

From Jericho to Jerusalem

The Violent Transformation of Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne

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ON THE EVENING of Friday, November 7, 1225, the archbishop of Cologne was murdered. That surprise attack by a band of local noblemen left the city bereft of a charismatic, powerful, and decidedly controversial political and ecclesiastical leader. One year later the Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach, at the urging of the new archbishop Henry of Molenark, attempted to remedy the loss by composing a *Vita* of Engelbert, praising his deeds and ultimately proclaiming him a saint.¹ The text is an extraordinary document that contains lively narrative sequences, detailed accounts of political situations, and some remarkable theoretical wrestling with the notion of sanctity. For, as Caesarius was well aware, claims for the archbishop's holiness were not to go undisputed; many citizens appear simply not to have liked him much, and most were aware that his spiritual concerns were not abundant. Below the surface of Caesarius's candid biography lies a mass of questions that we can see him struggling to resolve, both for the sake of a consistent narrative and in order to persuade his skeptical audience. What is the nature of sanctity? How do miracles work? How do they relate to virtues in life? What is the relation between life and death and the afterlife? At the heart of these diverse questions lie distinct but often contradictory assumptions and expectations about Last Things. Caesarius knew he was treading on thin ice by proclaiming Engelbert a martyr who enjoyed company with God immediately following his unexpected violent death, for, as he and his readers were certainly well aware, an extended sojourn in purgatory would have been necessary for anyone else departing life with the spiritual failings of this archbishop. How were these conflicting assumptions about the "eschatology of immortality" to be reconciled?

As we shall see, Caesarius would return repeatedly to the fact of Engel-

bert's murder and to its gruesome relic, the corpse, in order to work out these issues. The shock and pain of death in this case provided the pivotal point. As the archbishop's blood flowed out, what had been spiritual deficiencies in life became wells of virtue, worldly activities were replaced by miraculous ones, and the man who in the end could not save himself in the flesh gained the power to save the souls of others. While my account of Caesarius's biography of Engelbert is a case study of one man's Last Things, it contains much that is relevant to a more general discussion of eschatology. Issues of life and death, body and soul, judgment and salvation form the crux of the narrative, and Caesarius's unconventional treatment of the eschatology of immortality makes the *Vita* an especially valuable document when we consider thirteenth-century views of the End.²

Our view of this text must be deepened and complicated on the other hand if we keep in mind that it was ultimately unsuccessful in its aims to provide Cologne with a new saint: Engelbert was never canonized (nor, it appears, was a formal canonization process even initiated), and the spate of miracles so dutifully recorded in the *Vita* seems to have died along with Caesarius in around 1240. The *Vita* did not attract interest until the sixteenth century, when it was reworked in 1575 by Laurentius Surius.³ Eight years later Engelbert's name was entered for the first time into the Roman Martyrology, although his feast day was not celebrated publicly until 1617. Renewed interest in the archbishop's relics followed immediately; they were translated in 1622 and in 1633 received a glorious new shrine reliquary.⁴ Tourists visiting the Cologne Cathedral Treasury today can marvel at the lavishness of the precious materials and the dramatic poses of the little bishop figurines that line the sides of the coffer, gazing attentively at the scenes from the life of Engelbert depicted on silver relief plaques just above their shoulders: Engelbert saying mass, Engelbert feeding the hungry, Engelbert stabbed amid a flurry of cloaks and horses' hooves. To be sure, there is a far greater emphasis on the archbishop's pastoral care and personal piety in these images than there is in Caesarius's *Vita*—a reflection of the very different concerns of the Church during the Counter-Reformation that were also manifested in the title of Engelbert's new *Vita* with its emphasis on his "defensione ecclesiasticae libertatis et Romanae Ecclesiae obedientia." The shrine, of course, is likewise couched in a drastically different visual idiom from that current at the time of his death—one need only compare the sprawling baroque effigy with the solemn wooden statue of Engelbert produced around 1240 (now in Münster).⁵ Nonetheless, in the narrative panels that frame the archbishop's bones, the words of Caesarius continue to resonate.

During his nine-year reign, Caesarius tells us, Archbishop Engelbert II

of Berg proved himself a fierce and enthusiastic civic protector.⁶ His position established him as the most powerful official in the Holy Roman Empire after the emperor himself, and when after a tumultuous adolescence he grasped the reins of office, it was with evident glee. A member of one of Cologne's oldest and most formidable families,⁷ he aimed to reestablish Cologne's pre-eminence after decades of political and economic turmoil, and he swiftly put to an end the war, famine, inflation, and interdicts that had characterized his predecessors' reigns.⁸ He rebuilt crumbling defensive walls, resuscitated long-dead trade routes, and proudly assumed the role of a "new Solomon" as he stunned visiting kings and dignitaries with the splendor of his markedly improved city.⁹ Along with his duties as chief imperial administrator and local prince, Archbishop Engelbert worked to renovate churches, welcomed members of the young mendicant orders (who were still treated with suspicion), and reestablished the by then hazy boundaries between secular and ecclesiastical privileges, successfully reclaiming for the church numerous properties long oppressed by local nobles.¹⁰ At the same time, we are told, he exercised an ardent love for peace and zeal for justice, hearing and helping the local downtrodden in their plights against greedy lawyers, highwaymen, and even the ecclesiastical bureaucracy of which he himself was a part.¹¹ In this, Engelbert follows the model of lay male piety established in Odo of Cluny's tenth-century *Life of Saint Gerald of Aurillac*, but in contrast to Gerald, as we shall see, Engelbert displays no religious motivations or corresponding ascetic behavior.¹²

Like those of other charismatic power-holders (then as now), Engelbert's bold actions and forceful character caused sharp divisions in public opinion about him. Nevertheless, whether one loved and admired or feared and resented him, his far-reaching influence, diplomatic savvy, and administrative ingenuity were widely recognized and often appreciated by contemporaries. Nor did his lack of concern for pastoral duties or spiritual care seem to bother his contemporaries, who must have taken for granted the essentially secular, political nature of a powerful bishop-prince's duties. Although personal piety and an ascetic life did matter in questions of episcopal sanctity, as contemporary canonization documents make clear,¹³ it is, as C. Stephen Jaeger has reminded us, abundantly evident from surviving bishops' biographies that "piety was not a requisite quality for the position [of bishop] in the same way that statesmanship and administrative skill were."¹⁴ One can hardly obtain a clearer picture of the duties and qualities associated with the powerful bishop-princes of thirteenth-century Germany than from the verses written by the proimperial poet-propagandist Walther von der Vogelweide, praising Engelbert's achievements in the early 1220s:

Von Kölne werder bischof, sint von schulden frô.
ir hânt dem rîche wol gedienet und alsô,
daz iuwer lob da enzwischen stiget unde sweibet hô.
si iuwer werdekeit dekeinen boesen zagen swære,
fürsten meister, dáz sí fu als ein unnütze drô.
getriuwer küniges pflégære, ir sît höher mære,
keisers êren trôst baz dâne ie kancelære,
drier künige und ênlif tûsent mege kamerære.¹⁵

Noble bishop of Cologne, you have good cause to be happy. You have served the empire well—so well that your fame has grown in the meantime, and now hovers high. Should your esteem be offensive to any common cowards, you chief of princes, may that be to you an empty threat. Loyal guardian of the king, you are widely famous—better than any chancellor the guarantor of the emperor's honor, protector of Three Kings and Eleven Thousand Virgins.

Perhaps, joining in Walther's optimism, Engelbert took those words too much to heart and dismissed completely the threats that "common cowards" were indeed to pose. In any case, what began as a straightforward but irreconcilable dispute between the archbishop and his distant cousin Count Frederick of Isenberg over rights to a local nunnery ended in Engelbert's bloody death in 1225.¹⁶ Modern scholarship, beginning with a 1917 article by Wolfgang Kleist, maintains that the original plan had been simply to kidnap not kill the archbishop.¹⁷ Frederick, who under the mask of friendship was accompanying Engelbert on a journey to a church dedication ceremony in the outer reaches of the diocese, had treacherously arranged for some twenty-five of his men to wait in ambush along the sides of what Caesarius describes as a "concave road," a narrow path embedded between steep wooded hills near to the town of Gevelsberg. When the men, well concealed by the trees, leaped down to seize the vulnerable archbishop, the violence was evidently meant to stop there. But the plan backfired. For the archbishop, suddenly "made stronger," surprised the hitmen by struggling vigorously against them, and the attackers lost all control and drew their daggers. What followed, according to an eyewitness report, was a frenzied free-for-all, with the men brutally pounding, stabbing, and chopping away at the indignant, terrified, and ultimately helpless archbishop.¹⁸ When Engelbert's companions, worried that he had been taken captive by his enemies, turned back to search for him, they nearly stumbled over his prone body lying in the dirt. One can only imagine their shock to find their proud and robust leader now a filthy, bloody corpse—"exceedingly horrible to see" and, to add insult to injury, even stripped of his characteristically sumptuous attire.

The scenes described here were to provide fodder for much imaginative speculation in later centuries—from the dramatic depiction on the side of Engelbert's baroque shrine, which represents the men in great swooping cloaks and mannered poses, to Annette von Droste-Hülshoff's Romantic ballad "Der Tod des Erzbischofs Engelbert von Köln" (1838), which calls to mind a dreamy, gentle Engelbert facing the band of villains amid a forest thick with crackling branches and dripping dew.¹⁹ In contrast to those later, embellished versions of the story, Caesarius's account remains remarkably pragmatic. Just as in the miracle stories, he is careful to inform us which person performed what act at which point; and while the scene is a highly engaging read by virtue of its subject matter, Caesarius's primary concern seems to be to provide a full and accurate report of the struggle. Perhaps, paradoxically, it is the very matter-of-factness of this account, which does not appear to embellish anything and saves any moralizing until the end, that makes it so moving. Certainly it conforms to a tradition of history writing analyzed by Karl Morrison and exemplified by Caesarius's compatriot Otto of Freising, who "considered part of the historian's task to provide the reader with the illusion of being an eyewitness."²⁰

But back to the narrative itself. Stunned, saddened, and most likely terrified for their own safety, the archbishop's companions next piled his corpse onto an offensive-smelling dung cart borrowed from a nearby farmer and trundled it along to the closest church. Engelbert's humiliation was deepened further when, upon arrival there, the pastor made clear his disgust for the gory heap. Claiming that the body would "contaminate" the church, he relegated it instead to a corner of his living quarters for the night, where it would do less harm. There a monk recently converted from the knightly class guarded it—his former profession, it was claimed, made him less likely to be disturbed by close contact with a murdered person. The body soon began to work miracles, healing those who dared touch it and provoking visions in those who sat mourning it.²¹ These powers might help explain the fascination with which, soon afterward, the corpse was washed, eviscerated, inspected, and commented upon before being hauled back to Cologne, where the flesh was finally boiled away and buried in an "old tower."²² The bones—clean, now, though thoroughly crushed in the onslaught—remained exposed as powerful and less revolting tokens of the offense. These and the blood-soaked cap and shirt were marched from town to town by Cologne officials to reinforce their complaints against the crime's perpetrators, and these articles acted as tangible stand-ins for the archbishop in passionate demands for justice and revenge. Within a year, the main instigators—most prominently, Count Fred-

erick of Isenberg—were tracked down, tried, and publicly executed.²³ And it was one year after the murder, in November 1226, that the middle-aged Prior Caesarius from the monastery at Heisterbach presented to the new archbishop Henry of Molenark a *Vita* of Engelbert declaring him a saint.

Although the *Vita* was written at Henry's request—as the prefatory, conventional claims of modesty and unworthiness insist—there is good reason to believe that Caesarius was already deeply engaged in the tumultuous events surrounding the hero's life and death.²⁴ He included a passionate lament about the murder in a sermon composed immediately after the killing and probably, given the ambivalent attitude displayed toward the archbishop's life, even before the miracles began to occur. And in the prologue to a new collection of miracle stories known as the *Libri miraculorum* (1225–26), Caesarius announced his intention to include a *Vita* of Engelbert as Books IV and V. That plan was ultimately not borne out, probably because the subsequent official commission would have rendered it superfluous.²⁵

Modern scholars, of course, are well familiar with Caesarius of Heisterbach as an enthusiastic observer, reporter, and interpreter of things miraculous, and his peers in thirteenth-century monastic communities also recognized him as such.²⁶ His *Dialogue on Miracles* was a best-seller, so to speak, even as he was writing it—much to his own annoyance, for in a letter to a Prior Peter of Marienstatt he complains of certain monks and nuns snatching up portions to copy before his careful revisions were complete.²⁷ Although representing a different genre, the *Vita* of Engelbert is no less characterized by vivid local color, narrative candor, and wide-eyed wit than those collections of exempla—the lively account of the archbishop's murder, supplemented by an eyewitness report, has been praised by modern commentators as "among the best [passages] that Caesarius ever wrote."²⁸

As a historical document, however, the *Vita* remains as problematic and controversial as its very subject had been. By defying attempts to categorize it definitively as "true" historical biography or as a bit of myth-making hagiography, its structure has long frustrated modern scholars.²⁹ Its content presented no less a problem to Caesarius's own contemporaries (as he himself notes), many of whom were indeed skeptical that the worldly, wealthy man they knew could possibly be the healing, punishing, and vision-stimulating holy man whose pious activities were being recounted.³⁰ This, of course, is a dilemma that must have vexed many hagiographers of recognizable, recently dead persons: namely, how to reconcile a physical, time-bound life in the world with a spiritual, ahistorical holy existence. Sainly bishops—whose nonsainly peers were frequently commemorated in laudatory episcopal biographies³¹—pro-

vided special problems for their biographers, who had to combine the traditions of hagiographical and biographical writing to produce a new picture of a man who was both a secular administrative whiz and a pious ascetic. In fact, in spite of the low expectations for piety in bishops as essentially political figures, all five bishops who both died and were canonized during the thirteenth century—William of Bourges (d. 1209, can. 1218), Hugh of Lincoln (d. 1200, can. 1220), Edmund of Canterbury (d. 1240, can. 1247), William Pinchon (d. 1234, can. 1247), and Richard of Chichester (d. 1253, can. 1262)³²—displayed a penchant for ascetic, distinctly mendicant-influenced ideals, acting as models of humility, poverty, generosity, and so on. As in the case of Gerald of Aurillac, such behavior was closely tied to active thaumaturgical powers, so that their sanctity was recognized and praised during their lifetimes.³³

This was distinctly not the case for Engelbert. In his sermon on the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 30), preached immediately after the murder, Caesarius openly laments the archbishop's journey in life from Jerusalem to Jericho—the route along which the man of the parable was attacked by robbers and left for dead:³⁴

And perhaps, as most people suppose, God wanted to erase his descent from Jerusalem to Jericho [through his death]. Through Jerusalem, in which the temple was and therefore true religion, are indicated things spiritual; through Jericho, things worldly and secular. While [Engelbert] had been bishop and duke, he directed his attention less to those former things and went far down into the latter. This happened to such an extent that one of our monks said to him, "Lord, you are a good duke, but not a good bishop!"³⁵

In the *Vita*, too, Caesarius does not hesitate to inform us of the future archbishop's "complete and manifold" absorption as a youth in "the glories of worldly things" (even while already holding several high ecclesiastical offices);³⁶ he portrays him as completely entrapped by "nets of demons, tools and snares of sinners."³⁷ How, then, was Caesarius to explain the postmortem Engelbert, who appeared in visions performing mass—in one instance, his own memorial mass—or clad all in white and riding a mule humbly into church?³⁸ In seventy-nine recorded episodes over a period of ten years, this new Engelbert healed the blind, deaf, crippled, and insane and punished disbelievers, working miracles both through his relics at Cologne and through his blood soaking the ground at Gevelsberg.³⁹ And his sanctity was recognized now not only by those men and women who experienced his powers directly, but was also asserted by demons, who grudgingly praised the saint and described his heavenly status through the mouths of possessed people.⁴⁰

How could this be? The matter worried the knights and merchants who, Caesarius informs us, were apt to declare: "We cannot in any way believe that this proud, greedy man, entirely given over to the world, is able to work miracles"⁴¹—and the issue clearly bothered Caesarius as well.

And so, as a preface to his account of Engelbert's postmortem, holy activities, Caesarius offers a most unusual theory. The wonders that were occurring both at the archbishop's tomb in Cologne cathedral and at the site of his murder must not be regarded, he explains, as "the substance of sanctity, but are a certain signal of sanctity. Nor would it have been necessary," he continues, "that bishop Engelbert be distinguished by miracles after death if his life had been more perfect before death. The blessed Ebergisil and Saint Agilolf, both bishops of Cologne, both innocents murdered by guilty men, were crowned with martyrdom. They nonetheless were distinguished after death by rather few miracles, since it was not necessary that miracles recommend after death those whom a most holy life had recommended before death."⁴² This argument represents a surprising departure from traditional theories of the miraculous—and it was deliberately so, as we can see from Caesarius's pointed distortion of the truth that many miracles had in fact long been attributed to the earlier bishops.⁴³

As the compiler of a monumental collection of miracle stories, Caesarius was certainly aware of contemporary theoretical discussions of miracles and was one of the first to offer a definition of miracles as violating the ordinary course of nature.⁴⁴ But although the exact nature of miracles and their relation to individual sanctity was under debate at the time, most theologians agreed that true miracles were worked by God through a person distinguished by his or her individual merits.⁴⁵ Of course, it was difficult in the Middle Ages (as it remains today) for an individual to be acknowledged widely as a saint if he or she did not work miracles after death, regardless of his or her virtues during life. Nonetheless, miracles were tricky things; they could be performed fraudulently, for example by magicians or disguised demons, as well as legitimately by real saints, and medieval people were careful to distinguish between "true" and "false" displays.⁴⁶ One way of ascertaining that miracles were real and not delusions or falsely inspired was to examine the wonder-worker's life, whether it conformed in virtue to the astonishing deeds and whether this was a person through whom God would want to work.⁴⁷

In the eyes of many of his contemporaries, Engelbert was clearly not such a person, and it was probably to counter popular skepticism that Caesarius contrived his unusual miracle theory. His claim here is that the miracles of Engelbert must be understood as signifying not a holy life—for as every-

one well knew, the archbishop was little concerned with either spiritual or pastoral duties—but rather a holy *death*. In order for his miraculous capacities to be explained convincingly, Engelbert's murder had to be presented as a type of radical conversion, a reversal and a negation of his former, worldly life—the last-minute equivalent, one might say, to St. Francis's famous renunciation of his father's goods while still a young man, and a satisfactory substitute on earth for purgatorial penance. As Caesarius states in the first chapter of the *Vita*, "The sanctity which he lacked in his life was replenished in full by his death; and if he was less than perfect in his manner of living, he was nonetheless made holy through his suffering."⁴⁸

Although Caesarius insists throughout the *Vita* that Engelbert had died "in defense of the Church," thus aligning him with traditional martyrs, he continually presents this especially gruesome manner of death as being of interest in itself. It was the unwarranted outpouring of blood, the broken bones, the grief and humiliation—for its own sake more than for its political significance—that made Engelbert like Christ, Thomas Becket, and the other holy men and women of the time who embraced physical pain as an exhilarating, expiatory state of being.⁴⁹ In one remarkable passage, Caesarius begins to justify Engelbert's status as a martyr, citing various "causes" of martyrdom—innocence as in Abel, love of law as in the Maccabees, and so on—and aligning his hero, finally, with the internationally popular Thomas Becket.⁵⁰ (Engelbert seems, in fact, to have provided Caesarius with a figure well suited for what seems to be a particular sympathy of his for innocent victims of violent crime; he proclaimed the martyrdom of Margaret of Louvain, a young girl who was raped and murdered during a robbery of her family's home, in nearly identical terms.)⁵¹ "In modern times," Caesarius argues, [Christ] "was murdered in Saint Thomas, bishop of Canterbury, because of the need to maintain the liberty of the Church. The same cause of death existed in our leader Engelbert."⁵² Having found a suitable parallel, he proceeds to demonstrate the men's essential sameness on several points: "That man [Thomas] was murdered for the freedom of the church of Canterbury; this one, truly, for the defense of the church of Essen. That man freed the English church from the heavy yoke of King Henry with his blood; this one, by a similar death, entrusted the church to his protection from the unbearable demands of Count Frederick."⁵³

However, Caesarius continues, Engelbert should be admired as an even greater saint than his English counterpart because of the horrid particulars of his death.

And although the blessed Thomas sustained many troubles, damages and exile before his passion that Engelbert did not sustain, in [Engelbert's] passion it is certain that he

had, nonetheless, *more grief, anguish and distress* than Thomas had borne. That man indeed (as we read), struck in the head with a single blow, was left in the temple by sacrilegious men; this one, *his entire body bored through with many wounds by very many brigands*, was left naked on a dungheap. Saint Thomas was murdered by men who openly hated him; but Saint Engelbert⁵⁴ . . . by relatives and friends from whom he had anticipated nothing bad, and whom he himself had raised up. (emphasis added)⁵⁵

"*This tends*," says Caesarius, "*to induce greater grief and to increase ill-feeling*" (emphasis added).⁵⁶ What Caesarius is arguing, in other words, is that for all the similarities in cause with St. Thomas, Engelbert surpasses that famous martyr in glory because he suffered more in his death. I have emphasized certain phrases within this passage in order to point out the importance Caesarius places on Engelbert's pain—both physical (the body "bored through with many wounds") and psychological ("greater grief" and "ill feeling"). Unlike early martyrs and those described in the slightly later *Golden Legend*, who likewise died under violent and painful conditions but remained joyous, Engelbert died *sad*.⁵⁷ In that respect he is assimilated to Christ, who was also abandoned by his friends and executed by people to whom he had done no wrong. Brutally mauled by "many brigands," including his own relatives and supposed allies, and abandoned as a bloody, naked, and vulnerable cadaver, Engelbert died not with a typical martyr's confidence and self-righteousness—enjoying the painless "anesthesia of glory" so characteristic of other martyrs⁵⁸—but with a violent struggle, in confusion, pain, sadness, and humiliation. His emphatically undignified death contrasts with his orderly, controlled, dignified life. By genuinely *suffering*, both physically and psychologically, Engelbert inverted and negated his former secular life and was transformed—in the formulation of St. Paul borrowed repeatedly by Caesarius—from a "vessel of wrath" into a "vessel of glory."⁵⁹ That punishment on earth was enough to override any expiatory punishment after death that would otherwise have been necessary. For all his outrage and bitterness against them, Caesarius thus seems to have Count Frederick and his allies performing a service to the archbishop by shedding his blood.

The notion that suffering could function as a means of erasing sins or filling in moral deficiencies was not, of course, a new idea with Caesarius but had a long tradition in medieval thought. Writers such as St. Bonaventure applied it first of all to Christ himself—his suffering for the sins of humanity, it was held, overreached the bounds of ordinary human pain, to the extent that his body was more perfect than ordinary human bodies.⁶⁰ Engelbert's suffering, too, was greater than most people's—even than that of other martyrs such as Thomas—but this, it is argued, was because he was more in need of penance than they. Caesarius tells us that as the archbishop's companions

washed and examined the corpse the day after the murder, they counted forty-seven wounds on it and bestowed on those wounds a profoundly personal meaning by associating them with certain holes in Engelbert's spiritual life.⁶¹ As Caesarius recounts, "In every one of the members in which he had sinned, he was punished. He was punished many times in the head, namely on the crown, on the forehead, on the temples, lips and teeth—and so severely that rivulets of blood, flooding and flowing down, poured into and filled the hollows of his eyes, ears, nose and mouth to overflowing. He was also punished on the throat and neck, on the shoulders and back, on the chest and heart, on the stomach and hips, on the legs and feet."⁶²

Through his very language, with its steady rhythm and repetition, Caesarius here directs us point by point through the saint's body, pressing us to envision and replay the torments it had experienced. Caesarius's insistence on the active role of his readers (or listeners) in that process is made explicit in the next clause; he has carefully enumerated the archbishop's wounds, he continues, "in order that you, reader, might recognize with what kind of baptism Christ deemed worthy to wash away whatever guilt his martyr had incurred through being proud, through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, thinking, being immoderate, working, touching, walking, and any other kind of frivolities, omissions and negligences of discipline whatsoever. . . . Surely, surely not without reason did he arrive at the glory of a martyr!"⁶³ It is important to recognize that there were liturgical precedents for Caesarius's graphic description of the dead man's body parts and the role they played in his spiritual state. The rites for the sick and dying in the late ninth-century Sacramentary of Sens, discussed by Frederick Paxton, provide a striking structural parallel in their call for the anointing of the sick person "on the neck, and throat, and chest, and between the shoulders, and on the five corporeal senses, on the eyebrows, on the ears inside and out, on the end of or within the nostrils, on the outside of the lips, and similarly on the outside of the hands, so that the stains that have in any way adhered through the five senses of the mind and body by the fragility of the flesh of the body, these may be cast out by the spiritual medicine and the mercy of the Lord."⁶⁴ Of course, Engelbert's death occurred too suddenly for the formal rites of the dying to have been performed. But both the language of the passage on the washing of the corpse and the ideas it contains on the linkages between body and virtue (or vice) make it clear that Caesarius understood the flooding of Engelbert's body with blood to substitute for its anointing with oil—a type of penance through blood such as has been studied in depth by Arnold Angenendt.⁶⁵ In this way, what had appeared in the *Vita* to be a chaotic and sloppily executed attack (see Appendix to this chapter) became an act highly charged with positive religious meaning.

The wounds on Engelbert's corpse were not to be perceived only as signs pointing to the martyr's past faults. Rather, they were also the tangible stage from which God performed an intensive series of supernatural spectacles. At first it was surprising for Caesarius that Henry, the cellarer of Hemmerode—who had tried to defend Engelbert from the attack—experienced "no horror" while guarding the body the night after the murder, "such as usually arises from [contact with] the cadavers of murdered people."⁶⁶ Caesarius attributes this unusual bravery to the "presence of holy angels, who were exercising a heavenly watch around the martyr's body." (But, he continues, "this Henry had been a knight prior to his conversion, and was therefore probably better equipped and more brave for this kind of work than most people."⁶⁷) Such boldness in overcoming revulsion to handle the corpse was visibly and immediately rewarded in other cases. During the transport of the body back to Cologne, an older monk also named Henry was cured of a chronic limp when, "contemplating the blessed man murdered as an innocent by guilty men," he "touched the murdered man's bare arm with his own bare hand."⁶⁸ But the priest who had refused to let the corpse spend the previous night in his church—"claiming that the basilica would be contaminated, whereas it would in fact have been more greatly consecrated by the martyr's blood"—was "punished very severely, by divine will, on his body even today."⁶⁹ During its night at the monastery of Altenberg, the immanent power of the corpse and the intensity of the brothers' emotions were such as to induce in some of them "wonderful visions of the martyr's glory" while they slept.⁷⁰

In an earlier paper in this volume, Peter Brown discusses the attitude toward the bodies and souls of the deceased manifested in the prayers of sixth-century religious men and women.⁷¹ Those persons, he argues, were confronted with a "bruising paradox" as they washed and examined the lifeless flesh of their companions, for what they recognized in those moments was that "a human soul, released from the body and still 'soiled' with the dirt of life in a sinful world now drew close to the immense purity of God and His angels."⁷² This attitude—and the sense of eschatology it entails—could hardly be more different from that manifested by Engelbert's friends as they cleaned his battered corpse and counted his wounds. Indeed, it appears that they perceived the experience in exactly the opposite terms: for them, the soul was made pure—and manifested its proximity to God—precisely through the messy materiality of the body. Bloody limbs that could heal or hurt a person on contact must have been seen as virtually crackling with divine energy, so that along with grief, anger, and compassion, they also had the capacity to arouse feelings of awe and admiration. The friends of Engelbert did not need to pray that God have mercy on his "soiled soul," as Brown's sixth-century

people might have. In contrast to those who understood divine mercy to come "as much from outside [the soul's] own power to cleanse itself as did the act of the washing of the soiled, helpless corpse,"⁷³ Engelbert's companions knew that the very fact of their having to clean the body of blood and dirt meant that the soul was *already* clean. The soul had been purified through the body's violation.

And so, just as baptism with water could send an initiate out into life with a "clean slate," Engelbert's bloody end acted as a purification ritual that negated his former life and readied him for immediate entrance into the heavenly ranks.⁷⁴ It thus constitutes the critical turning point in the archbishop's life, a parallel to the calls-to-holiness experienced by many male saints in middle age or female saints in youth.⁷⁵ Unlike his contemporaries Francis of Assisi and Elizabeth of Thuringia, whose holiness was visible to those who knew them,⁷⁶ however, Engelbert began to function as a saint only once his body had been hacked apart and his previous life forcefully inverted. Aligning him with the suffering Christ, Caesarius draws attention to the importance of the end in effecting that conversion. "The sun having hastened to its setting," he says,

the victim hastened to the altar with his sacrifice, so that an evening sacrifice (the most worthy under the Old Law) might be made to the Lord. Christ suffered on a Friday, at the sixth hour (that is, at midday), in order to display himself as a mediator between God and men. He wanted Engelbert, however, to suffer on the same day but at the end of the day, in order to show him crowned through a good end, and not through his preceding life. . . . Just as it was not proper under the Old Law to present a sacrificial animal without a tail, neither will a good life without a good end be pleasing to God.⁷⁷

Caesarius's account of Archbishop Engelbert's death raises some provocative problems for current discussions of eschatology and the body. First, Caesarius is curiously, perhaps surprisingly silent when it comes to speaking explicitly of Last Things. He does not employ the traditional language of eschatology; no mention is made, for example, of the Second Coming, the Last Judgment, or the Resurrection of the Dead, and in several places Caesarius even explicitly refuses to speculate on the condition of the martyr's soul.⁷⁸ The question of what happened to Engelbert at the liminal stage of his death is, in fact, addressed directly only by two demons who happened to be at the scene and subsequently inhabited the bodies of a local man and a woman. One, possessing a man in Magdeburg, rejoiced at the murder of the archbishop even as he lamented his ignorance of the soul's whereabouts: Asked by a priest what had happened to Engelbert's soul, the demon responded sadly

(*lugubri voce*), "Just as his eyes were covered with blood and darkened, his soul was torn away from us, and I don't know where it went."⁷⁹ The demon possessing a Cistercian nun outside of Cologne was rather more thorough in her account.⁸⁰ She, too, lost sight of the soul at the moment of Engelbert's death, a loss she attributed to his tearful confession the day before. "Alas!" she sighed when questioned about the soul, "it was snatched away from me and my companions who were all gathered around. [Engelbert] had prepared and washed himself so thoroughly before death . . . that we could have no claim on him."⁸¹ The loquacious demon went on to volunteer the reason for Engelbert's current miracle-working prowess and to describe the power he exercised as an intercessor in heaven as well as on earth: "As he lay steeped in his blood, dying, he forgave his murderers with his whole heart, saying the words 'Father, forgive them' etc. On account of these words he has achieved such esteem from the Almighty that he is never refused what he requests of Him. And you should know this as a fact: no archbishop of Cologne has ever sat upon the episcopal throne who can accomplish so much with God, and whose rewards from God are so great."⁸² Supernatural essence notwithstanding, it is difficult to hold this demon as a terribly reliable reporter, in light of the rest of the *Vita*. Caesarius certainly never mentions the archbishop reciting Christ's dying words in his last moments, and if we are to believe Engelbert himself, as he appeared in a vision shortly after the murder, his good-hearted forgiveness of his enemies did not endure beyond the grave. A canon of the Augustinian community of Klosterrath, while celebrating a memorial mass for Engelbert one week after his death, reported that the archbishop appeared to him during the service, dressed in pontifical robes and with a serene demeanor. After performing the ritual actions alongside the astonished canon, the apparition proclaimed: "Know for certain that all those who murdered me, or at whose instigation I was murdered, shall die miserably—and that more quickly than can be believed!"⁸³

That assertion—rather hostile, it seems, for a saint, but typical of proclamations by ordinary ghosts⁸⁴—did not completely come true; many more persons had been involved in the crime than were in the end capitally punished. Still, at least for Canon Ludwig, the martyr's words were not to be doubted. For immediately prior to his vengeful prediction, Engelbert had given what would be the most explicit statement in the *Vita* about the state of his soul after death. As Ludwig had reached the point in the commemorative mass where the names of the dead were recited, Engelbert had interrupted. "Brother," he said, "it is not necessary to name me among the dead, for I am with God and in the community of martyrs, enjoying indescribable joy."⁸⁵

It is noteworthy that, throughout the *Vita*, Caesarius refuses to discuss Engelbert's glory in heaven himself because "we do not know what it is like nor how great it might be."⁸⁶ But he manages to make an aggressive argument for his sanctity nonetheless by placing testimonials in the mouths of both supernatural beings, who claim to have lost track of the soul, and of the archbishop himself, who claims already to be with God. Not only is Engelbert portrayed as attending God in the chorus of martyrs, but also, in the possessed nun's account, as enjoying particularly high regard from him. What this amounts to is a parallel to Engelbert's privileged status with the highest worldly authority, Emperor Frederick II (for whose son Engelbert acted as regent), during his lifetime. Indeed, the claim of the demon that Engelbert carried more weight with God than any previous archbishop of Cologne is not terribly different in essence from Walther von der Vogelweide's assertion that he had earned more esteem within the imperial administration than any other councilor. The emphasis, in this account, is on the earning of favors; it is not God's mercy that is at issue here, as it was in the early medieval cases elucidated by Peter Brown, but rather his justice, a justice that will repay a person's troubles during life with immediate entry into heaven after death while punishing wrongdoers with instant and painful retribution. It is perhaps revealing of the political climate of mid-thirteenth-century Cologne—and, most likely, of Caesarius's personal predilections as well—that the agency of God in effecting Engelbert's redemption seems to be secondary to Engelbert's own in suffering to achieve it. No thanks is given to God for his mercy, for example, nor do eschatological expectations about the Last Judgment and resurrection come into view directly. Engelbert's salvation occurs immediately, and he acts in the world as a punisher or healer with the same degree of freedom and vehemence as he had as a powerful bishop-prince. Indeed, God—like the emperor—seems to be out of town for much of this narrative.

Although his position vis-à-vis the status of the archbishop as a martyr-saint is obvious, Caesarius's reluctance to speak directly about the archbishop's soul probably stems from his own recognition of having created a new and not entirely unproblematic fusion of eschatological assumptions about personal redemption and immortality, a fusion that, like his unusual theory of miracles, may not have been wholeheartedly accepted by the public. And so his focus remains on the most striking and concrete evidence of the saint's downfall and exaltation, returning again and again to the broken body as the locus and vehicle of salvation—both Engelbert's own and that of the individuals who are cured by physical contact with it. The agony Engelbert experienced in his final moments thus replaced an extended stay in purgatory

(which he clearly would have needed otherwise) and allowed him to gain full and immediate access to heaven.

That so much attention is lavished on Engelbert's suffering body as the site of salvation may also have important implications for the issue of gender and sanctity. As numerous scholars have pointed out recently, the body as presented in texts both by and about women was the special locus of female holiness.⁸⁷ Women's soft, penetrable bodies that wept, bled, and oozed or that were miraculously hardened and closed through prolonged fasting and virginity were seen as the primary instruments for identification and union with the Divine. By depicting Engelbert's body as open, permeable, and prematurely fragmented and by making precisely those physical qualities the catalyst for the archbishop's spiritual transformation, Caesarius has blurred the conventional boundaries between male and female sanctity.

Although throughout his life Engelbert conformed to the emphatically masculine model of sanctity established in Odo of Cluny's *Life of St. Gerald of Aurillac*,⁸⁸ his agonizing death and the subsequent critical role of his broken body transformed him into a different sort of man. At the end of his story, we behold the dreadful and touching metamorphosis of a formidable, aggressive, and distant public persona into a pathetic mass of bleeding, naked flesh, flesh that was later intimately handled in private spaces. This ultimately redemptive shift in identity contains implications that extend beyond this figure's personal history, however. For in Engelbert's painful passage from life to death (and from there, to glory), we witness that decisive change in models of sanctity so often associated with the decades around 1200, when—under the influence of the mendicant orders—friars, bourgeois laypeople, and women increasingly supplanted powerful clerics and rulers as the saintly objects of popular admiration.⁸⁹ The man who, like Gerald of Aurillac, had followed the old-fashioned paradigm of the just and mighty ruler, was forced in the end to take up the qualities of so many lowlier men and women of his day who strove fervently to imitate Christ in his suffering humanity.⁹⁰ Keeping in mind the *Vita*'s deep concern with conversion and inversion, of sudden transformations and turnings-around, Engelbert's embodiment of two paradigms of sanctity is a judicious—if startling—solution. In order to become holy, clearly, Engelbert had to be in death everything that he was *not* in life. And when the archbishop encountered his radical turning point on that autumn night in 1225, he found that his body provided the fulcrum. For Caesarius and Engelbert's friends alike, that fear-inducing, wonder-working flesh was then embraced in awe as a tangible token of one personal and very painful redemption.

Engelbert's hard-won salvation, however, was not an end in itself. For

Caesarius, as for any pious devotee of saints, holiness resided not only in a person's acceptance into heaven but also—more immediately—in his or her propensity to communicate with the living and to aid in their salvation. And so while by relinquishing his elevated, worldly identity and adopting a more lowly, corporeal one, Engelbert redeemed himself and earned a place in the heavenly choirs of martyrs,⁹¹ his story does not end there. It ends, significantly, with the intensive manhunt and execution of the villainous conspirators, most prominent among them Count Frederick of Isenberg.⁹² Following Caesarius's example, I will conclude my discussion by examining the depiction of this other murder, a murder whose goal was essentially retributive yet became, in an unexpected twist, redemptive. Here, too, it is the body and the violence inflicted upon it that act as the pivot around which a profound moral and spiritual change takes place.⁹³ Moreover, the explicit connections and distinctions drawn in the narrative between Frederick's and Engelbert's deaths throw into higher relief the role of the murdered body in the archbishop's spiritual conversion.

Shortly after the death of Engelbert, Walther von der Vogelweide again gave voice to partisan sentiments surrounding the murder:

Swes lében ich lóbe, des tót den wil ich iemer klagen.
 sô wê im dér den werden fürsten habe erslagen
 von Kölnè! owê daz in diu erde mac getragen!
 in kan im nâch sîner schulde keine marter vinden:
 im wære álze senfte ein eichin wit umbe sînen kragen,
 in wíl sîn ouch niht brennen noch zerliden noch schinden
 noch mit dem rade zerbrechen noch ouch darûf binden.
 ich warte allez ob diu helle in lébende welle slinden.

He whose life I praise, his death I'll lament forever. And so I say—woe to him who has killed the noble prince of Cologne! Oh, that the earth can still bear him! I can find no torment bad enough to match his guilt: for him, an oaken stock around the neck would be far too mild. I don't want him to be burned, or chopped apart, or flayed, or broken on the wheel or even bound to it. I'm just waiting (to see) if hell will want to drag him, still living, down.⁹⁴

Contrary to this passionate contention that no punishment save going to hell alive could possibly be horrific enough for the murderer of Engelbert, Frederick did suffer upon his capture in November 1226 an excruciating series of torments prior to his expiration.⁹⁵ The event comprises the final chapter of Book II, in which Caesarius presents it as the perfect retribution by casting it

as a mirror image of Engelbert's murder. Whereas Engelbert's death had been spontaneous and chaotic, Frederick's was carefully orchestrated, involving a meticulous, piece-by-piece breaking down of his body by cool, indifferent, anonymous henchmen. Whereas Engelbert had been killed at night, Frederick's punishment takes up a full day, and he finally breathes his last at the break of dawn. Whereas the high-standing Engelbert had been laid low in a ditch, nearly invisible to his perplexed companions, the morally base and socially less lofty Frederick is elevated on a wheel set upon a tall pillar, his broken limbs all too visible to the onlookers below. Finally, whereas Engelbert had tried vigorously to defend himself, struggling against his attackers, Frederick accepts his punishment calmly and passively. Curiously, it is he, not Engelbert, who dies in the idiom of traditional martyrs: in prayer and without a struggle. Ever on the alert for things marvelous, Caesarius draws attention to the disparity between Frederick's arrogant, corrupt behavior in life and his humble and contrite attitude toward impending death, and he poignantly attributes it to a moral turnaround effected by Engelbert. The physical pain itself is what links them. While "it is fitting," he suggests,

that Frederick should perish in his body by a miserable and foul death, nonetheless we should hope that this same punishment was a medicine for his soul. For with contrition he shouted out both carefully and frequently, and both to himself and publicly, confessing himself a criminal, and patiently sustained the punishment carried out on himself, even offering his individual members to be broken to pieces, of his own accord. And when that merciless executioner wrought upon his back [Ps 128:3], inflicting sixteen blows with the hatchet, he did not utter a sound—so that everyone wondered.⁹⁶

The thoughtful mirroring and inversion that Caesarius constructed in the death scene are most clearly manifested in the image of Frederick's *adventus* into the city as a prisoner. "But what's more," he relates, "God having arranged it, on almost the same day as when, one year before (*anno revoluto*), Engelbert was carried dead into the city [accompanied by] the grief of the masses, Frederick, with the desire of the masses, was brought as a prisoner through the opposite gate. And on the fourth day—when, that is, the first seven-day celebration was being performed with great attendance the previous year (*revoluto anno*)—this man was raised up on a wheel in an exceedingly unsightly manner and with many torments."⁹⁷

The phrase Caesarius uses to convey the time lapse between the current action and the previous year, *anno revoluto*, captures beautifully the idea of turning around, of a movement from one point on a circle to the point directly opposite itself—in short, a conversion of the kind that, I have argued,

forms the very backbone of Engelbert's own story.⁹⁸ As if to reinforce this idea, Caesarius even uses a reversal of words in the passage, moving from the construction *anno revoluto* when describing the double-entrance into the city walls, to *revoluto anno* when recounting Frederick's death. The torture wheel—*rota*—brings in a further, concrete image of that turning process so crucial to the narrative. It is only when he is placed upon that wheel, one year after the commemorative mass for Engelbert, that Frederick—astonishingly—is transformed from antitype, an inverted Engelbert, to type, that is, a parallel of Engelbert. For, like the archbishop for whose death he was responsible, it is through the absolute destruction of his body that the count is ultimately redeemed.

In Frederick's final moments, the points on the revolving circle converge at last; as the "merit of the martyr Engelbert who, dying, prayed for his enemies"⁹⁹ is passed on to his greatest enemy, the guilty one embraces that "grace" to pray for himself.¹⁰⁰ If bleeding, breaking, suffering, and praying during the process of death provided Engelbert with the ability to work wonders, then perhaps this extension of grace to an enemy likewise experiencing bodily fragmentation—allowing his own murderer to be saved in the end—can be counted as his greatest miracle of all.

Appendix

Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Vita et miracula Engelberti archiepiscopi Coloniensis*, ed. Fritz Zschaeck, vol. 3 of *Die Wundergeschichten des Caesarius von Heisterbach*, ed. Alfons Hilka, Publikationen der Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschichtskunde 43 (Bonn: Peter Hansterns Verlag 1937), 234–328. My translation.

BOOK II, CHAPTER 7: THE DEATH OF ENGELBERT AND ITS AFTERMATH

They arrived at the place of ambush around dusk. And behold: Count Frederick, contemplating the enormity of his villainous plan and starting to abhor it, began to say to his men, "Woe to me, a wretched man! What kind of thing is this, that I wanted to do: to murder my lord and cousin?" But those others—the same men whom he himself had sparked earlier with the breath of Behemoth—soon rekindled him, inciting him to the evil deed with such

force that, like an asp, he grasped again all the more ardently the very venom he had rejected not long ago.

Soon afterward, in a discussion with Herenbert, he revealed his will concerning the bishop's murder.¹⁰¹ Then, in accordance with the instructions he had given his brother the steward, Frederick met up with Herenbert of Schwert and sped up ahead to where the lord archbishop was. When they reached the base of the mountain, the count declared: "Lord, this is our road." The bishop replied: "May the Lord protect us!" For, indeed, he was not without suspicion. Having lingered awhile, the count next positioned other attendants behind Engelbert, directing them to assist Herenbert in the act he had initiated. As the bishop entered onto the concave road flanked by two narrow footpaths, the count's servants who had been sent ahead made such a clatter as they awaited him that the lord archbishop himself wondered at the noise (so the cellarer of Hemmerode testifies today). Some of the attackers were approaching from the right side, others from the left, while still others followed behind with the count to observe the ambush. Then, as a signal to those who were hiding, Herenbert let loose a whistle so horribly loud that not only the men who were ignorant of the treachery were stunned, but so were the horses on which they were sitting. Soon those who had gone ahead drew their swords and turned back around. Seeing this, a certain soldier standing between the count's men and the bishop shouted in terror, "Lord, get on your horse right away, for death is at the door!" (A noble youth from Hemmersbach was leading the horse behind Engelbert's back.) Seeing that he had jumped onto the horse, the count's attendants threw themselves upon Engelbert, one of them severely wounding him on the leg. No one went to his defense except Conrad of Dortmund, who, with his sword drawn, threw himself upon Herenbert Rennekoie. But this Herenbert anticipated him, and struck him a heavy blow to the forehead. When Conrad turned away from him, Herenbert then wounded him between the shoulders [i.e., on his back]. Pay attention: This is the same Herenbert who shortly beforehand had forewarned the bishop of the plot, so that he would be able to extricate himself should the matter turn out differently than he hoped (*Vita* II:3). Seeing all this going on, "all" those who were with the bishop, "leaving him, fled" [Matt. 26:56], so that the words written about our Lord through the prophet were fulfilled in them: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed [Matt. 26:31]."

After that, what happened to the bishop could not be fully ascertained, because of both the flight of his men and the imminent night. But the will of

God caused the following events to take place, in order that the chronology and the manner of the martyrdom could be made manifest. It so happened that Count Frederick was captured upon his return from Rome, and led as a prisoner to Cologne. Once there he openly confessed his own guilt and pointed out by name the other performers of the parricide, accusing even his own brothers (mentioned above) as likewise being guilty. Along with himself and another man, his scribe Tobias was captured. Placed in chains and in the hope of subsequent indulgence, he exposed in writing in what manner and by whom the blessed bishop was murdered, in agreement with the facts that the agonized confession in Rome of the count and the other abominable men had brought to light. This he did at the request of certain canons (those who had also strongly urged me to write), in order that the account could be written more accurately. This said about the matter, shall suffice.

And when the lord bishop had gone far enough along the concave road—so writes Tobias—the attendants who had been sent ahead, by seizing his horse's bridle, turned the horse around so violently that they wrenched the bridle from his hands. Unable to leave the road by either side (as it was concave and very narrow), the archbishop fled down the slope, in the middle of the road. But the men followed him, and Joachim wounded the horse on the thigh. Since they could not overtake him from either side of the road, Herenbert, on horseback, leaped off the road onto the steepest footpath and caught him (as he was to confess), seizing Engelbert violently by the collar of his cloak and dragging him down sideways as he bent forward, until they were both on the ground. But soon the bishop, who was stronger than the other man, rose up again vigorously and fled off the road into the bushes, with Herenbert still clinging, alone, to the edge of his cloak. When the count heard this clamor in the bushes, he rushed closer and is said to have shouted: "Grab him and don't let him go: For the man is being made stronger than we are!" Then the bishop uttered words of supplication, and said: "Saint Peter, with what [crime] do these men charge me?" Gnashing his teeth, Frederick replied: "Bring me the thief! Bring me the man who disinherits noblemen and spares no one!"¹⁰² At this point Giselher, observing Herenbert clinging to the archbishop's cloak, rushed down and, chasing after them frantically, struck the first wound on Engelbert's head; and with the second blow, I believe, he cut off his hand; finally, that same Giselher ran his body through with his sword. — These words are Tobias's.

At the same time, Jordan, a man whom Engelbert had banished, rushed suddenly onto the scene to inflict the largest wound on his head (so he bragged in Isenberg), causing the bishop to cry a second time: "Oh woe!"

Then, turning to him again, Herenbert bored through him once more with his dagger, while Count Frederick wailed and shouted: "Woe to me, a wretched man! That's going too far!" When Giselher (whom I mentioned before) tried to chop off Engelbert's head, it was to Frederick that Godfrey, whom the Count had sent out to stop him, dragged Giselher by the hair. Still, barely ten paces separate the oak tree by which the men first attacked Engelbert to the place where he was finally dragged down, completely decimated (and where now, above the site of his martyrdom, a chapel has been constructed). It was at this spot that that herd, like rabid dogs and famished sons of perdition, bored into his whole body with the sharpest daggers prepared for the event, so that between the top of his head and the soles of his feet not a single part of his body remained free of wounds. This is just like what was said by the prophet regarding the figure of Christ, whose member Engelbert became by dying for the sake of justice: "Many dogs have encompassed me: the council of the malignant hath besieged me" and so on (Ps. 21:17).

Next it is said that one of the men sliced into the bottom of his foot, in order to appraise whether he was in fact dead. And then they all rushed back onto their horses, to reconvene at the place where the count was waiting, and left the body lying on the ground. Oh blind presumption! Oh madness not of men but of beasts, which did not shirk from so boldly, so cruelly, so odiously murdering the anointed one of the Lord, the priest of the Lord, a mighty pontiff, and not just any pontiff, but the father and prince of pontiffs—and, what should have been most terrifying of all, the most powerful duke and guardian of the Roman Empire. Having succeeded in the murder, the men, full of the devil, departed with their count—or rather that instigator of the entire malice—leaving the priest of the Lord to lie upon a dungheap as if he were not anointed with oil.

A certain knight named Leonius, who had remained with Engelbert when he was first attacked, chased after Henry the cellarer of Hemmerode, who had gone a little way ahead. "Oh lord cellarer," he said, "what should we do? Our lord the archbishop has been seriously wounded and taken captive by Count Frederick." By this he related simply that which he had seen, thinking that this is what had really happened. Unimaginably distressed, Henry replied: "Surely it would be proper to go back and see what is going on around him, or find out where he is being taken." They turned back immediately to the site of the murder, where they heard noises of the attendants wandering around in the woods. It was already night. And while they were walking about and looking around, they stumbled over the destroyed body of the martyr, which was full of holes and exceedingly horrible to see.

Greatly alarmed, the men left to retrieve from the nearest houses a stinking cart which had carried dung earlier that same day; this was by the cellarer's advice, so that the body would not perhaps be disgracefully treated by wild animals should it remain in the woods overnight. But behold: The body of that glorious prince, which when they left it was still partially clothed, they found almost completely naked when they returned. For aside from his leggings and overshirt, which hung about his neck, the attackers had left him with nothing; his undershirt and a little cap, though, were still to be found next to the body. All these things were so steeped in blood and so torn to pieces that the thieves had passed over them as if they were not of the barest use. But through them many healing cures have been effected, even today.

From Decay to Splendor

Body and Pain in Bonvesin da la Riva's
Book of the Three Scriptures

Manuele Gragnolati

BONVESIN DA LA RIVA'S *Book of the Three Scriptures* is an eschatological poem that describes hell in the *Black Scripture*, Christ's passion in the *Red Scripture*, and heaven in the *Golden Scripture*.¹ Enormous attention is given to the body within the whole text, which opens with contempt for the decay and rottenness of the earthly body and ends with triumphal praise of the splendor of the glorious body. In this essay I will analyze the meaning of the emphasis granted to the body in the poem and discuss the portrayal of Christ's passion as the midpoint in the transformation of the body from decay to splendor.

Bonvesin da la Riva was a tertiary of the Humiliati and arguably also of the Franciscans. He was born in Milan before 1250 and died between 1313 and 1315.² The *Book of the Three Scriptures* was written in the Milanese dialect in the last decades of the thirteenth century and was composed to be sung and recited orally to a wide and popular audience. It was a sort of oral preaching whose goal was more practical than explanatory or expository.³ The author announces his expectations at the beginning of the work, where he stresses that understanding is necessary but putting such understanding into action is absolutely essential:

Listening without understanding would have no effect, and the person who understood quite well would still accomplish nothing if he failed to put into action what he had understood. That to which man fails to commit his intellect and energy is of no avail. In this book of ours, there are three sorts of script. The first is black and full of fear; the second is red; the third is fair and pure, wrought in gold only, speaking of great sweetness. Thus, the time comes for speaking of the black script, of the birth of man, of life and death, of the twelve pains of hell, where there is great woe. May

72. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966), 16.
73. Eva Riad, "Safa'a dans le Coran," *Orientalia Suecana* 30 (1981): 37–62, at pp. 37–42; and Taede Huitema, *De Voorspraak (Shafa'a) in den Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936), 45, 56.
74. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih* 76.19.476, ed. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Beirut: Dar al-Arabia, 1985), 8: 316.
75. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih* 76.49.574, p. 374; Jane Idleman Smith and Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1981), 84.
76. Gregory, *Dialogi* 4.43.2, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé *Dialogues*, Sources chrétiennes 265 (Paris: Le Cerf, 1980), 154–55; see Carozzi, *Voyage de l'âme*, 187–89.
77. Eustratius, *De animis defunctorum*, 9, in Leo Allatius, *De utriusque ecclesiae occidentalis et orientalis perpetua in dogmate de purgatorio consensione* (Rome, 1655), 380–580, p. 373; see H. G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich: C. H. Beck 1959), 411. On the background of such doubts, see Vincent Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils des miracles?: l'exemple des miracles de saint Artémios," in *Les saints et leur sanctuaire à Byzance*, Byzantina Sorbonensia 11, ed. Catherine Jolivet-Lévy et al. (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1993), 95–116, esp. 113–16. See also L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Monophysite Angelology of John Philoponus," *Byzantion* 65 (1995): 388–95.
78. Eustratius, *De animis* 28, Allatius, 561–63.
79. Gregory, *Dialogi* 4.42.1–5, ed. de Vogüé, 150–54; compare the doublet *cultor pauperum et contemptor sui* used of Paschasius with Diehl, *Inscriptiones latinae christianae veteres*, no. 1195.10: *pauperibus dives sed sibi pauper erat* and 1778.6: *pauperibus locuples, sibi pauper*. See now A. Wirbelauer, *Zwei Päpste in Rom: Der Konflikt zwischen Laurentius und Symmachus (498–514)* (Munich: Tuduv, 1993).
80. Gregory, *Dialogi* 4.42.5, ed. de Vogüé, 154.
81. Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, 155.
82. Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 96.
83. R. Meens, "Willibrords boeteboek?" *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 106 (1993): 163–78; "A Background to Augustine's Mission to Anglo-Saxon England," *Anglo-Saxon England* 23 (1994): 5–17; "Pollution in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of Food Regulations in the Penitentials," *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995): 3–19; now *Het tripartite boeteboek: overlevering en beteknis van vroegmiddeleeuwse biechtvoorschriften* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994), 267–321, and now "Ritual Purity and the Influence of Gregory the Great in the Early Middle Ages," in *Unity and Diversity in the Church*, ed. R. N. Swanson, *Studies in Church History* 32 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 31–43.
84. A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, vol. 2, *Le Dieu cosmique* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1981), 441–46 on the *Dream of Scipio*.
85. Boniface, *Epistula* 115, ed. Michael Tangl, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Epistulae selectae* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1916), 248; Ciccarese, *Visioni*, 366, 370–72. See Carozzi, *Voyage de l'âme*, 200–222.
86. J. C. Schmitt, "Une histoire religieuse du Moyen-Age est-elle possible?" in *Il mestiere del storico del Medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro di Studi sull'Alto Medio Evo, 1994),

73–83, at p. 82: "Dieu n'est plus maître de toute l'espace et de tout le temps: c'est le sens de la nouvelle doctrine de purgatoire."

*From Jericho to Jerusalem: The Violent Transformation
of Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne*

This is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented at Columbia University's Seventh Annual Medieval Guild Conference in October 1996. It grew out of research conducted during a year-long seminar at Columbia with Caroline Walker Bynum, to whose many patient readings and incisive criticisms this essay owes a great debt and for whose generous enthusiasm and support I am immensely grateful. Many thanks also go to the other members of the seminar, especially Anna Harrison and Manuele Gragnolati, for the fruitful dialogues we carried on throughout the year and to Christopher Ranney for his insightful readings and comments.

1. The best edition of the text is the *Vita et miracula Engelberti*, ed. Fritz Zschaeck in Alfons Hilka, ed., *Die Wundergeschichten des Caesarius von Heisterbach*, Publikationen der Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschichtskunde 43 (Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag, 1937), 3: 234–328; hereafter *VE* (all citations are from this edition and all translations are my own). A German translation was published by Karl Langosch as *Leben, Leiden und Wunder des heiligen Erzbischofs Engelbert von Köln (Die Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit 100)* (Münster/Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1955). On the place of the *Vita* within Caesarius's oeuvre, see Langosch's entry "Caesarius von Heisterbach" in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon* (Vol. I), ed. Kurt Ruh et al. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978, cols. 1152–68; hereafter *DVL*.

2. For a valuable methodological discussion of the documentary value of saints' lives and related materials, see Friedrich Lotter, "Methodisches zur Gewinnung historischer Erkenntnisse aus hagiographischen Quellen," *Historische Zeitschrift* 229 (1979): 299–355.

3. Surius published a reworked *Vita* in his 1575 *De probatis Sanctorum historiis* VI, and that text provided the basis for Aegidius Gelenius's *Vindex libertatis ecclesiasticae et martyri S. Engelbertus . . . una cum brevi suae actatis annalium . . . editione* (Cologne, 1633); see K. Langosch's introduction to the German translation (1955), 23. Surius' name appeared in the Martyrology for the first time in 1583: *Coloniae sancti Engelberti episcopi, qui pro defensione ecclesiasticae libertatis et romanae ecclesiae obedientia martyrium subire non dubitavit*. See Albert Poncelet, *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. 71 (November), Part III (Antwerp: Meursius, 1910), 643–44 (hereafter *AASS*); and Niccolo del Re's entry in the *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* IV (Rome: Istituto Giovanni XXIII, 1964), cols. 1209–10.

4. The shrine, created in 1633 by the studio of Konrad Duisbergh, is discussed and reproduced in the exhibition catalogue *Erzbischöfe von Köln: Porträts—Insignien—Weihe*, ed. Rolf Lauer (Cologne: Erzbischöfliches Diözesanmuseum, 1989): 24–25 and plate 5.

5. See the entry in the exhibition catalogue *Bilder vom Menschen in der Kunst des Abendlandes: Jubiläumsausstellung der Preussischen Museen Berlin, 1830–1980* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1980), 125.

6. The following account of Engelbert's reign is drawn from the *Vita*, Liber I

(*De vita et actibus domini Engilberti Coloniensis archiepiscopi et martiris*), 235–49; supplemented by Richard Knipping, ed., *Die Regesten der Erzbischöfe von Köln im Mittelalter III: 1* (=Publikationen der Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschichtskunde 21), (Bonn: Peter Hansteins Verlag, 1909), 26–88; and Julius Ficker's *Engelbert der Heilige: Erzbischof von Köln und Reichsverweser* (Cologne, 1853; rep. Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1985), 53–144, which also contains documents pertaining to his career. A more concise but less complete account is Hans Foerster, *Engelbert von Berg der Heilige* (Elberfeld: Martini and Gruttefien, 1925).

7. On the family Berg, see Ficker, *Engelbert der Heilige* (1853), 14–16.

8. On the turbulent reigns of Archbishops Adolf I of Altena (1193–1205, 1212–16), Bruno IV of Sayn (1205–8), and Dietrich I of Hengebach (1208–12), see Knipping, *Regesten* (1909), 1–25; Ficker, *Engelbert der Heilige* (1853), 18–52; and *VE I*: 3, 238–40.

9. *VE I*: 6, 244–45.

10. On Engelbert's building activities and generosity in making donations to ecclesiastical establishments, *VE I*: 5, 241–44; on his assertion of control over secular lords, *ibid.* and *VE I*: 4, 240–41; on his welcoming of the mendicants in 1220 (Dominicans) and 1222 (Franciscans) in spite of public concerns that they represented the fulfillment of a frightening prophecy of Hildegard of Bingen, *VE I*: 7, 245–46. On Engelbert's relation to the mendicants, see J. Greven, "Engelbert der Heilige und die Bettelorden," *Bonner Zeitschrift für Theologie und Seelsorge* 2 (1925). On the oppressive state of affairs in the decades preceding Engelbert's reign, *VE I*: 3, 238–40, I: 4, 240–41.

11. Engelbert hears poor people's complaints, *VE I*: 7, 246; gives his glove as token of safe passage to a fearful merchant, *VE I*: 5, 242; allows a woman to bypass lawyers and state her case to him directly, *VE I*: 8, 246; orders on-the-spot hearing of a widow's complaint against him, overturns ruling in his favor, and pays her her debts, *VE II*: 5, 256–57.

12. See the Vita as translated by Dom Gerard Sitwell in *St. Odo of Cluny, Makers of Christendom* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958), 89–180.

13. André Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du moyen âge d'après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1981), 341, and note 26 below. See also the accounts in Stephanie Coué, "Acht Bischofsviten aus der Salierzeit—neu interpretiert," in Stefan Weinfurter, ed., *Die Salier und das Reich III: Gesellschaftlicher und ideengeschichtlicher Wandel im Reich der Salier* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1991), 347–414; and Hatto Kallfelz, ed. and trans., *Lebensbeschreibungen einiger Bischöfe des 10.–12. Jahrhunderts* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), where not all of the subjects were considered saints.

14. C. Stephen Jaeger, "The Courtier Bishop in *Vitae* from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 58, 2 (1983): 291–325, at 294.

15. Walther von der Vogelweide, "Kaiser Friedrichs-Ton 4: Engelbrechtspreis," in *Werke, Band I: Spruchlyrik*, ed. Günther Schweikle (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1994), 210–11.

16. The terms of the conflict and the various negotiations intended to solve the matter are described in *VE II*: 1, 249–52.

17. Wolfgang Kleist, "Der Tod des Erzbischofs Engelbert von Köln: Eine kritische Studie," *Zeitschrift für vaterländische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 75 (1917):

182–249. This interpretation has been accepted by Karl Langosch; see his introduction to the German translation of the Vita (1955), 20–21.

18. See Appendix for a complete translation of Caesarius's Book II, Chapter 7, which relies in part on the account of Frederick of Isenberg's notary Tobias and from which all citations given here are taken. The excerpt is from Hilka, *Die Wundergeschichten* (see note 1), 259–66.

19. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Gedichte*, ed. Siegfried Sudhof (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1974), 45–50.

20. Karl Morrison, *History as a Visual Art in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 206. According to Morrison, the sense of "being there" would lead to heightened empathetic participation in the events described, allowing the reader imaginatively to reenact those events and thus bring portions of sacred history into his or her own life.

21. See *VE II*: 8, 264.

22. On the treatment of the corpse on its return to Cologne, *VE II*: 9, 266–67; on the widespread practice of the division of dead bodies and the theoretical problems it entailed, see Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "Death and the Human Body in the Later Middle Ages: The Legislation of Boniface VIII on the Division of the Corpse," *Victor* 12 (1981): 221–70.

23. The events leading up to the assassins' executions are described in *VE II*: 13, 270–72; Frederick's brutal punishment is described in detail in *VE II*: 17, 278–81. For further discussion of this, see below.

24. There is some disagreement as to Caesarius's position regarding the events. Michael Goodich cites Caesarius's "grudging tone" in the preface in order to argue that "this [work] was apparently less a labor of love than an obligation"; see his *Vita Perfecta: The Ideal of Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (=Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 25) (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann Verlag, 1982), 63. Karl Langosch, on the other hand, contends that "die Ermordung Engelberts hat C. tief getroffen" on the basis of other evidence such as the sermon and early plans for a Vita, which I will discuss below; see his entry in the *DVL*, col. 1163.

25. See Langosch, *DVL*, col. 1162. The sermon, to be discussed further below, appears in Poncelet, *AASS*, 639–40.

26. Aside from the biographical sketches provided by Karl Langosch in the *DVL* and in the introduction to his German translation of the Engelbert Vita, see the colorful depiction of Caesarius's life and cultural milieu by Alexander Kaufmann, *Caesarius von Heisterbach: Ein Beitrag zur Culturgeschichte des zwölften und dreizehnten Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Verlag J. M. Heberle, 1862).

27. The letter was published by J. Braun in the *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und katholische Theologie* 6, 3: 7–11, and translated into German in Kaufmann, *Caesarius von Heisterbach* (1862), 89–90. The edition of the *Dialogue* to which I shall refer is Joseph Strange, ed., *Dialogus Miraculorum*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851; rep. Ridgewood, N.J.: Gregg Press, 1966); hereafter *DM*.

28. Langosch, *DVL*, col. 1164, especially in regard to Book II, Chapter 7 (the death scene).

29. See, for example, the judgments of Karl Langosch in his introduction to the German translation (1955), 19–20, and in the *DVL*, col. 1163. On the problem of

truth and fiction in medieval hagiography, see Hippolyte Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints: An Introduction to Hagiography*, trans. V. M. Crawford (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961); and on working with and around that disparity, see Lotter, “Methodisches zur Gewinnung,” note 2 above.

30. See below, pp. 66–67.

31. On episcopal biography as a genre, see Jaeger, “Courtier Bishop” (1983): 294–95; and Lotter, “Methodisches zur Gewinnung,” 310–12.

32. See Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident*, 303–6.

33. *Ibid.*, 340–53.

34. See the edition by Poncelet *AASS*, 639–40.

35. *Ibid.*, 640: “Et forte, sicut plures opinantur, Deus voluit delere culpam descensionis eius [Engelbert’s] ab Hierusalem in Iericho. Per Hierusalem, in quo templum erat et religio, negotia designantur spiritualia: per Iericho mundana atque saecularia. Cum episcopus esset et dux, minus illis intendebat et ad ista nimis descendebat, ita ut quidam monachorum nostrorum illi diceret: ‘Domine, vos estis bonus dux, sed non bonus episcopus.’”

36. *VE I*: 2, 238: “Nam mundane glorie deditus, totus illis multipliciter est irretitus.”

37. *Ibid.*: “[Non opera iustitie hec neque salutis divitie, sed] retia demoniorum, instrumenta et laquei peccatorum, quos ipse evadere non potuit.”

38. Engelbert appears at his memorial mass; *VE II*: 10, 268–69, Hermann of Lechenich is cured on his deathbed when Engelbert appears to him in a vision, see *VE III*: 24, 298–99.

39. The miracles of Engelbert comprise all of Book III of the Vita. They were no longer recorded, however, after the death of Caesarius in around 1240.

40. See below, pp. 72–73.

41. *VE II*: 14, 273: “Nequaquam credere possumus virum superbum, avarum et totum seculo deditum miracula posse facere.” Having just related the story of one skeptic who had dared God to make him go insane and die if the rumors of Engelbert’s miraculous activities were true, Caesarius proclaims that all those who are accustomed to make such cynical statements should consider his exemplum before voicing their doubts further.

42. *VE III*: Prologue, 282–83.

Signa enim non sunt de substantia sanctitatis, sed quedam indicia sanctitatis. Nec fuisset necesse dominum episcopum Engelbertum miraculis claruisse post mortem, si vite perfectioris fuisset ante mortem. Beatus Evergisus et sanctus Agilolfus Coloniensis episcopi, ambo a nocentibus innocentes occisi, martirio coronati sunt; qui tamen post mortem paucis admodum signis claruerunt, quia non erat necesse, ut post mortem commendarent miracula, quos ante mortem commendarat vita sanctissima.

Klaus Schreiner has thoroughly explored medieval suspicions that attended both saints who lived good lives but did not perform miracles after death and those who worked wonders without having lived exceptionally well—both types sanctioned in this passage by Caesarius—in his studies “Discrimen veri ac falsi: Ansätze und Formen der

Kritik in der Heiligen- und Reliquienverehrung des Mittelalters,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 48 (1965): 1–53 and “Zum Wahrheitsverständnis im Heiligen- und Reliquienwesen des Mittelalters,” *Saeculum* 17 (1966): 131–69. See also Eberhard Demm’s important “Zur Rolle des Wunders in der Heiligkeitkonzeption des Mittelalters,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 57 (1975): 300–344; and Michael Goodich, “Miracles and Disbelief in the Late Middle Ages,” *Mediaevistik* 1 (1988): 23–38.

43. Pointed out in an editor’s note, *VE III*: 282.

44. See his *DM*, dist. 10, cap. 1, 2:217. As the works of Klaus Schreiner (see note 42) and Benedicta Ward (see n. 45 below), make clear, miracles presented many problems to theologians trying to explain them, and their explanations tended to be at odds with the practices and beliefs of ordinary people. Many thanks to Caroline Walker Bynum for bringing this point up and for helping me to rethink and complicate my understanding of this rich issue.

45. See Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record, and Event, 1000–1215*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 166–91.

46. Especially Schreiner, “Discrimen veri ac falsi,” see note 42.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *VE I*: 1, 236: “Sanctitatem, que vite defuit, mors pretiosa supplevit, et si minus perfectus erat in conversatione, sanctus tamen effectus est in passione.”

49. As Barbara Newman has pointed out, it was characteristic of holy women of the high Middle Ages to take on voluntarily the postmortem sufferings of others, as “apostles to the dead”; see her article “On the Threshold of the Dead: Purgatory, Hell, and Religious Women,” in her *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 103–36, esp. 119ff. See also Jo Ann McNamara, “The Need to Suffer: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages,” in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Tímea Szell, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 199–211, on the replacement of penitential gift-giving by physical suffering among thirteenth-century women and Caroline Walker Bynum’s discussion of the stress laid on the physicality of suffering, in *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 245–59.

50. *VE II*: 16, 276.

51. See *DM*, dist. VI, cap. 34, 386–87.

52. *VE II*: 16, 276: “[. . .] tempore moderniori in sancto Thoma episcopo Cantuariensi occisus est propter libertatem ecclesie conservandam. Eadem causa mortis exstitit in presule nostro Engelberto.”

53. *Ibid.*, 276–77: “Occubuit ille pro libertate ecclesie Cantuariensis, iste vero pro defensione ecclesie Essendiensis. Liberavit ille ecclesiam Anglicanam sanguine suo de gravi iugo regis Henrici; liberavit iste eque morte sua ecclesiam sue defensionis commissam de intollerabili exactione comitis Friderici.”

54. This is the first time the title “saint” is applied to Engelbert in the Vita.

55. *VE II*: 277:

Et licet beatus Thomas ante passionem multa sustinuerit incommoda, dampna et exilia, que non sustinuit Engelbertus, in ipsa tamen passione *plus doloris, angoris et confusionis* certum est eum Thoma tollerasse. Ille enim, sicut legimus, in capite

uno ictu cesus a sacrilegis relictus est in templo; *iste vulneribus multis et a lictoribus plurimus toto corpore confossus*, nudus relictus est in sterquilinio. Sanctus Thomas occisus est ab eis qui eum aperte oderant; sanctus vero Engelbertus [*quod maiorem inferre solet dolorem et augere invidiam*] a cognatis et amicis, de quibus nichil mali presumebat et quos ipse sublimaverat (emphasis added).

56. See the passage in brackets in the preceding note.

57. Perhaps some earlier bishops, such as Otto of Bamberg, would have been envious of Engelbert's good fortune in having his sins cleared in this way. Compare Otto's response to an assault by pagan Slavs during a missionary expedition (as described by Morrison, *History as a Visual Art*, 146): "With joyful spirit and cheerful countenance, he had gone into the mêlée hoping to receive the crown of martyrdom. He had been struck down into the mire. When he pulled himself up, he raised his hands to heaven, giving thanks that, though he had not been slaughtered, he had at least been worthy to receive one blow in God's name."

58. The formulation is Caroline Walker Bynum's. On the complicated issues involved in the feeling or lack of feeling of pain during violent death, and its implications for the understanding of resurrection, see her discussion of early Christian martyrs in *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 21–58.

59. *VE I*: 2, 238, on Engelbert's fall into sin as a young man: "Hec idcirco commemoro, ut cognoscat lector, de quali viro martirem sibi elegerit Dominus, de 'vasc ire' faciens 'vas glorie.'" The citation is from Romans 9:22–23.

60. See the *Breviloquium*, Part IV, Chapter 9, in *The Works of Bonaventure II*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963), esp. 172. See also the essay by Manuele Gragnolati in this volume. I am grateful to Gragnolati for many illuminating discussions about these issues.

61. According to Caesarius, 40 is the number of penance, while 7 signifies the gifts of the Holy Spirit; see *VE II*: 8, 265.

62. *VE II*: 8, 265: "In omnibus siquidem membris, in quibus peccaverat, punitus est. Punitus est in capite multipliciter, sicut apparet in eius pillio, scilicet in vertice, in fronte et occipite, in tymporibus, labiis et dentibus, et tam graviter, ut rivuli sanguinis inundantes et decurrentes fossas oculorum, aurium, narium orisque influerunt et replerent. Punitus est etiam in gutture et collo, in humeris et dorso, in pectore et corde, in ventre et coxis, in cruribus et pedibus . . ."

63. *Ibid.*, 265–66: "ut cognoscas, lector, quali baptismo Christus in martire suo diluere dignatus sit, quidquid culpe contraxerat superbiendo, videndo, audiendo, olfaciendo, gustando, cogitando, luxuriando, operando, tangendo, gradiendo sive aliis quibuscumque levitatibus, omissionibus et negligentis circa disciplinam. . . . Certe, certe non sine causa ad gloriam martirii pervenit."

64. Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), 181.

65. Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien: Die Geschichte ihres Kultes vom frühen Christentum bis zur Gegenwart*, 2nd rev. ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1997), esp. 62–65; on 64–65 he includes the same passage from the Engelbert Vita that I discuss here. See also his "Sühne durch Blut," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 18 (1984): 437–67.

The quasi-supernatural powers associated with blood in the early modern period are treated by Piero Camporesi, *Juice of Life: The Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Continuum Books, 1995).

66. *VE II*: 7, 263: "numquam aliquid horroris ex illius contactu, sicut de cadaveribus occisorum fieri assolet, passus est." Fear of cadavers—especially murdered ones—is treated by Ronald C. Finucane, *Appearances of the Dead: A Cultural History of Ghosts* (London: Junction Books, 1982); and Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: The Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

67. *VE II*: 7, 263: "Haut dubium quin ex presentia sanctorum angelorum gratia hec, qui circa corpus martiris celestes excubias celebrabant. Fuerat enim idem Henricus ante conversionem miles et tanto fortassis ad huiusmodi opus expeditior et audacior quanto assuetior."

68. *VE II*: 8, 264: "Henricus vero, cum ob cruris sui infirmitatem in uno pede nutaret, cogitans beatum virum a nocentibus innocenter occisum, occisi brachium nudum nuda manu tetigit, et plena fide eandem benedictionem ad crus nudum transmittens, gradum pedis vacillantis roboravit."

69. *VE II*: 7, 263: "Quod Suelme prouducentes, cum in ecclesia illud ponere decrevisset, non permisit sacerdos, contaminationem basilice pretendens, cum magis sanguine martiris dedicaretur. Propter quod et alia quedam, in quibus martiris gratiam demeruit, usque hodie graviter satis in suo corpore divinitus flagellatur." Fear of contaminating powers inherent in dead bodies is of course very ancient and widespread; among the Céltí Dé in eighth-century Ireland, for example, a priest who was present at the moment of a sick person's death would not be allowed "to perform the sacrifice [of the Mass] until a bishop should consecrate him": see Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 85.

70. *VE II*: 8, 264: "[Deinde cum vocibus lacrimosis corpus oratorio introferentes,] eadem nocte quibusdam fratribus quedam mirifice visiones de gloria martiris ostense sunt, in sompnis tamen."

71. Peter Brown, "The Decline of the Empire of God: Amnesty, Penance, and the Afterlife from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages," this volume.

72. *Ibid.*

73. *Ibid.*

74. This cleansing process began with Engelbert's extraordinarily tearful confession to the bishop of Minden just prior to embarking on his final journey. It occurred immediately after he had brushed off rumors of Frederick's plot. See *VE II*: 4, 254–55.

75. On the complex issue of conversion to sanctity, which varied according to a person's social status, gender, and birthplace, see Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000–1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); on women's conversions as process or continuity rather than reversal, see Caroline Walker Bynum, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality," in her *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 27–52; and eadem, *Holy Feast*, 277–302.

76. See the accounts of their lives in James of Voragine's *Golden Legend*, trans. Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger (New York: Longmans, Green, 1941), 597–609 (Francis) and 675–88 (Elizabeth); and André Vauchez, "Jacques de Voragine et les

saints du XIII^e siècle dans la *Légende dorée*,” in *Legenda Aurea: sept siècles de diffusion* (Actes du Colloque International sur la Legenda Aurea), ed. Brenda Dunn-Lardeau (Paris: 1986), 27–56. Caesarius himself wrote a Vita of Elizabeth based on her canonization proceedings, as well as a fascinating account of her 1236 translation; they have been published by Albert Huyskens in A Hilka, *Die Wundergeschichten*, 345–90.

77. VE II: 6, 258:

Sole properante ad occasum, hostia cum immolante properat ad aram, ut fieret Domino sacrificium vespertinum, quod dignius erat in lege. Passus est Christus sexta feria, hora sexta, scilicet in meridie, ut declararet se mediatorem Dei et hominum. Engelbertum vero pati voluit eadem feria, sed in fine diei, ut ostenderet eum per bonum finem, non per precedentem vitam coronatum. . . . Hostiam sine cauda offerre non licuit [in lege], neque Deo vita bona sine bono fine placebit.

Notice Caesarius’s use of inversion in his very language to convey the notion that Engelbert’s “good end” is literally a turning around of his life, in the “*vita bona . . . bono fine*” construction. Caesarius employs this grammatical maneuver elsewhere in the Vita, for example, in his description of Frederick of Isenberg’s capture, torture, and execution; see below, pp. 76–78.

78. See below, p. 74.

79. VE II: 15, 274: “Quando oculi eius obducti sunt sanguine et involuti, anima nobis ablata est, et quo devenit ignoro.”

80. Surprisingly, this is not the first pronouncement of a Cologne archbishop’s death to be given by a demon speaking through a nun. Thietmar of Merseburg’s Chronicle reports of a certain Abbess Gerberga to whom the same thing happened; when she broke her promise to the demon to remain silent on the matter, however, the demon beat her to death. See the account in Walter Schlesinger, *Kirchengeschichte Sachsens im Mittelalter, 1. Band: Von den Anfängen kirchlicher Verkündigung bis zum Ende des Investiturstreites*, Mitteldeutsche Forschungen 27/I (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1962), 227.

81. VE II: 16, 275. “Heu! heu! [Anima] subtracta est michi et sociis meis, qui illic conveneramus. Sic se ante mortem preparaverat, sic se laverat . . . ut nostri iuris nichil esset in illo.”

82. Ibid.: “Quando voluntabatur in suo sanguine et iam moriturus erat, occisoribus suis ex toto corde ignovit, dicens hoc verbum: ‘Pater, ignosce’ et cetera [Luke 23: 34]. Propter hoc verbum tam potens est cum Altissimo, ut non ei negetur, quidquid petierit ab illo. Et hoc sciatis pro certo numquam aliquem episcopum sedisse Colonie in sede episcopali, qui ita possit cum Deo quomodo Engelbertus et tanti meriti sit apud Deum.”

83. VE II: 10, 268: “Noveris pro certo, quod omnes qui me occiderunt vel quorum consilio occisus sum, male peribunt et citius quam credi possit?”

84. See the many cases of ordinary murder victims appearing to the living to proclaim revenge on their killers in Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*.

85. VE II: 10, 268: “Frater, non est necesse, ut me inter mortuos nomines, quia cum Deo sum et in choro martirum gaudio fruens indicibili.”

86. VE II: 1, 249: “quia qualis vel quanta sit nescimus.”

87. See the seminal works by Bynum, *Holy Feast* and the essays in *Fragmentation and Redemption*; see also Elizabeth Alvida Petroff, *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Elizabeth Robertson, “The Corporeality of Female Sanctity in the *Life of Saint Margaret*,” in Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Szell, *Images of Sainthood*, 268–87; Brigitte Cazelles, *The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

88. See note 12 above.

89. On changing patterns of sanctity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident*, 329–478; idem, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. Daniel E. Bornstein and trans. Margery J. Schneider (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993); and Weinstein and Bell, *Saints and Society*, 141–65.

90. On the theological background of *imitatio Christi*, see Giles Constable, “The Ideal of the Imitation of Christ” in *Three Studies in Medieval Religion and Social Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 145–93. On the practice of *imitatio* in the high Middle Ages, see Bynum, *Holy Feast*, esp. 255–59; and the general overview presented by Vauchez, “The Idea of God,” in *The Laity*, 3–26.

91. See above, p. 73.

92. VE II: 17, 278–81. According to the commentators, this chapter was written and inserted into the Vita shortly after its presentation to the new archbishop Henry of Molenark in November 1226; the events described took place after his investiture. The much less painful atonement of another of the accused conspirators, Bishop Dietrich of Münster, is discussed by Theodor Rensing, “Die Ermordung Engelberts des Heiligen und die Ehrenrettung für Dietrich von Isenberg,” *Westfalen* 33 (1955): 125–43.

93. On the semiotics of the tortured body in the Middle Ages, see Wolfgang Schild, “Der gequälte und entehrte Leib: Spekulative Vorbemerkungen zu einer noch zu schreibenden Geschichte des Strafrechts,” in *Gepeinigt, begehrt, vergessen: Symbolik und Sozialbezug des Körpers im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Schreiner and Norbert Schnitzler (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1992), 147–68.

94. Walther von der Vogelweide, “Kaiser Friedrichs-Ton 5: Totenklage für Erzbischof Engelbrecht,” in *Werke I* (see note 15 above), pp. 212–13.

95. According to this account, Frederick’s punishment began on November 11 and ended with his death the following morning.

96. VE II: 17, 281:

Licet enim mala et turpi morte perierit in corpore Fridericus, speramus tamen eandem penam anime eius fuisse medicinam, eo quod bene contritus et diligenter atque frequenter tam privatim quam publice confessus se reum clamaverit et penam sibi illatam patienter sustinuerit, etiam ad confrigendum membra singula ultro offerens. Et cum in dorso eius fabricaret [Ps 128: 3] carnifex ille immisericors, ictus sedecim per securim ei infligendo, non emisit vocem, ita ut omnes mirarentur.

97. VE II: 17, 280:

At, Deo dispensante, eodem pene die anno revoluto, quo beatus martyr Engelbertus cum merore multorum civitati mortuus est illatus, Fridericus cum desiderio multorum per portam oppositam captivus est inventus. Qui die quarta, quando videlicet primum martiris septenarium celebriter agebatur, ipse nimis turpiter, revoluto anno, in rota tormentaliter levabatur.

98. On the circle—and in particular a wheel—as a paradigm of medieval hermeneutics, see Morrison, *History as a Visual Art*, 69ff.

99. The image of Engelbert blessing his enemies, which received much attention during his revival in the seventeenth century, does not appear in the primary account of the murder in the *VE II*: 7. In fact, prior to this statement it is only mentioned by the demon possessing the nun in Cologne (discussed above). While this justification is intriguing for what it reveals about the practice of *imitatio Christi*, it is noteworthy that Caesarius himself does not make use of it in his own explanation of Engelbert's miracles. Aside from the demonic account, the only time he evokes that scene is here, in his description of Frederick's last moments.

100. *VE II*: 17, 281: "[Postea usque ad matutinas in corpore durans, fertur tamen orasse et circumstantibus, ut pro se orarent, supplicasse.] Fortassis ex merito martiris Engelberti, qui mens pro inimicis oravit, gratia hec Friderico."

101. Further information on specific persons and places mentioned in this text can be found in the footnotes to the Hilka edition.

102. *VE II*: 7, 261: "Cedite latronem, cedite, qui et nobiles exheredit et nemini parci." There is some discrepancy as to the translation of this crucial sentence. In the German edition, Karl Langosch has Frederick call explicitly for the murder rather than the seizure of Engelbert: "Tötet den Räuber, tötet ihn, der die Adligen enterbt und keinen schont!" (Langosch, *Leben*, 70).

*From Decay to Splendor: Body and Pain in Bonvesin da la Riva's
Book of the Three Scriptures*

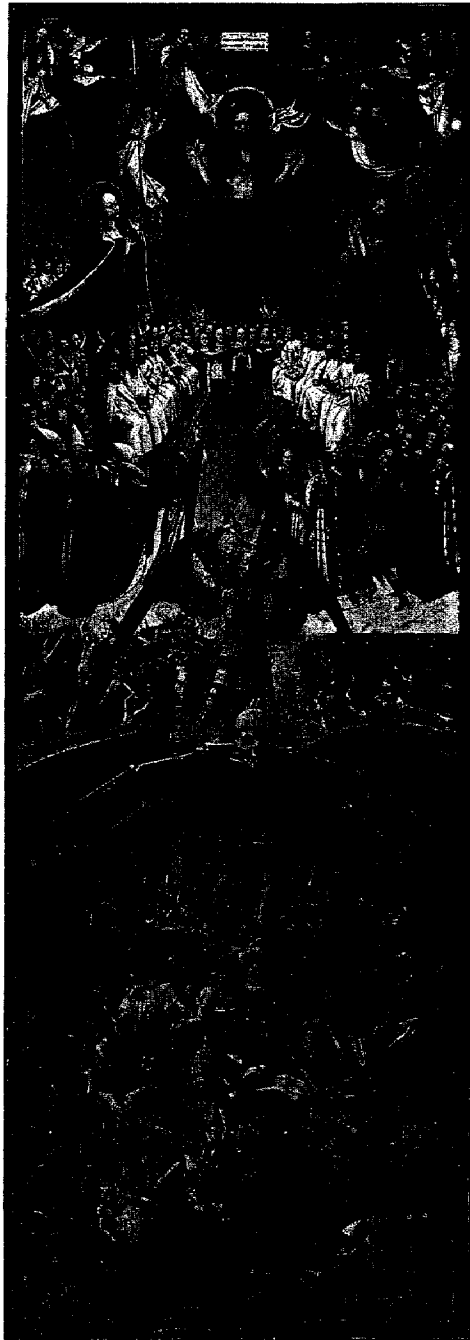
I would like to thank Caroline Walker Bynum for her constant help and generous support.

1. There are three twentieth-century editions of the *Libro delle tre scritture*: Bonvesin da la Riva, *Il libro delle tre scritture e il volgare delle vanità*, ed. V. De Bartholomaeis (Rome: Società Filologica Romana, 1901); Bonvesin da la Riva, *Il libro delle tre scritture e i volgari delle false scuse e delle vanità*, ed. L. Biadene (Pisa: E. Spoerri, 1902); and *Le opere volgari di Bonvesin da la Riva*, ed. G. Contini (Rome: Società Filologica Romana, 1941), in which the *Libro delle tre scritture* is found on pp. 101–76. Quotations from Bonvesin's poems will be from Contini's edition. For making sense of Bonvesin's often obscure dialect, one work proves very useful: Fabio Marri, *Glossario al milanese di Bonvesin* (Bologna: Patron, 1977). An English translation is available: Bonvesin da la Riva, *Volgari Scelti*, trans. Patrick S. Diehl and Ruggero Stefanini with commentary and notes by Stefanini and a biographical profile by Diehl (New York: Lang, 1987), 133–202. I will primarily use Diehl's and Stefanini's translation, indicating slight modifications with italics. On the one hand, Bonvesin has always been considered a simple

"precursor" of Dante, while on the other hand, there is no direct evidence that Dante knew his work. This is probably why such an interesting author has not been given the attention he deserves. A thorough knowledge of Bonvesin's work proves extremely useful for a precise understanding of Dante's intellectual background and spirituality. This is why, in the notes of this essay, I will give some hints on a few issues that the *Book of the Three Scriptures* helps one to understand and that are equally fundamental in Dante's *Commedia*. Quotations will be from Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. Charles S. Singleton (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970–75; rep. 1977). I have considered these issues in the dissertation entitled "Identity, Pain, and Resurrection: Body and Soul in Bonvesin da la Riva's *Book of the Three Scriptures* and Dante's *Commedia*," which I have written at Columbia University.

2. Bonvesin da la Riva was a successful and wealthy teacher of Latin in a private capacity in both Legnano and Milan. He wrote works in Latin both in prose and verse and several poems in the vernacular of Milan. For a summary of his life, see Bonvesin, *Volgari scelti*, 1–4. For more detailed information about Bonvesin's life, see Luigi Zanoni, "Fra Bonvesin della Riva fu Umiliato o Terziario Franceseano?," *Il Libro e la Stampa* 8 (1914): 141–48; Pio Pecchiai, "I documenti sulla biografia di Bonvicino della Riva," *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana* 78 (1921): 96–127. For a general presentation of Bonvesin's work, see Francesco De Sanctis, *Storia della letteratura italiana dai primi secoli agli albori del Trecento*, ed. G. Lazzari (Milan: Hoepli, 1950), 137–43, 240–66; Gianfranco Contini, *Poeti del duecento* (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1960), 1: 667–70; Pietro Gallardo, "Bonvesin da la Riva," in *Letteratura italiana: I minori* (Milan: Marzorati, 1961), 1: 171–83; Aldo Rossi, "Poesia didattica e poesia popolare del nord," in *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Milano: Garzanti, 1965), 1: 470–486; D'Arco Silvio Avalle, "Bonvesin da la Riva," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970), 1: 465–69; Emilio Pasquini, "La letteratura didattica e allegorica," in *La letteratura italiana: storia e testi*, ed. C. Muscetta (Bari: Laterza, 1970), 1 ("Il Duecento"), part. 2: 3–III, esp. 32–54.

3. The meter employed is the monorhymed alexandrine quatrain (aaaa, bbbb, etc.), typical of contemporary didactic poetry in northern Italy. This oral genre comes from France and consists of the translation, or rather the vernacular adaptation of middle-Latin didactic and hagiographic literature. On the technical aspects of the meter, see Avalle, "L'origine della quartina monorima di alessandrini," in *Saggi e ricerche in onore di Ettore Li Gotti* (Palermo: Centro di Studi Filologici e Linguistici Siciliani, 1962), 119–60. For information about the audience and the genre of this well-developed didactic literature, see Esther I. May, *The "De Jerusalem celesti" and the "De Babilonia infernali" of Fra Giacomino da Verona* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1930), 30; Umberto Cianciolo, "Contributo allo studio dei cantari di argomento sacro," *Archivium Romanicum* 30 (1938): 180–83; Avalle, "Bonvesin da la Riva," 567–68. The strong commitment to the practical usefulness of the poem could also be connected with the kind of preaching typical of Humiliati: Raoul Manselli, addressing the preaching of the Humiliati, writes that "Tout en partant d'un passage de l'Évangile, on évitait les développements théologiques pour se limiter à une exhortation à la pénitence, la prière, la vie de sainteté." "Italie: haut moyen âge: mouvements spirituels orthodoxes et hétérodoxes (11^e et 12^e siècles)," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1971), 7, part 2: cols. 2184–93; quotation col. 2190.



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