

**A HISTORY
OF FRANCISCAN
EDUCATION
(c. 1210-1517)**

Bert Roest

BRILL

A HISTORY OF
FRANCISCAN EDUCATION
(c. 1210-1517)

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND RENAISSANCE

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BY

BERT ROEST



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PREFACE

This work intends to be a concise yet encompassing handbook on the history of education in the first order of Friars Minor during the medieval period (until 1517). It is a concise work in that it does not contain lengthy digressions on sub-topics and, when possible, refers the reader in the footnotes to more detailed studies. The choice to be concise was a deliberate one, motivated both by my own ideas concerning the ideal length of an introductory scholarly work, and by the marketing policies of the publisher. Concise as it may be, this work is meant to be encompassing as well. It aspires to depict the emergence and the development of the schools in the various order provinces throughout the later medieval period. In addition, this work deals with main characteristics of the education provided in these schools, and the contexts in which these schools were able to flourish.

In the first chapter, the school-organisation itself will be addressed, sketching the emergence of schools and *studia* on the conventual, custodial, provincial, and supra-provincial level, as well as the relationship between Franciscan *studia generalia* and the universities. Specific attention is paid to the distribution of schools in the various provinces, and to the careers of students and lectors on different levels.

In chapter two, the actual curricular activities are touched upon, focussing on the length of the scholarly year and the books or texts used by students and teachers for the various disciplines. This chapter also contains some tentative remarks concerning the study of (canon) law, medicine and languages in the Franciscan order; topics that definitely require further study.

The third chapter follows with an analysis of the educational situation in the Observant movement from the late fourteenth century onwards. The Observants had a different, if changing, attitude towards learning than the 'Conventual' wing of the order. Attention is paid to the educational 'Werdegang' of the Observants, and also to the educational ideology presented by their most prominent spokesmen. In a final paragraph some preliminary remarks are made about the relationship between Observant and non-Observant mendicant education and (proto-) humanist ideals.

Chapter four deals with the question to what extent it is feasible to

speak of a 'Franciscan school.' During the last 120 years, school formation and the emergence of a specific Franciscan scholarly profile have been popular topics among scholars dealing with medieval and early modern Franciscan thinkers. This chapter attempts to explain the history of these topics, their relationship with neo-Thomist and historicist scholarly programs in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and their value for evaluating the medieval Franciscan scholarly endeavour, both as a historical phenomenon, and as an explanatory matrix to account for mendicant school formation.

The fifth chapter concentrates on Franciscan libraries and the access to books, which to a large degree determined the *causa materialis* for the pursuit of learning. This chapter surveys the emergence of Franciscan library collections, their content, and the conditions under which friars were entitled to use and borrow books. Also addressed are related topics, such as book collecting activities, and the existence of Franciscan *scriptoria*.

A history of education would remain a lopsided affair if it did not at least refer to the religious context in which the schooling of friars took place. The Friars Minor did, after all, belong to a religious order with a wide range of non-scholarly religious duties and very outspoken ideals of evangelical perfection. Chapter six therefore tries to put the Franciscan pursuit of learning in a wider perspective, by focusing on novice training, the relationship between scholarly and non-scholarly activities in the Franciscan religious life, and some dominant ideologies of learning that transcended purely scholastic views.

The place of learning in the Franciscan religious life, as well as Franciscan ideologies of learning provide information concerning the final goals of learning in Franciscan communities. It leaves no doubt that one of these final goals was to teach and to convert the world at large. Hence pastoral care was one of the major incentives for the schooling of Franciscan friars. The exigencies of pastoral care asked for pastoral training, both inside and outside the direct school situation. The final chapter therefore deals with main aspects of Franciscan preaching and related issues.

The book concludes with a short epilogue, in which some limitations of the present study will be highlighted, some possible ventures for future research will be indicated, and an initial assessment will be made of the wider impact of Franciscan school education.

Serious scholarly attention for the history of Franciscan education started more than 120 years ago, with Francesco Ehrle's forays into

medieval Franciscan administrative sources, and the publication of the first critical editions of medieval Franciscan theological texts by the Quaracchi editors. These initiatives provided major instruments for further research. The first encompassing book-length study of Franciscan education during the early decades of the thirteenth century was provided by Hilarin Felder as early as 1904. His *Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Studien im Franziskanerorden bis um die Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts* has remained a landmark. The same is true for the second large monograph devoted to Franciscan education by Brlek in 1942. In between these two works of synthesis a large number of important subtopics came under scrutiny by Kurtscheidt, Zawart, Little, Imle, Benoffi and others. Their insights as well as the many source publications and manuscript studies in the *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* and sister journals gradually made it possible to come up with a more detailed picture of the medieval Franciscan educational landscape.

Since the Second World war the production of deep-probing studies and important editions has not abated, witness for instance the important labours of Lorenzo di Fonzo, Celestino Piana, Cesare Cenci, Dieter Berg, William Courtenay, and the contributors to the 1978 volume *Le scuole degli ordini mendicanti*. The present handbook is by no means a replacement of these and many other fundamental studies. It did seem, however, worth while to attempt a new work of synthesis, to include and evaluate the many important post-war contributions to the field, and to re-assess the interpretations given by subsequent generations of specialists. The reader may decide to what extent this aim has been reached.

In the course of my preparations for this volume, I have benefited from the generosity, the expertise and the criticism of many. I would like to thank first of all the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek/Dutch Organisation for Scholarly Research (NWO) and the Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen/Netherlands Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the two organisations that over the years have provided me with the necessary funding. Their grants enabled me to visit many library collections and research institutes in Europe and the United States. To several of these library collections and research institutes as well as to the scholars active in these institutions I owe a special debt.

I owe such a debt, first of all, to Prof. Dr. Claudio Leonardi and his collaborators of the Fondazione Ezio Franceschini in Florence,

where I found a wealth of material, sound advice and stimulating comradeship. It was during my first sojourn in Florence as a visiting scholar with a NWO Talent Stipend, in Fall 1997, that the writing of this book began to look like a possibility. Second, I owe a great debt to Prof. Dr. John Van Engen and his colleagues and students at The Medieval Institute of Notre Dame. My visit to Notre Dame in Spring 1998 enabled me to peruse the dauntingly rich collections of the Hesburgh library, and to exchange ideas with members of the staff and advanced graduate students. My subsequent position as fellow of the KNAW, positioned in Groningen University, made it possible to benefit from the research facilities of the Groningen University Library, and to partake in the intellectual life of the local research institute COMERS/ICOG.

I also would like to express my special gratitude to friends, colleagues, editors and external readers whose support I have found particularly helpful. Among these I want to single out Prof. Dr. Dick de Boer, my inspiring supervisor and mentor from Groningen University, Julian Deahl from Brill Academic Publishers, who expressed his support for this project from the very beginning, Drs. Maarten van der Heijden, who provided indispensable technical support, and Dr. Frans van Liere, Dr. Christopher Schabel, Dr. James Ginther, and David Mengel MA, who commented on the early drafts of individual chapters and encouraged me to continue. I also want to thank Prof. Dr. Girard Etzkorn, Prof. Dr. William Courtenay and Prof. Dr. Joseph Goering, whose comments on the pre-ultimate version of the manuscript as a whole have saved me from several errors and have enabled me to flesh out some aspects in more detail.

A final word of thanks I owe to my partner, Dr. Nadia elMasry, who has been such a gentle critic and stimulating supporter throughout. To her I dedicate this book.

Bert Roest
Groningen-Basel, February 2000

CHAPTER ONE

STUDIA, STUDENTS, LECTORS, AND PROGRAMS

Introduction

Studies dealing with mendicant educational developments frequently start from two assumptions. First, it is postulated that the Friars Minor came to organise their school network only reluctantly. Driven by external circumstances rather than by ideological incentives, initially the order would not have embraced learning as an essential component of its religious life. Indeed, some scholars have claimed that Francesco d'Assisi himself saw learning as a danger to the ultimate evangelical *simplicitas*, and not reconcilable with the friar's chosen idiocy and totally subservient position.¹ Hence, from the beginning education was dealt with haphazardly. This lack of co-ordination resulted in substantial differences in educational developments between the various order provinces, especially during the first hundred years. Second, it is commonly thought that once a program of learning was reluctantly adopted, the Franciscans followed, albeit imperfectly, the Dominican set-up for their own educational system. The organisation and development of the Franciscan *studia* network is thus presented as a flawed copy of its Dominican counterpart.²

¹ The friar was to be an *idiota et subditus omnibus*. This is a running theme in the *vitae* devoted to Francesco d'Assisi. Cf. THOMAS DE CELANO, *Vita Secunda S. Francisci*, Chapter CII (De Humilitate) and Chapter CXLII (De Sancta Simplicitate); *SPECULUM PERFECTIONIS*, ed. Sabatier, 13 & Chapter 6. This anti-intellectual image of Francesco has been reinforced by, among others, the historians Carlo Müller and Paul Sabatier. Cf. MÜLLER, 1883, 104; SABATIER, 1931, 378 and the evaluation of their position in FRASCADORE & OOMS, 1964, 313-314. Subsequent scholars, such as ESSER, 1976, 26-41 and MOORMAN, 1952, 3-4, also posit a conflict between the original Franciscan ideals and the pursuit of learning. FELDER, 1904, 1-31, 58-96, however, is as one of the few much more optimistic, maybe even too optimistic, as has for instance been argued by SEPPELT, 1906, 149-179, and again by MARANESI, 1999, 7-41.

² Cf. BARONE, 1978, 221-222 and MULCHAHEY, 1998, xi: 'As Dominic when compared to Francis proved to be the shrewder constitutional lawyer as he framed the life of his new order, so, too, he and his sons had the keener sense of the institutional possibilities for providing themselves with the training they would need to fulfill their

Both assumptions contain some elements of truth. Francesco d'Assisi and many of his early followers did express strong misgivings about learning for its own sake, considering this contrary to the Franciscan ideals of humility and poverty. It was definitely not Francesco's intention to create a community of scholars. In that sense, there might have been a fundamental difference between the early Friars Minor and the contemporary Dominicans. Francesco did not prevent the entrance of learned friars into his order, as can be gathered from the reports of Matthew Paris and other sources.³ Among these learned friars were not solely theologians, but also Bolognese students and teachers of law, such as Pellegrino da Fallerone (d. 1233) Rizzerio da Muccia (d. 1236), and the Bolognese master Niccolò de'Pepoli (d. 1229).⁴ It is clear that Francesco wanted such friars to curtail their curiosity and he never approved of an unconditional pursuit of learning. Learned clerics joining the Franciscan order had even to abandon their ultimate possession, learning itself, so as to offer themselves naked to God.⁵ Nevertheless, whatever his qualms, Francesco did not frown upon theological knowledge per se. Francesco had a deep veneration for the priests who consecrated the body and blood of Christ and for the theologians who administered the Divine Word (*ministrant sanctissima verba divina*).⁶ Moreover, in his later years he openly acknowledged the necessity of doctrinally safe teachings, to prepare suitable friars for their pastoral tasks and missionary journeys, and to avoid charges of heresy.⁷ According to his Rules of 1221 and 1223, Francesco ex-

mission. The Franciscans in particular copied the dispositions made by the order of Preachers. They found themselves in the same milieu and oftentimes confronting the same problems as their Dominican fellow-friars, but it was Dominic's Preachers who devised most of the common-sense solutions to educational challenges, and the Franciscans, and others, readily absorbed their lessons.'

³ MATTHAEUS PARIS, *Chronica Maiora*, 248. According to Matthew's report, many priests and learned scholars would have joined the order before 1216. See also FELDER, 1904, 68.

⁴ FELDER, 1904, 129-130.

⁵ 'Dixit aliquando magnum clericum etiam scientiae quodammodo resigare debere, cum veniret ad Ordinem, ut tali expropriatus possessione nudum se offerret brachiis Crucifixi.' THOMAS DE CELANO, *Vita Secunda S. Francisci*, Chapter CXLVI, in: *Analecchia Franciscana* x, 241. Cf. LOMBARDI, 1982, 805, n. 40.

⁶ FRANCISCUS ASSISIENSIS, *Testamentum*, in: *Opuscula S.P. Francisci Assisiensis* (Quaracchi, 1941), 77-82; Cf. FELDER, 1904, 73; FRASCADORE & OOMS, 1964, 314. See on the early priests in the order also BÖRNER, 1988.

⁷ FELDER, 1904, 20-21, 66-66, 111-112. He relates how from around 1216 onwards, Franciscan missionary activities began to move beyond the Italian peninsula.

pected new friars to engage into the life of evangelical perfection in accordance with their capacities. Those who were not learned before they entered the order should not try to become learned afterwards.⁸ Those who were, would be allowed to continue their studies, but only to the extent that these studies harmonised with the spirit of poverty, simplicity and prayer, and were otherwise in agreement with the rigorous life of evangelical perfection.⁹ He therefore respected learning, but only insofar as it was combined with humility, so that it could lead to *vera sapientia*. Hence his salutation of wisdom as a sister of *sancta simplicitas* in his *Salutatio Virtutum*.¹⁰ This viewpoint was also behind Francesco's 1223 invitation to Antonio di Padova to teach the Franciscan friars in Bologna.¹¹ Soon thereafter, many convents had a lector of some description, as will be discussed later.

Francesco's immediate successors as general ministers of the order were highly educated men. They all stimulated the friars' access to the schools. This was true even for friar Elia da Cortona who in many other respects championed the lay element in the Franciscan movement.¹² Under their leadership the order quickly neutralised the

The Pentecost chapter of 1217 would have seen a congregation of 5000 Franciscan missionaries, many of whom shortly thereafter would take the road to France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and elsewhere. In 1219, Francesco and some of his followers travelled to Syria to preach the Gospels to the crusaders and the Muslims. In 1220, five Franciscan missionaries were martyred in Morocco. By then, the Franciscan order was fully engaged in missionary exploits inside and outside the European sphere. This asked for proper preparation, and hence necessitated the pursuit of studies.

⁸ FELDER, 1904, 71. If these lay friars were illiterate (that is, not versed in Latin), he did not want them to pursue literacy. This is expressed in the 1223 Rule, which expressively states: 'Et non curent nescientes litteras litteras discere.' FRANCISCUS ASSISIENSIS, *Regula Bullata*, x, 7, in: *Écrits*, 196. This was re-iterated in later constitutions.

⁹ FRANCISCUS ASSISIENSIS, *Regula Bullata*, x, 7 & 8, in: *Écrits*, 196. Cf. FELDER, 1904, 91-92; FRASCADORE & OOMS, 1964, 57.

¹⁰ 'Hanc [simplicitatem] in fratribus literatis et laicis requirebat pater sanctissimus, non eam contrariam sapientiae credens, sed vere germanam, licet pauperibus scientia faciliorem ad habitum, promptiorem ad usum; unde in laudibus, quas de virtutibus fecit, sic ait: Ave regina sapientia. Deus te salvet cum tua sorore pura sancta simplicitate.' THOMAS DE CELANO, *Vita Secunda S. Francisci*, Chapter CXLII, in: *Analecta Franciscana* x, 238. Cf. FELDER, 1904, 88-90, 129f.

¹¹ See my section on the Bologna *studium*, later in this chapter.

¹² The vicar general Pietro Catani (1221) was doctor of law in Bologna prior to his entrance in the order. The same was true of minister general Giovanni Parenti (1227-1232). Friar Elia da Cortona (vicar general in the 1220s and minister general between 1232-1239) was known for his wide knowledge of the natural sciences and Roman law. Salimbene accused Elia to have accepted too many lay friars in order to

misgivings expressed by Francesco and some of his companions, and wholeheartedly embraced the pursuit of theological learning as long as it steered free from *vana curiositas*. Later generations of Franciscan Spirituals, looking back at a century of developments in which the order had witnessed a rapid clericalisation, in which scholastic methods and secular sciences had been introduced and in which Franciscan students and teachers had received numerous privileges, deplored the influx of learned friars and the pursuit of learning.¹³ This is expressed in the famous accusation by Egidio d'Assisi and Jacopone da Todi that Paris had destroyed Assisi.¹⁴ To counter these developments these friars tried to fortify the image of the founding saint as a fanatical opponent of learning, an image that shines through in hagiographic collections such as the *Legenda Trium Sociorum* and the *Fioretti*. The historical Francesco of the 1220s, however, was rather more nuanced if not ambivalent in his attitude towards learning and the influx of learned friars than these radical spiritual sources make out. This was even acknowledged by some of the more cultured spiritual spokesmen.¹⁵

limit the influence of the clerical friars. SALIMBENE DE ADAM, *Cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger, 99-103. Yet Salimbene also acknowledged Elia's own scientific knowledge and his attempts to further the cause of learning in the order. Cf. ODOARDI, 1954; BERG, 1977, 69ff. During the vicariate of Elia, many study houses were established in Italy, France, and England. Alberto da Pisa (minister general between 1239-1240) also was a highly literate man, and his successor Haymo of Faversham (1240-1244) had been master of theology at Paris and lector in Bologna before his appointment. Crescenzo da Iesi (1244-1247) had studied law and medicine, and Giovanni Buralli da Parma (1247-1257), Bonaventura da Bagnoregio's immediate predecessor, had been lector at Paris, Bologna and Naples before his election in 1247. The appointment of the learned Bonaventura (1257-1273) shortly after his inception as master of theology at Paris therefore by no means signalled a novelty. Cf. FELDER, 1904, 107ff; BROOKE, 1959, passim.

¹³ On the clericalisation of the order in general, and the conflicts resulting from it, see BROOKE, 1959, LANDINI, 1968 and CONTI, 1982, 321-346.

¹⁴ Egidio d'Assisi would have cried out 'Parisius, parisius, quare destruis ordinem sancti Francisci.' *CHRONICA XXIV GENERALIUM*, in: *Analecta Franciscana* III, 86. The same lament was uttered by Jacopone da Todi: 'Mal vedemmo Parisi che ha distrutto Ascisi.' Cf. JACOPONE DA TODI, *Laudi, trattato e detti*, ed. F. Ageno (Florence, 1953), laude xxxi, 113. See on these statements and comparable utterances by rather learned friars such as Ubertino da Casale and Alvaro Pelayo also PIANA, 1982, 250.

¹⁵ UBERTINUS DE CASALI, *Responsio*, 75: 'Non tamen despiciebat [Franciscus] sanctorum litterarum studium et scientiam, immo multum reverebatur et revereri mandavit sacros theologos; sed in spiritu praevidebat, qualiter sequeretur abusus.' Cf. also IDEM, *Rotulus*, 127 & *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae Iesu*, I, 5, c. 5. Ubertino, just as Angelo Clareno after him, therefore did not frown upon the introduction of theological studies in the Franciscan order. However, both Ubertino and Angelo Clareno

Likewise, the Franciscan adaptation of the Dominican model calls for careful consideration. Historians have signalled an apparent lack of Franciscan regulations for the early period (that is, until the Narbonne constitutions of 1260), interpreting it as a lack of interest in the development of an organised study system. The surviving Dominican regulations, on the other hand, make it possible to trace the developments of a Dominican study system from 1217/1220 onwards.¹⁶ To overcome the paucity of early Franciscan legislation and to fill in the gaps of the Franciscan picture, important historians of Franciscan education have made extrapolations from existing Dominican sources. Inadvertently, Dominican developments have thus become the standard by which to judge Franciscan advances in learning and study organisation. As later thirteenth-century Franciscan sources portray a *studia* network that might be interpreted as a 'stripped' and modified version of the Dominican study system, it seems only natural to modern scholars that the Franciscans followed their Dominican siblings and rivals, like the toddler trying to keep up with his more agile older brother.¹⁷

However, it is not necessary to approach the unfolding of the Franciscan *studia* network from this angle only. The initial point of departure for the Franciscans was different from that of their Dominican colleagues. The Dominicans had begun as an anti-heretical task force in Southern France and were eager to enlist adolescent university students. Systematic theological training was part of Dominican life from the outset. The Friars Minor, on the other hand, began as a movement that wanted to bring about a fundamental change in the hearts of all Christians (and soon also non-Christians). When, from the 1220s onwards, the Dominican and Franciscan orders for a variety of reasons became more similar, the educational needs and initiatives in the order of Friars Minor remained predomi-

objected against the pursuit of learning detached from a life of poverty, humility and prayer. They also objected against the pursuit of profane sciences (logic, natural philosophy and metaphysics): 'Non intendimus sanctum et ordinatum studium sacrae Scripturae reprehendere, ymo potius defectus et abusiones huius temporis demonstrare, a quibus, si bene pensetur, procedunt ut plurimum omnia nostra mala.' Ibidem, 127.

¹⁶ MULCHAHEY, 1998, xiv, 3-71.

¹⁷ BRLEK, 1942, 25; MULCHAHEY, 1998, xi; BARONE, 1978, 225: '...per tutto questo periodo gli *'studia'* francescani continuarono a vivere e a diffondersi senza poter seguire alcun modello prefissato. Ciò costrinse i Minori, con ogni probabilità, a copiare sempre più pedissequamente la quasi perfetta organizzazione domenicana.'

nantly a function of inner pressures and mechanisms and should be presented as such. There is little evidence to suggest that the Franciscans tried to emulate the Dominican example. They had reasons of their own to gain access to the schools, and did so more quickly than is sometimes assumed.¹⁸

This chapter provides an overview of the developments of the Franciscan educational system between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, by exploring the surviving legislative texts and the corroborative evidence provided by a century of scholarship on medieval Franciscan learning and education. If need be, Dominican developments will not be discarded. Yet they will not be used as muster for the Franciscan educational situation. Special attention will be given to the emergence of Franciscan study houses or *studia* at different levels and to regulations concerning the lectorate and degree programs. Following chapters will deal in greater depth with developments in the Observant movement, the actual curricula, syllabi, and the literary production of lectors, the manifold forms of 'para-academic' schooling to which the majority of Friars Minor was exposed from the noviciate onwards, and the forms of pastoral education in which many of them were involved.

The establishment of schools and the emergence of a studia network

Initially, the organisation of studies was certainly not the most important concern of Franciscan leadership. The main ideals cherished by Francesco and his early companions were the renunciation of all worldly pride, and a life of apostolic poverty and humility. Not surprisingly, making detailed regulations concerning the organisation of studies did not have priority. Yet as has been said in the above, studies were not entirely discarded. The 1223 *Regula Bullata* subsumed studies under work in general. Just as handicrafts and begging were considered worthy occupations, so too were teaching and learning for those friars gifted with knowledge and talents.¹⁹ During and shortly after Francesco's final years, specific study houses were established in Bologna (1220-3), Montpellier and Toulouse (both between

¹⁸ SENOCAK, 1997, 33.

¹⁹ FRANCISCUS ASSISIENSIS, *Regula Bullata* v, 1, in: *Écrits*, 188.

1225 and 1227), Oxford (between 1224 and 1229), and Paris (c. 1224). Alongside these more important study houses, for the establishment of which the friars received strong ecclesiastical support,²⁰ more elementary theological schools appeared in many of the larger friaries, especially in the Italian, Southern French and English provinces. In the German lands, developments appeared to have been slower. Arriving slightly later on the German scene, the Friars Minor had more difficulties in establishing a network of schools in the first half of the thirteenth century. Nevertheless, as early as the mid 1220s a study house may have been erected for the custody of Hildesheim, followed shortly thereafter by the study house of Magdeburg (1228), later a provincial centre of theological studies.²¹ Further scholarly developments began to gain momentum in the 1230s.²²

Again with Felder as notable exception, nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians have seen the leadership period of Bonaventura da Bagnoregio (1257-1273) as a watershed. The Narbonne constitutions of 1260 compiled under Bonaventura's guidance, as well as Bonaventura's own writings on mendicant life and learning (e.g. the *Epistola de Tribus Quaestionibus*), are often presented as the first

²⁰ It has been argued that the ecclesiastical authorities saw the emergence of mendicant study houses as an excellent instrument to fulfill the requirement of Lateran III and IV to erect schools for the theological formation of the clergy. This would explain the outright papal support of mendicant educational initiatives, as well as the fact that many mendicant study houses had an 'open' character. See FELDER, 1904, 115ff; MANDONNET, 1914, *passim*. More recently, scholars such as OEDIGER, 1953, 62ff, POST, 1954, 155-265, and ELM, 1983, 602-603 admit that many mendicant theological study houses to some extent had an 'open' character, in that members of the local secular clergy were able to follow lectures and forms of practical homiletic training. Yet these scholars maintain that the Franciscan theology training centres, like those in the Dominican order, were first and foremost geared to teach the friars. However 'open' the mendicant study network might have been (BERG, 1986, 414-425 is adamant about the participation of secular priests in mendicant theology courses, and provides several interesting examples), it normally did not provide courses to lay people. The formal schooling of the urban lay establishment was not a mendicant affair, but rather the concern of the urban authorities, which on a large scale invested in Latin schools and professional schools for the merchant elite.

²¹ Hildesheim's first known lector is Konrad Holtzicker (mentioned for 1247). Magdeburg would have been the first *studium generale* for the German province, with as its first lector Simon Anglicus (1228). Cf. JORDANUS DE GIANO, *Chronica*, ed. Boehmer, 47; MEIER, 1958, 7-10.

²² BERG, 1977, 76. FELDER, 1904, 97 therefore remarks with reason that 'die Gründung der Ordensschulen in den verschiedenen Ordensprovinzen sich wesentlich zwischen 1219 und 1250 vollzieht...'

encompassing perspective on schooling as an integral part of Franciscan life as a whole. By giving the Narbonne constitutions undue weight and significance, the unfolding of a Franciscan study network is usually portrayed as a phenomenon of the later thirteenth century.²³

Contrary to the picture presented in most surveys of Franciscan educational developments in the thirteenth century, the Narbonne constitutions are not the first to pay attention to studies, nor do they betray a new vision concerning the necessity of learning and its systematic organisation. Contemporary Franciscan chroniclers, such as Giordano da Giano, Thomas Eccleston and Salimbene de Adam, together with several other sources indicate that substantial constitutions were produced at several general chapters prior to 1260. This implies that the Franciscan order by then possessed an extensive body of legislation.²⁴ The 1239 constitutions compiled under the new minister general Alberto da Pisa seemed to have been particularly encompassing. This is borne out by remarks of Salimbene, who reported that Bonaventura da Bagnoregio did not greatly add to these

²³ As a matter of fact, Hilarin Felder did realise that the Narbonne constitutions were not the first legislative text that dealt with Franciscan education. Cf. FELDER, 1904, 98ff, 319-322. More recent studies, however, tend to see 1260 as a veritable beginning. See for instance BARONE, 1978, 223: 'Con lui [that is, Bonaventura] si afferma nell'Ordine una mentalità nuova, meno legata alle tradizioni degli inizi e più aperta ai problemi reali del momento.' Barone argues that the space allotted in these constitutions to the organisation of studies is still very limited compared with previous and contemporary Dominican legislation. *Ibidem*, 224. As late as 1991, Bogdan Fajdek could write: 'Nelle prime Costituzioni dell'Ordine, quelle di Narbona di 1260, nella rubrica VI, si parla dello studio.' FAJDEK, 1991, 527. To this, he adds: 'L'Ordine dei Frati Minori ha acquistato con San Bonaventura la sua vera fisionomia religiosa, ben strutturata nella Chiesa, preparata a tutte le forme di apostolato, anche nuove, che le comunità monastiche prima di San Francesco ignoravano. Includendo nel lavoro lo studio e specificando le attività pastorali in relazione al 'munus praedicandi' e ad altri generi di apostolato, San Bonaventura mette in chiara luce l'importanza dell'attività scientifica dei frati.' *Ibidem*, 527.

²⁴ These sources indicate that, prior to 1260, several general chapters and general ministers paid serious attention to the organisation of learning. This seems to have been the case in 1224, when Francesco was still alive, in 1227 under Giovanni Parenti (who systematically furthered theological studies), in 1239 under Alberto da Pisa, and between 1240-1244 under Haymo of Faversham. Giovanni Buralli da Parma's refusal to add to the existing bulk of constitutions in the 1250s was not a sign of his spiritual or anti-intellectual inclinations. His decision was first and foremost motivated by his wish that the friars would abide by the regulations that already existed. See on this the revealing remarks of Cesare Cenci in *CONSTITUTIONES PRENARBONENSES* (-1239), 50-95.

older constitutions, but merely re-arranged them more systematically.²⁵ This would suggest that many elements found in the 1260 Narbonne constitutions might have been put forward as early as 1239, or even earlier. Felder already reached this conclusion in 1904, and therefore decided to use the Narbonne constitution to describe the educational developments between 1210 and 1260.²⁶ Many later scholars, however, did not follow him on this path. The choice of these later scholars to single out the Narbonne constitutions as signposts of a new beginning with regard to Minorite education might derive from the circumstance that Bonaventura, wanting clarity and uniformity in the order after a period of turmoil, ordered all existing copies of earlier constitutions to be destroyed once the Narbonne constitutions were approved (just as he later would order the destruction of all older *vitae* of Francesco after the publication of his *Legenda Major*).²⁷

Cesare Cenci's new edition of the surviving 'membra disiecta' of these pre-Narbonne regulations (the bulk of which indeed seem to date from 1239) nevertheless provides us with a picture of these earlier legislative texts. Keeping Salimbene's remarks in mind, we can postulate that at least some important elements of the Narbonne study regulations are much older than is frequently assumed. This is corroborated by those fragments of the pre-Narbonne constitutions that mention the number of students each province was allowed to send to Paris, and those that contain additional information on the use and the acquisition of books.²⁸

Such information indicates that the Narbonne constitutions do not represent something new. On the contrary, they show a study organisation that is already in progress by the 1230s, at least in outline. This is confirmed by Bonaventura's defences of Franciscan learning in the *Epistola de Tribus Quaestionibus* and other writings, which overtly attempt to legitimise an existing study situation against attacks from

²⁵ 'Et in illo capitulo [the 1239 chapter] facta est maxima multitudo constitutionum generalium, sed non erant ordinate; quas processu temporis ordinavit frater Bonaventura generalis minister, et parum addidit de suo, sed penitentias taxavit in aliquibus locis.' SALIMBENE DE ADAM, *Cronica*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, 158-159. Cf. CONSTITUTIONES PRENARBONENSES (-1239), 53.

²⁶ FELDER, 1904, passim.

²⁷ DIFFINITIONES NARBONENSES (1260), 502-4 (n. 1 & 17).

²⁸ CONSTITUTIONES PRENARBONENSES (-1239), 92-93. See in particular 93, no. 82: 'Statuimus quod pro qualibet provintia possint esse duo studentes Parisius...'