

Tome 107

N° 3-4

1997

REVUE BÉNÉDICTINE

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PETER DAMIAN AND MONTE CASSINO



DIRECTION ET ADMINISTRATION: ABBAYE DE MAREDSOUS (Belgique)

PETER DAMIAN AND MONTE CASSINO*

The rigorous asceticism of Peter Damian (d. 1072)¹ seems the antithesis of the opulent Benedictinism of Monte Cassino's eleventh-century "golden age."² Yet Peter became closely associated with Monte Cassino. He sent more than a dozen surviving letters to its monks,³ who

* Financial support for aspects of this research came from a Texas Tech University Faculty Development Leave, a Council for International Exchange of Scholars Travel Assistance Grant, and an American Philosophical Society Research Grant. Work was facilitated by the hospitality of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana and the Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom. Special thanks are due to Kurt Reindel (Universität Regensburg) for encouragement and for access to proofs of his edition of Peter Damian's letters.

1. Standard biographies are Fridolin DRESSLER, *Petrus Damiani: Leben und Werk*, Studia Anselmiana 34 (Rome, 1954); and Jean LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien ermite et homme d'Église*, Uomini e dottrine 8 (Rome, 1960). Materials for a more precise narrative are assembled in Giovanni LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita di San Pier Damiani: Componenti cronologiche e topografiche* (Cesena, 1972), a study reprinted, with the same pagination, from *San Pier Damiano nel IX Centenario della morte (1072-1972)*, 4 vols. (Cesena, 1972-78), 1:13-179 and 2:13-160. Reference articles include Pietro PALAZZINI, "Pier Damiani, Dottore della Chiesa, santo," *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 14 vols. (Rome, 1962-1970 and 1987), 10:554-74; LECLERCQ, "Pier Damiano, santo," *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, 8 vols. (Rome, 1974-), 6:1686-90; Benedetto CALATI, "Pierre Damien (saint)," *Dictionnaire de la Spiritualité*, 16 vols. (Paris, 1932-95), 12:1551-73; and Kennerly M. WOODY, "Peter Damian, St.," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, 13 vols. (New York, 1982-89), 9:508-09.

2. The "golden age" metaphor is developed in H. E. J. COWDREY, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius: Montecassino, the Papacy, and the Normans in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford, 1983), 1-45, 231-34; and Herbert BLOCH, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1986), 1:xiii-xiv, 3, and 40-136. Surveys of Monte Cassino's achievements in the eleventh century include Réginald GRÉGOIRE, "Le Mont-Cassin dans la réforme de l'Église de 1049 à 1122," in *Il monachesimo e la riforma ecclesiastica: Atti della quarta Settimana internazionale di studio, Mendola 23-29 agosto 1968* (Milan, 1971), 21-53; Luigi FABIANI, *La Terra di S. Benedetto: Studio storico-giuridico sull'Abbazia di Montecassino dall'VIII al XIII secolo*, 2 vols., *Miscellanea Cassinese*, 33-34 (Monte Cassino, 1968); BLOCH, "Monte Cassino's Teachers and Library in the High Middle Ages," *La scuola nell'Occidente latino dell'alto medioevo, 15-21 aprile 1971*, 2 vols., *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 19 (Spoleto, 1972), 2:563-613; and Heinrich DORMEIER, *Montecassino und die Laien im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert*, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 27 (Stuttgart, 1979).

3. Kurt REINDEL, "Petrus Damiani und seine Korrespondenten," *Studi Gregoriani*, 10 (1975): 207. Peter's letters to Monte Cassino equal letters 49, 82, 86, 90, 95, 102, 106, 119, 126, 127, 159, 160, and 161 in *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, ed. REINDEL, 4 vols., *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Briefe der Deutschen Kaiserzeit* 4 (1-4) (Munich, 1983-93). For short content summaries, see DRESSLER, *Petrus Damiani*, 73-74; and LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:23-25.

copied them and many of his other writings.⁴ He was welcomed as an esteemed visitor and spiritual advisor.⁵ This paradoxical relationship is receiving new attention. The old debate over Monte Cassino's role in the ecclesiastical reform movements of the eleventh century has been revived in the opposing images of H.E.J. Cowdrey, who sees the monastery as a "pillar of the Gregorian cause," and G.A. Loud, once Cowdrey's graduate student, who sees it as a "weather vane," a provincial, self-absorbed, opportunistic player in southern Italian politics, featuring a "historical bias" against "the ideology of the reform papacy."⁶ Both scholars examine Cardinal Peter Damian's relationship with Monte Cassino, since he was one of the monastery's direct links to Rome.⁷ Peter's letters to Monte Cassino have received new study in Kurt Reindel's critical edition for the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, in Aldo Granata's explications and Italian translations, and in Owen J. Blum's on-going English translations for the new medieval continuation of *Fathers of the Church*.⁸ Now Giovanni Spinelli has resurveyed the connection between Peter Damian and Monte Cassino.⁹

Despite all this scholarly attention, more remains to be said about the circumstances and character of the relationship between Peter Damian and Monte Cassino. When and how did it begin? When did Peter actually visit? What was the basis of their mutual attrac-

4. A simplified overview of the manuscript tradition of Damian's writings is given in LUCCHESI, *Clavis S. Petri Damiani* (Faenza, 1970), 23-25, rpt. from *Biblioteca Cardinale Gaetano Cicognani* 5, 2nd ed. (Faenza, 1971). A detailed analysis is in REINDEL, "Studien zur Überlieferung der Werke des Petrus Damiani," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 15 (1959): 23-102; 16 (1960): 73-154; and 17 (1962): 317-417. The two major collections of Peter Damian's works were compiled at Fonte Avellana and at Monte Cassino, and on the latter's importance see, for example, LOUD, *Church and Society in the Norman Principality of Capua* (Oxford, 1985), 71.

5. The current state of scholarship on Peter Damian's sojourns at Monte Cassino is found in LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:67-70 and 116-20, whose arguments are discussed and revised below.

6. G.A. LOUD, "Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino and the Gregorian Papacy," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30 (1979): 305-26, esp. 326; COWDREY, *Age of Abbot Desiderius*, esp. xxxix-xl, 28-45, 176, 213, 220-21, 231-34; and LOUD, *Church and Society in Capua*, esp. 65-79, 238-45. An earlier phase of this debate is presented in G.B. BORINO, "Per la storia della riforma della Chiesa nel sec. XI: A proposito di un recente libro di storia cassinese," *Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria*, 38 (1915): 453-513.

7. COWDREY, *Age of Abbot Desiderius*, 34-38; LOUD, *Church and Society*, 68-71.

8. REINDEL, *Briefe*; ALDO GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere ai monaci di Montecassino* (Milan, 1988); OWEN J. BLUM, *The Letters of St. Peter Damian*, *The Fathers of the Church Mediaeval Continuation* 1- (Washington, D.C., 1989).

9. GIOVANNI SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani e Montecassino," in *Storia, arte, e cultura*, ed. Faustino AVAGLIANO and Oronzo PECERE, = Vol. 3(1) of *L'Età dell'Abate Desiderio: Atti del IV Convegno di Studi sul Medioevo Meridionale (Montecassino - Cassino, 4-8 ottobre 1987)* (Monte Cassino, 1992 [1995]), 215-34.

tion? Although the surviving documents do not answer these questions completely, they give more precise information than previously recognized, especially once one of Peter Damian's heretofore free-floating letters has been redated and restudied.

Peter Damian probably had no direct contact with Monte Cassino until well after his fiftieth birthday. He was born around 1007 in Ravenna, and trained in letters at secular schools in Ravenna, Faenza, and Parma. When he was about thirty years old, he entered the eremitical monastery of Fonte Avellana (Umbria), his home for the rest of his life.¹⁰ He travelled extensively after he had begun to involve himself in the work of the Roman reform party, especially after 1057 when he had become bishop of Ostia and cardinal, but the popes sent him north, not south.

Jean Lerclercq, perhaps Peter's most influential biographer, followed Blum in assuming that Peter could have had an early Monte Cassino connection because, while he was teaching in the secular schools, he might have taught one of its monks, Alberic of Monte Cassino (d. between 1094 and 1097/1098).¹¹ Relatively little is known about Alberic, despite the scholarly attention given him because of his alleged role in the spread of the *ars dictaminis*.¹² The possible school link appears to have been first suggested in 1935 by Carl Erdmann, who, while noting that we do not know who Alberic's teacher was, observed that on the basis of *cursus* usage Peter Damian came to mind.¹³ However, in the years since Erdmann's remark, it has been demonstrated that eleventh-century *cursus* was much more omnipresent and diverse than previously suspected; that Damian's *cursus*, far from being a unique creation, reflected the style of northern Italian secular schools; and that Alberic's use of *cursus* cannot

10. Problems in reconstructing the chronology of Peter Damian's early career are analyzed in Lester K. LITTLE, "The Personal Development of Peter Damian," in *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Joseph R. Strayer*, ed. William C. JORDAN, Bruce McNAB, and Teofilo F. RUIZ (Princeton, 1976), 317-41 and 523-28.

11. LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 91; BLUM, "Alberic of Monte Cassino and a Letter of St. Peter Damian to Hildebrand," *Studi Gregoriani*, 5 (1956): 297.

12. The literature and debates on Alberic and his work are introduced in the ample footnotes of Franz Josef Wonsranock, "Die Anfänge der mittelalterlichen *Ars Dictandi*," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 23 (1989), 3-7, 13-14, 20, 30-31; and Carmelo Vir-cillo FRANKLIN, "The Restored Life and Miracles of St. Dominic of Sora," *Mediaeval Studies*, 55 (1993): 285-87.

13. Carl ERDMANN, "Nachrichten," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 50 (1935): 769-70.

be taken for granted.¹⁴ Speculation that Peter taught Alberic is unfounded.

Leclercq stated that Peter Damian was "en rapport" with Monte Cassino since the days of Leo IX (1049-54).¹⁵ This remark apparently stemmed from Blum's 1956 claim that the recipient of Peter Damian's letter to a "Most Revered Brother Hildebrand" was actually Alberic of Monte Cassino, an argument based on the *Liber Testimoniorum*, an early Fonte Avellana compilation which cites texts from the "Hildebrand" letter three times but attributes them to an "epistola ad Albericum."¹⁶ Blum argued for early contact with Monte Cassino, because the letter in question was dated to the years 1050-57. The problem here is that the date range of 1050-57 was postulated by Franz Neukirch in 1875 on the basis of the attribution to Hildebrand, who, he assumed, was the Hildebrand who later became Gregory VII, and who, he judged from the informality of the salutation, would have received the letter early in his career.¹⁷ If the recipient was Alberic rather than Hildebrand, then the basis for the early dating disappears. Kurt Reindel, in his critical edition of Damian's letters, has placed this one after Lent of 1069.¹⁸

Although there is no solid evidence for early direct contact between Peter Damian and Monte Cassino, he might have admired it from afar. Western monks acclaimed it as the home of the Benedictine *Rule*, the fountainhead of their tradition. There has been some debate about the status of the *Rule* in eremitical communities such as Fonte Avellana, but Peter himself certainly regarded it as an authoritative statement, a

14. TORE JANSON, *Prose Rhythm in Medieval Latin from the 9th to the 13th Century*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studia Latina Stockholmiensia 20 (Stockholm, 1975), 40-45, 67-68, and 77-78, demonstrates the complexities of eleventh-century Italian *cursus*, but concludes, based on a prose sample taken from Alberic's rhetorical work, that he did not use *cursus*. His conclusion is challenged on the basis of Alberic's hagiographical work by FRANKLIN, "The Restored Life and Miracles of St. Dominic of Sora," 310-17.

15. LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 91. See also, for example, André CANTIN, *Pierre Damien: Lettre sur la toute-puissance divine*, Sources Chrétiennes 191 (Paris, 1972), 48.

16. PETER DAMIAN, *Epistula* 160, ed. REINDEL, 4:100-34 [= *Ep.* 2:7 or *Opusculum* 32]; transl. GRANATA, in *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 295-320. On Alberic as the recipient, see BLUM, "Alberic of Monte Cassino and a Letter," 291-98; and again, "Alberic of Monte Cassino and the Hymns and Rhythms Attributed to Saint Peter Damian," *Traditio*, 12 (1956): 89.

17. FRANZ NEUKIRCH, *Das Leben des Petrus Damiani (Teil I: Bis zur Ostersynode 1059)* (Göttingen, 1875), 96. BLUM, "Alberic of Monte Cassino and a Letter," 292, indicates that he did not have access to Neukirch's work.

18. REINDEL, *Briefe*, 1:58 and 61, 4:100-34. The differing addressees might be explained by Peter Damian's occasional practice of sending the same letter to more than one person: see, for example, Reindel's note in *Briefe*, 2:62-63.

minimum guide to be followed unless compelling reasons dictated otherwise.¹⁹ Moreover, he portrayed Monte Cassino positively in one of his first works, the *Vita Romualdi*, written shortly before or in 1042.²⁰ He may even have developed a reputation as a supporter of the monastery, since Abbot Desiderius (1058-87) would state soon after 1064 that Peter was widely known to have loved the monastery of St. Benedict at Monte Cassino more than any other anywhere.²¹ Desiderius was not an unbiased observer, but he would not have asserted anything that Peter or his public knew to be false in the easily remembered past.

Peter Damian's first direct association with Monte Cassino seems to have resulted from his work with the Roman curia. Leo IX's chancellor, Frederick of Lorraine, had retired to Monte Cassino, where, in quick succession, he became first abbot (1057-58) and then pope (1057-58).²² Although Stephen IX was trained as a canon rather than a monk, he knew how to get monks to obey, and he knew Peter Damian. Under threat of papal anathema, he compelled him to accept the bishopric of Ostia and membership in the college of cardinals.²³ Peter's horizons widened, and he came to view the college as an important institution for promoting reform.²⁴ He wrote to his colleagues so often that letters to

19. LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 41-43; Mansueto DELLA SANTA, *Ricerche sull'idea monastica di San Pier Damiano*, Studi e testi camaldolesi 11 (Arezzo, 1961), 197-99; Ovidio CAPITANI, "San Pier Damiani e l'istituto eremitico," in *L'Eremitismo in Occidente nei secoli XI e XII: Atti della seconda Settimana internazionale di studio, Mendola, 30 agosto - 6 settembre 1962*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Contributi 3rd ser. 4, Miscellanea del Centro di Studi Medioevali, 4 (Milan, 1965), 122-63; Celestino PIERUCCI, "San Pietro Damiani e Fonte Avellana," in *Fonte Avellana nella Società dei Secoli XI e XII: Atti del II Convegno del Centro di Studi Avellaniti* (Fonte Avellana, 1978), 157-78.

20. Romuald's two visits to Monte Cassino are favorably described by Peter Damian in his *Vita Beati Romualdi* xii-xv and xxvi, ed. Giovanni TABACCO, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia* 94 (Rome, 1957), 33-39 and 54-55. On the date of composition, see *Ibid.*, liv; and HOWE, "The Awesome Hermit: The Symbolic Significance of the Hermit as a Possible Research Perspective," *Numen*, 30 (1983): 115-16.

21. DESIDERIUS, *Ep.*, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 145:17-18, noted in Paul Fridolin KERR *et al.*, *Italia Pontificia*, 10 vols. (Berlin, 1906-75), 8:145. On this letter, see note 43 below.

22. On Frederick's dates of office, see HOFFMANN, "Die älteren Abtslisten von Montecassino," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 47 (1967): 319-21; and Rudolf HÜLS, *Kardinäle, Klerus und Kirchen Roms, 1049-1130*, Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom, 48 (Tübingen, 1977), 168-69.

23. JOHN OF LODI, *Vita S. Petri Damiani* ix, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 144:130-31. On the date and circumstances, see Giuseppe M. CACCIAMANI, "La nomina di S. Pier Damiano a Vescovo e a Cardinale di Ostia," in *San Pier Damiano nel IX centenario*, 1:181-93.

24. Mario Fois, "I Compiti e le prerogative dei cardinali vescovi secondo Pier

cardinals form an entire book of Constantino Gaetani's edition of his correspondence.²⁵ Among his correspondents was Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino, who had become a cardinal priest on 6 March 1059.²⁶

The two men met in Rome during the famous Lateran synods of March and April of 1059 which reserved papal elections to the college of cardinals; in Florence at the papal court in January of 1060; and again in Rome at the Lateran in April of 1060.²⁷ They had much in common, despite differences in their ages (Peter Damian was almost two decades senior) and social origins (Peter was the son of *honesti parentes* of Ravenna, Desiderius a scion of the princes of Benevento). Both were nostalgic for the eremitical life, Peter for his "desert" of Fonte Avellana, from which he was frequently called, and Desiderius for the hermitage-filled mountains of southern Italy, to which he had twice run away as a youth.²⁸ Both the prior of Fonte Avellana and the abbot of Monte Cassino struggled to maintain monastic observances in the face of administrative duties. Both traveled in the same Roman circle, as is exemplified by their independent retelling of the same anecdote from Archdeacon Hildebrand.²⁹ Both would write hagiography, glorifying in texts and hymns the saints of their orders.³⁰

Damiani nel quadro della sua ecclesiologia primaziale," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae*, 10 (1972): 25-105; Edith PÁZTOR, "San Pier Damiani, il cardinalato e la formazione della Curia Romana," *Studi gregoriani*, 10 (1975): 317-39.

25. Constantino GAETANI, *Sancti Petri Damiani Opera Omnia*, rpt. in *Patrologia Latina*, 144:253-288. Note, however, the caveat offered by REINDEL, "Petrus Damiani und seine Korrespondenten," 206-07, who observes that many of these letters do not give their recipients the title of cardinal and therefore were not necessarily written to them in that capacity.

26. The sources for Desiderius' career as cardinal are surveyed in HÜLS, *Kardinale*, 154-57; an interpretative account is in COWDREY, *Desiderius*, 62-63 (but note SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 187).

27. *Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum. I: Inde ab A. DCCCCXI usque ad A. MCXCVII*, ed. Ludwig WEILAND, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Leges*, 4 (1) (Hannover, 1893), 544; KEHR, *Italia Pontificia*, 3:24-25, which must be supplemented with Giovanni LAMI, *Sanctae Ecclesiae Florentinae Monumenta*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1758), 2:946-47; KEHR, *Italia Pontificia*, 6:344. SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 187-88, analyzes skeptically the tradition that Peter Damian also participated in the Easter Synod of 1061.

28. On Peter Damian's desire for solitude, see LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 75-80. Desiderius' aborted career as a hermit is described in *Chron. Cass.* III i-vii, in *Die Chronik von Montecassino*, ed. Hartmut HOFFMANN, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores*, 34 (Hannover, 1980), 364-69.

29. Ian S. ROBINSON, "The Friendship Network of Gregory VII," *History*, 63 (1978): 6-7. Note also Angelo BARONIO, "Hostilis Amicus Meus: L'Amicizia di San Pier Damiani e Ildebrando," *La preparazione della riforma gregoriana e del pontificato di Gregorio VII: Atti del IX Convegno del Centro di Studi Avellaniti* (Fonte Avellana, 1985), 43-68.

30. Peter Damian's hagiographic works are listed in LUCCHESI, *Clavis S. Petri Damiani*, 60-61; Desiderius' in COWDREY, *Age of Desiderius*, 21-22.

Several surviving letters witness the earliest phase of their correspondence, which probably dates from the early 1060s since it presumes a friendship already established. The series opens with a letter Peter wrote at a time when he was expecting to see Desiderius again soon, perhaps at the Lenten synod of 1061. He uses the language of spiritual friendship that will recur in the letters to follow: he begins, for example, by citing "the fraternal love toward you which burns deep inside me." Using biblical verses, he urges Desiderius to tend his flock well, to nourish them with sacred Scripture and tears, and to keep in mind that God may speak through the simple. He concludes by exhorting him to take time away from earthly concerns to enter into the tabernacle of contemplation.³¹

Writing to Desiderius proved disappointing. In the months that followed, Peter seems to have sent two or more letters. One was a lengthy work, written after October of 1061 (Alexander II was already pope), which, after praising Desiderius and his monks for being withdrawn from the sinful world like the animals saved on the ark, analyzes the symbolism of animals, interpreting them so as to illustrate the monastic life.³² Another, known only from fragments and never actually sent to Desiderius in its surviving form, explicates the Books of Kings.³³ An apparently earlier letter on the Sabbath day and on contemplation, known from several differently addressed exemplars, is addressed to Desiderius

31. PETER DAMIAN, *Ep.* 82, ed. REINDEL, 2:441-48 [= *Ep.* 2:12]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 429-35; The assumption that this letter relates to the 1061 synod, at which Peter Damian's attendance is only postulated, is questioned by SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 187-88, who leaves open the possibility that it could have been written in anticipation of meetings in 1060 or even 1059. Nevertheless, a later date seems more likely since the letter's effusive invocation of a "fraternus amor" suggests that the two parties were already well acquainted. On dating and grouping of all the early letters between Peter and Desiderius, see LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:24-25.

32. *Epistula* 86, ed. REINDEL, 2:459-504 [= *Ep.* 2:18 or *Opusc.* 52]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 103-42.

33. *Ep.* 90, ed. REINDEL, 2:573-79 [= *Ep.* 2:13]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 437-44. This letter, which appears to have been assembled out of fragments by Constantino Gaetani (d.1650), had its original dated to about 1062 by LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:22-25, who argued that, while its salutation hints at the change in Peter Damian's episcopal responsibilities granted by Alexander II, who became pope only in October of 1061, the surviving sections do not allude to any of Peter's visits to Monte Cassino and hint at Peter's attempts to abdicate his episcopal dignity during this period. SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 193-204, considers this letter Gaetani's artifact, observing that it is absent from the regular manuscripts of Peter's collected letters and, in its present state, incongruous as a personal letter to Desiderius. Yet the dedication to Desiderius might well have been attached to some genuine work, and a commentary by Peter Damian on the Books of Kings may be presupposed by Alberic of Monte Cassino's queries on this subject, which were sent to Peter on the day before Easter of 1065 (see note 46 below).

in a Monte Cassino copy: whether it was sent to him in this period or later is unknown.³⁴ Eventually Peter complained in exasperation that "I, venerable brother, have written you not twice, but often; nevertheless up to the present I have not been able to wring out of you one single iota that you would deign to write back. . . . You didn't bother either to write me when I was writing or to dispatch the copyist that you promised." Peter followed up these reproofs by advising Desiderius to concentrate his attention on his vices rather than on his virtues, to accept fraternal correction, to rule wisely by disciplining faults as soon as they emerged (but not too harshly), and to fast and to celebrate the Mass frequently.³⁵

The early letters suggest that Peter's first contact with Monte Cassino was directed more toward Desiderius, cardinal and abbot, than toward his monks. This conclusion differs from that of Granata, who argues that all the Monte Cassino correspondence, however addressed, was intended for the community as a whole.³⁶ But Peter's choices of recipients do have significance: the early letters addressed to Desiderius express personal friendship and personal criticism, while the one addressed both to him and his monks offers lessons on religious life suitable for a community. In this first phase of the correspondence, Peter took the initiative; Desiderius and his monks were slow to respond.

In 1063 the situation was reversed. A crisis at Monte Cassino, which will be described below, suddenly required Peter Damian's presence. Instead he was sent off on a papal mission to Cluny, from which he returned toward the end of the year, effusively praising Monte Cassino's only significant rival for Benedictine preeminence.³⁷ Now Desi-

34. *Ep.* 49, ed. REINDEL, 2:62-77 [= *Ep.* 2:5].

35. *Ep.* 95, ed. REINDEL, 3:41-46 [= *Ep.* 2:11]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 423-27. For a defense of the ca. 1063 dating, see SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 192.

36. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 12-13.

37. The sources for this trip are JOHN OF LODI, *Vita Damiani* iii, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 144:165-66; Anon., *De Gallica Petri Damiani Professione et Ejus Ultramontano Itinere*, ed. SCHWARTZ and HOFMEISTER, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores*, 30:1034-46; and the *Miracula S. Hugonis*, ed. by Martin MARRIEN and André DUCHESNE, *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis* (Paris, 1614), 460-62, rpt. in *Patrologia Latina*, 145:857-60. Peter Damian praises Cluny in letters 100, 103, 113 and 125, ed. REINDEL, 3:101-15, 138-41, 289-95, and 411-13, analyzed in LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 119-23; Maria CITTADINI FULVI, "Le Epistolae di San Pier Damiani ai monaci di Cluny," in *La Preparazione della riforma gregoriana e del pontificato di Gregorio VII: Atti del IX Convegno del Centro di Studi Avellaniti* (Fonte Avellana, 1985), 69-100; and Irvén M. RESNICK, "Peter Damian on Cluny, Liturgy and Penance," *The Journal of Religious History*, 15 (1988): 63-67 and 74.

derius wrote Peter a letter, which is only known from the reply it received, a collection of miracle stories which included, perhaps rather gallingly, some Cluniac anecdotes.³⁸ Since here Peter cites his attendance at a synod as an excuse for a delayed reply, he may not have written back until after the winter synod of 1063/1064.³⁹ An ultimatum followed: Peter's next letter reveals that he had learned from Desiderius' messenger "that unless I would visit the Monte Cassino monastery which you nobly rule, I would not have the prayers of that holy place if I should die while you were still living." He claims to be old and in ill health, unable to make the fifteen-day journey easily. He recommends that "what you prescribe for an old man, you yourself, vigorous in age and outstanding in strength, should try first. Besides, you have plenty of vehicles and the services of swarms of assistants . . . Do what you yourself order, and you, young man, hurry to the old man, you who asked the old man to go to you." He argues that, in all seriousness, much as he would love to make the pilgrimage to the threshold of St. Benedict, his health at this time was so bad that he would risk death if he tried. He softens the blow by going on to recount miracle stories, but again includes some from "the brothers of the venerable monastery of Cluny." In closing, regretting any implication that his refusal to visit was disobedient, he prays to "the Author of humility and obedience that He might soon deign to repel the reproaches of these charges from me, and might permit me to chant within the gates of Monte Cassino this verse of the prophet "Because of this my people will know my name, in that day it would be I myself who was speaking 'Behold, I am here'" [cf. Isaiah 52:6].⁴⁰ The letter demonstrates that even by the end of 1063 Peter had not yet visited Monte Cassino. But, as he hints, this was soon to change. Leo Marsiacus, Monte Cassino's chronicler, describes Peter Damian's arrival at Monte Cassino in 1064, placing it in the context of a devastating event. On 18 January 1063, while the monks were chanting the office of prime, "suddenly lightning falling from heaven annihilated the priest on duty for the week, a man named Manno of good reputation, who was standing in the choir; it knocked down the others present in the area, leaving them as if they were dead. It killed a novice who was standing in front of the larger cross. In the chapter it destroyed the official

38. *Ep.* 102, ed. REINDEL, 3:118-38. [= *Ep.* 2:15 or *Opusc.* 34(1)]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 261-69.

39. LUCCHESI, *Per Una Vita*, 2:54-56.

40. *Ep.* 106, ed. REINDEL, 3:168-185 [= *Ep.* 2:14 or *Opusc.* 33]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 231-49.

attendance lists, and left the attendance taker as if he were dead; it tore apart and threw down the plaque bearing the face of Abbot Riche-rius. It also struck in very many places in the monastery." The monks were more upset by the divine anger evidenced than by the destruction itself. To placate the wrath of God ("ad iram Dei placandam"), Desiderius and the brethren immediately instituted penances: a special Mass was to be celebrated on the first Friday of each month, a day everyone was to spend "in abstinence and in processing with bare feet." Such processions were how Monte Cassino responded to major disasters such as Saracens, Normans, earthquakes, and papal hostility. "Moreover, every day throughout the year, public prayers concerning lightning and special psalms were to be added to the Mass." Leo immediately followed his description of the storm and its consequences with "Then blessed Peter Damian, whom we already mentioned above [in regard to events in Rome], coming to the monastery, inflamed by word and equally by example all persons he could with a fervent zeal for the service of God. Then, with the consent and permission of the blessed abbot, he obtained as a voluntary offering from the whole congregation for the remission of their sins that on Fridays throughout the year that were not feast days they would be content with only bread and water, and, after confession, they would receive flagellation individually. Moreover, each year they would perform a three-day fast at the start of Lent." Leo immediately follows his account of Peter's visit by returning again to the storm, describing how, after Desiderius had prayed many times to learn the reason for the scourge of lightning, St. Benedict appeared to him and told him that it was the devil's work.⁴¹ Although contemporary scholars have failed to note this, Leo Marsicanus — and presumably his community — located Peter's visit in the aftermath of the lightning storm which required a penitential response. Since the actual visit occurred more than a year later, the context Leo chose must be significant. Peter Damian was a charismatic holy man whose chains and calls for strict ascetical observances had just caused a stir at Cluny.⁴² After the bolts from heaven, he was what Monte Cassino wanted.

41. *Chron. Cass.* III xx, ed. HOFFMANN, 386-87. Although this section of the chronicle is missing in the autograph of Leo's first recension, its editor attributes it to him: see HOFFMANN, "Einleitung," xxi and xxvii. Monte Cassino's tradition of barefoot processions is attested in *Chron. Cass.* I xxvi, II lxxiv, IV lxxv and cviii, ed. HOFFMANN, 77, 316, 527-28, and 572.

42. So one would judge from the *Miraculum S. Hugonis*, 460-62, although earlier sources do not specifically confirm this anecdote.

Once Peter had reached the monastery, he became part of its monastic family. A letter from Desiderius and his monks formally received him into their prayer confraternity.⁴³ The resulting feeling of community and an eloquent expression of the grief of parting are found in Damian's letter on the omnipotence of God. No distinction between the hermit of Fonte Avellana and the abbot prince of the "Terra Sancti Benedicti" is made in the prologue, which reminds Desiderius of the impossibility of monastic life at the curia, warning that "they love us," but in the way that "hunters love the deer," that is, as something to be consumed. Damian explains that this letter had been inspired by a dinner conversation with Desiderius, during which a citation from Jerome had begun a long theological argument on which Damian now wished to have an epistolary last word. His interpretation of divine omnipotence is far more abstract and systematic than his usual work, perhaps because he knew it would be attentively read by the scholars of Monte Cassino. He returns to the theme of community in his closing, a gracious invocation of "most sacred Monte Cassino" in which he claims that "from the time I left the threshold of your glorious monastery, I have had you continually before my eyes. . . . I remain always near you.... Blessed indeed are those who live with you; blessed those who die among you and in your sacred service. It truly ought to be believed that that ladder, which once was seen stretching from Monte Cassino up into heaven still gleams bedecked with lamps and robes of glory."⁴⁴

43. DESIDERIUS, *Ep.*, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 145:17-18. This brief letter is undated in KEHR, *Italia Pontificia*, 8:145; and in LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:61. Nevertheless, it can be assigned by elimination to the period soon after Peter Damian first visited Monte Cassino. It could not have been part of the initial correspondence, since Peter said he had received no letters from Desiderius and his monks. It would not have been composed in 1063-64, the period immediately preceding Peter's visit, since if Desiderius and his monks had enrolled Peter into their prayer confraternity at that point they would have gratuitously given up their best means to compel his presence. During a time when Desiderius was threatening to exclude Peter from Monte Cassino's prayers, he would not have formally guaranteed them to him. The letter most probably results from the visit, which — as argued in SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 183 — would have been the occasion for Peter to demonstrate the "love" and "benevolence" it mentions.

44. *Ep.* 119, ed. REINDEL, 3:341-84 [= *Ep.* 2:17 or *Opusc.* 36]; ed. and transl. Paolo BREZZI and Bruno NARDI, *S. Pier Damiani De Divina Omnipotentia e Altri Opuscoli*, Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano 5 (Florence, 1943); ed. and transl. CANTIN, *Pierre Damien: Lettre*; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 167-203. The allusion to the ladder stretching from Monte Cassino to heaven refers to Gregory I, *Dialogi* II xxxvii iii, ed. Adalbert DE VOGÜÉ and Paul ANTIN, 3 vols., *Sources Chrétiennes* 251, 260, and 265 (Paris, 1978-80), 2:244-45. This letter's theological argument has attracted considerable attention: see CANTIN's lengthy introduction and RESNICK, "Peter Damian on the Restoration of Virginity; A Problem for Medieval Theology," *Journal of Theological Studies*, 39 (1988): 125-34.

One result of Peter Damian's visit was an increase in his correspondence with Monte Cassino. Questions raised in the mind of Alberic the Rhetorician by his discussions with Peter, and perhaps by the complete version of Peter's earlier letter on the Books of Kings, prompted him to write what Peter the Deacon described as "quamplurimae epistolae."⁴⁵ The answers to two sets of these queries survive, one of which can be explicitly dated to 24 March 1065.⁴⁶ A story about Monte Cassino's ravens and other local color in Peter's *Sermon for the Vigil of the Feast of St. Benedict* indicates that he composed this sermon during or after his visit, perhaps specifically for St. Benedict's liturgy at Monte Cassino as is suggested by its speedy incorporation into the monastery's lectionaries.⁴⁷

Scholars have been vague about the one or more later visits Peter made to Monte Cassino. A stay of twenty days, mentioned by his hagiographer John of Lodi, may have taken place in 1066. John notes it because an unusual healing occurred then, whose beneficiaries were workers on the new basilica, which now "is seen splendidly adorned with gold and fine stones." He specifies that "when Peter was there, the basilica of blessed Benedict was founded" ("cum esset ibi, beatissimi Benedicti basilica fundabatur").⁴⁸ Scholars have disagreed about whether these words mean that Peter was there when the cornerstone was laid in 1066, or there at sometime from 1066 to 1071 during the period of construc-

45. PETER THE DEACON, *De Viris Illustribus Casinensis Coenobii* xxi, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 173:1032-33. Whether Peter the Deacon had more information about the extent of this correspondence than scholars have today is uncertain: see Anselmo LENTINI, "Alberico di Montecassino nel Quadro della Riforma Gregoriana," *Studi Gregoriani*, 4 (1952): 63-65, rpt. in *Medioevo letterario Cassinese: Scritti vari*, ed. Faustino AVAGLIANO, *Miscellanea Cassinese*, 57 (Monte Cassino, 1988), 54-57.

46. *Ep.* 126 and 127, ed. REINDEL, 3:413-24 and 424-28 [= *Ep.* 2:20 and 2:21 or *Opusc.* 37(1) and 37(2)]; transl. in GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 321-32, 333-38. The second letter is dated exactly, because, in the course of a discussion of chronology, Peter reveals that he is writing on the day before Easter in the year 1065.

47. *Sermo* viii, in *Sancti Petri Damiani Sermones*, ed. Ioannis LUCCHESI, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 57 (Turnhout, 1983), 44-48; transl. in GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 445-49. Peter's sermon is identified as a liturgical reading in Desiderius' *Dialogi de Miraculis S. Benedicti* II xii, ed. Gerhard SCHWARTZ and Adolf HOFMEISTER, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 30 (2) (Hannover, 1929), 1132. During his reign, it was given an honorable place in the magnificent series of lectionaries written to celebrate the feasts of Monte Cassino's patrons: see LUCCHESI, "Il Sermonario di S. Pier Damiani come monumento storico agiografico e liturgico," *Studi gregoriani*, 10 (1975): 21-22 and 36-37; and Francis NEWTON, "A Third and Older Cassinese Lectionary for the Feasts of Saints Benedict, Maur, and Scholastica," in *Monastica III, Miscellanea Cassinese*, 47 (Montecassino, 1983), 45-75, esp. 47, 50-53, and 62-63.

48. JOHN OF LODI, *Vita B. Petri Damiani* xx, ed. *Patrologia Latina*, 144:141-42.

tion.⁴⁹ To complicate matters further, John's narrative states that Peter made this long visit "as was his custom" ("ex more"), which might mean more visits than the one he mentions and the one documented in the Monte Cassino chronicle.

The visit alluded to by John, or some additional visit, might have inspired three more letters Peter sent to Monte Cassino. One to Desiderius, hastily written while a messenger was waiting (who presumably already had other letters to carry to Monte Cassino), begins a discussion of Peter, Paul, and the Church by recalling how Peter and Desiderius had recently spent Lent together.⁵⁰ A letter to Alberic, analyzing the spiritual symbolism of the forty days of Lent and of the forty-two stopping places of the exodus, was written to present more systematically a previous discussion.⁵¹ A letter to the monks, describing their failure to continue community confession and self-flagellation in the way he had prescribed, was prompted by inquiries he had made while he was among them.⁵² Recent scholars group these letters together because of their complementary recipients, their presupposition of a recent visit, and the possibility that they were produced for the same messenger.⁵³ Do they refer to the visit John of Lodi describes? That hypothesis is not precluded by the discrepancy between the visit of twenty days mentioned by John and the Lent, presumably forty days, Peter said he had spent with Desiderius — the two cardinals could have spent additional time together while attending one of the reform papacy's Lenten synods. A more serious difficulty is that, since the criticism of the relaxation of flagellation practices was written after the death of Cardinal Stephan of San Crisogono (February 1069),⁵⁴ Peter would have had to have taken an

49. The start of construction in 1066 is indicated in *Chron. Cass.* III xxvi, ed. HOFFMANN, 394. Damian's presence at the laying of the cornerstone is presumed by DRESSLER, *Petrus Damiani*, 73; LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 137; and CANTIN, *Pierre Damien: Lettre*, 33. That he was at Monte Cassino at some point during construction is the reading of LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:116.

50. *Ep.* 159, ed. REINDEL, 4:90-99 [= *Ep.* 2:16 or *Opusc.* 35]; transl. in GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 387-94.

51. *Ep.* 160, ed. REINDEL, 4:100-34 [= *Ep.* 2:7 or *Opusc.* 33]; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 295-320. On the attribution problem here, see note 16 above.

52. *Ep.* 161, ed. REINDEL, 4:135-44 [= *Ep.* 6:1 or *Opusc.* 43]; transl. in GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 409-19.

53. LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:121; REINDEL, *Briefe*, 1:56.

54. *Ep.* 161, ed. REINDEL, 4:138. On the chronology of Stephan, see LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:111-15, 117; HÜLS, *Kardinäle*, 169-70; and the bibliography cited in REINDEL, *Briefe*, 2:63, to which can be added a similarly paginated reprint of Robert SOMERVILLE's "Cardinal Stephanus of St. Grisogono: Some Remarks on Legates and Legatine Councils in the Eleventh Century," in *Papacy, Councils, and Canon Law in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1990).

improbably long time to rebuke the monks if the visit that had prompted his letter was that described by John and had taken place in 1066. The solution adopted by Giovanni Lucchesi, the greatest expert on Damian's itineraries, was to postulate two visits to Monte Cassino, the first in 1064, described in the Monte Cassino chronicle, and a second in 1069, referred to by John of Lodi and the letters.⁵⁵ This solution is not wholly satisfying in that it requires a broad interpretation of Peter's presence at Monte Cassino when the basilica "was founded" and a narrow interpretation of John's claim that Peter's visit was made "as was his custom."

A better understanding of Peter's visits to Monte Cassino is possible thanks to a letter that he wrote to a Bishop Mainard of Gubbio one day after he had heard its main story from a Monte Cassino monk.⁵⁶ Bishop Mainard is otherwise unknown.⁵⁷ Since the letter is undated, all that can be said initially is that it must have been written in the years between Damian's first visit to Monte Cassino in 1064 and his death in 1072. Lucchesi, observing that "it isn't easy to establish a date for this letter," vacillated about what to do with it: in his first attempt at a "Clavis S. Petri Damiani" (1961), an erroneous date for Mainard had led him to place it in 1061-62; in his improved second edition (1970), he assigned it to ca. 1071-72 and placed Bishop Mainard after the Bishop Hugh of Gubbio who was present at a Roman synod in 1070; in his studies of Peter's itineraries (1972), he assigned it back to 1069, placing Mainard before Hugh, having decided that the letter's warnings about the dangers of corrupt bishops would also be suitable for Mainard at the end of his reign.⁵⁸ Kurt Reindel places it within the years 1069 to 1071, but privileges the earlier date by the location he gives the letter in his chronological ordering of Peter's correspondence.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the letter can be dated precisely — its main anecdote is the key. Although Peter Damian ostensibly wrote Mainard to exhort him to rule his diocese well, he seems to have especially wanted to share a

55. LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:116-20.

56. *Ep.* 157, ed. REINDEL, 4:79-84 [= *Ep.* 4:8].

57. On the bishops of Gubbio in this period, see Gerhard SCHWARTZ, *Die Besetzung der Bistümer Reichsitaliens unter den sächsischen und salischen Kaisern mit den Listen der Bischöfe, 951-1122* (Leipzig, 1913), 245-46.

58. LUCCHESI, "Clavis S. Petri Damiani," in *Studi su San Pier Damiano in Onore del Cardinale Amleto Giovanni Cicognani*, 5 vols., Biblioteca Cardinale Gaetano Cicognani 1-5 (Faenza, 1961), 5:284; *Clavis S. Petri Damiani* (Faenza, 1970), 37-38, rpt. *Studi su San Pier Damiano*, 2nd ed. (Faenza 1971), 5:284; *Per una Vita*, 1:117-18.

59. REINDEL, *Briefe*, 1:56 and 59, 4:79-81 (which includes slight modifications based, as Reindel carefully acknowledges, on an earlier, unpublished version of this present article).

story he had heard just the day before from "John, formerly the archpriest of the Marsican church, and now a religious monk in the monastery of Cassino."⁶⁰ It was the bloody tale of how, toward the turn of the millenium, Bishop Alberic of Marsica, unhappy in retirement after he had handed over his bishopric to his son by a sometime nun, attempted to take over Monte Cassino. He conspired with some "most pestilential monks and laymen ignorant of God," paying money in advance and promising more once they had blinded Monte Cassino's abbot [Manso, d. 996] and brought back his eyeballs. The plot began successfully enough, but then the conspirators, returning with their grisly proof, met a mysterious traveler who informed them that Bishop Alberic had died at the very hour when they had blinded the abbot. This gruesome story may actually contain considerable historical fact.⁶¹ What is significant in the present context, however, is that Peter had heard it, the day before he wrote it down, from a Monte Cassino monk named John who was a former archpriest of Marsica.

There was no shortage of either monks named John or Marsicans at Monte Cassino,⁶² but Peter's informant can be identified thanks to his

60. The long phrase identifying John might be called into question because it is followed by an erased half line in the sole surviving manuscript copy, MONTE CASSINO ms. 359, fol. 98^v [= p. 196]. However, judging from a reproduction of the manuscript page, the erasure does not extend under the phrase itself. In any case, the corrections found here appear to be faithful to the original text being copied: for example, on the same page a dropped line, required by the sense of the text, has been written on the bottom margin, along with an inverted caret to indicate its location. My thanks to Newton for calling this potential problem to my attention, and to Reindel for sending me a reproduction of the manuscript copy. REINDEL, "Studien zur Überlieferung I," 79-88, describes the full manuscript, which is part of an important Monte Cassino late eleventh-century collection of Peter Damian's works.

61. Circumstantial evidence supports John's tale. Alberic and his son Guinisius were bishops of Marsica: see SCHWARTZ, *Die Besetzung der Bistümer Reichsitaliens*, 281-82. It would have been advantageous for them to gain control over Monte Cassino, inasmuch as the grant of the abbey of San Angelo in Barrea and its many subordinate possessions, which Alberic claimed to have been awarded by Emperor Otto I in 964, had been changed in 970 to a life tenancy, after which the property would revert to Monte Cassino. This must have been a desperate issue for the family, since after Alberic's death Guinisius fought to maintain possession. Imperial grants documenting this are nos. 263 and 396 in *Ottonis I Regis Diplomata*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica *Diplomatum Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae*, I(2):375-77 and 538-59. Lost documentation concerning Guinisius and San Angelo is indicated in François BOUGARD, *La Justice dans le Royaume d'Italie de la fin du VIII^e siècle au début du XI^e siècle*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 291 (Rome 1995), 404-05. Bloch, *Monte Cassino*, 1:369-75, describes San Angelo in Barrea and its possessions.

62. "John" was probably the most common name among Monte Cassino monks: see, for example, Mario INGUANEZ, "Frammenti di un necrologio cassinese del secolo XI," *Miscellanea Cassinese*, 11 (1932): 19-24; or HOFFMANN, "Der Kalender des Leo Marsicanus," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 21 (1965): 137-39. On

knowledge of Alberic's plot. The only other source for the tale is the Monte Cassino chronicle, where Leo Marsicanus tells it with better geographical coordinates and the name of the victim, Abbot Manso (d. 996).⁶³ Leo claims that he himself as a boy had seen one of the conspirators, a priest named Andrew who was then bedridden and "centenarius." If Leo could remember him, then Andrew must have lived nearly sixty years after the deaths of Alberic and Manso, given that Leo entered Monte Cassino at the age of fourteen sometime from 1060 to 1063.⁶⁴ Leo states that Andrew, "as often as he was asked, was accustomed to confess with tears all these things, in order, to my beloved uncle of sacred memory, Bishop John of Sora."⁶⁵ Thus Leo's source for the story, like Peter's, was a man named John. Leo's uncle must likewise have been a Marsican, since Leo himself was "Marsicanus" and both had lived near Andrew. Leo's uncle was also linked to Monte Cassino, since later chroniclers identify Bishop John of Sora as a former monk when they relate how, after he had become a bishop in late 1073 or early 1074, he returned twice in 1075 to consecrate chapels of the great basilica.⁶⁶ These parallels, too fantastic to be coincidences, can be explained easily enough if Peter Damian and Leo Marsicanus actually had the same source for the story of Alberic's plot — Leo's uncle John.

Peter wrote to Mainard while John was a monk at Monte Cassino. The year of John's entrance can be established thanks to Monte Cassino ms. 99, a magnificent homiliary in which an illustrated opening dedication verse bears the date of 1072. There a seated St. Benedict receives the volume from "Brother John, once archpriest of the Marsican church, and now the least servant of this holy place." John is accompanied by a magnificently vested Desiderius who wears the square nimbus of a living saint. A young monk at Benedict's feet has been identified as the Leo who oversaw the production of the manuscript, Leo Marsicanus

monks from the region of Marsica, see Angelo PANTONI, "Documenti epigrafici sulla presenza di settentrionali a Montecassino nell'alto medioevo," *Benedictina*, 12 (1958): 210; and HOFFMANN, "Zur Geschichte Montecassinis im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert," in Heinrich DORMEIER, *Montecassino und die Laien im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert*, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 27 (Stuttgart, 1979), 7-8.

63. The chronology fits Manso: see HOFFMANN, "Die älteren Abtlisten von Montecassino," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 47 (1967): 295-303.

64. Leo's entry into Monte Cassino at the age of fourteen, and the departure of his novice master for Sardinia around 1063, are documented in *Chron. Cass.* III p. pref and xxiv, ed. HOFFMANN, 362 and 387.

65. *Chron. Cass.* II xvi, ed. HOFFMANN, 196-99.

66. *Chron. Cass.* III xxxiv, ed. HOFFMANN, 410. On John's consecration as bishop, see KEHR, *Italia Pontificia*, 8:101.

himself. In the verse accompanying the figures, John states that "I had this book made at my own expense for the salvation of myself and my family. I offered it devoutly to holy father Benedict himself, on his sacred altar, on the day I took his habit."⁶⁷ There was little overlap between John's monastic career and Peter Damian's life, since John officially became a monk only in 1072, the year Peter died on 23 February at Faenza. The two could only have met at Monte Cassino only during John's probationary year, the Benedictine Rule's minimum trial period, which is unlikely to have been more extended for an archpriest so distinguished that he would soon become a bishop. It follows, therefore, that Peter Damian was at Monte Cassino in 1071 when he wrote his letter to Mainard.

This dating utilizes information already known to various groups of medieval scholars. Part of the argument was anticipated by Giovanni Mittarelli and Anselmo Costadoni, in the second volume of the *Annales Camaldulenses* (1756), who tentatively identified the Marsican archpriest known to Damian with the Marsican archpriest named in a 1072 Monte Cassino homiliary.⁶⁸ However, their 1072 dating of the letter to Mainard has been universally ignored because they did not specify clearly the homiliary they had seen and because they did not recognize the confirmatory link that could be established by equating Peter Damian's and Leo's sources for the Alberic story.⁶⁹ In 1936 Hans-Walter Klewitz securely identified Alberic's uncle, Bishop John of Sora, with the John of the codex.⁷⁰ More information on this family was given in studies by Hoffmann and by Francis Newton.⁷¹ All that was necessary was to put the pieces together, to equate Peter Damian's archpriest John with Leo's

67. The dedication verse and illustration in MONTE CASSINO ms. 99 are edited and analyzed in Francis NEWTON, "Leo Marsicanus and the Dedicatory Text and Drawing in Monte Cassino 99," *Scriptorium*, 33 (1979): 181-205. His arguments are summarized approvingly in BLOCH, *Monte Cassino*, 2:1098. Bibliography on the manuscript is listed by NEWTON, *Ibid.*, 203-05; and by Virginia BROWN, in *Hand List of Beneventan Manuscripts*, in her 2nd ed. of E. A. LOEW, *The Beneventan Script: A History of the South Italian Minuscule*, Sussidi Eruditi 34 (Rome, 1980), 2:65-66. Note also HOFFMANN, *Buchkunst und Königtum im ottonischen und frühsalischen Reich*, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 30 (1) (Stuttgart, 1986), 80-81.

68. Giovanni MITTARELLI and Anselmo COSTADONI, *Annales Camaldulenses Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, 9 vols. (Venice, 1755-73), 2:341-43.

69. LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:131-32.

70. Hans-Walter KLEWITZ, "Petrus Diaconus und die Montecassineneser Klosterchronik des Leo von Ostia," *Archiv für Urkundenforschung*, 14 (1936), 422-23.

71. HOFFMANN, "Der Kalender des Leo Marsicanus," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 21 (1965): 83-84, 118, and 137; NEWTON, "Leo Marsicanus," 181-205.

uncle and to recognize that this equation reveals the date of the letter to Mainard.

An accurate dating of this letter has several consequences. Scholars attempting to reconstruct the episcopal *fastes* of Gubbio need to put Mainard after, not before, the bishop Hugh who is attested in 1070. Any scholar attempting to revise the chronological ordering of Peter's correspondence established by Reindel would need to place this letter in the last year of Peter Damian's life. Most significantly for the present study, the new dating establishes that Peter made at least three trips to Monte Cassino, not just the two that Lucchesi could document. The Monte Cassino chronicle describes the first, undertaken in 1064 after the great thunderstorm. John of Lodi mentions a second, a twenty-day visit made during the construction of the basilica, perhaps in 1066 when the foundation stone was laid, but certainly in the period between 1066 and some point well before the 1071 dedication, during years when large numbers of workers were still employed over an extended period of time hauling stone. The letter to Mainard witnesses a third, in 1071, made at a time when scholars have assumed that Peter Damian had ceased to travel extensively.⁷² Three visits conform better to John of Lodi's claim that the visit he mentioned was part of Peter's customary practice. It becomes uncertain, however, whether one should locate after the second, after the third, or after some additional undocumented visit the complementary letters to Desiderius, Alberic, and the monks which refer to a previous stay, specified in the letter to Desiderius as having taken place during Lent. Presumably these letters were written at a time when the death of Cardinal Stephan of San Crisogono in February of 1069 was still a vivid memory.⁷³

Does Peter's presence at Monte Cassino in 1071 indicate that he had traveled there to attend the October dedication of the basilica? The year fits. Many other cardinals were there, even the pope. Peter, however, was not. His name is not found in the list of attending ecclesiastical dignitaries which Leo Marsicanus wrote soon after the

72. That after 1069 old age and ill-health confined Peter to Fonte Avellana is the opinion of, for example, Patricia McNULTY, *St. Peter Damian: Selected Writings on the Spiritual Life* (New York, 1960), 25; LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:102; and SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 213-14. Yet Peter was certainly capable of traveling, since his death occurred at Cesena, in Winter of 1072, while he was returning from a trip made to reconcile Ravenna and Rome.

73. See note 54 above.

event.⁷⁴ Nor is it in the version of this list Leo entered into the Monte Cassino chronicle.⁷⁵ Leo would not have overlooked the presence of a famous cardinal courted by his monastery. Although much of the scholarly literature on Peter places him at the dedication, this historiographical error springs from a forged papal reaffirmation of Monte Cassino's privileges, allegedly made then, which includes Peter's name among other signatories.⁷⁶ Peter must have chosen a less formal and crowded occasion for a visit.

* * *

What was the basis for Peter Damian's close association with Monte Cassino? It began by chance, not by calculation. Over most of his life, he had never felt compelled to visit. When he did establish direct contact, it was because of his friendship with Abbot Desiderius, whom he met as a cardinal priest important to the Roman curia. His attempts at a closer relationship were at first unreciprocated. Perhaps they would have remained fruitless if lightning from heaven had not convinced the monks that they needed him. Thus the establishment of a bond between Peter Damian and Monte Cassino is in itself dubious evidence either for his interest in traditional Benedictine monasticism or for Monte Cassino's interest in the new asceticism.

Nothing in the correspondence connects this relationship to the *Roman* reform program. One must interpret cautiously the most recent commentator, Giovanni Spinelli, who claims that "neither the abbot nor the community of Monte Cassino would have surrounded the prior of Fonte Avellana with so much affection and respect, and they would not have conserved so jealously the writings directed to them, even those somewhat critical, unless they had been in authentic sympathy with his elevated ideals of reform."⁷⁷ Exactly what were the "ideals of reform" that

74. Leo's list is reproduced photographically and transcribed in LECCISOTTI, "Il racconto della dedizione della basilica desideriana nel codice cassinese 47," in *Le Vicende della Basilica di Montecassino attraverso la documentazione archeologica*, ed. Angelo PANRONI, *Miscellanea Cassinese*, 36 (Monte Cassino, 1973), 213-25. Additional analysis is in BLOCH, "Leo of Ostia's List of Guests at the Dedication of Desiderius' Basilica on October 1, 1071," in *Monte Cassino*, 1:118-21.

75. *Chron. Cass.* III xxix, ed. HOFFMANN, 398-401.

76. On the forgery, see KEHN, *Italia Pontificia*, 8:144-45. Scholars placing Peter Damian at the dedication include DRESSLER, *Petrus Damiani*, 74; LECLERCQ, *Saint Pierre Damien*, 124; PALAZZINI, "Pier Damiani," 560; and LOUD, *Church and Society in Capua*, 70. The error, and its source, was recognized by LUCCHESI, *Per una Vita*, 2:130-31; and by BLOCH, "Leo of Ostia's List," *Monte Cassino*, 1:121.

77. SPINELLI, "San Pier Damiani," 185.

Peter presented? None of his letters to Monte Cassino centers on early Gregorian themes such as freedom of the Church, revival of canon law, and opposition to nicolatism and simony — these appear only in rare anecdotes such as a miracle story which illustrates that gifts to the poor may be more fruitful than Masses purchased from carnal priests.⁷⁸ The popes themselves are generally absent. These letters offer a program of monastic rather than world reform. Peter and Desiderius must take care not to be caught up by curial business like fish by fishermen, like deer by hunters. Monks are to keep clear of the flood like the animals in the ark; they are to pass through the desert to the promised land like the Israelites. The world is a distraction, not an opportunity, and flight from it the common vocation of both Fonte Avellana hermits and Monte Cassino monks.

Such ascetical ideals were what joined Peter Damian to Monte Cassino, at least initially. Because of his penitential expertise, the monks asked him to help them appease the thundering wrath of God. In the midst of sermons, miracle stories, and animal allegories, he found ways to recommend fasting, silence, and tears.⁷⁹ But backsliding by the Monte Cassino monks is indicated by the modification of flagellation practices which prompted what Reindel treats as Peter's last surviving letter to them. The retreat should not be overstated, since Peter's silence in regard to the fasting practices he had also recommended suggests that these were still being followed, an *argumentum ex silentio* which is stronger than usual since the silence comes from a man so outspoken that he did not hesitate to write to the pope himself that if Christ returned to earth he would find "neither law nor justice" in the proceedings of the curia.⁸⁰ Nothing indicates that Peter was not sincere when he praised Monte Cassino monks as men climbing the ladder to heaven by living ordered lives according to the *Rule*.⁸¹ Yet he was quick to identify problems ranging from the attitudes of Desiderius to the lack of zeal for flagellation. Thus, while shared ideals of asceticism help explain the

78. *Ep.* 106, ed. REINDEL, 3:180-81.

79. Bestiary exempla for fasting and silence are found in *Ep.* 86 in REINDEL, *Briefe*, 2:489-90, 500-01. Penitential tears are invoked in Peter's sermon for the vigil of the feast of St. Benedict: *Sermo* viii, in *Sancti Petri Damiani Sermones*, ed. LUCCHESI, 47-48; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 448. An overview of his ascetical teaching is given in BLUM, *St. Peter Damian: His Teaching on the Spiritual Life*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Mediaeval History n.s. 10 (Washington, D.C., 1947), 104-28; and in McNULTY, *St. Peter Damian: Selected Writings*, 26-32.

80. *Ep.* 46 in REINDEL, 2:41-42. Peter Damian's failure to point out more abuses at Monte Cassino ought to be noted in other contexts too. LOUD, *Church and Society in Capua*, 238, speculates that in this period the monks of Monte Cassino irregularly possessed private property. If that were so, why did not Peter notice and criticize?

81. See note 44 above.

relationship between Peter and Monte Cassino, especially at its origins, they are not a sufficient cause since even after the crisis provoked by the thunderstorm was past, even after the penitential enthusiasm of the monks had somewhat abated, Peter was still willing to make the arduous fifteen-day journey to Monte Cassino during the last year of his life.

Of course, the very imperfections of Monte Cassino could have attracted Peter inasmuch as they gave him a chance to use his talents. He may have taken quite seriously his responsibility as a spiritual advisor to the greatest monastery of Christendom. Granata concludes that Peter's letters to Monte Cassino have an underlying unity — despite their widely divergent subjects and themes — resulting from the efforts of a spiritual director who, far from limiting himself to pious exhortations, wanted to measure all problems against the word of God.⁸² Moreover, the man who signed most of his Monte Cassino correspondence as "Petrus peccator" had a vested interest in the holiness of the monastery from which he hoped to obtain the patronage of St. Benedict and the prayers of his monks.⁸³

Nevertheless, another dimension to this apostolate, an intellectual dimension, is revealed by the literary virtuosity of Peter's Monte Cassino letters. Although he doubted that intellectual fulfillment was a legitimate aim *per se*, and although he came to condemn the methods and morals of the secular schools from which he had acquired his "facunda et incomparabilis eloquentia,"⁸⁴ he retained enough enthusiasm about monastic schools to arrange for a nephew, a namesake with whom he corresponded, to go to Cluny to study the arts.⁸⁵ Monte Cassino in the mid eleventh century had assembled the best collection of scholars in Europe.⁸⁶ It had a school Peter could praise.⁸⁷ Its abbot was Deside-

82. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 13.

83. Peter Damian's desire to receive the prayers of great monasteries is also attested in his dealings with Cluny: see RESNICK, "Peter Damian on Cluny," 66.

84. On Peter Damian's own education, see CANTIN, "Saint Pierre Damien et la culture de son temps," *Studi gregoriani*, 10 (1975), 245-85. On his ambivalent attitudes toward schools, see BLUM, *St. Peter Damian*, 129-34; Jean GONSETTE, *Pierre Damien et la culture profane*, *Essais philosophiques* 7 (Louvain, 1956); CANTIN, *Les sciences séculières et la foi: les deux voies de la science au jugement de S. Pierre Damien (1007-1072)*, *Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 5 (Spoleto, 1975); Suzanne FONAY WEMPLE, *Atto of Vercelli: Church, State, and Christian Society in Tenth-Century Italy*, *Tem e Testi* 27 (Rome, 1979), 166-67; Patricia RANFT, "The Role of the Eremitic Monks in the Medieval Intellectual Tradition," in *From Cloister to Classroom: Monastic and Scholastic Approaches to Truth*, ed. E. Rozanne ELDER, *The Spirituality of Western Christendom*, 3 (Kalamazoo, 1986), 86-88; and RESNICK, "Attitudes towards Philosophy and Dialectic during the Gregorian Reform," *The Journal of Religious History*, 16 (1990), 115-25. The description of Peter's eloquence is taken from the *De Gallica Petri Damiani Projectione* iv, 1037.

85. *Ep.* 123 and 125, ed. REINDEL, 3:399-407 and 411-13 [= *Ep.* 6:21 and 6:3].

86. See the bibliography cited in note 2 above. Good brief surveys are CANTIN,

rius, who, according to Amatus of Monte Cassino, had begun to take up the study of grammar and rhetoric in earnest at about the age of forty⁸⁸ — that is, at about the time Peter began to visit Monte Cassino. The intellectual stimulation he received from Monte Cassino is demonstrated by the fact that at least five of the six surviving letters he wrote to its monks after he had first visited Monte Cassino were prompted by discussions he had had while there. The letters not only clarify his arguments, but also give him the final words. He managed to answer in many genres, including sermons, theological disputations, biblical commentaries, bestiaries, miracle collections, and more. Monte Cassino also offered him material support for his intellectual endeavors, the scribal assistance and back-up copies important to a man of letters trying to leave his works in order.⁸⁹ Monte Cassino was not the desert of Fonte Avellana, but for conserving a literary heritage this might have been an advantage.

The association between Peter Damian and Monte Cassino is not easily categorized. It is better understood in spiritual rather than political terms, but only if "spiritual" is defined broadly enough to include intellectual as well as spiritual life. The line separating spirituality and theology which scholars take for granted today, and which was already sharp in the thirteenth century, is hard to discover in Peter Damian's relationship with Monte Cassino. He was recruited to provide ascetical leadership in a crisis, but he seems to have quickly taken his place in the monastery's intellectual circles. His letters, although written for apostolic and ecclesiastical purposes, were artfully composed for a cultured and appreciative audience. The association stimulated and supported Peter during his last years. It enriched Monte Cassino with the benefits of his knowledge, prestige, and holiness. Studies of Monte Cassino's "Golden Age" have tended to separate its spiritual from its literary glories, and to treat the relationship with Peter Damian in the former category. More probably he belonged at least equally to both realms.

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Pierre Damien: Lettre, 49-63; and COWDREY, *Age of Abbot Desiderius*, 19-27.

87. *Ep.* 119, ed. REINDEL, 3:382; ed. and transl. BREZZI and NARDI, *S. Pier Damiani*, 150; ed. and transl. CANTIN, *Pierre Damien: Lettre*, 482; transl. GRANATA, *Pier Damiani: Lettere*, 201.

88. On Desiderius' new literary interests, see AMATUS OF MONTE CASSINO, *Storia de' Normanni* III lii, ed. Vincenzo DE BARTHOLOMAEIS, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia*, 76 (Rome, 1935), 176-77.

89. A promised scribe is mentioned *Ep.* 95, ed. REINDEL, 3:42 (see note 35 above). P. PALAZZINI, "Frammenti di codici in Beneventana: Amanuensi Cassinesi a Fonte Avellana?" *Aevum*, 17 (1943): 254-58, examines possible evidence for Monte Cassino scribes working at Fonte Avellana.