The early development of the cult of St Katherine of Alexandria with particular reference to England

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Abstract

St Katherine of Alexandria, traditionally martyred c. 305, became one of the most popular saints of the later Middle Ages. Whilst most modern studies concentrate on the period of the cult's greatest popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this thesis examines the early formative period down to c. 1200. In so doing it seeks to clarify, as far as possible, the early history of the cult and to identify the means by which it was transmitted from east to west. The paucity of surviving source material has necessitated a cross-disciplinary approach to follow the cult's transmission from its Byzantine homeland into Western Europe. A major theme in this study is the role played by relics in the development of Katherine's cult. Initially, no relics of the saint existed and her eastern cult grew through Katherine's inclusion in liturgical and hagiographical works. In this early period artistic representations provided Katherine's only physical presence. Similarly the cult initially grew in Western Europe via hagiographies and artistic representations, however, it was not until the emergence of primary relics of Katherine in late tenth-century Sinai and subsequently in eleventh-century Normandy that her cult really began to develop in the west.

Chapter one surveys existing research on the development of Katherine's Passio. Chapter two discusses evidence for the historical Katherine, whilst chapter three investigates the origins of her cult in the Byzantine Empire and its transmission to Italy. Chapter four is a regional study examining the introduction of Katherine's cult into Normandy, following the acquisition of primary relics by Holy Trinity monastery, Rouen, c. 1030. The relationship between the foundation of Holy Trinity, its acquisition of Katherine's relics and the development of her cult is placed in the social and political context of eleventh-century Normandy. Clerical and lay attitudes to Katherine's cult are investigated using an eleventh-century collection of miracles performed by her Norman relics, translated here into English for the first time. Chapter five considers the development of Katherine's English cult down to c. 1200. This was closer to the Byzantine model rather than the Norman and took place through her inclusion in liturgical and hagiographical works and through the interest of certain identifiable individuals.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AASS  

AB  
*Analecta Bollandiana: revue critique d'hagiographie* (Brussels, 1882–).

ASC  

BHL  
*Bibliotheca hagiographica latina antiquae et media aetatis* (Brussels, 1898–).

BJRL  
Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.

BL  
British Library, London.

BM  
Bibliotheque Municipale.

BN  
Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

CCCC  
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

DHGE  
*Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, ed. A. Baudrillart, A. de Meyer, E. van Cauwenbergh and R. Aubert (Paris, 1912–).

DNB  

DOP  
*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, The Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies (1941–).

EHR  
*English Historical Review* (London, 1886–).

EETS  
Early English Texts Society

GA  

GC  

HA  

HE  

Heads of Religious Houses  

MGH  
*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, inde ab anno Christi quintesimo usque ad annum millesimum et quingentesimum* (Hanover/Berlin, 1824–).

MGH AA  
*Auctores Antiquissimi* (Berlin, 1877–).

MGH SRM  
*Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* (Hanover, 1885–).

MGH SS  
*Scriptores* (in folio), 32 vols in 34 (Hanover, 1826–1934).
Note: All biblical references are to the Douay Translation of the Vulgate. Where the Authorised Version (AV) differs the AV version is given in parentheses. For example, Ps. 119 (120).
Introduction

St Katherine of Alexandria, traditionally martyred c. 305 in Egypt, was to become one of the most popular saints of the later Middle Ages.\(^1\) Whilst most modern studies have tended to concentrate on the period of the cult’s greatest popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this thesis is concerned with the early formative period down to c. 1200.\(^2\) The paucity of surviving material from the early Middle Ages has necessitated a cross-disciplinary approach, drawing on a wide variety of sources—hagiographies, chronicles, works of art, and hitherto under-exploited charter evidence—in order to follow the transmission of the cult from its point of origin in the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire into Western Europe. In addition to their concentration on the late medieval cult, most modern historical works focus either on the development of Katherine’s cult in one particular country or on the uses made of certain attributes of the saint by groups or individuals.\(^3\) In contrast, by

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\(1\) The original Greek form of the saint’s name is \textit{Αἰκατερίνη} or \textit{Εκατερίνη}. This was transliterated into Latin as \textit{Ekaterina} or \textit{Ekaterina} from which comes the final Western European form of Katherine or Catherine. There is no uniformity as to usage and Katherine is used here as being closer to the original Greek form of her name, except where Catherine forms part of a place-name or occurs as such in a source. For a summary of the different forms of her name in different countries see H. Knust, \textit{Geschichte der Legende der Katharina von Alexandrien und der Hl. Maria Egyptiaca} (Halle a.S., 1890), pp. 173–6.


examining the movement of this cult across a broad geographical area stretching from Cappadocia to northern Europe, it is hoped not only to shed fresh light on its origins, but also to offer general insights into how a successful saint’s cult evolved. Katherine’s is a particularly interesting case study, in that, during the early centuries, there were no corporeal relics to provide a focal point. The cult grew solely through the saint’s inclusion in liturgical and hagiographical works; her only physical presence being provided by artistic representation. This situation changed with the emergence of primary relics, first in Sinai in the late tenth century, and subsequently in Normandy in the early eleventh. However, in the case of eleventh-century England, it is nonetheless still possible to find the cult emerging despite the absence there of relics.

Before turning to the specific cult of St Katherine, however, it is necessary first to consider the medieval cult of saints of which it formed a part. It has long been recognized that the cult of saints, as well as being a social and religious phenomenon worthy of study in its own right, can provide valuable insights into many aspects of the political, social and ecclesiastical history of pre-Reformation Europe. Modern studies of the cult of saints are heavily indebted to Peter Brown who, in his work on the role of the ‘Holy Man’ in Late Antiquity and the transition from pagan to Christian society, has given impetus to much subsequent scholarship on the relationship between religious men and women and secular society. Amongst other things, Brown has shown how the early Christians regarded the tombs of martyrs, or others whom they believed to be especially holy, to be places where the realms of heaven and earth met. Saints were regarded as being both in heaven with God whilst

56; idem, ‘St Katherine of Alexandria: Traditional Themes and the Development of a Medieval German Hagiographic Narrative’, Speculum, 52 (1977), pp. 785–800.

4 I use the term cult to mean the veneration and commemoration, by both clergy and laity, of an individual after their death, this veneration being offered because of the individual’s perceived sanctity. It implies nothing about the historical authenticity of what was believed.

at the same time also 'present' in their tombs. In this, early Christians were drawing upon Jewish traditions and the pagan cult of heroes. However, in absorbing these ideas, Christians altered them so that, whereas Jews and Pagans regarded handling dead bodies as an unclean activity, Christians revered their honoured dead by dismembering their bodies for relics and touching, washing and kissing their bones. Once initial aversion to the dismemberment of bodies had been overcome, partial corporeal relics began to be dispersed throughout Europe. These bones were believed to share the attributes of the whole body, providing a direct physical link to the saint and, through the saint, to God in Heaven.

Relics were thus extremely important in the creation of a successful saint’s cult. Their possession was also to prove a most powerful tool, initially for bishops and later for monastic communities. Brown shows how, in Western Europe, relic shrines came to form the basis of ecclesiastical power structures, citing the particular example of Ambrose, bishop of Milan (374–97). When, in 385, relics of Gervasius and Protasius were 'discovered', Ambrose had them buried in his new basilica near the high altar. In this case, Brown argues that Ambrose was trying to provide a focal point for ceremonies that could be brought under episcopal control. Shrines were also considered suitable locations for the working of miracles. The saints, present in their shrine-tombs, could be directly approached to intercede on a petitioner's behalf before God in Heaven where they also resided. In theological terms God himself performed any resulting miracle in response to the intercession of the saint. In practice, this theological nicety could become blurred and saints consequently regarded as potent miracle-workers almost in their own right. In order to promote a shrine hagiographical material might be commissioned which, in the case of a martyr, frequently took the form of a Passio or account of their martyrdom. Much of the following discussion assumes knowledge of Katherine's Passio, and it is, therefore, recounted below in the form that would have been current down to c. 1200.

6 Brown, The Cult of the Saints, p. 3.
7 Ibid., p. 4.
8 Ibid., pp. 8–12, 33–7.
9 Like many saints' passiones, Katherine's Passio changed over time although the core details remained consistent. The version given above is based upon the earliest Greek manuscripts.
The Passio of St Katherine

In the opening years of the fourth century there lived in Alexandria a beautiful and learned young woman named Katherine, the daughter of a nobleman of that city. Although she was of royal blood and might have been expected to make a good marriage, she had dedicated herself to Christ. Her path to martyrdom began when the Roman Emperor Maxentius ordered a festival to be held in Alexandria and animal sacrifices made to pagan gods. Katherine went to Maxentius to protest and a lengthy debate ensued between them. In this debate Katherine demonstrated her learning by citing various classical pagan writers and, in particular, those who questioned the validity of the worship of the gods. She did this in order to show that even pagans realized that the gods were false. Katherine then called upon Maxentius to acknowledge the one true God who was made man and chose death on the Cross. Maxentius, unable to counter Katherine’s arguments, ordered fifty of the wisest philosophers in the Empire to be gathered together to debate with her, in the expectation that they would publicly humiliate Katherine by defeating her in debate. While the philosophers assembled, Katherine was thrown into prison where an angel appeared to her. The angel promised that God would provide her with the skill to defeat her opponents and that she would ultimately win a martyr’s crown.

A public debate between Katherine and the fifty philosophers then took place. Again the saint’s speeches are quoted at length. As in the dialogue with Maxentius, her speeches displayed considerable knowledge of classical texts. She concluded with a statement of her faith, saying that the Lord had allowed himself to be put to death but, on the third day, had risen again and ascended into heaven. From there He sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples who were sent out to spread the Gospel. Katherine’s

10 Although the earliest Greek texts give the name of the Emperor as Maxentius, this soon changes and he starts to be named as Maximinus or Maximianus. This confusion persists throughout the medieval period in Greek, Latin and vernacular texts. As a result, there are four potential candidates for Katherine’s persecutor: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus (285–308), known as Herculius; his son, Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius (306–12), known as Maxentius; Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus (305–11), known as Galerius; his nephew, Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximinus (310–13), known as Daia. See the discussion on pages 50-4 as to the identity of the Emperor.

11 In most versions of the early Passio Katherine names some of her sources. These include Diodorus Siculus (Diodore the Sicilian), who lived in the second half of the first century BC and was the author of a Universal History covering some 1100 years up to 60 BC and Plutarch of Chaeronea (c.50–c.120), a Greek writer, the author of a number of biographies and miscellaneous other works. See O. Seyffert, Dictionary of Classical Mythology, Religion, Literature and Art (Leipzig, 1882), revised edn, H. Nettleship and J. E. Sandys (New York, 1995), pp. 187, 497-8.
mastery of classical sources was such that she won the debate with the philosophers, converting them all to Christianity. The furious Maxentius then had all fifty philosophers burned at the stake. Next, the Emperor attempted to seduce Katherine and, when this failed, had her tortured and thrown back into prison. There the Empress visited her, accompanied by Porphyrius, Captain of the Imperial Guard. Katherine converted both to Christianity, together with two hundred of Porphyrius’ soldiers. During the twelve days of her second period of imprisonment, Katherine was sustained by a heavenly dove, which brought her food and encouragement.

After twelve days Katherine was brought again before the Emperor but continued to defend Christianity, refusing to sacrifice to pagan gods. At this point an Imperial Prefect named Chursasadem (Χρυσακσαοδεμι) suggested that an ingenious device be built consisting of four wheels with knives attached to their rims. Katherine was tied to this contraption, which was meant to cut her to pieces. Instead, angelic intervention caused the machine to break, killing large numbers of the pagans who had gathered to watch the execution. Maxentius grew even more furious with Katherine but, whilst deciding what to do with her, the Empress intervened on Katherine’s behalf. This further infuriated the Emperor who proceeded to torture his wife by having her breasts torn off with pincers after which he ordered the Empress to be executed. Porphyrius then came forward saying that he and his soldiers also now professed Christianity. They too were all then executed.

Finally, the Emperor decided to have Katherine beheaded. When taken out to the place ordained for her execution, she was accompanied by a crowd of weeping women. Before her death she prayed to God. Firstly and most importantly, she requested that her body might be hidden and not divided up for relics. Second, that whomsoever should pray to God in her name should have their petition answered. She was then beheaded but, in a final miracle, instead of blood, milk flowed from her neck. Angels then carried away her body and buried it on Mount Sinai.

Although the events described in the Passio are supposed to have occurred in the early fourth century, no contemporary or even near-contemporary evidence exists for
Katherine. The earliest reference to her that I have been able to find comes from the seventh century and it is not until the tenth century that her cult really begins to make an impression on the historical record. This lack of historicity did not inhibit the growth of Katherine's cult, but it did impact on its nature by making it highly susceptible to alteration or re-interpretation in the light of changing religious attitudes and interests. This was possible as there were no living witnesses, or memorials left by witnesses, to challenge re-workings of her Life. The lack of historical evidence has also led to Katherine's authenticity being challenged on a number of occasions, most recently in 1969 when she was removed from the liturgical Calendar of the Catholic Church on the grounds that she was unlikely ever to have existed.

This lack of historical evidence contrasts with many other saints' cults that started out as local affairs in a community with knowledge of the living person. Even in such cases, after death, details of the saint's life became available for interpretation, inevitably emphasizing traits considered emblematic of sainthood. The basic paradigm against which a saint's life was modelled was the life of Christ. Other important influences structuring expectations were the Life of Antony (c. 251–356) by Athanasius (c. 296–373) and the Life of Benedict (c. 480–c. 550) by Gregory the Great (590–604). As a result of this stereotyping of sainthood, all representations of saint's lives contain what Delooz has called 'real' and 'constructed' elements.

12 The earliest reference to Katherine of which I am aware is contained in a Syriac litany written after 620 (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Syr. 77). It has been published, accompanied by a Latin translation, by Baumstark (see pages 75–8 for a fuller discussion of this manuscript). See A. Baumstark, 'Eine syrisch-melchitische Alleheiligenlitanei', Oriens Christianus, 4 (1904), pp. 98–120. For the dating see M. Lapidge, Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saints, Henry Bradshaw Society, 106 (London, 1991), pp. 17–18.

13 In 1963 following the conclusion of the second session of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, known as Vatican II, Pope Paul VI set up a council, known as the Consilium ad exequendum Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia, to revise the liturgical calendar. It reported in April 1967 and, following approval by Paul VI, its conclusions were published in 1969 as the Calendarium Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum. The report deleted St Katherine from the calendar of the Catholic Church on the grounds that the Passio was 'totally fabulous' and that 'nothing can be affirmed as certain of the very person of Catherine'. It is still possible, however, to find altars dedicated to Katherine in Catholic churches, for example, in Noyon cathedral, in France (personal observation).


element to their story increases. Katherine is unencumbered by memories of her as a living person, thus becoming a prime example of a constructed saint. Whether this matters is a moot point. Many saints can be shown to have dubious origins or to be largely allegorical embodiments of virtues. The important fact is that people believed in Katherine’s existence, this sincerely held belief providing impetus to the cult.

The most obvious example of the way Katherine was constructed and re-constructed over time is to be found in her Life. This became increasingly elaborate as interest grew in aspects of her life not otherwise included in the original version. The Life falls into two distinct parts, the oldest, the Passio, dealing with Katherine’s martyrdom. In the period covered by this thesis, namely down to c. 1200, this is all that existed. The first significant additions were the linked stories of Katherine’s conversion to Christianity and her mystical marriage to Christ. Both these themes are missing from the early Greek and Latin texts, which simply contain a brief reference to Christ as her bridegroom. Virgins who dedicated themselves to chastity were often referred to as ‘Brides of Christ’ but this was not the same as a full mystical marriage to Christ.

It has been suggested that the first indication of Katherine’s mystical marriage is to be found in a set of wall-paintings in the church of Notre-Dame de Montmorillon, France. The paintings are in the lower church, which was built at the end of the

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16 Saints Anne and Patrick are other examples of the same process. Anne is mentioned nowhere in the New Testament or in any primary sources and has been entirely ‘constructed’ from the premise that the Virgin Mary must have had a mother. See Delooz, ‘Sociological Study’, p. 196; Interpreting Cultural Symbols: St Anne in Late Medieval Society, eds K. Ashley and P. Sheingorn (Athens, Georgia, 1990), pp. 6–48. Patrick, on the other hand, appears to be a historical personage from the fifth century, although his dates are contentious, leading to the commemoration of the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of his death in 1961 and again in 1993. Much of Patrick’s Vita is also contentious, in particular there seems to have been a conflation between Patrick and Palladius who, in 431, was sent from Rome to be the first bishop of Ireland. See Saint Patrick A.D. 493–1993, ed. D. N. Dumville (Woodbridge, 1993).

17 For example, St Amphibalus, a supposed companion to St Alban. In fact he never existed but is the result of a mis-translation of a Latin word for cloak, the reference in the original story being to a garment belonging to Alban. See John Lydgate, The Life of Saint Alban and Saint Amphibal, ed. J. E. Van der Westhuizen (Leiden, 1974), pp. 34–5.

18 PG, 116, col. 277 Γ (Greek text), col. 278, III (Latin text).
eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century. They show the Virgin seated on a throne holding the Christ-child, one of whose hands rests upon the head of an unidentified woman wearing a crown and a halo. It has been suggested that this represents Katherine’s mystical marriage to Christ. The reason is that to the left of the Virgin and Child, Katherine stands crowned and holding a cross whilst debating with the philosophers. On the right of the Virgin and Child is Maxentius burning the philosophers for losing the debate with Katherine. The date of these paintings is disputed and they have been variously described as emanating from the late twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Thibout, in his detailed study of these paintings, dates them to c. 1200. He points out that the mystical marriage is not present in the influential version of Katherine’s Passio included in De Voragine’s Golden Legend, written c. 1260 and suggests that the central scene of the Virgin, Child and woman represents the union of Virgin and Church through the mediation of Christ.

No known written references to Katherine’s mystical marriage occur before the mid-thirteenth century but by the fourteenth, tales of Katherine’s conversion and mystical marriage had become widespread. This reflected the growing interest in mystical experience and the number of mystics, particularly female, who underwent their own marriage with Christ. So, for example, Raymond of Capua, in his Life of Catherine of Siena (1347–80), drew a parallel between her mystical marriage and that of Katherine of Alexandria. During the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, religious interests shifted again, away from an emphasis on virginity as the path to sanctity and towards an emphasis on family life. The growing interest in the Holy Family made it more acceptable for married people to be recognized as saints. This led to a parallel development in the Katherine Life whereby Katherine’s genealogy was very much elaborated.

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20 Ibid., p. 218.
24 Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, St Katherine, pp. 11–12, 67–8.
The concentration of most modern research on the later Western European cult of Katherine of Alexandria has also led to an emphasis on certain of her attributes, in particular as a role-model for women seeking to preach, teach or bear public witness to their Christian faith. This gendered reading of the later cult focuses on Katherine's successful public defence of Christianity. However, this aspect also appealed to men so, for example, the Menologium Basilianum written c. 1000 for Emperor Basil II (976–1025) emphasizes this attribute of Katherine. The presentation of the saint as a powerful intellectual figure, capable of successful public disputation and with the ability to convert others through the eloquence of her arguments, is one of the most original elements of her Passio. Whilst this attribute was undoubtedly important, a reading of her cult, focussing solely on Katherine as preacher, overlooks the multi-faceted nature of her cult. For some of her devotees, particularly in the period under consideration here, Katherine's defence of her virginity was as important as her defence of her faith. It was this attribute of virginity in particular which inspired the devotion of some of the prominent male clerics responsible for the early promotion of her cult in Western Europe. Underlying all other attributes however, was her martyrdom. This gave her potency as an intercessor, which her preaching and her virginity alone would not have done and it was this which lay at the heart of her appeal to the laity. Any explanation of the success of Katherine's cult has to look at the lady in the round and take account of all her attributes.

A second point that has often been overlooked is the particular role of relics in the development of Katherine's cult. The importance of relics in the general development of the medieval cult of saints has already been noted, however, initially, Katherine had no relics and from the seventh to the mid-tenth century her cult

26 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Vat. Gr. 1613, fol. 207. See page 70.
27 For a general introduction to concepts of virginity in the Middle Ages see J. M. Bugge, Virginitas: An Essay in the History of a Medieval Ideal, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Series Minor, 17 (The Hague, 1975), especially pp. 80–110. See also J. Wogan-Browne, Saint's Lives and Women's Literary Culture: Virginity and its Authorizations (Oxford, 2001), a study of the use made of the ideal of virginity in literature available to, commissioned or written by women, see especially pp. 227–45 concerning use made of the Life of St Katherine. I am grateful to Katherine Lewis for drawing my attention to this work.
28 Winstead, Virgin Martyrs, p. 17, has drawn attention to the popularity of these legends amongst male audiences in late medieval England. An example of a male cleric, noted for his devotion to Katherine and for his support for women wishing to live a virginal and religious life is Geoffrey of Gorham, Abbot of St Albans (1119–46), see pages 198–200.
manifested itself solely through liturgical and hagiographical works. Indeed, the early Passio, as outlined above, reflects the lack of relics, for in it, just before her execution, Katherine actually prays that her body should not be divided into relics. The absence of any primary relics helps to explain the initial slow growth of her cult. It is significant that the pace only quickened when Katherine’s relics were ‘discovered’ on Sinai, probably in the late tenth century.29 Further primary relics, namely, three small bones, surfaced in Normandy in the first half of the eleventh century, but in the period up to c. 1200 the only other relics to emerge were secondary ones, consisting of phials of the oil that flowed from her bones.

The role of relics in the development of Katherine’s cult is thus a curious one. There are a number of possible explanations for this. Katherine was a ‘universal’ saint in that she belonged to the common stock of saints recognized throughout Greek and Latin Christianity. Although she had a principal shrine in Sinai, this was too remote for all but the most intrepid of pilgrims to visit. Katherine, therefore, seems to have developed a persona which was not tied to one particular location and which made her accessible from a large number of places even though a petitioner might have no direct physical link to her. In those cases where a link existed, it was usually provided by the secondary relic of her oil rather than by primary relics. The role of relics in the development of Katherine’s cult will be explored in greater depth in subsequent chapters, but first it is appropriate to make some comments on the nature of the available source material for a study of the cult.

29 See pages 87–95.
Chapter One

Sources and their problems

The principal reason for the concentration of research on the later cult and on the manuscript tradition of Katherine's Life is that perennial curse of medieval historians, the scarcity of primary source material for the earlier period. This is exacerbated by the difficulty of dating tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts. Dating usually has to be based upon the palaeography of a manuscript but this can open up the possibility of scholarly dispute over the correct dating of particular features of a script or of the usage of particular word-forms. As relatively few manuscripts survive from before 1200, each one assumes a greater significance. In consequence, disputes over dating manuscripts weaken arguments built upon those manuscripts. In order to overcome the paucity of direct documentary evidence for Katherine's cult, this thesis draws upon a wide and eclectic range of source material. The diverse nature of the sources has created methodological problems, as I have been forced to weave information together from a variety of documentary and non-documentary material. For the sake of clarity it has proved simplest first to consider the source material by genre and then to compare the information derived from each type of material.

In the present chapter, a longitudinal approach is taken and consideration given to the availability and reliability of the source material within each genre over the period down to c. 1200. Wherever relevant, I have also commented on later sources. In subsequent chapters a more lateral approach is taken and information from all types of source material has been brought together to illustrate the nature of Katherine's cult in a particular place or a particular period. The sources are preserved in a number of different locations and countries, but, wherever possible, I have personally examined the primary source material. Many of the manuscripts consulted are held in London at the British Library and the Public Record Office and these have been made readily available to me. I have also been granted generous access to manuscripts at the John Rylands Library, Manchester; Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; the Bibliothèque Municipale, Rouen; and the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome. Whilst in Rome I was fortunate to be allowed to examine the
Menologium Basilianum and was also able to view some of the art historical evidence used. Where it has been impossible to consult original manuscripts, I have resorted to printed editions. The library of the Institute of Historical Research, London has been particularly valuable for published primary sources whilst the Cambridge University Library has proved equally valuable for its collection of rare secondary sources.

I Hagiographical material

a) Greek sources

The bulk of the extant hagiographical material consists of versions of the Katherine Passio and its later additions. The manuscript tradition of the Passio is complex and there is no comprehensive listing of literally hundreds of extant manuscripts. In Appendix I, I have attempted to compile a table of all Greek, Latin, French and English manuscripts of the Passio which pre-date c. 1200, together with those of a later date which are mentioned in this thesis.

Before considering the manuscript tradition of the Passio, it is necessary to be clear about the nature of the work under discussion. Passiones were not produced in a vacuum but were written for specific reasons, usually conforming in structure and content to certain conventions. They form a sub-set of the genre of hagiographical writing known as saints' vitae or Lives. A saint's Life was normally written for the purpose of proving the sanctity of the individual concerned. ¹ Within the genre of vitae, passiones formed a class of works concentrating on the death of a saint, usually with the objective of demonstrating that they had proved their sanctity by dying in defence of their faith. Not surprisingly, many passiones were concerned with individuals martyred in Late Antiquity. However, in some instances, any violent death might lead to the creation of a martyr cult. Thus, Edmund, the Christian king of the East Angles (847–69), defeated, captured and brutally murdered by pagan

¹ Heffernan, Sacred Biography, p. 16.
Vikings, was considered a martyr and sanctified. The growth of a cult might also be explicable in political terms. One such was the cult of King Edward Martyr (d. c.978) allegedly murdered by his stepmother and her allies to ensure the succession of her son, Edward’s half-brother, Æthelred II (978–1016). Edward seems to have been an obnoxious young man and not much missed, yet the manner of his death threw a shadow over his successor who was obliged to promote the sanctity of his half-brother by decreeing that the anniversary of Edward’s death should be celebrated throughout England.

As passiones were written to demonstrate a certain kind of sanctity, their contents were tailored to the requirements of the genre. The decision to include a particular piece of detailed information would depend on whether it demonstrated how far the individual conformed to accepted notions of sanctity. From the perspective of the historian, a medieval passio becomes a tantalising and sometimes frustrating document with which to work. It dangles the possibility of discovering an individual and illuminating their social milieu but delivers only partial information, which is often partisan or couched in highly general terms. Passiones, like vitae in general, should, therefore, always be approached with care.

The original language of the Katherine Passio was Greek but, although apparently translated into Latin by the beginning of the ninth century, no Greek manuscripts survive from before the tenth century. The earliest recorded Latin Passio is known only from a reference in the index to a Latin Passionary dated c. 800–40, which reads: ‘passio ecaterine virginis dei’. Whilst the Passio itself has been lost, ‘Ecaterine’, the form of the name used in the Passionary index appears close to the

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4 The oldest extant Greek manuscripts are Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Palatinus Gr. 4, dated to the tenth or eleventh century; BN, MSS Gr. 1180 and 1538, dated to the tenth century and BN, MS Gr. 1539 of the eleventh century. All were collated and published by the Abbé Viteau. See J. Viteau, Passions de Saints Ecaterine et Pierre d’Alexandrie, Barbara et Anysia (Paris, 1897).

5 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Claromonte 4554, fol. 1r–v.
original Greek form, suggesting that the lost *Passio* was a direct translation from a Greek original. The earliest Greek texts have been classified and collated by Viteau on the basis of their contents and wording. He grouped them into three core texts, which he called A, B and C. 6 Viteau’s conclusions are still generally accepted, although the Bollandist, Peeters, has shown that he had erred in his assessment of the relationship between the three texts. 7 Viteau believed that Text A was the oldest as it was the simplest. 8 However, Peeters used the convoluted speeches in Text B to prove that this text was in fact older and that A had been created by stripping out the verbose rhetorical flourishes from B.

An analogous example is the debate as to whether the *Rule* of St Benedict used the so-called *Rule of the Master* as a source document or *vice versa*. Many of the arguments in this debate centre on whether texts can be said to ‘evolve’ from a more ‘primitive’ to a more ‘progressive’ and ‘civilized’ state and which of these two *Rules* represents which state. In a recent article Dunn has reviewed this debate and attempted to move away from it. Instead of comparing the two *Rules* to see how one might have evolved from the other, she compares both of them to known external changes in monastic liturgical arrangements. This enables her to argue that the contents of the *Rule of the Master* are such that it must be of a later date than the *Rule of Benedict*. Although her arguments are cogent, they are not conclusive and the debate continues. 9

Viteau’s third text, C, is generally agreed to be the most recent of his three core texts. Additionally, he identified D, a fourth text, which he did not publish as he considered

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7 P. Peeters, ‘Une version arabe de la passion de Sainte Catherine d’Alexandrie’, *AB*, 26 (1907), pp. 5–32.
8 This attitude had its roots in the nineteenth-century scientific method that developed in the biological sciences following the adoption of Darwinian evolutionary theory. This sought, through the comparison and classification of living creatures, to trace their evolution back to a common source, initially for individual species and later to show how seemingly unrelated species might have a common ancestor. The approach was then adopted by scholars working in non-scientific disciplines, who sought to compare and classify cultural phenomena such as language and to produce ‘family trees’ for these phenomena. One key result of this approach derived from the fact that evolutionary theory assumed that simpler organisms occurred earlier in the evolutionary chain than more complex ones. In language and literature studies this frequently led to the assumption that shorter, simpler texts were likely to be earlier than more complex texts and that texts were more likely to have items added to them than deleted from them.
it a direct derivative from his Text C. However, D is perhaps the most interesting of Viteau's groupings from the point of view of this thesis, as the author of this version is known and it can therefore be placed firmly in its historical context.

Although the earliest manuscripts of this version of the Greek Passio date from the eleventh century, Text D itself comes from the second half of the tenth century and was compiled by the Greek hagiographer, Simeon Metaphrastes (d. before 1000), for his ten-volume compendium of saints' Lives. Viteau's view of the derivative nature of Metaphrastes' Passio of Katherine is borne out by an examination of the rest of his hagiography. Simeon earned his epithet of 'Metaphrastes', which derived from the Greek for 'translate' or 're-write', because he either directly copied from, or re-worked, earlier saints' Lives. Metaphrastes' work was immensely popular and nearly 850 manuscripts of his compendium, dating from the eleventh to the eighteenth centuries, survive.

Little is known about Metaphrastes other than that he was an official at the Byzantine Court in Constantinople during the second half of the tenth century. The difficulty in establishing reliable information on Metaphrastes arises from the fact that there are a number of references to Byzantine court officials named Simeon in the tenth century and it is not always possible to tell if they refer to one person or to several individuals of the same name. The Georgian chronicler and writer, Ep'rem Mcire (d. c.1110), writes that Metaphrastes became well-known as a hagiographer c. 982, in the sixth year of the reign of Emperor Basil II (976–1025). Yahya-ibn-Said of Antioch (d.1066), a Christian chronicler originally from Egypt and writing in Arabic, supports this, recording that Metaphrastes became famous for Egypt and writing in Arabic, supports this, recording that Metaphrastes became famous for his hagiography in the

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10 Viteau, Passions, p. 2.
11 Metaphrastes' version of Katherine's Passio was printed by Migne who included a Latin translation by Laurentius Surius (1522–78), a German scholar from Lubeck who became a Carthusian monk in Cologne in 1542 and is principally known for being amongst the first to critically assess his material when compiling saints' Lives. See PG, 116, cols 275–302. For Surius, see Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne, nouvelle edition publiée sous la direction de M. Michaud, revue, corrigée, et considérablement augmentée d'articles inédits et nouveaux, ed. E. Desplaces, 45 vols (Paris, 1843–66), xl, p. 455. The earliest surviving dated manuscripts containing extracts from Metaphrastes were produced in 1004 and 1011 while the earliest surviving whole volume (a volume 10) which can be securely dated was produced in 1042 (Athos, MS Iviron 16). See N. P. Ševčenko, Illustrated Manuscripts of the Metaphrastian Menologion (Chicago and London, 1990), p. 3.
fourth year of Basil II’s reign (that is c. 980). Metaphrastes is thought to have still been alive in 987 for his friend, Nicephoros Ouranos, composed a dirge in his honour shortly after his death. Ouranos had been a prisoner in Baghdad (979–87) and wrote the poem following his return to Constantinople. Metaphrastes, therefore, must have died after 987. His fame as a hagiographer was such that he is still venerated as a saint in the Orthodox Church. Given that Viteau’s Text C is Metaphrastes’ base text, C must, therefore, pre-date the second half of the tenth century when Metaphrastes was writing. As Peeters demonstrated that Viteau’s Text B was the oldest of his three texts, then B must be older still, dating from the early tenth century or even the ninth century.

Whilst Viteau concentrated on collating the earliest versions of Katherine’s Greek Passio he had been preceded in this task by two German scholars, Knust and Varnhagen, both of whom attempted to gather the source material needed to classify all the variants of both the Greek and Latin versions of Katherine’s Passio and its later accretions of her childhood, conversion and mystical marriage. First to publish was Knust in 1890. He managed to identify some 120 texts of the Passiones in nine languages. Unfortunately his work suffered from the fact that he concentrated on the Latin and vernacular versions and failed to examine in any detail their relationship to the earlier Greek texts. His methodology with the texts he did examine was also flawed in that he arbitrarily grouped together manuscripts from the same century and then sub-divided them by language, making it difficult for him to identify the relationships between different variants.

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Next to publish was Varnhagen who drew attention to the flaws in Knust’s publication and tried to remedy some of them. He was handicapped by the availability of texts, being forced to concentrate on Latin and Italian manuscripts, principally those in the State Library in Munich and the University Library in Erlangen. For all its drawbacks, Varnhagen’s work produced a basic analysis of the Latin texts, which, although refined by subsequent research, still holds true in its fundamentals. Over a century later, despite their deficiencies, the works of Knust and Varnhagen still remain fundamental to any study of the Katherine Passio. The enormity of the task they undertook is clear from the fact that it was not until 1960, when Bronzini produced his analysis of the Greek and Latin Passiones, that anyone else attempted a similar survey of the surviving Greek and Latin texts.

Bronzini’s paper remains a key secondary source for anyone studying Katherine’s cult. He had access to more manuscripts than either Knust or Varnhagen and was, therefore, able to refine Varnhagen’s earlier classification and to correct it in places. He also published several previously unedited texts. However, he was very much the heir of the tradition of ‘comparative science’ and adopted a highly systematic approach to the classification of the texts he considered. From his analysis, he produced a series of complex diagrams attempting to show the relationships and line of descent of the various versions of Katherine’s Passio from a putative original Greek text known as text α. Almost immediately he attracted criticism for the complexity of the ‘genealogical tables’ thus produced and for certain basic errors he made in constructing his stemma. The most significant of these was that Bronzini, in common with Knust, considered the Katherine Passio contained in the collection of saints’ Lives known as the Menologium Basilianum (c. 1000), to be the first datable Greek version completely overlooking Metaphrastes’ earlier recension.

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18 Ibid., p. 258.
21 MS Vat. Gr. 1613; Knust, Geschichte, p. 3; Bronzini, Leggenda, p. 260.
In constructing his *stemma* Bronzini followed Knust and Varnhagen in postulating that from a lost original Greek text, \( \alpha \), came two distinct variations referred to as \( \beta \) and \( \gamma \). Both of these variant texts were also lost. The three scholars argued that all surviving texts derived from one of these two lost intermediate texts, the resulting two groups of texts being distinguished in two ways. Firstly, whilst the texts derived from \( \beta \) contain the story of Katherine’s body being translated to Sinai by angels, the texts derived from \( \gamma \) do not. Second, \( \gamma \) texts use the name Maximinus or Maximianus for the Emperor. This is unusual for early Greek texts, although not unique to Bronzini’s \( \gamma \) texts. However, Bronzini could identify only two Katherine *Passiones* as \( \gamma \) texts, the Greek *Passio* contained in the *Menologium Basilianum* and an early Latin *Passio* from Montecassino.\(^{22}\) Bronzini’s argument can, therefore, be turned on its head, by suggesting that the one main version of Katherine’s *Passio* is that belonging to his \( \beta \) texts. Although textual differences may occur amongst \( \beta \) group texts, the story they tell is essentially the same.

It is also doubtful whether the two texts which Bronzini identified as deviating from the main group, MC 139 and the *Menologium Basilianum*, can be grouped together as deriving from a common Greek source, itself different from that for the principal version of the *Passio*. They are very different texts with no obvious relationship to each other. The unique feature of MC 139 is that Katherine’s body is not translated to Sinai but is buried near Alexandria by some local Christians. There are no obvious reasons for this ending to the *Passio* and it is a genuine variation in the story-line. The text also demonstrates a good grasp of Roman history, which the author uses to provide a plausible historical setting. It may be that this text represents a ‘tidying-up’ of the story by some Latin translator of a Greek *Passio* rather than a straight derivation from a Greek variant, particularly since there are no known Greek parallels for the ending. This suggestion is given some weight by its dating which Bronzini attributed to the eleventh-century, thus making it the oldest extant western manuscript.\(^{23}\) Both catalogues of Montecassino manuscripts date MC 139 to the

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\(^{22}\) Montecassino, MS lat. 139, fols 363–9 (*BHL*, 1662), hereafter MC 139. Published in *Bibliotheca Casinensis seu Codicum Manuscriptorum Qui in Tabulario Casinensi Asservantur*, 5 vols (Montecassino, 1877), iii, pp. 253, 255, *Florilegium*, pp. 184–7. I am grateful to Dr Herwig Weigl of the University of Vienna for providing me with a copy of the printed version of this text.

eleventh century. Loew, the doyen of Beneventan manuscript studies, also catalogued it as saec. xi ex., in his handlist of Beneventan manuscripts. The Italian cult of St Katherine is discussed in more detail in chapter three where I argue that her cult was beginning to establish itself in southern Italy and in Rome by the early eleventh century. This initial phase, occurring whilst the cult was still weak in Italy, would appear to be the obvious time for any 'tidying-up' to occur—the contents of the Passio were not well-known and changes could easily be made. MC 139 does not seem to have exerted much influence on later Latin versions of Katherine's Passio, although Bronzini suggested that it may well have been one source for a twelfth-century text now in Brussels.

The Menologium Basilianum, unlike MC 139, ends with Katherine's execution. The only unusual feature the two manuscripts share is the name of the Emperor. However, there is no true agreement between the two texts as the Menologium Basilianum calls him Maximinus, whilst MC 139 refers to him as Maximianus. In both cases the most likely reason for the name-change is that the writer was sufficiently knowledgeable about Roman history to have realized that Maxentius could not have executed Katherine. It is also questionable whether the Menologium Basilianum should be considered as a true variant of the Passio rather than simply as an abbreviated version of a β text. Bronzini argued that the Menologium Basilianum fell into a separate group, close to the original text α, because it is very short and contains only the bare bones of the Passio. This argument falls within the evolutionary tradition which saw texts moving from the simpler to the more complex. However, it completely ignores the nature of the Menologium Basilianum.

The Menologium Basilianum was compiled for Emperor Basil II (976–1025). It is typical of the confusion surrounding research into the early Katherine cult that a

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26 See pages 102–12.
27 Bronzini, Leggenda, p. 321.
28 See page 53–4.
29 Bronzini, Leggenda, pp. 264, 286, 288.
30 See chapter one, note 8.
number of modern writers have assumed that it was composed for Basil I (867–86). However, the text of the dedicatory poem makes it clear that it is Basil II to whom it refers when it speaks of Basil as ‘Sun of the purple, reared in purple robes’. This is a reference to the fact that Basil II was porphyrogenitus, or born to a ruling Emperor.

The Menologium Basilianum is ordered according to the Orthodox Church year, starting in September and appears to be the first volume of a two-volume set, although it is not known whether the companion volume was ever completed. The book covers the first half of the Church year, September to February. It is generally assumed to have been created c.1000, but Der Nessarian has argued that it may have been produced as early as c. 979. Her argument hinges on the suggestive rather than conclusive evidence that the Menologium Basilianum commemorates the earthquake of 740 but does not mention that of 989. The Menologium Basilianum also contains a miniature of a stylite saint. This follows the saints for 11 December and so is likely to refer to a saint whose feast-day is either 11 or 12 December. St Luke the Stylite is commemorated on 11 December and Der Nessarian suggests that the miniature represents him as Luke died in 979, the book could not have been produced before that date. Here, her argument seems to be on much stronger ground.

I am fortunate to have been able to examine the Menologium Basilianum. It has clearly been carefully designed with text and illustrations complementing each other. Each page is devoted to one saint and contains a brief synopsis of their life-story accompanied by an appropriate illustration. The text for each saint is exactly

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33 Porphyrogenitus, ‘born in the purple’, a reference to the room decorated with purple porphyry where children of a ruling Emperor were traditionally born. Basil II’s father, Romanos II (959–63) was also porphyrogenitus having been born when his father, Constantine VII (913–59), was co-Emperor. Basil I (867–86), Basil II’s great-great-grandfather and the founder of the dynasty, came from obscure peasant origins, possibly Armenian, and would not have been referred to in this way. See Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, iii, pp. 1701.


35 The illustration of Katherine and its accompanying Passio can be found at MS Vat. Gr. 1613, fol. 207.
sixteen lines long. The magnificence of the illustrations in the book and the brevity and regularity of the text has caused the Menologium Basilianum to be described as a book of illustrations accompanied by text rather than the other way around. Der Nessarian has also pointed out that the book more closely resembles a synaxarium than a menologium, the difference being that in a menologium the biographies are longer than in a synaxarium, the latter being little more than a collection of brief notes.36

As each saint’s story has been compressed into sixteen lines it is clear that the scribe has extracted and summarised from his source material.37 In these circumstances I would suggest that it is not possible to argue that the text for Katherine’s entry has been derived separately from text α. It is equally possible that the source was a Group β text that was pared down to fit the available space. The following translation shows what the scribe managed to fit into his sixteen lines:

‘Æcaterina was a martyr of Alexandria and the daughter of a rich and noble chieftain. Being distinguished by talent as well as beauty, she devoted herself to Grecian literature and the study of philosophy, and was moreover master of the languages of all nations. On a Grecian festival in honour of the idols, she was moved by the sight of so many slaughtered animals, and came into the presence of Maximinus and expostulated with him in these words, “Why hast thou left the living God to worship lifeless idols?” Whereupon the emperor gave her into custody and punished her severely. He then fetched fifty orators and bade them reason with Æcaterina and confute her, adding, “If ye fail to overpower her, I shall consign every one of you to the flames.” But they, seeing themselves vanquished in the contest were all baptised and forthwith burnt. She, on the contrary, was beheaded.’38

It is immediately apparent that only the bare bones of the story have been retained as the scribe has sought to condense it into the space available. What remains is the

38 This translation from the Greek is taken from Hardwick, An Historical Inquiry, pp. 10–11.
story of a martyrdom. This fits in with the general tenor of the book—the majority of illustrations in the Menologium are of martyrs, frequently in graphic detail. It also fits with what is known of Basil II’s character. Michael Psellus says of him that he was ‘...austere and abrupt in manner ... sober in his daily habits and averse to all effeminacy...’ and that ‘a change took place ... after he acceded to the throne and instead of leading his former dissolute ... life, he became a man of great energy’.  

There is no evidence that Basil II ever married and he appears to have adopted a life of monastic-like celibacy.  

The other striking feature of the text is that it retains the debate with the philosophers. This may explain why Katherine was included in the book. In the Byzantine tradition, religious works such as this were commissioned as acts of devotion in honour of the saints. In return the saints were expected to assist the owner of the work. Basil spent much of his reign at war with non-Christians and the dedicatory poem of the Menologium Basilianum prays that Basil might ‘In all those whom he has portrayed in colours ... find active helpers, sustainers of the State, allies in battles, deliverers from sufferings, healers in sickness, and above all eager mediators before the Lord at the time of Judgement, and providers of ineffable glory and the Kingdom of God.’  

The Menologium can thus be viewed as a statement by Basil that he considered the saints depicted within it to be intercessors on his behalf. In Katherine’s case, her debate with the philosophers symbolises the successful defence of Christianity, whilst her martyrdom is the source of her intercessory power. Katherine’s inclusion in the Menologium clearly shows that by the end of the tenth century she had established herself in the pantheon of Greek saints and was regarded as a powerful ‘active helper’.  

In summary, the evidence from the early manuscripts of the Greek Passio of Katherine shows that it must have been composed before the middle of the tenth century. However, the reference to a Latin Passio in the Munich Passionary index ...
suggests that the date of origin of the Greek *Passio* must be earlier still as its Greek original cannot have been written any later than the end of the eighth century.

b) Latin sources

Apart from the Munich Passionary, little evidence survives for the Latin *Passio* before the eleventh century. It has been suggested that part of an early Latin *Passio* of Katherine survives in a fragment of a ninth-century manuscript from the library of the Austrian monastery of Lambach.42 This fragment, which seems to derive from a ninth-century Passionary, was discovered inside the cover of a late medieval miscellany. On one side of the fragment a few lines remain which have been described as coming from a Latin *Life* of St Katherine.43 They read in English:

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... the citizens, however, energetically placed wood
about the wheel so that they might burn her with the wheel.

However, after she had been placed on the fire an angel of the Lord seized
the servant of Christ and placed her on the highest arch
which was near at hand.

And, having passed through the blaze they saw her standing upon the arch.

Then the Proconsul ordered her to be taken from the machine
and in the meantime to be shut up in prison and afterwards
to be brought to the wild animals

The wild animals when they saw her, killed her ...
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The main reason for supposing this passage to originate from a *Passio* of St Katherine is the mention of the wheel and the intervention of an angel. However this

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42 Lambach, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 480.
43 Kurt Holter: 'Zu einem Verzeichnis frühmittelalterlicher Handschriften', in Karolingische und Ottonische Kunst, Werden-Weisen-Wirkung, ed. F. Gerke, G. von Opel and H. Schnitzler, Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie, 3 (Wiesbaden, 1957), pp. 434–42. I am grateful to Dr Herwig Wiégl of the University of Vienna for providing me with a transcription of the fragment, obtained from the photograph and description published by Holter. The translation is mine.
44 *clues aut[em] ualde adportabant ligna/circa rotam ut eam cum rota incenderent/ Inposita autem igne angelus d[omiUni rapuit/famulam Christi [Xpi] et posuit eam sup[er] arcum/ altissimum qui iuxta erat./ Transactoq[ue] incendio uiderunt eam siantem incolomem sup[er] arcum./ Tunc proconsul machinis ea[m] iussit deponi/ et iterum recludi in carcerem postea aut[em]/ bestiis tradi./Bestiae autem ut uiderunt eam ceciderunt/ [last line is illegible].
is by no means a certain sign that the narrative relates to Katherine, as a number of saints suffered torture on a wheel and were saved by angelic intervention.\textsuperscript{45} Other elements of the passage, in particular the reference to giving the martyr to wild animals, do not appear in other versions of Katherine's \textit{Passio} where the saint is tortured and beheaded but never thrown to wild animals. This indicates that the passage is unlikely to have come from a Katherine \textit{Passio} but insufficient text remains to enable any firm conclusions to be drawn as to the true identity of the saint concerned.

The earliest surviving Latin \textit{Passio} of Katherine dates from the tenth-century and has been attributed to a Neapolitan sub-deacon named Peter (fl. c. 960).\textsuperscript{46} Peter is known to have written, or re-written, several hagiographical works but his authorship of this \textit{Passio}, while probable, is not certain. It is the eleventh century however, which sees the emergence of a number of Latin \textit{Passiones} of Katherine. Two whose approximate provenance is known also come from southern Italy. The first is the above-mentioned MC 139 and the second is a partial \textit{Passio} contained in MC 117.\textsuperscript{47} This latter manuscript is a collection of saints' lives and works by early Church authorities such as Jerome and Augustine. A significant portion of Katherine's \textit{Passio} has survived although it lacks the end. Nor is it any surprise that these three early Latin \textit{Passiones} should derive from southern Italy with its strong Graeco-Byzantine heritage.\textsuperscript{48} As will be seen in chapter three, Italy appears to have seen the earliest manifestations of Katherine's cult in Western Europe.

Unfortunately, scholars disagree over the dating of one of the Montecassino

\textsuperscript{45} Although Katherine is the saint most associated with the wheel, the \textit{Passiones} of Juliana, George, Christina, Euphemia and Charitiana also describe a similar episode. See De Voragine, \textit{The Golden Legend}, i, pp. 161 (Juliana), 241 (George), 386 (Christina), ii, p. 182 (Euphemia); \textit{Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Decembris: Martyrologium Romanum ad formam editionis typicae}, ed. H. Delehaye, P. Peeters et al (Brussels, 1940), p. 544 (Charitiana).


\textsuperscript{47} Montecassino, MS 117 (BHL, 1658), hereafter MC 117, published in \textit{Bibliotheca Casinensis}, iii, pp. 59, 73, \textit{Florilegium}, pp. 74–6. I am grateful to Dr Herwig Weigl of the University of Vienna for providing me with a copy of the printed version of this text. For MC 139 see pages 23–4.

\textsuperscript{48} For an introduction to the links between Montecassino and Byzantium see H. Bloch, \textit{Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages}, 3 vols (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1986), especially i, pp. 1–137.
manuscripts. When MC 117 was published in 1877 it was catalogued as dating from the beginning of the eleventh century or possibly even the end of the tenth.\footnote{Bibliotheca Casinensis, p. 59.}

However, the accuracy of this edition has been questioned and Varnhagen, in his survey of manuscripts containing Katherine’s Passio, was scathing about its quality: ‘...the editor had insufficient palaeographical knowledge... Sometimes it appears as if Latin is an unknown language to him...’\footnote{Varnhagen, Zur Geschichte, p. 2, note 2: ‘Die Ausgabe ist ausserordentlich schlecht. Der Herausgeber hat unzureichende paläographische Kenntnisse gehabt und sich nur in sehr geringem Masse un den Sinn gekümmert. Bisweilen scheint es, als sei Lateinische ihm eine unbekannte Sprache.’}

When Inguanez produced a revised catalogue of Montecassino manuscripts in 1915 he reassigned the manuscript to the eleventh or twelfth century. Bronzini also preferred a date towards the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century.\footnote{Codicum Casinensium, i, p. 224.}

Even if MC 117 is a twelfth-century text, it is possible that it represents a copy of an older eleventh-century one. Bronzini notes that a second copy of the Katherine Passio contained in MC 117 is to be found in a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century manuscript now held in Novara.\footnote{Bronzini, Leggenda, p. 301, note 143.} The Novara manuscript also contains the missing ending from MC 117 including the transportation of Katherine’s body to Sinai.\footnote{Novara, Biblioteca Capitolare di Novara, MS 23, fols 110–19.}

The disagreement over the dating of the manuscript is typical of the problems with such early material. In this case I have been unable to examine the original manuscript MC117, but, given the weight of opinion, it is unlikely to be late tenth-century. The published text of MC 117 does, however, reveal a number of features that imply a close relationship to a Greek version. It is, therefore, an early representative of the Latin manuscript tradition. In particular, the use of the name ‘Ecaterina’ for Katherine and ‘Maxentius’ for the Emperor should be noted. Both names suggest that the text is close to the original Greek version, Maxentius being the name used in the earliest surviving Greek versions whilst Ecaterina is a
transliteration of the Greek Αἰκατερίνη. Ecaterina is also the version used in MC 139. It should, however, be noted that both variants of the saint’s name, ‘Ecaterina’ and ‘Catherine’, appear to have been in use in the Montecassino region in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries and do not, therefore, provide a reliable dating guide. Thus, Alphanus, bishop of Salerno (d. 1085) used the form Catherine whilst a certain Ecaterina (b. before 1115–d. before 1149) was abbess of the convent of San Giovanni delle Monache in Capua.

The most prolific Latin version of the Passio is the so-called Vulgate, first identified by Knust in 1890. This text often opens with a prologue, ‘Cum sanctorum fortia gesta...’ whilst the incipit of the main text begins ‘Tradunt annales historie...’ Knust identified two versions of the Vulgate, the long and the short, of which he believed the long version to be the older. Although this proposition has been queried and some scholars have argued that the shorter version is the older, most authorities now accept Knust’s view. The oldest manuscripts of the long Vulgate may date from either the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Some scholars have identified the long Vulgate with the lost Office of St Katherine recorded by Orderic Vitalis as having been written by the monk Ainard at the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen in the first half of the eleventh century. No evidence exists to support this suggestion, nor is there any to suggest where in Western Europe the Vulgate version might originally have been composed.

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55 This is on the assumption that the editor has at least transcribed the saint’s name correctly. The opening sentence of MC 117 speaks of the impious Emperor Maxentius, ‘Temporibus maxentii impiissimi...’, which recalls the opening words of the tenth-century Greek Passio by Simeon Metaphraastes, ‘Imperante impio Maxentio’. See PG, 116, cols. 275–6.
56 See pages 106–11.
57 Knust, Geschichte, pp. 8–9.
58 The Vulgate version is catalogued as BHL, 1663. There are about 200 copies of it surviving in European libraries. See D’Ardenne and Dobson, Seinte Katerine, p. xvi.
59 Knust, Geschichte, pp. 8, 20.
60 For a summary of the debate which concludes in favour of the long Vulgate as older, see J. R. Bray, The Legend of St Katherine in Later Middle English Literature, unpublished University of London PhD (1984), pp. 26–7.
61 BN, MSS lat. 1970 fol 54–70 and 5343, fols 135–7v and 140–89v. Knust dated both manuscripts to the eleventh century but Bronzini has suggested that BN, MS 5343 is twelfth century. See Knust, Geschichte, p. 8; Bronzini, Leggenda, p. 304, note 151.
62 OV, iii, pp. 352–5. See Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, St Katherine of Alexandria, p. 5, who make an unsubstantiated statement that Ainard wrote the Vulgate version of the Passio.
Wherever this was, the Vulgate was immensely influential on subsequent western versions of Katherine’s Passio. Although most of these derivations from the Vulgate occur after c. 1200, two manuscripts based upon it are sufficiently early to be included in any discussion of the origins of the English cult of St Katherine. The first of these, BL, MS Harley 12, has been described as the earliest Katherine Passio written in England, but the provenance is not absolutely certain. It has most recently been catalogued as deriving from either Normandy or England c. 1090–c. 1110, although if written in Normandy, it soon reached England. It is during this period that Katherine’s cult begins to emerge from the shadows in England. However, because the provenance of BL, Harley 12 is uncertain it is difficult to use the manuscript except as general evidence to support this development. The provenance of the second manuscript, MS Gonville and Caius 301/515, is more certain. This was probably written in Winchester in the early twelfth century and possibly even earlier. If correct, this is significant as the earliest known reference to Katherine in England occurs in a monastic calendar also compiled in Winchester, probably c. 1030. Not only does MS Gonville and Caius 301/515 provide further evidence for the growing strength of Katherine’s cult in England at the end of the eleventh century, but it gives some weight to the proposition that Winchester was the initial point of entry of the cult into England.

Many Latin versions of Katherine’s Passio based on the Vulgate version, or sometimes directly on Metaphrastes’ work, were produced in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They fall outside the limits of this study and are not relevant to any consideration of the early cult. There is, however, one relevant thirteenth-century Passio that provides supporting evidence for the changing role of relics in the development of Katherine’s cult. As this is one of the themes examined in this study it is appropriate to discuss that Passio at this juncture. It was composed

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63 BL, MS Harley 12, fols 141–3. The first 140 folios of this manuscript contain a copy of John the Deacon’s Vita S. Gregorii, written at the end of the eleventh century, possibly in Durham. Bound in with this at folios 141–3 is a Passio of St Katherine, based on the short version of the Vulgate. See R. Gameson, The Manuscripts of Early Norman England c. 1066–1130 (Oxford, 1999), p. 105; Bray, The Legend of St Katherine, p. 35.
64 Gameson, Manuscripts, pp. xvi, 105; but see Bray, The Legend of St Katherine, p. 35 where it is described as one of the earliest extant Lives produced in England.
65 Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 301/515. This is based upon the long Vulgate. See Bray, The Legend of St Katherine, p. 35.
by the Italian Dominican, Jacobus de Voragine (c. 1230–98), for inclusion in his *Golden Legend* published c.1260.\(^{67}\)

*The Golden Legend*, a collection of 182 short texts, mostly saints' *Lives*, was an immensely influential work, which was translated into many European languages. Several later versions of Katherine's *Life* drew upon it. De Voragine's *Passio* is also noteworthy as the prayer that Katherine's body be not taken for relics, present in the early Greek texts, has been dropped and certain additions made concerning relics. In contrast, Katherine's prayer that those who invoke her in their hour of need will have their petitions answered is retained. In De Voragine's version, God answers her prayer, promising heavenly assistance to her devotees. These changes reflect the fact that by the middle of the thirteenth century primary relics of Katherine were known both in Sinai and in Rouen and secondary relics of her oil were widely available. These changes to the text further emphasise the growing importance of Katherine as intercessor.

c) *Vernacular sources*

Once Katherine's *Passio* had been translated into Latin and the Latin version had begun to circulate, vernacular translations followed. The first of these was a French verse *Life* of Katherine, written in Norman England by the nun, Clemence of Barking, in the last quarter of the twelfth century.\(^{68}\) In her poem Clemence refers to an earlier *Life* of Katherine which is in need of updating.\(^{69}\) Clemence's poem provides evidence that a vernacular *Passio* must have been circulating by the mid-twelfth century and that interest in Katherine was sufficient by the late twelfth century to justify producing a second vernacular poem. It is also worth noting that Clemence's version of Katherine's *Passio*, written over half a century before De

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\(^{67}\) De Voragine, a Dominican from 1244, held positions as teacher and administrator before becoming Archbishop of Genoa in 1292. Beatified in 1816, he is venerated as a saint by the Dominican Order. Like Metaphrastes he was a compiler who drew upon existing *Lives*, however De Voragine added some discussion of his sources and of the significance of the individual's *Life*, De Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, ed. Ryan, i, pp. xiii-xiv; ii, pp. 334–41.  
\(^{68}\) It is extant in three manuscripts, BN, MSS nouv. acq. fr. 4503 (c. 1200) and fr. 23112 (written after 1250); and MS Welbeck ICI from the Duke of Portland's collection, currently in the British Library, London as MS Additional 70513 (late thirteenth century). See MacBain, *Saint Catherine by Clemence of Barking*, pp. xiii–xx.  
Voragine’s version, already omits the saint’s prayer that her body be left undivided. Instead Clemence refers to Katherine’s miracle-working relics.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 83–4 (lines 2556–639).}

Clemence’s reference to an out-of-date \textit{Life} of Katherine has been linked to a partial French \textit{Passio}, contained in a fourteenth-century manuscript now in Manchester.\footnote{Manchester, John Rylands Library, MS French 6.}

This manuscript, Rylands, French 6, is a collection of saints’ \textit{Lives} that have been culled from other manuscripts and bound together. The sources of the different elements of Rylands, French 6 have been much discussed, most recently by Russell, who argued that it was once part of the same manuscript as BL, MS Egerton 2710, written in the thirteenth century. Russell’s arguments are cogent for fols 1–8, but less so for fols 9–12, which are the folios containing the partial life of Katherine, as he himself admits.\footnote{D. W. Russell, ‘The Manuscript Source of the Fragment, Rylands French MS 6’, \textit{BJRL}, 71 (1989), pp. 41–7, at p. 45. See also R. Fawtier and E. C. Fawtier-Jones, ‘Notice du manuscrit French 6 de la John Rylands Library, Manchester’, \textit{Romania}, 49 (1923), pp. 321–42, at pp. 321–2.}

In addition to the debate over the provenance of Rylands, French 6 there has also been some discussion concerning the origins of the fragmentary Katherine \textit{Passio} contained within it. Fawtier-Jones published an edited version of the Katherine \textit{Passio} and suggested that it was a copy of a late eleventh- or early twelfth-century original.\footnote{E. C. Fawtier-Jones, ‘Les vies de Sainte Catherine d’Alexandrie en ancien français’, \textit{Romania}, 56 (1930), pp. 80–104.}

She based this suggestion on a detailed analysis of the language used in the text. Bray, on the other hand, used linguistic analysis to argue that only sixteen lines are likely to be dated this early.\footnote{Bray, \textit{The Legend of St Katherine}, pp. 47–51.}

It seems clear from the work of Fawtier-Jones and Bray that the Katherine \textit{Passio} in Rylands, French 6 does contain some core material from the eleventh century even if the extent of that core is in dispute. Even more controversially, Fawtier-Jones has suggested that it might be part of the older outdated \textit{Passio} referred to by Clemence and that this, in turn, might be based on the lost Latin \textit{Office} written by Ainard.\footnote{See Fawtier-Jones, ‘Les vies de Sainte Catherine’, pp. 100–3; MacBain, \textit{Saint Catherine by Clemence of Barking}, p. xiii.}

These two propositions were based upon the
closing passage of the text, which refers to the relics of Katherine at the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen.76

I have been able to examine Rylands, French 6. The references in the closing lines to Katherine's Norman relics imply that the Passio has some connection with Holy Trinity. However, there is no evidence to link it with either Ainard's lost Office or the work referred to by Clemence and Fawtier-Jones' suggestions must therefore remain conjecture. Given that Holy Trinity can be shown to have been actively promoting its relics in the late eleventh century the most that can be said is that the Passio in Rylands, French 6 is likely to have been part of that promotional effort.77 In addition to Clemence's Passio and that in Rylands, French 6, a further six verse-versions of Katherine's Passio were produced in French prior to 1500.78

The earliest Life in English is the Middle English version dating from the first decade of the thirteenth century, which survives in three manuscripts.79 This was once known as the Semi-Saxon Legend but is now generally known as one of the Katherine Group of manuscripts. The Katherine Group consists of the Lives of Saints Katherine, Margaret and Juliana, a letter on virginity known as Hali Meidhad, an allegory on the custody of the soul called Sawles Warde, and four meditations known as the Wooling Group. They have been linked to another work for anchoresses known as Ancrene Wisse.80

76 Rylands, French 6, fol. 10r. See Fawtier-Jones, 'Les vies de Sainte Catherine', p. 94: 'De(l) tut ne pas est povre l'einznd de Normandi(e) / Treis os i ad acertes de sainte Katerine, / Danz Yzeberz li abes l(es) ad en sa baillie, / A Sainte Trinite a(u) Mont en l'abele...'

77 See pages 139-41. See also Fawtier-Jones, 'Les vies de Sainte Catherine', p. 104.

78 Ibid., pp. 80-8, where a list with bibliography can be found. A more recent bibliography on the French Lives can be found in La Passion de Sainte Catherine d'Alexandrie par Aumeric. éditée d'après le ms. 945 de la Bibliothèque de Tours avec introduction, étude de la langue et glossaire, ed. O. Naudeau (Tübingen, 1982), p. 195. For a selection of texts with introduction see B. Cazelles, The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century (Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 113-37.


80 There is an extensive literature on Ancrene Wisse and the Katherine Group. Key texts in favour of an Augustinian origin are D. S. Brewer, 'Two Notes on the Augustinian and possibly West Midland Origin of the Ancrene Riwle', Notes and Queries, 201 (1956), pp. 232-5; E. J. Dobson, The Origins of 'Ancrene Wisse' (Oxford, 1976), who suggested the texts might have been written at Wigmore Abbey, Herefordshire. The case for a Dominican origin has been made by B. Millet, 'The Origins of Ancrene Wisse. New Answers, New Questions', Medium Aevum, 61 (1992), pp. 206-28. See also Medieval English Prose for Women: Selections from the Katherine Group and 'Ancrene Wisse' ed. B. Millett and J. Wogan-Browne (rev. edn Oxford, 1992), a general introduction with a bibliography, although it does not include the Katherine Life; Anchoritic Spirituality: Ancrene Wisse and Associated Works, transl. and introduced by A. Savage and N. Watson with a preface by B. Ward (New Jersey, 1991), a
All are thought to have been written in the period 1200–30 in the Midlands. The Katherine Life is believed to be one of the earlier works and is based on the long Vulgate. The focus of all the works associated with the Katherine Group is on the religious needs of women living a contemplative life. These works seem to have been produced for anchoresses and deal with the difficulties and the joys of such a life. One of the predominant themes is devotion to Christ and it is this aspect of Katherine’s Life, coupled with her determined virginity, which made her a suitable subject. The Katherine Life has been published on a number of occasions. Morton’s edition of 1841 was closely followed by that of Hardwick in 1849. In the same article, Hardwick included a brief survey of the historical evidence for Katherine and some of the key early Greek and Latin texts. Hardwick, a fellow and Chaplain of St Catherine’s Hall, Cambridge (hence his interest in Katherine), wrote very much in the nineteenth-century antiquarian tradition. However, he did make a serious attempt to draw conclusions from his material, pointing out there was no evidence that Katherine had ever existed. Einenkel subsequently published the Middle English Life along with the Vulgate version in 1884, as did Gibbs in the same year. Further versions of Katherine’s Life in English were produced but none seem to have been dependent on the Katherine Group Life.

A number of studies of other vernacular traditions have appeared. The earliest German Life dates from c. 1300 when Das Passional, the first German legendary to include Katherine, was produced. A large rich manuscript tradition then developed in German-speaking lands containing both prose and verse versions of Katherine’s

general introduction including a translation of the Life of Katherine; Winstead, Virgin Martyrs, pp. 34–63.
81 Savage and Watson, Anchoritic Spirituality, p. 259; Bray, The Legend of St Katherine, pp. 70–2.
82 J. Morton, The Legend of St Katherine Edited from a Manuscript in the Cottonian Library (London, 1841); Hardwick, An Historical Inquiry, passim.
84 There are fourteen extant Middle English Lives from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. These all derive from De Voragine’s Golden Legend and through that from the Vulgate. See Lewis, The Cult of St Katherine, pp. 9–10, 14–15. Osbern Bokenham included one in his in Legends of Holy Women written c. 1443–7 and John Capgrave wrote one in c. 1438–45. See A Legend of Holy Women: a translation of Osbern Bokenham’s Legends of Holy Women, transl. and introduced by S. Delany (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1992); John Capgrave, The Life of St Katherine of Alexandria, ed. C. Horstmann, EETS, o.s. 100 (London, 1893); Bray, The Legend of St Katherine, a survey of all the Lives of Katherine known in England from the later eleventh century to the Dissolution of the Monasteries.
Life and a number of aspects of this tradition have been studied. Of general interest is Beatie's article on the development of the German Life in which he sought to identify key themes within it and to relate them to known folkloric themes. He followed this up with an article on German illustrative cycles of Katherine. Although these articles largely dealt with manuscripts and illustrations from the later Middle Ages they did identify themes which are common to the Life in all its phases. Of especial interest is the second article in which Beatie analysed the narrative scenes shown in all the representations of Katherine available to him. He identified forty scenes of which three were non-narrative and five were unidentifiable. This left thirty-two scenes of which eleven appear with relatively high frequency. As might be expected, the majority of these relate to Katherine's dispute with the philosophers, her torture on the wheel, her eventual beheading and the translation of her body to Sinai. In the 1980s Anna-Maria Valente Bacci wrote three articles on the development of the Katherine Life in German. She was concerned to show how the German vernacular versions of the Life derived from the Latin versions and, in particular, from the Vulgate version rather than from the Golden Legend.

Finally, some work has been undertaken on the manuscript tradition in Czech-speaking lands, much of it in Czech, but recently a translation of the Old Czech Life of Katherine (written 1360x75) has been published. This is of relevance to this thesis as the strength of the cult in Bohemia and Moravia is a further illustration of how veneration of Katherine was promoted by a single individual, in this case the Emperor Charles IV (1346–78). He had a particular devotion to Katherine following

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85 For example, in 1922 Bobbe produced a study of German verse Legends in Middle-High-German. See H. Bobbe, *Mittelhochdeutsche Katharinen-Legenden in Reimen: Eine Quellenuntersuchung* (Berlin, 1922).
86 Beatie, 'St. Katherine of Alexandria: Traditional Themes'.
87 Beatie, 'Illustrative Cycles', pp. 140–56.
88 Ibid., pp. 144, 155.
a battle fought and won on her feast-day in 1332.92 One of the sources of this version was De Voragine's *Golden Legend*.

Although the bulk of hagiographical material consists of various versions of Katherine's *Life*, other material does exist. Of relevance to this thesis are two manuscripts containing an account of the translation of relics of Katherine to Normandy in the 1030s and a small collection of twenty-two miracles performed by the relics.93 Whilst the principal manuscript dates from the thirteenth century, the second manuscript is twelfth-century. This means that the original text can be no later than that. It is also the case that most of the dateable details in the *Translatio* and *Miracula* refer to the eleventh century and no later. In consequence, the *Translatio* and *Miracula* are generally accepted to have originated in the second half of the eleventh century.94 There are few primary sources for the early Norman cult so the *Translatio* and the *Miracula* provide particularly precious information.

Robert Fawtier has subjected the *Translatio* to close scrutiny and demonstrated that its account of the transportation of relics of Katherine to Rouen by a Greek monk from Sinai, probably covers up a more dubious case of relic trafficking.95 However, since Fawtier's re-assessment of the historical evidence presented in the *Translatio*, little work has been done on the origins of Katherine's Norman cult. Most modern secondary works content themselves with referring to the articles of Poncelet and Fawtier on the relics without examining further the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Norman cult of St Katherine.96 Jones is one of the few scholars to have re-visited the origins of the Norman cult, although he did so in order to make a comparison with the cult of St Nicholas, which was his primary interest.97

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92 Ibid., p. 764.
93 Rouen, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS U. 22, containing the full text of both *Translatio* and *Miracula*, written in the thirteenth century. Saint-Omer, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS 27, containing a partial text, written in the twelfth century. The two manuscripts were collated and published by Poncelet. See A. Poncelet, 'Sanctae Catherinae Virginis et Martyris: Translatio et Miracula Rotomagensia Saec. XI', *AB*, 22 (1903), pp. 423–38.
94 See pages 136–9.
96 For example: Ortenburg, *The English Church and the Continent*, p. 257.
The *Miracula* has also been little studied and I know of only two studies of it. Gonthier and Le Bas have made a comparative study of twelve Norman miracle collections dating from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, the oldest collection being that of Katherine. They compared the nature of the miracles, the social status of the supplicants and attempted a preliminary classification. However the brevity of the study in relation to the mass of material did not allow detailed investigation of each miracle collection. Richard has also made a study of Norman miracle collections of the same period, seeking to put them in their historical context.

Provided it is treated with care, however, the *Miracula* contains significant details concerning perceptions of Katherine and the uses made of her cult by clerics and laity in eleventh-century Normandy and I have made considerable use of it in the case-study contained in chapter four.

Finally, whilst many hymns in honour of the saint survive from the later Middle Ages, few survive from the early period. There are, however, three hymns to Katherine written before 1100 by Alphanus, bishop of Salerno. These hymns offer early evidence that Katherine’s cult was used for political purposes. Alphanus has used her *Passio* to create works that have a larger purpose than the veneration of Katherine. He was active in support of the papacy during the Investiture Contest of the late-eleventh century and his writings reflect his politics. The hymns contain the principal elements of Katherine’s *Passio* but their main focus is on Katherine’s

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100 The poems have been published several times. See A. Lentini and F. Avagliano, *I Carmi di Alfano I, Arcivescovo di Salerno*, Miscellanea Cassinese a cura dei Monaci di Montecassino, 38 (Montecassino, 1974), pp. 196–200; *PL*, 147, cols 1240–1. Alphanus, noted scholar and friend of Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino (later Pope Victor III, 1086–7), was active in the political and intellectual world of late eleventh-century southern Italy. See *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1960–), ii, pp. 253–7. There is a slight doubt as to the authorship of these hymns but Lentini, who has studied Alphanus’ work, considers them to belong to his canon. See A. Lentini, ‘Rassegna delle poesie di Alfano da Salerno’, *Bullettino dell’Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo*, Archivio Muratoriano, 69 (Rome, 1957), pp. 213–35, especially p. 228. See pages 106–9 for a discussion of these hymns in the context of the Italian cult of St Katherine. An English translation of the three hymns will be found in Appendix II
steadfast defence of her faith. The martyr is described in glowing terms which emphasizes her virginal beauty in contrast to the dark prison and wickedness which she confronts. Alphanus has used Katherine’s public defence of Christianity as a metaphor for the Church’s stand against the secular authority of the Emperor.\(^{101}\)

II  Liturgical material

Although hagiographical material, by its sheer volume, dominates Katherine studies, other sources can provide equally relevant information. The first documentary evidence for a saint’s cult is often its inclusion in a litany or monastic calendar. Katherine is no exception. Such entries are the minimum requirement to enable a cult to take hold. In themselves they do not imply that a saint is regarded with particular reverence for, unless the entry is graded or highlighted in some way, it cannot be assumed that special prayers or devotions were offered to the saint. But without such entries a cult stood little chance of making any significant progress. At first an entry in a monastic calendar might mean nothing more than that day was known to be the saint’s feast-day but, as recognition grew, special prayers might start to be offered, and the cult thereby increased in importance. Some saints never progressed beyond a local importance recorded in the calendar of one particular centre.

In the case of St Katherine, it is possible to show that her inclusion in an early eleventh-century calendar from Winchester, to which I have already referred, led to the commemoration of her feast-day in other English ecclesiastical centres in the second half of the eleventh century. The Winchester Calendar, BL, Vitellius E.xvii\(^{a}\) (V), is a good example of a key manuscript whose problematic dating has profound implications for the interpretation of the early history of Katherine’s cult. It provides the only English reference to Katherine before the late eleventh century and it is

variously dated between c. 1030–c. 1060. Although these two dates are separated by only thirty years, the gap is significant. The first supports the early arrival of Katherine’s relics in Rouen and suggests a virtually simultaneous transmission of the cult to England. The second date does not clarify when the relics arrived in Rouen as they are known from other sources to have been there by 1060. It also suggests a sequential transmission of the cult from Normandy to England.

A second, unique, example of liturgical material is the Syriac, or western Aramaic, litany to which I have already made reference. This contains the earliest mention of Katherine that I have found anywhere, and, as far as I am aware, it has never previously been used in any discussion of the origins of her cult. This is probably because few western scholars, myself included, can read Syriac. Difficulty in accessing material in little-known languages is one of the many problems associated with the study of the early Katherine cult and provides another reason for the general concentration on the later cult. Not only is later source material more abundant but it is also written in Latin or vernacular European languages with which western scholars are more familiar.

Some of the eastern material has been published or catalogued as part of other projects and can be accessed indirectly. For example, a number of expeditions have been undertaken whose purpose has been to microfilm and catalogue the manuscripts held by St Catherine’s monastery, Sinai. By examining the secondary writings on this material it is possible to gather information originating in Georgian and Arabic documents, relating to the early Orthodox cult. The material involved includes a Georgian calendar of the late tenth-century and a tract in Arabic on the theme of the

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103 MS Vat. Syr. 77. See pages 75–8.

104 The American Library of Congress and the University of Alexandria jointly funded an expedition to microfilm manuscripts in 1950, followed by expeditions under the auspices of the Universities of Michigan, Princeton and Alexandria between 1956 and 1965.
There are obvious dangers in accessing material via secondary sources as one is reliant on the scholarship of those sources. With this caveat in mind, I have made use of the published version of MS Vat. Syr. 77 to help support arguments about the overall origins of the cult. I have also drawn upon the work of Garitte and Atiya to support arguments concerning the origins of Katherine's cult on Sinai. Even this limited use of eastern material has proved fruitful and I suspect that there is more material than this to be found by scholars with the ability to read the primary documents.

III Other documentary sources

A number of additional types of documentary source material are also available. These fall into three broad categories: chronicles, charters and miscellaneous. Several chroniclers, both Greek and Latin, provide relevant material, recording events of direct relevance to the growth of Katherine's cult or helping to frame the context within which the cult developed. Care has to be taken with this material as it can be influenced by the views of the chronicler. It can also be too anecdotal in nature to be historically reliable. A case in point is the Greek historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 265–340), whose Ecclesiastical History is invaluable for the period to 324. Eusebius provides some information on the anti-Christian policies of Maxentius, son of Herculius, and also of Maximinus (Daia), two of the possible imperial candidates for Katherine's executioner. This information has to be treated with caution because Eusebius was anxious to portray Constantine the Great in the best possible light, as the first Christian Emperor. He tended, therefore, to be unduly harsh on those he perceived to be Constantine's enemies.

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Equal care has to be taken with some Norman chroniclers. There are two principal sources for Normandy in the tenth century. Firstly, Flodoard (d. 966), generally considered to be reasonably objective, but whose chronicle ends too early to be of more than general interest to this thesis. Second, Dudo of St Quentin (d. before 1027) whose account finishes with the death of Duke Richard I in 996 and is, therefore, of more assistance in establishing conditions in Normandy at the beginning of the eleventh century. Unfortunately, the accuracy of Dudo’s account is much disputed by historians. Dudo’s style was heavily influenced by hagiography and his portrayal of the three early Norman leaders was designed to depict them in the best possible light as good Christian rulers rooting out paganism amongst their people. As a result, his description of the Church in Normandy in this period needs to be treated with caution.

The arrival of Katherine’s relics in Rouen and the establishment of the monastery of Holy Trinity, which was to house them, are mentioned in several chronicles. While these accounts probably mask the true nature of the acquisition of Katherine’s relics,
they nevertheless help to provide a time-frame for their advent and information on Vicomte Goscelin and his wife, Emmeline, the founders of the monastery. Other chronicle references are less substantial but can nevertheless still be used to flesh out an argument. So, for example, Rodolfus Glaber (c. 980–1046) refers in his chronicle to Greek monks from Sinai visiting the court of Duke Richard II of Normandy to seek alms, thus substantiating links between Sinai and Normandy in this period. 115

Charters are an equally fruitful source of direct and indirect information for the Norman and English cults of St Katherine. Perhaps the most important collection is contained in a late eleventh-century cartulary of Holy Trinity, Rouen which includes the foundation charter and copies of donations to the monastery. 116 As well as enabling estimates to be made about the holdings of the monastery and giving some idea of which lay individuals were benefactors, it is also possible to use the charters to monitor the growth of Katherine’s cult at Holy Trinity, Rouen. 117 So, for example, whilst the early charters do not mention the saint, one of 1084 speaks of the monastery of Holy Trinity where ‘the miracle-working bones of the most holy and venerable virgin and martyr Catherine are venerated far and wide’. 118

A second cartulary, this time from the fourteenth century, survives from an English dependency of Holy Trinity: St Mary’s Priory, Blyth, Nottinghamshire. 119 St Mary’s was founded by Roger de Builli and his wife Muriel, in 1088. Both had been benefactors of Holy Trinity, Rouen prior to 1066 and the charters can be used to show how they and their tenants continued their generosity to the monastery following their move to England after the Conquest. There are a number of references in the Blyth cartulary to St Katherine in charters from the first half of the twelfth century, casting light on the growing lay devotion to Katherine. 120

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117 For work on the monastery’s holdings, see G. Leclerc'H, Les abbayes de Sainte Catherine et de Saint Amand de Rouen et leurs donateurs au XVe siècle, Mémoire de maîtrise, University of Rouen (1993). Unfortunately, I have been unable to consult this work.
118 ‘...ubi sacratissimae ac venerabilis virginis et martiris Caterinae miraculo cotidie ab omnibus longe lateque venerantur ossa...’. Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, charter 90, p. 466–7.
120 See pages 206–9.
Only these two medieval collections of charters are directly relevant to the Norman and English cults. However Fauroux has compiled a modern collection of early Norman charters, which provides much invaluable supporting information. Other charter material consists of isolated references and can only be found by trawling through cartularies and charter collections. Fortunately, the effort is worthwhile as such references are frequently illuminating. Several types of information exist. In some instances a charter reference to a gift to an altar of St Katherine is the first indication of the spread of the cult to a particular area. In other instances charters unconnected with the cult are, by chance, enacted on St Katherine’s Day (25 November). This again, can be the first indication of the regional commemoration of the feast-day. When all this information is combined, it can indicate the spread of the cult, both geographically and chronologically, and can also provide evidence on individual devotees. I have made use of such charter information in the case studies in chapters four and five.

In addition to chronicles and charters a number of miscellaneous sources of information exist. Each of these might only provide limited evidence but, like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, when fitted together they add to the completion of the picture. So, the letters of Gregory the Great (590–604) include one addressed to John Climachus (d. c. 649), abbot of Mount Sinai. The letter shows that a monastery existed on Sinai in Gregory’s day but makes no mention of Katherine or her relics. On the other hand, John XXII (1316–34) referred to the Sinai monastery as St Catherine’s in a bull granting indulgences for pilgrims and benefactors of the monastery. The implication is that at some point between the pontificates of Gregory and John, the cult of St Katherine was established on Sinai. Finally, English wills provide a substantial amount of information about lay devotion and Lewis has made extensive use of them in her work on Katherine’s cult in England in the later Middle Ages. Unfortunately, few English wills date from before c. 1200 and I have been unable to find any reference to Katherine in those that do survive.

122 Gregory the Great Sancti Gregorii Papae I Cognomento Magni. Opera Omnia, PL, 77, Book 11, letter 1, col. 1117: ‘... Gregorio Joani abbati montis Sina ... ’.
Another source of information about the early cult which has been much exploited, namely artistic representations of Katherine, is also prone to dissension over dating. In most cases judgements have to be made based on the style of a painting and, frequently, considerable controversy takes place as to an appropriate date. This is particularly the case concerning early Italian wall-paintings depicting Katherine where a range of dates from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries is not uncommon for the same painting. One example, in the Catacomb of San Gennaro in Naples, is dated by Achelis to after c. 763. However, Fasola has suggested, on stylistic grounds, that the painting dates from the tenth century. Weigand, on the other hand, has argued on stylistic grounds that it dates to the thirteenth. Similar disputes exist concerning wall-paintings in Rome. Less contentiously, the iconography of western representations of Katherine has been used to interpret devotional attitudes to her cult. Fortunately there are fewer difficulties with Byzantine wall-paintings. In a number of instances, inscriptions survive, enabling paintings to be dated. In particular several paintings of Katherine survive in Cappadocian rock-churches that can be dated through inscriptions to the late tenth and eleventh centuries.

In addition to church wall-paintings, several illustrations of Katherine are found in eleventh and twelfth-century Greek manuscripts. In some instances it is possible to date the manuscript with some accuracy. The earliest such illustration is a case in point as it complements the text of the *Menologium Basilianum* which can be dated to c. 979x c. 1000. In addition, a number of other eleventh-century manuscript illuminations provide insight into Orthodox attitudes to Katherine.

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128 See, for example, Rusconi, ‘Women’s sermons at the end of the Middle Ages’, pp. 179–82; Lewis, *The Cult of St Katherine*, pp. 135–49; Beatie, ‘Illustrative Cycles’, *passim*.
129 See pages 81–5.
130 See page 25.
The first of these is a miniature of the saint contained in a Greek Psalter in the British Library known as the Theodore Psalter. A note in the Psalter tells us that it was

"written and illuminated by Theodore, archpriest of this monastery and copyist, from the town of Caesarea .... This transcription of the holy psalms was completed during the month of February of the seventh indiction in the year [of the world] 6574 [=1066] on the order of the Holy Father and Syncellus Michael, Hegumenus of the very holy and illustrious monastery..."  

The name of the monastery is missing but a note on fol. 207v refers to Michael as Hegumenus, or abbot, of Stoudios, one of the oldest and greatest monasteries of Constantinople. Dedicated to John the Baptist, Stoudios had been founded in the middle of the fifth century by an eponymous nobleman. It was transformed into a major intellectual centre by one of its most famous abbots, St Theodore (d. 826). Under his guidance Stoudios had become famous for the quality of its painting, miniatures and calligraphy. St Theodore was also a leading opponent of Iconoclasm.

Several other manuscript illustrations of Katherine also survive from the second half of the eleventh century, all contained within illustrated volumes of Metaphrastes' lives of saints. These illustrations are of particular interest as not only are they amongst the earliest representations of Katherine but it is also rare to find illustrated volumes of Metaphrastes. From the 850 surviving manuscripts of Metaphrastes, Nancy Patterson Ševčenko has identified forty-three manuscripts which contain figurative decoration. While some of these forty-three manuscripts represent different volumes of the same edition, others are duplicates. Amongst them, there are five copies of volume 4 (the second half of November, containing the Life of

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131 BL, Additional MS. 19352, fol. 167r.
135 Ševčenko, Illustrated Manuscripts, p. 6.
Katherine on 25 November), four of which still contain illustrations of her.\textsuperscript{136} The representations mostly date from the middle or second half of the eleventh century.

Such are the principal sources available for the study of the cult of St Katherine of Alexandria. It is now time to examine what the evidence tells us concerning the historical Katherine.

\textsuperscript{136} BN, MS gr. 580, fol. 2, dated 1055x6; Athos, Lavra, MS A 71, fol. 169r, dated c. 1055x63; Copenhagen, Royal Library, MS 167, fol. 78r, of uncertain date but probably last quarter of the eleventh century; Athos, MS Dochiariou 5, fol. 116v of the late eleventh- or early twelfth-century. The fifth manuscript, Genoa, Biblioteca Franzoniana, MS Urbana 36, almost certainly contained an illustration of Katherine on fol. 83a v, but it has been removed. See Ševčenko, \textit{Illustrated Manuscripts}, pp. 23, 47, 60, 198.
Chapter Two

The historical Katherine

The previous chapter discussed the nature of the source material available for an investigation into the origins of the cult of St Katherine of Alexandria and some of the problems inherent in its use. It also surveyed the research that has been undertaken to date into the manuscript tradition of Katherine’s Passio. One of the findings to emerge from this survey is that a Greek Passio is likely to have existed by the end of the eighth century. In this chapter the contents of the Passio are examined to see what they reveal of the historical Katherine and of the earliest origins of her cult. The problems arising from treating a narrative such as Katherine’s Passio as an historical document have already been discussed. In the case of Katherine’s Passio these problems are particularly acute for, as will be seen, despite the seeming wealth of factual details contained within it, a closer examination shows that this information cannot be verified against external sources and often consists of hagiographical stereotypes. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the confusion in the Passio over the date of Katherine’s execution.

The earliest Greek texts give a date of 305 for Katherine’s martyrdom. These texts also provide some information concerning the dates of all martyrdoms occurring in Katherine’s Passio (in sequence, these are the deaths of the fifty philosophers, of the Empress, of Porphyrius and his 200 soldiers and finally, of Katherine herself). However, no consistency exists over the dates nor do any of the dates match the time-frame of the supposed events. All three of Viteau’s texts give Thursday 17 November as the date of the martyrdom of the philosophers. Unfortunately, 17 November 305 was a Saturday. The next execution is that of the Empress, which in Viteau’s three texts occurs on Thursday 23 November (actually a Friday in 305). Porphyrius is then executed. While Text A records this execution as happening on

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1 See pages 17-18.
2 Viteau’s Texts A and B, representing the oldest known versions of the Greek Passio, both open with the words ‘in the year 305’ (Έτους τριακοστοῦ πέμπτου). Viteau, Passions, pp. 3, 25. 3 See Bronzini, Leggenda, pp. 286-8, for the difficulty in reconciling the various dates, which I have drawn upon in writing this paragraph.
the same day as that of the Empress, Texts B and C record it on the following day, Friday 24 November. Katherine’s execution is recorded as Friday 24 November in Text A, as Saturday 24 November in Text B and as Saturday 25 November (actually a Sunday in 305) in Text C. Text B has thus used 24 November for both Friday and Saturday! Not only are the dates a muddle but the logic is also flawed, for Katherine is supposed to have spent twelve days in prison between the execution of the philosophers and that of the Empress. By this reckoning the Empress could not have been executed before 29 November with the subsequent executions being later.

Attempts have been made to try to fit the dates and days given into other years but all founder on the twelve-day gap between the death of the philosophers and the death of the Empress. Most versions of the Passio, whether Greek or Latin, gloss over the problem, settling for inconsistency. Metaphrastes, who derived his version from Viteau’s Text C, writing in the second half of the tenth century, placed Katherine’s martyrdom at 25 November but did not give the day of the week. Her feast-day eventually settled on this date in both Orthodox and Latin Churches.⁵

Even if the dates cannot be reconciled, the year 305 tallies approximately with the dates of the persecutions that took place under Diocletian (284–305) and his co-rulers. Diocletian himself is not mentioned in Katherine’s Passio. He died in 305 but was out-lived by those he had elevated to co-rule with him, one at least of whom continued to persecute Christians after Diocletian’s death.⁶ It might be thought, therefore, that the general historical setting of the Passio is correct. Unfortunately the texts are as confused on the question of which Emperor persecuted Katherine as they are over the dates of her execution. All three of Viteau’s early Greek Passiones name the Emperor as Maxentius, as does Metaphrastes. In later texts, this is sometimes changed to Maximinus or Maximianus. So we find that in the two early Latin Passiones from Montecassino, MC 117 gives the Emperor as Maxentius whilst MC 139 places Maxentius in Rome and Maximianus in Egypt.⁷ As noted above, these

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⁵ The slippage of a feast-day in this manner was not uncommon, particularly when an Orthodox feast was incorporated into the Latin Church. Frequently slippage resulted from the fact that a feast-day was already occupied by another saint. In Katherine’s case 24 November was the feast-day of St Chrysogonus (d. c. 304).

⁶ The system of four co-rulers, known as the Tetrarchy, was established because Diocletian, who had begun his reign as sole Emperor, concluded that the Roman Empire was too large to rule unaided. In 285 he instituted a system of power-sharing with one co-ruler and later in 293 with an additional two co-rulers. See Grant, The Emperor Constantine, pp. 17–18.

discrepancies in the naming of the Emperor suggest four candidates for the role of Katherine’s persecutor.

The first of these is Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus, known as Herculius, who had been made Caesar, or junior partner by Diocletian in 285. He then elevated Herculius to Augustus, or equal partner, in 286. Herculius was Emperor in the west, based in Milan, while Diocletian retained the east, basing himself in Nicomedia (modern Izmit) in western Anatolia. Although Diocletian had created Herculius an Augustus, he retained superiority and, in 293, further divided power, appointing Constantius I Chlorus (305–6), the father of Constantine the Great, as Caesar to Herculius in the west. In the east Diocletian appointed the second candidate for Katherine’s persecutor, Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus, known as Galerius, as Caesar.

In 303 Herculius launched a persecution of Christians in North Africa. However, this did not involve Egypt, in the administrative diocese of Oriens, within Diocletian’s area of control. When Diocletian abdicated in 305, he forced Herculius to resign as well, although the latter soon became embroiled in politics again. Herculius died in 308, possibly by suicide, during the power struggle that led to Constantine’s assumption of sole control. As Herculius was never active in Egypt, he is unlikely to have been responsible for persecuting Christians in Alexandria.

Following the appointment of Galerius, as Caesar, he fought in Egypt in the following year. Galerius then went on to campaign against the Sassanian Persians while Diocletian was suppressing a revolt in Egypt. Between 299–305 Galerius campaigned in the Danube area. When Diocletian abdicated in 305, Galerius became the senior Emperor in the east with his nephew Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximinus, known as Daia, as his Caesar. Daia is the third candidate for consideration as Katherine’s executioner. Galerius campaigned in Italy in 307–10 but returned to his capital of Nicomedia where he died in 311. He is known to have been hostile to Christians and to have been responsible for the first edict of persecution against them

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9 Ibid., pp. 219–22, especially p. 220 regarding Galerius’ persecution of the Christians.
10 Ibid., pp. 238–40.
in 303. He maintained his hostility to Christians until shortly before his death when he issued an edict of toleration.

Once Daia had been created co-Emperor by his uncle, Galerius, he was given responsibility for Syria and Egypt. He is known to have shared his uncle’s hostility to Christians. In 306 and 309 he ordered general sacrifices to be made to pagan gods and punished those Christians who resisted. Following Galerius’ death in 311, Daia became supreme commander in the east and renewed the persecution of Christians after the edict of tolerance in 311. In the continuing struggle for power Daia suffered a major defeat in 313 at the hands of Licinius (308–24) and to punish the pagan priests who had promised him victory, he rescinded his anti-Christian edicts shortly before dying in August 313.

Finally, there is Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius. He was the son of Herculius and had originally been left out of the division of the Empire that occurred on Diocletian’s Abdication in 305. However, in the continuing turbulence, a rebellion in Rome led to his creation as Caesar in 306. Galerius opposed this but Maxentius managed to retain his power-base in Italy. Subsequently Spain declared for him and, in 311, one of his commanders put down a rebellion in North Africa. Maxentius himself remained in Italy, where, according to Eusebius, he ruled in Rome, pretending to be pro-Christian while actually dissolute and anti-Christian. However, there is no real evidence of anti-Christian activity on his part. He was eventually defeated and killed by his rival, Constantine, at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312.

Although the name Maxentius is used in most of the early texts he is the least likely to have been involved. Egypt was not part of the western Empire to which he laid claim and in any case, during his reign he was confined to Italy. Of the other possible candidates Daia, also called Maximinus, is the best candidate. Some support is given to this proposition by an anecdote concerning Daia and recorded by Eusebius, which

11 Ibid., pp. 224–7.
12 Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, ii, pp. 302–5. As noted above (page 42) Eusebius has to be treated with caution because of his strong pro-Christian, pro-Constantine bias.
has been much referred to in works on Katherine. This recounts how Daia lusted after a virtuous Christian maiden of high birth and considerable wealth who lived in Alexandria. When Daia was rebuffed he had her exiled. No other details are given. There is just sufficient similarity with Katherine to suggest that she might be Eusebius’ maiden. However, Eusebius’ evidence does not resolve the issue and enough discrepancies, especially the fact that the maiden is exiled rather than beheaded, exist to make such an identification unsound. Whether or not the lady in question was Katherine, such stories contributed to the generation of virgin martyr legends. So, for example, Rufinus of Aquilea (c. 345–410), who published a Latin version of Eusebius’ Historia Ecclesiastica c. 400, elaborated the anecdote concerning Daia and the virtuous woman of Alexandria, identifying her as a certain Dorothy. There is no apparent reason for the elaboration but it may explain why some scholars have argued that the Passiones of Dorothy and Katherine spring from the same source.

Of the earliest Latin texts of the Passio, that in MC 139 shows the best understanding of the historical position. Its opening sentences describe Constantine succeeding his father Constantius in Gaul and Britain, with Galerius and Maximinus in the East. In Rome, Maxentius, son of Herculius, holds sway. MC 139 blames Maximinus for the death of Katherine.

The confusion around which Emperor is supposed to have persecuted Katherine derives from the Romans’ limited pool of personal names coupled with their habit of adopting family names of patrons. The similarity in names plus the family relationships of the various Maximinii/Maxentii made it easy for later writers unfamiliar with the detailed history of the period to confuse them. The likelihood is that by the time that Katherine’s Passio came to be written down, the oral tradition had thoroughly garbled the name of the Emperor. His naming should, therefore, probably be regarded as a device to place Katherine’s martyrdom in a particular time-frame when persecutions were known to have occurred. It has also been

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15 Florilegium, iii, p. 184.
suggested that the change in name is the result of a later scribe, with some knowledge of Roman history, correcting the name to that of a persecutor of Christians who was known to have been in Egypt, in order to make the Passio more credible.\(^{16}\)

The core Passio gives few details concerning Katherine herself. She is the beautiful, highly educated, only daughter of a noble or prince of Alexandria. This conforms in part to the stereotypical virgin martyr, most of whom are described as beautiful and high-born.\(^{17}\) Even those who are initially described otherwise find themselves transformed over time. Apollonia (d. c. 249) is perhaps the best-known example of this process. Initially described as ‘*that marvellous aged virgin*’, she was later depicted as a beautiful young virgin.\(^{18}\)

In Katherine’s case the details given are far too general to provide identification. I have already noted the way in which, once Katherine’s Passio had become current in the west, it was gradually expanded into a full Life which included details of her childhood, conversion and mystical marriage.\(^{19}\) As part of this process Katherine acquired an elaborate family tree.\(^{20}\) At its most intricate, this made her the daughter of Costas, son of Constantius I Chlorus by an Armenian princess. According to this version of events, following the death of his Armenian wife, Chlorus was said to have travelled to Britain where he married Helena, the king’s daughter, by whom he had a second son, Constantine. Costas thus becomes the elder half-brother of Constantine the Great. Costas was supposed to have inherited Armenia from his mother and to have married the daughter of the King of Cyprus. In the less elaborate versions, Costas is simply described as King of Alexandria. It is worth noting the way in which different elements of Katherine’s genealogy were used to emphasize

\(^{16}\) Compare Migne in his published version of Metaphrastes compendium. _PG_, 116, col. 275, note 1 (*Maximinus legendum; is enim fuit Orientis, Maxentius Occidentis, imperator*).

\(^{17}\) For example, Agnes, Barbara, Lucy and Margaret of Antioch.


\(^{19}\) See pages 12–13.

\(^{20}\) One example of a Katherine Life containing a developed genealogy is the fifteenth-century Late Middle English Prose Life. See Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, _St Katherine of Alexandria_, pp. 11, 67–70.
her links with different countries. This was part of a process of naturalization that led to Katherine being regarded as a ‘local’ saint.21

The striking element in the Passio is the emphasis on Katherine’s erudition. This has provoked the theory amongst some writers that Katherine is a Christianized version of Hypatia of Alexandria (d. 415), a highly educated pagan Greek philosopher and mathematician who was murdered by a fanatical Christian mob in March 415.22 In 1848, Mrs Jameson first put forward the idea that traditions relating to Hypatia had become mixed up with the Life of Katherine.23 She based this on the similarities between their life-stories, in particular that both were from Alexandria, were beautiful, well-educated, pure in conduct and brutally murdered. In 1884, Einenkel also identified Hypatia with Katherine drawing similar parallels between them. He further argued that in the transition from paganism to Christianity it was understandable that people found it difficult to separate the two traditions so that in places they became confused.24 Although the parallels are suggestive they do not constitute evidence. While it can be argued that memories of Hypatia contributed to the development of the Katherine Legend it can equally be argued that they had nothing to do with it at all.

I have discussed above the difficulties in associating the Emperor who persecuted Katherine with Alexandria. The same problem occurs with Katherine herself. It is another of the seemingly factual elements of her Passio that on investigation, proves as hard to pin down as drifting smoke for ultimately the only direct link between Katherine and Alexandria is the Passio itself. Despite the absence of any evidence for Katherine’s presence in Alexandria, that city is a plausible setting for her martyrdom where Diocletianic-era persecutions, particularly under Daia, took

21 See page 161 regarding this process in England and France. The connection with Cyprus probably arose because the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai had extensive land-holdings on that island with the result that a significant Katherine cult arose there.
22 In 415 a power struggle was in progress in Alexandria between its bishop, Cyril (412–44) and Orestes, the Prefect. Cyril of Alexandria, a fanatical Christian, saw it as his duty to drive out Jews and pagans and was prepared to resort to mob tactics. Orestes, although a Christian, was less hostile to Jews and pagans. Hypatia, well-regarded in Alexandria, not least by Orestes, was seized by a Christian mob led by a cleric named Peter. She was then dragged to the Caesareum, formerly the temple of the imperial cult, which had become the cathedral, where she was stripped and stoned to death. See N. Russell, Cyril of Alexandria (London and New York, 2000), pp. 8–9.
24 E. Einenkel, The Life of St Katherine, pp. xi–xii.
place. But Alexandria was more than a known place of persecution. Originally a Greek city founded in 331 BC by Alexander the Great (d. 323 BC), it had been the capital of the Ptolemaic Egyptian Empire and remained one of the great cities of the Roman Empire. In addition to being an important administrative centre, it also had a long history as a centre of intellectual activity and learning and had been the home of the greatest library in the Antique world.

Alexandria was home to a large Jewish community and had been associated with the Christian Church from the earliest times. Tradition held that St Mark the Evangelist (d. c. 74) had brought Christianity to Alexandria. While there is no evidence to support this, the tradition is an ancient one, a Christian presence existing in Alexandria by the beginning of the second century. The Council of Nicaea recognized the antiquity of the Church in Alexandria in 325, designating it one of the three pre-eminent centres of the Christian Church, together with Rome and Antioch. Out of this mix of Greek, Jewish and Christian knowledge came a distinctive and influential school of Christian thought. By 305, when Katherine was believed to have died, Alexandria had already produced Christian thinkers such as Clement of Alexandria (d. c. 215) and Origen (c. 185–c. 254) the latter dying in exile in Caesarea during the Decian persecutions. Adherents to the Alexandrian school were also heavily involved in the Christological debates of the early centuries of Christianity. Katherine’s *Passio* is thus played out against the historical backcloth

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25 The best known of those who perished under Daia was Peter, bishop of Alexandria (300–11). Although legendary aspects became attached to his story, he is an attested historical figure. His feast-day is 26 November, one day later than Katherine’s. See D. Attwood, *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints* (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 275–6.


27 The Rabbis of Alexandria made the first translation of the Old Testament into Greek in the third century BC. This became known as the *Septuagint* after the 70 scholars who were supposed to have undertaken the work. See A. Hamman, *How To Read the Church Fathers* (New York, 1993), p. 35.


29 Hamman, *Church Fathers*, p. 35.

30 Alexandria was placed second in precedence after Rome. The Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381 demoted Alexandria to third place and inserted Constantinople as second only to Rome. This caused some considerable friction between the Patriarchates. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (rev. edn Harmondsworth, 1997), pp. 22–6.

of a city noted for its intellectual life, where a woman could achieve prominence for her academic achievements but also where members of different groups, whether Pagan, Christian or Jew, might meet a violent end.

So far, the *Passio* has not provided any firm information apart from a sense of time and place. This has led to the suggestion that Katherine is a composite personality who derives from folk-memories of various Christian women who met their death during the early fourth-century persecutions. Beatie, in particular, has argued that the development of the Katherine Legend is akin to the development of a folk-tale and that there may even have been a single prototype who inspired the *Passio*. This woman did something during the Roman persecutions *which caught the folk imagination and lived orally among Greek-speaking Christian congregations* and in time this oral tradition became the Katherine Legend. Whether this idea is correct, it must surely be the case that oral traditions existed concerning those who were persecuted during the early centuries of Christianity. These could have provided source material for the development of the Katherine *Passio* and for other similar martyr stories such as those of St Dorothy and St Barbara.

Some of the oldest extant manuscripts of the Greek *Passio* contain the claim that they were written by someone calling himself Athanasius or Anastasius—the texts vary—the *servant and slave of Katherine* and that they are eye-witness accounts of her martyrdom. The claim that a text is written by an eye-witness who served the victim is a common trope in hagiographical literature. Margaret of Antioch is another fourth-century virgin martyr whose *Passio* is similar in this respect to that of Katherine. Margaret's *Passio* was supposed to have been written down by an eye-witness, her attendant Theotimus. Before dismissing Athanasius's claim, the possibilities for such an author need to be explored. The first candidate is St Athanasius (c. 296–373), Patriarch of Alexandria. Athanasius was raised as a Christian and would have been about nine years old in 305. In principle he could have witnessed Katherine's execution, or certainly others like it. Athanasius was a

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32 Beatie, 'St Katherine of Alexandria: Traditional Themes', pp. 786–8; 798–9.
prolific writer on theological matters, composer of the Athanasian Creed, and author of the *Life of Antony* (c. 251–356), one of the founders of Egyptian monasticism. His *Life of Antony* became a model for much subsequent hagiography and it may be that the use of his name for the author of Katherine’s *Passio* derives from that association. The name of Athanasius might have given respectability to the tale. However, as Katherine’s *Passio* does not seem to have been written down before the eighth century Athanasius is unlikely to have been its author. This did not prevent some of the later Latin *Lives* of Katherine taking the reference to Athanasius and elaborating it. For example, the Late Middle English *Life* dating from c. 1500 begins with a passage describing Athanasius of Alexandria as Katherine’s teacher.

The second candidate is Athanasius the Great (c. 925–1003). He was a monk on Mount Athos where he built a monastery and wrote a detailed Rule for monastic life eventually coming to rule over all the monks on Mount Athos. Athanasius the Great was also a scholar and it has been suggested that he created a recension of Katherine’s *Life* at the end of the tenth century. While this is not impossible, there is no evidence to support or disprove the suggestion. More to the point though, is the fact that the oldest known Greek text, Viteau’s Text B, uses the name Anastasius and must have been written by the early tenth century. This means that it almost certainly pre-dates Athanasius the Great. The most likely explanation is that the claim that the *Passio* was written by a certain Athanasius or Anastasius is a formula to explain the origin of the story rather than a reference to a real person.

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40 Southwell Minster, MS 7, fols 175–89. See Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, *St Katherine of Alexandria*, pp. 21, 67. The discussion of this passage on page 21 needs to be treated with caution. Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen suggest that the claim that the text is by Athanasius, the servant of Katherine, was introduced into the Latin *Passio* by a translator who did not realise that his Greek original was written by Athanasius the Great. This ignores the fact that the claim to have been the servant and scribe of the saint is present in the oldest Greek *Passiones* and thus pre-dates Athanasius the Great.


42 Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, *St Katherine of Alexandria*, pp. 5, 21.
Of more significance is the closing sequence of the *Passio*. Just before her execution, Katherine prays that God should hide her body and prevent its division into relics. She also asks that anyone who prays to God in her name should have their petitions answered. Finally, after her execution, angels carry off her body for hidden burial on Mount Sinai. The translation of the body to Sinai can be read as a miracle story confirming the sanctity of the martyr. Miracles surrounding a martyrdom are a commonplace in hagiographical literature and would be expected in any martyr tale. Harris has also pointed out that references to Mount Sinai can be read as references to Moses of whom it was said that *'no man hath known of his sepulchre until this present day'*. By associating Katherine with Sinai and thus with Moses the sense of the saint’s holiness would be re-inforced and the lack of a body could be glossed over by reference to a reputable precedent. Another such precedent is that of Antony of Egypt. I have already noted how his *Life* by Athanasius of Alexandria was an influential model for much subsequent hagiography. At Antony’s request, his body was buried in an unknown location, although, like Katherine, his relics were subsequently ‘discovered’ and translated to Alexandria.

Other sceptical minds, finding it difficult to take the story of angelic translation at face value, have attempted to interpret it metaphorically. For example, Butler points out that in eastern Christianity the monk’s habit is often referred to as the ‘angelic habit’ and monks as ‘angels’. The reference to angels carrying the body could therefore be read as monks carrying the body. While this is a more credible reading, it fails to provide any real information about the historical Katherine. It is also slightly anachronistic as, in 305, Egyptian monasticism was still in its early stages. Whilst Antony had gathered scattered groups of hermits into communities of sorts, he had not created the organized communal life that later came to be the

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43 PG, 116, cols 299–302: *'Da autem et hoc meum corpus, quod pro te fuit concissum, non possit aspicī ab ipsis qui quaerunt ... Da autem eis quoque, qui per me invocant sanctum tuum nomen, petitiones quae sunt eis conducibiles, ut per omnia laudentur tua magnalia nunc et in saecula.'*
45 Farmer, *Saints*, p. 27.
hallmark of a monastery. This was left to Pachomios, who was born only c. 292 and did not convert to Christianity until c. 312.47

It has been suggested that, if Katherine is to be identified with the lady from Alexandria referred to by Eusebius, her place of exile might well have been Sinai, which would explain how her bones came to be found there.48 This seems to be a form of post hoc rationalisation attempting to explain how Katherine’s bones might have reached Sinai. From the historical point of view though, the reference to Sinai in the earliest texts is significant as it reveals that the association of Katherine with Sinai dates from the earliest stages of the Passio.49

On a more practical level, the prayer not to divide her body and the translation to Sinai can both be read as an attempt to explain the lack of physical evidence for Katherine—none of her relics appear anywhere before the late tenth century. In this context it is notable that, in the later Middle Ages, there were relics a-plenty of Katherine throughout Western Europe and that, in conjunction with this, many of the later western texts omit the prayer not to divide her body. For example, De Voragine’s version of the Passio, written c. 1260, includes Katherine’s prayer that anyone invoking her name in their hour of need might receive God’s help but makes no mention of her request not to have her body divided. Instead he refers to her bones being held on Mount Sinai and exuding a healing oil.50

Looked at from a theological viewpoint, yet another interpretation emerges. This is related to the debate on the status and use of relics. The issue of relics had been a difficult one for the Early Church. In response to the clear biblical injunctions against idolatry in both Old and New Testaments, doctrine stated that only God and his incarnation, Christ, were proper subjects for worship.51 In the Early Church, therefore, symbols were often used to represent Christ. However, by the fourth

49 For a discussion of the Sinai connection see pages 87–95.
51 In particular the Second Commandment forbids the making of graven images and ‘the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth.’ (Ex. 20: 4).
century the practice had developed of venerating items associated with Christ—such as pieces of the ‘True Cross’—and the physical remains of holy persons, especially martyrs. Church doctrine became subtler in response to this, distinguishing between veneration of icons and relics—whether of martyrs, Christ or the Virgin Mary—and the worship that belonged to God alone. However, both the image of the individual portrayed in an icon and the relics associated with that image were regarded as being in some way directly connected to the original individual. As a result, both icons and relics came to be regarded as powerful protectors in their own right—hence the regularity with which an icon of the Theotokos, or Mother of God, was paraded whenever Constantinople came under threat. By the end of the seventh century, the veneration of icons was so well-entrenched that the Seventh Ecumenical Council or Council in Trullo, held in Constantinople in 691–2 ordered that Christ should be represented by a portrait rather than by a lamb in the future.

Although the Church might regard a miracle worked by an icon or a relic of an individual as a sign of God working through their agency rather than the individual having powers separate from those of God, this distinction was not always so clear to the generality of the laity. In the popular mind the niceties of this doctrine could become blurred, particularly as it is always easier to focus attention on physical objects, such as icons or relics, or on individuals who may well have been known within a community rather than on abstractions such as God or the Trinity. As a result, while relics and icons grew popular throughout the Church in both east and west, in some quarters they were regarded with suspicion as they were felt to border on idolatry.

In the Eastern Church, the veneration of icons and relics came under attack from Iconoclasts during two periods in particular—c. 726–87 and c. 815–43. The causes of the Iconoclast controversy are complex and much argued over but for present

52 Lowden, Early Christian and Byzantine Art, pp. 154–5.
purposes it can be viewed as an alternative reaction to the same phenomena that also produced Iconophilia.\textsuperscript{55} The Byzantine Empire in many ways resembled a theocracy and considered itself under the special protection of God. Should the Emperor be successful in war and the Empire prosper, then God was pleased with his people. On the other hand, if the Emperor was defeated in battle or there was a plague or famine, this was seen as a punishment for offending God in some way. In the seventh century, the Empire came under increasing threat from Arabs in the east and Slavs and Bulgars in the west. Both Iconophiles and Iconoclasts saw the various defeats and pressures as a punishment from God. So we find Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (634–8) preaching a Christmas sermon in 634, following the loss of Bethlehem, and saying in part: ‘Because of countless sins and very serious faults we have become unworthy of the sight of these things...’\textsuperscript{56} These threats continued into the eighth century and between 716–18 an Arab army besieged Constantinople itself. Iconophiles and Iconoclasts responded to these defeats in different ways. Iconophiles turned to icons and relics as a source of protection whereas Iconoclasts saw the defeats as a result of the idolatrous worship of icons and relics. For example, the Iconoclast Emperor Leo V (813–20) is reported as saying: Why are the Christians suffering defeat at the hands of the pagans? It seems to me it is because the icons are worshipped and nothing else...\textsuperscript{57}

By asking that her body be not divided into relics Katherine could be seen as making a statement against relics in keeping with the Iconoclast viewpoint. This argues against the proposition that John of Damascus (c. 675–c. 749), a leading Iconophile, was the author of the Passio as has been suggested by some scholars.\textsuperscript{58} Katherine’s second prayer that whomsoever prays to God in her name should have their prayers answered is also in line with strict Church doctrine. She acknowledges that power to answer prayer is firmly assigned to God. A further theme, running through the


\textsuperscript{56} W. E. Kaegi Jr., Army, Society and Religion in Byzantium (London, 1982), Paper VIII, pp. 139–40. The sight of which they were unworthy was, of course, Bethlehem.


\textsuperscript{58} See page 64–5. See also St John Damascene, On Holy Images, transl. M. H. Allies (London, 1898).
Passio, which we will meet again, is Katherine's defence of Christianity against a tyrannical ruler seeking to make her worship false gods. She made a good subject for a writer seeking a suitable role-model to encourage a society under severe external threat from non-believers.

I would not wish to argue that Katherine’s Passio is the work of a fervent iconoclast as it cannot be regarded as an ardently iconoclast text. Indeed by the mid-eleventh century, Katherine was being associated with the Iconophile viewpoint. Rather, Katherine’s story was expressed in terms that would have been acceptable to all shades of religious opinion. As the Iconoclast movement lost its force, any iconoclastic tenor in Katherine’s Passio was lost, leaving her closing prayer to be read as an explanation of the absence of relics. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Metaphrastes wrote his version of Katherine’s Passio long after the second period of Iconoclasm ended. He had the opportunity to re-edit the story to remove Katherine’s prayer regarding her relics. The fact that he did not feel the need to make the Passio more Iconophile is, I would argue, further evidence that Katherine’s Passio was composed to appeal to a broad spectrum of opinion. If this argument is correct, it would mean that Katherine’s Passio was written down during the eighth century. The evidence that a Latin translation of the Greek Passio existed by the early ninth century supports the case for a Greek Passio having existed by the late eighth century although it does not resolve the question of precisely when it originated.

In this connection, Bronzini has suggested that the name Chursasadem (Χουρσασάδημ) and its Latin variants, Chursates, Cursates, Cursitans, Crisantus and Cursarsates, which are given, in the fuller versions of the Passio, to that court official responsible for suggesting the construction of the wheel to the Emperor, is derived from the Persian name, Kusar Azad. Based on this, Bronzini then suggested that the episode of the wheel was introduced into the Passio following the fall of Alexandria to the Persians in 620, when it might have been thought appropriate to insert a Persian villain into the story. He concluded that this meant that the core

59 See page 72.
60 Bronzini, Leggenda, pp. 410–11.
Passio dated from before 620. However, this suggestion is based on the proposition that the wheel is an addition to the original Passio and depends on the argument that the truncated version found in the Menologium Basilianum, is the closest survivor to the oldest version. As argued above, this would seem to be incorrect. 

Further, as the wheel episode is present in Greek texts that are older than the Menologium Basilianum, it is likely to be a feature of the original Passio. It would be unsafe, therefore, to use a possible Persian origin for the name Cursates, in order to argue for a date before 620 for the origin of the Passio. However, a Persian origin for the name does not contradict the argument for an eighth-century origin—on the grounds that the author of the Passio might still have thought a Persian villain an acceptable plot device, even though somewhat anachronistic in a fourth-century martyrdom.

The final elements of the Passio to be considered are the speeches made by Katherine to the Emperor and in the debate with the philosophers. In three articles written in the 1920s, J. Rendel Harris, Curator of Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library at Manchester University, sought to identify the source material for the speeches as recorded in Metaphrastes’ version of the Passio. Harris himself had made three trips to St Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai on the first of which he discovered a Syriac translation of the hitherto lost Apology of Aristides. Robinson subsequently showed that this latter Apology had, in a modified form, been incorporated into the Legend of Barlaam and Joasaph (sometimes written as Josaphat). With this in mind Harris went looking for further apologetic material in Metaphrastes’ version of Katherine’s Passio. Partly, I suspect, because he expected it to be there, he concluded that, within Katherine’s speeches, he had found part of the lost Apology for the Christian Faith given to the Emperor Hadrian (117–38) by Quadratus, bishop of Athens. Harris then went on to draw parallels between the Katherine Passio and the Greek version of the Legend of Barlaam and Joasaph.

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61 See page 22.
62 All three of Viteau’s texts contain the wheel episode. Viteau, Passions, pp. 18, 36, 60.
64 J. Armitage Robinson, Dean of Wells, was a noted scholar. See The Apology of Aristides on behalf of the Christians: from a Syriac ms preserved on Mount Sinai, with an appendix containing the main portion of the original Greek text by J. A. Robinson, ed. J. Rendel Harris (Cambridge, 1891).
65 Although a considerable scholar, Harris seems to have had a tendency throughout his career to advance ingenious suggestions that were not widely accepted. The DNB entry for Harris cites one of his teachers at Cambridge as saying that ‘it is a pity that (Harris) does not allow himself time to think of more than one theoretical possibility at once’. See DNB (1941–50), p. 361.
concluding that the same author wrote both. He believed the author was probably John of Damascus (c. 676–754) and that the Katherine Passio was the earlier of the two works.\textsuperscript{66}

In his analysis of Katherine’s speeches, Harris drew attention to the Euhemerist nature of her arguments and identified one of Katherine’s quotations as being from the History of Diodorus Siculus.\textsuperscript{67} He demonstrated that Diodorus was in turn citing Euhemerus (fl. c. 300 BC) who in turn was using Hecataeus of Abdera (fl. temp Alexander the Great and Ptolomy I). Harris then noted that Hecataeus also wrote a history of Israel and Egypt including the life of Abraham.\textsuperscript{68} Katherine’s reference to Serug could, therefore, well come from the same source as her reference to Diodorus. Harris’ analysis of her later speeches produced similar results in that they could be shown to be Euhemerist in origin. He then made an even more controversial suggestion, namely that the name \textit{Ækaterina} was derived from the name Hecataeus.\textsuperscript{69}

No other scholars have accepted this last suggestion. The final point that Harris made was to draw attention to similarities between the material in Metaphrastes’ \textit{Passio} and extracts from the sixth-century chronicler John Malalas (fl. 565).\textsuperscript{70} It would seem that both Malalas and Metaphrastes drew from the same original source.

Robinson immediately challenged Harris’ contention that Katherine’s \textit{Passio} contained part of Quadratus’ \textit{Apology} and had been written by John of Damascus.\textsuperscript{71} Robinson, however, did accept Harris’ other proposal that the Katherine \textit{Passio} contained elements drawn either from Malalas or from a sixth-century source used by Malalas.\textsuperscript{72} Finally, Robinson accepted that the author of the Greek version of \textit{Barlaam and Joasaph} had drawn upon the Katherine \textit{Passio}.\textsuperscript{73} Subsequent scholars

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\textsuperscript{66} Harris was not the first to suggest that John of Damascus wrote \textit{Barlaam and Joasaph} but did suggest that the same person had written Katherine’s \textit{Passio}. See \textit{Barlaam and Josaphat: A Middle English Life of Buddha}, ed. J. C. Hirsh, \textit{EE7S}, 290 (London, 1986), p. xviii, note 2 for a summary of the literature on the authorship debate.

\textsuperscript{67} Euhemerus held that the gods were originally men whose deeds caused them to be venerated as gods over time. See Harris, ‘A New Christian Apology’, p. 361.

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 362.

\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 377.


\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 253.

\textsuperscript{73} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 253.
have also accepted that *Barlaam and Joasaph* draws upon material contained in Katherine's *Passio*.  

The question of authorship was subsequently resolved in part when the Bollandist, Peeters, showed that the first Greek version of *Barlaam and Joasaph* had been adapted from a Georgian original in the early eleventh century. Peeters identified St Euthymius (d. 1028), abbot of the monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos, as the likely author. Modern scholarship supports Peeters' argument and it is now generally accepted that Euthymius, rather than John of Damascus, wrote the first Greek *Life of Barlaam and Joasaph*. Harris had based his argument that John of Damascus had written Katherine's *Passio* largely on his belief that John had written *Barlaam and Joasaph*, recognizing that the two works were related. Given that Peeters has shown that Euthymius wrote *Barlaam and Joasaph*, and in the absence of any other evidence, Harris' suggestion has to be regarded as pure speculation and unlikely to be correct.

The sequence of events would seem to be that the chronicle of John Malalas was composed first. Malalas was still writing his chronicle in 565 and may even have been composing it as late as 573. This provides an approximate *terminus post quem* of c. 565–573 for Katherine's *Passio* as it either draws upon Malalas or one of his sources. The lost Latin *Passio* dated to 800–840 provides the *terminus ante quem*. Metaphrastes then wrote his recension of Katherine's *Passio* in the second half of the tenth century. By the early eleventh century a copy of Katherine's *Passio* had reached Athos. Euthymius drew upon this when he prepared his version of *Barlaam and Joasaph*. Thus the origins of the *Passio* would appear to lie between the late sixth and the late eighth century. Two factors argue for a likely date of composition.

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75 P. Peeters, 'La première traduction latine de *Barlaam et Joasaph* et son original grec', *AB*, 49 (1931), pp. 276–312.
76 *Barlaam and Joasaph* is a Christianized version of the life of the Buddha, possibly based on the second-century life by Asvaghosa. This life was carried down the trade routes from Central Asia before being translated into Georgian and then into Greek. There has been some dissent from Peeters' view, principally by Dölger who argued for John of Damascus. Beck followed Dölger's view in his work on Byzantine religious literature but most scholars accept Peeters' arguments. See Hirsh, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, pp. xvi–xviii; H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und Theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1959), pp. 482–3.
77 Robinson, 'The Passion of St Catherine', p. 249.
in the eighth century rather than earlier. Firstly, the tenor of Katherine’s closing prayer implying a distaste for relics and, second, the weight of the manuscript evidence. The earliest surviving Passio texts are from the tenth century and there is no trace of any text before the beginning of the ninth century. While this could be mere chance, and there may indeed be earlier lost manuscripts, it does suggest that the Passio only became current in the eighth century.

The most likely ultimate source for Katherine’s Passio would thus seem to be an oral tradition arising out of the Roman persecutions of Christians during the third and early fourth centuries. Of Katherine herself there is no evidence and she may well be a composite figure. However her cult most certainly existed and her Passio was an important factor in its development as that was all there was available to structure expectations about the saint. Before moving on from a consideration of Katherine to a consideration of her cult I want, therefore, to consider the main themes that can be identified within the Passio.

The Passio conformed to the rules of the genre and contained several common hagiographical themes. There is nothing in its structure or the broad outlines of the story that is unique—all its elements can be found in other Passiones. However its treatment of one element, the issue of public debating by a woman, was fuller than in other Passiones and so this came to be regarded as the attribute which defined Katherine. The principal themes contained within the Passio are as follows:

- Katherine is presented as beautiful, educated and of noble birth. This is contrasted with her determination to shun worldly riches and worldly marriage—she regards herself as a ‘bride of Christ’;

- she bears public witness to her Christian faith against a tyrannical ruler and converts her opponents through the eloquence of her arguments;

- she converts other bystanders who are won over by her steadfastness and her arguments;
- she suffers imprisonment and starvation and is sustained by heavenly food and angelic encouragement;

- miraculous intervention occurs to save her from a hideous death on the wheels. Subsequently she dies a more merciful death for her faith, thus winning a martyr’s crown (as foretold by an angel during her first period of imprisonment);

- a miracle at her death confirms her sanctity, when milk instead of blood flows from her neck;

- a final miracle occurs when angels bear her body away for burial on Mount Sinai.

Each of these themes is to be found in the Lives of other virgin martyrs. I have already briefly discussed the way in which all of them are described as young and beautiful, even those such as Apollonia who are initially described as aged matrons. The reason that the martyr has to have these attributes of beauty, wealth and noble birth is so that they may be contrasted with her determination to remain a virgin. The implication is that whilst most women would have used their social position and beauty to make a high status secular marriage, the martyr had chosen a higher form of living by dedicating herself to Christ. In the period before 1200, Katherine’s attribute of virginity was as important as were her attributes of preaching and teaching. This reflected general religious trends. In Western Europe Katherine’s cult becomes increasingly visible during the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. This period coincides with the spread of the reforms introduced by Gregory VII (1073–85) and in particular with his insistence on clerical celibacy. Underlying this was the assumption that virginity represented the ideal way of life.

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78 See Winstead, Virgin Martyrs, pp. 5-10 regarding the ‘generic’ virgin martyr.
79 See page 54.
80 See Bugge, Virginitas, pp. 81-4. Bugge identifies two other influences on late-eleventh and twelfth-century concepts of virginity. These are the ‘juridical’ theory of atonement especially as propounded by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109). This ultimately changed attitudes towards Christ by emphasising his humanity, leading to a sexualization of the vocabulary used to describe human love towards Christ and paviing the way for the affective, and in some cases highly erotic, language used by female mystics towards Christ. The corollary of focusing sexual feelings on Christ was to devalue sexual feelings towards fellow-humans and to prize chastity. The third influence was the foundation in 1098 of the Cistercian Order. With their desire to return to a ‘purer’, less-worldly form of monasticism Cistercians sought to re-affirm the virginal way of life. The successful expansion of
The paucity of sources means that in the period up until c. 1200, only limited evidence exists for Katherine as an exemplar for those wishing to follow a virginal religious life. Two early examples, one Greek and one Latin, survive. The first is a member of the Cappadocian gentry named Ekaterina who became a nun in c.1060/61, probably after rearing a family. She commemorated the event by having herself portrayed in a painting with her name-saint, Katherine. That Katherine’s attribute of virginity was more important to Ekaterina than her powers of public debate is shown by the fact that Ekaterina chose the chaste enclosure of the convent rather than the public arena. The second example comes from England. Here Katherine appears to have been important to the recluse Christina of Markyate (c.1096/8–c.1155/66) and to her mentor Geoffrey of Gorham, abbot of St Albans (1119–46). Once more it is her defence of her virginity that seems to have been more important to them than anything else.

The most novel of the themes in Katherine’s *Passio* is that of a woman bearing public witness and defeating learned men in public debate. Both the debate with Maxentius and the subsequent debate with the philosophers show Katherine taking an active role rather than the more usual reactive one expected from a woman. This is repeated in the opening sequence of her *Passio*. Here the events leading up to her martyrdom are precipitated by her protests to the Emperor at his command to sacrifice to the pagan gods. Once more this is unusual. In most *passiones* the martyr does not court attention in this way. It is more common for martyrs to find themselves in a position where they are called upon to make a sacrifice and their refusal is a reaction to the situation in which they find themselves. In Katherine’s case she unnecessarily places herself in that position. In the rest of the *Passio* she

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81 This and other wall-paintings from Cappadocia relating to St Katherine are discussed more fully on pages 81–5.
82 See pages 197–201.
83 In the later Middle Ages, interest in Katherine is more balanced between her various attributes. One example of this is the attraction of Katherine for Margery Kempe (c. 1373–c. 1440). See Lewis, *The Cult of St Katherine*, pp. 242–56. See also A. Blamire, ‘Women and Preaching in Medieval Orthodoxy, Heresy and Saints’ Lives’, *Viator*, 26 (1995), pp. 136–52, at pp. 142, 144–9; Oliver, *Medieval Alphabet Soup*, especially p. 137; R. Rusconi, ‘Women’s Sermons at the end of the Middle Ages’, pp. 179–82.
84 For example, Lucy, denounced as a Christian, is commanded to sacrifice to pagan gods. Agnes refuses to wed because she has dedicated herself to Christ and is then commanded to make a sacrifice. See De Voragine, *Golden Legend*, i, pp. 28, 102.
conforms to the stereotype of the female virgin martyr as the passive victim, someone to whom things happen, rather than one who makes things happen.

In the two debates, Katherine presents an atypical image of a strong, intellectual woman who is the equal of the most educated man. Such an image is a vivid contrast to the normal classical and medieval stereotype of a woman as someone who inhabited the private space of the home rather than the public space of the debating arena and contravenes biblical teaching forbidding a woman to preach in public. This emphasis on Katherine as preacher is unusual but not unique. The other female saint associated with preaching was Mary Magdalene, who was sometimes described as the *apostolorum apostola*. This was based on John 20: 17–18 where Christ tells Mary Magdalene to announce the news of his resurrection to the apostles. In late medieval art Katherine and Mary Magdalene are sometimes paired, for example in a polyptych by Simone Martini (c. 1284–1344) made for the Dominican house of Santa Caterina in Pisa. One of the main themes of this polyptych was teaching.

Although there were differences in attributes between Katherine and Mary Magdalene, in particular the emphasis on Mary Magdalene as repentant sinner and on Katherine as a learned intellectual, they had sufficient in common to appeal to many of the same people. One such was Catherine of Siena. I have already referred to how Raymond of Capua in his *Life of St Catherine of Siena* drew a parallel between her mystical marriage and that of Katherine of Alexandria. In her study of the Magdalene cult, Jansen has also drawn attention to the way Raymond modelled Catherine’s ministry on that of Mary Magdalene and of how Catherine of Siena herself refers in her letters to Mary Magdalene as an exemplar. This raises an interesting question about the use of source material. Catherine of Siena is cited in works on Katherine of Alexandria as being particularly devoted to her namesake and in works on Mary Magdalene as being particularly devoted to that saint. The emphasis depends on which saint is under discussion. The balanced view might be

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85 E.g. 1 Timothy 2: 12: ‘But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to use authority over the man: but to be in silence’.
87 See page 13.
that Catherine of Siena was sufficiently sophisticated to draw on a range of exemplars with which to structure and express her piety. \(^88\)

The Italian holy woman, Margaret of Cortona (c. 1247-97), presents a similar example of someone devoted to both Mary Magdalene and Katherine. Margaret of Cortona had spent several years living with a nobleman, by whom she had a son. After the death of the nobleman she had undergone a religious conversion and spent the rest of her life in prayer and charitable work, eventually becoming a Franciscan tertiary. \(^89\) She saw herself as a repentant sinner and as such was devoted to Mary Magdalene. However, she also seems to have had a devotion to Katherine, for when she moved to a cell next to a ruined church in c. 1288 and set about restoration there, the church was subsequently consecrated to saints Basil, Egidio (Giles) and Katherine. \(^90\) Further, one of Margaret’s several visions of Christ occurred on the feast-day of Katherine of Alexandria. In it Christ told her that, with the exception of the Virgin Mary and Katherine, Mary Magdalene was the greatest virgin of all. \(^91\) Margaret’s vision thus presents a clear example of the pairing of the two saints.

Public preaching and debate is an aspect of Katherine that is highlighted very early on. However, the emphasis is on Katherine as a defender of the faith rather than as a woman preacher. This aspect of Katherine as defender of the faith can be seen in the Menologium Basilianum a work which contains vivid visual images of the saints whose *passiones* it records. \(^92\) In Katherine’s case both the text and the illustration make reference to her debate with the philosophers. This is even more striking when it is remembered that the text of the *Passio* has been stripped down to its bare bones in order to make it fit into the available space. The only other theme it contains is that of martyrdom. The illustration depicts Katherine’s execution and that of a


\(^92\) See pages 25-7.
representative group of eleven philosophers and thus neatly combines both themes.

Another eleventh-century manuscript illustration of Katherine also makes use of this aspect of Katherine. This is the so-called *Theodore Psalter*, one of a group of eight manuscripts of varying dates between the ninth and fourteenth centuries. These manuscripts represent a significant development in the Greek Orthodox tradition in that, for the first time, illustrations of individual saints have been included in a Psalter. Previous texts had used illustrations from the life of King David. The older manuscripts only contain a few illustrations but the *Theodore Psalter*, which comes roughly in the middle of the sequence, marked the beginning of significant usage of such illustrations. Most of the saints in these eight Psalters, including Katherine, are also contained in the Synaxarium of Constantinople and in Metaphrastes and it is probable that Metaphrastes in particular influenced the choice of saints given his popularity.

The *Theodore Psalter* was produced in the monastery of Stoudios in 1066. Stoudios had been closely associated with the Iconophile cause under its ninth-century abbot, St Theodore. The composer of the *Theodore Psalter*, who was also named Theodore, was clearly proud of the connection with his earlier namesake. On fol. 27v there is an illustration of St Theodore arguing against the iconoclasts in front of the Emperor. The illustration of Katherine appears on fol. 167r and shows her arguing with the philosophers in front of the Emperor Maximinus. This illustration has been placed next to a psalm beginning: *'In my trouble I cried to the Lord: and he heard me / O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips and a deceitful tongue.* Given the association of Stoudios with the Iconophile cause and the specific anti-iconoclast imagery in the Theodore Psalter, Katherine is here being associated with the defence of icons against the 'lies' of the iconoclasts.

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93 BL, Add. 19352.
95 See page 47.
96 Ps. 119 (120).
The other themes in Katherine's *Passio* identified above are representative of similar events found in many *passiones*. Heavenly nourishment while in prison and miracles surrounding the actual death of the martyr are commonly used to emphasize their sanctity. The principal impact of these themes on the subsequent cult of St Katherine was to provide her with her most striking and easily recognizable emblem—a broken wheel. In addition the miracle of the milk, flowing instead of blood when she was beheaded, led in time to her becoming the patron saint of nursing mothers—a curious fate for a virgin martyr.

It will be apparent from the discussion so far that Katherine's *Passio* provides no evidence that Katherine ever existed as a living person. Consideration of the *Passio* has, however, demonstrated evidence for Katherine's cult from about the eighth century, whilst an analysis of the principal themes within the *Passio* has indicated some of the reasons for the saint's appeal. In the next chapter consideration will be given as to what other evidence exists for the origins and early growth of Katherine's cult and for its initial transmission into Western Europe.
The composition of a *Passio* of St Katherine is the single most obvious sign that a cult commemorating the saint had begun to develop. It is not, however, the only indication and in this chapter other evidence for the origins of the cult is examined. This evidence largely consists of artistic representations of Katherine although some earlier documentary source material can also be utilized. Sufficient evidence exists to allow some conclusions to be drawn about the geographical spread of the cult down to c. 1100. It is, however, much less easy to use it to draw conclusions concerning the reasons for individual interest in the saint. This difficulty is largely explained by the limited nature of the documentary sources. I propose to begin by examining the spread of St Katherine's cult in Orthodox lands to c. 1100, then to discuss how the cult was first transmitted into Western Europe, in particular tracing its early development in Italy.

The cult in Orthodox lands

Although Katherine's martyrdom is traditionally dated to c. 305, no fourth- or fifth-century evidence exists to reveal either the existence of her person or of her cult. Indeed, the single piece of evidence frequently cited for the veneration of Katherine at this early date is itself highly questionable. This consists of a terracotta *ampulla*, one of a collection of so-called 'Menas *Ampullae*' held in the Museum of the Campo Santo Teutonico, or German School, in Rome.¹ St Menas, an Egyptian soldier in the Roman army, believed to have been martyred c. 303, would have been an approximate contemporary of Katherine.² Menas' shrine at Karm Abu Mina, southwest of Alexandria, was a major early Christian pilgrimage centre. *Menas *ampullae* have been found on a number of sites in Italy, Gaul and Spain and were small terracotta containers that pilgrims used to fill with holy water and oil from the shrine

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and take home with them as a kind of religious souvenir. Each _ampulla_ bore on its front face a representation of St Menas while the reverse carried various images or some other decoration.

Although the Index of Christian Art attributes an early date to the _ampulla_ in question, the Museum catalogue of the Campo Santo Teutonico suggests a somewhat later sixth- or seventh-century origin.³ The Museum catalogue describes this particular _ampulla_ as depicting a feminine head half turned to the right with only the contour of the face and wig, the inset of the eyes and the throat being recognizable. I have viewed the _ampulla_ in Rome and find nothing to suggest that it represents St Katherine. Indeed, in his study of the iconography of the Menas ampullae, Kaufmann interpreted the head as a rather womanly depiction of Menas.⁴ However Anton de Waal (1837–1917), one-time Rector of the Campo Santo Teutonico, while acknowledging that the head displays no distinguishing features, suggested that it might represent St Katherine—largely on grounds of the relative proximity of her shrine on Sinai to Menas' shrine at Karm Abu Mina.⁵

There is, in fact, no evidence that a shrine to St Katherine had been established on Sinai by the fifth century.⁶ De Waal's suggestion is, therefore, anachronistic and is based on an extrapolation backwards from the fact that such a shrine existed there in a later period. Another tenuous link exists between Menas and Katherine in that both were _myroblytes_, that is, their relics were believed to exude a healing oil or balm. Menas is probably the earliest known example of this phenomenon and it is possible that when Katherine's relics were installed on Sinai they acquired this attribute from Menas—possibly because one saint's relics were known to exude oil, it was naturally assumed that the relics of others would behave in the same way.

The earliest documentary reference to Katherine occurs in a seventh-century litany,

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⁴ C. M. Kaufmann, _Zur Ikonographie der Menasampullen_ (Cairo, 1910), p. 128, Fig 76.
⁶ See page 88.
now in the Vatican Library. Katherine is one of the holy women invoked in the litany, which is written in Syriac, also known as western Aramaic. Baumstark concluded that it derived from a Greek original because of its correspondence with known Greek invocations, and considered that it had been expanded by the addition of individual names. Baumstark further concluded that this was a Melkite litany.

The Melkites were Syrian and Egyptian Christians who accepted the rulings on the nature of Christ handed down by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. They formed a minority among the general population of those areas, most adhering to the Monophysite viewpoint. The term ‘Melkite’ derived from the Syriac word for ‘imperial’ and reflects these people’s identification with the Constantinopolitan Church hierarchy. However the term did not come into general use until after the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 680–1 when a separate Melkite identity began to emerge. It would perhaps be more accurate to describe MS Vat. Syr. 77 as Chalcedonian rather than Melkite, although for all practical purposes they are the same.

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7 MS Vat. Syr. 77. My discussion of the litany uses the Latin translation made by Anton Baumstark (1872–1948). Baumstark, an eminent German scholar, developed an influential approach to liturgical studies known as comparative liturgy. Spending the years 1899–1904 at the Campo Santo Teutonico in Rome, he devoted himself to the liturgy of churches in the eastern Mediterranean and also made an extended visit to the Middle East. This helped to crystallise his approach to liturgical studies. The other factor was his deeply held Catholic faith and he sought to reconcile dogma with historical truth. Fundamental to Baumstark’s approach was his conviction that eastern liturgies were not necessarily derived from Rome, in direct contrast to the prevailing view amongst western scholars and churchmen that they were. This latter view derived from prevailing Eurocentric and Catholic views that ‘their’ liturgy was based on the apostolic liturgy handed down from Christ via St Peter. From this, the view emerged that changes in the liturgy over time represented a deviation from the original ideal. Baumstark had not fully developed his theories of comparative liturgy at the time he published MS Vat. Syr 77, but already saw the liturgies of the different Christian Churches as having an essential unity, believing that they were all rooted in a common apostolic source, developing separately but according to common ‘laws’. The logical outcome of this approach was to view simpler texts and liturgies as being earlier in date than more complex ones. Baumstark’s analysis of MS Vat. Syr. 77 should be seen in this context. See F. West, *The Comparative Liturgy of Anton Baumstark* (Nottingham, 1995), pp. 6–15.

8 For the problems for western scholars in accessing oriental material see page 41. These are highlighted by the fact that I have had to use the Latin translation published by Baumstark in the discussion that follows, rather than the Syriac original.

9 Baumstark, ‘Alleheiligentitanie’, p. 114. In line with his general thesis that items are more likely to be added to liturgies than subtracted from them.


11 The orthodox Chalcedonian position was of Christ’s two natures, human and divine, in one person. Each nature had its own will in its own sphere of action but the two worked together in harmony. The Syrian and Egyptian Churches were Monophysite holding to the view that, while Christ came from two natures, after his incarnation he had only one nature, by implication divine. See *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ii, p. 1332, Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 25–6, 28–9, 311–13.
Baumstark was primarily interested in investigating the development of litanies in general and his discussion of MS Vat. Syr. 77 does not cover the individual saints' cults. While Lapidge has drawn attention to its value as an early source of information on these cults, little use seems to have been made of it for this purpose up to now. The text in English reads as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
O & \text{ our all-holy Lady Mother of God, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Army of the angels and archangels of heaven, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Holy Lord John the Baptist, prophet, messenger and precursor, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Prophets of God, Moses and Elia and Isaiah and Abacuc and Daniel and all prophets, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Holy Apostles, Lord Peter and Paul, John, Matthew, Luke, Mark, Andrew, Bartholomew, James, Philip, Thomas and all apostles, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Holy Martyrs, Lord Stephen, George, Theodore, Sergius and Bacchus, Cosmas and Damian, Demetrius, Cyriacus, John, Procopius, Pantaleemon (Pantaleon), Hermes, and all the holy martyrs pray, for our sins.} \\
\text{ Great priests, Basil, Gregory, John Chrysostom, John the Merciful, Epiphanius, Nicolas, Babylas, Cyprian, Cyriacus, Ignatius, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Blessed Fathers, Simon the Archimandrite, Simon Stylites, Daniel, Lord Sabas, Chariton, Macarius, Antony, Pachomius, Ephrem of Syria, Onuphrius, Theodosius, Arsenius, pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Holy women Thecla, Barbara, Juliana, \textit{phthimia'?, [Eu]praxia, Melania, Maria, Catharina, Shamunith and her seven sons, pray for our sins.} \ \textit{13} \\
\text{ All the saints and blessed ones both known and unknown pray for our sins.} \\
\text{ Do not abandon us, my Lord God, nor remove from us the great merit of your victorious cross. God, be merciful to our sins and have pity on us.} 
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{12} Lapidge, \textit{Anglo-Saxon Litanies}, pp. 17–18. \\
\textit{13} Baumstark writes that he has been unable to identify \textit{phthimia} and that it may be a mis-spelling in the original Syriac. See Baumstark, \textit{Alleheiligenlitanei}, p. 116.
Both Baumstark and Lapidge consider the litany to derive from Antioch, based on the names of the saints who are petitioned. In particular, the litany addresses Ignatius (d. c. 110), and Babylas (d. c. 250), both of whom were martyred bishops of Antioch and highly venerated in that city.

As the litany contains a reference to John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria (d. 620), it cannot be earlier than this date. Given that Katherine's Passio cannot be traced back before the eighth century, MS Vat. Syr. 77 would thus appear to provide the earliest documentary reference to Katherine. Her presence in this litany demonstrates that she was already venerated as an intercessor in the seventh century. Yet, as only one document from this period contains Katherine's name, it is difficult to determine how her name entered the litany. If MS Vat. Syr. 77 derives from a Chalcedonian Greek source this may imply that the focus of Katherine's cult was Constantinople and would, in turn, explain why the bulk of the early documentary evidence for the cult originates from here.

In support of this, other liturgical evidence shows that Katherine's feast day was included in the Constantinopolitan liturgy and could have been disseminated through the usage elsewhere of that liturgy. This evidence is somewhat later in date MS Vat. Syr. 77 but nevertheless still contains some of the earliest references to Katherine. These occur in two manuscripts, one housed on Patmos and the other in Jerusalem, which contain both the synaxarium and typicon of the cathedral of St Sophia in Constantinople. Mateos, in his edition of the synaxarium and typicon, has convincingly shown that the Patmos manuscript was composed at the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century while that of the Holy Cross at Jerusalem must have been written between 950–70. Both manuscripts give Katherine's feast day as 25 November but neither has it as the main festival for the day—both granting that primacy of honour to Clement of Rome and Peter of Alexandria, and placing

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14 Ibid., p. 116; Lapidge, Anglo-Saxon Litanies, p. 17.
17 Patmos, Monastery of St John the Theologian, MS 266; Monastery of the Holy Cross, Jerusalem, MS 40. Both manuscripts are collated and published in J. Mateos, Le Typicon de la Grande Église: MS Sainte-Croix N° 40, X\textsuperscript{e} siècle, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 165, 166 (1962, 1963). The Bollandists have published the Synaxarium of Constantinople. See Propylæum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris, Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanæ, ed. H. Delehaye (Brussels, 1902).
18 Mateos, Typicon, pp. x–xix.
Katherine fourth after St Mercurius.19 Indeed Katherine is noted almost as an afterthought: ‘...on the same day, the holy martyr Aikaterina...’.20 Her cult is still clearly quite minor.

Although the synaxarium and typicon in both manuscripts follow the usage of Constantinople, Delehaye suggested that a monk from the monastery of St Saba near Jerusalem wrote the Patmos manuscript, and Mateos adduces further evidence to support this proposition.21 On the other hand, on the basis of the detail of the processions and other internal evidence, Mateos also argued that the Holy Cross manuscript originated in Constantinople itself and must have been used there before reaching Jerusalem.22 Taken together, the two manuscripts demonstrate that Katherine’s feast day was a minor feast in the liturgy of Constantinople by the beginning of the tenth century and that the feast day spread to Palestine by this date as a result of the influence of the Constantinopolitan liturgy. More generally, it was during the tenth and eleventh centuries that the high visibility of Katherine’s cult began to increase and evidence to mount showing that veneration of the saint was becoming widespread throughout Eastern Christianity.

This process was driven by the spread of Katherine’s Passio and in particular by its inclusion in the compendium of saints’ Lives written in the second half of the tenth century by Simeon Metaphrastes.23 This same period also saw the production of the Menologium Basilianum but, in terms of lasting effect, the Metaphrastes’ Passio was the more important of the two. From the beginning, Metaphrastes’ work proved popular and numerous copies were made. Many of these were illustrated and four volumes containing paintings of Katherine survive. Three date from the mid-to-late eleventh century and one from the late-eleventh or early-twelfth centuries.24 Unlike the illustration in the Menologium Basilianum, which depicts scenes from the saint’s Passio, the illustrations of Katherine in editions of Metaphrastes are portraits of the saint. Although this group of illustrations is of varying dates and origins there is a unity about it in that Katherine is routinely depicted portrait-style, even where the

19 Ibid., pp. 112–15.
20 Ibid., pp. 114–15: ‘Τη αυτη ημερα, αθις της ιγιας μαρτυρος Αικατερινης ...’
21 Ibid., pp. viii–ix
22 Ibid., p. ix.
23 See pages 20–1.
24 See chapter one, note 136.
illustrations of other saints have a narrative element. Katherine too is always shown in Byzantine imperial dress emphasising her noble origins.

I have discussed above the narrative picture of Katherine in the *Theodore Psalter*, which also dates from the eleventh century. The *Theodore Psalter* was produced at the monastery of Stoudios and the inclusion of Katherine in the *Theodore Psalter* may be related to links between Stoudios and the Emperor Isaac I Comnenus (1057–9). Isaac had been educated in Stoudios and he and his wife were responsible for major repairs to the monastery. Following his abdication in 1059, Isaac became a monk in Stoudios where he remained until his death in 1061. Isaac’s wife was one Aecaterina, a Bulgarian princess, the daughter of John Vladislav (d. 1018). This is one of the earliest instances of the use of any variant of the name Katherine as a personal name that I have been able to find. The Empress Aecaterina retired to the convent of Myrelaion at the same time as her husband abdicated, taking the name Helena. Following Isaac’s death Aecaterina (or Helena) commemorated his death annually at Stoudios and, following her own death, was herself buried there. It is tempting to speculate that the Empress’ generosity to the monastery influenced the choice of Katherine for one of the illustrations of the *Theodore Psalter*.

The illustrations of Katherine in the *Menologium Basilianum*, the *Theodore Psalter* and Metaphrastes all reflect differing uses being made of the saint. The *Menologium Basilianum* and the Metaphrastes illustrations all see her as an intercessor, the former on behalf of the state, the latter, for the individual. However, while the *Menologium Basilianum* directly depicted Katherine’s dual aspects of defender of the faith and martyr, the more iconic Metaphrastes illustrations present a portrait of a high-status woman in stereotypical clothes and posture and only indirectly allude to her saintly attributes. Both the *Menologium Basilianum* and the *Theodore Psalter* stress her defence of Christianity but once more the context is different. Basil II was fighting external enemies, while the monks of Stoudios were proud of their heritage of

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25 As in Copenhagen MS 167.  
26 See page 72.  
28 Ibid., p. 47.  
opposition to Iconoclasm. The tenth and eleventh centuries thus reveal a growing interest in Katherine in Constantinople. A similar interest can also be found in the extended Byzantine Empire. Some of the evidence for this pre-dates the production of Metaphrastes’ *Passio* and demonstrates that Katherine’s cult, although still weak, was geographically widespread by the early tenth century.

Apart from the Patmos manuscript referred to above, the earliest evidence takes the form of two early tenth-century paintings of Katherine in rock-churches in Cappadocia in Asia Minor, on the eastern borders of the Byzantine Empire in present-day Turkey. Cappadocia was originally well within the borders of the Byzantine Empire. However, from the seventh century onwards, as invading Arab armies pushed the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire back, Cappadocia became a border area and was subjected to various military campaigns. A resurgence in Byzantine power occurred under Basil I (867–86) and Romanos I (912–20), continuing under their successors so that, from the late tenth until the mid-eleventh century, the region was relatively stable. In the second half of the eleventh century Seljuk Turks invaded the Byzantine Empire and by 1085 most of Cappadocia had passed out of Byzantine hands. As well as the two early tenth-century paintings of Katherine, several others date from the late tenth and eleventh centuries and all occur in the period when Byzantine control over the region was relatively secure.

All the churches housing the paintings are associated with monastic settlements of one sort or another. The earliest is to be found in the church of Tokali Kilise in the Goreme Valley. This is a complex site consisting of four different elements built at different times. Its origins are unknown but it may have begun as a hermitage. The oldest element is known as the Old Church. Amongst the wall-paintings there is a standing figure of Katherine on the lower part of the north wall, by the same workshop which decorated the church at Ayvalı Kilise. An inscription dates these

32 See pages 61–3, for a fuller discussion of the relationship between Iconoclasm and the cult of St Katherine.
33 See Map 1
latter paintings to 913–20 and so the paintings at Tokali Kilise are believed to fall within the same date range.\(^{37}\) Possibly of a similar date is a painting of Katherine on the west wall of a chapel, known as the chapel of St Symeon the Stylite after the cycle of paintings of that saint.\(^{38}\) The chapel is associated with a hermitage situated near the abandoned village of Zelve. The fresco of Katherine is depicted along with several other female saints, and has been dated by Rodley to the early tenth century.\(^{39}\)

Another cluster of paintings, dated reasonably securely to the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, from associated inscriptions, occur in the rock-cut church of Direkt Kilise, on the south side of the Peristrema valley opposite the village of Belisirma. Here a painting of Katherine is to be found on the arch that joins the north wall with the north-east pier.\(^{40}\) She is portrayed in imperial dress and wears the characteristic crown of an Empress, which has three points each topped by a cross. The church’s dedicatory inscription states that it was built in the reign of Basil and Constantine and can only refer to Basil II and his brother Constantine VIII who were co-rulers 976–1025. The church is associated with monastic buildings.

In the same area, a small chapel at Sümüllü Kilise, borders on the districts of Ihlara and Belisirama. On the vault of the arch joining the central and south naves two paintings of standing saints represent Katherine and Nicholas.\(^{41}\) The church has a small number of inscriptions using an alphabet similar to that used in late tenth- and early eleventh-century manuscripts and similar to that at Direkli Kilise. Nearby churches also date from the mid-tenth to the early-eleventh centuries, and it is for this reason that the paintings are believed to be from the same period. Another small monastic complex in the Soğanlı valley is built around a single original church dedicated to St Barbara, dated by an inscription to either 1006 or 1021.\(^{42}\) On the west wall of the nave is a portrait of Katherine.\(^{43}\)

\(^{37}\) Ibid., pp. 215–16.
\(^{38}\) Ibid., pp. 189–93.
\(^{39}\) Ibid., pp. 190, 193. Those that can be identified are Julitta, Theodota, Barbara and Thecla.
\(^{40}\) Ibid., pp. 92–3; N. Thierry and M. Thierry, Nouvelles églises rupestres de Cappadoce: region du Hasan Dag (Paris, 1963), p. 188.
\(^{41}\) Thierry, Nouvelles églises, pp. 178, 180–1.
\(^{42}\) Rodley, Cave Monasteries, p. 206.
\(^{43}\) Ibid., p. 205. Also on the west wall is an equestrian portrait of St George and portraits of Paraskeve and Anastasia.
The most significant of all the Cappodocian paintings connected with Katherine is in the Soğanlı valley, at the church at Karabağ Kilise. The original rock-cut church was carved out in the first quarter of the tenth century. Leading from it is a smaller chapel that can only be reached by way of the main church. This second chapel gives access to a third while, from the third chapel, a fourth funerary chapel has been carved. Each chapel can only be reached from the preceding one and so must have been carved in sequence. Only the first church was fully decorated with representational paintings. Chapels two and three were decorated with crosses and inscriptions while chapel four is decorated with pictures of the four monks who were buried there.

The original paintings in the main church of Karabağ Kilise have been over-painted. This second sequence of paintings has a donor inscription which records that the church was decorated at the expense of ‘Michael Skepides, Protospatharios, and Ekaterina the nun, and Nyphon, the monk ...’ in the year 6569 according to the Byzantine calendar (1060/1). The paintings include a representation of each of the donors plus other members of their family. Close to the portrait of the nun Ekaterina is a painting of St Katherine flanked by two smaller figures. This latter painting is now very damaged, although Katherine’s name can still be seen. It is, however, well described in earlier accounts. The two figures flanking St Katherine are known to have been labelled Eirene and Maria. There has been some debate as to the exact relationship of the various donors to each other. Kostof has suggested that Michael

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47 In order to make it clear whether I am referring to the nun or the saint I have used different forms of their name to distinguish between them. In fact the labels used in their respective paintings are identical, both ladies being entitled Ekaterina.
48 Rodley, *Cave Monasteries*, p. 198. Rodley provides line drawings of the donor paintings and the fragments of the St Katherine painting on p. 199.
and Ekaterina are husband and wife while Nyphon, Eirene and Maria are their children. However Rodley plausibly argues for considering Michael and Ekaterina to be the children of Nyphon, and Eirene and Maria to be Ekaterina’s children. In either case Ekaterina would have taken the veil in her old age.\textsuperscript{49} I have already referred to the use of Aekaterina as a personal name in mid-eleventh century Constantinople, citing the example of Emperor Isaac’s wife.\textsuperscript{50} The chance survival of the portrait of the nun, Ekaterina, shows that the name was in current use elsewhere in Byzantine territories.

Neither the paintings nor the inscription are funerary and Ekaterina, Michael and their family do not appear to have been buried at Karabaş Kilise. Whilst they must have had some connection with the locality, the reasons for their patronage of the church are unclear. One suggestion is that it may have been to mark the retirement to religious life of Ekaterina and Nyphon.\textsuperscript{51} The choice of the church of Karabaş Kilise in which to place the paintings may have been influenced by the fact that by 1060/1 this was a venerable site continuously inhabited by monks for over a hundred years.\textsuperscript{52} The juxtaposition of the nun’s portrait with that of her name-saint Katherine shows the affinity she must have felt. It is likely that the aspect of Katherine which most appealed to Ekaterina was her virginity, especially if it is remembered that, having performed her social duties as a wife and mother, Ekaterina had chosen to fulfil her religious aspirations by adopting the chaste life of a nun.

The two remaining paintings of Katherine to be found in Cappadocia both date from the second half of the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{53} The chapels containing them form part of a complex of monastic buildings in the Göreme valley, in an area now known as Göreme Park. The first chapel is dedicated to St Barbara. On one wall are wall-paintings of two female saints, one of whom is seated on a footstool. This latter saint has been identified as Katherine.\textsuperscript{54} In the narthex of a second chapel in the same

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., pp. 200–1; Kostof, Caves of God, p. 154.
\textsuperscript{50} See page 80.
\textsuperscript{51} Rodley, Cave Monasteries, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. 202.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., pp. 182–3. Rodley catalogues the two churches as chapels 18 and 20.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 175. The other female saint is unidentified. Also represented in the chapel are two equestrian saints, Theodore and George, trampling a dragon. In the north wall of the west arm is a portrait of St Barbara. There are no other portraits.
complex another portrait of Katherine is to be found. All the representations of Katherine found in Cappadocia are portrait in form rather than narrative. Judging from the descriptions of other wall-paintings this seems to be typical of the general style of decoration in rock-cut churches. In these types of paintings Katherine is typically represented in imperial dress, emphasizing her royal lineage. This style of representation echoes that to be found in the eleventh-century illustrated volumes of Metaphrastes' *Life* of Katherine. The narrative illustrations of Katherine found in the *Menologium Basilianum* and *Theodore Psalter*, which date from the same general period, would therefore seem to be atypical. All the Cappadocian paintings of Katherine are found in churches associated with hermits or monks suggesting that she was considered a relevant saint for monks and ascetics. Her status as a virgin martyr probably explains this. However, it is possible that her role as defender of the faith aroused equal interest, particularly as Cappadocia was a border area under threat from the expanding Muslim Empire. In this context, it is noticeable that military saints are particularly well represented in the rock-cut churches.

Katherine's high reputation in the ascetic circles of Asia Minor is supported by documentary evidence from the *Life* of the noted ascetic, Paul of Latra (d. c. 955/6). Paul of Latra spent most of his life on Mount Latra, situated between the ancient cities of Ephesus and Miletus in modern Turkey. At some unknown date before 924 he founded, or possibly re-founded, a monastery there—the sources are unclear. Monks were already living on Latra from the fifth century, some three hundred being said to have come from the monastery of Raithou on Sinai (a dependency of St Catherine’s monastery, Sinai), from whence they had fled from attacks by the Saracens. Although Raithou is known to have been attacked on a number of occasions during the Muslim and pre-Muslim era, there is no corroborating evidence that monks fled from there to Latra. However, this tradition, coupled with the ever-present threat of the Muslim advance through Asia Minor, might have made

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55 *Ibid.*, p. 178. This chapel is decorated with isolated panels depicting St Theodore on horseback, trampling a dragon, an unidentified bishop, Christ holding a book, a second equestrian saint, probably George, also trampling a dragon, an unidentified standing military saint and the Virgin and Child with a small donor figure.

56 See Map 1.

57 This paragraph is based on H. Delehaye, *La vie de St Paul le Jeune et la chronologie de Metaphraste*, *Revue des questions historiques*, n. s. 10/o. s. 54 (1893), pp. 49–85, at pp. 61–6; *PG* 113, col. 1065.
Katherine, in her role of defender of the faith, particularly relevant to Paul. The first clear reference to a monastery on Latra is in a chrysobull (a document bearing the Emperor’s golden seal) recording a gift to the monastery in 924 by Emperor Romanus I Lecapenus (920–44). Paul’s Life was composed, probably by a contemporary, within some thirty years of his death. In the Life, a passage speaks of the joy that Paul found in recalling the saints, in particular, St Katherine. This joy seems to have been a profound spiritual experience, going beyond the simple commemoration of the saint.

The geographical spread of the evidence from Asia Minor suggests that, already by the tenth century, veneration of Katherine was widespread throughout the eastern lands of the Byzantine Empire. She appears to be a middle-ranking saint in the Byzantine pantheon and of sufficient importance to be included in the decorative cycle of a number of churches. Further, Katherine can already be seen as significant in the lives of individual religious. Although there is less evidence from visual representations of Katherine from the western part of the Byzantine Empire, some indication exists to show that a similar situation pertained there. So, for example, to the north-west of Athens, in the narthex of the monastery of Hosios Loukas, there is a full-length representation of Katherine. Once more, the representation is in portrait form depicting Katherine robed in imperial dress. Hosios Loukas refers to a local St Luke, not to Luke the Evangelist. Loukas (d. 953), after spending his life as a hermit, had finally retired to this spot c. 946. He was highly regarded locally and a church dedicated to St Barbara was built for him next to his cell. Following Loukas’

58 The Life refers to Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (963–9) as though dead, so it is likely to be later than 969. However, other events during Phocas’ reign are mentioned as though they were recent and so it is unlikely to be much later. See ‘Vita S. Pauli Juniors in Monte Latro cum interpretatione Latina Iacobi Sirmondi S. I.’, ed. H. Delehaye, AB, 11 (1892), pp. 5–74, 136–82, a revised Latin translation of the Greek version of Paul’s Life based on that by Sirmondi; idem, ‘St Paul et la chronologie de Métaphraste’, p. 7.

59 Delehaye, ‘Vita S. Pauli Juniors’, pp. 153–4: Et aliorum quidem sanctorum memoria hilaritatis ansam Paulo dabant; martyris vero Aecatherinae non solum voluptate sanctum replebat, sed propemodum exsultatione et tripudio. Etenim celebrabat illam non corporis tantum sensu, sed admixta simul spirituali laetitia; aut potius, praecipuum id erat quod spiritui dabat. Ferianti igitur et sub dio epulanti cum fratribus, largus imber imminebat, monachosque suggere parantes ipse inhibuit; et pluvia cursum tamquam iussa repressit, ne gutta quidem vel tenui lapsa, quoad sublatae sunt mensae; idem vero convivis surgendi initium fuit, et pluviae cadendi. Mox enim magno impetu et copia ferri, quasi tessera data, coepit.

60 This description of Hosios Loukas is based upon P. Lazarides, Hossios Loukas (Athens, undated), pp. 30–40; Lowden, Early Christian & Byzantine Art, pp. 229–41.
death, a complex sequence of building took place on the site. First, probably in 961–6, a martyrrium was built over the tomb, which had formerly been Loukas’ cell, possibly funded by Emperor Romanos II (959–63). Some thirty years later, the church of St Barbara was rebuilt and re-dedicated to the Panaghia Theotokos (the All-Holy Mother of God), possibly funded by the widow of Romanos II, Theophano. Finally, at some date before 1084, a new, larger, church, which became the main church or Katholikon, was erected adjacent to the existing buildings. It is in the narthex of the Katholikon that the painting of Katherine is to be found. Hosios Loukas was an important pilgrimage site and seems to have enjoyed imperial favour. The inclusion of Katherine within its decorative scheme is further evidence that she was emerging from the massed ranks of saints into a more visible prominence.

Although representations of Katherine can be found from the tenth century onwards, I know of no icons of the saint that predate the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries.61 Perhaps the earliest is from St Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai.62 It consists of a central portrait of Katherine, while the border of the icon is filled with scenes from her life. This icon was of significance in the spread of artistic representations of Katherine as it later provided the inspiration for a number of Greek, Italian and Cretan artists.

Sinai

The possibility that the monastery founded by Paul of Latra might have been a re-foundation of one originally founded by monks from Raithou raises the question as to when the cult of St Katherine first developed on Sinai. This is of some significance as it is directly linked to the inventio of her relics on Sinai. I have already noted that in its early stages Katherine’s cult is atypical in having no relics of the saint to provide a focal point for her veneration. The cult spread solely through her inclusion in liturgical and hagiographical works. The only ‘physical’ manifestations of the saint took the form of artistic representations of Katherine derived from the hagiographical tradition. However the lack of relics was a limiting

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61 By ‘icon’ I mean an image painted on a wooden panel. Lowden, Early Christian and Byzantine Art’, p. 426.
factor in the growth of the cult. Katherine’s *Passio* confronts the problem by specifically allowing the saint to ask God to hide her body so it could not be divided up for relics, but this was never more than a temporary solution. The cultural pressures for saints to have relics were such that if Katherine’s cult was ever going to grow beyond minor status then relics were required.\(^{63}\)

The previous chapter discussed the non-historical nature of Katherine. Logically, if she did not exist then she cannot have left any physical remains. But, in the Middle Ages, belief in her existence was strong and so there was always the assumption that relics might exist. Katherine’s *Passio*, with its tale of angelic burial on Mount Sinai, created the presumption that if there were any relics, they would be found on Sinai and that any such relics found there were likely to be those of Katherine. So, when bones were duly found, in an ultimate act of ‘construction’ Katherine achieved physical existence. Yet the origins of Katherine’s relics on Sinai are extremely obscure. Traditionally the *inventio* took place c. 800 when monks based at the main monastery on Sinai found her uncorrupted body on a neighbouring mountain now known as Jebel Katrin, or St Katherine’s Mount.\(^{64}\) However, the earliest known account of the *inventio* of the relics is that of a certain Thietmar who visited Sinai in 1217.\(^{65}\)

Once the *inventio* had occurred, the monks placed Katherine’s relics in a small chapel high on Jebel Katrin where the bones exuded a miraculous healing oil.\(^{66}\) That this chapel seems to have contained Katherine’s shrine as late as the second half of the twelfth century, is shown by an account of a visit to the shrine left by Philippe de Milly, Grand Master of the Templars (1169–70). The account is contained in a letter, dated 1169, from De Milly to Maurice II of Craon (d. 1186x7), authenticating a relic of St Katherine which he had given to Maurice and which Maurice had subsequently presented to a local monastery. De Milly describes climbing Mount Sinai to

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\(^{63}\) Cf. St Anthony whose remains were buried in the desert but later ‘discovered’ and retrieved (see chapter 2, note 45).

\(^{64}\) See Map 2. Jebel Katrin is the highest mountain in the region at 2642 metres.

\(^{65}\) See Thietmar, *Magister Thetmari iter ad Terram Sanctam anno 1217. Ex codice manuscripto edidit Titus Tobler* (St Gall, 1851), p. 43; Bray, *The Legend of St Katherine*, p. 11.

\(^{66}\) A small chapel on the summit of Jebel Katrin marks the spot where Katherine’s body is believed to have been housed.
Katherine's shrine where he reverently collected the relic. As the cult grew more popular, Katherine's body was brought down from Jebel Katrin and was placed in the main monastery on Sinai where her relics are still displayed.

The problem with this tradition is that there is no evidence for the presence of Katherine's relics or for her veneration on Sinai before the late tenth century. Indeed the tradition itself seems to have originated much later than 800 and may represent a later attempt to explain the acquisition of the relics. If, as I have argued, the emergence of the relics was dependent on Katherine's Passio creating an expectation of their existence, then the inventio of the relics is unlikely to have occurred before the spread of the Passio in the late tenth century. As will be seen, this fits with the other evidence.

In order to disentangle fact from legend though, it is necessary to go back to the origins of Christianity on Sinai and to trace the development of monasticism on Sinai. Unfortunately the early records are scanty. The site is also remote and following the Muslim conquest of Sinai in the mid-seventh century was intermittently impossible to reach. Nevertheless much can be gleaned from archaeological and documentary sources. Exactly when the present monastery complex on Sinai was founded is a matter for conjecture. The site has biblical associations as the traditional location where God spoke to Moses out of the Burning Bush. Groups of Christian hermits are attested there from at least the fourth century and accounts survive of visits to the mountain by fourth-century pilgrims. Amongst the first visitors was Julian Saba, a Syrian monk credited with building the first church on the summit of Mount Sinai in c. 363. Another fourth-century visitor was

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67 B. de Broussillon, La maison de Craon 1050-1480: étude historique accompagnée du Cartulaire de Craon, 2 vols (Paris, 1893), i, p. 101: '...in montem Synay ascendi et a monachis loci illius sepulcru[m] beatæ virginis Catherinae mihi aperire obtinui et, cum ingenti timore pariter et amore, de sacratissimo corpore praefatae virginis, præsentum thesaurum veraciter assumpsi...'. I am grateful to Professor Michael Jones, University of Nottingham, for this reference.

68 Today the relics consist of a skull and left hand. The discrepancy between the original find of the saint's uncorrupted body and her remaining bones results from gifts of parts of her relics made to visiting dignitaries over the centuries. See J. Kamil, The Monastery of St Catherine in Sinai: A History and Guide (Cairo, 1991), p. 24.

69 See U. Dahari, Monastic Settlements in South Sinai in the Byzantine Period: The Archaeological Remains, Israel Antiquities Authority Reports, 9 (Jerusalem, 2000), pp. 21-4, for a summary of the historical sources for monasticism on Sinai from the fourth-seventh centuries.

70 Ex. 3: 1-4, which places the event on 'the mountain of God ... Horeb'. Traditionally this has been identified with Sinai (Acts 7: 30).

71 PG, 82, col. 1315; Dahari, Monastic Settlements in South Sinai, pp. 21, 166.
Egeria, who visited the holy places of Palestine and Egypt in the period 381–4, her visit to Sinai taking place November 383–January 384. She wrote an account of her travels, part of which survives in one eleventh-century manuscript preserved in Arezzo in Italy. In her account Egeria writes:

‘Late on Saturday, then, we arrived at the mountain and came to some cells. The monks who lived in them received us most hospitably, showing us every kindness. There is a church there with a presbyter, that is where we spent the night...’

Egeria then ascended Mount Sinai where she saw another church on top of the mountain. Later on leaving the valley below Mount Sinai she was shown the site of the Burning Bush where there were more cells and a church:

‘Our way out took us to the head of this valley because there the holy men had many cells and there is also a church there at the place of the Bush (which is still alive and sprouting). It was about four o’clock by the time we had come right down the Mount and reached the Bush. This as I have already said, is the Burning Bush out of which the Lord spoke to Moses, and it is at the head of the valley with the church and all the cells. The Bush itself is in front of the church in a very pretty garden which has plenty of excellent water.

It is clear from Egeria’s account that by the end of the fourth century an embryonic community, possibly even something which could be described as a lavra existed on Sinai, although there is no evidence of it having a formal constitution or a recognized leadership. It is also clear that the site was revered for its biblical associations, not

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73 Wilkinson, Egeria’s Travels, p. 3; Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, p. 164; idem, ‘The Itinerary of Egeria’, p. 35.
74 Wilkinson, Egeria’s Travels, p. 7.
75 Ibid., p. 93.
76 Ibid., p. 96.
77 In this period the term lavra was used to describe groups of hermits who occasionally met together for worship. This is what seems to have existed on Sinai. Later the term came to mean an Orthodox monastery such as the lavras on Mount Athos.
for its connection with Katherine. If the community followed the general pattern of Egyptian monasticism it probably began with one or two isolated individuals leading an eremitic life. Over time, as the number of hermits grew, they would have started to gather together occasionally for communal worship. Gradually this would have developed into a more formal arrangement. How this process began on Sinai is obscure but it is possible to use architectural and documentary evidence to determine approximately when the monastery complex as it exists today was founded.

Traditionally the Emperor Justinian (527–65) founded the Sinai monastery in 527. Whilst a number of the surviving buildings can be shown to originate from the sixth century, a foundation date of 527 is less certain. It derives from two inscriptions giving this date, which can be found above the present entrance. These and other inscriptions were recorded and translated by Ševčenko, a member of two university expeditions from Alexandria, Michigan and Princeton to the monastery in 1960 and 1963. Ševčenko considered that the inscriptions giving the date as 527 actually dated from the eighteenth century and thus could not be regarded as proof of a sixth-century foundation date. On the other hand, two inscriptions on the roof of the basilica of the monastery church provide support for it as a Justinianic foundation. One of the inscriptions refers to the late Empress Theodora (d. 548) and the other to the living Justinian. From this it can be inferred that the basilica was erected between 548 and 565, which fits with the architectural evidence.

Justinian’s reasons for building the monastery are not fully understood. According to Procopius, Justinian built a series of garrisons to defend the eastern border of the Empire against Saracen attack. The term ‘Saracen’ referred to the desert tribes (who would not have been Muslim at this time) but there is no real evidence that the monastery had any military function—indeed its situation is not particularly defensible nor is it strongly fortified. However, mixed religious and military motives, rather than purely military considerations, may have determined the site of the

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monastery. Since Procopius published his description of the Monastery in c. 560
this narrows the founding dates of the basilica even further to 548x60.\textsuperscript{82}

Procopius records the original sixth-century dedication of the monastery to the
Virgin Mary and, indeed, for the first few centuries of its existence it was known as
St Mary’s.\textsuperscript{83} It was not until the advent of Katherine’s relics that a gradual change in
dedication took place as the popularity of the Katherine cult over-shadowed the
original dedication and the monastery became known as St Catherine’s, a name it has
retained until the present day. Such references as there are to the monastery in the
centuries following its sixth-century foundation by Justinian either refer to it as St
Mary’s or fail to name it at all. They neither make any mention of the relics nor even
of Sinai as the place to which Katherine’s relics were deposited after her martyrdom.
Where mention is made of the religious nature of the location the focus is on its
Mosaic associations.

A description of the monastery, probably Carolingian in origin and written c. 808,
survives in a manuscript now held in Basle.\textsuperscript{84} The text describes the various
monasteries in the Holy Land and includes a brief description of four then in
existence on Sinai. In this the Monastery is referred to as St Mary’s:

\begin{quote}
\textit{On Holy Mount Sinai there are four churches: one, where God spoke with
Moses on the summit of the mountain, another St Elie, a third St [Elisei], the
fourth the monastery of St Mary; Abbot Elias, thirty monks…} \textsuperscript{85}
\end{quote}

The first writer to leave any detailed information about the monastery is the

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\textsuperscript{81} G. H. Forsyth and K. Weitzmann, \textit{The Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Church and
3–19, at p. 9.
\textsuperscript{84} Universität Basal Öffentliche Bibliothek, MS B.X.35. See \textit{Commemoratorium de casis dei vel
monasteris}, in \textit{Itineraria Hierosolymitana et Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae Bellis Sacris Anteriora et
Latin Lingua Exerata}, eds T. Tobler and A. Molinier (Geneva, 1879) pp. xliii–xiv, 303; J. Wilkinson,
\textit{Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades} (Warminster, 2002), pp. 24–5, 256.
\textsuperscript{85} Tobler, \textit{Commemoratorium}, p. 303: \textit{In Sancto monte Sina ecclesie iv: una, ubi Dominus locutus
est cum Moisi in vertice montis, alia Sancti Elie, tertia Sancti [Elisei], quarta monasterium Sancte
Marie; abba Elias, monachi xxx. Gradicula ad subeundum vel descendendum vil millia dce.}
\end{flushright}
chronicler Eutychius, also known as Said ibn-Batrick, Patriarch of Alexandria (933–40). Eutychius included in his chronicle a short history of the monastery from its foundation. Most of what he wrote seems to be based on hearsay and tradition. There is so little by way of corroborating evidence that that his account has to be treated with caution. Eutychius writes how the monks of Sinai asked the Emperor Justinian to build them a monastery to provide them with some defence against Arab attacks. This echoes Procopius’ statement that the monastery was part of a chain of defensive buildings along the eastern frontier. Of particular interest is Eutychius’ statement that before this time the monks had not lived a communal life but had been scattered over the mountain. Because of a lack of water on the upper reaches of the mountain the monastery was constructed on the lower slopes. According to Eutychius, Justinian was so angry that the monastery had been built in such a weak defensive position that he beheaded the official responsible. To compensate, Justinian sent one hundred freedmen and their families to settle there and guard the monastery. At some point following the Muslim conquest of Sinai the surviving descendants of these freedmen, known as the Banu Salehi, embraced Islam but remained as the servants and defenders of the monks.

Whatever the historical validity of Eutychius’ account of the foundation of the Monastery, it represents what was believed about it down to c. 940. His account makes no mention of Katherine’s association with Sinai or of the presence of her relics at St Catherine’s Monastery. It is a reasonable assumption that either the relics had not been discovered, or were too newly discovered to be widely known, when Eutychius was writing his chronicle. However, Western European references to the Sinai relics in the first half of the eleventh century suggest that they were in situ by the turn of the first millennium. This gives a period of about 60 years (c. 940–c.1000) during which the relics were probably discovered. It is possible slightly to narrow this time frame, by reference to certain manuscripts contained within the Library of St Catherine’s Monastery.

87 Eutychius, Annales, PG, 111, col. 1071: ‘Neque enim ante illud tempus ullum fuit in monte Sina coenobium in quo convenirent monachi, sed in montibus ac vallibus circa rubem e quo Deus Mosen allocatus est, sparsim degerunt’.
88 Eutychius, Annales, PG, 111, col. 1072.
89 See page 129.
Largely on account of its isolation, the Monastery at Sinai has managed to preserve many ancient manuscripts and icons known from no other source and its Library possesses an unrivalled collection of manuscripts in a variety of languages dating back centuries. Many of these manuscripts still await investigation but they are slowly coming under scholarly scrutiny. In 1950 a joint American-Egyptian expedition to St Catherine’s Monastery had as its objective to microfilm as many manuscripts as possible for deposit in the Library of Congress in Washington. Professor Aziz Atiya was charged with selecting Arabic manuscripts for microfilming. Atiya catalogued one of these manuscripts copied by the 1950 expedition as being late ninth- or early tenth-century. It is a miscellany of a number of items, one of which is recorded as being a tract on the skull of St Katherine. Unfortunately I have been unable to obtain either a copy or a translation of the relevant section of the manuscript but, given that one of the relics of St Katherine at Sinai is her skull, the existence of this text may mean that the relics had been identified several decades earlier than other evidence suggests. If this were to be the case, the silence of the other sources might be explained by the comparative newness of the relics and the isolation of the Monastery.

The same expedition also microfilmed the Georgian manuscripts in St Catherine’s library under the guidance of Gerard Garitte of Louvain University who subsequently published a study of one text. Contained within the manuscript is a calendar in which St Katherine’s feast day is given as 24 November. The manuscript is in the hand of a known scribe, John Zosimus, who worked at St Catherine’s Monastery

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90 Amongst the manuscripts he examined was the Codex Arabicus. This tri-lingual palimpsest contained five layers of writing. The top layer was written in the Middle Kufic of the eighth century with a number of saints’ lives. In his book on Sinai, Skrobucha claimed that one of these was a Life of Katherine. However this does not seem to be the case. Professor Atiya produced a descriptive catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts he microfilmed but the list of contents of the Codex Arabicus makes no mention of a Life of Katherine. See H. Skrobucha, Sinai, transl. G. Hunt (London, 1966), p. 108; Atiya, The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai, pp. xxvii, 19 (item 514); idem, ‘Codex Arabicus (Sinai Arabic Ms. No. 514)’, in Homage to a Bookman: Essays on Manuscripts, Books and Printing written for Hans P. Kraus on his 60th Birthday, October 12 1967, ed. H. Lehmann-Haupt (Berlin, 1967), pp. 75–82; idem, ‘The Arabic Palimpsests of Mount Sinai’, in The World of Islam: Studies in honour of Philip K. Hitti, eds J. Kritzeck and R. B. Winder (London, 1959), pp. 109–20, at pp. 113–19.

91 Atiya, The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai, No. 542, p. 22.

92 Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, MS Sin. Georg. 34; See Garitte, Le Calendrier Palestino-Géorgien.

93 Ibid., p. 394.
between 973–86. Garitte has argued that the manuscript was written while Zosimus was at the Monastery of St Saba near Jerusalem, thus dating it to before 973.\textsuperscript{94} I have already noted that Katherine’s feast day was known in Jerusalem by this date so this is quite possible, but no secure evidence exists to show when Zosimus wrote the manuscript and so it cannot be dated more precisely than sometime before 986. Whether or not Zosimus wrote his calendar at St Saba or on Sinai, he would have carried the knowledge of Katherine’s feast day with him to Sinai and it can, therefore, be reasonably argued that it would have been known on Sinai in the last quarter of the tenth century.

The weight of the evidence so far discussed argues for the emergence of Katherine’s relics on Sinai during the latter part of the tenth century. However, the change in the monastery’s dedication from Mary to Katherine came much later. As late as the early thirteenth century, Pope Honorius III (1216–27) referred to the ‘monastery of St Mary’ on Sinai in a bull on 6 August 1217 confirming the possessions of the monastery.\textsuperscript{95} The first known western reference to the monastery’s dedication to St Catherine’s dates from the early fourteenth century when Pope John XXII (1316–34) referred to it in an indulgence for pilgrims and benefactors of the monastery.\textsuperscript{96}

The time-lag between the emergence of Katherine’s relics and the change in name of the Monastery is understandable—it would not have been considered appropriate to replace the Virgin Mary with an obscure virgin martyr until such time as the martyr’s cult had grown sufficiently in importance to become the major attraction of the Monastery. A similar process will be seen to have been at work at the main Norman cult centre in Rouen.\textsuperscript{97}

Once the cult had started to take root in eastern Christendom the question then arises as to when and how it was carried westwards. As with so much of the early development of Katherine’s cult, the evidence is scattered and some of the material is problematic. It is, however, possible to draw some conclusions about its likely

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., pp. 18–19.
\textsuperscript{95} Acta Honorii III (1216–1227) et Gregorii IX (1227–1241), Acta Romanorum Pontificum (Rome 1943–), iii, p. 35: ‘... Montem Synai et monasterium Sanctae Mariae in pede ipsius montis...’.
\textsuperscript{96} Acta Ioannis XXII (1317–1334), N°. 103, pp. 196–7: ‘... ecclesia monasterii Sanctae Catharinae in Monte Sinai ... ’; N°, 97, pp. 190–1: ‘... Fratem Montis Sinai, Ordinis Sancti Basilli...’.
\textsuperscript{97} See chapter four.
transmission to the west. Unsurprisingly, the first indications that the Katherine-cult had migrated westwards are to be found in that part of Western Europe most exposed to Byzantine influence, namely southern Italy and, as we shall see, it is again the tenth century that seems to have been the crucial period in the growth of the cult.

From its beginnings in the apostolic era the Christian Church had always sought unity. Christians regarded themselves as members of one community of the faithful. Following Constantine’s recognition of Christianity as a legal religion in 313 the Empire gradually became equated with the Christian community and there was general acceptance of the concept of one unified Church within the Empire. The Roman Emperor from Constantine onwards was recognized as the secular Head of the Church whose responsibility it was to ensure good order. Gradually the eastern and western halves of the old Roman Empire drifted apart and the western part divided further into a number of smaller political entities. Parallel with this, a gradual division took place between the Eastern and Western Churches, although this was a slower process with the two remaining ostensibly united until 1054. Until 731 confirmation was sought from the eastern Emperor for Papal elections. Between 678–741 eleven out of thirteen Popes were Syrian or Greek in origin and Rome also provided a home to monastic refugees from the east. Some of these easterners had come west as a result of religious differences, some had fled the Muslim advances. Either way they brought with them eastern customs and devotions and proceeded to found monasteries in Rome which followed the eastern rite. Thus, by 700, the Monastery of St Saba had been founded according to the Greek rite. There was ample opportunity for Katherine’s cult to have been brought from the east to Rome. In addition, as I shall discuss below, the Katherine-cult was known in Montecassino and could have spread westwards via that route.

Rome

Potentially the earliest evidence for knowledge of Katherine in Rome comes from wall-paintings in some of the older catacombs and churches. However, as the dating of this material depends in part on assessments of artistic style, there is no general agreement on their antiquity. In the basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le mura, also

99 Ibid., p. 90.
known as San Lorenzo al Verano, a fresco depicts a female figure with a halo ascribed to CATERINA (see Plate I). The fresco of Katherine is one of a series of four saints originally placed on the north wall of one of the chapels, the others being Laurence, Andrew and John the Evangelist. During restoration works following the Second World War, the frescoes were moved from their original location and now hang in isolation on the south wall of the nave. They have been compared on stylistic grounds to some frescoes in the church of San Crisogono that date from the time of Gregory III (731–41). However, more recently, a local expert has attributed them to the twelfth century.

Even more controversial is a wall-painting in the Cyriaca catacomb situated beneath San Lorenzo fuori le mura. This purports to show the Virgin Mary with Saints Cyriaca and Katherine. Here there is no consensus in the literature concerning the likely date of the painting. Seroux d’Agincourt, present when the painting was discovered in 1780, copied the painting and dated it between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Weigand, on the other hand, in line with his general argument that the cult was not established in Italy before the thirteenth century, considers that it can be no earlier than the eleventh century and is more likely to date to the thirteenth century.

Unfortunately, conditions in the catacomb are currently too dangerous to permit visits and so I was unable to see the painting when I visited San Lorenzo in 1998. My own view is that d’Agincourt is correct and its origins lie between the ninth and

100 The original Constantinian basilica was built close to the present church in the Ager or field of Verano. In the sixth century, Pope Pelagius II (579–90) began the present church over the presumed burial site of St Laurence in the Cyriaca catacomb. Further building work took place in subsequent centuries. See S. Martina, La Basilica Patriarcale di San Lorenzo fuori le mura (Rome, 1997), pp. 3–7.
101 Ibid., p. 23.
102 The church was badly damaged in the bombardment of 16 July 1943 but has since been restored.
104 Martina, La Basilica Patriarcale di San Lorenzo, p. 23. I was also able to discuss the painting with Padre Martina during a visit to Rome.
106 Weigand also notes that Narbey believed the painting to be fifth- or sixth-century. This is most unlikely, no evidence exists for the cult anywhere at this early date. Weigand, ‘Zu den ältesten abendländischen Darstellungen’, p. 279.
eleventh century. Even here I suspect that a ninth-century date is too early and that
the painting is more likely to have originated in the tenth or eleventh-century, when
the cult can be shown to be taking hold in Italy. Weigand seems too intent on proving
that the cult in Italy is thirteenth-century in origin and as he is mistaken in this, as I
intend to show in the following paragraphs, his dating must be treated with caution.

A third wall-painting is to be found in the monastery church of San Sebastiano alla
Polveriera, formerly Santa Maria in Pallara, on the Palatine Hill. Many of the wall-
paintings in this church were destroyed at its renovation in 1626–31 by order of
Urban VIII. However, in the rounded apse that forms the eastern end of the church, a
number of paintings remain in reasonable condition. On the lower part of the apse is
a painting of the Virgin flanked by two angels who are in turn each flanked by two
female saints. Shortly before Urban's restoration Cardinal Barberini commissioned
Antonio Eclissi to draw the paintings. In these drawings the female saint on the
extreme right is identified by the name CATERINA at her side. By the time that
Fedele viewed the painting of Katherine in 1903 it had deteriorated to the point that
the name could not be discerned and when I was able to view the painting in 1998 no
trace of a name remained (see Plate II). As a result of this deterioration, it is not now
possible to be absolutely sure that the painting is of Katherine, particularly as Eclissi
was not known for his accuracy, but the earlier eye-witness accounts make it more
likely than not that it is indeed her. 107

The origins of this church and its associated monastery are obscure and it has been
suggested that it is a Constantinian foundation on the site of the martyrdom of St
Sebastian. Fedele showed that this is unlikely and that both church and monastery
probably date from the second half of the tenth century and were originally dedicated
to the Virgin and SS Zoticus and Sebastian. 108 This deduction is based on the earliest
references to the monastery, which date from the tenth century. The earliest of these
is contained in a partially destroyed gravestone of one Merco. 109 As well as recording

107 P. Fedele, "Una Chiesa del Palatino", Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria, 26 (1903),
108 Ibid., p. 350.
109 Ibid., p. 364.
110 G. Ferrari, O.S.B., Early Roman Monasteries: Notes for the History of the Monasteries and
Convents at Rome from the V through the X century (Vatican City, 1957), p. 217.
his death in 977 the epitaph also notes the fact that he was a monk so the monastery must have been in existence by then.

The likely dates for the founding of the monastery can be further refined. Part of an inscription still survives, set between the upper apse fresco of Christ and saints Lawrence, Sebastian, Zoticus and Stephen and the lower fresco containing the portrait of Katherine. This records the name of Petrus medicus (Peter the Doctor). Other fragmentary frescoes survive elsewhere in the church, which were recorded in their original state by Eclissi. Taken together these show that Peter founded the monastery and church. This is further confirmed by a note in a twelfth-century hand in a codex from Santa Maria in Pallara which records the anniversary of the death of the founder of the monastery on 25 September and names him as Petrus medicus.111 This same Peter can be traced in other records. A document in the archive of the church of St Praxedes, dated 999, refers to quondam petrus making it clear he was already dead by that date.112 Fedele also found two earlier references to Peter in the Subiaco Register under years 968 and 973.113 Based on these references, Fedele argued that the monastery was founded between 973 and 999.114 However, Ferrari has found a mention of Peter dating from 955 and, taking this in conjunction with Merco's epitaph, has argued for a foundation date between 955 and 977.115 Fedele considered the possibility that the church might have been founded before the monastery but could find no earlier evidence for this.116 However, the church was mentioned by 1001, when a synod, attended by Pope Sylvester II (999–1003) and Emperor Otto III (983–1002), was held there.117 This church is likely, therefore, to have been founded contemporaneously with the monastery.

I have delved into the dating of the foundation of the monastery and church in some

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114 Ibid., p. 358.
115 Ferrari, Early Roman Monasteries, p. 220, note 8.
117 Tangmarus, Vita Bernwardi, AASS, October, xi, pp. 996–1021, at p. 1007. Tangmarus states that in 1001 a synod was called and held: '...in palare in ecclesia sancti Sebastiani martyr...'.

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considerable detail because the fresco of St Katherine forms part of the original decoration of the church.\footnote{Fedele, 'Una Chiesa del Palatino', p. 349.} In common with the other art historical evidence examined so far, various dates have been given for the painting. Wilpert dated it to 973–7; Bertaux to the second half of the eleventh century, while Weigand, in line with his general thesis, considered it to be late thirteenth century.\footnote{J. Wilpert, Die Römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom iv bis xiii Jahrhundert, 4 vols in 8 parts (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1917), ii/2, pp. 1078–82; Weigand, 'Zu den ältesten abendländischen Darstellungen', p. 284.} However, given that the church was probably built in the second half of the tenth century and certainly before 1001, the portrait of Katherine can most reasonably be considered as late tenth-century.

The church of San Sebastiano and its associated monastery also had links with the monastery of Montecassino. In 1057, following the death of Pope Victor II (1054–7), the Roman populace seized Frederick of Lotharingia, then abbot of Montecassino, who was in Rome at that moment, and acclaimed him as Pope Stephen IX (1057–8).\footnote{MGH. SS, vii, p. 690: '...dehinc ad Pallarium ubi hospitabatur...'} The chronicle recording this event describes how Frederick was at that time lodged in the monastery of San Sebastiano, which indicates a relationship between San Sebastiano and Montecassino. This relationship was confirmed when in 1061 Pope Alexander II (1061–73) granted San Sebastiano to Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino.\footnote{L. Gigli, S. Sebastiano al Palatino, Le Chiese di Roma illustrate, 128 (Rome, 1975), p. 39.} I have been unable to discover any earlier references to links between the two monasteries and it is therefore not possible to be certain when their relationship began. However, as will be seen below, evidence exists to show that the Katherine cult was known at Montecassino at the turn of the tenth century and that Montecassino was one of the more important entry points for the cult in Western Europe.

Before examining the evidence from Southern Italy, however, another set of wall-paintings from Rome have been advanced to demonstrate that Katherine’s cult was active there from an early date. The Basilica Church of San Clemente, situated near the Colosseum, has stood on the site since at least the fourth century. Archaeological evidence of Christian worship exists there from the end of the first or the beginning
of the second century. In 1857, Father Joseph Mullooly, then Prior, supervised excavations in the Lower Church of San Clemente. During these excavations some wall-paintings were discovered, several of which he identified as representing scenes from the martyrdom of Katherine of Alexandria. The colours had almost disappeared and only fragments of the paintings remained but he identified one of them as Katherine debating with the Emperor while a philosopher looks on. The other scenes he described as follows:

'The middle compartment is destroyed; the stoles of one or two figures remaining on the left of it indicate ecclesiastics. On the right the letters KA identify the saint who is tied, almost naked, to the wheel, which a man is turning, while two others seem to hold her against it. The judge is seated in advance of the crowd, and a person, perhaps one of the discomfited philosophers turns away. Three angels, over the judge's head, are flying towards her ... The three lower subjects are scarcely visible. On the left she seems to be haranguing, perhaps, while in prison. In the centre is her beheading, before the judge. On the right a crowd of persons appears advancing, past two columns of a temple in the background, towards an elevated figure, but the subject cannot be made out.'

These paintings were copied at the time by Ewing whose depiction of them seemed to support Mullooly's view that they represented Katherine's martyrdom. However Mullooly's interpretation of these scenes has not been widely accepted. Wilpert, who was able to re-examine the paintings, believed them to be part of a larger Last Judgement scene and to date from c. 850. On the basis of his re-examination Wilpert argued that Ewing's copy was too inaccurate to be relied upon and he explained the letters KA as being part of the name of the high priest KAI(phas).

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123 J. Mullooly, Saint Clement Pope and Martyr and his Basilica in Rome (Rome, 1869), pp. 131–7.
Unfortunately the paintings have since deteriorated to such an extent that it is not now possible to be sure what they represent. However, in his extensive study of the wall-paintings of the Lower Church, Osborne concluded that, on balance, Wilpert was more likely to have been correct. Wilpert’s descriptions of paintings are generally more accurate than Mullooly’s and his explanation accounts better for the elements of the pictures that could be distinguished. It seems unlikely then that these paintings are scenes from Katherine’s martyrdom and, thus, they cannot be used to demonstrate the early existence of the cult in Rome.

Southern Italy

The evidence for the cult in southern Italy is more mixed in nature with more documentary sources being available than for Rome. The earliest indication of veneration of Katherine, as in Rome, is pictorial and the dating is once again problematic. The representation in question is to be found in Naples in the Catacomb of San Gennaro, largest and most important of the Neapolitan catacombs, and traditional burial place of the eponymous saint (Januarius). Above the Catacomb today is the church of San Gennaro dei Poveri, while archaeological evidence indicates the existence of an Oratory on the site from the fifth century. This is confirmed by a mention in the late fifth century of the ‘church of the blessed martyr Januarius and Saint Agrippinus the confessor’.

Achelis has described the painting in detail and reproduced a drawing of it. In the period 763–5, Bishop Paul II built a baptismal chapel in the entrance hall to the first catacomb. At the back of this hall are two niches, on the back wall of the right-hand niche there is a wall-painting of Saints Katherine, Agatha and Eugenia. There

127 The only other paintings of Katherine in San Clemente occur in the magnificent cycle in the Chapel of St Catherine in the Upper Church, painted by Masolino da Panicale (c. 1383–1447), possibly in collaboration with Masaccio (d. c. 1428/9) and dating from 1420s/1430s.
128 It is possible to distinguish four different cemeteries in the Catacomb and there may originally have been more.
129 Achelis, Die Katakomben von Neapel, p. 28: ‘...ecclesia beati Januartii martyris et sancti Agrippinii confessoris...
130 Ibid., pp. 39, 72, Plate 47. See also Fasola, Le Catacombe di S. Gennaro, p. 204, Plate 15. I have not been able to view the catacomb and the description in this paragraph derives from these two works.
are also signs of earlier painting underneath. This is particularly evident under the figure of Eugenia. On the side walls of the niche are paintings of Saints Margaret and Juliana. Each is identified by name. The inscription by Katherine runs vertically and reads:

SCA
ECATERI
N
A

Achelis has dated the painting to after c. 763, whilst Fasola has suggested on stylistic grounds that the painting derives from the tenth century. Weigand, in line with his general thesis, argues against an eighth-century date on the grounds that Katherine receives no mention in the Marble Calendar of Naples, begun between 750 and 763. Given that the paintings do not seem to have been the original decoration of the niche and that neither Katherine nor Margaret are mentioned in the Marble Calendar, his assumption is probably correct. However, there are a number of factors that argue against Weigand's proposal for a thirteenth-century date.

The first point to note about the painting is the spelling of Katherine's name in the inscription. Ecaterina is a direct latinization of the Greek form of her name (Αὐκατερίνα), generally found in older western inscriptions and documents before giving way to the simpler Latin and western vernacular form of K/Catherine. This change to K/Catherine was already underway in the eleventh century and virtually complete by the end of the twelfth century. The implication of this is that the painting is likely to be earlier rather than later.

Further, while the catacombs were in use up until the tenth century, they then fell into disuse until the plague epidemics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This makes it less likely that the paintings are from a later period such as the thirteenth century when the cemetery was not being used on a regular basis. A ninth-

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132 Ibid., p. 72.
133 Fasola, Le Catacombe di S. Gennaro, p. 204.
135 Achelis, Die Katakomben von Neapel, pp. 28–9
or tenth-century date would also fit better with the likely date for the origin of the Passio. I have already argued that this is unlikely to have been written before the eighth century. Some time would need to be allowed for the Passio to become known and spread west so that on balance I think that a ninth- or tenth-century date for the painting is more likely than an eighth-century one. I have argued above that there are no reliable indications of the cult in Rome before the late tenth century. It is possible that the cult reached Naples before Rome given the links between Southern Italy and Byzantium. On balance, therefore, I would favour a tenth-century date for the painting, possibly in the first half of the century. The Latin Passio, written by Peter the sub-deacon, further supports the proposition that Katherine was known in tenth-century Naples. This knowledge is likely to have come through the many links between Naples and the eastern Mediterranean.

The second point of interest about the painting is that beneath the depiction of St Margaret an inscription gives the names of the donors of the paintings. It reads: ‘Ego Gregorius cum Maria concumba pingere feci’. Achelis has suggested that Gregory and Maria might have been eastern Christians, resident in Naples, hence the favouring of a Greek saint such as Katherine. But, as Weigand has pointed out, Gregory and Maria are Italian names rather than Greek ones. The other saints portrayed were also well known in the west at a much earlier date than Katherine. It seems more likely that the origins of Gregory and Mary were western, giving some support for the idea that Katherine was venerated by some westerners. How they came to favour Katherine is an insoluble question.

Montecassino

Montecassino is the other place in Italy where the Katherine-cult can be shown to have emerged at an early date. The early history of this monastery, traditionally founded by St Benedict in 529, was chequered. It was abandoned in the late 570s

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136 See page 29.
137 'I Gregory with Maria my wife made these paintings’. See Achelis, Die Katakomben von Neapel, p. 73.
138 Ibid., p. 73.
139 Weigand ‘Zu den ältesten abendländischen Darstellungen’, p. 283.
140 This paragraph is based upon H. Bloch, Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages, 3 vols (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1986), i, pp. 4–14.
or early 580s as a result of the Lombard invasions and not re-founded until c. 718 when it came under Carolingian protection. It was abandoned once more in 883 when Muslim invaders took Montecassino, killing the Abbot and causing the surviving monks to flee to Teano in Campania. It was during this sojourn in Campania that the first evidence of links between Montecassino and Byzantium is to be found in the form of various landgrants made by the successive Byzantine generals in charge of the re-conquest of Southern Italy. Finally in c. 950, the monks returned to Montecassino and again there is evidence of assistance from the Byzantine governor in recovering Cassinese possessions lost during the monks’ exile. Other links with the Orthodox world can also be demonstrated in the latter part of the tenth century, for example, in c. 981, the Greek monk, St Nilus of Rossano and his companions were given a monastery at Vallelucium by Abbot Aligern (948–85). The Vita of St Nilus records that he was asked to celebrate a service in Greek in Montecassino.

In 986, Manso was elected abbot of Montecassino (986–97). His eleven-year abbacy proved controversial on account of his close links to the rulers of Capua and his lax attitudes to monastic life. Leo of Ostia, also known as Leo Marsicanus (c. 1046–1115), records in the Chronicle of Montecassino that, as a result of disagreements with Manso, eight monks left the monastery. One of these was the future Abbot John III of Montecassino. John went first to Jerusalem, thence to Mount Sinai, where he spent six years in the early 990s, and finally to Mount Athos. He returned to Montecassino during the abbacy of Manso’s successor, John II (997–8). He himself succeeded as John III (998–1010) ruling for twelve years and six months. This chronology places John III firmly on Mount Sinai in the late tenth century but the Chronicle fails to clarify whether he had joined the monastery or was living an eremetical life there. However, John could hardly have spent six years on Mount

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142 AASS, September, vii, p. 327.
143 PL, 173, cols 597–8.
144 MGH SS, 34, pp. 190–1. An earlier published edition of the Chronicle can be found in MGH SS, 7, p. 636.
145 MGH SS, 34, p. 206; MGH SS, 7, p. 642.
Sinai without coming into some degree of contact with the monastery. We have seen that by this date Katherine’s feast day would have been known in the monastery. More significantly, this is precisely the time at which I have argued that the relics were discovered on Sinai. If, as is just possible, the relics had been discovered earlier, then this only strengthens the argument that John III would have known about them. Abbot John is also likely to have been familiar with the story of Katherine’s *Passio* following his sojourn on Sinai and may well have brought it back with him to Montecassino. Certainly the two early Latin *Passiones* from Montecassino, discussed above, both post-date his abbacy, although neither can be dated precisely.\(^{146}\)

That the *Passio* was in circulation in the territory of Montecassino by the mid-eleventh century can, however, be demonstrated from another source, the religious poems or hymns of Bishop Alphanus I of Salerno (1058–85). A noted scholar and poet, born between 1015 and 1020 to a noble family in Salerno, Alphanus was well educated in the liberal arts. He entered the Abbey of Montecassino in 1056 together with his great friend Desiderius, and the two men collaborated closely throughout their ecclesiastical careers.\(^{147}\) In 1058, Pope Stephen IX appointed Alphanus as Bishop of Salerno.\(^{148}\) As well as being heavily involved in the intellectual life of Salerno, Alphanus was also a prominent player in the political life of southern Italy.\(^{149}\)

Alphanus is known to have composed a large number of poetical works of which many survive. Among these are three hymns of an unknown date in honour of the virgin Katherine. Although the hymns to Katherine are always included in the canon of Alphanus’ work, their attribution is not as straightforward as it might seem.\(^{150}\) Peter the Deacon (c 1107–d. after 1153) produced the earliest list of Alphanus’ work. Unfortunately the hymns to Katherine do not appear in Peter’s list. He only mentions twenty-eight works ending with the ambiguous phrase: ‘...and others which have not

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\(^{146}\) See pages 23–4, 29–31.
\(^{147}\) Desiderius became Abbot of Montecassino in 1057 and subsequently Pope Victor III in 1087. See *NCE*, xiv, p. 647.
\(^{148}\) The former Frederick of Lotharingia who had been Abbot of Montecassino.
\(^{149}\) *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, ii, pp. 253–7; *NCE* i, p. 336.
come to our attention..." 151 Lentini has shown that, in addition to the works listed by Peter, further works of Alphanus are to be found in a Cassinese manuscript. 152 Again, the hymns to Katherine are not included.

The earliest mention of the hymns to Katherine occurs in the list of Alphanus’ work published by Martinengo in 1590. Martinengo stated that he had transcribed an ancient codex, *Longobardicis litteris exarato, monasterii Casinensis*. 153 This codex was subsequently lost but, although Lentini failed to identify it, Martinengo’s list is now generally accepted and the hymns to Katherine are attributed to Alphanus. This view, is also supported by their stylistic similarities to Alphanus’ other work, in particular, the hymns he wrote to other virgin martyr saints (Christina, Margaret, Ursula, Lucy and Agnes), two of which (those in honour of Christina) appear in the original list of Peter the Deacon. 154

The hymns to Katherine have been edited and published in Latin but are not available in English. I have translated them and they are to be found in Appendix II. The hymns are of interest as, while they draw significantly upon the Katherine *Passio*, they are not a mere re-telling of it. The three hymns reveal knowledge of the key elements of the *Passio*. In all three, Katherine is well-born and educated. In Hymn II references occur to the debate with the philosophers and to their subsequent execution while Hymns I and II describe Katherine’s steadfastness in the face of both torture and offers of worldly goods and her subsequent imprisonment. Hymn I also refers to Katherine’s torture on the wheels and the visit by the Empress to Katherine’s prison cell. All three hymns refer to the milk flowing from Katherine’s neck instead of blood after she had been beheaded and to her body being carried away by angels for burial. Finally, Hymn III has a clear reference to her place of burial as Sinai, while all three hymns end with a reference to her bones oozing a healing balm.

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151 Montecassino, MS 280. See Petrus Diaconus, *De viris illustribus Casinensibus*, PL, 173, cols 1030–1: ‘...et alia quae in nostram notitiam non venerunt...’.
154 *PL*, 173, 1030–1.
The hymns demonstrate that Alphanus was aware of the principal details of Katherine's *Passio* and they corroborate the evidence offered above for the existence of veneration of Katherine in eleventh-century South Italy. While it is not possible to show exactly how Alphanus came into contact with Katherine’s cult, his Cassinese connections make this the most likely route. It is worth noting in this context, however, that he is known to have made a visit to Constantinople in 1062 whilst on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the company of Gisulf II of Salerno. Katherine’s cult was already current in Constantinople at this time.

Much has been written on the growing emphasis placed on virginity by reform-minded clerics and devout laity, which stemmed from the reform movement of the late eleventh century. Cowdrey has described at length the involvement of Desiderius and Montecassino in this movement associated with Gregory VII. As a result of their involvement, the virtue of chastity became a major theme in Cassinese writing. Alphanus with his close links to Desiderius and Montecassino reflected this Cassinese interest. But what was Alphanus’ interest in Katherine, and indeed in the other virgin saints to whom he wrote hymns? It is clear from all the hymns to virgin saints that they are as much in praise of the general virtues of virginity and martyrdom as they are in praise of individual saints. Alphanus’ interest in these two themes is a reflection, not only of the religious and political environment in Southern Italy at this time but also of Alphanus’ own role in the Church and in Southern Italian politics. Likewise Alphanus’ second theme of Martyrdom can be shown to be a product of political conditions in this period. Relations between the Papacy and the German Emperor were always fraught, but from about 1080 onwards they deteriorated significantly as the Investiture Contest grew more heated. Alphanus, as a leading churchman and supporter of the Hildebrandine reform movement, was closely associated with the papal side in the contest. This is reflected in various of his writings, in particular, in an ode he wrote to Hildebrand, then an archdeacon. In this,

156 See for example Bugge, *Virginitas*, pp. 81–4.
he urged the papacy to use its spiritual weapons to crush the opposing forces of barbarism and compared Hildebrand to ancient Roman heroes. Alphanus continued to give practical as well as moral support to Hildebrand once he had become Pope Gregory VII, offering him a refuge in Salerno when Emperor Henry IV drove Gregory out of Rome in 1085. The same political motivation can be seen in Alphanus’ three hymns to Katherine. In these, considerable emphasis is given to the manner in which Katherine stands up to a tyrannical ruler, not giving way despite both physical torture and the offer of worldly rewards. Alphanus’ interest in Katherine and his interpretation of her can, therefore, be firmly rooted in the religious and political circumstances of the period, in particular, the use of the cult to bolster the papal reform movement in the Investiture Contest. So far the evidence for the Katherine-cult in Montecassino and its environs has demonstrated its introduction and use at an institutional level. Even if Abbot John III had come into contact with Katherine’s cult during his time on Sinai, there is nothing to show that he had a particular personal devotion to her over and above other saints venerated at Montecassino. By the same token, Alphanus wrote hymns to several virgin saints and cannot be shown to have had a more particular affection for Katherine than for the others.

By the early twelfth century, however, evidence emerges of a personal devotion to the saint by individuals. The first indication of this is the use of the saint’s name as a forename. The earliest evidence that I have found, both in Italy and more generally in the west, occurs at Capua in the nunnery of San Giovanni delle Monache, founded by 972 as a dependency of Montecassino. The Italian historian, Michele Monaco (1574–1644), who was appointed as chaplain and preacher to San Giovanni in 1600, left a history of the convent plus transcriptions of some of its early manuscripts and descriptions and drawings of some of its artefacts, without which it would be impossible to reconstruct the early history of the convent. One of the greatest abbesses of San Giovanni was Gemma II (fl.1115–31/2). Gemma must have been married before becoming a nun as she had a daughter who succeeded her as

158 PL, 147, cols 1262–3.
159 Bloch, Monte Cassino, i, pp. 502–4, 534–42.
160 Ibid, i, pp. 495–6.
This daughter was called Ecaterina. Little is known of the antecedents of Gemma and Ecaterina. Ecaterina must have been born before 1115, the earliest date at which her mother is recorded as abbess and to have died some time before 1149 when a certain Maria is recorded as abbess. I have been unable to establish whether Ecaterina was her birth-name or the name taken at her religious profession. If the implication of the records is that it is indeed her birth-name, her name must have been chosen while her mother was still a laywoman. Further, as the name was extremely unusual at this period, the suggestion must be that Gemma was personally attracted to the saint.

It is only possible to speculate as to why Gemma might have been sufficiently attracted to Katherine to name her daughter Ecaterina. Although nothing is known about Gemma's background, she seems to have been well-connected in Capua judging by her success in acquiring gifts and privileges for San Giovanni. This success in enriching the convent and the fact that she became abbess in the first place suggests that she possessed good political and administrative skills. In her later years she chose to exercise these in leading a celibate, religious life. She may well have found in Katherine, the educated, strong-minded virgin, a sympathetic saint after whom to name her daughter.

Gemma too may have sympathised with the traditions of the Gregorian reform movement for she appears as a supporter of Anacletus II against Innocent II in the schism following the disputed papal election of 1130. In fact, Anacletus issued the only papal privilege ever received by San Giovanni in November 1130. Gemma's apparent support for Anacletus may be related to her links with Oderisius (by 1130 no longer abbot of Montecassino), and with Montecassino both of whom also supported Anacletus. Such religious sympathies might again have pre-disposed her towards saints such as Katherine.

161 Ibid., i, p. 509.
162 Ibid., i, p. 513.
163 Ibid., i, p. 514.
165 Ibid., p. 514; ii, pp. 944–69.
If Ecaterina assumed her name of her own free will, she must have felt a personal devotion to Katherine to have assumed the saint’s name on such an important occasion. Again the reasons can only be conjectured but, given her family background, would have been similar to her mother’s. Ecaterina is known through two surviving references. The first of these records her as *Domina Caterina* in a document dated 1132 which has been preserved in a transcription by Monaco. The other more noteworthy reference is contained in a description and drawing by Monaco of the now lost bronze doors of San Giovanni. Abbot Oderisius II of Montecassino had given these doors to San Giovanni in either 1124 or 1125. They were divided into a series of horizontal panels, each of which was in turn divided into four sections. In the two left-hand panels of the fifth row from the top were two inscriptions, one referring to Gemma and the other to Ecaterina—the latter identified by name as Gemma’s daughter (*Ecaterina filia eius*). As Monaco has recorded her name as both Caterina and Ecaterina it is not possible to be sure whether the difference reflects actual usage or represents Monaco’s mistake. Given the rarity of the name in this period it is possible both forms were used, Ecaterina being a transitional form between the Greek Αἰκατερίνα and the Latin, Caterina.

The second example of personal devotion to Katherine in southern Italy is that of Alexander, Count of Graving (fl. 1130s–70s). Graving is in the region of Bari (see Map 1). Following the accession of Roger II as ruler of Sicily in 1130, a number of rebellions occurred against Roger by Apulian and Capuan nobles as a result of which Alexander was forced into exile. He first went to the court of the German Emperor, Conrad III Hohenstaufen (1138–52), for whom he undertook several diplomatic missions. One of these was to the court of Emperor John II Comnenus in Constantinople in 1140 to arrange the marriage of John’s son Manuel to Conrad’s sister-in-law, Bertha of Sulbach. This errand was unsuccessful, although Manuel subsequently did marry Bertha, but Alexander must have impressed Manuel for, when Manuel became Emperor in 1143, he gave Alexander a place at his court. Here Alexander undertook diplomatic errands for Manuel and commanded the Norman troops working for Manuel.

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166 Ibid., i, pp. 515, 551, no. 10.
167 Ibid., iii, p. 1252, fig. 161.
Four lead seals belonging to Alexander have been found. Barnea published a description of one of them, found at Dorostolon (Silistre in Bulgaria).\(^{168}\) On the obverse of the seal is a bust of St Katherine, her head surrounded by a nimbus and with a cross in her right hand. Her left hand shows an open palm. To the left of the saint is a vertical inscription that reads Η / ΑΓ / ΑΕΚ–ΤΕΠ ('Η αγια Εκατερίνα or St Ekaterina). On the reverse of the seal is a Latin inscription which reads ALEX / ... DE / GRAVINA. How the seal came to be in Bulgaria is a mystery, although Barnea suggests that it may have reached there through one of the many Byzantine missions to the area.

A second seal belonging to Alexander is in the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg.\(^{169}\) This depicts a bust of St Katherine in similar pose, holding a cross in her left hand and with her right-hand palm turned outwards. Next to Katherine, on the right of the seal, are the letters Τ / Ε / ΡΙ / ΝΑ ([Εκο] τερινα). On the reverse it reads ALEXA [Ν] / DERCOMES / GRAVIN[E]. From its appearance the seal is thought to date to the early 1140s, before Alexander became resident in Constantinople. In total, four seals of Alexander are known, all of which show portraits of St Katherine on the obverse.\(^{170}\) Nothing in Alexander’s known career indicates why he would use a portrait of Katherine on a seal but the fact that he did demonstrates that she was of significance to him. If the dating of the seal in the Hermitage is correct, then Alexander’s devotion to the saint originates from his time in Italy rather than Constantinople and results from the South Italian cult. This is made more likely by the fact that Katherine’s image does not appear on other Byzantine seals.\(^{171}\)

*The Normans*

The next chapter discusses the introduction of Katherine’s cult into Normandy but, before leaving this survey of the early evidence for the cult, Norman connections

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169 Hermitage Museum inv. no. M-2221. Published in Sinai, Byzantium and Russia, ed. Y. Pianitsky, *et al.*, Cat. item S25, p. 212, from which this description is drawn.
170 Ibid., p. 212.
171 Ibid., p. 212.
with southern Italy in the eleventh century are worth noting. Although it cannot be proven that these influenced the introduction of the cult into Normandy they may well have facilitated it by familiarising Norman society with the existence of the saint. Considerable debate has taken place as to when the Normans first arrived in southern Italy, some sources suggesting before 1000 and others after 1017.\footnote{See J. France, 'The Occasion of the Coming of the Normans to Southern Italy', \textit{Journal of Medieval History}, 17 (1991), pp. 185–205, at pp. 185–6, for a summary of the debate; B. M. Kreutz, \textit{Before the Normans: Southern Italy in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries} (Philadelphia, 1991), xxv–xxvi; 150–8.} Recently France has argued strongly that Melo, a noble from Bari, recruited Normans for his army when he led an anti-Byzantine revolt in 1017 and that this was the occasion for the arrival of the Normans.\footnote{France, 'The Occasion of the Coming of the Normans to Southern Italy', pp. 201–2.} Whatever the exact date of the Norman influx into southern Italy, all sources agree that it had begun by the early part of the eleventh century, just the time when the cult of St Katherine was beginning to take hold in that region. Less than two decades after Melo's revolt, primary relics of Katherine appeared in Normandy and the cult rapidly established itself in the dukedom.
Chapter Four

The cult of Saint Katherine in Normandy

The previous chapters have discussed the origins of the cult of St Katherine in Orthodox Christendom and the evidence for its transmission into Italy. One of the most striking features was the early development of this cult in the absence of any relics. While Katherine's cult was not unique in this, the lack of her relics was a constraint, for most successful saints' cults at least possessed relics, or a shrine at the supposed burial place, or sometimes a miraculous icon to provide a physical focal point for the cult. 1 Katherine's cult, at least in the beginning, enjoyed none of these features. Its origins are to be found in her inclusion in liturgical works and its propagation was through the production of hagiographical works and artistic representations. This resulted in the steady but slow dissemination of the cult through the Orthodox East and into Italy.

The modest progress that Katherine's cult achieved in this way quickened with the emergence of physical relics of the martyr in Sinai. One consequence of the inventio, or discovery, of her bones on Sinai was that it became possible for other monastic centres to claim ownership of primary relics of Katherine derived from Sinai and to set themselves up as local focal points for her cult. In this chapter I propose to examine this process at work in one particular centre, Normandy. Here, unlike the Orthodox East, Katherine's relics appeared first and the liturgical and hagiographical aspects of her cult followed later. Normandy can therefore, be regarded as an early example of the second stage of development of the cult, once her relics had become available.

St Katherine emerged in Normandy, an area hitherto untouched by her cult, in the early eleventh century, shortly after she had begun to make headway in Italy. The catalyst was the acquisition of primary relics of St Katherine by the newly-founded monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen. 2 The monastery and its relics prospered and, by

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2 These consisted of three small bones. See Poncelet, Translatio et Miracula, p. 427.
the late-eleventh century, the cult of St Katherine had become of some local importance. This chapter examines how and why Katherine’s cult emerged in Normandy and the way in which it developed down to c. 1100. It concludes with an analysis of a small eleventh-century collection of miracles performed by Katherine’s Rouennais relics, which particularly examines what the collection can tell us concerning clerical and lay attitudes to the cult. To assist with this analysis I have prepared the first English translation of the text of the miracle collection. However, before turning to the foundation of the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen and its acquisition of relics of Katherine, it is necessary first to consider the political and social context in which this diffusion took place.

The origins of what became known as the Duchy of Normandy are obscure and coloured by later Norman propaganda. Dudo of Saint-Quentin, the principal source for the tenth century, recounts the tradition that Normandy originated in the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 911 between the Carolingian king, Charles the Simple (879–929) and Rollo, the leader of a Viking band. The text of the treaty does not survive and, indeed, may never have existed, but some form of agreement was reached and land ceded to Rollo. This land grant was centred on Rouen in the north of the old Frankish kingdom of Neustria and seems to have consisted of the area around Rouen itself plus the Carolingian pagi of Talou, Caux and Evreux and part of the Vexin. Rollo and his immediate successors became known as the Counts of Rouen.

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3 See Appendix III.
8 By the late tenth century the Count of Rouen became recognized as having ducal rank—Werner has argued that full ducal rights were not conferred before 987–1006. See K. F. Werner, ‘Quelques observations au sujet des débuts du “duché” de Normandie’, in Droit privé et institutions regionales: études historiques offertes à Jean Yver (Paris, 1976), pp. 691–709.
Modern historians tend to regard Charles’ arrangement with Rollo as an attempt to contain the Vikings by giving permanent settlement to one of the more successful bands who would then act as a buffer against the rest. However, Rollo and his son and successor, William Longsword, soon set about expanding and consolidating their landholdings. By the time of William Longsword’s assassination in 942, the settlement had expanded to an area approximating to the old Carolingian ecclesiastical province of Rouen. While the frontier remained fluid for some time after this, the essential area of Normandy had been established. It has frequently been noted that this reflected older Carolingian territorial units, which in their turn were based upon even older Gallo-Roman ones, and this has been used to argue that there was an underlying continuity between Neustria and Normandy.

The extent to which Frankish ecclesiastical institutions survived into the Norman period is relevant to this thesis but, before considering this issue, certain other points need to be made about Norman society in the tenth and early eleventh centuries.

The nascent Normandy presented considerable opportunities for incoming Viking families to establish themselves and to make, or lose, their fortunes. Unfortunately, the sources for the tenth century are so scanty that it is not possible to determine how this jockeying for position and wealth took place, while the origins of most of the

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9 For example, Le Patourel, The Norman Empire, p. 5; Dunbabin, France in the Making, p. 79.
10 In 924 King Ralph (923–36) granted Rollo the Bessin and Hidmoisin in central Normandy while in 933 William Longsword was granted the Cotentin and Avranchin, previously held by Brittany. See Musset, ‘Naissance de la Normandie’, pp. 98–9; Dunbabin, France in the Making, pp. 79–80; McKitterick, Frankish Kingdoms, p. 238; Bates, Normandy before 1066, pp. 9, 265.
11 There is debate over the extent to which the structures of Carolingian Neustria were taken over by Viking Normandy. For arguments in favour of continuity, see Musset, ‘Naissance de la Normandie’, pp. 114–16; idem, ‘Ruine et reconstitution d’une administration: de la Neustrie franque à la Normandie ducale’, Revue historique de droit français et étranger, 4me série, 30 (1952), p. 275; J. Yver, ‘Les bases du pouvoir ducal en Normandie’, Revue historique de droit français et étranger, 4me série, 29 (1951), pp. 135–6; idem, ‘Contribution à l’étude du développement de la compétence ducale en Normandie’, Annales de Normandie, 8 (1958), pp. 139–83; idem, ‘Les premières institutions du duché de Normandie’, pp. 299–366. For arguments in favour of change see M. de Bouard, ‘De la Neustrie Carolingienne à la Normandie féodale: Continuité ou discontinuité?’, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 28 (1955), pp. 1–14. For the debate see Bates, Normandy before 1066, pp. 2–43; McKitterick, Frankish Kingdoms, pp. 239–40. For a balanced account arguing that while the Normans used pre-existing administrative and ecclesiastical structures they also made changes, see Le Patourel, Norman Empire, pp. 4 note 1, 13, 282–3. Le Patourel’s arguments are plausible. There were continuities in that the administrative units used by the Normans reflected the pagi of Carolingian Neustria. Ecclesiastical divisions were largely the same. The Normans controlled their territory by reviving or adapting ancient administrative structures and practices which would be understood by the local population—even if only at a basic atavistic level—and by their fellows in Northern France.
Norman families who subsequently became known to history are unknown. As a consequence, there has been much debate concerning the emergence in the early eleventh century of the so-called 'new aristocracy' comprising individuals unrelated to the ducal family. This has centred on whether the first individuals to leave traces in the historical record were self-made or were the inheritors of a steady growth in family wealth and power which had taken place during the tenth century. Le Patourel has noted that, once the tendency to hereditary tenure of land had developed, successful families can be seen emerging over one or two generations, 'each adding to its predecessors' accumulation of land and wealth'. Most families who succeeded were, however, closely linked to the ducal family.

Early emergence into a position of power did not guarantee that a family would continue in the ruling elite. For example, as Bates has noted, twelve vicomtes listed in a charter of 1025 leave no further trace in the historical record. The opening decades of the eleventh century were thus not only a time of opportunity but also of political insecurity amongst leading Norman families. An integral part of establishing one's social position was to indulge in ostentatious display and enhance prestige through lavish public expenditure. In the second quarter of the eleventh century all these factors combined and we find noble families beginning to consolidate their local power bases and display their wealth through patronage of various monastic foundations. As will be seen, this development was a key element in the process that led to the foundation of Holy Trinity, Rouen.

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The debate over the degree to which Norman monasteries represented surviving Neustrian foundations, re-foundations of defunct Neustrian monasteries or were new foundations is a complex one. Dudo of Saint-Quentin writes graphically of Viking depredations of monastic property, contrasting this with the efforts of the newly-baptised Rollo and his successors to restore ecclesiastical life in their domain.

Monastic annals seem to support Dudo’s account. For example, an account was left by the monks of Fontenelle of how they fled from the Vikings in 858 and wandered for many years with their relics. It is also known that Rouen was sacked by Viking raiders in 841 and the monasteries of Saint-Ouen and Jumièges were burned down, whilst Fontenelle had already been attacked in 851, prior to its abandonment in 858. Later writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries picked up the theme of Viking destruction and monastic flight to create a general view of the complete disruption of organized religious life in the region with monasteries being abandoned and monks fleeing the region bearing with them their collections of saint’s relics. In addition to the monastic evidence, all lists of Neustrian bishops, with the exception of Rouen and Coutances, contain large gaps following the murder of bishops and the flight of clergy. Even in the case of Coutances, although the list is complete, the bishops actually resided in Rouen for many years. This suggests disruption to the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the region.

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18 Dudo, ed. Christiansen, p. 17: ‘Round the walls of strongholds, he roars as the wolf round the folds of sheep... He butchers those he finds out on their own... Wives are repeatedly raped... The convent-girdled fane of the martyr Quentin... and all the other churches in Vermandois are burnt... Francia is desolated, almost emptied of people...’. For the conversion of the Normans to Christianity see Guillot, ‘La conversion des Normands’.


21 For example, Orderic Vitalis writes of a slaughtered population and how ‘...the bodies of saints were either left unvenerated in their tombs amongst the ruins or carried by faithful worshippers to remote places’. OV, ii, pp. 6–7.


This evidence of considerable disruption to civil and ecclesiastical life in Neustria in the ninth century has led some modern scholars to accept that all monasteries in what was to become Normandy were abandoned. However, other evidence exists which suggests that in some cases that monks returned to their monasteries once the raiders had withdrawn and that not all monasteries were completely abandoned. Thus, whilst modern scholars generally accept that the Viking raids caused considerable disruption, there is disagreement as to its extent. Some scholars such as Musset and Yver have shown that the landholdings of Norman monastic ‘re-foundations’ contained territory held from Frankish times. They have used this to argue that there must have been a level of continuity for holdings so consistently to reflect the earlier period. It has also been argued that the disruption might have been worse for the upper ecclesiastical hierarchy and that, at a local level, religious life, including the veneration of saints, continued throughout the whole period.

The idea of a wholesale flight of relics out of the region has also been challenged. Lifshitz, in particular, has taken issue with this interpretation of the sources preferring to re-interpret the evidence as covering up wholesale theft of relics. As a proponent of the continuity school of thought, she has argued that the ‘myth’, as she puts it, of the flight of relics has helped to impose ‘a discourse of disruption and rupture on the historiography of Neustria-Normandy, in spite of a significant amount of evidence for continuity’. While Lifshitz has undoubtedly uncovered some

28 Lifshitz argues that the idea of a flight of relics from the ecclesiastical province of Rouen is a myth which results from anti-Viking and anti-Norman propaganda. Many of the relics transfers, or thefts as she prefers, took place during the troubled minority of Duke Richard I in the mid-tenth century, after the Viking attacks had ceased. Finally she argues that much of the written evidence for the exodus of relics comes from eleventh- and twelfth-century writers keen to promote the claims of their own monasteries to relics and is written from a pro-Capetian, anti-Norman perspective. See F. Lifshitz, ‘The Migration of Neustrian Relics in the Viking Age: The Myth of Voluntary Exodus, the Reality of Coercion and Theft’, Early Medieval Europe, 4 (1995), pp. 175–92. For arguments against Lifshitz’s broad conclusions see Potts, Monastic Revival, p. 18 note 19.
examples of relic theft, not all of her arguments preclude relic flight having taken place. In particular, as evidence to support her thesis, she uses the fact that, in some instances, monks who fled with relics were prevented from returning with them to their original monasteries. However, while this is undoubtedly a type of theft, it was precipitated in the first place by the flight of the monks.30

The issue of continuity or not as far as religious life is concerned would seem to be yet another case of mixed evidence. What most likely happened is that there was a significant level of disruption but that it was not sufficient for religious life to break down altogether. The disruption can be seen by the fact that many Frankish monasteries disappear and are not to be found in the Norman period.31 However, continuity is demonstrated in that, of the nine monasteries patronised by the Norman dukes before c. 1060, only one had not existed in the Frankish period.32 Some of the monasteries that continued to exist may well have enjoyed a high degree of continuity, with monks returning relatively quickly after a Viking raid. The case of Jumièges is a good example of the mixed evidence that exists.33 Royal charters of 849 and 862 confirming the possessions of Jumièges suggest that the monks returned after the sacking of 841, whilst Dudo also implies that the monastery was functioning in Rollo's time. However, William of Jumièges writes as if it had ceased to exist in Rollo's time and had been re-founded under William Longsword. As Potts notes, the evidence is too inconclusive to be sure which version is correct.

Throughout the tenth century Norman rule was much stronger in eastern, or Upper, Normandy than in western, or Lower, Normandy. It is not surprising therefore that the earliest monasteries to re-emerge are in Upper Normandy. Even here, however, it

30 The monks of Saint-Wandrille at Fontenelle fled in 858 taking with them relics of Saints Wandrille, Ansbert and Vulfran (see note 19 above). Over the next 30 years the monks took refuge in a number of places but disappear from the historical record around 885/6 and do not reappear until c.944 when Count Arnulf I of Flanders ordered their relics, by then in Boulogne, taken to the monastery of Saint-Pierre at Ghent (c.f. the wanderings of St Cuthbert before his relics found their final resting place in Durham, see page 166). From that time Saint-Pierre claimed to possess all three sets of relics. After two failed attempts in the tenth century, Fontenelle was refounded in 1008. Shortly after, Fontenelle claimed to have discovered the body of Vulfran buried at Fontenelle and set about reviving his cult. Van Houts links this to attempts by Fontenelle to reclaim its former patrimony and secure its economic future. See Farmer, Saints, pp. 501, 517; Van Houts, 'Historiography and Hagiography at Saint-Wandrille', p. 233; Lifshitz, 'The Migration of Neustrian relics', pp. 185–6.
32 Potts, Monastic Revival, p. 20 note 27.
33 Ibid., p. 21.
was a slow process, although Jumièges, Saint-Ouen, Saint-Evroul and Mont-Saint-Michel can be shown to be functioning by the middle of the tenth century. Duke Richard I is known to have installed canons at Fécamp and to have refounded Saint-Taurin in Évreux between 962 and 996. This latter re-foundering was linked to his struggles during that period with a series of external enemies and the need to establish a hold in the Evrecin. The use of monasteries to consolidate ducal power can also be seen in the way in which, as ducal power extended westwards, monasteries in Upper Normandy acquired land grants in the west. Then, as ducal power became more established in Lower Normandy, monasteries began to be founded and re-founded in the west.

Duke Richard II (996–1026) continued the policy of promoting monastic renewal and further developed it by allying the Norman dukes to the Cluniac reform movement. He did this by persuading William of Volpiano (961–1031), also known as William of Dijon or William of St Bénigne, a noted monastic reformer, to leave his monastery of St-Bénigne in Dijon in 1001 to become abbot of Fécamp. From there William undertook the reform of Norman monasteries along Cluniac lines.

It was against this background of monastic revival that the Norman cult of St Katherine emerged. Despite gaps in the evidence, the origins of the cult in Normandy can be identified reasonably precisely, beginning with the foundation of the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen, c. 1030, by the nobleman Goscelyn and his wife Emmeline. Up until this point all Norman monastic foundations and re-foundations had been undertaken by the Dukes or their immediate family and Holy Trinity was the first Norman monastery to be founded by individuals who were not members of

34 Bates, Normandy before 1066, p. 31.
38 A late-eleventh-century copy of the foundation charter survives in the cartulary of Holy Trinity, Rouen. See Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, no. 1; Fauroux, Recueil, No. 61.
the Norman ducal family. Little is known about Goscelyn’s antecedents. There is a reference in a charter of Duke Richard II, dated 996x1007, to Gocelinum filium Hecdonis and another in an undated charter of Duke Robert I (1027–35), to Gozelino filio Heddonis, both of which probably, but not certainly, relate to our Goscelyn. Nothing else is known about Heddo or his family. As has already been noted, this lack of known antecedents is fairly typical for Norman noble families of this period. Even more typically, there is no evidence at all relating to Emmeline’s antecedents and, although she appears in several charters, she is always defined as Goscelyn’s wife. At about the same time as they founded Holy Trinity, Goscelyn and Emmeline also founded the nunnery of Saint-Amand, Rouen. From 1030 onwards other non-ducal families began to follow the example of Goscelyn and Emmeline and to make foundations of their own. During Duke Robert I’s reign, a further three non-ducal abbeys were founded: Bec, founded in 1034 by the knight Herluin; Saint-Pierre, Preaux, re-founded by Humphrey of Vielles before 1035; and Saint-Pierre, Conches, founded by Roger of Tosny in 1035. In the reign of Robert’s son, Duke William II, the rate of foundations grew apace with a further seven non-ducal monasteries having been founded by c. 1066. All of these

39 By 1030 seven monasteries had been refounded by the ducal family and one new monastery founded. Re-foundations were: Fécamp; Jumièges; Mont-Saint-Michel; Montvilliers; Saint-Ouen, Rouen; Saint-Taurin, Evreux; Saint-Wandrille, Fontenelle. Bernay, the new foundation, was settled by Richard II in 1025. This latter house had been entrusted to William of Volpiano and was essentially a daughter-house of Fécamp. See Bates, Normandy before 1066, p. 31; Potts, Monastic Revival, pp. 26–9, 31, 65–9; Van Houts, `Historiography and Hagiography at Saint-Wandrille’, p. 234.

40 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 10 and 72.

41 Pommeraye published the foundation charter of Saint-Amand in 1662. Noting that it was undated and unsigned, he believed it to be the original and not a copy. Fauroux has also published a fourteenth-century version of the foundation charter. The text differs from that published by Pommeraye and Fauroux considers it to be a forgery. Pommeraye also recorded a tradition that Saint-Amand had been erected on a site previously been used as a temple to Venus in order to replace ‘vice with virtue’, but could find no evidence to support this tradition. However Saint-Amand may have been a re-foundation as, during a law-suit in the fourteenth century, the abbey of Saint-Ouen produced a charter claiming to have built a church in Rouen in honour of Saint-Amand and referring to Rollo ‘Ecclesiam quoque intra urbesm Rothomagensem in honore Sancti Amandi, quae omnem noster Atavus Rolphus praenominato loco partim restituit, partim et dedit...’. While such a charter is likely to have been a forgery, it may reflect an old tradition. The convent of Saint-Amand was still in existence in Pommeraye’s day but was eventually destroyed following the French Revolution. See J. F. Pommeraye, Histoire de L’Abbaye Royale de Saint Ouen de Rouen. Divisée en cinq livres. Receuillie des diverses Chartes, Titres, Papiers, & Memoires instructifs, et des Auteurs qui en on escrit. Ensemble celles des Abbayes de Ste. Catherine et de St. Amand. Par un Régulieux Benedictin de la Congregation de Saint Maur (Rouen, 1662), pp. 2–3, 76–7; Fauroux, Recueil, N° 62.

42 See GC, xi, cols 216–20 (Bec), 637 (Conches), 834–5 (Preaux).

43 Fontenay founded by Ralph Taisson in 1055; Saint-Evroul restored by members of the Giroie and Grandmesnil families c.1050; Saint-Léger, Préaux founded mid-century by Roger of Beaumont; Saint-
foundations were by noble families who were strong supporters of Duke William II. In addition, there were also seven foundations in this period by nobles with direct connections, either by blood or marriage, to the ducal family.\textsuperscript{44}

The significance of these foundations has been much debated. Given the political instability during the early part of Robert I’s reign, Bates has argued that the emergence of non-ducal foundations reflects a weakening in ducal power.\textsuperscript{45} Potts, however, has recently argued that this is not the case.\textsuperscript{46} She points out that the monasteries founded during Robert’s reign were all established after the period of greatest instability had ended. Likewise in William II’s reign, all but one of the foundations took place after his victory at Val-ès-Dunes in 1047, when he had consolidated his position. Potts’ arguments are compelling, in particular, her point that the monastic foundations were made by individuals and families with close links to the ducal house. The foundations could, therefore, be interpreted as supportive of ducal power rather than a dilution of it. However, even if a foundation was not initially threatening to ducal power, it contained the potential to diminish it. Both nobles and dukes founded monasteries for a similar mixture of religious, political and economic reasons and expected to have some control over a monastery they had founded. This control was frequently exercised in the guise of patronage—in particular, family members were inserted in positions of authority in ‘family’ monasteries. In this way noble families could consolidate their hold over land in

\textsuperscript{44} Notre-Dame de Grestain, founded c. 1050 by Herluin de Conteville, stepfather to Duke William II, and his son Robert of Mortain, William’s half-brother, Saint-Sauveur, Evreux founded c. 1060 by Richard of Evreux, the son of William’s great-uncle Robert, Archbishop of Rouen; Saint-Pierre-sur-Dives founded c. 1046, by Countess Lesceline of Eu, the widow of William Count of Eu, half-brother to Duke Richard II; Notre-Dame du Pré, Lisieux, also known as Saint-Désir, which Lesceline co-founded c. 1050 with her son Hugh, Bishop of Lisieux; Le Tréport founded c. 1060 by another of Lesceline’s sons, Robert Count of Eu; Lyre and Cormeilles built c. 1050 and c. 1060 respectively by William fitz Osbern whose grandfather was the brother of Duchess Gunnor, wife of Richard I and whose mother was the daughter of Ralph of Irvy, half-brother of Richard I. See GC, xi, cols 842–3 (Grestain), 655 (Evreux), 728–9 (Saint-Pierre-sur-Dives), 855–6 (Lisieux), 244–5 (Le Tréport), 644 (Lyre), 846 (Cormeilles).

\textsuperscript{45} Bates, Normandy before 1066, p. 121.

\textsuperscript{46} Potts, Monastic Revival, pp. 106–113.
much the same way as the ducal family did through its monastic patronage.

The tension between noble and ducal patronage can be seen in the way that many noble foundations were rapidly brought under ducal patronage or protection. Holy Trinity, Rouen is a case in point for its foundation charter is, in fact, a confirmation by Duke Robert I of the endowment by Goscelyn and Emmeline of Holy Trinity. This charter grants the monastery certain immunities and effectively places it under ducal protection. Given that both Robert and William in turn were forced to struggle to establish themselves in power they would both have been conscious of the need not to alienate the nobility. By allowing trusted families to found monasteries but at the same time asserting some form of control, the dukes trod a fine line between minimising the loss of their authority whilst not unnecessarily antagonising the nobility.

Goscelyn presents one example of a powerful noble, being described as a close confidant of Duke Robert I. The witness-list of the foundation charter of Holy Trinity testifies to Goscelyn’s high connections. As well as Goscelyn himself, it consists of Duke Robert, the duke’s uncle, Robert, Archbishop of Rouen and a certain Bishop Hugh. The status of these signatories testifies to Goscelyn’s connections at the highest levels of Norman society. This is also borne out by the fact that Goscelyn was one of the most frequent witnesses of ducal charters under Robert I. Political power often enhanced economic power and Goscelyn can be shown to have been amassing land and wealth, sometimes at the expense of existing ducal monasteries. For example, a charter of Robert I, dated to 1027x35, resolved a land dispute between Goscelyn and the monastery of Fécamp. By this, the monastery


48 Cheruel, Nova Chronica, p. 3: ‘... Goscelynus nomine ... vicecomes Rotomagensis scilicet et Archacencis, inclyti marchionis Roberti a secretis etfamiliarissimis, tum pro sui nobilitate et prudentia, tum etiam pro sui fidelitate et amicii{a} sibi jam dudum exhibita...’

49 Three bishops were named Hugh at this time Hugh III, Bishop of Bayeux; Hugh, Bishop of Avranches and Hugh II, Bishop of Evreux. The charter is not specific as to which one is meant. See GC, xi, cols 353, 474-5, 570-1.

50 Potts, Monastic Revival, p. 108; Bates, Normandy before 1066, p. 159.

51 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 72; Bates, Normandy before 1066, p. 100.
was forced to recognize Goscelyn's title to the land in question during his lifetime with the provision that it should revert to them after his death. In all probability, the charter glosses over the seizure of the land by Goscelyn as it seems not to have been handed back on his death. Further indication of his wealth is given by the size of his initial endowment of Holy Trinity, Rouen, to which he later added other substantial gifts.

Goscelyn thus fits the classic stereotype of the Norman nobility of the early eleventh century. He came from obscure antecedents, he was close to the ducal family and he was busy amassing land and wealth. At some point, c. 1030, he became Vicomte of Rouen and separately Vicomte of Arques. The position of vicomte was of some importance. The title derived from that of a Carolingian official who had exercised certain administrative functions on behalf of the king and it re-emerged in Normandy during the reign of Duke Richard II. Like his Carolingian predecessor, a Norman vicomte seems to have been linked to a designated pagus. However, it is difficult to demonstrate the precise nature of this link as individuals are frequently named as vicomte without a territorial qualifier. In his study of the office of vicomte, Genestal argued that, before the reforms of King Henry II (1154–89), while vicomtes may have been powerful lords in their own right, they exercised the office of vicomte on behalf of the duke. Genestal further argued that, while the title ultimately became hereditary, the powers of the office disappeared. In the 1030s, however, vicomtes were not necessarily hereditary and can be shown to have moved between families as

52 Bates, Normandy before 1066, pp. 104–5. 53 The original endowment is set out in the foundation charter. In a subsequent charter dated 1030x4, Goscelyn paid 60 pounds for a vineyard which he gave as a gift to Holy Trinity. See Deville, 'Cartulaire S. Trinité', nos 1 and 9; Fauroux, Recueil, N° 83. 54 For references to Goscelyn as Vicomte of Rouen see Deville 'Cartulaire S. Trinité', no. 9; Fauroux, Recueil, N° 83. For references to Goscelyn as Vicomte of Arques see Cheruel, Nova Chronica, p. 3. Goscelyn is generally referred to as Vicomte of Arques in Norman chronicles and later secondary works. See OV, ii, pp. 10–11; Deville, 'Cartulaire S. Trinité', p. 405; Fauroux, Recueil, pp. 184, 185. 55 R. Genestal, 'Note sur les vicomtes fiefs de Normandie', Revue historique de droit français et étranger, 3rd Ser., 28 (1904), pp. 766–75; D. Douglas, 'The Earliest Norman Counts', especially p. 152; J.-M. Bouvriz, 'Contribution à une étude de l'institution vicomtale en Normandie au XIe siècle. L'exemple de la partie orientale du Duché: les Vicomtes de Rouen et de Fécamp', in Autour du pouvoir ducal Normand Xe-XIIIe siècles, ed. L. Musset, J.-M. Bouvriz, J.-M. Maillefer, Cahiers des Annales de Normandie, 17 (1985), pp. 149–74. 56 Six of the witnesses to a charter of Richard II dated 1022x6 are named as vicomtes. See Fauroux, Recueil, N° 40. 57 Genestal, 'Note sur les vicomtes fiefs de Normandie', pp. 767–8.
part of the gains and losses of various power struggles. The vicomtés changed hands in this period in a way which highlights the association of the title with high status in the power hierarchy.

It is unclear when Goscelyn acquired his two vicomtés of Arques and Rouen. From 1025 he appeared regularly in charters styled as vicomte but without any territorial qualifier. The confusion is compounded by the fact that, in some of the charters witnessed by Goscelyn, other individuals are described as Vicomte of Arques or Vicomte of Rouen. So, in a charter dated c.1025–6, which was witnessed by Goscelyn, one of the other witnesses was a certain Rainald who styled himself Vicomte of Arques. Bouvris’ study of the Vicomtes of Rouen used charter evidence to show that a certain Tesselin was Vicomte of Rouen in 1015, and, c. 1015, his son Richard succeeded him in that title. Richard and Goscelyn were co-signatories to two surviving charters, both being described as vicomtes. The import of this is that in c. 1025 Goscelyn was described as a vicomte in documents where the two vicomtés he is known to have held are attributed to others. The sources are insufficient to resolve the conundrum. Goscelyn is not known to have held any other vicomtés. It may be that he was sufficiently powerful by 1025 to have been recognized as heir to either Rainald (in Arques) or Richard (in Rouen) and already to be styled as vicomte. This possibility is supported by the fact that in two charters, one dated 1035–40, the other 1037–c. 1045, while Goscelyn is still alive, his son–law and heir, Godfrey, is being referred to as vicomte. Another possibility is that, given

59 For the argument that he only acquired one vicomté, that of Rouen, see D. C. Douglas, William the Conqueror: The Norman Impact upon England (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964), p. 94, especially note 1. However, this seems unlikely, particularly as his immediate descendants seem to have inherited the vicomté of Arques.
60 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 35, 43, 60, 61, 69, 73, 84, 85, 93, 102. The latest of these, N° 102, is dated 1037–c. 1045.
61 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 54.
63 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 35, 43.
64 Part of Goscelyn’s original endowment of Holy Trinity consisted of land in the pagus of Talou. This was the Carolingian name for the district which became known as the vicomté of Arques in Norman times, the later name deriving from its principal town, Arques. Goscelyn also gave Holy Trinity certain grants in the town of Arques itself. See Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, charter 1; Fauroux, Recueil, N° 62. For Talou as the ancient name of Arques see Deville, Histoire du Château d’Arques (Rouen, 1839), pp. 1–2, 46; Le Patourel, The Norman Empire, Map 1, p. 384.
65 Fauroux, Recueil, N° 93 and 102. Godfrey is known to have become Vicomte of Arques, see Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, charter 25.
the dating of at least one of the charters concerned is only approximate, they may be more sequential than is immediately apparent.

What is known is that, although Richard, *Vicomte* of Rouen, had a son and a grandson, neither became *Vicomte* of Rouen. Instead, Goscelyn was being referred to as *Vicomte* of Rouen in charters from c. 1030. That he was able to wrest the *vicomté* from another family that had held it for two generations is further evidence of his powerful position. Bouvris suggests that Goscelyn must have become *Vicomte* of Rouen in 1030–1. It is precisely at this moment that Goscelyn and his wife founded the monastery of Holy Trinity. This is unlikely to have been a coincidence. There is no evidence to suggest that promotion of Katherine’s cult provided the impetus for the foundation; rather, it is more likely that Goscelyn is using the foundation to help consolidate his position and make a statement about his status. This statement is made even more powerful by the fact that, in addition to founding Holy Trinity, Goscelyn and Emmeline also established the nunnery of Saint-Amand at about the same time. Setting up two substantial foundations approximately simultaneously would have required considerable economic resources and reinforces the argument that Goscelyn had established himself as a major force in the duchy.

Whilst the decision to found Holy Trinity can be linked to Goscelyn’s high standing at the ducal court, other factors seem also to have been at work. Holy Trinity was situated on a hill on the south-east outskirts of Rouen. It is possible that there was a priory dedicated to St Michael on the same hill from the late tenth century. This

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67 Deville 'Cartulaire S. Trinité', charter 9; Fauroux, *Recueil*, N° 83.
68 Evidence of the way in which the title of *vicomte* was linked to fluctuations in family fortunes can be seen in the fate of Goscelyn’s own *vicomtés*. The *vicomté* of Rouen had passed to a relative of Duke Richard II, Roger I Beaumont, son of Humphrey of Vieilles, by c. 1050. In the case of Arques, while Goscelyn’s son-in-law Godfrey inherited the title, Godfrey’s son William did not. For Rouen see Bouvris, 'Contribution à une étude de l'institution vicomtale', p. 159; Cheruel, *Nova Chronica*, p. 3. For Arques see White, 'The Sisters and Nieces of Gunnor', pp. 59–60; T. Stapleton, 'Observations upon the Succession to the Barony of William of Arques, in the County of Kent, during the period between the Conquest of England and the Reign of King John', *Archaeologia*, 31 (1846), pp. 216–37, at pp. 217–18; Bates, *Normandy before 1066*, p. 104.
69 L. De Duranville, 'Notice sur la côte Sainte-Catherine, près de Rouen', *Revue de Rouen et de Normandie*, 31 (1849), pp. 174–90; 225–44, at p. 177; L. Prévost, 'Historique des anciens monuments de la colline Sainte-Catherine de Rouen', *Études Normandes*, 4e trimestre (1973), pp. 1–16, at p. 2. The hill on which Holy Trinity was built eventually became known as Saint Catherine's Mount, which name it still retains. Prior to this it seems to have been known as St Michael's Mount. This can be seen in a charter, dated by Deville to 1053, which refers to the monastery of Holy Trinity situated on St
may mean that Holy Trinity is actually a re-foundation and expansion of an older establishment rather than a completely new foundation. More significant, however, is the strategic siting of the monastery. From the hill it is possible to dominate the town and there is evidence that fortifications of some sort had existed on the hill ever since the foundation of Rouen as a town. The strategic importance of the hill can be seen by the fact that at an unknown date during the medieval period a fort was constructed upon it. The fort is known not to have existed when Geoffrey of Anjou camped by the monastery in 1144 but it had been built by 1418 when Henry V of England attacked it during his siege of Rouen. Subsequently the Protestant Army that besieged Rouen in April 1562 built a second fort upon the hill. The choice of such a militarily important site for Holy Trinity suggests that Goscelyn was asserting control over the area. The strategic sensitivity of the site also supports the argument that Goscelyn was a trusted confidant of the duke.

Founded monasteries to consolidate a patron’s political and economic position did not preclude genuine religious feeling. Piety was a strong motivation and indeed Goscelyn is said to have retired to Holy Trinity at the end of his life and Emmeline to Saint-Amand. There is no evidence though that this piety encompassed a particular devotion to St Katherine. The original dedication of the monastery was to Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mary and initially it was generally known as Holy Trinity. Holy Trinity was a common dedication and it was not until the late eleventh or early twelfth century that the monastery gradually became known as Sainte-Catherine-du-Mont-de-Rouen in honour of its miracle-working relics. This recalls the Monastery Michael's Mount, Rouen (... monasterio Sanctae Trinitatis, quod situm est Rotomagi in monte Sancti Michaelis...). See Deville, 'Cartulaire S. Trinité', charter 50. De Duranville, 'Notice sur la côte Saint-Catherine', p. 227. The monks of Holy Trinity, by then known as Sainte-Catherine, are said to have placed their relics in Rouen Castle to protect them from Henry V. When Rouen fell to Henry in January 1419, an article in the resulting treaty gave back to the monks all their goods and relics. De Duranville, 'Notice sur la côte Sainte-Catherine', pp. 226–30. The strategic situation of the monastery led to its ultimate demise. In the Wars of Religion, Henri IV of France had both forts and the monastery of Holy Trinity demolished in 1598 following his capture of Rouen. See De Duranville, 'Notice sur la côte Sainte-Catherine', pp. 234, 243. Several sixteenth-century illustrations of the monastery and forts prior to their demolition are discussed in A. Pottier, 'Différentes vues de l’abbaye-fortesse de Ste-Catherine, près de Rouen', Revue de Rouen et de Normandie, 31 (1849), pp. 278–80. The ruins of the monastery were still there when Ducarel visited Rouen in the eighteenth century. See A. C. Ducarel, Anglo-Norman Antiquities Considered In A Tour Through Part of Normandy (London, 1767), pp. 38–9. Cheruel, Nova Chronica, p. 6; Pommeraye, Histoire de L’Abbaye Royale de Saint-Ouen', pp. 7–8.
of St Catherine on Sinai, which only assumed this name over time as the fame of its relics spread.

It was the acquisition of relics of Katherine by Holy Trinity, Rouen, that initiated the introduction of her cult. The monastery was likely to have been looking to acquire suitable relics and the fact that it came upon Katherine’s relics was probably more a matter of chance than the result of an existing devotion to her. It is appropriate then at this point to pose the question as to how Katherine’s relics appeared in Rouen at this time. The traditional account of the advent of the relics is contained in three sources. The first of these is the anonymous account written by a monk from Holy Trinity in the late eleventh century to which reference has already been made. 74 The chronicler, Hugh of Flavigny (b. c. 1065–d. c. 1144), recounts essentially the same story. 75 The final source is the Chronicle, Triplex e Unum. 76

According to these three documents, Simeon, a Greek monk from Sinai, came seeking alms from Duke Richard II on behalf of his community. The sources relate that at that time the relics of Katherine on Sinai were housed in a chapel away from the main monastery. Each week the monks would go to the saint’s shrine to collect the holy oil, oozing from her bones. Several would then stay behind to stand guard over the bones during the week. It was while Simeon was on guard duty that three small bones ‘detached’ themselves from the main relics and were gathered up by him. When he came on his journey to Rouen, Simeon brought these relics with him. Some credibility is given to this account by the passage written by the chronicler Rodolfus Glaber (c. 980–1046) recording that every year monks would come from Sinai to the court of Duke Richard II seeking alms. 77 Glaber claims this as an example of Richard’s reputation for generosity and alms-giving but this does not really explain how the particular relationship with Sinai originated. However, giving alms to a monastery, which had been founded by the Emperor Justinian on one of the holiest sites in Christendom, is unlikely to have been solely an act of piety, for it

74 Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet.
75 Hugh of Flavigny, Chronicon, pp. 398–9.
76 Cheruel, Nova Chronica, pp. 3–4.
77 Rodolfus Glaber, Historiarum Libri Quinque, pp. 36–7: ‘Dona etiam amplissima sacrasi ecclesiis pene in toto orbe mittebant, ita ut etiam ab oriente, scilicet de nomintissimo monte Sina, per singulos annos monachi Rotomagnum uenientes, qui a predictis principibus plurima redeuntes aurii et argenti suis deferrent exenia.’
must have been seen too as enhancing Richard's own prestige. On his arrival, Simeon found that Duke Richard had died and his son Robert I was now ruling in Rouen. Nevertheless Simeon was well-received and lodged at the house of Goscelyn and Emmeline for two years. Here he is supposed to have encouraged them in their desire to found a monastery and to have given them the relics of Katherine that he had brought from Sinai. Simeon then left Rouen and continued on his travels eventually ending his days as a recluse in the *Porta Nigra*. 78

Simeon has been identified as St Simeon of Trier (d. 1035) who is known to have spent some time on Sinai and to have visited Rouen in the 1020s. 79 His friend, Abbot Eberwin of St Martin's, Trier, wrote his *Life*. 80 Unfortunately Eberwin, who knew Simeon well and provides much colourful details about his travels, makes no mention anywhere in his *Life* of any relics of Katherine being brought by Simeon from Sinai to Rouen. Fawtier made a detailed study of the story of the advent of Katherine's relics in Rouen and concluded that this could not be true. 81 He suggested two possibilities: either the *Translatio* covers up a dubious piece of relic trafficking by Simeon or, more likely, his known presence in Rouen has been used to create an acceptable provenance for the relics. This latter possibility still implies that the relics were acquired in dubious circumstances even if Simeon was not involved. 82

Authenticating the relics would have been very important to Holy Trinity. Although Goscelyn had made a substantial endowment when he had founded the monastery, if it were to grow and prosper it needed to increase its income. One method by which a monastery might do this was to obtain relics, thus attracting pilgrims who would bring votive offerings. However, as a new foundation, Holy Trinity had no links to any local saint. Its sole option was to acquire relics of a non-local 'universal' saint—preferably one who did not already have a major cult centre to provide competition. The problem with a 'universal' saint was how to present a plausible explanation for the acquisition of their relics so that the relics would be accepted as genuine and

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79 *AASS*, 1 June, p. 91.
80 *AASS*, 1 June, pp. 87–104.
81 Fawtier, *Les reliques Rouennaise*.
preferably miracle-working. This was particularly important when the saint in question was an obscure one about whom little would be generally known. A common method of authenticating relics and justifying their possession by one’s own monastery was to develop a tradition that the saint concerned had engineered the movement of their relics through the agency of a recognized holy person. Simeon seems to have fulfilled this function for Holy Trinity.

In whatever way Katherine’s relics were acquired, they appear to have reached Holy Trinity shortly after its foundation. All three accounts of their advent place their arrival during the abbacy of Isembert, first abbot of Holy Trinity. Isembert is said to have been of German origin and a monk at Saint Ouen, Rouen before moving to Holy Trinity. He is reputed to have been a scholarly, well-respected man, the author of several works including an Office for St Nicholas. Jones has challenged his authorship, arguing that Isembert merely brought the Nicholas work from Germany. The evidence is inconclusive but there is no reason to suppose that Isembert was not an original writer, particularly as he is credited with other works. The Miracula also recounts two miracles worked by Katherine’s relics during Isembert’s abbacy, one of which involved Isembert himself. While the exact dates of Isembert’s abbacy are disputed, they seem to fall within the range 1031–54. This would place the arrival of the relics in the 1030s or 1040s.

Confirmation occurs in a passage by Orderic Vitalis, recording the death of Ainard, first abbot of Saint-Pierre-sur-Dives (1046x7). Ainard had been a monk at Holy Trinity and, like Isembert, was of German origin. In common with his compatriot,

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85 See Appendix III, Miracle 1
87 GC, xi, col. 729.
Ainard too was a noted composer and amongst his works Orderic notes an Office for St Katherine.\(^88\) On the assumption that Ainard composed this work during his time at Holy Trinity, then this places the relics in that monastery before 1046x7. This dating is further supported by a passage in the Miracula which speaks of monks from Holy Trinity taking the relics of St Katherine to a peace council in Caen.\(^89\) I discuss the dating of this council elsewhere but it must have taken place by 1047 at the latest.\(^90\)

No other Norman sources permit a closer dating than the mid-eleventh century to be suggested for the arrival of the relics. However, it is possible to show that, in England, commemoration of Katherine’s feast-day may already have begun at the beginning of the 1030s in Winchester.\(^91\) Whilst there is no clear explanation as to why this should be, it may well be linked in some way to the emergence of relics of Katherine’s relics in Rouen. One possibility is that knowledge of the presence of Katherine’s relics in Rouen spread rapidly to England leading to her inclusion in a Winchester monastic calendar. This is not impossible as Winchester was a major ecclesiastical and political centre in this period. The channel was also a highway rather than a barrier with considerable movement in people across it.\(^92\) There were close links with Normandy too through Queen Emma (d.1052), the daughter of Duke Richard I and successively wife to two kings of England, Æthelred II (978–1016) and Cnut (1016–35).

Another possibility, however, should be considered. The Canterbury monk, Eadmer (c. 1060–c. 1130), the biographer and companion of St Anselm (1033–1109), records an anecdote concerning the bishop of Benevento.\(^93\) As he accompanied Anselm to a Church Council in Bari in 1098, Eadmer noticed the bishop of Benevento wearing a splendid cope. This caused him to recall a story he had been told in his boyhood by older monks which concerned a visit to England made in their youth by the then bishop of Benevento.

\(^{88}\) Ov, iv, pp.352–5.
\(^{89}\) See Appendix III, Miracle 22.
\(^{90}\) See pages 139–40.
\(^{91}\) See pages 174–80.
\(^{92}\) Le Patourel, The Norman Empire, pp. 163–172.
The bishop was on a fund-raising expedition to help stave off a famine in his hometown. To raise money he had brought with him the relic of the arm of St Bartholomew. Eadmer writes that, having failed to raise sufficient money, the bishop sold the arm to Queen Emma, wife of Cnut, who also presented him with a splendid cope. On making enquiries, Eadmer found that this was indeed the cope of which he had been told. Eadmer records that Cnut was also party to the transaction so the visit must have taken place after his marriage to Emma and before his death, that is, 1017x35. Whilst displaying relics was an accepted method of fund-raising, the story has the ring of probability by providing a respectable cover for a piece of relic-trafficking by the bishop. As has been shown earlier, Katherine's cult was already active in Southern Italy by this date and it is possible that on his way to England the bishop, or one of his entourage, sold relics of Katherine to Holy Trinity, Rouen. It is equally possible that the bishop could have brought knowledge of Katherine with him to England. Unfortunately, there is no evidence other than a co-incidence of timing to support this suggestion and it remains speculation.

Once established, Holy Trinity flourished. Goscelyn's initial endowment had consisted of land and privileges in the vicomtés of Arques and Rouen. To this Goscelyn added further substantial gifts in four subsequent charters. Goscelyn's heirs continued to support the monastery for example, in 1059 when his grandsons, William and Gislebert, made land-grants to it. Holy Trinity also attracted gifts from other donors of varying social status, many of which are recorded in the ninety-seven surviving charters in the Holy Trinity cartulary compiled towards the end of the eleventh century. In c. 1090, Holy Trinity acquired the Priory of St Austreberta at Pavilly. This ancient Merovingian nunnery, founded in the seventh century, had had Austreberta as its first abbess and had subsequently housed her relics. The sources are unclear as to what extent Pavilly had survived the Viking era. Indeed this may have been a re-foundation, as, under Holy Trinity's control, it housed monks rather than nuns.

94 See pages 102-113.
95 Deville, 'Cartulaire S. Trinite', charter 1; Fauroux, Recueil, N° 61.
96 Ibid., N° 60, 83, 84; Deville, 'Cartulaire S. Trinite', charters 3, 8, 9 and 24.
97 Ibid., charter 25.
98 GC, xi, col. 127. For Austreberta see AASS, Feb. 10.
99 See pages 144-5.
While it is possible to gain some idea of the monastery’s landholdings there is little information on the monastery itself in the eleventh century. Some idea of its size at a later stage in its history can be gleaned from the record of a visitation by Eudes, bishop of Rouen, made in 1250 to St Catherine’s, as it was then known. Eudes found thirty monks in residence. The monastery had four priories and an income of two thousand pounds. The Bishop noted various misdemeanours, which he corrected. On a subsequent visit in 1251 he found thirty-one monks at St Catherine’s, whilst in 1257 the number had fallen to twenty-eight.100

All the charters in the cartulary refer to the monastery as Holy Trinity rather than St Catherine’s, which suggests that the name-change cannot have taken place before the end of the eleventh century at the earliest. This is borne out by a letter of St Anselm written before 1093 to the bishop of Winchester. In it he makes reference to a conversation he has had with the Abbot of Holy Trinity.101 However, the cartulary reveals the beginnings of this name-change in one of the charters, which is unfortunately undated.102 This charter refers to a gift being made to ‘Holy Trinity and Blessed Katherine’.103 Only one other reference to Katherine occurs in the cartulary, and that appears in a charter dated 1084, of the greatest interest for the gift it records to Holy Trinity by one Fulk of Caldri in return for a miracle worked by Katherine’s relics.104 According to the charter Fulk had sought a cure for an ‘incurable infirmity of the body’ at Holy Trinity ‘where the most holy and revered virgin and martyr Katherine daily performs miracles and her bones are venerated by everyone far and wide’.105 For his gift Fulk gives a quarter share in the church of Beherville and agrees to support lodgings for two people at the north door of the church.106 The final point of interest concerning the charter is its specific statement that the gifts were approved

102 Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, charter 97.
103 ‘...dederunt Sanctae Trinitati et beatae Caterinae...’
104 Deville, ‘Cartulaire S. Trinité’, charter 90.
105 ‘...ob ipsius mei corporis inremedialem infirmitatem, montem Sanctae Trinitatis Rotamagensis adii, ubi sacratissime ac venerabilis virginis et martyris Caterinae miro miraculo cotidie ab omnibus longe lateque venerantur ossa...’
106 ‘...damus quartem pertem ecclesiae in villa quae vocatur Behervilla, ceteraque ad eandem ecclesiae partem pertinientia. Ante portem ipsius ecclesiae septentrionalem concedimus duos hospites ...’
by Fulk's overlord, King Philip of France. This implies that Fulk came from outside Normandy and provides almost the only indication that Holy Trinity was attracting pilgrims from a wide geographical area by the 1080s.

The evidence considered so far shows that by the end of the eleventh century Holy Trinity had achieved a measure of economic security. Further, at an unknown date, probably shortly after its foundation in 1030, it had acquired relics of St Katherine. Having acquired her relics, Holy Trinity next proceeded to promote her cult. As part of its promotional activities, Ainard, a monk of the monastery, wrote an office for the saint sometime before 1046/7. As Fulk of Caldri's charter shows, by 1084 the monks of Holy Trinity were having some success in their endeavours and were attracting pilgrims from outside their immediate locality. It was around this time, towards the end of the eleventh century, that the accounts of the translation of Katherine's relics to Rouen and of some of the miracles worked there by them were written by an anonymous monk from Holy Trinity, Rouen. The final part of this discussion of Katherine's cult in eleventh-century Normandy, consists of an analysis of the Miracula.

The Norman Miracles of St Katherine

Miracle collections are a particular sub-group of hagiographical works. Their use as historical documents is, therefore, subject to all the caveats already discussed in connection with Katherine's Passio. The nature of their content also renders them susceptible to being dismissed as mere collections of fairy-stories for the gullible and uneducated. Recently, however, scholars have sought to look behind the superficial content of individual miracle collections to tease out information concerning the institution that commissioned the writing of the collection and the individuals recorded within it. Such an approach makes no judgement on the validity or

107 Philip I (1060–1108).
108 See pages 17–18.
otherwise of the miraculous content of the collection, but does allow their treatment as historical documents.

*Date of composition*

The Norman miracles of St Katherine survive in two manuscripts. Both manuscripts contain the same basic texts consisting of a version of Katherine's *Passio* followed by a description of the translation of relics of Katherine to Rouen (the *Translatio*) and a collection of miracles performed by her Rouennais relics (the *Miracula*). R contains the complete text of the translation of Katherine's relics to Rouen and the miracles wrought by those relics. A, on the other hand, is incomplete. There are also some minor variations between the two manuscripts. Poncelet collated the texts of the *Translatio et Miracula* from both manuscripts and published an edited version in 1903, complete with notes on the variations. I have been able to examine a microfilm of R and have used this as my primary text, but have noted any significant differences between R and A as highlighted by Poncelet.

R is a collection of thirty-one saints' *vitae, passiones and miracula*. In addition, there are three homilies for delivery on named feast-days. With two exceptions all the texts relate to feast-days that fall in November and December and appear in chronological order of feast-day. The manuscript is likely, therefore, to have had a liturgical function, possibly to provide readings for feast-days. The exceptions are the first two texts which consist of a *Life* of King Louis IX of France (1226–70) and a collection of his miracles. The inclusion of Louis means that R is likely to have been compiled in the late thirteenth century after his death.

The existence of the twelfth-century manuscript, A, also containing the *Miracula* demonstrates that R must be a copy. Given that A is incomplete and that there are variations between A and R, it too is unlikely to be the original text. The existence of A does, however, set a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the *Miracula*.

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10 BM Saint-Omer, 27 of the twelfth century, hereafter A and BM Rouen, U.22 of the thirteenth century, hereafter R.
11 *Translatio et Miracula*, ed. Poncelet, p. 425. The version of the *Passio* used is BHL, 1659.
13 Louis' feast-day is 25 August.
There are reasons, discussed below, to believe that the original text of the *Miracula* was composed in the second half of the eleventh century. The survival of two later copies suggests that the work was considered important or popular enough to be copied on several occasions. It is worth noting though, that both the twelfth and thirteenth-century manuscripts contain the same twenty-two miracles. Despite the passage of time, the scribes concerned do not seem to have felt the need to enhance the collection with additional miracles performed since its original composition. This suggests that the document was considered to be adequate for its purpose and I will return later to the possible purpose. The author of the *Miracula* is anonymous but, from the language used, he must have been a monk at Holy Trinity. He uses the first person plural when referring to the monastery and its inhabitants and makes references to conversations with other monks. It can be inferred then that he was writing at the behest of the monastery, but when and for what purpose?

When Poncelet published his edition of the *Translatio et Miracula* he argued that the text was composed shortly after 1050.\textsuperscript{114} This was on the basis that there were references in the text to Isembert, the first abbot of Holy Trinity, as though he were recently dead. It is not known exactly when Isembert died but he is unlikely to have lived beyond 1054 as there are references to his successor from around that time. Although Isembert’s death provides a *terminus post quem*, it is not sufficient on its own to fix the date of composition to the 1050s. However, two miracles in the collection provide further indications of a likely date-range. The first of these is Miracle 2.\textsuperscript{115} A key figure in this is Isembert himself and the author says that he learned of it from two older monks, Odo and Hugo, who witnessed it. The wording implies that both are still living. It is also clear from the text that the writer expects his audience to know both Odo and Hugo. This would mean that he is writing within living memory of Isembert. Fawtier has identified Odo with a certain Odo whose death was recorded in the year 1090.\textsuperscript{116}

The second is the final miracle, Miracle 22.\textsuperscript{117} This miracle opens with a sequence describing how Katherine’s relics were taken to a peace council in Caen, along with

\textsuperscript{115} Appendix III, Miracle 2.  
\textsuperscript{116} Fawtier, ‘Les reliques Rouennaises’, p. 357.  
\textsuperscript{117} Appendix III, Miracle 22.
relics from other monasteries. At this council Katherine's relics performed a number of miracles of which Miracle 22 was one. By making this the closing miracle the author implies it is the most recent in date. If this council can be dated it would, therefore, provide an indication as to the period covered by the miracles. The opening passage of Miracle 22 describes Normandy as ravaged by war and a council being summoned to establish peace. The description of the council, in particular the way in which miracle-working relics were brought to Caen, are similar to many other descriptions of councils called under the so-called Truce of God movement. Indeed this passage from Miracle 22 has been cited as an early indication of the emergence of the Truce of God in Normandy. De Bouard has used charter, hagiographical and chronicle evidence to argue that a peace council was called in Caen in 1047. In his first article on the subject he overlooked the reference to the council in Katherine's Miracula. However the German scholar, Töpfer, challenged this dating, arguing for the council to have taken place in 1042, basing his argument on a particular phrase in the Miracula. De Bouard did not accept this and has argued that there were a series of seven councils, the reference in the Miracula being to the first in c. 1041/42, with the last council being held in 1047.

Whilst repetition of councils in this way would have been unique, as De Bouard himself admitted, his evidence for a council taking place in 1047 is strong. There is little subsequent work on the subject but Richard in his work on Norman miracle collections assumed that the Miracula referred to a council at Caen in 1047. Although the evidence for the dating is not conclusive it appears that at least one peace council was held in Caen in 1047 following Duke William II's victory at Val-

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120 The phrase in dispute reads: 'hoc etiam septemannis fiet dum eorum dux in vires resurget.' Töpfer interprets this as meaning that the council took place seven years after William II became duke. De Bouard, on the other hand, prefers to interpret it as a council took place every year for seven years. See De Bouard, 'A propos des origines de la Trève de Dieu en Normandie', p. 330.


ès-Dunes although there may have been others earlier in the 1040s. From this, a *terminus ante quem* of 1047 can be placed upon Miracle 22.

By placing the opening and closing miracles in a chronological context the author of the *Miracula* creates the impression that all the other miracles recounted took place in the seventeen years between c. 1030–c. 1047, despite the fact that Miracles 3–21 have no chronological references. This impression is strengthened by the language used which implies that the miracles occurred within that time-frame.\(^{123}\) If the collection only records miracles up until c. 1047, then it is likely to have been written a comparatively short time after that date otherwise one would expect later miracles wrought by the relics to be included. It is therefore, likely that the *Miracula* was compiled between the death of Isembert in c. 1053 and the death of the monk Odo in c. 1090 and probably earlier in that range rather than later. Although the approximate date of composition can be deduced this still leaves open the question as to why it was written. Unfortunately, nowhere within either the *Translatio* or the *Miracula* is there any direct statement of the author’s reason for composing them. His motivation has to be inferred indirectly from the nature of the text and from certain general statements he makes.

**Purpose**

The *Translatio* and *Miracula* are closely related documents, with the *Translatio* authenticating Katherine’s relics by providing a provenance for them and a plausible explanation for their presence in Rouen. The *Miracula* then further authenticates the relics by providing ‘evidence’ of their efficacy; the sub-text being that only genuine relics of a powerful intercessor with God could effect such miracles. This relationship between the two texts can be seen in the opening phrase of the *Miracula* which provides a direct reference back to the *Translatio*: ‘*After the relics of the Blessed Katherine had been sent to us by Divine Grace...*’.\(^{124}\) The two documents thus appear to have been conceived and written as the two parts of a single text, the objective of which was to demonstrate that the relics were indeed authentic and efficacious. Richard has, however, suggested that the *Translatio* was inserted in front

\(^{123}\) Certain of the miracles open with phrases such as ‘*In the succeeding time ...*’ (Miracle 2); ‘*Another of the more prudent sons of this generation ...*’ (Miracle 7); ‘*At the same time also...*’ (Miracle 22).
of the Miracula at the end of the eleventh century, but he does not give his reasons in his summary of his thesis and I have found no evidence to support this suggestion.\textsuperscript{125} Even if Richard is correct, it does not invalidate the argument that the two texts complement each other.

The general introduction to both works speaks of how Katherine is ‘beloved of Christ’ and ‘greatly prized by God’, as shown by the many miracles worked by God through her.\textsuperscript{126} After praising the many virtues of Katherine, the writer then claims to be writing this ‘little work’ in order to make the wonders worked by God at her shrine better known.\textsuperscript{127} This further suggests that the Translatio and Miracula were written to promote the relics but still gives no clue as to whether this was as part of a general promotional campaign or as a response to a specific event or events. The earliest directly dateable evidence for the cult of St Katherine at Holy Trinity, Rouen in the eleventh century occurs in the 1084 charter of Fulk of Caldri.\textsuperscript{128} Whilst the charter doubtless reflects the gratitude Fulk felt for his cure, he is unlikely personally to have written it and it is more likely that a scribe from Holy Trinity drafted it. Thus it can be seen to be as much a promotional document as a legal one. The dating of the charter places it in the same general time-slot as the composition of the Translatio and Miracula. Although there is no direct linkage between the Miracula and Fulk’s charter, it is possible to speculate that they are both evidence of an attempt by Holy Trinity to foster the cult of St Katherine in the second half of the eleventh century.

The timing of this would seem appropriate. Holy Trinity was founded c. 1030 and Katherine’s relics seem to have arrived by 1046/7. As the century wore on, the early generations of monks would start to disappear and first-hand knowledge of the origins of Holy Trinity and its relics would be dependent on the memories of older monks, such as Odo and Hugo referred to above. On the other hand, memories would have started to fade sufficiently for it to be just possible to conflate the visit of Simeon of Trier to Rouen with the acquisition of Katherine’s relics. If Holy Trinity

\textsuperscript{124} Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 431: ‘Postquam igitur beatae Caterinae reliquias divina ad nos gratia direxit...’
\textsuperscript{126} Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 426: ‘Beata Caterina virgo, amatrix Christi gloriosa, quantum apud Deum sit merit...’
\textsuperscript{127} Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 426: ‘...opusculi...’
\textsuperscript{128} See pages 134–5.
were to continue to promote its relics, what better time than this to produce a foundation story which would serve as a continuing statement explaining the presence of the relics. Once written, as noted above, both the Translatio and Miracula seem to have been considered as adequate to confirm the legitimacy of the relics and no further miracles were recorded.  

Other eleventh-century Norman miracle texts

The Miracula is one of a number of miracle collections produced in Normandy in the eleventh century. Four are of particular relevance to the present discussion. Two are collections of miracles of St Ouen, produced by the Abbey of St Ouen in Rouen, the third is a collection of miracles of St Austreberta of Pavilly, written by a monk from Holy Trinity, Rouen and the fourth a twelfth-century text containing miracles performed by a group of relics belonging to the Apostle Paul, and SS Clarus and Cyriacus, which was produced at the monastery of Jumièges, near Rouen. I intend to comment briefly on these four collections before turning to a more detailed analysis of the Miracula. Additionally, I will consider a miracle collection compiled by Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–c. 1250) that includes two miracles of Katherine. Although these latter miracles did not occur in Normandy they represent an early example of Katherine miracles and provide a direct comparison with those in the Miracula.

The miracles attributed to St Ouen are found in two texts, both originating from the Abbey of St Ouen in Rouen. The first was compiled c. 1047 following the peace council called by Duke William II at Caen whilst the second text was written

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129 A note of caution should be entered here. Many of the records of Holy Trinity were lost following its destruction at the end of the sixteenth century so that it is not possible to be completely sure that no further miracles were recorded.
130 Other eleventh-century Norman miracle collections consist of two collections of the miracles of St Wulfran produced by the Abbey of Fontenelle; three collections of miracles of the Trinity and Precious Blood produced at the Abbey of Fécamp; and three collections of miracles of St Michael interspersed with miracles of St Aubert (fl. 708), the bishop of Avranches credited with founding Mont-Saint-Michel, which were produced in that monastery. See Richard, 'Les Miracula composés en Normandie', pp. 185–6, where the collections are listed with a brief description; D. Gonthier and C. Le Bas, 'Analyse socio-économique', pp. 6–7, 8–11, 15, where these collections are also described.
Both texts were clearly written for propaganda purposes. A striking feature of the two collections is the international nature of Ouen's cult. For example, one miracle concerned a man suffering from paralysis who had visited the shrine of the Archangel Michael on Mount Gargano in southern Italy. There he was advised in a dream to seek a cure from Ouen in Rouen. He duly went to that shrine and was cured. In another instance Ouen punished a case of blasphemy in Constantinople. A third miracle involved a pilgrim who had been directed to Ouen by some Norman pilgrims he had met in St Peter's in Rome.

The significance of these miracles is in the way in which they compare Ouen to other major cult figures. It is not so much that the author depicts Ouen as more powerful than St Peter or St Michael, rather he depicts him as their confrère. Pilgrims visiting Peter and Michael are sent on to Ouen, not because those saints were incapable of performing a cure, but more as a parcelling out of cures amongst a brotherhood of equals. There are similarities between this and one of Katherine's miracles in the *Miracula*. In miracle 13 of her collection, a nobleman suffering from cancer initially sought the aid of St Ouen only to be guided to St Katherine's shrine to be cured. The miracle describes the crowds at Ouen's shrine and implies that Katherine and Ouen are sharing the work of healing between them. In a parallel with the Ouen miracles, Katherine is depicted as Ouen's co-worker. There is no suggestion that Ouen alone is unable to perform miracles of healing, indeed he is described as the Lord's 'beloved priest' who was at that time carrying out a number of cures. However God has allocated this miracle to Katherine.

By pairing each saint in this way, Ouen with Peter and Katherine with Ouen, the compilers of the miracle collections manage to convey the idea of a celestial

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132 As Gonthier and Le Bas note, both texts have all the hall-marks of propaganda to promote Ouen's cult. Lifshitz places their production at the centre of a struggle between the Abbey of St Ouen with the relics of their eponymous bishop, and the Cathedral of Rouen with its relics of Romanus (d. c. 640), Ouen's predecessor as bishop of Rouen. See Gonthier et Le Bas, 'Analyse socio-economique', p. 9; F. Lifshitz, The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria: Hagiographic Discourse and Saintly Relics 684-1090 (Toronto, 1995), especially pp. 195-206.
133 *AASS*, August, iv, p. 829 para. 20.
136 See Appendix III.
hierarchy of saints. Peter, as prince of the apostles and first bishop of Rome, enjoyed a major international cult and his shrine in Rome was one of the chief pilgrimage centres in Western Europe. Although Ouen was a lesser figure than Peter, his cult too enjoyed an international dimension. By depicting him as a co-worker with Peter, the author of Ouen’s miracle collections sought to enhance his status. Similarly, Ouen was a major figure in Rouen and the author of Katherine’s Miracula sought to enhance her status by depicting her as a co-worker with Ouen.

This process of positioning a cult can also be found in the twelfth-century Norman collection of miracles performed by relics of the Apostle Paul and SS Clarus and Cyriacus. These relics were discovered on 27 June 1185 at Duclair, near to the monastery of Jumièges (see Map 3). The provenance of the relics is extremely obscure as is the exact identity of SS Clarus and Cyriacus, but the relics were controlled by Jumièges who sent monks to Duclair to manage a shrine there. Alexander, a monk at Jumièges, composed the text with the obvious intention of promoting the relics. Of interest in the present context is a miracle concerning a youth who had lost the sight in his left eye and was in pain from his affliction. According to Alexander, he first went to Holy Trinity, Rouen seeking the aid of St Katherine but, finding crowds of people there, was unable to obtain help and came away unhappier than he had been before. He then heard of the miracles performed by the relics of Paul, Clarus and Cyriacus and, thoroughly wretched, he came to their shrine. Here Clarus took pity on him and restored his sight and his pain left him.

137 Alexander of Jumièges, ‘Miracula SS Pauli, Clari et Cyriaci, auctore Alexandro Gemmeticensi’, AB, 12 (1903), pp. 388-407, see pp. 392-3 in particular where the inventio of the relics is described. Gonthier and Le Bas in their description of the collection give the year the relics were discovered as 1135 but both the published edition of the text and Richard give the date as 1185. See Gonthier and Le Bas, ‘Analyse socio-economique’, p. 14; Richard, ‘Les Miracula composés en Normandie’, p. 189.

138 Clarus may have been St Clarus (d. c. 875), believed to have originated from Rochester in England. He became a hermit in the diocese of Rouen but was eventually murdered at the behest of a woman whose advances he had spurned. Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, where the treaty between Rollo and Charles the Simple is supposed to have been agreed was named after him. There are several other saints named Clarus and at least three saints named Cyriacus. See Alexander of Jumièges, ‘Miracula SS Pauli, Clari et Cyriaci’ pp. 389-90 note 8; The Book of Saints, compiled by the Benedictine monks of St Augustine’s Abbey, Ramsgate (London, 1989), p. 127; Attwater, Dictionary of Saints, pp. 97-8.

139 Alexander became a monk at Jumièges in 1171. In c. 1180 he was made prior and subsequently became abbot in 1198. See Alexander of Jumièges, ‘Miracula SS Pauli, Clari et Cyriaci’, p. 389.

140 Ibid., pp. 394-5.

141 Ibid., p. 395: ‘Expetierat autem beatae Katherinae suffragium in monte Rothomagi, ubi multis subvenire consuevit: sed necsio quare, nondum fuerat ei subventum, et qui tristis advenerat, de repulsa tristior abscessit.’
Once more, we find the supplicant defeated by the crowds at the first shrine visited, in this case Katherine’s shrine at Holy Trinity. Fate then guides him to the shrine of Paul, Clarus and Cyriacus where he finds a cure. In this instance the relics of Paul, Clarus and Cyriacus are being positioned in relation to those of Katherine. One implication of this is that, in the late twelfth century, Katherine’s relics still enjoyed a high reputation for performing miracles, otherwise there would have been no point in the comparison.

It is worth noting too, that Alexander of Jumièges chose Katherine for his comparison rather than, say, Ouen. This would fit with the notion of an unstated hierarchical order. In each case the comparison is made with a more successful cult centre. So Ouen is positioned against Peter; Katherine is positioned against Ouen and Paul, Clarus and Cyriacus against Katherine. Since comparisons need to be credible to be successful, it is possible to infer that Katherine’s Rouennais cult was not so important that a comparison with Rome would have been feasible. Nor is there any evidence that her Rouennais relics enjoyed more than a regional attraction or seem to have attracted the same kind of international interest as Ouen.

The final Norman miracle collection on which to comment is that of St Austreberta. The interest here is in the fact that her cult had direct links to Holy Trinity, Rouen. Her principal relics were at Pavilly (see Map 3), which passed into the control of Holy Trinity in 1090, the miracle collection being produced by a monk of that monastery after this date, possibly c. 1100. This makes the miracles slightly later in composition than the Miracula of St Katherine. There is some confusion over the fate of Austreberta’s relics but they seem to have been removed from Pavilly to Holy Trinity, although Pavilly continued to function as a priory of Holy Trinity.

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142 Although in Miracle 20 Hugo, son of Athala, returns to Rouen from Rome, his illness struck him on the homeward journey. There is an implication that he preferred to continue to Rouen rather than return to Rome for a cure. No great emphasis is placed upon this point.

143 Austreberta (d. 704; f. d. February 10) was a member of the Merovingian nobility. She had taken her vows at the hands of St Omer and in due course had become the first abbess of Pavilly. Some relics of St Austreberta were found in Canterbury Cathedral in the twelfth century. See AASS, February, ii, pp. 417–29; The Book of Saints, p. 70; Gervase of Canterbury, The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury: the Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I by Gervase, the Monk of Canterbury, ed W. Stubbs, RS, 73, 2 vols (London, 1879–80), i, p. 8.


The miracles are a typical mixture of healing cures of such maladies as paralysis. They include two cures of possession by demons and one animal cure—a blind cow recovers its sight. In addition, Austreberta is also credited with saving a ship in peril at sea. Many of the miracles appear to take place at Austreberta’s tomb at Pavilly. In one miracle there is a reference to a grateful recipient of a miracle seeking to make a thank-offering at the church of Holy Trinity monastery where the bones of the saint were kept, but there is no reference within the collection to St Katherine.

In acquiring Pavilly and the relics of Austreberta, the monks of Holy Trinity acquired a relationship with a local saint, something they had so far lacked. At the same time the cult of their primary patron, Katherine, was growing satisfactorily by 1090. The task of the monks thus became to increase both cults so that they were complementary rather than competing. This would explain why, although Austreberta’s relics seem to have been moved to Holy Trinity, the primary focus of her cult remained at Pavilly. It was easier to promote both if they remained geographically separate. This need to maintain a distance between the cults of Katherine and Austreberta can also be seen in the way in which many of Austreberta’s miracles take place in locations other than Holy Trinity where her relics were kept. The collection appears to have been compiled primarily to promote Austreberta’s cult at her shrine at Pavilly.

The last miracle collection to be considered before turning to an analysis of Katherine’s Miracula is not from Normandy. This is the Dialogue of Miracles by Caesarius of Heisterbach. A certain amount of information about Caesarius can be gleaned from his writings. He probably came from Cologne and became a monk at the Cistercian monastery of Heisterbach in the Rhineland at the end of 1198 or the

146 AASS, February, ii, pp. 428 paras 35–6, 41.
147 Ibid., p. 428 para. 40.
148 Ibid., p. 428 para. 34: ‘Deinde ecclesiam beatae Trinitatis, quae in vicino monte sita est, ubi pretiosa eius continentur ossa, devote subiens, ad indicium suae curæ, manum frumento plenam ad altare obtulit.’
150 Dialogue, transl. Scott and Bland, i, pp. xxii–xvi.
beginning of 1199. Later he became Novice Master, and then, in 1220, the Prior of Heisterbach, dying somewhere between 1240 and 1250. Caesarius was a noted scholar and the author of several works, including *The Dialogue on Miracles*. This latter work was to remain popular in Cistercian houses up until the Reformation. The *Dialogue* is a collection of miracles and anecdotes which Caesarius uses to elucidate certain theological principles with which to instruct his readers. The work clearly reflects his experience as Novice Master and, in some cases, the anecdotes conclude with an appropriate comment by a novice and his instructor.

In Book 8 of the *Dialogue* an exchange occurs between the novice and his instructor on the state of virginity.¹⁵¹ The monk makes the point that most patriarchs, prophets and apostles were married and the novice responds by asking why *the saints commend virginity so highly?* The monk replies that it is so *that they may show how dear chastity is to God. In virgins this is called virginity or virginal continence; in married folk, conjugal modesty; in widows, widowed continence*. He continues by saying that *it is better to refrain than marry* because *Christ ... chose virginity*. The monk then says that he will tell the novice some stories to show *how delightful and health-bringing are the visions of the holy virgins*. It is clear from this introduction and the subsequent stories that Caesarius had several inter-related objectives in mind. Firstly, he wanted to strengthen the commitment of his readers, in particular those embarking on a continent religious life, to holy virginity. Second, he sought to show that the saints are powerful intercessors with God. He connected this power with virginity in appropriate instances thus underscoring the message about the value of virginity. Caesarius also emphasized the way miracles and visions showed God at work in the world. Finally, he encouraged the veneration of saints' relics. He did this on religious grounds but, as discussed elsewhere in this thesis, monasteries also had strong economic grounds for encouraging relic cults. The way in which these themes are interwoven and flow through the work provides an illustration of the medieval mind-set in the first half of the thirteenth century. In particular, the *Dialogue* highlights the genuine piety underpinning the monastic cult of saints.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ii, p. 82.
Book 8 of the *Dialogue* also contains two stories concerning Katherine.\(^{152}\) Both of them are more anecdotes than miracles of healing. The first came from the convent of Hoven.\(^{153}\) It recounts how on the altar to St Linthild at Hoven was a fine wooden sculpture of Katherine.\(^{154}\) This image had been carelessly moved so that its face had almost been turned to the wall. A woman, named as Alice, wife of Wiric, knight of Guzene, was praying before the statue with her servant when it turned around looking very morose. Both women saw the statue move as did other onlookers. Caesarius notes that this event took place barely a year before he wrote. He concludes with a short exchange between novice and monk. The novice says that as the bones of St Katherine ceaselessly exude oil she must have been *very gentle and pitiful*. The monk replies that the oil is *a mark of those very virtues*.

The two elements of the chapter, namely the movement of the statue and the exchange between the two monks are quite distinct. The contents of each part are unrelated and their only connection is that both elements refer to Katherine. The point of the tale seems to be that due reverence is required to be paid to the saints and to their representations. Almost incidentally however, it does provide some information about veneration of Katherine. There does not seem to have been an altar to Katherine in the convent rather she appears to have been the junior saint sharing an altar with another virgin saint, Linthild.\(^{155}\) No relic of Katherine seems to have been present and veneration was focussed on a finely carved wooden statue, which tallies with the general lack of primary relics of Katherine in this period. Having told a story about Katherine, however, Caesarius is now able to make an unrelated point about an attribute of the saint, namely, the oil exuded by her bones, which was venerated as a secondary relic. There is no mention of the oil in the story of the statue but the closing exchange between novice and instructor is entirely taken up with a significant discussion of it and the reader or listener is clearly expected to know that oil is one of the prime characteristics of Katherine’s relics. The point is then made that the oil from Katherine’s bones signifies certain virtues. The exchange

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\(^{153}\) Hoven was a Cistercian house of nuns not far from Cologne and Heisterbach. See *Dialogus Miraculorum*, ed. Strange, ii, p. 150; *Index*, p. 21.

\(^{154}\) St Linthild (d. c. 850), feast-day 23 January, was a popular saint in the Cologne area. A hermit, she was credited with many miracles after her death. Her name is variously given as Liuthild, Lufthildis, Leuchteldis, Lufthold etc. See Butler’s *Lives of the Saints*, i, p. 157.

\(^{155}\) Linthild had an important cult at Hoven. See *Dialogue*, transl. Scott and Bland, ii, pp. 83–4.
between the two monks is used in this way to authenticate the sanctity of Katherine's oil from a theological perspective, thus indirectly authenticating the veneration of the saint's oil held by monasteries. It also provides a bridge into the next story, which is focussed on the oil from Katherine's bones.

Caesarius credits the second anecdote to Henry, abbot of Scimenu. Caesarus was breaking off a piece of Katherine's bone when a drop of oil appeared. With difficulty he prevented the oil falling to the ground. It is not clear from the anecdote where this event took place, although it may have been during a pilgrimage to Sinai. Caesarius not only describes Katherine's tomb in Sinai being full of the same oil but also tells of returning travellers recounting how they saw her relics swimming in oil. Some of this oil had been collected and brought back for Heisterbach and other monasteries. Caesarius concludes with another exchange between novice and instructor. Once more, he uses the exchange as a device to move his discussion on, this time to other virgin saints. The novice asks his instructor to tell him about visions of virgins of their house, such as the eleven thousand virgins 'so that they might incite us to greater veneration of them'. The monk replies that he will tell him things 'which would be a terror to those who have their relics, if they are negligent of them, but a consolation if they hold them in reverence'. Caesarius then proceeds in the next chapter to a tale relating to the eleven thousand virgins. This second story relating to Katherine, like the preceding one, falls into two distinct parts. Having introduced the subject of Katherine's oil in his first story and legitimized it as a mark of her virtue, Caesarius continues his theme in the opening element of the second story by providing a valid provenance for the oil held in his monastery. The text also implies that Heisterbach may have possessed a piece of bone belonging to Katherine. The second element of the chapter is ostensibly on a different topic, only connected to the first part by the theme of virgin martyrs. However there is another connecting theme, that of the necessity to revere relics.

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156 Scimenu is probably a reference to the Abbey of Cheminon near Vitry-le-François in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne in northern France. This was originally an Arrouaisian house that affiliated to the Cistercians in 1138. A certain Henry is recorded as abbot in 1208 until c. 1225, which makes him contemporaneous with Caesarius. See Dialogus Miraculorum, ed. Strange, ii, p. 12 note 3; Index, p. 35; DHGE, xii, p. 625-6.

157 A reference to St Ursula and her 11,000 virgins, supposedly martyred with her at Cologne in the fourth century. Cologne and the Rhineland was the heartland of their cult. See Farmer, Saints, pp. 485-6.

158 In the later Middle Ages primary relics of Katherine were claimed throughout continental Europe.
Katherine's cult was still growing when Caesarius wrote his *Dialogue* in the early thirteenth century and had not yet reached the heights it was to achieve in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Few miracles of Katherine survive from this early period, indeed I have only been able to identify the eleventh-century Norman miracles and those of Caesarius—even if, in the case of Caesarius, the miraculous content of his tales is actually limited to a statue that moved to signify its displeasure. In the absence of any substantial miracles to report, Caesarius has concentrated on provided a general, theologically sound reason for venerating Katherine and her oil. In so doing he also supports his general theme of the validity of the cult of saints and their relics.

*Analysis of the Miracula*

It is now time to consider the *Miracula* of St Katherine in more detail. The miracles performed by Katherine are all cures of various health problems and can be analysed as follows:

- **Sterility:** 4 (Miracles 3, 4, 5 and 6)
- **Blindness or eye problems:** 4 (Miracles 7, 8, 9 and 10)
- **Cancer** (ulcer or gangrene): 4 (Miracles 2, 13, 14 and 16)
- **Dementia:** 3 (Miracles 11, 12 and 22)
- **Fever:** 2 (Miracles 17, 18)
- **Trembling:** 1 (Miracle 19)
- **Facial paralysis:** 1 (Miracle 15)
- **Menstrual problems:** 1 (Miracle 21)
- **Toothache:** 1 (Miracle 1)
- **Unspecified illness:** 1 (Miracle 20)

Care has been taken with the structure of the text so that, in general, miracles of the same type are grouped together—the clearest examples being the grouping of the sterility and blindness miracles. Deviations from this pattern are usually the result of particular sub-groupings being superimposed on the basic structure. For example, the first cure of *cancer*, a term that could encompass ulcers and gangrene, is found in Miracle 2. The next such cure is not found until Miracle 13. However Miracle 2
features Isembert, first abbot of Holy Trinity, as a central character and has been placed after Miracle 1, which recounts how Isembert was cured of agonizing toothache by Katherine's oil. A sub-group of miracles involving Isembert can thus be discerned. These two miracles were probably placed first in order to emphasize that the relics had been performing miracles from the moment they arrived at Holy Trinity during Isembert's abbacy. The second break in the grouping of cancer cures may also be more apparent than real. Miracles 13 and 14 involve cancer of the face. They are followed by Miracle 15, which is a cure of a man suffering facial paralysis. The link may therefore be facial ailments rather than cancer. Miracle 16 is a cure of an ulcerated hand and this may have been considered different from the earlier cancer cures of the face. The other group with a break in the sequence is dementia and again this may be more apparent than real. The madness of the individuals in Miracles 11 and 12 is explicitly attributed to possession by demons. In Miracle 22 the cause of the madness is not stated although the ferocity of the ailment is linked to the phases of the moon. Miracle 22 is also stated as having occurred during the temporary translation of Katherine's relics to Caen for William II's peace council in 1047. For both these reasons the author probably regarded it as falling into a category of its own. Categories with only one example, such as menstrual problems or unspecified illness have been placed towards the end of the collection. Even here there is some attempt at linkage so that the two cures of men suffering from fevers are followed by a cure of a man afflicted by severe trembling. Given that fevers can cause trembling, there is a logic to the sequence.

The concentration on health cures is not unusual and is found in many miracle collections. Gonthier and Le Bas, in their comparative analysis of twelve Norman miracles collections note that approximately 72% of all the miracles recorded are cures of some kind. However, they draw attention to one particular type of

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159 The twelve collections studied by Gonthier and Le Bas are those of Ouen, Austreberta, and Paul, Clair and Cyriacus, already discussed; Wulfran and the Trinity and Precious Blood (see note 130 above); four twelfth-century collections: Valentine, produced at Jumièges where the relic of the saint's head was held, Nicholas produced at Bec and two collections of miracles of the Virgin, one produced at Coutances and one at Saint-Pierre-sur Dives; two thirteenth-century collections, one produced at Savigny to commemorate the translation of 38 local saints in 1243 and the other containing miracles of Thomas Hélie; the twelfth collection is that of Katherine herself. See Gonthier and Le Bas, 'Analyse socio-economique', p. 20. In their analysis of Katherine's Miracula Gonthier and Le bas refer to 24 miracles whereas in fact there are 22. I have therefore preferred to use my own statistical analysis of Katherine's miracles.
miracle, namely, cures of sterility. Katherine performs four such miracles. Only Wulfran, amongst the other saints studied by Gonthier and Le Bas, undertakes a cure of sterility and he only does this on one occasion. This therefore represents an unusual feature in a Norman saint’s cult and it is worth looking in slightly more detail at these four miracles.

The first sterility miracle, Miracle 3, is the longest and most complex in the collection. It concerns a soldier (miles) named Ernigis who is said to be one of the most important men of the kingdom. As no other information is given I have been unable to identify him. As Ernigis and his wife were childless, he sought Katherine’s aid vowing that if they had a child, that child would be dedicated to God. A son was duly born but Ernigis later regretted his promise to surrender the child and sought to change his vow. His son subsequently sickened but when he was close to death Ernigis re-affirmed his vow and the boy recovered. However, Ernigis remained reluctant to surrender his son; once more the boy sickened and this time died.

The punitive aspects of the story are not unusual and are common to many miracle collections. Saints generally do not take kindly to suppliants who fail to keep their promises—some saints had reputations for being quite vindictive if crossed—and Katherine is no exception. All the miracles in the collection place great emphasis on the recipient being suitably grateful for the favour bestowed upon them by Katherine. In those cases (Miracles 3, 11 and 12) where the individual failed to offer suitable thanks or reneged on a vow made to the saint, Katherine was quick to rescind the miracle. Given that suppliants came to a saint for help because other cures had failed, this may have been a way of explaining why some cures were not enduring. The failure had to be explained away as resulting from some moral flaw in the recipient and not from a lack of power by the saint. In the case of Ernigis and his wife, the author emphasises how healthy and bonny the child had been, blaming the couple for causing his death through their faithlessness. However, it is equally likely

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161 The idea that the fiercely virgin Katherine might be able to restore fecundity may arise from an association of the flow of milk from her neck when she was beheaded with that from the breast of a nursing mother.
163 For example, St Faith. See The Book of St Foy, ed. Sheingorn, pp. 24, 86–8
that, as they had difficulty in conceiving, the child was sickly from the start and failed to flourish.

The other three sterility miracles (numbers 4, 5, and 6) are much shorter and lack the wealth of detail in Miracle 3. However taken together all four are informative concerning social attitudes in eleventh-century Normandy. The motivation of the supplicants in all the sterility miracles is to produce an heir. This is most evident in Miracle 3 where initially Ernigis vows to surrender the unborn child. In his desire to have a child, however, he fails to think through the implications of his vow. Once the child is born, more traditional attitudes assert themselves and he does not want to surrender his only heir. His wife and her parents are also described as wanting to keep the child. The social pressures on Ernigis and his wife to produce an heir are palpable throughout the whole of Miracle 3. In the other sterility miracles more modest vows are made and kept but the sense of longing for an heir is still apparent.

In Miracles 3 and 4 the couple's failure to conceive a child is blamed upon the wife. Ernigis' wife is described as sterile whilst the wife in Miracle 4 is described as having 'nulla fecunditate'. In all four miracles, however, the husband is obviously committed to the marriage and seeks to remedy the situation with Katherine's assistance. In Miracle 4 the couple have been together seven years, in Miracle 5 they have been married eighteen years, whilst in Miracle 6 the husband is described as 'iam senuerat absque liberis'. The reverse attitude is to be found elsewhere in the collection in Miracle 21. Here a wife fears she is about to be divorced because of menstrual problems. Although the text does not say so explicitly, such problems were likely to affect her ability to have children and provide an heir to her husband. She asks Katherine's assistance to cure her ailment and, by implication, to save her marriage. Given that the basic paradigm for all saints' Lives was the life of Christ, it is noteworthy that Miracle 21 also echoes Christ's cure of the woman with an issue of blood. Parallels of this kind serve to emphasize the holiness of the saint.

The emphasis in the Miracula on the curative powers of the relics is illustrative of both lay and clerical attitudes. Both believed in saints as powerful intercessors with

God and that saints were in some way ‘present’ in their relics. By venerating a saint’s relics, the saint was being approached. Clerics also tended to view ‘their’ saint as the patron of their monastery or cathedral and they regarded it as a holy duty to protect and enhance the saint’s patrimony. They did this by promoting their relics as a focal point for pilgrimage and encouraging gifts to the saint. They saw nothing incongruous with the fact that this also enhanced their own economic position.\textsuperscript{165} In promoting the efficacy of their relics the clergy were also likely to be aware of the theological niceties concerning miracle-working relics. In particular, that veneration belonged to God alone and that miracles were worked by the power of God acting through the saint. Katherine’s miracles, written as they were by a monk, reflect this tension between praising the saint and praising God.\textsuperscript{166}

Lay attitudes equally demonstrated a mixture of faith and pragmatism. Faith brought the lay-person to a shrine to seek a cure when faced with health problems which medieval medicine was unable to cure. The lack of medical knowledge plus the lack of access to such knowledge as was available, particularly amongst the poor, caused the laity to seek supernatural help for a wide range of ailments. Lay people, however, were less likely to distinguish between the power of the saint and the power of God working through the saint. Their prayers were to St Katherine, so in Miracle 9, a blind woman keeps the vigils of the martyr and entreats Katherine to relieve her blindness. This attitude led the laity to be pragmatic and only patronise shrines whose relics, they believed to be efficacious. As a result, they could be fickle, and while popular shrines attracted great multitudes throughout the medieval period, others would flourish for a while and then fade as pilgrims moved on to newer shrines with brighter reputations.\textsuperscript{167}

The clerical emphasis on the power of their relics and the lay requirement that the saint should produce practical results come together in Miracle 13 where the monk-author seeks to demonstrate that Katherine is more powerful than any doctor. In this miracle, a rich man had sought the aid of a foreign doctor in Rouen, at some

\textsuperscript{165} See pages 169–70 for a discussion of this in the English context.
\textsuperscript{166} See for example Miracle 1: ‘... the Supreme Father/ through whom the virgin bestows his gifts of health... ’; Miracle 3: ‘... so great a virgin, close to God ...’\textsuperscript{167} See Ward, Miracles and the Medieval Mind, pp. 127–31 for a discussion of failed shrines.
considerable cost, but to no avail. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the doctor was believed to be skilled in medicine because he was a foreigner. His failure is then juxtaposed with Katherine’s success. The local relics are seen as triumphing over the foreign medical practitioner.\textsuperscript{168}

Some information can be gleaned from the miracles as to the social origins of those seeking Katherine’s aid. Twenty-six petitioners are recorded (counting couples as two people). Twenty-five of them are adults while the age of the twenty-sixth is not clear—the recipient of Miracle 11 simply being described as someone’s son. Nineteen of the twenty-six (73\%) are male and seven (27\%) female. This preponderance of adult males is repeated at most other Norman shrines.\textsuperscript{169} The overwhelming majority of male petitioners is surprising given the popularity of St Katherine amongst lay women in the later middle ages.\textsuperscript{170} It may reflect the male outlook of the author, best seen in the miracles of sterility (Miracles 3–6), which are presented very much from the male point of view, or it may reflect the greater mobility of men even within their own locality. Sufficient information is given about eleven petitioners to identify their social status or occupation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleric</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich man</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight (miles)</td>
<td>2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beggar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the eleven come from wealthier or higher-status groups and it is probably this that causes them to be singled out. The author would be keen to attract a clientele able to make gifts and to assure them of the suitability of the shrine for someone of their social position.

It is also possible to extract some limited information from the Miracula concerning both the physical aspects of Katherine’s shrine and certain of the rituals practised by petitioners. In Miracle 12 a baker is possessed by the devil. He is brought to

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\textsuperscript{168} Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 436: ‘...venit ad quendam medicum, cui quod non erat compatriota, maior medicinae artis credebatur inesse peritía.’


\textsuperscript{170} Lewis, The Cult of St Katherine, especially chapter 5 on St Katherine and Women.
Katherine's shrine and left bound before an altar to St Michael while the monks prepare to attempt to cure him.\(^{171}\) While he is lying there he has a vision of Katherine. The description of the vision contains two significant statements. The first of these refers to 'the little box' in which her relics were kept.\(^{172}\) The box is presumably the reliquary containing the three bones possessed by Holy Trinity. That the relics were kept in some kind of box to which only monks had access is confirmed later in the miracle when there is a reference to the monks 'bringing down the box of holy relics'.\(^{173}\) Judging by what is known about other shrines the relic-box was likely to have been visible to the laity even if they could not touch it, perhaps kept behind a grille of some kind. The second statement describes Katherine as appearing in the form 'in which she is usually rendered in gold or silver or work of any kind', namely as a young woman of 'tender age'.\(^{174}\) It is unsurprising that the baker, in trying to describe Katherine, should use imagery derived from statues or other artistic representations of the saint that he had seen. In doing so though, he unwittingly confirms that such statues and representations of Katherine exist by the mid-eleventh century and gives a general idea of what they might have looked like. Information on eleventh-century religious statuary is scanty as so much of it was made from wood and has not survived. Those sources and objects that do survive support the propositions that statues were likely to be carved from wood and that important statues were often decorated with gold and silver.\(^{175}\)

Eleventh-century attitudes to statues of saints were ambivalent and there was concern on the part of some churchmen that the laity might come to venerate the statue itself, almost as an idol, rather than see it as emblematic of a more ethereal power. This ambivalence can be seen in the celebrated account by Bernard of Angers (fl. c. 1013–c. 1020) of his horror when he first saw the statue of St Gerald at Aurillac.\(^{176}\) Bernard describes Gerald's statue as being made out of gold and decorated with precious

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\(^{171}\) The reference to an altar of St Michael may represent an echo of the earlier foundation to that saint which is thought to have once existed on the site subsequently occupied by Holy Trinity. See pages 127-8.

\(^{172}\) Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 436: '...capsula...'

\(^{173}\) Ibid., p. 436: '...reliquiarum capsam deferenibus...'

\(^{174}\) Ibid., p. 436: '...qua solet fingi in auro vel in argento vel quovis opere, sive uti puella aetatis adhuc tenerae...'

\(^{175}\) The work of Forsyth on the 'Throne of Wisdom' sculptures of the Virgin in France up to c. 1200 is relevant here. See I. H. Forsyth, The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France (Princeton, New Jersey, 1972). See also Solt, 'Romanesque French Reliquaries'.

\(^{176}\) The Book of Sainte Foy, ed. Sheingorn, pp. 77-9.
jewels and his initial reaction was to compare it with idols of Jupiter or Mars. However once Bernard developed a particular devotion to St Faith, he found himself having to justify the reverence displayed to her reliquary-statue. In *The Book of Saint Foy*, a collection of Faith’s miracles begun by Bernard and continued by later authors, Bernard recounts how Faith chastises someone for mocking her statue.\(^{177}\) He explains this on the grounds that disrespect for her image was tantamount to disrespect for the saint herself. Bernard continues by justifying reverence for Faith’s statue on the grounds that it represented ‘...the pious memory of the holy virgin...’ which did not cause individuals to ‘...lapse into pagan errors...’.

The reliquary-statue of St Faith at Conques still survives. It is a wooden statue richly decorated with gold containing within it a piece of the skull of St Faith.\(^{178}\) Statues such as this were used as a focus for veneration. The remaining relics of Faith were kept separately in a casket known as a *châsse*. In her study of eleventh-century French reliquaries, Solt has identified the *châsse* as the most common type of reliquary and shown how it was often paired with a reliquary-statue containing the saint’s head.\(^{179}\) The *châsse* was a casket-shaped box that was meant to resemble a tomb. Solt also identified certain Latin terms as being synonymous with the modern French term *châsse*, amongst these was *capsa*, the term used in the *Miracula* for the box containing Katherine’s relics. Although Solt did not include Normandy in her study, the similarities are such that it is likely that Katherine’s relics were held in some kind of *châsse* reliquary. As Holy Trinity only possessed three small bones of Katherine it would not have been possible for them to create a reliquary-statue containing her head. Any statue could only have been a straightforward representation of the saint—although as no-one knew what she looked like, the details would have owed much to the imagination of the sculptor.

The *Miracula* also gives an indication of some of the practices followed by visitors to Katherine’s shrine at Holy Trinity, Rouen.\(^{180}\) Fifteen of the miracles (68%) involved the individual either smearing the oil exuded by Katherine’s relics on the

\(^{177}\) Ibid., p. 79. See also *The Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour*, ed. Bull, p. 48.


\(^{180}\) In this context see also the discussion on rites at Norman shrines in Gonthier and Le Bas, ‘Analyse socio-economique’, pp. 31–4.
affected part of their body or drinking it. This was obviously a necessary, ritualized, part of the healing process. The seven miracles that do not mention Katherine’s oil are the four sterility miracles (Miracles 3, 4, 5 and 6), the two cures of unspecified fevers (Miracles 17 and 18) and one of the cures of blindness (Miracle 10). In the case of the sterility miracles the supplicants offer prayers and, in one case, undertake a fast. As there was no obvious physical symptom in these four cases, it is possible that it was not thought appropriate to use the oil.

The two fever miracles both concern clerics. Miracle 17 is the fullest account and tells of a monk named Goscelin who was debilitated by fevers. Believing his death to be near he was praying and meditating when he had a vision of Katherine. When he awoke from the vision the fevers had gone. In Miracle 18 a monk suffering from fevers had a vision of his bier above the high altar. This seems to have coincided with the crisis-point in his fever. Lying down before the altar, the fever abated and he survived. There is no obvious reason why oil should not have been used in either case. It may be that the crisis in each man’s fever arrived before oil could be administered—Miracle 18 certainly implies that the crisis arrived swiftly. The final miracle not to involve the use of oil, Miracle 10, is of a blind woman whose sight was restored while she was en route to Holy Trinity to seek a cure at Katherine’s shrine. Although her blindness had gone by the time she reached the shrine it was attributed to Katherine as the woman had been on a pilgrimage to the saint at the time. There was therefore no need to administer oil. This is the only miracle that explicitly takes place at a distance from Katherine’s relics and may have been included for that reason.

Some of the miracles mention the supplicant performing prayers, keeping a vigil at the shrine or fasting—sometimes all three—before receiving miraculous aid but no particular emphasis is placed on this. More emphasis is placed on bearing public witness to the miracle and giving thanks to Katherine after the event. This need to bear public witness to a miracle is not unique to Katherine’s shrine and has been commented on by Bull in relation to the miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour. As Bull points out, if pilgrims did not recount their stories how else would the monks

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181 Miracles 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21 and 22.
know about them. It is likely therefore that the monks would have put in place arrangements for gathering information about successful cures. It is also likely that supplicants who believed themselves to be cured would have experienced an emotional release which would make them want to recount their experience.

This chapter has discussed the establishment of the cult of St Katherine in Normandy and has attempted to set this within the context of the political and social attitudes of eleventh-century Normandy. The most important factor underlying the growth of the cult was the existence of a monastic centre with a vested interest in promoting the saint. This monastic interest had been generated through the acquisition of primary relics of Katherine. Promotion of a saint’s cult through promotion of relics was the way in which the majority of cults grew. However, this represented a new departure for St Katherine whose cult had, until only a few decades earlier, no such focal point to stimulate its growth. Indeed, the saint herself in her *Passio* had expressly requested that her body not be turned into relics. Ultimately though, the cultural imperative to possess relics proved too great, leading to the *inventio* of Katherine’s relics on Sinai. Once a credible source of relics existed it was only a matter of time before they spread. In the event, Katherine’s relics spread quickly west and their emergence in Normandy within a few decades of their first appearance on Sinai is testament to the attraction exerted by relics. The development of the cult of St Katherine in Normandy thus follows the typical pattern of many, if not most, saints’ cults. In contrast, the introduction of the cult into England was more akin to the original development of the cult in the Orthodox East, in that it was based on Katherine’s inclusion in liturgical and hagiographical works rather than on the possession of primary relics of the saint. It is this that will be explored in the next chapter.
Chapter Five

The Introduction of the cult of St Katherine into England

Background

The previous chapter considered the origins of the cult of St Katherine in eleventh-century Normandy. This chapter examines a second regional example from approximately the same period, namely the origins of the English cult of St Katherine, to establish whether similar processes were at work. In so doing, it is hoped to develop a model to explain the processes underlying the early development of Katherine’s cult. The period covered by this case-study of England is c. 1030 to c. 1200. In contrast to Normandy the introduction of Katherine’s cult into England followed a pattern more typical of the earliest stage of development of the cult in the East. Thus, it began with the liturgical veneration of Katherine and continued with the development of a hagiographical tradition. Physical foci were subsequently created, initially in the form of altars and chapels within churches dedicated to another patron. I have found only one instance of primary relics of Katherine being claimed by an English religious centre.¹

This pattern of development is not typical of the general development of saints’ cults in England. Usually, for a saint to move beyond liturgical commemoration, that is, inclusion in litanies and calendars, it was necessary for a relic to be acquired by a religious centre. Whilst relics were not always sufficient to ensure the success of a saint’s cult, without them few cults progressed far. The cults of indigenous English saints usually developed around the presumed primary relics of a particular individual who, either from the manner of their life or the circumstances of their death, or both, was considered to be saintly. So, for example, Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne was venerated for his saintly and ascetic way of life, whilst King Edmund of East Anglia was sanctified following his death in battle.² Both cults centred on possession of actual, or, in the case of Edmund, presumed relics. The cults of saints who originated outside England were usually promoted following the

¹ See page 217
² See pages 17–18
acquisition of a primary relic. Each saint’s cult was then promoted by the centre or centres that possessed their relics. In this respect, England was fully in the mainstream of western attitudes towards saints’ cults. 3

The absence of Katherine’s relics meant that there was no obvious focal point in England for her cult and, therefore, no obvious promoter. Katherine was also, in effect, in competition with those early virgin martyr saints who appeared already in the liturgy of the English Church having been introduced via the Roman liturgy that Augustine brought with him to England. Female saints such as Agnes, Agatha and Cecilia, never reached the same levels of popularity as Katherine in England. One foreign import, however, who did become popular was the Greek virgin martyr, Margaret of Antioch. 4 In addition, new cults such as Katherine’s faced competition from several Anglo-Saxon virgin saints with strong local connections. 5

The growth of the cult of St Katherine in England is, therefore, illustrative of a model different to that normally identified. As will be seen throughout this chapter, instead of being promoted by relic-owners, the cult grew as the result of the cumulative effect of the actions of a number of individuals whose motivation varied. Further, as the cult was not focussed on one spot and as Katherine grew in popularity, so a large number of local centres developed around chapels and altars dedicated to her. Paradoxically, this only strengthened the cult as the chapels and altars set up in her honour were not competing with each other. Even when relics of Katherine began to be acquired, c. 1100, they were secondary relics, *ampulæ* filled with oil which had oozed from bones housed elsewhere, rather than primary relics of the bones themselves. This further emphasises the local nature of each point of veneration, as these secondary relics were not sufficiently important for any of them to develop into major pilgrimage attractions.

It is also worth noting that, whilst Katherine had no obvious connection with England, as her cult took hold there, a gradual process of ‘anglicization’ took place.

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5 For Anglo-Saxon virgin saints see pages 167–8.
This resulted in St Katherine losing her Greek identity and becoming, in effect, an ‘English’ saint. This process was so successful that, in certain instances of the Late Middle English prose version of her Legend, written in England in the fifteenth century, a totally fictitious genealogy was fabricated for her in order to give her a British connection. This naturalisation of Katherine is not unique to England and can be seen in France as well. For example, Katherine was one of the three saints who appeared to Joan of Arc to encourage her to mobilise the French against the English. Joan’s insistence that her voices spoke French and not English seems to have been closely linked to her sense of national identity and her belief that she had God’s support for her actions. So at her trial we find Joan saying in answer to a question as to whether St Margaret spoke English ‘why should she speak English when she is not on the English side’, whilst in a summary of her evidence it was written that ‘The said Jeanne has said and publicly declared that the saints, angels and archangels speak French and not English, and that the saints, angels and archangels are not on the side of the English but of the French...’. This does not seem to have gone down well with her prosecutors. In this fifteenth-century instance Katherine was seen as a patron of France, a ‘French’ saint. This naturalisation process was so complete in both England and France that whilst Joan of Arc heard Katherine speak to her in French, Margery Kempe, who also had a vision of Katherine, heard her speak in English.

Given this pattern of development, the earliest sources for the Katherine-cult in England are documentary. Unfortunately, they are also limited, the eleventh-century English sources for the cult being as scanty as those from eleventh-century Normandy, although they begin to become relatively more plentiful in the twelfth century. As might be expected, much of the surviving material derives from

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6 See page 54.
7 ‘And [Constantine] by ryght of his modre, was crownyd lyng of Brytayne, / bat now ys callyd Englund/ ...[Kateryn] was of ße noble I kynred of themperour Constantyne and of the nacyon of/ Brytayne the mor....’. See Nevanlinna and Taavitsainen, St Katherine of Alexandria, pp. 11, 68-9. Constantine’s birthplace is uncertain but it is unlikely to have been Britain. He may have been born at Naissus (Niš) in Upper Moesia in central Europe. See M. Grant, The Emperor Constantine, pp. 15–16.
monasteries and demonstrates the variety of clerical attitudes to Katherine, but there is also some evidence relating to lay responses to her cult. Before examining these sources in detail the introduction of St Katherine’s cult must be placed within the context of the general development of the cult of saints in England.

The cult of saints in England

The cult of saints in England goes back to early Christian times and can be seen as a regional example of the general veneration of holy individuals which was developing throughout the Roman Christian world from the fourth century onwards. The earliest documentary evidence for the veneration of saints in England dates from the first half of the fifth century, when Britain had ceased to be under effective Roman rule. The saint in question is Alban and the evidence is contained in the Life of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre (d. 446), written by Constantius of Lyons c. 480.10 Constantius records that Germanus, accompanied by Lupus of Troyes, had successfully completed a mission to Britain in 429 to combat Pelagian heretics.11 The Life of Germanus implies that some form of organized Christian Church had continued to exist in Britain after the Roman legions had been withdrawn in c.410. The existence in Britain of the Pelagian heresy, which, amongst other things, denied the concept of original sin and the validity of infant baptism, also suggests a thriving interest in Christian matters in fifth-century Britain. Constantius continues by recounting how, in gratitude for his success, Germanus gave thanks for his victory at the tomb of the blessed martyr Alban and exchanged relics of the apostles and several martyrs for earth from Alban’s tomb soaked with the martyr’s blood.12 As well as honouring St Alban, Germanus worked miracles on his own account in front of crowds of onlookers and subsequently attributed his safe return home to the protection of St Alban.13

11 Pelagius (c. 360–c. 420) was born in either Britain or Ireland. See McGrath, Christian Theology, pp. 371–7; W. L. Wakefield and A. P. Evans, Heresies of the High Middle Ages (New York, 1969), p. 246.
12 MGH SRM, vii, p. 262. See also W. Levison, ‘St Alban and St Albans’, Antiquity, 15 (1941), pp. 337–59, at 337.
13 MGH SRM, vii, pp. 262, 265.
Several inferences can be drawn from the *Life of Germanus*. Firstly, that the cult of the martyred St Alban was already thriving by 429; secondly, that the veneration of saints and their relics was associated with miracle-working (even Germanus’s own miracles can be interpreted as enhancing Alban’s prestige as they occurred at his shrine); and finally that Germanus must either have known about Alban’s cult before he left Gaul or, alternatively, been impressed by it while he was in England. Alban’s cult was certainly known in Gaul as the earliest *Passio* of Alban is thought to have been written there, c. 515–40, possibly in Germanus’s home town of Auxerre.\(^{14}\)

The *Life of Germanus* does not identify the site of the shrine of St Alban but the sixth-century historian, Gildas (c. 500–c. 570), locates it at Verulamium and places Alban’s martyrdom during the Diocletianic persecutions of the early fourth century, which would make it contemporary with the traditional date for Katherine’s execution. The date of Alban’s martyrdom has been the subject of much debate but a recent study suggests that it probably occurred during the rule in Britain of Constantius I Chlorus (305–6).\(^{15}\) After Gildas, a gap occurs in the documentary record. However, archaeological evidence shows that Alban’s shrine remained in continuous use from Roman times throughout the whole of the Anglo-Saxon pagan period.\(^{16}\) Certainly, by the time that Bede (673–735) wrote his *Historia Ecclesiastica* the cult of St Alban was thriving, for Bede not only describes the shrine but records that miracles were still being worked by the saint in Bede’s own time.\(^{17}\) As well as Alban, there is some evidence for the early veneration of other saints and martyrs. Gildas refers to the martyrdom of Julius and Aaron of Caerleon at the hands of the Romans.\(^{18}\) Little is known about these two individuals but a church appears to have

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\(^{17}\) *HE*, i, 7, p. 35.

\(^{18}\) *MGH AA*, xiii, 31. See also J. K. Knight, ‘Britain’s Other Martyrs: Julius, Aaron and Alban at Caerleon’, in *Alban and St Albans*, ed. Henig and Lindley, pp. 38–44.
been dedicated to them in or near Caerleon. In a well-known passage, Gildas describes a Britain ‘lit by the brilliant lamps of the martyrs’ and refers to their ‘graves and the places where they suffered’.

Rollason has suggested that, although an organized Church ceased to exist in England during the fifth and sixth centuries, Christianity may well have survived in the pagan Anglo-Saxon kingdoms down to c. 600 through the continuation of local saints’ cults. Apart from the archaeological evidence for the continuation of Alban’s cult, there is the testimony of a letter from Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540–604) to Augustine in which Gregory writes that he is sending relics of the martyred Pope Sixtus II (257–8) to replace those of a certain Sixtus who was being venerated in Britain but about whom nothing was known. Rollason notes that the unknown Sixtus is likely to represent another martyr-cult surviving from the Roman period. In addition to any cults that may have survived from Romano-British times, Bede (673–735) records that Augustine brought relics and liturgical manuscripts with him to England and that Gregory the Great also sent him relics of the holy apostles and martyrs. These relics are not listed, but were probably from saints of the Roman liturgy. There is no direct evidence for this but Gregory is likely to have sent relics of Roman ‘general’ saints who could be presented as belonging to the Universal Church and therefore of relevance to England. Roman saints would also emphasise the links between the English and Roman Churches at a time when the supremacy of Roman practice was by no means established. Rollason has suggested that Gregory may have sent secondary relics given his resistance to dividing saints’ bodies.

Bede also records how Pope Vitalian (657–72) subsequently sent King Oswiu of Northumbria (641–70) relics of the apostles Peter and Paul, the martyrs Lawrence, John, Paul and Pancras and of Pope Gregory the Great himself. Rollason draws a

19 See Levison, ‘St Alban and St Albans’, p. 340; Knight, ‘Britain’s Other Martyrs’, p. 40.
20 MGH AA, xiii, p. 31: ‘...clarissimos lampades sanctorum martyrum nobis accendit, quorum nunc corporum sepulturae et passionem loca ...’
22 PL, 77, col. 1193.
23 Rollason, Saints and Relics, p. 15.
24 HE, i, 29, pp. 104–5.
26 Ibid., p. 24.
27 HE, iii, 29, pp. 318–21.
link between these early relics and known seventh-and-eighth-century church dedications, a high proportion of which are to Peter and Paul (33 out of 84) with smaller numbers dedicated to Gregory (3) and Lawrence (3). Other early Anglo-Saxon Christians also seem to have been receptive to the idea of collecting and venerating saints' relics. This can be seen in the activities of men such as Benedict Biscop (c. 628–89), the founder of the sister monasteries of Wearmouth (where, as abbot, he received the young Bede) and Jarrow (where Bede later became a monk). Bede describes the activities of his abbot, an inveterate collector of relics, who made five journeys to Rome in the years 653–79, returning with various saints' relics. Bede also states that Biscop brought back theological works from Rome, some of which may have been saints' lives. Certainly Bede himself owned a copy of the Life and Passion of St Anastasius and had access to other saints' lives.

Bede used the books he owned—and others to which he had access—to produce a martyrology, which was unique in the west at that time, including information concerning the passio of each saint. Previously, western martyrologies had omitted such narrative detail and only contained names and dates of martyrdom. Some texts of Bede's martyrology include an entry for St Katherine but this has been shown to be a twelfth-century interpolation and it is not present in the oldest texts which are closest to Bede's original. While the majority of saints contained in Bede's martyrology originated outside of England a growing number of indigenous English saints were beginning to be commemorated.

One of the earliest examples of a successful indigenous cult is that of St Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne (c. 634–87). Immediately after his death Cuthbert was buried on Lindisfarne and his cult was heavily promoted by the monks there. Thacker has

30 HA, p. 369.
31 HE v.24, p. 569.
pointed out that Cuthbert was the first English bishop to develop a successful cult and that the cult centred on the saint's remains and the miracles associated with them.\textsuperscript{34} This emphasis on Cuthbert's relics is significant as in the seventh century the process of sanctification had not yet been codified into the formal process of canonization. Instead, sanctification was achieved by exhuming the putative saint from their original tomb and translating their remains to a new and honoured place in the heart of the church.\textsuperscript{35} Cuthbert's body was translated in 698 and shortly after a \textit{Life} was written by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne—the earliest saint's \textit{Life} to be written in England.\textsuperscript{36} Following Viking raids in 875, Cuthbert's body was moved and after years of being carried from place to place, finally came to rest in Durham Cathedral in 995. Once Cuthbert's body reached Durham a new shrine was built in 999 and a second translation took place. This time the process of translation was not just a ceremony of recognition for the saint, it was also used to confirm Durham's possession of his relics. This type of second translation ceremony was common at a time when relics changed hands frequently, sometimes by underhand methods. A third translation took place in 1104, following the replacement of the secular canons at the Cathedral with monks in 1083 and the subsequent re-building of Durham Cathedral by Bishop William of St Calais. On this latter occasion, the translation has been interpreted as a means of confirming the changes that had taken place by emphasising that the Cathedral still enjoyed St Cuthbert's favour.\textsuperscript{37} During all three translations, Cuthbert's body was found to be uncorrupted, a common mark of sanctity, which was felt to re-inforce the validity of the occasion. The important thing to note is the way in which, not only at Lindisfarne but also at Durham, Cuthbert's relics were central to the creation of his cult and provided a focal point for pilgrims.

The production of hagiographical tracts followed the acquisition of Cuthbert's relics in both cases. 38

It was, however, the seventh century that witnessed the beginning of a tradition of indigenous female saints. The women concerned were high-ranking, usually directly connected to one of the Anglo-Saxon royal houses and were often consecrated virgins from childhood. Even when they had been married, their Lives frequently stress that it had been a chaste marriage. One example of such a saint is Æthelthryth or Etheldreda (d. 679). The daughter of Anna, King of East Anglia, Æthelthryth had first married Tondberht, an Ealdorman, but the marriage had been chaste. Widowed, she re-married, this time to Egfrith, King of Northumbria, who initially also agreed on a chaste marriage, but subsequently changed his mind. Æthelthryth however stood firm and the marriage was dissolved. Egfrith remarried while, in 673, Æthelthryth founded Ely Abbey as a double monastery for both men and women using dower lands given to her by Tondberht. 39

Æthelthryth's sister, Sexburga, who succeeded her as Abbess of Ely, was the first to promote her cult. Sixteen years after Æthelthryth's death, Sexburga had the body translated to a new, more splendid coffin and shrine. During the translation, Æthelthryth's body was, like Cuthbert's, found to not to have decayed. 40 Sexburga, in her turn, passed on the abbacy to her daughter, Eormenilda, who was likewise succeeded by her daughter Werburga. All four women were subsequently venerated as saints. Ridyard's study of Anglo-Saxon royal saints highlights the inter-relationship between royal patronage of Ely and the promotion of the cults of royal saints. 41 Whilst these women were personally pious, the giving of a daughter as a nun or the taking of the veil in widowhood were two strategies regarded as respectable alternatives to marriage for high-born women. In addition, the political value of

39 Ridyard, Royal Saints, pp. 176-81.
40 Ibid., pp. 34-5.
41 Ibid., p. 180.
having a saint in the family has often been noted and there have been a number of studies demonstrating the political uses that were made of such cults.42

Conversely, while a royal family might derive political benefit from promoting the cult of a family member, the possession of a royal saint conferred economic benefit on the monastery that held their relics. So, for example, Æthelthryth had endowed Ely from her dower lands; whilst Eadburga of Winchester (d. 960), daughter of Edward the Elder (899–925) and his third wife Eadgifu, having become a nun at Nunnaminster, Winchester (which had been founded by her grandmother and completed by her father) persuaded Edward to make a further donation of land to the convent.43 After her death Eadburga was commemorated at Nunnaminster and her cult became widespread in Anglo-Saxon England. The Lives of all these Anglo-Saxon royal women make it clear that they had strong personalities, enabling them to enforce their choice of a virginal religious life as opposed to the rich worldly life they might have enjoyed. The themes of royalty, virginity and a rejection of worldly riches closely parallel the fundamental themes of Katherine’s Passio ensuring that, when Katherine’s cult began to spread, resonances would have occurred with this pre-existing tradition.44

In addition to the indigenous cults discussed so far, a number of cults grew up which centred on foreign saints. These generally commenced when a monastery acquired relics of the saint concerned. So, for example, in 901 the newly-founded New Minster acquired the head of St Judoc. This became the focus of an important Winchester cult.45 The widespread holdings of relics in late Anglo-Saxon England


43 The earliest surviving Life of St Eadburga, composed in the twelfth century by Osbert of Clare, is contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 114, fols 85–120. Eadburga’s donation occurs on fol. 92. The Life is published in Ridyard, Royal Saints, pp. 253–308, who also discusses the cult in detail on pp. 96–139. The manuscript, written in hands of the second half of the twelfth century, consists of Augustine of Hippo’s De doctrina Christiana and a series of hagiographical texts of which Eadburga’s Life is one. These hagiographies follow the liturgical year and contain a Life of Katherine of Alexandria.

44 In addition to Æthelthryth and her relations and Eadburga there were, amongst others, Mildreth of Minster-in-Thanet (d. c. 700), a member of the Kentish royal house; her follower, Eadburga of Minster-in-Thanet (d. 751) probably a princess of Wessex and a correspondent of Boniface (c. 675–754) and Edith of Wilton (961–84), the daughter of King Edgar (959–75). For a fuller discussion of all these saints see Ridyard, The Royal Saints, passim; Rollason, Saints and Relics, passim; idem, The Mildreth Legend: A Study in Early Medieval Hagiography in England (Leicester, 1982).

45 ASC, p. 93; Farmer, Saints, p. 278.
can be seen from the list in the *Secgan be Æam Godes sanctum pe on Engla lande ærost reston*. This list probably reached its final form in the early eleventh century and is the fullest surviving source of information on Anglo-Saxon relic holdings, providing as it does the location of 89 relics, all but one of which are in England. In an analysis of the *Secgan* and other supplementary evidence, Rollason has demonstrated that much of the relic-collecting that took place in the late tenth and early eleventh century was associated with the reformed Benedictine abbeys.

There is other evidence too, that the cult of saints in England was given impetus by the tenth-century reform movement associated with St Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester (963–84), St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury (960–88) and St Oswald, Bishop of Worcester (961–92) and Archbishop of York (972–92). The reasons behind this were a mixture of economic necessity and piety. The Viking invasions of the ninth century had severely disrupted monastic and diocesan life so that many monasteries had fallen into desuetude and many dioceses had ceased to function as their lands and revenues had been lost to others. Stenton has even suggested that the reason Oswald held Worcester and York in plurality was so that the richer southern see could subsidise the poorer northern one. King Alfred (871–99) had begun the revival of religious life with foundations at Athelney and Shaftesbury while his widow, Ealhswith (d. c. 902/3), founded St Mary’s Abbey, Winchester—better known as Nunnaminster—shortly before her death. Alfred’s son, Edward the Elder (899–925), continued this work with the foundation of New Minster, Winchester for secular canons in 901. However, it was the activities of Dunstan, Oswald and particularly Æthelwold in the second half of the tenth century, that led to the replacement of secular canons by monks in cathedrals and monasteries they controlled and to the foundation or re-foundation of most of the major

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46 The text survives in two eleventh-century manuscripts, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 201, pp. 149-51 and BL, MS Stowe 944, fols 34v-39r.

monasteries that were to flourish in England throughout the entire Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{50}

If the revived monasteries were to prosper, they needed to be placed on a sound financial footing and this required the generation of sufficient revenue to support the monks. Æthelwold, in particular, was most assiduous in seeking to recover lost monastic lands and revenues.\textsuperscript{51} One potential source of revenue was offerings from the laity at relic shrines. A successful shrine could bring in substantial funds and so there was an increase in relic-collecting in the new monasteries.\textsuperscript{52} The use of relics to underpin the monastic economy would not have appeared as incongruous in this period as it does to modern sensibilities for a saint was regarded as the patron, and ‘owner’ of the monastery in which their relics resided. This attitude to the use of saints’ relics was strongly influenced by broader European attitudes for the continental counterpart to the English tenth-century reform movement was closely associated with the cult of saints.

Dunstan was exposed to this use of relics during his exile (956–7), which he spent at the monastery of St Peter in Ghent. In the 950s, Gerard of Brogne had reformed this monastery and that of Saint-Bavon, its companion and competitor in Ghent. Gerard was a fervent collector of relics, sometimes by dubious means.\textsuperscript{53} Dunstan, however, seems to have taken much less interest than either Æthelwold or Oswald in the cult of saints.\textsuperscript{54} This was in marked contrast to Oda (941–58), his predecessor at

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{51} Bishop Æthelwold, ed. Yorke, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{52} See Nilson, \textit{Cathedral shrines}, pp. 211–42 for tables and graphs of offerings at selected shrines.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Thacker, ‘Cults at Canterbury, p. 237.
\end{itemize}
Canterbury, who was responsible for translating Wilfred's relics to Canterbury after their seizure by King Eadred (946-55) during a raid on Ripon in 948.55 When he succeeded Oda, Dunstan took no steps to capitalise on Oda's reputation for holiness or to translate his remains in order to sanctify him. He did not even make any attempt to promote the cults of any of the other archbishops who were buried in the Cathedral. Nor are there any records to show that Dunstan actively sought to collect other relics. Thacker suggests that this might have been because of strained relations with the Cathedral clergy and that Dunstan may have preferred St Augustine's, Canterbury.56 Æthelwold on the other hand seems to have actively used indigenous saints' cults to strengthen his foundations and to have revived a number of cults which had lapsed, such as those of Æthelthryth and Sexburga at Ely. Sometimes political as well as economic reasons emerge for promoting certain saints, as was the case with Æthelwold's translation of St Swithun in 971. This followed Æthelwold's replacement at Winchester of secular canons by monks and was designed to show that the changes had saintly approval.57

By the end of the tenth century the cult of saints was firmly established in England. As we have seen, it was closely linked to the possession of primary relics (bodies and bones) of the saint concerned. While the saints of the Roman liturgy were known, there was also a strong tradition of indigenous saints. Within this latter tradition an important sub-group of royal female saints existed. This then was the background against which the cult of St Katherine emerged in England in the second quarter of the eleventh century. How, then, did this foreign saint, lacking any local primary relics, become such a successful part of English religious life? In the rest of this chapter I intend to try and answer this question by examining the history of the cult in England down to c. 1200.

56 Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury', p. 238.
57 See A. Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon', *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. Yorke, pp. 43–64, at pp. 60–3, for a discussion of Æthelwold's relic-collecting. For Oswald see A. Thacker, 'Saint-making and relic collecting by Oswald and his communities', in *St Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence* ed. Brooks and Cubitt, pp. 244–68.
The cult of St Katherine in England

The general picture emerging from the detailed evidence is that the cult of St Katherine appeared in England at approximately the same time as in Normandy, that is, in the 1030s. As will be seen, the evidence is ambiguous and while it is possible that the acquisition of Katherine’s relics by Holy Trinity, Rouen may have stimulated Katherine’s inclusion in an English monastic calendar, it is also possible that these two events were simultaneous rather than sequential. It is clear though, that the cult did not take hold in England as rapidly as in Normandy, primarily because there was no focal point for it. Whereas in Normandy the monastery of Holy Trinity promoted its relics of Katherine, in England no centre possessed a comparable incentive. It is also clear that after 1066, the cult began to spread more rapidly and in this sense the Normans can be said to have encouraged it in England. However, care needs to be taken in assuming that the advent of the Normans was the prime cause of the spread of the cult for, as Ortenberg has pointed out, this may be an accident of chronology and, given that Katherine was known in England prior to the Conquest, her cult might well have spread without the involvement of the Normans. 58

In addition, several leading churchmen involved in the early post-1066 stages of the dissemination of the cult were not themselves Norman. This, in turn, highlights the cosmopolitan nature of the Norman ecclesiastical hierarchy, the upper ranks of which were filled by a mixture of sons of noble Norman families and by eminent churchmen imported from elsewhere. As we shall see, four of those who had a significant role in propagating Katherine’s cult were of Italian origin and may equally have encountered the cult in Italy as well as in Normandy. 59 Another of this group had contacts with Orthodox Christianity. 60 Yet another was from Maine. 61 The non-Norman origins of many of those involved in the propagation of the cult weakens the argument that devotion to Katherine in western Europe was a peculiarly Norman phenomenon in the late eleventh/early twelfth century.

58 Ortenberg, The English Church and the Continent, p. 257.
59 Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury (1070–89); Paul of Caen, Abbot of St Albans (1077–93); St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109); Anselm, Abbot of Bury St Edmunds (1120–48).
60 Anselm of Bury St Edmunds, see page 203.
61 Geoffrey of Gorham, Abbot of St Albans (1119–46), see page 198.
Although no detailed study exists of the early Katherine cult in England, a number of articles do provide a broad summary. The cult is frequently mentioned, in studies both of the English Church and of relations between England and the Continent. The general tenor of all such works has been to accept that the Normans introduced the cult into England and that it was given further impetus by individuals returning from the Crusades who had encountered it in the East. As will be seen however, the process by which the cult became established in England was far more complicated than this simplistic solution suggests. Nor does the evidence show that the three major Crusades prior to 1200 played any great part in promoting Katherine’s cult. On the other hand, travel to the East would have exposed large numbers of people to eastern saints and may well have increased receptivity of the cult.

Catherine Thomas, writing in 1917, was one of the first modern scholars to emphasize Norman involvement in the English cult. Thomas argued that the veneration felt for Katherine by William the Conqueror and, in particular, his son Henry I (1100–35), led to the introduction of the cult into England. She showed that William gave lands to the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen following the conquest of England in 1066 and ‘inspired his nobles to acts of similar generosity’. She based her evidence on charters recording bequests to Holy Trinity Rouen, both in Normandy and England, which frequently state that the gift is in honour of William and his wife Matilda. However, this common formula is found in many charters of the period and cannot be taken as particular evidence of William’s regard for Katherine. Indeed, William’s gifts to Holy Trinity are not especially generous compared to other monastic foundations and would be better regarded as part of the general parcelling out of land that took place following the Conquest. Thomas also argued that the majority of early English references to foundations or gifts dedicated to Katherine can be traced back to a desire to please Henry I. She supported her argument by assuming that anything dedicated to Katherine in Henry’s reign or by his family must, almost by definition, have been the result of royal veneration of Katherine. This view now appears over-simplistic, as additional, richer, documentary

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63 For example, Ortenberg, The English Church and the Continent, pp. 256–7.
65 See page 205.
source material has come to light for eleventh- and twelfth-century England making it possible to piece together a more sophisticated analysis.

This analysis begins in early eleventh-century England where Katherine crept quietly into the English religious consciousness, initially through her inclusion in the liturgical calendars of certain southern English monasteries. From a low level of recognition her cult grew in a number of different monasteries, usually as a result of the action of a particular individual. Its growth did not follow a tidy linear progression but, broadly speaking, the commemoration of Katherine’s feast-day on 25 November seems to have been followed by the creation of a physical focal point for her veneration—for example, the dedication of an altar or chapel to her. As Katherine grew in popularity, so more hagiographical texts appeared re-telling her Passio. Institutions such as hospitals were dedicated to her and evidence of lay interest in her emerged as gifts in her honour started to appear in charters and wills. I propose to begin by examining the way in which the observance of Katherine’s feast-day spread amongst the major monastic centres.

The Winchester calendar

The earliest known reference to Katherine in England appears in a calendar in a Psalter from Winchester of uncertain date but certainly written by c.1060.66 I have examined the manuscript, which, although damaged in the Cotton Library fire of 1731, has 146 mostly legible surviving leaves. These have been separately mounted and re-bound.67 The edges of all the leaves have suffered varying degrees of damage and some marginal text has been lost. The top few lines on most folios are damaged and not always fully legible. It is clear from breaks in the text that a few leaves are missing. The contents of the manuscript are as follows:

Fols 2r–7v: a calendar.

Fols 8–17: a computus containing a variety of items in a mixture of Latin and Old English.

66 BL, MS Cotton Vitellius E.xvii, fol. 7r.
67 It was last re-bound in 1954 when some of the pages were re-foliated. I have used the current foliation.
Fols 18–139r: a Gallican Psalter and canticles, the psalms are written in Latin with an Old English gloss.  

Fols 139r–141r: the Athanasian Creed.  

Fols 141r–142r: a litany.  

Fols 142r–146v: various items in different hands.  

Both the calendar and the litany contain an entry for Katherine. The litany is written in a later hand than either calendar or Psalter and probably dates from the twelfth century.  

Humfrey Wanley first described the manuscript containing the Vitellius Calendar (V) in 1705, dating it to c.1031. Unfortunately, although his remains the only description of the calendar in its undamaged state, Wanley only offered a brief description of the Calendar and gave no reason for his dating. Hampson subsequently published V in 1841. He cited Hickes as his authority for dating V to 1031 but again gave no reason. This version had a number of defects but has been widely used and quoted, for example, by the liturgical scholar, Edmund Bishop, in several of his works. In 1908, Bishop and Abbé Gasquet produced an edited version of the so-called Bosworth Psalter, a Roman Psalter compiled in the second half of the tenth century at Canterbury. Included in this edition was a discussion by Bishop of the relationship between the calendar in The Bosworth Psalter and certain other early English calendars, including V, in which he argued that the calendar in use in Winchester had influenced the composition of the calendars of other centres such as Canterbury. Bishop’s dating of certain eleventh-century calendars has since been

68 The Psalter and canticles have been published, see J. L. Rosier, The Vitellius Psalter edited from British Museum MS Cotton Vitellius E.viii (New York, 1962).  
71 R. T. Hampson, Medii Aevi Kalendarium of dates, charters and customs of the Middle Ages with Kalendars from the tenth to the fifteenth century; and an alphabetical digest of obsolete names of days: forming a glossary of the dates of the Middle Ages, with tables and other aids for ascertaining dates, 2 vols (London, 1841), i, pp. 421–33.  
72 Hampson, Medii Aevi Kalendarium, p. 421. George Hickes (1642–1715), a cleric and scholar, was a leading authority of his time on early manuscripts.  
shown to be incorrect but his fundamental conclusion about the influence of the Winchester calendar upon other monastic calendars still holds. Bishop himself seems to have been uncertain about the date of V for, in separate places in The Bosworth Psalter, he dates V both to the mid-eleventh century and to c. 1090. Further, in a later essay on the origins of the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Bishop dates V to c. 1030 citing Wanley as his authority without giving any further reason.

Perhaps the most detailed study of V was produced by Wildhagen in 1921. He placed the calendar in the first half of the eleventh century and in his essay undertook a detailed analysis of the saints contained within it. While his analysis convincingly supported the general view that V originated from Winchester, Wildhagen did not reach any final conclusions regarding its monastery of origin although he thought that the Cathedral was the most likely source. Wormald, on the other hand, who published V in 1934, suggested that it probably came from New Minster and was composed c. 1060, although he thought that it must soon have passed to the Cathedral. Unfortunately, Wormald never published his reasons for this dating and provenance. However, Wildhagen had earlier discussed the opinion of J. P. Gilson, then Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum, who drew attention to a cross placed above one of the columns of a composite solar and lunar year table on fol. 13v. Gilson was of the view that this indicated that V had been composed between 1060 and 1087—the years of the solar cycle contained in that column. Wildhagen was doubtful about this suggestion and, having examined the manuscript, I can see no reason why this cross should be taken as indicating the date of composition of the calendar. However, Wormald may have been following Gilson in dating V to c. 1060.

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74 Bishop believed that the calendar in BL, MS Arundel 155 represented the post-Conquest calendar of Canterbury. This has been shown to be incorrect and Arundel 155 is now accepted as the work of a known scribe, Eadui Basan, writing c. 1012x23. See Gasquet and Bishop, The Bosworth Psalter, pp. 28-9; T. A. M. Bishop, English Caroline Minuscule (Oxford, 1971), p. 22; R. W. Pfaff, 'Eadui Basan: Scriptorum Principis?', in England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaston Symposium, ed. C. Hicks (Stamford, 1992) pp. 267-83, at pp. 273–6.
75 Gasquet and Bishop, The Bosworth Psalter, pp. 30, 42.
76 Wormald, Kalendars before 1100, pp. vi, 155.
77 Wildhagen, 'Das Kalendarium der Vitellius E.xviii', pp. 68–118.
78 Wormald, Kalendars before 1100, pp. 117–18. Wildhagen refers to fol. 15v but the numbering changed with the re-foliation of 1954.
Clayton, noting these differences in dating, has pointed out that the Easter table in the computus runs from 1030 to 1145.\textsuperscript{80} It is hard to see why a retrospective table would be transcribed and this suggests a date of c. 1030 for the computus. This in turn raises the question of whether the other elements of the manuscript can be dated to the same period as the computus. Ker suggests that at least part of the computus material is written in the same hand as the Old English gloss to the Psalter.\textsuperscript{81} The main part of the calendar is written in a similar, but not identical, hand to the computus (there are numerous minor additions in a variety of hands). It also contains the names of the months in Old English as well as Latin. The Latin version of the Psalms and canticles are written in a single hand but this is very different to the hand(s) in which the calendar and computus are written. The litany is written in a later, twelfth-century hand. Although the palaeographical evidence is not conclusive, it does suggest that the calendar and the computus contained in V are more or less contemporary. Wildhagen has also pointed out that the latest dateable event commemorated in the main hand in V is the death of St Alphege. This is Alphege II, Bishop of Winchester (984–1005) and then Archbishop of Canterbury who was captured by Vikings and killed in London, on 19 April 1012. The calendar must therefore be later than 1012. There is nothing in the contents of V that might help establish a terminus ante quem.

If the calendar and the table in the computus are contemporary and date from c. 1030 rather than c. 1060, this would be highly significant in terms of the introduction of Katherine’s cult into both Normandy and England. The monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen was only founded c. 1030. If the calendar dates from c. 1030, then it possible that the advent of Katherine’s relics at Holy Trinity, Rouen and her appearance in V are connected in some way. I have already suggested that Katherine’s relics could have been brought to Rouen and knowledge of her transmitted to England as a result of the visit of the bishop of Benevento.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{80} Clayton, The Cult of the Virgin Mary, p. 43. Compare Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon, pp. 298–301, where it is suggested that the tables ran from 1031. I have examined the manuscript and the discrepancy may be explained by the fire damage to the top 3 or 4 lines leaving the top-most line virtually illegible. If it should be included, then the table starts in 1030; if not then it starts in 1031.

\textsuperscript{81} Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon, p. 298–301.

\textsuperscript{82} See pages 132–3.
It should be noted that, unusually for an English calendar of this period, V also contains the feast-day on 27 January of another Eastern saint, St John Chrysostom (c. 347–407). Clayton further points out that in addition, V contains two feasts of Mary, the Presentation in the Temple (21 November) and the Conception (8 December), as does a calendar contained in another Winchester manuscript, BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvii. This latter manuscript originated at New Minster and a note in the manuscript records that it belonged to dean Ælfwine. Ælfwine was dean of New Minster (1023–32) and subsequently its abbot (1032–57), so BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvii must date to the period 1023–32.83 The eastern feasts were added to BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvii shortly after the main text was written, possibly in the period of Ælfwine’s abbacy, which would date these entries to 1032–57.84 Clayton further notes that the main hand of V is similar to the hand which wrote folios 20r–68r of a third manuscript, BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvi and that these latter folios were once part of BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvii.85 This supports the suggestion that V dates from c. 1030. These are the first instances of these Marian feasts in England—the only other instance being a calendar from Worcester which also contains the feast of the Conception.86 Clayton considers that they result from Eastern Christian influence, although it is not possible to show any specific eastern contacts with Winchester in the 1030s.

The exact provenance of V has also been the subject of much debate. I have already noted that Wildhagen favoured the Cathedral while Wormald thought it originated in New Minster but rapidly moved to the Cathedral. Ker also favoured New Minster on liturgical grounds.87 Subsequently, Morgan, in his work on the Calendar of the Cathedral, suggested that V originated from the Cathedral.88 It is not possible to
make a direct comparison between V and the Cathedral Calendar as re-constructed by Morgan because his reconstruction was reached by collating eight manuscripts, including V, of various dates from the eleventh to the sixteenth century. This makes it too generic in nature to be considered representative of any one period as it fails to distinguish how feasts were added over time. Morgan does, however, make some observations as to which feasts were important to the Cathedral, which to New Minster and which, while indicating a Winchester origin, were held in common.89

In Appendix IV I have analysed the four surviving pre-Conquest Winchester Calendars.90 I have stripped out all those feasts that are general in nature and only left those known to be particular to Winchester. I have then colour-coded them to show which are more likely to be Cathedral, which New Minster and which shared. V will be seen to contain two feasts suggesting a New Minster origin and six which suggest the Cathedral. Of the New Minster feasts, Morgan states that Branwalator on 19 January is, with rare exceptions, only found in calendars from New Minster.91 If it were not for the preponderance of Cathedral feasts this would suggest a New Minster origin. Even Wormald's suggestion that the Calendar was composed in New Minster but quickly moved to the Cathedral does not fully explain this mix of feasts as all eight of them are entered in the original hand.

In this context another noteworthy feature of V appears to be the number of English virgin saints included in the Calendar. Wildhagen raised the possibility that it was produced for a woman.92 The analysis in Appendix IV compares the incidence of female saints in the four calendars. From this it will be seen that V contains forty female saints. The other three calendars each contain thirty-four. V also contains five female saints' feasts that are unique to it—more than all the others put together. In addition, on 10 June, V includes the feast of the Dedication of the Church of St Mary. This probably refers to Nunnaminster.93 The same feast occurs in Arundel 60;

89 Morgan, 'Winchester Cathedral Calendar', pp. 149-53.
90 BL, MS Cotton Titus D.xxvii; Cambridge, Trinity College R.15.32 of c. 1025, from New Minster; BL, MS Arundel 60 of c. 1060, exact provenance unknown; and V. See F. Wormald, English Kalendar after A.D. 1100, Henry Bradshaw Society, 77 (London, 1939), no. 9, pp. 114-25; no. 10, pp.128-39; no. 11, pp. 141-53.
91 Morgan, 'Winchester Cathedral Calendar', p. 152. The exceptions according to Morgan are the Psalter of Henry of Blois, of Winchester origin, and an Icelandic martyrlogical calendar.
92 Wildhagen, 'Das Kalendarium der Vitellius E.xviii', p. 73.
93 Morgan, 'Winchester Cathedral Calendar', pp. 150, 165 note 54.

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a similar one in Titus D.xxvii on 5 June, and so it cannot, of itself, indicate a Nunnaminster origin. However, the analysis of these four calendars does at least raise the possibility that V was influenced by Nunnaminster or by someone with a particular interest in female saints. This could explain why, alone of all the early Winchester calendars, V included St Katherine. The significance of V, however, lies not just in its early date. The Winchester calendar, by which I mean the general pool of Winchester saints rather than the Cathedral or New Minster specific calendar, had a considerable influence over the composition of other monastic calendars. Once Katherine had appeared in a Winchester calendar, she slowly began to infiltrate the calendars and the religious life of other centres. 94

Canterbury

The first indication of this can be seen at Canterbury. Here Lanfranc, the Italian abbot of Duke William’s foundation of St Étienne de Caen and the former abbot of Bec, became Archbishop in 1070 and held that office until his death in 1089. Lanfranc was a close advisor to Duke William and continued in that role when William became King of England. Lanfranc’s reforms of the English Church have been well rehearsed elsewhere and I do not propose to consider them in detail here. 95 However one of his changes was relevant, namely his reform of the calendars of Christ Church Cathedral and St Augustine’s. Lanfranc’s work on the calendar must have been underway by c. 1079 when Eadmer records a debate between Lanfranc

94 The impact of the Winchester calendar may have spread outside England to the extent that it carried Katherine’s feast-day back to the eastern Mediterranean. The so-called Queen Melisende Psalter (BL, MS Egerton 1139) was composed in the 1130s or 1140s in one of the Crusader kingdoms of the Latin East, although its exact provenance is unknown. Wormald has drawn attention to the large number of English saints in the calendar of this Psalter many of whom have Winchester connections. It seems likely that a Winchester source provided the core of the calendar. Katherine appears against her feast-day of 25 November. Although the core of the calendar is English, some of the entries originate from the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. It is possible, therefore, that Katherine is one of the local entries, given the proximity of her shrine on Sinai. However, she is not to be found in many other calendars of this period from the Latin East. For example, Katherine appears in the calendar in Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 477 (dated c. 1140), but not in those in BN, lat. 12056; Florence, Riccardiana MS 323 (dated c. 1140–9); Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barberini 659 (a 13th century copy of a 12th century original). It is tempting to think that she may have been copied across into the Melisende Psalter from a Winchester source, thus completing a journey from the Orthodox East to the Latin West and back again to the Holy Land. See F. Wormald, ‘The Calendar of Queen Melisende’s Psalter’, in Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, ed. H. Büchthal (Oxford, 1957), pp. 107–23.

and Anselm on the sanctity of Alphege. There has been considerable debate amongst modern historians as to the extent of the changes made to the Canterbury calendar by Lanfranc and the reasons for those changes. In a tradition derived from Eadmer and Gervase of Canterbury, Lanfranc is portrayed as rejecting many of the saints' cults of Anglo-Saxon England for their dubious validity. Other contemporaries of Lanfranc have been perceived as behaving in a similar manner, for example, Lanfranc's nephew, Paul of Caen, is recorded as removing the relics of his predecessors as abbot of St Albans on the grounds that they were unworthy to be venerated within the Abbey. This behaviour has been seen as part of the cultural shifts taking place after 1066.

Recently, however, it has been suggested that this perception of the first Norman prelates is incorrect and that many of them were indeed prepared to promote local cults that were of economic value to their monasteries and cathedrals, for example, at Ely. In the case of Lanfranc it has been argued that the view of his rejection of many Anglo-Saxon saints is based upon a palaeographical error. More recently it has been suggested that Lanfranc did indeed regard many of the cults he found at Canterbury with suspicion, not because they were Anglo-Saxon, but because of his own theological preferences, which were Christocentric and focussed on the Eucharist as the relic of the body of Christ. Overall, the evidence suggests that Lanfranc was lukewarm in his enthusiasm for the cult of saints and that in general, his interests lay elsewhere. This attitude was, however, not particularly widespread, and the evidence adduced by Ridyard shows that Norman churchmen were prepared to accept Anglo-Saxon saints.

96 Eadmer records the discussion as occurring in the year that Anselm was consecrated Abbot of Bec, that is 1079. See Eadmer, The Life of St Anselm, ed. and transl. R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1962), pp. 48, 50–4.
98 GA, i, p. 62.
100 See page 175–6.
In parallel to the debate about the extent to which Lanfranc 'purged' the Canterbury calendar, a second debate has taken place as to the sources of Lanfranc's revised customs and calendar. This centres on the extent to which he imported the customs and calendar of Bec. Bishop's view that Lanfranc based his revised calendar on that of Winchester has already been noted.\textsuperscript{102} Since Bishop wrote, however, it has been argued that Bec was the source of Lanfranc's revisions. Unfortunately, the earliest surviving copy of the customs and calendar of Bec dates from the late thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{103} Whilst it has been suggested that the later Bec customs and calendar are essentially the same as those current in Lanfranc's day, there is no conclusive evidence to support this proposition, particularly as it is known that abbot Roger II of Bec (1185–94) revised the customs of that house.\textsuperscript{104} Whilst Katherine is included in the later Bec calendar, this would be expected by the thirteenth century and does not necessarily indicate that she was included in earlier versions.\textsuperscript{105}

Three calendars, two in the British Library and a third in Oxford, shed some light on how the Canterbury calendar changed during the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{106} The earliest of these is that contained in the late tenth-century \textit{Bosworth Psalter}.\textsuperscript{107} Its calendar, which is of a slightly later date than the rest of the manuscript, was probably written by 1008 and has affinities with the tenth-century calendar in the so-called \textit{Leofric Missal}.\textsuperscript{108} There has been considerable debate as to whether \textit{The Bosworth Psalter} was composed in Christ Church or St Augustine's but on balance it is probably from Christ Church.\textsuperscript{109} \textit{The Bosworth Psalter} shows some signs of Winchester influence

\textsuperscript{102} See page 175–6.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{The Bee Missal}, ed. A. Hughes, Henry Bradshaw Society, 94 (London, 1963).
\textsuperscript{105} See Lanfranc, \textit{The Monastic Constitutions}, rev. edn Brooke, pp. xlii–xliii, where Brooke summarises the case for Bec influence on Lanfranc's sacramentary.
\textsuperscript{106} The calendars are contained in BL, MSS Add. 37517 and Arundel 155; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Add. C. 260.
\textsuperscript{107} BL, MS Add. 37517.
\textsuperscript{109} See the summary of the various views in Korhammer, 'Origin of the Bosworth Psalter', pp. 174–80 where the case for a Christ Church origin for the Psalter is strongly made, however, more recently Orchard has re-opened the debate, making the case for St Augustine's. See N. Orchard, 'The Bosworth Psalter and St Augustine's Missal' in \textit{Canterbury and the Norman Conquest}, ed. Eales and Sharpe, pp. 87–94.
but Bishop concluded that both Bosworth and Leofric probably had a common source in a Glastonbury calendar.\textsuperscript{110}

The second calendar is contained in a Roman Psalter, although this time with some Gallican amendments made in the main hand, which was produced at Christ Church by the scribe Eadui (Eadwig) Basan in 1012–23.\textsuperscript{111} The calendar is very different to that in the Bosworth Psalter since it omits many of the saints contained in the earlier Psalter.\textsuperscript{112} More Winchester specific feasts occur than in the Bosworth Psalter.\textsuperscript{113} The beginning of the influence of the Winchester calendar on Canterbury can thus be seen, perhaps through the close links between Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester (963–84) and Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury (959–88) in the late tenth century. Subsequent archbishops of Canterbury also had Winchester connections: Æthelgar (988–9) had been abbot of New Minster while Alphege II (1006–12) had been bishop of Winchester.\textsuperscript{114} Both the Bosworth Psalter and Arundel 155 pre-date the production of the calendar in V and do not include St Katherine’s feast-day. The third calendar dates from the 1120s but is thought to be essentially Lanfranc’s calendar.\textsuperscript{115} This latter calendar does contain an entry for St Katherine, confirming her commemoration in Canterbury by the early twelfth century. Heslop has argued strongly for the influence of Bec on this calendar but again the evidence is not conclusive given the lack of an early Bec calendar to provide a comparison. If Katherine was included in both the Bec and the Winchester calendars, this could only have strengthened the case for her inclusion by Lanfranc in the Canterbury calendar.

\textsuperscript{110} Gasquet and Bishop, \textit{The Bosworth Psalter}, p. 15. \textit{The Bosworth Psalter} includes the Winchester feasts of St Swithun on 2 July, St Grimbald on 8 July, and the translation of St Swithun on 15 July. See also N. Orchard, \textit{The Leofric Missal}, Henry Bradshaw Society, 113 (London, 2002), pp. 8–9.

\textsuperscript{111} BL, MS Arundel 155. The calendar can be dated fairly precisely because it includes, in the main hand, the death of Alphege (1012) but not his translation (1023). See Pfaff, ‘Eadui Basan: \textit{Scriptorum Princeps}’, pp. 267–83.

\textsuperscript{112} See note 74 above.

\textsuperscript{113} For example, in addition to those in \textit{The Bosworth Psalter}, the translation of Birinus on 4 September, St Judoc on 13 December.


It is probable that in addition to reforming the Christ Church calendar, Lanfranc also imposed his reformed calendar on St Augustine's, Canterbury. On the assumption that the *Bosworth Psalter* is from Christ Church, no calendar dating before the thirteenth century survives from St Augustine's. However, a Missal, or more accurately a sacramentary, dating from the opening years of the twelfth century does survive, which clearly demonstrates that by the end of the eleventh century Katherine's cult had taken root in Canterbury and moved beyond simple inclusion in the monastic calendar. This Missal contains a substantial entry for prayers on the feast-day of St Katherine.

Rule argued, on the basis of internal evidence, that the Missal could not have been completed before 1095. His arguments on this point seem sound. He further suggested that the Missal was intended for Hugh de Flori (d. 1126) who, he argued, had become abbot of St Augustine's on 13 March 1099. From this, Rule concluded that the Missal was probably written in 1099 and certainly no later than the summer of 1100. However, Knowles et al leave the date of Hugh's consecration open, noting that, as Anselm of Canterbury blessed Hugh on 27 February 1108, Rule's proposed date of 1099 must be incorrect; whilst Vaughn states that he became abbot in 1107. Rule based his conclusions on internal evidence. Firstly, he suggested that the word *dicimus* was used in such a way as to indicate that the Missal had been written for a newcomer to the Abbey, unfamiliar with its customs. This seems slight evidence on which to date the Missal so precisely to Hugh's assumption of the abbacy. Further, if, as seems likely, Rule was wrong over his dating of Hugh's assumption of the abbacy, then, even if he was correct in his suggestion that the Missal was written for Hugh, this would place the date of composition as c. 1107 or 1108.

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118 Rule, *Missal*, pp. xi–xiv. Rule points out that, on fol. 117v, between the masses for 11 and 14 September a mass commemorates the translation of the relics of Augustine, Laurence, Mellitus, Justus, Honorius, Deusdedit and Theodore. This took place in 1091 but the commemoration was only fixed on 13 September after Anselm became Archbishop in December 1093. Further, Rule points out that on fol. 111v certain words relating to the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary are attributable to Urban II in late 1094 or early 1095.
120 Fol. 47r/v: ‘Hac die non dicimus communicantes nec hanc igitur.'
Second, Rule drew attention to a reference in the manuscript to a mass for the King, Queen and people and suggested that this referred to Henry I (1100-35) and his first wife, Matilda (d. 1118), which would place the latest date of writing as 1100-18. Rule appears correct in suggesting that the king referred to must be Henry I, as his predecessor, William II (1087–1100), was unmarried. This makes it most unlikely that the Missal was composed before 1100. However, Henry took a second wife following the death of Matilda, and the Missal does not name the Queen concerned. I have been able to examine the manuscript and can find nothing to indicate which of Henry’s wives is referred to and thus allow a precise dating. Some palaeographical evidence, however, supports a dating to the first part of Henry’s reign.

The Missal is written in a known Canterbury hand and other documents have survived by the same scribe. These were summarised by T. A. M. Bishop who drew attention to the fact that the style contains many archaic Anglo-Saxon features. A complicating factor is that in 1089 Lanfranc transferred twenty-three monks from Christ Church to St Augustine’s following trouble in the town between monks from the two communities. It is not possible to determine whether the scribe of the Missal was one of the new monks or whether he had been a member of the previous community at St Augustine’s who had been allowed to stay—indeed it is not known whether any of the previous community remained. From whichever community the scribe originated, the likelihood is that he was a survivor from the pre-Conquest era. In this context, Lawrence has drawn attention to other related hands, which suggest that a group of four or five pre-Conquest scribes worked at St Augustine’s for a considerable period after the Conquest.

On this basis the scribe would have been comparatively elderly by the turn of the eleventh century. Whilst this supports Rule’s argument for an early date for the Missal, a charter, not mentioned by Bishop, but written in the same hand, provides

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121 Fol. 73v
125 Lawrence, ‘Manuscripts of Early Anglo-Norman Canterbury’, p. 102
evidence that the scribe continued to write for some time into the twelfth century. The charter is dated to the Lent, *quadragesima*, in which Henry I gave his daughter Matilda to be married to the Emperor, that is February 1110. Given the length of the career of this scribe, it is not possible to date the writing of the Missal more precisely than 1100x c.1110. This does, however, mean that it is likely to have been composed in the period when St Anselm was Archbishop of Canterbury (1093–1109).

The entry for Katherine consists of 20 lines of which eight are virtually illegible. Within this short space are references to two key elements of her legend namely the transportation of her body to Sinai by angels and the ‘liquor’ that was supposed to exude from her relics. The little that can be read of the eight illegible lines seem to speak of her noble birth and her triumph over tyranny. A translation of the entry is given in Appendix V At the time that the Missal was composed the monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen was actively promoting its relics of Katherine but the Missal of St Augustine’s places Katherine firmly on Sinai. It makes no mention of her connections with the Rouen monastery. While this could simply be that the author of the Missal drew upon Katherine’s basic *Passio*, it could also be the case that St Augustine’s did not want to boost a competitor for pilgrims and gifts. By emphasizing Katherine’s links with Sinai, it was possible at one and the same time to venerate the saint and yet to ignore her links with Holy Trinity, Rouen.

At around the same time that the Missal was produced another writer, the well-known hagiographer, Goscelin of Saint-Bertin, was at work in St Augustine’s. Goscelin had come to England in 1058 in the entourage of Hermann who held the bishoprics of Ramsey and Sherborne in plurality until 1075 when Sherborne was moved to Salisbury. Goscelin’s origins are unknown but he was probably Flemish.
and born c. 1035. Following Hermann’s death in 1078, Goscelin was forced to leave the diocese for unknown reasons and seems to have spent a period travelling from monastery to monastery until he finally came to St Augustine’s at an unknown date but probably not before 1091. He is known to have stayed in Canterbury for the rest of his life but the date of his death is not known. The latest work attributable to him with certainty was completed in 1099, but some evidence exists to show that he might still have been alive as late as c. 1116.

In addition to his hagiographical writings, Goscelin also produced a work entitled the Liber Confortatorius, dedicated to a spiritual protégé of his named Eve of Wilton, a text of which survives in a twelfth-century manuscript. At some point after Goscelin left Salisbury in 1078, Eve had left her community at Wilton and travelled to Angers in search of a solitary life, eventually settling at the small priory of St Eutrope where she died at an unknown date. Goscelin wrote the Liber Confortatorius to encourage Eve in her resolve to live a solitary life and towards the end of the work he exhorts her to follow the example of a number of early saints and martyrs. Amongst those whom he cites is Katherine. I have examined the manuscript and the word ‘Katherine’ is in the main hand. Given this, and the fact that it occurs in the middle of a sentence, it is unlikely to be a later interpolation.

Although it is not possible to determine whether Goscelin wrote this work before he came to St Augustine’s or during his sojourn there, his inclusion of Katherine as a role model for a holy woman shows that, by the closing years of the eleventh century, her Passio was becoming more widely known. Goscelin would not have chosen to use her as an example had he not thought that Eve, or any other reader, would recognize the name.

Some evidence too survives from this period to show links between Canterbury and Constantinople. These could have added to the general knowledge of eastern saints. Haskins drew attention to a Rochester lectionary of the twelfth century that contains part of an account of a visit to Constantinople and Jerusalem made by a monk named

130 Ibid., pp. 3–6.
131 Ibid., ed. Talbot, pp. 7–10.
132 BL, MS Sloane 3013.
133 Liber Confortatorius, ed. Talbot, pp. 22–3.
134 Ibid., p. 23.
135 Fol. 112v: ‘... cum Tecla, Agnete, Cecilia et Argina, Caterina, multaque virginum turba ... ’
Joseph c. 1090. Joseph would appear to have been interested in saints' relics and may well have brought relics of St Andrew back to Canterbury.

Despite the evidence of the Missal and the fact that a named member of St Augustine's can be shown to have been using St Katherine as a role model for a woman seeking a life of holy chastity, the general scarcity of evidence from the late eleventh century makes it difficult to determine who was promoting Katherine's cult in Canterbury and why. There is no evidence of any relics being held by either Christ Church or St Augustine's at this time, although at some date before 1316 the Cathedral acquired a secondary relic of Katherine in the form of the holy oil that exuded from her bones. The origin of the relic is not known so it is impossible to be sure whether the oil came from Rouen or Sinai or to ascertain the date at which it arrived. It is possible, however, to make some tentative suggestions, using the little evidence that exists, about the development of the cult in Christ Church and, by extension, St Augustine's.

In 1067, fire destroyed the Anglo-Saxon cathedral of Christ Church, Canterbury. Lanfranc commenced rebuilding in 1070, as soon as he took up office and this work was continued by his successor, Anselm. Further work was carried out in the 1150s and 1160s. The rebuilt cathedral was itself burned down in 1174 and it is to this latter event that we owe the description of the cathedral of Lanfranc and Anselm, written by Gervase of Canterbury who probably began his chronicle in about 1188. Little is known about Gervase other than that he became a monk at Christ Church on 16 February 1163 and, knowing the pre-1174 Cathedral, his description would have been drawn from his own recollections. Although the upper church was destroyed in 1174, the crypt survived and while it has witnessed some changes over the centuries, structurally it remains to this day essentially as Anselm conceived it.

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138 The oil is recorded as being there in 1316 in Prior Henry of Eastry's memorandum Book, BL, MS Cotton Galba E.iv, fols 122v–127v.
139 The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, ed. Stubbs, i, pp. 3–17. Stubbs points out that in his chronicle, to which the Tractatus forms an addendum, Gervase refers to Herbert of Bosham's life of Thomas Becket, written in 1186, which makes it unlikely that the chronicle was begun before this date.
From what is known about the building work it seems most likely that the design of the crypt was drawn up as part of Anselm’s design for the Great Choir. A crypt was an ancient architectural element of a Christian church and from the beginning was associated with the display of relics and the veneration of saints. The early crypt with the most considerable influence on church design was that of St Peter’s in Rome, which had been built c. 590 by Gregory the Great. He created a ‘ring crypt’ with passageways around the apse leading to the grave of St Peter, allowing for controlled access to Peter’s relics. By the eleventh century, crypts had developed into far more architecturally complex areas and the ‘hall crypt’ had emerged, of which Anselm’s is a prime example.\footnote{140}

Anselm’s crypt consisted of a large open space with groin-vaulting supported by two rows of columns, which had the effect of dividing it into a central space flanked on each side by an aisle and an ambulatory. Certain aspects of the design can be shown to be of liturgical significance in particular the decoration of the columns, which alternated spirals, zigzags and other patterns with plain columns in an echo of the twisted columns in front of St Peter’s shrine in Rome.\footnote{141} Fernie has also argued that the decoration of the columns becomes richer as one moves from the west end of the crypt towards the more liturgically significant sanctuary at the eastern end.\footnote{142} From the ambulatory radiated seven chapels mirroring the chapels radiating from the apse ambulatory in the upper church. Within these chapels were nine altars dedicated to different saints. Near to many of the altars in both the upper church and the crypt were the tombs of previous archbishops, some of whom were considered saints, and some of these altars are described as containing relics. According to Gervase, in the central sanctuary area at the eastern end of the crypt, immediately beneath the High Altar in the upper church, was an altar to the Virgin Mary, while beneath the altar to St Gregory, which was in the south-east transept of the upper church, an altar was dedicated to:

\footnote{141} Ibid., pp. 150–3.  
\footnote{142} E. Fernie, ‘St Anselm’s Crypt’, in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Canterbury before 1220*, ed. Coldstream and Draper, pp. 26–38, at p. 32.
St Ouen Archbishop of Rouen ... before the altar of St Ouen in the middle of the open ground was an altar to St Katherine'.

The other altars recorded by Gervase as being set up in the crypt were dedicated to St Augustine and St John the Baptist (near to these two were buried Archbishops Ethelred [870–88] and Eadsige [1038–50]), the Holy Innocents, the Archangel Gabriel, St Mary Magdalene, St Nicholas and St Paulinus (where Archbishop Sigeric [990–4] was buried).

The work began on the Great Choir and the crypt in 1096 and it is likely that the bulk of the construction was completed in c. 1110 shortly after Anselm’s death in 1109. The decoration, particularly of the Great Choir, took another twenty years and the final consecration of Anselm’s re-building did not take place until 1130. However Matthew Paris, writing c. 1240–50, refers to a consecration in 1114. Given that the crypt provided the underpinning for the upper church, it was probably completed in the first phase of building while Anselm still lived. The likelihood is, therefore, that the choice of altar dedications in the crypt can be attributed to Anselm. So why then would Anselm have chosen Katherine for one of the dedications? Further, is this choice linked in any way to the prominence given to Katherine in the St Augustine’s Missal?

It is noticeable that the ten altars in the crypt fall into three groups: firstly, those dedicated to New Testament figures (Mary, John the Baptist, Holy Innocents, Gabriel and Mary Magdalene); secondly, those to Fathers of the English Church (Augustine and Paulinus); and lastly, those saints important in Rouen (Ouen, Nicholas and Katherine). The fact that the majority of the altars were dedicated to biblical figures or to individuals with Canterbury connections highlights the particularly Norman slant of the dedications of the remaining three.

143 'sub hoc in cripta erat altare Sancti Audoeni Rothomagensis archiepiscopi ... Ante altare Sancti Audoeni in media fere planitie erat altare Sanctae Katerinae', Gervase of Canterbury, ed. Stubbs, i, p. 15.
St Ouen, the seventh-century bishop of Rouen responsible for converting or re-Christianising much of the area around Rouen was a well-established saint in both Normandy and England. Eadmer’s account of the arrival of the relics of St Ouen in Canterbury is confused as he describes this as occurring during the reign of Edgar (959–75) and the archbishopric of Oda (942–59), a clear impossibility. Gervase of Canterbury places their arrival in the reign of Eadred (946–55), a contemporary of Oda. Whichever account is correct, the relics would appear to have arrived in the mid-tenth century. Eadmer also recounts how Ouen’s relics had been put to one side in Lanfranc’s time, were re-discovered by himself and Osbern, and were later restored to a place of honour in the Cathedral. An altar to Ouen could thus be seen as appealing to both Norman and English sensibilities in Canterbury.

As far as Nicholas is concerned, this saint, often seen as the male counterpart of St Katherine, had been popular in Normandy since at least the early eleventh century. Duke Richard III (1026–7) had named his son Nicholas (later to be abbot of Saint-Ouen, c. 1036–92), in one of the earliest instances of its use in Western Europe. In addition, Bec had acquired a relic of St Nicholas c. 1090, during Anselm’s abbacy and he had written a prayer to the saint for use in the translation ceremony. Anselm had been further exposed to Nicholas’ cult at Bari, in southern Italy where, in 1098, he had taken part in a gathering at which he had defended the western Catholic viewpoint against Orthodox theologians. In 1087, the relics of St Nicholas had been abstracted to Bari from Myra and Anselm would have seen the enthusiasm for Nicholas amongst the Normans of southern Italy. His choice of Nicholas can, therefore, be explained by the saint’s popularity amongst the Normans and by Anselm’s own exposure to the cult at Bec and at Bari.

In the case of Katherine, however, there is no evidence from either the surviving

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146 See page 142.
151 Eadmer, The Life of St Anselm, pp. 112–13
letters or the prayers composed by Anselm that he felt a special devotion to her, or indeed, to female virgin martyrs in general. On the other hand, Anselm would certainly have been aware of St Katherine. As a former abbot of Bec, Anselm was familiar with the other Norman monasteries and letters written by him survive which show that he knew the abbot of Holy Trinity, Rouen. He could not have failed to know of that monastery's prized possession of Katherine's relics. We have also seen that Katherine was known in Canterbury in Anselm's time. Anselm might also have encountered her cult in Italy. He originated from north Italy and during his long career had made several visits to Rome and southern Italy fostering his connections with Montecassino where the cult was already established. One possible explanation for Anselm's decision to dedicate an altar to Katherine at Canterbury is to be found in the principal Church-State controversy of the day—the Investiture Contest. This struggle by the Church throughout Europe to be free of any lay control led, in the case of England, to two lengthy periods of exile for Anselm (1097–1100 and 1103–6). In the same way that Alfanus of Salerno used Katherine’s Passio in support of the papal side in the Investiture Contest in Italy, Anselm's raising of an altar to Katherine can be read as making a similar statement in England. Anselm and his bishops had stood firm against the attempts of two kings to impose their authority on the Church in England in the same way that Katherine had defied the unreasonable authority of the Emperor. The choice of Katherine rather than any other saint in this role might well have been suggested by her supportive presence in Rouen. I have already discussed above the entry for St Katherine in the St Augustine's Missal as evidence for the growth of the cult at this time. It is possible that the entry in the Missal also reflects support for clerical independence from secular interference. This suggestion is supported by what can be read of the eight defaced lines in the middle of the entry with their references to tyranny.

Although the cult was established in Canterbury by the opening decades of the twelfth century there is little direct evidence to show how it developed in Canterbury thereafter. What indirect evidence there is suggests that Katherine had by this time

152 The Letters of St Anselm, ed. W. Fröhlich. For example, letter 122 written before 1093 opens: 'I have spoken to the Lord Abbot of La Trinité-du-mont'. This would have been Gaultier (c.1080–1120), third Abbot of Holy Trinity.
153 See pages 104–12.
become a generally recognized saint. So, for example, a charter dated 1152 records the purchase of a plot of land by Wibert, sub-prior of Christ Church Cathedral from one, Baldwin Cauvel. Cauvel made his mark with a cross ‘on the feast of St Katherine virgin and martyr’, that is, on 25 November.  

Finally a late twelfth-century poem in honour of St Katherine composed by the Canterbury monk, Nigel Wireker (fl. 1190), also known as Nigel de Longchamp, is preserved in a thirteenth-century manuscript. The twenty hexameter lines of the poem play on the use of two colours to describe the saint—the purple of martyrdom and the white of virginity. However, in the opening lines, Nigel writes of ‘the fountain on Mount Sinai which flowed from Katherine’—a reference to the oil which flowed from Katherine’s bones. By the late twelfth century, Katherine had become part of the common culture of religious literature in Canterbury, but it is worth noting that again the allusion is to her relics on Sinai not in Rouen—the local competitor was still being ignored.

**Hereford**

In parallel with the developments in Canterbury, Robert of Lotharingia, Bishop of Hereford (1079–95), may have independently introduced Katherine’s cult into Hereford. Robert was highly educated with an interest in mathematics and chronology, and probably came to England from Normandy in the reign of Edward the Confessor. Shortly after his election, Robert built a two-storey chapel adjacent to Hereford Cathedral. Each storey contained a separate chapel, one dedicated to St Mary Magdalene and one to St Katherine. The chapel was demolished in c. 1737 but a description and sketch plans of the Bishop’s Chapel made by the antiquarian, William Stukeley, in 1721 still survives. Unfortunately a discrepancy exists

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156 ‘fons in monte Syna qui defluit ex Katerina’.
between Stukeley’s written account and his sketches, for he writes that the chapel of St Katherine is on the lower floor while his sketches show it to be on the upper floor. Shortly before the chapel was demolished the Society of Antiquaries commissioned a scale drawing of the building. The drawing does not indicate which chapel was which but the minutes of the Society record the presentation of the drawing and a description of the two chapels. This description places St Katherine’s chapel on the lower floor. On balance therefore it is likely that her chapel was the lower one, although, as Drinkwater points out, many other chapels dedicated to Katherine tend to be on high ground or upper floors.

Architectural historians who have been seeking to identify the influences on the design of the building have undertaken most research on the Bishop’s Chapel, Hereford. Yet few have queried whether the dedications are original or not. Barrow has argued that the building of the Bishop’s Chapel was part of Robert’s programme to re-organize his diocese and place it on a sound economic footing following the depredations of the Welsh, particularly in 1055. She points out that both dedications would have been very early examples of these saints in England but suggests they might be original as Robert had been educated in Liége, an Imperial city, and was well informed about new cults from the eastern Mediterranean. This, however, is speculation, as there is no documentary evidence which resolves the issue.

The earliest known reference to the chapel of St Katherine occurs in a document of Bishop Hugh Foliot (1219–34) dated to 1230x4, although the chapel of St Mary Magdalene appears in an undated document of Bishop Robert de Melun (1163–7). Indirect evidence that the dedication is original occurs in another undated document,
this time of Bishop Robert de Bethune (1131–48) notifying that he has dedicated an altar to St Mary Magdalene, St Margaret and St Katherine at Leominster Priory. Barrow points out that Leominster possessed relics of Margaret but not those of Mary Magdalene or Katherine and speculates that the dedication might derive from the episcopal chapel dedications. While the dedication to Mary Magdalene is clearly either original or appeared soon after the erection of the building, that of Katherine is more problematic. The fact that Katherine’s dedication first appears in the records under Hugh Foliot raises questions, for he was the bishop responsible for founding the hospital of St Katherine at Ledbury in 1232. Foliot clearly had an interest in the saint and the dedication of the chapel within Robert’s double chapel could have arisen with him.

Thorney Abbey and twelfth-century relics of Katherine

The beginning of the twelfth century also saw the first known mention in England of a relic of Katherine’s oil in an inventory of relics from Thomey Abbey, Cambridgeshire. Thomey abbey was founded, or possibly re-founded, c. 971 by Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, so that the oil must have been acquired after that date. Cecily Clark has dated the relic-list to c. 1100. Thomas, in his work on English monastic relic collections, has argued that the portion of the list containing Katherine’s oil must have been written after 1105. This would place the acquisition of the oil between c. 971 and c. 1105. The provenance of the oil is not known and there is no other evidence of Katherine being venerated at Thomey in this period.

166 Ibid., pp. 30–1.
167 BL, Additional MS. 40000, fol. 11v.
170 I. G. Thomas, The Cult of Saints’ Relics in Medieval England, unpublished University of London PhD thesis (1975), pp. 231–2. Thomas points out that the list is written in three different hands. The Katherine entry is in the same hand as the entry for the relics of St Theodore, which the Thorney Annals record as arriving in 1105.
Similar isolated references to Katherine’s oil are to be found in other twelfth-century monastic relics lists but these are all much later than the Thorney list. One such is a relic-list from Exeter contained in a late twelfth-century scroll. The oil is not mentioned in an earlier Exeter relic-list contained in the Leofric Missal so it must have been acquired at some date between the composition of the two manuscripts. While the provenance is not known, a possible candidate for the donor appears in Robert Warelwast, Bishop of Exeter (1138–55) who is known to have gone to Rome with Archbishop Theobald in 1139 and is said to have made other pilgrimages. He could well have acquired relics for his Cathedral on these trips. Another relic-list survives from the Abbey of Reading, written during the 1190s, it includes a reference to the oil of St Katherine. As Reading Abbey was founded in the 1120s by Henry I, the collection must have been acquired during the intervening seventy years. Again no provenance is given for the oil. It is also possible that a relic of Katherine’s oil was venerated at Shrewsbury Abbey by the 1170s. This is not certain, as the only reference to it is in a nineteenth-century history of Shrewsbury, in which the claim is made to have transcribed a twelfth-century list—the actual manuscript is unknown. If the transcription is accurate, the original manuscript is likely to have been written c.1175 as it mentions an abbot A, perhaps a certain Adam who ceased being abbot in 1175.

Although Westminster Abbey claimed to have an early relic of oil, donated by Edward the Confessor, no reference is made until John Flete, a monk at Westminster Abbey 1420–65, mentioned it in his history of the Abbey. While not inherently impossible, given that Edward had spent much of his youth in exile in Normandy and was there when Holy Trinity, Rouen was founded and Katherine’s relics arrived, there is no evidence that he had any especial interest in that monastery or its saint. It is also suspect that there is no reference earlier than Flete to this relic. A more likely explanation is that Westminster acquired the oil at some point and it was subsequently assumed to have been a gift from Edward, possibly to enhance its value.

Exeter Cathedral, MS 2861. See Thomas, Saints’ Relics, p. 343 and Appendix III where Thomas provides a transcription. The Katherine reference is in line 56 on the verso of the scroll: ‘De oleo Sancte Katerine virginis et martyris’.


Thomas, Saints’ Relics, p. 229.
Because of its pre-eminent position, Canterbury exercised considerable influence, both direct and indirect, on other monastic establishments. As a result, the Canterbury calendar as reformed by Lanfranc and following the Winchester model, was passed on to other monastic centres. As this reformed calendar was adopted so observance of St Katherine’s 25 November feast-day began to spread. As we have seen in Canterbury, however, inclusion in a calendar was not enough of itself to develop the cult, which required some local initiative in each centre to promote it. A case in point is the Abbey of St Albans. In 1077, Paul of Caen, Lanfranc’s nephew, became abbot of St Albans where he ruled until his death in 1093. Paul is described by the Gesta Abbatum as a religious and well-educated man who reformed the way of life in the monastery and turned the house into a centre of religious learning.\(^{178}\)

The Gesta Abbatum also records that Paul introduced Lanfranc’s Customs to St Albans and made gifts to the monastery of a number of books including Psalters, customaries and missals plus liturgical vestments and relics.\(^{179}\) Elsewhere the Gesta Abbatum records that Paul made other changes to monastic discipline out of reverence for the Eastern Fathers.\(^{180}\) It is clear from these statements that Paul undertook a major reform of his monastery. No calendars survive from his abbacy but, as will be seen, those that do survive from the first half of the twelfth century include Katherine. There is also other evidence to show that by c. 1109 Katherine’s feast-day was being celebrated in St Albans. The likelihood is, therefore, that the feast-day of St Katherine entered the calendar of St Albans as part of the reforms made by Paul of Caen.

\(^{178}\) GA, i, p. 52: ‘vir religiousus et elegantier litteratus...et facta est Ecclesia Sancti Albani quasi schola religionis et disciplinaris observantiae per totum regnum Angliae’; p. 59: ‘In Conventu autem monachorum, postquam officinas cinstr=erat, mores reformavit, ordinem redintegravit, honestatem resarcivit’.


\(^{180}\) Ibid., i, p. 60: ‘Pronunciationes quorundam nominum, vel ob reverentiam patrum nostrorum Orientalium...’
That Katherine's feast-day was being celebrated as early as c. 1109 is confirmed by a well-known episode in the *Gesta Abbatum*.\(^{181}\) Geoffrey of Gorham, an inhabitant of Maine, had been invited to St Albans on account of his reputation for learning. On his arrival, he found that the position he was seeking had already been taken. Undeterred, he became a schoolmaster at nearby Dunstable, a dependency of the Abbey, while waiting for a more substantial vacancy to occur. At Dunstable, in c.1109/10 he wrote a *ludus* or liturgical play about St Katherine, to be performed by his pupils on her feast-day. Lacking props for the performers, he borrowed some valuable copes from the Abbey but, most unfortunately, these were destroyed by fire. In recompense, Geoffrey, entered the monastery and rose to become abbot of St Albans (1119–46). No copy of the Katherine play survives but it is during Geoffrey's abbacy that St Katherine emerges as a major cult figure. He appears to have had a particular devotion to Katherine, for, in addition to his play, the *Gesta Abbatum* also records that Geoffrey was ordained on St Katherine's Day and ordered that her feast-day be kept as a major feast.\(^{182}\) This is confirmed by two calendars produced at St Albans during Geoffrey's abbacy, in which the entries for Katherine include red and green lettering, indicating a major feast.\(^{183}\) Geoffrey's abbacy also covered the period when the *St Alban's Psalter* was produced.\(^{184}\) This is a compendium of several items, two of which—the calendar and the litany—contain entries for St Katherine. The *Psalter* has been linked to the recluse, Christina of Markyate, for whom Geoffrey was a friend and protector.\(^{185}\)

It is possible that the key to Geoffrey's interest in Katherine may be found in his relationship with Christina of Markyate. In contrast to the more political interests of Alfanus of Salerno, or, indeed, to those of St Anselm, Geoffrey's interest seems to have been closely related to his conception of spiritual perfection. This appears to be firmly rooted in the eleventh-century Gregorian reform movement with its ideals of holy virginity which, in turn, led to an interest in virgin saints as spiritual exemplars. Geoffrey seems to have viewed Christina of Markyate, as one who possessed great

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\(^{181}\) *Ibid.*, i, p. 73.

\(^{182}\) *Ibid.*, i, p. 75.

\(^{183}\) BL, MSS Egerton 3721 fol. 7r and Royal 2A.x. fol. 7r.

\(^{184}\) Hildesheim, St Godehard, MS 1; *The St Albans Psalter*, ed. O. Pächt, C. R. Dodwell and F. Wormald (London, 1960).

spiritual power and insight derived from her chosen way of life. Christina had chosen, like Katherine, not to marry but to remain a virgin, in Christina's case, in the face of strong and documented family opposition. This opposition, including physical violence and a forced betrothal, presented Christina with many difficulties before she was allowed to follow a religious life. In Christina's Life, the success or failure of her desire to become a religious is portrayed as being dependent on whether or not she is able to preserve her virginity. Virginity is thus a key element in the story of Christina's struggle with her family and the fact that she triumphs becomes a sign of her great spirituality. However, a price has to be paid for everything and Christina paid for her victory with the harshness of the way of life she gradually adopted. She originally wished to enter a nunnery but her family opposed this by refusing to pay a dowry for her entry. They were also sufficiently influential to gain temporary support from the local religious establishment in their attempts to marry her off. As a result the only support Christina initially found was from certain anchoresses and hermits who hid her in their cells, inducing her to imitate their lifestyle. The brutal difficulty of this way of life served to reinforce perceptions of Christina as a holy woman, exceptional in her closeness to God. Once established in her hermitage at Markyate, she was much sought after for her advice and prayers and other women began to gather round her, forming a small community which, in 1145, became a Benedictine Priory with Christina as its head. 186

Geoffrey had probably come into contact with Christina by c. 1124, shortly after she had taken up sole possession of the hermitage at Markyate, and the manner of their meeting set the tone for their future relationship. According to the version given in the Life, Geoffrey was a worldly prelate who was planning an unspecified course of action, which he knew would upset his monks. Christina subsequently experienced a vision in which one of the monks implored her to prevent Geoffrey from implementing his plan. She requested that he should desist, a plea that he initially dismissed only to fall seriously ill and repent of his plan. 187 This vision of Christina's had a profound effect upon Geoffrey. He continued to be involved in worldly matters, becoming a confidant of King Stephen—but the difficulty of balancing such worldliness with a desire for greater spirituality appears to have affected him. As a

186 This paragraph is based on Life of Christina of Markyate, ed. Talbot, pp. 15-20, 27-8. 187 Life of Christina of Markyate, ed. Talbot, 134-9.
result he suffered from occasional bouts of ill-health which he attributed either to
punishment from God or to attacks by demons and from which he only found relief
through the prayers of Christina.

The complex relationship between Geoffrey and Christina hinges on his respect for
her as someone close to God. His perception of her as holy was directly related to her
virginal state. Further, the difficulties she had overcome to become a religious and
the ascetic nature of the life she led could be perceived by the twelfth-century mind
as a form of martyrdom spiritually akin to the brutal deaths suffered by the early
Christian martyrs. These themes of martyrdom and virginity are also fundamental to
St Katherine’s Passio, so that it is possible to regard both Katherine and Christina of
Markyate as complementary examples of a particular form of spirituality. In
venerating Katherine and in his respect for Christina, Geoffrey of Gorham was
displaying a consistent adherence to the ideals of the Papal Reform Movement, but
he did not make himself popular with the community of St Albans. Recently,
Koopmans has argued that Geoffrey’s relationship with Christina was unpopular for
a number of reasons. Firstly, it was felt to be a source of scandal; second, Christina
was becoming a financial drain on the resources of the Abbey; and finally their
relationship raised the potential for jurisdictional conflict with the bishop of
Lincoln. The fact that Geoffrey persisted in the relationship in the face of
opposition from his own monks demonstrates its importance to him.

Although Geoffrey always supported Christina, his general attitude to religious
women seems to have been conventional. In the case of Christina herself, he was
instrumental in persuading her to regularize her position and make a formal religious
profession before the bishop of Lincoln. Geoffrey also took action over a group of
women religious living in the almonry at St Albans. He was apprehensive about them

188 Bullington suggests that Geoffrey may have been responsible for the writing of the Life of Alexis
contained in the St Albans Psalter. According to his Life, Alexis refused to consummate his marriage.
Bullington compares the chaste relationship between Alexis and his bride to that between Geoffrey
and Christina. See R. Bullington, The Alexis in the St Albans Psalter: A Look Into The Heart Of The
190 St Albans claimed exemption from the bishop’s jurisdiction, however, Markyate was sited on land
owned by St Paul’s Cathedral and under the jurisdiction of the bishop.
living in such close proximity to his monks and resettled them sometime before 1140 to Sopwell Priory, on the other side of the River Ver from his Abbey. Geoffrey's behaviour towards Christina and the Sopwell nuns combines the traditional desire of the Church to contain and control women with the respect showed by many reform-minded clerics of the time towards female sanctity.\(^{192}\)

The strength of Katherine's cult in St Albans as a result of Geoffrey's devotion to the saint is revealed by a *Life* of Katherine, probably written in the St Albans scriptorium between c. 1140x1180 for presentation to Christ Church Canterbury.\(^{193}\) While there is no absolute proof that it was written at St Albans, the style and date of the manuscript coupled with Geoffrey's known promotion of Katherine's cult make it likely.\(^{194}\) The text is illustrated on fol. 40r with an unframed half-page miniature of Katherine, showing her encircled by four wheels with the hand of God above her. One interesting aspect of the manuscript is the way in which it includes features characteristic of both St Albans and Canterbury, such as the *Life* of Alphege. While this can be explained by the fact that, even though it was written in St Albans, it was destined for Christ Church, Canterbury, it neatly illustrates the shared hagiographic interests of the two establishments, links that are likely to date to the time of Lanfranc and abbot Paul of Caen.\(^{195}\)

The interest in Katherine's cult at St Albans may be responsible for its spread to Tynemouth Priory. Tynemouth was an ancient priory, mentioned by Bede, which appears to have failed at some point. Monks from Jarrow attempted reoccupation in 1080 but, by 1089, it had been re-founded as a dependency of St Albans.\(^{196}\) A twelfth-century relic-list that survives from Tynemouth includes the oil of St Katherine amongst the items listed.\(^{197}\) There is no indication of the provenance of the relic but it is highly likely that the link with St Albans stimulated interest in the saint.

\(^{192}\) GA i, 80; *Life of Christina of Markyate*, ed. Talbot, pp. 28–30.

\(^{193}\) Cambridge, Corpus Christi college MS 375, fols 1–54v.

\(^{194}\) R. M. Thomson, *Manuscripts from St Albans Abbey 1066–1235*, 2 vols (Woodbridge, 1982), i, p. 120; Bray, *The Legend of St Katherine*, p. 53.


\(^{196}\) Thomas, *Saints' Relics*, p. 239.

\(^{197}\) Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 134, fol. 2r: 'De oleo sancte katerine in ampulla'. See Thomas, *Saints' Relics*, pp. 348, Appendix III, where Thomas provides a transcription.
The three leading Benedictine centres so far examined, Winchester, Canterbury and St Albans, are those where the earliest evidence for the English cult of St Katherine is to be found. Their close connections meant that calendar changes were passed from one to the other while at Canterbury and St Albans, specific local reasons have been identified for the promotion of the cult. It was not long, however, before the cult began to emerge in other monastic centres and by the mid-twelfth century it was well established in southern England and the Midlands.

Bury St Edmunds

At the great East Anglian monastery of Bury St Edmunds, the first signs of Katherine’s cult are to be found during the abbacy of Anselm of Bury (1120–48). In this instance no calendars from the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries have survived to show whether her feast-day had been adopted, while the sole pre-Conquest calendar, dating from c. 1050, contains no entry for Katherine. However, charter evidence confirms that, by Anselm’s time, Katherine’s feast-day was being celebrated at Bury St Edmunds. In a charter, dated to 1121–48, a certain Hamo Pecche (Peccatum) confirmed a gift to the Abbey made by his mother and grandmother which included 10 solidi for the feast of St Katherine. Hamo Pecche was the son of William Pecche by his second wife, Isilia de Bourges, daughter and heiress of Hervé de Bourges and his wife Jenita. Isilia had married William, a considerably older man, at an unknown date after 1088. Hamo is recorded as alive in 1130 and still in 1178 but was dead by 1185 when his widow and son are recorded as paying a fine to inherit land from her sister, who had died childless. Hamo’s maternal grandfather, Hervé, is mentioned in Domesday as holding lands in Suffolk so his maternal grandmother, Jenita, is likely to have been active in the closing

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198 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reginensis Lat.12, fols 7–12v; Wormald, *Kalendars before 1100*, no. 19, pp. 239–51.

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The probable establishment of Katherine's feast in Bury by the beginning of the twelfth century is made more credible by the fact that Anselm erected a chapel to St Katherine, as part of the major building works he undertook at Bury during his abbacy. Although, as we shall see, he is likely to have known her cult from his previous experiences, he might also have been influenced to choose her as patron of one of his chapels if she were growing in popularity locally. While the Abbey Church of Bury St Edmunds is now in ruins, the chapel of St Katherine seems to have been an upper chapel on the south side of the west front, above the chapel of St John the Baptist. There is no direct evidence to explain why Anselm might have had an interest in Katherine but a certain amount can be inferred from his background. Anselm of Bury was an Italian by birth, nephew and protégé of St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury—whom, as we have seen, raised an altar to Katherine in Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury. Anselm of Bury, who had been a monk at the north Italian monastery of S. Martino di Chiusa from childhood, had been brought to England by his uncle to join the community at Christ Church Canterbury in 1100 and he remained there until St Anselm died in 1109. This places him in Canterbury while his uncle's building works were being planned and executed. Even if the St Augustine's Missal accurately reflects only the usage of that house—and it cannot be assumed that Christ Church followed exactly the same ritual—Anselm would have been aware of the major feasts at the monastery. It can thus be shown that he was in Canterbury at an appropriate time to have encountered Katherine's cult.

After leaving Canterbury, Anselm of Bury first became abbot of the monastery of San Saba in Rome, was then sent as Papal Legate to England, finally being elected

abbot of Bury St Edmunds in 1121. Anselm’s link with San Saba may also have influenced his decision to dedicate a chapel to Katherine. San Saba was one of the oldest monasteries in Rome, founded in the seventh century by Greek monks and dedicated to a popular Greek saint. By Anselm’s time there it had become a mixed Greek/Latin rite monastery. Anselm of Bury is known to have introduced the celebration of the feast of St Saba into Bury St Edmunds and to have dedicated a chapel to Saba in the Abbey Church. He was also involved in re-introducing the feast of the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary into England. The younger Anselm’s involvement in the advancement of Katherine’s cult can, therefore, be firmly placed in the context of his connections with Italy and the Eastern Church as well as his Canterbury connection.

One final noteworthy reference to Katherine at Bury St Edmunds dates from the end of the twelfth century. It is to be found in the Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, a monk of the abbey, and records how, on St Katherine’s Day, 25 November 1198, abbot Samson, opened the coffin of St Edmund and examined and touched his body. This deed was performed with fear and reverence and, although the choice of St Katherine’s Day had more to do with its proximity to St Edmund’s Day (20 November) than to a special reverence for Katherine, the story demonstrates the well-established nature of her feast-day by the end of the twelfth century. The royal virgin martyr’s feast-day might also have been thought to be an appropriate choice for viewing the body of the martyr king.

The English dependencies of Holy Trinity, Rouen

The development of the cult in the monastic centres so far examined shows no direct influence from Holy Trinity, Rouen. While the community of Holy Trinity, as

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206 Ferrari, Early Roman Monasteries, pp. 281–90.
207 Douglas, Feudal Documents from Bury St Edmunds, charter 112.
custodian of the only relics of Katherine in Western Europe at this time, might have
been expected to promote her cult in England after 1066, there is, in fact, little
evidence that it did so. Rather, it can be shown to have promoted the cult in specific
localities where it had interests but to have established neither itself nor its English
outposts as major pilgrimage centres. This reflects the view expressed above that
Holy Trinity never became more than a moderately successful middle-ranking
monastery. In so far as it can be shown to have influenced the English cult it was a
consequence of its territorial gains during the division of spoils that followed the
Norman take-over of 1066.

In 1069, on the suggestion of William fitz Osbern, William the Conqueror granted
land and a church at Harmondsworth in Middlesex to Holy Trinity, Rouen. In
addition to recording the king’s gift, the charter also contains a small vignette
illustrating William’s sense of humour. It records that the king made the gift by
presenting abbot Rainer with a dagger. This was a common way of marking a gift.
However, as he did so, he made as if to stab the abbot’s hand saying that it was in
this way that land should be given. One can only hope that the abbot saw the joke.
Domesday records the abbot of Holy Trinity holding Harmondsworth from the King.
Its extent was 30 hides, its value twenty pounds and the manor had previously been
held by Earl, that is King, Harold. Holy Trinity established a priory at
Harmondsworth but it always remained small and probably only consisted of a prior
and one monk. When Eudes (Odo), Archbishop of Rouen, visited Holy Trinity in
1265 and again in 1268, on both occasions he recorded only two monks in the
priory. The main function of the priory seems to have been to act as the
administrative centre for Holy Trinity’s property in England (the much larger
dependency of Blyth [see below] was never entrusted with this task). During the
thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was periodically seized as an alien priory, with
the priors paying a rent to the Crown in order to retain control. Finally, in 1391,
William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, obtained a licence from Richard II to

211 ‘Hoc donatio facta est per unum cultellum, quem prefatus rex joculariter dans abbati quasi eius
palmae minatus infigere: “Ita", inquit, “terra dari debet”.’
212 Domesday Book: Middlesex, ed. J. Morris (Chichester, 1975), 5.1.
213 The Register of Eudes of Rouen, pp. 605, 704.
214 VCH, Middlesex, i, p. 200.
purchase all the land which Holy Trinity, Rouen—by now known as St Catherine’s—owned in England, apart from Blyth. Harmondsworth then became part of the endowment that Wykeham made to his foundations at Winchester and New College, Oxford. The Harmondsworth never became a major centre for St Katherine’s cult must be attributed to the nature of the establishment. It was a small administrative centre, vulnerable to royal depredations, and as such not suitable to promote itself or its mother-house as a pilgrimage centre.

A more significant landholding was obtained by Holy Trinity in 1088 when Roger de Builli and his wife Muriel founded a priory, dependent on Holy Trinity, Rouen, at Blyth in Nottinghamshire, endowing it with the church of St Mary at Blyth and substantial landholdings in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, and Leicestershire. At a stroke, this endowment propelled the cult northwards into the English Midlands. Both Roger and Muriel seem to have been well-connected. When they married, Muriel received the manor of Sandford, Devonshire from Queen Matilda, wife of the Conqueror, while Orderic Vitalis records that, on Roger’s death in c. 1098, Robert of Bellême claimed his lands on grounds of kinship. Roger was already a benefactor of Holy Trinity, Rouen and appears to have been continuing his patronage with gifts from his post-Conquest gains in England. In the two charters recording the endowment of Blyth Priory no references to Katherine occur. It is not possible, therefore, to impute devotion to Katherine as part of the motivation for the foundation. However, Roger and Muriel obviously regarded themselves as patrons of Holy Trinity, Rouen and by 1088, as we have seen, the monastery’s relics of Katherine were well-known for their miracle-working properties. The presence of popular relics can only have added to the Holy Trinity’s attraction for potential patrons.

The relationship between Blyth and its parent house of Holy Trinity seems to have been a close one. The abbot of Holy Trinity usually appointed the prior of Blyth, and monks from Rouen were sent to Blyth. However, like Harmondsworth, Blyth does

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215 Ibid., p. 202
216 Timson, Cartulary of Blyth Priory, charters 325 and 361.
218 Having sold it the tithe of Buslei (his ancestral holding at Bully-le-vicompte) in either 1060 or 1064. See Timson, Cartulary of Blyth Priory, p. xiv; Deville, Cartulaire S. Trinité, charter 43.
219 Timson, Cartulary of Blyth Priory, pp. lxii–lxii.
not appear to have become a major centre for Katherine's cult although, as the Priory church was also the parish church, it provided a focal point for the local laity. It is likely, but not absolutely certain, that a church at Blyth dedicated to the Virgin existed prior to the creation of the Priory. 220 This is made more likely by its dedication to Mary, for, had the church been a new foundation, it would probably have been dedicated to Katherine from the beginning. Instead, Katherine's cult seems to have been promoted by a dedication of an altar to the saint within the church. This led over time to Katherine becoming associated with the Virgin Mary as a junior patron of the Priory. The process that had led to Katherine becoming the principal patron in Sinai and Rouen did not, however, occur here, and Katherine remained the secondary patron.

Some of the early Blyth Priory records provide indications of lay devotion to Katherine in England. A surviving cartulary contains copies of charters from the time of the foundation down to the fourteenth century. While most of these refer only to St Mary at Blyth, three include reference to St Katherine. It is noteworthy that these three were all given by descendants of witnesses to the original foundation charter of Blyth Priory, two of the three being given by individuals from the same family.

The earliest of the three charters records a gift of certain tracts of land in Nottinghamshire made by one, William of Whatton, to 'the Lord God, St Mary and St Katherine'. 221 William is thought to have been the son-in-law of Ralf Novi Fori, one of the signatories of Blyth's foundation charter. The origins of Ralf Novi Fori are unknown but he is likely to have had some connection with Roger de Builli in Normandy, and he certainly held a tenancy from Roger in Blyth. William is known to have been alive in 1130, when he paid for his son to inherit the land of his uncle (Ralf's son) William de Novo Mercato, but is thought to have died soon after. The charter is therefore unlikely to be later than 1130. 222 The phrasing of the charter suggests that Katherine was already associated with Mary as a second patron of the Priory. William's son Adam seems to have taken his uncle's name and, as Adam de Neufmarché, granted a charter confirming 'to God, St Mary and St Katherine of

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220 Ibid., p. xxix.
221 Ibid., Charter 133: 'Sciatis me concessisse domino deo et sancte Marie et sancte Katerine . . . .'
Blyth' all the gifts his ancestors had made to the Priory. The phrasing of this charter suggests that Katherine, together with Mary, had established herself as a joint patron of the Priory. Adam seems to have succeeded his father soon after 1130. He died in 1161 so the charter can be dated to c.1130–60/1.

The third charter, records a grant by Ralf de Chevrecourt of 16 pence for a light to burn on the altar of St Katherine in the church of Blyth. From the witness list the charter is likely to date before 1157. Ralf (d. before 1166) was probably the son of Thorald de Cheuerchort (Chevrecourt), another of the signatories of Blyth’s foundation charter. Thorald originated from Quievrechort about four miles from Builli and may have been an under-tenant of Roger de Builli. That Thorald witnessed Roger’s foundation charter indicates that the two families must have been connected. Amongst other benefactions known to have been made by Ralf was Wallingwells Priory, Blyth’s sister house for nuns. The charter provides direct evidence that there was an altar to St Katherine in the Priory Church.

These three charters reveal that, at some point after Holy Trinity, Rouen acquired the Blyth Priory in the mid-twelfth century, an altar to St Katherine was set up in the Priory Church which stimulated lay interest in her cult. Although the direct evidence for this is comparatively late, the earlier charters associating the Priory with St Katherine suggest that the altar had been set up much earlier. This would be consistent with the natural desire of Holy Trinity, Rouen to promote the cult of a saint whose relics it possessed. The other noteworthy feature of these charters is the way in which the Priory benefited from continuing links with certain families. Both the families concerned can be traced back to the foundation charter and may have had connections with Roger de Builli in Normandy. The likelihood is that veneration of St Katherine was part of the religious ‘baggage’ that the families brought with

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223 Cartulary of Blyth Priory, ed. Timson, charter 135: ‘Sciante... concessi... deo et sancte Marie et sancte Katherine de Blida...’
224 Ibid., p. xxxiv; Early Yorkshire Charters, ed. Clay, p. 142. The Neufmarché family maintained their links with Blyth as members of the family made further gifts at the end of the twelfth century. See Timson, Cartulary of Blyth Priory, p. xxxiv.
225 Ibid., charter 189, especially note 51.
226 Ibid., p. xxv.
227 Ibid., pp. xxv–xxvi. The Chevrecourt family maintained their links with Blyth as Ralf’s granddaughters are recorded as making gifts to the Priory. See Timson, Cartulary of Blyth Priory, p. xliv.
them when they transplanted themselves into England in the years following 1066. Their continuing support for Blyth Priory and its altar to St Katherine would have been a mixture of personal piety and family tradition—it was 'their' proprietary priory. Unlike the monastic centres examined elsewhere the establishment of Katherine's cult at Blyth is, therefore, a direct offshoot from the Norman cult and results from both clerical and lay interest.

The church at Hemtone sita super fluvium Tamisie

Although the Blyth charters are amongst the earliest evidence of lay interest in Katherine there is one even earlier charter reference. This occurs in a charter given by Robert de Haia, or de la Haye, in 1105 when he created a priory at Boxgrove in Sussex, dependent on the Abbey of Lessay in Normandy. Amongst the lands and gifts with which he endowed the new priory is listed the church of St Katherine by the Thames at Hemtone. The charter was reconfirmed at various times up to the fifteenth century and each time the list of gifts is repeated without more information as to the location of this church. The wording of the charter does, however, imply that the church was already in existence by 1105.

Various suggestions have been made as to the location of this church, none of them entirely satisfactory. Harben has suggested that it might have been in London on the site of the future St Katherine’s Hospital. He points out that if this is correct it confuses the subsequent land transactions which saw the area first being granted by deed to the Priory of Holy Trinity, Aldgate and subsequently to Queen Matilda (d.1152), wife of King Stephen (1135–54), for her new hospital. However no evidence exists for a land transfer between Lessay and either Holy Trinity, Aldgate or Matilda and so this seems unlikely. Although there are a number of Boxgrove charters up into the fifteenth century which mention the church of St Katherine this

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229 '... et ecclesiam Sancte Katherine que est sita super fluvium Tamisie ...'
231 See page 217.
seems to be merely a repetition of the original charter. Neither the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV in 1291, nor the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII mention the church amongst the possessions of Boxgrove.

The editor of the Boxgrove cartulary has suggested that *Hemtone* might be Heston in Middlesex but I can find no evidence for a church dedicated to St Katherine at Heston. Another possibility based on the name *Hemtone* might be Hampton on the Thames but no church dedicated to St Katherine appears at Hampton. A final possibility might be Littlehampton, Sussex on the Arun and possibly confused by someone unfamiliar with the geography of the region with a tributary of the Thames. Littlehampton, variously known as Hampton Parva and Hantone, has the advantage of being close to the Sussex lands known to have been held by Robert de Haia. The available evidence does not permit a definitive answer and the church of St Katherine *sita super fluvium Tamisie* remains a tantalising early hint at the cult in southern England.

To return to firmer monastic ground. I have already demonstrated how the cult of St Katherine had taken root in southern England in the second half of the eleventh century and the opening decades of the twelfth century. Through the dependency of Holy Trinity Rouen, established at Blyth, it had also become rooted in the Midlands and it is here in the middle of England that the next major centre associated with the cult emerges.

**Lincoln**

The Gilbertine Priory of St Katherine's, Lincoln was founded c. 1148 by Bishop Robert Chesney of Lincoln (1148–66) shortly after he became bishop. The Gilbertine order had only recently come into being originating locally in Lincolnshire. Gilbert of Sempringham (c. 1085–1189) established a small community next to his church in

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Sempringham c. 1131. Initially, he had hoped to ally his foundations with the Cistercian order but his attempts to do this in the General Chapter of the Cistercians held at Citeaux in September 1147 proved fruitless. This failure may have had something to do with the Cistercians’ known hostility to the idea of taking responsibility for women religious—although the two foundations Gilbert had set up by this date were double houses, they were primarily for women. However, as Brian Golding has pointed out, the Chapter of 1147 did agree to take over responsibility for the orders of Savigny and Obazine, which also included some women amongst their ranks. The deciding factor may therefore have been the poverty of the two Gilbertine houses and their lack of a powerful patron.

Following, his return from Citeaux, Gilbert adopted the Augustinian Rule for his communities and a further seven double houses were founded by the time of his death in 1189. In addition, four houses solely for Augustinian canons were established, of which St Katherine-without-Lincoln was the first. Golding suggests that the initial shift towards single-sex houses may have resulted from the other charitable responsibilities of these four men-only establishments, which prevented them from taking on responsibility for nuns. Following Gilbert’s death however, only one more double house was founded and all the remaining foundations were for men alone. Elkins suggests that this overall shift towards single-sex establishments represents a growing reluctance amongst the Gilbertines’ to found double houses and a growing suspicion of such establishments during the second-half of the twelfth century.

The choice of St Katherine as the patron of Bishop Chesney’s foundation is an interesting one. As can be seen from the table below, the majority of Gilbertine houses were dedicated to the Virgin Mary (twelve out of the twenty-four successful foundations, with a further two where she shared the dedication). This is probably a

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238 St Katherine’s, Malton and Clattercote were all associated with hospitals while Ellerton was responsible for the maintenance of thirteen poor men. See Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham*, p. 220.

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reflection of the general preference of the times—Mary was overwhelmingly the favourite choice of patron for monastic foundations and parish churches—and possibly also of Gilbert’s early inclination towards the Cistercians, all of whose dedications were to the Virgin Mary.240

In the table on the next page it will be seen that, with the exception of St Katherine’s, all the early foundations are to the Virgin Mary. The joint dedication to Mary and Andrew of the first foundation at Sempringham can be explained by the fact that Gilbert began his work at the church of St Andrew at Sempringham, to which he was presented by his father.241 It is not until the late twelfth century that other dedications start to appear. The later foundations tend to be outside Lincolnshire and sometimes the dedications can be traced to the particular wish of the founder. For example, Henry, Rural Dean of Fordham, began to build a Priory dedicated to St Peter and St Mary Magdalene at Fordham shortly before 1227. He began building before deciding which Order should occupy the Priory and only subsequently gave the Priory to the Gilbertines.242 Similarly, St Edmund’s, Cambridge was founded by Cicely, daughter of William of St Edmund’s, who gave land and the advowson of the chapel of St Edmund’s for that purpose.243

Given this pattern of dedications, it seems likely that there must have been a particular reason for choosing Katherine as the patron of the Lincoln foundation. This proposition is further strengthened when it is remembered that the Priory at Lincoln was Chesney’s only religious foundation during his eighteen-year episcopate. His decision to create a Gilbertine foundation could be explained as a continuation of his predecessor’s policy of supporting a local Order—but his choice of saintly patron cannot be so explained. Katherine might therefore reasonably be assumed to reflect something of importance to him. So, who was Robert Chesney and why might he have been interested in St Katherine?

240 Out of 213 monasteries founded between 1101 and 1150, 96 (44%) were dedicated to the Virgin. See A. Binns, Dedications of Monastic Houses in England and Wales, 1066–1216 (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 26–7.
243 Golding, Gilbert of Sempringham, p. 172.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Foundation date</th>
<th>Dedication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sempringham</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>c. 1131</td>
<td>Mary &amp; Andrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haverholme</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>1139</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvingham</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>1148x55</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>c. 1148</td>
<td>Katherine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watton</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>c. 1150</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malton</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>c. 1150</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicksands</td>
<td>Bedfordshire</td>
<td>1151x3</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullington</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>by 1155</td>
<td>Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nun Ormsby</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>1151x60</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catley</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>before Dec. 1157</td>
<td>Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newstead</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td>Holy Trinity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sixhills</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>before 1186–8</td>
<td>Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clattercote</td>
<td>Oxfordshire</td>
<td>by late 1180s</td>
<td>Leonard</td>
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<td>Mattersey</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
<td>before 1192</td>
<td>Helen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shouldham</td>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>1193x1200</td>
<td>Holy Cross &amp; Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holland Bridge</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>1195x9</td>
<td>St Saviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>1195x1202</td>
<td>Andrew</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marlborough</td>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>by 1199</td>
<td>Margaret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellerton</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>1199x1203</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fordham</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>1204x27</td>
<td>Peter &amp; Mary Magdalene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marmont</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>c. 1204</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>1291</td>
<td>Edmund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poulton</td>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hitchin</td>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>c. 1361–2</td>
<td>St Saviour</td>
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Chesney was born c. 1109, the son of a knight whose family had property in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire. He may have been educated in Paris and, although not a scholar himself, was a patron of Geoffrey of Monmouth and owned several books, which he bequeathed to the Cathedral Library. He was the uncle-by-marriage of Gilbert Foliot (Bishop of Hereford [1148–63] and Bishop of London [1163–87]), with whom he appears to have been on good terms. At the time of his election to the bishopric of Lincoln he was Archdeacon of Leicester and a canon of St George’s, Oxford. He did not play a major role in the political turmoil of the times, perhaps because he had connections to both camps in the civil war—his brother was an adherent of Stephen, while his Foliot relatives supported the Empress Matilda. Nor does he seem to have been active in the upheaval surrounding Archbishop’s Becket’s dispute with Henry II, although by then he was in failing health and died while the controversy still raged. Chesney was also a friend of Ralph de Diceto who described him as vir simplicitatis et humilitatis magnae. But he also had his critics, such as Gerald of Wales, who berated him for being too generous in giving away cathedral properties, in particular the cathedral prebend and four parish churches which he gave to St Katherine-without-Lincoln.

Nothing in Chesney’s background gives any real clue as to the reason for his choice of dedication. Nor are there any obvious local connections with St Katherine’s cult. Cole has suggested that a pre-existing dedication of the site might have been perpetuated but there is no evidence for this and given the embryonic state of the cult in England at this time, it seems unlikely. Nor does anything suggest that Chesney had the same profound respect for holy women which motivated Geoffrey of Gorham, particularly as the foundation was the first male-only Gilbertine house.

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One possibility is that the choice was influenced by contacts with St Albans, itself in the diocese of Lincoln. The relationship of abbot and bishop was turbulent and Chesney himself became embroiled in ultimately unsuccessful litigation over the Abbey's claim to exemption. Nevertheless the promotion of the cult of St Katherine at St Albans by Geoffrey of Gorham would not have gone unnoticed in Lincoln. Geoffrey died in 1146, while Chesney would have been an archdeacon in Lincoln, and his successor at St Albans was one, Ralph Gubion (1146–51). Ralph, who was abbot throughout Chesney's episcopate, had strong Lincoln connections having formerly been a chaplain to bishop Alexander of Lincoln (1123–48). Chesney may, therefore, have been influenced in his choice of dedication by direct exposure to the cult at St Albans.

Another possibility is that the dedication to St Katherine was acquired after the Priory was founded. The original foundation charter has been lost but was confirmed by Henry II, probably between 1156 and 1166, and its text is extant, having been copied into an Inspeiximus of Edward III dated 1327. Henry's charter appears to be a consolidation of several grants to the Priory but it nowhere contains a dedication for the priory. In Edward III's confirmation of Henry's charter, the wording is precise: confirmation is given to the Prior and canons of the aforesaid place now called the Priory of St Katherine-without-Lincoln (my italics). If the name was acquired after the foundation it must have been soon after as there is charter evidence of its use by c.1189 and no evidence that it was ever known by another name. If Chesney's principal motivation was to found a Gilbertine house for men, then the decision to dedicate it to Katherine could have been triggered by the gift to the Priory, shortly after its foundation, of the Hospital of Holy Sepulchre, Lincoln, founded by Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln (1093–1123). This gift is one of those recorded in Henry's charter and so is likely to have been made soon after St Katherine-without-Lincoln was founded.

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248 GA, i, pp. 138–58.
The early history of the Hospital is little known and confusion has been caused in the records by its absorption by the Priory. Although there are frequent references in charters to the Priory as the Hospital of St Katherine and Holy Sepulchre, there does seem to have been some administrative separation between the two with the Prior of St Katherine's in overall control. Unlike the Priory, which was for canons only, the Hospital was a mixed-sex community consisting of lay brethren and lay sisters. The latter were known as the Sisters of St Katherine, appearing as the recipients of bequests in a number of wills and charters. It was gifts such as these to the sisters and to the Hospital generally that caused St Katherine's to become one of the wealthiest of the Gilbertine houses. Golding has noted that the level of gifts was maintained up until the Dissolution indicating the strength of regard for its charitable work.

It may well have been in Chesney's mind to give the Hospital to the Priory from the beginning and this link may provide the reason for the dedication. While Katherine's Passio does not suggest any obvious link with nursing and healing, evidence from elsewhere shows that such a link was perceived to exist. At approximately the same time as the Lincoln Priory was founded, Matilda, King Stephen's wife, founded a hospital in London which became known as St Katherine's by the Tower and the infirmary chapel at Westminster Abbey was dedicated to St Katherine. It may be because she was portrayed as an educated woman that she was thought to be knowledgeable in such matters or it may reflect her dying prayer that God would grant the prayers of all those who prayed in her memory, as well as her perceived powers as an intercessor. It should also be remembered that in the later Middle Ages she became one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers who were believed to be particularly powerful intercessors for God's aid.

A final factor might have been growing general popularity of Katherine's cult amongst the laity in Lincolnshire during the twelfth century. Unfortunately, little twelfth-century evidence survives to indicate lay interest in Katherine in Lincolnshire so its growth is difficult to chart. However, a manorial chapel was dedicated to her in

253 Golding, Gilbert of Sempringham, p. 233.
254 See pages 217–19.
Whaplode before the end of the twelfth century. Eventually the growth in interest led to the cult manifesting itself within Lincoln Cathedral, although probably not before 1200. Although this places it just outside the time-frame of this thesis, certain features of the later cult at Lincoln are sufficiently unique to be worth considering here. Of particular note, given that relics are an abiding theme of this thesis, are the relics of Katherine possessed by the Cathedral. The Lincoln Cathedral relics differ from the usual secondary relic of oil as they consist of portions of the chain with which St Katherine was supposed to have bound the devil. The Lincoln relic is mentioned in a fifteenth-century inventory, however nothing is known about its origins. In an inventory dated 1536, Lincoln Cathedral is also said to have possessed a finger of St Katherine kept in a long purse decorated with pearls. This is the only reference I have found to a primary relic of Katherine in England.

A similar chain relic is mentioned in a relic-list from Salisbury Cathedral dated 1536 but again its provenance is not known nor is it known whether there was any connection between the Lincoln and Salisbury relics. The emergence of a relic in the form of a chain used by the saint to bind the devil is very curious as there are no stories of Katherine binding the devil with a chain. I can only speculate that it derives from a passage in Jacob de Voragine, where one explanation given for her name is that it comes from catenula meaning small chain. De Voragine says that this is because by her good works she fashioned a chain for herself by which she climbed to heaven. This would mean that both relics probably originated after c. 1260 when The Golden Legend was written.

London

The mid-eleventh century saw a flurry of activity in London with the foundation of a number of different institutions dedicated to Katherine. In addition to Chesney’s

259 In the fourteenth century Lincoln Cathedral possessed an altar dedicated to St Katherine at which a number of chantries were kept, such as that founded in 1332 by Bishop Burghersh, and that of Richard Stretton, a Prior of St Katherine-without-Lincoln, founded 1334x5. See P. B. G. Binnall, ‘Notes on the Medieval Altars and Chapels in Lincoln Cathedral’, The Antiquaries Journal, 42 (1962), pp. 68–80, at p. 74; Cole, ‘Priory of St Katherine without Lincoln’, p. 294.
260 Thomas, Saints’ Relics, pp. 114, 126.
priory in Lincoln, King Stephen’s wife, Matilda, founded the hospital of St Katherine by the Tower c. 1148 on land acquired from Holy Trinity Aldgate. The earliest existing reference however, to its dedication to Katherine is in 1216, as before that date it is referred to merely as ‘the hospital’. It is not certain then, that the dedication dates from the foundation of the hospital but it remains a possibility. I have already drawn attention to the connection with the church granted to Lessay by Robert de Haia. Although this connection is problematic, there are other indications that the Augustinian Priory of Holy Trinity, Aldgate, the original owner of the land on which the hospital was built, had an interest in St Katherine. Indeed, the Priory had built a parish church dedicated to St Katherine in the priory churchyard, probably by the early twelfth century. I have been unable to discover any particular reason for this interest in Katherine on the part of Holy Trinity, Aldgate but it seems to have persisted throughout the twelfth century, as around the end of the century, a life of Katherine was written by the then prior, Peter of London (1197–1221).

Holy Trinity, Aldgate had been founded by an earlier Queen Matilda (d. 1118), the wife of King Henry I and had continued to enjoy royal favour under Stephen and his wife. The second prior, Ralph, acted as the Queen’s confessor and two of Stephen and Matilda’s children were buried in the priory. The second Matilda would have been familiar with the priory and its interests. When she founded the hospital, Matilda gave to Holy Trinity, Aldgate the perpetual custody of it, although the hospital subsequently asserted its independence and the link was formally severed in 1261.


263 See page 209.


266 Hodgett, The Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate, p. 3.

267 See Jamison, The History of the Royal Hospital of St Katherine by the Tower, p. 4, Appendix A, p. 177–8, where the foundation charter is printed with a translation; Hodgett, The Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate, p. xv, and charters 973–87, pp. 192–5.
where the hospital should be built. If the hospital’s dedication is original, it must have been acceptable to both Matilda and the canons. Although the available evidence is insufficient to be sure how or when the dedication was chosen, given the other interest shown by the priory in St Katherine at this time, it may well have been contemporary or nearly contemporary with the foundation of the hospital.

Shortly after St Katherine-by-the-Tower was founded, a chapel, dedicated to St Katherine, was built in the infirmary of Westminster Abbey. The chapel was a substantial building and, although little now remains, it is believed to have consisted of a nave with five bays with aisles and a chancel. It was large enough to be used for the holding of council, synods and episcopal consecrations. There is some uncertainty about its foundation date, which in turn makes it difficult to be sure who founded the chapel. It was certainly built by 1163 when Henry II is recorded as holding court in the ‘Capella Sanctae Katerinae apud Westmonasterium’ but it may have been built as early as 1154. If it was built before 1158, then the founder was Stephen’s illegitimate son, Gervase, by his mistress, known only as Darnette. Gervase was made abbot of Westminster by Stephen in c. 1138, an office he held until his deposition in either late 1157 or early 1158. If the chapel was built after Gervase’s deposition, then abbot Lawrence (1158–73) built it, and of these two abbots, Lawrence seems the more likely to have founded the chapel.

Before he came to Westminster Lawrence was, for a time, a monk at St Albans during the abbacy of Robert of Gorham (1151–66), nephew of Geoffreyn of Gorham, the principal promoter of Katherine’s cult at St Albans. Lawrence seems to have retained his links with St Albans, for after his election to Westminster, he persuaded Robert of Gorham to give a number of valuable gifts to Westminster Abbey on the

268 Jamison, The History of the Royal Hospital of St Katherine by the Tower, p. 4; Hodgett, The Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate, charters 975–6, p. 192.
270 For example, the Council of Westminster, 1173; the consecration of William of Ste-Mère-Église as bishop of London in 1199. See Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C. N. L. Brooke, 3 vols (Oxford, 1981), i, pp. 965, 1054.
271 G4, i, p. 150; Lethaby, Westminster Abbey, pp. 27–8.
grounds that the Abbey had been impoverished through the mismanagement of his predecessor, Gervase. These gifts caused much resentment amongst the monks of St Alban's, which is unlikely to have been diminished when Lawrence repaid the gifts by successfully gaining Henry II's support in a lawsuit between Westminster and St Albans. 274

By the mid-twelfth century Katherine was sufficiently widely known for Lawrence to have known of her existence as one of the general 'reservoir' of early saints. However, given his St Albans' connections, he is likely to have had a heightened awareness of her cult. If he is the builder of the chapel, as I think likely, then his choice of dedication may be explained through his St Albans' connections. Other factors arguing in favour of Lawrence as founder are that he is known to have undertaken building works in Westminster Abbey to repair extensive fire damage, although there is no direct evidence that he built the chapel as part of this refurbishment. 275 It has also been suggested that abbot Lawrence is the most likely candidate as there was an altar to St Lawrence within the chapel. 276 Finally, to commemorate the anniversary of his death, Lawrence assigned income from the churches of Battersea and Wandsworth for the support of the Infirmary, so he appears to have had a special regard for it. 277 While the evidence is not conclusive, it suggests that Lawrence built the chapel in the early years of his abbacy.

Whoever built the infirmary chapel at Westminster Abbey, it is significant that Katherine is once more associated with tending the sick. 278 The fact that three hospitals dedicated to the saint were founded within the space of a few years—the other two being St Katherine-without-Lincoln, c. 1148, and St Katherine by the Tower, c. 1148—suggests that a connection between Katherine and the care of the poor and the sick had been established by the mid-twelfth century. Once established, this link continued and in the opening decades of the thirteenth century hospitals

274 GA, i, pp. 112, 133–4; Mason, Westminster Abbey and its People, p. 52.
276 Lethaby, Westminster Abbey, p. 27.
278 Medieval hospitals performed the functions of almshouse, orphanage and hospital (in the modern sense). This mixture could vary but in essence hospitals were charitable establishments caring for particular groups.
dedicated to Katherine were founded at Bedminster near Bristol (1219) and Ledbury, Herefordshire (c. 1231).  

Waltham Abbey

The discussion so far has shown how, by the late twelfth century, Katherine's cult had become widespread in southern England and the Midlands. As a result of this growing popularity, altars begin to be dedicated to the saint within churches and the oil of Katherine starts to appear in monastic relic-lists. This steady expansion of Katherine's cult is clearly demonstrated at Waltham Abbey in Essex, where Katherine's cult was integrated into the religious life of a monastery as a secondary cult.

A fourteenth-century manuscript survives from Waltham Abbey containing a list of the relics owned by that Abbey. Much of the relic list appears to be a copy of an earlier list drawn up following an inspection of the relics by abbot Richard (c. 1201/2–30) in 1204. The relics fall into three main groups: those believed to have been given to the Abbey by King Harold (d. 1066), who had founded a monastery for secular canons at Waltham in 1060; those given by unnamed donors before 1177 and those given by named donors after 1177, the year in which the Abbey was re-founded for Augustinian canons. Amongst the items donated before 1177 is listed a small glass bottle containing the oil of St Katherine, but with no indication of its provenance. Amongst the post-1177 items is a list of gifts from a certain dominus Nicholaus, prior of St Gregory's, Canterbury, which includes oil of

280 BL, MS 3776, fols 31r–35r. See Thomas, Saints' Relics, pp. 258, 349 and Appendix III for a transcript of the relic-list; N. Rogers, 'The Waltham Abbey Relic-list', in England in the Eleventh Century, ed. C. Hicks, pp. 157–81, including a printed edition of the relic-list.
281 Rogers, 'The Waltham Abbey Relic-list', p. 158.
282 The list of donors begins at fol. 33r.b line 11 with Ralph de Bonelece, first Augustinian prior of Waltham Abbey, who was appointed 11 June 1177. See The Early Charters of the Augustinian Canons of Waltham Abbey, Essex 1062–1230 ed. R. Ransford (Woodbridge, 1989), p. xi.
283 Fol. 32r.a, "...De oleo Sancte katerine. Ampullula uitrea. vestigia tam olei / ostendens non autem oleum habens..."
St Katherine. Given that Nicholas only became prior of St Gregory’s in 1241 this implies that the relic-list was added to after the death of abbot Richard in 1230.

In addition to these relics, other evidence shows that Katherine was one of the more popular saints at Waltham by the end of the twelfth century, although her cult was still comparatively weak compared to the main Waltham cults of Holy Cross and St Lawrence. Amongst the surviving charters from Waltham is one dated 10 August 1186x1224, notifying that Reinier, Bishop of St Asaph, had consecrated altars there to several saints, including Katherine, and had granted an indulgence from penance of thirteen days on the anniversary of the consecration. There is also a taxation return on the church of St John, New Windsor and its chapel of St Andrew, Old Windsor, both of which had been given to the canons of Waltham by Henry II, prepared for Bishop Richard of Salisbury in 1226. The return lists the offerings made on the most popular saints days. In New Windsor, Katherine is shown as attracting an offering of one shilling, on a par with Edmund the King and Mary Magdalene. Although this is a respectable sum, the more popular feast-days attracted considerably more: St John the Baptist (the patron of the local church)—15 shillings; All Saints—8 shillings; while St Nicholas, at an offering of 2 shillings, attracted twice as much as Katherine. In Old Windsor the range of feast-days recorded is more limited and Katherine is not mentioned.

Waltham Abbey thus provides an example of the way in which the cult of St Katherine spread from its early beginnings into the mainstream of English religious life. All the recorded evidence from Waltham relating to Katherine comes from the period after 1177 when it became an Augustinian house. None of the surviving documents from the earlier period mention her. There are several reasons for this, firstly in the period following the introduction of the Augustinians, a considerable expansion took place in the wealth and possessions of the Abbey and thus in its...

284 Fol. 34r.b line 21, ‘...De dono domini Nicholai prioris Sancti Gregorii cantuariie ... et de oleo Sancte Katerine ... ’ This is a reference to Nicholas of Shotindon, Prior of St Gregory’s 1241–c. 1252. See Cartulary of the Priory of St Gregory, Canterbury, ed. A. M. Woodcock, Camden Society, 3rd Series, 88 (London, 1956), pp. 172–3 for a list of the priors of St Gregory’s.

285 The choice of the Bishop of St Asaph to perform the consecration resulted from the canons’ desire to stress their exemption from local episcopal jurisdiction rather than any particular connection he may have had with the saints concerned. See Early Charters of Waltham Abbey, ed. Ransford, pp. vii, lx, charter 279.

286 Ibid., pp. xxx; xxxviii, charter 116.
status. It was, therefore, in a better position to attract gifts such as relics. Secondly, Katherine's cult was becoming more widespread by the late twelfth century and samples of her oil would have been more generally available to be given. The growth in the cult was obviously significant enough by this period to spur the canons to set up an altar in her honour in their Abbey. The growth in Katherine's popularity amongst the laity can also be seen in the way in which the Abbey began to garner significant offerings on her feast-day.

Other monastic and church dedications to Katherine before c. 1200

By the mid-twelfth century, Katherine’s cult was well-established in south-east and eastern England. It continued to spread in these areas and in c. 1150 a priory dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St Katherine was founded at Blackborough, Norfolk by Roger de Scales and his wife Muriel. Although the dedication was a joint one the priory was sometimes simply referred to as St Katherine’s. The priory was originally intended for monks, although by c. 1170 it had become a house for both sexes and, by c. 1200, the founder’s son had given the foundation to Benedictine nuns. In Essex, evidence of the cult at parish level is found with the building of a church at Little Bardfield in Essex, which still stands, dedicated to St Katherine. Although the exact foundation date is unknown there is a reference to the ‘capella Sancte Katerine’ in Bardfield in a charter dated to 1173x1217 and possibly even before 1180.

Although most evidence for the cult in the twelfth century comes from south-east England there are two indications of its spread westwards. The earliest of these

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287 Ibid., pp. xxiv–xxv.
288 Binns, Dedications, p. 64.
290 Care has to be taken over church dedications as many supposedly ancient dedications are in fact nineteenth century re-creations. Arnold-Forster identified 61 pre-Reformation churches dedicated to Katherine and her listings are often cited in modern secondary works as a measure of the popularity of the cult in medieval England. Unfortunately Arnold-Forster’s work was not based on primary sources and only represents dedications current in her own day. As a result, her list cannot be relied upon for the medieval dedication without corroborative evidence. Indeed, some of her medieval dedications can be shown to be post-Reformation and at least one is not, in fact, dedicated to Katherine. In this section and elsewhere I have only cited dedications for which reliable primary sources can be shown to exist. See F. Arnold-Forster, Studies in Church Dedications or England’s Patron Saints, 3 vols (London, 1899) iii, pp. 344–5; N. Orme, English Church Dedications with a Survey of Cornwall and Devon (Exeter, 1996), pp. 55–8 where Arnold-Forster’s deficiencies are discussed.
comes from Montacute in Somerset. Here, a Cluniac priory dedicated to SS Peter and Paul had been founded c. 1078, probably by Count Robert of Mortain, although his son William was traditionally credited with being the founder. 292 In 1174 a chapel dedicated to Katherine was built in the monks' burial place. In due course this became the parish church with the chaplain paying the monks a pension of one mark. 293 Slightly later, in c. 1200 a Benedictine priory for nuns was founded at Polsloe in Devon. 294 I have not been able to find any other references to Katherine prior to 1200.

This chapter has sought to clarify the process at work in the introduction of the cult of St Katherine into England. It has also identified some of the individuals who were responsible for the spread of the cult. Yet, as with so many aspects of eleventh- and twelfth-century history, inadequate primary sources mean that gaps must remain. However sufficient can be discerned to show the steady establishment of the cult in southern England and the Midlands in the period up until 1200.

292 Binns, Dedications, p. 115; Two Cartularies of the Augustinian Priory of Bruton and the Cluniac Priory of Montacute, ed. T. S. Holmes, Somerset Record Society, 8 (1894), pp. 119-20.
293 Holmes, Two Cartularies, p. 192.
294 Orme: English Church Dedications, p. 193; The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, ed. Stubbs, ii, p. 424. A further dedication to Katherine is a chapel at North Hylton on the outskirts of Durham. The chapel was erected in 1157 and its ruins still stand. However, I have not found any contemporary confirmation of the original dedication.
Chapter Six

Conclusion

In this thesis I set out to examine the origins and development of the cult of St Katherine of Alexandria to c. 1200. My dual purpose has been to clarify, as far as possible, the cult's early history and to identify the means by which it was transmitted from East to West. As an integral part of this study, I have attempted to analyze some of the general processes of cult development so that Katherine may be more firmly placed in context. Her cult most probably originated in oral traditions emanating from the early fourth-century Diocletianic persecutions of Christians in Alexandria but whether the saint was an individual or a composite figure cannot be determined from the available evidence. However, Katherine can be shown to have achieved independent existence by the seventh century when her name is found in a Syriac litany, probably composed in Antioch. This litany, most likely based upon a Greek original, demonstrates Chalcedonian characteristics, suggesting that it derives ultimately from Constantinople. Although no seventh-century evidence has survived from Constantinople, Katherine's inclusion in the tenth-century synaxarium of St Sophia attests to her commemoration in the Constantinopolitan liturgy.

Commemoration of Katherine within the liturgy is the first indication that the saint was regarded as an identifiable individual, worthy of remembrance, although at this stage she remained a minor figure. No special significance is given to her name in the Syriac litany while the synaxarium of St Sophia celebrated three other saints on 25 November before Katherine is even mentioned. Many saints never progressed beyond this stage, doomed to languish forever in obscurity, but for some reason, now hidden from us, Katherine caught the imagination of an anonymous liturgist and her Passio was set down. The composition of the Passio was a major advance for the cult as it enabled Katherine to develop a distinct persona with which the faithful could identify—a necessary pre-requisite for any cult—that of a beautiful, intelligent, noble-born virgin, capable of defying an Emperor, of outwitting the finest minds in

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1 See pages 49–67.
2 See pages 75–8.
3 See pages 78–9.
the Roman Empire and of enduring torture and martyrdom for her Christian faith. As the Passio became more widely diffused and, in consequence, the story of the saint became better known, Katherine slowly began to distinguish herself from the common herd of early martyrs. The importance of the Passio in this process cannot be over-stressed. As there were no material remains—neither relics nor shrine—so too there were no vested interests to promote her veneration. Only Katherine's Passio was capable of providing a structure and focal point for her cult. This inevitably slowed down development and growth, and not until the tenth century were there signs of a significant expansion in the veneration of the saint. The earliest surviving Greek manuscripts of Katherine's Passio date from the tenth century, as does the earliest Latin Passio.⁴ Thereafter, increasing numbers of texts survive in both languages from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

One of the most significant tenth-century developments highlights still further the influence of Katherine's Passio in extending her cult. This saw the inclusion of the Passio in the compendium of saints' Lives compiled in the second half of the tenth-century by the hagiographer Simeon Metaphrastes. His highly influential compendium was immediately popular and numerous copies survive dating from the early eleventh century onwards. The inclusion of Katherine's Passio within Metaphrastes' compilation meant that her story was brought to the attention of a much wider audience than had hitherto been the case. Although the balance of evidence suggests that Katherine appeared in the liturgy prior to the composition of her Passio, it is not possible to provide conclusive evidence to support this proposition. Such a sequence of events would mean that the liturgical commemoration of a saint, possibly supported by an oral tradition, was able to generate sufficient interest for a narrative Passio to be composed. The later example of the introduction of Katherine's cult into England also demonstrates how a cult could spread in the first instance solely through the saint's inclusion in the liturgy.⁵

The proposed terminus post quem for the Passio is c. 565x73 for it contains passages drawn either from John Malalas, a chronicler who was certainly at work by 565 and

⁴ See chapter one, notes 4 and 46.
⁵ See chapter five.
may well have been writing even as late as 573, or from one of his sources. The *terminus ante quem* is c. 800–40 by which time a Latin version of the *Passio* can be shown to have existed, although the specific text is now lost. This allows a time-span of approximately two hundred years during which the original *Passio* was composed. However, the surviving evidence suggests an eighth- rather than a seventh-century date for the *Passio*. Nevertheless, such an interpretation has to be treated with caution as it is in part based upon an argument from silence. Arguments from silence are notoriously dangerous as they assume that a lack of evidence equals no evidence—whereas it might simply have been lost. In this case, the argument is based on the fact that no Katherine *Passio* survives from the seventh century, neither has any trace of a seventh-century *Passio* been found.

It is, however, possible to speculate on a time-frame for the composition of the original *Passio*, based upon its contents. In particular, Katherine’s prayer just before her execution that her body should not be divided up to be distributed as relics, suggests that the *Passio* may have originated during the eighth-century Iconoclastic period, c. 726–87. Although Katherine’s *Passio* is not an obviously iconoclastic tract, the prejudice against relics prevailing in this period may well have influenced the author of the *Passio* to make a virtue out of necessity and to explain the absence of relics in terms acceptable to the prevailing attitudes. It is noticeable that the later western versions of the *Passio*, circulating at a time when relics were both desirable and available, do not include this prayer. Thus the capacity of this cult to adapt to prevailing religious trends and to differing individual needs is perhaps the single most important reason for its steady growth and one which ensured its wide and receptive audience. In general the differing responses to Katherine fell into two broad categories: she was either regarded as an exemplar or an intercessor. Within these categories, a number of sub-groups evolved, while it is possible in any given period to find varying attitudes to the saint co-existing.

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6 See pages 65–6.
7 See pages 18–19.
8 See pages 60–3.
One of the earliest examples of Katherine as intercessor is to be found in the *Menologium Basilianum* written for Basil II c. 1000. Basil was to spend much of his reign at war with non-Christians and the *Menologium Basilianum* reflects his need for divine assistance in his struggles. The nature of his attitude to Katherine is subtler than merely regarding her as a potential helper on the grounds that she had died for her faith. The author of the *Menologium* presents her as a strong defender of the faith in life as well as in death so that the episode of her debate with the philosophers remains almost the only element of her story to be retained in the truncated version used. A similar attitude can be seen in the illustration of Katherine in the *Theodore Psalter* composed in 1066. In this work, with its anti-Iconoclast overtones, Katherine is depicted in debate as a defender of the faith, this time against false doctrine. The invocation of the saint on behalf of a political cause is also clear from the hymns of Alphanus of Salerno, written before 1085, where the twin attributes of martyr and defender of the faith are once more combined as an up-dated Katherine is pressed into service on the papal side of the Investiture Contest. More mundane attitudes to Katherine as intercessor emerge from the case-study of the early Norman cult centred on Rouen. An analysis of the miracles wrought by Katherine’s relics there, reveal how personal was the nature of the help sought. Individuals came to Katherine’s shrine out of a necessity, underpinned by their belief in her as both intercessor and miracle-worker. In some of the longer miracles, a real sense of the desperation of the supplicant comes through. This is particularly so in Miracle 3, where the overwhelming desire of Emigis and his wife for a child, who would also be their heir, is apparent throughout the story.

Some indications reveal that Katherine was already regarded as a spiritual exemplar in Byzantine religious circles by the tenth century. In the middle of that century Paul of Latra (d. c. 955/6) is recorded as being greatly moved by meditating on St Katherine and, in the mid-eleventh century, Ekaterina, a Cappadochian gentlewoman, took the veil in imitation of her name-saint. By the turn of the eleventh century, interest in Katherine as a spiritual exemplar becomes apparent in Western

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9 See pages 23-7.
10 See pages 106-9, Appendix II.
11 See pages 149-58.
12 See pages 151-2.
Europe. As a result, Goscelin of St Bertin includes her as an exemplar in his *Liber Confortatorius*, written for the recluse, Eve of Wilton. Katherine’s spiritual appeal to Geoffrey of Gorham, Abbot of St Albans, is possibly one of the clearest examples of how an individual religious might venerate Katherine in this way. She is the thread that runs through his whole life from the time he composed a *ludus* or liturgical play in her honour in c. 1109 to his introduction of her feast-day as a major festival at St Albans between 1119–46. Geoffrey’s interest in the saint appears to derive from his enormous respect for women determined to follow a chaste religious life in the face of considerable opposition. This provides the second theme to his life, his support and friendship with the anchoress Christina of Markyate. Indeed, the strength of his support for holy women is practically demonstrated by his continuing friendship with Christina despite vigorous opposition from within his own abbey.

Other early examples of individual devotion to Katherine can be found in southern Italy but it is harder to identify the motivation of those concerned. Abbess Ekaterina of San Giovanni delle Monache in Capua (b. before 1115–d. before 1149) may well have identified with her saintly namesake as a powerful educated woman dedicated to a chaste life, but has left nothing behind but her name as evidence. Similarly, Katherine must have been of significance to Alexander, Count of Gravina (fl. 1130s–70s), for she is depicted on all four of his known seals. Why this should have been so is a matter of surmise.

The expansion of the cult in the tenth century would appear to have created the need for some kind of physical expression of the saint, for it is at this point that the first surviving pictures of Katherine are to be found. These are the product of each individual artist’s creative inspiration, as only the most generalized description of Katherine’s qualities could be drawn from her *Passio*—her youth, her noble bearing and her beauty. All three of these elements are present in the earliest visual representations of Katherine in which great stress was laid on her noble antecedents. This leads to her translation into art as the archetypal Byzantine princess, usually appearing in courtly dress and frequently with an imperial crown. The earliest

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13 See pages 198–201.
14 See page 200.
15 See pages 111–12.
representation of Katherine to have been identified is a Cappadocian wall-painting thought to date from 913–20.\textsuperscript{16} This appearance of the saint, far from metropolitan Constantinople, seems to suggest that, even before Metaphrastes' popularization of Katherine, her \textit{Passio} is likely to have been in general circulation. Other tenth- and eleventh-century Cappadocian paintings of Katherine all show her in iconic pose and rich imperial dress—the more narrative representation of her martyrdom contained in the \textit{Menologium Basilianum}, which dates from the same period, also depicts her in Byzantine courtly dress.

From the late tenth century, representations of Katherine begin to appear on the walls of churches in western Christendom. The painting that can be most securely dated, is that in San Sebastiano alla Polveriera, on the Palatine Hill in Rome.\textsuperscript{17} This was probably produced c. 973x99. As with the early Greek representations of Katherine, her noble status is made manifest by the clothing of the saint in Byzantine royal dress. The dating of a second painting in the catacomb of San Gennaro in Naples is more problematic but is likely to be tenth-century.\textsuperscript{18} The second half of the tenth century also seems to be the period when Katherine's \textit{Passio} became current in southern Italy. A certain Neapolitan sub-deacon named Peter (fl. c. 960) is thought to have composed a version of the \textit{Passio} and, quite separately, the work appears to have reached Montecassino at the end of the tenth century.\textsuperscript{19} Abbot John III (998–1010) is known to have spent six years on Sinai in the 990s, during which period he is likely to have had some exposure to Katherine's cult.\textsuperscript{20} The two earliest surviving Cassinese versions of Katherine's \textit{Passio} are thought to be eleventh-century in date and post-date John's abbacy.

A final product of the tenth-century expansion in the cult was the creation of an expectation that, if Katherine was indeed buried on Sinai, then it should be possible to recover her relics. It is that this point that Katherine steps off the written pages of liturgy and hagiography and achieves an actual physical existence with the \textit{inventio} of her relics. This event is poorly recorded but, given that it is not mentioned in the

\textsuperscript{16} See pages 81–2.
\textsuperscript{17} See pages 98–100 and Plate II.
\textsuperscript{18} See pages 102–4.
\textsuperscript{19} See pages 104–12.
\textsuperscript{20} See pages 105–6.
chronicle of Eutychius, Patriarch of Alexandria (933–40), it seems to have occurred in the second half of the tenth century after c. 940. The inventio of Katherine’s relics represents the second major advance for her cult. Even more significant than the composition of her Passio, it raised the cult to a different plane and provided a major centre—Sinai—which was motivated to promote veneration of the saint. The remoteness of the shrine does not seem to have been an inhibiting factor, particularly as Katherine’s relics turned out to have the power to produce a miraculous healing oil which could be widely distributed as a secondary relic.

Relics—their location, presentation and efficacy—emerge as the second theme in this study of Katherine’s early cult and they present one of the cult’s most distinctive characteristics. It is now widely accepted that most successful saints’ cults relied upon the presence of relics to provide a focal point for the cult. The belief that a saint remained in some way ‘present’ in his or her mortal remains, whilst at the same time being present in the court of heaven, was fundamental to the belief that saints provided a bridge between heaven and earth, humanity and God, and could, therefore, intercede with God on behalf of human supplicants. In Katherine’s case, her Orthodox cult achieved substantial growth prior to the inventio of her relics on Sinai. Yet, the cult also managed to gain a toe-hold in western Christendom in the absence of any relics. However, Rouen, the first major western cult centre for Katherine, only comes into prominence once the relics of the saint become available. It is also noticeable that the Rouen centre comes into being, not out of any particular devotion to Katherine, but because the availability of relics of the saint coincided with the need of the newly-founded monastery of Holy Trinity, Rouen, to find a suitable source of revenue.

That money lay at the heart of the quest for relics is certainly not to decry the genuine piety of the monks of Holy Trinity. That the monks considered Katherine to be an appropriate patroness informs us about the level of knowledge of Katherine in Normandy. Their monastery, after all, had been founded by Goscelyn, one of the leading men of the duchy, and had been granted many privileges by the duke.

21 See page 93.
22 See pages 7–8.
23 See chapter four.
himself. The advent of the relics at Holy Trinity probably occurred in the 1030s and certainly by 1046/7. Once the monastery had acquired Katherine's relics, hagiographical works were produced, the most important of these being the two late eleventh-century works, the *Translatio* and the *Miracula*. This was in direct contrast to the early Greek cult where liturgical and hagiographical works preceded the *inventio* of any relics. The implications of this inversion of the process occurring within the Orthodox cult, can be seen in the speed at which the cult of St Katherine developed in Normandy compared to its early progress in the eastern Mediterranean. Within fifty years of Holy Trinity's acquisition of the relics, the cult was well-entrenched, the relics attracting pilgrims and performing miracles. The relics appear to have been kept in a *châsse* reliquary and there is likely also to have been a statue of Katherine present in the monastery church.

The promotion of the saint's relics by the monks of Holy Trinity provides a glimpse into the world of the monks entrusted with the charge of the saint's shrine. The works they composed, in particular the *Translatio* and the *Miracula* were clearly written to promote Katherine's relics and to attract more pilgrims but a comparison of the work with similar collections from other Norman shrines allows more general conclusions to be drawn about saints' cults in eleventh-century Normandy. Such a comparison suggests that an informal 'pecking order' existed amongst saints in the region. At the head was St Ouen, the possessor of a major international shrine in Rouen. In the *Miracula*, the monk-author set out to enhance Katherine's reputation in Normandy by depicting her as a co-worker of miracles with Ouen. Katherine herself possessed a regional cult that was sufficiently successful to encourage the promoters of lesser cults to use her as a comparator in the same way that she was compared to Ouen by her promoters.

While the early Norman cult of St Katherine was typical of the majority of saints' cults in being rooted in the possession of relics, the early English cult developed in a way more akin to the original Orthodox cult. The explanation for this is that the first

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24 See page 124.
25 See pages 129-32.
26 See page 155-7.
27 See pages 142-4.
manifestations of the cult in England were liturgical and hagiographical—relics did not play a significant role in its development. The creation of centres of worship for Katherine was effected through the dedication of altars and chapels or churches to Katherine, whose only relics were those secondary ones of oil from her bones on Sinai or in Rouen. Katherine may have been included in a monastic calendar from Winchester as early as 1030 but her cult was almost non-existent at this point. Indeed, the cult does not really begin to progress until after the Norman Conquest in 1066. This may well have resulted from the lack of relics and the absence of any obvious promoter for her cult. On the other hand, the lack of source material may have been caused by the disruption that followed the Conquest and it cannot be definitively ruled out that the cult was being diffused prior to 1066. What can be clearly demonstrated is that by the end of the eleventh century Katherine's cult had taken root in Canterbury and that, in the opening years of the twelfth century, an altar was erected to the saint in Christ Church Cathedral, probably by no less a figure than St Anselm himself.

Although no comparable document to the Norman *Miracula* has survived in English sources, it is still possible to discern something of lay attitudes to Katherine in the twelfth and early thirteenth century. Two distinct groups can be distinguished from the records. The first, emanating from the Norman baronage, are to be found in a set of charters from Blyth Priory, Nottinghamshire. Blyth was a dependency of Holy Trinity, Rouen and it is possible to trace gifts to the Priory from a group of Norman families through the foundation charter and three later charters covering a period from 1088–c. 1161. All these families would appear to have had connections with Holy Trinity prior to 1066 and to be continuing their patronage of that monastery through its English dependency. Their involvement in supporting Katherine's cult would seem to result from a mixture of personal piety and longstanding family tradition, and to derive directly from the Norman cult.

The second group of identifiable laity have proved to be far more shadowy. These are to be found in taxation records of Waltham Abbey prepared in 1226 and, while it

28 See pages 172–3.
29 See pages 188–92.
30 See pages 207–8.
is not possible to break the group down into named individuals, as with the Blyth group, the records do give an inkling of the growing lay interest in the saint.\textsuperscript{31} The taxation records list the offerings made to individual saints on their feast-day at one of the churches belonging to the Abbey. In the shilling collected on St Katherine’s day it is possible to distinguish the sum of a number of smaller offerings made by the local parishioners to the saint. Whilst being eclipsed by the fifteen shillings offered to St John the Baptist, patron of the church, this sum is still sufficiently respectable to warrant being recorded as a separate item, thus symbolizing the way in which, by the end of the twelfth century, the cult of St Katherine had embedded itself into everyday church life in England.

Although the height of Katherine’s popularity was yet to be achieved, already by c.1200, knowledge of her was well established in both eastern and western Europe. It was the capacity of her cult to appeal in different ways to different individuals or to groups of individuals that held the key to its success. Whether as spiritual exemplar or powerful intercessor, Katherine touched the sensibilities of a wide range of people from the court of the Emperor in Constantinople to an ordinary English parish church. In return, the faithful offered her their devotion and, in so doing, helped to lay the foundations of what was to become one of the major cults of the later Middle Ages.

\textsuperscript{31} See page 222.
## Early Manuscripts containing the Passio of St Katherine

Note: This list contains manuscripts written prior to c. 1200. In addition, it contains manuscripts which are referred to in the body of this thesis. Abbreviated references are given for modern works which either contain edited versions of the manuscripts or discussions on them. Full details will be found in the bibliography.

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<td>Metaphrastes. Illustration of Katherine Life is on fo. 83r. Illustration has been cut out.</td>
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*Cambridge* MS Goeville and Caiss College MSS 301/315

*BL* Cotton Caligula A.viii; *ff.*169-91

*Bern* Burger bibliothek MS 137; *ff.*158-78

*Brussels* Bibliotheque Royale MS 8690-8702; *ff.*13-41v

*Roven* Bibliotheque Municipale MS U.2; *ff.*185 m-a, 186-94

*Roven* Bibliotheque Municipale MS U.119; pages 131-67

*BN* Fonds latin 5165; *ff.*163-71

*BN* fonda latin 12259; *ff.*267-86

*Hereford* Cathedral Library P.8.VII & P.7.VI

*Bodley* Latu Misl 14

*BN* fonda latin 17007; *ff.*203-10v

*Leipzig* Universitatsbibliothek, MS Rep.II.64, *ff.*60v-100

*Brussels* Bibliotheque Royale MS 9120; *ff.*92v-100

*MS* Lambeth Palace 51

**Vulgate** [long]

*BN* Fonds latin 1970: *ff.* 54-70

*BN* Fonds latin 5343; *ff.*135-7v & 140-8v

*Bern* Burger bibliothek MS 133; *ff.*65v-84v

*Brussels* Bibliotheque Royale MS 18108; *ff.*25v-37

*Cambridge* MS Goeville and Caiss College MSS 301/315

*BL* Cotton Caligula A.viii; *ff.*169-91

*Bern* Burger bibliothek MS 137; *ff.*158-78

*Brussels* Bibliotheque Royale MS 8690-8702; *ff.*13-41v

*Roven* Bibliotheque Municipale MS U.2; *ff.*185 m-a, 186-94

*Roven* Bibliotheque Municipale MS U.119; pages 131-67

*BN* Fonds latin 5165; *ff.*163-71

*BN* fonda latin 12259; *ff.*267-86

*Hereford* Cathedral Library P.8.VII & P.7.VI

*Bodley* Latu Misl 14

*BN* fonda latin 17007; *ff.*203-10v

*Leipzig* Universitatsbibliothek, MS Rep.II.64, *ff.*60v-100

*Brussels* Bibliotheque Royale MS 9120; *ff.*92v-100

*MS* Lambeth Palace 51

**BHL 1663**
## Appendix I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANUSCRIPT</th>
<th>DATE OF MANUSCRIPT</th>
<th>Modern published editions/descriptions.</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BL MS Harley 12, fto 141r-143v</td>
<td>Early 13c</td>
<td></td>
<td>Written by one Richard - probably from St. Albans. Work may date from about 100 years before ms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leipzig Senatskoden 196</td>
<td>c1140 x 1180</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BN MS fonds latin 5279</td>
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<td>BN MS fonds latin 14364</td>
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<td>Gloucester Cathedral MS 1</td>
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<td>CCC 375</td>
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<td>Bodley Laud Misc 515</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANGLO-NORMAN TEXTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS French 6 in John Rylands Library, Manchester.</td>
<td>13c</td>
<td>Fawtier Jones (1930).</td>
<td>Part of text prob. copied from 12c original. Likely to have originally been part of BL, MS Egerston 2710.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clemence of Barking</td>
<td>last quarter 12c</td>
<td>McFain (1964).</td>
<td>Anglo-Norman French text. Based on Vulgate [long version]. Three mss survive none of them the original, which probably dates from the last quarter of 12c. None of the mss has been copied from the other two. A &amp; P descend from a common original. Clemence of Barking. Clemence of Barking. (Formerly MS Welbeck ICI from the Duke of Portland's collection). Clemence of Barking. This ms is translation of poems in Picard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: BN nouvacq. &amp;. 4SO3 ff. 43r-74r</td>
<td>c1200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B: BL MS Add. 70513</td>
<td>13/14c</td>
<td>McFain (1964).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>P: BN B. 23112 ff 117v-334v</td>
<td>second half 13c</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MIDDLE ENGLISH VERSION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxford, MS Bodley 34</td>
<td>c1200-1225</td>
<td>Eenkel (1884); Dobson &amp; d'Ardenne (1981). Hardwick (1849); Eenkel (1884); Dobson &amp; d'Ardenne (1981). Hardwick (1849); Eenkel (1884); Dobson &amp; d'Ardenne (1981).</td>
<td>Also known as Katherine Group version. In 19th century known as Semi-Saxon version. Based on long form of Vulgate. Middle English version. MS linguistically close to Ancrene Wisse in CCC402 and likely to be c.1225. However work older and likely to be c 1200-1210.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BL MS Royal 17 A.xxvii</td>
<td>c1220-30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Middle English version.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BL Cotton Titus D.xxvii</td>
<td>c1250</td>
<td></td>
<td>Middle English version.</td>
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<td>OTHER</td>
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Translation of three odes to St Katherine by Alfanus, Bishop of Salerno (1058-1085)¹

1. *Hymn in praise of St Catherine the virgin*

Beautiful beyond measure yet wanting to admit no husband, she did not cover her perfect appearance with adornments, she was all-knowing, seeking greatness through goodness, and was especially pleasing on account of her piety, The chaste virgin Catherine, a martyr of God, obtains that which she chooses whilst she shrinks away from the wickednesses and enticements of the flesh. And while she rejects wealth, while she spurns empty honours, exposed to blows the victrix is made more illustrious with each one. Courageous and steadfast, with God's help, she stood firm against human snares not worrying about cruel threats. A learned teacher, she did not fear to confound learned minds, nor was afraid in tender youth to endure whips ordered by imperial authority; while imprisoned in a dark cell no hunger was able to cast down the Saint's soul, A servant given to God, whose lives are fitting, God visits his handmaiden and the Queen visits the imprisoned maiden. Nor does she suffer darkness, for light is poured out within. A throng of servants coming together as spectators, bound and suffering she sought early the palm of faith's victory. Nor could the wheels revolve as promised. Nor did she fear death, carrying from death a crown. Whilst her wound ought to send out bloody waves, it gave out milk and a heavenly crowd took her body to the glorious tomb, and the body poured forth healing drops.

¹ These translations have been prepared from the Latin using the edited version of Alfanus' writings published in Migne, *PL*, 147, col. 1240-41.
2. *Hymn in praise of the same Virgin*

The great goodness of the young girl gathers us together
to make praises with our song.
While small she rejects that which her parents
poured upon her, she is favoured with much wealth.
While she relinquishes the perishable authority of the king
the young girl is endowed with a greater crown.
The appearance of Catherine shone out
but manifold virtue renders her more beautiful
and having been born uniquely beautiful
she deserves to be joined with the Supreme Father.
While (the ruler) desired to be aroused by her embrace,
she did not want the lands that he might give.
She fled neither from anything favourable nor evil,
from which the ruler could not with
threatening countenance move her spirit.
She scorned to favour his inducements.
She taught with detailed deeds of reasoning
which illuminated faith to the old toga-clad men.
She conquered, and they were pleased to submit,
while in the end they submitted depriving themselves of life.
The executioner wounded the delicate girl with a sword
by chance, but was unable to kill her spirit.
Her splendour lay hidden by the rectangular cave of prison
but she manifested to a troop of soldiers the highest comeliness
and the riches Christ prepares.
Now, a holy wonder, she carried before her the weight of the wheels
and cut to pieces a company of soldiers.
Finally her head having been ordered to be cut off
She asked Christ humble favours.
The wound pours forth a white liquid.
The virgin's bones buried by a heavenly host
give out a healing balm.
Let there be no annoyance in having brought forth in song praise which the virgin has merited, not equal to the merits: virginal purity, outstanding brightness that shone forth in wisdom, and steadfast valour seek rightly to be extolled by new honours, the number of the virtues, by which she flourished in this her brief space of life in fragile state, raising high the snowy glory of Catherine.

That many advantages could not tear apart nor outward appearance take away, or weigh down with riches the free part of the female sex.

Great knowledge (was) revealed under the guise of one of tender age, you find much hidden knowledge.

While she reveals the mystic dogmas of faith the knowledgeable audience can contribute nothing, holding fast to the light of the gleaming victrix the losers discover their souls.

A solid oak within a frail body, she put to the test the ruling power, she whom it held in its power she attacks with prayers, while threatening with fury, lacerating the flesh it places her in darkness, that by the removal of food it may hasten her death.

But God accumulates joys for his handmaiden, prepares food, that it may nourish the flesh. The Word bears fruit, heaps together seeds.

Strong she did not fear the terrible wheels, and suffers death in order not to die.

And white milk follows the wounds.

The right hands of those who dwell in heaven place the body on a mountain peak, from which the liquid flows, giving back strong limbs to the weak.
Appendix III

The Miracles of Saint Katherine, BM, Rouen, MS U.22, fols 112r–115v

Introduction

So after divine grace directed to us the remains of the Blessed Catherine this place never lacked signs of miracles, even for a short time. Here, the blind recovered sight, the deaf hearing, the lame movement, paralytics were cured and others burdened with infirmities were returned to health. The renowned martyr of God demonstrated to all around that Normandy was illuminated by her presence; for the lamp of Christ shone forth with the full light of her virtues, not placed under a bushel but upon a candlestick and not only pervading the fertile Athenian lands but reaching as far as the western regions of the world. Almost the whole of Neustria rejoices and exults, being suffused with the oil of so great a virgin and adorned from heaven with such a very precious jewel. So splendid miracles are performed, of which omitting most of them, we will describe a few.

Miracle 1

And first making mention of our most reverend father Isernbert, we describe what we have discovered concerning him, which although very slight among the others, is nevertheless suitable and special out of regard for him, and it is confirmed by the testimony of many brothers. For at the time of the first coming of the holy relics, it happened that the reverend father was tormented by very severe toothache, to such an

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Footnotes:
1 In order to make the text clearer I have inserted sub-headings at appropriate points. These are not present in the original text.
2 The metaphor of a light being placed on a candlestick is a reference to the Sermon on the Mount. See Matt. 5: 15; c.f. Mark 4: 21; Luke 11: 33. The reference to the Athenian fields is the first of two references to Athens (see note 14). There is no obvious reason for associating Katherine with Athens rather than Alexandria. It may simply be a way of describing Katherine as being Greek.
3 Neustria was the Carolingian name for the region in northern France part of which later became Normandy. Although Neustria and Normandy were not identical, the two terms were sometimes used interchangeably in the early Norman period.
4 Isembert was abbot c. 1030–c. 1054 (see chapter four, note 86). Manuscript A inserts at the end of the sentence: 'who still survive from that time'.
extent that he was hardly able to take food or enjoy sleep. Accordingly the feeling of all suffered with the suffering of one and the pleasant congregation of sons suffered with compassion for the pains of their holy father. And when for several days he was distressed by discomfort of this kind and could not in any way be cured, on a certain night he was advised in a dream that he should not delay to be anointed with the oil of the blessed Catherine. He, trusting in the vision, when day broke, asked for some of the precious treasure to be brought to him by the sacristan of the church. And when he had been anointed with the holy liquid, he took a draught of it, and immediately his pain was put to flight, and so he marvellously proved the merit of the blessed martyr by this one test of her virtues in himself.

So when they saw this, the celebrated order of monks
Rendered thanks from the heart to the Supreme Father
Through whom the virgin bestowed the gifts of health on His people.

Miracle 2

In the succeeding time, when the same venerable father was standing in the garden with the brothers, suddenly a man came there wretched in appearance and dress asking for alms, in great distress from lack of food and exhaustion; for his ailment, which is commonly called cancer, taking hold of his right side had, by penetrating, so eaten it away that it already came to the hidden parts of his ribs and was killing the unfortunate man by pitiful torment. So the man of God, sympathising with his misery, first ordered him to be given food and then to be taken to the monastery and anointed with the oil of the blessed virgin. And so the poor man went away doubly revived by the gift and in a short time recovered his health. And not ungrateful for his salvation, like the Samaritan in the gospel, after three days he returned to the monastery to give thanks to the Blessed Virgin for his cure. He showed to everyone his side, formerly damaged by a serious ulcer and consumed with corruption but now so renewed with a covering of skin and flesh and restored to the appearance of its earlier comeliness that you would be openly amazed at the notable miracle of the heavenly craftsman through

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5 Cancer was used for a number of ailments and is more likely to have meant ulcers or gangrene than cancer in the modern sense of the word. See R. E. Latham, Revised Medieval Latin Word-list (London, 1965), p. 66; Gonthier and Le Bas, ‘Analyse socio-economique’, p. 6.
the holy martyr. And in this there was also this remarkable feature, that three scars appeared like scarlet threads on the very site of the ulcer, as if providing indication of the divine virtue. Seeing which, those who were present glorified the Lord in the holy virgin and with one mind offered prayers of thanksgiving.

So by the gift of the Lord, by which the saints can do all things,
More beautiful than amber, more precious than all gold,
Catherine shines in the countryside with the fame of her miracles.  

Miracle 3

A certain soldier called Ernigis, one of the most important men of the kingdom, made a vow to the blessed Catherine on behalf of his sterile wife that a child of either sex whom God might grant to her through the merits of Catherine he would devote to the service of God out of love for her. So having invoked the glorious virgin and made a solemn promise, the glorious virgin granted his petition and in the same year the woman having been made fertile, she brought forth a son of outstanding beauty. Nor was he undeservedly beautiful whom so great a virgin by her merits had obtained for them at the throne of God. The father rejoiced with much dancing and returned thanks to the blessed virgin for the son given to him by God through her merits. At that time he also intended to keep his vow; but as the child grew in body and in beauty, his intention to disinherit an heir of such handsomeness by giving him to the holy martyr began to worry him somewhat. And later, having been consulted foolishly by his wife and her parents, he determined to withdraw this child and fulfil his vow with another if God granted it. 0 inconstancy of heart, 0 impudence of a perverse mind, by which, as the voice lies, the soul is killed. What compelled the unhappy man to make a vow which the heart determined to fulfil with imperfect firmness? Did you really think to mock the blessed virgin? But truly:

You are foolish, Ernigis, when you undo well-intentioned vows,
When you violate the agreement and oppose divine commands,

Following this verse, A inserts: 'Although this miracle is attested by the statement of many, we have chiefly learnt of it by the very sure description of our venerable brothers Odo and Hugo'. See page 137.

Manuscript A inserts the following text at the beginning of this miracle. 'Let us tell another of the miracles of the same glorious martyr, which, if it is necessary, we shall prove by the testimony of many, and in particular of him the cruel perfidy and falsity of whose heart we mark and reveal.'
And the boy granted to you and the sterile mother,
You take away from her to whom you had given him and remove from
Christ his gifts.

So she advises you to return to your intention, for she demands the vow and requires
the debt. 9 Consider with what blows of your son on the door of your heart she bids it
to be opened to her, too late for it is cruelly condemned to hardness. For as soon as
the father changed his mind, so the son began to languish in his whole body, so that,
his vigour being changed into languor, there was nothing else for them to expect than
the imminent death of the boy. At length, returning to saner counsel and recognising
that they had erred, they confessed the guilt of their folly and stupidity and determined
to give the boy back to the holy virgin. Soon in a marvellous way the infant who had
been close to death was graced with a lively colour and health returned, revisiting all
the limbs of his body, so that in the very change of mind of the father and mother in
redeeming their vow you could see the martyr placated in the boy’s health. For as
health can be concentrated at that tender age, joy and liveliness were to be seen in his
whole body. So the growing boy became larger by natural increases, destined to be a
great grief for his parents. For while for a second time they set the vow at naught and
made him heir to his father’s wealth, soon also the boy, destined to die by his parents’
faithlessness, was gripped in renewed languor and if not with his tongue, yet by his
sickness confessed their error. Then the father, hoping that he could achieve
something in the matter of his son’s health by the help of others, directed his death-
bearing son with useless labour now to this and now to that doctor. But when he
achieved nothing, with perverse declaration he said to one of his men impatiently: ‘Go
quickly and take the boy with speed to that mountain to those monks.’ And he,
obeying the instructions, picked up the boy and took the road towards Rouen. But the
blessed martyr did not give assent to the false vow-takers, nor did she accept their
vows, which had now twice been wrongfully broken. For as he was being carried on
the said journey, he breathed out his last spark of life, slain by the faithless swearing of
his parents.

Miracles 4, 5 and 6

Again, three men, driven by sterility, betook themselves to the help of the blessed virgin. The first of them was named Norman, the second was named Gislebert from the town of Condeith, and the third was an inhabitant of the town of Luthri. The first of them, after living for seven years with his wife, could rejoice in no fertility on her part, when after praying with perfect faith he returned home and in the same year was filled with joy for offspring granted to him. The second, when for eighteen years he was unable to have an heir with his wife, made a vow to the blessed martyr that by keeping the vigils of her and all the apostles with fasting and watching he would try with all possible devotion if God would grant him a child by the merits of his virgin; many other vows he also made, in keeping which he was not idle; he also in the same year experienced the merits of the blessed martyr in a pregnant wife; he deserved to obtain at her intercession one by whom his extensive patrimony might be maintained. The third man had already grown old without children when in the same year, the blessed virgin showing favour to his prayers, he succeeded in obtaining his wife’s pregnancy. Without doubt the efficacy of such miracles fulfils that prophecy: ‘Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for many are the children of the desolate more than of her which hath the husband’. For more glorious is the handiwork of heavenly mercy when by an increase of this kind it makes up in kindly fashion what has been delayed. Truly by the merits and prayers of Catherine, this blessed witness of Christ, we shall bring forth offspring of virtues in whom Christ may be formed if we are the imitators of her to whom we pay the proclamation of our small meed of praise.

Miracle 7

Another of the more prudent sons of this generation, Rotgerius by name, a man with a plentiful enough abundance of the furnishing of earthly things, was daily in considerable discomfort with one eye running down and resorted to the help of the blessed martyr and, binding himself to her by a vow, by which through her favour health is given to many sick persons, he received the oil of the blessed liquid; and

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10 I have not been able to identify either Condeith or Luthri.
11 See Translatio et Miracula, ed. Poncelet, p. 434, citing Galat 4: 27, which is in turn a reference to Isaiah 54:1.
suddenly his vision was improved and returned to its proper place, but with other
profitable business coming in the way, he took little notice of the day for the payment
of his vow and made light of the vow. And the eye, the possession of which he earned
by his prayers, since he omitted to carry out his vow, he lost.

Miracle 8

And that story is very similar also to this one. A certain man from Neielfe, the
sharpness of whose vision had been blunted for a considerable time, could see
nothing; and coming to the place sanctified to the memory of the blessed virgin he
asked for oil, and his eyes being anointed he returned to his lodging. Then after the
lapse, as it were, of a moment both eyes were opened to sight; and insolently moved
by improper joy he jokingly asserted that he saw mists cleared by a secular flux and
added that much clothing of this kind suited him; and while he ought to have
concentrated on returning thanks to God and the holy martyr, he began to boast about
the extravagant worldly appearance of his own attire. Soon, therefore, since he
neglected to preserve in himself the light punctually granted to him, he lost it forever
and remained as blind as he had been.

Miracle 9

Again a certain blind woman came and kept watches in the presence of the blessed
martyr and prayed with vows of supplication that she would help her blindness by the
healing qualities of the blessed liquid. And soon, marvellous to say, she received the
mercy which she sought in faith; and exulting with joy at her recovered sight, she
showed her fingers, which she said she saw clearly, to a companion who asked what
was the matter with her. Then the woman did the utmost within the scope of human
insignificance in praises and rendering of thanks, because by the anointing with the
holy oil, Catherine had shown her magnificence by so great a gift in the case of a
sinner, but nevertheless a woman of genuine faith, and so she returned joyful to her
own place.
Another woman also from the town called Cayvilliacus, blind in both eyes, sought the shrine of the martyr of blessed memory to ask help for the disability of her blindness. She, coming to the bridge of the Seine, which flows by the aforesaid place, when a bright gleaming sight appeared in her gaze, asked a friend what brightness appeared close to hand. For the darkness being put to flight and the lanterns of her eyes restored, she saw a ship and in it some people in white garments. The friend said to her, 'What is appearing to you, since you are blind?' Then she said 'By God's grace I am not blind, but I see by the merits and mercy of the blessed Catherine'. And when she had ascended the mountain, she revealed the miracle of her famous giver of light in the presence of the brothers, to be approved by all with a worthy expression of praise; and when the expression of due reverence had been completed, she returned healed and seeing to her own place. When she saw not long afterwards that her son had lost his mind and was being harassed by the enemy, and mindful of her own return to health by the merits of the blessed virgin, she climbed up to her with her raving son. To whom soon, when he received the holy oil, the enemy being put to flight, sanity returned so completely that when they told him to sign himself as a mark of his freedom, he fortified himself with the sign of the holy cross and with great meekness returned to his place with his mother.

Another, a baker, also of the same place where the blessed virgin is worshipped, was attacked by the devil and lost his wits. This happened in the following way, to tell it briefly. Burdened with much ill-health, when he had begun to recover and on a certain day was lying alone confined in the house, he looked up and saw demons in a shape which he knew from pictures gesticulating through the walls and the bars of the roof, crowding one upon the other, some at his back and others at his head and terrifying him also with threatening faces. And when, his mind overcome he was afflicted by things of this kind, he was attacked by them, caught and harassed, and so being deprived of his senses, orders were given for him to be kept under guard for a few days. But when he made no progress in custody, he was led to the presence of the

12 Chayvilliacus in A. I have not been able to identify this village.
blessed martyr and laid out before the altar to the memory of the blessed Michael; and lying there, while a delay was involved for the brothers preparing themselves to act for such a situation, he was weighed down by sleep. He gazed consciously at the blessed saint on the little box in which the auspicious remains of her bones were venerated, with the distinction of her form in which she is usually rendered in gold or silver or work of any kind, namely as a girl of still tender age. When he concentrated more intensely on her, she seemed to administer to him with little fingers extended the oil that he was to take and to tell him in a sweet and cheerful voice not to be afraid. And then at the same moment he was roused by the brothers bringing down the box of holy relics and received quite quietly by their administration the life-giving oil first offered to him by the blessed martyr; and he returned to his senses cured, and having paid a weight of thanks, he lived out the rest of his life in happiness and good health.

Miracle 13

In a man who was well endowed with the riches of this world, a sickness which in common parlance is called a cancer had so corrupted and disfigured his whole face that for the man languishing in the loathsomeness of his ailment his worldly goods seemed more a burden than an advantage. He, collecting his wealth for a more fruitful use of his life, came to Rouen to a certain doctor in whom, because he was a foreigner, a greater skill in the art of medicine was thought to lie. When the illness strongly resisted the remedies that the doctor used against it, the man lost a great deal of money, for nothing worked. And, since at that time, Christ the Lord through his beloved bishop, Ouen, was blessing many signs of his piety towards all sick people, he lay down on his high-born bed amongst the sick common folk. But because the merciful Lord had ascribed healing to the merits of his blessed martyr Catherine, he postponed the work of bodily health that he was about to grant. At length therefore, having heard what the Lord was doing through the anointing of oil from the remains of his virgin, he betook himself wholly to her mercy, and forestalling activity in watches and prayers, he was anointed with the oil which the deadly ailment seemed to require. What need of more? He recovered, returned home and afterwards was often seen with his face cured.

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13 The term cancer was also used for ulcers or gangrene.
**Miracle 14**

Again, a cleric of still youthful age was afflicted with the same ailment, and at his request was anointed with the oil of curing, which he had never denied to needy people who asked for it. But afterwards when healed he met the rector of the same place on a journey, and revealed to him, who was still ignorant of it, the blessed virgin as the worker of his salvation, and identified the monk under whose supervision he had been anointed, who was present, and attached him as a witness.

**Miracle 15**

Again, a man with a twisted face and handicapped with the disease that they call paralysis, could not speak; and he also resorted in devotion to the aid of the blessed virgin. And being anointed with the liquid of such great strength, his mouth reverted to its natural state and he returned speaking and healthy, by the grace and favour of God and the blessed martyr.

**Miracle 16**

Another man, also, being troubled for many days with a severe ulcer on his hand, sought out the blessed virgin with prayers, and after having his limb anointed, which although it alone was affected had involved his whole body in pain, he rejoiced to be cured and in good health.

**Miracle 17**

A certain brother also called Goscelin, who was a monk in the place where the blessed virgin was venerated, was so sickened with fevers that, despairing of life, he reflected with all his concentration on how, leaving this world, he was to meet the supreme judge. For what need is there to speak of his fasting when by daily wasting of his body his fleshly strength declined deep within? And so, as a deathly cold tormented him, when he expected death to be near, in his sleep he saw the blessed virgin standing over his chest, and speaking as if to someone consulting her she said that she was an Athenian woman and well acquainted with the art of medicine. Then he also saw her as if raised among the tops of the clouds and emitting as it were a leaf which falling,

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14 See note 2 regarding the description of Katherine as Athenian.
as usually happens in winter time, with a draft of air blew into the mouth of the sick man as he lay. And waking up he felt as if his fevers had been driven out and that he was free of them, and he gave thanks to the blessed martyr, and took his seat again in very good health as a very witness of her virtue and grace. Thus the blessed virgin wishes also to produce monks as witnesses of her outstanding power, so that they too, by whose veneration she is celebrated daily, may not be deprived of the gift of their piety.

*Miracle 18*

Again, a servant of that same place, whose bodily energy had been severely drained over no small period by the extreme force of fevers, on a certain day seeing her holy reliquary above the holy altar he was seized by the constriction of a deadly surge and checking his course he lay down underneath; and falling asleep in that same place he survived the crisis and the deadly torment left him.

*Miracle 19*

Again, a man who trembled all over his body had lost all vital functions; having first been despaired of by several doctors, he at last resorted to the most skilled doctor, Catherine, the virgin of Christ, and entrusted himself wholly in devotion to her mercy. So he was anointed with the medicine of the propitious oil; by virtue of which his illness was put to flight and he was returned to complete health, and repeatedly was seen afterwards as a witness of his cure on behalf of the blessed virgin.

*Miracle 20*

Again, a certain Hugo, son of a noble mother called Athala, having left Rome was attacked by repeated ill health. Having returned with no little danger, his illness accompanying him, he climbed immediately to the blessed virgin and with the receiving of the oil he drank in his former good health.

*Miracle 21*

Also a certain woman joined in legal marriage, being troubled by an excessive flow of blood and in addition anxious because her husband on account of the onset of this ailment was already deciding to take out a writ of separation, surrendered herself
wholly to the assistance of the blessed virgin. And when in trusting faith she drank in the health-giving oil, at the same moment at the command of the healing liquid she was freed from her flow of blood.  

**Miracle 22**

At the same time also, while the whole of Normandy under the rule of their duke was raging one part against another, steps were taken through the joint agency of some sons of peace that for the establishment of peace in a certain area which could be approached equally by all, the bodies of the saints should be carried down and that this should happen for seven years until their duke should regain his strength. So by common consent they decided that this should happen at Caen because it seemed to stand on the middle boundary of the surrounding lands. Then among the other bodies of the blessed ones of Normandy giving protection by their merits, the box of relics of the holy virgin Catherine was brought down. With what granting of miracles the Lord glorified his martyr on the way, what tongue or eloquent discourse will be able to unfold? Yet, lest the theme of our writing be nullified, let us bring out one or two.

A certain madman was so troubled by his complaint at the waning of the moon that he could hardly be restrained under confinement by several people. Then he was taken by force through the efforts of many and given to drink of the oil of the blessed virgin; and immediately he was granted the benefit of health so fully that returning after about half an hour he laid down the cloak which he had taken off when dragged along and performed the rendering of thanks to her who had been his salvation.

---

Appendix IV

ANALYSIS OF FOUR WINCHESTER CALENDARS

I. Feasts particular to Winchester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Feast</th>
<th>BL TITUS E.vii ff. 3-4b</th>
<th>BL VITELLUS E.vii ff. 2-7b</th>
<th>BL ARNULF 60 ff. 2-7b</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>Translation of St Judoc</td>
<td>Cambridge, Trinity College R.15.32 pp. 15-26</td>
<td>Cambridge, Trinity College R.15.32 pp. 15-26</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>Deposition of St Etheldreda</td>
<td>Cambridge, Trinity College R.15.32 pp. 15-26</td>
<td>Cambridge, Trinity College R.15.32 pp. 15-26</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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</table>

Key:
- Cathedral Feast
- New Minster Feast
- Common Feast

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### Appendix IV

#### Analysis of Four Winchester Calendars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Calendar 1</th>
<th>Calendar 2</th>
<th>Calendar 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Prisca, virgin</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Agnes, virgin</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Britid, queen</td>
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<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Bridgid, virgin</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purification of St Mary</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Agatha, virgin</td>
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<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Scholastica, virgin</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Eornicrilic, virgin</td>
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<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
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<td>St. Agatha, virgin</td>
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<td>St. Scholastica, virgin</td>
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<td>St. Juliana, virgin</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>St. Euphemia virgin</td>
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<td>St. Perowna, virgin</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>Sabine, v</td>
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<td>October</td>
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<td>November</td>
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<td>Presentation of Mary in the Temple added in 11th century hand - not the main hand</td>
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<td>St. Cecilia virgin &amp; m</td>
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<td>December</td>
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<td>Presentation of Mary in the Temple when she was three years old</td>
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<td>Conception of St Mary the Mother of God added in 11th century hand - not the main hand</td>
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<td>St. Lucy, virgin &amp; m</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

- Footnotes may appear in this calendar.
- Footnotes missing from this calendar.
Appendix V

Extract from the Canterbury Missal, CCCC 270, fols 134r-135r

About St Katherine

A prayer
God who hast given the law to Moses on the summit of Mount Sinai and didst miraculously place the body of the blessed virgin Katherine in the same place through thy angels, grant we beseech that by her merits and intercession, we may be able to arrive at the Mount which is Christ: who with thee...

Secreta

O Lord, may the gifts of the present sacrifice which we are offering to thee in honour of St Katherine the virgin become for us we pray by her prayers perpetual life and by thy gift unending salvation: through...

Erasure of eight lines

After communion

... O Lord, when the mysteries of eternal salvation have been received we humbly beseech that as the liquid which trickles continuously from the limbs of the blessed virgin Katherine heals the bodies of the sick, so her prayer may drive out all iniquities from us: through...
Map 1: Mediterranean in the Eleventh Century
Plate I: Twelfth-century wall-painting of St Katherine in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le mura, Rome
Plate II: Late tenth-century wall-painting of St Katherine in the church of San Sebastiano alla Polveriera, formerly Santa Maria in Pallara, Rome.
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Cotton Vespasian D.xix
Cotton Vitellius A.xviii
Cotton Vitellius E.xviii
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