be just as well that its purpose was to set at rest Rafanelli's conscience, which might well have been troubled by the canonically questionable course of action that Ercole had compelled him to follow. Be that as it may, Toti was still languishing in the ducal dungeon in late November 1498. By this time, however, Ercole was beginning to express his willingness to pardon him in response to both a plea from Lucia da Nani herself and Felino Sandei's advice that it would be expedient to do so.¹²⁶ This must have taken place by 26 April 1499, when the master general restored Toti's rights as a member of the Ferrarese convent.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ "Approbatur declaratio facta in capitulo generali Ferrarie celebrato 1498 quod frater Thimoteus de Mutina verus magister non est nec fuit unquam frater conventus S. Dominici de Ferrara interveniente consensu reverendorum provincialium et diffinitorum ipsius capituli requirentibus magistris, patribus et fratribus cum publica scriptura et subscriptione propria cuiuslibet eorum." (10 June 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 33^v.

¹²⁶ Gandini 1901: letter of Felino Sandei to Duke Ercole (10 November 1498), pp. 102–103; letter of Duke Ercole to Felino Sandei (25 November 1498), pp. 103–104.

¹²⁷ "Magister Thimoteus de Mutina restituitur filiationi conventus Ferrariensis, et camera eius eidem restituitur et precipitur presidenti sub pena suspensionis ut infra tres dies eam consignet..." (26 April 1499) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 40^v.

Later that year, on 26 September, Torriani finally transferred Toti from Ferrara by appointing him regent master in the convent of San Domenico in Ancona and we lose all trace of him thereafter.¹²⁸

Other than being burdened with the case of Toti, Rafanelli does not seem to have been involved at all in Duke Ercole's efforts to have Lucia da Narni settle in Ferrara, that finally took place in May 1499.¹²⁹ But this is not surprising, for like many of her contemporary court *beate* (the *sante vive*), such as Osanna Andreasi at that of the Gonzaga in Mantua and Colomba da Rieti at that of the Baglioni in Perugia, Lucia was fostered by the Congregation of Lombardy.¹³⁰ The fourth of the five examinations of her purported stigmata, held on 2 March 1500, was the first to take place in Ferrara, and it was at the insistence of the German Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer ('Institoris'). It is instructive that the inquisitor who took part in the proceedings was not Rafanelli, inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, but Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia, inquisitor of Bologna and a member of the Congregation, who at that time was working in Ferrara and, it has been claimed, was the duke's confessor.¹³¹ Furthermore, when Ercole built for Lucia the monastery of Santa Caterina da Siena, into which she moved with her community on 4 August 1501, it was next to the Congregation's convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli and entrusted to the spiritual care of its friars.

In September 1500, shortly after the end of his long term as prior of the convent of San Domenico, Rafanelli seems to have been especially involved with both his inquisitorial duties and the constant demands made upon him by Ercole. This is evident from a concession made to him at this time by the order's vicar general, Francesco Mei da Firenze, that allowed him to recruit another friar as an assistant.¹³² At this time, of course, the entire Ferrarese court was taken up with the preparations for the impending marriage of the duke's son, Alfonso,

¹²⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 42^v (26 September 1499).

¹²⁹ For an analysis of Ercole's possible motives see Folin 2001, pp. 282–285.

¹³⁰ On the fifteenth and sixteenth-century phenomenon of the court *beate* see Zarri 1990. The fact that they moved in the orbit of the Congregation of Lombardy, rather than the conventual provinces, has been overlooked by scholars and deserves further investigation.

¹³¹ A contemporary copy of Giovanni da Taggia's certificate attesting the authenticity of Lucia's stigmata is in AGOP, IV, liber GGG, fols. 332–335.

¹³² "Magister Joannes inquisitor conventus Ferrariensis potest eligere unum socium et electum mutare, clericum vel conversum et presbiter eximitur ab omnibus excepta notatione misse et celebratione... et hoc quia idem magister est propter officium (inquisitionis) et Ducem impeditus." (19 September 1500) AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 25^r.

to the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia Borgia. Late the following year, Rafanelli was himself sent as a member of the large and distinguished retinue that, under the leadership of Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, left Ferrara on 9 December 1501 to collect the bride. The party arrived in Rome on 23 December and the wedding was celebrated on 30 December by proxy, Alfonso being represented by his brother Ferrante. It finally left Rome, with the bride and her dowry of one-hundred thousand gold ducats, on the evening of 6 January 1502 and arrived in Ferrara on 2 February, when the marriage was immediately consummated. Rafanelli is listed among the members of the party,¹³³ and as having a personal following of four persons and three horses.¹³⁴ One wonders at the extent of his participation at the lavish and often bawdy functions, such as the *commedie*, *moresche* and *choree*, that had been held in the papal apartments for the entertainment of the Ferrarese,

Rafanelli left Ferrara permanently for Rome in mid-1503, after being appointed to the curial post of master of the sacred palace on 15 May.¹³⁵ Nonetheless, he continued to hold the post of inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena till 1514 when, as we have seen, his inability to function as such led to his replacement by Antonio Beccari. Rafanelli's predecessor as master of the sacred palace was Giovanni Nanni da Viterbo (usually known as Annio da Viterbo) who had held the post since 1499—after the elevation to the episcopate of Paolo Moneglia da Genova who will be considered in chapter 4—till his death on 13 November 1502.¹³⁶ V.M. Fontana (1666) claims that Rafanelli was appointed to the post as the result of the benevolence of Master General Vincenzo Bandello who had supposedly previously appointed him as his assistant. But Fontana is mistaken on both points, as he so evidently also is in his other claims that Rafanelli belonged to the Congregation of Lombardy and taught and served as the prior in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna.¹³⁷ Rather, it is certain that immediately after Annio's death the post of master of the sacred palace was first offered to the provincial of

¹³³ "Et de quelli che sono andati stare in Roma cum il Cardinale non ne faccio mentione salvo' che del vescovo de Adria el vescovo de Comachio et vescovo de Cervia et Mastro Zanetto inquisitore di Sancto Dominico in Ferrara." Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 278.

¹³⁴ "Maestro Zanetto inquisitore de San Domenego cavali 3, boche 4." Anon., *Diario ferrarese*, p. 310.

¹³⁵ The bull of appointment is extant in ASV, Arm. 29, t. 55, fol. 71^v.

¹³⁶ Buckard, *Liber notarum*, p. 339. On Annio da Viterbo see: Taurisano 1916, p. 49; Weiss 1962; Signorelli 1965; Fumagalli 1980; Fumagalli 1982.

¹³⁷ Fontana 1666, p. 442. Fontana has evidently confused Rafanelli with Eustachio Piazzesi da Bologna.

the Province of St. Dominic, Pietro Cavalcanti da Udine, who refused it in order to remain provincial, which he did till 1505.¹³⁸ When the post was offered to Rafanelli, probably in early 1503, Master General Bandello is unlikely to have had any part in the matter, since at that time he was absent from Rome and visiting the order's houses in France.¹³⁹ If anyone in the Dominican curia in Rome at the time was consulted about Rafanelli's appointment, it would have been Cajetan, who was procurator general and had been appointed by Bandello as his vicar and given wide-ranging powers over the Italian provinces of the order.¹⁴⁰

There is little need to enter into the details of the history and character of the office of master of the sacred palace in this book, for these have been discussed adequately elsewhere.¹⁴¹ It might be mentioned, though, that at the very beginning of Rafanelli's term of office the principal task of the master of the sacred palace was still that of being the regent master of the theological faculty of the Studium Romanae Curiae. But there is no trace whatsoever of any activity by Rafanelli in this capacity, and it is quite possible that it was precisely at that time that the Studium Romanae Curiae was finally suppressed by the Holy See, probably in order to bolster the lot of the faculty of theology of the University of Rome (that is, the Studium Urbis that had been founded by Pope Boniface VIII in 1303 and was also known as the Gymnasium Romanum and, more popularly, as the Sapienza). It was, then, with Rafanelli that the post of master of the sacred palace stopped being primarily an academic one and was transformed into an exclusively curial office. The possibility remains, however, that Rafanelli did act as the promoter of the very last Dominican to graduate master of theology from the Studium Romanae Curiae. The last known record of a Dominican being assigned to an academic post in the Studium Romanae Curiae is that of the appointment, made by the general chapter held in Rome in 1501, of Antonio da Caramanico as bachelor of the

¹³⁸ "Magister Petrus Cavalcantis absolvitur a provincialatu Sancti Dominici postquam acceptaverit officium magistri sacri palatii. Magister Sixtus de Venetiis instituitur prefate provincie vicarius tunc tantum si magister Petrus acceptaverit magisterium sacri palatii." (21 December 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 48^v. On Pietro dei Cavalcanti see Gargan 1971, pp. 134–135.

¹³⁹ See Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 82–94.

¹⁴⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 64^r.

¹⁴¹ See: Fontana 1663; Catalano 1751; Taurisano 1926; Creytens 1942; Tavuzzi 1997, pp. 75–78.

Sentences for the biennium 1501–1503.¹⁴² There is no doubt that Antonio da Caramanico did graduate master of theology, for in 1507 the general chapter of Pavia appointed him regent master in the studium of the convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome.¹⁴³ But as this could not have happened before the end of the academic year 1502–1503, it is likely that he did so only after Rafanelli's appointment as master of the sacred palace. It is probable, then, that Antonio da Caramanico was the very last Dominican to graduate master of theology *in sacro palatio*, and that Rafanelli was the last master of the sacred palace to act as the promoter and present the *insignia magistralia* at such a graduation.

Moreover, there is no evidence that, after the suppression of the Studium Romanae Curiae, Rafanelli taught theology in some other Roman school as, for example, his successor, Prierias, would do in the faculty of theology of the Sapienza during 1516–1522.¹⁴⁴ Rather, he seems to have limited himself to carrying out the routine chores associated with his office, such as the vetting of preachers and sermons at the papal liturgies and the censoring of books. Once again, there is little need to enter into the details of these tasks since they have been thoroughly dealt with by J.W. O'Malley and G.M. Blasio, who have discussed Rafanelli's conscientious, but not particularly remarkable, handling of these duties.¹⁴⁵ The intriguing suggestion has also been made that, as master of the sacred palace, Rafanelli must have been entrusted in 1508 with the task of vetting for orthodoxy Michaelangelo's project for the painting of the Sistine Chapel, but even its proponent readily concedes that there is no documentary basis for it.¹⁴⁶ Of greater interest is Rafanelli's participation in the juridical process held in Rome in 1511 occasioned by the bizarre heresy propagated by Pietro da Lucca in Mantua. Pietro, a Canon Regular of St. Augustine, had begun to preach that Jesus had not been conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary but in three drops of blood in her heart. It has been opined that this eccentric thesis might have been inspired by

¹⁴² "In sacro palacio ad legendum sentencias pro primo et secundo anno f. Antonium de Caramanico, quem post hoc tempus licenciamus ad magisterium." Kaeppli 1935, p. 294. Antonio da Caramanico had previously studied in both Padua and Pavia, see Gargan 1971, p. 161.

¹⁴³ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 70.

¹⁴⁴ Tavuzzi 1997, pp. 84–88.

¹⁴⁵ O'Malley 1979, pp. 19–20; Blasio 1988, pp. 50–51, 57.

¹⁴⁶ King 2003, pp. 61–62.

the physiological speculations of Averroes.¹⁴⁷ Whatever the case, Pietro's doctrine was immediately attacked by the Carmelite theologian Battista Spagnoli da Mantova who published a tract against it.¹⁴⁸ It also came forthwith to the attention of the Dominican inquisitor of Mantua, Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, who delated Pietro to the Holy See.

Pope Julius II entrusted the case to a commission of cardinals, Domenico Grimani and Antonio del Monte, who summoned both Pietro da Lucca and Domenico Pirri to Rome. Pietro protested that, although he had indeed preached the suspect thesis, he had never presented it as the truth but solely as an edifying, pious opinion. The two cardinals then decided to have the thesis examined by a commission of theologians and ordered Pietro not to preach it again, since it appeared to them temerarious and scandalous. They also instructed Domenico Pirri and the other members of his inquisitorial staff not to defame Pietro by labelling him prematurely a heretic. The theological commission assembled comprised thirteen Roman theologians, including four Dominicans: Rafanelli, master of the sacred palace; Cajetan, Dominican master general; Leonardo da Milano, prior of the convent of Santa Sabina;¹⁴⁹ Henry Jacobin, a minor penitentiary of St. Peter's Basilica.¹⁵⁰ During its deliberations the commission was addressed by one of Domenico Pirri's inquisitorial vicars, Girolamo Armellini da Faenza discussed in chapter 2. The members of the commission, with the single exception of an Augustinian friar, judged Pietro's thesis to be erroneous, scandalous and heretical, but absolved Pietro himself of formal heresy. The two cardinals accepted the conclusions of the commission that they then repropounded in the formal judgment (*sententia*), dated 22 July 1511, that they presented to Julius II and was published in Rome.¹⁵¹ Julius II then formally condemned the thesis as heretical in a bull dated 7 September 1511.¹⁵² It is interesting that Cajetan later explicitly discussed Pietro da Lucca's thesis in his commentary on the *Tertia pars*,

¹⁴⁷ Zambelli 1977, p. 511.

¹⁴⁸ Baptista de Mantua, *De parte corporis in qua conceptus est Christus*, Lyon 1516.

¹⁴⁹ See: MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 49, 55; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 140, 143; Rodocanachi 1898, p. 14; Berthier 1912, p. 450.

¹⁵⁰ See: MOPH, vol. 17, p. 244; BOP, vol. 4, p. 265; Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 339.

¹⁵¹ *Sententia contra dom Petrum de Luca qui novam Mantue predicavit heresim*, Rome 1511.

¹⁵² BOP, vol. 4, p. 268.

q. 31, a. 5, of Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* first published in 1523.¹⁵³ It was also mentioned by Leandro Alberti in the context of the praises lavished on Girolamo Armellini in *De viris illustribus* (1516, pub. 1517). The thesis seems to have had still some proponents even after its condemnation by Julius II, for Alberti remarks that only the previous year (1515) one of its adherents had been discovered in the Roman curia and condemned.¹⁵⁴

It is possible that Rafanelli played some part in the juridical process that was opened in Rome in 1514 against the celebrated German humanist and hebraist Johannes Reuchlin, but there is no documentary evidence for this.¹⁵⁵ Nor is there any trace of Rafanelli's equally likely participation at the opening sessions of the Fifth Lateran Council that began in Rome on 10 May 1512. Whatever the case, Rafanelli certainly continued to receive the monthly stipend of ten gold ducats due to him as master of the sacred palace till his death, which took place in Rome in mid-1515 at the probable age of seventy-two.¹⁵⁶ There seems to be no record of his final obsequies or of his place of burial. Two contemporary, posthumous mentions are to be found in the brief of Leo X appointing Prierias as his successor as master of the sacred palace in December 1515,¹⁵⁷ and in Alberti's *De viris illustribus*. As they are primarily concerned with his successor, they do not provide further information on Rafanelli himself. The praise lavished on him by Sebastian de Olmeda in his *Chronica* (1531) seems to indicate that he always exercised the office of master of the sacred palace in a decorous manner. Unfortunately, the several literary works, principally historical, mentioned by Olmeda as having been left by this former inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena seem to be no longer extant.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Thomas de Vio Caietanus, *In IIIa*, in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia*, vol. 11, Rome 1903, p. 328.

¹⁵⁴ Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^r.

¹⁵⁵ The standard account of the Reuchlin case is still Geiger 1871, but see also Overfield 1984, pp. 247–299.

¹⁵⁶ Taurisano 1916, p. 50.

¹⁵⁷ See above, note 72.

¹⁵⁸ "Fuit et cum his Lector Sacri Palatii qui dictus est magister Joannes de Ferraria, ecclesiae Romanae gratus, verboque et scripto famatus, historias gestaue majorum temporumque decursus etiam ethnicorum in promptu habens." Olmeda, *Chronica*, p. 183. The identification with Rafanelli first proposed by Reichert (MOPH, vol. 8, p. 431 n. 1) and repeated by Meersseman and Planzer (MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41 n. 1) of the Giovanni da Ferrara assigned by the general chapter of Ferrara 1498 bachelor of the Sentences in Paris for 1498–1499 is mistaken. The latter is most likely the Giovanni da Ferrara who in 1492 was permitted by Master General Torriani to leave the Congregation of Lombardy (AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 62^v), was allowed to live outside

4. *Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia, Inquisitor of Bologna 1494–1513*

The inquisitorial district of Bologna was the most important of those entrusted to the Congregation of Lombardy by 1474. It was also the district that had been committed to it the longest, for the convent of San Domenico in Bologna had been reformed as early as 1426 and was one of the founding houses of the Congregation in 1459. Indeed, the Bolognese convent was the centre of the movement of reform propagated by the Congregation throughout northern Italy during the Renaissance and was the habitual residence of its vicar general and his chancery. The convent of San Domenico was one of the most prestigious in the entire order, since its large conventual church contained the monumental tomb of the order's founder. Moreover, it was the site of an important studium generale, that was integrated in the theological faculty of the University of Bologna and attracted many graduate students from throughout the order. It possessed a remarkable library, that contained almost five-hundred volumes by the beginning of the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁹ This studium generale was the principal centre of the great Thomist revival of the fifteenth century. It boasted a succession of eminent professors and students, among whom are to be counted almost all the principal representatives of Renaissance Thomism: Pietro Maldura da Bergamo, Dominic of Flanders, Paolo Barbo da Soncino, Prierias, Cajetan, Francesco Silvestri, Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale. The studium generale of Bologna might well be considered the principal nursery of would-be-inquisitors of Renaissance Italy—and not only, for it would become even more so after the suppression of the studium generale in Pavia in 1531 and the promulgation of *Licet ab initio* in 1542 that established the Roman Inquisition, and remain such till the late-eighteenth-century suppressions of most local tribunals of that Inquisition.

Although the pious legend that St. Dominic himself was the first Friar Preacher to act as inquisitor in Bologna can be readily dismissed, it is probable that Dominicans first began to do so by the 1240s. The first Dominican whose presence as inquisitor in Bologna is documented

the order in 1493 (AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 68^r) and, perhaps not having gone to Paris at all, was assigned to the studium in Pavia in 1499 (AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 40^v). Similarly mistaken is probably R.F. Raspadori's identification with Rafanelli of a Giovanni da Ferrara who taught in the faculty of arts of the University of Ferrara in 1514–1515 (Raspadori 1991, p. 222).

¹⁵⁹ See Laurent 1943.

is Aldovrandino da Reggio, whose activities can be dated to 1273. We are fortunate to have a register of the inquisitorial activities conducted in Bologna during 1291–1310 that permits a reconstruction of the list of Aldovrandino's immediate successors: Guglielmo da Cremona, Florio da Vicenza, Guido Zorzi da Vicenza, Manfredo da Parma, Guido da Parma, Niccolò Tascheri da Bologna. But these are the same friars who are known to have been inquisitors at the same time in other places, such as Ferrara and Piacenza, so that it would be premature to consider them specifically Bolognese inquisitors. It is not known when the territory of the diocese of Bologna became a distinct inquisitorial district with its own inquisitor, and separate from such neighbouring districts as Ferrara, Piacenza and Parma, but it was certainly the case by the beginning of the fifteenth century. We also possess what appears to be a fairly reliable list of the inquisitors of Bologna during the Renaissance.¹⁶⁰ It is noteworthy how many of these had previously served, or were serving concurrently, as regent masters in San Domenico's studium generale and, moreover, how many rose to very prominent positions in the order. Of the eleven men who held the post of inquisitor of Bologna between 1474 and 1527 almost all had been previously regent masters in its studium generale and three became Dominican masters general: Bartolomeo Commazio da Bologna, Vincenzo Bandello di Castelnuovo, Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara.

The inquisitor of Bologna who had the longest tenure during the period 1474–1527 was Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia and, since his term of office of almost twenty years (1494–1513) straddled the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, he may be taken as representative. Giovanni di Giuliano Cagnazzo da Taggia entered the Dominican order in 1470.¹⁶¹ After completing his novitiate in the convent of San Domenico in Albenga he transferred to the convent of his native Taggia, Santa Maria della Misericordia, that had been founded in 1459 as a house of the Congregation of Lombardy.¹⁶² He is likely to have completed his initial studies in the Bolognese studium and to have been ordained priest

¹⁶⁰ Todeschini, *Catalogus inquisitorum* in AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 407^r.

¹⁶¹ At times Giovanni Cagnazzo has been confused with the almost homonymous Giovanni di Francesco da Taggia who was received in the convent of Savona, transferred to that of Taggia when it was founded in 1459, was ordained deacon in Bologna in 1466 (Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 155), founded the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Oveda in 1481, was to allowed to live privately due to poor health in 1488 (AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 240^v), and died in 1494 (Calvi, *Chronica*, pp. 120–122).

¹⁶² Calvi, *Chronica*, pp. 68, 128.

around 1476. He must have been an exceptional student, for already in 1477 he was assigned *studens formalis* in the Bolognese studium generale, without the interval of several years of apostolic work between ordination and graduate theological studies that was customary in the Congregation of Lombardy.¹⁶³ In 1481 the general chapter held in Rome appointed him master of studies in Bologna for the academic year 1483–1484.¹⁶⁴ He began to serve in this capacity on 3 September 1483 and was subsequently reappointed to the post for the following academic year, 1484–1485.¹⁶⁵ In mid-1489 Master General Gioacchino Torriani appointed him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1489–1491.¹⁶⁶ Cagnazzo's regular participation at this time as bachelor of the Sentences in the sessions of the council of the convent of San Domenico is recorded in its still-extant *Liber consiliorum*.¹⁶⁷ He graduated master of theology from the theological faculty of the University of Bologna and was aggregated a member of its *collegium doctorum* on 4 July 1494.¹⁶⁸ It is instructive that Cagnazzo's promoter at the examination that preceded his graduation was Domenico Pirri, who had been inquisitor of Bologna during 1485–1490 and was at the time inquisitor of Mantua.

In mid-1494, immediately after his magisterial graduation, Cagnazzo was appointed regent master in the Bolognese studium generale for the triennium 1494–1497, but continued in the post as well through the year 1497–1498.¹⁶⁹ The general chapter held in Ferrara in 1498 reappointed him to the post for a further academic year, 1498–1499.¹⁷⁰ During these five years, as well as performing his duties in the Dominican studium generale, he fully participated in the life of the theological faculty of the University of Bologna: he served as the faculty's dean during the first quarter of 1495 and the first quarter of 1497,¹⁷¹ and took part in

¹⁶³ *Moderatores*, fol. 4^v.

¹⁶⁴ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 362.

¹⁶⁵ *Moderatores*, fol. 4^v.

¹⁶⁶ "Fr. Iohannes de Tabia fit bachalarius loci fratri Archangeli de Brixia in conventu Bononiense cum gratiis pro anno immediate sequenti." (3 June 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 245^v.

¹⁶⁷ *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 24^{r-v} (18 September and 1 December 1489), 25^v (1 March 1491).

¹⁶⁸ Piana 1963, pp. 199–201.

¹⁶⁹ *Moderatores*, fol. 5^r.

¹⁷⁰ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 431.

¹⁷¹ Piana 1963, p. 269.

well over a dozen examinations of candidates for the master's degree.¹⁷² He was himself the promoter of the last magisterial candidate that he examined at this time, in April 1499: Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale, destined to become inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona a little later, in 1502.¹⁷³ Once again, his regular attendance at the meetings of San Domenico's conventual council throughout this period is recorded in its *Liber consiliorum*.¹⁷⁴

At the end of his Bolognese regency, Cagnazzo left Bologna and spent some six years in Ferrara, in the Congregation of Lombardy's convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli. At this time he is reputed to have been the confessor of Duke Ercole and in March 1500 took part in the first examination held in Ferrara of the purported stigmata of Lucia da Narni that he declared authentic.¹⁷⁵ By the beginning of the academic year 1505–1506, however, he was back in Bologna and serving as the theological faculty's vicedean and regularly taking part in examinations for the master's degree.¹⁷⁶ During the following academic year, 1506–1507, he also served once more as the regent master of the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico.¹⁷⁷ Thereafter, till March 1510, Cagnazzo continued attending magisterial graduations in the theological faculty and served once more as its dean during the third quarter of 1508.¹⁷⁸ He left Bologna once again, though, in mid-1510 and held the office of prior of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa during 1510–1512.¹⁷⁹

Cagnazzo returned to Bologna in late 1512 and returned as well to academic activities. He is recorded as taking part in examinations in the University's faculty of theology for the master's degree continuously from September 1512 to November 1520.¹⁸⁰ He appears also in the Bolognese convent's *Liber consiliorum* as attending the meetings of its council from mid-1515 till April 1520.¹⁸¹ In early 1516 Cagnazzo published in Bologna a vast encyclopaedia of moral theology and canon

¹⁷² Piana 1963, pp. 202–209, 213.

¹⁷³ Piana 1963, p. 215.

¹⁷⁴ *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 28^{r-v} (October 1495 and 28 February 1499).

¹⁷⁵ See above, note 131.

¹⁷⁶ Piana 1963, pp. 245–246.

¹⁷⁷ *Moderatores*, fol. 6^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁸ Piana 1963, pp. 247, 253–255, 272; Piana 1969, p. 206.

¹⁷⁹ Vigna 1888, vol. 1, p. 100.

¹⁸⁰ Piana 1969, pp. 210, 212–213, 215–218, 221–222.

¹⁸¹ *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 35^v (1515), 36^r (8 March 1516), 36A^v (October 1518), 36^v (10 February 1519), 37^{r-v} (11 March and 23 April 1520).

law, the *Summa summarum quae Tabiena dicitur*, the result of many years' labours, which was clearly intended to rival and compete with Prierias' celebrated *Summa summarum quae Silvestrina dicitur* published a little earlier, in 1514.¹⁸² By this time, Cagnazzo had attained among his brethren of the Order of Preachers the status of a venerable and much admired elderly academic as is evident from the references to him made by both Alberto da Castello in the *Chronica brevissima* (1516),¹⁸³ and by Leandro Alberti in *De viris illustribus* (1517).¹⁸⁴ An otherwise undocumented account in Niccolò Calvi's chronicle of the convent of Taggia would have Cagnazzo called to Rome toward the end of his life by Pope Leo X to dispute with some Lutheran heretics imprisoned there. After succeeding in convincing these to renounce their errors and abjure he was asked by the pope what benefices he desired as a reward, to which he responded that the only recompense he needed was the pope's blessing.¹⁸⁵ Be that as it may, Leandro Alberti tells us in *Descrittione di tutta Italia* (1550) that Cagnazzo died in 1521.¹⁸⁶

For almost twenty years of this life dedicated overwhelmingly to academic pursuits, as well as through the interludes spent in Ferrara (1499–1505) and as prior in Genoa (1510–1512), Cagnazzo held the post of inquisitor of Bologna. He was first appointed to it in succession to Girolamo Borselli in 1494, while he was regent master, and held it till 1513, when he was replaced by Girolamo Fantoni da Vigevano. Cagnazzo seems to have inherited an inquisitorial post that had not suffered from neglect as was at times the case elsewhere. It was endowed with a solid *domus inquisitionis* where a previous inquisitor, Pietro da Barcellona, had a new jail built as recently as 1452, to which were added some cells

¹⁸² See Michaud-Quantin 1962, p. 104.

¹⁸³ "Floret insuper magister Ioannes de Tabia Genuensis, vir religiosus et apprime doctus, qui Bononie multis annis gratiosissime regens fuit in sacra theologia et heretice pravitate inquisitor, et in multis solemnibus conventibus lector. Hic summam de casibus amplissimam compilavit, opus valde insigne et utile confessoribus et animarum saluti consulentibus." See Creyten 1960, p. 300.

¹⁸⁴ "Ne praetermiseris illum alium reverendum seniore litterarum et bene litteratum Ioannem Tabiensem cum opere suo illo praeclarissimo Tabienna nuncupato (vulgo summa casuum dicta). Quae nunc in tua Bononiensi urbe proceditur. Nosti hominem, eo quod bis praefuit Gymnasio Bononiensi et hereticorum censor multo tempore fuerat, vir bonus, doctus, et moribus ornatus. Leander: Nosco virum venerandum et eum amo, veneror, et observo, ob eius ingentes virtutes." Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 151^{r-v}.

¹⁸⁵ Calvi, *Chronica*, pp. 130–131.

¹⁸⁶ Alberti, *Descrittione*, fol. 11^r.

specifically for women in 1472 and further enlarged in 1482.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, another of Cagnazzo's recent predecessors, Corrado di Germania, had revived the local Society of the Holy Cross in 1451, after more than a century of being dormant.¹⁸⁸

It was the members of the Society of the Holy Cross, however, that caused Cagnazzo the first difficulties he encountered as inquisitor. Soon after his appointment as inquisitor, in September 1494, the members of the Society decided, without consulting him, to amalgamate with a pious confraternity also based in the convent of San Domenico, the *Compagnia dei Battuti di San Domenico*. Cagnazzo objected that by doing so the members of the Society had perverted its nature and had violated the vow of obedience they had made to him as inquisitor and declared null the union of the two entities. The members of the Society refused to obey him, however, and responded by withholding from him the use of the inquisitorial fund that was administered by them. It took Cagnazzo almost three years, and a protracted legal suit before a papal commissary and the episcopal vicar of Bologna, to regain control over his recalcitrant *crucesignati*, as well as the money, in August 1497.¹⁸⁹ The dispute was then definitively settled by Pope Alexander VI with a bull that stressed the obedience that members of the Society owed the inquisitor.¹⁹⁰

Cagnazzo's properly inquisitorial activities, however, do not seem to have been all that much more intense, or more the principal focus of his attention, than those of his contemporaries, Madei in Asti and Rafanelli in Ferrara. In 1497 he had arrested and put on trial a physician, Gabriele da Salò, who openly proclaimed extreme heresies: he denied the divinity of Christ and claimed that Christ had been crucified for his misdeeds and sins, claimed that Christ had been begotten by natural congress between Joseph and Mary, denied the eucharistic presence, claimed that Christ's purported miracles were achieved through the influence of the heavenly bodies and that Christianity would soon end. At the conclusion of the trial Cagnazzo condemned Gabriele da Salò to be burned at the stake. Gabriele da Salò went unscathed, however, for he had close connections with the Bentivoglio who ordered Cagnazzo to release him, with the threat that otherwise they would come and free

¹⁸⁷ D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 393, 396, 402.

¹⁸⁸ D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, p. 394.

¹⁸⁹ See Meersseman 1951, pp. 75–76, 163–165.

¹⁹⁰ BOP, vol. 8, p. 113.

him by force. Cagnazzo then relented, released Gabriele da Salò, and absolved him after the imposition of light penances.¹⁹¹

In 1498 Cagnazzo condemned a purported witch, Gentile Cimitri, to be burned at the stake. This seems to have been considered an exceptional event that, accordingly, attracted considerable attention at the time—it is reported in almost every contemporary Bolognese chronicle.¹⁹² Prierias, who in 1498 was the regent master in San Domenico and seems to have assisted Cagnazzo with the trial, was certainly present at her execution, and he would still vividly recall the event more than twenty years later.¹⁹³ Now, Cagnazzo's predecessors as Bolognese inquisitor had occasionally been involved with cases of sorcery: Gaspare Sighicelli da Bologna, inquisitor during 1443–1449, absolved and imposed light penances on a Marco Mattei da Gesso who confessed taking part in the invocation of demons and Corrado di Germania, inquisitor during 1450–1455, condemned a priest, Niccolò da Verona, also for invoking demons.¹⁹⁴ Girolamo Parlasca da Como, inquisitor during 1465–1466, condemned a Servite friar, Giovanni Faelli da Verona, for invoking demons, profaning the sacraments, performing malevolent magic and assorted heresies.¹⁹⁵ Faelli must have been let off lightly by Parlasca, for he was brought up again on similar charges, with the addition of that of running a brothel staffed by demons *succubi*, by Simone da Novara, inquisitor during 1468–1474.¹⁹⁶ But all these cases represented instances of ritual magic (necromancy in its widest sense) and, indeed, all the accused seem to have been clerics who might well be considered members of what R. Kieckhefer has aptly described as a “clerical underworld” given to attempts at conjuring and dominating demons for such motives as discovering treasure or gaining a woman's compliance.¹⁹⁷ It should be noticed that Dominicans themselves do not seem to have been extraneous to this underworld: there are several cases of Dominicans being condemned by the order's general chapters toward the end of the fifteenth century for invoking demons and who, when apprehended, were punished by nothing more

¹⁹¹ Ghirardacci, *Historia di Bologna*, p. 293; Borselli, *Cronica*, p. 116.

¹⁹² Ghirardacci, *Historia di Bologna*, pp. 294–295; Fileno della Tuata, *Cronaca*, vol. 1, fol. 337^v; Floriano degli Ubaldini, *Cronaca*, fol. 713^v.

¹⁹³ Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 202.

¹⁹⁴ D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, p. 402.

¹⁹⁵ Piana 1963, p. 282.

¹⁹⁶ Borselli, *Cronica*, p. 100.

¹⁹⁷ Kieckhefer 1989, p. 153; Kieckhefer 1997, p. 4.

drastic than expulsion from the order.¹⁹⁸ Even the chapters of the Congregation of Lombardy itself often felt the need to command that its friars were not to read the works of the necromancers or practise the noxious (*damnosa*) art of alchemy.¹⁹⁹ But in all this there was no trace of the defining elements of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft that will be considered in chapter 5.

The case of Gentile Cimitri does seem, however, to have been somewhat different in kind, for it did not involve merely the invocation of demons for the acquisition of some personal benefit, but also a subservient pact with the devil and the performance of malevolent magic (*maleficium*) at his beckoning. Gentile Cimitri, the wife of the notary Alessandro Ranieri, was no ignorant peasant woman. She was well connected with the Bentivoglio and enjoyed especially the friendship and patronage of Ginevra, wife of the *signore* of Bologna Giovanni Bentivoglio. Ginevra had taken Cimitri under her wing and had even contributed a dowry so that one of her daughters could marry and arranged for two other daughters to be settled in monasteries. This was because Cimitri had a reputation as a proficient healer, and Ginevra had even sent her to Mantua when her daughter Laura, wife of Giovanni Gonzaga marquis of Vescovado, had been ill. Cimitri was called upon again to cure a son of Giovanni Bentivoglio and, after succeeding in healing him, people began suspecting her of having caused the illness to begin with.

Cimitri was then arrested and put on trial by Cagnazzo, whereupon she confessed to having been a witch for over twenty years and to have caused the illness and, at times, the death of many people, especially several Bentivoglio. She claimed to have been introduced to her art by some Franciscan friars and then to have dedicated her body and soul to the devil in order to obtain two graces from him: the acquisition of wealth and favour with the rich and powerful. The devil had replied that he could give her neither of these, but that he could give her the means of causing illness and curing it so that thereby she could fulfil her two wishes. Cimitri accepted the devil's offer and thereafter regularly paid him homage and adored him as divine. When she attended Mass

¹⁹⁸ See, for example, the decision of the chapter held in Le Mans in 1491: "Quia frater Laurencius de Durlendio provincie Francie est notorius demonum invocator multisque criminibus a iuventute implicatus et carcerum, nescitur qua arte, infractor, eciam incorrigibilis et vagus existens, precipimus omnibus provincialibus, ad quorum manus devenerit, quatenus ipsum habitu ordinis exuant." MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 414-415.

¹⁹⁹ Creytens and D'Amato 1961, p. 294.

and the priest was reading the Gospel and at the elevation of the Host she would mutter “you are lying through your throat” and then offer candles to the devil at the altar dedicated to the Archangel Michael. She claimed to have seventy-two demons at her beck and call, in the first place Lucifer, and to have gone often to dance naked at night in the devil’s honour in the garth of the church of San Francesco. She used parts of human corpses that she had disinterred to prepare the powders that she employed to cause illness and to heal. While incarcerated she demonstrated to Cagnazzo her supernatural powers by predicting who would later call upon him and what they would say to him. When she was finally executed she met her end serenely, quite convinced that with the devil’s aid no harm could come to her.

Perhaps Cimitri might not have been treated so severely if members of Bologna’s ruling family had not been among her purported victims; the social dynamics of her case were the exact opposite of those that had saved Gabriele da Salò. Be that as it may, while her case was one of diabolic witchcraft, it lacked several, perhaps the most important, of the elements that comprise its stereotype. There is no mention of a sabbat or of nocturnal flight to it. Furthermore, it does not seem that Cagnazzo presumed that Cimitri belonged to a supposed sect of the witches and, accordingly, she was not interrogated about accomplices. Her trial, then, did not unleash a wider witch-hunt; nor does Cagnazzo, despite almost two decades as Bolognese inquisitor, seem to have been involved in any such at any time.

CHAPTER FOUR

SURVEILLANTS OF MINORITIES

1. *Freethinkers and Dissenters*

Renaissance Italy was not a land of heretics. There were, of course, occasional freethinkers, especially among the radical Aristotelians who taught natural philosophy in the faculties of arts of the universities. These often toyed with ideas that inquisitors found perturbing: atheism, the mortality of the human soul, the denial of miracles and divine providence, the purely human character of religions including Christianity, magical themes. But they usually did so with much-publicized, emphatic declarations—sincere or otherwise—that they were doing so solely in a hypothetical, speculative manner and that the truth on these matters was to be found undoubtedly in the teachings of the Catholic faith. Their coy intellectual daring was accompanied often by a generous dose of anticlericalism—aimed, in the first place, against the friars, whom they generally referred to as the *cucullati*, the ‘hooded ones’, by which they meant to allude not so much to the friars’ cowls as to their allegedly closed minds. We have seen, in chapter 2, an extreme example of such as these in the Tiberio Russelliano who so irritated and antagonized, and ultimately had the better of, the inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, Girolamo Armellini da Faenza.

A far more significant example is provided by Pietro Pomponazzi who in 1516, when he was professor of natural philosophy in the University of Bologna, quickly drew the attention of the inquisitor of Bologna, Eustachio Piazzesi da Bologna, with the claim that Aristotle had taught the mortality of the human soul. The case is certainly arresting, for despite the efforts of the inquisitor of Bologna and his vicars, such as Giovanni Torfanini, and even those of Prierias, at the time master of the sacred palace in Rome, Pomponazzi came through it quite unscathed. He managed this by pointing out, in a rather provocative manner, that the thesis was also held by the most eminent Dominican theologian of the time, Cardinal Cajetan, and, especially, by adroitly securing the benign intervention of one of his former students who

by then had become inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona, Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale. But the case of Pomponazzi has been already the object of ample scholarly attention and its unfolding has been reconstructed adequately.¹ There is little need to consider it once again here.

Theological dissenters were also, at times, the objects of inquisitorial concern. These were quickly brought to heel, as with the Pietro da Lucca discussed in chapter 2, whose bizarre, albeit pious, theological speculations aroused the indignation of the inquisitor of Mantua, Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, and the Gabriele da Salò, considered in the same chapter, whose scandalous heterodoxies were immediately targeted by the inquisitor of Bologna, Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia. But, all in all, such as these were little more than momentary nuisances to inquisitors during the Renaissance. Of greater concern to inquisitors were the two principal groups of religious outcasts of Renaissance Italy: the Waldensians, and the Jews and purported Judaizers. This chapter will focus, then, on inquisitors whose principal task was their surveillance.

2. *The Waldensians*

By 1474 the various heterodox movements whose threat had first induced the popes at the beginning of the thirteenth century to entrust inquisitorial activities in northern Italy to the Dominican order had been almost completely extirpated. Almost completely, because while Cathars, Patarines, Dulcinians and Fraticelli of various hues had long since disappeared as significant, popular phenomena, the Waldensians, an evangelical movement that had first emerged around 1170 as the Poor of Lyons founded by a certain Waldo (or Valdès), still survived, isolated in their remote mountain valleys of western Piedmont (the valleys of the Cottian Alps) as well as in the valleys of the Dauphinese Alps, in the south-east of present-day France.² Throughout the fourteenth century and during the first three quarters of the fifteenth, the Waldensians continued to be the object of sporadic inquisitorial attention. The history of this continuing, although only episodic, persecu-

¹ See Tavuzzi 1995 and Tavuzzi 1997, pp. 97–104.

² For a general history of the Waldensians see Audisio 1999.

tion, that resulted in the gradual contraction of the geographical distribution of the movement, has been traced already.³

The northern-Italian Waldensian communities still in existence by mid-fifteenth century were concentrated in the Alpine valleys to the south-west of Turin (especially Val Chisone and Val Pellice) and, moving further south, to the west of Saluzzo, almost at the source of the Po river. Accordingly, politically they were to be found principally within the borders of the domains of the dukes of Savoy and within the small, independent enclave represented by the marquisate of Saluzzo. Ecclesiastically, they fell largely within the jurisdiction of the then vast diocese of Turin,⁴ and inquisitorially they lay mostly within the wide-ranging district of Savigliano, Saluzzo, Mondovì, Alba and Acqui which was entrusted to the conventual friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The Waldensian communities on the western side of the Alps, in the Dauphiné, fell within the vast inquisitorial district comprising the dioceses of Vienne, Grenoble, Embrun and Gap, which was entrusted to inquisitors drawn from the Franciscan order.⁵

Some of the late-fifteenth-century and early-sixteenth-century inquisitors of Savigliano are known to have conducted witch trials. The inquisitor of Savigliano from 1495 to 1502, Vito Beggiami da Savigliano, is recorded as doing so in the small villages of Rifreddo and Gambasca, to the west of Saluzzo, during late 1495.⁶ Yet the primary object of their inquisitorial surveillance was undoubtedly the Waldensians. It seems though, that, when left to their own devices and not goaded into action by secular or ecclesiastical authorities, by mid-fifteenth century the inquisitors of Savigliano had, all in all, acquiesced in a comparatively tolerant stand toward Waldensians—in effect a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy whereby suspected Waldensian communities were left more or less in peace as long as they conformed externally to Catholic devotional practices.

The list of the inquisitors of Savigliano compiled by Casimiro Turletti in 1879, that commences with Oberto Benzi da Chieri (inquisitor 1267–1271), includes most of the inquisitors known to have been active in the persecutions of Waldensians in northern Italy during the

³ For the ongoing, fourteenth and early-fifteenth-century persecution of Waldensians in Piedmont see Merlo 1977, for that in the Dauphiné see Marx 1914.

⁴ The vast medieval diocese of Turin was divided in 1519 by Pope Leo X, see Cairaghi 1979.

⁵ See Marx 1914, pp. 10–11.

⁶ See Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004.

fourteenth century (Tommaso da Cherasco, Pietro da Ruffia, Antonio Pavonio, Antonio da Settimo) and the first half of the fifteenth (Giacomo Buronzo, Bartolomeo Cervere).⁷ Some of these inquisitors, such as Pietro Cambiano da Ruffia (d. 1365), Antonio Pavonio da Chieri (d. 1374) and Bartolomeo Cervere da Savigliano (d. 1466), lost their lives at the hands of the Waldensians in their pursuance of the *negotium fidei*.⁸ This lent an aura of martyrdom, and accordingly of sanctity, to the office of inquisitor of Savigliano—no doubt to the great chagrin of the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy, for the inquisitors of Savigliano were all conventual friars. The inquisitor of Savigliano at the beginning of our period, Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano who held the post for almost thirty years, from 1467 till his death in 1495, enjoyed already within his lifetime a reputation for holiness.⁹ Be that as it may, nothing is known of Taparelli's inquisitorial activities, let alone of his prosecutions of Waldensians, if any. I shall turn, then, to two inquisitors who were not titulars of the inquisitorial district of Savigliano, but of smaller districts that were carved from it at different times within our period, and who, moreover, were the principal Dominican protagonists of the two major episodes of persecutions of Waldensians that took place in northern Italy during the Renaissance.

3. *Biagio Berra da Mondovì, Inquisitor of Mondovì 1471–1513*

Biagio Berra was born in Mondovì around 1430 in a numerous family originating from Bastia near Mondovì. The earliest documented reference to him shows that by 1455 he was a priest and a member of the convent of San Domenico in Mondovì, that belonged to the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1456 his father, Manfrino, left him a substantial legacy of both land and money and, as well, made sure in his will that Biagio Berra's several siblings would look after his material needs and even obey him. The general chapter held in Siena in 1462, that referred to him in its Acts as *Blazius de Monteregali*, assigned him bachelor of the

⁷ Turletti 1879, vol. 2, p. 333.

⁸ Bartolomeo Cervere, Pietro Cambiano and Antonio Pavonio were beatified by Pope Pius IX in 1853, 1856 and 1868 respectively. This deserves further investigation, for their beatification seem to have represented an act of protest on the part of the Holy See at the policy of religious tolerance introduced in the kingdom of Sardina by King Charles Albert in 1848.

⁹ Aimone Taparelli was beatified by Pope Pius IX in 1856.

Sentences in the studium generale situated in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the two academic years 1462–1463 and 1463–1464, and it is likely that he graduated master of theology from the theological faculty of the University of Pavia some time thereafter, certainly by 1471 at the very latest.¹⁰ Whatever the case, by 1468 he was the prior of the convent of Mondovì, and, perhaps, was already assisting the vicar of the bishop of Mondovì in inquisitorial tasks.¹¹

Biagio Berra began his inquisitorial career very early indeed, for there is a brief of Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484) appointing him such in 1471.¹² But this is a puzzling document, for, in addition to misconstruing his name, it fails to mention the location where he was meant to exercise his office. Later documents, dating from 1487, tell us, however, that he had been first commissioned by Sixtus IV, the Dominican master general Martial Auribelli, and the Cardinal of San Clemente (Roberto Roverella, Archbishop of Ravenna, d. 1476) to proceed as inquisitor against the Waldensians.¹³ In June 1474 he was the prior of the convent of Mondovì,¹⁴ a post that he perhaps lost in November, as the result of the reform of the convent ordered by Master General Leonardo Mansueti at that time.¹⁵ Certainly he was no longer prior by August of the following year when the master general confirmed the concession that had been made to him by his successor as prior, of the use of a house that he had built at his own expense in the vicinity of the convent.¹⁶ Meanwhile, though, the master general had appointed

¹⁰ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 285. There is, however, no mention of Biagio Berra in the extant documentation of the University of Pavia reproduced in Negruzzo 1995.

¹¹ See Comino 2002, pp. 49–50.

¹² BOP, vol. 3, p. 487. Biagio Berra appears in this brief as *Blasius de Bonis*, but it is possible that this is a misreading made by the compilers of BOP.

¹³ The information appears in the bull of Pope Innocent VIII of 27 April 1487 committing to Alberto Cattaneo the direction of the crusade against the Waldensians. The bull is reproduced in Morland 1658 and in Chevalier 1890. My references are to the edition in Chevalier 1890.

¹⁴ “Magistro Blasio de Uberris priori Montis Regalis fuit concessum ut exigent centum libras pro prioribus de pecunia dicti loci a domine Iohanne Riccio...” (7 July 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 183^r.

¹⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 191^r.

¹⁶ “Magister Blasius Berre conventus Montis Regalis qui dicitur habuisse a priore et fratribus sui conventus concessionem cuiusdam domus, sive prope fornacem dicti conventus, ita ut de ipsa disponeat ad libitum quamdiu viveat, ex eo quod ipsam domum edificavit propriis sumptibus, et multa alia bona fecit conventui, prout dicitur continere in publico instrumento, habuit confirmationem dicte concessionis et dicti instrumenti inquantum hec sint consona iuri et rationi...” (8 August 1475) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 199^r.

him in December 1474 inquisitor of the diocese of Mondovì, given the continual absence of the titular inquisitor—presumably Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano, the then inquisitor of the entire district of Savigliano, Saluzzo, Mondovì, Alba and Acqui. The further concession that he was to continue the inquisitorial cases that he had already initiated in the absence of the official inquisitor, indicates that he had been acting as such even before this and, probably, that it was precisely in Mondovì that he had functioned as inquisitor since 1471.¹⁷

By May 1475 Biagio Berra must have left Mondovì, for he was allowed by the master general to stay at that time with the bishop of Turin, Giovanni di Campesio.¹⁸ A little over a year later, in mid-July 1476, he was permitted to be in attendance on a regular basis at the court of Duchess Iolanda of Savoy, whose confessor he had become, as well as to exercise his ministry, including perhaps inquisitorial tasks, at the courts of other, unspecified secular lords and bishops.¹⁹ Biagio Berra's movements become difficult to follow at this point, for the duchess of Savoy had been abducted in late June of that year by the duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold, and imprisoned in Rouvres in Burgundy, where she remained until October when she managed to escape, returned to Chambery in Savoy in December 1476 and by June 1477 was back in Piedmont.²⁰ Of course it might be that Biagio Berra's request to attend her court had been sent to the master general some time before her abduction so that, when the master general's permission eventually arrived, it was of no use, and he simply stayed put wherever he was. On the other hand, since it seems that Iolanda's imprisonment was not particularly rigorous, it is not unreasonable to surmise that her confessor might have been allowed to call on her in Rouvres, and the very fact that Biagio Berra felt compelled to ask the master general's permission to attend upon her might imply that he was planning to embark on a journey somewhat out of the ordinary. Be all that as it

¹⁷ "Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis fuit substitutus inquisitor in dyocesi Montis Regalis... in absentia inquisitoris principalis, ita quod processus ab eum incoatos in absentia principalis inquisitoris prosequi..." (12 December 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 194^v.

¹⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 197^r.

¹⁹ "Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis qui est confessor illustrissime ducisse Sabaudie potest ire ad suum beneplacitum ad curiam suam et aliorum dominorum tam ecclesiasticorum quam secularium et manere in obsequium eorum..." (16 July 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 398^r.

²⁰ On Iolanda of Savoy see: Ménabréa 1859, Colombo 1894, Daviso di Charvensod 1035, Brocard 1999.

may, he certainly was not in attendance on her in March and April 1477 when he was in Cuneo and, after rapid trials, consigned four women to the secular arm to be burned, probably on charges of witchcraft.²¹

One wishes one knew far more about Biagio Berra's dealings with Iolanda of Savoy. As early as 1465 she had assumed the regency of the duchy of Savoy since her husband, Duke Amadeus IX, was both epileptic and simple-minded and, thus, unable to govern. At his death in 1472, she continued to act as regent on behalf of her seven-year-old son, Duke Philibert I, and would do so till her death in Moncrivello in Piedmont in late October 1478. In January 1476 she unleashed the first systematic persecution of Waldensians in northern Italy of the second half of the fifteenth century. Perhaps Biagio Berra, as her confessor, played some role in this. It has been suggested, however, that it was the result of the machinations of another Dominican friar, Giovanni Andrea da Aquapendente, who after visiting Val Lucerna (as Val Pellice was then known) in 1475, and allegedly finding it pullulating with Waldensians, turned to the local podestà, Antonio di Campiglione, for help in repressing them.²² When the podestà proved uncooperative, Giovanni Andrea complained to Duchess Iolanda who subsequently issued an appropriate edict on 23 January 1476 and dispatched an armed force to accomplish the task, without lasting results though.²³

Whatever might have been the degree of Biagio Berra's involvement in the persecutions of 1476, during the next few years he was taken up with a variety of tasks. In May 1478 he was made responsible for a small Dominican house founded as a dependency of the convent of Mondovì in the village of Peveragno.²⁴ Then, in June 1481, he attended the Dominican general chapter held in Rome as a delegate (*diffinitor*) of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.²⁵ The general chapter accepted for the order a small foundation in the village of Garesio with the hope

²¹ The executed were Angelina Mazza and Antonia Nanda on 24 March, Antonina wife of Rosso on 22 March, and Audisia wife of Guglielmo Dalmazzo on 26 April, Gabotto 1888, pp. 45–46.

²² Giovanni Andrea da Aquapendente does not seem to have been an inquisitor. He was a friar of the convent of Saluzzo and was its prior in 1459, 1465 and 1474, see Mangione 2005, pp. 161, 287, 293.

²³ The oldest account of this episode is in Rorengo 1649, pp. 20–25. It was utilized by Comba 1901, vol. 1, pp. 368–371, from whom all other historians of the Waldensians have drawn. The edict is reproduced in its entirety in Borelli, *Editti*, p. 260.

²⁴ “Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis fuit factus vicarius Piperagni.” (22 May 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 32^r.

²⁵ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 353.

that it would eventually become a full convent and dedicated it to St. Vincent Ferrer.²⁶ A few days after the chapter, Master General Salvo Cassetta confirmed Biagio Berra as vicar of the house in Peveragno and gave him similar authority over the new foundation in Garesio.²⁷ At the same time he was permitted to set off on another of his rounds to exercise his ministry at the courts of various local lords.²⁸ Presumably during all this time he continued as inquisitor in charge of the subdistrict of Mondovì, for we still find him designated such in the records of the chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr that he attended in Savigliano in May 1483.²⁹

Certainly, roughly at this time, mid-1483, he was active as inquisitor against the Waldensians in Val Lucerna, where he conducted the trial of a prominent Waldensian pastor (*barba*), Philippe Nazaret, whom the other Waldensians were believed to consider their “bishop”.³⁰ Indeed, it might even have been this trial that sparked the great Waldensian rebellion that commenced later in 1483 in Val Lucerna and spread rapidly throughout western Piedmont and even to the Waldensian communities on the western side of the Alps, in the Dauphiné. Whatever the case, Biagio Berra was among the first to suffer from the rebellion, for the Waldensians of Val Perosa (as Val Chisone was then known) pillaged and razed to the ground a house that he had there and killed one of his servants.³¹ This did not interfere, however, with his other inquisitorial activities, for in 1485 he put on trial and condemned eight women and one man for witchcraft in Peveragno.³²

The Waldensian revolt of 1483 reawakened official, ecclesiastical pre-occupation with their continuing presence, so that in 1487 Jean Baile, the archbishop of Embrun in the Dauphiné, appealed to Pope Inno-

²⁶ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 369. Pope Innocent VIII’s brief approving the foundation on 31 January 1488 is in BOP, vol. 4, pp. 33–35; it was reformed and annexed to the Congregation of Lombardy on 19 September 1517, see the brief of Leo X in BOP, vol. 4, p. 347.

²⁷ “Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis confirmatur in vicariatu loci Piperagni... et sibi committitur cura loci Garesii diocesis Albensis sicut habet super loci Piperagni...” (19 June 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 183^r.

²⁸ “Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis habet licentiam accedendi ad curias quorumcumque dominorum et servendi ecclesiis...” (19 June 1481) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 183^r.

²⁹ AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81.

³⁰ Marx 1914, p. 195.

³¹ Bull of Innocent VIII of 27 April 1487, Chevalier 1890, p. 44.

³² Comino 2002, p. 50, 53–54.

cent VIII. The pope eventually responded by launching a “crusade” against the Waldensians and entrusted on 27 April 1487 its direction to an apostolic commissioner in the person of Alberto Cattaneo, archdeacon of Cremona, who devised a two-pronged campaign, assaulting the Waldensians in the Dauphinese Alps and the Cottian Alps. The story of Cattaneo’s anti-Waldensian campaign of 1487–1488, that met with only partial success, has been told often and does not need to be recapitulated here, for our interest in it is limited to Biagio Berra’s studied lack of involvement in it.³³ At the very beginning of the campaign Cattaneo sent his notary to invite Biagio Berra to join him in the enterprise. But Biagio Berra’s response was far from enthusiastic: he failed to turn up and, instead, in July 1487 sent Cattaneo a letter in which he begged to be excused because of illness.³⁴ A further epistolary exchange between Cattaneo and the vicar general of the diocese of Turin, that took place in August 1487, shows that relations between Cattaneo and Biagio Berra became increasingly strained and it has been suggested that this was due to jurisdictional rivalry, that Biagio Berra resented Cattaneo’s intrusion into his inquisitorial district.³⁵ It is just as likely, however, that with the previous experience of having his house destroyed and a servant killed, Biagio Berra’s lack of cooperation was motivated by pusillanimity as much as anything else. Whatever might have been the case with Biagio Berra’s motives for failing to assist Cattaneo, his behaviour was considered to be indicative of bad will by Pope Innocent VIII, who accordingly deprived him of his inquisitorial title and functions in late October 1487.³⁶ In early January 1488 Innocent VIII reiterated his decision that henceforth Cattaneo, whose campaign was to be over by mid-1488, was to proceed alone against the Waldensians and without any reference to Biagio Berra.³⁷

It was surely Biagio Berra’s failure to live up to the demands made of him by Cattaneo, and ultimately to the expectations of the pope himself, that led the Dominican master general, Gioacchino Torriani, to summon him to his presence in Savigliano in late December

³³ Accounts of the campaign, with varying degrees of accuracy and scholarly impartiality, are to be found, for example, in Morland 1658, Muston 1851, Wylie 1880, Comba 1901. The best detailed account is Marx 1914; a recent, summary account is in Cameron 1984, pp. 30–32.

³⁴ Marx 1914, p. 68.

³⁵ Marx 1914, pp. 68, 73.

³⁶ Marx 1914, pp. 58, 68.

³⁷ Marx 1914, pp. 57–58.

1488.³⁸ Biagio Berra, however, must have given the master general a satisfactory version of the events, for the master general immediately reappointed him inquisitor of Mondovì.³⁹ At the same time the master general confirmed Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano—to whose responsibility the subdistrict of Mondovì must have reverted when Innocent VIII had deprived Biagio Berra of it in October 1487—inquisitor of Savigliano and all its associated subdistricts with the exception of Mondovì.⁴⁰ It is perhaps instructive that the master general's provisions clearly indicate that the inquisitorial subdistricts where the Waldensian presence was most intense, such as Bricherasio and Val Lucerna, belonged to Taparelli's rather than Biagio Berra's jurisdiction. Indeed, Biagio Berra's failure to participate in Cattaneo's campaign of 1487–1488 seems to have had no negative effect whatsoever on his standing within the order: in early April 1489 the master general reappointed him vicar of the house in Peveragno,⁴¹ and later in the month he delegated to him the power to confirm whomsoever was elected provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr after the end of Paolo Moneglia's term of office,⁴² a provision repeated in August 1489.⁴³ He also continued to be active as a prosecutor of witches, and in the same year, 1489, put on trial and condemned seventeen women in Peveragno.⁴⁴

We next hear of Biagio Berra some six years later, in 1495, when he was once again deprived of the inquisition of Mondovì which was re-

³⁸ “Mandatur magistro Blasio de Berra quod infra duos dies a notitia presentium debeat comparere coram magistro reverendissimo Savigliano sub pena privationis sui iuris.” (29 December 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^r.

³⁹ “Magister Blasius de Monte Regali fit inquisitor heretice pravitatis in eandem provincia (Lombardie superioris et marchia Ianuensi). Et assignatur sibi pro loco principali civitas Montis Regalis cum eius dyocesi cum terminis que spectant conventui Montis Regalis.” (5 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^v.

⁴⁰ “Magister Aymo conventus Savigliani fit inquisitor heretice pravitatis in provincia Lombardie superioris et marchia Ianuensi et assignatur sibi pro loco principali civitas Albensis, Saviglianum, Cleraschum, villasque Salutiarum cum terminis conventuum eorumdem, Bricherasium et Chaburrium ac Vallis Lucerne citra Iuga Ianue existentia.” (5 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^v.

⁴¹ “Conceditur magistro Blasio de Berra conventus Montis Regalis quod non possit removeri a vicariatu loci sanctorum Bonis et Petri Martyris...” (3 April 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 245^r.

⁴² “Absolvitur magister Paulus de Monelia ab officio provincialatus Lombardie 30 Aprilis 1489. Eadem die committitur confirmatio futuri provinciali magistro Blasio de Berra inquisitori Montis Regalis.” (30 April 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 245^r.

⁴³ “Committitur magistro Blasio de Berra quod possit confirmare electum in provinciale a maiori parte eligentium.” (14 August 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^r.

⁴⁴ Comino 2002, pp. 52, 54.

stored by Master General Torriani to the inquisitor of Savigliano, Aimone Taparelli.⁴⁵ The reason for the demotion is not known and, anyhow, Biagio Berra was reinstated in the post less than three years later, at the beginning of 1498.⁴⁶ In September 1502 the new master general, Vincenzo Bandello, confirmed Biagio Berra once again as vicar of the house in Peveragno but, since he had made there his habitual residence, deprived him in October of the right to participate in the election of the prior of the convent of Mondovì.⁴⁷ In 1507 Biagio Berra turned again to the Waldensians and put on trial three of their preachers in Val Lucerna.⁴⁸ In 1510, however, Master General Tommaso De Vio threatened him with imprisonment, notwithstanding that he was still inquisitor, over some squabble that he had become involved in with some prominent citizens of Mondovì.⁴⁹ At the time Biagio Berra must have been in his eighties, yet he was still inquisitor and, evidently, quite capable of mischief: the last record we have of him shows him in Peveragno putting on trial and condemning nine women as witches in 1512–1513.⁵⁰

4. *Angelo Rizzardi da Savigliano, Inquisitor of Monferrato
1505–1509, Inquisitor of Saluzzo 1509–1510*

It is likely that Angelo Rizzardi da Savigliano (at times ‘da Saluzzo’) entered the Dominican order in the convent of San Giovanni Battista in Saluzzo and that he completed there the initial course of studies required for ordination to the priesthood. The beginning of his academic career is indicated by the provision of the Dominican general chapter held in Rome in 1481 whereby he was appointed master of

⁴⁵ “Privatur magister Blasius de Berra officii inquisitionis Montis Regalis cum terminis suis et submittuntur dicta loca sub officio inquisitionis sicut prius erant inquisitionis magistri Aimonis et instituitur inquisitor tam Saviliani quam Montis Regalis cum suis terminis cum omnibus iuribus.” (4 March 1495) AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 146^v.

⁴⁶ “Magister Blasius de Berra conventus Montis Regalis restituitur ad officium inquisitionis.” (1 February 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 139^r.

⁴⁷ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 260^{r-v}.

⁴⁸ Comino 2002, p. 52.

⁴⁹ “Prior Salutarum fit iudex ad terminandum... omnem controversiam, quae vertitur inter quosdam cives Montisregalis... et magistrum Blasium de Berris ... praecipitur magistro Blasi sub poena carceris, ut oboediat... non obstante quod magister Blasius est inquisitor...” (6 June 1510) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 262.

⁵⁰ Comino 2002, pp. 52, 55.

studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the academic year 1482–1483.⁵¹ Rizzardi probably remained in Pavia for the remainder of his advanced studies, serving there successively as biblical bachelor and bachelor of the Sentences, and he was already a *baccalaureus formatus* and at the point of completing his formal lecturing on the Sentences (his *lectura pro gradu et forma magisterii*) when in December 1488 Master General Torriani permitted him to proceed to the degree of master of theology.⁵² Rizzardi graduated master of theology from the theological faculty of the University of Pavia a few months later, on 11 April 1489.⁵³ At the same time Rizzardi was incorporated as a member of the *collegium doctorum* of that faculty of theology and thereby obtained the right of presenting candidates for the master's degree and of holding its offices of dean and vicedean. One finds him exercising these prerogatives often during the immediately following years.⁵⁴

During the next five years, 1489–1494, Rizzardi served as the regent master of the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia and at the same time held the chair of Thomistic theology (*ad lecturam operum beati Thomae*) in the University of Pavia's faculty of arts. The chair had been filled customarily by the regent master in the convent of San Tommaso ever since its inception in 1479 with Paolo Moneglia as its first incumbent. Toward the end of this five-year period, Master General Torriani allowed Rizzardi to remain in Pavia and continue occupying his cell in the convent of San Tommaso till the very beginning of the following academic year (1494–1495).⁵⁵ At that point the master general commanded him to relinquish the cell to his successor as both regent master in San Tommaso and as holder of the university chair in Thomistic theology, Bernardo Granelli da Genova who would fill both posts during the following biennium (1494–1496).⁵⁶ Before this appointment Granelli had been serving during 1495–1496

⁵¹ "Conventui Papiensi damus... in magistrum studentium... pro secundo ⟨anno⟩ fr. Angelum de Salute..." MOPH, vol. 8, p. 366.

⁵² "Data est licentia fratri Angelo bachalario de Salutis accipiendi insignia magistralia in quacumque universitate sibi grata, expleta lectura, dummodo de iuramento." (17 December 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 240^r.

⁵³ Negruzzo 1995, p. 330.

⁵⁴ Negruzzo 1995, pp. 91, 100, 186.

⁵⁵ "Magister Angelus assignatur usque ad principium studii in conventu Sancti Thome de Pavia. Et potest stare in cella solita et sociis." (23 May 1494) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 28^r.

⁵⁶ "Mandatur magistro Angelo regenti Papiensi ut finito tempore sue regentie, sci-

as inquisitor of the March of Genoa. Following his departure from Pavia, it is likely that Rizzardi spent the biennium 1494–1496 in his own convent in Saluzzo, for during this time he is recorded as attending several conventual chapters there.⁵⁷

Rizzardi returned to Pavia, again both as regent master in the studium generale in San Tommaso and as holder of the university chair of Thomistic theology, during the academic year 1496–1497. During that year he became entangled, along with another friar of the convent of San Tommaso, Alberto di Sant'Angelo da Pavia, in what must have been a rather unpleasant conflict with Vincenzo Dodo da Pavia, who was then serving under him as bachelor of the Sentences in the studium in San Tommaso and would succeed him in its regency the following academic year.⁵⁸ It is very difficult, at this point, to work out the precise cause and the course of this litigation. It seems, though, that Rizzardi and Alberto di Sant'Angelo accused Dodo of some financial misdemeanour toward the beginning of 1497. Master General Torriani entrusted the adjudication of the case to the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Matteo dell'Olmo, the prior of the convent of Sant'Apollinare in Pavia, Paolo da Tortona, and another friar, Bartolomeo da Caravaggio.⁵⁹ The matter was resolved in Dodo's favour at the beginning of October 1497, since neither Rizzardi nor Alberto di Sant'Angelo were capable of proving their accusations, and they were then ordered by the master general to pay the expenses of the litigation.⁶⁰ The case continued, nonetheless, and in January 1498, the master general suspended his judgment against Rizzardi and Alberto di Sant'Angelo and committed the case to the following general chapter,

licet circa festum Ioannis Baptiste, cedat et det locum magistro Bernardo et cameram." (26 June 1494) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 248^v.

⁵⁷ Camilla 1991, p. 115; Mangione 2005, pp. 120, 330–334.

⁵⁸ On Vincenzo Dodo da Pavia (1466–1520), regent master in San Tommaso in Pavia during 1497–1504 and 1509–1513, see Tavuzzi 2002, pp. 301–307.

⁵⁹ "Committitur et precipitur provinciali provincie et fratri Paulo de Terdona priori S. Apollinaris et fratri Bartolomeo de Caravaggio quod sint iudices in causa vertente inter magistrum Angelum de Salutiis regentem Papie et fratrem Vincetium de Dodis et eius fratrem Philippum ad videndum et iudicandum cum complemento iustitie etc. Et condemnandum in expensis reos cum censuris." (12 January 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 135^v.

⁶⁰ "Condemnantur in expensis, dampnis et interesse factis per Filipum de Dodis de Papia L. 100 de Mediolano magister Angelus de Rizardinis de Salutiis et frater Albertus de S. Angelo de Papia quia falso inculpaverunt et infamaverunt ipsum fratrem Philippum eo quod defecerunt in probationibus ut patet ex processu super inde facto per priorem Papie etc." (17 September 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 138^v.

advising both parties to try to settle the issue privately in the meanwhile.⁶¹ There was certainly no private reconciliation, for the case was presented to the general chapter held in Ferrara in 1498. The general chapter decided in favour of at least Alberto di Sant'Angelo, but its decision was annulled by the master general who finally entrusted the case to a prominent lay jurist in Pavia.⁶² We do not know how the matter was finally settled in Rizzardi's case, but it is likely that one of its consequences was the end of his academic career in Pavia.

Rizzardi, meanwhile, had left Pavia in mid-1497. Perhaps he returned to his convent in Saluzzo once again, but we do not know anything certain of his whereabouts during the immediately following years. In 1501, though, he published in Venice a fine edition of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles*,⁶³ and it is certain that in April 1502 he left the convent of Saluzzo, for at that time his cell there was given by Master General Vincenzo Bandello to another friar, Bernardo da Saluzzo.⁶⁴ Perhaps Rizzardi's departure from the convent of Saluzzo was occasioned by the reform of that convent that Master General Bandello had commanded to the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Pietro Andrea degli Inviziati, on 24 December 1501, an injunction accompanied by the threat that if the reform was not carried out by the provincial it would be done by other means, by which Bandello surely meant its subtraction from the Province of St. Peter Martyr and its annexation and occupation by the observant friars of the Congregation of Lombardy.⁶⁵ Be that as it may, Rizzardi was

⁶¹ "Suspenditur sententia lata contra magistrum Angelum de Salutiis et fratrem Albertum de Papia usque ad capitulum generale proxime futurum. Interim si partes possunt concordari per magistrum Petrum Andream vicarium et magistrum Ioannem Antonium conventus Papie priorem, omnia per ipsos facta de consensu partium erunt rate et firma." (27 January 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 139^r.

⁶² AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^v.

⁶³ Angelus de Saviliano, *Aurea divi Thomae Aquinatis de ordine predicatorum doctoris angelici summa contra gentiles*, "per probum virum Symonem Impensa et cura egregii ac nobilis viri domini Alexandri Calcedonii", Venice 1501. The opening letter and the colophon of this edition are in Tavuzzi 2002, pp. 318–319. Quéatif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 47, indicates a further edition "sumptibus Iacobi et Francisci de Giunta in officina Antonii du Ry", Lyon 1521.

⁶⁴ "Fratrī Bernardo de Salutiis conceditur camera que fuerat concessa magistro Angelo in conventu Salutiarium, quoniam ille cedit et rogat etc." (11 April 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 257^r.

⁶⁵ "Magistro Petro Andree de Inviciatis de Alexandria imponitur ut reformet conventum Salutiarium infra tres menses, iuxta modum in actis capituli generalis contentum etc., alioquin significatur ei quod per aliam viam reformabitur." (24 December 1501) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 257^r.

transferred from the convent of Saluzzo to that of San Domenico in Alba, a move later ratified by the general chapter held in Milan in 1505.⁶⁶

Immediately after the general chapter's approval of his transfer from the convent of Saluzzo to that of Alba, Rizzardi was given his first inquisitorial appointment. On 20 May 1505 he was named inquisitor of Casale, Alba and Acqui.⁶⁷ This was a new inquisitorial district that covered the entire, fragmented territory of the marquisate of Monferrato, and it was carved out of the eastern part of the inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como and the eastern part of that of Savigliano, Saluzzo, Alba and Acqui. It was set up, no doubt, to respond to the aspiration of the marquis of Monferrato, Guglielmo IX Paleologo (1494–1518), to have a separate inquisition of his own comprising the entirety of his domains. It was a continuation of the assertive policy of his predecessors, Guglielmo VIII (1464–1483) and Bonifacio III (1483–1494), who had managed to have the capital of the marquisate, Casale, raised to the status of an independent diocese in 1474 and the inquisitorial subdistrict covering the northern sections of the marquisate, Casale and Trino, rendered at least temporarily independent of the inquisition of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como in 1488 when, as we have seen, it was entrusted to Michele Madei da Asti. It is instructive that the record of the appointment in 1510 of Rizzardi's eventual successor as inquisitor of Casale, Alba and Acqui, Sebastiano Pastorelli da Taggia, expressly refers to him as inquisitor "in all places subject to the marquis of Monferrato."⁶⁸ Unfortunately, we do not know precisely how long Rizzardi remained inquisitor of Casale, Alba and Acqui, although he certainly still held the post in early 1506;⁶⁹ nor do we have any record of his activities as such.

⁶⁶ "Approbamus translationem magistri Angelo de Saviliano de conventu Salutarum ad conventum Albensem provincie S. Petri Martiris." MOPH, vol. 9, p. 49.

⁶⁷ "Magister Angelus de Saviliano instituitur inquisitor Casalensis, Albensis et Aquisensis cum auctoritate." (20 May 1505) AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172^r.

⁶⁸ "Fratr Sebastianus de Thabia instituitur inquisitor Casalensis, Albensis et Aquisensis, eorumque totis diocesibus et in omnibus locis marchioni Montisferrati subiectis." (1 May 1510) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 262.

⁶⁹ This is indicated by the reassurance issued by Master General Bandello on 22 March 1506 to the inquisitor Paolo da Finale that his inquisitorial district remained intact except for those of its parts that fell within the marquisate of Monferrato: "Magistro Paulo de Finario declaratur quod eandem auctoritatem circa officium inquisitionis habet quam habebat antequam esset institutus inquisitor Casalensis magister Angelus, nisi in terris domini marchionis." AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 173^r.

Sometime around 1508 Rizzarda returned to the convent of Saluzzo. However, since his departure from there in 1502, given the failure of the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr to reform the convent as he had been instructed to do in 1502, the master general had acted upon his threat and had handed it over to the Congregation of Lombardy on 27 May 1505,⁷⁰ a move that had been emphatically requested by the marchioness of Saluzzo, Margaret of Foix.⁷¹ It is possible that Rizzarda, in order to be received again in the convent of Saluzzo, and perhaps even more so to ingratiate himself with the marchioness, had decided to become himself a member of the Congregation of Lombardy, for this seems to be indicated by the record of his appointment by Master General Thomas De Vio on 9 July 1509 as inquisitor of the entire marquisate of Saluzzo.⁷² This, like the inquisitorial district of the marquisate of Monferrato, was also a new inquisitorial district and was carved out of that of Savigliano. Once again, it was surely a matter of political prestige: once the marquisate of Monferrato had its own inquisitor, the marquisate of Saluzzo simply had to have its own as well. Indeed, the ecclesiastical policy of the marchioness of Saluzzo led not only to the establishment of a separate inquisition in the marquisate in 1509, but also to the raising of the city of Saluzzo to the status of an independent diocese in 1511.⁷³

Rizzarda remained inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo only for a little less than a year, till he was replaced on 16 June 1510. During this period, though, he played a central role in the persecution of Waldensians unleashed at the time by the marchioness of Saluzzo. Margaret of Foix (1466–1536) had married the marquis Ludovico II in 1490 and upon his death in 1504 had assumed the regency of the marquisate on behalf of her eldest son, Marquis Michele Antonio, and contrived to remain in charge even after he attained his majority and after his death in 1528, till she was banished in 1532 by her third-born, Marquis Francesco I. This episode of Waldensian-hunting is quite well

⁷⁰ “Reverendo vicario congregationis Lombardie committitur sub precepto reformatio conventus Salutiarum et monasterium Revelli.” (27 May 1505) AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172r.

⁷¹ Ambrogio Taegio, *Chronice*, vol. 2, fol. 320r, tells us that the convent of Saluzzo had been reformed “...dominia Marchionissa procurante et Magistro ordinis consentiente, in quo factus fuit primus prior fr. Vincentius de Brixia.”

⁷² “Magister Angelus de Salutiis congregationis Lombardie, fit inquisitor totius marchionatus Salutiarum.” (9 July 1509) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 259.

⁷³ On the marquisate of Saluzzo in this period see: Tallone 1901; Pascal 1960, pp. 41–79; Mola 1986.

known thanks to the contemporary *Memoriale* (or *Charneto*) of Giovanni Andrea Saluzzo del Castellar.⁷⁴ This source has been regularly exploited by historians, though at times they have been imprecise about the identity of the inquisitors involved.⁷⁵

It seems that, all in all, Rizzardi performed the inquisitorial duties that were thrust upon him by the marchioness without enthusiasm but systematically and conscientiously. Rizzardi commenced, in late November 1509, by turning his attention to those suspected of being Waldensians in the village of Paesana, in the Po valley to the west of Saluzzo. He strictly followed the legal norms that governed inquisitorial procedure by first delivering a series of sermons in which he admonished and invited whatever heretics there might have been there to repentance and to confess voluntarily, with the customary reassurance that those who did so would be treated compassionately. But as there was no response to this, he was forced to proceed on the basis of mere hearsay that there were some Waldensians in the nearby hamlets of Pratoguglielmo, Bioletto, Bietonetto and Serro di Momian. Eventually he arrested a certain Piero Faro who confessed that all the inhabitants there were indeed Waldensians, but paid little attention to him on account of the man's poor reputation. However, another person arrested, Luchino Maria, made a similar confession and, finally, after having sent some soldiers to capture possible suspects from among people attending Mass at the church in Pratoguglielmo on the feast of St. Catherine, he arrested two other persons, Franses Maria and Balangier Lanfrè, who also confessed that all there were Waldensians. On account of these confessions the marchioness dispatched some two hundred soldiers to round up the inhabitants of these villages, but most managed to escape in time, some even with their livestock. A few, though, were caught and confessed to being Waldensians: Iacobino Mainer, Antoni Lanfrè, Genet Iulian, Gienet Maria and others.

On the vigil of Palm Sunday 1510, five Waldensians were condemned to be burned in Paesana: Franses Maria, Iacobino Mainer, Luchino Maria, Antoni Lanfrè and Vigliermo Maria. But a heavy snow fall prevented the carrying out of the sentence that was then postponed to the

⁷⁴ The *Memoriale* was first partially published in Promis 1869; it has been published almost in its entirety in Natale 1998, pp. 129–397.

⁷⁵ See: Comba 1901, vol. 1, pp. 462–475; Savio 1911, pp. 133–135; Gonnet 1967, pp. 132–135; Pascal 1960, pp. 70–73; Molnar 1974, vol. 1, pp. 192–193; Vindemmio 2004, pp. 293–300. For the account of Rizzardi's doings see Natale 1998, pp. 226–231.

following Monday and this enabled all five to escape in the meanwhile. Rizzardi then decided that three others, Genet Iulian, Gienet Maria and Balangier Lanfrè were to be burned in their stead, even though these had confessed voluntarily and had accordingly been promised that their lives would be spared. Two more were burned a little later and another six were punished by being whipped and then banished, while all the Waldensians who had managed to flee had their properties confiscated. Finally, on 18 June 1510, Rizzardi ordered the destruction of the house that the Waldensians had used as their meeting place. Altogether, then, Rizzardi was responsible for five executions by burning during the period from late November 1509 to mid-June 1510. Throughout this time he kept detailed records of the confessions that he extorted during the several trials that he conducted.⁷⁶ His *Errores Valdensium in Paesana commorantium*, compiled from these records, is a valuable document for it is one of the very few pieces of evidence that we have as to what some Waldensians actually believed only a few decades before they adhered to the Protestant Reformation at the Synod they held in Chanforan in 1532.⁷⁷

Rizzardi's term as inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo came to an abrupt end on 16 June 1510 (though news of this would have reached him only several weeks later) when Master General Thomas De Vio replaced him in the post with a long-standing member of the Congregation of Lombardy, Agostino da Pavia who had been previously inquisitor of Bergamo in 1499.⁷⁸ Perhaps this was due to his having decided to leave the Congregation of Lombardy and return to the Province of St. Peter Martyr; for the following general chapter, held in Genoa in 1513, approved his transfer from the convent of Saluzzo to that of Savigliano.⁷⁹ Whatever the case, this is the last piece of hard evidence that we have on Rizzardi. Turletti, in his fairly reliable list of the inquisitors of Savigliano, indicates Rizzardi as also being inquisitor in Mondovì during 1520–1521 and in Savigliano from 1525 till his death in 1532. Although Turletti claims to have derived his information from a manuscript history of the convent of Savigliano composed by the Dominican Giuseppe Maria Gallateri (d. 1742), who had access to

⁷⁶ These records have been published in Pascal 1916.

⁷⁷ See Gonnet 1967, pp. 132–135.

⁷⁸ "Frater Augustinus de Pavia fit inquisitor Salutiarum absoluto quovis alio." (16 June 1510) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 263.

⁷⁹ "In primis transferimus fr. Angelum de Saviliano magistrum de conventu Salutiarum ad conventum Saviliani province s. Petri Martyris." MOPH, vol. 9, p. 330.

documentation still preserved in his time in the archive of the tribunal of the inquisition of Savigliano, it needs to be treated with caution, for he also claims, quite incorrectly, that Rizzardi had been previously inquisitor of Saluzzo from 1504 till at least 1521.⁸⁰

5. *Jews and Judaizers*

The Renaissance was a comparatively fortunate period for Jews in northern Italy. Indeed, at this time, northern Italy became a destination for Jewish emigrants from southern Italy and Rome, as well as France, Germany and even as far away as Poland.⁸¹ Bustling and prosperous Jewish communities were to be found in several of its major urban centres and not a few minor ones. Bologna, the second city of the Papal States, for example, is known to have had a Jewish community of some eight hundred with eleven synagogues by the early 1520s and was renowned as a centre of Hebrew scholarship and publishing. Tiny, but often well-established, Jewish communities were to be found even in the most remote places.⁸² Heavily involved in moneylending and commerce, and at times even with the running of the local mints and the collection of various tolls, the Jews of northern Italy enjoyed considerable tolerance and the patronage and protection of secular rulers who readily availed themselves of their professional accomplishments in such fields as medicine and, especially, of their financial activities, expertise and resources. It should be noticed, though, that their monetary transactions took primarily the form of lending to the economically underprivileged, thereby fulfilling a need that would not have been met otherwise and explains why their presence was felt to be necessary, albeit an abuse. This did provoke a measure of popular resentment, that was enhanced by the aggressive, polemical preaching of the Observant Franciscans, such as Bernardino da Siena and Bernardino da Feltre, and occasioned attempts to foster the development of alternative financial structures catering to the poor in the form of a network of *Monti di Pietà*—that the Dominicans often attacked as being them-

⁸⁰ Turletti 1883, vol. 2, p. 330.

⁸¹ The standard history of Jews in Italy remains Milano 1963, but see also Bonfil 1991 and Foa 2001.

⁸² For the geographical distribution of Jews in northern Italy during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance see Luzzati 1996.

selves stained by usurious practices. But the extension of credit provided by the Jewish *banchi* proved indispensable and these usually reasserted themselves and, in some localities, continued to function alongside, and even in cooperation with, the Monti.⁸³ There were indeed some cases of official, corporate expulsions from some places: Vicenza in 1485, Parma in 1488, Milan in 1490 and Ravenna in 1491. There were also some manifestations of popular anti-Semitism, occasioned by alleged incidents of Host desecration and the ritual murder of Christian children, such as the well known case of Simon of Trent in 1475, that resulted in minor persecutions.⁸⁴ But such incidents were not the norm and never attained in northern Italy the intensity they did in other parts of Western Europe, especially Germany.⁸⁵

Moreover, such instances of persecutions were never the result of official Church policy toward Jews, for it continued to be fairly restrained till the middle of the sixteenth century. Following an almost millennial tradition that hailed back to Pope Gregory the Great, who promulgated the seminal bull *Sicut Judaeis* in 598,⁸⁶ the Renaissance popes saw themselves as the guarantors of Jewish rights, as long as these did not exceed certain limits. Papal policy was, then, an ambivalent mixture of protection and restriction (of *tolerantia* and *gravamina*), that had as its basis the recognition that Jews had the right to maintain their religious and cultural identity and were not to be coerced into accepting baptism. This was constantly reiterated during the Middle Ages with successive reediting of *Sicut Judaeis* by such popes as Anacletus II (1030–1035), Callixtus II (1119–1124) who first promulgated the *Constitutio pro Judaeis*, Eugene III (1145–1151), and Alexander III (1155–1181),⁸⁷ who all stressed that its import transcended the secular confines of the Papal States and concerned the entire Christian world. There was a certain lapse in this protective, albeit patronizing, cast of mind at the time of Innocent III (1198–1216) and the Fourth Lateran Council (1215, Constitutions 67–70), in the aftermath of the Crusades and the climate of suspicion and intolerance that they engendered, that resulted in the imposition of such restrictions as the wearing of distinctive dress, the

⁸³ See Toaff 2004.

⁸⁴ See Quaglioni 1987 (edition of the defence of the indicted Jews composed by the Dominican inquisitor appointed papal commissioner, Benedetto de' Giudici da Finale); Esposito and Quaglioni 1990 (edition of the trial records); Hsia 1992.

⁸⁵ See: Hsia 1988; Rubin 1999.

⁸⁶ Simonsohn 1988–1991, vol. 1, pp. 15–16.

⁸⁷ Simonsohn 1988–1991, vol. 1, pp. 51–52.

prohibition of holding public office and the strict social separation of Jews and Christians. But this was soon redressed by succeeding popes who reissued *Sicut Judaeis*, such as Innocent IV in 1247,⁸⁸ Gregory X in 1272, and Martin V in 1422,⁸⁹ and by mid-fifteenth century these restrictions had largely fallen into disuse in many parts of northern Italy. The turning point would take place in 1555 when Pope Paul IV, as part of the general Counter-Reformation emphasis on the tightening of religious discipline, issued the decree *Cum nimis absurdum* that, along with the strict reimposition of such restrictions as the wearing of distinctive apparel, prescribed the Venetian model first devised in 1516, whereby Jews were to be confined to ghettos.⁹⁰

Various attempts were made from the thirteenth century to include Jews indirectly within the scope of inquisitorial surveillance insofar as the Talmud was alleged to contain passages injurious to Christianity and the mystical tradition of the Kabbalah was suspected of being tinged with necromancy. While this led, especially in France and Spain, to the occasional confiscation and destruction of Hebrew books by inquisitors and the virulent anti-Jewish stance of the Spanish anti-Pope Benedict XIII (1394-deposed 1417),⁹¹ it also resulted in an extremely nuanced debate about the value for Christians of Jewish literature that protracted itself till the beginning of the sixteenth century with the famous case of Reuchlin.⁹² It did not result, moreover, in any overturning of the principle that Jews as such were beyond the jurisdiction of inquisitors. Even the notorious trial held in Milan in 1488 of thirty-eight Jews for the possession of the Talmud and other Hebrew books supposedly derogatory to Christianity did not involve the local Dominican inquisitor, Matteo dell'Olmo, at all. It was conducted entirely by a lay ducal commissioner, Bernardino da Arezzo, at the behest of the duke of Milan, and was motivated by ulterior, lucrative concerns. Although it concluded with the condemnation of nine Jews to be burned and the others banished, these drastic penalties were immediately commuted to the payment of exorbitant fines.⁹³

Cases of involvement of Dominican inquisitors with Jews in northern Italy during 1474–1527 seem to have been rare, and even in these few

⁸⁸ Simonsohn 1988–1991, vol. 1, pp. 192.

⁸⁹ Simonsohn 1988–1991, vol. 2, pp. 711–713.

⁹⁰ On the Inquisition and the Jews in Italy after 1555 see Luzzati 1994.

⁹¹ Milano 1963, p. 151.

⁹² For a detailed discussion of this theme see Parente 1996.

⁹³ See: Simonsohn 1982: vol. 1, p. xxiv; vol. 2, pp. 894–897; Antoniazzi Villa 1986.

instances the Jews who were the object of inquisitorial attention were never such precisely insofar as they were Jews, but insofar as they were deemed guilty of such infractions as blasphemy or the practice of ceremonial magic. Of direct interest to these inquisitors were, however, the many Spanish *conversos*, the Marranos, who after their expulsion from Spain in 1492, Sicily in 1493 and Portugal in 1497, migrated to Genoa and other northern-Italian localities and, once there, were suspected of being Judaizers, of secretly practising the Jewish faith or, at times, of openly reverting to Judaism. Such as these rapidly became the concern of inquisitors, for in accordance with the bull *Turbato corde* issued by Pope Clement IV in 1267 (reissued by Gregory X in 1274, Martin IV in 1281, Nicholas IV in 1288 and Nicholas V in 1290) and the decretal *Contra christianos* promulgated by Pope Boniface VIII in 1298—all documents addressed specifically to inquisitors⁹⁴—all Jews who converted to Christianity and then reverted to their original faith were to be considered heretics and apostates, and all Jews who encouraged or aided them to do so were to be prosecuted as well. It is this preoccupation, then, that provides the most likely explanation of the puzzling, short-term appointment as inquisitor of the March of Genoa during 1494–1497 of the inquisitor who will be considered next.

6. *Paolo Moneglia da Genova,*
Inquisitor of the March of Genoa 1494–1497

A discussion of Paolo Moneglia da Genova requires an initial clarification, for his name at times has been rendered erroneously as Paolo Giustiniani da Moneglia. The attribution to Paolo Moneglia of the surname Giustiniani is anachronistic, since the Moneglia family was only aggregated to the *albergo* Giustiniani in 1528, more than a quarter century after his death. The transformation of the surname Moneglia into the toponym ‘da Moneglia’ is similarly erroneous, for, at least by Paolo Moneglia’s time, the Moneglia were a Genoese family.⁹⁵ It is not sur-

⁹⁴ Simonsohn 1988–1991, vol. 1, pp. 236–237, 244–245, 254, 267–268, 275–276, 285–286.

⁹⁵ On the *albergo* Giustiniani see Grendi 1875 and Hopf 1882. The anachronism was already recognized in Vigna 1886, p. 11, where, following the seventeenth-century Dominican historian Tommaso Maria Giovi, it is traced back to a whim of the Genoese genealogist Federico Federici. Nonetheless, it has been repeated even by the most recent literature as, for example, Walsh 1986.

prising, then, that the misconstrued nomenclature is never to be found in contemporary sources.

The eighteenth-century Dominican historians J. Quétif and J. Échard, in their monumental, but not always completely reliable, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum* (2 vols., 1719–1721), would have Moneglia born in 1444 and the son of Pellegro Moneglia, who at one point served as the Genoese ambassador to the dukes of Milan.⁹⁶ Be that as it may, it is certain the Moneglia entered the Dominican order on 23 March 1463 in the Genoese convent of Santa Maria di Castello, and received the order's habit from the convent's vicar, Agostino da Ventimiglia. Very early in his Dominican career, however, Moneglia left the Congregation of Lombardy, joined the Province of St. Peter Martyr, and became a *filius* of the unreformed convent of San Domenico in Genoa.⁹⁷

On 16 August 1474, some time after the completion of his initial studies, probably in the studium of the convent of Sant Tommaso in Pavia, and the reception of holy orders, Moneglia matriculated in the theological faculty of the University of Cologne. During the biennium 1473–1475 he held the post of master of studies in the Dominican studium generale, that was integrated in that faculty of theology, and graduated bachelor of theology by the end of the period.⁹⁸ He did not, however, graduate master of theology in Cologne probably, as has been suggested, because of the excessive expense of doing so.⁹⁹ Be that as it may, on 3 January 1476, Master General Leonardo Mansueti permitted Moneglia to graduate master of theology in either the University of Turin or that of Pavia. The annotation of this concession in Mansueti's register tells us that Moneglia had spent the academic year 1475–1476 as well in Cologne, functioning as bachelor of the Sentences, permitting the conclusion that he spent an entire triennium (1473–1476) there.¹⁰⁰ Moneglia returned to Italy in mid-1476 and graduated master of theology and was incorporated in the *collegium doctorum* of the theological faculty of the University of Pavia soon thereafter.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 3; Vigna 1886, p. 11; Vigna 1887, p. 203.

⁹⁷ Vigna 1888, pp. 30–31.

⁹⁸ Löhr 1926, pp. 26, 35, 99; Löhr 1939, p. 219; Löhr 1949, p. 247.

⁹⁹ Löhr 1949, pp. 218–219.

¹⁰⁰ “Fratr Paulus de Monelia conventus S. Dominici de Janua qui legit sententias in Colonia potest magistrari in universitate Thaurinensi aut Papiensi...” (3 January 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 207^r.

¹⁰¹ Negruzzo 1995, p. 328.

Moneglia did not embark immediately, as one might have expected, on an academic career. Instead, soon after his magisterial graduation, he was elected prior of the convent of San Domenico in Genoa and was confirmed such by the master general on 9 August 1476.¹⁰² Despite the claim that his election had been almost unanimous, it seems to have met a certain measure of resistance from some members of the conventual community, and the master general had to intervene once again before the end of that month.¹⁰³ The difficulties must have continued, for Moneglia was released from the office of prior after only a year and a half, possibly at the insistence of San Domenico's community, on 28 January 1478.¹⁰⁴

The general chapter of the order held in Perugia in May 1478 appointed Moneglia regent master of the studium generale in Pavia for the biennium 1478–1480.¹⁰⁵ He held the post, however, for the entire triennium 1478–1481, because in late 1478 Master General Mansueti prorogued the academic assignments made by the chapter of Perugia for the studium of Pavia till the next general chapter, which was due to be held in May 1481.¹⁰⁶ At the beginning of the academic year 1479–1480 Moneglia became the first incumbent of the chair of Thomistic theology (*ad lecturam operum beati Thomae*) that was then founded in the faculty of arts of the University of Pavia by duke Gian Galeazzo Sforza at the request of the commune of Pavia.¹⁰⁷ Moneglia held the chair till the end of the academic year 1481–1482, and thereafter it was normally filled by the regent master of the studium in the convent

¹⁰² “Magister Paulus de Monelia conventus Ianuensis qui fuit electus a maiori parte fratrum conventus S. Dominici de Ianua in priorem, paucis exceptis scilicet quinque vel sex qui vota sua commiserunt in magistrum reverendissimum etc., fuit confirmatum coram omnibus fratribus conventus et coram reverendo provinciali cum solita potestate et preceptum fuit omnibus quod obediant.” (9 August 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 311^r.

¹⁰³ “Magister Paulus de Monelia prior conventus Ianuensis habuit litteras quod non possit absolvi vel molestari a magistro Pietro Bonino ut plane habetur in copia signata...” (20 August 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 313^r.

¹⁰⁴ “Magister Paulus de Monelia declaratur absolutus ab officio prioratus conventus Ianuensis si maior pars patrum voluerit, non obstantibus...” (28 January 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 325^r.

¹⁰⁵ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 347.

¹⁰⁶ “Magister regens, baccalaureus biblicus, magister studentium et alii officiales conventus sancti Thome de Pavia confirmantur usque ad capitulum generale.” (22 September 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 322^v.

¹⁰⁷ The petition of the commune of Pavia for the founding of the chair (7 October 1479) is partially reproduced in Negruzzo 1995, p. 34, n. 23.

of San Tommaso.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, the general chapter held in Rome in 1481 had reassigned Moneglia as regent master of the studium in San Tommaso for the further triennium 1481–1484,¹⁰⁹ but, for reasons that it is no longer possible to discover, he refused the charge.

Sometime after the end of the academic year 1481–1482 Moneglia returned to the convent of San Domenico in Genoa where he was assigned a cell by mid-1483.¹¹⁰ The general chapter held in Rome in 1484 attempted to coax him to return to full-time academic work by appointing him regent master of the studium in the convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence for the triennium 1484–1487,¹¹¹ but the assignment was rescinded by Master General Bartolomeo Commazio who in October 1484 confirmed Moneglia's assignment in Genoa.¹¹² In early 1485 he was elected provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and confirmed as such by the master general on 23 February 1485.¹¹³ As provincial, Moneglia probably resided in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan which was the habitual base of the provincials of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1486 he attended the general chapter held in Venice,¹¹⁴ but otherwise little is known of his activities as provincial. One interesting point, already mentioned in chapter 1, is his appointment as inquisitor of Milan and Lodi of Matteo dell'Olmo da Como, for it illustrates well the mechanism of inquisitorial appointments at the

¹⁰⁸ For the unusual circumstances that led to the chair being held by Cajetan, of the Province of the Kingdom of Naples, during the academic year 1497–1498 see Tavuzzi 2002, pp. 267–268.

¹⁰⁹ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 366.

¹¹⁰ “Magister Paulus de Monelia conventus Ianuensis habuit confirmationem celle sibi date per patres conventus predicti et libere eam potest inhabitare e nullus inferior potest eum molestare.” (26 May 1483) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 194^r.

¹¹¹ “In conventu Florentino assignamus in regentem usque ad sequens capitulum generale fr. Paulum de Monelia conventus Ianuensis magistrum.” MOPH, vol. 8, p. 380. The following general chapter was originally envisaged as being held in Paris in May 1487, MOPH, vol. 8, p. 390.

¹¹² The annotation of this assignment, copied from the register of Master General Commazio which is now lost, is in Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 4: “Magister Paulus de Monelia, qui per acta capituli erat deputatus regens Perusiae propter bella removetur a dicta assignatione ac assignatur in conventu suo Genuensi.” (27 October 1482). The reference to Perugia, instead of Florence, is an obvious *lapsus calami*, but it is not certain whether it appeared in Commazio's register or was made by Quétif and Échard. Whatever the case, it has given rise to the unfounded claim that Moneglia was regent in Perugia that has been repeated often, see, for example, Negruzzo 1995, p. 177 and Walsh 1986, cols. 94–95.

¹¹³ “Rev. Magister Paulus de Monelia confirmatur in priorem provincialem Lombardiae.” (23 February 1485) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 54.

¹¹⁴ D'Amato 1947, p. 235.

time. After serving as provincial for the customary term of four years, Moneglia was released from office by the master general on 5 August 1489, when Michele Madei da Asti was appointed provincial vicar.¹¹⁵

Upon his return to the convent of San Domenico in Genoa, Moneglia was immediately implicated in a rather squalid episode, that deserves to be mentioned only because it illustrates rather well that Renaissance friaries were far from havens of perfection. Another friar of the convent, a certain Girolamo da Rapallo, falsely accused Moneglia to the master general of having stolen ten gold ducats from his room. The subsequent inquiry demonstrated Moneglia's complete innocence and his calumniator was severely punished.¹¹⁶ Soon thereafter, the master general showed his continuing high regard for Moneglia by entrusting him with a delicate task of mediation.¹¹⁷

The following year, 1490, brought a decisive change to Moneglia's life, for on 6 June Pope Innocent VIII appointed him to the curial post of master of the sacred palace,¹¹⁸ that entailed his definitive transfer from Genoa to Rome, where he resided in the convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Moneglia, with the full approval of the Dominican order,¹¹⁹ succeeded Marco Maroldi in the prestigious office and occu-

¹¹⁵ "Absolvitur magister Paulus de Monelia ab officio provincialatus Lombardie et instituitur vicarius magister Michael de Madeis cum plenaria potestate." (5 August 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^r.

¹¹⁶ "Precipitur magistro Paulo de Monelia quod restituat fratri Hieronymo de Rapallo 10 ducatos quod abstulit de cella eius infra quindenam, et sic etc." (23 August 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^r; "Precipitur fratri Hieronymo de Rapallo conventus Ianuensis sub pena excommunicationis late sententie quod infra octo dies debet recedere de conventu et ire ad provincialem qui sibi provideat de uno conventu." (23 August 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 246^v; "Dirigitur litera magistro Paulo de Monelia conventus Genuensis in qua absolvitur ab infamia per fratrem Hieronymum de Rapallo imposita super ablatione X. ducatorum quos idem fr. Hieronymum sibi imposuit quod abstulerit de camera sua et convictus de mendacio condemnantur in expensis per magistrum Paulum facta et exulatur a conventu per X. annos." (24 November 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^r.

¹¹⁷ "Magister Paulus de Monelia potest accipere compromissum super causa vertente inter Dominum Bartholomeum Imperialem et Iohannem Antonium de Axireto et terminare." (4 December 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^r.

¹¹⁸ Burckard, *Liber notarum*, vol. 1, pp. 311–312: "Dominica VI junii, festum sanctae Trinitatis... Hodie vero in vespere, ex commissione SS.D.N. receptus fuit in magistrum sacri palatii et eo loco assignatus est magister Paulus... januensis, ordinis Praedicatorum in locum magistri Marci..."

¹¹⁹ "Magister Paulus de Monelia magister apostolici palatii recipitur ad gratias et suffragia ordinis et potest tenere pecunias, et dispensatur super esu carniarum, potest equitare et tenere secum duos fratres, et libere eligere sibi confessorum de ordine et absolvi toties quoties ab omnibus." (20 June 1490) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 248^v.

pied it for the remainder of the pontificate of Innocent VIII (d. 1492) and the greater part of that of Pope Alexander VI, until he was replaced in 1499 by Giovanni Nanni da Viterbo—who would in turn be succeeded in 1503 by the inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena, Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara, discussed in chapter 3. Once again, there is little need to enter into the details of the history and character of this important curial post here, although it should be mentioned that during Moneglia's term of office, unlike Rafanelli's, the theological faculty of the studium of the Roman curia, of which the master of the sacred palace was *ex officio* dean, was still functioning.¹²⁰

In 1493 Moneglia, as master of the sacred palace, became involved in the famous case of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Pico's *Conclusiones* had been partially condemned during the pontificate of Innocent VIII, principally at the instigation of the master of the papal chapel, the Spanish bishop Pedro Garsias.¹²¹ The two Dominicans who were involved in the case at that time, the master of the sacred palace Marco Maroldi and his assistant, Gioacchino da Vinci, had refused, however, to associate themselves with the condemnation. In early 1493 Alexander VI named a commission composed of three cardinals (Giorgio Costa, Giambattista Orsini and Francesco Todeschini-Piccolomini) and Moneglia as theological consultant to reexamine the case. The result of the commission's deliberations was the rehabilitation of Pico communicated in Alexander VI's brief *Omnium Catholicorum*, issued on 18 June 1493, that explicitly mentions Moneglia's favourable contribution.¹²²

Surprisingly, on 6 April 1494, Master General Torriani appointed Moneglia inquisitor of the March of Genoa.¹²³ Moneglia replaced in the post Bernardo Granelli da Genova, who was enabled thereby to become regent master in the studium in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia. But it is hardly likely that the master general discomfited the

¹²⁰ This is evident from the academic appointments made by the general chapter held in Le Mans in 1491: "In sacro palacio ad legendum sentencias fratrem Thomam de Cathanis de Ianua et fratrem Petrum de Ranzano, hac lege ut ille Thomas de Cathanis pro lectione sentenciarum possit magistrari." MOPH, vol. 8, p. 403.

¹²¹ Zambelli 1996, p. 51, confuses the post of master of the papal chapel with that of master of the sacred palace and, hence, erroneously transforms Pedro Garsias into a Dominican friar.

¹²² For a detailed and accurate account see Di Napoli 1965, pp. 81–137, that reproduces Alexander VI's brief of 18 June 1493 in its entirety (pp. 116–118).

¹²³ "Reverendus magister Paulus de Ianua magister sacri palatii fit inquisitor totius Marchie Ianuensis." (6 June 1494) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 247^r.

pope's personal theologian for the needs of the studium of Pavia, let alone for the convenience of the comparatively unimportant Granelli. Moreover, it seems that Moneglia was kept so occupied by the task of Genoese inquisitor that during the following three years the procurator general of the Dominican order, Ludovico Valenza da Ferrara, fulfilled in his stead the duties proper to the master of the sacred palace.¹²⁴

Moneglia's puzzling inquisitorial appointment can only be accounted for by an exceptional set of circumstances that warranted the presence in Genoa at that time of an especially authoritative theologian who was himself Genoese and, moreover, was acceptable to and enjoyed the confidence of its civic authorities. It might be significant that from 1488 till 1499 Genoa lost its independence and was subjected to the Sforza dukes of Milan with whom, if we are to take seriously the claims of Quétif and Échard, Moneglia might have been well connected in virtue of his father's former ambassadorial activities. A more likely explanation, however, is the situation that had arisen in Genoa following upon the influx of exceptionally large numbers of Sephardic Jews and Marranos who had been recently expelled from Spain (1492) and Sicily (1493). Unfortunately this explanation, too, must remain a mere conjecture, for while the influx, or at least transit, of large numbers of Jews and Marranos in Genoa at the time of Moneglia's inquisitorial term is well documented, none of his activities as Genoese inquisitor are.¹²⁵ Moreover, if there be any substance to this conjecture, it might well have been Moneglia's lot not merely to look for Judaizers and Marranos among the Jewish immigrants to Genoa, and to either temper or tauten the attitude of the Genoese authorities toward them, but also to cast an inquisitorial glance on the consequences of the doings of the rabidly anti-Semitic Franciscan Bernardino da Feltré. Bernardino, upon his arrival in Genoa in late 1492, had savagely inveighed against the reception of Jews and demanded their persecution and expulsion—an exaggerated stance that was not looked kindly upon at the court of Alexander VI. Be all that as it may, Moneglia was succeeded as inquisitor of the March of Genoa on 9 February 1497 by Gaspare Rossetti da Varazze.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 3.

¹²⁵ For a synthetic account of the immigration and transit of Jews and Marranos in Genoa during the last decade of the fifteenth century see Urbani and Zazzu 1999, vol. 1, pp. xxxii–li.

¹²⁶ “Magister Gaspar de Voragine conventus Ianuensis fit inquisitor marchie Ianuensis cum clausulis opportunis etc.” (9 February 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 144^r.

Moneglia returned to Rome at the beginning of 1497, but midway through that year he was in Viterbo. Along with a Franciscan bishop and Alexander VI's personal physician, Berardo di Recanati, he undertook the third examination of the purported stigmata of Lucia da Narni.¹²⁷ Far more interesting are his activities during 1498, for these lend further credence to the conjectures of the preceding paragraph. In April of that year, Pedro da Aranda, bishop of Calahorra in Spain but resident in Rome, was arrested and tried on the accusation of being a Marrano. There is little need to enter into the details of this case here, since it has been studied closely by A. Foa.¹²⁸ Moneglia was appointed one of the commissioners entrusted with the proceedings and, in the course of the trial, raised the wider issue of the true religious allegiance of the many *conversos* then in Rome. Alexander VI subsequently formally appointed him Roman inquisitor and gave him the task of holding an inquest in the Jewish community in Rome which, it was suspected, harboured a considerable number of Marranos who had reverted to the practice of the Jewish religion and, thereby, had apostasized from their at least nominal Christianity and, accordingly, were deemed to be due objects of inquisitorial attention. Following the inquest, during a consistory held on 20 July 1498, Alexander VI empowered Moneglia to reconcile to the Church as many of these apostates as possible. A great public ceremony was then held on 29 July, during which several hundred persons were absolved and had imposed upon them light penances.

This imposing *auto de fê*, in which Moneglia played the principal role, seems to have captured the popular imagination of the time, for it is described in great detail in several contemporary sources—the *Diarii* of Marin Sanudo¹²⁹ and the *Liber notarum* of Jakob Burckard,¹³⁰ among others. The several hundred Marranos, all wearing appropriate penitential garb, were first assembled in the square in front of St. Peter's basilica, in the presence of several high curial officials and witnessed by Alexander VI himself, as well as his daughter, from a window of the Vatican palace. A sermon was then delivered by a Dominican friar at the end of which Moneglia, in both Latin and Spanish, rebuked them for their errors, exhorted them to be faithful Christians, imposed

¹²⁷ Ponsi 1711, pp. 99–100.

¹²⁸ See Foa 1998 and Foa 2004, pp. 23–37.

¹²⁹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 1, col. 1029.

¹³⁰ Burckard, *Liber notarum*, vol. 2, pp. 114–115.

penances and granted absolution. The Marranos then entered the basilica for a moment of prayer after which they set off, two by two with lighted candles, on a procession through the centre of Rome that ended at the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, where they discarded their *sanbenito*-like garments. In a letter to the duke of Milan, Ludovico il Moro, dated 29 July 1498, Bartolomeo Saliceto remarked the absence among the penitents of anyone of importance or wealth, for Marranos such as these, he added more realistically than maliciously, “had managed to be reconciled by kissing other things than altars.”¹³¹

On 1 February 1499, during a consistory in which the principal speaker was Cardinal Giovanni de’ Medici (later Pope Leo X), Alexander VI elevated Moneglia to the episcopate and replaced him as master of the sacred palace with Annio da Viterbo.¹³² Moneglia was appointed bishop of Chios, the capital of a small island in the eastern Aegean that had been a Genoese colony since 1346. But it is extremely unlikely that Moneglia ever visited his diocese, for soon after his promotion the pope named him papal legate in Hungary, and it is generally believed that he died and was buried in Buda in 1502.¹³³ The Dominican general chapter held in Milan in 1505, prescribed that prayers be offered for the repose of his soul, and associated him in this with Ludovico II, marquis of Saluzzo, and Ercole I, duke of Ferrara and Modena, both of whom had died a little earlier.¹³⁴ Moneglia has been attributed the authorship of several works of biblical exegesis, but these are no longer extant.¹³⁵

¹³¹ The letter is in Fumi 1910, p. 40.

¹³² Burckard, *Liber notarum*, vol. 2, p. 125; HC, vol. 2, p. 126.

¹³³ Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 4.

¹³⁴ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 60.

¹³⁵ Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, p. 4.

CHAPTER FIVE

WITCH-HUNTERS

1. *The Inquisitors' Witches*

The preceding chapters might have given the impression that during the Renaissance the inquisitors drawn from the friars of the Dominican order who exercised their office in northern Italy were, all in all, comparatively indolent—with the exception of occasional firebrands, such as Antonio da Casale, Giorgio Cacatossici and Girolamo Armellini, whose hyperactivity one might be tempted to ascribe to subjective, temperamental traits. At best, it might be thought that they were unenthusiastic ones, as seems to have been the case with those who had thrust upon them by secular rulers the unenviable task of prosecuting Waldensians. The present chapter will dispel this impression of inactivity, by showing that Antonio da Casale, Cacatossici and Armellini were far from exceptional, for it will consider six friars, drawn from both the conventual provinces and the Congregation of Lombardy, who were especially earnest prosecutors of witches. The first two belonged to the Province of St. Peter Martyr and were responsible for the same inquisitorial district, that of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, and their combined, successive terms of office spanned almost half a century, from briefly before 1460 to well past 1500. Both men were indefatigable witch-hunters and the memory of their harsh repressions was still very much alive almost a century later, in 1586, when one of their successors as inquisitor of Vercelli and Ivrea, Cipriano Uberti da Ivrea, wrote of them “...friar Niccolò Constantini da Biella... an inquisitor who was extremely severe with the witches and by whom more than three hundred were consigned to the secular arm... friar Lorenzo Solerio, similarly terrifying to the aforementioned witches.”¹ Analogous remarks

¹ “...fra Nicolò Constantini da Biella... severissimo inquisitore contro le streghe, sotto il quale ne diedero al braccio secolare più di 300... fra Lorenzo Solerio... similmente terribilissimo contro le sudette streghe.” Uberti, *Tavola degli inquisitori*, partially reproduced in Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

could well be made on the four inquisitors drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy who will be considered: Antonio Pezzotelli da Brescia, Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, Girolamo da Lodi and Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza. These were responsible for the inquisitorial districts of Brescia, Bergamo, Mantua, and (from 1505) of Como, and, taken together, their activity also covered some fifty years, from the late 1470s to the mid-1520s.

The very brutality and scale of the persecutions that they instigated, as well as the available documentary evidence in the form of trial records and other accounts, disclose that these inquisitors subscribed to what historians have come to designate the ‘cumulative concept of witchcraft.’² That is, they accepted the diabolic interpretation of witchcraft whereby witches were not to be identified with common enchanters or sorcerers who practised either beneficial or harmful magic (*maleficium*), or with the sophisticated Renaissance necromancers who engaged in magical rituals by which they sought to conjure demons and have them do their bidding. Indeed, neither of these categories were, at least in theory, the direct concern of inquisitors, since they considered them to be more the victims of superstition than guilty of heresy.³ Renaissance inquisitors did indeed concern themselves increasingly with practitioners of ceremonial magic whom they suspected of diabolism, for the explicit invocation of demons had begun to be considered a manifestation of heresy from the time of Pope John XXII’s bull *Super illius specula* (1320),⁴ and, moreover, some inquisitors, such as Prierias with his neologism ‘strigimagus’, tried to blur the distinction between ritual magicians and diabolic witches. Nonetheless, simple sorcerers and ritual magicians fell primarily within the jurisdiction of episcopal courts or, in the case of performers of maleficent magic, of secular magistrates.

Rather, these inquisitors claimed to be prosecuting the adepts of an extremely dangerous, conspiratorial sect of heretics and apostates from the Christian faith that had only arisen after the beginning of the fifteenth century—an allegation that, for them, made the dismissal of witchcraft as merely superstitious and delusional by the authorita-

² The English expression was made popular by Levack 1995, p. 29 (first edition 1987) and has been widely adopted, see for example Behringer 2004, p. 57.

³ The Constitution of Alexander IV of 1258 insisted that inquisitors were not to concern themselves with popular superstitious practices *nisi manifeste haeresis sapiunt*. See Friedberg 1877, vol. 2, cols. 1071–1072 and Kors and Peters 2001, pp. 116–118.

⁴ Hansen 1901, pp. 4–6.

tive, tenth-century *Canon episcopi* entirely irrelevant.⁵ These witches—the term ‘witch’ being understood as gender-inclusive—were supposed to worship the devil and to enter into a contractual relationship with him whereby they became his serfs. In virtue of this pact, witches did not only acquire the power whereby their particularly gruesome *maleficia* were effective, but also indulged in all the elements that comprised the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft: participation at the sabbat, nocturnal flight, shapeshifting, profanation of the sacraments and Christian symbols such as the cross, infanticide and anthropophagy, unbridled, perverse sexual activities with demons *incubi* and *succubi* and other witches, and so on.

The problem, of course, is that according to the overwhelming majority of historians, as well as modern rationality, witches such as these never existed.⁶ Who were, then, the factual targets of these inquisitors’ witch-hunts? The answers that have been put forward by historians in response to this question are extremely varied, not necessarily exclusive, and all have had their fair share of critics as well as advocates. Some have argued that it was simply the ubiquitous, well-meaning casters of beneficent spells and practitioners of techniques of divination as well as malevolent sorcerers and learned necromancers who were all lumped together and reinterpreted by inquisitors as diabolic witches because they asserted that if their spells and rituals did have some effect—as they were commonly believed to do—it could only be through the intervention of demons, since they held them to be inefficacious in their own right. Others have claimed that it was the remnants of earlier, medieval heretical movements, especially Cathars and Waldensians, who by the beginning of the fifteenth century had become confused about their own identities and, moreover, had been subjected by inquisitors to diabolic stereotyping according to a centuries-old, well-established pattern. Some have argued that it was the members of surviving, pre-Christian fertility cults who still met to celebrate pagan rituals. Others still have suggested that it was people who entertained archaic folk-beliefs that were particularly susceptible to a demonic interpretation, such as that of flying at night with

⁵ The point is stressed, for example, by Bernardo Retegno da Como, *Tractatus de strigiis*, p. 145, and Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, pp. 149 and 161, who asserts that the “modern sect of the witches” had begun only shortly before the promulgation of Pope Innocent VIII’s bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* in 1484.

⁶ Briggs 1996, p. 6.

Diana and Herodias mentioned by the *Canon episcopi* and other expressions of ancestral myths reminiscent of ecstatic, shamanic-like contact with the world of the dead. Yet others have proposed that it was people who experienced cataleptic states induced by hallucinogenic substances, consumed either intentionally through the assimilation of concocted potions, especially ointments, or accidentally by eating cereals infected with ergot. Some, moreover, noticing that most people accused of witchcraft were female, have argued that it was largely a matter of innocent women, especially healers, herbalists and midwives, who were targeted by celibate, misogynist inquisitors precisely because of their gender. A very popular, current theory is that, since accusations of witchcraft came principally “from below”, it was largely a matter of entirely innocent people who were accused of being witches after falling foul of their neighbours, according to a refusal-of-charity and projection-of-guilt paradigm or as the result of some other social tension at the village level. Most recently, it has been suggested that, since so many accusations of witchcraft verged on the supposed performance of weather-magic, it was once again a matter of entirely innocent people, but ones who were scapegoated for the hardships and duress experienced as the result of the Little Ice Age—the global cooling that took place during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and whose most intense periods seem to coincide remarkably with peaks in witch-hunting.⁷ Whatever the case, the question remains open; there is little need to address it here, however, for in a book focusing on the inquisitors themselves it is their witch-interpretation that is important.

Of more immediate interest, then, is the question of whence these northern-Italian inquisitors derived their understanding of witches. It is important to notice that the witch-hunting by Constantini, Soleri and Pezzotelli preceded both the publication of Kramer and Sprenger’s *Malleus maleficarum* (1487) and the first appearance of Innocent VIII’s bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (1484) as that book’s preface. Indeed, the second of the three, Soleri, is cited in the *Malleus* as a source of information in several places, where he appears as the *inquisitor Cumanus* (the ‘inquisitor of Como’)—the abbreviated title customarily employed to refer to the inquisitors of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como. Moreover, the great bulk of the witch-hunting conducted in northern Italy even after the publication of the *Malleus* in 1487 is not

⁷ See Behringer 2004, pp. 87–89.

likely to have been immediately influenced by it, because traces of its being read by northern-Italian inquisitors only become evident at the beginning of the 1520s, in such works as Prierias' *De strigimarum daemonumque mirandis* (written 1520) and Giovan Francesco Pico's *Strix* (1523). It would be difficult to argue that the influence of the *Malleus* played a significant role, let alone a determinative one, in the witch-hunting conducted in northern Italy during the greater part of the period with which we are concerned.⁸

It is simply not known how the witch-hunting inquisitors of both the Province of St. Peter Martyr and the Congregation of Lombardy came to subscribe to the diabolic interpretation of witchcraft. Perhaps they derived it from literary works compiled sometime after the end of the first quarter of the fifteenth century, such as the anonymous *Errores Gazariorum* (1436, with additions of 1439) and Johannes Nider's *Formicarius* (1437–1438). But little is known for certain about the diffusion of these treatises, even though Nider's work was printed as early as 1475,⁹ and any claim that they, any more than the *Malleus maleficarum*, were actually read by and influenced inquisitors prosecuting witches in northern Italy at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries remains dubious at least.¹⁰

It seems more likely, however, that they simply acquired their diabolic interpretation of witchcraft by contagion, through personal contact with Dominican inquisitors active in contiguous inquisitorial districts situated in the northern dominions of the dukes of Savoy (Vaud, Valais, Geneva, Lausanne) where, it has been claimed, the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft first developed during the first half of the fifteenth century.¹¹ The inquisitorial districts of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara, Como, Brescia, Bergamo and Mantua covered the Italian, southern half of the Alpine region, shared with present-day France and southern Switzerland, and partly covered the central part of the Savoyard territories

⁸ It is instructive that the *Malleus* does not appear in the catalogue of the library of the convent of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan (1494) nor in that of San Domenico in Bologna (1511), see Kaeppli 1935 and Laurent 1943.

⁹ First printed in Cologne in 1475, see SOPMA, vol. 2, pp. 503–504.

¹⁰ It is instructive that the *Errores Gazariorum* and Nider's *Formicarius* do not appear in the catalogues of the important libraries of the convents of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan (1494) and San Domenico in Bologna (1511), see Kaeppli 1935 and Laurent 1943. Moreover, none of the two extant manuscripts of the *Errores* and of the twenty-six of the *Formicarius* are of Italian provenance, see Ostorero, Paravicini Bagliani and Utz Tremp 1999, pp. 108–115, 269–272.

¹¹ See Ostorero, Paravicini Bagliani and Utz Tremp 1999.

(Piedmont). It is probable that the doings of such inquisitors as Uldry de Torrenté (active ca. 1420–1445), the instigator of what has been described as the “first major witch-hunt in Europe” in Valais in the late 1420s and early 1430s and, perhaps, the author of the *Errores Gazariorum*, became well known to northern-Italian inquisitors and influenced them accordingly.¹² It is instructive that the duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, referred in 1463 to a particularly enterprising witch-hunting inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona during the 1450s and 1460s, Paolo Folperti da Pavia who habitually went on his inquisitorial rounds with an escort of three hundred soldiers, as *inquisitore de li Gazari*.¹³

Furthermore, it is not at all unlikely that, at least in part, these inquisitors adopted the diabolic interpretation of witchcraft as the result of their familiarity with the magical themes prevalent in so much of the literature of classical antiquity—with its preponderance of female practitioners of magic—with which, as men of the Renaissance, they might have been quite familiar. But, most of all, it is possible that they did so on the basis of their own experience of the phenomenon and its practitioners, for, if these inquisitors themselves are to be believed, the practice of witchcraft was endemic in the areas entrusted to their surveillance. One should be wary, here, of any excessively rigid and, perhaps, largely artificial distinction between the inquisitors’ ‘learned notions’ and the ‘popular beliefs’ upon which they putatively imposed them, as well as the underlying, rationalist thesis that witchcraft was a purely ‘imaginary crime’ and that any alleged evidence for its existence, such as the confessions of those tried for witchcraft, was solely the result of the accused being made to conform to the inquisitors’ elaborate, speculative demonologies by suggestive questioning and the application of torture.¹⁴

It is important to bear in mind that these inquisitors were not strangers in a strange land: they were almost all born and raised in the inquisitorial districts for which they were responsible and pursued their inquisitorial activities there over many years. It is not entirely unlikely that their interpretation of witchcraft reflected to some extent the local

¹² See Andmatten and Utz Tremp 1992 and, for a rapid overview, Behringer 2004, pp. 57–69.

¹³ Fumi 1910, p. 104; Motta 1888, p. 127.

¹⁴ The distinction between elite and popular culture in the matter of witchcraft harks back to Hansen 1900, for whom witchcraft was an ‘imaginary crime’, and was taken for granted in Kieckhefer 1976. Its tenuousness has been stressed recently, see for example Briggs 1996, p. 28.

popular beliefs, that they probably shared and with which they interacted, and that it owed as much to what they might first have been told about witches and witchcraft by their grandmothers and nannies as to the learned demonological disquisitions that they might have heard in the rarified atmosphere of the halls of the universities of Pavia and Bologna. Accordingly, they are all likely to have been very much in touch with a reality, whatever it might have been, that, perhaps, now largely escapes us. Be all that as it may, the diabolic interpretation of witchcraft was certainly current among the friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr by the beginning of the 1460s at the very latest, as is disclosed by the anti-witchcraft tracts composed at that time by one of its provincials, Girolamo Visconti da Milano (d. 1477).¹⁵

2. *Niccolò Constantini da Biella, Inquisitor of
Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como ca. 1460–1483*

Despite his provenance from Biella, indicated by his toponym, Niccolò Constantini seems to have been his entire life a member of the convent of San Paolo in Vercelli that belonged to the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The earliest record that we have of him places him in Vercelli in 1450 and shows him already holding the office of inquisitorial vicar there. He must have been held in high regard by the citizens of Vercelli, for that same year they asked him to participate in the drawing up of new statutes to regulate elections to public offices.¹⁶ A few years later, on 13 December 1453, he graduated master of theology and was incorporated in the *collegium doctorum* of the theological faculty of the University of Turin.¹⁷ In 1460 he already held the post of inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como and while visiting Cremona, where he had previously acquired a reputation as an effective preacher, took it upon himself to write to the duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, to inform him of popular discontent with its bishop.¹⁸

Little is known with precision of the vast inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como. A list of the inquisitors who were active

¹⁵ Visconti's tracts, *Lamiarum sive striarum opusculum* and *Opusculum de striis* were both written around 1460 but only first printed in Milan in 1490, see Hansen 1901, pp. 200–207.

¹⁶ Vallaro 1936, p. 59.

¹⁷ Vallari 1936, p. 48.

¹⁸ Fumi 1910, p. 29.

in Como is provided by Ballarini (1619), but it is so evidently unreliable as to be useless—it dates, for example, Constantini's own appointment as inquisitor as first taking place in 1495, by which time he was long dead.¹⁹ More interesting are the remarks, that have been cited often by historians, made by Bernardo Retegno da Como, who was appointed inquisitor of Como in 1505, when that subdistrict was separated from the districts of Vercelli, Ivrea and Novara and entrusted to the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy. Retegno claims, on the alleged basis of his familiarity with the local inquisitorial archive, that systematic witch-hunting had been carried out by the inquisitors of Como for about one hundred and fifty years by the time he took over the office, from roughly 1350.²⁰ Some historians, though, have suggested that this ought not be taken too seriously,²¹ while others have argued for its accuracy.²² Retegno's claim might be corroborated by Cipriano Uberti's statement, in his *Tavola degli inquisitori* (1586), that in 1416 the inquisitor then active in Como, a certain Antonio da Casale of whom otherwise nothing is known, consigned three hundred witches to the secular arm to be burned.²³ Now, if we are to believe Ballarini for once, there does indeed seem to have been a so-named inquisitor in Como at roughly that time.²⁴ The possibility remains, however, that Ballarini took his information from Uberti's *Tavola* to begin with, and it is not unlikely that in the *Tavola*, which is a real hotchpotch, Uberti has simply chronologically misplaced the Antonio da Casale who was discussed in chapter 2 and was inquisitor of Bergamo till 1508, of Parma and Reggio during 1508–1513, of Como in 1513–1515, and is remembered by Leandro Alberti as an extremely zealous witch-hunter. Whatever the case, it is unlikely that when Constantini was appointed inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, he was being particularly innovative by his earnest witch-hunting. Certainly, his probable immediate predecessor in the post, Bartolomeo da Omate, was himself a renowned prosecutor of witches.²⁵

¹⁹ Ballarini 1619, pp. 202–203.

²⁰ Hansen 1901, p. 282.

²¹ Cohn 1973, p. 200.

²² Ginzburg 1991, pp. 71, 83 and Behringer 2004, p. 62.

²³ Monti 1829–1832, vol. 2, p. 90.

²⁴ Ballarini 1619, p. 202.

²⁵ Bernardo da Como, *Tractatus de strigiis*, p. 144, mentions that Bartolomeo da Omate conducted witch-hunts in Mendrisio to the north of Como in the 1450s.

Politically, the inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como encompassed the northern third of the principality of Piedmont, the upper part of the duchy of Milan and the northern sections of the marquisate of Monferrato. The subdistrict of Como was particularly large, for the medieval diocese of Como extended well to the north-east of the city of Como, so as to include several remote Alpine valleys, especially Valle Misolcina and Valtellina. It is not surprising, then, that both Constantini and Soleri had to employ several inquisitorial vicars to ensure the continued surveillance of the vast district entrusted to them. In Constantini's case we know of the appointments of Jacobo da Monza as vicar in Bellinzona in 1464, Domenico da Sasso as vicar in Como in 1476 and of Antonio Seghandi da Soncino in 1472,²⁶ possibly in Valle Misolcina, for he is probably to be identified with the Antonio da Soncino who would be appointed vicar there under Soleri in 1488.²⁷

Constantini soon made his mark as an insistent inquisitor. So much so, that in 1463, while conducting trials in Como, the populace there reacted violently, insulting and threatening him and severely beating some of his assistants. Constantini must have complained about this to Francesco Sforza, for the duke wrote to Constantini expressing his regrets at the turn of events and then wrote to the podestà of Como, whom he severely reprimanded and commanded that he discover and punish those responsible.²⁸ A further letter, that might be the response of the podestà of Como to Francesco Sforza, accused Constantini of having proceeded in an entirely arbitrary manner: he acted with great cruelty and without sufficient reason, sentencing several unfortunates to be burned and others to be banished. The writer concluded that, if he were to know the truth of the matter, the duke would realize that inquisitors such as Constantini deserved to be punished themselves even more harshly than the manner in which they treated their ill-fated victims.²⁹

Although there is no documentary evidence of the three hundred witches that, if we are to believe Uberti, Constantini condemned to be burned at the stake, we do possess the records of at least one trial

²⁶ Motta 1888, p. 125.

²⁷ "Frater Antonius de Soncino Congregationis Lombardie instituit vicarius inquisitoris heretice pravitatis in Valle Misolcine cum beneplacito domini episcopi Cumenensis, cum privilegiis." (7 October 1488) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 239^v.

²⁸ Fumi 1910, p. 96, partially reproduces the letters of Francesco Sforza to Constantini and to the podestà of Como.

²⁹ The letter is in Motta 1888, p. 126.

for witchcraft for which he was ultimately responsible. This is the trial of Giovanna Monduro of Miagliano, wife of Antoniotto Marandolo, held during January and February 1470 in the village of Salussola near Biella.³⁰ Since at the time Constantini was serving as the prior of the convent of San Paolo in Vercelli as well as inquisitor, the trial was largely carried out on his behalf by one of his inquisitorial vicars, Giovanni Domenico da Cremona, but Giovanna's final sentencing as a heretic and release to the secular arm is ascribed to Constantini himself. The transcript of the proceedings was penned by a diocesan priest, Francesco Vialardi who acted as notary at the trial, and it merits considerable attention. It may well be taken as representative of the witch-trials conducted by Dominicans, both conventual and observant, in northern Italy during the Renaissance and discloses their common dynamics. The records of very few of these are extant, and, as was stressed in chapter 1, even of these we have reliable, modern editions of less than a handful. However, despite multiple differences of detail, all these trials seem to have been procedurally very similar; it will suffice, then, to focus on the earliest of these of which we have reliable documentation—the trial of 1470, than can be taken as paradigmatic.

The document informs us that the proceedings commenced with Giovanni Domenico's arrival in mid-January 1470 in Salussola, where he preached at length and proclaimed the customary *tempus gratiae*, several days within which anyone who considered himself guilty of some lapse, or knew of someone else's lapses, could present himself to the inquisitor, make his confession and be absolved with the imposition of some light penance, and be free of further prosecution. But what occasioned Giovanni Domenico's descent upon Salussola to begin with? It is only in passing that the document mentions that Giovanna had been denounced as a member of the sect of the witches, and as having been seen taking part in sabbats, by another purported witch, a certain Maddalena, whose trial Giovanni Domenico had held only a few days previously in some nearby village.³¹ It is more than likely, then, that it was on the basis of this delation that Giovanni Domenico, possibly at Constantini's behest and certainly with his approval, had taken it upon himself to go to Salussola and investigate.

³⁰ These records were first published in Italian translation in Poma 1913 and republished in Reviglio della Veneria 1951, pp. 180–198, and in Craveri 1981, pp. 128–143. The original Latin text has been edited in Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54.

³¹ Crovella 1985, p. 41.

Following Giovanni Domenico's proclamation took place the *inquisitio generalis*, the gathering of evidence, by the interrogation of spontaneous witnesses, on the area's heretical beliefs, practices and reputations. Several villagers presented themselves before him between 21 January and 6 February and testified to Giovanna's public fame as a witch. These witnesses were almost all Giovanna's close relatives; the substance of their combined testimonies adds up, however, to little more than that she was probably much given to malicious invective and irreverent cursing when feeling harassed. Upon hearing that she was being accused of witchcraft, Giovanna attempted to flee, but was seized and detained. The trial itself, or *inquisitio specialis*, began on 13 February and was held in the church of Santi Gervasio and Protasio in Salussola. The list reproduced in the trial's transcript of the predetermined questions that were to be put to Giovanna by Giovanni Domenico during the course of the trial is instructive, for it reveals very well indeed the conceptual baggage that an inquisitor brought to such a task at this time. The questions amount to a kind of primer of the diabolic interpretation of witchcraft and allude to almost all its essential components: the sect of the witches, repudiation of the Christian faith, the pact with the devil, sexual congress with him, abuse of the sacraments, the performance of malevolent magic.³² Inquisitors invariably compiled such a list of points, known as *articuli* or *capituli inquisitionales*, to guide them in their interrogations, and it is through these that their own witch-beliefs and demonology would have impinged upon the course and outcome of a witch-trial, for extant samples of such lists are, all in all, rather similar, and seem to owe more to some prefabricated pattern, perhaps even a standard formulary, than to the specific accusations derived from any particular *inquisitio generalis*.³³ That such was the case need not surprise us, for, after all, inquisitors would have conceived their task as the ferreting out of crimes, and not the collection of folklore.³⁴

The trial opened with Giovanna's first interrogation and she replied negatively to all questions. Her second interrogation was held the fol-

³² Crovella 1985, pp. 43–44.

³³ For examples of analogous lists see the *articuli inquisitionales* compiled by the inquisitor of Savigliano, Vito Beggiami, for the trials of Caterina Bonivarda and Caterina Borrella held in Rifreddo in late 1495, in Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004, pp. 103–104, 146–147. For comparative purposes one may look at the list compiled by the *procurator fidei* for the trial of Jaquet Durier held in Vevey (Vaud) in 1448, in Ostorero 1995, pp. 216–218.

³⁴ The turn of phrase is borrowed loosely from Rose 2003, p. 27.

lowing day, 14 February, and once again she denied all charges. Giovanni Domenico then asked her if she had any enemy who might be accusing her unjustly and out of spite or for revenge and to this also she gave a negative answer. He concluded by granting her some time to think of why she ought not to be tortured so as to arrive at the truth. On 15 February she was subjected to a third interrogation, and torture was applied for the first time, but she remained steadfast in her denials. A fourth interrogation took place on 20 February, and at that point she began to confess: she admitted that she had indeed belonged to the sect of the witches for twenty-three years, recapitulated all the elements of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft, including shapeshifting and transvection that are not mentioned in Giovanni Domenico's initial list of questions, and admitted to having caused the deaths of several persons. During a further session held the same day, she began to name other members of the sect, three local women and two of the nearby village of Andorno. On 21 February when she was interrogated for the fifth time, and tied up for torture although it was not employed, she repeated her confession of the previous day and named yet other members of the sect, including a local priest. In a further session of the same day she continued her confession but also retracted some of her accusations of others. On 27 February she was interrogated for the sixth time and she at first denied but then confirmed again her previous confession, although she excluded from her identification as fellow-witches all persons who were still living, limiting herself to those who had already died. Torture was then applied a second, and last, time and she slightly modified her list of accomplices. During a further session later that day she ratified her confession once again and repeated her original list of other members of the sect with a few exceptions. Giovanni Domenico then decided to end the interrogations, even though he was convinced that Giovanna had not as yet told the entire truth, because he felt that this could not be achieved without an excessive use of torture.³⁵

On 2 and 3 March Giovanni Domenico interrogated well over thirty inhabitants of Salussola on whether Giovanna was to be deemed mentally sane and, accordingly, responsible for her actions, and the unanimous response was that this was indeed so. It is possible that subsequently Constantini himself came to Salussola and conducted further

³⁵ "Et sic conclusit dominus vicarius eam dimittendam licet plena veritas habita non sit et ea haberi non possit nisi predicta tormentis forte consumeretur." Crovella 1985, p. 52.

interrogations of Giovanna, but of this there is no trace in the documentation. Whatever the case, it seems that Constantini himself pronounced Giovanna “a heretic and guilty of innumerable crimes” and released her to the secular arm to be dealt with as prescribed by the law. Well over a year later, on 17 August 1471, the deputy of the local feudal lord, the count of Tollengo, in whose dungeon she must have been incarcerated since the trial, emitted the sentence whereby Giovanna was to be burned at the stake in nearby Miagliano—her birthplace—and it was carried out the same day.³⁶ Perhaps by then both Constantini and Giovanni Domenico, neither of whom was present at the execution, had long since set off, tracking down her alleged accomplices in the village of Andorno and elsewhere.

Constantini seems to have continued as inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como till his death, sometime before 1483, when he was succeeded in the post by Soleri. One should not think, however, that, even though Constantini and Soleri certainly shared a common cast of mind in the matter of witch-hunting, their personal relationship was harmonious and peaceful. Indeed, most of the documentary references to be had on Constantini for the last decade or so of his life concern what seems to have been an ongoing feud between him and Soleri. Since the fray was occasioned by the issue of Soleri’s conventual affiliation it will be most convenient to consider its details when we turn to Soleri. At this point it will suffice to glean what the documents tell us about Constantini, without entering into the matter further. In June 1474 Constantini, though still inquisitor, was released from the office of prior of the convent of San Paolo in Vercelli and Soleri was appointed vicar till the election of a new prior.³⁷ In mid-October of that year Constantini was himself appointed vicar of the convent at the behest of Duchess Iolanda of Savoy, whose intercession with the Dominican master general he must have managed to inveigle, and, poignantly, he was allowed to determine the matter of Soleri’s affiliation to the convent of Vercelli.³⁸ Before the end of the month, though, he was sum-

³⁶ Crovella 1985, pp. 71–72.

³⁷ “Magister Nicolaus de Bugella prior et inquisitor Vercellensis est absolutus ab officio prioratus et instituitur vicarius magister Laurentius predictus usque ad presentiam prioris in domo.” (4 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 182r.

³⁸ “Magister Nicolaus de Constantinis de Bugella inquisitor Cumanus de conventu Vercellensi fuit factus vicarius super conventu Vercellense prefato super capite et membra in spiritualibus et temporalibus cum plenissima potestate etiam absolvendi etc., et ordinandi omnia pro reductione bone vite ad instantiam precipue illustrissime ducisse

moned before Master General Mansueti, who was then in Milan, for Soleri and his associates in the convent of Vercelli had by then brought charges against him of some kind of impropriety, probably financial.³⁹ As the charges against him could not be proved, Constantini was subsequently rehabilitated by the master general.⁴⁰

There are a few mentions of Constantini that show him still comparatively active in what must have been his last few years. In August 1476 a friar of the convent of Vercelli, Pietro Pezzano, was commanded by the master general to give an account of himself for usurping Constantini's role as inquisitor and, falsely pretending to be an inquisitor himself, taking it upon himself to absolve a sorceress (*maga*) who was being investigated by Constantini.⁴¹ Perhaps Pietro Pezzano's baffling behaviour might have been occasioned by what may have been reasonable prognostications about Constantini's life expectancy, for at the same time the master general allowed Constantini to change his cell in the convent of Vercelli on account of some illness and to make provisions for the disposal of his goods after his death.⁴² Constantini survived, however, for several years. In late 1478 the master general appointed him vicar of the convent of Ivrea with the task of reforming it,⁴³ and in early 1479 gave him a similar commission in the convent of Biella.⁴⁴ It is not known when Constantini died, but it probably happened before Soleri's return to the convent of Vercelli and his election as its prior in 1482.

Sabaudie d. Violantis sororis christianissimorum regum Francie, et potest compellere fratres et assignare et facere et declarare magistrum Laurentium de Vercellis filium nativum vel non filium nativum dicti conventus secundum voluntatem maioris partis sententiam, mandatur omnibus ut obediant..." (15 October 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 186^r.

³⁹ "Magister Nicolaus de Bugella ad instantiam magistri Laurentii et aliorum patrum conventus Vercellensis fuit citatus ut infra duos dies compareat in conventu Mediolanensi, omnino impedimento cessante quatenus habeant pro confesso." (28 October 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 188^v.

⁴⁰ "Magister Nicolaus de Bugella conventus Vercellensis habuit absolutionem, abolitionem, et remissionem omnium culparum et penarum propter incursum, et fuit restitutus ad omnes gratias ordinis si tamen hoc beneficio indiget, propter multa que sibi fuerit imposita licet non probata, et mandatur omnibus presidentibus et fratribus ordinis sub pena gravioris culpe quod predictis gratiis eum uti permittant nec impediunt et nullus molestat aut mutet predicta inferior. Si tamen est debitor sui conventus satisfaciatur ad plenum." (2 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 190^v.

⁴¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 314^v (30 August 1476).

⁴² AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 315^r (3 August 1476).

⁴³ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 322^r (13 September 1478).

⁴⁴ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 212^v (3 February 1479).

3. *Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata, Inquisitor of
Vercelli, Irea, Novara and Como 1483–1505*

Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata is one Renaissance inquisitor who appears invariably in histories of witchcraft and the witch-hunts—not least because of a mildly titillating mention in Frazer's *Golden Bough*.⁴⁵ The authors who allude to him, however, are not aware of precisely who he was, let alone know anything further about him, for he is always referred to, without further ado, by the abbreviated form of his inquisitorial title whereby he is invoked on four occasions in the *Malleus maleficarum*—the 'inquisitor of Como' (*inquisitor Cumanus*)—and solely on account of his purported doings in Bormio in 1485 that warranted his inclusion in that work.⁴⁶ But before turning to these it will be useful to consider his preceding career.

If we are to go by his toponym, Lorenzo Soleri may have hailed from the hamlet of Sant'Agata, situated some fifty kilometers to the north of Como, near Gero Laria, at the very top of the lake of Como and the opening of the lower Valtellina. Some credence is lent to this by Ballarini who, although he fails to enumerate Soleri among the inquisitors of Como, does mention him as originating from the area of Como.⁴⁷ Nothing can be discovered about Soleri's early years and it is not even possible to conjecture in which convent he was initially received in the Dominican order. We do know, however, that he completed a university course in theology, since his graduation as master of theology was approved by the general chapter held in Rome in June 1474.⁴⁸ It is probable that he did all this in the faculty of theology of the University of Pavia, for a few years later, in 1476–1477, he was appointed regent master in the Dominican studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia which was integrated in that faculty.⁴⁹ At the same time as the approval of his graduation, the general chapter of 1474 appointed him regent of studies in the convent of San Paolo in Vercelli.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Chapter 67, section 1.

⁴⁶ See, for one of numerous possible examples, Ankerloo, Clark and Monter 2002, p. 44.

⁴⁷ Ballarini 1619, pp. 202–203.

⁴⁸ D'Amato 1947, p. 229.

⁴⁹ Soleri does not appear, however, in the list of graduates of the theological faculty of the University of Pavia published in Negruzzo 1995, pp. 327–345.

⁵⁰ "Eadem die magister Laurentius Vercellensis fuit assignatus in regentem in con-

Soleri's assignment to the convent of Vercelli as regent of its studium was accompanied by Master General Mansueti's concession that he was to become a permanent member (*filius natus*) of that convent if accepted by a majority of the members of its community.⁵¹ It was also accompanied by his appointment as the convent's vicar or temporary superior till the election of a new prior, and this entailed the release from office of the then prior, Constantini. The result of all this was a typical friars' squabble and its opening act has been presented already. Constantini, obviously resentful of his demotion from the priorship, attempted to make difficulties for Soleri by trying to impede his acceptance as a permanent member of its community and by appealing to powerful patrons outside the order. Thanks to the intervention of Iolanda of Savoy, Constantini was then himself appointed vicar of the convent of Vercelli and, moreover, empowered to deal with the question of Soleri's affiliation. Soleri and his supporters in the convent struck back at Constantini by accusing him of some misdeed to the master general, possibly some financial impropriety. The master general summoned Constantini to appear before him in Milan, but subsequently declared him innocent of all charges.

Despite Constantini's vindication, Soleri at first survived well enough his initial conflict with him: on 31 November 1474 the master general confirmed him in his post as regent in Vercelli.⁵² Furthermore, by 3 May 1475, when he was reprimanded by the master general for excessively teasing the Augustinian friars in Vercelli about the alleged character of their order, he had been elected conventual prior.⁵³ Nevertheless, the quarrels within the convent of Vercelli over Soleri's affiliation

ventu Vercellensis cum gratiis consuetis et fuit sibi concessa camera quecumque vacans sibi grata et fuit preceptum priori sub pena absolutionis quatenus acceptat eum in regentem et patrem conventus." (4 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 182^r.

⁵¹ "Magister Laurentius de Vercellis est effectus natus conventus Vercellensis accedente consensu maioris partis fratrum." (4 June 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 182^r.

⁵² "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha qui Rome in capituli generali fuit assignatus in regentem sui conventus Vercellensis habuit confirmationem dicte assignationi, et ulterius habuit licentiam acceptandi lecturam in ecclesia cathedrali vel alia si fuerit requisitus, ac etiam predicandi et sermocinandi..." (31 November 1474) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 190^v.

⁵³ "Magistro Laurentio de Sancta Agata priori conventus Vercellarum, qui dicitur aliqua dixisse contra fratres Heremitarum Sancti Augustini asserendo eos non esse de ordine mendicantium et alia prout procuratore dicti ordinis Heremitarum conquestus est, precipitur sub pena gravioris culpe ut infra terminum trium dierum ad veniendum ad reverendissimum magistrum ad se excusandum et mandatur omnibus presidentibus et fratribus quod obediant hanc citationem." (3 May 1475) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 196^v.

must have continued and the master general finally intervened by sending on 31 June the inquisitor of Carcassone, Michael de Morello, to take over the convent and examine the case.⁵⁴ Soleri was subsequently removed from office and ordered to leave the convent of Vercelli on 30 January 1476,⁵⁵ and the master general finally decided against his membership of the convent on 23 August 1476.⁵⁶

Soleri's departure from Vercelli did not leave him without prospects, for during the academic year 1476–1477 he was expected to serve as regent master of the studium in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia. Soleri had been assigned to the post by the general chapter held in Rome in 1474, but in early January 1476 Soleri seems to have been unwilling to accept the office, so that the master general had to make alternative arrangements and appointed Benedetto da Biella as a substitute just in case.⁵⁷ The further development of his situation in Vercelli must have convinced Soleri to accept the post after all, and the master general definitively confirmed his tenure of it on 8 May 1476.⁵⁸ But it is doubtful that Soleri did in fact serve as regent master in Pavia during 1476–1477, for on 17 July the master general allowed him to engage in itinerant preaching,⁵⁹ and on 28 August appointed him

⁵⁴ “Magister Michael de Morello inquisitor Carcassone fuit factus visitator et vicarius ac commissarius super conventum Vercellarum, maxime propter querelas habitas de magistro Laurentio de Sancta Agatha priore quem potest absolvere, et punire fratres, etc...” (31 July 1475) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 198^v.

⁵⁵ “Magistro Laurentio de Sancta Agatha fuit factum simile preceptum (quod infra quattuor dies recedat a conventu Vercellensi et terminis eius) de dicto conventu Vercellensi.” (30 January 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 207^v.

⁵⁶ “Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha de Vercellis qui habuit literas quod fuerit filius natus conventus Vercellarum si maior pars consentiret et postea secutus est consensus. Sed aliis contrariantibus dicte fratrum plurium sententie, tandem commissa est causa magistro Cherubino de Fabriano reverendo vicario magistri reverendissimi quid iudicavit magistrum Laurentium non fuisse bene receptum nec a maiori parte propterea non esse filium nativum dicti conventus et declaratur non pertinere ad conventum Vercellensem et non esse filium nec habendum pro filio dicti conventus ...” (23 August 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 313^v.

⁵⁷ “Magister Benedictus de Biella fuit subrogatus in regentem conventus Papiensis pro tertio anno si magister Laurentius de Vercellis principaliter assignatus non iverit...” (30 January 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 207^v.

⁵⁸ “Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha confirmatur in regentem in conventu Papiensi sicut per acta capituli generali fuit assignatus.” (8 May 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 207^v.

⁵⁹ “Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha conventus Vercellensis habuit licentiam discurrere predicando ubique, commorandi apud dominos et personas religiosas et officiandi et legendi ac recipiendi elemosinas, exsequendi ultimas voluntates, assumendi socios quorum curat gerat ut prior...” (17 July 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 308^v.

superior of the small Dominican house dedicated to St. Peter Martyr in Moncrivello.⁶⁰ Of course these might have been merely temporary assignments meant to occupy him till the beginning of the academic year, that customarily took place in Pavia toward the end of September. Whatever the case, there is no documentary evidence that he ever did serve as regent master in Pavia.

There are no traces of Soleri for the following eighteen months or so. Then, in late 1477, he was appointed by the master general, along with Giorgio da Mondovì, to settle a dispute between two friars, Cristoforo da Cherasco and Michele Madei da Asti, and he was still involved in this at the beginning of March 1478. Unfortunately, the records of this case tell us nothing about either Soleri's other engagements or his whereabouts at this time.⁶¹ Soon after, however, on 9 March 1478, Soleri was appointed prior of the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Cherasco,⁶² and he is likely to have remained there till another prior was elected at the end of January 1479.⁶³ The years 1479–1482 represent another gap in our knowledge of Soleri's places of assignment and activities. V.M. Fontana (1666) claims that in 1479 Soleri was appointed inquisitor of Turin and justifies this by alluding to a supposed mention in the second register (1478–1480) of Master General Mansueti,⁶⁴ but Fontana surely errs on this for of such a reference there is no trace.

By mid-1482, however, Soleri was once again in the convent of Vercelli and, moreover, once again its prior. One suspects that his old antagonist, Constantini, of whom there are no traces after 1479, probably died before this. In August 1482 Master General Salvo Casseta da Palermo commissioned him to reform the convent of Santa Caterina in Trino,⁶⁵ and appointed him vicar of the Dominican nuns' monastery of Santa Margherita in Vercelli.⁶⁶ In early January of the following year,

⁶⁰ "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha Vercellensis fuit factus vicarius generalis super loco sancti Petri Martyris upud Ciglanum cum plenissima potestate ita tamen quod sit sub provinciali." (28 August 1476) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 314^r.

⁶¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 324^r (5 December 1477 and 11 March 1478).

⁶² "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha Vercellensis confirmatur et instituitur in priorem conventus Clarasci cum solita potestate." (9 March 1478) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 325^v.

⁶³ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 212^r (26 January 1479).

⁶⁴ Fontana 1666, p. 611.

⁶⁵ "Magister Laurentio de Sancta Agatha prior conventus Vercellensis fuit data plena commissio super conventum Sancte Catherine de Tridino in capitibus et in membris..." (21 July 1482) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 190^r.

⁶⁶ "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha prior conventus Vercellensis fuit confir-

1483, the master general appointed Soleri to the post, probably left vacant at Constantini's death, of inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como.⁶⁷ A few months later, Soleri attended the chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr held in Savigliano and is designated in its records *prior et inquisitor Vercellensis*.⁶⁸ In May 1483 the master general commissioned him, along with Francesco della Riva, the inquisitor of Milan, to settle a dispute between the convent of Novara and the Dominican nuns of the monastery of Santa Maria Maddalena in Albi and the record of this designates him with the customary, abbreviated form of his inquisitorial title: *inquisitor Cumanus*.⁶⁹ In late May 1483, and this is interesting for it shows that there were some things that not even a powerful inquisitor could get away with, the master general threatened him with excommunication and demotion from his offices if he did not immediately return a copy of Aquinas' commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics* that belonged to another convent and it was suspected he had unduly appropriated.⁷⁰

Soleri remained in charge of the inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como for more than two decades. He was reappointed to the post at the beginning of 1489 by Master General Giocchino Torriani, and is repeatedly designated *inquisitor* in chronologically subsequent documentation. The minor subdistrict of Casale and Trino was, however, subtracted from the inquisition of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como in early 1489 and, as has been seen, was entrusted

matus vicarius super monasterio Sancte Margarite de Vercellis cum plenaria potestate." (2 July 1482) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 190^v.

⁶⁷ "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha conventus Vercellensis fuit confirmatus inquisitor in Lombardia superiori et marchia Ianuensi est specialiter civitatem Vercellensem, Novariensem, Cumanam et Yporegensensem cum terminis eorundem conventuum, terris et districtibus eorumque cura huius officii dare consuetis annullando omnem alium per quemcumque me inferiore institutum et nullus inferior potest molestare." (10 January 1483) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 191^v.

⁶⁸ AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81.

⁶⁹ "Magistro videlicet Francisco de Ripa inquisitore Mediolanense et magistro Laurentio de Vercellis inquisitore Cumano committitur quod auditis sororibus Sancte Marie Magdalene de Alba et fratribus conventus Novariensis..." (27 May 1483) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 195^v.

⁷⁰ "Magistro Laurentio de Sancta Agatha precipitur in virtute Spiritus sancti et sancte obedientie ac sub pena excommunicationis late sententie et absolutionis ab officio quatenus si habeat librum seu scriptum sancti Thome super libros ethicorum qui liber erat in manus magistri Archangeli de Vicentia qui pertinet ad conventum Angelorum debeat restituere latori, si non habet et sciat ubi est debet indicare eidem sub eisdem penis." (27 January 1483) AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 200^r.

to Michele Madei da Asti, at least temporarily.⁷¹ In 1505 the subdistrict of Novara was transformed into an independent district and entrusted to Alberto Bossi da Novara, while the subdistrict of Como was also transformed into an independent district and entrusted to Bernardo Retegno da Como.⁷² It is likely that at that time Soleri was also released from the post of inquisitor of the remaining rump of his formerly vast district, Vercelli and Ivrea, which seems to have been entrusted to Paolo da Finale.⁷³

Soleri's notorious witch-hunting in Bormio in 1485, reported in the *Malleus maleficarum*, took place, then, in the opening years of his tenure of the post of inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, and it might just indicate that he inaugurated it with a wide-ranging and systematic reconnaissance of its territory. Before turning to Soleri's activities reported in the *Malleus* it is necessary to deal with the alternative suggestions that have been made as to the identity of its *inquisitor Cumanus*, for the little attention that scholars have paid him so far has focused principally on this issue.

The only two published lists of the inquisitors of Como, Ballarini (1619) and Fontana (1666), are of no help, for, being incomplete, neither indicates who held the post in 1485.⁷⁴ Moreover, even if they did, it is likely that they would still be of little use, since, as has been seen, Ballarini's list is quite confused and Fontana's fares little better. H.C. Lea suggested in his pioneering study (1888) of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages that the *inquisitor Cumanus* is to be identified as the Dominican Girolamo Visconti da Milano.⁷⁵ But this can be dismissed immediately, for it is certain that Visconti died in late 1477. J. Hansen (1901) did identify him correctly as Soleri on the basis of some references to him in the registers of the Dominican masters general, but paid him no further attention.⁷⁶ Hansen's correct identification has not been followed, however, by a spate of subsequent authors, even some who claim to be familiar with his work. There is no need to enumerate all these

⁷¹ "Magister Laurentius de Solerii prior Vercellensis confirmatur inquisitor in Lombardia et marchia Ianuensi. Cum terminis consuetis etc. Civitate Casalense cum terminis conventuum Casalensi et Tridini dumtaxat exceptis." (10 January 1489) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 243^r.

⁷² AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172^r (18 and 20 May 1505).

⁷³ AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 173^r (22 March 1506).

⁷⁴ See Ballarini 1619, pp. 202–203, Fontana 1666, p. 576.

⁷⁵ Lea 1888, vol. 3, p. 540.

⁷⁶ Hansen 1901, p. 502.

and it will suffice to mention authors who first proposed, rather than merely popularized, alternative identifications. V. Spinetti (1903) gave rise to the identification of the *inquisitor Cumanus* as Niccolò di Castello, a canon of Como, for he discovered a record in the archive of the commune of Bormio of a bill presented by him to that commune, dated 21 August 1489, for his inquisitorial activities there.⁷⁷ E. Besta (1945), after a hurried examination of further documentation preserved in the same archive, identified him as Niccolò da Menaggio, who is recorded as carrying out inquisitorial activities in Bormio in June 1485, and transformed him without further ado into a Dominican friar,⁷⁸ and was followed in this by G. Bonomo (1955).⁷⁹ G. Giorgetta (1983), following upon a more systematic study of the documentation in Bormio, was far more cautious and did not expressly identify the *inquisitor Cumanus* with any one person.⁸⁰ For he discovered that two Dominican inquisitors summoned from the convent of Monza, a friar Agostino and an unnamed companion, were already acting as inquisitors in Bormio in late 1483.⁸¹ Furthermore, he pointed out that Niccolò da Menaggio was not a Dominican at all but a canon of Como who participated in some witch-trials in June 1485 as the representative of the bishop of Como and in concert with a Dominican inquisitor, a friar Girolamo.⁸² E. Paccagnini (1989), who seems to have been unaware of Giorgetta's research, repeated Bonomo's identification and added further, supposed evidence of his own.⁸³

While the documentation adduced by these authors does provide evidence of inquisitorial activities being performed in Bormio at the turn of the second half of the 1480s by the canon of Como Niccolò da Menaggio (who is probably the same person as Spinetti's Niccolò di Castello), as well as the Dominican friars Agostino and Girolamo,⁸⁴

⁷⁷ Spinetti 1903, pp. 59, 118 n. 124.

⁷⁸ Besta 1945, p. 114.

⁷⁹ Bonomo 1983, p. 253.

⁸⁰ R. Decker's summary dismissal of Hansen's identification of Soleri as the *inquisitor Cumanus* on the alleged basis of Giorgetta's research is unwarranted, see Decker 2003, p. 163 n. 11.

⁸¹ Giorgetta 1983, p. 158 n. 23. This Agostino is perhaps to be identified with Agostino da Pavia.

⁸² Giorgetta 1983, p. 161. The friar Girolamo in question is probably one of Soleri's inquisitorial vicars, Girolamo Rusconi, who will be discussed below.

⁸³ Paccagnini 1989, p. 44. In addition to referring to Bonomo, Paccagnini invokes Ballarini 1619 and Motta 1888, but neither contains any reference to the issue.

⁸⁴ This documentation is now available in its entirety on the web, see 'La stregone-

this does not suffice to identify any one of these with the *inquisitor Cumanus* of the *Malleus*. In the first place, this documentation only shows these inquisitors as involved in comparatively minor prosecutions and nowhere is it precisely a matter of the major witch-hunting, as well as of the details of the circumstances that occasioned it, mentioned by the *Malleus*. Furthermore, there remains the possibility that, in the accounts reported in the *Malleus*, Soleri is describing activities carried out by his inquisitorial vicars on his behalf rather than in person, but for which, as the titular inquisitor, he was ultimately responsible. Be that as it may, the phrase *inquisitor Cumanus* cannot be taken simply as a description of anyone who carried out inquisitorial activities in localities pertaining to the inquisitorial subdistrict of Como, such as Bormio. It was, as has been seen, the customary abbreviation of the formal title of inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, and could only denote the inquisitor officially responsible for that district. The principal author of the *Malleus*, Heinrich Kramer ('Institoris'), who was a formally appointed inquisitor himself, would surely have known this and could only have employed the expression accordingly.

The four references to Soleri in the *Malleus* are largely repetitive and can be recapitulated quickly, even though they do differ in their details insofar they are employed to illustrate various issues at stake. The authors of the *Malleus* claim to have been informed by Soleri how in 1485 he was called by the inhabitants of Bormio, in upper Valtellina, to fulfil his inquisitorial duties after one of them had witnessed a sabbat during which his own child, who had been abducted previously from his cradle, was killed and had his blood drunk. Soleri did so and prosecuted a number of witches who confessed not only the killing and eating of children, but also of sexual activities with demons *incubi*. Although some of the accused managed to escape and take refuge in Austria, Soleri succeeded in having forty-one purported witches condemned to be burned at the stake, after they had been completely shaved. Finally, we are reassured that Soleri was still hunting witches while the *Malleus* was being written (1486).⁸⁵

ria nel contado di Bormio. Fonti archivistiche dei secoli XV–XVII e note storico-linguistiche' edited by the Centro Studi Storici Alta Valtellina and part of the site 'Lombardia Storica', <http://plain.unipv.it>.

⁸⁵ *Malleus maleficarum*: I, q. XI (64A); II, q. I, c. 2 (96C), c. 4 (108C); III, q. XV (215C). See Mackay 2006: vol. 1 (Latin text), pp. 330–331, 395, 417–418, 623–624; vol. 2 (translation), pp. 163, 234–235, 260, 507.

Now, the elements in the account that strike one at first reading (anthropophagy, sexuality) are not particularly interesting, for they are all common to the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft. Similarly, the practice of completely shaving witches before their execution, while not universal as the authors of the *Malleus* are quick to point out, was common in Italy, for it was feared that witches might hide magical objects in their hair. Nor is too much to be made of the fact that Soleri did not initiate the entire sequence of events because, after all, he had responded to a call from the inhabitants of Bormio themselves, for this can be readily accounted for in terms of the witches-and-neighbours paradigm that is at present popular among historians of witchcraft. The one tantalizing element is the unfortunately far too little that it tells us about the channels of communication and the degree of cooperation that must have existed between inquisitors. The authors of the *Malleus* were not just repeating a well-worn anecdote, nor were they writing about something that had happened years earlier or that they were plagiarizing from Nider, something that they readily acknowledged doing when they did so; they were writing about events that were happening while the book was being written. They were able to do so, moreover, because they were being informed (*nobis retulit, nobis insinuavit*) by Soleri himself who was hoping, no doubt, that they might be able to do something about his suspects who had fled from his inquisitorial district and taken refuge in Austria.

Like Constantini, Soleri had to rely on the assistance of vicars to enable him to keep watch over his large inquisitorial district. Some of these seem to have been at hand in the convent of Vercelli and were allowed by the master general to travel with him as well as to be of service to him there.⁸⁶ But most of his vicars would have been dispersed throughout his vast district, would have looked after day-to-day matters, and are likely to have called for his intervention only in major cases, such as that of Bormio in 1485. There are several documented examples of this. Girolamo Rusconi, who is probably to be identified with the friar Girolamo active as inquisitor in Bormio in 1485 in concert with Niccolò da Menaggio, presided over several other witch-trials on Soleri's behalf. The judgment (*sententia*) reached

⁸⁶ "Magister Laurentio de Sancta Agata conventus Vercellensis habet licentiam tenendi duos socios pro officio suo et inquisitioni, et provisio et cum eo quando videtur in camera comedere, discurrere et alia facere que officiis suis erunt opportuna." (4 May 1492) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 240^r.

at the conclusion of one of these, held in Lezzeno to the north of Como, has come down to us. This document, dated 8 July 1487 and in which Rusconi explicitly styles himself Soleri's vicar, presents all the elements of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft: a sabbat presided by a rather elegant devil, named Compagnone, dressed all in black with a red beret "in the French fashion"; the pact with the devil; homicide; rejection of the Christian faith; profanation of the Eucharist; nocturnal flight. It concludes with the handing over to the secular arm to be burned of three women judged to have been impenitent and relapsed heretics.⁸⁷ Then there is Antonio da Soncino who was appointed inquisitorial vicar in Valle Misolcina with the approval of the bishop of Como and, if he is indeed to be identified with Antonio de Seghandi da Soncino, appointed vicar under Constantini in 1472, provides a rare example of inquisitorial continuity through a change of titular inquisitors. Perhaps the most poignant example is Pietro Feccia da Strambino, the inquisitorial vicar of Ivrea, who, according to Cipriano Uberti, was assassinated by witches in Valle di Ponte Uberti in 1500.⁸⁸

As well as performing his demanding inquisitorial duties from 1483 onward, Soleri repeatedly served as prior of the convent of Vercelli. The last reference we have of him as occupying the post dates from 1490 and occurs in the context of Master General Torriani's renewal of a long-standing concession to him of a room in the convent of Ivrea that, more than likely, was intermittently occupied by him on his inquisitorial rounds.⁸⁹ Soleri continued as well as the master general's vicar in the monastery of Santa Margherita in Vercelli, a position to which he was reappointed in 1492.⁹⁰ In late August 1493, at the end of Michele Madei's second term as provincial, the master general appointed Soleri vicar of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.⁹¹ Soleri was subsequently elected provincial and confirmed as such by the master general in late November.⁹² There are many traces of Soleri's

⁸⁷ The document is partially reproduced in Fumi 1910, pp. 97–98.

⁸⁸ Romeo 1990, p. 42.

⁸⁹ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 250^v (24 September 1490).

⁹⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 240^v (4 May 1492).

⁹¹ "Magister Michael de Madeis absolvitur ab officio provincialatus et magister Laurentius de Vercellis fit vicarius generalis provincie cum amplitudine potestatis etc ..." (27 August 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 246^v.

⁹² "Magister Laurentius de Sancta Agata confirmatur in priorem provinciam provincie Lombardie superioris cum plenaria potestate." (26 November 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 246bis, r.

activities as provincial, but there is little need to recount these in detail, for they invariably report matters of ordinary administration.⁹³ During his provincialate it is likely that Soleri left Vercelli and settled in the convent of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan, the habitual residence of the provincials of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He was probably responsible for the cataloguing of that convent's outstanding library, that took place in July 1494, just as he certainly was responsible for the drawing up of an inventory of the contents of the basilica's sacristy a month later.⁹⁴ Soleri continued as provincial till almost the end of 1495 when Master General Torriani released him from office and appointed vicar of the province the inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona, Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi.⁹⁵

After the end of his term as provincial in late 1495, that does not seem to have effected in any way his tenure as inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, Soleri returned to Vercelli, but from this time documentary references to him become scarce. In early 1497 he was reappointed once again the master general's vicar in the monastery of Santa Margherita in Vercelli.⁹⁶ In mid-1497 he was commissioned by the master general, who referred to him explicitly as *inquisitor*, to act as judge, along with the new provincial Matteo dell'Olmo, in a dispute between a friar and the convent of Trino.⁹⁷ In February 1501 he was entrusted with the settlement of a dispute in the convent of Saluzzo and in the document that he drew up he styled himself *inquisitor* with emphasis.⁹⁸ A few months later, in May, he attended the Dominican general chapter held in Rome as the representative (*diffinitor*) of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and is indicated in the list of participants that prefaces the chapter's Acts as still holding the post of inquisitor.⁹⁹

⁹³ AGOP, IV: reg. 10, fols. 246bis^r (26 November 1493), 246bis^v (15 January 1494), 248^{r-v} (24 May 1494); reg. 11, fols. 146^r (19 October and 25 November 1494), 147^r (4 March 1495), 147^v (25 June 1495).

⁹⁴ Kaeppli 1955, p. 67.

⁹⁵ "Absolvitur ab officio provincialatus magister Laurentius de Sancta Agatha et fit vicarius electionis magister Ioannes Antonius de Papia." (27 November 1495) AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 149^r.

⁹⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fols. 135^r (10 January 1497), 135^v (30 January 1497).

⁹⁷ "Committitur provinciali Lombardie et magistro Laurentio de Sancta Agata inquisitori ut iudicant pro iustitia inter fratrem Franciscum de Ponte Sturia et conventum Tridini..." AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^v.

⁹⁸ Mangione 2005, pp. 338–339.

⁹⁹ "Magister Laurentius de Vercellis inquisitor." MOPH, vol. 9, p. 2.

In 1502 there are but two, passing references to him.¹⁰⁰ The general chapter held in Pavia in 1507 transferred Soleri from the convent of Vercelli to that of Ivrea, but it is unlikely that he ever left Vercelli.¹⁰¹ Whatever the case, Master General Cajetan rescinded the assignment to Ivrea in mid-1509 and upheld the legitimacy of Soleri's permanence in the convent of Vercelli by declaring him, finally, a *filius natiuus* of that convent¹⁰²—perhaps the consequences of Constantini's antagonism had plagued him to the very end. As there are no further traces of Soleri after this, it is plausible that he died soon after, around 1510.

4. *Antonio Pezzotelli da Brescia,
Inquisitor of Brescia 1479–1498*

Antonio, son of Francesco Pezzotelli, probably entered the Dominican order sometime during the late 1440s in the reformed convent of San Domenico in Brescia, that formed part of the loose association of convents that would be reconstituted as the Congregation of Lombardy in 1459. In early 1452 he was a junior student in the studium of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna.¹⁰³ A decade later, in 1462, he was prior of the convent of Brescia,¹⁰⁴ and in 1465 the general chapter held in Novara assigned him *studens formalis* of theology in the Bolognese studium generale,¹⁰⁵ and he was certainly there toward the end of that year.¹⁰⁶ He does not seem to have made an academic career, however, because there is no trace of his serving as bachelor of the Bible or of the Sentences, let alone of having graduated master of theology or being appointed regent master in a studium generale. In May 1470, when he attended the chapter of the Congregation held in Vicenza, he was again a conventual prior, either of the convent of Aquila or of that of Cesena.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 257^v (21 March 1502), 259^r (1 September 1502).

¹⁰¹ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 79.

¹⁰² MOPH, vol. 17, p. 252 (18 June 1509).

¹⁰³ Piana 1963, p. 281.

¹⁰⁴ AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 380^v.

¹⁰⁵ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 300.

¹⁰⁶ Piana 1963, p. 283.

¹⁰⁷ There were two Antonio da Brescia at the chapter of Vicenza 1470. Although Antonio Pezzotelli is otherwise easy to distinguish from the other, Antonio Bonetti da Brescia, it is not possible to say who of the two was prior of Aquila or Cesena. See D'Amato 1945, pp. 90–91.

The general chapter convoked in Avignon in 1470 severely punished him, along with another friar, Girolamo da Bellano, for some presumed misdeed on which it is now impossible to cast full light, even though it seems that he had sought the aid of powerful patrons outside the order in matters of internal politics.¹⁰⁸ His condemnation, however, seems to have been but one in a series of machinations against the Congregation of Lombardy by some of the capitulars of Avignon. Pope Paul II intervened and appointed a commission of cardinals to review the matter with the result that all measures taken against the Congregation by the chapter of Avignon were annulled, and Pezzotelli was deemed to have been treated unjustly and rehabilitated.¹⁰⁹ Soon thereafter he became prior of the convent of San Domenico di Castello in Venice,¹¹⁰ and by the end of 1472 was once again prior of the convent of Brescia.¹¹¹ If we are to believe Piò (1615), he was already serving as inquisitor of Brescia by 1474.¹¹² But this seems unlikely, for in 1474–1475, Pezzotelli was prior of the convent of Sant’Andrea in Faenza.¹¹³ Whatever the case, Master General Mansueti appointed him inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema on 7 December 1479 in succession to Giovanni da Gandino,¹¹⁴ who was released from the post, to which he had been appointed in 1476, on account of some illness that prevented him from working effectively.¹¹⁵

Like his conventual contemporaries, Constantini and Soleri, Pezzotelli soon revealed himself a very active inquisitor. In 1480 he conducted the trial of a purported witch, Maria known as *la medica* (‘the healer’), in Calcinato near Brescia. Her confession furnished almost all the elements of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft: participation at the sabbat for fourteen years; pact and sexual intercourse with a devil called Lucibello, from whom she had received her healing powers; the

¹⁰⁸ “Iste sunt penitencie. In primis fr. Hieronymum de Bellano et fr. Antonium de Brixia tamquam infamatores nostre religionis declaramus in penas gravioris culpe incidesse, a quibus non possunt absolvi nisi per capitulum generale vel reverendissimum magistrum ordinis.” MOPH, vol. 8, p. 328.

¹⁰⁹ BOP, vol. 7, pp. 99–100 (*Suscepti regiminis sollicitudo*, 29 November 1470).

¹¹⁰ Armano 1729, p. 140.

¹¹¹ AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 380^v.

¹¹² Piò 1615, p. 295.

¹¹³ D’Amato 1997, p. 316.

¹¹⁴ “Fratr Antonius de Brixia fuit factus inquisitor Bergomensis cum potestate solita declarando absolutum fr. Ioannem de Gandino.” (7 December 1479) AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 216^r.

¹¹⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 216^r.

casting of evil spells (*maleficia*) against thirty children, of whom half had died while the others recovered due to her subsequent intervention. Surprisingly, Pezzotelli did not condemn her to be burned at the stake but to life imprisonment, whatever that might have meant in practice.¹¹⁶

During 1485–1487 Pezzotelli conducted several witch-trials in Edolo in Valcamonica, destined to be the scene of further major witch-hunts in 1510 and again in 1518–1521. These began in 1485, at roughly the same time that Soleri was prosecuting witches in Bormio in Valtellina, but we know little of their course for they were chiefly noticed by contemporary chroniclers because of the consequent conflicts between Pezzotelli and the Venetian government as well as its representatives in Brescia. Pezzotelli soon found that the local civic authorities—the podestà of Brescia and his assistant, Alberto degli Alberti—were not as cooperative as he desired. Accordingly, Pezzotelli petitioned the Venetian senate that the secular arm be granted readily to him, and the senate accorded his request on 9 December 1485, after examining the correctness of his proceedings.¹¹⁷ But even then the Brescian authorities were reluctant to assist him. Pezzotelli petitioned the Venetian senate once again and, as well, ensured that both the papal legate in Venice and the patriarch of Venice, Maffeo Gherardi, intervened with the senate on his behalf. The Doge Agostino Barbarigo then commanded, on 15 September 1486, the podestà of Brescia and the principal law-enforcer there (the capitano generale di giustizia) to do as Pezzotelli requested. Yet the Brescian authorities still insisted on being allowed to see the records of the trials conducted by Pezzotelli before carrying out his sentences. At this point the matter was further complicated by the intervention of the bishop of Brescia, Paolo Zane, who also began to demand to be allowed to see the judgments emitted by Pezzotelli before giving his approval to their execution.

Obviously at the end of his tether, Pezzotelli then tried to circumvent all local obstacles by appealing to the Holy See. Pope Innocent VIII responded on 30 September 1486 with a brief addressed to both Pezzotelli and the bishop of Brescia. The pope insisted that Pezzotelli was acting within his rights, the crime of heresy being a purely ecclesiastical matter, and commanded him to excommunicate the Brescian author-

¹¹⁶ Guerrini 1922, vol. 1, pp. 183–185. Derivative and summary accounts are in: Russell 1972, pp. 260–261; Bonomo 1983, pp. 121–122; Di Gesaro 1988, p. 383; Paccagnini 1989, p. 43.

¹¹⁷ Sanudo, *Diarî*, vol. 26, cols. 32–33.

ities if they continued to be uncooperative.¹¹⁸ But even papal intervention did not settle the matter, for although the Brescian authorities did begin to lend their assistance, there were still continuing conflicts between Pezzotelli and Alberto degli Alberti, whom he summoned before him to justify his behaviour. The Doge then intervened again, since he must have found it intolerable to have one of his officials treated in such a presumptuous manner by Pezzotelli and wrote to the podestà of Brescia commanding him to inform Pezzotelli that he ought to act more circumspectly if he desired to continue enjoying his support. But in the meanwhile Pezzotelli had gone even further and had cited Alberto degli Alberti to present himself in Rome. The Doge wrote again to the podestà on 23 April 1487 expressing his extreme displeasure at this. Not easily intimidated, Pezzotelli then ordered the arrest of one of Alberti's notaries. Finally, obviously furious, the Doge wrote to the podestà on 28 May 1487 and ordered him to summon Pezzotelli to present himself before him in Venice to render account of his actions.¹¹⁹ It is not known whether Pezzotelli ever bothered to do so. Whatever the case, he survived the turbulent affair well enough, for in March 1493 Pezzotelli was still inquisitor and is so designated in a provision made at that time by Master General Torriani.¹²⁰

Later in 1493 Pezzotelli moved from Brescia to Naples, but even this transfer does not seem to have effected in any way his tenure of the post of inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema. In February of that year the Congregation of Lombardy had been ordered by Pope Alexander VI to take over and reform eleven convents of the unreformed Province of Naples (*Provincia Regni Siciliae*). Although it had no desire to do so, and had indeed decided against doing so at its chapter held in Como in 1490 when the move was first proposed, the Congregation had to accede to the papal injunction. Consequently, the vicar general of the Congregation, Vincenzo Bandello, after travelling to Rome and attempting once more to dissuade the pope, appointed Pezzotelli substitute vicar general and placed him in charge of the party of friars who were sent to Naples to implement the pope's command. Pezzotelli then began to do so by formally taking possession of the convent of San

¹¹⁸ BOP, vol. 4, p. 15; Hansen 1901, pp. 29–30.

¹¹⁹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 32–33; Cochetti 1858, p. 89; Di Gesaro 1988, pp. 383–385; Paccagnini 1989, pp. 46–48.

¹²⁰ "Fratr Antonius de Brixia inquisitor potest testificari in causa Domini Philippi." (13 March 1493) AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 244^r.

Domenico in Naples on 26 October 1493, and of that of San Pietro Martire as well as that of Santo Spirito, both also in Naples, on 29 October.¹²¹ Pezzotelli did extremely well for himself in Naples, where he became the confessor of Ferrandino, duke of Calabria and son and heir of King Alfonso II. In early 1494, through his contacts at court, Pezzotelli learned of the steps being taken by Girolamo Savonarola to separate the convents of Pisa and Fiesole from the Congregation of Lombardy and annex them to his independent convent of San Marco in Florence. He immediately set off for Rome, armed with letters of recommendation provided him by the king of Naples, where he attempted to convince the Neapolitan cardinal protector of the order, Oliviero Carafa, not to support Savonarola's plans, but without success.¹²²

Pezzotelli returned to Brescia toward the end of 1494. He was reconfirmed inquisitor of Bergamo and Brescia on 22 October 1494 and, very much at the same time, elected once again prior of the convent of Brescia.¹²³ In late January 1497 Master General Gioacchino Torriani conferred on him for his many meritorious services the title of Preacher General, that placed him immediately after the masters of theology in the pecking-order of the Congregation.¹²⁴ In a still-extant letter written by Pezzotelli on 16 June 1497 he styles himself inquisitor and prior of Brescia.¹²⁵ He died soon after, while still inquisitor if not prior, on 30 September 1497.¹²⁶ It was claimed that he died by falling from a ladder, and Savonarola's *piagnoni* insisted that it was divine retribution for attempting to thwart the plan to annex the convents of Pisa and Fiesole.¹²⁷ Be that as it may, a collection of his Lenten and others sermons was published posthumously in Brescia in 1503.¹²⁸

¹²¹ For a detailed account of this episode see D'Amato 1956.

¹²² See Di Maio 1969, pp. 42–49.

¹²³ BOP, vol. 4, p. 103.

¹²⁴ “Fr. Antonius de Brixia inquisitor quia longo tempore fuit predicator precipuus et plurimum laboravit predicando in vinea Domini Sabahot, ideo pro suis meritis fit predicator generalis, et locus sibi conceditur post magistros in theologia immediate.” (30 January 1497) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 135^v.

¹²⁵ Guerrini 1922a, p. 171.

¹²⁶ “Anno domini 1497 die ultima septembris obiit R.P.F. Antonius de Brixia tunc prior et inquisitor conventus Sancti Dominici de Brixia et magnus predicator.” AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 378^v. In fact, Andrea Porcellaga da Brescia was prior of Brescia by 23 September 1497, see Guerrini 1992a, p. 171.

¹²⁷ Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 1, p. 892.

¹²⁸ Antonius de Brixia, *Sermones aurei quadragesimales reverendi domini fratris Antonii de Brixia inquisitoris dignissimi una cum sermonibus de sanctis*, per Angelum Britannicum, Brescia 1503.

After the death of Pezzotelli the large inquisitorial district of Brescia, Bergamo and Crema was divided into two separate districts: that of Brescia and Crema and that of Bergamo. The district of Brescia and Crema was entrusted in July 1498 to Angelo Faella da Verona,¹²⁹ and that of Bergamo to Cristoforo Alzani da Bergamo.¹³⁰ Thereafter, these allegedly witch-ridden inquisitorial districts experienced a rapid, comparatively high turnover of inquisitors, so that their succession over the following thirty years or so defies precise reconstruction. As far as can be discovered, Alzani's successor as inquisitor of Bergamo was Giovanni dell'Olmo, appointed on 5 June 1499,¹³¹ who was soon replaced, on 5 December 1499, by Agostino da Pavia.¹³² It is not certain when Agostino da Pavia was succeeded by Antonio da Casale, who held the post till he was transferred to the inquisition of Parma and Reggio and was replaced by Giovanni Battista Gratarola in 1508.¹³³ The district of Bergamo, along with that of Brescia and Crema, was then entrusted to Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale during 1512–1515. After the death of Cacatossici, once again along with the district of Brescia and Crema, it was entrusted to Giovanni da Soncino.¹³⁴ Thereafter it was again separated from that of Brescia and Crema and, whatever the case with the identity of its titular inquisitor, was the scene of witch-hunting in 1518 by the inquisitorial vicar Giovanni Battista da Viquerio in the village of Clusone.¹³⁵ The district of Bergamo was eventually entrusted to Antonio Passerini da Bergamo in 1520,¹³⁶ and to Giovanni Ceresoli da Bergamo in 1523.¹³⁷

¹²⁹ "Fratr Angelus de Verona magister fit inquisitor Brisianus et pertinentium." (10 July 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r.

¹³⁰ "Fratr Christophorus de Alzano conventus Bergomensis confirmatur seu instituitur inquisitor Bergomensis et diocesis cum privilegiis solitis." (18 September 1498) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r.

¹³¹ "Fratr Ioannes de Lulmo factus est inquisitor Bergomensis cum potestate." (5 June 1499) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 144^v.

¹³² "Fr. Augustinus de Pavia fit inquisitor Bergomensis cum gratiis et privilegia." (5 December 1499) AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 147^r.

¹³³ "Fratr Ioannes Baptista da Bergomo, congregationis Lombardiae, instituitur inquisitor haeretice pravitatis in Bergomo et in aliis locis ad eum spectantibus." (17 June 1508) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 252.

¹³⁴ Piò 1615, p. 273.

¹³⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 323–335. Giovanni Battista da Viquerio is mentioned by Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 137, as an authority on witchcraft. He was prior of the convent of Brescia in 1520, AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, p. 598.

¹³⁶ Alce 1995, p. 40.

¹³⁷ "Ven. P. Fr. Ioannes de Bergomo institutus est inquisitor haeretice pravitatis in

Faella did not remain inquisitor of Brescia and Crema for long, since he was replaced already in late 1499 by Appolonio da Gavardo.¹³⁸ Nonetheless, he must have continued the witch-hunting policy of his predecessor, for he was the recipient of the bull *Cum acceperimus* promulgated by Pope Alexander VI that encouraged the prosecution of witches.¹³⁹ Otherwise, nothing is known of the inquisitorial activities of either Faella or Appolonio da Gavardo—although one of Faella's inquisitorial vicars is known to have condemned to being burned in 1499 three priests in Valcamonica who had confessed to having been adepts of diabolic witchcraft.¹⁴⁰ The same is the case with Andrea Porcellaga da Brescia who succeeded Appolonio da Gavardo in 1502 and remained inquisitor of Brescia and Crema till his election as vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy in 1507.¹⁴¹ Porcellaga's successor, Prierias, was appointer inquisitor of Brescia and Crema in 1508 and held the post till 1512,¹⁴² when he was transferred to the inquisition of Milan and Lodi. In his case, it is known that during his term of office extensive witch-hunts were conducted in Valcamonica, especially in the villages of Edolo and Pisogne, where some sixty witches were burned during 1510–1511. These witch-hunts seem to have captured the imagination of contemporary chroniclers, and were engraved on the collective memory of inquisitors belonging to the Congregation of Lombardy, not so much for their brutality as for the tranquillity with which the condemned accepted their fate due to their unshakable conviction that the devil would maintain his promise to rescue them.¹⁴³ In 1512 the inquisitorial district of Brescia and Crema was, as we have just seen, reunited with that of Bergamo and entrusted to Giorgio Cacatossici till around 1515, when he was replaced by Giovanni da Soncino who held

civitate Bergomi et diocesi.” (26 July 1523) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 142. See also Alce 1995, p. 40.

¹³⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 145^v (12 November 1499).

¹³⁹ It is reproduced in Hansen 1901, p. 34, with the dating 1501 that needs to be altered to 1498–1499. There is an English translation in Kors and Peters 2001, p. 299, that follows Hansen's erroneous dating.

¹⁴⁰ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 34–37.

¹⁴¹ “Frater Andreas Portulata de Brixia confirmatur seu instituitur inquisitor Brixie.” (2 October 1502) AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 260^r.

¹⁴² “Magister Sylvester de Prierio instituitur inquisitor haeretice pravitatis in civitate Brixiae, Crema et aliis locis, quae ad dictam inquisitionem spectant.” (17 June 1508) MOPH, vol. 17, p. 251.

¹⁴³ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 607; Cochetti 1858, p. 90; Hansen 1901, p. 510.

the post till late 1516.¹⁴⁴ For a very brief period at the turn of 1516 and 1517 the inquisitor of Brescia and Crema was Agostino Mori da Brescia. But his appointment, which was decided by the convent of Brescia on its own and in defiance of the regulations then governing the appointment of inquisitors in the Congregation of Lombardy, was immediately cassated by Pope Leo X.¹⁴⁵ Finally, in 1518, we have the appointment as inquisitor of Brescia and Crema of Girolamo da Lodi who will be considered below.

5. *Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, Inquisitor of
Bologna 1485–1490, Inquisitor of Mantua 1490–1520*

Domenico di Pietro Pirri da Gargnano hailed from the small village to the north-east of Brescia disclosed by his toponym. Nothing, however, is known of his early years in the order, not even of the convent where he was first received. The general chapter held in Novara in 1465 appointed him master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna for the academic year 1465–1466,¹⁴⁶ and he began to function in that capacity on 18 July 1465.¹⁴⁷ It was at this time, as far as is known, that he had his first contact with the phenomenon of ceremonial magic, for in late 1465 he assisted at the formal condemnation by the then inquisitor of Bologna, Girolamo Parlasca da Como, of a Servite friar, Giovanni di Niccolò Faelli da Verona, for invoking demons, profaning the sacraments and performing malevolent magic.¹⁴⁸ By 1473 Pirri was bachelor of the Sentences in the Bolognese studium and held the office during the following biennium.¹⁴⁹ On 26 May 1476, the order's master general, Leonardo Mansueti, permitted Pirri, along with another friar, Bartolomeo da Bologna, to proceed to the degree of master of theology. At the same time the master general allowed the vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy, Giorgio da Vercelli, to choose between Pirri and Bartolomeo da Bologna for appointment as regent master in San Domenico till the following gen-

¹⁴⁴ Piò 1615, p. 273.

¹⁴⁵ BOP, vol. 4, p. 339.

¹⁴⁶ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 300.

¹⁴⁷ *Moderatores*, fol. 2^r.

¹⁴⁸ Piana 1963, pp. 282–283.

¹⁴⁹ *Moderatores*, fol. 2^r.

eral chapter, that was due to be held in May 1478.¹⁵⁰ The vicar general selected Pirri, who succeeded in the post the renowned Thomist and author of the great index to the works of Aquinas known as the *Tabula aurea*, Pietro Maldura da Bergamo.¹⁵¹ Just before beginning his term as regent master, Pirri graduated master of theology from the theological faculty of the University of Bologna and was incorporated as a member of its *collegium doctorum* on 6 September 1476.¹⁵² Pirri continued as Bolognese regent master for four years, till mid-1480, for the general chapter held in Perugia in 1478 reappointed him to the post for the following two years.¹⁵³ During his period as regent, and indeed till the end of his stay in Bologna in 1490, Pirri participated fully in the activities of the Bolognese faculty of theology and is recorded as taking part repeatedly in the examination of candidates for the degree of master of theology.¹⁵⁴ He was also much in demand as a preacher and was Advent preacher in the basilica of San Petronio in Bologna in 1482 and 1486.¹⁵⁵

On 17 April 1485 Pirri was appointed inquisitor of Bologna.¹⁵⁶ Little is known of his activities as such other than that he inaugurated his tenure of the office by delivering a series of instructions on the defence of the Catholic faith in the conventual church of San Domenico,¹⁵⁷ and that in early 1489 he condemned a German teacher of grammar in the nearby village of Cento for teaching heretical doctrines.¹⁵⁸ In August 1490 he was released from the post of inquisitor of Bologna and appointed to that of inquisitor of Mantua.¹⁵⁹ Pirri succeeded Ambrogio di Germania (*Ambrosius de Alemmania*), who had been appointed to the post in 1485,¹⁶⁰ after the brief, temporary incumbency of Agostino Maggi da Mantova as inquisitorial vicar.¹⁶¹ Pirri seems to have re-

¹⁵⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 64^v (26 May 1476).

¹⁵¹ *Moderatores*, fols. 3^v–4^r.

¹⁵² Ehrle 1932, p. 123; Piana 1963, pp. 136–138.

¹⁵³ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 345.

¹⁵⁴ Piana 1963, pp. 149 (14 January 1480), 175 (22 September 1485), 177–179 (2 and 23 October 1487), 185 (2 August 1490).

¹⁵⁵ Piana 1963, p. 137.

¹⁵⁶ AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 407^v.

¹⁵⁷ Piana 1963, p. 136.

¹⁵⁸ Piana 1963, p. 137.

¹⁵⁹ “Magister Dominicus de Grignano absolvitur ab inquisitione Bononiense et fit inquisitor Mantuanus cum terminis eiusdem.” (6 August 1490) AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 61^v.

¹⁶⁰ “Frater Ambrosius de Alemmania, conventus Mantuani, instituitur inquisitor Mantuanus.” (14 May 1485) MOPH, vol. 21, p. 42.

¹⁶¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 61^r (27 March 1490).

mained inquisitor of Mantua for the rest of his life, till 1520 or so. He did, though, return to Bologna on at least two occasions: in July 1494 he presided at the graduation as master of theology of Giovanni Cagnazzo and in April 1499 he attended that of Giorgio Cacatossici, both of whom, as has been seen, were themselves subsequently called upon to serve as inquisitors.

In Pirri's time there were two Dominican houses in Mantua. The smaller convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli had been founded as an observant house in 1438; the larger and much older, centrally-situated convent of San Domenico had been reformed by 1446 and it was probably there that Pirri, as inquisitor, resided. It is likely that Dominicans functioned as inquisitors in Mantua, as in so many other northern-Italian localities, by mid-thirteenth century. But it seems that it was only as late as 1485 that the territory of the marquisate of Mantua was established as a distinct inquisitorial district, separate from that of Bologna, with the appointment as inquisitor there of Ambrogio di Germania. This probably took place to meet the wish of Marquis Francesco Gonzaga to have a separate inquisitorial district corresponding to his temporal domain. Whatever the case, the following year, and then again in 1492, the marquis renewed the long-dormant provisions in the statutes of Mantua that required the secular arm to assist the inquisitor when called upon to do so.¹⁶² That the civic officials were not always disposed to be at the inquisitor's beck and call is evident, however, from the case of the podestà of the commune of Volta, Bartolomeo Arcero. Arcero was accused of grave heresies in 1505 and Pirri had him arrested and imprisoned in the inquisitor's jail in the convent of San Domenico. The convent was then stormed by the marquis' officials who freed Arcero. Pirri remonstrated about this with the marquis and demanded that Arcero be returned to him and promised to treat him compassionately. The marquis, nevertheless, paid no heed to Pirri, restored Arcero to his post and continued thereafter to favour and protect him. The potentially extremely serious conflict was only resolved by Arcero's timely death a little later.¹⁶³

In the same year, 1505, Pirri sent one of his inquisitorial vicars to attempt to completely extirpate what he described as "the sect of heretics, witches and wizards" from the village of Cavriana, situated roughly half-way between Mantua and Brescia. This time the marquis

¹⁶² Davari 1879, p. 60.

¹⁶³ Davari 1879, pp. 553-554.

was more cooperative, for when Pirri had first appealed to him for help in carrying out his severe repression of the purported sect he stressed that it was in the marquis' interest to do so, since heretics tended to be disloyal subjects. Little is known, however, of the details of the doings of Pirri's vicar. He began by excommunicating "all heretics and sorcerers" as well as those who, knowing who they were, failed to denounce them. He then conducted several trials that concluded with the burning of the exhumed remains of one relapsed heretic and the consignment to the secular arm of another. Finally, he had the local parish priest dismissed from his post for being unwilling to take part in the proceedings.¹⁶⁴

That Pirri was an extremely zealous inquisitor is stressed by Alberto da Castello in the 1506 edition of the *Chronica brevissima*. Alberto also tells us that Pirri was a very accomplished preacher, having preached forty series of Lenten sermons by 1506, and was "much loved everywhere for his good, sweet nature."¹⁶⁵ Be that as it may, Pirri caused a supposed witch and another woman from Volta to be burned in Mantua in 1507 as relapsed heretics.¹⁶⁶ The following year he conducted the trial of another witch in Mantua but, to his great chagrin, it led to no burning. We know of this trial from a letter written by Pirri to the marquis of Mantua, dated 7 April 1508, in which he complained bitterly about the trial's aftermath. Pirri stressed that the witch had confessed, without being tortured and even without being threatened in any way, to having participated at the sabbat, renounced the Christian faith, taken the devil as her lord and served him for twenty-seven years, profaned the Eucharist, and performed many *maleficia*. Yet, upon a copious show of tears from the witch, she was spared her life by the other judges taking part in the trial and condemned to no more than light penances, such as being paraded through Mantua mounted on an ass and wearing a heretic's mitre on her head. Pirri remonstrated with the marquis that this was totally unacceptable and that one should pro-

¹⁶⁴ Davari 1879, pp. 554, 561–562. Some of the documentation presented in Davari 1879 needs to be treated with caution, see Tedeschi 1991, pp. xiv, xvii n. 4.

¹⁶⁵ "Floruit quoque hoc tempore et adhuc (1506) floret reverendus et dulcissimus pater magister Dominicus de Gargnano Brixiensis vir per omnia laudabilis. Qui legendo predicandoque fructuosissime magnum sue bonitatis et doctrine exemplar poster relinquit. Vivit adhuc inquisitor heretice pravitatis ferventissimus existens, et usque ad hoc tempus ultra quadraginta quadragesimas cum maximo fructu predicavit, ubique gratus et dilectus pro sua dulcissima bonitate existens." Creytens 1960, p. 297.

¹⁶⁶ Davari 1879, pp. 554, 562.

ceed far more severely against the sect of the witches which ought to be completely exterminated.¹⁶⁷

As well as prosecuting the sect of the witches, and being occasionally entrusted by the master general with disciplinary tasks within the order,¹⁶⁸ Pirri kept a close watch on other potential heretics. His initiating of the case against Pietro da Lucca in 1511 has already been discussed in chapter 3, for the case was brought before Giovanni Rafanelli as master of the sacred palace. Moreover, as has been seen, in the Roman handling of the case, Pirri was represented by one of his inquisitorial vicars, Girolamo Armellini who was considered in chapter 2. Of greater interest is Pirri's constant involvement with cases of court *beate*. The peculiar Renaissance phenomenon of the *sante vive* ensconced in princely courts and patronized and pampered by princes desirous of having them in their retinue has already received a good deal of attention from scholars.¹⁶⁹ Pirri himself is recorded as taking part, in Viterbo on 23 April 1497, in the second examination of the purported stigmata of Lucia da Narni that he readily authenticated.¹⁷⁰ In Crema in early 1497 Pirri assisted at the ecstasies of Stefana Quinzani da Orzinuovi during which she supposedly relived Christ's Passion,¹⁷¹ and did so once again in Mantua in June 1500.¹⁷² On both occasions Pirri unreservedly vouched for the authentically supernatural character of the experiences. Little is known of Pirri's final years. Ermenegildo Todeschini's list of the inquisitors of Mantua, compiled in the early eighteenth century, indicates him as holding the post till 1521,¹⁷³ and there is no record of the appointment of a successor as inquisitor of Mantua till that of Ludovico Marini da Genova in August 1524.¹⁷⁴ But all this needs to be treated with caution, for there seems to be no further documented reference to Pirri from 1511 onward.

¹⁶⁷ Zarri 1990, p. 154 n. 220.

¹⁶⁸ Master General Cajetan commissioned Pirri, along with the prior of San Domenico di Castello in Venice, to discipline a certain Domenico da Ancona in March and April 1509. MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 82–83.

¹⁶⁹ See Zarri 1990.

¹⁷⁰ Ponsi 1711, pp. 197–199.

¹⁷¹ Brunati 1855, vol. 2, pp. 55–61; Guerrini 1930, p. 101.

¹⁷² Brunati 1855, vol. 2, pp. 62–64; Guerrini 1930, p. 104.

¹⁷³ AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 598.

¹⁷⁴ AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 35^r (1 August 1524).

6. *Girolamo da Lodi, Inquisitor of Brescia 1518–1526*

Girolamo da Lodi's early life is elusive.¹⁷⁵ The general chapter held in Milan in 1505 appointed him master of studies in the Bolognese studium generale for the academic year 1506–1507,¹⁷⁶ so that, perhaps, it was there he completed his previous theological studies after entering the Dominican order in his home convent of Lodi. He does not seem, however, to have made an academic career. During 1510–1512 he served as the prior of the convent of Sant'Andrea in Faenza.¹⁷⁷ He returned to the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and was its prior during 1518–1520.¹⁷⁸ It was at this time that he was responsible for the confiscation of the works of his fellow-friar Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa written against Cardinal Cajetan as well Pietro Pomponazzi, an incident that has been discussed often by scholars.¹⁷⁹ He then held a succession of priorships: of the convent of San Domenico in Cremona between 1520 and 1522,¹⁸⁰ and of the convent of San Domenico in Mantua during 1523–1526.¹⁸¹ The climax of his administrative career was reached with his election as vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy at the Congregation's chapter held in Mantua in mid-1526.¹⁸² He died while in office as vicar general on 11 March 1527.¹⁸³

It was, then, while he was prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna that Girolamo da Lodi was first appointed inquisitor of Brescia and Crema in 1518. Unfortunately it is not possible to indicate the date of his appointment with precision, for the second register (1513–1518) of Master General Cajetan, that would have recorded it, is lost. Giovanni

¹⁷⁵ A word of caution is necessary, for the Girolamo da Lodi in question has been confused often with the homonymous Girolamo Papino da Lodi (inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena from 1548 till his death in 1557, see Prosperi 2003, pp. 99–123). The confusion first appeared in Quétif and Échard 1719–1721, vol. 2, pp. 133–134, it was repeated by Domaneschi 1767, p. 248, and even in the otherwise punctilious series of the vicars general of the Congregation of Lombardy reconstructed in Creytens 1962, p. 260.

¹⁷⁶ MOPH, vol. 9, p. 49.

¹⁷⁷ D'Amato 1999, p. 316.

¹⁷⁸ *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 36A^v, 36B^r, 37^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁹ For the background and details of this episode see Tavuzzi 1997, pp. 99–103.

¹⁸⁰ Domaneschi 1767, p. 248.

¹⁸¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 136^r; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 291.

¹⁸² On his election (7 April 1526), confirmation (9 May 1526) and activities as vicar general see Creytens 1962, pp. 260–261.

¹⁸³ Creytens 1962, p. 261.

Michele Piò (1615) assures us, however, that it took place in 1518,¹⁸⁴ and at least on this point he deserves to be believed, since his works show that he was acquainted with contemporary documents.¹⁸⁵ Girolamo da Lodi remained inquisitor of Brescia and Crema till the appointment to the post of Pietro Cattanei da Provaglio by Master General Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara on the last day of 1525.¹⁸⁶

During Girolamo da Lodi's term as inquisitor of Brescia and Crema took place the often-discussed, great witch-hunts of 1518–1521 in Valcamonica that fell within his inquisitorial district—Valcamonica being an Alpine valley to the north of Brescia.¹⁸⁷ At the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Valcamonica was considered a backward region, and its inhabitants primitive, inbred rustics. It was reputed a major centre of the purported sect of the witches, that was supposed to have originated in northern Greece and to have been introduced in Valcamonica by Albanian immigrants. The sect was widely believed to hold regular, extremely populous sabbats on the Tonale mountain, situated at the northern end of Valcamonica and overlooking, on its northern side, Valtellina. The Tonale was, thus, the fulcrum of the two, supposedly, most witch-infested areas of the Italian Alps. In 1518 contemporary reports estimated the population of Valcamonica to be some fifty-thousand, of whom at least five-thousand were deemed to be adepts of the sect of the witches.¹⁸⁸ It is not surprising, then, that aggressive witch-hunting had been undertaken in Valcamonica since long before Girolamo da Lodi's appointment as inquisitor of Brescia and Crema, and mention has been made already of the large-scale persecutions conducted in its principal villages, Edole and Pisogne, by some of his predecessors—Pezzotelli in 1485–1487 and Prierias in 1510–1511.

In 1516–1517, the years immediately preceding Girolamo da Lodi's appointment, yet another witch-hunt had taken place. The identity of the inquisitor responsible for it, probably an inquisitorial vicar, is not known, but the jurist Andrea Alciati claimed that this inquisitor held

¹⁸⁴ Piò 1615, p. 295.

¹⁸⁵ See, for example, his remarks on the appointment of Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale in 1515 as inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona, Piò 1615, p. 488.

¹⁸⁶ "Ven. p. Petrus de Provalio Congregationis Lombardie instituitur inquisitor heretice pravitatis in Civitate Brixiana." (31 December 1525) AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 135^v.

¹⁸⁷ The principal account is in Sanudo's *Diarii*, but see also the important complementary material in Del Col 1988.

¹⁸⁸ Report of Giuseppe OrzINUOVI of 1 August 1518 in Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 602–609.

trials repeatedly and consigned well over a hundred alleged witches to the flames. Eventually the local peasantry rebelled, put an end to the persecution and appealed to the bishop of Brescia, Paolo Zane. Alciati, who was then transmitted the records of the trials by the bishop who wanted a legal judgment on the correctness of the proceedings, opined that most of the accused had been more in need of medical treatment (hellebore) than deserving of the pyre, for he considered them more likely to be suffering from “melancholy” than to be in league with the devil. He did not, however, object to the prosecution as such of witches, let alone question their existence.¹⁸⁹

By the time of Girolamo da Lodi’s appointment as inquisitor of Brescia in early 1518, the bishop of Brescia’s legal doubts had been resolved, and this was followed by even more systematic witch-hunts during the first half of that year, especially in June. Girolamo da Lodi, however, is likely to have had very little to do with them personally, even though they were conducted at least nominally under his ultimate authority. For there is no evidence whatsoever that he ever went at this time anywhere near the inquisitorial district entrusted to his care. Indeed, the minutes of the council of the Bolognese convent of San Domenico, of which he was prior, show him almost invariably in residence there throughout this period.¹⁹⁰ Rather, these witch-hunts seem to have had as their principal Dominican protagonist Girolamo da Lodi’s inquisitorial vicar in Brescia, Lorenzo Maggi. In practice these witch-hunts were a cooperative venture only loosely supervised by Maggi and the bishop of Brescia and conducted at their vague behest by six local diocesan priests. These churchmen, whose identities are recorded, seem to have divided Valcamonica among themselves, with each focusing on one of its principal hamlets.¹⁹¹

The various reports of these witch-hunts, all collected by Marin Sanudo in the *Diarü*, are slightly discordant on their overall results. On 14 June 1518, the chatelain of Breno in Valcamonica, Carlo Miani, wrote to Marino Zorzi that several burnings of witches had taken place.¹⁹² In a letter to the Venetian Council of Ten dated 14 July

¹⁸⁹ Hansen 1901, pp. 310–312.

¹⁹⁰ He is recorded as being present at the meetings of the council of the Bolognese convent at the beginning of October 1518, 24 October 1518, early February 1519, he is absent on 10 February 1519, and is again present on 1 May 1519, 27 October 1519, 11 March 1520, 23 April 1520, *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 36A^{r-v}, 36^v, 37^r, 36B^r, 37^v.

¹⁹¹ Sanudo, *Diarü*, vol. 25, cols. 572–574, 609–610.

¹⁹² Sanudo, *Diarü*, vol. 25, cols. 545–549 (also partially in Hansen 1901, p. 511).

1518 it was claimed that the inquisitor in Brescia, presumably Maggi, had himself boasted that seventy executions had been carried out.¹⁹³ On 28 July a Brescian jurist, Alessandro Pompeo, informed Giovanni Giustiniani that more than eighty witches had been consigned to the flames.¹⁹⁴ In a report dated 1 August, Giuseppe OrzINUOVI claimed that an incredible number of witches had been discovered, the worst among them being priests.¹⁹⁵ The podestà of Brescia, Giovanni Badoer, asserted that there had been sixty-two executions, of which forty were of women,¹⁹⁶ while Sanudo's own tallying concluded to sixty-six, of which fifty-six were women.¹⁹⁷

Whatever the case with the actual number of witches executed, all these reports seem to be in substantial agreement on two points. First, they all agree that, fundamentally, the witch-hunts were justified, for they all accept the reality of the diabolic witchcraft allegedly practised by the purported witches of Valcamonica and even of such farfetched claims as that of numerous transvections to incredibly well-attended sabbats on the Tonale. But, second, they all stress that the inquisitors' proceedings were highly irregular, marked by unnecessary, extreme cruelty—the condemned being burned alive—and, more often than not, precipitously targeted some people who were probably entirely innocent, seemingly for reprehensible, self-serving motives such as the confiscation of their properties. Several of the reports stress the last point, especially with regard to the doings of the diocesan priest who had focused on the village of Pisogne, Bernardino Grossi, who alone was supposed to have burned fifteen women.¹⁹⁸ It is difficult to know what to make of these claims, however, for there are no extant records of these proceedings.

We do, nonetheless, possess the transcript of one trial for witchcraft held at the time, but it was not held in Valcamonica itself but in Brescia, and not by one of the six diocesan priests on the loose in that valley, but by Girolamo da Lodi's inquisitorial vicar, Lorenzo Maggi. The trial was held in late June 1518 in the convent of San Domenico in Brescia. The accused, the sixty-year-old widow and healer Benvenuta Pincinello, had already been tried for witchcraft some time earlier by Maggi's predeces-

¹⁹³ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 537–538.

¹⁹⁴ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 574–575.

¹⁹⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 602–608.

¹⁹⁶ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 609.

¹⁹⁷ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, col. 58.

¹⁹⁸ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 575.

sor as inquisitorial vicar, Tommaso da Calvisano. But, as it was her first indictment, she had been pardoned, imposed some light penances, and warned not to revert to her former practices. Maggi soon learnt, however, that she had indeed “returned to her vomit like a rabid dog”—as the records put it—and was once again engaged in the casting of spells for healing, love, and the freeing of victims of malevolent magic. After interviewing several witnesses as to the veracity of this and on her public fame as a witch, Maggi had Benvenuta apprehended and incarcerated on 24 June. The following day, he interrogated her and she readily confessed, apparently without the use of torture or even the threat of such. She admitted that she had been a member of the sect of the witches for many years, performed maleficent magic, derived her powers from a devil, called Giuliano, who was her paramour and supplied her with the powders she employed for her spells, as well as the ointment with which she greased the stick on which she flew to the sabbats held on the Tonale. Maggi offered her the services of a lawyer for her defence, but she steadfastly refused this and placed herself at the mercy of God and the inquisitor. Maggi then assembled a court of several churchmen and civil jurists to deliberate on her case. On 29 June, following the court’s verdict of guilt, Maggi, in virtue of his authority as Girolamo da Lodi’s vicar and along with the vicar of the bishop of Brescia, sentenced Benvenuta to be consigned to the secular arm to be burned alive as a relapsed heretic and witch.¹⁹⁹

The witch-hunting excesses in Valcamonica did not take long to attract the attention of the authorities of the Venetian republic. Already on 14 July the Council of Ten expressed its displeasure that such extreme measures had been resorted to without first seeking its approval and requested a detailed account from the rectors of Brescia; it ordered the suspension of any further trial and execution and demanded that they obtain from the inquisitors the records of the trials and forward them to Venice.²⁰⁰ On 19 and 29 July the rectors of Brescia summarily replied to the Council of Ten describing what had taken place, but the Council deemed the curt response unsatisfactory. Consequently, in early August, the Council of Ten ordered the podestà of Brescia, Giovanni Badoer, to requisition the trial records and forward them to Venice. He was also ordered to investigate the doings in Pisogne of Bernardino Grossi in particular and to command the inquisitors and the capitano

¹⁹⁹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 632–650.

²⁰⁰ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 537–538.

di giustizia to present themselves in Venice and to bring with them a copy of the statutes of Brescia—that were supposed to furnish the legal grounds for the inquisitors' appeal to the secular arm.

The trial records arrived in Venice on 11 August. These were reviewed by the Council of Ten on 23 August when it also interviewed the inquisitors and the capitano di giustizia. The papal legate in Venice, Altobello Averoldi bishop of Pola, had by then also entered the fray and had ordered the bishop of Brescia to call a halt to the witch-trials.²⁰¹ On 24 August the Council of Ten entrusted the matter to Averoldi but informed him that it would itself appoint some competent churchmen to review the trials. The Council of Ten then consulted the Holy See and Pope Leo X issued a brief whereby he also entrusted the matter to Averoldi. After receiving the papal brief on 19 September, the Council of Ten instructed the Venetian ambassador in Rome to express its satisfaction with it to the pope and, furthermore, to beg the pope to instruct the bishop of Brescia and the inquisitors to refrain from reviewing the trials themselves and to leave this to Averoldi, who was to be charged with ascertaining whether any abuses had been committed by the inquisitors.²⁰² On 25 September Averoldi had a further meeting with the Council of Ten and tried to convince it of the reality of diabolic witchcraft, even bringing along a confessed witch—a priest, Betin—for the purpose. Furthermore, on 1 February 1519, a Dominican who was an inquisitor in Bergamo stressed to the authorities of the Republic that there too there were witches who flew to the sabbats on the Tonale and deserved to be prosecuted. His request for permission and assistance to do so was, however, largely rebuffed and Luca Tron insisted that these were crazy notions (*materie*) and that there was nothing on the Tonale.²⁰³

The papal legate deputed the review of the trial records and the investigation of possible improper conduct on the part of the inquisitors to Mattia Ugoni, bishop of Famagusta, and Bartolomeo Assonica, bishop of Capodistria and himself a Dominican friar. But before the legate's deputies could begin their work, Lorenzo Maggi started prosecuting witches again, arresting a suspect and confiscating his properties. The podestà of Brescia immediately intervened, rescued the suspect from Maggi by incarcerating him in the public jail and ordered Maggi

²⁰¹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 584.

²⁰² Del Col 1988, pp. 252–253.

²⁰³ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 411–412.

to make restitution. Maggi retorted by promptly excommunicating the podestà. He was then summoned by the Council of Ten to present himself in Venice, which he did readily enough, being convinced that he had acted in conformity with the law. On 24 February 1520 the Council of Ten entreated Averoldi to ensure that his two deputies finally went to Valcamonica and began their work of review. But, rather than halt the prosecutions, in July 1520 at least one of Averoldi's deputies, the bishop of Capodistria Assonica, began himself to arrest purported witches and hold trials.²⁰⁴

On 12 December 1520 the Council of Ten commanded Assonica to suspend all prosecutions and summoned him to Venice. At the beginning of 1521 Assonica presented himself before the Council of Ten, submitted the records of the trials he had conducted, and occasioned yet another debate on the reality of diabolic witchcraft, a matter on which most of the councillors were sceptical. The Holy See, however, deemed Assonica's summoning before the Council of Ten an affront and an unwarranted intrusion in its jurisdiction, so that Pope Leo X issued a brief the following 15 February threatening the Venetians with excommunication. During March the Venetians proposed a compromise that the papal legate accepted on 12 April: thereafter the prosecution of witches was to continue, but it was to be done by a mixed commission of both churchmen and lay magistrates. In practice, it was to be continued by an ecclesiastic appointed by the Council of Ten, Paolo Borgese bishop of Limasol.²⁰⁵ A little later, however, on 27 July 1521, the Council of Ten invoked the tense political situation of the time and put an end to the witch-hunting altogether.²⁰⁶ Sanudo's collection of reports concludes with a claim, made by Paolo Borgese before the Council of Ten in September 1521, that the happenings in Valcamonica had been indeed diabolically inspired.²⁰⁷ But the statement is curiously ambiguous, because it is not at all clear what it was that Borgese had in mind—the doings of the witches or those of the inquisitors? Whatever the case, the claim seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

²⁰⁴ Del Col 1988, pp. 254–255.

²⁰⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 30, col. 252.

²⁰⁶ Del Col 1988, pp. 256–258.

²⁰⁷ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 31, col. 353.

7. *Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza, Inquisitor of Parma
and Reggio 1519, Inquisitor of Como ca. 1520–1530*

It has been seen that the inquisitorial subdistrict of Como was separated from the vast inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como in 1505 and entrusted to the Congregation of Lombardy, with the appointment of Bernardo Retegno da Como as inquisitor there in 1505.²⁰⁸ Retegno continued the harsh witch-hunting policy of his conventional predecessors, Constantini and Soleri, and there are echoes of this in his *Tractatus de strigiis*.²⁰⁹ After Retegno's death around 1513, the inquisition of Como was entrusted to Antonio da Casale, who was discussed in chapter 2 and whose witch-hunting propensities in Como are recorded by Leandro Alberti.²¹⁰ It is not known who was Antonio da Casale's immediate successor after his death in 1515, but Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza certainly held the post by 20 July 1523, when he was the recipient of the bull *Dudum, uti nobis* issued by Pope Adrian VI that encouraged the prosecution of witches and largely recapitulated an earlier bull of Julius II addressed to Giorgio Cacatossici.²¹¹ There can be little doubt that Adrian VI's encouragement was taken to heart by Scrofa, since Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa (1523), informs us that, with the assistance of eight to ten inquisitorial vicars, every year he tried more than a thousand witches, of whom about one hundred were condemned to be burned.²¹²

Very little indeed is known about Scrofa prior to his becoming inquisitor of Como sometime before 1523. He is probably to be identified with the Dominican friar Modesto di Girolamo da Vicenza who was ordained priest in Bologna on 19 March 1491.²¹³ In that case, he is likely to have studied theology before ordination in the studium in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna, but he does not seem to have made any kind of academic career. By 1504 he was prior of the convent of Santa Corona in Vicenza,²¹⁴ in 1507 he was prior of the convent

²⁰⁸ "Frater Bernardus de Como instituitur inquisitor Comensis." (20 May 1505) AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172^r.

²⁰⁹ Written sometime between 1505 and 1513, but only first published in 1584.

²¹⁰ Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^r.

²¹¹ The bull is in Hansen 1901, pp. 34–36, and there is an English translation in Kors and Peters 2001, pp. 246–247.

²¹² Spina, *Quaestio de strigibus*, p. 37.

²¹³ Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 214.

²¹⁴ Bortolan 1889, p. 365.

of San Domenico in Modena,²¹⁵ and in 1510 he was again prior of the convent in Vicenza.²¹⁶ In 1519 he was inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, when he allowed the inquisitorial vicar in Modena, Antonio da Brescia, to enter his jurisdiction in order to apprehend a fugitive.²¹⁷ Soon thereafter he was appointed inquisitor of Como and it is possible that he held the post till the appointment to it of Pietro Martire Rusca da Lugano by Master General Paolo Bottigella da Pavia in 1530.²¹⁸

The motives that lead Scrofa to be such an enthusiastic, unrelenting hunter of witches might just have been at least partially self-serving. Scrofa conducted a witch-hunt in Sondrio, in Valtellina, in August and September 1523, very soon after the promulgation of Adrian VI's *Dudum, uti nobis*. The thirty-four trials that were held had constant recourse to torture and little respect for juridical procedure. They succeeded in producing several confessions that comprised all the elements of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft. Their final result was the condemnation of at least six women to be burned, as well as the confiscation of the properties of many more. The text of the judgment (*sententia*) pronounced by Scrofa on one of these women, Santina Landini, is still extant and its charges recapitulate once again all the components of the cumulative concept of witchcraft.²¹⁹ Yet, a contemporary chronicler, Stefano Merlo di Sondrio, did not hesitate to affirm that Scrofa was principally driven by avidity for the financial benefits that could be reaped by the confiscation of the goods of the condemned. Scrofa's motives were, apparently, so transparent that the civic authorities of Sondrio compelled him to leave. The witch-hunt continued, however, for later, in September 1523, another inquisitor, a Bernardo da Como who must have been one of Scrofa's vicars, consigned another purported witch, a male this time, to the secular arm.²²⁰

Perhaps the harsh words of criticism that the podestà of Brescia, Giovanni Badoer, wrote to the Venetian Council of Ten about the inquisitorial vicars of Brescia who took part in the witch-hunts of 1518–1521 in Valcamonica could be applied equally well, or even more so, to Scrofa and his vicars: "They are, to speak frankly, overdressed peasants,

²¹⁵ Biondi, G. 1986, p. 47.

²¹⁶ Bortolan 1889, p. 365.

²¹⁷ Duni 1999, pp. 80, 277, 303–304.

²¹⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 22, fol. 122^r (2 January 1530).

²¹⁹ It is reproduced in: Cantù 1829–1831, vol. 2, pp. 111–112; Craveri 1981, pp. 162–167; Paccagnini 1989, 74–75; 149–150.

²²⁰ Spinetti 1903, pp. 18–19, 52.

who have devoured their shame as well as their conscience. I say this of the greater part of those who are here, and this because the decent friars don't want to come to this city, knowing that they are looked upon worse than Jews on account of their squabblings and bad behaviour" and "on account of their friars' cloaks, they permit themselves every enormous and nefarious crime, I say this of the bad friars, who by their actions disclose the nature of their lives, confident that the laity and the temporal lords, as they claim, have no jurisdiction over them."²²¹ And these were friars of the reformed, observant Congregation of Lombardy.

8. *Witch-Trials and Witch-Hunts*

The expression 'witch-hunt', even though its employment is current and almost unavoidable, carries with it perhaps unwarranted connotations so that it needs to be used with caution. The notion of *hunting* witches might seem to imply that in their prosecution of witches it was inquisitors themselves who took the initiative and, as it were, relentlessly scoured the inquisitorial districts for which they were responsible hoping to discover such. Recent scholarship has come to the conclusion that this was simply not the case. Rather, most witch-trials seem to have been carried out following and at the insistence of local, popular demand. But this scholarship has focused on witch-trials not conducted by papal inquisitors at all but, rather, on those conducted by lay magistrates, outside Italy and during the late-sixteenth and the early-seventeenth centuries.²²² A similar conclusion is in order, nevertheless, for the witch-trials carried out by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy during the Renaissance. This was first noticed by Fumi (1910) who assembled some documentary evidence that these inquisitors usually conducted witch-trials because they were requested to do so by local

²²¹ "Sono, *ut ingenue fatear*, rustici travestiti, che hanno devorato la vergogna et la conscientia insieme, dico de la mazor parte de quelli che sono qui, et questo perché li homeni da bene non vogliono venir in questa città, sapendo esser pezo veduti che zudei pel tal sua lite et mali portamenti." "Per le loro cappe si fanno licito ogni enorme et nefando delicto, dico de li tristi, che per la operatione fanno manifesta la lor vita, fidandosi che li laici et signori temporali, come dicono, non haver poter sopra di loro." Letters of Giovanni Badoer of 1519 in Archivio di Stato, Venezia, *Santo Uffizio*, busta 160, quoted in Del Col 1988, pp. 254–255.

²²² See Ankerloo, Clark and Monter 2002, p. 113 (includes references to several other scholars who share this view).

civic authorities and that, moreover, local people often preferred to have the prosecution of witches carried out by Dominican inquisitors, whom they considered more circumspect and respectful of due juridical procedure than lay magistrates.²²³ One of the several cases invoked by Fumi is that of the inquisitor Bartolomeo da Omate, who was repeatedly entreated in 1457 by the people of Bellano, a village north of Milan on the eastern shore of the lake of Como, to conduct trials and rid their land of witches.²²⁴ This was also mostly the case with the inquisitors considered in this chapter, at least insofar as can be discovered. It was seen, for example, that even the inquisitor responsible for burning forty-one witches in Bormio in 1485 conducted his witch-trials because he had been called to do so by the local populace.

Once a witch-trial began, however, the prosecution of witches often acquired a momentum of its own, for an indicted witch almost invariably named alleged associates whom the inquisitor then felt obliged to track down, and it is only in such cases that it seems proper to talk of 'witch-hunts'. We saw how the trial of Giovanna Monduro in Salusola in 1470 began because she had been delated by another witch who had been put on trial a little earlier and she herself, once put on trail, denounced several alleged associates. Another example is provided by the witch-trials conducted by the inquisitorial vicars Battista da Pavia and Michele di Aragona in Venegono Superiore, near Varese, in 1520. These trials, that led to the burning of five women and one exhumed cadaver as well as several abjurations followed by less drastic punishments, began because two of the women who were eventually executed had been denounced by a male witch, Giacomo da Seregno, who had been put on trial and burned previously in Monza.²²⁵

Furthermore, the notion of *witch-hunting* could connote a certain measure of precipitousness and arbitrariness and the lack of respect of due procedure on the part of inquisitors. This, while it might have happened at times as seems to have been the case with the prosecutions conducted in Valcamonica in 1518–1521 and in Sondrio in 1523, does not seem to have been the norm. Here it is useful to refer to a series of witch-trials that hitherto have received no attention in histories of witchcraft and the witch-hunts, for the records of these trials have been discovered and edited only very recently (2004). This is the series of tri-

²²³ Fumi 1910, pp. 102–111.

²²⁴ Fumi 1910, pp. 103–104.

²²⁵ See Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1999, pp. 84–86.

als conducted in the villages of Rifreddo and Gambasca, near Saluzzo, in late 1495 by the inquisitor of Savigliano, Vito Beggiami.²²⁶ Beggiami conducted several trials over a period of three months that led to the condemnation of at least three women. Beggiami conducted these trials, whose minutes were penned by the public notary Tarchiotto Taparelli, with meticulousness. He respected the rights of intervention and supervision of the representative of the local bishop and readily allowed the accused to avail themselves of lawyers for their defence. Moreover, at the insistence of the marquis of Saluzzo, Ludovico II, Beggiami's doings were vetted by Michele Madei da Asti who thoroughly reviewed the trial records and requested the repetition of several interrogations in his presence. Whatever the case with the inquisitor's witch-beliefs that informed these trials and the character of the local conflicts that might have occasioned them, they leave little to be desired from the point of view of procedural correctness.²²⁷

How numerous were the witch-trials, and the witch-hunts that they sometimes occasioned, for which Dominican inquisitors were responsible in northern Italy during the Renaissance? Even if we leave aside entirely undocumented and probably exaggerated claims—such as that made by Uberti of three hundred witches consigned to the flames by Constantini and that made by Spina of one thousand witches put on trial each year by Scrofa at the beginning of the 1520s—they are likely to have been considerably more numerous than has been acknowledged hitherto. The calendar of known witch-trials presented as appendix 2 may be compared with the analogous calendar (geographically much wider-ranging and chronologically limited to 1500) compiled by R. Kieckhefer in 1976.²²⁸ Even if we restrict ourselves to witch-trials conducted by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy between 1450 and 1500, it is evident that Kieckhefer's survey fell dramatically short, for subsequent research has produced substantial new documentation. The references assembled in appendix 2 permit us to conclude to a very minimum of several hundred trials and, since most trials involved several alleged witches, a significantly larger number of executions. Perhaps further archival research will show that even this large estimate represents no more than “the tip of the pyre”. Furthermore, if one

²²⁶ See Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004.

²²⁷ This is readily acknowledged by G. Merlo in his ‘Introduzione’, see Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004, p. 37.

²²⁸ Kieckhefer 1976, pp. 108–147.

were to consider as well witch-trials carried out by Franciscan inquisitors, episcopal courts and, especially, secular magistrates, it might well turn out that, whatever might have been the defining traits of the *civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, witch-hunting was an integral part of it.

9. *The Issue of Gender*

The Dominican inquisitors active in northern Italy during the Renaissance would have acknowledged readily that most witches were women, and they could hardly have failed to do so, for it is evident that their witch-hunting found in women the great majority of its prey. Moreover, they would have found it perfectly comprehensible that most witches would be women, for they were convinced that women had a lesser capacity than men for resisting diabolic temptation—in line with the Aristotelian conviction, mediated by the Scholastics, that women were less rational and more dominated by their emotions than men. Yet, the Renaissance inquisitorial stereotype of diabolic witchcraft was not intrinsically gender-specific, for it also acknowledged the existence of male witches (wizards) and it did not find this problematic, since some men, too, could be irrational and subservient to their passions—and it is a moot point whether this implied their feminization.²²⁹ Whatever the case, it was an inquisitorial commonplace that the worst witches of all were clerics who had succumbed to the wiles of the devil.²³⁰

Indeed, the documentary evidence for male witches during the Renaissance is abundant. Here it will suffice to recall that the several accounts of the witch-hunts conducted in Valcamonica in 1518–1521 collected by Sanudo refer repeatedly to male witches (*strioni*), perhaps even more than to female witches (*strie*), and insist that the leading witches (*principalissimi strioni*) were priests.²³¹ Even Prierias, in one of the rare examples given in *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis* (1520) that he has not plagiarized from Nider's *Formicarius* or the *Malleus maleficarum* or some other written source and has derived from either his personal experience or a first-hand report from a contemporary northern-Italian

²²⁹ This is suggested in Apps and Gow 2003, pp. 127–137. One could equally argue, though, that for women to be seen as witches implied their masculinization, for they first had to be seen as inferior, defective males.

²³⁰ See, for example, Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 167.

²³¹ See, for example, the account by Giuseppe OrzINUOVI in Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 602–608.

inquisitor, unproblematically refers to a male witch who, when about to be burned, fondly recalled his demon *succubus*.²³² Moreover, there seems to be little, if any, difference between the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft as it applied to male witches and to female witches. Its components were identical and common to both cases, as can be seen readily from the confessions of the three priests put on trial as witches in Brescia in 1499 and of another priest tried there as such in 1518: the pact with the devil, transvection to the sabbat, profanation of the Eucharist, shapeshifting, sex with demons, and so on.²³³ The single, rather discountable, exception was that whereas female witches were held to have sexual congress with demons *incubi*, male witches were believed to do so with demons *succubi*.

While some individual inquisitors might well have been misogynists, there is no evidence whatsoever that taken as a group they included proportionately any more such, or were more so, than any other category of northern-Italian men during the Renaissance. One certainly looks in vain in inquisitorial records for the kind of articulated misogynist invective—once again of Aristotelian inspiration—that one finds readily enough, for example, in the works of a Pomponazzi.²³⁴ Moreover, at times, the inquisitors who were the most insistent on the need to extirpate “the sect of heretics, witches and wizards”, such as Domenico Pirri, were also the most credulous and effusive when it came to the *sante vive*, and had little hesitation about ascribing the purported *mirabilia* performed by these—often remarkably similar to those ascribed to witches—to the power of the Almighty rather than the mischievousness of the Father of Lies. It is instructive that such an ally of inquisitors as Giovan Francesco Pico, who wrote *Strix* and fostered the witch-hunts in Mirandola in 1523, was devoted to the *beata* Caterina da Racconigi (1486–1547). In the biography he wrote of her, he tells us that she was popularly known as the *mascha di Dio*—‘God’s witch’—on account of her transvections.²³⁵ It would certainly be no easy task to

²³² Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 164: “Unde quidam in agro Comensi mox arsurus, ridens diu, interrogatus de causa dixit se recordari de lenociniis et blanditiis suae Catherinae et daemone succubi, et cum iam flamora occupabit, idem, inquit, faciam.”

²³³ Sanudo, *Diarî*, vol. 26, cols. 29–34.

²³⁴ For example, in *Tractatus de immortalitate animae*, p. 84, Pomponazzi remarks: “...sicut fertur de mulieribus, quod nulla est sapiens, nisi in comparatione ad alias maxime fatuas.”

²³⁵ Zarri 1990, pp. 12–13.

argue convincingly that a misogyny *peculiar to inquisitors* was the principal motive behind the witch-hunts conducted by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy during the Renaissance, let alone that these represented instances of deliberate, calculated gendercide.

10. *Witch-Hunting and Dominican Reform*

The Dominican inquisitors who were principally involved in witch-hunting in northern Italy during the second half of the fifteenth century were almost all friars of the conventual provinces, especially that of St. Peter Martyr. During the opening decades of the sixteenth century, on the other hand, the great bulk of witch-hunting was done by inquisitors belonging to the Congregation of Lombardy. At that time, the inquisitors of the Province of St. Peter Martyr did continue to be involved in witch-hunting, but to an ever-decreasing extent. This changing, institutional pattern of witch-hunting can be readily explained by the gradual appropriation by the Congregation of Lombardy of inquisitorial districts situated in the Italian part of the Alpine region. The great witch-hunts carried out by the friars of the Congregation in the districts of Como, Bergamo and Brescia in the 1510s and at the turn of the 1520s do not represent an innovation peculiar to the Congregation, but are continuous with the witch-hunts carried out by the inquisitors of the conventual provinces while they were still responsible for those and contiguous districts. Of greater interest, then, are the witch-hunts carried out by the inquisitors of the Congregation in those districts, far from the Alpine region, where, as long as they had been entrusted to conventual inquisitors, there was practically no witch-hunting. It is these witch-hunts in particular that might give rise to the idea that there was some special, perhaps ideological, link between the hunting of witches and the spread of the movement of Dominican reform. Why is it that, as was seen in chapter 2, in districts such as Parma and Reggio, Ferrara and Modena, the prosecution and burning of purported witches, that had rarely, if ever, taken place when they were entrusted to inquisitors drawn from the conventual provinces, began immediately and increased dramatically once they were taken over by the Congregation?

Perhaps an answer is to be found in the different life styles of the conventual friars and those of the Congregation. Conventual friars tended to stay put in their convents of affiliation for their entire lives, so that

conventual friars called upon to serve as inquisitors were almost invariably home-grown. The friars of the Congregation, however, tended to be shuffled from convent to convent, so that friars appointed to inquisitorial posts, especially after 1500, were often outsiders. The conventual inquisitors of Parma and Reggio, for example, would have had a long-standing, perhaps even life-long, familiarity with the purported witches and their neighbours of their district, and due to this might well have readily dismissed them as no more than silly, superstitious men and women or, at the most, as instances of common sorcerers rather than diabolic witches. Moreover, they would have seen readily through the neighbourhood conflicts motivating their accusers. On the other hand, a newly appointed inquisitor drawn from the Congregation, coming to Parma and Reggio from somewhere else, who would not have had the same familiarity with the alleged witches and their accusers, could have taken both far too seriously and acted accordingly. Furthermore, the new inquisitor drawn from the Congregation was likely to have worked previously as an inquisitor or an inquisitorial vicar in a district of the Alpine region and would have tended to see the purported witches of his new district in the light of his previous experiences, and consequent witch-beliefs, and have interpreted them without further ado as diabolic witches. We saw examples of this dynamic at work in the cases of two inquisitors discussed in chapter 2: Antonio da Casale and Armellini. Before becoming inquisitor of Parma and Reggio in 1508, Antonio da Casale had served as inquisitor in Bergamo, while Armellini, who was so prone to see diabolic witchcraft in Mirandola in the early 1520s when he became inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, had learnt his trade as inquisitor while serving as vicar of Domenico Pirri in the Alpine foothills that comprised the northern part of the inquisitorial district of Mantua.

A further fact that might make one suspect that there was, after all, some special connection between an excessive preoccupation with the phenomenon of diabolic witchcraft and the movement of Dominican reform is the series of intransigent demonological tracts penned by some of the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy during the first two decades of the sixteenth century. Indeed, works belonging to this literary genre seem to have been produced, at that time, almost exclusively by inquisitors who were friars of the Congregation: Bernardo Retegno da Como's *Tractatus de strigijs* (ca. 1510), Prierias' *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis* (1520), Bartolomeo Spina's *Quaestio de strigibus* (1523). Giovan Francesco Pico was himself in the spiritual and intellectual orbit of

the Congregation when he wrote *Strix* in 1523 and it was immediately (1524) translated into Italian by a friar of the Congregation, Leandro Alberti. But the composition of these tracts can be explained readily as the pondered response of the intelligentsia of the Congregation to the phenomenon of diabolic witchcraft of which they had personal experience, or at least first-hand reports from inquisitors in the field, following upon the Congregation's gradual appropriation of inquisitorial districts in the Alpine region.

The distinction between inquisitors who hunted witches and those who did not cannot be drawn, then, on the basis of administrative or ideological divisions within the Dominican order itself, for both conventual and observant friars at times indulged in aggressive witch-hunting and, indeed, the conventuals were the first to do so. Accordingly, the thesis that has been suggested recently, but hardly argued, that the development of witch-hunting was, somehow, impelled by the spread of Dominican reform, while it merits further investigation, is unconvincing.²³⁶ Rather, the distinction seems to deserve to be made on the basis of having or not having experienced the phenomenon of witchcraft as it was endemic in the Alpine region. It was contact with this phenomenon, whatever it might have been, that led to the formation of diabolic witch-beliefs and turned inquisitors into witch-hunters, be they conventuals or friars of the Congregation.

If there was indeed some special connection between the movement of Dominican reform, as incarnated in the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy, and an intensified preoccupation with witch-hunting, it is to be seen not so much as an ideological connection but as one entailed by the sheer professionalism of the inquisitors drawn from the ranks of the observant friars as opposed to those drawn from the ranks of the conventual—a point first made in chapter 2. But it will be best to return briefly to this matter in the epilogue, for it is the incipient professionalism of the inquisitors drawn from the Congregation of Lombardy that provides the link between our Renaissance inquisitors and the Roman Inquisition founded in 1542.

²³⁶ See Bailey 2003. In fairness it should be said that Bailey recognizes the need for further research on the issue, see, for example, p. 180 n. 56.

11. *Questioning Motives*

An appreciation of the genesis of the demonological tracts mentioned in the previous section as a response to personal experience, or at least to first-hand reports from inquisitors in the field, is important, for a forceful claim has been made recently as to the supposedly tacit, but underlying, real function of the intransigent demonological theses elaborated in them.²³⁷ Far from asserting any connection between witch-hunting and the movement of Dominican reform, it has argued that, ultimately, these tracts ought to be understood as compilations of instances of wishful thinking about witches rather than of witch-beliefs that were actually entertained with conviction. They are to be seen, then, as the manifestation of an engrained scepticism about the very existence of the supernatural that vainly sought to redress itself by seeking empirical evidence for it in the one area where it seemed that it could be, and it was hoped that it would be, readily available: the purported corporeal, especially sexual, interaction between witches and demons.

While stimulating, this reading of these demonological tracts might just be methodologically premature, for its convincing proposal would seem to require the prior resolution of a problem already posed by C. Ginzburg some forty years ago, that of the precise connection between inquisitorial practice and the elaboration of the doctrines presented in these tracts.²³⁸ This reading seems, in effect, to invert their likely connection by implying that the demonological tracts created and not merely interpreted—rightly or wrongly—the phenomenon of witchcraft. But the diabolic witchcraft theories elaborated by the authors of these tracts were not so much the causes as the consequences of witch-hunting. As was suggested in the preceding section, it would be unwarranted to think that these demonologists spun their theories in an a priori manner, and then imparted them to inquisitors about to set off on “fieldtrips” during which they could not but be corroborated thanks to the suggestive and torture-laden interrogation of suspects. Rather, they seem to have developed their witchcraft theories as a response to the information communicated to them by experienced, albeit puzzled, inquisitors working in the Alpine region; information about which, more often than not, they themselves were at first

²³⁷ See Stephens 1994 and Stephens 2004.

²³⁸ See Ginzburg 1990, pp. 1–2 (the original Italian text is from 1966).

extremely incredulous. The ultimate problem could be, then, that historians and cultural anthropologists have not as yet managed to clarify satisfactorily just what it was about the witchcraft practised in the Alpine region that made it appear to Renaissance inquisitors so different from the ubiquitous, simple sorcery found elsewhere and that rendered it so susceptible to a diabolic interpretation.²³⁹

12. *Was There a Sect of the Witches?*

The Dominican inquisitors who hunted witches in northern Italy during the Renaissance are most likely to have done so because they were convinced that witches existed, rather than because they were rabid misogynists, or it was somehow entailed by the movement of Dominican reform, or they had profound doubts about the existence of God. Historians, as was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, have, however, overwhelmingly rejected the likelihood of any correspondence with reality of their stereotype of diabolic witchcraft, largely on account of the a priori impossibility of its most striking, fanciful components: nocturnal transvection to the sabbat, shapeshifting, sexual congress with demons *incubi* and *succubi*, and so on. They have, moreover, generally denied the veracity of the inquisitors' claim as to the existence of a sect of the witches, but have done this on the basis of an a posteriori argument: the complete lack of any independent documentation—that is, not derived from the records of inquisitorial trials or demonological treatises compiled by the inquisitors themselves—that could lend any credence to it. It might be worthwhile to conclude this chapter by turning briefly and very tentatively to the latter point, even though, in a book dealing with inquisitors and not witches, it represents a digression.

It is possible that there were people who, even though they did not really fly at night to the sabbat or had sex with demons and so on, were sincerely convinced that they did so—people for whom the fantastic components of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft were subjectively

²³⁹ A beginning of research aimed at the resolution of this problem seems to be the collaboration between historians and cultural anthropologists represented by the congresses held regularly in Triora. See, for example, the forthcoming Acts of the congress held on 22–24 October 2004 “La via occidentale. Antiche tradizioni e caccia alle streghe nel chiostro Alpino” (IV Convegno nazionale di studi storico antropologici).

real. This possibility has not been entirely discounted by all historians, for it helps to explain the fact, continuously invoked by inquisitors and demonologists, that people very often confessed to having performed such actions and did so at different times, in different places, voluntarily and with conviction, and even without the suggestive questioning and the application of torture often associated with inquisitorial trials. It is a possibility that has especially appealed to scholars who have sought an explanation of the putative phenomenon of diabolic witchcraft in terms of the deliberate or accidental assimilation of hallucinogenic substances. It is also possible to speculate, as C. Ginzburg did concerning the Benandanti, that, once out of their cataleptic states, such as these might have met and come to think of themselves as members of a sect.²⁴⁰ But this is a line of argument that already has been proposed adequately elsewhere, and there is little need to follow it here.

Historians have taken for granted that if the inquisitors' sect of the witches did exist, it must have taken the form of a structured, even hierarchical, organization, that would have held regular meetings and that, as such, could not but have left at least minimal documentary traces. Yet, there is no inquisitorial record or demonological tract that asserts that the sect of the witches was indeed a structured organization or that it held any kind of regular meetings *outside of the sabbats*. Hence, once the objective reality of the sabbat is, probably correctly, dismissed—and no matter what might have been the case with its subjective reality experienced by some alleged witches in trances—there is no reason at all why there should be any such documentation witnessing to the sect's existence. It makes little sense, then, to dismiss readily the objective existence of a sect of the witches on the basis of a lack of documentation that, in the light of the rejection of the objective reality of the sabbat, could never have existed to begin with.

It is possible, however, to hypothesize the existence of a sect of the witches conceived not as a structured organization but as a very loose, informal movement of people who shared certain beliefs. Its members need not have attended any kind of regular, formal meetings at all, and they need not have communicated with one another, and gained new adherents, by any other means than orally. It is possible to conjecture that they might have met as the sharers of a common set of beliefs, but this need not have taken the form of anything more elaborate than the

²⁴⁰ Ginzburg 1983, p. 133.

occasional, fortuitous meeting of a group of women around a scrubbing stone, or of a group of men around an anvil, or of a group of men and women resting a little while working in the fields, or around a stall at a local market. Chance encounters such as these would, of course, hardly have left documentary traces.

Is there any evidence, then, for the possible existence of a popular, underground movement conceived in this manner and that could be taken to represent at least a minimal objective instantiation of the inquisitors' sect of the witches? It is here that the comparatively humdrum and prosaic, but a priori quite possible, components of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft become relevant and deserving of much greater attention than they have received hitherto—elements held to occur not so much in the context of the, probably, imaginative construct of the sabbat, as in the context of the alleged witches' everyday life. One such is the prevalence during the Renaissance of infanticide and the employment of human, especially children's remains, in the preparation of medications.²⁴¹ A more important, and perhaps defining, element is the central role invariably played by the Host—the wafer of bread consecrated during the celebration of the Eucharist or Mass—in the records of inquisitorial witch-trials. It is crucial to notice that this does not occur only in the context of their accounts of the sabbat, in the form of profanation at the devil's behest; it is also presented as central to the purported witches' doings outside of the sabbat, in everyday life. In many transcripts of witch-trials conducted by Dominican inquisitors in northern Italy during the Renaissance the alleged witch appears as confessing to participating at the celebration of Mass in a covertly sacrilegious manner. This takes place especially at the salient moments of the celebration, the reading of the Gospel and the elevation of the Host for adoration by the assembled worshippers. Unlike the faithful, the witch averts the eyes and refuses to gaze upon the Host, furtively makes an obscene, contemptuous gesture with the fingers (*ficam facere*), and mutters inaudibly but repeatedly in response to the priest's affirmation that the Host is indeed the body of Christ “you are lying through the throat” (*tu menti de gula*). Moreover, even though the witch receives the Host during Communion, it is not consumed but kept in the mouth, whence it is spat out at the conclusion of the rite and taken away surreptitiously.

²⁴¹ This is stressed in Prospero 2005, pp. 26–44.

Now, all this might be no more than an inquisitorial *topos*—and it had probably become one by the time it appeared in Giovan Francesco Pico's *Strix* (1523).²⁴² The phrase *tu menti de gula* was, moreover, current in the parlance of Renaissance Italy and is common in literature; it is to be found, for example, in Boccaccio and, in its possibly derivative, English version, even in Shakespeare. Yet, there is nothing intrinsically impossible about such a scenario, and, obviously, it is far more likely to mirror objective behaviour than, say, flying at night on a broomstick or morphing into a cat. It certainly appears repeatedly in the accounts of witch-trials held through the second half of the fifteenth century and throughout northern Italy—among others, that of the trial of Giovanna Monduro held in Salussola (northern Piedmont) in 1470,²⁴³ and that of the trial of Gentile Cimitri held in Bologna in 1498²⁴⁴—and it is mentioned in the report penned by Giuseppe OrzINUOVI in 1518 as customary among the *strioni* of Valcamonica.²⁴⁵

Furthermore, the popular performance of magical practices that involved the use of pilfered eucharistic wafers is amply documented and it is surely likely to have been accompanied by an at least by word of mouth propagation of its putative efficacy. Indeed, the identification of such practices as specific to witchcraft in a stronger sense than other superstitious practices, such as divination or even the performance of malevolent magic (*maleficium*), anticipates the formation of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft during the first half of the fifteenth century.²⁴⁶ Even as early a presentation of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft as that in *Erroris Gazanorum* (1436/39) seems at least to imply that the sect of the witches was fundamentally an anti-Eucharist conspiracy.²⁴⁷ It is also surely instructive that the alleged emergence of the sect of the witches roughly coincides chronologically with the rise of accusations of Host-profanation made against Jews.

For us, such practices and their diffusion need not represent anything more than a superstitious, degenerate aspect of Christianity concomitant with, and indeed reflecting negatively, the increased emphasis on

²⁴² G.F. Pico, *Strega*, p. 139.

²⁴³ Crovella 1985, p. 50.

²⁴⁴ Ghirardacci, *Della Historia di Bologna*, p. 295.

²⁴⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 607.

²⁴⁶ See the letter of William, cardinal of Santa Sabina, dated 22 August 1320, addressed to the inquisitors of Carcassonne and Toulouse in Hansen 1901, pp. 4–5.

²⁴⁷ Ostorero, Paravicini Bagliani and Utz Tremp 1999, pp. 280–281; see also Prospero 2005, p. 29.

the cult of the Host characteristic of the late-medieval and, in particular, of the fifteenth-century Church. Renaissance inquisitors, on the other hand, would readily have interpreted such doings as pointing to a sect of demonically-inspired heretics and apostates quite distinct from, and far more insidious and threatening to Christianity, than the common sorcerers who did not have recourse to the Eucharist in their magical practices and were readily dismissed as merely superstitious and undeserving of specifically inquisitorial attention.²⁴⁸ Moreover, given the contemporaneity of such practices with the comparatively recent stress on Eucharistic exposition and adoration, it is understandable that these inquisitors would have identified them and their practitioners as a new, modern phenomenon and as being wholly other than the “witchcraft” and the “witches” of the tenth-century *Canon episcopi*.

If there be any substance to these surmisals, the problem would then arise of how inquisitors’ sketchy awareness of such a popular movement came to coagulate in the Alpine region during the first half of the fifteenth century with the entire gamut of the literally fabulous components of the stereotype of diabolic witchcraft and was thence propagated to the rest of Europe over the following two centuries—even after losing its Eucharistic underpinning in post-Reformation, Protestant northern Europe. Whatever the case, that further, systematic research along these lines might be rewarding seems to be indicated by the records of a trial for witchcraft held as far away as Modica in Sicily in mid-seventeenth century. The accused, Vincenza Lentini, confessed to instructing another woman to recite repeatedly the phrase “you are lying through the throat” during Mass at the elevation of the Host if she wanted her spells to be effective.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Superstitious practices such as divination that were not tainted with heresy came under the jurisdiction of inquisitors only after the promulgation of Sixtus V’s bull *Coeli et terra* in 1585—well after the founding of the Roman Inquisition in 1542.

²⁴⁹ Leonardi 2000, p. 23.

EPILOGUE

The principal catalyst in the history of the Inquisition in northern Italy during the Renaissance was the gradual appropriation of inquisitorial districts by the Observant Congregation of Lombardy. By the time that Paul III established the Roman Inquisition in 1542, with the bull *Licet ab initio*, almost all northern-Italian inquisitorial districts had come under its control—as reconstituted by Pope Clement VII in 1531 as the Province of Both Lombardies. In the following years, the few remaining districts still entrusted to the conventual friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr—by then demoted to the status of a vicariate—would also be consigned, with a few mainly peripheral exceptions, to the Province of Both Lombardies. The district of Genoa had been reassigned to the Province by 1539, and even the much-contested inquisition of Milan was finally seized by it in 1558, through the stratagem of its being relocated from the unreformable convent of Sant’ Eustorgio to that of Santa Maria delle Grazie. A similar fate also befell most districts that hitherto had been entrusted to the Franciscan order: Venice in 1560, the inquisitorial province of Romagna in 1567, the inquisitorial districts of Verona and Vicenza and the inquisitorial provinces of the March of Ancona and of the March of Treviso in 1569.

The ever-increasing assumption of inquisitorial duties by the Congregation after 1474 engendered, at least embryonically, a new type of inquisitor. The often lackadaisical conventual inquisitor, whose primary interests were usually quite other than the pursuit of purported heretics, was gradually replaced by the professional inquisitor—often thought of, quite mistakenly, as an exclusively post-1542, Counter-Reformation phenomenon. The development of this type within the ranks of the Congregation was due to several factors: the Congregation’s desire to revitalize all aspects of Dominican life and apostolic commitment; a less fickle, because collegial, procedure of appointment; mobility of assignments; early specialization in inquisitorial work, often at the sacrifice of a promising academic career; the gradual promotion from inquisitorial vicar to titular inquisitor, with its implication of ongoing “on the job” training and the acquisition of wide-ranging experience. At the risk

of oversimplification: inquisitors mutated from deferential courtiers to dogged constables—the Rafanellis gave way to the Antonios da Casale.

No better, and certainly no more significant, example of the emergent type could be given than that of Michele Ghislieri da Alessandria. A member of the Congregation of Lombardy from 1520, he made no academic career—despite the hagiographical confabulations of his often-still-repeated seventeenth-century biographers, he would only be promoted master of theology *ex apostolica auctoritate* by Pope Julius III in 1553.¹ Assigned to inquisitorial work not long after his priestly ordination in 1528, he held a number of posts as inquisitorial vicar till he was appointed inquisitor of Como in 1546 and soon thereafter, certainly by 1548, of Bergamo. His relentless, stubborn carrying out of his inquisitorial duties, even at the risk of death, eventually brought him to the attention of Cardinal Giampietro Carafa—soon to become Pope Paul IV—and led to his subsequent spectacular career: First Commissary of the Holy Office (1551–1557), bishop of Sutri and Nepi in 1556, cardinal and *summus et perpetuus inquisitor* (1557–1566), bishop of Mondovì in 1560, Roman Pontiff (1566–1572).

Throughout his pontificate, Pope Pius V would look upon the Roman Inquisition as the principal bulwark against the spread of Protestantism and its consolidation as his overriding task. A bolstering that, in practice, meant spreading the inquisitorial type that had developed within the Congregation of Lombardy to all parts of Italy under that Inquisition's sway. Throughout his career he would show little patience with the dilettantism of conventual inquisitors, both Dominican and Franciscan, and did away with them whenever he could.² Even the one truly innovative element of *Licet ab initio*—that of a central and all-powerful, coordinating and monitoring commission of cardinals—was moulded by him, as pope, to fit in with this, for, by the concession of a special privilege, he entrusted in perpetuity to the friars of the Province of Both Lombardies the pivotal posts of Commissary and of his First and Second Companion³—the highest ranking of the permanent, full-time personnel who did the day-to-day work of the Congregation of the Holy Office: prepared and conducted trials, maintained contact

¹ AGOP, IV, reg. 31, fol. 36^r (20 August 1553).

² See, for example, Prosperi 1966, pp. 146–153.

³ Del Re 1970, pp. 99–100: Unfortunately, it has not been possible to trace Pius V's brief conceding the privilege—the motivation for the concession, if stated, might well have given us an inkling of his own understanding of the story that has been retold in the pages of this book.

with local tribunals, and largely predetermined the issues that were to be brought to the attention of the cardinalatial commission. It follows, then, that the continuity between the inquisitors of the Renaissance and the Roman Inquisition was significantly greater than has been acknowledged heretofore.

This crucial, institutionalized link between the Roman Inquisition and the inquisitorial zeal and professionalism of the Congregation of Lombardy, as it continued as a characteristic trait of the ethos of the Province of Both Lombardies, survived for four centuries. It passed unscathed through the general reorganization of the Roman curia implemented by Pope Sixtus V in 1588.⁴ It withstood the general suppression of local inquisitorial tribunals that, commencing in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, was completed with the abolition of the last surviving tribunal, that of Bologna, in 1860. It persisted despite the reform introduced by Pope Pius X in 1908 that abrogated, once and for all, the nomenclature of Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition and replaced it with Congregation of the Holy Office.⁵ It was finally done away with only in late 1965, when Pope Paul VI did not only impose the new name Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,⁶ but, invoking the changed circumstances of the time in a letter addressed to the Dominican master general, Aniceto Fernandez, also abolished the posts of commissary and of his companions.⁷ Thereafter no Dominican friars of the Province of Both Lombardies were to be automatically appointed to posts in the Roman congregation charged with the detection and suppression of heresy, and it is a moot point whether the results have been entirely felicitous. Be that as it may, it was only less than half a century ago, then, that the curtain was finally drawn on the scenario first writ large by the Renaissance inquisitors who have been the subject of this book.

⁴ See the Apostolic Constitution *Immenso aeterni Dei* (22 January 1588), BR, vol. 8, pp. 985–999.

⁵ See the Apostolic Constitution *Sapienti consilio* (29 June 1908), AAS, vol. 1 (1909), pp. 7–19.

⁶ See the Motu Proprio *Integrae servandae* (7 December 1965), AAS, vol. 57 (1965), pp. 952–955.

⁷ See the Letter of Paul VI (26 May 1966), AAS, vol. 58 (1966), pp. 292–294. The last, forty-sixth, commissary, Angelo Raimondo Verardo (1913–1999), who represents a rare exception in that he was a member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, was subsequently appointed apostolic administrator of the archdiocese of Amalfi (1966–1967) and, finally, bishop of Ventimiglia (1967–1988).

APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHICAL REGISTER OF DOMINICAN INQUISITORS IN NORTHERN ITALY, 1474–1527¹

Agostino Mori da Brescia (*Augustinus de Moris de Brixia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is in the convent of San Floriano in Brescia in 1496 but travels to Spain later that year and is again in the convent of Brescia in 1498 and 1501. He is prior of the convent of Brescia in 1507–1509 and prior of the convent of Santo Stefano in Bergamo in 1510–1512. In 1517 he is appointed inquisitor of Brescia by the conventual community there without the permission of the Congregation's vicar general and is immediately dismissed from the post by Pope Leo X. On 8 March 1530 he is appointed by Master General Paolo Bottigella to publish an indulgence in favour of the following general chapter.²

Agostino da Pavia (*Augustinus de Papia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is a student in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1475. He is perhaps to be identified with the friar Agostino summoned from the convent of Monza in 1483 to conduct witch-trials in Bormio in Valtellina. He is prior of the convent of Sant'Apollinare in Pavia in 1487–1489. In 1498 he is prior of the convent of Arienzo, in the kingdom of Naples, and takes possession of the convent of Santa Caterina in Fornello on behalf of the Congregation. In early 1500 he is still prior of Arienzo and takes possession of the convent of Maddaloni. He is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo on 5 December 1499 and becomes prior of the convent of Mantua in mid-1500. On 16 June 1510 he is appointed inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo. In 1516 he is praised by Leandro Alberti as “venerabilis senior”. As inquisitorial vicar he conducts witch-trials in Bormio in Val-

¹ This register furnishes biographical sketches of inquisitors mentioned but not discussed in the body of the book; inquisitors expressly considered there are listed for the sake of completeness and with reference to the relevant section.

² AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 380^v; BOP, vol. 4, p. 339; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 122^v.

tellina in 1519. In 1520 Prierias describes him as “inquisitor peritissimus et expertissimus.”³

Aimone Taparelli da Savigliano (*Aymo de Taparellis de Saviliano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is born in 1398. A scion of the counts of Lagnasco and a jurist, he enters the Dominican order, probably in the convent of San Domenico in Turin, in 1441 at the age of forty-four after the death of his wife. He graduates master of theology from the University of Turin. He transfers to the convent of Savigliano after the murder by Waldensians of the inquisitor of Savigliano, Bartolomeo Cervere, on 21 May 1466. He is inquisitor of Savigliano, Alba, Saluzzo, Mondovì and Cherasco from mid-1467. In 1468 he is prior of the convent of Savigliano and court preacher and confessor of Duke Amedeo IX of Savoy (1435–1472). His inquisitorial vicar, Giovanni Boscato da Savigliano, conducts a witch-trial in Villafranca in 1482. He is reconfirmed inquisitor of Savigliano on 10 January 1483. When he attends the provincial chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr held in Savigliano in 1483 he is still prior of the convent of Savigliano and is, as well, provincial vicar. He is reconfirmed inquisitor of Savigliano, Alba, Saluzzo, Cherasco, Cavour, Bricherasio and Valle Lucerna (but not Mondovì) on 5 January 1489. The inquisitorial district of Mondovì is restored to him on 8 March 1495. He dies on 15 August 1495 and is beatified by Pope Pius IX on 29 May 1856.⁴

Alberto Bossi da Novara (*Albertus de Boxis de Novaria*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. On 23 August 1497 he is appointed master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia. In 1499 he is incorporated as bachelor of the Sentences in the theological faculty of the University of Pavia. He is licensed to graduate master of theology by the general chapter of Rome on 4 June 1501. He graduates master of theology from the University of Pavia and is incorporated in its faculty of theology in mid-1501. He is

³ Piana 1963, p. 171; Vigna 1888, p. 73; D’Amato 1956, pp. 255, 258, 272; AGOP, XIV, liber M, pp. 259–260; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 147^r; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; Simoncelli 1988, p. 117; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 263; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^r; Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 133.

⁴ Turletti 1879, vol. 2, pp. 160–223, 314; Vallaro 1936; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 183^v, 191^v; AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 233^{r-v}, 242^v, 247^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 146^r.

appointed inquisitor of Novara on 18 May 1505 and allowed to assume a *socius* to assist him with his inquisitorial duties. He is still in Novara, but is no longer inquisitor, in 1508.⁵

Ambrogio di Corrado di Germania (*Ambrosius Conradi de Alemannia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained subdeacon in Bologna on 27 February 1458. In 1470 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Vicenza as the *socius* of the prior of the convent of San Domenico in Mantua. In 1470 the general chapter of Avignon assigns him *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and he is still there as such in 1471. In 1473–1474 he is master of studies in the Bolognese studium. In 1481 the general chapter of Rome assigns him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the academic year 1483–1484, but he does not seem to proceed to the master's degree. On 16 May 1485 he is appointed inquisitor of Mantua. In 1486 the marquis of Mantua, Francesco II Gonzaga, extends him the aid of the secular arm. He probably dies shortly before 27 March 1490 when Agostino Maggi da Mantova is temporarily appointed inquisitorial vicar in Mantua.⁶

Andrea Porcellaga da Brescia (*Andreas Portulata de Brixia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. In 1491 he is prior of the convent of Brescia, in 1496–1498 of the convent of Cremona, and in 1498–1499 of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa. On 9 November 1499 Thomas de Vio dedicates to him from Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan his *De cambiis* in which he refers to him as the then prior of the convent of Brescia. On 2 October 1502 he is appointed inquisitor of Brescia and reappointed to the post on 19 November 1503. In 1504 he is again prior of the convent of Brescia and during 1507–1508 he serves as vicar general of the Congregation.⁷

⁵ AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 138^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 255^v; Negruzzo 1995, p. 331; AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172^r; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 253.

⁶ Piana 1963, pp. 113, 138; D'Amato 1945, p. 93; MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 328, 362; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 349–350; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 42; Davari 1879, pp. 552–553, 560; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 61^r.

⁷ AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, p. 598; Domaneschi 1767, p. 427; Vigna 1888, p. 89; Cajetan, *Opuscula*, p. 162; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 260^r, 262^r; Creytens 1962, pp. 251–252.

Angelo Faella da Verona (*Angelus de Faellis de Verona*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. The general chapter of Novara 1465 assigns him *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and he matriculates as such on 5 July 1465. He is master of studies in Bologna during 1474–1475. He is the prior of the convent of Sant’Anastasia in Verona during 1477–1478 and of that of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan in 1481–1482. The general chapter of Rome 1481 assigns him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for 1481–1483. He is again prior of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan in 1483–1484. On 23 October 1487 he graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna and serves as regent master in the studium generale in San Domenico in 1489–1492. He is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1495–1496. During 1496–1498 he is vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy. On 10 July 1498 he is appointed inquisitor of Brescia. During his inquisitorial term he is the recipient of the brief of Pope Alexander VI, *Cum acceperimus*, encouraging the prosecution of witches. Between 1499 and 1502 he is prior of the convent of Verona. In 1508–1509 he is in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Padua. He serves a third term as prior of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan in 1510–1512 and is again prior of the convent of Verona in 1516–1517.⁸

Angelo Rizzardi da Savigliano, da Saluzzo (*Angelus de Rizzardinis de Saviliano, de Salutiis*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of the marquisate of Monferrato in 1505–1509, inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo in 1509–1510, and perhaps inquisitor of Mondovì in 1520–1521 and inquisitor of Savigliano in 1525–1532.⁹

Antonio Beccari da Ferrara (*Antonius de Bechariis de Ferrara*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He enters the Dominican order in the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara on 1 Jan-

⁸ MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 300, 362; Piana 1963, pp. 177–178; AGOP, XIV, liber QQ, vol. 1, p. 688, vol. 2, pp. 173, 179; AGOP, XIV, liber OO, pp. 625, 647, 677; Gattico, *Descrizione*, pp. 46, 69, 71, 85, 107, 137–139, 147–149, 153; Santa Maria 1922, pp. 39–40; Ehrle 1932, p. 124; *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 24^r, 25^r; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; D’Amato 1956, pp. 250, 256, 277; Creytens and D’Amato 1961, p. 249; Creytens 1962, pp. 246–247; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r; Hansen 1901, p. 31; Kors and Peters 2001, p. 229; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 72, 77; Gasparotto 1966, p. 247.

⁹ See chapter 4, section 4.

uary 1499 and is its prior in 1514–1516. He is appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena in 1514, at the behest of Duke Alfonso I, and remains at least nominally so till 1525. Leandro Alberti praises him in 1516 and attributes to him numerous theological works which are mostly no longer extant. Extant, however, is his inquisitor's account book for 1514–1522. His inquisitorial vicars in the subdistrict of Modena during 1517–1523—Lazzaro da San Colombano, Antonio da Brescia, Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa, Tommaso da Vicenza—conduct several trials for which he sends directives and in which he intervenes personally at times. During 1520–1522 he is prior of the convent of Mantua. He is appointed viceprocurator general and vicar general of the order on 31 December 1522, is informed of this on 18 March 1523 and serves as such till 8 August 1524. His two registers as vicar general have been edited. He is created master of theology by Pope Clement VII on 29 November 1523. He is elected bishop of Scutari on 23 September 1524 and allowed to accept the post by Master General Silvestri on 15 October 1524. He never visits his diocese and, after being dispensed from the obligation of residence there, serves as auxiliary of Gian Matteo Giberti in Verona from late 1524 till the beginning of 1535, when he becomes vicar of Cardinal Girolamo Aleandro in Brindisi. He dies in Ancona in 1543.¹⁰

Antonio da Casale (*Antonius de Casali*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Bergamo in 1501–1508, inquisitor of Parma and Reggio in 1508–1513, and inquisitor of Como in 1513–1515.¹¹

Antonio di Francesco Pezzotelli da Brescia (*Antonius de Brixia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Brescia and Bergamo during 1479–1498.¹²

Antonio Ghislandi da Torino (*Antonius de Ghislandis de Thaurino*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He enters the order in the convent of San Domenico in Turin and is allowed to proceed to

¹⁰ Taurisano 1916, p. 98; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 143^r; Mercati 1942, pp. 129–133; Ferrara 1972, pp. 127–145; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; MOPH, vol. 21, pp. 140–184; Prosperi 1965; Ginzburg 1961; Bertolotti 1979; Duni 1999; HC, vol. 3, p. 294.

¹¹ See chapter 2, section 4.

¹² See chapter 5, section 4.

the master's degree on 14 November 1475, probably in the University of Turin. The general chapter of Perugia 1478 appoints him regent master in the studium in Turin till the following general chapter (1478–1481). The general chapter of Rome 1481 reappoints him regent master in Turin till the following general chapter (1481–1484). In 1483 he attends the provincial chapter held in Savigliano as regent master and inquisitor of Turin. In 1485 he teaches logic and theology in the University of Turin. He is prior of the convent in Turin during 1485–1488, 1490–1492, 1497–1502 and 1504. He is appointed vicar of the Province of St. Peter Martyr in 1489 and again in 1492. He conducts several witch-trials in Carignano in 1493–1494. In 1505 the general chapter of Milan appoints him once again regent master in Turin. In 1508 he is still inquisitor of Turin and taking part in the academic life of the University of Turin. In early March 1509 he is entrusted with the settling of a dispute among friars in Turin. He remains inquisitor of Turin till his death in 1510 when he is succeeded by Cornelio da Beinasco.¹³

Antonio Passerini da Bergamo (*Antonius de Bergamo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. After a term as prior of the convent of San Stefano in Bergamo he is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo in 1520. According to Cipriano Uberti (1586) he is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo in 1522.¹⁴

Appolonio da Gavardo (*Appolonius de Gavardo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. In October 1470 he is a student in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. He is appointed inquisitor of Brescia and Crema on 12 November 1499.¹⁵

Arcangelo Fontana da Vicenza (*Archangelus Fontane de Vicentia*)

Originally a member of the Congregation of Lombardy, then of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is prior of the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara when that convent (along with San Domenico in Modena, San Domenico in Reggio, San Marco in Florence and San Domenico in Fiesole) separates itself from the Congregation from

¹³ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 204^v; MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 348, 367; AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81; Vallaro 1936, p. 49; Dainotti 1932; Castagno 2004; MOPH, vol. 9, p. 55; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 257; Ferrua 1995, pp. 26, 427–428, 610–611, 620–621, 979–981, 983, 1137–1138.

¹⁴ Alce 1995, p. 40; Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

¹⁵ Piana 1963, p. 270; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 145^v.

1469 till 1472. During this period he graduates master of theology without due permission, so that when the Ferrarese convent rejoins the Congregation in 1472 he is refused readmission. In 1470 he is invited by the bishop of Mantua to work there as a preacher. In 1472–1473 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Perugia and in 1474 of that of San Romano in Lucca. In 1476 he transfers definitively from his original house of affiliation, the convent of Sant’Anastasia in Verona, to the convent of Cremona, thereby becoming a member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. On 19 February 1479 he is appointed inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona, but in mid-1481 he is dismissed by the master general from the post of inquisitor and that of vicar of the Cremonese convent for some misdeed and is forbidden to return there.¹⁶

Bartolomeo Commazio da Bologna (*Bartholomaeus Comatius de Bononia*)
Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He enters the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 16 January 1456. He receives tonsure and minor orders in Bologna on 12 March 1457, subdiaconate on 25 February 1458 and diaconate on 29 March 1460. By 15 November 1465 he is *studens formalis* in the Bolognese studium generale where he serves as master of studies during 1469–1470, biblical bachelor in 1470–1471 and bachelor of the Sentences in 1472–1475. He graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna on 1 October 1476. He is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna during 1476–1477 and vicar general of the Congregation during 1477–1479. On 7 June 1478 he is appointed inquisitor of Bologna, with the dispensation from the requirement of being at least forty-years old granted *auctoritate apostolica*, and remains such till 1481. He is again prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna during 1479–1480. The general chapter of Rome 1481 appoints him regent master in the Bolognese studium for the triennium 1481–1484. The general chapter of Rome 1484 elects him Dominican master general and he dies in office in Perugia on 4 August 1485.¹⁷

¹⁶ D’Amato 1945; BOP, vol. 3, p. 464; Hieronymus de Bursellis, *Chronica*, fol. 230^r; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 28; Kaeppli 1962, p. 27 n. 3; Verde and Corsi 1990, pp. 8, 162, 388; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 38^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 212^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fols. 183^r, 187^r.

¹⁷ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, pp. 72, 146; Piana 1963, pp. 138–139; Ehrle 1932, p. 123; Creytens 1962, p. 235; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 334^v, 343^r; MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 274, 362; Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 4, pp. 570–597.

Bernardo Granelli da Genova (*Bernardus de Granellis de Janua*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. On 11 June 1487 he is permitted to graduate master of theology and does so in 1488 from the University of Pavia. He holds the chair *ad lecturam operum S. Thomae* in the faculty of arts of the University of Pavia during 1487–1489 and it is likely that at the same time he is the regent master in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia. On 23 August 1489 he is assigned to the convent of San Domenico in Genoa and appointed preacher in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice during Lent of 1490. He preaches in Venice also during Lent of 1491. On 15 July 1491 the Venetian Senate offers him the chair of theology *in via Thomae* in the faculty of arts of the University of Padua but he does not accept. On 24 April 1493 he is appointed inquisitor of the March of Genoa but remains such for less than a year, till the appointment of Paolo Moneglia in April 1494. In mid-1494 he is reappointed regent master in the studium of the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the biennium 1494–1496 during which time he is also prior of the convent and holds, once again, the chair of Thomistic theology in the University of Pavia. In mid-1496 he returns to Genoa and is prior of the convent of San Domenico during 1496–1498. The general chapter of Rome 1501 appoints him regent master in the Genoese convent. On 21 December 1502 Master General Bandello allows him to travel “in orientem” to preach and carry out other apostolic activities. It is likely that he goes to the Holy Land or, perhaps, to the Genoese colonies in the Ottoman Empire. Whatever the case, on 21 June 1510 Master General Cajetan writes to the convent of San Domenico in Genoa asking the community there to welcome him kindly, just as would be done for a veteran of the foreign missions who was returning home for a brief spell.¹⁸

Bernardo Retegno da Como (*Bernardus de Cumis*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. In 1479 he is in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. In 1490 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Como as prior of the convent of Como. In 1494–1496 he is prior of the convent of Sant’Andrea in Faenza and in

¹⁸ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 233^v, 246^r; Negruzzo 1995, pp. 338, 347; Brotto and Zonta 1922, p. 186; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fols. 241^r, 245^v, 248^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 149^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 256^r, 260^v; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 263; Tavuzzi 2002, pp. 286–291.

1501–1502 of the convent of Cremona. On 20 May 1505 he is appointed inquisitor of Como. Leandro Alberti informs us he died in 1515. He is the author of a manual of inquisitorial procedure, *Lucerna inquisitorum haeretice pravitatis*, and a tract arguing for the reality of diabolic witchcraft and the necessity of prosecuting witches, *De strigiis*—both were first printed in Milan only in 1566.¹⁹

Biagio Berra da Mondovì (*Blasius de Berra de Montereali*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Mondovì. with occasional, brief interruptions, during 1471–1513.²⁰

Biagio degli Imperiati da Asti (*Blasius de Imperiatis de Asti*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1481 he is already a master of theology and is prior of the convent of San Giovanni Battista in Saluzzo. In 1495 he is the prior of the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia. He is appointed inquisitor of Asti on 1 November 1500 by the vicar general of the order, Francesco Mei da Firenze. He is the prior of the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Asti in 1501. He is dismissed from the post of inquisitor of Asti by Master General Bandello on 4 July 1501.²¹

Clemente da Venezia (*Clemens de Venetiis*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua on 25 August 1453. In 1453 he is bachelor of the Sentences in the studium in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua and chaplain to Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan, patriarch of Aquileia. He graduates master of theology from the University of Padua on 18 September 1456. He is prior of the convent in Padua in 1463 and of that in Monselice in 1475. He is appointed inquisitor of Vicenza *auctoritate apostolica* on 23 January 1475 and holds the post for a brief period till it is restored to its previous incumbent, Giocchino Torriani. He is prior of the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice in 1477 and dies in 1478.²²

¹⁹ Piana 1963, p. 199; D'Amato 1956, p. 257; D'Amato 1977, p. 318; Domaneschi 1767, p. 427; AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 172^r; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^f.

²⁰ See chapter 4, section 3.

²¹ Camilla 1991, p. 111; Mangione 2005, pp. 174, 177, 266; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 234^v, 243^{r-v}; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fols. 241^v, 248^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 148^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fols. 143^r, 145^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fols. 141^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 255^v.

²² AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 46^v; Gargan 1971, p. 100.

Cornelio da Beinasco (*Cornelius de Beinasco*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter martyr. A scion of the counts of Piosasco and lords of Beinasco, he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Turing during 1495–1496 and 1511–1512. He is incorporated as bachelor of the Sentences in the theological faculty of the University of Turin on 8 May 1496, graduates master of theology from there, and serves as its dean in 1517. He is inquisitor of Turin from 1510 till his death in late 1518 or early 1519.²³

Crisostomo Iavelli da Casale (*Chrysostomus Javellus de Casali, Canapicius*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is born *ca.* 1470 in San Giorgio near Casale in Monferrato. On 17 August 1495 he is admitted *studens formalis* in the studium generale of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. He is assigned by the general chapter of Milan 1505 as substitute for Leonardo da Milano as master of studies in Bologna for the academic year 1507–1508 and reassigned to the post for that academic year by the general chapter of Pavia 1507. On 19 June 1512 he is appointed by Master General Cajetan bachelor of the Sentences in the studium generale of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan for the academic year 1513–1514. He does not, however, fill the post for by then Sant'Eustorgio has been reoccupied by the conventual friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. Instead, he remains in Bologna where he attends the lectures of Pietro Pomponazzi in the University of Bologna's faculty of arts. The general chapter of Genoa 1513 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in the Bolognese studium for the biennium 1514–1516. The general chapter of Naples 1515 licenses him to proceed to the degree of master of theology and appoints him inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona, a post that he holds till his death in 1542. On 18 February 1516 he graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna and is incorporated in its *collegium doctorum*. Leandro Alberti praises him in 1516 for his human qualities as well as his scholarship. The general chapter of Rome 1518 formally recognizes his graduation as master and appoints him regent master in Bologna for the triennium 1518–1521. During this period he participates regularly in the activities of the Bolognese faculty of theology and becomes involved in the case of Pietro Pomponazzi for whom he composes the *Solutiones*. At the end of

²³ Vallaro 1936, pp. 48, 72–73; Ferrua 1995, pp. 327, 557–561, 571, 990–991, 1006, 1038.

his Bolognese regency in 1521 he settles definitively in the convent of San Giovanni in Canale in Piacenza and is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Piacenza on 14 January 1523. In 1530 he is approached by the emissaries of King Henry VIII of England and responds by composing several tracts favourable to Henry on that king's Great Matter. A prolific author, he composes numerous expositions of Aquinas, Aristotelian commentaries and polemical works against Luther.²⁴

Cristoforo Alzani da Bergamo (*Christophorus de Alzanis de Bergamo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. In 1470 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Vicenza and in 1484 he is prior of the convent of Mantua. On 15 September 1498 he is appointed vicar of the inquisitor of Bergamo and only three days later, 18 September 1498, he is named inquisitor of Bergamo. He dies in 1499 while visiting the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara.²⁵

Cristoforo da Vicenza (*Christophorus de Vicentia*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. In 1450 he is in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua and on 15 July 1554 he is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua. He graduates master of theology from the University of Padua on 24 October 1459. He is prior of the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua in 1461–1462. He is inquisitor of Padua in 1467 and is again prior of Sant'Agostino in 1484.²⁶

Dionisio da Genova (*Dionysius de Janua*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology when he is appointed inquisitor of Corsica on 29 February 1500. On 4 June 1501 he is required by the master general to give

²⁴ Piana 1969, pp. 216–217, 219, 221–222, 258; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 70, 143, 150, 175; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 96; Kaeppli 1935, p. 308; Piò 1615, p. 488; AGOP, XIV, liber O, vol. 1, p. 10; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 142^r; Gilson 1961; Gilson 1963; Di Napoli 1963, pp. 214–226; Kristeller 1967, pp. 54, 60–61; Brewer 1862–1910, vol. 4, part. 3, pp. 2872, 3190; Pocock 1870, vol. 1, p. 317; Surtz 1975, pp. 439–442; Bedouelle and Le Gal 1987, p. 354; Hansen 1900, pp. 512–513; Arata 1929, p. 218; a survey of his Aristotelian commentaries is in Lohr 1988, pp. 202–204 and a complete bibliography in Tavuzzi 1991.

²⁵ D'Amato 1945, p. 95; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fols. 141^v, 142^r; Piò 1620, vol. 1, p. 193.

²⁶ Gargan 1971, p. 10.

an account to the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr of the money he has collected from the Dominican friars working in Bonifacio.²⁷

Domenico di Frassino da Lodi (*Dominicus de Laude*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. In 1466 he is in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. In 1470 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Como as the prior of the convent of Brescia. In 1478 he is prior of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. In 1481 he is prior of the convent of Mantua. In 1487 he is again prior of the Milanese convent and in 1489 again of that of Brescia. The general chapter held in Le Mans in 1491 reprimands him for the harsh manner in which he has reformed the convent of San Giacomo in Lodi, of which he is still prior in 1494. On 10 July 1498 he is appointed inquisitor, but the annotation of this in Master General Torriani's register does not specify where.²⁸

Domenico Pirri da Gargnano (*Dominicus de Pirris de Gragnano*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Bologna during 1485–1490 and of Mantua during 1490–1520.²⁹

Domenico Visconti da Novara (*Dominicus Vicecomes de Novaria*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The general chapter of Ferrara 1498 approves his graduation as master of theology. He is appointed inquisitor of Novara on 22 June 1508, but soon thereafter becomes involved in a financial dispute with the convent of Novara. He is still inquisitor of Novara in 1519 when he conducts witch-trials in the village of Suno north of Novara.³⁰

Donato da Brescia (*Donatus de Brixia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. The general chapter of Milan 1505 appoints him master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1505–1506 and the

²⁷ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 142^r, 255^v.

²⁸ Piana 1963, p. 178; D'Amato 1956, p. 259; Gattico, *Descrizione*, pp. 84, 136, 139; Santa Maria 1922, pp. 39–40; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, p. 598; MOPH, vol. 8, p. 413; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 140^r.

²⁹ See chapter 5, section 5.

³⁰ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 433; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 256^r, 257^r, 261^r; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 253, 257; Osimo 1985.

general chapter of Rome 1508 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences there in 1511–1512, but he does not seem to proceed to the master's degree. He is inquisitor of Parma and Reggio in 1515 and inquisitor of Brescia from 1530. In 1534–1535 his harsh manner of conducting witch-trials is found unacceptable by the rectors of Brescia and he is summoned before the Venetian Council of Ten to render account of his actions.³¹

Eustachio di Bonifazio Piazzesi da Bologna (*Eustachius de Platisiis de Bononia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained subdeacon in Bologna on 2 June 1479, deacon on 26 February 1480 and priest on 18 December 1484. The general chapter of Le Mans 1491 assigns him substitute for the post of master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna for the academic year 1493–1494. The general chapter of Ferrara 1498 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences there for the biennium 1499–1501. He graduates master of theology from the theological faculty of the University of Bologna and is incorporated in its *collegium doctorum* on 8 August 1502. In 1504 he is appointed assistant to Master General Vincenzo Bandello, receives the title of provincial of the Province of the Holy Land, and serves as such till Bandello's death in August 1506. He attends the general chapter of Milan 1505 as provincial of the Province of the Holy Land and the chapter approves his graduation as master of theology and appoints him regent master in the Bolognese studium for 1505–1507. In 1507 he attends the general chapter of Pavia, again as provincial of the Province of the Holy Land, and is appointed regent master in Bologna for the triennium 1507–1510. The general chapter of Rome 1508 confirms him in the post of Bolognese regent master for the biennium 1508–1510. In 1509–1510 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and then serves as vicar general of the Congregation during 1510–1512. In 1514–1515 he is again prior of the Bolognese convent. In 1515 Master General Cajetan appoints him procurator general of the order and he holds this office till his death, presumably in 1520. Despite his appointment as procurator general that entails his residing in Rome, he is inquisitor of Bologna during 1517–1519. Not surprisingly, all inquisitorial activities in Bologna at this time, such as involvement in the famous

³¹ MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 49, 90; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 148^v; Piò 1615, p. 295; Del Col 1988, p. 259.

case of Pietro Pomponazzi, are carried out by his inquisitorial vicar, Giovanni Torfanini da Bologna.³²

Francesco della Riva da Milano (*Franciscus de Ripa de Mediolano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology when the general chapter of Rome 1468 assigns him regent master in the studium generale of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan for the academic year 1469–1470. By mid-1477 he is inquisitor of Milan and Lodi. He is reconfirmed in the post on 22 August 1481 and again on 22 May 1483.³³

Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara (*Franciscus Silvestris de Ferraria*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is born in Ferrara in 1474 and enters the Dominican order in the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara in 1488. He is accepted as *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 15 February 1497 for the year 1497–1498. In late 1498 he is appointed theological lector in the convent of Mantua and remains there till 1503 when he is moved to the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. The general chapter of Pavia 1507 appoints him master of studies in Bologna for the year 1508–1509 and this is confirmed by the chapter of the Congregation held in Mantua in 1508 and the general chapter of Rome 1508. During 1509–1511 he lectures in theology in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. On 5 August 1511 Master General Cajetan appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan for 1511–1512. On 19 June 1512 Master General Cajetan reappoints him bachelor of the Sentences in Milan for 1512–1513, but this does not take place because the convent of Sant'Eustorgio is restored to the Province of St. Peter Martyr in mid-1512. The general chapter of Naples 1515 approves his lecturing on the Sentences as being *pro gradu et forma magisterii* and allows him to proceed to the master's degree. He graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna on 18 February 1516 and this is approved by the general chapter of Rome 1518. In 1516 he is the

³² Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 183–184, 190; Piana 1963, pp. 234–236; MOPH, vol. 7, pp. 401–402, 431; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 46, 49, 61, 69, 90; Piana 1969, pp. 206, 213, 215–216, 257; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; Creytens and D'Amato 1961, p. 286; Creytens 1962, pp. 252–253, 281; Taurisano 1916, p. 98; Battistella 1905, p. 198.

³³ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 316; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 243^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fols. 186^r, 195^r, 199^r.

prior of the convent of Ferrara and teaching theology in the faculty of arts of the University of Ferrara. In 1518 he is elected vicar general of the Congregation and holds the post till 1520. In 1519 he is appointed inquisitor of Bologna and remains such till 1525. During 1521–1524 he is regent master of the Bolognese studium generale. In 1524 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and is appointed vicar general of the entire order by Pope Clement VII. In 1525 he is elected Dominican master general and holds the office till his death in Rennes in France on 1 September 1528. He is chiefly remembered for his commentary on Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles*. He is also the author of various Aristotelian commentaries, a polemical work against Luther and a life of Bl. Osanna Andreasi da Mantova.³⁴

Gaspare Rossetti da Varazze (*Gaspar Rosetus de Voragine*)

Perhaps originally a member of the Congregation of Lombardy, for in October 1471 he is in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. Whatever the case, on 4 June 1474 he transfers to the convent of San Domenico in Genoa, thereby becoming a member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is assigned biblical bachelor in Genoa on 13 September 1474. He graduates master of theology from the studium generale in the convent of Aix in Provence (*universitas Aquensis*) and, as this seems to be a matter of some controversy, it is settled by the master general's intervention in mid-1476. He is reassigned to the convent of Genoa on 2 October 1478, accorded there the privileges conceded to masters of theology on 6 July 1481, and recognized a *filius* of that convent once again on 31 January 1482. In 1483 he attends the provincial chapter held in Savigliano as prior of the convent of Genoa. He is appointed inquisitor of the March of Genoa on 9 February 1497. The general chapter of Rome 1518 approves the disciplinary measures taken against him for some alleged misdeed by the provincial chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and deprives him of the post of Genoese inquisitor.³⁵

³⁴ Piana 1969, pp. 215–216; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 70, 90, 143, 194–195, 232; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 91, 256; Kaeppli 1935, p. 308; Creytens and D'Amato 1961, p. 292; Creytens 1962, pp. 256–261; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 500–501, 610; Taurisano 1916, p. 10; Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 261–284; Sestili 1923; Lohr 1988, pp. 422–423.

³⁵ Piana 1963, p. 113; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 182^r, 185^r, 239^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 210^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fols. 184^r, 189^r; AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 144^r; MOPH, vol. 9, p. 127.

Giacomo Negro da Venezia (*Jacobus de Venetiis*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is assigned *studens artium* in the studium of the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia on 3 August 1511. According to Cipriano Uberti (1586) he is appointed inquisitor of Genoa in 1521.³⁶

Giacomo d'Ognissanti da Ferrara (*Jacobus de Omnibus Sanctis de Ferraria*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is a deacon in the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara in 1465, graduates master of theology from the University of Ferrara on 13 February 1475 and is incorporated in the *collegium doctorum* of its theological faculty by 1476. He is appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena on 4 March 1484, but is replaced in the post by Giovanni Rafanelli on 1 June 1485 with the proviso that he be allowed to complete a full year in it. He is assigned to the convent of Ancona on 31 December 1488 and to that of Ravenna on 4 March 1493.³⁷

Giacomo della Porta de' Valenza da Ferrara (*Jacobus de Valentibus de Ferraria*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic, He is in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua in late 1444. He is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua on 2 October 1448 and graduates master of theology on 21 January 1450. He is prior of the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua during 1452–1453. During 1454–1457, he holds the chair of theology in San Benedetto, the house of studies in Padua of the Olivetan Benedictines. In 1468–1469 he is provincial of the Province of Greece and as such attends the general chapter of Rome 1468. In 1473–1474 he is regent master in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua. He is appointed inquisitor of Padua on 4 June 1474, is still such on 4 July 1477, and probably holds the post till Pope Sixtus IV restores the inquisition of Padua to the Franciscans on 14 October 1477. He is vicar of the province of St. Dominic from 20 October till 20 December 1476 and serves as dean of the theological faculty of the University of Padua from October 1481 till March 1482. He dies on 29 March 1492.³⁸

³⁶ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 91; Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

³⁷ Creytens 1959, p. 161; Pardi 1900, p. 161; Pardi 1903, p. 198; MOPH, vol. 21, pp. 41–42; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 53^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 65^r.

³⁸ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 301; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 37^r, 43^v, 337^r; Gargan 1971, p. 92; BF, new series, vol. 3, p. 486 n. 1001.

Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia (*Joachinus de Becharia de Pavia*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is assigned *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia on 28 March 1502. The general chapter of Milan 1505 appoints him master of studies in Pavia for the academic year 1505–1506 and the general chapter of Pavia 1507 assigns him bachelor of the Sentences there for the biennium 1507–1509. The general chapter of Rome 1508 approves his lecturing on the Sentences as being *pro gradu et forma magisterii* and permits him to proceed to the degree of master of theology. On 18 June 1508 Master General Cajetan allows him to graduate master from any university of his own choice and he does so from that of Pavia before the end of 1508. In August 1509 Cajetan appoints him regent master in the studium in Pavia but rescinds the appointment in October to allow the post to be returned to Vincenzo Dodo da Pavia. In May 1512 he takes part in an armed assault by the friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr on the convent of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan that has been occupied by the friars of the Congregation of Lombardy. The general chapter of Genoa 1513 formally approves his graduation as master and it is likely that he serves as regent master in Pavia during the triennium 1513–1516. Leandro Alberti praises him in 1516 for his knowledge and oratorical prowess. It is probable that he is first appointed inquisitor of Pavia as early as 1509 and that from 1519 till 1521 he is inquisitor of Milan as well. He conducts witch-trials in Cassano d'Adda, near Cremona, in 1519 and his inquisitorial vicars, Battista da Pavia and Michele di Aragona, conduct several witch-trials in Venegono Superiore, near Varese, in 1520.³⁹

Gioacchino di Giacomo Torriani da Venezia (*Joachinus Turriani de Venetiis*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He studies philosophy in Venice in the school of Paolo della Pergola and theology during 1450–1453 in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo. After three years as master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua he is incorporated in the faculty of theology of the University of Padua on 23 June 1456. He graduates master of theology from

³⁹ AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 257^v; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 55, 74, 88; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 252, 259; Negruzzo 1995, p. 332; AGOP, XIV, liber N, pp. 804–805; MOPH, vol. 9, p. 117; Alberti *De viris illustribus*, fol. 146^v; Ghisoni 1669, vol. 1, p. 83; Muzio, *Tabula chronologica*, fol. 137^v; Bazzi 1890; Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1999; Tavuzzi 2002, pp. 312–316.

the University of Padua on 22 February 1459. He is appointed regent master in the studium in Sant'Agostino in 1461 and teaches metaphysics in the arts faculty of the University of Padua. He is prior of the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice during 1465–1469. He is appointed inquisitor of Vicenza on 4 June 1474 and holds the post, with a brief interruption in 1475 due to the appointment to it of Clemente da Venezia *apostolica auctoritate*, till the inquisition of Vicenza is restored to the Franciscans by Pope Sixtus IV on 14 October 1477. He is again prior of the convent in Venice during 1475–1476 and serves as the provincial of the Province of St. Dominic during 1479–1482. He is elected Dominican master general by the general chapter of Venice 1487 and holds the office till his death in Rome on 1 August 1500.⁴⁰

Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale (*Georgius Cacatoxicus de Casali*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Cremona and Piacenza during 1502–1511, inquisitor of Brescia, Cremona and Crema during 1511–1512, and inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona and Crema during 1512–1515.⁴¹

Giovanni Antonio Savarezzi da Cremona (*Johannes Antonius de Scavaražiis de Cremona*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is a *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia in 1477–1478. The general chapter of Rome 1481 assigns him bachelor of the Sentences in Pavia for the academic year 1481–1482. He graduates master of theology from the University of Pavia in mid-1487. He ends a term as prior of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan on 23 May 1493. He is already inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona on 15 December 1494 when he is instructed by the master general to apprehend and punish a friar. On 25 June 1495 the master general confirms his reappointment as inquisitor that has been made previously by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is vicar of the Province in mid-1495, prior of the convent of Pavia in 1498 and prior of the convent of San Domenico in Genoa in 1499–1500. He is reconfirmed inquisitor of Pavia on 25 May 1502, but is deprived of the

⁴⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 37^r, 337^r; Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 1–65; Taurisano 1916, p. 9; Piana 1963, pp. 173–218; Gargan 1971, pp. 104–107; BF, new series, vol. 3, p. 486 n. 1001.

⁴¹ See chapter 2, section 6.

districts of Piacenza and Cremona that are assigned to a friar of the Congregation of Lombardy, Giorgio da Casale. He attends the general chapter of Pavia 1507 as a representative of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.⁴²

Giovanni di Bartolomeo da Soncino (*Johannes de Soncino*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in early 1483 and is ordained priest there on 13 March 1484. He is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema by Master General Cajetan in the general chapter of Naples 1515.⁴³

Giovanni Battista di Guariso Gratarola da Bergamo (*Johannes Baptista de Bergamo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained priest in Bologna on 13 March 1484, appointed inquisitor of Bergamo on 17 June 1508 and remains such till 1511.⁴⁴

Giovanni Battista da Milano (*Johannes Baptista de Mediolano*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in late 1499. The general chapter of Genoa 1513 assigns him master of studies in the Bolognese studium for 1514–1515. He is prior of the convent of Santa Maria della Grazie in Milan in 1516–1518 and again in 1520–1522. The general chapter of Rome 1525 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1526–1528. He serves as inquisitor of Mantua during 1526–1531. He graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna on 9 August 1530. The general chapter of Rome 1530 appoints him substitute for Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa as regent master in the Bolognese studium generale for the triennium 1530–1533. During 1532–1535 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. In 1535 he is again prior of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. In 1535 he is once more prior

⁴² AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 321^v; MOPH, vol. 8, p. 366; Negruzzo 1995, p. 330; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 245^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fols. 146^r, 149^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 146^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fols. 141^r, 143^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 258^v; MOPH, vol. 9, p. 61; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 26.

⁴³ Piana 1963, pp. 174, 214; Piò 1615, p. 273.

⁴⁴ Piana 1963, p. 214; Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 196; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 252; Piò 1615, p. 273; Simoncelli 1988, p. 117; Alce 1995, p. 40.

of the convent of Mantua and in 1538 of that of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. In 1541 he is elected provincial of the Province of Both Lombardies.⁴⁵

Giovanni Ceresoli da Bergamo (*Johannes de Bergamo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained subdeacon in Bologna on 23 September 1489 and is accepted as *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 14 December 1502. The general chapter of Naples 1515 appoints him master of studies in Bologna for the academic year 1516–1517. He is praised by Leandro Alberti in 1516 who includes him in a list of distinguished theologians. He is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo on 26 July 1523 and probably holds the post till 1530. The general chapter of Milan 1525 names him substitute for Giovanni Battista da Milano as bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1526–1528. In 1528 he attends the chapter of the Congregation of Lombardy held in Piacenza as prior of the convent of Bergamo. He serves as bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna during 1528–1530. The general chapter of Rome 1532 allows him to proceed to the master's degree and he graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna on 27 May 1533. He is regent master in the Bolognese studium during 1534–1535 and in mid-1535 he is elected provincial of the Province of Both Lombardies. He dies in 1536 while visiting the convent of San Domenico in Cremona.⁴⁶

Giovanni da Chieri (*Johannes de Cherio*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Genoa in 1482.⁴⁷

Giovanni Domenico da Cremona (*Johannes Dominicus de Cremona*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology in 1470 when he conducts witch-trials in Salussola and

⁴⁵ Piana 1969, pp. 226–231; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 119, 208, 235; Gattico, *Descrizione*, p. 149; Santa Maria 1922, p. 40; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 39^r, 42^r–45^r, 46^v; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 503–505.

⁴⁶ Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 232; Piana 1969, pp. 229–230, 260; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 150, 208; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, f. 142^v; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 142; Tavuzzi 2003, p. 192; *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 39^v, 40^{r-v}, 44^r–45^v; Creytens 1962, p. 264; D'Amato 1947, p. 247; Piò 1615, p. 272.

⁴⁷ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 205^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fols., 191^r, 196^r.

nearby villages as the vicar of the inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como, Niccolò Constantini da Biella. He is appointed inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona on 10 November 1474. On account of some false accusations made against him by his predecessor as inquisitor, Paolo Folperti da Pavia, he is dismissed from the post by 21 December 1475, when the matter is entrusted by the master general for adjudication to Ugo Albini, Michele Madei and the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Girolamo Visconti. On the following day he is granted permission to resume preaching. It is not certain whether he is restored to the post of inquisitor, but in early 1479 he is acting as the vicar of the inquisitor of Pavia when he forwards to the duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, a petition from the community of Casteggio pleading for the prosecution of heretics. In February 1479, while acting in the same capacity, he refuses to send a copy of the trial that he has just held of a woman accused of witchcraft, Margherita da Belcredo, to the duke of Milan as he is asked to do, pleading that he would have to send the entire documentation of the inquisition of Pavia and that this is held by different notaries.⁴⁸

Giovanni da Gandino (*Johannes de Gandino*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He enters the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 27 March 1460. In 1470 he is prior of the convent of Santa Corona in Vicenza. In 1474 he is transferred from the convent of Chioggia to that of Santo Stefano in Bergamo. In 1476 he is reappointed inquisitor of Bergamo, Brescia and Crema, while he is the syndic of the convent of Santa Maria della Basella in Urgnano. He is released from his inquisitorial post on 7 December 1479 because of his illnesses and consequent inability to preach.⁴⁹

Giovanni di Giuliano Cagnazzo da Taggia (*Johannes de Cagnatiis de Tabia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Bologna during 1494–1513.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 193^r, 207^r; Fumi 1910, pp. 106, 109–110.

⁴⁹ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 73; D'Amato 1945, p. 89; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 34^v; Piò 1615, p. 273; AGOP, IV, reg. 4, fol. 216^r.

⁵⁰ See chapter 3, section 4.

Giovanni dell'Olmo (*Johannes de Lulmo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is prior of the convent of San Domenico di Castello in Venice in 1464, of the convent of San Stefano in Bergamo in 1470, and of the convent of San Floriano in Brescia in 1474. He is again prior of the convent in Venice in 1476, of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1478, and of the convent of San Giovanni in Canale in Piacenza in 1479. He serves as vicar general of the Congregation during 1485–1487. He is prior of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa in 1489, again of that in Bologna in 1496–1497, and of the convent of Sant'Andrea in Faenza in 1498–1499. He is appointed inquisitor of Bergamo on 5 June 1499 but dies soon after, in early 1500.⁵¹

Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara (*Johannes, Zanettus, de Raphanellis de Ferraria*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena during 1481–1514.⁵²

Giovanni da Treviso (*Johannes de Tarvisio*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is briefly inquisitor of Parma and Reggio in 1490.⁵³

Girolamo di Gianfrancesco Armellini da Faenza (*Hieronymus de Faventia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Parma and Reggio during 1518–1526 and of Mantua during 1531–1540.⁵⁴

Girolamo di Girolamo Fantoni da Vigevano (*Hieronymus de Vigevano*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained subdeacon in Bologna on 11 March 1486 and ordained priest there on 7 April 1489. He is accepted as *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna at the beginning of the academic year 1489–1490. In 1494 he is conventual lector in the convent of Sant'Andrea in Faenza. The general chapter of Ferrara 1498 appoints

⁵¹ Armano 1729, pp. 140–141; D'Amato 1945, pp. 90, 96; AGOP, XIV, liber GGG, vol. 2, fol. 380^v; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; Creytens 1962, p. 241; Vigna 1888, p. 74; D'Amato 1956, p. 259; D'Amato 1997, p. 316; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 144^v; Vigna 1886, pp. 30–31.

⁵² See chapter 3, section 3.

⁵³ AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 62^r.

⁵⁴ See chapter 2, section 5.

him master of studies in the Bolognese studium for 1499–1500. The appointment is confirmed by the chapter of the Congregation held in Bergamo in 1499 and he begins to exercise the office on 12 June 1499. The general chapter of Rome 1501 proposes him as substitute for Cornelio da Sambuco as bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1503–1505, but this provision has no effect for Cornelio regularly fills the post. The general chapter of Milan 1505 names him to the post for the biennium 1505–1507. He graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna and is incorporated in its theological faculty on 4 March 1510. Master General Cajetan assigns him regent master in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan on 5 August 1511, but he holds the post for only the year 1511–1512 because in mid-1512 Sant'Eustorgio is restored to the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The chapter of the Congregation held in Cremona in 1512 designates him regent master in the Bolognese studium for the triennium 1512–1515 and this is confirmed by the general chapter of Genoa 1513 for the biennium 1513–1515. He is inquisitor of Bologna during 1513–1517. In 1516 he is praised for his learning by Leandro Alberti. Master General Francesco Silvestri names him visitor of the convent of Novara in June 1527. He attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Piacenza in 1528 as a master of theology. He dies in the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara in 1532 at the age of seventy.⁵⁵

Girolamo da Lodi (*Hieronymus de Laude*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Brescia during 1518–1525.⁵⁶

Girolamo di Pietro Albertucci dei Borselli da Bologna (*Hieronymus de Bononia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is born in Bologna in 1432. He receives tonsure in Bologna on 23 December 1458, minor orders on 22 September 1459, subdiaconate on 29 March 1460 and diaconate on 20 December 1460. He does not seem to make an aca-

⁵⁵ Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 201, 208; Piana 1963, pp. 250, 256; D'Amato 1997, p. 94; MOPH, vol. 8, p. 431; Kaeppli 1935, p. 291; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 49, 119; Piana 1969, pp. 210–212, 226, 258; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 96; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, p. 610; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fols. 141^v–142^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 18^v; Tavuzzi 2003, p. 194; Alberti, *Descriptione*, fol. 395b.

⁵⁶ See chapter 5, section 6.

demic career. He serves as inquisitor of Bologna during 1493–1494. He is chiefly remembered for his several works on the history of Bologna.⁵⁷

Girolamo Rachia da Chieri (*Hieronymus de Rachiis de Cherio*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He enters the order in the convent of Chieri. The general chapter of Rome 1501 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the biennium 1501–1503 and he graduates master of theology soon after, probably from the University of Turin. The general chapter of Milan 1505 approves his graduation and the general chapter of Pavia 1505 appoints him regent master in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Turin for the triennium 1507–1510. In 1507 he serves as dean of the theological faculty of the University of Turin. During 1512 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Chieri and, along with Martino Giustiniani da Genova, is commissioned repeatedly by Master General Cajetan to examine friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr appointed to academic posts in Turin and Pavia. In 1513 he attends the general chapter of Genoa as a representative of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and is appointed by the chapter regent master in Turin for 1513–1515, during which time he is also prior of the convent there. During 1516–1519 he is provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr and as such attends the general chapter held in Rome in 1518. He serves a second term as dean of the theological faculty of the University of Turin in 1518 and a further term as prior of the convent of Turin in 1523. In 1525 the general chapter of Rome reappoints him regent master in Turin for the biennium 1526–1528 and he is dean of the theological faculty of the University of Turin for a third time in 1526. In 1530 the general chapter of Rome appoints him once again regent master in Turin, for the biennium 1531–1533. After the demotion of the Province of St. Peter Martyr in 1531 to the status of a vicariate he serves as its vicar in 1533. He is vicar of the Vicariate of St. Peter Martyr for a second term in 1541 and a third term in 1545. He probably dies in office as vicar while in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan. Despite all these administrative and academic commitments he holds the post of inquisitor of Turin from 1519 till his death. Cipriano Uberti (1586) claims that he was the first inquisitor in

⁵⁷ Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 5, 140, 122, 144–145; Redigonda 1960; Pasquali 1971; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, p. 405.

Piedmont to advert to the threat posed by Lutheranism and convinced Duke Charles II of Savoy to ban Luther's works from his dominions. He is the author of a commentary on the *Epistle to the Romans* directed against Bucer.⁵⁸

Graziadio Crotti da Cremona (*Gratiadeus de Crottis de Cremona*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona during 1481–1483 and inquisitor of Milan and Lodi during 1497–1510 and 1512–1515.⁵⁹

Lorenzo Butini da Alessandria (*Laurentius de Alexandria*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology when he assists as a scribe at the witch-trials held in Levone in 1474 by the jurist Francesco Chiabaudi on the behalf of the inquisitor of Asti, Michele Valenti. He is inquisitor of Alessandria and Tortona when he attends the chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr held in Savigliano in 1483. On 30 December 1488 he is reappointed inquisitor of Alessandria, Tortona and Acqui. In 1491 he attends the general chapter of Le Mans as a representative of the Province of St. Peter Martyr.⁶⁰

Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata (*Laurentius de Soleris de Sancta Aghata*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como during 1483–1505.⁶¹

Ludovico Ferrari da Savigliano (*Ludovicus de Ferrariis de Saviliano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The general chapter of Rome 1484 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences *pro gradu et forma magisterii* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Perugia for the academic year 1485–1486. After his graduation as master of theology he returns to the convent of Savigliano and serves as its prior till 2 April 1494. On 21 October 1502 he is appointed regent

⁵⁸ Kaeppli 1935, pp. 294, 306; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 46, 74, 93, 156, 212, 239, 240; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 272–274; Vallaro 1936, pp. 45, 65–67; Simoncelli 1988, p. 116; Ferrua 1995, pp. 22, 291, 327, 477–478, 517, 617–618, 633, 1006–1008, 1018, 1139.

⁵⁹ See chapter 2, section 2.

⁶⁰ Vayra 1970, pp. 32, 36; Hansen 1901, pp. 485–487; AGOP, XIV, liber FF, vol. 2, p. 81; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 242^r; MOPH, vol. 8, p. 393.

⁶¹ See chapter 5, section 3.

master in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan. He is appointed inquisitor of Savigliano on 1 November 1502 and holds the post till his death on 22 September 1504.⁶²

Ludovico Marini da Genova (*Ludovicus de Janua*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He enters the Dominican order on 5 June 1485 in the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa and is ordained priest in Bologna on 31 March 1498. The general chapter of Rome 1508 appoints him master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna for 1509–1510, but he does not fill the post till 1511–1512. In 1514 he is prior of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa, The general chapter of Rome 1518 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1520–1522. During 1522–1523 he is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna. In 1524 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Ferrara where, on 16 April, he is elected vicar general of the Congregation. He is confirmed by the vicar general of the order, Antonio Beccari, on 29 April and fills the office during 1524–1525. On 1 August 1524 he is appointed inquisitor of Mantua and remains such till 1526. The general chapter of Rome 1525 approves his lecturing on the Sentences as being *pro gradu et forma magisterii* and assigns him as substitute for Girolamo Fornari da Pavia as regent master in the Bolognese studium generale for the triennium 1525–1528 but he does not hold the office at that time. On 25 March 1525 he graduates master of theology from the University of Bologna, He is appointed regent master in Bologna for the triennium 1528–1531 but dies in Mantua in 1528 just before the beginning of the academic year.⁶³

Maffeo di Galvano da Parma (*Mapheus de Parma*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is inquisitor of Parma and Reggio during 1505–1507.⁶⁴

⁶² MOPH, vol. 8, p. 381; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 247^r; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fols. 260^v, 261^v; Turletti 1879, vol. 3, p. 468.

⁶³ Vigna 1888, pp. 75, 109; Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 231; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 90, 175; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; Creytens and D'Amato 1961, p. 292; Creytens 1962, pp. 259–260, 281–282; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 181; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 35^r; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 598; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 205, 209; Piana 1979, p. 259.

⁶⁴ See chapter 2, section 3.

Martino Giustiniani da Genova (*Martinus de Janua*)

At first a member of the Congregation of Lombardy, he is received in the Dominican order on 28 January 1485 in the convent of Savona but as a *filius* of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa. At some point he leaves the Congregation and becomes a member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. On 29 November 1493 he is already a master of theology and is appointed regent master in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Perugia. In 1505 the general chapter of Milan transfers him from the convent of Santa Maria di Castello to that of San Domenico in Genoa. The same general chapter appoints him regent master in the studium generale in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice for the triennium 1505–1508. During 1512 he is repeatedly commissioned, along with Girolamo Rachia, to examine friars of the Province of St. Peter Martyr who are to be appointed to academic posts in Pavia and Turin. By early 1518 he seems to be inquisitor of Milan, for he is indicated as such in the imprimatur conceded to a book published there on 18 May. In 1518 he attends the general chapter of Rome as a representative of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1528 he is appointed inquisitor of Genoa and remains such till he dies in Genoa in 1530.⁶⁵

Matteo dell'Olmo da Como, da Morbegno (*Matthaeus de Lulmo de Cumis*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. The general chapter of Avignon 1470 assigns him *studens formalis* in the studium generale of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and he is there in October 1471. It is not known where he graduates master of theology, but he has done so by the time that the general chapter of Rome 1481 appoints him regent master in the studium generale of the convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence for the biennium 1481–1483. He is appointed inquisitor of Milan by the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Paolo Moneglia, on 8 July 1487 and is confirmed such by Master General Torriani on 7 October 1487 when he is indicated as being in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan. On 12 November 1488 he is the recipient of a letter from the master general settling a series

⁶⁵ Vigna 1880, p. 60; AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fol. 133^v; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 48, 50, 156; MOPH, vol. 17, pp. 272–274; Hieronymus Lucensis, *In pomponacium de anima immortalitate*, fol. 2^r; Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

of disputes between him as inquisitor of Milan and the *studentes formales* in the studium in Sant'Eustorgio. He is reappointed inquisitor of Milan on 7 July 1493 by Pope Alexander VI with a brief in which he is styled *inquisitor in ducatu Mediolani*. He serves as provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr during 1496–1497. On 16 October 1497 he is named titular bishop of Laodicea and auxiliary bishop in Milan and Como. He dies in Milan in 1512 after being threatened with banishment by King Louis XII of France for refusing to adhere to the *conciliabulum* of Pisa-Milan.⁶⁶

Melchiorre Crivelli da Milano (*Melchor Cribellis de Mediolano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. Born in 1486 he probably enters the Dominican order in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan. On 14 August 1510 the prior of the convent of Sant'Eustorgio is instructed by the master general to pay him the annual sum of four ducats to cover the expenses of his studies for the following six years or till he graduates master of theology. The general chapter of Genoa 1513 appoints him master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for 1514–1515. The general chapter of Rome 1518 approves his graduation as master of theology and the general chapter of Rome 1530 appoints him regent master in Sant'Eustorgio for the triennium 1530–1533. There is a bull of Pope Leo X appointing him inquisitor of Milan on 24 August 1518, with the apposite dispensation for his being still only in his early thirties. But there is evidence that Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia is inquisitor of Milan during 1519–1520, and Muzio indicates Crivelli as inquisitor only from 1521 and after Beccaria. Be that as it may, he remains inquisitor of Milan till the appointment of Giovanni Ambrogio Barbavaro in 1554. He publishes, probably in 1538, the first index of prohibited books compiled in Italy. He is considerably active as inquisitor during the 1530s and 1540s, but this leads to jurisdictional conflicts from the beginning of the 1550s with the appointment of Angelo Arcimboldi as archbishop of Milan. In 1540 he is named titular bishop of Tagaste and auxiliary in the diocese of Vercelli. He becomes auxiliary bishop in Milan in 1544 and remains such till 1553 when he is dismissed by Arcim-

⁶⁶ MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 328, 363; Piana 1963, p. 113; Fumi 1910, pp. 27–28; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 234^v, 240^r; BOP, vol. 4, pp. 102–103; AGOP, IV, reg. 11, fol. 150^v; HC, vol. 2, p. 172; Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 127^r.

boldi. He is reappointed auxiliary in Milan in 1560 by the new archbishop, Carlo Borromeo, but dies on 7 October 1561 in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio.⁶⁷

Michele di Guglielmo di Olanda (*Michael de Hollandia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Bologna and syndic of the convent of San Domenico during 1456–1460. He serves twice as the prior of San Domenico, during 1462–1463 and 1469–1471. He is prior of the convent of Santa Corona in Vicenza during 1473–1475. He is again inquisitor of Bologna during 1474–1477.⁶⁸

Michele Madei da Asti (*Michael de Madeis de Asti*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Casale and Trino during 1488–1490 and of Asti during 1494–1500.⁶⁹

Michele Valenti da Torino (*Michael de Valentibus de Taurino*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1472–1475 he is already a master of theology, prior of the convent of San Domenico in Turin and inquisitor of Asti, Chieri and Turin when the jurist Francesco Chiabaudi conducts witch-trials on his behalf in Forno-Rivara (1472) and Levone (1474–1475). He is temporarily removed from his inquisitorial post with the appointment to it of Ugo Albini da Chieri in mid-1474, but he is restored to it *de mandatu apostolico* on 1 July 1475. On 21 December 1475 he is entrusted by the master general, along with the provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, Girolamo Visconti, and Ugo Albini, to adjudicate the case of Giovanni Domenico da Cremona, inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona, who was falsely accused, as it turns out, of some misdeed by his predecessor in that post, Paolo Folperti da Pavia.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ MOPH, vol. 17, p. 264; Kaeppli 1935, pp. 305, 309; MOPH, vol. 9, p. 240; BOP, vol. 4, pp. 373–374; Muzio, *Tabula chronologica*, fol. 137^v; Villa and Benedicenti 2002, p. 152; Borromeo 1985; Borromeo 1995.

⁶⁸ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; Piana 1963, pp. 113, 139, 283; D'Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 45, 90; Bortolan 1883, p. 365; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 37^v, 334^v; Zucchini 1937, pp. 81, 84, 89.

⁶⁹ See chapter 3, section 2.

⁷⁰ Vayra 1970; Hansen 1901, pp. 485–486; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 198^r, 206^r; Ferrua 1995, pp. 979, 1137.

Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza (*Modestus de Vincentia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Parma and Reggio in 1517 and of Como during 1520–1530.⁷¹

Niccolò Bonini da Reggio (*Nicolaus de Reghio*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. A *filius* of the convent of San Domenico in Reggio, he is master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Agostino in Padua and is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua in 1460. During 1460–1461 he is biblical bachelor in Sant'Agostino. He graduates master of theology from the University of Ferrara on 8 May 1465. Later in May 1465 he attends the chapter of the Province of St. Dominic held in Novara as a representative of the convents of that province situated in Lombardy (“pro natione Lombardiae”) and is assigned by the chapter to preach in Ravenna and to visit the convents of the March of Treviso. On 16 September 1475 he is assigned to the convent of Este and 15 July 1477 to that of Sant'Agostino in Padua. On 4 August 1477 he is appointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio and issued a licence *ubique praedicandi*. On 27 May 1490 he is elected dean of the faculty of theology of the University of Parma and thereafter he participates regularly in its academic activities. On 19 August 1490 he is replaced as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio by Giovanni da Treviso, but is restored to the post in early 1491. In 1492 he is again dean of the faculty of theology of the University of Parma and holds the post a third time in 1497. In mid-1498 he is in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice and on 27 August is temporarily replaced as inquisitor of Parma and Reggio by his inquisitorial vicar, Pietro da Reggio. He is reappointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio on 19 December 1498 and presumably remains such till the appointment of Maffeo da Parma in 1505.⁷²

Niccolò Constantini da Biella (*Nicolaus de Constantinis de Bugella*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como from at least 1460 till 1483.⁷³

⁷¹ See chapter 5, section 7.

⁷² Gargan 1971, pp. 111–112; Pardi 1900, p. 44; Creytens 1959, pp. 157, 162, 167; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 51^v, 336^v, 337^r; Piana 1963, pp. 329–330; 466, 468, 472–474, 476, 478; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fols. 30^v, 35^r, 36^v, 39^r.

⁷³ See chapter 5, section 2.

Paolo Asinari da Asti (*Paulus de Assinariis de Asti*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. On 28 March 1492, along with Domenico da Chieri and Gabriele da Saluzzo, he is denied all privileges conceded in the order to masters of theology for having graduated such without permission from the master general. In early 1501 he is in the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Asti, is indicated as being a master of theology and already as inquisitor of Asti. On 4 July 1501 he is appointed inquisitor of Asti.⁷⁴

Paolo Bottigella da Pavia (*Paulus Butigella de Pavia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He enters the Dominican order in 1494 in the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Ferrara. He is elected vicar general of the Congregation in its chapter held in Mantua in 1516 and serves as such till 1518. He is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna during 1520–1522. He serves a second term as vicar general of the Congregation during 1522–1524 after being elected to the post in the chapter held in Forlì. On 31 December 1525 he is appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena. On 23 February 1529, after the death of Master General Francesco Silvestri, he is appointed vicar general of the entire order by Pope Clement VII and appoints various friars as his inquisitorial vicars in Ferrara and Modena. On 15 January 1530 he is the recipient of a brief of Pope Clement VII encouraging the prosecution of heretics. He is elected Dominican master general in the general chapter of Rome 1530 and holds the office till he dies in Naples on 9 October 1531.⁷⁵

Paolo da Finale (*Paulus de Finario*)

Probably a member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1507 he is inquisitor, possibly of Vercelli and Ivrea. For he is reassured by Master General Bandello that his inquisitorial jurisdiction is as it has been till then, except for the district of Casale and other territories of the marquisate of Monferrato that have been entrusted to the newly established inquisition of that marquisate.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 239^v; Mangione 2005, p. 266; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 255^v.

⁷⁵ Creytens 1962, pp. 255–256, 263, 265, 284; Prelormo, *Monumenta*, p. 146; Gattico, *Descrizione*, p. 149; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 42^r; BOP, vol. 4, pp. 469, 473; AGOP, IV, reg. 21, fols. 33^v, 35^v; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 216, 218; Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 285–296; Taurisano 1916, p. 10.

⁷⁶ AGOP, IV, reg. 17, fol. 173^r.

Paolo Folperti da Pavia (*Paulus de Folpertis de Pavia*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology and active as inquisitor by 1455 when he condemns Margherita da Pennolo in San Nazzaro to be burned as a witch, In 1462 the general chapter of Siena appoints him regent master in the studium generale in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the biennium 1462–1464. Soon thereafter, and possibly even earlier, he is appointed inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona and is very active as inquisitor through the following decade. In November 1463 he conducts the trial of Beatrice del Ponzo in Casteggio whom he condemns to be burned and orders the confiscation of her properties. The judgment of confiscation is suspended by the duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, who refers to him as “frate Paulo de li Filimberti inquisitore de li gazari”, for it seems to him unjust to her relatives, After examining the trial records, however, the duke orders the judgment to be carried out. In March 1464 the duke implores him to go to Redona, where his services as inquisitor are insistently requested by the marquis of Godiasco, but he demurs; he writes to the duke claiming that his life is in danger and is only safe in Darzo where he is protected by a force of three hundred soldiers that he has assembled for the prosecution of heretics and boasts that he has conducted seventeen trials in three months. He is replaced as inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona by Giovanni Domenico da Cremona in late 1474. He then accuses his successor of some misdeed so that Giovanni Domenico is dismissed from the post in mid-1475. As his accusations turn out to be fabricated he is commanded by the master general on 21 December 1465 to present himself at the next chapter of the Province of St. Peter Martyr to be punished.⁷⁷

Paolo Moneglia da Genova (*Paulus de Monelia de Janua*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of the March of Genoa during 1494–1497.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 285; AGOP, XIV, liber O, vol. 1, p. 11; Fumi 1910, pp. 39, 1083–1008; Motta 1888, p. 127; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 206^v, 207^r.

⁷⁸ See chapter 4, section 6.

Pietro di Armelino Cattanei da Provaglio, da Brescia (*Petrus de Provalio, de Brixia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is present at some magisterial graduations in Bologna in 1507 and 1510. He is prior of the convent of Santa Sabina in Rome in 1525 and is appointed inquisitor of Brescia on 31 December 1525. He is in Orvieto on 20 January 1528 when he is received by Pope Clement VII along with other friars of the Congregation. He attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Piacenza in 1528 as the prior of the convent of Santa Sabina. On 12 July 1528 he is the recipient, along with the bishop of Brescia, of a brief of Clement VII directed against the proliferation of Lutheranism.⁷⁹

Pietro da Cairate (*Petrus de Cayrate*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is inquisitor of Milan and Lodi by late 1474 but is replaced by Francesco della Riva in mid-1477. In 1474 he condemns to be burned a hermit, Rolando, accused of necromancy and sacrificing a child to the devil. The general chapter of Milan 1481 appoints him regent master in the studium generale in the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan for the academic year 1481–1482.⁸⁰

Pietro Sereni da Savigliano (*Petrus de Serenis de Saviliano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is born in 1456 and enters the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Savigliano in 1471. The general chapter of Rome 1481 appoints him master of studies in the studium in the convent of San Tommaso in Pavia for the academic year 1483–1484. He is incorporated as biblical bachelor in the University of Turin on 1 March 1485 and is licensed to proceed to the master's degree on 10 June 1487. He serves four terms as prior of the convent of Savigliano: 1495, 1499, 1502, 1504. He is inquisitor of Savigliano from 17 January 1505 till 2 July 1524 when he dies of the plague.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Piana 1963, pp. 250, 256; Rodocanachi 1898, p. 16; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 135^v; Tavuzzi 2003, p. 197; BOP, vol. 4, pp. 464–465.

⁸⁰ AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 191^v; Villa and Benedicenti 2002, p. 126; MOPH, vol. 8, p. 366.

⁸¹ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 366; Vallaro 1936, p. 48; AGOP, IV, reg. 15, fol. 262^v; Turletti 1879, vol. 2, p. 302, vol. 3, pp. 467–470.

Sebastiano di Angelo Pastorelli da Taggia (*Sebastianus de Tabia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is ordained deacon in Bologna on 20 September 1466 and is ordained priest there on 17 March 1470. He is prior of the convent of Taggia in 1484–1486, 1486–1488 and 1507–1509. He is appointed inquisitor of Casale, Alba, Acqui and the entire marquisate of Monferrato on 1 May 1510.⁸²

Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio (*Sylvester de Prierio*, ‘*Prierias*’)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is inquisitor of Brescia and Crema during 1508–1511 and of Milan, Lodi and Piacenza during 1512–1513.⁸³

Simone di Niccolò da Novara (*Simon de Novaria*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. The general chapter of Montepulciano 1456 appoints him master of studies in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna for the academic year 1456–1457 and biblical bachelor there for 1458–1459. The general chapter of Nejmegen 1459 appoints him bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for the biennium 1460–1462. It is not known where he graduates master of theology, but he probably does so from the University of Bologna, and has probably done so by the time he serves as regent master in the Bolognese studium during 1466–1467. In 1468 he is appointed inquisitor of Bologna and holds the post till 6 June 1474. In 1468, as inquisitor, he condemns a Servite friar, Giovanni Faelli, for the heretical practices of invoking demons and offering them sacrifices. On 17 March 1471 he is the recipient of a bull, *Intelleximus*, of Pope Paul II that he has solicited and that encourages him to apprehend and punish for heresy a certain Guizardo da Salussola and assures him the aid of the vicar general of the bishop of Bologna in doing so. After the end of his term as inquisitor he seems to remain in Bologna and is recorded as being there in 1478.⁸⁴

⁸² Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 155, 166; Calvinì 1982, pp. 499–500; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 262.

⁸³ See Tavuzzi 1997.

⁸⁴ MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 276, 277; Piana 1963, pp. 139, 199; D’Amato 1988, vol. 1, pp. 342–343, 346, 404; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 37^v; Borselli, *Cronica*, p. 100; BOP, vol. 7, p. 100; *Chart. Stud. Bon.*, vol. 1, p. 373.

Stefano Bandini da Alba (*Stephanus Bauduinus de Alba*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. In 1483 he attends the provincial chapter held in Savigliano as master of theology and inquisitor of Asti. He is dismissed as inquisitor of Asti on 9 January 1488. He is appointed prior of the convent of Saluzzo on 25 October 1488. He is reappointed inquisitor of Asti and Chieri on 30 December 1488. He is replaced as inquisitor of Asti and Chieri by Michele Madei da Asti by 5 April 1494 but is allowed to conclude the inquisitorial trials that he had initiated during his term of office. He is released from the post of prior of the convent of San Domenico in Genoa on 11 November 1512.⁸⁵

Stefano di Nestore Foscarari da Bologna (*Stephanus Foscherarius de Bononia*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is a scion of a patrician Bolognese family and uncle of Egidio Foscarari (1512–1564, master of the sacred palace 1547–1550, bishop of Modena from 1550). He enters the Dominican order in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna on 2 August 1491. He receives tonsure and minor orders on 22 December 1492, subdiaconate on 22 February 1494, diaconate on 27 February 1496 and is ordained priest on 6 March 1501. In 1501 he is the syndic of the Bolognese convent. He is prior of the convent of Sant' Andrea in Faenza in 1506–1510, of that of San Domenico in Bologna in 1515–1517, of that of San Domenico di Castello in Venice in 1517–1519 and of that of Santa Maria degli Angeli in 1523–1525. He serves a second term as prior in Bologna in 1525–1526. He is appointed inquisitor of Bologna on 21 May 1526 and remains such till mid-1543. He is prior of the convent of Santa Corona in Vicenza in 1526–1537. In 1528 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Piacenza as prior of the convent of Sant'Anastasia in Verona. He serves a third term as prior in Bologna in 1528–1529. He is vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy in 1529–1531 and presides the chapters of the Congregation held in Rimini in 1530 and in Faenza in 1531. He serves a fourth term as prior in Bologna in 1531–1532. In 1532 he attends the general chapter held in Rome as a representative of the Province of Both Lombardies. He is prior of the convent of Mantua in 1533–1535. He serves a fifth term as prior in Bologna, but as this

⁸⁵ AGOP, XIV, liber FFF, vol. 2, p. 81; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fols. 235^v, 238^v; Mangione 2005, pp. 327–328; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 247^r; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 293.

causes some controversy it occasions the intervention of Pope Paul III. He is prior in Bologna for a sixth term in 1539–1541 and a seventh term in 1543–1533. He serves another term as prior in Venice in 1545–1546. He is provincial of the Province of Both Lombardies in 1546–1547 and attends the general chapter of Rome 1546. He dies in Genoa on 4 November 1547. Despite his long tenure as Bolognese inquisitor (1526–1543) traces of his inquisitorial activities are scarce.⁸⁶

Tommaso da Alessandria (*Thomas de Alexandria*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is assigned *studens formalis* in the studium generale in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1501. He is appointed inquisitor of Pavia on 27 May 1527.⁸⁷

Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara (*Thomas a Leutis de Ferraria*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Padua on 4 May 1447 and graduates master of theology there soon after. As his graduation had not been officially approved by the order's authorities he is assigned to lecture on the Sentences in the studium generale of the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara before he is conceded the status and privileges of a master of theology. He is first appointed inquisitor of Ferrara, Modena and Reggio in 1462. He attends the general chapter of Novara 1465 as a representative of the Province of St. Dominic. He is provincial of the Province of St. Dominic during 1466–1474 and as such attends the general chapters of Rome 1468 and Avignon 1470. On 6 June 1474 Master General Mansueti confirms him in the post of inquisitor and renews the concessions that had been made to him by his predecessor, Martial Auribelli. Some of his inquisitorial activities are recorded in the copy of *De officio inquisitionis* that belonged to the Ferrarese inquisition (now in the Vatican Library) and the Ferrarese chronicler Bernardino Zambotti informs us that he condemned for magical practices a certain Vincenzo di Ambrosio da Lendinara on 24 March 1476. He is dismissed as inquisitor by Pope Sixtus IV on 18 June 1481. He is the author

⁸⁶ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, pp. 140, 146; Piana and Cenci 1968, pp. 216, 219, 226, 237; *Lib. cons. conv. Bon.*, fols. 30^r, 35^v, 36^r, 38^v, 39^r, 41^v, 42^r, 45^v, 46^{r-v}, 48^v, 49^{r-v}, 50^r; D'Amato 1997, p. 316; Armano 1729, p. 148; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 150; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 42^r; Bortolan 1889, p. 365; Tavuzzi 2003, p. 199; Creytens 1962, pp. 262–264; MOPH, vol. 9, pp. 245, 302; AGOP, XIV, liber D, p. 591; BOP, vol. 4, pp. 550–551; Battistella 1905, pp. 198–199; Dall'Olio 1999, pp. 60, 104.

⁸⁷ Kappeli 1935, p. 292; AGOP, IV, reg. 20, fol. 139^r.

of *Trattato del modo di ben governare* composed during 1452–1462 and dedicated to Borso d'Este, duke of Modena and marquis of Ferrara; a collection of Lenten sermons, *Liber petitionum animae*, written by 1466 and published in Cologne in 1474; a *Declaratio* composed around 1469 and dedicated to Prisciano dei Prisciani, a councillor of Borso d'Este.⁸⁸

Tommaso da Vigevano (*Thomas de Vigevano*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Como in 1490 as the *socius* of the prior of the convent of Sant'Anastasia in Verona. He is appointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio on 1 August 1507.⁸⁹

Ugo Albini da Chieri (*Hugo de Albinis de Cherio*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is already a master of theology in 1470 when the general chapter held in Avignon appoints him vicar of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is appointed inquisitor of Asti on 3 June 1474 *de mandatu summi pontificis*. He is confirmed provincial of the Province of St. Peter Martyr on 7 December 1481 and holds the post till 31 March 1483.⁹⁰

Vincenzo Bandello di Castelnuovo (*Vincentius Bandellus de Castronovo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy. He is born in 1435 in Castelnuovo Scrivia, near Tortona, and enters the Dominican order in the convent of Santa Sabina in Rome in 1458 but completes his novitiate in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and becomes a *filius* of that convent. He is ordained priest in Bologna on 8 June 1465. In 1465 the general chapter of Novara assigns him *studens formalis* in the Bolognese studium generale and he matriculates there as such on 12 June. In 1470 he attends the chapter of the Congregation held in Vicenza as the *socius* of the prior of the convent of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa. The general chapter of Avignon 1470 appoints him master of studies in Bologna for the academic year 1470–1471. In 1475 he is in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan and publishes the first of several treatises against the the thesis of the Immaculate Conception. In 1478

⁸⁸ Kappeli 1950; Gargan 1971, pp. 88, 91; MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 298, 300, 320; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 37^v; Dondaine 1947, pp. 169–170; Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 28; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 33^r.

⁸⁹ D'Amato 1956, p. 261; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 65.

⁹⁰ MOPH, vol. 8, p. 327; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 37^r, 182^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fols. 187^v, 193^r.

the general chapter of Perugia appoints him for a second year as bachelor of the Sentences in Bologna for 1478–1479. During 1481–1483 he is prior of the convent of San Marco in Florence where he composes a tract against Marsilio Ficino’s thesis of the superiority of the will over the intellect. In May 1484 he attends the general chapter held in Rome where, after a disputation against the thesis of the Immaculate Conception, he is created master of theology by Pope Innocent VIII. He is regent master in the Bolognese studium generale during 1484–1489 and is incorporated in the theological faculty of the University of Bologna in 1484. He is prior of the convent of San Domenico in Bologna in 1488–1489 and serves as vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy in 1489–1491. On 24 August 1490 he is appointed inquisitor of Bologna and holds the post till 1493. He serves a second term as vicar general of the Congregation of Lombardy in 1493–1495. He is prior of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan in 1495–1497 and 1499–1500. On 29 November 1500 Pope Alexander VI appoints him vicar general of the entire order and he is elected master general at the general chapter of Rome 1501. He serves as master general till his death in Altomonte in Calabria on 27 August 1506. The precise nature of his kinship with his “nephew” the famous novelist Matteo Bandello is not clear.⁹¹

Vincenzo da Codogno (*Vincentius de Cothoneo*)

Member of the Congregation of Lombardy, He is inquisitor of the marquisate of Saluzzo in 1515.⁹²

Vincenzo Mentini da Ferrara (*Vincentius de Mentinis de Ferraria*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is in the convent of San Domenico in Ferrara by 1461 and is assigned definitively to it in May 1465. He graduates master of theology from the University of Ferrara on 15 April 1467 and his graduation is approved by the general chapter of Rome 1474. He is a member of the *collegium doctorum* of the theological faculty of the University of Ferrara by 1476 and teaches

⁹¹ Prelormo, *Monumenta*, pp. 73, 146; Piana and Cenci 1968, p. 153; MOPH, vol. 8, pp. 300, 328, 345, 382; Piana 1963, pp. 113, 172, 268; D’Amato 1945, p. 95; Piana 1954, p. 451; Kristeller 1967, pp. 195–278; Kristeller 1965, pp. 467–494 (also in Kristeller 1993, pp. 147–171); Creytens 1962, pp. 242–245; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 62^r; Gattico, *Descrizione*, pp. 142–144; Santa Maria 1922, p. 40; BOP, vol. 4, p. 164; Mortier 1903–1920, vol. 5, pp. 66–125. On Bandello’s tense relationship with Savonarola see Tavuzzi 1999.

⁹² Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, f. 149^r.

theology in that university's faculty of arts in 1474–1476. In 1476 he is prior of the Ferrarese convent. He is appointed inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena on 18 October 1484 but is replaced in March 1485.⁹³

Vincenzo Pessoti da Parma (*Vincentius de Pessotis de Parma*)

Member of the Province of St. Dominic. He is first appointed inquisitor of Parma and Reggio by Master General Martial Auribelli on 11 April 1468. He graduates master of theology from the University of Parma sometime before 1470 and is the dean of its faculty of theology in 1473. He is reappointed to the post of inquisitor of Parma and Reggio by Master General Mansueti on 12 November 1474 and is released from it on 4 July 1477.⁹⁴

Vito di Antonio Beggiami da Savigliano (*Vitus de Beianis de Saviliano*)

Member of the Province of St. Peter Martyr. He is born in 1439 and enters the Dominican order in 1455 in the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Asti. He is master of theology by 21 November 1476 when at the request of the friars of the Province of the Holy Land and the bishops of Nicosia and Famagusta he is appointed by Master General Mansueti vicar provincial of that province. He is released from the post on 25 May 1477, with the appointment of Girolamo Ericino as provincial, and returns to Asti. On the occasion of the visitation of the Province of St. Peter Martyr, conducted on the master general's behalf by Tommaso Nanni da Viterbo in late 1481, the council of the commune of Savigliano petitions on 21 October 1481 for his return to Savigliano and affiliation to the convent of San Domenico. This takes place by 14 March 1482 when, along with the inquisitor of Savigliano, Aimone Taparelli, he is entreated by the commune of Savigliano to proceed against those suspected of heresy in Savigliano and in Mandamento. He is subsequently elected prior of the convent of Savigliano, but this seems to arouse some opposition within the conventual community, for the master general has to intervene and affirm the validity of both his master's degree and his status as prior on 27 December 1489. He serves a second term as conventual prior in 1491–1493. He is first appointed inquisitor of Savigliano after the

⁹³ Pardi 1900, pp. 39, 46; Creytens 1959, p. 196; D'Amato 1947, p. 229; Pardi 1903, pp. 143, 198; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fol. 176^r; MOPH, vol. 21, p. 41.

⁹⁴ Pezzana 1837–1859, vol. 3, p. 206; AGOP, IV, reg. 3, fols. 194^r, 318^r, 337^r; Piana 1963, pp. 328, 332, 425, 439.

death of Aimone Taparelli in mid-August 1495. He conducts several witch-trials in Rifreddo and Gambasca, near Saluzzo in late 1495 and in Verzuolo in 1497. He serves a third term as prior in Savigliano in 1497–1499 and is reappointed inquisitor there on 10 April 1499. At the beginning of 1500 his inquisitorial cell, stable and jails are burgled and dishevelled. Since the inquest ordered by the master general fails to discover the culprits, the incident may indicate either continuing tensions within the conventual community or disaffection on the part of his inquisitorial targets. Whatever the case, he resigns as inquisitor on 25 May 1500 and is finally released from the post on 1 November 1502. He dies on 14 June 1508 with a reputation for sanctity and is thereafter popularly designated ‘blessed’. On 23 December 1508 the master general orders the vicar of the Province of St. Peter Martyr to ensure that his possessions are distributed justly.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Turletti 1879, vol. 3, pp. 250–260; Longo 1989, p. 210; AGOP, IV, reg. 6, fol. 192^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 9, fol. 247^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 10, fol. 246bis-v; Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004; Gabotto 1897–1898, pp. 28–29; AGOP, IV, reg. 12, fol. 145^v; AGOP, IV, reg. 13, fols. 141^r, 144^v; MOPH, vol. 17, p. 257.

APPENDIX 2

CALENDAR OF KNOWN TRIALS
FOR WITCHCRAFT CONDUCTED BY DOMINICAN
INQUISITORS IN NORTHERN ITALY, 1450–1527

- 1451 Bologna, condemnation of a priest, Niccolò da Verona, for invoking demons. Inquisitor: Corrado di Germania, inquisitor of Bologna.¹
- 1455 San Nazario, trial of Margherita da Pennolo who is condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Paolo Folperti da Pavia, inquisitor of Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona.²
- 1457 Bellano, north of Milan, several trials. Inquisitor: Bartolomeo da Omate, inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como.³
- 1450s Mendrisio, north of Como, several trials. Inquisitor: Bartolomeo da Omate.⁴
- 1460–1482 Three hundred witches condemned to be burned in inquisitorial district of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como. Inquisitor: Niccolò Constantini da Biella, inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como.⁵
- 1463 Casteggio, south of Pavia, trial of Beatrice del Ponzo who is condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Paolo Folperti da Pavia.⁶
- 1463 Como, several trials ending in burnings and banishments. Inquisitor: Niccolò Constantini da Biella.⁷
- 1464 Darzo, north of Brescia, seventeen trials. Inquisitor: Paolo Folperti da Pavia.⁸
- 1465 Bologna, trial and condemnation of the Servite friar Giovanni Faelli da Verona for necromancy. Inquisitor: Girolamo Parlasca da Como, inquisitor of Bologna.⁹
- 1468 Bologna, trial and final condemnation of the Servite friar Giovanni Faelli da Verona for invoking demons and running a

¹ D'Amato 1988, vol. I, p. 402.

² Fumi 1910, p. 108.

³ Fumi 1910, p. 103–104.

⁴ Bernardo da Como, *Tractatus de strigiis*, p. 144.

⁵ Cipriano Uberti, *Tavola*, in Simoncelli 1988, p. 117.

⁶ Fumi 1910, p. 103.

⁷ Fumi 1910, p. 96; Motta 1888, p. 126.

⁸ Fumi 1910, p. 104.

⁹ Piana 1963, p. 282–283.

- brothel staffed by demons *succubi*. Inquisitor: Simone da Novara, inquisitor of Bologna.¹⁰
- 1469 Near Biella, trial of witch Maddalena. Inquisitor: Giovanni Domenico da Cremona, vicar of Niccolò Constantini.¹¹
- 1470 Salussola, near Biella, trial of Giovanna Monduro who is condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Giovanni Domenico da Cremona and Niccolò Constantini da Biella.¹²
- 1472 Forno-Rivara, north of Turin, trial of three witches who are condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Francesco Chiabaudi on behalf of Michele Valenti da Torino.¹³
- 1474 Milan, trial of hermit Rolando who is condemned to be burned for diabolism and the killing of a child. Inquisitor: Pietro da Cairate, inquisitor of Milan and Lodi.¹⁴
- 1474 Levone, north of Turin, trial of four witches, all condemned to be burned, but two escape. Inquisitor: Francesco Chiabaudi on behalf of Michele Valenti da Torino.¹⁵
- 1475 Rivara, north of Turin, trial of five witches, but their fate is unknown since the trial is transferred to the tribunal of the bishop of Turin. Inquisitor: Francesco Chiabaudi on behalf of Michele Valenti da Torino.¹⁶
- 1476 Ferrara, trial and condemnation for magical practices of Vincenzo di Ambrosio da Lendinara. Inquisitor: Tommaso dai Liuti da Ferrara, inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena.¹⁷
- 1477 Cuneo, trial and execution of four witches. Inquisitor: Biagio Berra da Mondovì, inquisitor of Mondovì.¹⁸
- 1479 Near Pavia, trial and execution of Margherita da Belcredo. Inquisitor: Giovanni Domenico da Cremona on behalf of the inquisitor of Pavia.¹⁹
- 1480 Calcinato, near Brescia, trial of Maria la Medica who is condemned to life imprisonment. Inquisitor: Antonio Pezzotelli da Brescia, inquisitor of Brescia and Bergamo.²⁰
- 1482 Villafranca, south of Turin, several trials. Inquisitor: Antonio Boscato da Savigliano, vicar of Aimone Taparelli, inquisitor of Savigliano.²¹

¹⁰ Borselli, *Cronica*, p. 100.

¹¹ Crovella 1985, p. 41.

¹² Crovella 1985, pp. 39–54.

¹³ Vayra 1970, pp. 78–96; Hansen 1901, pp. 485–486.

¹⁴ Villa and Benedicenti 2002, p. 126.

¹⁵ Vayra 1970, pp. 23–24, 35, 38–40, 46–61; Hansen 1901, pp. 485–486.

¹⁶ Vayra 1970, pp. 23–24, 90–145.

¹⁷ Zambotti, *Diario*, p. 28.

¹⁸ Gabotto 1888, pp. 45–46.

¹⁹ Fumi 1910, p. 109.

²⁰ Guerrini 1922, vol. 1, pp. 183–185.

²¹ Turletti 1879, vol. 2, p. 214.

- 1483 Bormio in Valtellina, several trials. Inquisitor: Agostino and a companion from the convent of Monza.²²
- 1485 Bormio in Valtellina, several trials leading to the burning of forty-one witches. Inquisitor: Lorenzo Soleri da Sant'Agata, inquisitor of Vercelli, Ivrea, Novara and Como.²³
- 1485 Peveragno, trial and condemnation of eight women and one man for witchcraft. Inquisitor: Biagio Berra da Mondovì, inquisitor of Mondovì.²⁴
- 1485–1487 Edolo in Valcamonica, several trials. Inquisitor: Antonio Pezzotelli.²⁵
- 1487 Lezzeno, near Como, trial and burning of three witches. Inquisitor: Girolamo Rusconi, vicar of Lorenzo Soleri.²⁶
- 1489 Peveragno, trial and condemnation of seventeen women for witchcraft. Inquisitor: Biagio Berra da Mondovì.²⁷
- 1493–1494 Carignano, trial and execution of four witches. Inquisitor: Antonio Ghislandi da Torino, inquisitor of Turin.²⁸
- 1494–1495 Rifreddo and Gambasca, near Saluzzo, several trials with at least three witches condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Vito Beggiami da Savigliano, inquisitor of Savigliano.²⁹
- 1497 Verzuolo, near Saluzzo, several trials. Inquisitor: probably Vito Beggiami.³⁰
- 1499 Brescia, trial and burning of the priests Martino, Ermanno and Donato who had become witches. Inquisitor: a vicar of the inquisitor of Brescia.³¹
- 1499 Bologna, trial of Gentile Cimitri who is condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Giovanni Cagnazzo da Taggia, inquisitor of Bologna.³²
- 1502–1503 Piacenza, trial and burning of several witches: Inquisitor: Giorgio Cacatossici da Casale, inquisitor of Piacenza and Cremona.³³
- 1505 Cavriana, between Mantua and Brescia, several trials. Inquisitor: a vicar of Domenico Pirri da Gargnano, inquisitor of Mantua.³⁴

²² Giorgetta 1983, p. 158.

²³ *Malleus maleficarum*: I, q. XI, 64A; II, q. 1, c. 2, 96C, c. 4, 108C; III, q. XV, 215C. See Mackay 2006: vol. 1, pp. 330–331, 395, 417–418; vol. 2, pp. 163, 234–235, 260, 501.

²⁴ Comino 2002, pp. 50, 53–54.

²⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 32–33.

²⁶ Fiumi 1910, pp. 97–98.

²⁷ Comino 2002, pp. 52, 54.

²⁸ Dainotti 1932; Castagno 2004.

²⁹ Merlo, Comba and Nicolini 2004.

³⁰ Gabotto 1897–1898, pp. 28–29.

³¹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 34–37.

³² Ghirardacci, *Historia di Bologna*, pp. 294–295; Fileno della Tuata, *Cronaca*, vol. 1, fol. 337^v; Floriano degli Ubaldini, *Cronaca*, fol. 713^v; Prierias, *De strigimagarum daemonumque mirandis*, p. 202.

³³ Prierias, *Summa silvestrina*, vol. 1, p. 490.

³⁴ Davari 1879, pp. 554, 561–562.

- 1505–1513 Ponte, near Sondrio in Valtellina, several trials. Inquisitor: Bernardo Retegno da Como, inquisitor of Como.³⁵
- 1507 Mantua, trial and burning of at least one witch. Inquisitor: Domenico Pirri.³⁶
- 1508 Mantua, trial of one witch, condemned to light penances. Inquisitor: Domenico Pirri.³⁷
- 1508 Parma, trial of one witch, condemned to burning but the sentence is commuted to light penances. Inquisitor: Antonio da Casale, inquisitor of Parma and Reggio.³⁸
- 1510 Parma, trial of witch Luccia Cacciarda, condemned to be burned alive. Inquisitor: Antonio da Casale.³⁹
- 1510–1512 Pisogne and Edolo in Valcamonica, trials and executions of sixty witches. Inquisitor: Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio, inquisitor of Brescia and Crema.⁴⁰
- 1512–1513 Peveragno, trial and condemnation of nine women for witchcraft. Inquisitor: Biagio Berra da Mondovì.⁴¹
- 1513–1515 Como, thirty-three executions of heretics, presumably witches. Inquisitor: Antonio da Casale, inquisitor of Como.⁴²
- 1515 Milan, one woman burned in front of Sant'Eustorgio, perhaps as a witch. Inquisitor: perhaps Graziadio Crotti da Milan, inquisitor of Milan and Lodi.⁴³
- 1516–1517 Valcamonica, several trials leading to a hundred burnings. The inquisitor is unknown, but Andrea Alciati identifies him as a Dominican.⁴⁴
- 1517–1519 Modena, some thirty trials, including that of Chiara Signorini for witchcraft. Inquisitors: Lazzaro da San Colombano, Antonio da Brescia, Bartolomeo Spina da Pisa, Tommaso da Vicenza, all vicars of Antonio Beccari da Ferrara, inquisitor of Ferrara and Modena.⁴⁵
- 1518–1521 Valcamonica, several trials leading to well over seventy burnings. Inquisitor: Lorenzo Maggi da Brescia and six diocesan priests, vicars of Girolamo da Lodi, inquisitor of Brescia.⁴⁶

³⁵ Bernardus de Como, *Tractatus de strigiis*, p. 143.

³⁶ Davari 1879, pp. 554, 562.

³⁷ Davari 1879, p. 562; Zarri 1990, p. 124 n. 220.

³⁸ Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 151.

³⁹ Smagliati, *Cronaca*, p. 151.

⁴⁰ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, col. 607; Cochetti 1858, p. 90; Hansen 1901, p. 510.

⁴¹ Comino 2002, pp. 52, 55.

⁴² Alberti, *De viris illustribus*, fol. 149^r.

⁴³ *Registro delle Sentenze*, Milan, Bib. Ambrosiana. Ms. S.Q. + I.6, vol. 1, pp. 60–61; Paccagnini 1989, p. 67.

⁴⁴ Hansen 1901, pp. 310–312.

⁴⁵ Ginzburg 1966; Bertolotti 1979; Duni 1999.

⁴⁶ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 537–538, 541, 545–549, 574–575, 584, 602–609, 632–650, vol. 26, col. 58, 411–412, vol. 30, col. 252, vol. 31, col. 353.

- 1518 Brescia, trial of Benvenuta Pincinello who is condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Lorenzo Maggi, vicar of Girolamo da Lodi.⁴⁷
- 1518 Clusone, north-east of Bergamo, trial of at least five witches. Inquisitor: Giovan Battista da Viquerio, inquisitorial vicar.⁴⁸
- 1518–1520 Bergamo, several trials. Inquisitor: ... da Casale.⁴⁹
- 1519 Milan, one woman burned in front of Sant'Eustorgio, perhaps as a witch. Inquisitor: perhaps Gioacchino Beccaria da Pavia, inquisitor of Pavia and Milan.⁵⁰
- 1519 Suno, north of Novara, five witches condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Domenico Visconti, inquisitor of Novara.⁵¹
- 1519 Suno, north of Novara, five witches condemned to be burned and one admonished not to relapse. Inquisitor: Bernardino Crivelli, vicar of Domenico Visconti.⁵²
- 1519 Cassano d'Adda, near Cremona, several trials. Inquisitor Gioacchino Beccaria.⁵³
- 1519 Bormio in Valtellina, several trials. Inquisitor: inquisitorial vicar Agostino da Pavia.⁵⁴
- 1520 Monza, trial and execution of male witch Giacomo da Seregno. Inquisitor: unknown, but probably a vicar of Gioacchino Beccaria.⁵⁵
- 1520 Venegono Superiore, near Varese, several trials leading to the burning of five women and an exhumed cadaver as well as several abjurations. Inquisitor: Battista da Pavia and Michele da Aragona, vicars of Gioacchino Beccaria.⁵⁶
- 1520s Inquisitorial district of Como, each year trials of a thousand witches of whom one hundred are condemned to be burned. Inquisitor: Modesto Scrofa da Vicenza, inquisitor of Como, with the help of some eight vicars.⁵⁷
- 1522–1525 Mirandola, several trials leading to eleven burnings. Inquisitor: Girolamo Armellini da Faenza, inquisitor of Parma and Reggio, with the assistance of inquisitorial vicar Luca Bettini da Firenze.⁵⁸
- 1523 Bologna, apprehension of suspects escaped from Mirandola. Inquisitor: Francesco Silvestri da Ferrara, inquisitor of Bologna.⁵⁹

⁴⁷ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 25, cols. 632–650.

⁴⁸ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 324–325.

⁴⁹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. 26, cols. 411–412; Del Col 1988, p. 258.

⁵⁰ See above, note. 40.

⁵¹ Osimo 1985, pp. 61, 68–70; Paccagnini 1989, p. 71.

⁵² Paccagnini 1989, pp. 71–72.

⁵³ Bazzi 1890.

⁵⁴ Scheda 21, 'La stregoneria nel contado di Bormio', <http://plain.unipv.it>.

⁵⁵ Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1999, p. 84.

⁵⁶ Marcaccioli Castiglioni 1999.

⁵⁷ Bartolomaeus Spina, *Quaestio de strigibus*, p. 37.

⁵⁸ Biondi 1977; Biondi 1984; Biondi 1989.

⁵⁹ Hansen 1901, p. 513.

- 1523 Sondrio in Valtellina, at least thirty-four trials with at least seven executions. Inquisitor: Modesto Scrofa.⁶⁰
- 1523 Sondrio in Valtellina, trial of a male witch consigned to the secular arm. Inquisitor: Bernardo da Como, a vicar of Modesto Scrofa.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Odorici 1861; Spinetti 1903, pp. 18–19.

⁶¹ Spinetti 1903, p. 52.

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Abbreviations

- AAS *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Rome 1909–.
AFH *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, Grottaferrata 1908–.
AFP *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, Rome 1930–.
AGOP Archivio Generale dell'Ordine dei Predicatori, Santa Sabina, Rome.
ASL *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Milan 1874–.
ASOP *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Rome 1893–.
ASV Archivio Segreto Vaticano.
BAV Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.
BF *Bullarium Franciscanum*, new series, Grottaferrata 1929–.
BOP *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 4 vols., Rome 1729–1740.
BR *Bullarium Romanum*, 25 vols., Turin 1857–1872.
CF *Collectanea Franciscana*, Rome 1932–.
DBI *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Rome 1960–.
DHGE *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclesiastiques*, Paris 1912–.
HC *Hierarchia Catholica*, Munich and Padua, 1913–.
MD *Memorie Domenicane*, Pistoia 1884–.
MOPH *Monumenta Ordinis Praedicatorum Historica*, Rome 1896–.
RIS *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, Città di Castello and Bologna, 1900–.
SOPMA *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, 4 vols. Rome 1970–1990.

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IV, reg. 6: *Registrum litterarum et actorum fr. Salvi Cassetta, mag. gen. pro annis 1480–1483*.

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