Teaching by Example: Cistercian Exempla Collections before Caesarius, 1178–1220

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Abstract

In the period between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, Cistercian monks in France and Germany wrote a number of exempla collections. These were widely copied and disseminated throughout the houses of the Order, and several survive in multiple manuscript witnesses, testifying to their significance; as this thesis argues, they were perhaps the paramount Cistercian literary production of this period. The most famous of these is Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum*, but his was not the first, and an entire earlier corpus of exempla collections exists that has gone largely unexplored. This thesis studies Herbert of Clairvaux's *Liber miraculorum*, Conrad of Eberbach's *Exordium magnum*, and Engelhard of Langheim's collection for the nuns of Wechterswinkel, the three most widely read and copied of the earlier collections, to explore the development of this textual tradition before Caesarius. These exempla collections have been seen by historians as attempts to create a uniform Cistercian identity, especially as the Order expanded and moved away from its French heartlands and founding generation. This thesis, studying the collections in an interdisciplinary manner, reveals the unique character of each collection and the specific agenda of its author, conditioned by the context in which he was writing, the audience for whom he created his collection, and his network of relationships and influences. It argues that teaching by example, via exempla collections, was a key way in which Cistercian life was constructed, contested and propagated, and that there existed multiple conceptions of Cistercian spirituality in these decades. It also demonstrates that Cistercian exempla constitute their own species of exempla, and shows how they were compiled, written, and arranged in the collections to construct and propagate these different models of 'Cistercianness' through the formation of members of the Order.

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Abbreviations

Collectaneum	*Collectaneum exemplorum ac visionum Clarevallense e codice Trecensi 946*. Edited by Olivier Legendre. Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 208. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.
DM/*Dialogus miraculorum*	Caesarius of Heisterbach. *Dialogus miraculorum*. Edited and translated by Horst Schneider and Nikolaus Nösges. 5 vols. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009.
EM/*Exordium magnum*	Conrad of Eberbach. *Exordium magnum cisterciense, sive narratio de initio cisterciensis ordinis*. Edited by Bruno Griesser. Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1961; reprinted with additional notes, Turnhout: Brepols, 1994.
EO	*Ecclesiastica Officia*. Choisselet, Danièle, and Placide Vernet, eds. *Les Ecclesiastica Officia cisterciens du XIIème siècle: Texte Latin selon les manuscrits édités de Trente 1711, Ljubljana 31 et Dijon 114, version Française, annexe liturgique, notes, index et table*. Les Éditions 22. Reiningue: La Documentation Cistercienne, 1989.
LM/*Liber miraculorum*	Herbert of Clairvaux. *Liber visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium*. Edited by Giancarlo Zichi, Graziono Fois, and Stefano Mula. Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 277. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 221 vols. Paris: Migne, 1841–64.
Rule	Rule of St Benedict. Benedict. *Regula Benedicti*. Edited by Timothy Fry as *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981.

Note on translations

Unless otherwise noted, all translations from the Latin are my own. Where a printed edition exists, the full bibliographic information is given in the first citation only. The exempla collections are all referenced by chapter number, indicated by an Arabic numeral, or, where relevant, book number (Roman numeral) and chapter number (Arabic numeral). Other medieval texts are generally referenced by chapter number. All quotations from the PL reference the volume and column number. All biblical quotations are from Albert Colunga and Lorenzo Turrado's 1946 edition of the Clementine Vulgate and Richard Challonder's 1750 edition of the Douay-Rheims English translation.

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After Covid hit, this research was made possible thanks to the help of librarians at the Biblioteka Raczyńskich in Poznań and the Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek RheinMain, in Wiesbaden, especially Dr Martin Mayer. I want to extend my gratitude to the library staff at the University of York library, who throughout the pandemic have purchased ebooks, provided scans of journal articles, and sent physical books through the post by the dozen. Similarly, nothing at the CMS would work properly without the administrators, Gillian Galloway and Brittany Scowcroft. I am especially grateful for their assistance with the conferences and seminars I have organised during my PhD.

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I would not have made it through this PhD, especially during a pandemic, without the PhD community at the Centre for Medieval Studies, in particular Kirstin Barnard, Rebecca Drake, Annabel Dukes, Emma Nuding and Dr Tim Wingard. Thank you for the numerous talks, walks and coffees, and for always being there with a supportive word. I am also grateful to the wider CMS research community for the feedback on several papers that I presented at SCRAMS. I have benefitted immensely from the conversations that took place at the Approaches to Medieval Religion reading group, and the Ideology, Society and Medieval Religion seminar series, and I want to thank my co-convenors, Annabel and Tim, for embarking on these endeavours with me.

In July 2021, Jack Ford and I launched Cistercian Worlds, a new Cistercian studies conference. The research that was presented there, and the conversations I had, inspired the final few months of my own research, and created wonderful community during the ongoing pandemic. Thank you to all our contributors and participants. I am especially grateful to Jack for agreeing to organise the conference with me, and for being unfailingly diligent and generous.

I have presented much of this research at various conferences over the past three years. This thesis has benefitted enormously from comments and questions from participants at the Haskins Society conferences in 2020 and 2021, sessions at the ICMS in 2021, and Cistercian Worlds, in particular. My thanks also to Professor Martha Newman, Dr William Purkis, and Professor Stefano Mula for sharing their expertise with me at these events, and taking an interest in my research.

On a personal note, I want to thank my parents, Namrita and David Price-Goodfellow, for first taking me to Cathar castles in France and inspiring my love of medieval history, and for being unfailingly supportive throughout this process. Thank you for your love and belief, without which this would not have been possible. Thanks also to my younger brother, Kai, for tolerating all the medieval chat and visits to historical sites on family holidays. My grandfather, Peter Goodfellow, has provided a modern perspective on religious belief as a Methodist preacher, and I have appreciated our many conversations about sermons. Throughout the pandemic in particular, my friends have kept me sane, and provided a much-needed escape from my Cistercian monks. Jack, Holly and Aimee – thank you for keeping me smiling, I love you guys. Weekly calls with my brother- and sister-in-law, Mathew and Claire, were also a high point during endless weeks in lockdown, and I am grateful for Ernie, who came along and brightened the final months of thesis writing. Our cats, Jane and Herc, have also been my constant furry companions in my home office.

I cannot imagine having completed this thesis without the endless love and support of my wife, Jaime, who now knows more about Cistercian monks than any scientist wants or needs to. Thank you for the many cups of tea, takeaway dinners and long walks that have got me through the last few years. As one twelfth-century nun wrote to another: 'You are the only woman I have chosen according to my heart.'

This thesis is dedicated to my granny, Marion Emmie Dugal, who read and commented on drafts of several of the early chapters but will never get to read the finished thesis. I would not be the woman I am today without your inspiring example. In the words of Bernard of Clairvaux: 'I grieve, finally, not over you, but because of you. It is this that wounds me so deeply: that I loved you with all my heart.'

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

In 1232, the Cistercian General Chapter issued a decree concerning teaching by example. When monastic superiors did hold conferences with monks 'for the sake of consolation', they were instructed to narrate edifying miracle stories that 'pertained to the salvation of souls, leaving out any detraction, disputes and other empty matters.'[1] Coming a few short years after Caesarius of Heisterbach had completed his *Dialogus miraculorum*, the most famous Cistercian exempla collection of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this decree perhaps reflects the success and popularity of Caesarius' work; an official endorsement of teaching using exempla, so long as the telling of stories did not descend into malicious gossip or idle chatter.[2] Just as the sharing of exempla to edify and instruct did not begin with the 1232 statute, Caesarius' collection did not initiate the tradition of Cistercian exempla collections, though it is the best-known and most-studied example of the genre. A number of collections of edifying miracle stories were written by Cistercians between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, and the *Dialogus miraculorum* was the culmination of this decades-long effort. This thesis explores the Cistercian exempla collections that shaped this textual tradition before Caesarius.

The Cistercian Order is often considered the most significant Christian monastic order of the second millennium. Indeed, one recent book describes the white monks as 'the most prolific and enduring experiment to emerge from the tumultuous intellectual and monastic fervour of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.'[3] Founded by a group of monks who broke away from the French Benedictine monastery of Molesme in 1098, the Cistercians exploded across Europe during the twelfth century, producing preachers, bishops, a pope and that most famous European churchman, Bernard of Clairvaux. Cistercian houses were founded from Poland to Portugal, each following a standardised way of life, not only praying and working at the same time, but, as some historians have argued, thinking and feeling alike too. At the annual General Chapter, abbots from across Europe reconvened at Cîteaux to promulgate legislation for all houses to follow, further ensuring uniformity of observance. The decades around 1200 have been described as a

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[1] Joseph M. Canivez ed. *Statuta capitalorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad 1789*, vol. II (Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue, 1934), 101 (1232: 5): 'Propter collationes illicitas de medio tollendas, statuitur ut quando monachi causa solatii ad colloquium ab ordinis custode vocantur, illud colloquium sit de sanctorum miraculis, de verbis aedificatoriis, et de his quae pertinent ad salutem animarum, exclusis detractionibus, contentionibus, et aliis vanitatibus.'

[2] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Monk Who Loved to Listen: Trying to Understand Caesarius', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's 'Dialogue on Miracles' and Its Reception*, ed. Victoria Smirnova, Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, and Jacques Berlioz (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 41.

[3] Janet E. Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 7.

difficult moment in the Order's history. After the deaths of St Bernard (d. 1153) and many of their founding generation, and with the rise of universities and competing forms of religious life, the Cistercians struggled to define their place in this changed and changing world. By studying the writing of exempla collections between 1178 and 1220, this thesis explores the development of a textual tradition that in these decades was almost uniquely Cistercian, and offers an insight into the formative role of teaching by textual example at this critical moment in the history of the Order.

Whilst Cistercian houses had never accepted child oblates, in 1157 the age of admission into the Order was raised to eighteen years old, and the General Chapter mandated that those admitted to the noviciate be literate.[4] Unlike in Benedictine houses, where many monks entered the monastery as children, the Cistercians had to contend with the formation of adults with experience of the world.[5] Before joining the Order they may have fallen in love, travelled, fought, had sex, married, and raised children – all activities now prohibited by the monastic vocation they had adopted.

Perhaps not coincidentally, from around 1170 there was what Stefano Mula has described as a 'flourishing of the exempla' in Cistercian monasteries, and a number of exempla collections were produced and disseminated throughout the Order.[6] These collections are understood to have educated novices, whilst aiding in the continued development of monks and nuns. Between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, nine Cistercian exempla collections were written that have survived in some form.[7] The first, compiled from the late 1160s to *c.* 1181, is the collection formerly known as Prior John's, recently edited by Olivier Legendre with the title *Collectaneum exemplorum et visionum Clarevallense* (hereafter *Collectaneum*).[8] It was created at Clairvaux by several different authors, as evidenced by the scribal hands in the only surviving manuscript, with the work likely overseen by the prior, John. Next came another collection from Clairvaux, Herbert of Clairvaux's *Liber*

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[4] Emilia Jamroziak, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe, 1090–1500* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), 59–60; Joseph M. Canivez ed. *Statuta capitalorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad 1789*, vol. I (Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue, 1933), 62 (1157: 28): 'non enim debet novitius recipi minus quam decem et octo annos habens' ['for a novice should not be admitted if he is younger than 18']. The admission of underage novices was however a persistent problem, Joseph H. Lynch, 'The Cistercians and Underage Novices', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis* 24 (1973): 283–97.

[5] Wim Verbaal, 'Cistercians in Dialogue: Bringing the World into the Monastery', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, ed. Mette Birkedal Bruun (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 237–42. On child oblates in Benedictine houses, see Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel's Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Brill: Leiden, 1996).

[6] Stefano Mula, 'Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Cistercian Exempla Collections: Role, Diffusion and Evolution,' *History Compass* 8, issue 8 (2010): 906.

[7] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 905–906.

[8] Olivier Legendre ed. *Collectaneum exemplorum et visionum Clarevallense* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); Brian Patrick McGuire, 'A Lost Clairvaux Exemplum Collection Found: The *Liber Visionum et Miraculorum* Compiled under Prior John of Clairvaux (1171–79),' *Analecta Cisterciensia* 39 (1983): 26–62, reprinted in Brian Patrick McGuire, *Friendship and Faith: Cistercian Men, Women, and Their Stories, 1100–1250* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2002).

visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium (hereafter *Liber miraculorum*), written in 1178.[9] Gossuinus, another Clairvaux monk, wrote a collection for the abbot of Eberbach sometime after Herbert had finished writing, but only fragments of this text have survived.[10] In the last decade of the twelfth century, Engelhard, a monk at the abbey of Langheim, sent a short collection to the Cistercian nuns of Wechterswinkel – the only collection written for a community of women.[11] At around the same time, an anonymous collection was written at Himmerod Abbey, the mother-house of Heisterbach; an anonymous French collection, surviving in only one manuscript, Paris, BNF MS lat. 15912, was written early in the thirteenth century (hereafter *Collectio*).[12] Perhaps inspired by Prior John and Herbert while living at Clairvaux, Conrad of Eberbach wrote his famous *Exordium magnum Cisterciense* (hereafter *Exordium magnum*) after he had moved to the German abbey of Eberbach, which he completed sometime in the second decade of the thirteenth century.[13] Finally, the most well-known collection, Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum,* was written between 1219 and 1223.[14] Caesarius began another collection, the *Libri VIII miraculorum*, but it remains unfinished; it is likely that he died before he could complete it.[15]

The exempla collections were widely read, copied and distributed throughout the houses of the Order. Although several of the collections survive in only one manuscript, the *Liber miraculorum*, *Exordium magnum* and *Dialogus miraculorum* are all represented by numerous manuscript witnesses. The most recent editors of Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* identified twenty-seven complete or abridged manuscript copies of the collection, dating from the twelfth to

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[9] Herbert of Clairvaux, *Liber visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium,* eds. Giancarlo Zichi, Graziono Fois, and Stefano Mula, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 277 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017). For more on the manuscript history, dating and composition of this collection, see chapter two of this thesis.

[10] Mula, 'Cistercian Exemepla Collections', 905; Stefano Mula, 'Frammenti del *Liber miraculorum* di Gossuinus, edizione e commento', *Herbertus* 3, no. 2 (2002): 7–16.

[11] Engelhard's collection has not been edited, although extracts can be found in Bruno Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim und sein Exempelbuch für die Nonnen von Wechterswinkel', *Cistercienser Chronik* 70 (1963): 55–73. For more on the manuscript history, dating and composition of this collection, see chapter four of this thesis.

[12] The Himmerod collection has been partially edited in Bruno Griesser, 'Ein Himmeroder *Liber miraculorum* und seine Beziehungen zu Caesarius von Heisterbach', *Archiv für mittelreinische Kirchegeschichte* 4 (1952): 257–74. An edition of the collection found in BNF 15912 has recently been published, Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu eds. *Collectio exemplorum Cisterciensis in codice Parisiensi 15912 asseruata* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).

[13] Conrad of Eberbach, *Exordium magnum cisterciense, sive narratio de initio cisterciensis ordinis*, ed. Bruno Griesser (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1961; reprinted with additional notes, Turnhout: Brepols, 1994). It has recently been translated into English, Conrad of Eberbach, *The Great Beginning of Cîteaux, A Narrative of the Beginning of the Cistercian Order: The* Exordium Magnum *of Conrad of Eberbach,* trans. Benedicta Ward and Paul Savage (Trappist: Cistercian Publications, 2012). For more on the manuscript history, dating and composition of this collection, see chapter three of this thesis.

[14] An edition of Caesarius' collection was originally published by Joseph Strange in 1851, Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, 2 vols (Cologne: H. Lempertz & Co., 1851). Strange's edition is updated and reprinted alongside a German translation in Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, eds. and trans. Horst Schneider and Nikolaus Nösges, 5 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009). An antiquated English translation also exists, Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The Dialogue on Miracles,* trans. H. Von. E Scott and C. C. Swinton Bland (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd, 1929).

[15] Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Libri VIII Miraculorum*, in *Die Wundergeschichten des Caesarius von Heisterbach*, ed. Alfons Hilka, 3 vols (Bonn: Hanstein, 1933–37).

fifteenth centuries.[16] Herbert's work was also frequently reworked and augmented in addition to being simply reproduced, demonstrating its continued use by subsequent generations of Cistercians. Conrad's *Exordium magnum* survives in forty-two abridged and unabridged manuscript witnesses, including nine from the thirteenth century, produced shortly after its composition.[17] The *Dialogus miraculorum* was by far the most copied and circulated. Although little research has been conducted into its manuscript tradition, scholars have suggested that it exists in as many as one hundred witnesses, both complete and abridged, from the libraries of Cistercians, Carthusians, Benedictines, Dominicans and Franciscans.[18] Though it was not as widely copied, there exist multiple witnesses even for Engelhard's collection. It survives in four manuscripts from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, as well as one from the fifteenth century, where it can be found in combination with Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*.[19]

Alongside the numerous surviving manuscripts, which testify to the widespread diffusion of the collections within the Order, their impact can be seen in the ways subsequent collections borrowed from earlier ones. While the collections all relied to a large extent on oral sources – barring the *Exordium magnum*, which is unusual in this respect – when they did draw exempla from written sources these were generally earlier Cistercian collections. Both the *Exordium magnum* and the anonymous *Collectio* took many of their exempla from Herbert's collection and from the *Collectaneum*. Several of Engelhard's exempla were also reworked versions of those found in the *Liber miraculorum* and *Collectaneum*, and Caesarius occasionally copied exempla from both of these sources, as well as from Engelhard and the anonymous Himmerod collection. Contemporary or near-contemporary Cistercian chroniclers, including Hélinand of Froidmont (d. after 1229) and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines (d. *c.* 1252) also made use of the material found in the exempla collections.[20] These texts were widely written, read, copied and rewritten throughout the Cistercian Order in the decades around 1200; they were perhaps the paramount Cistercian literary production of the period.

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[16] *Liber miraculorum*, xii–liv. For more on the copying and diffusion of Cistercian exempla collections, see Stefano Mula, 'Geography and the Early Cistercian Exempla Collections', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 46 (2011): 27–44.
[17] *Exordium magnum*, 10–25.
[18] Walter Cahn, 'An Illuminated Manuscript of Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum*', in *Tributes to Jonathan J. G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, Art & Architecture,* ed. Susan L'Engle and Gerald B. Guest (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2006), 284–85.
[19] Martha G. Newman, *Cistercian Stories for Nuns and Monks: The Sacramental Imagination of Engelhard of Langheim* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 199–209.
[20] Stefano Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens du Moyen Age, entre philologie et histoire', in *L'oeuvre littéraire du Moyen Age aux yeux de l'historien et du philologue: interaction et concurrence des approches*, ed. Victoria Smirnova, Recontres 77 (Paris: Garnier, 2014), 382; Stefano Mula, 'Exempla and Historiography. Alberic of Trois-Fontaines's Reading of Caesarius's "Dialogus Miraculorum"', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's 'Dialogue on Miracles' and Its Reception*, ed. Victoria Smirnova, Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, and Jacques Berlioz (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 143–59.

Yet, for much of the twentieth century, they were side-lined as historical sources, viewed with suspicion thanks to the supernatural stories they recorded. If they were used as sources for Cistercian life or contemporary events, it was with heavy caveats as to their reliability.[21] Forty years ago, Brian Patrick McGuire – undoubtedly the father of Cistercian exempla collection studies in the modern age – decried the lack of research into these rich sources, and in particular the *Dialogus miraculorum*. Historians need to stop asking whether the stories recorded within Caesarius' collection are true, he argued, and instead think about their sources, themes and composition, and the mentalities they reveal.[22] It is an argument he has continued to make since.[23] While in the years following more research has been done, the exempla collections are still a niche pursuit in Cistercian studies. As McGuire wrote again in 2015: 'there is perhaps still a general attitude that genuine Cistercian studies do best to concentrate on the great figures of the twelfth century, such as Bernard, William of St Thierry, and perhaps Aelred of Rievaulx.'[24]

McGuire's own work has mainly focused on the *Dialogus miraculorum*, although he has written on several of the other collections too.[25] He located Caesarius within his monastic environment and his network of relationships and informers, and having thus contextualised the collection, studied it as a tool of Cistercian socialisation, and examined the values and practices of monastic life that it was created to teach.[26] In the years since, the men and ideas that

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[21] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Written Sources and Cistercian Inspiration in Caesarius of Heisterbach,' *Analecta Cisterciensia* 35 (1979): 228, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*. See, for example, John Baldwin's caveat to Caesarius' stories about Peter the Chanter: 'If Caesar of Heisterbach's narrative can be trusted...' John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle*, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 31.

[22] McGuire, 'Written Sources', 227–29, 274.

[23] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Les mentalités des cisterciens dans les recueils d'exempla du XII siècle: une nouvelle lecture du "Liber Visionum et Miraculorum" de Clairvaux', in *Les exempla médiévaux: nouvelles perspectives*, ed. Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998), 108–109; Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Cistercian Storytelling – A Living Tradition: Surprises in the World of Research', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2004): 281–86; McGuire, 'Monk who Loved to Listen', 32–34.

[24] McGuire, 'Monk who Loved to Listen', 33.

[25] On the *Dialogus miraculorum*, McGuire, 'Written Sources', 227–82 and Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Friends and Tales in the Cloister: Oral Sources in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum*', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 36 (1980): 167–247, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*. On the *Exordium magnum*, Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness in the "Exordium Magnum Cisterciense": The Clairvaux Cistercians after Bernard', *Cahiers de l'Institut Du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin* 30 (1979): 33–90, and Brian Patrick McGuire, 'An Introduction to the "Exordium Magnum Cisterciense"', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1992): 277–97. On the *Collectaneum*, McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum Collection', 26–62 and McGuire, 'Les mentalités des cisterciens', 107–45. On the *Collectio*, Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Cistercians and the Rise of the Exemplum in Early Thirteenth Century France: A Reevaluation of *Paris BN MS lat. 15912*', *Classica et Mediaevalia: Revue Danoise de Philogie et d'Histoire* 34 (1983): 211–67, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*. McGuire includes comments on Herbert and Engelhard in several of his articles, but has not studied either of them in detail. On Engelhard, Brian Patrick McGuire,'Rebirth and Responsibility: Cistercian Stories from the Late Twelfth Century', *Cahiers de l'Institute du Moyen-Age Grec et Latin* 57 (1988): 148–58, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*, and Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Taking Responsibility: Medieval Cistercian Abbots and Monks as their Brother's Keepers', *Cîteaux: Commentarii cistercienses* 39 (1988): 259–66, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*. On Herbert, Brian Patrick McGuire, *The Cistercians in Denmark* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1982), 68–73, and McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum Collection', 30–31, 38–41.

[26] McGuire, 'Written Sources', 235–37; McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 191, 274.

influenced Caesarius have been studied further, and various themes within the collection have been explored, including crusade and crusade preaching, the conversion of pagan peoples, and inquisition and heresy.[27] It has also been mined for stories about non-Cistercian medieval life, on several themes, including almsgiving, ghosts, and confession.[28] Four decades later, McGuire seems to have won the argument regarding its usefulness as a source, and its content, themes and composition history have been thoroughly examined.

The same cannot be said for the exempla collections that came before Caesarius, whose stories he sometimes borrowed and remodelled, and in whose literary and educational footsteps he was walking. McGuire has argued that for the Cistercians, the exempla collections were 'important ways of telling each other and the world around them who they were and what they believed in.'[29] As it stands, we primarily know what Caesarius was trying to say. The *Dialogus miraculorum* may have been the culmination of this Cistercian textual tradition, but an entire earlier corpus exists, and limited research has been conducted into these other collections. These were not marginal texts; the multiple surviving manuscript copies of the *Liber miraculorum*, *Exordium magnum* and Engelhard's collection, as well as the reuse of their exempla in subsequent Cistercian texts, testify to their importance for both their contemporaries and later generations. Despite growing interest in the collections, evidenced by the recent publication of several editions and translations, there exists no sustained, comparative study of such an important form of Cistercian literature, rooted in the monastic practice of teaching by example.

This thesis explores the tradition to which Caesarius was heir, by studying the three most copied and reused – and so most impactful – collections that came before his: Herbert of

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[27] Jacques Berlioz, 'Exemplum et histoire: Césaire de Heisterbach (v. 1180–v. 1240) et la croisade albigeoise', *Bibliothéque de l'École des chartes* 147 (1989): 49–86; Barbara Bombi, 'The Authority of Miracles: Caesarius of Heisterbach and the Livonian Crusade', in *Aspects of Power and Authority in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brenda M. Bolton and Christine E. Meek (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 302–25; William J. Purkis, 'Crusading and Crusade Memory in Caesarius of Heisterbach's "Dialogus Miraculorum"', *Journal of Medieval History* 39, no. 1 (2013): 100–27; William J. Purkis, 'Memories of the Preaching for the Fifth Crusade in Caesarius of Heisterbach's "Dialogus Miraculorum"', *Journal of Medieval History* 40, no. 3 (2014): 329–45; Marek Tamm, 'Communicating Crusade. Livonian Mission and the Cistercian Network in the Thirteenth Century', *Ajalooline Ajakiri. The Estonian Historical Journal* 129/130, no. 3/4 (2009): 341–72; Marek Tamm, 'The Livonian Crusade in Cistercian Stories of the Early Thirteenth Century', in *Crusading on the Edge: Ideas and Practice of Crusading in Iberia and the Baltic Region, 1100–1500*, ed. Torben K. Nielsen and Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, Outremer 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 365–89; Jessalynn Bird, 'The Wheat and the Tares: Peter the Chanter's Circle and the Fama-Based Inquest against Heresy and Criminal Sins, c. 1198–c. 1235', in *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law: Washington, D.C. 1–7 August 2004*, ed. Uta-Renate Blumenthal, Kenneth Pennington, and Atria A. Larson (Vatican City: Bibloteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2008), 768–79; Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, 'Inquisition et inquisiteurs dans les recueils d'exempla (XIIe–XIVe siècles)', *Acta Scientiarum* 37, no. 4 (2015): 358–61.

[28] Spencer E. Young, 'More Blessed to Give and Receive: Charitable Giving in Thirteenth- and Early Fourteenth-Century Exempla', in *Experiences of Charity, 1250–1650*, ed. Anne M. Scott (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 63–78; Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: The Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 127–33; Alexander Murray, 'Counselling in Medieval Confession', in *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and A. J. Minnis (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1998), 63–77.

[29] McGuire, 'Cistercian Storytelling', 281.

Clairvaux's *Liber miraculorum*, Conrad of Eberbach's *Exordium magnum*, and Engelhard of Langheim's collection for the nuns of Wechterswinkel. All three texts are ripe for evaluation or re-evaluation. A new edition of the *Liber miraculorum* has recently been published, which presents for the first time a clear picture of the collection in its entirety, as it existed in the earliest manuscript witnesses.[30] For the *Exordium magnum*, Conrad's once-lost autograph manuscript has been rediscovered, but has so far received little attention.[31] Engelhard's collection remains chronically under-studied: only Martha Newman has published on it in the last few decades, and no edition or translation has yet been produced.[32]

Between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, before their adoption by the preaching orders in the mid-thirteenth century, exempla collections were a Cistercian genre, created by monks from across the Order, writing to both men and women, and they were widely read and disseminated. Through an interdisciplinary examination of Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collections, this thesis studies the Cistercian practice of teaching by example through written exempla collections. It argues that teaching and learning by example constituted a crucial element of being Cistercian, and explores the textual contestation of Cistercian spirituality through the formation of members of the Order, in so doing uncovering the multiple visions of Cistercian life that existed in this period.

Historiography

Cistercian Exempla Collections

In recent years, there has been a flurry of interest in the Cistercian exempla collections, and several editions and translations have been published. The *Dialogus miraculorum* was first edited in the nineteenth century, and an English translation published in 1929, one of the earliest collections for which both a Latin edition and translation into a modern European language were available.[33] An edition of the *Exordium magnum* was first produced in the seventeenth century, and this was followed in 1961 by an edition by Bruno Griesser, based on a complete survey of the abridged and unabridged manuscripts; an English translation of Conrad's dense Latin only

[30] *Liber miraculorum*, xcviii–xcvix.
[31] Ferruccio Gastaldelli, 'A Critical Note on the Edition of the "Exordium Magnum Cisterciense"', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2004): 311–20; Holger Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität: Das 'Exordium magnum Cisterciense' des Konrad von Eberbach unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 'Codex Eberbacensis'* (Mainz: Patrimonium-Verlag, 2020).
[32] Martha G. Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women: Engelhard of Langheim Considers a Woman in Disguise', *Speculum* 78, no. 4 (2003): 1184–1213; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*; Martha G. Newman, 'Assigned Female at Death: Joseph of Schönau and the Disruption of Medieval Gender Binaries', in *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*, ed. Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 43–63.
[33] See note 14 above.

became available in 2012.[34] Although Herbert's collection was also first edited in the seventeenth century, it was noted as early as 1886 and again by Griesser that this was based on an abridged manuscript copy; an edition that traced the full manuscript history was not available until 2017.[35] The first two decades of the twenty-first century have also seen the publication of editions of Prior John's *Collectaneum* and the anonymous *Collectio*.[36] Newman is currently working on an edition of Engelhard's collection, extracts of which were published by Griesser in 1963 but which otherwise exists only in manuscript.[37] The relative lack of research into the collections can partly be attributed to the difficulty scholars once faced in accessing the texts, but these new editions now open possibilities for intensive, and comparative, research.

Nevertheless, research into the collections is still sparse. Before the turn of the twenty-first century, the main voices in the field were Griesser and McGuire. Alongside his edition of the *Exordium magnum*, Griesser published articles on Herbert and Engelhard's collections, and edited selected extracts of the anonymous Himmerod collection.[38] This research was explicitly provisional, outlining the author's life, the dating of the collection, and something of the manuscript tradition. The contents, structure or purpose of the collection remained largely undiscussed. McGuire's work on the *Dialogus miraculorum* and *Exordium magnum* built on this, considering the structure of each collection, the author's use of sources, and their purpose in writing.[39] He also researched Prior John's *Collectaneum* and the anonymous *Collectio* before the publication of the editions, in each case exploring the author, dating and contents of the collection. This research has been published as articles, limiting extensive analysis of a single collection or comparisons between multiple texts. In the new millennium, even the excellent research by scholars like Mula and Newman has tended to focus on a select number of exempla from one or two of the collections, again in article-length published research. Mula's article on Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, for example, looks only at the first story in the collection, and two of Newman's articles focus on just the final story in Engelhard's collection.[40] This focus on individual exempla has meant that the collections have rarely been studied as collections. Only

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[34] See note 13 above.
[35] Georg Hüffer, *Der heilige Bernard von Clairvaux. Eine Darstellung seines Lebens und Wirkens. Erster band: Vorstudien* (Münster: Druck und Verlag der Kichendorffichen Buchhandlung, 1886), 158–71; Bruno Griesser, 'Herbert von Clairvaux und sein *Liber Miraculorum*', *Cistercienser Chronik* 54 (1947): 21–23; *Liber miraculorum*, vii.
[36] Legendre ed. *Collectaneum*; Berlioz and Polo de Beaulieu eds. *Collectio*.
[37] Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 55–73.
[38] Griesser, 'Herbert von Clairvaux', 21–39 and 118–48; Griesser, 'Ein Himmeroder *Liber miraculorum*', 257–74; Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 55–73.
[39] See note 25 above.
[40] Stefano Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès et l'autoreprésentation de l'ordre cistercien dans les recueils d'exempla', in *Le Tonnerre des exemples: Exempla et médiation culturelle dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, Pascal Collomb, and Jacques Berlioz (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 187–99; Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women', 1184–1213; Newman, 'Assigned Female at Death, 43–63.

Newman's book on Engelhard, published in late 2020, and a recent German doctoral thesis on the *Exordium magnum*, again published in 2020, explore one of the Cistercian collections in depth.[41] Sustained, comparative research simply does not exist.

The research that has been conducted into the Cistercian exempla collections in recent decades is diverse. It crosses disciplinary boundaries, encompassing more strictly historical research, literary approaches, and manuscript studies. This research comes under three broad headings: the use of the collections as sources for Cistercian life, their creation at a difficult time for the Order, and their status as Cistercian didactic texts.

Sources for Cistercian Life

Historians have drawn on the collections as a rich source of anecdotes about monastic life, and especially the life of lay brothers.[42] This research tends not to engage with the entirety of the collections, or make comparisons between them, but is interested instead in the historical details captured by individual exempla. The collections have also been explored by other historians of the Cistercian Order as attempts to create a common Cistercian identity, generally through the preservation and transmission of stories about their past. McGuire has described the collections as expressions of Cistercian identity and community, and the stories as a link to their founding generation.[43] He has argued that since any texts must have been approved by the General Chapter, the collections reflect a common Cistercian mentality.[44] Considering the exempla collections as part of a broader twelfth-century Cistercian historiographical project, Elizabeth Freeman has argued that they worked to formulate a shared Cistercian identity and then present it to both the Order's members and the outside world.[45] Mula sees the collections as a means of maintaining a communal identity; as the Order expanded eastwards, there was a desire to create unity through a shared understanding of the Cistercian past.[46] Newman has likewise argued that at a time of expansion, the collections were a means to communicate a common identity for the

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[41] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*.

[42] Megan Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 167–93; Brian Noell, 'Expectation and Unrest among Cistercian Lay Brothers in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006): 253–74; James France, *Separate but Equal. Cistercian Lay Brothers 1120–1350* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Cistercian Publications, 2012), especially xxii–xxv; Helen Birkett, 'Visions of Power: Authority and Religious Identity in Cistercian Exempla', in *Thirteenth Century England XV: Authority and Resistance in the Age of Magna Carta. Proceedings of the Aberystwyth and Lampeter Conference, 2013*, ed. Jane Burton, Phillip Schofield, and Björn Weiler (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), 139–56.

[43] McGuire, 'Cistercian Storytelling', 288–304.

[44] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 35. However, Sturm provides evidence that this ruling was not always followed; there is also no evidence as to which writings were approved or rejected by the General Chapter, Sturm, '*Beschriebene Zisterziensität*', 15–16.

[45] Elizabeth Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order: Cistercian Historical Writing in England, 1150–1220* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 128–29.

[46] Mula, 'Geography and Exempla Collections', 39.

Order, and William Purkis has also explored how shared stories could maintain a shared memory.[47] Exempla collections are thus understood to be like other Cistercian historical writings, such as foundation narratives.[48] By constructing a vision of the past, they created a shared identity for the Order in the present.

Reading these characterisations of the collections, one might assume that they are uniform texts that reproduce the same stories of the Cistercian founding generation. As the first chapter of this thesis argues, however, even when exempla were shared between the collections, they changed as they travelled. The exempla included in each collection also varies. Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* contains two corpuses of material: the first comprises exempla set in Cistercian houses, primarily Clairvaux, and the second features extra-monastic miraculous exempla. Conrad's *Exordium magnum* narrates the founding of Cîteaux and the Order, and then is almost exclusively comprised of exempla from Clairvaux. Conversely, Engelhard mostly used exempla from German Cistercian houses, and Clairvaux hardly features in his collection. Finally, Caesarius' collection is known for its myriad exempla set in the world outside the cloister; his exempla about other Cistercians mostly came from Germany too. The extent to which each collection records events from the Cistercian past differs, as does their geographic focus, and the balance of monastic and non-monastic exempla.

This diversity extends to other areas. While Herbert, Engelhard and Caesarius relied on oral sources, supplemented by some exempla taken from earlier collections, Conrad took his exempla almost exclusively from other Cistercian texts.[49] The collections also vary in length and structure. Engelhard's is only thirty-four chapters long, while Herbert's collection is comprised of 165 chapters, and Caesarius' 746. The exempla in the *Exordium magnum* and *Dialogus miraculorum* are divided into six and twelve thematic books respectively, but neither Herbert nor Engelhard's collection has any kind of obvious internal textual organisation. The *Liber miraculorum* has no prologue or final summary, while Conrad included an opening prologue and a lengthy final summary in the *Exordium magnum* to explain his purpose in writing. Engelhard's collection, uniquely, is prefaced by a dedication letter to its intended recipients, the nuns of Wechterswinkel. On a number of levels, therefore, the collections are different, their individuality obscured by the argument that they created a common Cistercian identity. This thesis argues that each collection

[47] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 52; Purkis, 'Crusading and Crusade Memory', 102.
[48] Janet Burton, 'Constructing a Corporate Identity: The "Historia Fundationis" of the Cistercian Abbeys of Byland and Jervaulx', in *Self-Representation of Medieval Religious Communities: The British Isles in Context*, ed. Anne Müller and Karen Stöber (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2009), 327–40; Emilia Jamroziak, 'Cistercian Identities on the Northern Peripheries of Medieval Europe from the Twelfth to the Late Fourteenth Century', in *Self-Representation of Medieval Religious Communities*, 209–19; Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order*, 128–31, 217.
[49] *Liber miraculorum*, lxxiv, 432–38; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 55–61; McGuire, 'Written Sources', 227–82; McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 167–247; for the *Exordium magnum*, see Griesser's notes in his edition.

is unique, based on the exempla its author chose to include, how he wrote or rewrote them, and how he arranged and structured his material. Exploring the distinct character of the collections – and so thinking about them as *collections* of deliberately chosen and arranged exempla – is one of the core aims of this thesis.

A Period of Challenge

Historical research into the collections also argues that they were produced at a difficult period in Cistercian history. They were all written in the decades after the death of Bernard, the Cistercians' greatest champion, and at a time when the geographic expansion of the Order and rapid foundation of new houses was slowing. The authors are often described as belonging to the Cistercian "third generation", concerned with keeping the memory of the Order's founders alive and returning their contemporaries to the fervency of observance that characterised the early years of their existence.[50] Even those historians who do not see this as a period of decline argue that the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were a time of reflection and change, when the Cistercians were evaluating their values, activities and identity without Bernard, and the exempla collections are seen as part of this enterprise.[51] As McGuire writes, they represent an 'ongoing Cistercian discussion about the identity and role not only of Bernard but also of the Order as a whole.'[52] The close of the twelfth century also saw a very different religious landscape from the one in which Cîteaux had been founded a century earlier, and in the early thirteenth century the Cistercians would be forced to compete with the newly-founded mendicant orders. The rise of cathedral schools and universities as centres of education and the creation of a clerical caste likewise have been identified as hastening the marginalisation of the monastic culture of the Cistercians.[53] Shortly after the last exempla collection was written, in the mid-thirteenth century, the white monks would integrate themselves into this changing culture by founding a college at the university of Paris.[54] Cistercians also faced criticism in these decades for their wealth and avarice, and were even threatened by the papacy with the removal of their privileges.[55] The

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[50] France, *Separate but Equal*, xxiv–xxv; McGuire, 'Introduction', 279; Michaela Pfeifer, 'Quand les moines recontent des histoires... spiritualité cistercienne dans *l'Exordium Mangum Cisterciense*', *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 65 (2003): 34; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, especially chapter 5.

[51] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 33–37; McGuire, 'Les mentalités cisterciens', 107–108; Paul Savage, 'Introduction', in *The Great Beginning of Cîteaux*, 1.

[52] Brian Patrick McGuire, *The Difficult Saint: Bernard of Clairvaux and His Tradition* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 157.

[53] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 4–7; McGuire, 'Monk who Loved to Listen', 46; France, *Separate but Equal*, xxv.

[54] St Bernard College in Paris was the result of reforms instituted by Stephen Lexington, abbot of Clairvaux from 1243–1255. On 24 January 1254, a bull of Pope Innocent IV gave the college the same status as those of the mendicant orders. Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 240–41.

[55] Daniel S. Buczek, '"Pro Defendendis Ordinis": The French Cistercians and Their Enemies', in *Studies in Medieval Cistercian History Presented to Jeremiah F. O'Sullivan*, ed. John Robert Sommerfeldt (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), 88–109; Brian J. Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', *Reading Medieval Studies* 21 (1995): 5–30.

exempla collections are often interpreted as reacting to these changes: by telling stories of Cistercian holiness, they attempted to reform their members, and defend the Order to outsiders.[56]

While this sketch provides the broad context for the challenges facing the white monks between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, the specific circumstances of time, geography and audience that informed the writing of each of the exempla collections remains unexplored. Herbert wrote at Clairvaux, the centre of the Order, in 1178, while Engelhard and Conrad wrote later in Germany. Notably, Engelhard wrote for a convent of Cistercian nuns; the other collections were created for and within male communities. Their own experiences of monastic life may also have informed their creations: Herbert had once been an abbot, as had Engelhard, and Herbert also accompanied his abbot on a mission against heretics. Each author existed within a unique network of relationships and influences that informed his collection. The second aim of this thesis is to understand the specific moment in time and place – the historical circumstances both within and without the Order – that conditioned the composition of each collection.

Didactic Texts

Historians have often remarked on the educative character of the collections. McGuire described the *Dialogus miraculorum* as a tool of 'monastic socialisation', which aimed to teach the values and practices of monastic life; Purkis has called it a 'pedagogical tool'; the introduction to a recent edited volume refers to it as an 'example of the Cistercian literature whose aim it was to educate and to convert.'[57] Likewise, the exempla in the *Exordium magnum* have been described as 'edifying stories... meant primarily to instruct' and Newman has argued that Engelhard's exempla taught those who had entered the monastic life how to progress in their faith.[58] The various Cistercian educative contexts in which the collections might have been used have also been suggested: as well as acculturating novices, they could be used to edify existing members, train monks in theology, and preach inside the monastery and out, as well as to defend the Order from its critics and record their history.[59]

These historical studies have not tended to engage with literary approaches or theories. Nonetheless, some literary scholars have studied the didactic strategies employed by Caesarius in

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[56] McGuire, 'Introduction', 278–86; Savage, 'Introduction', 1, 16; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 11 and chapter 5; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 5–8.

[57] McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 191; Purkis, 'Crusading and Crusade Memory', 101; Victoria Smirnova, Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, and Jacques Berlioz, 'Introduction', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*, 1.

[58] Savage, 'Introduction', 2; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 11–13.

[59] Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, 'Traces d'oralité dans les recueils d'exempla cisterciens', in *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication (Western Europe, Tenth–Thirteenth Centuries)*, ed. Steven Vanderputten (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 139–40; Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 906; Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens du Moyen Age, 379; Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 44.

the *Dialogus miraculorum* – how he made his exempla persuasive and communicated his vision of Cistercian spirituality.[60] This research, though limited to Caesarius' collection, suggests that Cistercian exempla are complex, constructed to make arguments, teach lessons and influence the thoughts and feelings of their audience. They are not simply transparent sources that reveal something of Cistercian life and mentalities. These literary studies have still been uninterested in the collections as collections, instead focusing on close readings of individual exempla. Marie Formarier's article on mental imagery in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, for example, only studies one exemplum, VIII.31.[61] Elsewhere, scholars have been interested in rhetoric or narrative theology in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, a kind of thematic analysis that again does not take account of the structure and arrangement of the collection, but pulls out exempla that demonstrate, for example, Caesarius' use of the techniques of classical rhetoric.[62]

However, the arrangement of the exempla was not random – often, the author referred to the next exemplum at the end of the previous one, or referenced a similar exemplum earlier or later in the collection. Conrad and Caesarius clearly divided their texts into thematic books, but, as chapters two and four argue, Herbert and Engelhard also carefully arranged and ordered their exempla. Research into medieval compilations has repeatedly shown that the selection and arrangement of material was part of the overall argument an author sought to make; we should pay attention to these texts as collections.[63]

This thesis thus uses a novel interdisciplinary approach to study the collections. It combines close readings of individual exempla with an analysis of the overall structure, themes and arguments of the collections, and places them within the context of the author's life, the moment in Cistercian history in which he was writing, and the audience for which he wrote. It examines the meaning produced by the unique content and arrangement of each collection, against the historical background of its composition, and argues for the role played by exempla collections and teaching by example in the contestation and propagation of what it meant to be Cistercian in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

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[60] In particular, see the essays in the recent edited volume, Smirnova *et al.* eds. *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*. See also Victoria Smirnova, '"And Nothing Will Be Wasted": Actualization of the Past in Caesarius of Heisterbach's "Dialogus Miraculorum"', in *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lucie Doležalová (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 253–65.

[61] Marie Formarier, 'Visual Imagination in Religious Persuasion: Mental Imagery in Caesarius of Heisterbach's "Dialogus Miraculorum" (VIII, 31)', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*, 97–116.

[62] Victoria Smirnova, 'Caesarius of Heisterbach Following the Rules of Rhetoric (Or Not?)', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*, 79–96; Victoria Smirnova, 'Narrative Theology in Caesarius of Heisterbach's "Dialogus Miraculorum"', in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*, 121–42.

[63] R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, 'Ordinatio and Compilatio Revisited', in *Ad Litteram: Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent Emery (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 113–34; E. L. Saak, 'The Limits of Knowledge: Hélinand de Froidmont's "Chronicon"', in *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1–4 July 1996*, ed. Peter Binkley (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 289–302.

The Cistercian Order

The exempla collections are predominantly studied by historians of the Cistercian Order. As such, the main themes in the historiography of the collections follow currents in Cistercian studies more broadly. The idea that the collections reflect a common Cistercian identity reflects the debate around the 'ideals and reality' paradigm, advanced in the influential work of Louis Lekai.[64] He posited that true Cistercianism lay in the ideals held by the Order's founders – poverty, simplicity, solitude, uniformity, and strict adherence to their rules – and that the Order declined in the thirteenth century because they deviated from these values.[65] In this view, the Cistercian Order was defined and constituted by its legislative texts and body (the General Chapter), and the uniform observance of these rules across the houses of the Order. This institutional view of the twelfth-century Order perhaps made it vulnerable to the attack launched by Constance Berman. In a controversial book, Berman argued that the Cistercian Order was not created until the late twelfth century, at which point the primitive documents were written or forged.[66] Whilst her central thesis has been criticised, largely for her cavalier redating of the primitive documents, many scholars have agreed that the records of individual houses do not always match up with the constitutional paradigm.[67] They concur that it is necessary to complicate the picture of the Order's foundation, in terms of whether houses were incorporated or founded, the dates at which legislative texts and the General Chapter came into being, and the changes made to them across the twelfth century.[68] Her book has prompted several historians to re-evaluate the role played by rules and documents in creating the Order altogether. Instead of a constitutional body, McGuire and Freeman have argued that the Order was based around a common understanding of how to follow the Rule of St Benedict, shared myths of their origins

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[64] Louis J. Lekai, *The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977); Louis J. Lekai, 'Ideals and Reality in Early Cistercian Life and Legislation', in *Cistercian Ideals and Reality*, ed. J. R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1978): 4–29. See also the response by Constance Bouchard, Constance B. Bouchard, 'Cistercians Ideals versus Reality: 1134 Reconsidered', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis* 39 (1988): 217–31.

[65] An excellent overview of the field of Cistercian studies can be found in Mette Birkedal Bruun and Emilia Jamroziak, 'Introduction: Withdrawal and Engagement', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, 1–22. See also Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, chapter 1, and Martha G. Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity: Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform, 1090–1180* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996), 3–5.

[66] Constance Hoffman Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). Discussions of the debate can be found in Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 19–25; Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians*, 9–20; Martha G. Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism and the Narrative of Cistercian Beginnings', *Church History* 90, no. 3 (2021): 537–46.

[67] For a detailed critique of Berman's dating of the primitive documents, see Chrysogonus Waddell, 'The Myth of Cistercian Origins: C. H. Berman and the Manuscript Sources', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis* 51 (2000): 299–386.

[68] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Charity and Unanimity: The Invention of the Cistercian Order, A Review Article', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis* 51 (2000): 285–97; Martha G. Newman, 'Review of Constance Hoffman Berman "The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe"', *The Catholic Historical Review* 87, no. 2 (2001): 315–16; John Van Engen, 'Review of Constance Hoffman Berman, "The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe"', *Speculum* 79, no. 2 (2004): 452–55.

and founders, and the writings of Bernard.[69] In other words, what it meant to be a Cistercian was rooted in a shared history and monastic sensibility, visible in the theological and literary works of Cistercian authors.

This move away from such an institutional view of the Cistercian Order is necessary, as this thesis will argue. However, the existence of such a common identity and spirituality, whether rooted in rules or a shared monastic sensibility, is still a matter of debate. It has been argued that, certainly from the middle of the twelfth century, the General Chapter, and lines of filiation and visitation, worked to promote conformity and uniformity of observance, although this did become harder to maintain as the Order expanded; abbots in far-flung houses did not have to attend the General Chapter every year, and these houses felt various levels of loyalty to the Cistercian heartlands.[70] The liturgical books to be used in all houses were specified in the Statutes of the Order, and the Cistercian calendar was controlled centrally by Cîteaux; any changes were made at the General Chapter.[71] This combined to create uniformity of life and observance – a shared *ordo*.[72] But the flexibility within these rules has also been demonstrated in recent years; the negotiation between individual desires and temperaments and the impositions of communal living.[73] Additionally, the homogeneity of thought within the Order has been questioned. As Emilia Jamroziak argues in her recent book:

> [the early years of the Order's existence] saw the emergence of a powerful tradition of what constitutes 'Cistercianness' – a set of ideas, concepts and images that influenced the formation of the order and continued to be rehearsed and reinvented by the Cistercian monks throughout the middle ages. Yet it was a far more amorphous body of ideas than many historians have claimed... even such normative and narrative texts as existed were to undergo significant changes in the course of the twelfth century.[74]

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[69] McGuire, 'Charity and Unanimity', 285–97; Elizabeth Freeman, 'What Makes a Monastic Order? Issues of Methodology in "The Cistercian Evolution"', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2002): 429–42.
[70] Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians*, 82–98; Martha G. Newman, 'Foundation and Twelfth Century', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, 33–36; Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 43–48, 69–76; Jamroziak, 'Cistercian Identities', 25–37.
[71] Nicolas Bell, 'Liturgy', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, 258–67; Chrysogonus Waddell, ed., *Twelfth-Century Statutes from the Cistercian General Chapter*, Studia et Documenta 12 (Cîteaux: Comentarii cistercienses, 2002), 513: 'Missale, textus, epistolare, collectaneum, gradale, antiphonarium, hymnarium, psalterium, lectionarium, regula, kalendarium, ubique uniformiter habeantur.' ['The Missal, the Bible, the Epistolary, the Collectarium, the Gradual, the Antiphonary, the Hymnary, the Psalter, the Lectionary, the Rule of St Benedict and the Calendar should be held uniformly everywhere.']
[72] Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 29.
[73] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Meaning of Cistercian Spirituality: Thoughts for Cîteaux's Nine-Hundredth Anniversary', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1995): 92; Birkett, 'Vision of Power',140–42.
[74] Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 19.

Cisterciannness was an identity in flux, especially after the death of Bernard, and with the increasing geographic diversity of the Order. Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's exempla collections, written in three specific moments and in different locations throughout the Order, allow for an evaluation of the formation and reformation of Cisterciannness in this period of change.

Since Brian Stock's influential 1983 book, many scholars have seen the Cistercian Order as a 'textual community', a group whose common mentality and identity was based around shared texts, and this is how the exempla collection have been viewed.[75] Caroline Walker Bynum, in her research into Cistercian spirituality, has likewise argued that works of spiritual advice, such as treatises for novices, are a key source for the ideals and self-conceptions of religious groups.[76] Though not treatises, it is a central contention of this thesis that exempla collections are works of spiritual and moral formation, and as such offer a window into how different authors conceptualised the Cistercian life and vocation, and, crucially, how they attempted to propagate their views. When considering monastic educative texts more generally, Tjamke Snijders argues that these should not be taken as evidence of consensus about a group's identity, but should be seen as part of an effort to forge such a consensus.[77] Teaching was a crucial weapon in this fight; rather than simply socialising new members into a commonly-agreed upon monastic identity, the formation of novices was often the primary method of creating and disseminating new or competing identities. This thesis argues that the exempla collections were works of Cistercian formation; guides to being Cistercian. They therefore provide an opportunity to study the reality of a uniform Cistercian identity or spirituality, and the role of texts in the formation of such an identity (or identities). As this thesis will argue, far from attempts to create a uniform Cistercian identity, the exempla collections were self-conscious attempts to propagate their author's version of Cistercian life.

One particularly contested aspect of Cistercian life which the exempla collections illuminate is the idea of withdrawal from the world. Before the 1980s, many scholars accepted Cistercian rhetoric about their desire to retreat from the world to the wilderness, exemplified by Lekai's

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[75] Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 405. Stock argued that the Cistercian Order was a 'textual community' whose shared spirituality was based on Bernard's sermons on the Song of Songs, but this idea has been expanded in recent years to include other texts on which the Order's common identity was based, for example Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 25 with regards to the *Carta caritatis* and early histories of the Order; Mula, 'Geography and Exempla Collections', 39, with regards to the exempla collections.

[76] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 35–37.

[77] Tjamke Snijders, 'Communal Learning and Communal Identities in Medieval Studies', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages: Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Transfer in Religious Communities*, ed. Micol Long, Steven Vanderputten, and Tjamke Snijders (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 43–45.

claim that 'undisturbed solitude' was central to the Cistercian conception of monastic life.[78] But archaeological evidence has shown that many houses were not built in remote or inhospitable locations, and that the Cistercian 'retreat to the desert' was more rhetoric that reality.[79] In her 1996 book, *The Boundaries of Charity*, Newman explored in detail Cistercian involvement in the world, arguing that Cistercian monks saw themselves as having a responsibility towards the church and wider society.[80] While some Cistercians, following in the tradition of Bernard, did attack cities and schools as places of vice, poverty and heresy, others, likewise following in Bernard's footsteps, stepped into the world, acting as preachers and taking up ecclesiastical posts; their involvement in crusade preaching, especially on behalf of Pope Innocent III, has been widely studied.[81] The involvement of Cistercian houses with their patrons and local communities, and in particular the charitable work of Cistercian nuns, has also been illuminated in recent years.[82] Though their spiritual treatises urged Cistercians to renounce dependence on the world in favour of dependence on God, the white monks were always involved in the world around them.[83] But historians have argued that there was a decline in Cistercian work on behalf of the papacy after the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, when they were supplanted by the new urban mendicant orders.[84]

The exempla collections were written before any such decline, during a period when historians have demonstrated continual Cistercian activity on behalf of the papacy. As the *Exordium magnum* has long been seen as advocating for withdrawal from the world, whilst the *Liber miraculorum* features numerous stories of the secular world, a comparative study of this

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[78] Lekai, *Ideals and Reality*, 32.

[79] See Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians*, chapter 3, for a recent discussion of Cistercian sites and buildings, which argues that Cistercian houses were generally 'more secluded than remote... the monks were sheltered but not cut off from the world and most houses were relatively near to transport links and communication routes.'

[80] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, especially 242–43.

[81] For Cistercian polemics against cities, see Beverly Mayne Kienzle, 'Cistercian Views of the City in the Sermons of Hélinand of Froidmont', in *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University. Proceedings of International Symposia at Kalamazoo and New York.*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse et al. (Louvain-la-Neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 1998), 165–82. For Cistercian involvement with anti-heresy and crusade preaching, see, for example, Brenda M. Bolton, 'A Mission to the Orthodox? The Cistercians in Romania', *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976): 169–81; Brenda M. Bolton, 'For the See of Simon Peter: The Cistercians at Innocent III's Nearest Frontier', in *Monastic Studies I*, ed. Judith Loades (Bangor: Headstart History, 1990), 1–20; Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade in Occitania, 1145–1229: Preaching in the Lord's Vineyards* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2001); Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*; Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians*, 194–201.

[82] For a discussion of Cistercian interactions with patrons and lay communities, see Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, chapter 3. On the charitable work of Cistercian nuns, see Anne E. Lester, 'Cares Beyond the Walls: Cistercians Nuns and the Care of Lepers in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Northern France', in *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000–1400: Interaction, Negotiation and Power*, ed. Emilia Jamroziak and Janet E. Burton (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 197–224; Anne E. Lester, *Creating Cistercian Nuns: The Women's Religious Movement and Its Reform in Thirteenth-Century Champagne* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 117–46.

[83] For the former, see Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 163.

[84] R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 273–75; Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 99; Bolton, 'For the See of Simon Peter', 20; Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 53.

diverse body of Cistercian literature can throw new light on the debate around withdrawal and engagement. Furthermore, as the pastoral care monks offered to religious women is often considered a deviation from Cistercian ideals, studying Engelhard's collection alongside those written for monks allows for an assessment of Cistercian care for nuns, so often assumed to have been carried out under duress.[85] A comparative analysis of the collections makes visible diverse Cistercian views on these issues. Alongside making an argument for the importance of exempla collections and teaching by example in the creation and reproduction of what it meant to be Cistercian, this thesis thus also reassesses these core debates in Cistercian studies using the evidence provided by the exempla collections, sources usually omitted from these discussions.

Exempla and Teaching by Example

Although it is rarely translated in this way, 'exemplum' is most simply translated as 'example'. Yet while scholarship exists – both Cistercian and not – on both medieval exempla and the practice of teaching by example, these two strands of research are rarely brought together. Historical research on non-Cistercian exempla collections exists instead as part of the broader field of preaching and sermon studies. Scholars of medieval religion have argued that a new paradigm of religious life was born in the twelfth century, based around preaching and evangelism. In his ground-breaking 1935 book, Herbert Grundmann argued that the multifarious new lay, monastic and heretical groups in this period were linked by a common desire to live as the apostles did, rather than by new doctrinal beliefs, and this *vita apostolica* rested on two main pillars: voluntary poverty and itinerant preaching.[86] In the decades since, historians working on many aspects of religion in this period have largely agreed with this framing. Research on groups from the *mulieres sanctae* to the Franciscans to hospital workers has emphasised that the religious feeling of the age was centred on living a new way of life that revolved around penitential acts, voluntary poverty and often preaching.[87] Marie-Dominique Chenu famously described this era as one of 'evangelical awakening': preaching was central to the apostolic way of life, and for itinerant preachers personal witness was a core part of their method of communication – the proof of the preachers' messages

[85] Lekai, *Ideals and Reality*, 350–52. For a discussion of the historiography on Cistercian nuns, see the introduction to chapter four of this thesis.
[86] Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. Steven Rowan (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 1–13.
[87] Brenda M. Bolton, 'Poverty as Protest: Some Inspirational Groups at the Turn of the Twelfth Century', in *The Church in a Changing Society, Conflict – Reconciliation or Adjustment? Papers Presented at the CIHEC Conference in Uppsala, August 17–21, 1977* (Uppsala: The Swedish sub-commission of CIHEC, 1978), 1–11; Lester, *Creating Cistercian* Nuns, 21–22; C. H. Lawrence, *The Friars: The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society* (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 1–15; Adam J. Davis, 'Preaching in Thirteenth-Century Hospitals', *Journal of Medieval History* 36, no. 1 (2010): 72–89.

was in the lives of holy poverty they lived.[88] This framing has been influential. Work by Brenda Bolton and Frances Andrews has shown that for groups such as the Humiliati and Waldensians, founded around ideals of apostolic poverty, it was the question of preaching that often disrupted efforts to integrate them into the church: while they saw it as central to their mission, popes and bishops were wary of unauthorised preaching.[89] Conversely, the mendicants' ability to preach effectively to the laity and overcome shortcomings in pastoral care has been identified as their chief attraction to the papacy.[90] Preaching has also frequently been seen as the conduit through which new reformist and moral theological ideas could be taken from papal councils or universities and transmitted to the populace.[91]

This explosion in preaching activities was accompanied by ancillary developments. Written preaching aids, such as model sermons and exempla collections, were copied and disseminated in large numbers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[92] It is these collections, often written by Dominicans and other lay preachers, that historians more frequently study when they research exempla in this period, not the Cistercian collections.[93] This research follows the broader agendas of the field of sermon studies, where sermons are used as a source for medieval attitudes, and the preaching event and interaction with the audience studied as a form of social and cultural communication.[94] The exempla collections created for preachers have thus been used as sources

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[88] Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1997), 241–48.
[89] Bolton, 'Poverty as Protest', 1–11; Frances Andrews, 'Innocent III and Evangelical Enthusiasts: The Route to Approval', in *Innocent III and His World*, ed. John C. Moore and Brenda M. Bolton (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 1999), 229–41.
[90] Lawrence, *The Friars*, 220–21; Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy*, 173–200; Barbara H. Rosenwein and Lester K. Little, 'Social Meaning in the Monastic and Mendicant Spiritualities', *Past and Present* 63 (1974): 4–32.
[91] The preeminent study of the Parisian moral theologians and their views is still Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*. On the preaching activities of the Chanter's circle, see Jessalynn Bird, 'Reform or Crusade? Anti-Usury and Crusade Preaching during the Pontificate of Innocent III', in *Innocent III and His World*, 165–85; Jessalynn Bird, 'Medicine for Body and Soul: Jacques de Vitry's Sermons to Hospitallers and Their Charges', in *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and Joseph Ziegler (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2001), 91–108; Stephen C. Ferruolo, 'Preaching to the Clergy and Laity in Early Thirteenth-Century France: Jacques de Vitry's "Sermones Ad Status"', *The Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 12 (1984): 14.
[92] Little, *Religious Poverty*, 192–96; David D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris before 1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 14–26.
[93] Andrea L. Winkler, 'Building the Imagined Community: Dominican "Exempla" and Theological Knowledge', *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 19 (1998): 197–226; David Jones, *Friars' Tales: Thirteenth Century Exempla from the British Isles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Sebastian Sobecki, 'Exemplary Intentions: Two English Dominican Hagiographers in the Thirteenth Century and the Preaching through Exempla', *New Blackfriars* 89 (2008): 478–87; Robert Sweetman, 'Exemplary Care: Storytelling and the "Art of Arts" among Thirteenth-Century Dominicans', in *From Learning to Love. Schools, Law and Pastoral Care in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Joseph W. Goering*, ed. Tristan Sharp et al. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2017), 628–46; Tuija Ainonen, 'Making New from Old: Distinction Collections and Textual Communities at the Turn of the Thirteenth Century', in *From Learning to Love*, 48–69; Jussi Hanska, '"Miracula" and "Exempla" – A Complicated Relationship', in *A Companion to Medieval Miracle Collections*, ed. Sari Katajala-Peltomaa, Jenni Kuuliala, and Iona McCleery (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 125–43.
[94] For the study of medieval sermons and preaching, see especially Beverly Mayne Kienzle ed. *The Sermon* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), and the essays in several recent edited volumes, Hamesse, et al. eds. *Medieval Sermons and Society*; Carolyn Muessig ed. *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Georgiana Donavin, Cary

for sermons and preaching events, and as a source for medieval mentalities.[95] In thinking about sermons as a form of religious or social communication, the construction of persuasive exemplary narratives has also been studied in relation to the non-Cistercians collections.[96]

Furthermore, scholars of medieval literature have studied the use of exempla in religious treatises or literary works, especially the works of Chaucer and Gower.[97] Literary scholars have often been concerned with defining the exemplum as a literary form, in addition to thinking about the didactic or persuasive force of exempla; how short narratives can be constructed so as to persuade their audience to change their behaviour.[98] The Cistercian collections have tended to be overlooked in such studies, and so most definitions of 'exemplum' do not fully apply to them, and limit our ability to explore their unique features and functions. However, literary approaches do provide important ways to both closely read individual exempla and understand the structure and form of the collections, and this thesis employs several literary methodologies, as discussed in the next section. The first chapter of this thesis also seeks to define the Cistercian exemplum, arguing that it is its own species of exempla that functioned in a unique way to encourage monks and nuns to form themselves according to the example of other Cistercians.

Nederman, and Richard Utz eds. *Speculum Sermonis: Interdisciplinary Reflections on the Medieval Sermon* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004); Roger Andersson *ed. Constructing the Medieval Sermon* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008).

[95] For their use as sources for preaching see, for example, Phyllis B. Roberts, 'Preaching in/and the Medieval City', in *Medieval Sermons and Society*, 151–64; Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, 'The Preacher Facing a Reluctant Audience According to the Testimony of Exempla', *Medieval Sermon Studies* 57, no. 1 (2013): 16–28. On their use as a source for medieval attitudes, see Sharon Farmer, 'The Leper in the Master-Bedroom: Thinking through a Thirteenth-Century Exemplum', in *Framing the Family: Narrative and Representation in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Rosalynn Voaden and Diane Wolfthal (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 79–100; David R. Winter, 'Becket and the Wolves: Imagining the Lupine Welsh in a Thirteenth-Century Latin Preaching Exemplum from Llanthony Secunda Priory', in *From Learning to Love*, 590–612; Salvador Ryan and Anthony Shanahan, 'How to Communicate Lateran IV in 13th Century Ireland: Lessons from the "Liber Exemplorum" (*c.* 1275)', *Religions* 9, no. 3 (2018): 75–88.

[96] Jussi Hanska, 'From Historical Event to Didactic Story: Medieval Miracle Stories as a Means of Communication', in *Changing Minds: Communication and Influence in the High and Later Middle Ages*, ed. Christian Krotzl and Miikka Tamminen (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2013), 87–106; Sobecki, 'Exemplary Intentions', 478–87; Farmer, 'Leper in the Master-Bedroom', 79–100; Anne M. Scott, 'The Role of Exempla in Educating through Emotion: The Deadly Sin of "lecherye" in Robert Mannyng's "Handlyng Synne" (1303–1317)', in *Authority, Gender and Emotions in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Susan Broomhall (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 34–50; Sweetman, 'Storytelling and the "Art of Arts"', 628–46.

[97] Larry Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power: The Medieval Exemplum and the Chaucerian Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); J. Allan Mitchell, *Ethics and Exemplary Narrative in Chaucer and Gower* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004).

[98] Hans Robert Jauss, 'The Alterity and Modernity of Medieval Literature', trans. Timothy Bahti, *New Literary History* 10, no. 2 (1979): 208–18; Peter Von Moos, 'L'exemplum et les exempla des prêcheurs', in *Les exempla médiévaux: nouvelles perspectives*, 67–81; Jean-Yves Tilliette, 'L'exemplum rhétorique: questions de définition', in *Les exempla médiévaux: nouvelles perspectives*, 43–65; Karlheinz Stierle, 'L'histoire comme exemple, l'exemple comme histoire: contribution à la pragmatique et à la poétique des textes narratifs', *Poétique* 10 (1972): 176–98; François Cornilliat, 'Exemplarities: A Response to Timothy Hampton and Karlheinz Stierle', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59, no. 4 (1998): 613–24; Fritz Kemmler, *'Exempla' in Context: A Historical and Critical Study of Robert Mannyng of Brunne's 'Handlyng Synne'* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1984); Susan Suleiman, 'Le récit exemplaire: parabole, fable, roman à thèse', *Poétique* 101 (1977): 468–89.

Studies of medieval exempla are generally divorced from related research into the monastic practice of teaching by example. Though the scholarship of medieval monastic education once focused on education within monastic schools, and on the content of learning transmitted from master to student, several recent monographs and edited collections have brought attention to informal, shared, peer-to-peer or horizontal processes of teaching and learning within religious groups.[99] Imitation and teaching by example are often discussed in such contexts: Micol Long, for example, argues that learning by example was just one of many ways in which shared learning occurred within the monastery. Teaching by example has in fact been seen as central to twelfth-century monastic life. According to Bynum: 'The twelfth century person affiliated with a group, converted to a Christian life, by adopting a model that simultaneously shaped both "outer man" (behaviour) and "inner man" (soul).'[100] Members of a religious group conformed to a behavioural model, and in so doing also shaped their inner selves.[101] Ienje van 't Spijker has made a similar argument, that monastic life in the twelfth century was a script that monks were expected to study, practise and perform, with the imitation of examples as a key part of this.[102] As Stephen Jaegar has argued, this teaching by example was increasingly done through texts, as 'charismatic texts' took the place of actual teachers in the realm of moral education in the twelfth century.[103]

Teaching by example has also been explored in the Cistercian context, where studies of Cistercian education also show a split between research into the structures and content of education and the ongoing formation of members within the cloister.[104] The latter explores

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[99] Constant J. Mews and John N. Crossley eds. *Communities of Learning: Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual Identity in Europe, 1100–1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011); Long, Vanderputten and Snijders eds., *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*; Micol Long, *Learning as Shared Practice in Monastic Communities, 1070–1180*, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance 58 (Leiden: Brill, 2021). An excellent overview of the historiography of education in medieval religious communities is Sita Steckel, 'Concluding Observations: Horizontal, Hierarchical, and Community-Oriented Learning in a Wider Perspective', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*, 235–56.

[100] Bynum *Jesus as Mother*, 90. This essay, 'Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?', reprinted in *Jesus as Mother*, was written in response to the debate around the twelfth-century 'discovery of the individual'. For the original proponent of this paradigm, see Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050–1200* (London: The Camelot Press Ltd, 1972). Another response can be found in John F. Benton, 'Consciousness of Self and Perceptions of Individuality', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 263–95.

[101] Bynum *Jesus as Mother,* 97–105.

[102] Ienje van 't Spijker, *Fictions of the Inner Life: Religious Literature and Formation of the Self in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 10, 235. Other studies of the moulding of the inner self through the disciplining of the body include C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950-1200* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994); Isabelle Cochelin, 'Besides the Book: Using the Body to Mould the Mind – Cluny in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', in *Medieval Monastic Education*, ed. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (London: Leicester University Press, 2002), 21–34; Cédric Giraud, '"Ut Fiat Aequalitas": Spiritual Training of the Inner Man in the Twelfth-Century Cloister', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*, 65–80.

[103] Jaeger, *Envy of Angels*, 273–76; C. Stephen Jaeger, 'Charismatic Body – Charismatic Text', *Exemplaria* 9, no. 1 (1997): 117–37.

[104] For the former, see, for example, Mirko Breitenstein, 'The Novice Master in the Cistercian Order', in *Generations in the Cloister: Youth and Age in Medieval Religious Life*, ed. Sabine von Heusinger and Annette Kehnel (New Brunswick:

Cistercian theories of and attitudes towards education, often focusing on spiritual treatises and sermons.[105] Working in this vein, Rozanne Elder and Wim Verbaal have argued that *formation*, rather than *education*, is the appropriate term for the lifelong process of spiritual and moral advancement that was advocated by Cistercian thinkers; as Elder notes, 'formation' is the word used in the Rule for education in a monastic setting.[106] When discussing Bernard's use of the word, Verbaal argues that *forma* 'is one of the most fundamental concepts in Bernard's thought. It does not only mean 'example' or 'pattern'… but instead refers to something akin to the platonic idea: a higher, more spiritual signification of being in the mind of God to which man has to conform.'[107] He goes on, exploring Bernard's use of the example of St Paul: 'In this sense Saint Paul is more than just an example to Bernard: he is the *forma*, the higher spiritual truthful being to which he wants to be conformed.' Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn has likewise argued that Bernard's writings emphasised learning through experience by living a monastic life, the framework for which was provided by the cloister and its rules.[108] Cistercian theories of monastic formation thus specified a process of transforming oneself through conformation to the example of others.

The exempla collections have rarely been included in the research that studies the practice of teaching by example, which instead uses as sources treatises of religious instruction, sermons and letters. But exempla collections – collections of *examples* – were part of this same current in twelfth-century education. They provide a window onto the spiritual and moral formation that took place within Cistercian monasteries, and the practice of teaching and learning through textual examples. In particular, this thesis contends, they show how the presentation and imitation of examples was used to shape notions of 'Cistercianness' between 1178 and 1220; how teaching by example, as a means of forming the moral and spiritual lives of members of the Order, could be and was used to propagate what it meant to be Cistercian. It thus argues for the centrality of this practice in reproducing Cistercian life across space and time in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

Transaction Publishers, 2008), 145–55; Diane J. Reilly, 'Education, Liturgy and Practice in Early Cîteaux', in *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication*, 85–114.

[105] See, for example, Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere Verbo et Exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality* (Missoula-Montana: Scholars Press, 1979); Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 64–81. E. Rozanne Elder, 'Formation for Wisdom, Not Education for Knowledge', in *Religious Education in Pre-Modern Europe*, ed. Ilinca Tanaseanu-Döbler and Marvin Döbler (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 183–211.

[106] Elder, 'Formation for Wisdom', 186. As she notes, the word 'formation' is used throughout RB, c. 2.

[107] Wim Verbaal, 'The Sermon Collection: Its Creation and Edition', in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Sermons for Advent and the Christmas Season*, ed. John Leinenweber (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 2007), li.

[108] Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn, 'Word, Example and Practice: Learning and the Learner in Twelfth-Century Thought', *Journal of Medieval History* 46, no. 5 (2020): 525–27.

This thesis maps the development of the Cistercian exempla collection tradition before Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*. The first chapter of this thesis redefines 'exemplum' in the Cistercian context, arguing that the collections presented not illustrations of moral or doctrinal lessons but the examples of other Cistercians for their audience to absorb and embody. Each collection demonstrated a different way of being Cistercian, and subsequent chapters then explore these divergent conceptions of Cistercian being. They examine the subject-matter of the exempla included in each collection, the model of Cistercian life each author created, and how this related to the historical circumstances in they were writing. Each chapter examines them as collections, exploring the content and arrangement of each. This thesis answers four questions. Firstly, what are the structure, content and main themes of each collection? Secondly, how did Herbert, Conrad and Engelhard select, rewrite, compose and arrange exempla to create texts that both included individual examples of virtuous or sinful conduct, and constructed a vision of Cistercian life? Thirdly, what was the relationship between the composition of each collection and the challenges and opportunities, both within and without the Order, faced by the Cistercians at the time the author was writing? And finally, what was the place of exempla collections and teaching by example within the literary and formative culture of the Cistercian Order in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries? This research both addresses itself to and draws on currents in the study of Cistercian exempla collections, Cistercian studies more broadly, and work on religious communication and education in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It demonstrates the diversity of models of Cistercian life on offer at a crucial moment in the history of the white monks, as they responded to criticism and change both within and without the cloister; it explores how texts could be used within medieval religious groups to form new members and argue for the group's identity; and argues for the centrality of teaching and learning by example to Cistercian life in this period.

Reading Cistercian Exempla Collections: Methodology and Structure

This thesis studies the Cistercian exempla collection tradition before Caesarius, and subjects the *Liber miraculorum*, *Exordium magnum* and Engelhard's untitled collection to the kind of analysis afforded to his work – an exploration of the author, his relationships, and the historical moment to which he was responding, and the content, structure and sources of the collection. As discussed above, these three texts were the most prominent collections in the tradition, evidenced by the number of surviving manuscripts, and the use of their material in later collections. Moreover, many of the other collections are unlike Caesarius' text, and would not be suitable for this kind of analysis. The Himmerod collection and *Collectio* are anonymous, and so the author

and his influences cannot be traced. Gossuinus' collection exists only in fragments, and so the overall makeup and structure of the text is lost. As for the *Collectaneum*, while we know where and when it was written, it was a compilation created by several monks; it does not represent a single authorial vision or project. Whereas Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, Conrad's *Exordium magnum* and Engelhard's collection are, like the *Dialogus miraculorum*, complete collections that were the work of a single author whose identity is known, and whose environs and influences can be studied. They also provide a geographic spread, taking in both French and German authors; a temporal range from 1178 to *c.* 1220, when Caesarius began writing; and allow for a comparison between texts written for monks and one addressed to a community of nuns. They thus allow for a study of the diversity of the tradition.

The life of each author and the composition of each collection will be explored in detail in the relevant chapter; what is presented here is merely an introductory overview. Our earliest author, Herbert, appears to have entered the abbey of Clairvaux as a novice after the death of St Bernard in 1153.[109] He left Clairvaux at the end of the 1160s to become the abbot of Mores, a Cistercian abbey in the diocese of Langres, before returning to Clairvaux in 1177 or 1178. Upon his return he became chaplain to the abbot, Henry of Marcy, and continued in this position until Henry left the abbey in 1179. In 1181, Herbert himself left to take up the position of archbishop of Torres in Sardinia. According to the *Chronicon Clarevallense*, he wrote his exempla collection, the *Liber miraculorum*, at Clairvaux in 1178: 'And in this year [1178], Dom Herbert, who was then monk at Clairvaux and had been abbot of Mores, wrote a book of miracles at Clairvaux.'[110] It is comprised of 165 chapters, on a variety of Cistercian and non-Cistercian themes, although only his Cistercian exempla have previously been explored. Herbert's connection to Henry of Marcy, who was prominent in the papally-directed fight against heresy while Herbert was serving as his chaplain, has also hitherto been overlooked in discussions of the *Liber miraculorum*, and his influence on the collection is examined for the first time in this thesis, especially in relation to the non-Cistercian exempla Herbert included.

Biographical information on Conrad and Engelhard is even more sparse. Based on evidence provided by his *Exordium magnum*, Conrad of Eberbach entered Clairvaux around 1179, and left before 1193.[111] He then moved to the abbey of Eberbach, where he was made abbot in 1221 and died several months later. The *Exordium magnum* is organised into six books: the early books narrate the history of the founding of Cîteaux, Clairvaux and the Cistercian Order, while

[109] *Liber miraculorum*, lv–lxvii.
[110] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 905; 'Et hoc anno [1178] domnus Herbertus monachus Claraevallis, qui fuerat abbas de Moris, librum miraculorum apud Claramvallem conscripsit.' *Chronicon Clarevallense,* PL 185, 1248B.
[111] *Exordium magnum*, 5; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 37–42.

the later ones largely focus on exempla from Clairvaux under Bernard. Unlike the *Liber miraculorum*, it includes almost exclusively Cistercian exempla. Scholars have argued that Conrad wrote his collection in two sections, first at Clairvaux, and later at Eberbach. This thesis challenges this view, on the basis of Conrad's recently rediscovered autograph manuscript, as well as other internal textual evidence. From this new composition history, it suggests a new understanding of the structure and main arguments of the *Exordium magnum*, arguing that it was written to promote the life at Clairvaux as a model for all Cistercian houses.

Engelhard was born in Bamberg sometime in the mid-twelfth century before joining the nearby Cistercian abbey of Langheim in the 1160s or 1170s.[112] He was briefly abbot of an unknown Austrian house before returning to Langheim, and as well as his exempla collection he wrote a famous *vita* of St Mechthild of Diessen (d. 1160). His collection, addressed to the nuns of Wechterswinkel, was sent sometime in the last decade of the twelfth century, and is comprised of thirty-four exempla, a dedication letter, and an authorial *apologia*. His exempla are mainly set in other German Cistercian houses, and are a mixture of examples of saintly life and warnings against bad behaviour. The dedication letter that prefaces this collection shows that it was created for and directed at the spiritual and moral advancement of the abbess of Wechterswinkel and her nuns, but it has never before been analysed through the lens of this address, which this thesis sets out to do. Ultimately, this gendered analysis aims to rethink the moral formation offered to Cistercian nuns, and their relationship with Cistercian men.

Reception Theory and the Social Logic of the Text

The thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach, combining close readings of individual exempla with an analysis of the overall structure and arrangement of each collection, whilst situating them within their specific moment in Cistercian history. This approach is novel. It allows for an examination of the divergent models of Cistercian life offered by each collection, and of how the authors encouraged their readers to form themselves according to this model. Reception theory and theories of *réécriture* have proved key to opening up the collections, creating a way of reading to reveal how the authors directed their readers' responses to them and encouraged them to form themselves according to the examples presented. Chapter one further explicates this close reading methodology through a worked example, exploring five different versions of one exemplum, in the *Collectaneum, Liber miraculorum*, *Exordium magnum*, Engelhard's collection, and finally the *Dialogus miraculorum*.

[112] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 18–32.

The Cistercian exempla collections represent attempts to teach by example through the presentation of textual examples. Although scholars have considered some of the rhetorical and didactic strategies visible in Caesarius' collection, how the authors of the other collections could act as teachers, with their teaching mediated through a text, has yet to be explored. Reception theory creates a way of reading that allows for an analysis of both the production and reception of didactic texts. It views literature as a dialectical process between production (author) and reception (reader) and is concerned with the interactions between text and reader that determine how texts are received. As Hans Robert Jauss argued, every text predisposes its audience to a specific kind of reception through various covert and overt signals, allusions, and familiar characteristics, and so reading is 'the carrying out of specific instructions in a process of directed perception'.[113] He theorised the 'horizon of expectation', which governs how a text is received. This horizon is made up of the reader's knowledge of other literary works, genres and tropes, but also social norms and conventions, and how a text constructs this horizon and then fits into it or subverts it helps to determine how it is received.[114] Wolfgang Iser, who was interested in the microcosm of reader response, also theorised about the process of reading, and the interplay between text and reader: 'the "transfer" of text to reader [is] often regarded as being brought about solely by the text. Any successful transfer however – though initiated by the text – depends on the extent to which this text can activate the individual reader's faculties of perceiving and processing.'[115] Reception theory thus provides a means of exploring how the exempla collection authors wrote and arranged their exempla so as to direct their audiences' reactions to and interpretations of the material they presented. Such a way of reading pays attention to how the authors imagined their audience and then used this knowledge to direct their interpretation of the exempla, and encourage their formation according to the examples offered.

Previous scholars have identified reception theory as a productive way to understand medieval reading practices, especially the practice of *lectio divina* in monasteries, where memorisation and meditation on texts and their meanings was encouraged.[116] Several similar theories of reading and meditation were outlined in the twelfth century. Hugh of Saint-Victor proposed a five-step reading process: reading, meditation, prayer, action and contemplation.[117] In a purely monastic setting, the twelfth-century Carthusian prior Guigo II outlined a four-stage

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[113] Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982), 25.
[114] Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, 22–25.
[115] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 107.
[116] Duncan Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Cistercian Publications, 2011), 31–32.
[117] Robertson, *Lectio Divina*, xvii.

lectio divina in his *Ladder of Monks*: *lectio*, the first reading; *meditatio*, involving repeated reading and reflection on the material; *oratio*, prayer; and *contemplatio*, rest in the presence of the Spirit.[118] For both authors, and many others, reading, reflection and meditation were a way for the reader to penetrate and investigate a text, to extract its meaning. Through repeated readings and reflection, readers could learn and grow, moving from simpler to more complex understandings of the text.[119] Hence reception theory, with its emphasis on the interplay between production and the reception and interpretation of texts, can provide the tools to better understand the teaching by example enacted through the exempla collections. Reading in this way reveals the functions and unique features of the Cistercian exempla, as compared to other kinds of exemplary or illustrative narratives, since it seeks to reconstruct the Cistercian author imagining his Cistercian audience. It also provides a way of meaning that mediates between the details of individual exemplary narratives and the structure of the collection as a whole. The acts of the author at every stage of the composition process – selecting, writing or rewriting, and then arranging exempla – are seen as attempts to communicate with the reader and direct their response to the collection. Nothing is incidental or accidental. The whole of the collection becomes as important as the construction of individual exempla.

The content and structure of each collection is therefore a key focus of this thesis. As well as being influenced by medieval research, the approach taken here is inspired by Caroline Levine's work on forms, in which she argues that the form of a text, its content and the context in which it was written are inseparable.[120] She expands the usual definition of form in literary studies to include patterns of socio-political experience which are brought into and organise texts, and bring with them their own associations and affordances.[121] As will be shown in subsequent chapters, this argument, about the indissoluble link between form and content, and the political work (imagined here in the broadest sense of the word) done by forms influences my analysis of the structure and arrangement of the exempla collections, and the argument made by each author through their collection.

A final component of the methodology of this research is the contextualisation of these collections within the world their authors inhabited. This includes the intellectual and spiritual traditions they inherited, the texts to which they would have been exposed, the people they knew and who recounted stories to them, and the problems facing the Order to which they proposed solutions. This approach draws on Gabrielle Spiegel's theory of 'the social logic of the text', its

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[118] Robertson, *Lectio Divina*, xvii.
[119] Robertson, *Lectio Divina*, 204–228
[120] Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 2.
[121] Levine, *Forms*, 2–11.

'location within a broader network of social and intertextual relations'.[122] As she argues: 'the power and the meaning of any given set of representations derive in large part from their social context and their relation to the social and political networks in which they are elaborated'.[123] Studying a text in its 'specific social site' allows the literary historian to see the economic, social, political and other pressures that might have impacted its production. When thinking about the author of the text, she advocates considering his 'perceptual grids': the set of cultural beliefs, assumptions and experiences that he brought to his work, that 'governed both the nature of his perceptions and the manner in which he transmitted them'.[124] Each chapter in this thesis seeks to reconstruct the conditions that brought about the production of that particular exempla collection, and its author's cultural thought-world, as specifically as possible. Rather than thinking broadly about the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries as a time of crisis and change, I investigate Herbert's collection against the backdrop of his participation in an anti-heresy preaching mission with his abbot, Henry, and use a comparison with twelfth-century German texts of spiritual instruction for nuns to reconstruct Engelhard's attitudes towards religious women. Generalisations have often been made about these collections, especially when considered as a group; by thinking through the 'social logic' of each one individually, this research creates a richer and more diverse picture of the exempla collection tradition.

Chapter Outlines

This thesis seeks to do three novel things with regards to the Cistercian exempla collections that came before Caesarius. Firstly, to think about the content, structure and arrangement of the collections as collections. Secondly, to contextualise them in the life of the author, his influences, and the moment in Cistercian history and geography in which he lived. Thirdly, to examine exempla collections as a form of teaching by example, and to understand the place of this practice in the formation of Cistercian members and the reproduction of different visions of Cistercian life. In order to accomplish the first two tasks, chapters two, three and four study Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collections in turn. Studying them separately allows for a thorough exploration of each collection and the context in which it was written, and ensures the individual character of each is explored. However, comparisons are made between the collections throughout, so as to build a picture of them as a textual tradition, with each borrowing from, building on, or even deliberately ignoring those that came before it. The first chapter and the conclusion consider them

[122] Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 26.
[123] Spiegel, *Past as Text*, 27, 53.
[124] Spiegel, *Past as Text*, 103.

as a group, arguing that they were a kind of formative text that in this period was uniquely Cistercian, and that teaching by example was central to Cistercian life and spirituality.

The first chapter seeks to define Cistercian exempla, to examine the building blocks of the collections. It examines one exemplum that appears in multiple Cistercian exempla collections, that of the Virgin Mary visiting the harvesters at Clairvaux. The similarities between these disparate versions reveal a way of Cistercian being that was based around absorbing the example of other Cistercians, both their inner self and outer actions. This was the reproduction of Cistercian life by recourse to the lives of those who had come before. However, based on the changes made to this exemplum in each subsequent version, this chapter also argues for the distinct character of each collection. It suggests that far from creating a unified corporate identity for the Order, each one presented a different vision of Cistercianness, and this unique character is explored in the following chapters.

The order of chapters two to four is partly based on chronology, and partly on geography. I start with Herbert of Clairvaux's *Liber miraculorum*, as the first of the three collections studied in this thesis to be written. Working from the new edition of the text and one of the earliest manuscript witnesses, this chapter challenges the scholarly consensus, based on an older, incomplete edition, that Herbert's text is a disorganised collection of anecdotes about his fellow Cistercians. It argues that there are a series of repeated themes in the text that reveal his agenda: exempla about the eucharist, crusade, conversion and heresy show an interest in Cistercian activity outside the cloister on behalf of the papacy. For the first time, it considers Herbert's collection in the context of his relationship with Henry of Marcy, who was a key figure in the papacy's fight against heresy in these years. As Henry's chaplain, Herbert accompanied him on a preaching tour in 1178, and this chapter concludes that the collection was likely written or conceived of on that tour, with Henry's input, to argue for active Cistercian involvement in the world outside the cloister in combatting heresy and lay unbelief.

Though he wrote his collection later than Engelhard, Conrad began his career as a monk at Clairvaux, before moving to Germany, and the *Exordium magnum* is deeply nostalgic, continually looking back to the Order's French heartlands; he also made use of many of Herbert's stories, especially those about Clairvaux. Chapter three thus studies Conrad of Eberbach's *Exordium magnum*, a combined history of the Cistercian Order and exempla collection. Scholars have long argued that it was written in two parts: books I–IV at Clairvaux, celebrating that monastery, and books V–VI in Germany, to warn against the dangers of the negligent behaviour he saw there. This understanding of the structure and composition history has then informed explanations of Conrad's methods and purpose in writing. But Conrad's autograph manuscript has recently been

rediscovered, providing an opportunity to re-examine the collection and his composition of it. This chapter proposes a new understanding of the dating and composition of the *Exordium magnum*, based on the autograph manuscript, internal textual evidence and the evidence of other Cistercian sources, and from this a new way of thinking about the collection's structure. It then examines how Conrad rewrote an earlier Cistercian history, the *Exordium parvum*, as well as Herbert's text, arguing that Conrad rewrote to create a new history for the Order, one that centred on Bernard and Clairvaux, and urged his German readers to adopt the Claravallians as a model for Cistercian perfection. Far from making Clairvaux as important as Cîteaux, as scholars have argued, Conrad made Clairvaux the centre of the Cistercian Order, and its monks examples to all other Cistercians.

If the *Liber miraculorum* was written entirely in France, and the *Exordium magnum* represents a move from Clairvaux to Eberbach, then the final collection is wholly German. Engelhard of Langheim's collection, written for a community of local Cistercian nuns at the end of the twelfth century, is the subject of the fourth and final chapter. This collection has received little scholarly attention and has not been analysed as a work for Cistercian women. This chapter compares Engelhard's exempla to those in collections for men and reads them through the lens of his dedication letter, arguing that this was a collection specifically addressed to the spiritual and moral formation of nuns. An unusual focus on sex and virginity argued for the importance of an enclosed monastic life for Cistercian women, at a time when other models of female religious life were available. Furthermore, Engelhard provided a model for the abbess in her role as monastic superior in his novel and multi-faceted depiction of the Virgin Mary, at a time when there was little guidance for abbesses. This chapter finally reflects on the implications of Engelhard's collection for our modern understanding of the relationship between Cistercian men and women.

In charting the Cistercian exempla collections before Caesarius, this thesis moves through both time and space towards his writing of the *Dialogus miraculorum*. The *Liber miraculorum* was written by a French monk at Clairvaux, the *Exordium magnum* was written at Eberbach by a French monk who continually looked back towards Clairvaux, and Engelhard's collection was written by a German monk, for a house of German nuns. Likewise, Caesarius wrote his collection in Germany, at the urging of two German abbots. This movement from France to Germany additionally reflects the dissemination of copies of exempla collections written at Clairvaux, which were copied and appear in the libraries of houses to the east but not the west.[125] In moving from France to Germany, this thesis charts the geographic spread of the tradition, and follows the direction of travel of the writing and copying of exempla collections within the Cistercian Order.

[125] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 907–908; Mula, 'Geography and Exempla Collections', 27–40. Newman has also discussed the difference between 'central' collections from Clairvaux and 'peripheral' ones like Engelhard's collection, Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 54.

Overall, this thesis argues that the exempla collections were perhaps the paramount Cistercian literary production between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230, and that they show how central teaching by example was to the construction and propagation of often competing visions of what it meant to be Cistercian in these decades. The Cistercian Order has often been defined by its institutional structures and legislative texts, or by the high-brow spiritual writings of exceptional figures like St Bernard. But neither of these views represents the quotidian reality of living as a Cistercian. The exempla collections presented concrete if divergent ways of being Cistercian and attempted to form members of the Order according to their vision. They demonstrate that to be Cistercian was defined by absorbing and embodying the example of those Cistercians who had come before; not so much following in their footsteps as becoming them, inside and out. It was an age of example.

Fig 1. Map showing the locations of the abbeys where the exempla collections were written

Chapter one

Being Cistercian: Redefining Cistercian Exempla

Introduction

Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum*, the culmination of the Cistercian exempla collection tradition, begins with the criteria by which he chose his exempla:

> When it was my duty, in my responsible post, to recite to the novices some of the events that have been miraculously wrought within our Order in our own time, and that still occur daily, I was asked with much insistence by certain people to perpetuate them in writing.... I have also inserted accounts of a great number of events that took place outside the Order, because they were edifying [*aedificatoria*] and were, like all the rest, told to me by religious men. God is my witness that not one chapter in this Dialogue has been invented by me [*nec me finxisse*].[1]

The stories he wrote down were not only edifying, they were based on true testimonials.[2] His 'exempla', as he referred to them elsewhere in the prologue, were, firstly, all based on real events that he had learnt about from reliable witnesses, and, secondly, chosen because they could educate or inspire his audience. These two claims were made by the earlier exempla collection authors too. Herbert frequently made reference to his sources in the *Liber miraculorum*, testifying to the person's reliability, as a way to prove the validity of the exempla he used. One exemplum ends: 'This we learned from the mouth of the abbot himself by a secret narration, with God as witness, whose words we believe certainly not less than our own eyes.'[3] And another: 'I heard this

[1] 'Cum ex debito iniunctae sollicitudinis aliqua ex his quae in ordine nostro nostris temporibus miraculose gesta sunt et quotidie fiunt, recitarem nouiciis, rogatus sum a quibusdam cum instantia multa, eadem scripto perpetuare... Plurima etiam inserui quae extra ordinem contigerunt, eo quod essent aedificatoria, et a viris religiosis, sicut et reliqua, mihi recitata. Testis est mihi Dominus, nec unum quidem capitulum in hoc Dialogo me finxisse.' *Dialogus miraculorum*, prologue.
[2] Mula, 'Exempla and Historiography', 253–55.
[3] 'Hec ab ipsius abbatis ore secreta relacione, teste Deo, cognouimus, cuius utique uerbis non minus quam oculis nostris credimus.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 109.

from a man so great – who swore to have seen it – that I would have blushed to not believe it.'[4] In his exempla featuring his fellow monks from Clairvaux, Herbert also frequently referred to the exemplary nature of their lives. Conrad, when describing how he had chosen his 'exempla' (as he described them) in the summary that closes the *Exordium magnum*, likewise highlighted that he had not invented them himself: 'We have not written all this as if we were writing something new but... have discovered and gathered together what our zealous fathers had already written down.'[5] The 'laudable deeds of our forefathers' that Conrad included were there to educate: 'to instruct the unlearned, strengthen the weak... [and] inform the devout for perfection.'[6] Engelhard, in his *apologia* at the end of his collection, also claimed, 'I have invented nothing [*nil finxerim*]', and stated that he had written 'for the edification of the reader'.[7] All of the exempla collection authors made the same claims about their methods: their collections were comprised of miraculous exempla, based on true testimonials of verifiable events, and they were included because they were edifying. While Herbert, Conrad, Engelhard and Caesarius often described their tales as *miracula,* or occasionally *historia*, the collections are also full of references to *exempla*, and learning by example.[8]

There is much debate about how to define the medieval exemplum, thanks in part to the multiple contexts in which exempla were used, including sermons, histories, literary works and didactic treatises. Many scholars argue that the formal aspects of exempla matter less than their function, which was to illustrate or persuade.[9] The most-cited scholarly definition defines an exemplum as: 'a short story, told as though true, and destined to be inserted into a discourse (usually a sermon) in order to convince an audience through a salutary lesson.'[10] They are described elsewhere similarly as plausible stories, used to illustrate a moral or theological point, and to transmit truths of the Christian faith from a clerical to a lay audience.[11] Alongside the

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[4] 'Ego a tali uiro audiui qui se uidesse iuraret cui erubescerem non credere.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 111.
[5] 'Neque enim quasi novi alicuius operis auctores haec conscripsimus, sed... quae a studiosis patribus sparsim exarata reperimus... in unum collegimus'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.
[6] 'ut per ea rudes instruantur, infirmi confortentur, lascivi gravitatem sectentur, duri corde compungantur, devoti ad perfectionem informentur'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.
[7] 'Libellum hoc scripserim in quo Dei quesita sit gloria edificantio legenti... ego nil finxerim'. Engelhard's *apologia*, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 13097, fol. 167r. (hereafter MBS Clm 13097). Quotations from Engelhard's collection throughout are my own transcription and translation, and references are to the text and folio number in MBS Clm 13097. There is no published edition of Engelhard's collection. For this research, a transcription was made of Engelhard's collection on the basis of the earliest manuscript witness, MBS Clm 13097 (from the late twelfth century), which was then compared to Poznań Rkp. 173 (from the thirteenth century). The text is almost identical across the two manuscripts. For more on the manuscript history, see the discussion in chapter four of this thesis.
[8] Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens', 380.
[9] Kemmler, *'Exempla' in Context*, 192; Suleiman, 'Le récit exemplaire', 469; Tilliette, 'L'exemplum rhétorique', 65.
[10] Claude Bremond, Jacques Le Goff, and Jean-Claude Schmitt, *L'Exemplum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982), 37–38. My translation from the French.
[11] Jones, *Friars' Tales*, 1; Bronislaw Geremek, 'L'exemplum et la circulation de la culture au Moyen Âge', *Mélanges de l'école Française de Rome* 92, no. 1 (1980): 177.

hierarchical nature of their communication – from learned preacher to uneducated layperson – their ideological function in enacting cultural authority has been emphasised.[12] However, this research has tended to exclude the Cistercian exempla, which are still studied almost exclusively by historians of the Cistercian Order. As such, as Mula has noted, the Cistercian exempla do not fit these definitions, because they were not intended to be used individually in sermons or other discourses.[13] Moreover, it is clear that they do not represent an interaction between a learned clerical elite and a lay audience, complicating the issue of hierarchy and authority. The Cistercian exempla also described particular people and events, based on the testimonies of those with first-hand knowledge of them. While sermon exempla were 'told as though true', scholars generally argue that they did not include specific people or locations; it was their generality that ensured the lesson they illustrated would be relevant and applicable to all members of an audience.[14] Precise details and the authority of witnesses are seen as hallmarks not of exempla, but of miracle stories, an overlapping but separate genre.[15] The exempla in the Cistercian collections have thus been described by Jean-Claude Schmitt as straddling the genres of exempla and *miracula*, thanks to both their edifying nature and their recording of true testimonials, a characterisation that positions them as a patchwork of other genres.[16]

No scholar has yet elaborated a definition specific to the Cistercian exempla. Scholars of the Cistercian collections have instead argued that current definitions of medieval exempla, taken most broadly, are indeed applicable to the Cistercian exempla. For example, Newman argues that Engelhard's stories can be classed with other medieval exempla, since they were short narratives with exemplary and rhetorical force.[17] When historians have addressed the particularities of the exempla in the Cistercian collections, they have argued that what differentiates them is their role in creating a shared history and uniform identity for the white monks; they were intended to defend and prove an entire monastic order, not just illustrate a discrete moral lesson.[18] Beyond this institutional perspective, the existing scholarship does not engage with the peculiarities of the Cistercian exempla as compared to the nearly-contemporary sermon exempla, or attempt to

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[12] Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, especially 31–38, 58.
[13] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 903; Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens', 378–80.
[14] Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, 60; Hanska, 'Historical Event to Didactic Story', 104–105; Winkler, 'Building Imagined Community', 203; Smirnova, 'Actualization of the Past', 261–62.
[15] Hanska, "Miracula' and 'Exempla", 142; Hanska, 'Historical Event to Didactic Story', 87–106. On medieval miracles and miracle collections, see Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind. Theory, Record and Event, 1000–1215* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Wildwood House, 1987); Michael E. Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150–1350* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007); Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
[16] Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, 126–27.
[17] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 51.
[18] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 35; McGuire, 'Cistercian Storytelling', 288–304; Freeman, *Narratives of a New* Order, 128–131; Mula, 'Geography and Exempla Collections', 39; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 51–52; Ward, *Miracles*, 198–99.

define them as their own species of exempla, despite their many differences. Though the genre is defined by modern scholars according to the later mendicant collections, it was Cistercians who revived exempla collections as a form of religious literature in the twelfth century. The form that exempla and exempla collections took during this renaissance at the hands of the white monks has gone unexplored and undefined.

This thesis studies the Cistercian exempla collection tradition before Caesarius, and so before the rise of sermon exempla. Before studying the collections, it is necessary to first seek to understand and define the Cistercian exemplum, to understand the specific features and function of the short narratives that were gathered and arranged to create exempla collections. This chapter takes one exemplum that appears in multiple collections and explores the changes made to it from one text to another, to examine the Cistercian construction, use and reuse of exempla, and ultimately to offer a new understanding of 'exemplum' in the Cistercian context.

The exemplum is a famous one about a vision of the Virgin Mary, accompanied by female saints or other attendants, visiting the monks at Clairvaux at harvest time. It first appeared in the *Collectaneum* in the 1170s, and in a slightly different version in Herbert's near-contemporaneous *Liber miraculorum*. As with much of the material in the *Exordium magnum*, Conrad then copied it almost verbatim from Herbert's collection, while Engelhard's version diverges entirely from the earlier ones. In the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius returned to a version similar to that found in the *Liber miraculorum* and *Exordium magnum*, but told the exemplum within a frame narrative that told the story of his own conversion to Cistercian life. The same story can also be found in other contemporary texts, including the collection of miracles of the Virgin known as the *Mariale Magnum*, composed before 1187, and Hélinand of Froidmont's *Chronicon*.[19] This seems to have been an exemplum that circulated orally throughout the Order, across five decades; the collections represent moments when it was captured and pinned down in writing, but there does not appear to have been one definitive or authoritative version.[20]

McGuire, Mula and Newman have all noted the differences between the versions in their studies of this exemplum.[21] For Newman, these changes illuminate varying Cistercian attitudes to work, whilst Mula uses it to consider the relationship between veracity and didactic efficacy. But, as one of the only exempla to appear in so many collections, the comparison between these

[19] Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens', 382.
[20] For a discussion of the interaction between oral and written storytelling cultures with regards to the exempla collections, see Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 59–61. For more on the interplay between oral miracle stories and written miracle collections, see Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, especially chapters 1, 2 and 7.
[21] McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 40–41; Mula, 'Les exempla cisterciens', 381–88; Martha G. Newman, 'Labor: Insights from a Medieval Monastery', in *Why the Middle Ages Matter: Medieval Light on Modern Injustice*, ed. Celia Chazelle et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 113–20.

different versions also provides an opportunity to explore how Cistercian authors created, changed and used exempla in their collections, and so to understand how Cistercian exempla functioned as formative tools. This chapter therefore considers the exemplum of the Virgin and the harvesters in Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collections alongside the versions in the *Collectaneum* and *Dialogus miraculorum* – the earliest and latest collections, respectively – in order to suggest a definition of 'exemplum' in the Cistercian context that is applicable across the entire tradition. This chapter studies one version at a time in chronological order, exploring the changes made to it from one collection to the next, before offering a new understanding of the kind of persuasion and formation offered by the Cistercian exempla. It ends by considering whether what is peculiarly Cistercian about them is indeed the attempted creation of a common history and identity for the Order, as scholars have suggested.

The Virgin Visits the Harvesters at Clairvaux

The five versions of the exemplum considered in this chapter are those from Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collections – introduced in the introduction – and the *Collectaneum* and Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*. The *Dialogus miraculorum* was written at Heisterbach, an abbey near Cologne.[22] Caesarius had been novice master, and around 1219–1223 he created an exempla collection, ostensibly at the behest of his abbot and the abbot of Marienstatt, to record the exempla he had used to teach novices. The collection contains 746 chapters and is divided into twelve thematic books; themes include conversion, confession, demons, the Eucharist, and the punishment and salvation of the dead. It has been described as a medieval bestseller, and manuscript copies could be found in the libraries of many religious orders; it was taken up by preachers and used as a source for sermon exempla, hence its longevity and popularity.[23]

The less well-known *Collectaneum* was created at Clairvaux in two stages, the first before 1174, and the second between *c.* 1174 and 1181.[24] Its compilation was likely overseen by John, prior 1171–1179. It survives in only one manuscript, Troyes, MS 946, and appears to be a first draft – there are several scribal hands visible, space left for exempla that were never inserted, and sections that are crossed out. The collection is in four parts. The first part mainly features extracts from written hagiographical works; the second part consists of exempla concerning the eucharist; the third includes exempla about the dangers of monastic life; and the final part tells exempla set at Clairvaux itself.

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[22] *Dialogus miraculorum*, 24–83.
[23] *Dialogus miraculorum*, 84–88.
[24] *Collectaneum*, 29–32. See also McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 26–30.

The *Collectaneum*

We start with the earliest version of the exemplum, that in the *Collectaneum* (IV.16), where it appears in the fourth part of the text, after several other stories about or told by monks from Clairvaux. In this version, the vision of the Virgin is described as: 'A most wonderful spectacle and worthy of everlasting remembrance'.[25] One day, an unnamed monk watches his fellows harvesting in the fields, 'sweating and exerting themselves with this work'.[26] As he is watching, he sees three splendid women arrive:

> 'advancing with marvellous gravity and reverence, [they] encircled the convent of reaping monks, and thus they positioned themselves around them, just as in this time secular deputies habitually position themselves to guard the crops on behalf of their masters. And in fact they were guarding them [*custodiebant eos*], not because they suspected them of fraud with the crops, but lest invisible thieves dared to somehow bring fraud to the fruits of their sacred labours through temptation... unless we keep divine protection around us, we cannot at all bear the wickedness of their harassment'[27]

The monk who sees this vision is surprised by the presence of women among Cistercian men, but a figure appears to him and explains that the women are the Virgin, Mary Magdalene and St Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist. The Virgin, he explains, frequently visits Cistercian monks, since the Order is dedicated to her, and as their patron she protects and oversees their work. The exemplum ends with an exhortation: 'the faith and truth of what was said to us must remain forever.'[28]

This vision occurred at Clairvaux at harvest time, when the monks were reaping 'after the custom of the Cistercian Order', making this exemplum one that is both rooted in a specific place and time and universal to the experience of Cistercian men. The specificity is produced through reference to the monk who had the vision: the audience was told that it was experienced by 'a

[25] 'Spectaculum pulcherrimum et perhenni memoria dignissimum'. *Collectaneum*, IV.16.
[26] 'Quibus die quadam hoc exercicio desudantibus'. *Collectaneum*, IV.16.
[27] 'que mira grauitate et reuerentia incedentes conuentum metentium circuibant monachorum, ac ita se circa illos habebant ut solent se habere deputati a dominis suis eo tempore homines seculares ad custodiam messorum. Et reuera custodiebant eos, non ut de fraude frugum suspectos eos haberent, sed ne inuisibiles fraudatores sanctorum laborum fructui per aliqua temptamenta fraudem inferre presumerent... nisi haberemus circa nos diuinam custodiam, nullatenus possemus eorum infestationis tolerare maliciam.' *Collectaneum*, IV.16.
[28] 'fides et ueritas dictorum nobis cum debet manere in eternum.' *Collectaneum*, IV.16.

certain man of our Order'.[29] The exemplum starts with this unnamed monk standing off from his brothers and watching them, before he sees the vision. His reaction to and thoughts about the vision are then revealed to the audience: 'he wondered to himself what it was he was seeing'. The reason for Mary's visitation is then explained to him – and the exemplum's audience through him – by the reverend figure who appears at his side. This important vision for the Cistercian Order – one whose truth must never be forgotten – is told in the *Collectaneum* as being the experience of a specific, albeit anonymous, monk at Clairvaux. Although he is unnamed, and his life and character are not described, his experience of the vision and thoughts were recorded, a trend that would continue in most of the other versions.

Newman has argued that this exemplum communicated that monks could be tempted while out harvesting (perhaps because manual labour was boring) and so needed divine protection to ward off these temptations.[30] However, this is not the lesson that the author of the exemplum drew. The most important lesson, as shown by the last line, is that by dedicating the Order to Mary, the Cistercians have gained her protection, and this vision is proof of her dedication to and care of 'her own' monks [*eos proprios*], whom she guarded like a secular deputy or overseer. It is an exemplum about a community and its protector.

The community at Clairvaux is introduced in the exemplum before the vision itself is recounted. The audience was told that they were harvesting, sweating and exerting themselves, 'after the custom of the Cistercian Order, and according to the tradition of St Benedict.'[31] This connects the work of the monks to an even wider community: a geographic one, encompassing other Cistercian houses who would also have been harvesting at this time, and a historic one, encompassing all those houses past and present that followed the Benedictine Rule. This exemplum also comes after several others that enumerate the temptations that monks could suffer, including falling prey to doubts about the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharist, and sinking into depression (IV.12, IV.15). In these stories, as in others nearby in the collection (IV.13–14), the monks are strengthened and comforted by their fellows – their monastic community – and by God. The exemplum of the Virgin and the harvesters, especially when read with those preceding it, thus taught monks that they might be tempted while living out their sacred vocation in the monastery, but reassured them that they were part of a community who would support them, and which was also divinely protected by the Virgin. This exemplum, as it

[29] 'sicut narratione cuiusdam uiri nostri ordinis accepi'. *Collectaneum*, IV.16.
[30] Newman, 'Labor', 113–14.
[31] 'secundum ordinis Cisterciensis consuetudinem ad colligendas fruges ex traditione beati Benedicti sunt occupati monachi'. *Collectaneum*, IV.16.

appears in the *Collectaneum*, is thus about the vision and the monk who experienced it, the community at Clairvaux, and their protector.

The *Liber miraculorum*

After its first appearance in the *Collectaneum*, the exemplum next appeared in Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, written in 1178, as the very first chapter in the collection, where it is followed by the examples of other Clairvaux monks. Although Herbert's text is nearly contemporaneous, and was also written at Clairvaux, there is little to no overlap between the vision of the Virgin in these two collections. This is true for most of the exempla shared between the *Collectaneum* and *Liber miraculorum*: when a similar story appears in both, they seem to be independent of one another, but based on a common oral tradition.[32]

Herbert's version of this exemplum leaves out any mention of demonic temptation, and focuses instead on the monk who experienced the vision, who is named as Reinaldus. The vision of the Virgin visiting the harvesters is just one part of the exemplum, which begins with a sketch of Reinaldus' life before he joined the Cistercian Order, where he is described as:

> 'a man of simplicity, who feared God and retained his innocence from infancy to old age; although he lived in a secular habit for thirty years before his conversion, he did not live in a secular manner, but, concerned with glorifying and carrying God in his body, was always persevering with pious works.'[33]

Herbert then recounted how Reinaldus joined the community at Clairvaux, where he 'girded himself manfully for a new conflict... mortifying himself all day long in labours, in vigils, in fastings, and in the other services of holy discipline.'[34] His virtues, as listed by Herbert, included chastity, simplicity, obedience, prayer, manual labour, and bodily mortification. Again, there is both universality and specificity here. The behaviours Reinaldus exemplified are Cistercian monastic virtues, and the vision occurred at harvest time, the manual labour associated with which was a routine part of life in the monastery. But these virtues and rhythms of life are embodied in this exemplum through the story of Reinaldus' life.

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[32] McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 38.
[33] 'uir simplicitatis, timens Deum et retinens innocenciam suam ab infancia usque ad senectutem, qui licet ante conuersione suam per triginta annos uiueret in habitu seculari, non tamen seculariter uixit, sed operibus pietatis semper insistens in corpore suo glorificare et portare Deum sollicitus fuit.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.
[34] 'Susceptus autem in Claraualle ilico ad nouam miliciam uiriliter se accinxit... in laboribus, in uigilis, in ieiuniis ceterisque sancte discipline obsequiis seipsum tota die mortificans.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

After this introduction to Reinaldus and his virtuous conduct comes the vision of the Virgin. Reinaldus observes his brothers harvesting in the valley – the mention of the valley is new and calls attention to Clairvaux, the "clear valley" – when he is surprised to see several women approaching them:

> Behold! Three venerable women with rosy faces suddenly appeared to him, dressed in white garments; the one who came first was dressed in more resplendent garments, and was more graceful in form and taller in stature. They came down the nearby hillside and approached the convent of brothers [*conuentui fratrum*] harvesting crops on the hillside... When they came among them, they began to walk separately from one another so that they could better mingle amongst the monks and lay brothers.[35]

Whilst Reinaldus is wondering why women are walking amongst the monks, a man dressed in white appears to explain that the women are the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene and St Elizabeth, and Reinaldus is amazed.

Unlike in the *Collectaneum*, the holy women circulate among the monks, rather than forming a protective ring around them. There is also no suggestion that Mary is acting as an overseer, and no mention of temptation or demonic attack. Quite the opposite: the vision demonstrates the especially sacred nature of the community at Clairvaux, the community in the clear valley. The holiness of the entire Clairvaux community, and their unity, is reinforced by the mention of the monks and lay brothers harvesting together. Additionally, in the narrative, before Reinaldus sees the holy women, he is resting and considering his fellows:

> marvelling that so many evidently wise, noble and delicate men should submit themselves to labours and hardships for the love of Christ in that place… Thus raising his eyes and his hands towards heaven, he gave thanks to God that He had permitted him, although unworthy and sinful, to join such a holy multitude [*tam sancta multitudini*].[36]

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[35] 'en subito apparuerunt ei tres quasi matrone uenerabiles uultibus roseis et candidis uestibus renitentes, quarum una que precedebat, ueste fulgencior, forma uenustior et statura procerior erat. Descendebant uero de monto propinquo et appropinquabant conuentui fratrum in ipsius montis latere fruges metentium... Que cum introissent, separate ab inuicem deambulare ceperunt tamquam gratia uisitacionis huc atque illuc inter monachos et conuersos.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

[36] 'admirans quia videlicet tot sapiens, tot nobiles et delicati ibidem viri propter amorem Christi laboribus et erumpnis seipsos exponerent… Inde ergo protensis in celum oculis ac manibus grates Domino referebat, quod eum tam sancta multitudini, quamuis indignum et peccatorem, coniunxerat.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

Even before the divine favour bestowed upon Clairvaux is made visible by the arrival of the Virgin, the sacred nature of the community is shown. By adding in this description of the harvesters, Herbert communicated the extraordinary piety of Clairvaux, in a notable change from the previous version. Although the *Collectaneum* creates a sense of the community at Clairvaux, they were not praised to the same extent as in the *Liber miraculorum*.

In Herbert's collection, Reinaldus was named, and his life story related. Herbert also recalled how their friendship had allowed him to hear about the vision:

> For eight years [Reinaldus] kept hidden this memory that I have recounted, and it was only a short time before his death – forty days if I remember correctly – that, though unwilling, urged on by me, he revealed it under this circumstance. Thus, one day, when we had both been talking intimately about the salvation of our souls, knowing that he was a lawful and holy man [*virum iustum et sanctum*] often visited by God, I dared to ask him to tell me about his own experiences, and I had confidence because I loved him [*illum diligebam*] and felt that he loved me too [*me ab illo diligi*]. So I began to vigorously beg him from the depths of my heart to make known to me one of his revelations, whichever of them he judged would most edify me, for the love of Christ and because of his own compassion.[37]

Whilst the scribe in the *Collectaneum* wrote that this exemplum was 'of a certain man of our Order', Herbert's version is presented as coming directly from Reinaldus himself. Reinaldus did not offer up the recitation of this vision willingly; it was a secret revealed to Herbert only thanks to their mutual love. In this way, it is not only an exemplum that demonstrates the sanctity of the community at Clairvaux, but one that also praises the practice of communal Cistercian living, since it is through the personal bonds created by the monastic community that this important vision about the Order was revealed.

[37] 'Nam et istam supramemoratum quam per octennium fere silencio presserat, paruo tempore, id est XL, si bene memini, diebus ante obitum suum inuitus et quodammodo coactus michi, licet indigno, tali occasione patefecit. Quadam siquidem die, cum de salute animarum nostrarum amno familiariter loqueremur, ego sciens eum virum iustum et sanctum et a Deo sepius visitatum, in ea confidencia qua illum diligebam, et me ab illo diligi sentiebam, ausus sum scicitari et petere aliquid ab eo. Itaque propter amorem Christi et propter miseraciones eius cepi illummedullitus obsecrare et vehementer insistere, ut ad honorem Dei unam aliquam ex suis revelacionibus michi manifestaret, illam scilicet de qua me magis edificandum conseret.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

Herbert and his exempla collection mediated between Reinaldus and the audience; they recorded the words of the former and transmitted them to the latter. However, the structure of the exemplum worked to obscure this until after the audience had read about the vision, since Herbert's narration of Reinaldus' vision comes before he explains how his friend told it to him. He thus made his audience privy to two moments of revelation, with one given priority. The first revelation is Reinaldus' experience of the vision, and in his telling of it, Herbert gave his audience access to Reinaldus' emotions and thoughts: he was 'seized by a joy he could hardly contain' and 'agitated and astonished by excessive wonder'.[38] Only after describing Reinaldus' experience did Herbert tell of how an emotional Reinaldus later revealed the vision to him: 'groans and sobs from the bottom of his heart frequently interrupted his voice, as though he were still seeing the vision.'[39] In both cases it was Reinaldus' emotions and thoughts that Herbert recorded, not his own: the experience of the original visionary, whose life was the subject of the exemplum, was centred.

Similarly, Herbert related how this vision changed Reinaldus, not himself: 'Truly, his enviable monastic observance and his daily growth in virtue showed how much he accomplished thanks to this vision, and how much he grew in love for God and the most blessed Bearer of God.'[40] Reinaldus wondered at the vision and then, moved by what he saw, continued more vigorously on the path of monastic observance and towards union with God. By revealing so little of his own feelings, Herbert could not be a cipher for the audience; he was not asking them to imagine themselves in his place, hearing about this vision from Reinaldus. Instead, the focus on Reinaldus' feelings, and the way this vision changed him, suggested to the audience that they imagine and embody his thoughts and emotions.[41] In reading about Reinaldus experience, they should be moved by this vision, and their desire to progress spiritually enkindled, like him.

In the *Collectaneum*, this exemplum was told as the experience of the monk who had the vision, a framing expanded by Herbert. He structured his exemplum around Reinaldus' life, starting with his existence before he entered the monastery, followed by his entry into Clairvaux and the visions he experienced there, and ending with his death. The exemplum demonstrates Mary's care for the Cistercian Order – and the holiness of Clairvaux in particular – but it also

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[38] 'pre immensitate leticie seipsum uix caperet'; 'pre nimia admiracione turbatus et obstupefactos'. *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

[39] 'gemitus et singultus a fundo cordis erumpentes, uocem loquentis frequentius interrumperent tamquam si eadem hora ipsam cerneret uisionem.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

[40] 'Quantum uero de huiusmodi uisitacione profecerit quantumque in amorem Dei et ipsius beatissime genitricis excreuerit, emulanda conuersacio eius et cotidiana uirtutum incrementa monstrabant.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 1.

[41] Anne Scott has explored how emotions were used to persuade and teach in the exempla contained in the fourteenth-century treatise *Handlyng Synne*, although she does not discuss the audience feeling the same emotions as the subject of the exempla, but rather the emotional effect the narrative as a whole might have on the audience. Scott, 'Educating through Emotion', 34–50.

presents Reinaldus and his virtues, described by Herbert at the start of the chapter, as an example of Cistercian monastic observance. Bynum has argued that in the Middle Ages, wonder – the emotion that the vision sparks in Reinaldus, and thus in the exempla collection's audience – was not contrasted with the knowable or mundane but rather the imitable.[42] 'Non imitandum sed admirandum' was a common phrase in medieval hagiographies and miracle collections, and this separation between the wonderous and the imitable was often a way to draw a distinction between the flashy and miraculous in the life of a saint and those more ordinary virtues that could be adopted and copied.[43] A similar dynamic is at play in the Reinaldus exemplum: the audience could marvel at the visions he experienced, as Reinaldus himself had done, but Herbert also provided them with the concrete ways in which he lived an exemplary and imitable monastic life. The vision of the Virgin is part of Reinaldus' life story, but it is the example of his entire life and conduct that Herbert presented his audience with in the first chapter of the *Liber miraculorum*. Reinaldus was not important only as a visionary; by presenting his entire life story, Herbert told his audience that all of his behaviour was worthy of imitation.

The word imitation suggests a mimicking of outward behaviour. But this exemplum is not just a narration of Reinaldus' life and visions, with the audience asked to copy his actions: chastity, fasting, praying, and hard work. Herbert used the vision of the Virgin – the centrepiece of the exemplum – as a moment to reveal to the audience Reinaldus' inner self, through the descriptions of his thoughts and emotions. As argued above, Herbert linked Reinaldus' emotions upon seeing the vision to his subsequent greater devotion; his feelings spur his progress. This progress encompasses both outer actions and inner feelings: Herbert told his audience that Reinaldus both grew in love for God and Mary, grew in virtue, and outwardly lived an 'enviable' monastic existence. Inner feelings and outer actions are inextricably linked in the example of Reinaldus, suggesting that Herbert hoped his audience would not just imitate Reinaldus' visible actions, as laid out in the opening of the exemplum, but embody his whole self, inner and outer. To feel like him, and so to act like him and ultimately be like him.

The *Exordium magnum*

As with much of the material he took from the *Liber miraculorum* (explored further in chapter three), Conrad copied the story of Reinaldus and the Virgin almost word for word, including keeping Herbert's use of first-person narration. The main difference between Conrad's and Herbert's versions lies in where in each collection the story was placed – its textual context. In

[42] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 51.
[43] Ward, *Miracles*, 24–26; Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders*, 37–38.

the *Liber miraculorum* it was the first exemplum, and has been described as an introduction, demonstrating the collection's main themes, including friendship, the holiness of Cistercian monks, and the divine approval shown to the Order.[44] Its position also worked to emphasise Reinaldus' virtues and merits, since his example was placed first, before those of other pious Cistercian men. Its placement suggests the importance of this vision, the supreme holiness and blessedness of Clairvaux, and the primacy of Reinaldus as an example of Cistercian conduct.

In the *Exordium magnum*, by contrast, the vision of the Virgin comes mid-way through the third book, and sits amongst – but not ahead of – other exempla featuring holy monks from Clairvaux. In this context, Reinaldus is just one example of Cistercian virtue among many, and the Virgin's visit yet more proof of Clairvaux's sanctity. Instead, the paramount example of holiness at Clairvaux, in Conrad's text, is Bernard. Book II is entirely dedicated to stories of Bernard and his successors as abbot, and argues for the sanctity of life at Clairvaux under him.[45] As chapter thirteen in the subsequent book, Reinaldus is then just one example of the ordinary monks at Clairvaux, whose stories Conrad retold in books III and IV, who followed a pattern of piety set by Bernard.

One of Conrad's only additions was a brief note at the start of the exemplum, naming Herbert's collection as his source: 'The senior monk who, as we already mentioned, bequeathed to us many written records about the observant persons of our Order, wrote this about [Reinaldus], and I insert it here with as much faith as he had in writing it.'[46] Although he changed very little, we can understand Conrad's use of Herbert's material as a kind of rewriting. In her work on hagiographical rewriting, Monique Goullet has argued that (re)writers either wrote pretending to be the original author or acknowledged that they were reusing and changing existing material.[47] In the latter case, the new author could rely on the authority of the older text to legitimise their new one. This dynamic is visible in the *Exordium magnum*. By using Herbert's material, Conrad gave his collection legitimacy, since he could claim that all his exempla were the 'true testimony' [*veracis testimonii*] and 'written records' [*litterarum monimentis*] of Herbert, who had personally known the men whose stories he was telling.

In introducing this exemplum as the true recollections of Herbert, Conrad claimed that this event really happened. As argued above, Herbert decentred his own role in transmitting the story

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[44] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 189–99.
[45] For a discussion of Conrad's argument about the centrality of Bernard to Cistercian life, and his reuse of Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, see chapter three of this thesis.
[46] 'De hoc senior ille, quem supra diximus de religiosis personis ordinis nostri... plura litterarum monimentis tradidisse, quae nihilominus eadem fide, qua ille ea expressit, nos hic inseruimus, ita scribit.' *Exordium magnum*, III.13.
[47] Monique Goullet, 'Quelle autorité pour une réécriture hagiographique?', in *Author and Authorship in Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. Edoardo D'Angelo and Jan Ziolkowski (Firenze: SISMEL - Edizioni Del Galluzzo, 2014), 441.

of the vision from Reinaldus to his audience by ensuring they encountered the relation of the vision before they learned how he had come to hear of it. Although Conrad noted his source briefly at the beginning, in using Herbert's text almost verbatim, he still retained the same impression of unimpeded access to Reinaldus' inner self; his own thoughts on the story go unrecorded, and so it is Reinaldus' emotions and reactions that are centred and presented to the audience. However, despite this focus on the experience of Reinaldus as the recipient of this vision, in both the *Exordium magnum* and *Liber miraculorum* the source of the vision is discussed: it came from Reinaldus himself, and then to Conrad through Herbert's text. By including the moment in which Reinaldus testified to this revelation as part of their narrative, in addition to telling his life story, both authors claimed that this event genuinely occurred. In other words, Herbert and Conrad presented Reinaldus to their audience as an example of the conduct of a real Cistercian monk – one of the 'observant persons of the Order', in Conrad's words. In embodying Reinaldus, these truth claims imply, their Cistercian audience would be reliving the life of one of their forebears. In the case of the audience of the *Exordium magnum*, they were separated from Reinaldus by perhaps half a century or more; by absorbing how Reinaldus felt and thought, and then using this inner orientation to behave like him too, his life was re-enacted across time. Continuity of the Cistercian community was also ensured geographically, as Conrad, writing in Eberbach, offered the example of Reinaldus to the German monks for whom he wrote. These exempla collections thus encouraged the replication of Cistercian life by recourse to past examples. The exempla did not just illustrate the rules and norms of Cistercian life, or instruct monks in the history of the Order, but asked their Cistercian audience to embody the lives and examples of other Cistercians.

Engelhard's Collection for the Nuns of Wechterswinkel

Engelhard's collection, like Conrad's, but unlike the *Collectaneum* or *Liber miraculorum*, was written in Germany. Of all the collections, it was the only one to be created for a community of Cistercian women. The special attention paid by the Virgin to the Cistercian Order was still shown in his version of the exemplum (c. 14), written sometime in the 1180s or 1190s, and it was still about a vision of the Virgin at harvest time.[48] Yet here Clairvaux itself was decentred; it was, in fact, not even named, and the narrative was completely changed.

Engelhard described how he heard from witnesses that 'In a house of our Order [*una domo ordinis nostri*] in France this celebrated event [*res celebris*] occurred and is believed by all'.[49] It starts

[48] See Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 139–43, for a discussion of Engelhard's version of this story.
[49] 'In una domo ordinis nostri res gesta est celebris apud franciam et ab omnibus credita.' Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 145v.

as the earlier versions do, with the monks in the fields: 'It was harvest time, and the monks were reaping and sweating under the weight of the day and the heat.'[50] The monks' hard work in the fields links this exemplum with the earlier versions. Their sweat, proof of their exertions, was mentioned in the *Collectaneum* but was absent from Herbert's version; it returns here. However, at this point the narrative departs from that in earlier collections, taking the audience to the end of the day and the cellarer, who, having paid the day workers, is now sitting in the chapter house. It is here that he sees the Virgin Mary enter with several attendants (not the female saints of earlier versions), and he asks who they are, and why they have entered the house at night. The Virgin herself answers him:

> "'I am Mary", she said, "and here is the sweat from all in this house [*in domo*], and all in this order [*ordine*]." She brought a glass vessel to her nose as if smelling the odour coming out of it. She said, "Today, I visited my monks in the field, and collected their sweat [*sudorem*] in this vessel, and this odour is greatly valued by me and my Son"'[51]

The cellarer questions her, asking how their work can be valuable given that it is done out of necessity, not voluntarily.[52] She reassures him that all the work they do out of duty belongs to her, and will bring a reward: "'what you do is mine, I claim all that you do as mine. What I receive, I remunerate.'"[53]

Again, this exemplum tells the story of the visionary himself and the moment of revelation. But the visionary in Engelhard's version is not a monk in the fields but the cellarer. Whilst the nuns of Wechterswinkel would not have been involved in the manual labour of harvesting, the convent would have had a cellarer, a senior nun tasked with provisioning the house. Although this cellarer is a man, it brings the exemplum closer to the lived experiences of Engelhard's female Cistercian audience. As with Reinaldus, the cellarer's emotions and thoughts are revealed in the text. By this vision, he is 'renewed in spirit, comforted in his faith, and willing to work.'[54] His inner feelings of spiritual comfort and rejuvenation result in outer actions, in this case

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[50] 'Messis erat et monachi messuerunt, et sub pondere diei et aestus fortiter sudavuerunt.' Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 145v.
[51] "'Ego sum", inquit, "Maria cuius aestu et cuius sunt omnia quae in domo ista sunt et ordine isto." Portabat autem vas vitreum ad nares suas tamquam odorem captans ex eo. Dixitque, "Visitavi hodie monachos meos in agro, sudorem eae collegi mihi in vase isto, et hic odor optimus coram me et filio meo dignus".' Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 145v–146r.
[52] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 141–42.
[53] "'Sive ergo necessitate sive voluntate quid agitis meum est, omnia vestra mihi vendico, ego suscipio, ego remunero.'" Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 146r.
[54] 'utique sic animatus in spe, confortatus in fide, voluntarius in labore.' Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 146r.

labouring willingly. The feelings of the other monks in the monastery are also described. In the morning, the cellarer relates what had happened the previous night to the abbot, who then tells it to the whole house: 'The gentle heard this and were gladdened; the fainthearted heard this and were comforted; the lazy stirred up; the eager were hastened not wearied. All gave glory to Christ and Mary'.[55] As in the *Liber miraculorum*, where Reinaldus' dedication to monastic life increases after he experiences the vision, the cellarer and his fellows are gladdened and then stirred to increased action after they hear of the Virgin's visit and know that their work is valued by her. Although Mary tells the cellarer that all work, done for whatever reason, is worthwhile, the exemplum in fact encourages its audience to labour willingly and gladly, having been stirred up by this vision, just as the cellarer and his fellows were. This exemplum still aims to change the audience's internal motivations (a desire to work), so as to effect an outward change (more eager and diligent labour).

Despite these similarities, Engelhard's retelling of the exemplum provided a different vision of the Cistercian Order than that in earlier versions. Rather than praising the specific sanctity of Clairvaux, it showed Mary's interest in all Cistercians: all their work belonged to and was done for her. It was a story about the whole Order, and not just Clairvaux (which goes unnamed), since her glass vessel contains sweat from 'all in this order'. The Virgin reassures the cellarer, and so the audience, that she values all work done in her name by every Cistercian. By rewriting this famous Cistercian story, Engelhard taught the nuns for whom he wrote of the value of all Cistercian work, including their own, whether voluntary or not, and whether done outside in the fields or inside the monastery.

There was also intimacy created in this exemplum not just by the hearts and minds of the characters that Engelhard revealed to his audience, but in the setting. The other versions of this exemplum take place outside, during the day, with the entire convent present. In Engelhard's exemplum, he used the word 'house' [*domo*] repeatedly to describe the monastery, because the visitation occurs in the building, not with the convent of brothers in the fields. This language increases the intimacy and indeed domesticity of the encounter. Just as nuns were enclosed behind the walls of the convent, so the vision of Mary visiting the harvesters was enclosed by Engelhard in his retelling. Intimacy was also created between Mary and the visionary that is absent from the earlier versions. The cellarer in Engelhard's exemplum sees Mary alone at night, and he speaks directly to her, not to a reverend figure who comes to tell him why Mary has appeared. In the earlier versions the Virgin walks among the monks; here, she talks to one and

[55] 'Audiant hec mansueti et laetentur, audiant pusillanimes et confortentur, pigri excitentur, alacres currantur nec lassentur. Omnes Christo et Maria dent gloria'. Engelhard, c. 14, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 146r.

explains her visit herself, and she also interacts with the monks' sweat. This vision of Mary is intimate on three levels: it occurs at night when the cellarer is alone, she converses directly with him, and it is implied she has been in contact with other monks so as to collect their sweat. In this version, created for a community of women, Mary is a tangible presence, and not a distant vision.

The Virgin's collection of the sweat from the toiling monks additionally clarifies what is present but less obvious in the earlier versions of this exemplum: that it is about bodies. Cistercian theologians were deeply interested in the human body, both in the sense of loving and empathising with Jesus' humanity and in the belief that spiritual progress towards the divine started with the body and the disciplining of it.[56] In all versions of this exemplum, the appearance of Mary in the text is preceded by a description of the labouring bodies of the monks, and, in the case of the *Collectaneum* and Engelhard's collection, their literal sweat too (sweat is also mentioned in the later version in the *Dialogus miraculorum*). The harvesting – which in Engelhard's exemplum stands in for all Cistercian work – was done by Cistercians according to their customs, and in all versions of the exemplum is shown as an activity that the entire community participated in. In the *Collectaneum*, the monks are reaping alongside all others who follow Cistercian customs; in the *Liber miraculorum*, Herbert specified that both the monks and lay brothers were harvesting; in Engelhard's collection, Mary has collected sweat from all the members of the Order. Living a Cistercian life, according to the customs of the Order, is therefore shown in the various versions of this exemplum to be a physical, bodily experience. Actions are highlighted; a way of doing, embodying and being a Cistercian. The visionaries are also spurred to action: Engelhard's cellarer and his fellows are more willing to work, and Reinaldus lives a more virtuous Cistercian life after his vision.

However, these actions are highlighted alongside the emotions and thoughts of the visionaries. The kind of formation these exempla offered was to present the audience with the example of another Cistercian, both their inner and outer selves, suggesting that the audience feel what they had felt and then use those feelings to inspire their own future actions and conduct. The exempla are not just illustrations of a moral lesson or a Cistercian rule, as some scholars have argued.[57] They are examples of ways of being Cistercian that encompass both inner thoughts and feelings and outer actions, and show the importance of replicating what it means to be Cistercian by acting and being like others in the Order – by following their example.

[56] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 58–64.
[57] See, for example, Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 190.

The *Dialogus miraculorum*

In the 1220s, when he came to write the *Dialogus miraculorum,* Caesarius went back to the exemplum as told by Herbert and Conrad, rather than following Engelhard's unique retelling. He does seem to have had access to Engelhard's collection, since other of Engelhard's exempla appear in both of his exempla collections, but did not rely on it here. His version (I.17) returns to a monk in the fields who sees the Virgin and several female saints walking among the harvesters at Clairvaux. However, he retold the story of this vision in just a few lines, within a frame narrative: this was apparently the story that converted Caesarius himself to the Cistercian Order. It is in the first book of the collection, 'On Conversion', under the title 'Of the conversion of the author of this little work'. [58]

The exemplum begins with the story of how Caesarius was converted to monastic life by Gevard, Abbot of Heisterbach, likely around 1200.[59] The two met whilst Caesarius was on pilgrimage, and Gevard told him of the vision of the Virgin visiting the harvesters, the details of which Caesarius briefly recounted for his audience:

> … [Gevard] told me of that glorious vision of Clairvaux, about which one reads [*in qua legitur*] that at a certain harvest time, while the monastery [*conventus*] was reaping in the valley, a certain holy man [*quodam viro sancto*] who stood on the opposite hill observed the Virgin Mary, the holy mother of God, and her mother, St Anne, and St Mary Magdalene come down the mountainside into the valley in a great flood of light, and wipe the sweat [*sudores terserunt*] from the monks, and fan them with the flapping of their sleeves, and the rest that is set down about it [*reliqua quae ibidem posita sunt*].[60]

Even when retold briefly, it was still framed as a vision seen by a 'certain holy man'. In no version of the exemplum are the details of the vision divorced from the visionary himself. The vision is not just a vision, but an event, that took place at a specific abbey (Clairvaux) at a specific time (harvest time) and to a specific monk there, even if in several versions he is unnamed.

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[58] 'De conversione auctoris huius opusculi'. *Dialogus miraculorum*, I.17.
[59] *Dialogus miraculorum*, 45–47.
[60] '…retulit mihi visionum illam gloriosam Clarevallis, in qua legitur, quod quodam tempore messis, cum conventus in valle meteret, beata Dei genitrix virgo Maria et sancta Anna mater euis ac sancta Maria Magdalena de monte venientes, quodam viro sancto, qui stabat ex adverso, aspiciente, in vallem eandem in magna claritate descenderunt, monachorum sudores terserunt, flabello manicarum suarum ventum admoverunt, et reliqua quae ibidem posita sunt.' *Dialogus miraculorum*, I.17.

The work of the community is also foregrounded in this exemplum, as it is in earlier versions. The order of events – the work of the monks, and then the visitation by the Virgin – remains unchanged within the frame narrative. However, the language Caesarius used did create distance from the community at Clairvaux. In the *Liber miraculorum* Herbert described the 'convent of brothers' [*conventui fratrum*] who were visited by the Virgin and female saints. In the *Dialogus miraculorum* the word used for the community is just 'convent' [*conventus*], without the addition of 'fratrum': a less personal and more institutional view, reflecting that this was not an exemplum written by a member of the Clairvaux community. Furthermore, this is the only version of the exemplum where nothing of the visionary's thoughts or emotions are recorded. Instead, the personal language Caesarius used was about himself and his emotions; it is he who is moved to act by the vision, not Reinaldus:

> I was much moved [*in tantum motus fui*] by the discussion of this vision, and promised the abbot that I would go to no house except his for my conversion, if God should inspire me with the desire to do so … Three months later, without the knowledge of my friends, but guided and urged by the mercy of God alone, I came to [Heisterbach][61]

Caesarius here leaves one set of relationships – with his friends – to join his new community at Heisterbach. The community invoked here is not Clairvaux, but Heisterbach, whose abbot converted Caesarius and where he made his profession. It also demonstrated the continuing vitality of Cistercian life in Germany in the late twelfth century, when Caesarius converted, and showed the sanctity of all Cistercian houses. Caesarius did not rush to join Clairvaux upon hearing this story, but Heisterbach. He interpreted it as showing divine and especially Marian protection for the whole Order, which he then entered at a house near to his native Cologne, with whose abbot he had an existing personal relationship.

In presenting his audience with his emotions, Caesarius asked them to imagine not what it would feel like to see the vision and be changed by it, but to understand the emotions and mental changes wrought by hearing about this vision, and the actions that might precipitate. In the *Dialogus miraculorum*, this exemplum is in the book 'On Conversion', in which Caesarius told various stories of how people might be persuaded to convert to the monastic life. The persuasive power of this exemplum relied on his audience identifying with his feelings, perhaps because they

[61] 'Sermone huius visionis in tantum motus fui, ut Abbati promitterem, me non venturum nisi ad eius domum gratia conversionis, si tamen Deus mihi inspiraret voluntatem… Qua post menses tres expleta, nullo amicorum meorum sciente, sola Dei misericordia me praeveniente et promovente, ad Vallem sancti Petri veni'. *Dialogus miraculorum*, I.17.

had themselves already been told the story of the Virgin visiting the harvesters, and so could remember the feelings they had experienced when they first heard it. Caesarius referred several times to it as one that could be read about, and ended the exemplum with the comment 'and the rest that is set down about it.' There is an underlying assumption that his audience was already familiar with the story, and so he only needed to include the barest sketch. Caesarius relied on this knowledge to help them understand the argument he was making, about the ability of exempla to change hearts and minds and so convert. The sparse detail of the actual miraculous event, alongside the focus on Caesarius' own feelings upon hearing it, encouraged his audience to recall their own memories of encountering this story and being moved by it, to feel what he had felt in that moment and so to understand why it moved him to convert. Through this, they could see how powerful a miraculous exemplum could be as an emotive form of persuasion. It is a meta-exemplum, since its purpose was to demonstrate the power of exempla to teach and persuade. It was proof of Caesarius' working methods and his reasons for creating a collection of hundreds of miraculous exempla. But the persuasive force of this meta-exemplum still required the audience to embody the thoughts and feelings of another Cistercian, in this case Caesarius, just as Herbert asked his audience to imagine themselves as Reinaldus and then change their behaviour just as he had altered his. In each case the author had a different message, but the form the persuasion took remained the same.

In this exemplum, there was the same emphasis on the bodies of the monks as in earlier versions: the female saints were described by Caesarius as wiping away the monks' sweat and fanning them with their sleeves. Cistercian life, even in moments of contact with the divine, is again shown to be an embodied spirituality, represented by the toiling bodies of the monks. But all versions of this exemplum require not just the imitation of outward actions, nor an intellectual understanding of the moral illustrated. The Cistercian reading them was led by the author to imagine themselves as the person in the exemplum whose thoughts and reactions were described, to absorb their example, feel like them, act like them, and so be like them. The Cistercian exempla collections were not works of edification or education but rather formation. Through a focus on the example of individual Cistercians, their life experiences, conduct, and feelings, the authors asked their audience to inhabit the mind and body of the Cistercian presented in the exemplum, conform to their example, and so to reform their own self, both inner and outer.

This kind of formation according to the example of another Cistercian – embodying their whole self – can be seen as part of Cistercian spiritual beliefs about loving one's neighbour as one step on the path to union with the divine. Bernard argued that it was easier for humans to love the humanity of Jesus rather than the divinity of God, and it was through the relationships with

their monastic fellows that monks could move away from love of the self and towards love of others and ultimately the divine.[62] Loving others fully and completely was a step towards imitating Christ Himself. These exempla suggest a radical version of loving one's neighbour, in which the reader fully immerses themselves in the example of another Cistercian, such that they become like them, inside and out, as part of their own spiritual and moral formation. The Cistercian exempla were thus entirely different from other contemporary exemplary genres, and were rooted in both the deeply monastic practice of teaching by example, and Cistercian spiritual beliefs around the path to union with God moving first from love of the self to love and understanding of others.

Examples of Cistercian Being

Exempla are sometimes described as illustrations, or otherwise as rhetorical arguments, or persuasive narratives. The multiple versions of the Cistercian exemplum discussed above are none of these things, but instead are embodied examples. They ask the Cistercian reader to absorb the example of a person by detailing their thoughts and feelings and their actions, to feel like them and so be motivated to live like them. They suggested to the audience not just how to act like the example of the person offered, but how to be like them in a more fundamental way. Although every version of this exemplum is about a vision of the Virgin visiting the harvesters, each is first about the person who saw the vision, or, in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius, the person who heard about it. The Cistercian exempla are focused on people. They are examples of conduct, emotions, and thoughts; the totality of living and being Cistercian. This sense of Cistercian life as embodied by the example of other Cistercians – of their thoughts, feelings and actions – is also shown in the attention paid to the bodies of the monks labouring in the fields. Cistercian life and labour, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, their patron, is represented here by the work of harvesting. The monks reap the sacred fruits of their labours, ideally gladly and willingly, through their physical actions, a customary Cistercian activity. These exempla do not just teach the morals or rules of Cistercian life, they are examples of Cistercian being.

Each author claimed that the exemplum he presented was true, and so clearly it mattered that the audience think that this event had really happened. The specific details – the time and place this vision was seen, the monk who saw it, the moment when Caesarius heard it – are part of this. They help to create a sense of rootedness and realness to the vision, and to the lives of the monks who experienced it or heard about it. They make this a vision specific to the Cistercian

[62] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 58–64.

Order, and clarify that the example presented is of a Cistercian monk. However, the actual details of the revelation change from one version to another. This is particularly obvious in the case of the holy women with Mary. In the *Collectaneum*, *Liber miraculorum* and *Exordium magnum* she is joined by Mary Magdalene and St Elizabeth, while in the *Dialogus miraculorum* it is Mary Magdalene and St Anne. Engelhard dispensed with these women altogether, and the Virgin is simply accompanied by attendants. Caesarius deliberately referenced the written version of this vision even as he altered or misremembered a central detail of it. Thus, the specificity of these Cistercian exempla is not about the careful transmission of some unchanging or accurate "truth" or history from one collection to another. Rather, the details create an aura of reality, and root the stories in a Cistercian past. What is unchanging in this exemplum is the devotion and labour of Cistercians, harvesting in the fields according to their customs, across space and time, and the revelation of the Virgin and her care for the Order to a specific monk. People – past monks and the lives they lived – are central to this vision of Cistercian history and community, just as they are central to the formation offered by Cistercian exempla.

Conclusion

There is an overarching unity to the ways in which the exempla discussed above define being Cistercian. There is a focus in each on bodies: the bodies of the community doing the work mandated by Cistercian customs, and the body and person of the man who has the vision, or hears about it. The emotions and reactions of the visionary – his inner self – is exposed to allow the audience to not only act like him but feel like him too, and so be like him in totality. Being Cistercian is reproduced by recourse to feeling and being like the example set down by earlier Cistercians. The Virgin Mary and her protection of the Order remains central, as does the importance of community.

Despite this unity, the changes made to the exemplum from one collection to another do call into question the scholarly understanding of the Cistercian collections as attempts to create a uniform history or identity for the Order. In each subsequent collection the exemplum presented a different vision of the Cistercian Order. In the *Collectaneum*, the Order was shown to be divinely protected by Mary, but also a place of demonic attack. Clairvaux, where this event occurred, was not presented as particularly special. The version in the *Liber miraculorum* and *Exordium magnum* described Clairvaux as a house filled with dedicated and fervent monks, who had given up the comforts of secular life for the hardship of the monastery. Mary's visit was not necessary protection against temptation, but a sign of the divine approval for this house and its members. In the *Liber miraculorum* it appeared as the first chapter, suggesting that Clairvaux was the most

blessed Cistercian house; in Conrad's collection it comes amongst a plethora of other stories about holy Claravallians, again reinforcing the house's paramount sanctity, thanks in large part to its foundation by Bernard. Engelhard's version for the nuns of Wechterswinkel decentred Clairvaux in favour of making an argument that Mary values the work done by all Cistercians in every house. Implicit in this, given his audience, was that not only the manual work done by monks, but the work of prayer undertaken by Cistercian women was worthwhile.[63] The nuns were therefore included in his vision of the Cistercian Order through his rewriting of such a famous exemplum. Although Clairvaux was mentioned by Caesarius, his exemplum was about the vibrancy of Cistercian life in Germany, where an abbot could convert an eager youth on the road. Again, the Order was not defined or represented by Clairvaux, but by life in contemporary Germany. The context – including geography and audience – in which each author wrote his collection seems to have played a crucial role in the vision of the Cistercian community he constructed.

This thesis studies the exempla collection tradition before Caesarius. Even excellent previous scholarship has generalised about the collections as uniform attempts to create a history for the Order, or defend its legitimacy and sanctity. What this chapter has shown is that this characterisation of the collections is too simplistic: each created a different picture of the Cistercian Order. Moreover, it has argued that the exempla were engaged in a more subtle kind of moral formation than has previously been suggested. They did not simply illustrate the rules of Cistercian life, or act as prompts to remember certain norms. The exempla did not provide simple descriptions of good conduct to imitate; they were concerned with different ways of being Cistercian, inside and out. The following chapters explore the ways of being – the visions of Cistercian life – offered by the three collections that came before Caesarius and, like his, were written by a single author whose identity is known. I start with Herbert's, the earliest of the three, and written at Clairvaux. Conrad copied much of Herbert's work, and in his lifetime moved from Clairvaux to Germany, and so his collection is explored next. The final chapter studies Engelhard's collection, not only written in Germany (where Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum* would be too) but uniquely written for a community of nuns. This chapter has shown the similarities that mark the Cistercian exempla and the kind of moral formation they encouraged, as well as their flexibility and adaptability. The following chapters demonstrate the richness and geographic, temporal and gender diversity of the tradition, by exploring the individual character of these three exempla collections that came before Caesarius.

[63] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 141–42.

Fig. 2. Map showing locations associated with Herbert of Clairvaux and Henry of Marcy

Chapter two

Herbert of Clairvaux's *Liber visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium*: A Mission Statement for the Cistercian Order

Introduction

One of the earliest Cistercian exempla collections, nearly contemporary with the *Collectaneum*, was Herbert of Clairvaux's *Liber visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium* (*Liber miraculorum*). Its material would be substantially reused in Conrad of Eberbach's thirteenth-century *Exordium magnum*, the focus of the next chapter, but Herbert's collection has received less scholarly attention than either Conrad's work or the *Dialogus miraculorum*. This is perhaps due to the dearth of translations of the collection into modern European languages, and the relatively recent publication of an authoritative edition in 2017.[1] Long seen by scholars as an unstructured series of anecdotes about Cistercian life, the new edition provides an opportunity to reassess this important collection, which significantly influenced the Cistercian collections written later.

Scholars have thought of Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* as a series of unconnected stories about his fellow monks at Clairvaux, in contrast to the thematic organisation of Conrad's and Caesarius' later collections. McGuire has characterised it as a collection with no overall structure or organisation, made up of a series of discrete events: 'a chaotic mass of miracle stories unrelated to each other.'[2] He argued that Herbert was interested in describing outstanding Cistercian individuals, as a way to prove the primacy of Cistercian life within the church.[3] These same themes were picked up by Michael Casey in his article on the collection: he described the *Liber miraculorum* as bringing together wonderful events from the lives of Herbert's fellow monks in order to edify other Cistercians, with no clear structure or organisation.[4] His article focused on the quotidian nature of the collection, alongside the miraculous and visionary; he argued that it offers a window into the daily life of the Cistercian monastery, especially rituals around death, as well as the mentalities and beliefs of the Order.[5] Mula has likewise argued that the *Liber*

[1] *Liber miraculorum*, ed. Zichi, Fois, and Mula.
[2] McGuire, *Difficult Saint*, 164; McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 26.
[3] McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 41; McGuire, *Cistercians in Denmark*, 68–71.
[4] Michael Casey, 'Herbert of Clairvaux's "Book of Wonderful Happenings"', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (1990): 41–46.
[5] Casey, 'Book of Wonderful Happenings', 56–59.

miraculorum shows Cistercian daily life, with a focus on the deaths of monks and the visions they often experienced beforehand.[6] The introduction to the edition lends further credence to the idea that this was a collection without clear structure or organisation, describing it as perhaps a first draft.[7] The only scholar to have attempted to understand the method in Herbert's collection is Mula, who has suggested that there was a deliberate repetition throughout the collection of certain themes and lessons, which created a form of organisation.[8]

This near-unanimous view, that the *Liber miraculorum* is a 'chaotic mass of miracle stories', is thanks in large part to an edition, produced by the Jesuit Father Chifflet in the seventeenth century, and reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina*, which was based on two unrepresentative manuscript copies.[9] One of these manuscripts uniquely divides the collection into three parts, and unbeknownst to the editor, both were abridged, lacking a large number of the exempla found in other surviving manuscripts. The publication of the new edition, based on a survey of the complete and incomplete manuscripts, and which largely reproduces the earliest twelfth-century witness (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 2607, henceforth MBS Clm 2607), has provided a clearer picture of Herbert's collection and its manuscript history. Most significantly, it includes the sixty-six exempla missing from the edition in the PL.[10] The content and structure of the *Liber miraculorum* are thus ripe for re-evaluation in light of the new edition and the earliest manuscript witness.

Moreover, the notion that the exempla in the *Liber miraculorum* lack clear thematic or chronological arrangement arose because scholars compared the collection to those that came afterwards, namely the *Exordium magnum* and *Dialogus miraculorum*. Whilst the earlier *Collectaneum* is also divided into thematic parts, Engelhard's later collection is not; this kind of textual structuring is not necessarily a prerequisite for an exempla collection. There is a negative judgement attached to the description of the *Liber miraculorum* as unstructured. As McGuire has argued: '[Herbert's] job is to impress the reader by the number of his wonders, not to interpret them or to integrate them into some system.'[11] This suggests that meaning is created only through the systematic structuring and clear arrangement of the exempla within a collection.

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[6] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 190–98.
[7] *Liber miraculorum*, lxviii–lxx.
[8] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 187–99.
[9] PL 185: 1271–1384, with additional fragments in PL 185: 453–466. Chifflet's edition, *Sancti Bernardi Clarevallensis abbatis genus illustre assertum. Accedunt Odonis de Diogilo, Iohannis Eremitae, Herberti Turrium Sardiniae archiepiscopi, aliorumque aliquot scriptorum opuscola, duodecimi post Christum seculi historiam spectantia: quorum seriem proxima post epistolam nuncupatoriam pagina dabit*, ed. Petrus Franciscus Chiffletius (1660).
[10] MBS Clm 2607 has been digitised, 'Liber de miraculis S. Brandani abbatis. De visionibus, quae variis monachis Cisterciensibus, inprimis Clarevallenisbus apparuerunt - BSB Clm 2607', *Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum, Digitale Bibliothek*, accessed Dec 12, 2021, https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/details/bsb00048177. Herbert's collection begins on fol. 16v.
[11] McGuire, 'Rise of the Exemplum', 213.

Work on medieval *compilatio* and collections, including in the Cistercian context, has long shown the ways in which selecting and ordering material was necessarily a deliberate and creative act.[12] Even without clear divisions of the kind found in other collections, how Herbert selected and ordered his material can reveal much about his reasons for writing, and how he created meaning in the text. A re-evaluation of the full content of the *Liber miraculorum* also provides an opportunity to consider the myriad other ways that exempla in the Cistercian exempla collections were organised, and meaning created.

The scholarship on Herbert's collection has tended to focus on the exempla that feature other Cistercians. McGuire's arguments about the stories shared between the *Liber miraculorum* and other Cistercian collections, the Cistercian individuals he wrote about, and his attempts to justify and celebrate the Cistercian way of life were based only on exempla about white monks. Casey, in analysing how the collection showed both the ordinary, daily life of the monastery and moments of vision and miracle, likewise chose to examine the exempla Herbert included about his fellow monks. In his articles, Mula has primarily studied the Reinaldus exemplum that was the subject of the previous chapter, with reference to other exempla that show the rules and norms of Cistercian daily life. But around half of the exempla are set outside the walls of the monastery. Far from being a random collection of stories about life in a Cistercian monastery, the material is split evenly between exempla about Clairvaux and other monasteries, and those that feature lay people and take place in the secular world. Whilst the collection is not divided into thematic books, a number of themes are repeated in this latter group of exempla: unbelief and heresy, eucharistic miracles, crusade and the conversion of pagans, and the divine punishments incurred by the sinful behaviour of the laity. It is a more varied and complex text than has hitherto been recognised, and the publication of the new edition opens possibilities for both considering anew how Herbert structured and organised his material and exploring the full breadth of exempla that he chose to use, especially the unexplored stories of non-Cistercians.

The context in which Herbert wrote his collection also remains unstudied. In 1178, the year in which the *Liber miraculorum* was written, Herbert was acting as chaplain to Henry of Marcy, Abbot of Clairvaux. That same year, they spent several months in the south of France, as part of a mission against heretics supported by Pope Alexander III and the kings of both France and England. Herbert's relationship with Henry has not previously been used as a lens through which to explore the *Liber miraculorum*, even though, as Henry's chaplain, Herbert likely accompanied him to Toulouse. Even the introduction to the new edition merely notes his

[12] Saak, 'The Limits of Knowledge', 289–302; Rouse and Rouse, 'Ordinatio and Compilatio Revisited', 113–34; McGuire, 'Written Sources', 282; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 49.

position as Henry's chaplain as part of his biography.[13] This chapter seeks to re-evaluate Herbert's collection as a Cistercian formative text through a consideration of the totality of the exempla he used, not merely those concerning other Cistercians, whilst contextualising it against the 1178 mission and his relationship with Henry of Marcy. It explores two main questions. Firstly, what kinds of exempla and on what themes did Herbert include in the *Liber miraculorum*, and how did he organise or arrange them? And secondly, what influence did Henry and the events of 1178 have on the exempla Herbert chose to include? This exploration of the variety of exempla Herbert used, against the backdrop of the 1178 mission, will show that Herbert's exempla were in fact thematically chosen and arranged, and his agenda in writing influenced by the 1178 mission and Henry's ideology of Cistercian involvement in the world.

The chapter has five sections. The first introduces Herbert and his collection. The second considers the exempla that constitute the *Liber miraculorum*, while the third identifies key repeated themes in the text, and examines what such repetitions reveal of Herbert's ideas. The fourth contextualises Herbert and his collection within the 1178 mission and Henry's ideology and writings, while the final section proposes a new theory about the composition of Herbert's collection, arguing that it was conceived of and written with Henry, as a guide for Cistercian preachers.

Herbert of Clairvaux and the *Liber miraculorum*

Despite the various significant positions he held, as abbot and archbishop, biographical details on Herbert of Clairvaux are scarce.[14] However, several of the decisions he made over the course of his monastic career are explicable thanks to his relationship with Henry of Marcy; this section discusses the intersection of their lives and makes the case for their friendship. Herbert was traditionally assumed to have come from Spain, but there is little evidence for this claim.[15] He appears to have entered Clairvaux as a novice after the death of Bernard in 1153, since he did not include any personal stories about him in the *Liber miraculorum*; those he did use came second-hand from older monks. In the collection, Herbert did describe a monk named Achard who was novice master during his time at Clairvaux, who took the position sometime around

[13] *Liber miraculorum*, lix.
[14] Although Herbert has been referred to variously as Herbert of Mores, Herbert of Torres, and Herbert of Clairvaux, I refer to him as Herbert of Clairvaux in this thesis, to indicate where he lived while writing the *Liber miraculorum.*
[15] The details of Herbert's biography come from *Liber miraculorum*, lv–lxvii and Griesser 'Herbert von Clairvaux', 25–29.

1140 and died after 1170.[16] He also wrote about serving at the table of Fastrad, abbot 1157–61: '...by what rigid fasting he kept his body under control once he became a monk... I noted enough along this line during the many years I served at his table.'[17] Herbert seems therefore to have made his profession by 1157, and so likely entered the noviciate *c.* 1155. Sometime between 1168 and 1177 he left Clairvaux to become the third abbot of Mores, a Cistercian abbey in the diocese of Langres, not far from Clairvaux, which had been founded by Bernard between 1151 and 1152. The first abbot, Menardus, is mentioned in documents from 1165, 1167 and 1168, and he was succeeded by a Gerard, about whom no dated documents survive. No documents survive from Herbert's tenure either, making it impossible to pinpoint exactly when he assumed the leadership of Mores.[18] But the fourth abbot, Ugo, was recorded on a document in 1178, and so Herbert likely stepped down as abbot and returned to Clairvaux in 1177 or early 1178 at the latest.

Upon his return to Clairvaux he became chaplain to Abbot Henry, otherwise known as Henry of Marcy or Henry of Albano. Henry, the son of a noble family, had entered Clairvaux as a novice at a similar time to Herbert, and made his profession in 1156.[19] Given their later relationship, it is likely that they were in the noviciate together. Henry left Clairvaux in 1160 whilst still a very young man to become abbot of Hautecombe, another French Clairvaux daughter founded in 1135, near to the modern border with Switzerland. As French abbots, Herbert and Henry would have travelled to Cîteaux annually to attend the General Chapter, and we can imagine a friendship that began as novices continuing through these annual reunions. While abbot of Hautecombe, Henry would have travelled to visit its daughter-houses, including Fossanova near to Rome, whose abbot from 1170 was Geoffrey of Auxerre, Bernard's erstwhile secretary and hagiographer. Geoffrey had briefly been abbot of Clairvaux himself (1162–1165), before moving to Igny and then Fossanova; he would later succeed Henry at Hautecombe.[20] Henry's predecessor at Clairvaux, Gerard, had been murdered by a rebellious monk while conducting a visitation at Igny, a story told in somewhat gory detail in the *Exordium magnum* (EM

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[16] Heinz Piesik trans. *Exordium Magnum Cisterciense oder Bericht von Anfang des Zisterzienserordens*, 2 vols. (Langwaden: Bernardus-Verlag, 2000–2002), vol. I, 509n442.

[17] 'Iam uero monachus factus, quam sobrie uiuendo, immo quam rigide abstinendo corpus in seruitutem redegerit supersedeo dicere quia, ut uerum fatear, uehementior extitit in hac parte. Satis etenim illum super huiusmodi noui atque notaui, quippe qui pluribus annis eidem in mensa sua ministraui.' *Liber miraculorum,* c. 46. For the rules concerning the abbot's kitchen helpers, see Danièle Choisselet and Placide Vernet, eds. *Les Ecclesiastica Officia cisterciens du XIIème siècle: Texte Latin selon les manuscrits édités de Trente 1711, Ljubljana 31 et Dijon 114, version Française, annexe liturgique, notes, index et table*, Les Éditions 22 (Reiningue: La Documentation Cistercienne, 1989), c. 109, and Benedict, *Regula Benedicti,* ed. Timothy Fry as *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981), c. 53.

[18] *Liber miraculorum*, lvii–lviii.

[19] The premier study of Henry is still that by Yves Congar. Yves Congar, 'Henri de Marcy, abbé de Clairvaux, cardinal-évêque d'Albano et légat pontifical', *Analecta Monastica*, Studia Anselmiana 43, Series 5 (1958), 1–2.

[20] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 2–5.

II.28). Stories about Henry are also told in Conrad's collection (EM II.30–31), but he is mostly absent from Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, despite their relationship.

Herbert's return to Clairvaux in 1177 has never been explained. The editors of the new edition of the *Liber miraculorum* note that it was not uncommon for monks to return to Clairvaux, and many travelled there to spend their final years.[21] But Herbert spent only a few years there after returning. He left again in 1181, shortly after Henry had also departed in 1179 or 1180.[22] Both Henry and Herbert returned to Clairvaux in 1177, and Herbert left again the year after Henry's departure; his second tenure at Clairvaux seems to have been tied to Henry's. It is thus likely that the two knew each other as younger men, and that Herbert left his position as abbot and came back to Clairvaux at Henry's request to serve as his chaplain. In 1177, Henry was returning to Clairvaux after an absence of nearly two decades; asking Herbert, who had likewise been away for many years, to serve as his chaplain perhaps avoided disturbing the internal politics of the house, and gave Henry a trusted friend and confidante.

Though details of Herbert's life and work are scarce, we have evidence of the esteem in which he was held by his French Cistercian contemporaries: a letter to Henry from Abbot William of Auberive, another Clairvaux daughter in the diocese of Langres, requested his opinion as well as Herbert's on a difficult theological question.[23] He was clearly held in high regard by Henry too. The role of a Cistercian abbot's chaplain is not clear; it is not mentioned in either the Rule or the *Ecclesiastica Officia,* the Cistercian customary.[24] The editors of the *Liber miraculorum* refer to Herbert only as a chaplain, since in a passage from the *Chronicon Clarevallense* he is described as Henry's *capellanus*. However, other historians, given Herbert's learning, and the reference to him in William's letter, have described him as both chaplain and secretary.[25] An appropriate model for Herbert's role may be Geoffrey of Auxerre, who acted as Bernard's secretary, and accompanied him on the missions that took him away from Clairvaux – though Geoffrey was described as Bernard's *notarius*, not *capellanus*. There are other monastic examples of chaplain-secretaries and their close relationships with their abbots or bishops: Eadmer (d. 1126) was chaplain, secretary, and friend to Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109) and wrote his *vita* after his death.[26] Similarly, Abbot Samson of Bury (d. 1211) and his chaplain, Jocelin of Brakeland (d. *c.*

[21] *Liber miraculorum*, lix.
[22] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 26–30.
[23] *Liber miraculorum*, lxi.
[24] For the chapters concerning abbots, see EO c. 110, and Rule cc. 2 and 64. What the Rule has to say concerning ordained priests in the monastery can be found in cc. 60 and 62.
[25] Griesser, 'Herbert von Clairvaux', 26.
[26] R. W. Southern ed. and trans. *The Life of St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972); R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059–c. 1130* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

1215), are often held up as an example of monastic friendship, with Jocelin allegedly staying by Samson's side both day and night.[27]

After only a short time at Clairvaux, Henry was made cardinal-bishop of Albano by Alexander III at the Third Lateran Council on 14th March 1179, and left the abbey sometime in 1179 or 1180.[28] Herbert remained at Clairvaux until 1181 when he was elected archbishop of Torres in Sardinia. No records survive from his time there, but one recently discovered document suggests that he died sometime in or before 1196: on 14th August 1196 one *magister* Bandino, from Pisa, was referred to as the newly elected archbishop of Torres.[29] Herbert appears to have left a copy of the *Liber miraculorum* at Clairvaux before he departed for Sardinia, from which his collection was copied and disseminated throughout Europe over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – the editors of the new edition have argued that the earliest surviving manuscript witness, MBS Clm 2607, was copied from this lost Clairvaux manuscript.[30]

The *Liber miraculorum*

The *Liber miraculorum* is Herbert's only known work. The *Chronicon Clarevallense*, whose authorship Mula has recently attributed to Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, records that it was written at Clairvaux in 1178.[31] Reporting the words of the Cistercian monk and exempla-writer Gossuinus on the subject of the exempla collections written at Clairvaux, Alberic wrote:

> And in this year [1178], Dom Herbert, who was then monk at Clairvaux and had been abbot of Mores, wrote a book of miracles [*librum miraculorum*] at Clairvaux... From the testimony of Dom Gossuinus, who was once a monk at Clairvaux... "...And also Dom Herbert, who was once the chaplain [*capellanus*] of Abbot Henry, produced quite a large volume of diverse visions and miracles, and later became archbishop in Sardinia thanks to God's providence."[32]

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[27] For a study of their relationship, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Collapse of a Monastic Friendship: The Case of Jocelin and Samson of Bury', *Journal of Medieval History* 4 (1978): 369–97.
[28] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 26.
[29] *Liber miraculorum*, lxv.
[30] *Liber miraculorum*, xcviii–xciv.
[31] Stefano Mula, 'Looking for an Author: Alberic of Trois Fontaines and the *Chronicon Clarevallense*', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses* 60 (2009), 5–25. Mula has also produced a new edition of the chronicle, Stefano Mula, 'Il considetto *Chronicon Clarevallense*. Edizione sal ms. Firenze, Bibl. Laurenziana, Ashburnham 1906', *Herbertus* 5 no. 4 (2005): 5–48.
[32] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 905; 'Et hoc anno [1178] domnus Herbertus monachus Claraevallis, qui fuerat abbas de Moris, librum miraculorum apud Claramvallem conscripsit…Testimonium domni Gossuini monachi quondam Claraevallis…"…Praeterea et domnus Herbertus, qui aliquando capellanus domni Henrici exstitit abbatis, magnum satis diversarum visionum et miraculorum edidit volumen: qui postea Dei providentia Sardiniae fuit archiepiscopus.'" PL 185, 1248B.

Scholars have tended to trust this dating, and there are no events in the collection known to have occurred after 1178.[33] The surviving manuscript witnesses suggest that Herbert left his autograph manuscript (now lost) at Clairvaux, from which copies were made; he must have completed it at the very latest by 1181, when he went to Sardinia. The recent editors argue that what Herbert left at Clairvaux was in effect a first draft, because the *Liber miraculorum* does not have the hallmarks of other exempla collections, such as a prologue or a division of the exempla into different sections.[34] However, the final chapter does end with a prayer and thus some kind of conclusion.[35] Although the collection has no consistent title across the various manuscripts, the recent editors chose the title *Liber visionum et miraculorum Clarevallensium*; this respects both the manuscript and edition traditions, and highlights what they see as the main themes of the work. However, as the *Chronicon* refers to it as a *liber miraculorum*, that is the abbreviated title I will be using throughout this thesis.

The first edition of Herbert's collection was produced in the seventeenth century and is reproduced in the PL. Unbeknownst to the editor, the two manuscripts he consulted were abridged; consequently, this edition leaves out a large number of exempla seen in other manuscript witnesses.[36] This edition also divides the collection into three books, an organisation of the material seen in only one surviving manuscript. In 1886, Georg Hüffer ascertained that the manuscript tradition presented a different and expanded version to the one published by Chifflet, and Griesser continued this research in the 1940s, although he died before he could complete a new edition of the collection.[37] The recent editors, working from Griesser's research, have identified three lines of manuscript transmission, the most important being the one they have termed the Bavarian-Austrian group.[38] The French manuscripts, from which Chifflet worked, seem to have been based on a reworked and abridged manuscript produced at Clairvaux. This is not unusual. More editing and abridging seems to have been done at Clairvaux for a wide range of Cistercian texts, whilst German manuscripts more faithfully copied the original – the same dynamic can be seen with the works of Bernard and Geoffrey of Auxerre.[39] The recent edition follows those manuscripts from the Bavarian-Austrian group, and primarily the earliest manuscript, MBS Clm 2607, a twelfth-century witness, believed to have been copied

[33] *Liber miraculorum*, lx; Griesser, 'Herbert von Clairvaux', 35–39.
[34] *Liber miraculorum*, lxviii.
[35] *Liber miraculorum*, lxxxi–lxxxii.
[36] *Liber miraculorum*, vii.
[37] Hüffer, *Der heilige Bernard von Clairvaux*, 158–71; Griesser, 'Herbert von Clairvaux'. For further information on the manuscript and edition history, see the introduction to the new edition, *Liber miraculorum*, vii–cxi.
[38] *Liber miraculorum*, lxviii–c.
[39] Mula, 'Geography and Exempla Collections', 31.

from an early, unabridged, Clairvaux manuscript.[40] The reception of the collection in the centuries after it was written is shown by the 'Corpus Pseudo-Herbertianum' included at the end of the new edition, which captures the extraneous exempla added into different manuscript copies. This thesis however follows MBS Clm 2607, as reproduced in the main body of the edition, as being closest to Herbert's original text, whilst acknowledging that we do not have an autograph manuscript, as we do for Conrad's collection, or complete agreement between the surviving manuscript witnesses, as is the case with Engelhard's text.

In the new critical edition, the *Liber miraculorum* is comprised of 165 chapters. In MBS Clm 2607, the collection only has 152 chapters; however, this is due to different practices of chapter numbering, and not any difference in content.[41] The manuscript often groups several exempla under one chapter title and number. What is chapter 80 in MBS Clm 2607 (fol. 87v) is titled 'A recent miracle about the sacrament of the altar', and after relating one such miracle, several others on the same theme are told (fol. 87v–88r), each signalled with 'Another' [*Aliud*] written in the margin, but without a chapter number. This occurs several times. To demarcate separate exempla more clearly, the edition generally gives every story a new chapter numeral. Therefore, the chapter numbers do not fully correspond between the manuscript and edition, although the content and the order that the exempla are in do. Additionally, the chapter numbers given in the text of the collection in MBS Clm 2607 do not always correspond to the chapter numbers and titles in the chapter index at the start of the manuscript (fol. 16r–19r); the first exemplum is labelled chapter 1 in the text of the collection (fol. 19r) but in the chapter index it is shown as chapter 2, with the index itself numbered as chapter 1 (fol. 16r). For this thesis, I have consulted both the manuscript and edition. However, I will refer to the chapter numbers and text of the edition throughout, for ease and consistency of reference.

The Exempla in the *Liber miraculorum*

As most research on the *Liber miraculorum* has until now been based on the incomplete edition, any new analysis must start with an exploration of its content – what kinds of exempla did Herbert choose or create to go into his collection? In the new edition, the collection is comprised of 165 chapters, with some chapters containing multiple miraculous occurrences. There are no explicit thematic or temporal divisions of the exempla, and no prologue or final summary. Mula has argued that the first chapter, the Reinaldus exemplum, acted as an unofficial prologue by introducing the main themes of the text: friendship in the monastery, the rules of

[40] *Liber miraculorum*, lxxvi–lxxvii.
[41] For a discussion of the chapter numbering in the edition and manuscripts, see *Liber miraculorum*, lxxxi–lxxxv.

monastic life, visions, the protection of the Virgin, and death.[42] These themes are all to do with the life of the Cistercian monk inside the monastery.

However, there is a discernible movement across the text, from more Cistercian-focused exempla in the first half of the collection to exempla featuring laypeople in the latter half. The majority of the exempla in the first half – up to chapter 85 – are about Cistercians, and mostly monks or lay brothers from Clairvaux. There are very few stories about monks from other orders; the monastic life is represented by Cistercians. The non-Cistercian religious figures who do appear are secular clerics, bishops, and Benedictine nuns. As previous research has noted, the majority of the exempla about the Cistercian Order concern visions, rather than miracles, and in particular deathbed visions: a monk sees angels, Christ, the Virgin Mary or a saint as he lies dying, or perhaps has a vision which foretells the death of someone else.[43] In one typical exemplum, Abbot Robert of Clairvaux (1153–1157) sees a vision of angels preparing for the arrival of a new saint, and shortly afterwards a holy brother dies (c. 8); in another, a dying lay brother sees angels approaching his bed, and tells those around him to sound the board for his death (c. 14). Others feature visions of holy persons experienced by a monk at prayer, such as the monk who had a vision of the crucified Christ on Good Friday (c. 23). Visions also reveal misbehaviour by members of the monastic community: in one, a monk considering leaving the monastery has a vision of Saints Bernard and Malachy, and is beaten by Bernard for wanting to leave (c. 27); in another, a monk sees demons offering roast chicken or glasses of red wine to the lazy and negligent during Vigils (c. 5); in a final example, Stephen Harding (abbot of Cîteaux 1108–1134) sees an evil spirit enter the mouth of his successor, and so is warned of his unfitness for the role (c. 25). As with the Reinaldus exemplum, the thoughts and feelings of the subjects are described, encouraging the audience to form themselves according to the example presented; to feel wonder and so be spurred to greater observance, or be terrified away from sin.

The *Liber miraculorum* was not just an exempla collection that showed Cistercian monks how to behave well through the presentation of the examples of their virtuous forebears. From chapter 85 onwards there are many more exempla about the world outside the monastery, and Cistercians feature less regularly. Eucharistic miracles, involving the miraculous transformation or preservation of a host wafer, herald the start of the second half of the collection (cc. 85–96). Several stories about paganism, devil-worship and the Christianisation of Eastern Europe follow (cc. 100–104). There are a number set in Denmark, probably told at Clairvaux by the Danish

[42] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 189–90.
[43] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 190–97; Casey, 'Book of Wonderful Happenings', 56–59.

archbishop Eskil, who retired there in the 1170s (cc. 99, 105–106, 119).[44] Along with these Danish stories comes a story of a Jewish man who converts to Christianity (c. 107). Following this are nine miracle stories (cc. 110–118) taken from William of Malmesbury's (d. 1143) *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. Finished around February 1126, this work told England's secular history from Bede's time until William's own.[45] These exempla mark a break in practice, since the majority of Herbert's exempla came from oral sources.[46] William's work, from which sixteen exempla are drawn in total, is the textual source used most frequently in the *Liber miraculorum*.[47] These are for the most part not stories of English kings (bar a couple featuring King William Rufus), but fantastic miracle stories William included as digressions. They include the story of a number of villagers who danced in the churchyard for a whole year in Saxony (c. 110) and an exemplum about a young Roman man who accidentally married a statue of Venus (c. 112).

After those from the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, the majority of the remaining exempla deal with different examples of lay sinfulness and the punishments for such. Several are about heretics: men who disparage the sacrament of the altar and die horribly (cc. 143–144) and a heretic woman who gives birth to a demon (c. 125). Herbert also included a number of exempla concerning lay misbehaviour: men who swear on Christ's body and limbs and suffer horrible punishments (cc. 134–136); criminals who abuse pilgrims and are driven mad or killed as a result (cc. 137–138); men who attempt to rape virtuous women and nuns (cc. 63–64, 97, 138); and a multitude of lay people, who give their soul to the devil or are otherwise tormented by demons (cc. 111, 139, 141, 149, 159, 162, 164–165). Amongst these are only a few exempla featuring wrongdoing committed by clerics, nuns, monks or prelates, such as the clerics joined in carnal love (cc. 151–152), a cleric who buys a bishopric (c. 160) and the ruler for whom a beautiful nun leaves her nunnery (c. 157). The final exemplum in the collection (c. 165) tells the story of a woman who suffers an infestation of demons. Both a priest and a Clairvaux monk go to her home to help her overcome her troubles, and Herbert ends by saying that he has heard that the woman has recently overcome the persecution.

The division of Cistercian and non-Cistercian exempla into different halves of the collection is not absolute; a number of exempla involving Cistercians can still be found in the latter half, and vice versa. Five exempla before chapter 85 are about lay people, for example, and

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[44] On Archbishop Eskil and the Cistercians in Denmark, see McGuire, *Cistercians in Denmark*, especially 39–73, and James France, 'St Bernard, Archbishop Eskil and the Danish Cistercians', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cisterciensis* 39 (1988), 232–48.

[45] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998–1999).

[46] *Liber miraculorum*, lxxix.

[47] Paul Lehmann, 'Ein Mirakelbuch des Zisterziensordens', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens* 45 (1927), 72–93. Herbert's sources are laid out in the *Index Fontium* in the new edition, *Liber miraculorum*, 432–38.

eight chapters in the latter half feature Cistercians. Nevertheless, from chapter 85 onwards there are many more exempla about the world outside the monastery, and Cistercians appear less frequently.

The change in the content of the exempla at chapter 85, when the eucharistic miracles are introduced and Cistercian exempla become less frequent, is abrupt. The few chapters immediately preceding this point concern monks from Clairvaux, and visions they experienced of either Christ or the Virgin Mary. In one, a monk sees the Virgin feeding sweet medicine to his brothers (c. 82), while another is about a monk who has a vision where Christ shows him Mary Magdalene's tears to prove how much he loves the contrition of sinners (c. 84). There is then a sudden shift to eucharistic miracles featuring lay people. Though there are a few stories about non-Cistercians in the first half of the collection, before chapter 85 Herbert always returned to Cistercian stories after venturing briefly into the secular world. After the eucharistic miracles, the collection does not come back inside the walls of the monastery, but strays far from Clairvaux: chapter 97 is about a Muslim convert to Christianity killed by a Christian knight who was attempting to rape her, chapter 99 tells the story of a pious Danish woman killed unjustly by her husband, and chapters 100–104 are about pagan peoples in Eastern Europe. Chapter 108 is the next to take place inside a Cistercian monastery, but afterwards the collection again returns to the outside world. Chapter 85 marks a definitive shift in the content of the exempla.

Herbert drew few, if any, of his exempla from the earlier *Collectaneum*. When exempla are common to both collections, the narratives are distinct enough to suggest that both were drawing on a shared oral tradition.[48] The majority of the exempla featuring Herbert's fellow Cistercians seem to have come to him via word of mouth; according to the recent editors, in sixty-seven exempla Herbert named the person who told him the story, and in another eighty an anonymous oral source was either mentioned or implied.[49] He used few written sources, with the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* being the one used most frequently. Herbert also included various fantastical exempla for which he gave no source and for which no precedent has so far been discovered, such as the exemplum about the Muslim woman killed for protecting her virginity.

What the above has sketched out is something of the nature of Herbert's corpus of exempla. In so doing, it has argued for the scope and variety of its contents. This was not a Cistercian collection comprised solely of stories of the white monks; it contained by design a significant number of exempla that dealt with the world outside the monastery. The exempla are organised in the earliest manuscript witnesses – which most likely reflect Herbert's text as he left

[48] McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 38.
[49] *Liber miraculorum,* lxxiv.

it at Clairvaux – so as to present two corpuses of material within the collection: exempla about Cistercian life in the first half, and exempla from the world outside the cloister in the latter. Later Cistercian authors seem to have recognised the differences between the two halves as well. While Conrad made extensive use of the Cistercian material in the first half of the *Liber miraculorum*, he did not reuse Herbert's exempla about laypeople in his *Exordium magnum*.[50] Only the corpus of exempla concerning the Cistercian Order was of use to him, showing that Herbert's text was received as one of two halves, each with their own character.

Herbert's Themes: The Eucharist, Crusade, Conversion, and Lay Sinfulness

In reading Herbert's exempla about other Cistercian monks, Casey and Mula have identified recurring themes and plot-points.[51] The daily life of the monastery, its rules and its challenges appear repeatedly: the hard work, the liturgical calendar, the challenges of abbatial responsibilities, the procedures to be followed when a monk is dying, and the different lives lived by monks and lay brothers. In these exempla, the monastery is a place where both angels and demons can be found; other religious figures, such as Christ, the Virgin, and various saints also appear occasionally, with Mary especially acting as protector to the monks. They present the monastery as a site of spiritual struggle. As Mula and Casey argue, deathbed visions and marvels reoccur, and these served to show the bond between heaven and earth, and between the living and the dead – Herbert's monastic readers were not alone as they strove for salvation. These exempla were centred around both the correct way to die and the proper way to treat dying and dead monks, according to the rules of Cistercian life, and there is a community aspect to many of them, as the monks all gather to pray over the dying, and then to stand vigil over their body in the chapel.[52]

These repeated themes have been the basis for how scholars have then interpreted the meaning and purpose of the collection: Mula has argued that they were part of Herbert's strategy of edification, affirming and improving the reader's understanding of the core rules of monastic life through repeated stories on the same themes.[53] As argued in chapter one, the exempla of past Cistercian monks, like Reinaldus, also encouraged the audience to form themselves according to their example, to feel and act like them. Mula's insight is important as it pertains to the exempla

[50] A table of correspondences between the *Liber miraculorum* and *Exordium magnum* can be found in *Liber miraculorum*, cii–cviii.
[51] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 187–97; Casey, 'Book of Wonderful Happenings', 37–64.
[52] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 190–97; Casey, 'Book of Wonderful Happenings', 56–60.
[53] Mula, 'Herbert de Torrès', 198–99.

about other Cistercians, yet it still leaves nearly half of the 165 chapters unexamined, rendering an explanation of Herbert's work incomplete. Because with chapter 85, a eucharistic miracle, Herbert switched his and his audience's attention to the world outside the monastery. This section explores the repeated themes that can be found in the latter half of the *Liber miraculorum*.

Miracles of the Eucharist

The miracles of the eucharist represent the largest group of exempla on a single theme: fifteen chapters in total, nearly a fifth of the material in the second half of the collection. They start with chapters 85–96. The repetitive nature of these exempla, and their identity as a gathered cohort on the theme, is highlighted by the fact that, as outlined above, in MBS Clm 2607 many are grouped together under one chapter heading. The first – chapter 85 in the edition – is titled 'A recent miracle of the sacrament of the altar', with the four following stories merely given the heading 'Another' and no new chapter number. Whilst two of these miracles (cc. 91–92) occurred within Cistercian monasteries (though to lay brothers, not choir monks), the majority took place in the world outside the monastery. Exempla demonstrating the miraculous power and transformation of the eucharist were common throughout the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, used to strengthen the belief of the faithful and confound heretics.[54] Various ways of categorising such exempla have been suggested, but most recently Miri Rubin has proposed three categories according to the type of story-line presented: firstly, a vision showing the Real Presence of Christ in the host, as a way to reward faith or counter doubts; secondly, animals, humans or elements behaving unusually in awe at the eucharist; and finally the appearance of eucharistic properties (flesh or blood) to one abusing the eucharist.[55] This three-part classification captures many but not all of the miracles that appear in the *Liber miraculorum*. Chapters 85–89 demonstrate the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharist and the miraculous nature of the host. In some, the appearance of the host changed to show its true nature: 'A certain priest of honest life, whilst celebrating the mass one Friday, perceived that the sacred host had become like flesh, and similarly the sacrament in the chalice had taken on the appearance of blood. When he saw this,

[54] This is the common view, see Jessalynn Bird, 'The Construction of Orthodoxy and the (De)Construction of Heretical Attacks on the Eucharist in Pastoralia from Peter the Chanter's Circle in Paris', in *Texts and the Repression of Medieval Heresy*, ed. Caterina Bruschi and Peter Biller (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003), 53–59; Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 109–20. However, a provocative article by Steven Justice questions how second-hand testimony could serve to convince someone who was wavering in their faith, Steven Justice, 'Eucharistic Miracle and Eucharistic Doubt', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2012): 307–32.
[55] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 118.

he was not at all terrified'.[56] The priest then took communion, but was later reprimanded by his bishop for not preserving the miraculous host. The next week, with the bishop watching, the same thing happened, and the wafer was preserved as a relic. Chapter 86 is similar, with the host wafer transforming into flesh everywhere except where the priest's fingers touch it: 'A certain priest, while he was offering the sacrament, found in the moment before the fraction of the body of the Lord that most of it had changed into most clean and beautiful flesh'.[57] In chapter 85, a church burns down, but the host wafer is discovered intact and unburned – the elements themselves behaved unnaturally in awe of Christ's body.

The sacrament of the altar could also reveal wrongdoing, as some of the exempla show. In chapter 88, a priest is called before the pope to defend himself against criminal accusations, but he lies about his guilt. When he later celebrates mass the host and chalice disappear, and he is terrified into a confession. In another (c. 92), a lay brother retains some money when he enters monastic life. On Easter Sunday he takes communion, but feels as though he is swallowing a burning coal, which encourages him to go to his abbot and confess his sin. These people believe in the sacrament of the eucharist, and being unable to interact with the host normally spurs them to confess and reform their behaviour.

Proof of the miraculous nature of the host could have the unfortunate consequence of convincing the laity that consecrated wafers were powerful talismans, according to other exempla that Herbert included (cc. 93–95). The first concerns a host wafer kept in a pigsty by a layman. A monk, alerted to its presence by a vision in which God lamented how his body was being misused, discovered it, and found it miraculously transformed to flesh. The same dynamic is at play in the next chapter, about a poor peasant, who, having heard that if he kept the body of Christ close, he would become rich, one day at Easter took the host out of his mouth and sewed it into his cloak. At the point of death, still poor, he repented and confessed. His priest found the host, whole and turned into flesh. The final exemplum in this group can be found in various versions in other collections, including Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*, and is about a host that had been hidden in a beehive in the belief that it would keep the bees healthy, only to be discovered miraculously intact years later.

Later in the collection (cc. 143–144) Herbert included further exempla of a type not represented in Rubin's classification, that were direct rebukes to those who did not believe in the sacrament of the eucharist, showing the punishments awaiting them. Since these stories are not

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[56] 'Quidam honeste conuersacionis presbiter, dum in quadam sexta feria sacrificaret, reperit ante percepcionem hostiam sacratam in similitudinem carnis esse conuersam, ipsumque calicis sacramentum in speciem sanguinis commutatum. Quod cum ille vidisset, nichil omnino exhorruit'. *Liber miraculorum*, c. 87.

[57] 'Sacerdos quidam, dum sacramenta offeret, invenit ante fractionem corpus dominicum, in speciem defecate ac pulcherrime carnis ex maiori parte mutatum'. *Liber miraculorum*, c. 86.

about the miraculous nature of the eucharist, but rather the danger of not believing in the sacraments, Herbert placed them amongst other exempla that tell the stories of sinful lay people. The chapters immediately preceding these two exempla feature evil knights who do not confess before death, peasants who swear on the name of the devil or give their soul to him, a man who assaults a young woman on pilgrimage, and those who swear on Christ's limbs. Chapter 143 is about a usurer named Robert who stopped going to church and started disparaging the sacraments, especially the eucharist. He turned his cellar into a kind of 'demonic synagogue' – linking heresy and Judaism – and started making sacrifices to the devil. One day his wife came home from church to find the house infested with demons; upon returning with the priest, they found that Robert had hanged himself; his body was then hidden as far away from the city as possible. The second exemplum is about a man 'corrupted by the poison of heretical depravity.'[58] He often secretly disparaged the sacrament of the eucharist, stating that it was only bread and wine and not Christ's body and blood. When he later fell ill, his friends urged him to call the priest, so that he could take communion, but he responded: "'It is not necessary for me to send for him today'".[59] He died that very night, 'suffocated by the devil; killed so quickly that a certain son of his, lying next to him in the bed, was unaware that he had died.'[60]

These eucharistic miracles, in the order in which they appear in the collection, move through different kinds of people. The first chapters feature believers, both lay people and priests, who are rewarded with some kind of miracle; either a host is miraculously preserved in a fire, or it turns to flesh in front of their eyes. The second group includes priests and lay brothers who have not confessed their sins and so cannot take communion, but who otherwise believe in the sacrament. A miraculous occurrence forces them to change their behaviour. The third group features lay believers enacting their belief in understandable but inappropriate ways, by using a host wafer to keep themselves or their livestock safe. The final group are doubters and heretics, who disparage the sacrament and are justly punished. They demonstrate a spectrum of belief and unbelief, in which not all believers are without sin or treat the host with due reverence.[61]

The *Liber miraculorum* may not have any explicit textual organisation, but exempla on the same theme were often placed together, as in chapters 85–96. Herbert also worked to link these themes; by including chapters 143 and 144, on the usurer and heretic who disparage the

[58] 'prauitatis heretice ueneno corruptus.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 144.
[59] "'Non est michi necesse ut hodie illum accersiam'". *Liber miraculorum*, c. 144.
[60] 'Eadem itaque nocte suffocatus a diabolo, ita repente interiit ut quidam filius eius, iuxta ipsum in eodem lectulo recubans, nesciret omnino quando expirauerit.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 144.
[61] On the idea of belief and unbelief in the middle ages existing as a spectrum, not a binary of either true belief and heresy, see John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London: Hodder Education, 2005), especially the introduction and conclusion.

sacraments, among other stories about misbehaving lay people, he connected the eucharistic miracles thematically with other exempla about lay sinfulness. These exempla are also related to ideas about confession, as shown by the stories of the priest and lay brother who cannot take mass or communion because they have not confessed their sins. Similarly, the exemplum before the story of Robert the usurer is about an excommunicated knight who was killed by his enemies (c. 142). He did not receive extreme unction or confess, and was buried outside of the cemetery. When his friends came to find his body, it was gone, and they suspected that the devil had taken him. Furthermore, Herbert included a miracle of the eucharist in the extended narrative about Archbishop Eskil (c. 106), which also features sinful lay people (such as adulterous nobles) and Christian encounters with non-Christians on the fringes of Europe: Herbert celebrated Eskil for pushing pagans out of Denmark, and for solidifying the Christianisation of the country by founding monasteries of five different orders. In Herbert's collection, the sins committed by the laity, the sacrament of the eucharist and the other sacraments of the church, and the Christianisation of Europe were thematically linked. These are themes that predominate in the second half of the collection, beginning at chapter 85 with the eucharistic miracles. The sacrament of the altar is literally pivotal to this collection; Herbert used them to move his audience away from thinking about life in the Cistercian monastery, to thinking about sin, heresy and conversion.

The eucharist lies both literally and figuratively at the centre of Herbert's collection. It comes between the stories of monks in the first half and those of secular priests and the laity in the second half, and links the myriad themes outlined above. This is not a coincidence. The sacrament of the eucharist was central to the rituals of monastic life: Cistercian monks took communion every Sunday, at Christmas, on Holy Thursday, Easter Day, and Pentecost. If they could not take communion on Sunday, they would do so on another weekday.[62] Though yearly communion did not become mandatory for the laity until 1215, historians have argued that from the twelfth century onwards the eucharist was the foremost sacrament of the church.[63] In the transformation of the bread into Christ's body, it allowed for direct human interaction with the divine, and cemented the power of the priest as mediator between believer and God. It was a unifying symbol, thanks to the universality of the ritual: 'The eucharist emerged [in the eleventh and twelfth centuries] as a unifying symbol for a complex world'.[64] Communion, as a ritual in which they all partook, was a point of connection between the very different lives lived by

[62] *Ecclesiastica Officia*, c. 66.
[63] Gary Macy, 'The Dogma of Transubstantiation in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 45, no. 1 (1994), 11–41; Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 12–14 and 35–82.
[64] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 348.

monks, priests and laypeople. As the foremost symbol of Christian belief and unity, the eucharist could lie at the centre of the matrix of themes Herbert built – confession, conversion, sin, divine power and punishment – and link them. But by including these miracles at the mid-point of his collection, and suggesting their thematic linkages with other exempla, Herbert was not just reflecting a contemporary understanding of the importance of the eucharist; he was also arguing for its centrality. Thanks to its placement, the eucharist was made the centre point of Herbert's collection, suggesting its paramount importance in the life of both his monastic audience, whose stories precede its miracles, and the laity, who appear in the latter half of the collection.

Crusade and Conversion

After the miracles of the eucharist, Herbert included a number of exempla on the themes of crusade and conversion, in a variety of guises. Chapters 97 and 99 are both about pious women on the peripheries of Christian Europe: Muslim Iberia and Denmark, where resistance to Christianity was seen into the lifetime of Eskil, the subject of several chapters. The Muslim woman is a Christian convert, venerated as a martyr after she dies protecting her virginity. The Danish woman, Margaret, is extremely pious but is killed by her husband and his sister; she is likewise revered after her death, and several miracles occur at her tomb, confirming the truth and power of Christianity to the Danish population.

In the exempla after that about Margaret, Herbert recorded something of the Cistercian missionary and colonisation activities in Eastern Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the consequences of those interactions.[65] In chapter 102 he wrote: 'Consequently in the Slavic lands, which recently were converted for the most part to the Christian faith, it is well-known that many monasteries of the Cistercian Order were founded.'[66] Chapters 100 and 101 are both about Christians travelling in pagan lands – most likely Slavic lands – and their experiences of devil worship by the inhabitants. Chapter 100 concerns a demonic idol destroyed by a pious traveller, a theme continued in chapter 101, which describes how pagan peoples worshipped and were oppressed by a demon who lived in a statue. The next chapter (c. 102), about the conversion of Slavic peoples by Cistercian monks, concerns a pagan village from which legions of demons fled after the people were converted and baptised. The following chapter (c. 103) relates another story about the conversion of a pagan woman by the monks. The series is

[65] One of the exempla about Slavic pagans is studied in Michał Łuczyński, 'Herberti di miraculis as a Source to the History of Religion of Western Slavs', *Studia Mythologica Slavica* 16 (2013): 69–77. A further examination of Cistercian missionary work in this area and the stories they told about it can be found in Tamm, 'Communicating Crusade', 341–72; Tamm, 'The Livonian Crusade in Cistercian Stories', 365–89.

[66] 'Igitur in regione Sclauanie, que nouiter est ad christianam fidem ex magna parte conuersa, plurima cisterciensis ordinis monasteria constat esse fundata.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 102.

finished with chapter 104, about a battle between Christians and pagans, which again features the white monks:

> 'When nearly ten years ago the Saxon leader, the most Christian prince, besieged a certain Slavic pagan town with a great army... the Slavs came out of the town, attacking them at night and catching them off-guard... and so a massacre of innumerable numbers of both sides occurred, such that the bodies of the dead could not be buried because there were so many.... now their dry bones lie above the surface of the field, exposed and packed closely together, just as the sand lies on the seashore.'[67]

It was Cistercian monks who found these bones and discovered that a miracle had occurred: coming to the spot to pray, they found the skulls of the Christians marked with crosses. Here in the *Liber miraculorum* we have evidence for an early phase of Cistercian missionary activity, to augment the research already conducted into such stories in Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*.[68]

Following these exempla is the extended chapter about Eskil (c. 106), in which Herbert described his efforts to thoroughly Christianise Denmark, by driving out pagans and punishing sinners, especially those who contravened Christian morality concerning sex and marriage.[69] After this, Herbert told the story of a Jewish convert to Christianity; although his family then killed him, he was recognised by the local Christian community as a martyr (c. 107). As with the miracles of the eucharist, as the audience moved through these stories, they encountered a range of converts. The two women's piety and faith in chapters 97 and 99 are not encouraged by any outside figure – the Muslim girl converts simply because she believes faithfully in Christ, and so busies herself with becoming a Christian.[70] The recent Slavic converts are all shown interacting with Cistercian monks, who were responsible for their conversion. Eskil, a bishop, is then shown to be leading the fight to institute Christianity fully in Denmark, and the Jewish man is converted by his friend, a cleric. They also demonstrate different facets of the issue of conversion. Both the Muslim woman and the Jewish man baptise themselves, in their own blood or with water, and become martyrs because they die for their faith; their conversions and inner conviction win them

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[67] 'Nam cum Saxonie dux, princeps christianissimus, ante hoc ferme decennium in Sclauonia quoddam oppidum paganorum... cum grandi exercitu obsideret... exeuntes itaque Sclaui de municipio illo, irruerunt nocte super incautos... facta est ergo utriusque populi strages innumerabilis, ita ut eorum cadauera nequirent pre multitudine sepeliri.... Unde etiam nunc ossa eorum arida iacent super faciem agri, discooperta atque condensa nimis, sicut arena iacet in littore maris.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 104.

[68] Bombi, 'Authority of Miracles', 302–25; Tamm, 'Communicating Crusade'; Tamm, 'The Livonian Crusade in Cistercian Stories'.

[69] For a discussion of Eskil's portrayal in the *Liber miraculorum*, see McGuire, *Cistercians in Denmark*, 69–73.

[70] 'que in Christum fideliter credens ad christianismun pertingere satagebat.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

eternal salvation. The stories of missionary work in Eastern Europe are proof of Cistercian successes in the region, and also show how conversion liberates pagan peoples from the oppression of demons.

As well as exploring the issue of conversion in combination, the individual exempla taught their own lessons, and offered their own examples of virtuous conduct. The story of Margaret is about a holy and charitable woman killed by her husband and his sister, who arrange the scene to look like suicide. Margaret is buried in unconsecrated ground, but miracles around her grave alert the local populace to the truth, and she is reburied with honour after her husband is tortured to make him reveal the truth. There is another twelfth-century record of this incident, in Latin but written in Denmark, which describes the miracles and her reburial, as well as her relation to local ecclesiastical figures.[71] Herbert described Margaret as a 'woman with a meek and humble heart' who 'was gifted with great simplicity and innocence'.[72] Her husband beat her, but she 'continually persevered with good works and endured the frequent injuries done to her with equanimity.'[73] The exemplum immediately before (c. 98) is about the brothers of a monastery called Boulancourt, who attempt to find ancient treasure in a field. Instead, they are nearly killed by a great ball of fire sent by the devil, and saved when they think to pray:

> When the brothers saw [the devouring fire] rushing terribly towards them and threatening them, they were disturbed [*conturbati sunt*], and ignorant people would have gone or rather fled completely from it. There was however one remedy in such a crisis: to beg for divine mercy, which was the only thing that could help them. Thus, in their tribulation and great difficulty the lay brothers entreated the Lord with prayers to save them from their imminent demise.[74]

Herbert summarised the lesson of this exemplum clearly at the end:

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[71] Søgaard includes an edition of the short Latin account in her article discussing it and its textual history, Helge Søgaard, 'Overleveringen om den hellige Margrete af Roskilde', *Historie* 15, no 3 (1984): 476–83.
[72] 'mulier quedam mitis et humilis corde, nomine Margareta, magna simplicitate et innocencia predita'. *Liber miraculorum*, c. 99.
[73] 'que bonis operibus iugiter insistebat et illatas sibi frequenter iniurias equanimiter tolerabat.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 99.
[74] 'Quem cum terribiliter irruentem iam sibi de proximo imminere conspicerent, conturbati sunt vehementer, quid agerent quoue fugerent ab igne deuorante penitus ignorantes. Vnum autem in tanto discrimine remedium erat: diuinam implorare clemenciam, que sola succurrere poterat. Conuersi igitur ad oracionem, in tribulacione et angustia magna Dominum deprecabantur, ut ab instanti morte liberarentur.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 98.

> ...they learned [*didicerunt*] to trust God more than uncertain riches, certainly understanding [*scientes utique*] that it was incomparably better to live strenuously by the work of manual labour than to live laxly from unjust riches or to want to be enriched by the anathema [*anathemate*] from Jericho.[75]

Using phrases such as 'they learned', and 'certainly understanding' signalled to his readers that this was the lesson they should also internalise: to put their trust in God, and endure hard work. The audience was encouraged to learn the same lesson as the subjects of the exemplum, by thinking and feeling like them. The brothers are described as emotionally disturbed, but the audience is also privy to their thoughts; since they are not ignorant, they know to beg God for mercy and put their faith in him. The audience must think themselves inside the lay brothers' heads, and know this too, and so learn the ultimate lesson of the exemplum: to trust God, and to value the hard work of monastic life, rather than to yearn for laxity and luxury. The audience learns by feeling and thinking as the lay brothers did.

The Biblical allusions also communicate this message, and add to the emotional and psychological education offered. The 'anathema' or 'spoils' of Jericho refers to the Biblical story of Achan, told in the Book of Joshua. After the fall of Jericho, Achan pillaged gold, silver and a Babylonian garment from the city, despite Joshua's command: 'But beware ye lest you touch ought of those things that are forbidden, and you be guilty of transgression, and all the camp of Israel be under sin, and be troubled. But whatsoever gold or silver there shall be, or vessels of brass and iron, let it be consecrated to the Lord, laid up in his treasures.' (Joshua 6:18-19).[76] Achan's theft led to God punishing the Israelites, and they failed to capture Ai. Achan, his children and livestock were then stoned to death, and their remains burnt. The word 'anathema' was used in both the *Liber miraculorum* and the opening of Joshua chapter 7, creating a clear and direct link between the two texts: 'For Achan... took something of the anathema [*anathemate*]: and the Lord was angry against the children of Israel.' (Joshua 7:1).[77] Through this allusion, Herbert contrasted the spoils – and so by association the fate that befell Achan – with the manual labour and hard work that Cistercian monks and lay brothers were expected to endure, and in so doing

[75] 'didicerunt sperare in Domino magis quam in incerto diuiciarum, scientes utique incomparabiliter melius existere strenue operando de labore manuum sustentari, quam uiuendo remisse de mammona iniquo aut de anathemate Ihericho uelle locupletari.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 98.
[76] 'Vos autem cauete ne de his, quae praecepta sunt, quippiam contingatis, et sitis praeuaricationis rei, et omnia castra Israël sub peccato sint atque turbentur. Quidquid autem auri et argenti fuerit, et uasorum aeneorum ac ferri, Domino consecretur, repositum in thesauris eius.'
[77] 'Nam Achan... tulit aliquid de anathemate: iratusque est Dominus contra filios Israël.'

showed the latter to be the superior way to live. Alongside encouraging the audience to feel the monks' fear and know the things they know, and so learn their lesson, this biblical reference also warned of the dangers of greed.

Having first read this, Margaret's example of simplicity and innocence would have been clarified. Margaret's character and thoughts are revealed, so the monks could form themselves to her example, inner and outer. As well as being simple and innocent, she is also steadfast, and does not entertain thoughts of evil. Though her husband beats her: 'it was as if she did not feel this, and, as if she had no rebukes in her mouth, she busied herself [*satagebat*] to defeat the evil with good, and with those who hate peace she made peace.'[78] Margaret does not have evil thoughts, and loves good, which results in her 'busying herself' to defeat her husband's evil – her inner self moulds her behaviour, and her entire self is thus presented as exemplary. The verb 'satagere' was often used in other exempla collections to describe the work of monks; Conrad, for example, used it to urge his readers to busy themselves in following the footsteps of their forebears.[79] Margaret's simplicity, innocence and forbearance was thus linguistically linked to the life and work of a Cistercian monk, and her example suggested as one for monks to follow. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of chapters 98 and 99 allowed the attacks that Margaret suffered to be seen as analogous to the physical hardship and manual work that Cistercian monks endured, and suggested her tolerance and faith as an example to follow.

Chapter 97, about the Muslim convert killed by a Christian knight, is similar. The knight is supposed to be leading her to Christian lands, but attempts to rape her on the journey. She is the only character who speaks in the exemplum, and Herbert included an extended monologue in which she begs the knight to spare her:

> "Oh, you good Christian man, what are you trying to do, that will ruin both yourself and me equally?... Can it be that you seek to abuse me as a prostitute?... Is this then the Christian purity which I was delighted to achieve by your teaching?... If you wish to have me as your consort in bed, hold back for a short while until the shame of my pagan identity is washed off in the baptismal font, and then we may be joined to procreate legitimately"... After she had said this, the wicked man was in no way moved to piety, but, driven evermore insane by his lust, threatened to kill her without hesitation, unless she immediately

[78] 'Ipsa uero quasi non senciens, et quasi non habens in ore suo redarguciones, malum in bono uincere satagebat, et cum hiis qui oderant pacem pacifica erat.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 99.
[79] 'Sectari veterum satagas vestigia patrum.' *Exordium magnum*, prologue.

> consented to his command. In truth, more constant in her love for Christ, the woman said freely that she would sooner choose a glorious death in order to protect her honour, than buy a disgraced life by prostituting herself.[80]

The woman, though a heathen, has more real 'Christian purity' than the knight, since she understands that before they can have sex she must be baptised, and they must be married. The audience is also privy to her inner sense of the importance of chastity, motivated by her 'love for Christ', which means she would rather die than give in to the knight. As with the exempla discussed in chapter one, it is the inner self that is shown to inform a person's behaviour. The woman in fact becomes a martyr after her death because she so vociferously protected her virginity: 'it was judged by [Pope Alexander III] that she should be buried in a church with honour, and she should be held as a martyr among the martyrs; because for the love of chastity she lay dead, and was baptised by her own blood, she deserved the martyr's crown granted by God.'[81] The murderous knight, meanwhile, is driven to act badly because he has sinful thoughts and uncontrollable emotions; he is motivated to act and kill her by his insane lust, and is then horribly punished:

> For immediately, prepared by the kingdom of the Lord, a terrible dragon exited the nearby cave. It rushed headlong to where the knight was and, opening its terrifying jaws wide, attacked this son of perdition... the beast, attacking and pursuing the fleeing man, caught hold of his back with its deadly teeth. At once dragging him to his cave, in revenge for his cruelty it devoured him with one harsh bite.[82]

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[80] '"Heu, tu bone christiane, quid est quod facere temptas ut et seipsum et me pariter perdas?... An, ut scorto, me abuti queris?... Heccine est ergo puritas christiana quam, te docente, me assequi delectabar?... Si me consortem thori habere uolueris, sustine per modicum tempus donec obprobrium paganitatis mee fonte baptismatis diluatur et tunc legitimo federe sociemur"... Hec illa dicente, nichil impius ille mouebatur ad pietatem, sed libidine magis ac magis insaniens minabatur ei necem inferre celeriter nisi protinus eius imperio consentiret. Ipsa uero, in Christi amore constantior, libera uoce dicebat se pro tuicione pudoris mortem potius eligere gloriosam, quam pudicicia prostituta ignominiosam redimere uitam.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

[81] 'Postmodum autem, missa pro ea legacione ad dominum papam Alexandrum, iudicatum est ab eo ut in ecclesia cum honore tumularetur et quasi martir inter martires haberetur, utpote que amore castitatis occubit et proprio sanguine baptizata, martirii coronam largiente Deo promeruit.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

[82] 'Statim namque, preparatus ad imperium Domini, egressus est de cauerna proxima draco terribilis qui ad eum locum concite ueniens ac terrifico ore dehiscens, filium perdicionis inuasit... uero bestia, celeriter insequens et consequens fugientem, feralibus eum dentibus a dorso comprehendit. Quem ad suam cauernam protinus protrahens in ulcionem tante crudelitatis morsu amarissimo deuorauit.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

There are several lessons here. Firstly, virginity and chastity are highly praised, and were values central to the monastic life lived by Herbert's Cistercian audience. The Cistercian audience, by following the woman's example, and forming themselves to prize their chastity equally highly out of love for Christ, should be similarly unwillingly to relinquish it. Secondly, sinful behaviour, in this case attempted rape and murder, will be punished. Feeling lust, as the knight does, leads him to act disastrously, and he pays the price. The justice of Heaven is made literal in this exemplum by the appearance of a dragon, a creature often associated with the devil; the beast in this exemplum, whilst punishing the knight in this life, simultaneously represents the eternal, hellish penalties awaiting those who commit mortal sins. Finally, as well as being an example of both virtuous and sinful conduct, this exemplum furthers Herbert's argument about the possibilities for conversion, and the variety of peoples – Muslim, Jewish, and pagan – being converted to Christianity in the present age, and the strength of their new religious conviction.

The exempla Herbert included in the latter half of the *Liber miraculorum* were multi-faceted. In combination, chapters 97–107 painted a picture of the missionary work occurring in Europe and the possibilities for conversion. Read individually, or in comparison with the exempla preceding or following them, they also provided examples of both moral and sinful thoughts, emotions and conduct. Far from being unstructured, Herbert's arrangement and ordering of exempla created distinct themes in the collection. The first theme in the latter half of the collection is the sacrament of the altar: the eucharist was a symbol of unity, and the stories of conversion, coming after the eucharistic miracles, depict non-Christians being added to the community of believers, and show the expansion of Christendom to include evermore territory and people. Not only did Herbert structure his collection so as to group exempla into themes, he also worked to then link those themes.

The Sinfulness of the Laity

The story of Eskil sees him both converting pagans and punishing aristocratic sinners – specifically adulterers – in Denmark, connecting lay sinfulness and the Christianisation of Europe. Equally, Herbert placed exempla about those who disparage the sacrament of the eucharist in the collection alongside exempla that demonstrated lay unbelief, ignorance, and wickedness, conceptually linking exempla about sin and the eucharistic miracles. In the exempla about lay sinfulness, Herbert tended to group exempla by theme, so that teachings were reiterated. Several (cc. 121, 130–132) concern lay people who die without confessing and return to life to confess fully, or who come back to ask relatives to pray or give alms for their soul. Chapters 134–136 concern lay people who swear. In the first, a gambler swears on every part of

Christ and then Mary too; he receives a blow as though from a sword, falls down and dies, with a gaping hole in his body. The second is about a man who similarly suffers all sorts of torments, before giving up his soul to demons. The punishment in the third is the most visceral. A rich man playing dice near Jerusalem swears on the Cross that he is honest, even though he is lying: 'marvellously, at that moment, his beard with all the skin fell from the chin of the liar and lay in his hands, so that his face and bloody flesh appeared to have been flayed with a scalpel.'[83] His punishment allowed for some kind of redemption: he goes to the Holy Sepulchre and begs the pardon of the Patriarch, admitting his fault to all present. His example demonstrated the gravity of swearing, but also that through repentance, forgiveness was possible.

Nearby exempla concern lay wrongdoing in the abuse of pilgrims. One (c. 137) is about a man who steals money from pilgrims; another (c. 138) concerns a man who violates a female pilgrim. Both meet grisly fates. The first man drops dead on the threshold of a church, and the second is punished by madness, dying three days later after immense suffering. Two exempla (cc. 139, 141) are about people who swear on the devil, surrendering their souls to him and returning after death to terrorise their neighbours; these supplement those (cc. 140, 142), in which laypeople are given over to the devil because they die without confessing or taking communion. Again, these exempla both taught a specific lesson – do not swear, steal, or rape – and the accumulated weight of them affirmed a broader moral education about the importance of communion and confession, living free from sin, and dying properly, in order to achieve salvation, as well as the punishment for failing to do so.

Many of these have parallels in the monastic exempla Herbert included. Among the exempla about demons harming sinful laypeople, Herbert told one about of a virtuous lay brother (c. 148), who sees an army of demons approaching the sheepfold where he is standing, but cannot be harmed by them because he is praying. He then included an exemplum (c. 150) about a monk from St-Remy who sees a vision of a dead brother being mauled by demonic dogs; he begs the community to pray for him, and later appears to show that he has been released from punishment. Though there are no exempla about Cistercian monks giving their soul to the devil or suffering severe punishments, there are some in the first half of the collection that show demons harassing misbehaving monks. In one (c. 25), an abbot sees a demon offering red wine to a monk in choir. The abbot calls him over and he confesses he was thinking of deserting the monastery, but instead he repents and accepts penance. The sins which monks and laymen might commit are conditioned by their circumstances: monks might leave the monastery and become

[83] 'mirum dictu in ipsa hora de mento mentientis barba tota cum cute sua cecidit atque in manu remansit, ita ut facies hominis et caro cruenta et quasi scalpello excoriata appareret.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 136.

apostates, while laymen steal and rape, swear and refuse to take communion. But throughout the *Liber miraculorum*, these sins are instigated, revealed and punished by demons. There are many fewer exempla featuring bad behaviour on the part of monks, but those that do show commonalities with those of lay sinfulness, and so serve to link the sins of all members of the Christian community. The exempla in the latter half of the collection show specific instances of lay misbehaviour, but also reinforce the moral formation provided to Cistercian monks in the first half, by continuing the theme of demonic involvement in sinful behaviour, and the necessity of confession and contrition.

The scope and variety of the content of the *Liber miraculorum* is vaster than previous scholarship has suggested, and, just as Mula and Casey have identified repeated lessons in the Cistercian exempla, specific themes reoccur in the second half: the sacrament of the altar, heresy and unbelief, lay sinfulness, conversion, and the non-Christian peripheries of Europe. Herbert's collection was not disorganised; themes and lessons were repeated, often in exempla that were placed near to one another in the text, such that exempla throughout the collection reinforced one another. Consecutive exempla often explored different facets of an issue, or gave a variety of perspectives. Miracles of the eucharist acted as a nexus which connected monastic and non-monastic life, and all those exempla touching on the unity of Christian life and attacks to it: conversion, crusade, heretical belief, the mistreatment of pilgrims, swearing on the limbs of Christ, and the summoning of demons. Individual exempla offered specific examples, but also built on one another to make bigger arguments, about the successful conversion of non-Christian peoples, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, or divine punishment for wrongdoing.

The first half of the collection showed monks how to live a holy life according to the rules of Cistercian life within the walls of the monastery. How are we to understand the purpose of the exempla in the latter half of the collection, which show the myriad problems of the secular world, but also divine signs that served to demonstrate God's power, and reinforce certain points of Catholic doctrine? In part, they provided examples of virtuous and sinful behaviour to Herbert's fellow monks, asking them to feel and act like the subjects of the exempla. They also informed Herbert's monastic audience about the breadth of lay misbehaviour and sinfulness, and about Cistercian missionary efforts. But why was this important information to include, and why did he deliberately choose and arrange exempla on these themes? To understand this, Herbert's collection must be contextualised within the preaching mission of 1178, which took place in the same year in which he wrote the *Liber miraculorum*.

The 1178 Mission and Cistercian Involvement in the World

In the *Dialogus miraculorum*, written over four decades later, some of the same themes are present as in the *Liber miraculorum*. Caesarius dedicated an entire book to eucharistic miracles (book IX) and categorised different types of heretics, including Albigensians and Waldensians (DM V.18–25). He drew his exempla from events surrounding the Third (DM IV.15) and Fifth Crusade (DM VIII.27–28), as well as the Albigensian Crusade: his collection contains the first record of the Cistercian abbot-turned-crusader Arnaud Amaury's chilling remark before the 1209 massacre at Béziers in 1209: 'Kill them all. For the Lord knows which are His.'[84] His collection suggests his interest in pastoral care for the laity, with an entire book dedicated to confession (book III). Caesarius was writing in the wake of the reforms instituted at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and, through his abbot, the Paris-trained Henry of Heisterbach, Caesarius was connected to reformers and moralists, including Oliver of Paderborn and Jacques de Vitry.[85] As Beverley Mayne Kienzle has shown, every Cistercian who preached the crusade or contended with heretics during Innocent III's papacy had direct or indirect ties to the circle of Peter the Chanter in Paris, and so there was a triangular network that connected Innocent III, the Cistercian Order and the moral theologians in Paris.[86] These relationships can be seen in the *Dialogus miraculorum* in the numerous stories concerned with heresy, crusade, social and economic morality, and pastoral care, and have been used by historians to explain Caesarius' interest in such matters.[87]

Herbert's collection can also be contextualised against a church council and his relationship with an influential churchman. The Third Lateran Council was held in 1179, and Henry of Marcy played a significant role in preparations for it and the legislation that was ultimately promulgated. In particular, as Kienzle has argued, Henry influenced the writing of Canon 27, which detailed measures for repressing heresy.[88] The year before the council, he had been part of a preaching mission to Toulouse, aimed at suppressing heretics in that region, and had been a keen instigator of that mission. After leaving Clairvaux he would also be involved with preaching the Third Crusade, and in his later years wrote a crusade treatise, *De peregrinante civitate Dei* (hereafter *De peregrinante*), written sometime before his death in January 1189.[89] In the letter that Henry wrote following the mission, and later in *De peregrinante*, several of the same themes are visible as those found in the *Liber miraculorum*: heresy and sin, the eucharist, miracles and relics, preaching and conversion, and armed struggle on behalf of Christianity.

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[84] 'Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius.' *Dialogus miraculorum*, V.21.
[85] Bird, 'The Wheat and the Tares', 768–79.
[86] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 171–73.
[87] Bird, 'The Wheat and the Tares', 768–79.
[88] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 117–19.
[89] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 241–42.

Despite his relationship with Henry, this is not a context in which the *Liber miraculorum* has previously been studied. Herbert has been placed among his fellow monks at Clairvaux, whose stories he recorded, but not in the wider world, even though his abbot was concerned with contending with heretics and non-Christians on behalf of the papacy. Having examined the content and structure of Herbert's collection, and argued for the themes that predominate in the latter half of the text, the question the remainder of this chapter explores is: did Henry of Marcy and the events of 1178 shape the exempla Herbert chose to include in the *Liber miraculorum*?

The 1178 Mission: Heretics, Preachers and Miracles

Henry had become abbot of Clairvaux in 1177 upon the death of his predecessor Gerard, with Herbert as his chaplain. In 1178, when Herbert wrote the *Liber miraculorum*, Henry spent the summer and autumn in the south of France on a mission against heretics. Reports of heretical activity in France, especially in the south, had proliferated in the years before, as Kienzle has outlined in her account of the events of 1178.[90] In the Narbonnais, heretics were becoming more powerful during the period 1176–1178, and had begun fortifying houses and castles. In September 1177, Raymond V of Toulouse appealed to the Cistercian General Chapter for help with a crackdown on the increasingly powerful heretics in his domain, as part of a mission supported by the kings of France and England.[91] Henry was central to the planning of the mission, as surviving letters show. In one, written to Alexander III, he transposed the logic of crusade in the Holy Land to heretics within Europe's borders, laying the intellectual and spiritual groundwork for armed campaigns against heresy, as Kienzle and Congar have argued.[92] In this same letter, dated May 1178, he begged the pope to extend Peter of St Chrysogonous' (d. 1182) authority as papal legate to include the fight against heresy – he believed that only the intervention of the papacy would be effective against heresy and immorality, combined with the might of secular powers.

Henry's entreaties were successful. The 1178 mission, which lasted from August to October, was headed by the papal legate, Peter of St Chrysogonous, and included, alongside Henry, the archbishop of Narbonne; the bishop of Poitiers; Raymond V; and Reginald Fitz Jocelin, bishop of Bath. Henry recorded the events in a letter he wrote upon his return, known from its opening words as *Audite coeli*.[93] Here he described the mission and its participants:

[90] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, chapter 4.
[91] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 10–12.
[92] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 18; Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 113–121.
[93] For an analysis of the letter see Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 121–27.

> Recently, at the command of our lord pope, and at the request of the pious princes, Louis, king of the French, and Henry, king of the English, I accompanied the venerable Peter, legate of the Apostolic See, and those wise men the bishop of Poitiers and the bishop of Bath, to Toulouse, which is an extremely populous city, said to be the mother of heresy and the source of error.[94]

According to the papal legate's account, the delegation included almost 300 people.[95] While we have no direct evidence that Herbert was one of them, as Henry's chaplain it is likely that he accompanied him. The example of Geoffrey of Auxerre, who as his secretary accompanied Bernard on his own preaching mission to the south of France in 1145, suggests that Herbert would have been there with Henry.[96] We have evidence that Herbert accompanied Henry's successor, Abbot Peter Monoculus, on a visitation to a Clairvaux daughter-house in the province of Reims in early 1181.[97] It is improbable that Herbert, as Henry's chaplain, would have stayed behind at Clairvaux while Henry was in Toulouse for several months. Moreover, in one of the eucharistic miracles, Herbert stated that he heard it from King Louis himself in Arras; Herbert's meeting with the monarch is most likely to have occurred while he was chaplain to and travelling with Henry, suggesting that he did accompany him when he left the monastery.[98]

Sources for the mission include the letters written afterwards by the papal legate and by Henry, and entries in Roger of Howden's *Chronicon* based on the letters.[99] Henry's letter begins by arguing that heretical beliefs were widespread and heretics gaining in power, especially in the south of France; because of this, there was a need for a concerted campaign against them:

> Listen, Oh Heavens, to our lament!... May Catholic Christians mourn Christ's plight, and the faithful people mourn the overthrow of the

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[94] Henry's *Epistola* 29 is in PL 204: 235–240, here 235D–236A. 'Contigit enim nuper ad imperium domini papae, et hortatu piissimorum principum Ludovici Francorum, et Henrici Anglorum, regum, venerabilem Petrum apostolicae sedis legatum, virosque discretos Pictavensem et Bathoniensem episcopos, nosque in comitatu eorum urbem adire Tolosam, quae sicut erat civitas maximae multitudinis, ita etiam dicebatur mater haeresis et caput erroris.' An English translation of a slightly different version of the letter can be found in R. I. Moore, *The Birth of Popular Heresy* (London: 1975), 116–122.

[95] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 19.

[96] On Bernard's preaching mission, see Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, chapter 3.

[97] *Liber miraculorum*, lxi–lxiii.

[98] 'Referente piissimo et christianissimo rege Francorum Ludewico, cognouimus in pago Atrebatensi...' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 85.

[99] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 113–14. For the legate's letter, PL 199: 1119–1124, and translated in Moore, *Birth of Popular Heresy*, 113–16. The relevant entry from Roger of Howden's chronicle is translated in Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, eds. and trans., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York and London, 1969), 194–200.

> faith... In our time, a new Philistine stands before the ranks of Israel, the order of heretics, an army of evildoers, who irreverently revile the troops of the living God, impiously presuming to blaspheme against the majesty of the Lord.[100]

The vast heretical army that he describes is exemplified by the state of Toulouse, where heretics openly preached their dangerous ideology:

> Behold! We found the city so diseased that from the soles of its feet to the top of its head there was nothing healthy in it... In that place, heretics ruled the people and dominated the clergy... Heretics spoke, and everyone admired them... The plague was so strong in the land that they not only had their own priests and bishops, but even their own evangelists... who seduced the people and preached to them new doctrines drawn from their own evil hearts.[101]

Nevertheless, they achieved some success in Toulouse, obtaining the public confession of Peter Maurand, a notorious heretic. Henry then departed the city in order to attend the General Chapter meeting in September. Before he did so, he travelled to the diocese of Albi to (unsuccessfully) secure the bishop's release from the heretic Roger of Béziers.[102] In 1181, after his elevation as cardinal-bishop of Albano, Henry would return to the Languedoc at the head of an armed mission against Roger, the first papal legate to raise and lead an army into a Christian land, presaging Arnaud Amaury's role in the massacre at Béziers.[103] The 1178 mission was merely the beginning of his papally-sanctioned career as a scourge of heretics and non-believers.

Both Henry's and the legate's letters show that not believing in the sacraments of the church, including baptism, and especially denying the sacrament of the eucharist was a key tenet of the heretical doctrine with which they had to contend. In his account of the interrogation of Peter Maurand, Henry wrote:

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[100] 'Audite, coeli, quod plangimus... Doleant vices Christi catholici Christiani, et ad detrimentum fidei fidelis populus ingemiscat... Stat contra phalangas Israel novus nostri temporis Philisthaeus, haereticorum ordo, exercitus perversorum, qui agminibus Dei viventis irreverenter exprobrat, et Dominum majestatis impia praesumptione blasphemat.' PL 204: 235.

[101] 'Et ecce inventa est plaga eius magnanimis, ita ut a planta pedis usque ad verticem non esset in ea sanitas... Ibi haeretici principabantur in populo, dominabantur in clero... Loquebantur haeretici, et omnes admirabantur... Interim praevaluerat pestis in terra, quod illi sibi non solum sacerdotes et pontifices fecerant, sed etiam evangelistas habebant, qui... de corde suo nequam recentia dogmata seducto populo praedicarent.' PL 204: 236A–236B.

[102] Congar, 'Henri de Marcy', 22.

[103] Congar, Henri de Marcy', 31–41; Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 132–134.

> [Peter] was required simply to tell us, without deceit, what he believed about the eucharist... he contended, by a new doctrine, that the holy bread of eternal life, consecrated by a priest in the word of the Lord, is not the body of Christ... he was adjudged a heretic.[104]

There were continuing debates in this period about how exactly the bread and wine were transformed into the body and blood of Christ.[105] Outside of the technical arguments of theologians, scholars have argued that preachers were most often concerned with the ease of dissemination of the concept of the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharist.[106] Miracles of the eucharist were embraced as a communication strategy to prove the doctrine and the power of the sacrament. Hence the proliferation of eucharistic miracles in exempla collections throughout the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[107] There was a link between the sacrament of the eucharist, the communication of the doctrine to the laity through preaching, and the use of miracle stories to illustrate and prove these teachings. By the early thirteenth century, Cistercians would be supporting practices like the elevation of the host at mass and the celebration of the feast of Corpus Christi, but Henry's letter and the *Liber miraculorum* show earlier Cistercian involvement in promoting eucharistic theology.[108]

The 1178 mission relied on preaching and proofs of divine power to counter heretical beliefs: 'one of our number was appointed to preach the word... When orthodoxy had been preached to the people, the sinners were filled with terror in Zion.'[109] They had divine support in this work. When Henry and the bishop of Bath had gone to Béziers, to secure the release of the bishop of Albi from Roger, they had found a castle full of heretics. Nevertheless, God was on their side:

> Almost all the inhabitants of the castle were either heretics or their accomplices, and the power of the Lord above prevented them from presuming to murmur against the faith which we preached. Although we were there in their hands, and in their power, since we were surrounded

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[104] 'At nobis instantibus, ut de sacramento altaris suam nobis finem sine fraude aliqua fateretur... et panem sanctum vitae aeternae sacerdotis ministerio in verbo Domini consecratum, non esse corpus Christi novo dogmate contendebat... haereticus judicatus' PL 204: 238B–238C.
[105] James F. McCue, 'The Doctrine of Transubstantiation from Berengar through Trent: The Point at Issue', *The Harvard Theological Review* 61, no. 3 (1968): 383–430; Macy, 'The Dogma of Transubstantiation', 11–41.
[106] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 86.
[107] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 109–20.
[108] Jessalynn Bird, 'The Construction of Orthodoxy', 54.
[109] '...nuntiatum est uni de nobis verbum exhortationis assumere... Habito autem sermone orthodoxae praedicationis ad plebem, conterriti sunt in Sion peccatores'. PL 204: 236D.

> by heretical accomplices on every side, the word of the Lord was not impeded, so that we struck them with continuous invectives and rebukes.[110]

Thanks to the intervention of God, Henry was able to continue preaching. In *Audite coeli*, preaching is shown to be the method through which heretical doctrine is spread, and also a divinely-supported weapon in the fight against it. Even in the midst of the armed mission that he later led to Béziers in 1181, preaching was still important. Geoffrey of Auxerre reported Henry's success in converting two heretics: the Holy Spirit moved him to such eloquence that his preaching caused the wrongdoers to emotionally confess their errors.[111] Kienzle has argued that Henry saw preaching alone as insufficient, hence his advocation for armed struggle against heresy and the involvement of secular rulers.[112] Nevertheless, while in the closing passages of *Audite coeli* Henry argued for future armed missions against places such as Béziers that were still heretical strongholds, he also praised the success of their non-violent preaching tour:

> See, it is clear from this that a great door is evidently open to Christian princes to avenge the insults to Christ, and bring to the desert the garden of the Lord, and to the wilderness the sweetness of paradise. In case anyone thinks that nothing can be done against them, all should know that it was the general opinion in the city of Toulouse that if our visit had occurred three years later, we would scarcely have found anyone there who would call upon the name of Christ.[113]

Their sermons and the public interrogation of heretics were responsible for turning the tide against heresy in Toulouse. Though Henry was clear that there was further work for Christian princes to do, his skill as a preacher, coupled with divine assistance, remained a key weapon in his arsenal, even into 1181, when his army wielded actual steel against the heretics.

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[110] 'Omnes fere habitatores illius castri, vel haeretici, vel haereticorum complices erant, licet sola Domini virtute repressi, nihil contra fidem quam praedicabamus praesumerat vel mutire. Quamvis enim essemus et nos in manibus ipsorum positi, et velut intra quosdam potentiae complices haeretica undique multitudine circumventi, verbum tamen Domini non erat alligatum, quin eos continuis invectionibus et increpationibus feriremus.' PL 204: 240B.
[111] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 133.
[112] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 121–25.
[113] 'Ecce amodo satis apparet quam grande et evidens ostium patet principibus Christianis, ut Christi ulciscantur injurias, ponantque desertum illud quasi hortum Domini, et solitudinem eius in delicias paradisi. Ne autem vel parum, vel nihil contra illos posse causentur, sciant omnes generalem fuisse in urbe Tolosana sententiam, quod si visitatio ista fuisset adhuc triennio retardata, vix inveniretur in ea qui nomen Christi amplius invocaret.' PL 204: 240C.

Henry's letter also described the impact of other signs of divine power on believers and heretics alike. During the interrogation and confession of the heretic Peter Maurand, relics of saints were brought in so that he could swear an oath: 'The relics of the saints were soon respectfully brought in and received with such solemn reverence and devotion that the faithful people were moved to tears; the heretics who were at the meeting found their hiding places preferable to such a sight.'[114] The relics comforted the faithful and terrified the heretics. Peter was then frightened into confessing by a miracle. When he took an oath on a Bible, the page was opened randomly to a passage where two men possessed with devils ask Jesus: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matthew 8:29).[115] After seeing this, Peter confessed, and the gathered believers took great pleasure in this divine intervention: 'The mouths of the faithful were opened, and Catholic lips unsealed in your praise, Oh Christ.'[116] Henry's letter argued for the significance of relics and signs of divine power in the combatting of heresy.[117] In this, it mirrored Geoffrey of Auxerre's accounts of Bernard's preaching, which stressed the importance of symbols and proof of the divine presence on earth over and above disputation and argumentation; in Bernard's case this also involved his performance of miracles.[118] Based on the accounts of both preaching tours, a combination of preaching, relics, and miraculous occurrences were used to confound heretics and compel them to confess, and through them the faithful were also confirmed in their beliefs.

This link, between anti-heresy efforts and miraculous events, can be found in the *Liber miraculorum*. Mid-way through the collection, when discussing the eucharistic miracles, Herbert explained that they were proliferating thanks to the spread of heresy in France, presumably a reference to the heretics with which Henry was contending:

> Whence we are given to understand, because of the most foul heresies in the kingdom of France... [which are] sending forth poisonous shoots and greatly disparaging the sacrament of the altar, the Lord Jesus Christ has deigned to reveal abundant miracles concerning the sacrament of His

[114] 'Mox igitur sanctorum reliquiae honorabiliter efferuntur, cum tam solemni reverentia et devotione susceptae, ut et de fidelis populus compungeretur lacrymas; haereticos vero, qui convenerant, latebrae potius quam talia spectacula delectarent.' PL 204: 237D–238A.
[115] 'illius Scripturae textus occurrit: 'Quid tibi et nobis, Jesu, Fili Dei? Venisti ante tempus perdere nos?' PL 204: 238B.
[116] '...aperiuntur ora fidelium, et catholicae plebis labia in tua, Christe, praeconia resolvuntur'. PL 204: 238C.
[117] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 124.
[118] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 230.

> body and His blood, in this time and in these regions, in order to reinforce the faith of believers.[119]

Though in the edition this passage is in chapter 86, and chapter 85 is the first miracle of the eucharist, in MBS Clm 2607 they are all part of one chapter. Given its placement, in the very chapter in which Herbert turned away from Cistercian material and towards the secular world, it was an explanation for why he has chosen to include the material he did in the latter half of the collection. Heresy was spreading in France, so God was sending miracles to counter it and comfort believers; through his collection, Herbert disseminated these miracles, as well as a variety of other contemporary miraculous occurrences and signs of divine power. This passage informed his Cistercian audience of the dangers of heretics and the spread of their influence, told them something about the content of their beliefs, and then argued for the importance of miracles to counter them.

After arguing for the importance of miracles in the eucharistic exempla, the next group of exempla in the *Liber miraculorum* further demonstrate the power of divine signs to convert, or confirm the faith of the newly converted, especially when interpreted by a priest or monk learned enough to understand them. Following the eucharistic miracles, and the two stories (cc. 97 and 99) about pious women on the peripheries of Christendom, Herbert included exempla about pagan peoples, crusade, and conversion in Eastern Europe. In one of these (c. 102), a pagan town, recently converted, is terrified one night by the sound of an army in retreat. The next day, when Cistercian monks arrive to baptise the townspeople and hear what happened, they explain to them that what they heard was the demons who had once plagued them retreating, since they could not bear the arrival of the Holy Spirit:

> Then the people of that place, all hearing the noise of the retreat and flight, and not seeing anything, were astounded and without a doubt afraid, not knowing what this strange occurrence was or whether it was a portent of good or evil. However, when the next day the monks came to that same town, they baptised there a great crowd of both sexes. Then truly it manifestly became known to all the faithful that the nocturnal commotion was nothing other than legions of demons, who had rebuked

[119] 'Unde datur intelligi quia propter spurcissimas hereses in regno Gallie... uirulento germine pullulantes et sacramento altaris maxime detrahentes, Dominus Ihesus Christus de ipso sacramento corporis et sanguinis sui temporibus et regionibus istis ad roborandam credentium fidem crebriora solito miracula demonstrare dignatur.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 86.

> God, who fled from the humans they had besieged, not able to withstand the presence of holy angels and the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Thanks to this event all were consoled [*consolati sunt*] in God, indeed especially the newly converted, who were liberated from the wicked dominion [of the devils].[120]

Thanks to the explanation of this supernatural event, the newly converted were consoled. Herbert made clear the need for explication that the monks provide: only after their arrival and the baptism (another sacrament denied by heretics) is an explanation of what the townspeople heard the night before offered in the narrative. Like the new converts, Herbert's audience was not told the significance of the supernatural events until the arrival of the Cistercian monks into the story; their experience mirrored that of the townspeople, and so the explanation to the converts within the narrative served also to illuminate the message of the exemplum to the audience. By the end of the narrative they, like the townspeople, understood that this exemplum demonstrated that demons assault non-believers, but Christians are protected from them. Additionally, they learned that such a miracle can act to console and strengthen the newly converted, thanks to Herbert's description of the townspeople's thoughts and emotions: they move from fear to comfort and consolation. The next chapter likewise testified to the power of conversion and baptism: a pagan woman, accidentally splashed by a monk with holy water, feels a burning sensation in her body whenever she invokes the name of the demon she worships. But when she realises her error, converts, and invokes the name of Christ, the pain stops, and she understands that she will be saved in both body and soul.

Herbert emphasised this need for explication in the following chapter (c. 104), the final exemplum concerning Cistercian activities in Slavic lands. In the aftermath of a mighty battle between Christians and pagans, the bones of all lie unburied in a field. Later, Cistercian monks come to the spot and find crosses on the skulls of the Christians. The monks immediately understand that the crosses signify which bones are Christian, whilst the recently converted locals, in their ignorance, had ignored this manifestation of divine power.[121] Lacking an

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[120] 'Porro homines loci, recendentium strepitum et fugam communiter audientes, personam aliquam non uidentes stupebant ac metuebant nimirum, ignorantes que ista nouitas esset aut quid boni maliue portenderet. In crastinum autem uenientes monachi ad eandem uillam, baptizaverunt ibi promiscui sexus turbam copiosam. Tunc uero fidelibus cunctis manifeste innotuit quia tumultus ille nocturnus nichil aliud extitit nisi demonum legiones ab obsessis hominibus, increpante Domino, fugientes, qui beatorum angelorum presenciam et Sancti Spiritus aduentum sustinere non poterant. De qua uidelicet re multum in Domino consolati sunt uniuersi, precipue vero nephiti illi, qui ab immunda dominacione fuerant liberati.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 102.

[121] 'Porro homines loci, cum antea ydolatre existerent, miraculum illud minime aduertebant, quia de signo crucis aut nichil sciebant aut nichil omnino curabant.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 104.

explanation, the converts had not been strengthened in their faith by this sign; they were not 'consoled'. Herbert emphasised the need for monks to interpret miracles and other signs of divine power laypeople. This explication, done within the narrative to the converts, again served to explain the sign of divine approval for the crusaders to Herbert's audience, and reiterated the need for learned interpretation of miracles to ordinary people.

Cistercian involvement in these campaigns in eastern Europe dated back to Bernard of Clairvaux who, preaching the crusade throughout Germany in 1147, had realised that German knights and rulers were more interested in fighting non-Christians on their eastern frontier than travelling to the Holy Land. Bernard thus obtained for them an extension of the crusade indulgence to cover their campaigns as well.[122] The campaigns continued for decades after the main campaign of 1148, and over the course of the twelfth century Cistercian houses were founded across Germany, including in the lands newly conquered from the Slavs in modern-day Poland.[123] Yet in his exempla, Herbert did not include any specifics about these activities, as one might in a chronicle: there are no dates or names of foundations, nor names of the monks or abbots involved. Herbert did not intend to communicate the facts of Cistercian history with these stories. The exempla he gathered demonstrate the power of miracles and the need for their explication; they are not accounts of Cistercian activity. Instead, they argue for Cistercian involvement in missionary work, and, alongside the miracles of the eucharist, show how conversion and persuasion can take place: through miracles and miracle stories. Like the Cistercian exempla earlier in the collection, they also focus on the thoughts and emotions of the people depicted.

Many of the other exempla in the collection feature similar proofs of the importance of miracles explained and expounded; Herbert often included in the narrative a character who recognises a miracle or other divine sign. This begins with the Cistercian exempla: in the story of Reinaldus, a venerable figure appears and tells him that the women he sees are Mary and other female saints. In the exempla in the latter half of the collection, this figure is often a monk or ecclesiastic, as in chapter 97, the story of the Muslim convert and murderous knight. This is a fantastical miracle, and Herbert built into the narrative an explanation for how it became widely known, and how it was understood; it is only known because the woman's boy-servant witnessed it as he lay hidden:

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[122] Andrew Jotischky, *Crusading and the Crusader States* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 199.
[123] For Cistercian activity here, see Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 153–55, 227–29, 256–69; Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 69–80; Tamm, 'Communicating Crusade'; Tamm, 'The Livonian Crusade'; N. Bourgeois, 'Cistercians and the Crusade of Livony', *Revue historique* 635 (2005): 521–60.

> Then the aforementioned boy servant, seeing [the murder] and stricken with excessive fear, fled, and in the early morning came to a [Templar] fort and told them all that had happened. Hastening forth, the Templars discovered the goods of the dead man along with the half-burnt corpse of the blessed martyr with her head. They carried this back with them with devotion and reverence and buried her. However, a little while later, after a delegation was sent to the Lord Pope Alexander on her behalf, it was judged by him that she should be buried in a church with honour, and she should be held as a martyr among the martyrs; because for the love of chastity she lay dead, and was baptised by her own blood, she deserved the martyr's crown granted by God.[124]

There were several stages to the discovery of the miracle. There was the boy, who alerted members of a religious order, the Templars, who understood that something miraculous had occurred and so gave her a Christian burial. The pope (identified as Alexander III) is the final explicator of the miracle: this woman is a Christian martyr among martyrs and should be honoured as such, and presumably her myth propagated and used as an example. The editors have not been able to find a precedent to this story. It shares features with the legends of female saints martyred by the Romans: a beautiful young woman, steadfast in her faith, protecting her chastity even against violent attack.[125] There are parallels with the legend of Margaret of Antioch, also a convert who was born to a non-Christian father. Margaret consecrated her virginity to God, and was eventually decapitated, just as the Muslim woman is in Herbert's exemplum.[126] Margaret's story even features a dragon, although it swallowed Margaret and not those abusing her. At the beginning of the exemplum, Herbert claimed that the miracle he was telling and the woman's example had been spread widely: 'I tell here of a thing greatly considered and disseminated throughout Spain.'[127] If so, other versions have now been lost. The reference to Alexander III suggests this could have been a story told to Herbert on the 1178 tour, perhaps by

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[124] 'Supradictus uero puerulus ista considerans, nimio terrore concussus, aufugit, et facto mane ueniens ad castrum cuncta que acciderant per ordinem indicauit. Exeuntes itaque Templarii, spolia mortuorum ipsumque beatissime martiris corpus semiustum cum capite repererunt. Quod secum deferentes cum deuocione ac reuerencia sepelierunt. Postmodum autem, missa pro ea legacione ad dominum papam Alexandrum, iudicatum est ab eo ut in ecclesia cum honore tumularetur et quasi martir inter martires haberetur, utpote que amore castitatis occubuit et proprio sanguine baptizata, martirii coronam largiente Deo promeruit.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

[125] The best study of the saints' lives written for and about women remains Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives and Women's Literary Culture, 1150–1300: Virginity and its Authorizations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[126] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 368–70.

[127] 'Opinata res est ualde et per Hispanium diuulgata quam refero.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97.

the papal legate, although none of those leading the mission were Spanish. Whatever its origins, Herbert suggested this exemplum was contemporary, writing that it happened 'not long ago' [*nuper*]. He framed it as another recent miracle, like those proliferating because of the spread of heresy. The woman's virtues and her example are explicated and disseminated thanks to a religious order, who recognise the significance of what the boy has told them and bury her with reverence, and the pope, who declares her a martyr.

With the eucharistic miracles, alongside the exempla of crusade and conversion that follow, Herbert demonstrated three points: firstly, the role of miracles and wonders in strengthening faith, and the need for this at a moment of heretical attack. Secondly, the need for learned men, often Cistercian monks, to explain the significance of such signs to the laity, in order for them to console the faithful, convert unbelievers, and confound heretics. Finally, that Cistercian monks, in carrying out missionary and preaching activities, could convert non-Christian peoples and console the faithful. These exempla in the *Liber miraculorum* were proofs of the power of miracles to persuade and convert, so long as they were properly explained and expounded.

Henry and Herbert on Cistercian Involvement in the World

Henry's actions while abbot of Clairvaux show a commitment to active involvement in the world on behalf of the papacy. Just as had Bernard, Henry left the cloister and the contemplative life to preach against heretics in France; unlike Bernard, he would eventually leave the monastery behind entirely. As Newman has argued, when it came to issues of heresy and crusade, Henry's actions in 1178 and later in the 1180s show his belief that Cistercians should heed the call of the pope and take up the preacher's mantle.[128]

Henry distilled his thinking on this issue in his crusade treatise, *De peregrinante*, written sometime before his death in 1189.[129] The text dealt with the situation in the Holy Land following Saladin's recapture of Jerusalem, but also considered the state of Christianity more broadly.[130] In particular, Henry expounded on the theme 'that faith without works is dead' [*Fides enim sine operibus mortua comprobatur*].[131] Newman has examined how, in this treatise, Henry argued that his contemporaries no longer cared about the crusade because there had been a collapse in the spiritual Jerusalem; preoccupied with the acquisition of material goods, their faith had become impoverished.[132] Works [*operes*] and sacrifice for their faith (in this case recovering

[128] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 229–43.
[129] *De peregrinante* is reproduced in PL 204: 251–402.
[130] Penny J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusade to the Holy Land, 1095–1270* (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1991), 63–71; Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 241–42; Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 112 and 134.
[131] PL 204: 314C.
[132] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 229–43.

Jerusalem) were incumbent upon Christians: they had a duty to serve Christ. In Latin, there were two words commonly used for work or labour: *labor/laborare* and *opus/operari*. It is the latter that Henry used in his treatise. In the Bible, variations of *operari* are used to describe God's creation and Adam's work tending the garden of Eden; when the disciples ask Jesus how to perform the works of God, this is also the word that is used.[133] *Opus/operari* thus connotes actions and deeds, and especially spiritual endeavour and religious works. It is this kind of religious action that Henry is urging his readers to become involve with, and this theme, that faith without works is dead, is one of the ideological underpinnings of Henry's treatise.

Henry dedicated his treatise to the monks of Clairvaux: 'To his beloved and spiritual sons who serve the Lord at Clairvaux'.[134] In his preface, addressed to the monks, he described himself as still intimately connected to the Cistercian community: he is their father and they are his sons, and he is anxious for them as any father is; the treatise is his way of 'opening up' to his sons.[135] He then revealed his current internal struggle between a yearning for the monastic life at Clairvaux and his responsibilities as papal legate and crusade champion. This does not concern his decision to leave Clairvaux in 1179, but speaks of his state of mind later in the 1180s, when he had been away from the abbey for several years. The same trope, of the tension between the active and contemplative life, is found in the works of Bernard, who described himself as a 'chimera', neither one thing nor another, since he was abbot of Clairvaux, but so often away from the monastery on papal business.[136] Henry's description of his inner turmoil should therefore give us pause; did he truly struggle to decide between action and contemplation, or was this language expected of a Cistercian who was involved on behalf of the pope in anti-heresy and crusade preaching? Bernard never relinquished his abbacy or accepted an ecclesiastical post, but Henry did leave Clairvaux to become cardinal-bishop of Albano. Bernard's despair over his dual responsibilities was grounded in a reality that Henry's was not. What the examples of Henry and Bernard do show is that despite their rhetorical claims about the dichotomy between the active and contemplative life, the Cistercian vocation could and did encompass both.[137]

After describing being pulled between the cloister and the world, in the next passages Henry explained to his monks that despite his desire for the contemplative life, he had decided

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[133] Newman, 'Labor', 110.
[134] 'Charissimis ac spiritualibus filiis suis in Claravalle Domino servientibus'. PL 204: 251B.
[135] 'Ex ea qua me sentio vobis charitate devinctum, vestrum quem erga me geritis, metiri ac pensare libet affectum. Inde est quod sicut de exteriori vestro profectu quotidiana sollicitudine angor, sic filiali affectu vos paternis anxietatibus condolere, et pro meo statu versa vice sollicitis non dubito cogitationibus aestuare. Videns igitur ad praesens non posse satisfieri votis, ut praesentes vos habeam, et omnia quae circa vos sunt, plenius praesens agroscam, vestris saltem desideriis satisfacere, licet absens, cupio: et quae circa me acta sunt, ex quo a vobis exivi, vel agantur hodie, volo vobis, prout possum melius, aperire.' PL 204: 251B.
[136] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 240–42.
[137] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 240–42.

that he could not abandon this mission that God had given him, as papal legate. He then went on to praise the comfort he had received from the monks of Clairvaux, whilst directing their attention to the condition of the church and the heavenly Jerusalem. It was here that he and his monks would be reunited, but only if they all worked to ensure its existence:

> 'So, what else now remains but that we should eagerly sow fields, plant vineyards, and make a fruitful yield so that, after the many and various disturbances described above, the city with dwelling places is finally found?'[138]

The same imagery, of tending farms and fields, is present in *Audite coeli*, when Henry urged 'all the faithful of Christ' – presumably including Cistercians – to stop the heretics from despoiling their fields, and to drive the animals from their farmland.[139] The imagery of the harvest and the vineyard, whilst common in tirades against heretics, was also deeply Cistercian, as can be seen in the story of Reinaldus; harvesting was part of the rhythms of Cistercian life. In her discussion of *De peregrinante*, Newman has argued that the idea that underpins the preface, addressed to the monks of Clairvaux, is that Cistercians are part of a wider Christian society and must work to perfect it, and that without doing so they would not obtain salvation. It was a broad understanding of the Cistercian value of *caritas*, which argued for Cistercian involvement in working towards Christian unity and healing the wounds of the Church, such as those caused by heresy.

Henry's treatise is a late example of this ideology; a similar line of thinking had been elaborated by earlier Cistercian writers, starting with Bernard himself.[140] In several sermons in the 1160s, Geoffrey of Auxerre argued that Cistercians had to work for the unity of the church: the monastic life could not please God, he stressed, if it existed without a unified church, no matter how spiritually perfect its monks were. Geoffrey was writing in defence of Cistercian activities on behalf of Alexander III, who would later authorise Henry's preaching activities in 1178.[141] Newman has argued that Henry saw heresy as a particular threat to a united church and thus to salvation, making the fight against heresy a moral act to reinforce Christian unity.[142] He put this

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[138] 'Quid igitur restare aliud iam videtur, nisi ut post multos et varios fluctus superius descriptos, civitate tandem habitationis inventa, seminare agros, plantare vineas et fructum navitatis facere studeamus?' PL 204: 253B. For the translation and interpretation, I have referred to Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 241–42.
[139] *Audite coeli* is addressed 'Ad omnes Christi fideles.' 'Ubi sunt ergo nunc agricolae tui constituti super fertilem agrum et jucundum, tuo cruore floridum, et aspersione pii sanguinis irrigatum? Surgant et opitulentur nobis, et in necessitate nos protegant, seque ad cruentas bestias murum defensionis opponant.' PL 204: 255C.
[140] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 235–43.
[141] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 242.
[142] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 233.

ideology into practice through his participation in papally-supported campaigns, both preaching the crusade and working against heretics, in 1178 and later. His work for the Third Lateran Council and his assumption of the role of legate shows the centrality of the papacy to this thinking: reinforcing Christian unity and mending a divided church was about extending Christian and especially papal control over peoples and lands.

Herbert's actions suggest he subscribed to Henry's philosophy. It is likely he accompanied Henry in 1178, and perhaps also on other activities as he prepared for the Third Lateran Council. After Henry left the monastery, Herbert soon followed him, becoming archbishop of Porto Torres. At the time, Sardinia was contested territory, part of the Pisan-Genoese battle for supremacy, and, as alliances shifted, it was also a sight of contestation between papal and imperial power.[143] When Herbert was elected archbishop, another monk from Clairvaux was simultaneously elected bishop of Sorres, a Sardinian diocese subject to the archdiocese of Torres.[144] As Graziano Fois has argued, their election was likely part of Alexander III's policy to balance Pisan and Genoese power:

> ...the papacy had an interest in smoothing out the reasons for the conflict, since both republics would have been useful to the cause of Christianity in the event of a crusade. Electing a Cistercian [Herbert]... meant containing Pisan expansionism (who probably pressed for the election of one of their own as archbishop) and at the same time did not favour Genoa. In short, Herbert was an impartial person.[145]

Herbert's election was a political move to mend European alliances ahead of a crusade, and to consolidate papal power. He may have yearned for a quiet monastic life and only resignedly travelled to Sardinia, or perhaps was eager for a new challenge. But Herbert's acceptance of the archbishopric shows his embrace of Henry's ideology: like Henry, he left Clairvaux and assumed an ecclesiastical position, one that aided Alexander III's policies. Herbert's closeness to Henry put him in the midst of Cistercian preaching activities on behalf of the pope; his similar decision to leave the cloister and assume a new role places him amongst those Cistercians, like Henry, Bernard, and Geoffrey of Auxerre, who believed in Cistercian activity outside the monastery.

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[143] Graziano Fois, 'Gonario giudice e poi monaco ed Herbertus arcivescovo di Torres: storia di intersezioni', *Herbertus* 2, no. 1 (2000), 25–78.
[144] *Liber miraculorum*, lxv.
[145] Fois, 'Gonario giudice', 45-46. My translation from the Italian.

This intellectual and cultural context opens new ways of reading the *Liber miraculorum*, situating it within a lineage of Cistercian thought concerned with acting against heretics and non-believers.

Against this background, a clear overview can be sketched of the content and purpose of each part of this so-called unstructured and unwieldy text. In the first half of the *Liber miraculorum*, Herbert primarily included exempla about Cistercian monks, often from Clairvaux, that took place within the walls of the monastery. As shown by the Reinaldus exemplum, they provided examples of Cistercian conduct, thoughts and emotions to absorb and embody; they showed how to be Cistercian. Midway through the collection, the content and setting of the exempla abruptly change to being about the secular world. At this point, Herbert included a number of eucharistic miracles, whose presence he explained through the need to confront heretics and strengthen the faithful, given the spread of heresy in France. There are then a number of exempla about crusade and conversion, which furthered his argument about the power of miracle stories to convert non-Christians and console believers, so long as they are explicated by Cistercian monks. After a selection of miracle stories from William of Malmesbury, the remainder of the collection then catalogues various kind of bad behaviour on the part of the laity. A monk reading this would have learnt, in order: how to lead a good Cistercian life within the walls of the monastery; the dangers of heretics who disparage the sacraments, and the appearance of miracles to counter them; the power of miracles to persuade and convert; and the various kinds of wrongdoing, heresy and sin that existed in the world. He would then have ended the collection with an exemplum which showed a monk from Clairvaux successfully intervening alongside a secular cleric to help a lay woman escape from demons and sin.

The first half of the *Liber miraculorum* encouraged Herbert's audience of Cistercian monks to form themselves according to past Cistercian examples, like Reinaldus. At the half-way point of the collection, Herbert included a number of eucharistic miracles, telling his readers that because of the spread of heresy, miracles were proliferating so as to confirm the beliefs of the faithful. He both informed his readers of the problems of the world (which would be elaborated on in the many exempla about lay misbehaviour in the second half of the collection), argued that preaching and miracles were a remedy against heresy, and provided his audience with the exemplary narratives that could be used in the kinds of preaching events that he and Henry were involved with in 1178. Often the same exemplum could fulfil all three roles: the exemplum about the host transforming into flesh includes Herbert's comments about the proliferation of miracles to combat the spread of heresy, and is proof itself of the Real Presence of Christ in the sacrament of the altar, and so could be included in a sermon about the sacrament. A Cistercian monk like Henry could make use of the miracles, to explicate and expound points of doctrine, to console

the faithful, and confound heretics. The two corpuses of material within his collection argued for the life of a Cistercian monk to be both contemplative and bounded by the walls of the monastery, and active in the service of papal anti-heresy and crusade efforts. In other words, the entire collection was designed to form Cistercian monks according to Henry's example.

Who Wrote the *Liber miraculorum*?

Herbert wrote the *Liber miraculorum* in 1178, and it features exempla that prove the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharist, demonstrate the punishments awaiting those who disparage the sacraments, show the power of other sacraments like baptism, and celebrate the power of miracles and divine signs to persuade and convert. This raises the question of whether Henry was involved in the production of Herbert's collection. His participation would explain his absence in the exempla used. While Herbert included stories valorising the other abbots of Clairvaux he had known, such as Fastrad, and the senior monks who had inspired him, Henry appears only briefly in the *Liber miraculorum*. One exemplum (c. 129) is about a monk at Clairvaux who confesses a sin to him, but the focus of the story is on the monk. He is also named as a source for another exemplum (c. 133), about a dying monk to whom Mary gives the grace of three virtues. The omission seems even stranger when Herbert's collection is compared to the *Exordium magnum*, in which Conrad added in many stories praising Henry amongst the material he copied from Herbert (EM II.30–31). The combination in the two corpuses of exempla in the *Liber miraculorum* of virtuous Cistercian living and a focus on the problems of the world also mirrors Henry's own thoughts in *De peregrinante* on the need for Cistercians to work actively in the world as part of their journey towards virtue, suggesting his influence.

Furthermore, the initial composition of the collection during the 1178 preaching campaign – and perhaps even for use by the preachers on the mission – could explain Herbert's use of William of Malmesbury. His works were available in the library at Clairvaux, so Herbert's access to these texts has never been called into question; rather, in the bountiful library at Clairvaux, why was it to William that Herbert turned for miracle stories? His works are almost the only source of written miracle stories Herbert seems to have consulted and used, and he used William's words almost verbatim; this was not a case of rewriting stories he had read or heard earlier, he must have had the text in front of him. One of the members of the 1178 legation was Reginald Fitz Jocelin, Bishop of Bath. After the encounter with the heretics in Toulouse, the papal legate tasked Henry and Reginald with going to Béziers to secure the release of the bishop of Albi. Henry and Herbert thus spent longer on the road with Reginald and his retinue. Reginald was the son of Jocelin de Bohun, bishop of Salisbury from 1142 until he retired to a

Cistercian monastery shortly before his death in 1184.[146] Malmesbury Abbey was in the diocese of Salisbury, and Reginald's diocese, Bath, neighboured his father's. If Herbert wrote the *Liber miraculorum* not at Clairvaux, but on the preaching tour, he would have had access to a more limited library. Factoring in the presence of Reginald and his retinue, is it possible that a copy of William's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* was one of the small number of books available to him. It explains why most of the stories are word of mouth – Herbert had been told these previously and remembered them, or was told them on the preaching tour – and why he relied so infrequently on written miracle collections. Away from Clairvaux, he was dependent on a limited library, of which the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* may well have been one.

Conclusion

The *Liber miraculorum* is the result of Henry and Herbert's commitment to Cistercian activity as preachers and missionaries. Herbert created a collection that argued that, firstly, a key component of Cistercian life was activity in the world in the service of the papacy, and provided numerous exempla that both taught his audience of the problems of the world and could be used as part of a sermon to the laity. And secondly, it argued that reform of the self, the monastic preacher, had to precede that engagement with the laity. Only the first half is similar to the other collections discussed in this thesis. It is likely that the text was written in this order: the latter half on the preaching mission, the first half once Herbert returned to Clairvaux and gathered more word-of-mouth tales from his fellow monks. However, he deliberately reversed this order in the final text. Following the logic of the collection, the eager Cistercian learned first to model himself on the example of the virtuous monks portrayed in the first half of the text; only then, after being told that heresy is spreading, that miracles can counter it, and that Cistercians monks are working successfully as missionaries, converting and consoling the faithful with the explanation of miraculous occurrences, was he encouraged to go forth and take action. In Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*, the Cistercian vocation was shown to combine prayer and contemplation within the walls of the abbey with preaching and missionary work. The preaching Herbert envisaged, modelled on Henry, was thus truly evangelical, in the sense that the preacher was expected to be a virtuous man and an example himself when he went forth to preach. This idea, that historians have more readily associated with the mendicant preachers and their role as the shock-troops of the papacy in the thirteenth century, is found here in the *Liber miraculorum*,

[146] B. R. Kemp, 'Jocelin de Bohunn', and Charles Duggan, 'Reginald *fitz* Jocelin', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

the result of the close relationship between Herbert of Clairvaux and his abbot and friend, Henry of Marcy, according to whose example he implicitly encouraged his audience to form themselves.

Chapter three

Conrad of Eberbach's *Exordium magnum Cisterciense*: Clairvaux as the Model for Cistercian Life

Introduction

The *Exordium magnum Cisterciense* was written in the decades after 1178, when Herbert had composed the *Liber miraculorum*. Its author, Conrad of Eberbach, made extensive use of Herbert's material in his own collection, reusing and reordering a great number of the exempla contained therein.[1] Unlike Herbert, he created a clearly structured text, divided into six books, that was both a collection of edifying examples and a history of the Cistercian Order. Conrad only selected exempla that related to other Cistercians, primarily monks from Clairvaux, from the *Liber miraculorum*, rejecting any that were set outside of the monastery. From Herbert's material, Conrad thus created an original exempla collection, despite claiming that he was merely a compiler: 'We have not written all this as if we were writing something new but... have discovered and gathered together what our zealous fathers had already written down.'[2] This chapter seeks to explore how Conrad constructed the *Exordium magnum* and endowed his recycled exempla with new meaning: how he took the *Liber miraculorum*, as well as other Cistercian texts, and created a new collection with an alternate vision of the Cistercian Order.

Modern scholarship on the *Exordium magnum* is remarkably uniform with regards to the text's composition, its purpose, and the historical context in which it should be understood. In the introduction to his edition, Griesser argued that Conrad had written the collection in two parts: the first four books at Clairvaux in the late twelfth century, and the final two at Eberbach between 1206 and 1221.[3] He also argued that it was written to edify and instruct Conrad's fellow monks, and to avoid any further decline in monastic discipline across the Order. McGuire's work on the collection has been in the same vein, exploring what the text could show about a time when the founders of the Order and their devotion were a distant memory, and negligences were

[1] Savage, 'Introduction', 17–22; *Exordium magnum*, 35–41; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 45–49.
[2] *Exordium magnum*, VI.10. 'Nequen enim quasi novi alicuius operis auctores haec conscripsimus, sed... quae a studiosis patribus sparsim exarata reperimus... in unum collegimus'. McGuire also cautions that we should not take Conrad's statements about his 'limited ambitions' too literally, McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 49.
[3] *Exordium magnum*, 5-6.

creeping in.[4] He further explored the structure of the text, largely agreeing with Griesser about Conrad's two-stage composition process: he argued that books I–IV were written in the 1190s at Clairvaux to justify the Order to enemies outside, while books V–VI were written at Eberbach in the thirteenth century to educate the less-disciplined monks who lived at a distance from the Order's heartlands. Overall, he described it as a text aimed at renewing observance and discipline, an assessment with which subsequent scholars have agreed.[5] Paul Savage's introduction to the English translation follows this dating, noting that Conrad wrote the text in two parts in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[6] Savage argues that Conrad uniquely combined history and exempla to defend the Cistercians from their critics, provide a history of the Order, and give examples of good conduct to edify and reform the behaviour of his fellows. As Newman notes in her recent article on the collection, the *Exordium magnum* is uniformly seen by historians as a hybrid text, written over several decades, that combines history and exempla.[7] Berman's is the only dissenting voice. She argued that the *Exordium magnum* was written around 1200, part of a concerted effort by Cistercians in this period to create a false origin myth for themselves; in this case by fraudulently writing Bernard and Clairvaux into the history of Cistercian foundations.[8] Her interpretation has not however been taken up by subsequent scholars. Against this consensus background, recent research, especially in French, has tended to explore certain themes in the *Exordium magnum*, including confession and confessors, ghostly apparitions, and the performance of the liturgy.[9]

The *Exordium magnum* has therefore been seen as a text of two halves: history and exempla, written at Clairvaux and then at Germany, intended to defend the Order's holiness against outsiders who might doubt it, and then to reform the behaviour of monks in far-flung houses

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[4] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 36–37; McGuire, 'Introduction', 278–80.
[5] Pfeifer, 'Quand les moines', 34; Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 553–54.
[6] Savage, 'Introduction', 1–15.
[7] Martha G. Newman, 'The Benedictine Rule and the Narrow Path: The Place of the "Charter of Charity" in the *Exordium Magnum* and Other Late Twelfth-Century Cistercian Texts', in *La 'Charte de charité', 1119–2019: Un document pour préserver l'unité entre les communautés*, ed. Éric Delaissé (Paris: Cerf Patrimoines, 2020), 236.
[8] Berman, *Cistercian Evolution*, 2.
[9] See the essays on various themes in the text published alongside the French translation, Jacques Berlioz, 'Pénitence et confession dans le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux', in Conrad of Eberbach, *Le Grande Exorde de Cîteaux ou Récit des débuts de l'Ordre cistercien,* trans. Anthelmette Piébourg, introduction by Brian Patrick McGuire, with the collaboration of Marie-Gérard Dubois, Pierre-Yves Emery, Placide Vernet, Danièle Choisselet, Jacques Berlioz, Claude Carozzi and Pascal Collomb (Turnhout: Brepols/Commentarii cistercienses, 1998), 435–46; Pierre-Yves Emery, 'La notion de "merite" dans le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux', in *Le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux*, 447–50; Claude Carozzi, 'Les médiateurs dans le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux', in *Le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux*, 451–75; Marie-Gérard Dubois, 'La destinée après la mort. Apparitions de défunts et revelations sur l'au-delà dans le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux', in *Le Grand Exorde de Cîteaux*, 477–92. See also, Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Mística y Espiritualidad en el Exordium Magnum Cisterciense', in *Primero Congresso Internacional Sobre Mística Cisterciense*, ed. Francisco R. de Pascual, Crescenta Mateo, and Fernando Beltrán Llavador (Zamora: Ediciones Monte Casino, 1999), 235–50; Pascal Collomb, 'La liturgie et le récit. L'exemple du Grand Exorde de Cîteaux', in *Praise No Less Than Charity: Studies in Honour of M. Chrysogonus Waddell, Monk of Gethsemani Abbey*, ed. E. Rozanne Elder (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 2002), 31–52.

who were losing touch with their past. This explanation for the collection's purpose and the understanding of its structure thus proceeds from the argument about when and where it was written. The first half of the *Exordium magnum* is understood as a history of the Order and a defence of its holiness, since it was written while Conrad was secure at Clairvaux, while the second half is concerned with preventing creeping negligences, since it was written after Conrad had travelled to Germany and saw the lack of discipline there.

A key piece of evidence that illuminates the collection's composition has recently reappeared: Conrad's autograph manuscript, kept in the library at Eberbach until its dissolution in 1803, and missing at various periods throughout the twentieth century.[10] Through an exploration of this manuscript, as well as overlooked elements of the text and evidence from contemporary sources, this chapter starts with a reconsideration of when and where Conrad wrote the *Exordium magnum*. It argues that it was not written in two parts, but instead over a period of a few years at Eberbach. This upends previous arguments about Conrad's purpose in writing, which have been predicated on his writing the collection in two different contexts. Having proposed a new theory for the writing and dating of the *Exordium magnum*, this chapter then examines its content and structure through this new lens. It asks, how did Conrad gather, arrange and rewrite exempla so as to construct a model of Cistercian life? What was this model, and on what was it based? And how was this conditioned by his audience of German monks? After reconsidering the composition history of the *Exordium magnum* in the first section, the second section of this chapter proposes a new way of understanding the structure of the text. The third and final section then looks at Conrad's sources, in particular the *Exordium parvum* and *Liber miraculorum*, and argues that he collected and rewrote existing material to propose a new model for Cistercian life, based on Clairvaux as the foremost example of Cistercian holiness, that responded to the challenges the Order faced during his lifetime.

The Writing of the *Exordium magnum*

Conrad of Eberbach and the *Exordium magnum*

The *Exordium magnum* is a very different exempla collection from Herbert's *Liber miraculorum*. To begin with, it has a clear and thorough structure. It is divided into six books, introduced by a prologue in verse that argues for the importance of learning from past examples in monastic life, and ends with a long summary of its contents and purpose: to defend the Order from its enemies, teach Cistercians about their history, and renew discipline throughout the Order.

[10] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 71–73. Sturm examines the codicological and palaeographical aspects of the manuscript, but does not consider what it reveals of Conrad's composition process.

Starting with a sweeping and highly original overview of the history of monasticism, Conrad placed the founding of the Cistercian Order into a cenobitic tradition that stretched back to the New Testament (I.1–10).[11] After describing, in passages taken from an earlier Cistercian history, the *Exordium parvum*, the institution of the Order – its rules and privileges, its growth and the founding of new monasteries (I.11–22, 29–30) – Conrad then dedicated the majority of his collection to exempla about Bernard and the community at Clairvaux. From the second book onwards, he turned to material from the *Liber miraculorum*, rearranging it to tell a story of the wondrous life of Bernard whilst at Clairvaux (II.1–23), and the abbots that came after him and continued his legacy of fervent monastic observance (II.24–33). The third and fourth books then described the lives of 'our forefathers who shone forth at Clairvaux under our most blessed Father Bernard'.[12] In the fifth distinction, Conrad supplemented his examples of pious conduct with exempla that warned about the dangers of bad behaviour, including swearing (V.1), keeping personal property when entering the monastery (V.2), disobedience (V.9), failing to confess promptly (V.13) and chanting the divine office negligently (V.20). The sixth and final distinction, with its focus on how to die a good death, brought the collection to a conclusion. It ends with a final summary in which Conrad outlined his purpose in writing and his hope for the good his collection would do:

> I say, may our Lord and God, by the merits and intercession of our holy fathers [the pious abbots and monks of Clairvaux], of whose life and character we have written for the edification [*aedificationem*] of our successors, grant us to be thus strengthened in true humility through continence of the flesh, that by the grace of God we may deserve to come to that glory of eternal blessedness at which we believe our holy fathers have undoubtedly already arrived.[13]

By following and conforming to the example of the holy abbots and monks of Clairvaux that he had provided them with, Conrad hoped his audience would reform themselves and achieve salvation. After a short prayer, the collection ends.

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[11] On Conrad's original view of Cistercian and monastic history, see Savage, 'Introduction', 13–15.
[12] 'Iam vero ad seniores qui sub beatissimo patre nostro Bernardo et deinceps in Claravalle claruerunt'. *Exordium magnum*, III.1.
[13] 'inquam Dominus ac Deus noster per merita et intercessionem sanctorum patrum, de quorum vita et moribus ad aedificationem posterorum aliqua conscripsimus, donet nobis ita per continentiam carnis in humilitate vera roborari, ut ad illam aeternae beatitudinis gloriam, ad quam eosdem sanctos patres nostros indubitanter pervenisse credimus, etiam nos cooperante gratia Dei quandoque pervenire mereamur'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.

The number of exempla in each book remains consistent across books I–IV, which all contain either thirty-four or thirty-five chapters. Book V is much shorter, at twenty-one chapters, and book VI is only ten chapters long. Book I, which deals with the founding of the Order, focuses on Cîteaux, whilst books II–IV are entirely about Clairvaux Cistercians. Although books V and VI do feature some stories about non-Cistercian religious, the vast majority of the exempla in the *Exordium magnum* are about the white monks and take place within the confines of a Cistercian monastery, in contrast to Herbert's collection.

The *Exordium magnum* was written by Conrad, a Clairvaux monk who later became abbot of Eberbach. The identification of this Conrad as the author of the collection is generally accepted. As Griesser showed in his edition of the text, two manuscripts of the *Exordium magnum*, which do not belong to the same manuscript family, independently name the author, one as Conrad, abbot of Eberbach, who had been a monk of Clairvaux; the other as Conrad, a senior of Clairvaux.[14] Since he did not name himself or provide many identifying details in the text, Griesser argued there must have been a widespread oral tradition concerning the author for two unrelated manuscripts to thus name him.

As with Herbert's biography, scant information survives about Conrad. We do know something about the beginning and end of his time as a Cistercian: he wrote in the *Exordium magnum* of being raised in the school of Clairvaux, so we can assume he was a novice there, and he died in 1221 as abbot of Eberbach, a Clairvaux daughter-house not far from Frankfurt.[15] Griesser argued that he must have been at Clairvaux by 1169 or 1170, since in the *Exordium magnum* he wrote that he had known Prior Gerard there, who became prior in 1168 and by 1173 had left to become abbot of Eberbach.[16] McGuire has cast doubt on this, pointing out that Gerard seems to have returned to Clairvaux later in the 1170s, and that Conrad could have known him then. He argues that, since Conrad explicitly stated that he was at Clairvaux during the abbacies of Peter Monoculus (1179–86) and Garner of Rochefort (1186–93) it is likely that Conrad was only at the abbey during these years.[17] Given this textual evidence, we can therefore say that Conrad came to Clairvaux around 1179, at the start of Peter's abbacy, and left before 1193, when Garner's abbacy came to an end. It is in this period that scholars argue he wrote the first four books of the *Exordium magnum*. After this, the only certain facts are that he became abbot of Eberbach in May 1221 and died several months later, in September.[18]

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[14] *Exordium magnum*, 32. The manuscript tradition and edition are discussed in more detail below.
[15] *Exordium magnum,* 32–33; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness,' 38.
[16] *Exordium magnum,* 32–34.
[17] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 38.
[18] *Exordium magnum,* 32–33; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 38.

We know little about Conrad's time at Clairvaux, beyond a few references in the collection, or of the roughly twenty-five years between his leaving Clairvaux and becoming abbot at Eberbach. There are some scattered clues in the *Exordium magnum*. He included an account of the revolt of the lay brothers at Schönau (V.10), and named as his source Theobald, his predecessor as abbot of Eberbach from 1206–1221, suggesting that he was at Eberbach prior to his election to the abbacy in 1221.[19] In the same exemplum, Conrad also referenced the revolt of the lay brothers at Eberbach, which most likely took place between 1208 and 1210, placing him there in the first decade of the thirteenth century.[20] As shown by the careers of others such as Prior Gerard, who held positions at both Clairvaux and Eberbach, monks frequently moved between the two houses, and so it is not unlikely that Conrad left Clairvaux for Germany around 1193, as McGuire suggests.[21] It was here, scholars argue, that the *Exordium magnum* was completed, with the composition of the final two books.

The Manuscript History and the Critical Edition

The *Exordium magnum* survives in forty-one manuscripts, including a recently rediscovered manuscript from Eberbach, Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek RheinMain, Hs. 381 (hereafter Hs. 381).[22] Holger Sturm's doctoral thesis, recently published, which examines Hs. 381, has persuasively demonstrated that this manuscript is Conrad's own working copy, complete with emendations and additions.[23] Hs. 381 has gone missing several times since it left Eberbach in 1803, and was once again lost when Griesser was preparing his edition of the text.[24] It was also not consulted for the 1994 Brepols reprint – scholars had for years followed Griesser and assumed it to be lost forever. While Hs. 381 did go missing in 1927, it reappeared and was reacquired by the Wiesbaden library in 1965; the scholarly community seems to have been unaware of this, however, until 2001, when Ferruccio Gastaldelli emailed the library and ascertained that the manuscript had been 'found' several decades before.[25] Despite this find, no one but Gastaldelli seems to have examined Hs. 381 until Sturm.

The reasons for believing Hs. 381 is Conrad's autograph are various. It was written by a single scribal hand and features a number of modifications in the same hand which suggest it

[19] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 38–39.
[20] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 40.
[21] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 39.
[22] My thanks to the Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek RheinMain, especially Dr Martin Mayer, for sending me high-quality scans of Hs. 381 once Covid made it impossible to travel to the library, and for allowing me to use them in this thesis.
[23] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, chapter 2. See also Gastaldelli, 'A Critical Note', 311–20.
[24] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 71.
[25] Gastaldelli, 'A Critical Note', 313.

was subject to a process of authorial revision. For example, in two places a reference mark indicates a separate sheet of paper with a long passage to be added into the main text; in two places entire paragraphs have been crossed out, and there are numerous changes made to the spelling and literary style.[26] These corrections in the same hand to both the content and style of the text suggest an authorial, rather than copyist's, hand, and have led Sturm (and Gastaldelli before him) to conclude that Hs. 381 is indeed Conrad's working copy.[27] The codex was also preserved in the library at Eberbach from the thirteenth century until its dissolution in 1803, further evidence that this was the manuscript left at Eberbach on Conrad's death in 1221.

All of the corrections and additions were taken up by the subsequent surviving manuscripts, showing Hs. 381 to be the ancestor of these.[28] In addition to the autograph manuscript, there are six other complete thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts, today in libraries in Innsbruck, Copenhagen, Karlsruhe, Munich, Oxford and Paris.[29] These are called 'complete' because they all contain material in book I that is missing in fifteen 'incomplete' manuscripts – the latter do not contain chapters 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 or the end of chapter 14. This material covers the tenure of Alberic of Cîteaux (1100–1109), as well as a critical account of their founder, Robert's, actions, and his return to Molesme in 1100. There is debate about whether this material was removed accidentally or on purpose; for the purposes of this chapter, which focuses on Conrad's work in creating the collection, this later use of the work is not considered.[30] The criticism of Robert is found in Hs. 381, and so was part of Conrad's original text. Among the complete manuscripts, the older manuscripts give the collection a title along the lines of *Narratio de initio Cisterciensis ordinis,* while in the fourteenth-century witnesses the title is *Liber de viris illustribus Cisterciensis ordinis*. The title *Exordium magnum* gained currency thanks to Bertrand Tissier's 1660 edition, but it does also appear in several complete thirteenth century manuscripts, including those from Oxford and Munich. There are a limited number of textual variations between the complete manuscripts, as laid out in the introduction to the edition and Sturm's book.[31]

The two most important manuscripts are Hs. 381, Conrad's autograph, and the thirteenth century Oxford MS. Bod. Laud. Misc. 238 (labelled O in Griesser's introduction), which both

[26] Gastaldelli, 'Critical Note', 313–14; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 45–62.
[27] Gastaldelli, 'Critical Note', 318; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 72–73.
[28] Gastaldelli, 'Critical Note', 318; *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 68–71.
[29] The following discussion on the manuscript history of the Exordium magnum comes from the introduction to Griesser's edition, *Exordium magnum*, 1–32.
[30] *Exordium magnum*, 7, 10–11; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 13–21.
[31] *Exordium magnum*, 10–32; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 287–325.

came from the library at Eberbach.[32] Since for his edition – still considered authoritative, and the basis for the various translations of the collection – Griesser could not make use of Hs. 381, he relied instead on O, since he believed this to have been copied from the 'lost' autograph. His edition was constructed based on agreements between O and the other complete and incomplete manuscripts. Recent comparisons between Hs. 381, O, and Griesser's edition show a high degree of correspondence between them all.[33] Not only does this confirm Griesser's hypothesis that O was copied directly from the 'lost' Hs. 381 at Eberbach, but it also underscores the soundness of his edition. Quotations from the *Exordium magnum* in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated, are from the printed edition for the sake of accessibility, since it is generally in agreement with Hs. 381 anyway.

Conrad of Eberbach and the *Exordium magnum*: A New Understanding

Scholars have previously argued that Conrad's move between Clairvaux and Eberbach is visible in the material he used for his collection: the first four books have been described as containing material about the monks of Cîteaux and Clairvaux, while the final two books contain more stories from Germany. Hence the argument that the former were written at Clairvaux in the final decades of the twelfth century (after Herbert wrote the *Liber miraculorum*), and the latter *c.* 1210 after encountering German monks and their stories at Eberbach.[34] But there are grounds for questioning this dating, based, most importantly, on Hs. 381. Sturm, in his excellent study, did not take up this question – he focused on Conrad's writing style, his purpose, and the differences between Hs. 381 and the edition.[35] What is proposed here is a new dating and composition process, based on an assessment of Conrad's autograph manuscript, but also overlooked internal textual clues and contemporary evidence that has not previously been considered.

The Evidence of Hs. 381

Hs. 381 is written in one hand, in a gothic book script that can be dated to the first decades of the thirteenth century, with a slight change in writing style apparent from fol. 21r, at the start of I.20, and following a large deletion.[36] Before this point, the hand is regular, tall, wide and well-spaced; after this the writing is smaller and more closely-spaced, although throughout the chapter

[32] *Exordium magnum*, 16 and 31. The Bodleian library catalogue states that this MS is identifiable as T7 or d27 in the Eberbach library catalogue of 1502, 'Bodleian Library MS. Laud Misc. 238 – Exordium magnum Cisterciense', *Digital Bodleian*, accessed Jan 7, 2022, https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/cd782553-def6-4b8d-913d-c0d1460a9ff3/

[33] Gastaldelli, 'Critical Note', 313–18; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 68–71.

[34] *Exordium magnum*, 32–34; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 37–42; Savage, 'Introduction', 24–29.

[35] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*.

[36] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 71.

titles (in red) and numbers (in red in the margins) have the same form as the first 20 folios. The codex starts with a numbered chapter index in this same hand in the first style. Corrections throughout are in the same hand, in the second style, and include corrections to grammar and spelling, minor and major additions to the content of the text, and stylistic changes to sentences.

According to the scholarly consensus regarding when and where Conrad wrote the *Exordium magnum*, in Hs. 381 a break in the text should be apparent between the end of book IV and the start of V, or some indication that Conrad put the work away and then added books V and VI some decades later. There is no evidence of this: the handwriting and ink colour remain consistent, there is no gap in the text, and there is no new heading apart from that for a new chapter (fig. 3). Book IV ends on line 20 of fol. 120r with the word 'apparebit', and the title of the first chapter of book V (in red) starts on the same line. What break there is between books IV and V was added at a later stage of editing: between fol. 118 and fol. 120 a small page, about two-thirds of the size of the other pages in the codex, has been added, and labelled fol. 119 by the library (fig. 4). Fol. 119r is blank, but 119v (facing 120r, where IV ends and V begins) contains a recapitulation of book IV and introduction to V, and where this addition is intended to go in the text is marked by a small red symbol like an 'h' placed just above the 'apparebit' on fol. 120r (figs. 3 and 4). In this addendum, Conrad explained that the third and fourth books had shown examples to imitate, while the fifth would show how sinners are punished and saved. After this is written in red 'Explicit distinctio quarta. Incipit quinta'. On fol. 120r there is otherwise no clear signal that one book has ended, and another begun.

Far from showing that there was a significant passage of time between the creation of books IV and V, the evidence of Hs. 381 instead suggests that the two books were only later separated, during the editing process. Other book introductions and summaries (which are discussed in section two of this chapter) were written into the main text of the collection. The *recapitulatio* at the end of the second book, which summarises books I and II and explains what III and IV will be about, begins on the fifth line of fol. 53v, on the same line that the final chapter of book II ends (fig. 5). In his first draft, Conrad constructed the text such that books II and III were definitely separate, but this is not the case with books IV and V, where the rationale for separating them was added during a later editing process, with a page inserted into the codex.

There is no evidence in Hs. 381 that books V and VI were added decades later. On the contrary, the manuscript suggests that the fourth and fifth books may originally have been written as one section, and only later broken up, with a summary added to the end of book IV to explain the different purpose of each one: the first showing examples of Cistercian virtue, the second examples of sinful behaviour. The autograph manuscript reveals that Conrad's collection

underwent extensive edits and revisions, during which he finalised where each book would begin and end, but it casts serious doubt on the scholarly consensus that Conrad wrote books I–IV at Clairvaux, and V–VI later at Eberbach; there is no such break visible in the manuscript.

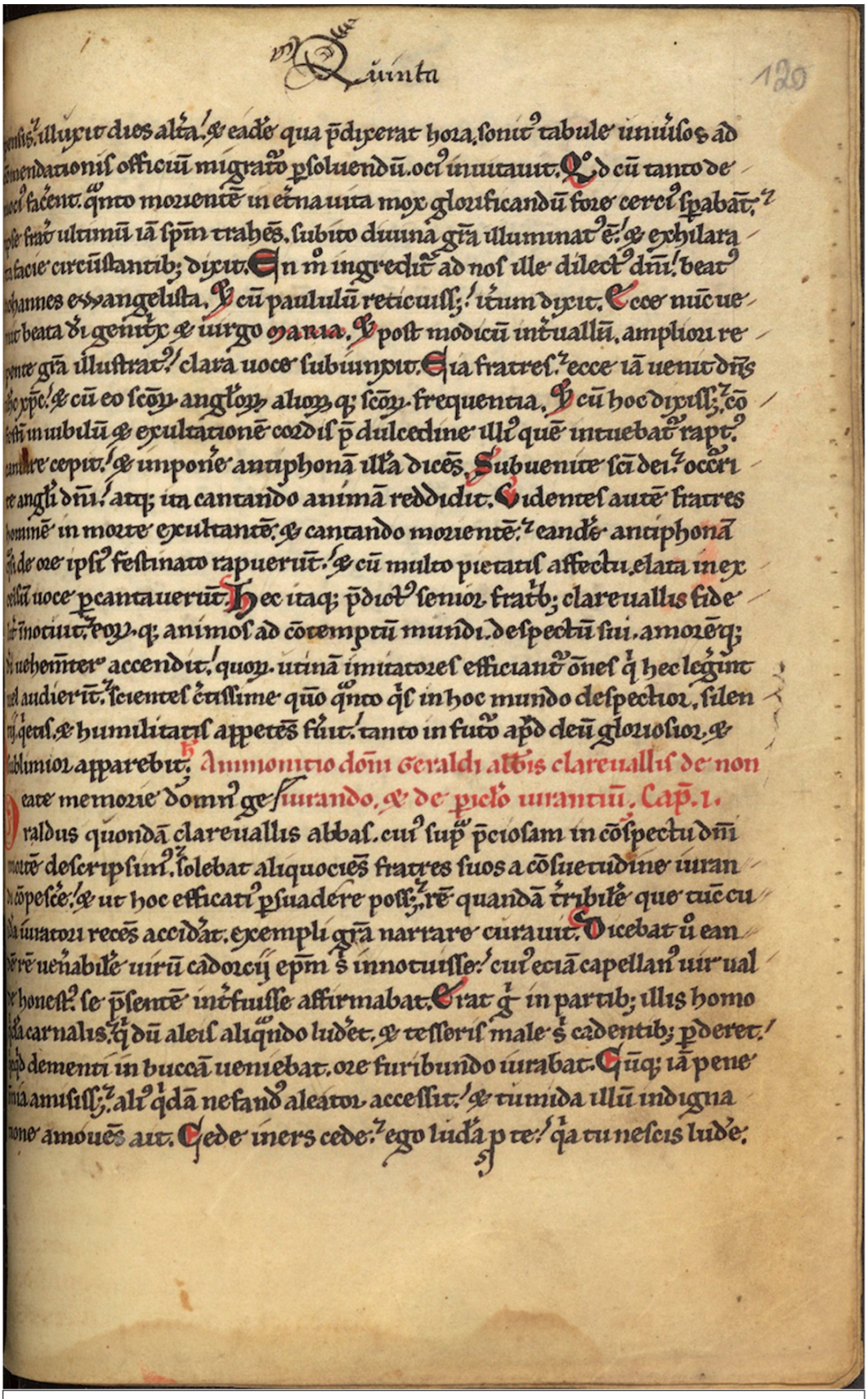

Fig. 3. Hs 381 fol. 120r, showing the end of book IV and the beginning of book V

Fig. 4. Hs 381 fol. 119v–120r, showing the end of book IV and the beginning of book V, and the half-page added in, in the same hand

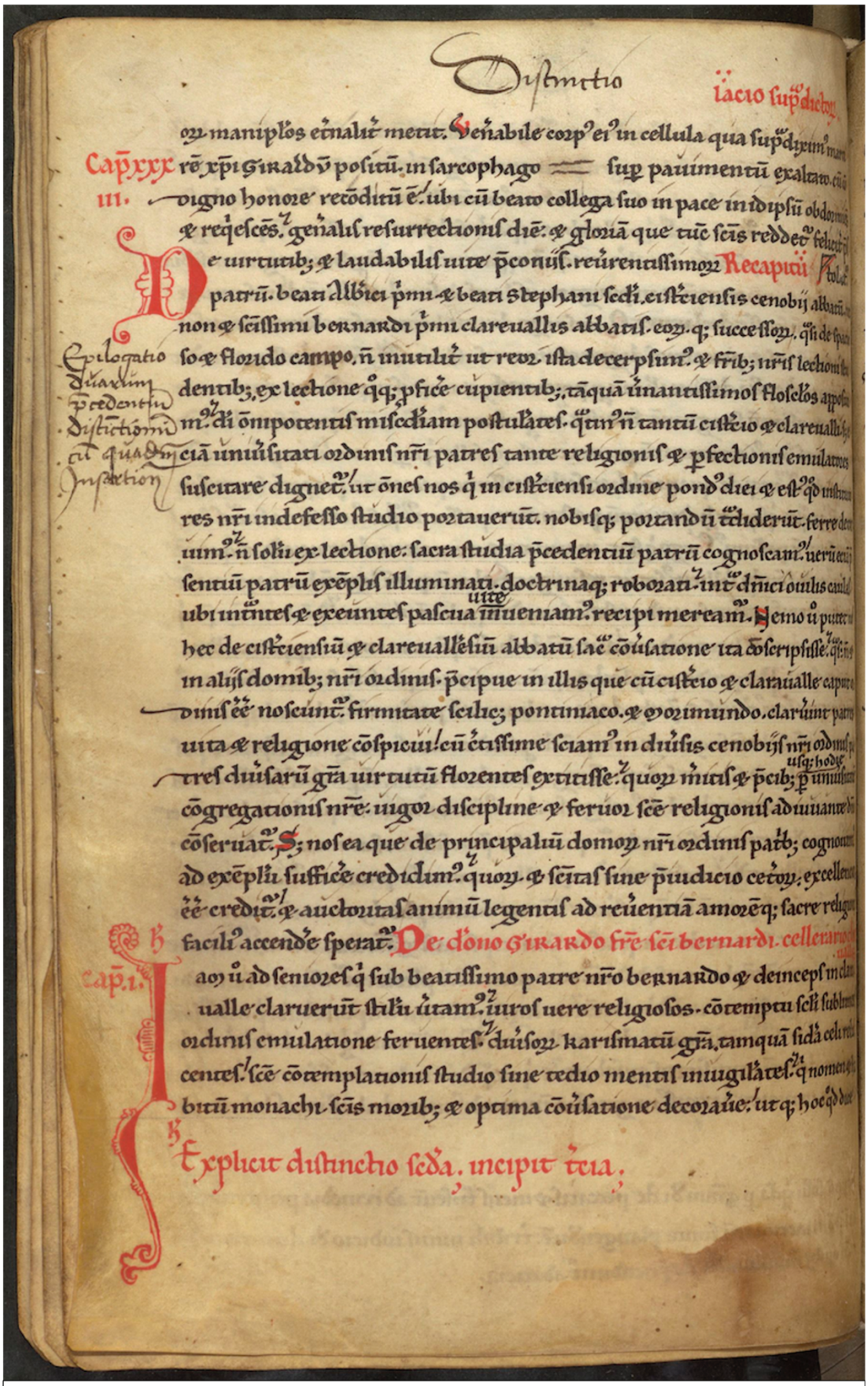

Fig. 5. Hs 381 fol. 53v, showing the recapitulation at the end of book II, incorporated into the text

The Evidence of the Exordium magnum

Scholars have generally used internal textual evidence to date the *Exordium magnum*. McGuire has argued that Conrad must have finished the first four books at Clairvaux by *c.* 1193, since halfway through the fourth book he wrote that fifty years after Bernard had sent a monk to Sweden in 1143, he returned to Clairvaux to die.[37] Two different lay brother revolts in Germany have been used to date the writing of the final books. As mentioned above, Conrad included in book V an account of the revolt of the lay brothers at Schönau, an Eberbach daughter-house, an event that he learned about from Theobald, who did not become abbot of Eberbach until 1206.[38] He also mentioned the lay brother revolt at Eberbach itself, which most likely happened between 1208 and 1210.[39]

There are several problems with these arguments. Firstly, McGuire's use of 1193 here seems erroneous; all it suggests is that Conrad was writing after 1193, not that he was writing in 1193. In the text, Bernard reassures a monk, Gerard, who he is sending to Sweden, that he will return to die at Clairvaux: 'by the spirit of prophecy, he foresaw and foretold what was to happen fifty years later.'[40] This shows that Conrad knew that Gerard has died in or around 1193, but he could have written about it in 1203, or 1213. Similarly, McGuire used an anecdote told to Conrad in the early 1190s to date the writing of the first part of the text to that period; again, Conrad could indeed have been told this story at Clairvaux in 1193, but not written it down until years later.[41] Neither of these events definitively date the writing of books I–IV to Clairvaux in the early 1190s.

The lay brother revolts seem more decisive, showing that Conrad cannot have written at least book V before *c.* 1210. He would not have heard about the revolt at Schönau from Theobald – one of his few named oral sources – before Theobald came to Eberbach as its abbot in 1206, and he cannot have written about the revolt at Eberbach before it happened, likely around 1210. The manuscript evidence laid out above, which shows no obvious break between the earlier and later books, suggests that Conrad wrote the collection as a whole over a shorter period of time than has previously been suggested, and then revised it later. This initial period likely occurred *c.* 1210, at Eberbach, given his inclusion of the lay brother revolts.

Other overlooked internal textual clues also point to a single writing period at Eberbach in the early thirteenth century. Firstly, Conrad used the phrase '*libro diffinitionum*' in I.29, in a passage about the institution of Cistercian customs and the General Chapter:

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[37] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 39; *Exordium magnum*, IV.28.
[38] *Exordium magnum,* 34.
[39] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 40.
[40] 'quae post annos quinquaginta futura erant, spiritu prophetico praevidens et praedicens'. *Exordium magnum*, IV.28.
[41] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 40.

> Thus for this reason, from then until now the reverend fathers of the Cistercian Order visit their mother-house once a year to celebrate the General Chapter, and by the anointing of the Holy Spirit they declare statutes, a full description of which is contained in the *Book of Rulings* [*libro diffinitionum*].[42]

The procedure by which a group of *diffinitores* created a written copy of General Chapter decisions was not clarified until 1197, and the first reference to a book in which such things were recorded to be widely disseminated dates from 1204.[43] In other words, a legislative text that could be described as a *liber diffinitionis* seems to have existed only from the early thirteenth century. Conrad was in I.29 ascribing a later practice to much earlier General Chapters, but, his ahistoricism aside, his use of this phrase to describe the book in which General Chapter statutes were recorded provides yet more evidence that he was writing the first book of the *Exordium magnum* at least after 1197, and likely after 1204, by which time he was already living at Eberbach.

The use of Claravallian material in earlier books, as opposed to more German material in book V, it has been argued, points to the former being written at Clairvaux, and the latter books at Eberbach.[44] However, Conrad's sources actually suggest that he was both writing away from Clairvaux, and did not break for a long period of time between writing books IV and V. Herbert had not relied on the earlier *Collectaneum* for his exempla set at Clairvaux – he drew on oral traditions and the testimony of his friends, because he was living there while writing. In contrast, Conrad's reliance on textual sources for his exempla about Clairvaux may suggest he was writing elsewhere, and so only had access to the stories of Clairvaux monks through Herbert's collection (and to a lesser extent the *Collectaneum*, which he also made use of). Moreover, Conrad's collection does not as suddenly switch from exempla about Cîteaux and Clairvaux in books I–IV to German ones in book V as previous scholars have implied. Much of the material in books II–IV is drawn from Herbert's collection, but so are seven out of the twenty-one chapters in book V; in distinction VI, two of the ten chapters are also taken from the *Liber miraculorum*. The final

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[42] 'Hac ergo ratione ex tunc usque ad haec tempora reverendi patres Cisterciensis ordinis semel per annum matrem suam visitant, generale capitulum celebrant et unctione sancti Spiritus edocti capitula, quae in libro diffinitionum plenius descripta continentur.' *Exordium magnum*, I.29.

[43] Waddell, *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, 15–17; Newman, 'Place of *Charter of Charity*', 245; Canivez, *Statuta* vol. I, 296 (1204: 8): 'De libello difinitionum praeceptum est a generali Capitulo ut ab omnibus quam citius potuerunt, habeatur, ut nullus abbatum de cetero de ignorantia se excusent.' ['Concerning the *Book of Rulings*, it was prescribed by the General Chapter that it should be had by all as soon as possible, so that none of the abbots should excuse themselves through ignorance of the other rulings.']. Griesser argues that Conrad could not have been referring to this, since he believes the *Exordium magnum* was written before 1204; he does not seem to have taken this as evidence for a later composition date, *Exordium magnum*, 87n1.

[44] *Exordium magnum*, 34; McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 38; Savage, 'Introduction', 18.

chapter of the fourth book, IV.35, is taken from chapter 55 of the *Liber miraculorum*. Although the first chapter in book V is constructed from chapters 134–35 of Herbert's collection, V.2 comes from chapters 56 and 58, and V.3 from chapter 57. Conrad's use of chapter 55 for IV.35, and then chapters 56, 57 and 58 in V.2–3 provides further evidence that there was no decades-long break between the writing of the fourth and fifth books, but that they were written as one, using the same source: the *Liber miraculorum*. As he moved from positive examples of the monks of Clairvaux in book IV into warnings about sin in book V, Conrad did turn to some sources other than Herbert, seemingly out of a desire not to say anything negative about Clairvaux, but he did not cease to use the *Liber miraculorum* entirely. There is no clear division between the sources in books I–IV and those in V–VI; Herbert's collection was used extensively throughout.

Chapter V.1 also connects rather than separates the fifth book from earlier ones. This chapter comes from Herbert, and records how Abbot Gerard of Clairvaux, whose tenure ended when he was murdered in 1177, used to use terrible examples of sinners to warn his monks against swearing. The story of Gerard's life and abbacy is recorded in II.27–28, linking book V backwards in the text. At the end of the fifth book, whilst summarising its purpose, Conrad referenced Gerard again when he wrote: 'And so, for some time we have discussed the dangers of certain vices or negligences, occasioned by the recitals of Dom Gerard of blessed memory, abbot of Clairvaux, who always strove to assiduously warn his brothers about the danger of swearing.'[45] According to this, Conrad's exempla about sin were not inspired by some sudden horror upon going to Germany and seeing the conditions there, as scholars have posited, but were modelled upon the method of teaching at Clairvaux, as recorded by Herbert.

Furthermore, the inclusion of the *Collectaneum* as a source in book V complicates the narrative that books V and VI suddenly contain much more German material. Book V of the *Exordium magnum* seems to have been modelled on the third part of the *Collectaneum*, which included exempla about the dangers of monastic life.[46] Seven of the twenty-one chapters in book V are from Herbert, and a further four are from Prior John's collection, as are two in book VI.[47] In comparison, only five of the chapters in book V feature exempla from Germany that have not come from previous exempla collections. Though the latter two books rely on the Clairvaux collections slightly less frequently, and Conrad did include a few stories that seem to have come from contemporary Germany, there is no dramatic shift in the sources he relied upon, or a sudden inundation of German material. His reliance throughout on written miracle collections

[45] 'Haec itaque, quae de periculis qorumlibet vitiorum seu negligentiarum aliquamdiu iam tractavimus, ex occasione relationis beatae memoriae domni Geraldi, Claraevallis abbatis, qui de periculo assidue iurantium fratres suos admonere studuit'. *Exordium magnum*, V.21.
[46] McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum', 42.
[47] Conrad's sources are listed in a useful table in Ward and Savage, *Great Beginning,* 580–85.

from Clairvaux, and his continued use of these sources in books V–VI, point towards Conrad having composed all six books together, at Eberbach, between *c.* 1210 and *c.* 1220. As the collection ends with a clear final summary, it was likely completed before he became abbot in 1221 and died shortly after.

The Evidence from Gossuinus' Collection

There is one piece of external evidence that further suggests the *Exordium magnum* was written after 1200. The monk Gossuinus wrote an exempla collection at Clairvaux in the 1190s, which he sent to Gerard, abbot of Eberbach, former prior of Clairvaux.[48] In an entry for the *Chronicon Claravallense*, quoted in the previous chapter, Alberic of Trois Fontaines reported on the exempla collections written at Clairvaux, using Gossuinus as his source.[49] Alberic quoted from the prologue to his book of miracles, in which he discussed the Clairvaux exempla collections and mentioned Prior John's collection, as well as Herbert's. Gossuinus had written his book of miracles in the 1190s; his collection recorded the death of the priest Everard of Cologne, who died in 1192, and so he cannot have been writing before this date.[50] McGuire speculates that Gerard, during his second tenure as prior of Clairvaux in the 1180s, had encouraged Gossuinus to write, and the completed work was then sent to him sometime after 1192, once he was abbot at Eberbach. It is likely that Conrad was also at Eberbach by this point, since he seems to have left Clairvaux in or before 1193. Gossuinus' listing – sometime in the 1190s – of only Prior John and Herbert as writers of exempla collections at Clairvaux strongly suggests that Conrad did not write the first four books at Clairvaux in the 1180s and 1190s. If he had, Gossuinus would likely have mentioned his collection in his prologue, especially since he was addressing the man who was now Conrad's abbot. Moreover, Gerard receiving (and perhaps encouraging the writing of) Gossuinus' collection provides a possible context for Conrad's decision to write the *Exordium magnum*. When Conrad arrived at Eberbach in the 1190s, he joined a community headed by a man who had shown previous interest in exempla collections.[51] Encouragement from Gerard at Eberbach could have provided the catalyst for Conrad's writing of the *Exordium magnum*.

The accumulated evidence from Hs. 381, internal textual evidence, Gossuinus' ignorance of Conrad's work in the 1190s, and Gerard's interest in exempla collections strongly suggests

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[48] Gerard was twice prior at Clairvaux and twice abbot of Eberbach. Though the dates of his first tenure at Eberbach are known – 1171–1177 – the dates of his second tenure are not recorded, but he must have been abbot again in the 1190s for Gossuinus to have sent him this collection. McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 39; *Exordium magnum*, 39n5, 135n2.

[49] Mula, 'Cistercian Exempla Collections', 905. 'Hic ergo scripsit quemdam librum miraculorum, ad abbatem Everbaci Gerardum'. PL 185, 1248D.

[50] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 41.

[51] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 41–42.

that the *Exordium magnum* was not written in two stages, first at Clairvaux and later at Eberbach. Instead, it was written as a coherent collection at Eberbach in the second decade of the thirteenth century, between *c.* 1210 and *c.* 1220. This shorter writing period accords with the composition of other collections written by a single author: Herbert wrote the *Liber miraculorum* in 1178, and had certainly finished by 1181, and Caesarius wrote the *Dialogus miraculorum* in just a few years between 1219–1223.[52] Far from being a hybrid text whose two parts were written in different contexts and for different reasons, Conrad composed the *Exordium magnum* in one place, at one time, and so, we can assume, had a single unified vision for its purpose. The remainder of this chapter seeks to explore the meaning of his collection, and the vision of Cisterciannness it constructed. The second section explores the structure of the *Exordium magnum* afresh, absent the notion that it consists of two separately written parts; section three then explores how Conrad gathered and reused his sources, and seeks to understand the arguments he made and the model of Cistercian life he constructed by rewriting existing Cistercian narratives.

The Content and Structure of the *Exordium magnum*

McGuire's 1979 article was the first, and one of the only, to explore seriously the structure and organisation of the *Exordium magnum*.[53] Much of his article focused on the internal structuring of each book rather than that of the overall collection. He nuanced slightly the idea of a two-part division in the text by arguing that the middle books create something of a bridge between the beginning and end, moving the collection from a narrative of Cistercian origins to a more traditional collection of exemplary stories. Elsewhere, the structure of the *Exordium magnum* has primarily been viewed through the lens of Conrad's move from Clairvaux to Eberbach, when he apparently wrote books V and VI to add in more negative examples as warnings against the sorts of negligences and bad behaviours he was seeing in Germany.[54] The structure and his purpose, as previously conceived, cannot be separated, since both hinge around his move to Germany mid-way through composition. But if the entire collection was constructed at Eberbach in the second decade of the thirteenth century, then it is necessary to reconsider how Conrad chose to structure his collection.

It is common for historians to look to the prologue and Conrad's final summary when trying to understand his purpose.[55] But he also wrote introductions and summaries for several of

[52] McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 197–200; Schneider and Nösges, *Dialogus miraculorum*, 59–66.
[53] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness,' 33–90.
[54] McGuire, 'Introduction', 280; Savage, 'Introduction', 7–8.
[55] See, for example, Savage, 'Introduction', 7.

the individual books, even going so far as to later add in a recapitulation of book IV to clarify what that book was doing, and what the fifth would do differently, as described above. The placement of these introductions and summaries bracket parts of the collection – they create groupings of books. These places in the text, which I am calling the structuring elements, are the prologue in verse at the start; the introductions at the beginning of books I, III and V; the summaries at the end of books II, IV and V, and the final summary at the end of book VI.[56] These structuring elements, previously overlooked, reveal how Conrad conceived of the structure of the *Exordium magnum* and illuminate the specific purpose of each part within the collection.

After the prologue in verse, introducing the whole collection, Conrad wrote a shorter introduction before the first book:

> Here begins the narrative of the origins of the Cistercian Order; of how, having left the monastery of Molesme in order to restore the purity of the Order by following the path of the Rule of Saint Benedict, our forefathers founded the fruitful church at Cîteaux... and also tells of some of the revered persons, conspicuous for their religious observance, who have shone forth Cîteaux and Clairvaux.[57]

This announces the start of one part of the text that ends at the recapitulation after book II. By talking about 'revered persons' from both Cîteaux and Clairvaux, Conrad united the first two books into one part, since it is only in book II that the history of Clairvaux is described. The structure of this first part (books I–II), was described briefly but as a unity here. It starts with a history of monasticism (I.1–10), moves to the founding of the Order and holiness of the abbots there (I.11–22, 29–30), describes Bernard's arrival and the founding of Clairvaux (II.1–23), and then talks about the holiness of the abbots at Clairvaux (II.24–34).

This overall structure is recapitulated at the end of book II, in which abbots Alberic, Stephen, Bernard, and the other holy fathers of both Cîteaux (the subject of book I) and Clairvaux (book II) are mentioned:

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[56] McGuire also studied these elements in his examination of the collection's structure, but came to very different conclusions, as outlined above. And while McGuire does briefly refer to these elements as demarcating 'sections', this thought is never pursued. McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness,' 60.

[57] 'Incipit narratio de initio Cisterciensis Ordinis, qualiter nostri de Molismensi cenobio propter puritatem ordinis secundum tenorem regulae Sancti Benedicti recuperandam egressi fecundam Cisterciensem ecclesiam fundaverunt... et de nonnullis reverendis atque in omni religione conspicuis personis, quae in Cistercio et in Claravalle claruerunt.' *Exordium magnum*, introduction to book I.

> From among the celebrated virtues and praiseworthy lives of our most reverend fathers, blessed Alberic, and blessed Stephen, the first and second abbots of the monastery of Cîteaux [book I], and no less those of the most holy Bernard, first abbot of Clairvaux, and of their successors [book II], we have, as if from a broad and flowery field [*spatioso et florido*]... plucked and assembled the most fragrant nosegays [*flosculos*] for our brothers who study and want to profit from them... whose holiness is believed, without prejudice, to be more excellent than others. One hopes that their authority will more easily enkindle reverence and love of holy religion in the soul of the reader.[58]

Conrad here described this part of the collection as one with a unified purpose; through a history of the Order's foundation, to present his audience with examples of perfect Cistercians from the early days of Cîteaux and Clairvaux, which he considered the principal houses of the Order in terms of their holiness and devotion.

This first part is followed by a second part made up of books III–IV. An introduction to book III and a summary after book IV again bracket this part of the collection, this one concerning the perfect lives of monks from Clairvaux. Each book has its own characteristics – III primarily features named monks, often those in senior positions in the monastery, whilst IV tells stories of anonymous monks and lay brothers – but they had one vision and purpose, and that was to provide examples of devotion and discipline, using exempla about monks at Clairvaux under Bernard. At the start of book III, Conrad announced the subject of the forthcoming part:

> We are now going to write about our forefathers who shone forth at Clairvaux under our most blessed Father Bernard... who honoured the name and habit of a monk by their holy behaviour and most noble conduct[59]

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[58] 'De virtutibus et laudabilis vitae praeconiis reverentissimorum patrum, beati Alberici primi et beati Stephani secundi Cisterciensis coenobii abbatum, nec non et sanctissimi Bernardi, primi Claraevallis abbatis, eorumque successorum quasi de spatioso et florido campo... ista decerpsimus et fratribus nostris lectioni studentibus, ex lectioni quoque proficere cupientibus tanquam vernantissimos flosculos apposuimus... quorum et sanctitas sine praeiudicio ceterorum excellentior esse creditur et auctoritas animum legentis ad reverentiam amoremque sacrae religionis facilius accendere speratur.' *Exordium magnum*, II.34.

[59] 'Iam vero ad seniores, qui sub beatissimo patre nostro Bernardo et deinceps in Claravalle claruerunt... qui nomen et habitum monachi sanctis moribus et optima conversatione decoravere'. *Exordium magnum*, III.1.

And from the summary at the end of book IV: 'And so, thus far it has sufficed for us to discuss the bright luminaries of Clairvaux... We have plucked a few of the flowers [*flores*] from the most vast and flowering meadow [*spatiossimo floridissimoque prato*] of the blessed valley to enkindle in us the fervour of holy devotion'.[60] The metaphor here, of Conrad plucking examples of holy and fervent conduct and presenting them to his reader, so as to enkindle in them fervour and devotion, mirrors that used in the summary that ends book II. While the flowery field of examples used in books I and II is described as broad and flowering [*spatioso et florido*], the superlative is used to describe the examples assembled in books III and IV: 'the most vast and flowering meadow [*spatiossimo floridissimoque prato*]'. Books III and IV, which are solely about Clairvaux, as opposed to the mixture of examples from Cîteaux and Clairvaux in books I–II, contain the superlative examples of Cistercian conduct.

This language also reflects that used in contemporary *florilegia*, collections made for spiritual reading and moral edification, or as tools for preachers.[61] The titles of these works are often distinctly floral, such as Lambert of Saint-Omer's twelfth-century encyclopaedia, the *Liber Floridus* (*Book of Flowers*), and the thirteenth-century preaching aid *Manipulus florum* (*Handful of Flowers*) of Thomas of Ireland.[62] Conrad here placed his gathering of earlier Cistercian sources and stories within the recognisable frame of the *florilegia*. These metaphors also created unity across the collection, by showing the intellectual work to be the same throughout.

Book III features monks from Clairvaux who often held senior positions in the monastery, and generally tells the story of their entire lives, not just a specific miraculous occurrence with which they were involved. This can be seen in the Reinaldus exemplum discussed in chapter one. Similarly, Conrad took a story from Herbert about Arnulf, a highborn man converted by Bernard (III.19). This chapter describes how Bernard, as he travelled through Flanders, attracted the attention of Arnulf, who 'secretly put himself into Bernard's hands' and agreed to join Clairvaux after he had put his affairs in order, for he was the head of an important family.[63] The chapter then recounts many incidents from Arnulf's life at Clairvaux, as well as describing his virtues: 'Certainly, the urgency of his penitence rebukes our tepidity and negligence... this servant

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[60] 'Hactenus itaque de claris luminaribus Claraevallis... nos disseruisse sufficiat, cum tamen paucos admodum flores de spatiossimo floridissimoque prato vernantis eiusdem beatae vallis ad accendendum in nobis sacrae devotionis fervorem decerpserimus'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.35.

[61] Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons: Studies on the Manipulus florum of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979), 3–4.

[62] Albert Derolez, ed. *Lamberti S. Audomari canonici Liber Floridus. Codex autographus Bibliothecae Universitatis Gandavensis, auspiciis eiusdem Universitatis in commemorationem diei natalis editus* (Ghent: Story-Scientia, 1968); Albert Derolez, *The Autograph Manuscript of the Liber Floridus: A Key to the Encyclopedia of Lambert of Saint-*Omer (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998); Rouse and Rouse, *Manipulus florum*.

[63] 'Dum reverentissimus pater Bernardus aliquando provinciam Flandriae intrasset... quidam vir, Arnulphus de Maiorca, dives et delicatus nimis, secretos manibus eius se reddidit.' *Exordium magnum*, III.19.

of God would not consent to go to the infirmary unless mortally ill, and additionally persevered in serving God at Vigils while suffering a serious illness.'[64] Conrad also included chapters about various churchmen who joined Clairvaux later in life, or monks from Clairvaux who were elevated to ecclesiastical office, including Archbishop Eskil (III.27);[65] Baldwin, who became bishop of Pisa (III.26); and Geoffrey, who became Bishop of Sorres (III.23-25). Exemplars of good conduct for monastic officials are also included in book III: the cellarer (III.1–3), prior (III.4–6), subprior (III.7) and novice master (III.22).

The chapter on Achard (III.22), the novice master, which Conrad took from the *Liber miraculorum*, exemplifies the kind of edifying story included in book III. Achard is described as a man 'of noble birth but nobler still in monastic observance' who was put in charge of the novices.[66] Something of his life story is recounted: his time in the noviciate, when one of his fellows deserted, and his founding of several monasteries at Bernard's direction. Achard's praiseworthy monastic conduct is also revealed through a story about his struggle with a demon, in which they are described as like gladiators in the arena; in the end, Achard defeats the demon, breaking his skull and spilling his brains.[67] This martial imagery was commonly used in relation to the monastic existence, to express the fight of the monk against temptation – Achard is shown to have been successful in this struggle. His character and skills are listed, in particular those that made him a good novice master:

> He was a man capable of edifying and consoling by his words [*in verbo aedificationis et consolationis*]... and he also told [the novices] exempla [*exemplis*] of the past and of the present to keep them on guard against vices... By [such stories] he would wonderfully strengthen the first attempts of the new recruits and enkindle in them no small love of the virtues.[68]

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[64] 'Arguit profecto instantia paenitentiae eius tepiditatem et negligentiam nostram... iste servus Dei nisi pro infirmitate responsum mortis habente infirmitorium intrare non acquieverit et insuper ad vigilias servitii Dei quandoque gravi debilitate laborans devote perstiterit.' *Exordium magnum*, III.19.
[65] For a discussion of Conrad and Herbert's differing views on Eskil, see McGuire, *Cistercians in Denmark*, 69–73.
[66] 'Senex quidam Acardus nomine, nobilis genere, sed conversationis dignitate nobilior, novitiorum curam in Claravalle gerebat'. *Exordium magnum*, III.22.
[67] 'multa deamonum bella et multa flagella pertulerit... Quadam denique vice apparuit ei diabolus gladitorior cum eo conflictu in modum palaestrae decertans... Ad ultimum vero subactum deamonem colliso capite excerebravit.' *Exordium magnum*, III.22.
[68] 'vir potens in verbo aedificationis et consolationis... exemplis etiam tam veteribus quam reciontoribus adversus vitia cautiores reddebat... quibus rudimenta tirocinii eorum magnifice roborabat atque in amorem virtutum non mediocriter accendebat.' *Exordium magnum*, III.22.

Not only does this illustrate the qualities of a good novice master, it also makes an argument for the value of exempla to edify and instruct; it is another meta-exemplum. This chapter presents Achard as an example for the novice master, but the details of his life also show him to be an example for ordinary monks: he was steadfast, not abandoning the monastery along with his fellow novice, and he struggled against temptation before vanquishing his demons. To conform to his example, Cistercian monks would need to also battle against their inner demons and those things that tempted them – made literal here with Achard's fight with the demon – and having done so they could be as noble in monastic observance as him. Reforming the inner self, like Achard, could lead to more perfect monastic conduct. In book III, the people whose stories Conrad chose to include were examples of Cistercian virtue, particularly for monastic officials: their virtues were enumerated, their fulfilment of their responsibilities described, and their conduct praised. These men were also part of the history of Clairvaux and the Cistercian Order, since many of them had a hand in shaping it. Achard founded many monasteries, Eskil founded a Cistercian abbey in Denmark and championed the Order there, and the monks who become bishops showed the esteem in which the Cistercians were held by the papacy and secular leaders.

In book IV, Conrad featured the stories of ordinary monks and lay brothers from Clairvaux, many of whom went unnamed. Rather than presenting the lives of these people as exemplary in their totality, these stories tend to be shorter than those in book III, and present one event from a life; they were snapshots that taught one specific lesson. The second chapter (again, taken from the *Liber miraculorum*) is about a monk who has greatly offended God by his sins who goes about all day weeping, because he knows his confession is worthless without contrition of the heart (IV.2). One night, Christ visits him and shows him the tears of Mary Magdalene, as proof that he loves the tears of penitent sinners. This and other visions console him: 'the brother learned to relax in the hope of forgiveness, to give thanks for the benefits he received, and to sigh for greater things still. Oh, how happy is the humility of the penitent!'[69] The moral of this story, as expressed by Conrad's narrative voice here, is the value of contrition and penitence, not just oral confession. The monk's whole life was not exemplary, but his story was useful in illustrating this lesson. In a similar fashion, IV.24 is a story about a lay brother who washes his socks without permission and is killed by God; the moral of this story is that even small negligences in monastic observance will be punished, and that small errors lead to larger ones:

[69] 'His et huiusmodi consolationibus isdem frater saepius relevatus inspirante Domino didicit in spem veniae respirare et de perceptis beneficiis gratias agens ad ampliora suspirare. O felix humilitas paenitentium!' *Exordium magnum*, IV.2.

> If there are any, God forbid, who think they can commit these trifling faults without grave danger to their souls, and who neglect to wash away their transgressions by the worthy fruits of confession and penance, they can be certain that they will not stay at this degree of negligence... Therefore, let all of us who are professed in this most illustrious Order strive anxiously to observe not only the greater, but also the lesser institutions of it[70]

Again, the lay brother provides an opportunity for Conrad to teach a specific lesson. IV.19 likewise teaches the value of obedience, through the story of a lay brother at Clairvaux who is confident when dying that he will be saved, because he has followed monastic observance exactly, with diligence and humility. In this part of the collection (books III–IV), Conrad started with the stories of monks whose whole lives were praiseworthy in book III, before moving on in book IV to exempla that illustrated specific moral lessons. There are different kinds of exempla in the *Exordium magnum*, offering different kinds of moral formation and education, just as in the *Liber miraculorum* the exempla in the first half offered examples to Cistercian monks, while those in the second half could be used when preaching to the laity.

While the first part of the collection (books I–II) chronicled the Order's founding and early days, culminating in the foundation of Clairvaux under Bernard and the perfect pattern of observance that he instituted there, the second part (books III–IV) then gave examples of the lives lived by the monks at Clairvaux under Bernard and his successors. The prologue in verse that opens the *Exordium magnum* also demonstrates Conrad's rationale for the structure and purpose of the first two parts. It begins:

> Whoever longs to reach eternal life,
> And hastens in the blessed contest of the monk to strive,
> Avoiding detours [*devia*] and keeping to the proper path [*rectum cursum*],
> Should busy themselves with following in the footsteps [*vestigia*] of the ancient fathers.[71]

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[70] 'Ceterum, si qui sunt, quod Deus avertat, qui se haec levia absque gravi periculo animae suae facere posse putant et tales excessus suos per condignos confessionis et paenitentiae fructus diluere negligunt, certe sint, quia hoc negligentiae gradu non haerebunt... Quapropter omnes nos, qui praeclarissimo Cisterciensi ordini professionis titulo astricti sumus, studeamus non solum maiora, sed etiam minora eius instituta omni sollicitudine servare'. *Exordium magnum*, IV.24.

[71] 'Quisquis ad aeternam cupiens pertingere vitam/Currere felicem monachi contendis agonem/Ut teneas rectum devitans devia cursum/Sectari veterum satagas vestigia patrum.' *Exordium magnum*, prologue. The translation of the

It is later clarified that the 'fathers' here referred to are the abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux and the praiseworthy monks of the latter house – the subjects of books I–IV. The prologue thus starts with a declaration of purpose, one that is restated throughout the structuring elements of the collection. A fuller expression of this purpose comes through Conrad's explanation of what the reader will gain from the narrative of Cistercian history that he has constructed:

> ...I shall plainly and with compelling reasoning disclose
> The origin of this celebrated way of life [the Cistercian Order]...
> Here you are duly taught how the desert of Cîteaux,
> Till then long sterile, produced sublime flowers...
> These pages will teach you that the perfect mother [Cîteaux] has produced
> A perfect offspring [Clairvaux] who has fulfilled her hopes...
> The most illustrious of abbots [Bernard] by his merits made this valley clear...
> Reading this then gives witness
> To the exertions of the senior monks of Clairvaux...
> May their lifestyle be to you, I pray, a living lesson[72]

Here, Conrad sketched out a history of the Order that began with Cîteaux and its foundation but did not reach its apogee until the arrival of Bernard and the founding of Clairvaux – it was this house, under this abbot, that fulfilled the hopes of the founders, according to Conrad. It was from Bernard and examples from Clairvaux that Conrad wanted his audience to learn, as stated here and reiterated throughout the summaries. He might have nodded towards Cîteaux and claimed at points that he wanted his audience to learn from the seniors of both houses, but the majority of his exempla were about Clairvaux, and in various places he acknowledged and apologised for his Claravallian focus, explaining that he knew it better. Part one (books I–II) of the *Exordium magnum* can be seen as a historical prologue or introduction, laying out the events that brought about the perfection that was Clairvaux under Bernard, and then arguing for

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verse prologue, was prepared with reference to the English translation. Ward and Savage, trans., *The Great Beginning of Cîteaux*, 37–41.

[72] 'quo plene valida pandam ratione/Principium celebris vitae.../Hic, quam sublimes heremus Cistercia flores/Iam dudum sterilis, produxit, rite doceris.../Perfectam sobolem docet haec te pagina matrem/Perfectam laetis generasse per omnia votis.../Hanc vallem claram meritis clarissimus abba/Fecit.../Post Claraevallis seniorum streniutatis/Lectio testis adest.../Ipsorum viat tibi sit, rogo, lectio viva' *Exordium magnum*, prologue.

Bernard's particular sanctity through a plethora of exempla about him. Part two (books III–IV) then included exempla about the monks and lay brothers who had learned to be perfect from Bernard at Clairvaux, and it was these who were the 'ancient fathers' who his audience should busily follow, and to whose example they should conform themselves.

Following on from the first two parts, book V forms a third part, one that turned from examples of good conduct to warnings of what to avoid. Again, this is signalled in the verse prologue, when Conrad talked of the detours from the proper path that monks could take. The recapitulation at the end of book IV expressed the purpose of book V fully:

> ...we will show in the following examples how kindly He pardons sinners or how severely he sometimes strikes offenders... if by chance we discover that we are more negligent [*negligentiores*] on the way of God's commandments, we must always consider with a fearful mind the punishment that threatens those who carry out the work of God negligently [*negligenter*].[73]

The reason for including these exempla was elaborated in the summary to book V, which also linked it to part two and the examples Conrad described there of virtuous Cistercian conduct:

> Thus here for some time we have discussed the dangers of certain vices and negligences [*negligentiarum*]... I have taken care to put together a summary for the exhortation of readers, knowing that the souls of simple brothers are more moved by examples than words [*exempla plus movere quam verba*], while turning deeds [of holy men] over in the memory... will further enkindle their love of virtues and horror of vices[74]

Here he showed how parts two and three are related, and how both were part of his conception of learning by example: part two showed readers the deeds of holy men whose example they should follow, whilst part three showed them the 'dangers of certain vices and negligences' to

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[73] 'in subsequentibus exemplis demonstrabimus, quanta benignitate quandoque peccantibus ignoscat seu quanta districtione delinquentes interdum feriat.. si forte negligentiores nos in via mandatorum Dei deprehenderimus, maledictionem, quae opus Dei negligenter exsequentibus intentatur, pavida semper mente pensemus.' *Exordium magnum*, IV.35.

[74] 'Haec itaque, quae de periculis quorumlibet vitiorum seu negligentiarum aliquamdiu iam tractavimus... ad exhortationem legentiun summatim pertsringere curavimus scienties simplicium fratrum animos exempla plus movere quam verba, dum facti memoriam versando atque reversando... ad amorem virtutum horroremque vitiorum amplius ex ea accenditur.' *Exordium magnum*, V.21.

avoid. Conrad gave his audience examples of both the proper path of monastic life and the dangerous detours that a monk could take. Only by reading parts two and three together would his audience increase their love of good and their horror of *negligentia*, a word whose derivatives are repeated twice in the introduction to part three, and again in the summary that ends it. *Negligentia* was originally a term from Roman law, denoting carelessness in performing an obligation, or a breach of duty; the opposite of *diligentia*, which means carefulness, attentiveness, diligence.[75] Gregory the Great used it in a homily to his fellow bishops to chastise them for failing in their duty to their flocks: 'For by our sin the multitude of the people was cast down, because, through our negligence [*negligentia*], they were not educated for life.'[76] Aelred of Rievaulx used it frequently, often to refer to laxity in following monastic rules. In one of his sermons, it is accompanied by words like weakness [*infirmitate*], and torpor [*torpore*] to describe a sluggish and fearful soul which must be revived and renewed.[77] In using this word, Conrad was specifically accusing his fellows of failing in their duty as monks; they were lazy and remiss, committing minor infractions and then not confessing and doing penance. *Negligentia* connotes not following the rules of the monastic life to which they had committed themselves.

These various negligences are enumerated in part three (book V) of the *Exordium magnum*: swearing (V.1), retaining personal property after entering the monastery (V.2), not confessing a certain sin (V.4–5, 13), falling asleep at Vigils (V.6), disobedience (V.8–9) and chanting so as to gain applause (V.20). Many of these infractions are specific to the monastic vocation. Part two of the *Exordium magnum* includes stories of monks who are diligent office-holders, who struggle against temptation, confess and feel contrition, and are obedient. Part three then presents negligent monks and religious, who are either corrected and forgiven or punished. This is yet more evidence that the *Exordium magnum* was conceived of and written as a coherent text, since parts two and three work in tandem. They were both part of the formation Conrad offered, which involved both positive and negative examples of behaviour, to increase his audience's love of good and simultaneously their horror of negligence and laxity.

Book VI has often been overlooked. McGuire argued that it included exempla grouped by theme – the eucharist, death, and confession.[78] But it also includes the final summary of the

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[75] *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities* ed. Harry Thurston Peck (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1898), s.v. 'negligentia'; *A Latin Dictionary* ed. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1879; reissued 1963), s.v. 'diligentia'; Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium, CETEDOC, and Brepols, *Library of Latin Texts, Series A* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), http://clt.brepolis.net/LLTA, s.v. 'negligentia'.
[76] 'Ex nostro etenim peccato populi turba prostrata est, quia, faciente nostra negligentia, ad uitam erudita non est.' Gregory the Great, *XL Homiliarium in Evangelia liber I*, *Homilia XVII*, PL 76, 1147C.
[77] 'Iacet autem anima aliquando in iniquitate, aliquando in infirmitate, aliquando in timore, aliquando in negligentia et torpore.' *Aelredi Rievallensis sermones XLVII–LXXXIV*, ed. Gaetano Raciti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), sermon XLVIII.
[78] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 59.

collection, and the whole book acts as a conclusion, both to the collection and to the audience's life as Cistercians. In the summary at the end of book V, Conrad expressed the purpose of the final book:

> ...thus I will return at last to my series of narrations, constructed for the edification of many, about the religious conduct of our venerable fathers [at Clairvaux] and their deaths, precious in the sight of the Lord; this will serve as an appropriate conclusion.[79]

The first two chapters in this book describe monks who contemplated negligently, their constant questioning leading them to doubt the sacrament of the eucharist. Coming after the summary to book V, in which Conrad wrote about exempla as appropriate for simple monks, and before a warning in the final summary to use this work for edification and not to satisfy idle curiosity, these exempla start the conclusion by showing the dangers of too inquisitive learning or curious questioning. They instead encouraged monks to turn to prayer and meditation, including meditating on positive examples. They valorise the kind of moral formation by example offered by the *Exordium magnum*, over and above a questioning, scholastic search for knowledge.[80]

Chapters VI.3–9 are then about deaths, at Cistercian and non-Cistercian houses. They show the need to make full confession before death, and the vital role the prayers of the community of both the living and the dead play in salvation. Clairvaux is centred, thanks to the stories of people desperate to return there to die, and a conception of a Christian community that includes both the living and deceased is created. This is where the exempla in the *Exordium magnum* end.

Book VI ends with the final summary, which expresses the structure and purpose of the whole collection. Conrad started this summary with a clear statement of the purpose of his work, one that harked back to the first two parts, and explicitly repeated the language of the introduction to book I, creating cohesion between the beginning and end of the collection:

> We have finished everything which we considered necessary to write about the beginning of the Cistercian Order, and also about the reverend

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[79] 'revertamur sicque tandem narrationis nostrae series, quae de venerabilium patrum religiosa conversatione pretiosaque in conspectu Domini morte ad aedificationem multorum texitur, competenti conclusione terminetur.' *Exordium magnum*, V.21.

[80] For a discussion of the orientation of monastic versus scholastic learning, see Jean Leclerq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God. A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Mishrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), 208–12.

> and conspicuous religious life of the men who shone at Cîteaux and Clairvaux.[81]

He then ended his conclusion by calling on his readers to follow the example of these individuals, and to form themselves after them:

> ...by the merits and intercession of our holy fathers, of whose life and character we have written for the edification of our successors, grant us to be thus strengthened in true humility through continence of the flesh, that by the grace of God we may deserve to come to that glory of eternal blessedness at which we believe our holy fathers have undoubtedly already arrived[82]

This passage at the end of the collection brought the text full circle, implicitly reminding his audience of the opening of the prologue, which likewise called on them to follow in the footsteps of the holy monks of Clairvaux.

Conrad thus organised his material in the *Exordium magnum* into four parts, a new structure I am proposing here, predicated on Conrad writing the entire collection at Eberbach in the early thirteenth century. Part one is a historical introduction, describing the establishment of the Order and then the founding of Clairvaux, the house that should be the model for all Cistercians to follow, because of the preeminent sanctity of Bernard, its founder. Part two is a series of positive examples from this house, for his audience to conform to; part three then contains negative examples to avoid. Part four is a long conclusion that encouraged monks to think about how to die well and so be saved, and reminded them of the utility and importance of learning by example.

Collecting and Rewriting Cistercian Texts –The *Exordium magnum*, *Exordium parvum* and *Liber miraculorum*

Conrad's almost exclusive use of material taken from earlier exempla collections makes the *Exordium magnum* unique among the collections studied in this thesis. Both the *Liber miraculorum* and Engelhard's collection, as we will see in the next chapter, relied far less on textual sources,

[81] 'Explicitis iis, quae de initio Cisterciensis ordinis nec non et de reverendis atque in omni religione conspicuis viris, qui in Cistercio et in Claravalle claruerunt, scribere necessarium duximus'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.
[82] see note 13 above for Latin

and ninety-five percent of exempla in the *Dialogus miraculorum* were drawn from oral narratives, as McGuire has shown.[83] Yet whilst Conrad often copied exempla from his sources almost verbatim, his arrangement and reordering of the material was novel. It is routine for historians to comment on Conrad's extensive use of earlier Cistercian sources: the *Liber miraculorum*, the *Vita prima*, the *Exordium parvum* and *Exordium Cistercii*, the *Carta caritatis*, and important documents such as the papal bulls authorising the Order's constitution and privileges.[84] McGuire has explored the changes Conrad made to individual chapters that he took from the *Exordium parvum* and *Liber miraculorum*, especially how the lessons taught by these exempla were changed with the addition of new conclusions.[85] In his studies of Conrad's portrayal of Bernard, he also put this collection into conversation with other Cistercian writings on Bernard, to interrogate the different picture of the saint painted in the *Exordium magnum*.[86] More recently, Newman has researched how Conrad used extracts from the *Carta caritatis*, the Cistercian constitution. She argues that he portrayed it not as a legal document, but a vehicle through which Cistercian customs were passed on, in order to show that the Cistercians were an Order bound by a shared way of life, not legal structures.[87]

This work does however have its limits. For the most part, especially in analysing Conrad's changes to Herbert's exempla, scholars have examined the changes he made, but not the effect of those changes within the text – what do they reveal of Conrad's purpose, his educative strategies, and how he created examples of Cistercian life for his audience to follow? This is largely because, as argued in the previous chapter, before the publication of the new edition, Herbert's collection was seen as a chaotic mass of exempla: good raw material, but not a literary product in its own right, where the ordering and arrangement of exempla had meaning. The re-evaluation of the *Liber miraculorum* in chapter two demands a re-evaluation of Conrad's collection too, since he was not just taking from a random set of anecdotes, but deliberately selecting and rearranging exempla that possessed meaning within the context of Herbert's collection.

As argued in chapter one, an author's reuse, reordering or rewriting of existing exempla served to create new lessons out of old material, and present different visions of the Cistercian Order. This section asks how Conrad collected and ordered his sources, and with what meaning this reuse imbued the *Exordium magnum*. It focuses on Conrad's two most-used Cistercian

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[83] McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 167–247.
[84] Savage, 'Introduction', 17–22; *Exordium magnum,* 35–41; McGuire, 'Introduction', 291.
[85] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 42–49.
[86] Brian Patrick McGuire, 'La présence de Bernard de Clairvaux dans l'Exordium Magnum Cisterciense', in *Vies et légendes de Saint Bernard de Clairvaux: création, diffusion, réception (XIIe-XXe siecles)*, ed. Patrick Arabeyre, Jacques Berlioz, and Philippe Poirrier (Pontigny: Cîteaux: Commentarii cistercienses, 1993), 63–83. See also McGuire, *Difficult Saint*, 153–86.
[87] Newman, 'Place of "Charter of Charity"', 235–48.

sources, the *Exordium parvum* and *Liber miraculorum*, and explores the historical, educative and political arguments made by Conrad's reuse and rewriting of them.

Rewriting as Historical Argument

The most striking difference between Conrad's and Herbert's collections is the former's historical introduction to his exempla (part one of the text). The first section of this, book I, drew heavily on the *Exordium parvum*. This text, only eighteen chapters long, has been known as the "Little" *Exordium* since the seventeenth century, when it was edited by Bertrand Tissier alongside Conrad's far more substantial, "Great" *Exordium*, although in extant manuscripts it generally bears the heading *Exordium Cisterciensis Cenobii* (*The Beginning of the Monastery of Cîteaux*).[88] It is one of two accounts of Cistercian origins from the early twelfth century, the other being the (shorter) *Exordium Cistercii*. The *Exordium parvum* was once believed to have been written by the founders of the Order, probably Stephen Harding, the third abbot of Cîteaux and the author of the *Carta caritatis*.[89] Since the middle of the twentieth century there has been a great deal of controversy concerning its authorship and purpose, most recently with the publication of Berman's book, which argues that it was written late in the twelfth century to create a fictional origin story for the white monks; this argument has been challenged on a number of grounds, including her codicological methods.[90] The more commonly-agreed upon dating is Waddell's, who hypothesises that the prologue, along with chapters 1, 2, and 4–14, were written by Stephen sometime around 1112 or 1113, at a time when Cîteaux was receiving new recruits unfamiliar with the monastery's history.[91] Not long before 1147 it was reworked at Cîteaux by Abbot Raynard of Bar (1134–1150), and from around 1147 became the historical introduction to the third recension of the Cistercian customary; this new recension became necessary upon completion of the liturgical reform initiated by Bernard. Waddell has also argued that, as many new houses joined the Order in 1147, thanks to the incorporation of the congregations of Obazine and Savigny, an extended historical account of the Order's beginnings was a necessary addition to the new customary. Raynard's rewriting added a contents list, chapter headings, chapter 3, and chapters 15 to 18.

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[88] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 416.
[89] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 200.
[90] Berman, *Cistercian Evolution*, 2–23. For a summary of the debate before Berman's intervention, see Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 199–205. For an excellent recent discussion of the controversy, see Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 542–44. See also Janet Burton, 'Past Models and Contemporary Concerns: The Foundation and Growth of the Cistercian Order', *Studies in Church History* 44 (2008): 27–45.
[91] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 205 and 228–30. See, for example, Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 20–24; Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 544.

The *Exordium parvum* comprises a mixture of narrative chapters and documents that describe the early history of the Order and demonstrate the legality of its foundation.[92] In a recent article, Newman argues that it was written to function like a foundation charter, hence the mixture of legislative documents and brief historical narrative.[93] After the prologue, the history begins with the arrival of Robert of Molesme and the first monks to the site that would become Cîteaux (c. 1), and then presents the letter of the papal legate authorising the new community (c. 2). Chapter 3 adds more information about why they left Molesme – because they could not adequately follow the Rule there – and emphasises the harsh, wild nature of the site the new community was given. There then follows information about Robert's return to Molesme (cc. 4–8) – including the letters and decrees from the pope and legate ordering it – Alberic's election as abbot of Cîteaux in 1100 (c. 9), the Roman Privilege granted to the new order (cc. 10 and 14), and the letters supporting this petition to the pope from the legate and other ecclesiastics (cc. 11–13). The rules drawn up by the new community are then described (c. 15), and those added by Stephen after his election (c. 17). There is a small passage about the community's initial sorrow that they attracted so few recruits (c. 16), and their joy when recruits flocked to them (c. 17), likely a reference to the 1113 arrival of Bernard and his relatives. It closes (c. 18) by saying that within eight years of the founding of Cîteaux, there were twelve Cistercian abbeys already constructed.

The first few chapters of book I of the *Exordium magnum* are novel: they trace the history of monasticism back to the apostles, through the desert fathers, to St Benedict, through Cluny in its early years, and then to the Cistercians. Conrad constructed a continual cycle of monastic perfection and decline throughout history, as well as placing the Cistercians into a lineage of monastic groups inspired by the Holy Spirit.[94] From I.10 onwards, once his history reached the founding of Cîteaux, much of Conrad's material came from the *Exordium parvum*. This chapter starts with a phrase that echoed the opening of the *Exordium parvum* and referenced it indirectly:

[92] All references to the *Exordium parvum* are from Waddell's edition. Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 416–40.
[93] Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 546–47.
[94] Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 553.

	Exordium magnum, I.10	*Exordium parvum, prologue*
Latin	Sed iam nunc operae pretium reor generationibus futurus diligentius describere qualiter Cisterciensis ordo **sumpsit exordium**... sicut partim per litterarum monimenta tradiderunt nobis viri sancti, qui ab initio sacrae huius religionis auctores extitere... didicimus.	Nos Cistercienses, primi huius ecclesiae fundatores, successoribus nostris stylo praesenti notificamus quam canonice, quanta auctoritate, a quibus etiam personis, quibusque temporibus, cenobium et tenor vitae illorum **exordium sumpserit**.[95]
English	But now I deem it worthwhile work to describe diligently for future generations how the Cistercian Order **took its beginning**... Just as we have learned it for the most part from the written accounts handed down to us from the holy men who were the first founders of our sacred religious observance.	We Cistercians, the first founders of this church, by the present pen are notifying our successors how canonically, with what great authority, and also by whom and by what stages their monastery and tenor of life **took its beginning**

For the most part, Conrad reworked this passage in his own language, yet still evoked the same sense of handing down the history of the Order to future generations, a history that came from the Order's founders. There is the same personal tone as well, if in different language – Conrad writing down this history for future generations, as the founders did for their successors. Nevertheless, there is one clear linguistic link, tying this explicitly to the earlier text: 'exordium sumpsit' (in the pluperfect in the *Exordium parvum*). He also made implicit reference to the *Exordium parvum*, through mention of the written accounts handed down. These textual clues would have recalled the earlier *Exordium parvum* for his Cistercian audience. It would not have evoked the *Exordium Cistercii,* the other early Cistercian narrative history, since that has such introduction or opening declaration.[96] This section in the *Exordium magnum* was thus heralded as a reworking of the *Exordium parvum*. The audience's recognition of the links between this and the *Exordium parvum* would have increased as they proceeded through book I, as Conrad copied large chunks of the earlier history verbatim, including inserting wholesale the episcopal letters and papal privilege.

[95] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 417.
[96] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 399.

Conrad did however make changes to this material. In the penultimate chapter of the *Exordium parvum,* after a description of the election of Stephen, the narrative tells of how, when the monks of Cîteaux were despairing of having successors, God sent to them thirty new recruits, 'laymen, powerful in the world and likewise noble'.[97] This is an oblique reference to the arrival of Bernard, along with his friends and relatives, around 1113. After this, the *Exordium parvum* notes simply that '[s]ince then they have established abbeys in various episcopates' (c. 18), and ends with the numbers of abbeys standing at twelve.[98] It does not mention Bernard by name. In the *Exordium parvum*, Bernard is an anonymous new recruit, and the expansion of the Order to twelve abbeys is the end of the story: the Cistercian Order has been established.

In the *Exordium magnum*, Bernard's arrival is a beginning, one that Conrad then elaborated on in books II–IV (which are all about Clairvaux). I.21 in the *Exordium magnum* contains much of the same information as chapter 17 of the *Exordium parvum*, and even repeats the despair of the aging monks at Cîteaux that they have no successors. But rather than a few sentences about nameless new recruits, Conrad named Bernard and introduced him in detail: 'He was a young nobleman, delicate and learned, so intensely ablaze with the fire of divine love'.[99] Newman has argued that the *Exordium parvum* was concerned with the founding of Cîteaux and its way of life, while the *Exordium magnum* was written to show the establishment of the Cistercian Order.[100] But the earlier text also includes details about the rules of Cistercian life established by Alberic and Stephen, and the foundation of eleven further abbeys. The *Exordium parvum* does show the establishment of the Cistercian Order – a group of monasteries united by a single way of life – and not just Cîteaux. The difference between this and the *Exordium magnum* is that for Conrad the establishment of the Order was not the most important moment in its foundation history, nor its end point. For him, the hopes of the Order and its founders were achieved with the life at Clairvaux under Bernard, as quoted above from the prologue: 'These pages will teach you that the perfect mother [Cîteaux] has produced/A perfect offspring [Clairvaux] who has fulfilled her hopes...'.

For Conrad, Cistercian foundation history did not end when it was clear the Order would, in fact, become a monastic order with multiple houses, but rather with the perfection of Bernard's Clairvaux. This is the subject of book II, which formed the second half of his historical introduction. Sturm has argued that Conrad made Bernard and Clairvaux as important

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[97] 'laicos etiam in saeculo potentes et aeque nobiles'. Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts,* 438.
[98] 'Abhinc abbatias in diversis episcopatibus ordinaverunt... duodecim coenobia constructa fuerint inventa.' Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts,* 439.
[99] 'Qui cum esset adolescens nobilis, delicatus et litteratus, tam valido igne divini amoris accensus est' *Exordium magnum*, I.21.
[100] Newman, 'Place of "Charter of Charity"', 238.

as Stephen and Cîteaux to Cistercian history, showing his 'Clairvaux-Cistercian' point of view.[101] But his rewriting of the *Exordium parvum* actually shows Conrad making Clairvaux and Bernard more important: Clairvaux literally becomes the pinnacle of Cistercian achievement, where all Cistercian hopes were fulfilled. Whilst Stephen is accorded 10 chapters in book I, 19 in book II are specifically about Bernard, with the rest of book II and the entirety of books III and IV arguing for the sanctity of life at Clairvaux, thanks to Bernard's legacy.[102] Stephen was described favourably by Conrad, as 'a man of conspicuous holiness, adorned with the grace of all virtues' who organised the establishment of the Order by God's design.[103] But even in that same chapter where Stephen's praises are sung, and his work to establish the Order and its observances recognised, Bernard intrudes and then surpasses him. Once Stephen has instituted the Cistercian life, he cannot attract anyone to join the community: 'of course, in those days rarely any converts came to them'.[104] But then Bernard joins:

> And the Lord stirred the spirit of a young man, whose name was Bernard... While not only those who were noble and wealthy but those in middling circumstances and even the poor, seeing the severity of the Order, refused to join them, this tender and delicate young man... went about, ardently and zealously preaching the message of the vocation... desiring to pass it on to others... Not by words but by deeds [*non verbis sed factis*] [Bernard and his relatives] persuaded other men that the severity of the Order, which they had fled, was nothing other than the easy yoke and light burden of the Lord. Provoked by their example [*exemplo*], a countless multitude of men... filled that stable of Christ... so that the brothers who had suffered weariness and despair at having no successors marvellously rejoiced [*mirabiliter laetificarent*].[105]

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[101] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 210–13, 280.
[102] For an analysis of Bernard's presence at Clairvaux in the text, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'La présence de Bernard', 63–83.
[103] 'virum conscipuae sanctitatis omniumque virtutum gratia decoratum'. *Exordium magnum*, I.21.
[104] 'scilicet raro quis illis diebus ad eos causa conversionis veniebat.' *Exordium magnum*, I.21.
[105] 'Et suscitavit Dominus spiritum pueri iunioris, cui nomen Bernardus... Cum enim non solum nobiles et divites, sed etiam mediocres, ipsi quoque pauperes videntes ordinis asperitatem detrectarent accedere ad eos, iste tam tener et delicatus iuvenis... fervens et aestuans circuibat et praedicabat verbum vocationis... cupiens et aliis propinare... suadebant ceteris hominibus non verbis, sed factis onmem illam asperitatem ordinis, quam refugiebant, non esse aliud nisi iugum Domini suave et onus eius leve. Quorum exemplo provocata innumera multitudo hominum... ita stabulum illud Christi... repleverunt, ut fratres illos taedio et desperatione posteritatis afflictos mirabiliter laetificarent'. *Exordium magnum*, I.21.

Chapter 17 of the *Exordium parvum* also ends with this idea of other men running to join after the example of the first recruits, but since Bernard is not named, it does not credit him personally with the expansion of the Order. As such, it does not construct Bernard as an inspirational figure, akin to Stephen, who was responsible for the foundation or spread of the Order. In the *Exordium magnum*, Stephen and the other brothers are left at the end of the chapter marvelling at how Bernard has brought them all these new recruits, thanks to both his preaching and his example. Conrad argued that Bernard was 'the very splendid pillar on which our whole Order rests'; his central importance down to his having ensured the Order's survival and spread.[106] Stephen may have instituted many of the customs, but Bernard is to thank for its success – this is the argument that Conrad made in rewriting the *Exordium parvum*, even before he dedicated three further books in his collection to Bernard and Clairvaux.

By rewriting the *Exordium parvum,* Conrad created a new narrative of the foundation and spread of the Order, one in which Bernard was responsible for the Cistercians' survival and success, and in which the pinnacle of Cistercian observance was achieved at Clairvaux under him. Using and rewriting an established text allowed Conrad to make a new argument about how the beginnings of Cistercian history should be seen: he was not just rewriting but overwriting the previous understanding. In so doing, he argued for the centrality of Clairvaux to Cistercian life, and displaced Cîteaux as the heart of the Order's fervour and sanctity.

Rewriting as Educative Argument

The introduction that begins part one in the *Exordium magnum* (quoted above) tells the audience that they will be reading a historical narrative: 'Here begins the narrative [*narratio*] of the origins of the Cistercian Order...'. In the recapitulation at the end of book II, whilst reiterating the unity of books I and II by talking about the life of Clairvaux and Cîteaux, Conrad moved his audience away from historical narrative and into exempla: he had gathered together 'fragrant nosegays' not just so that his fellow Cistercians could learn about the early days of the Order, but also so that they could follow their forebears' examples. He used the same language at the end of book IV, when he wrote again of picking flowers from Clairvaux to enkindle devotion in his audience, but also the need to use examples [*exempla*] to show how God pardons and punishes sinners. The language of examples is present again at the end of book V, when Conrad argued that the souls of simple brothers are moved more by example than words [*exempla plus quam verba*], and so they should be given examples of saints and sinners to teach them to value good and abhor evil. This interplay between history and exempla is shown again in the final summary, when Conrad wrote

[106] 'splendidissimam columnam, cui universitas ordinis nostri innititur'. *Exordium magnum*, II.1.

that his book was intended to teach about the establishment of the Cistercian Order, life at Cîteaux and Clairvaux, and to provide examples [*exempla*] for his audience to imitate. The information he had provided was not merely 'a chronicle of events' but should 'instruct the unlearned, strengthen the weak... [and] inform the devout for perfection.'[107]

History as edification is hardly an uncommon theme in medieval monastic texts (or medieval texts full stop) and the combination of history and exempla in the *Exordium magnum* has not gone unexplored.[108] However, what has gone unnoticed is that the overall structure of the *Exordium magnum* argued for its utility as an educative text. The *Exordium parvum*, Conrad's source for book I, was most commonly transmitted at the beginning of Cistercian customary manuscripts.[109] The Benedictine rule may have given the Cistercians a framework for monastic observance, but it did not cover every aspect or circumstance of monastic life, and the customary was there to fill in the gaps; in conjunction with the Rule, the customary conveyed the rules and norms that shaped and defined Cistercian existence.[110] In the strictest sense of the term, the *Ecclesiastica Officia* acted as the customary for Cistercian monks, while the *Usus conversorum* fulfilled the same role for the lay brothers.[111] The *Ecclesiastica Officia* laid out the prescriptions for daily living, starting with the liturgical aspects of life within the monastery (EO 1–69), and proceeding to issues including food and mealtimes (EO 76–77, 80, 121), the daily work schedule (EO 75), special rules for harvest times (EO 84), the various monastic roles and offices (EO 103–120), care for the sick, (EO 89–93), care for the dying and dead (EO 94–98), and interactions with guests and the outside world (EO 86-88, 99–101).[112]

However, Waddell has convincingly demonstrated that the Cistercian customary in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries should not be thought of as just the *Ecclesiastica Officia*, an argument taken up by Jamroziak in her recent chapter on the subject.[113] Instead, the *Ecclesiastica Officia* was always transmitted as part of a compilation of several texts, which in a number of extant manuscripts bears the heading *Incipiunt consuetudines monachorum cisterciensium*; 'consuetudines' meaning customs or usages. The texts included in these manuscripts vary across

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[107] 'Neque enim propterea patrum praecedentium laudablia gesta describuntur, ut vanae et iniquietae curiositati serviatur, sed ut per ea rudes instruantur, infirmi confortentur, lascivi gravitatem sectentur, duri corde compungantur, devoti ad perfectionem informentur'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.
[108] Savage, 'Introduction', 1–16; McGuire, 'Introduction', 278–79.
[109] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 197–205.
[110] Emilia Jamroziak, 'The Cistercian Customaries', in *A Companion to Medieval Rules and Customaries*, ed. Krijn Pansters (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 77–102. Some of these texts (the *Instituta Generalis Capitula Apud Cistercium*, *Carta Caritatis*, and *Capitula*) have been edited in Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts.*
[111] The *Ecclesiastic officia* has been edited and translated into French, Choisselet and Vernet, *Les Ecclesiastica Officia*, and translated into English, *The Ancient Usages of the Cistercian Order*, trans. Martinus Cawley (Guadalupe Abbey: Guadalupe Translations, 1998). Waddell has also edited the *Usus conversorum*, Chrysogonus Waddell, ed., *Cistercian Lay Brothers: Twelfth-Century Usages with Related Texts.*, Studia et Documenta 10 (Cîteaux: Comentarii cistercienses, 2000).
[112] Jamroziak, 'The Cistercian Customaries', 77–102; Choisselet and Vernet, *Ecclesiastica Officia*, 60–339.
[113] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 23; Jamroziak, 'The Cistercian Customaries', 77–102.

the several recensions the customary went through, but most included a narrative history of the Order (the *Exordium parvum* or *Exordium Cistercii*); a version of the *Carta caritatis*, often alongside the papal bull that confirmed it; a codification of statutes from the General Chapter, and finally the *Ecclesiastica Officia* and *Usus conversorum.*[114] In a large number of surviving manuscripts there is no distinction between the various sections and the chapters are numbered consecutively from the historical narrative at the start all the way through to the end of the *Ecclesiastica Officia* (the *Usus conversorum* is numbered separately).[115] The effect is therefore to create a unified text that together makes up the Cistercian customary.

The customary went through a process of evolution in the twelfth century. The third recension, which was current from around 1147 until the early 1180s, and the fourth, from the 1180s, consisted of: the *Exordium parvum*; the *Carta caritatis posterior* (in manuscripts from after 1152), and its 1152 confirmation by Eugenius III; the *Ecclesiastica Officia*; the *Instituta Generalis Capituli apud Cistercium* (an early codification of decisions taken at the General Chapter), and the *Usus conversorum*.[116] Thanks to the continuous numbering of the chapters across all the parts, the customary manuscript is encountered as a historical introduction, followed by a series of rules for Cistercian life. The *Exordium parvum*, which served as the historical introduction, survives predominantly in these customary manuscripts.[117] Thus the most likely context within which Conrad and his audience would have encountered this text would have been as part of a customary manuscript, especially since customaries were read by and to Cistercian monks: they were accessible and accessed documents.[118]

There are similarities between the *Exordium magnum* and the Cistercian customary manuscripts. Both are compilations of other Cistercian texts; both begin with a historical narrative based on the *Exordium parvum*; both were aimed at the average monk. Exempla are also often described as rules in narrative form.[119] The new understanding of the structure that I have argued for in this chapter shows that Conrad's collection consisted of a historical narrative that set out the beginning of Cistercian life at Cîteaux and its culmination with Bernard and Clairvaux (part one), followed by a set of exempla (parts two and three). Thinking of exempla as narrative rules, the *Exordium magnum* is thus a historical introduction plus a set of rules for Cistercian living.

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[114] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts,* 13.
[115] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts,* 22–23.
[116] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 22–24, 228–30, and 272.
[117] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 197–205.
[118] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 264.
[119] Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, 33–34.

Many of the exempla in books III–V cover topics regulated in the *Ecclesiastica Officia*. The latter text is dedicated in its first seventy or so chapters to the liturgy, and although the *Exordium magnum* does not attempt to give directions on the structure or content of the liturgy, a group of four exempla in book V (V.16–18, V.20) are about the perils of meditating negligently on the psalms, the value of devoutly serving the Lord in vigils and the dangers of serving Him half-heartedly, and the danger of chanting the office in a worldly way or for applause. One chapter (EO 84) in the *Ecclesiastica Officia* is about the harvest time, and the *Exordium magnum* provides the story of Reinaldus, which describes what happened at Clairvaux during harvest time (III.13). A number of chapters in the customary (EO 91–93, 116) concern the treatment of the infirm and the running of the infirmary, and many exempla were set in the infirmary (for example, III.17, III.19, V.22). Conrad also included a number of examples of men whose fervour was such that they would not go to the infirmary and so give themselves over to softer living (III,19, IV.27). The treatment of the dead is also dealt with in the customary (EO 94–98), and is a common theme in the *Exordium magnum*. Conrad was not dealing with the office to be sung, or how a monk should be buried, but with individual behaviour, such as how a monk should confess before death, or die wearing his cowl (V.3, V.13). As argued above, book III of the *Exordium magnum* includes examples of the conduct of those who held senior offices, including the novice master and prior. The *Ecclesiastic Officia* has chapters on all of these responsible positions and the conduct and duties of the officeholder (EO 110–120). Conrad featured even some of the most specific rules, such as those about bloodletting, in his collection: in one, there is nothing in the monastery with which to make Abbot Stephen a hearty meal after his bloodletting, until a bird brings a fish to the cellarer (I.24). The *Instituta* specifies that after bloodletting monks should receive extra and better food (generally white bread), a prescription that is repeated in the *Ecclesiastica Officia* (EO 90), and echoed in this exemplum.[120]

The exempla in the *Exordium magnum* do not mimic the order of the rules of Cistercian life as laid out in the customary, nor are all of the topics covered. Nonetheless, Conrad's exempla did provide examples of how to live a virtuous Cistercian life; the *Exordium magnum* can thus be seen as a historical narrative of the foundations of the Order and Clairvaux plus a set of exempla showing the enactment of Cistercian rules. Similarly, the customary manuscript is a historical narrative that lays out the foundations of the Order (the *Exordium parvum*) followed by the rules of Cistercian life. The parts of Conrad's collection mirror the constituent parts of the customary and their order, with the legislative rules rewritten as exemplary narratives. We can therefore see the Cistercian customary as a framing document for the *Exordium magnum*.

[120] Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 462 (*Instituta* 14).

Conrad's rewriting of the *Exordium parvum* linked his collection with the customary manuscripts, which laid out the template and rules for Cistercian life. In so doing, he made an argument that the *Exordium magnum* was doing something equivalent – providing the average Cistercian monk with examples of how to live an obedient and devoted monastic life. The customary was not simply a convenient model for his text; linking his own work to it in the reader's mind, through the use of the *Exordium parvum*, which was transmitted exclusively with the customary, made an implicit argument about the purpose and importance of his collection. He was showing how Cistercian monks should behave, and what the Cistercian life should look like. This was a way of life modelled on Clairvaux. As McGuire has pointed out, one argument Conrad made in book II was that every Cistercian would be saved, so long as they lived in obedience and humility according to the precepts of the Order, and he demonstrated that this was the case under Bernard at Clairvaux, thanks to his oversight and holiness.[121] What the work above has done is show how the centrality of Bernard and so Clairvaux was constructed in the *Exordium magnum*, and how it used a rewriting of familiar Cistercian sources to achieve this. By rewriting chapter 17 of the *Exordium parvum* to give a prominent role to Bernard and move the locus of Cistercian spirituality from Stephen and Cîteaux to Bernard and Clairvaux, and then linking his collection to the customary manuscripts, Conrad created an authoritative model for Cistercian life, leant legitimacy by the earlier texts on which it was modelled. The *Exordium magnum* is a coherent text, even as it moves from history to exempla, from Cîteaux, to Clairvaux, since the historical narrative served to justify and argue for the model of Cistercian living that the exempla in the second part represented. This was a collection with a clear structure and organisation of material that carried Conrad's purpose from beginning to end.

Rewriting as Political Argument

This chapter offers a new date and model for the writing of the *Exordium magnum*. It argues that it was written as a coherent text at Eberbach in the second decade of the thirteenth century. In combining a historical introduction – in which Conrad rewrote the *Exordium parvum* to make an argument for the centrality of Bernard and Clairvaux to Cistercian history, moving the focus away from Stephen and Cîteaux – with a set of examples of the rules and norms of Cistercian life, Conrad mirrored the key constituent parts of the Cistercian customary manuscript, calling it to his audience's mind and so arguing that the *Exordium magnum* was also a text that would tell them how to live a proper Cistercian life, modelled after the life of Clairvaux. The question that

[121] McGuire, 'La présence de Bernard', 65–66.

remains is, why was such a model of Cistercian life so important to communicate in the early thirteenth century?

Conrad was selective in which material he took from the *Liber miraculorum*. He reused Herbert's exempla concerning the Cistercian Order, but none about preaching or conversion, and none of the miracles that occurred in the secular world. Herbert's inclusion of such exempla made an argument for a Cistercian Order that was active in the world in the service of the papacy; he was encouraging monks to embody the example of someone like Henry of Marcy. Conrad's reuse of some exempla but not others also made an argument – he excised activity in the world from his vision of the Cistercian Order. Conrad frequently referenced that his material came from the work of a senior at Clairvaux, as in the story of Reinaldus: 'About this, the senior monk who, as we already mentioned, passed down to us in writing many reminiscences about the observant persons of our Order, especially the elders, both monks and lay brothers, of Clairvaux, wrote this'.[122] Or earlier: 'Moreover, the aforesaid brother [Herbert] committed what he had heard to writing, and what we say now we express in his own words.'[123] The manuscript survival suggests that the *Liber miraculorum* was well-known throughout France and Germany.[124] Conrad's reuse of the *Liber miraculorum* was explicit and clear for those familiar with Hebert's work: Conrad thus presented his own ideas about the kinds of examples of Cistercian life to which his audience should conform, and he did so in contrast to Herbert. The difference in structure and content of the two collections would have been noticeable.

Many scholars have noted that Conrad was responding to attacks on the legitimacy of the Cistercians with the *Exordium magnum*.[125] He stated in the final summary that he wanted to rebut the monks of the black order who slander the Order.[126] Conrad was not uncritical of contemporary Cistercian life himself. There was plenty he did criticise his contemporaries for in terms of the negligences that they had allowed to slip in, as described above, and discussed extensively in the scholarship.[127] But these were all to do with individual bad behaviour, and the examples that he provided would hopefully allow individuals to reform themselves in accordance with their forebears at Clairvaux. There is one notable criticism of the Order as a whole that Conrad included, and it comes from the mouth of a pious virgin. In one exemplum (V.20), the

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122 'De hoc senior ille, quem supra diximus de religiosis personis ordinis nostri, praecipue de senioribus tam monachis quam conversis suae Claraevallis, plura litterarum monimentis tradidisse... ita scribit'. *Exordium magnum*, III.13.

123 'Porro memoratus frater scripto, quae audierat, commendavit, unde et nos ea quae dicturi sumus, ipsius verbis expressimus.' *Exordium magnum*, II.32.

124 For a discussion of the manuscript history of the *Liber miraculorum*, see chapter two.

125 Savage, 'Introduction', 16–17; McGuire, 'Introduction', 286.

126 'ut monachis nigri ordinis calumniandi occasionem tolleremus'. *Exordium magnum*, VI.10.

127 McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 76–79; McGuire, 'Introduction', 283–85; Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, chapter 5.

abbot of Cîteaux goes to visit a holy woman, and asks her to entreat God as to what the Order's biggest faults are. She does so, and His answer is simple: "'Know, Lord Father, that there are three things in your Order that particularly offend the eyes of the supreme majesty, namely the multiplication of land holdings, a superfluity of buildings, and worldliness in singing.'"[128] This is included in an exemplum about not chanting in a worldly way, and Conrad concludes by urging his readers not to do this; the comment about too much land and elaborate buildings is simply left hanging, neither commented on nor rebutted. In a collection that is otherwise very defensive of the Order, and uses examples of bad behaviour from non-Cistercians rather than show sinful Cistercian behaviour,[129] this is a striking moment, and so draws the reader's attention. It points towards the genuine criticisms that the Cistercians were receiving in this period.

The late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries saw the Cistercians facing attacks from several places, as exemplified by the well-known words of Gerald of Wales, 'From the malice of monks, but especially the Cistercians, good Lord, deliver us.'[130] Other monastic groups attacked them for breaking with tradition; secular clerics despised the fact that they owned churches, against their own rules; and they were vilified by all sides for their supposed hypocrisy and greed.[131] Walter Map's famous attacks on the wealth and hypocrisy of the Cistercians in his *De Nugis Curialium* came in the 1180s, in which he accused them of taking over villages and evicting the inhabitants, and even murdering knights to obtain more land![132] But it was not just their rivals who attacked them. As early as 1169, Pope Alexander III had threatened the Order with the revocation of their fiscal privileges if they did not stop acquiring types of property forbidden by their own rule, and around the time of Lateran IV in 1215 Innocent III wrote a letter, perhaps to the General Chapter, laying out the many complaints against the Order: Cistercians had not paid tithes that were due and parish churches has been ruined, they had pressured neighbours to sell them property, they farmed surplus land for profit, and they accepted the rich and powerful for burial in their monasteries.[133]

The statutes of the General Chapter give an indication of what the Order was concerned about in any given moment, and they show a response to these critiques. In 1180 there were two statutes concerning property and tithes; in response to the criticism of their non-payment of

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[128] "'Sciatis, domine pater, tria esse in ordine vestro, quae specialiter oculos summae maiestatis offendunt, multiplicatio scilicet agrorum, superfluitas aedificiorum atque lascivia vocum.' *Exordium magnum*, V.20.
[129] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 62.
[130] Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 5.
[131] Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 5–7; Buczek, 'French Cistercians and their Enemies', 88–109.
[132] Lekai, *Ideals and Reality*, 396; Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 7–8.
[133] 'A Letter of Pope Innocent III and the Lateran Decree on Cistercian Tithe-Paying', in *Medieval Texts and Studies,* ed. C. R. Cheney (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 277-84; Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 8.

tithes, they ordered that tithes should now be paid on newly acquired properties.[134] A statute of 1182 prevented donors from paying a set sum for a set amount of Masses; one from 1185 prevented monks elected to bishoprics from intervening if the election was contentious; in 1185 and 1186 there were repeat prohibitions on abbots or monks baptizing.[135] The 1190 General Chapter was again dealing with issues of land purchases and the acquisition of possessions, completely banning all future purchases of land and immovable goods.[136] In the same year there was also an attempt to reduce the number of Cistercian houses in cities or towns.[137] In 1214, perhaps in response to Innocent's letter, the acquisition of properties was again curtailed.[138] At the end of the twelfth century, in the decades after Herbert had written the *Liber miraculorum*, there was also noticeable Cistercian withdrawal from the likes of crusade or anti-heresy preaching. Whilst they were involved with the preaching of the Third Crusade, when in 1198 papal legate Fulk of Neuilly arrived at the General Chapter to recruit crusade preachers he was unsuccessful; in 1201 Fulk had to be given papal authorisation to designate three Cistercian abbots as his assistants.[139]

Outsiders did attack the Cistercians for their break with tradition and their illegitimate foundation, as Conrad noted with such disgust in the *Exordium magnum*, but criticism directed at the Order was primarily about their greed, expansion, and involvement with secular affairs. The General Chapter responded to these attacks with various rulings, and Conrad also referred to them in his text, by putting a criticism of the Cistercian's greed and acquisition of land in the mouth of a holy virgin, whose message came from God Himself. In this blink-and-you-miss-it moment, Conrad thus criticised Cistercian acquisitiveness in the *Exordium magnum*, even if his desire to defend the Order then meant he did nothing but mention it in passing.

Considering his reuse only of Herbert's material about Cistercians, and against this backdrop of criticism, it can be seen that Conrad was making another argument in his collection, for withdrawal from the entanglements of the world, and a return to earlier simplicity. His portrayal of Bernard is illuminating here. McGuire has noted that Conrad was interested in Bernard as abbot, rather than politician, or even saint; Conrad's exempla showed him primarily at Clairvaux, interacting with and caring for his monks.[140] McGuire has argued that this portrayal was intended to show Bernard as the saviour of all Cistercians, but in the context of Conrad's

[134] Waddell, *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, 86.
[135] Waddell, *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, 98, 127 and 132.
[136] Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 8–9; Waddell, *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, 174–75.
[137] Waddell, *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, 176–77.
[138] Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', 8–9
[139] Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, 135.
[140] McGuire, 'La présence de Bernard', 63–83.

exclusive use of Cistercian material, and the legislation from the General Chapter, it could also be an argument for withdrawing from the world. Unlike in the *Vita prima*, which Conrad occasionally used, written with Bernard's canonisation in mind, the Bernard created by Conrad is remarkable because of the things he does within the monastery, not outside of it. One chapter in the *Exordium magnum* that deals with Bernard raising a man from the dead, a typical saintly miracle, was only added to later versions, and was not in Conrad's original text.[141] Instead, when Bernard travels outside the monastery in Conrad's collection, it is often to convert and bring back new members, such as the scholars from Paris (II.13), or the thief he takes to become a lay brother (II.15). Even when away, he returns in spirit to Clairvaux to comfort his monks, a point Conrad made in two consecutive exempla; Bernard's absence from the monastery was referred to only in relation to his returning to Clairvaux (II.11-12).

From his first introduction, Conrad's praise for Bernard highlighted what a good Cistercian monk he was, and his desire to leave the world:

> He was a young nobleman, delicate and learned, so intensely ablaze with the fire of divine love to leave the many pleasures and riches of the world and its ecclesiastical preferments, and set himself with a devout spirit to imitate the most strict conduct of the Cistercians as first fruits to the Lord.[142]

It was not only from the riches of the world that Bernard was fleeing, but also other positions he may have attained in the church. Through his praise of Bernard's choices, Conrad implicitly argued that in order to fully abide by their rules and the founders' vision for Cistercian life, they needed to turn inwards, away from the world, and also the ways in which they had aided the papacy and episcopacy.

Just as it was a deliberate choice to only use the Cistercian exempla from Herbert, Conrad also made a conscious decision not to reuse material from the *Vita prima*, but instead include other recollections of Bernard:

> Concerning his admirable way of life, singular holiness and the special privileges of his signs and virtues, they have been set forth in full in the

[141] *Exordium magnum*, 113–14.
[142] 'Qui cum esset adolescens nobilis, delicatus et litteratus, tam valido igne divini amoris accensus est, ut relictis universis mundi voluptatibus et divitiis, ecclesiasticis quoque dignitatibus artissimam conversationem Cisterciensium tamquam primitiae frugum Domini devoto animo proponeret imitari.' *Exordium magnum*, I.21.

> book of his life, yet I think it appropriate to record here some of the things which have been omitted there, to remember so great a man and to edify readers.[143]

His collection contextualised the *Vita*, a work that came first and which Conrad assumed his audience would know. It revised the religious foundation of the Order away from the documents about Bernard's life and miracles and towards him as abbot and example to his own community. The picture painted of Bernard in the *Exordium magnum* was one that implicitly argued for Cistercian perfection as achievable only through withdrawal and a turn inwards, and towards Clairvaux under Bernard (the abbot, not the statesman) as the foremost example of correct Cistercian living. At a time when the Order was being criticised for its activities in the world – its possession of churches, its burial of wealthy donors – and the General Chapter was starting to react to this, Conrad created a collection that, through its portrayal of Bernard, made an argument for the Order to keep away from the world. This was the explication of a political position within the Order, one far removed from that held by Herbert, Henry of Marcy or even Bernard himself. Conrad created a version of Bernard to serve his ideological ends, and was working within a current, visible in the General Chapter statutes, that clearly thought as he did: that in order to avoid criticism and maintain their privileges, the white monks needed to step back from some of their entanglements with the world.

Conclusion

This chapter argues for a new date and model for the writing of the *Exordium magnum*, as well as a new conception of its structure. Evidence from the autograph manuscript, Hs. 381, as well as from the text itself and Gossuinus' exempla collection strongly suggest that it was written at Eberbach between *c.* 1210 and *c.* 1220, and that it was planned as a coherent whole from the outset. This chapter further argues that the collection consists of four main parts, and not the two parts (books I–IV, and books V–VI) that previous scholars had suggested: a historical introduction (books I–II), constructing a narrative whereby Bernard and Clairvaux represent the pinnacle of Cistercian life; a series of exempla detailing good and then bad behaviour (books III–IV, book V); and then a series of exempla about how to die well, bringing the collection to a close (book VI). This new model overturns our understanding of the context and motivations for

[143] 'De cuius admirabili conversatione, singulari sanctitate, speciali signorum atque virtutum praerogativa, licet liber vitae eius plenius edisserat, tamen aliqua, quae illic praetermissa sunt, ad memoriam tanti viri simul ad aedificationem legentium scribere congruum puto'. *Exordium magnum*, II.1.

Conrad's writing of the *Exordium magnum*. Despite its focus on Clairvaux, it was entirely written in Germany, as an attempt to perpetuate the example of earlier Claravallian monks separated from Conrad and his German brothers by both space and time. The first part does not merely record stories of his fellows at Clairvaux; Conrad wrote this section at Eberbach as well, and so was constructing the example of Bernard and the monks of Clairvaux for his fellows in Germany to embody. Through this embodied imitation, Conrad could attempt to recreate the golden age of Clairvaux at Eberbach, and indeed across the entire Order.

This thesis is interested in the act of collecting, and this chapter has demonstrated that creating collections was not a neutral activity; Conrad gathered, ordered, and wrote or rewrote a variety of written narratives and exempla. It contends that, in rewriting the *Exordium parvum*, Conrad was not, as Berman argued, motivated by a desire to backdate Claravallian involvement in the Order and so falsify Cistercian origins, but was making another a historical argument, that Cistercian values and spirituality were most fully exemplified by Bernard; the Order's foundation history culminated in his example, one that was copied by the monks at Clairvaux, and should be imitated and embodied by monks across the Order. His rewriting of the *Exordium parvum* also linked his collection in the minds of his audience with the Cistercian customary, further suggesting that Conrad constructed the *Exordium magnum* to be a model for Cistercian life, one based around recreating the example of Bernard and his monks. This chapter has also shown how Conrad carefully selected and rearranged the exempla found in Herbert's collection. In rewriting Herbert, he also argued for the benefits of his ordered and structured collection to better educate, and more importantly argued for his vision for the Cistercian Order, one in which withdrawal from the concerns and distractions of the world was paramount.

In his book on the *Exordium magnum*, Sturm describes a concept he calls 'Zisterziensität', or 'Cistercianity'. He defines this as the complicated relationship between Cistercian ideals and the reality of Cistercian life, or, in the case of the individual, the relationship between ideals or norms and their subjective experience of living a Cistercian life.[144] He argues that the *Exordium magnum* is an artefact of Conrad's 'Zisterziensität'. Whilst this approach is a step forwards, taking us away from the view of Conrad's text as representative of the mind of every average Cistercian monk, as McGuire argues, and acknowledging that it is the product of a single mind, writing in a specific time and place, it is still a problematic framing.[145] It suggests that there were concrete, uncontentious, agreed upon norms for Cistercian life that people or texts could be measured against, and that all monks were striving towards. But already in this thesis this has been shown

[144] Sturm, *Beschriebene Zisterziensität*, 284–85.
[145] McGuire argues that the *Exordium magnum* shows 'the hopes, dreams, and fears of the middling monk'. McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 34.

not to be the case. Herbert's view of Cistercian ideals, which involved activity in the world, stand in stark contrast to Conrad's. It obscures the fact that ideals or norms were constructed and contested, as they were in these two exempla collections. For Conrad, Cistercian ideals were simplicity, strict observance of the Rule, and separation from the world, but these are not the same ideals espoused by the *Liber miraculorum*. In fact, Conrad had to rewrite Herbert's collection, removing all exempla about the world outside the monastery, to rebut Herbert's argument and create his own vision of the Cistercian Order, modelled after the life of the cloistered monk from Clairvaux. These two collections, when taken together, are evidence for the existence of multiple and competing Cistercianisms in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, constructed and propagated via exempla collections, and based on the practice of teaching by example.

Fig. 6. Map showing locations associated with Engelhard of Langheim and the nuns of Wechterswinkel

Chapter four

Engelhard of Langheim's Collection for the Nuns of Wechterswinkel: A Twelfth-Century Cistercian and the *cura monialium*

Introduction

In the last decade of the twelfth century, a German Cistercian monk named Engelhard, living at the Franconian abbey of Langheim, sent a collection of thirty-four exempla to the nuns of Wechterswinkel, a Cistercian abbey in the diocese of Würzburg. It is the only Cistercian exempla collection to have been written for a community of nuns and the earliest extant text sent by a Cistercian man to Cistercian women.[1] He prefaced his collection with a dedication letter, addressed deferentially to the abbess, M – most likely the second abbess, Mechthild – and her nuns: 'To the venerable and most-loved lady and mother in Christ, M[echthild], abbess at Wechterswinkel, and to the sacred convent, loved by God, of her daughters, greetings from E[ngelhard], both a servant and son to them, but a son more.'[2] Engelhard claimed to have written this collection in return for an unspecified kindness, and added his hope that he had recorded edifying stories that might otherwise have been lost – examples of both honourable conduct and sinful behaviour. Just as Herbert had in the *Liber miraculorum*, and Conrad would in the *Exordium magnum*, Engelhard brought together examples of good and bad conduct to persuade his audience – uniquely in this case a house of Cistercian women – to grow in virtue and avoid sin. As such it is an invaluable source showing a Cistercian man, his care for Cistercian women, and his interest in their spiritual and moral formation. Unlike the other collections, it presents a vision of the Order in the twelfth century that explicitly included nuns.

[1] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 2.

[2] 'Dominae et matri suae, M., venerabili atque amabili in christo, abbatissae in weterswink, sanctoque ac Deo dilecto conventui filiarum eius, E., ipsarum servus et filius debitum utriusque sed filii amplius.' Engelhard's dedication letter, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 13097 (hereafter MBS Clm 13097) fol. 133v. Quotations from Engelhard's collection throughout are my own transcription and translation, and references are to the text and folio number in MBS Clm 13097. There is no published edition of Engelhard's collection. For this research, a transcription was made of Engelhard's collection on the basis of the earliest manuscript witness, MBS Clm 13097 (from the late twelfth century), which was then compared to Poznań Rkp. 173 (from the thirteenth century). The text is almost identical across the two manuscripts. For more on the manuscript history, see the discussion in section one of this chapter.

Engelhard's collection has not received widespread scholarly attention, and no complete edition or translation exists, although extracts have been edited or translated in various articles.[3] Griesser, with his great interest in the Cistercian exempla collections, published two articles on Engelhard and his surviving writings in the mid-twentieth century.[4] In these, he edited several of Engelhard's letters, as well as providing extracts from his exempla collection, and discussed its dating, authorship and manuscript history. Since Griesser, McGuire has included a few notes on Engelhard in his many articles on the Cistercian exempla collections.[5] By far the preeminent scholar of Engelhard has been Newman, in her recent book and in several articles. In the latter she has primarily focused on the lengthy final exemplum in the collection, which tells the story of a transgender monk, Joseph of Schönau.[6] Her book examines the totality of the collection, arguing that it shows what she calls Engelhard's 'sacramental imagination': 'Engelhard's story collection taught nuns and monks to imagine the transcendent meaning of everyday objects and behaviours and to link this imagination to their spiritual development.'[7] For her, Engelhard's collection shows him resisting the clericalisation of monastic life and creating an egalitarian religiosity that both nuns and monks could participate in. She has thus been hesitant to analyse this text through a gendered lens, instead arguing that Engelhard addressed monks and nuns together as a 'distinct sociological group', and blurred or removed gendered distinctions in his writing.[8] In her analysis of Engelhard's depiction of the Virgin Mary, for example, she states that he did not intend for Mary to be an exemplar for the nuns, since he also wrote for monks, and sent an early draft of the collection to the abbot of Prüfening, a male Benedictine house.[9] The possibility that Engelhard's collection could be different from the other Cistercian exempla collections because of the gender of his intended audience is not explored; the nuns are not imagined as women, but simply as religious.

This lack of a gendered lens is surprising considering ongoing scholarly interest in religious women in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the contentious scholarly debates concerning the inclusion of nuns in the Cistercian Order. There was a huge increase in female religious life across Europe in this period: women entered religious life as Cistercian nuns, beguines,

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[3] Joseph Schwarzer, 'Vitae und Miracula aus Kloster Ebrach', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 6 (1881): 515–29; Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 55–73; McGuire, 'Rebirth and Responsibility', 148–58; Newman, 'Making Cistercian Exempla', 45–66.
[4] Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 55–73; Bruno Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim und Abt Erbo von Prüfening: Neue Belege zu Engelhards Exempelbuch.' *Cistercienser Chronik* 67/68 (1964): 55–73.
[5] McGuire, 'Rebirth and Responsibility', 148–58; McGuire, 'Taking Responsibility', 259–66.
[6] Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women', 1184–1213; Newman, 'Making Cistercian Exempla', 45–66; Newman, 'Assigned Female at Death', 43–63.
[7] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 1.
[8] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 8–9, 41–43.
[9] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 153.

Clarissans, anchorites, lay sisters, Franciscan tertiaries, and more. Yet the historiography of the *frauenfrage*, the question of how the church hierarchy and male religious orders could accommodate the needs of the burgeoning women's religious movement, has in the past been profoundly negative. Historians have argued that women were seen as a disruptive force in the church, and that monks and clerics – especially Cistercian monks – were burdened with nuns they did not wish to care for and who had no place in their version of religious life.[10] In recent decades scholars have called into question elements of this framing. Most pertinent to an exploration of Engelhard's collection, scholars such as Constant Mews, Julie Hotchin and Fiona Griffiths have explored the recognised spiritual and emotional benefits that could accrue to religious men who ministered to nuns, the male reformers who chose to be involved with communities of women, and the literature of spiritual formation that they wrote.[11] In particular, there has been a move to study the routine interactions between ordinary religious men and women, and not solely extraordinary women like Hildegard of Bingen and their male admirers.[12] Positive attempts to devise religious rules suitable for women, such as Abelard and Heloise's observances for the Paraclete, or the creation of the Gilbertine rules, have also been recognised in recent years.[13]

A similar trend can be seen in the historiography of Cistercian nuns. For much of the twentieth century, scholars largely agreed with Grundmann, who considered Cistercian nuns peripheral to the Order and caring for them an unwanted burden for male communities. Moreover, it was argued that the female Cistercian houses that did exist were not incorporated until the thirteenth century, and even then, only under pressure from the papacy; communities of

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[10] For this view, popular for much of the twentieth century, see Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 75–137; Brenda M. Bolton, 'Mulieres Sanctae', in *Women in Medieval Society*, ed. Susan Mosher Stuard (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976), 141–58; Sally Thompson, 'The Problem of the Cistercian Nuns in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries', in *Medieval Women*, ed. Rosalind M. T. Hill and Derek Baker (Oxford: Published for the Ecclesiastical History Society by Basil Blackwell, 1978), 227–52. Jo Ann McNamara has argued that the *frauenfrage* was preceded by a *herrenfrage* in the early twelfth century, a masculine identity crisis that led to a restructuring of gender relations, Jo Ann McNamara, 'The Herrenfrage: The Restructuring of the Gender System, 1050–1150', in *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*, ed. Clare A. Lees, Thelma Fenster, and Jo Ann McNamara (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 3–29. A thorough review of the scholarship on religious women and male religious orders can be found in the introduction to Fiona J. Griffiths, *Nuns' Priests' Tales: Men and Salvation in Medieval Women's Monastic Life* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

[11] See for example Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Holy Women and Monks in the Thirteenth Century: Friendship or Exploitation?', *Vox Benedictina* 6 (1989): 343–73; Julie Hotchin, 'Female Religious Life and the "Cura Monialium" in Hirsau Monasticism, 1080 to 1150', in *Listen, Daughter: The 'Speculum Virginum' and the Formation of Religious Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Constant J. Mews (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 59–83; Constant J. Mews, 'Virginity, Theology and Pedagogy in the Speculum Virginum', in *Listen, Daughter*, 15–40; Constant J. Mews, 'Negotiating the Boundaries of Gender in Religious Life: Robert of Arbrissel and Hersende, Abelard and Heloise', *Viator* 37 (2006): 113–48; Griffiths, *Nuns' Priests' Tales*.

[12] See, for example, the essays collected in Fiona J. Griffiths and Julie Hotchin, eds., *Partners in Spirit: Women, Men, and Religious Life in Germany, 1100–1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

[13] Constant J. Mews, 'Imagining Heloise as Abbess of the Paraclete', *Journal of Religious History* 44, no. 4 (2020): 422–42; Katharine Sykes, 'Rewriting the Rules: Gender, Bodies and Monastic Legislation in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies* 9 (2020): 107–31.

Cistercian women in the twelfth century were described by historians as merely "imitating" the Order's customs.[14] Recent research has challenged this view, demonstrating that houses of Cistercian women existed from the early days of the Order's existence, and the origins and spirituality of these women has been delineated more clearly.[15] In particular, the work of Anne Lester in her book, *Creating Cistercian Nuns*, and in several articles, has shown that houses of Cistercian women incorporated in the early thirteenth century, especially in northern France, were formed around leper houses and hospices.[16] The spirituality of these communities of women was based in the same apostolic ideals as contemporary male groups like the Franciscans, as well as groups of female beguines: charity, penance and poverty.[17] Historians have also begun to explore the ways in which Cistercian men were involved with and invested in the care of nuns, rather than assuming them to be an unwanted burden.[18]

Engelhard's collection provides an opportunity not only to enrich the male-centric work on the exempla collections, but also to examine these live scholarly questions of male care for women within the Cistercian Order and the spirituality of Cistercian nuns. Inclusion does not have to mean identical treatment, as is the case with Newman's argument that Engelhard saw no difference between the spirituality of monks and nuns; can we not imagine that he included Cistercian nuns in his vision of the Order, but still saw their needs and lives as different? In other words, that he wrote to the nuns as women, and not just fellow Cistercians? Engelhard did indeed reference both nuns and monks reading his stories, as Newman stresses, and he did send an early draft of the collection to Abbot Erbo of Prüfening.[19] Nevertheless, his dedication letter, which is included in all complete manuscripts of the collection, is addressed to Mechthild and

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[14] Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, 75–92; Lekai, *Ideals and Reality*, especially chapter 22; Thompson, 'The Problem of the Cistercian Nuns', 227–52.
[15] Brigitte Degler-Spengler, 'The Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns into the Order in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women. Medieval Religious Women, Volume 3*, ed. John A. Nichols and Lillian Thomas Shank, OCSO (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications Inc., 1995), 85–134; Constance Hoffman Berman, 'Were There Twelfth-Century Cistercian Nuns?', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 217–48; Constance Hoffman Berman, *The White Nuns: Cistercian Abbeys for Women in Medieval France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018); and Lester, *Creating Cistercian Nuns*.
[16] Lester, 'Cares Beyond the Walls', 197–224; Anne E. Lester, 'Making the Margins in the Thirteenth Century: Suburban Space and Religious Reform between the Low Countries and the Country of Champagne', *Parergon* 27, no. 2 (2010): 58–87.
[17] Lester, *Creating Cistercians Nuns*, especially chapter 1. On the beguines and their spirituality, see Carol Neel, 'The Origins of the Beguines', in *Sisters and Workers in the Middle* Ages, eds. Judith M. Bennett, Elizabeth A. Clark, Jean F. O'Barr, B. Anne Vilen and Sarah Westphal-Wihl (Chicago: The University of Chircago Press, 1989), 240–60; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).
[18] On the care of Cistercian women, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Cistercians and Friendship: An Opening to Women', in *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women*, 171–200; Elizabeth Freeman, 'A Cistercian Monk Writes to a Cistercian Nun: John Godard's Treatise for the Abbess of Tarrant, England, *c.* 1250', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (2010): 331–51; and Elizabeth Freeman, 'Gilbert of Hoyland's Sermons for Nuns: A Cistercian Abbot and the "Cura Monialium" in Twelfth-Century Lincolnshire', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2015): 267–91.
[19] Griesser, 'Engelhard und Abt Erbo', 25–26; Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 23–24.

her nuns, and its inclusion positions this as a text written for a community of women – not a mixed group of nuns and monks – both in its initial composition and for its subsequent readers. While in the *Dialogus miraculorum* Caesarius alluded to the various kinds of Cistercians who might be edified by his collection, he intended it primarily as a work of male monastic socialisation aimed at novices, structuring it as a dialogue between a monk and a novice. In the same way, we can simultaneously imagine that Engelhard considered the various kinds of Cistercians (or even non-Cistercian religious) who might read his collection and profit from the exempla, but still wrote it for a specific community of Cistercian women, a community he addressed directly in the dedication letter that served as prologue to the collection. In the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius' audience, as exemplified by the novice in the dialogue, is central to how the collection and its educative strategies are constructed; the voice of the novice anticipates the questions and comments an audience might have had and suggests appropriate responses. Engelhard's dedication letter has been overlooked in previous studies of the collection, and the audience he explicitly constructed in it not used as a lens through which to understand the exempla he included in his collection and the kind of spiritual and moral formation he offered. This chapter for the first time explores Engelhard's collection through the prism of the dedication letter, as one written specifically for an audience of nuns.

Furthermore, Newman's intriguing claim that Engelhard sent the nuns the same stories used to teach monks requires exploration. This thesis has argued that an author's selection of examples, and how they then arranged them in their collection, was as important as the details of the exempla themselves. By reusing Herbert's Cistercian material in the *Exordium magnum* but not his exempla about the world outside the cloister, Conrad constructed an argument about Cistercian withdrawal from the world; even if every exemplum in Engelhard's collection taught a lesson relevant to both nuns and monks, what themes predominate across the collection, and what if anything did the author leave out? In considering the collection Engelhard sent to the nuns of Wechterswinkel, the whole is as important as the individual exempla when exploring the moral and spiritual formation he offered to them, and how he conceptualised their religious vocation.

This chapter explores Engelhard's collection as one written for a community of Cistercian women. It asks: what collection of examples and moral lessons did Engelhard offer to the nuns of Wechterswinkel, and to what degree was there a gendered dimension to this? It draws on comparisons with Herbert's, Conrad's and Caesarius' collections, as well as contemporary texts of religious instruction written for women, to examine whether Engelhard saw making women into nuns as a different endeavour from turning men into monks. It also breaks down the

category of 'religious women', to think about the different lessons conveyed to the nuns and the abbess, all of whom were addressed in the dedication letter that prefaced the collection.

Since the collection is relatively unknown and no edition exists, this chapter starts with an overview of the exempla contained therein, based on my own transcription. The second section explores the history of Engelhard and the nuns of Wechterswinkel, to build a picture of the women to whom Engelhard was writing and his relationship with them, and then examines the way he addressed and constructed the nuns in his dedication letter. It argues that this was a collection directed at two specific audiences of religious women: the convent of nuns, and Mechthild, the abbess. The third and fourth sections then explore the lessons taught to the nuns in more detail, contextualising Engelhard's collection in the literature of spiritual formation written for women in the twelfth century and comparing it to the exempla in the other Cistercian collections, to argue that Engelhard focused on issues of virginity and sexual temptation. The final section then studies the instruction and formation offered to Abbess Mechthild, examining the preponderance of stories of failures in pastoral care and the numerous visions of the Virgin, and arguing that Engelhard offered Mary as an example for the abbess. The conclusion reflects on the historiographical debate around Cistercians and women in light of Engelhard's collection.

Engelhard's Collection: Structure and Content

There exists no edition of Engelhard's collection, beyond the few extracts published by Schwarzer and Griesser. Yet the content and structure of the collection in its entirety has not been explored in the secondary literature either. In most analyses of the text, certain themes or stories are pulled out and studied: Cistercian holiness, the care of abbots for their monks, the story of Brother Joseph, stories of the Eucharist, and the frequent appearance of the Virgin Mary.[20] Even in her recent book, Newman does not provide a systematic overview of the collection, beyond a list of chapter titles, which do not give a clear sense of the content or moral themes of the exempla. Unless one has access to the manuscripts, it is hard to learn what exempla Engelhard included in his collection, and in what order. After an explanation of the methodology used to prepare a transcription of the collection for this thesis, this section clarifies the content and structure of Engelhard's collection, and makes an argument as to the arrangement of his exempla, to provide a foundation for the discussion in the rest of the chapter.

[20] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*; Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women', 1184–1213; Newman, 'Assigned Female at Death', 43–63; McGuire, 'Taking Responsibility', 259–61; McGuire, 'Rebirth and Responsibility', 148–58.

The Manuscripts

Griesser identified two manuscripts of Engelhard's collection, one held in a library in Poznań (previously identified by Schwarzer), and the other in Paris; in a later article he identified a further manuscript, produced at the Cistercian monastery of Zwettl.[21] Newman's articles and book list a further two witnesses, including another Poznań manuscript that she has only recently identified as containing a recension of Engelhard's collection.[22] The five known manuscripts all originated in southwest Germany or Austria. Four date from the late twelfth or thirteenth centuries – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 13097 (hereafter MBS Clm 13097); Zwettl, Stiftsbibliothek Codex 13; Poznań, Biblioteka Raczyńskich Rkp. 156; Poznań, Biblioteka Raczyńskich Rkp. 173 – and one from the fourteenth – Paris, BNF n.a. lat. 2627. Zwettl 13 and BNF lat. 2627 contain abridgements of Engelhard's collection. Interestingly, the Paris codex contains Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* followed by Engelhard's collection, showing the contemporary and near contemporary reception of the Cistercian exempla collections as all belonging to one genre.

In the manuscripts, the collection is sometimes included alongside Engelhard's other literary works: his life of St Mechthild of Diessen (d. 1160), writings on the Virgin Mary (dedicated to a *sponsa Christi* named 'T'), as well as several of his letters, most notably those between him and Abbot Erbo.[23] It is from two of these manuscripts that we learn of Engelhard's authorship. In Poznań Rkp. 156, an acrostic poem spells out the name Engelharduss; while the thirteenth-century codex Zwettl 13, names the author as Engelhard.[24] As Griesser demonstrated, Engelhard was a twelfth-century monk from Langheim: he made reference to his life and the community there at several points in the collection, as well as in the dedication letter to his *vita* of St Mechthild, where he called himself 'Brother E[ngelhard], formerly called abbot, now however Christ's pauper in Langheim.'[25] On this evidence, the collection was attributed to Engelhard, a twelfth-century monk from Langheim Abbey, an attribution with which subsequent scholars have agreed.

For this thesis, a transcription was made of Engelhard's collection on the basis of the oldest complete manuscript, MBS Clm 13097, considered by Newman to be closest to the one

[21] Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 55–57; Griesser, 'Engelhard und Abt Erbo', 22.
[22] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 199–209, lists all the manuscripts, their dates and provenances, their contents, and includes notes on palaeography. The discussion of the manuscripts here draws substantially from her work.
[23] Newman *Cistercian Stories*, 203–209; Griesser, 'Engelhard und Abt Erbo', 55–73.
[24] Newman *Cistercian Stories*, 203–204.
[25] Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 58–59; Engelhard of Langheim, *Vita B. Mathildis Virginis*, ed. Gottfried Henschen, AASS 7 May: 436–49. An English translation of Engelhard's *vita* of Mechthild can be found in Jonathan R. Lyon trans. *Noble Society: Five Lives from Twelfth-Century Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 163–219. The dedication letter can be found on page 171.

sent to the nuns of Wechterswinkel.[26] This was then compared to Poznań Rkp. 173.[27] At the time this research was conducted, only these two had been identified as complete manuscript copies of Engelhard's collection.[28] Since then, Newman has identified Poznań Rkp. 156 as another complete copy, which she believes predates Poznań Rkp. 173, although not necessarily MBS Clm 13097. Newman has compared all five of the manuscripts and has concluded that there are minimal variations in the text.[29] Apart from word-order within sentences, my own comparison likewise found that the text of MBS Clm 13097 and Poznań Rkp. 173 are consistent; a lacuna in Poznań Rkp. 173 omits the end of chapter 18 and the beginning of chapter 19, but the length of the omission suggests this is due to a missing leaf. Quotations in this thesis are from MBS Clm 13097, the oldest surviving manuscript witness, and the one most likely to reflect the collection encountered by the nuns.

The Exempla

Engelhard's collection was sent to the nuns in the last decade of the twelfth century, and so was written after the *Liber miraculorum* but before *Exordium magnum*. As Newman has shown, most of Engelhard's exempla are not found in the earlier collections, the *Collectaneum* or *Liber miraculorum*.[30] Only three (cc. 9, 14 and 21) are similar to exempla in existing collections, but are different enough to suggest that Engelhard was drawing on a common oral tradition. Engelhard did state several times that he deliberately did not copy written stories, recording only those that came to him by word of mouth: 'None of these things that I write have I read or learned through writings; instead, I learned about certain events through seeing them and many through hearing about them.'[31] Newman has further suggested that Engelhard's use of oral sources is unusual among the exempla collections, but, as chapter two of this thesis showed, Herbert relied on oral sources too; McGuire has also examined the numerous oral sources in Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*.[32] In his use of exempla that had come to him via friends or acquaintances, Engelhard's working methods were the same as Herbert's had been, and Caesarius' would be. It

[26] Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women', 1185n3.
[27] MBS Clm 13097 has been digitised, 'Botonis monachi Pruviningensis homilae (29) in Ezechielem BSB Clm 13097', *Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum, Digitale Bibliothek*, accessed Jan 8, 2021, https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb00113825?page=,1. Engelhard's collection begins on fol. 133v and runs to 167r. My thanks to the staff at Biblioteka Raczyńskich for sending me scans of Poznań Rkp. 173 once Covid meant travel was no longer possible.
[28] Newman, 'Real Men and Imaginary Women', 1185n3.
[29] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 199.
[30] All of his sources and the correspondences with other collections have been discussed by Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 55–61.
[31] 'Nichil horum quae legerim vel scripta conpererim scribo, sed quedam quae visu, plurima quae auditu didicerim.' Engelhard's dedication letter, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 134r.
[32] McGuire, 'Oral Sources', 167–245.

was in fact Conrad, with his reliance on written sources, who was unusual among the exempla collection authors studied in this thesis. Moreover, his use of original exempla shows that Engelhard was not attempting to communicate well-known Cistercian stories to the nuns. Instead, he selected exempla that would be most suitable for their formation. His collection was personal to him, and the exempla contained therein were specifically chosen for the nuns at Wechterswinkel.

Engelhard's collection is unusually short, being comprised of only thirty-four chapters, a letter of dedication, and an authorial apology. Its content is similar to Conrad's collection, since the majority of the exempla are about Cistercians, and most have male protagonists; the lay world is left largely unexplored. However, unlike Conrad, Engelhard did not use exempla from Clairvaux, and in fact a third of his exempla are set at Langheim itself. Although most take place within a monastery, or have a connection to a religious house, the range of subjects covered and plot-lines are numerous. The chapter titles give some sense of this diversity:

Engelhard's Collection

Letter of dedication
[I. The Eucharist]
1. Of the sacrament of the altar
2. Of he who through a vision was taught about the sacrament
3. About the blood of Christ that was seen by us in its real appearance
4. Of he who saw the blessed Mary on the altar
5. Of a shepherd who continually carried the eucharist with him who died by lightening
6. Of he who buried the eucharist

[II. Visions and Cistercian Examples]
7. That kings were seen in spirit by a monk and lay brother
8. Of he who saw a dragon
9. Of Bishop Pons and his monk
10. Of the monk Gottschalk
11. Of a girl who the blessed Mary called
12. Of he who died following a revelation
13. Of the young men who after death revealed themselves to their abbot
14. That blessed Mary was seen by a certain person

[III. Vices – behaviour to avoid]
15. Of an eager monk in the choir
16. Of a hot-tempered monk
17. Of he who killed himself and came back to life
18. Of he who demons killed
19. A defence of our order and the death of an evil brother
20. Of he who was submerged in the latrine

[IV. Engelhard's Virtuous Friends – examples to imitate]
21. Of he who saw all the orders before God in a vision
22. Of the deacon Volmar, a good man
23. Of Bertolf, a holy priest and monk
24. That among us there were and are holy men
25. Of Otto, a holy man
[V. Treatises on Monastic Virtues]
26. Of abstinence
27. Of chastity
28. Of justice
[VI. Miscellaneous Miracles]
29. Of Bishop Peter
30. Of a small child whom a fire did not burn
31. Of a usurer who sought advice from the bishop
32. Of the other Peter
33. Of two necromancers
34. Of a virgin discovered in our Order and now dead
Authorial apology

Similar to Herbert, Engelhard did not include explicit chronological or thematic divisions in his collection. Nevertheless, a discernible thematic arrangement of the exempla is clear, which reveals Engelhard's work in selecting exempla suitable for the moral formation of nuns. After the dedicatory letter to Abbess Mechthild and her nuns, Engelhard began his collection with a treatise about the sacrament of the altar, explaining its significance and linking it to his task; this heralds the start of the first section I have identified, featuring miracles of the eucharist:

> The sacrament of the altar is the foundation of works. For whether a structure has gold or silver or precious stones, it cannot stand but falls without Christ.... We will build on this, and will talk of things to be believed, that ought to be and can be proved. Still, it cannot be denied by human reason, because God testifies to it... The sacraments of the holy altar are those in which we can discern some things and trust in others[33]

Like the bread and wine becoming flesh and blood in a way that is not visible but is believed, so too should his audience see the miracles he presents them with as signs of divine intervention

[33] 'Sacramentum altaris fundamentum est operis. Nam christus utrusque sine quo non auri non argenti non lapidum preciosorum habet structura statum, sed casum... Super haec edificemus et nos dicturi de rebus quae credi et debent et possunt probari. Tamen humana ratione non possunt quas negare non est, quia Deus testis est... Altaris sacramenta sunt haec in quibus aliud cernimus atque aliud credimus.' c. 1, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 134r–134v.

and power, and use them to grow in Christ.[34] Since the sacrament of the eucharist is the foundation of religious works and duties [*fundamentum operis*], Engelhard placed these exempla first, and then built the rest of the moral and spiritual formation he offered to the nuns onto them. The nuns' spiritual lives should be founded on devotion to Christ, symbolised by the eucharist; the remainder of the collection provided moral formation to mould them into the kinds of individuals who could achieve salvation and union with God. Chapters 2–6 continue the theme of the eucharist, recounting examples of those whose faith in the eucharist was restored, confirmed or initiated through visions, and one about a lay person who mistreated the body of Christ by carrying a host wafer in his pocket at all times for protection.

The second section presents accounts of visionary experiences, predominantly experiences by Cistercian monks. In so doing, it offers many examples of Cistercian life, and, as with the version of the Reinaldus exemplum in the *Liber miraculorum*, Engelhard often included something of the biography and character of the visionary. Chapter 7 is about Gottschalk, a monk Engelhard knew at Langheim, who had a vision of monks and lay brothers as kings before God. His virtuous life and death are then recounted in chapter 10: he was so well-liked and respected that a fellow monk died with him so that he would not have to enter Heaven alone. Chapter 8 is an exemplum about a Cistercian monk who had left the monastery once to marry and have children, only to later return; when he decided to leave again, he was convinced to stay by a vision of Hell shown to him by the Virgin Mary, and did reform his behaviour. The next chapter is also about a Cistercian who wants to desert, but is persuaded by his abbot, Pons of Grandselve, to stay, so long as Pons acts as guarantor of his salvation. A vision confirms the salvation of Pons and his monk, and the virtues and characters of both are detailed. The only non-Cistercian exempla in this section is chapter 11, which is about a young woman who lived near Langheim and was preparing to be married: she had a vision in which she was called to Heaven by Mary to become one of her holy virgins and died shortly thereafter. Similar to the account of Gottschalk's life, chapter 12 tells the story of a pious lay brother who dies with a fellow monk, and chapter 13 is about two young monks who die together and later appear to their abbot in a vision to confirm their salvation. Chapter 14 is the exemplum about the vision of Mary and the harvesters explored in chapter one.

In all of these exempla, a vision either spurs an improvement in monastic life and devotion (cc. 8, 14) or confirms the virtues of an individual or the entire Cistercian Order (cc. 7, 9–13). In both cases, visions direct the audience to embody the example of the subject of the exempla. If a

[34] Newman's reading of this passage is the basis for her argument that Engelhard's collection shows his 'sacramental imagination', Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 101–104.

vision confirms the holiness of an individual, then this is a sign that the person is worthy of imitation. If experiencing a vision leads a monk to reform his character or grow in virtue, then, as chapter one argued, the audience should likewise form themselves according to his example and use the retelling of the vision as a spur for their own spiritual and moral advancement.

Following these examples of Cistercian life, the exempla in the next section, chapters 15–20, feature examples of bad behaviour to be avoided, starting with pride and anger and ending with fornication and suicide. Unusually, many of these misbehaving monks are Cistercians; the other collections often use exempla about lay people, clerics or monks from other orders to demonstrate the punishments awaiting those who sin. This third section is followed by one about the virtuous behaviour of men whom Engelhard had known. Chapter 21 is slightly out of place, and is more like the visions included in the second section: a monk new to Langheim is disappointed that the monastery does not appear to be the paradise on earth he had hoped it would be, but that night he has a vision in which he sees Cistercians at God's right hand in Heaven. Chapters 22–25 are about religious men whom Engelhard had known and whom he presented to his audience as exemplars of good conduct. The fifth section, chapters 26–28, are not exempla but brief explications of monastic virtues: abstinence, chastity and justice. They continue the theme of virtue. Sections two to five thus move from Cistercian virtues, to Cistercian vices, and back to Cistercian virtues again. The sections on examples to imitate bookend the examples to be avoided.

Four exempla in the latter half of the collection are about virtuous men that Engelhard had known personally. The first is about Volmar (c. 22), a deacon who raised Engelhard after his father's death: 'Accordingly, I owe to him affection for his kindness, he who after the death of my father became a father to me, fostering and raising me with every familial kindness.'[35] Engelhard here also admitted something of his fallibility as an author when he raised the possibility that his love for Volmar might cause him to exaggerate his merits, or at least his audience might suspect such a thing: 'I praise him sparingly lest it seem that through love I lie.'[36] The next exemplum is about Bertolf (c. 23), who had also been raised in Volmar's household and always lived according to monastic virtues, even before his entry into monastic life. Reinbart (c. 24) was a holy monk of Engelhard's acquaintance from Langheim, who had died when he was not yet thirty years old but whom the community still remembered for his virtues. Finally, there is Otto (c. 25), the prior at Langheim whom Engelhard claimed helped him to recover from a

[35] 'Siquidem affectum pro beneficio debeo illi qui post obitum patris pater orphanae factus est mihi, fovens et nutriens me in omni genere beneficii.' c. 22, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 155r.
[36] 'De volmero dicendum prius dignus ipse laudari sed laudem parcius ne videar amore mentitus.' c. 22, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 155r.

period of despair when he first entered the monastery. The three exempla about the monk Gottschalk (c. 4, 7 and 10) are also about a monk of Engelhard's acquaintance, and all took place at Langheim, as do many of his exempla. These exempla are all about men who had helped Engelhard in his spiritual progression, or whose example of sanctity he had seen at first hand, and he now offered them to the nuns as examples in virtue. The people and events that taught him were passed onto the nuns for their edification. This echoes Caesarius' writing of an exempla collection because he himself had been converted to the Cistercian life by a miracle story. Before they were authors of exempla collections, both men had experiences with learning by personal example or through an exemplary story. Prior to being transmitters of exempla, they were receivers; their collections show this negotiation between reception and production, and are inextricable from the lives and experiences of their authors.

The final section of the collection is more loosely joined together, but for the most part the exempla feature miracles that have consequences in the physical world, rather than visions. The life of the Cistercian Archbishop Peter of Tarentaise (d. 1174) and two miracles associated with him – including a baby saved miraculously from a fire – are told in chapters 29–31. These are followed by an exemplum about 'the other Peter', abbot of Igny (1169–79), and later Clairvaux (1179–86), and a monk of his who comes back to life to confess. Chapter 33 takes places in Spain, where two young men practiced necromancy together; one died and returned to warn the other to repent and join a Cistercian community, which he did. The final and by far the longest exemplum is the story of Brother Joseph, whose story would be retold later by Caesarius, among others.[37] Assigned female at birth, Joseph travelled to the Holy Land with his father as a child, only for his father to die. Joseph then began living as a boy, and after a series of unfortunate events made his way back to Europe, where he was wrongly accused of theft, and then hanged by the family of the real thief. Thanks to the intervention of an angel, he survived this ordeal, and later joined the male Cistercian community at Schönau, where he soon died. After death, the other monks believed his body to be female, and were amazed that such a holy person had been living in their midst.

Engelhard's collection thus had a clear structure. Building on a foundation of eucharistic miracles – the foundation of all good works in monastic life – Engelhard moved his audience between examples of good conduct to imitate and sinful behaviour to avoid. The collection ends with Engelhard's authorial *apologia,* in which he repeats much of what was in his dedication letter, and contrasts the positive and negative examples he has provided:

[37] For a discussion of the different versions of this story, see McGuire, 'Written Sources', 247–54, and Newman, 'Assigned Female at Death', 43–63.

> I have written this little work [*libellum*]... for the edification of the reader [*edificantio legenti*] and as the payment of a debt for the writer... joining together this little codex [*codicellum*] from lots of small pieces [*ex multi minutiis*].... Just as I was persuaded by charity to write, may it persuade [*persuadeat*] the readers to grow in faith, and to exhibit in themselves [*exhibeant in se*] those things which are virtuous and worthy of imitation [*digna imitatu*] which they revere in others. And we also joined them with stories of shameful deeds [*indigna*], to show that their outcome is without honour, and indeed is horrible, so that those who are not provoked by good deeds to do good things [*ad bonum bona non provocant*] may be recalled by bad deeds or even fear [*revocentur a malis vel terrore*].[38]

Engelhard's tone here, as signalled by his frequent use of the subjunctive, is hopeful; he wishes that the nuns, his readers, will be edified by the small volume [*libellum, codicellum*] that he has assembled from many fragments. Newman has argued that the eucharistic miracles are they key to reading the entire collection: all the exempla are about signs of divine power, discerning and knowing the truth, and the sacramental qualities of everyday objects and behaviours.[39] But Engelhard described the sacrament of the eucharist as the *foundation* of all works, and these exempla are only the starting point of his collection. As expressed in his *apologia*, the moral and spiritual formation offered by the collection relies on the opposition of those deeds and people that are worthy [*digna*] and so should be imitated, and those that are shameful or unworthy [*indigna*] and so should terrify the reader. This reflects the structure of the central sections of the collection, which move from examples to imitate, to those to avoid, and back to virtuous examples. This formation is reiterated in the *apologia* through the opposition of 'bona provocant' and 'malis revocentur', both verbs from a common root, *vocare*. Engelhard's exempla were persuasive speech acts; he hoped that his audience would be provoked into doing good by the example of good people, whose example they should then imitate and embody, or recalled from their own sin through fear of punishment, again after being presented with the example of other sinners. These exempla did not illustrate simple moral lessons, but rather presented the examples

[38] 'Libellum hoc scripserim in quo Dei quaesita sit gloria edificantio legenti et veniae remuneratio scribentis... ex multis minutiis codicellum istum conpingens... eadem [caritas] mihi persuasit ut scriberem, persuadeat et legentibus ut adhibeant fidem, et quae honesta sunt horum dignaque imitatu venerentur in aliis, exhibeant in se ipsis. Porro et indigna covinximus ostendentes finem illae sine honore ceterim cum horrore, ut quos ad bonum bona non provocant revocentur a malis vel terrore.' Engelhard's *apologia*, MBS Clm 13097, fol. 167r.
[39] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 102–29, 150, 157, 159, 187–88.

of individuals for the nuns to embody, so that they could exhibit in themselves [*exhibeant in se*] the behaviours and virtues of other Cistercians. The remainder of this chapter explores the examples offered to the nuns and abbess, after first working to construct a picture of them as Engelhard's audience.

Engelhard and the Nuns of Wechterswinkel

Although not unique as a Cistercian man writing to a female house, Engelhard's collection is the only exempla collection to have been written for Cistercian nuns. This chapter seeks to explore the collection through this gendered lens, paying close attention for the first time to Engelhard's dedication letter, addressed to Abbess Mechthild and her nuns. This section sets out the historiographical debate around women in the Cistercian Order – which will be reflected on using the evidence of the collection in the conclusion – and the relationships between Engelhard and the nuns of Wechterswinkel. Much of this latter ground has been covered by Newman, but it is important context for the argument of this chapter and so needs to be reiterated. I then go further in contextualising Engelhard's collection against other German texts of spiritual formation for religious women, and construct a historical picture of Abbess Mechthild and the kind of women who were nuns at Wechterswinkel, before exploring the way Engelhard constructed his female audience in his dedication letter, and arguing that, since the collection was addressed to them, it must be read with close attention to the ways Engelhard wrote for his female audience.

Historians have long considered the Cistercians institutionally hostile to women, based on rulings from the General Chapter in the early to mid-thirteenth century. In recent decades, as noted above, this view has been reconsidered, and the communities of religious women who followed Cistercian practices are being written into our histories of the Order, from its earliest decades.[40] Jully, a priory founded from Molesme, seemingly followed Cistercian customs even if their organisation followed the Cluniac model (with a prioress instead of an abbess); Bernard's sister entered the house in 1133.[41] Tart Abbey, located only a few miles from Cîteaux, was reputed to have been founded by Stephen Harding, and a bull from 1147 shows that the women there followed Cistercian customs. Tart founded several daughter-houses, all of which likewise took the Rule and the *Carta caritatis* as the model for their way of life, and they were visited by

[40] See, for example, the numerous essays in Nichols and Shank, OCSO, eds. *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women.* See also note 15 above.
[41] Jean de la Croix Bouton, OCSO, 'The Life of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Nuns of Cîteaux', in *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women*, 14–15; Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 88.

the abbess of Tart, with oversight from the abbot of Cîteaux.[42] A congregation of Spanish female communities grew up after the foundation of the royal abbey of Las Huelgas in 1181, alongside numerous Cistercian female houses across Europe.[43] While few of the twelfth-century communities of Cistercian women had official authorisation from the General Chapter, in recent years historians have argued that to use this criterion for the inclusion of female communities in the twelfth century would be to apply thirteenth century standards retroactively, and to hold female houses to a higher standard than their male counterparts – male houses founded in the same period also lacked such permissions, because they were not necessary at this point in the Order's history.[44]

One of the earliest statutes taken to indicate a Cistercian desire to distance themselves from religious women is from 1134, and states that abbots should not consecrate nuns. This is, however, as Brigitte Degler-Spengler has argued, evidence that abbots were interacting with nuns from the early decades of the twelfth century, and that the General Chapter wished to regulate this involvement, perhaps so as not to antagonise local bishops.[45] The majority of the other statutes that historians have argued show hostility to women come from the thirteenth century, after Engelhard's interactions with the Wechterswinkel nuns. In 1213 the General Chapter sought to put existing women's houses under the control of Cistercian abbots; in 1218 and again in 1219 they ordered the total enclosure of all nuns; in 1220 they reiterated that unenclosed houses should leave the Order, and banned the incorporation of any new houses; in 1228 it was ordered that no new houses of Cistercian nuns should be founded.[46] As Degler-Spengler argues, rather than demonstrating hostility to nuns, these statutes represent a desire only to incorporate certain kinds of houses (with sufficient buildings and wealth for enclosure), rather than a total ban, and reflect a need to regulate the influx of women.[47] Jacques de Vitry, writing around 1220 in his *Historia occidentalis*, claimed that 'The religious movement of women in the Cistercian Order increased to infinity like the stars of heaven' in the early thirteenth century.[48] There were, for example, an estimated 15 Cistercian nunneries in Germany in the twelfth century; by 1250 there

[42] Croix Bouton, 'Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Nuns of Cîteaux', 15–16; Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 88–91; Berman, 'Twelfth-Century Cistercian Nuns', 219.
[43] Croix Bouton, 'Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Nuns of Cîteaux', 16; Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 94.
[44] Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 88–96; Berman, 'Twelfth-Century Cistercian Nuns', 221–34; Berman, *White Nuns*, 10–17.
[45] Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 89.
[46] Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 98–101. The relevant statutes are *Statuta* vol. I, 405 (1213: 3), 502 (1218: 84), 505 (1219: 12), 517 (1220: 4); *Statuta* vol. II, 67–68 (1228: 12, 15–16).
[47] Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 102–105.
[48] Elizabeth Freeman, 'Nuns', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, 102; John Frederick Hinnebusch ed., *The 'Historia Occidentalis' of Jacques de Vitry: A Critical Edition* (Fribourg: Fribourg University Press, 1972), 117.

were 220, and these houses and others across Europe needed to be regulated.[49] Recent studies of individual houses or localities have shown that the ban on new foundations went unheeded, and paint a picture of both the desire of women to become Cistercians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the wishes of churchmen and patrons to institutionalise and regularise houses of religious women through incorporation into the structures of the Order.[50]

If the historiography of Cistercian women has until recently been characterised by a projection backwards of the attitude of the General Chapter in the thirteenth century, Engelhard's collection provides a window onto interactions between Cistercian men and women in the period before these rulings. It also throws light on the question of Cistercian nuns from a different angle: not their legal incorporation, but their inclusion in the Cistercian culture of teaching by example.

Engelhard sent his collection to the nuns sometime in the last decade of the twelfth century, as Newman has argued, although she does not advance a more specific date.[51] The final exemplum in his collection tells the story of the transgender monk Joseph, including his death; he died on 20th April 1188, providing the earliest date at which Engelhard could have finished writing.[52] Since his dedication letter was addressed to abbess 'M', most likely the second abbess, Mechthild, whose gravestone indicates she died in 1200, the collection must have been completed and sent in the last decade of the twelfth century.[53] It does however seems likely that it was closer to 1190 than 1200. Engelhard sent an early draft of his collection to Erbo, abbot of the Benedictine house of Prüfening, who died in 1188; several of their (sadly undated) letters to one another survive.[54] In the first surviving first letter, Engelhard asked Erbo to send the collection back to him, since his abbot and the abbot of Morimond did not wish his little book to be spread outside of the Order (showing that the nuns were considered by the abbots to be a part of the Order).[55] As Erbo and Brother Joseph died in the same year, the version of the

[49] Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 99.
[50] These studies span Europe. For France, especially the south, see Berman, *White Nuns,* and Berman*, Cistercian Evolution*, especially chapter 4; for Flanders, Erin L. Jordan, 'Gender Concerns: Monks, Nuns, and Patronage of the Cistercian Order in Thirteenth-Century Flanders and Hainaut', *Speculum* 87, no. 1 (2012): 62–94; for Champagne, Lester, *Creating Cistercian Nuns*; for Switzerland, Degler-Spengler, 'Incorporation of Cistercian Nuns', 106–117; for Germany, Franz J. Felten, 'Zisterzienserinnen in Deutschland: Beobachtungen und Überlegungen zu Ausbreitung und Ordenszugehörigkeit', in *Unaimité et diversité cisterciennes: Filiations—réseaux—relectures de XIIe au XVIIe siècle*, ed. Nicole Bouter (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2000), 345–400; for Castille, Ghislain Baury, *Les religieuses de Castille: Patronage aristocratique et ordre cistercien: XIIe–XIIIe siècles* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires, 2021).
[51] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 200.
[52] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 200.
[53] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 38–40.
[54] Griesser, 'Engelhard und Abt Erbo', 55–73; Newman *Cistercian Stories*, 203–209.
[55] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 24. 'Abbas meus hoc retulit michi postulans libellum quem deferret; respondi hunc aberi a vobis; quem, rogo, ut per presentium latorem remittatis.' Griesser, 'Engelhard und Abt Erbo', 26.

collection that Engelhard sent to Erbo likely did not include this final exemplum, but may well have been substantially the same; in effect, Erbo received a first draft of the collection Engelhard was preparing the convent.[56] Soon after Joseph's death, Engelhard would have added the story of his life and sent it to the nuns. Engelhard was thus probably writing in the mid- to late-1180s, and sent the collection to Wechterswinkel *c.* 1190.

Little is known about Engelhard's life. A number of fires in the late medieval and early modern periods destroyed documents at Langheim, including any further evidence that may have existed about Engelhard, and his collection provides scant biographical clues.[57] In one of his exempla (c. 23) he stated that he had been born in Bamberg, the nearest large town to Langheim Abbey, and that after his father died, he had been raised in Bamberg by Volmar, a deacon. Newman has found evidence of a Volmar in charters from the bishops of Bamberg, and the dates suggest Engelhard was born in the 1140s or 1150s.[58] He was possibly educated at the cathedral school, and seems to have spent most of his adult life at Langheim – chapter 25 of his collection talks of his entry into the abbey as a young man. He likely entered in the 1160s or 1170s, at the start of a period of growth for the monastery. He must have been ordained, since in the prologue to Mechthild's *vita* and in a letter he wrote to Abbot Herman of Ebrach sometime between 1190 and 1207 he stated that he had once been described as an abbot in Austria, but no clues as to which abbey or when survive, or indeed why he returned to Langheim.[59] Newman has suggested that his election to the abbacy may have been illegitimate and swiftly overturned by the General Chapter, but there is only circumstantial evidence to support this idea. It does seem unlikely, if this were the case, that he would clarify that he had once been called abbot in his hagiography; perhaps he simply found the office too demanding and desired a return to Langheim. His address of the collection to Abbess Mechthild, discussed below, is especially intriguing given his own, albeit brief, tenure as abbot. The date of his death is unknown.

The abbey of Langheim was founded in 1132, as a daughter-house of Ebrach.[60] Ebrach had been founded in 1127, and lay halfway between the cities of Würzburg and Bamberg. It was a daughter-house of Morimond, meaning that Engelhard's collection is the only one studied in this thesis not to be written at a Clairvaux-affiliated house. The first abbot of Langheim, Adam (d. 1180), likely came from Morimond via Ebrach, and visitations at Langheim were conducted by the abbots of Ebrach. Langheim lies nearly 40 miles from Ebrach, closer to Bamberg, and

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[56] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 24.
[57] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 18.
[58] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 21.
[59] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 24–25.
[60] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 23. The discussion of Langheim, Ebrach and Wechterswinkel draws substantially on her work.

was likely founded with support from Bishop Otto of Bamberg (d. 1139); later in the twelfth century the powerful Andechs-Merania family would become important patrons. They provide a link between Engelhard and German female religiosity, since several female saints of the period came from the family: Mechthild of Diessen, whose *vita* Engelhard would write; her sister St Euphemia of Altonmünster (d. 1180); their grand-niece St Hedwig of Silesia (d. 1243), and Hedwig's niece, St Elizabeth of Hungary (d. 1231).[61] Engelhard wrote Mechthild's life sometime around 1200 and addressed it to an unknown countess; it is possible that the family themselves requested he write it, and so he may have been known as someone interested in the lives of religious women.[62]

Ebrach Abbey provides a point of connection between Engelhard and the Wechterswinkel nuns. Wechterswinkel has often been called the oldest female Cistercian house in Germany.[63] It was founded sometime before 1140 by the bishop of Würzburg, but no record of its affiliation to the Cistercian Order survives until a papal bull of 1241.[64] Nevertheless, as Newman has shown, two communities founded from Wechterswinkel in the twelfth century did follow Cistercian customs, and there is evidence that the nuns followed Cistercian rules from the middle of the century, including their ownership of granges worked by lay brothers and the dedication of the abbey to the Virgin Mary in 1144. Responsibility for their spiritual care lay with the Bishop of Würzburg, and in the late thirteenth century it was formally linked to the Cistercian abbey of Bildhausen, another Ebrach daughter. However, the abbot of Ebrach appears on charters from Wechterswinkel as early as the last decades of the twelfth century; in 1181 an Engelhard is even recorded on a charter alongside the abbot.[65] Our Engelhard may have been a member of the party that accompanied the abbot to the women's house on this or another occasion, meeting Abbess Mechthild and her nuns and receiving their help and kindness, and providing the inspiration for his collection.

Engelhard's collection is unusual when viewed from the perspective of the other Cistercian exempla collections, which were all written for monks; when viewed through the lens of female religiosity in his contemporary Germany it is less anomalous. There was a huge rise in female monasticism in Germany from the late eleventh century, and many of these newly established or reformed communities welcomed both men and women – Diessen, the community that St

[61] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 29–32.
[62] Newman argues that it was written at the family's request, Newman, *Cistercian Stories,* 32–33; Lyon notes that the identity of the unnamed countess who commissioned the work is unknown, and concedes only that she might have known Engelhard through the Andechs family, Lyon, *Noble Lives*, 166–67.
[63] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 38.
[64] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 38–40.
[65] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 38–40.

Mechthild headed, was an Augustinian community that housed both genders.[66] It was in this environment that texts of spiritual and moral instruction were written for nuns and the men who ministered to their spiritual needs, the most well-known being the *Speculum virginum,* written in Germany by a monk from Hirsau.[67] It was from Hirsau, a Benedictine abbey on the northern edge of the Black Forest mountain range, that Cluniac-style reforms spread throughout German-speaking lands in the late eleventh century, after William of Hirsau sent a number of his monks to Cluny to learn their customs and rule. Through Bishop Otto of Bamberg, who founded monasteries following the customs of Hirsau as well as Cistercian houses, Engelhard was connected to such communities.[68] Prüfening, where Erbo was abbot, was also a Hirsau-affiliated house.

The concerns of the Hirsau reformers, and in particular their belief that women were as able as men to follow a strict religious life, are reflected in the *Speculum virginum*.[69] This text, all known manuscripts of which come from the libraries of male communities, acted as an instruction manual for religious men involved in the *cura monialium*. Many male Cistercian communities read and owned this text – one copy, now in the British Library (BL Arundel 44) belonged to Conrad's house, Eberbach, by the late twelfth century, reflecting the responsibility for communities of women they had acquired.[70] Through a dialogue between Peregrinus, a male instructor, and Theodora, a nun and virgin, it explores the virgin's quest for moral perfection and the value of her physical virginity.[71] It has been suggested that it was written to be delivered aloud by a male preacher to groups of women; even if nuns did not read it, they would have heard and been familiar with it, as were the men who ministered to their spiritual needs.[72] There are echoes in the letter of dedication, addressed to 'the holy virgins N and N' of Engelhard's claim to have a mutual relationship with the nuns of Wechterswinkel: 'since love is never idle, I have sent you a little book as a kind of token of mutual love.'[73] Engelhard's collection must be contextualised then not only as a Cistercian exempla collection, but as another example of the contemporary literature of spiritual formation written by men for nuns, particularly in Germany.

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[66] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 35–36.
[67] See the essays in Mews, ed., *Listen, Daughter*. For an edition of the Latin text, see Jutta Seyfarth, ed., *Speculum virginum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999).
[68] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 31.
[69] Mews; 'Virginity, Theology and Pedagogy', 15–40; Hotchin, 'Female Religious Life', 59–83.
[70] Constant J. Mews, 'Introduction', in *Listen, Daughter*, 3–5.
[71] Mews, 'Virginity, Theology, and Pedagogy', 15–40.
[72] Morgan Powell, 'The *Speculum virginum* and the Audio-Visual Poetics of Women's Religious Instruction', in *Listen, Daughter*, 111–35.
[73] Barbara Newman trans., '*Speculum virginum*: Selected Excerpts', in *Listen Daughter*, 269–70. 'Verum quia amor numquam ociosus est, misi uobis libellum quoddam mutui amoris insigne'. *Speculum virginum*, epistula.

Evidence also exists as to what religious women themselves thought of their educational and formative needs, which must be considered when reconstructing Engelhard's audience. An extraordinary manuscript showing nuns' conceptions of their educational needs was prepared by the abbess of the Augustinian monastery of Hohenbourg late in the twelfth century. The *Hortus deliciarum* is a compilation of textual extracts and images woven together into an explication of salvation history. As a creation by the abbess, Herrard, it shows a female monastic leader taking control of the education and spiritual formation of her nuns.[74] It also demonstrates the high level of education of some German nuns, and their involvement in the spiritual and intellectual currents of the twelfth century.

Herrard's approach to education and formation was not the only one advocated by twelfth-century religious women. The education Herrard offered in the *Hortus deliciarum* taught her canonesses what theologians had to say regarding moral development.[75] She relied on the authority of these thinkers and philosophers, and stands in stark contrast to the mystical, charismatic approach of a figure like Hildegard of Bingen. Hildegard's teaching, as Carolyn Muessig has argued in her comparison of the two women, revolved around her prophetic abilities; her didactic authority came from God.[76] The two women represent different styles of education in twelfth-century Germany – intellectual versus charismatic – and also the varying needs of canonesses and nuns. A divide existed not just between what men thought nuns needed to learn, and what the women themselves thought; religious women had varying opinions too.

Although the writings of Herrard or Hildegund say nothing of the community at Wechterswinkel, they demonstrate the active involvement of twelfth-century German nuns in their own spiritual formation: they undercut one-dimensional ideas of female spirituality as purely mystical, and are a welcome reminder, as Griffiths agues, that the literature men produced for women did not always represent the interests of nuns themselves.[77] One of the considerations of this chapter is the extent to which the collection is a reflection of Engelhard's thoughts on the education and formation of nuns, or whether, as a text for women, it is an example of 'women's literary culture' that allows us to access the spirituality and mentalities of the nuns themselves.[78] This section has explored the context in which Engelhard wrote his formative text for the Wechterswinkel nuns, with particular attention paid to the interactions

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[74] Fiona J. Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights: Reform and Renaissance for Women in the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 1–23.
[75] Carolyn Muessig, 'Learning and Mentoring in the Twelfth Century: Hildegard of Bingen and Herrard of Landsberg', in *Medieval Monastic Education*, 99.
[76] Muessig, 'Hildegard and Herrard', 99.
[77] Griffiths, *Garden of Delights*, 213–23.
[78] Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*, 1; Kathryn Maude, *Addressing Women in Early Medieval Religious Texts* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021), 3–6.

between religious men and women in this period. I now turn to what we know specifically of Engelhard's audience, and what we can learn about the nuns, his relationship with them, and the framing of his collection from his letter of dedication.

Engelhard's Address to Mechthild and her Nuns

Engelhard's collection begins with a dedication letter to Abbess 'M' and her nuns, who Newman argues is most likely Mechthild, the second abbess.[79] The dedication letter is not only unusual because of the gender of the addressees; so is the fact that the collection is prefaced with a letter at all. Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* has no prologue or introduction, it simply starts with the exemplum of Reinaldus and the Virgin. The *Exordium magnum* begins with a prologue in verse, explaining Conrad's intentions, but it is addressed to no one in particular, simply a general audience of Cistercian monks. Similarly, the prologue to the *Dialogus miraculorum* tells the reader why Caesarius wrote this collection, why he structured it as he did, and what he hopes they will gain from it, but it is not addressed to any one person or abbey. Engelhard's collection is thus unique in being created for a specific community. His intended audience can be reconstructed, both from the evidence of the letter and external sources, and the spiritual and moral formation offered by Engelhard understood through the lens of this audience.

Beginning with what we know of the nuns from other sources, what little is known of Mechthild suggests she was an educated woman. An undated letter that she wrote to Hildegard of Bingen survives, in which she begs Hildegard to serve as protector of the community at Wechterswinkel: 'Therefore, sweet mother, we implore your sanctity with all the affection of our heart to accept us as your children and to deign to foster us with the protection of your holy prayers.'[80] A letter from Hildegard to an unknown community of nuns may even constitute her reply:

> 'my spirit rejoices over your community as if I were present with you.
> Now, therefore, report to your Bridegroom and your Comforter
> regarding me and my sisters, so that we may gather together in that place

[79] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 40. Griesser was sure that Mechthild could not be 'abbess M', since records of her as abbess exist only from 1155 until 1176 (Griesser, 'Engelhard von Langheim', 59). However, the survival of records from Wechterswinkel can be described as patchy at best, and, as per Newman, her gravestone indicates she did not die until 1200, meaning that she is the most likely candidate to be 'M'.

[80] Translated in Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman trans. and eds., *The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, vol. III (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 31–32 (letter 231).

> where "winter is now past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers have appeared".'[81]

As well as being educated enough to compose such a letter,[82] Mechthild likely came from a noble family: studies of medieval German Cistercian nuns have shown that most of them came from the lower nobility, or from wealthy urban families.[83] Another of Hildegard's letters reveals something of the kind of women who made their home at Wechterswinkel: after the death of her husband, Count Hermann, in 1155, Gertrude von Stahleck, sister of King Conrad III and aunt to Frederick Barbarossa, entered Wechterswinkel. However, she seems not to have found the place to her liking, and Hildegard sent her two letters advising her on what to do.[84] In addressing his collection to Mechthild and her nuns, Engelhard was likely writing to an educated noblewoman who corresponded with one of the leading religious figures of her day, and a convent of nuns with aristocratic or even royal backgrounds. This collection does not only represent interaction across gender lines, but potentially across class lines too.

Engelhard's dedicatory prologue plays with both these gendered and class distinctions:

> To the venerable and most-loved lady and mother [*dominae et matri*] in Christ, M[echthild], abbess at Wechterswinkel, and to the sacred convent, loved by God, of her daughters [*filiarum eius*], [greetings from] E[ngelhard], both a servant and son to them [*ipsarum servus et filius*], but a son more [*sed filii amplius*]. I owe thanks for your kindness, which I wished to repay if it was granted to me to do so... What then should I render to my lady [*dominae meae*] for all that she has rendered to me? What [should I render] to her most pious daughters [*filiabus eius sanctissimis*] for the sweetness of their remarkable grace?... You most gladly hear honest events of piety that edify... In this way I gave my work to serve you [*servire vobis*], to write down that which I heard which might

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[81] Baird and Ehrman, *The Letters of Hildegard*, 34–35 (letter 235).
[82] Alison Beach's work on German nuns as scribes, and on their letters, shows the levels of education and literacy of German nuns in the twelfth century, Alison I. Beach, 'Voices from a Distant Land: Fragments of a Twelfth-Century Nuns' Letter Collection', *Speculum* 77, no. 1 (2002): 34–54; Alison I. Beach, *Women as Scribes: Book Production and Monastic Reform in Twelfth-Century Bavaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Joan Ferrante has also suggested that written correspondence was widespread among women religious in medieval Europe, Joan M. Ferrante, *To the Glory of Her Sex: Women's Roles in the Composition of Medieval Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 18.
[83] John Freed, 'Urban Development and the "Cura Monialium" in Thirteenth-Century Germany', *Viator* 3 (1972): 317–320.
[84] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 39; Baird and Ehrman, *The Letters of Hildegard*, 32–33 (letters 232 and 233).

> be useful... I do not seek praise, nor do I worry about your opprobrium in this; I will love the feeling provided that I edify [*aedificem*] or certainly enrich the hearts of the readers. How much we have heard and learnt, and how much of what our fathers have reported to us, would have been destroyed by forgetfulness – and still may be forgotten – if it were not recorded and pinned down with a pen?[85]

Through the terms used to describe the nuns and himself, Engelhard constructed a relationship with the nuns that was intimate and familial: Mechthild was mother-abbess, the nuns her daughters, and Engelhard their servant and son. These terms of address are unusual when compared to surviving examples of Cistercian men writing to women: the English Cistercian John Godard, writing in the mid-thirteenth century to the abbess of Tarant abbey, referred to her as 'sister', despite her senior position within her own abbey, and John of Hoyland's mid-twelfth century sermons to nuns address them as 'daughters'.[86] In her work on addresses to women in early medieval religious texts, Kathryn Maude argues that by addressing someone – or a group of women – in a text, authors claimed and gave shape and meaning to the relationship between themselves and their addressees.[87] In this dedication, Engelhard did not construct a didactic relationship in which he was an authority figure and the nuns his inferiors; his provision of exempla was a service done to them. This language of service, and rendering what is owed, is courtly, appropriate for an address to the nuns of Wechterswinkel, likely aristocratic women before they entered the convent. The courtly and romantic aspects of Engelhard's collection will be explored further later, but it bears noting that this tone is set in the dedication letter.

Engelhard described in this letter a relationship with the Wechterswinkel nuns that was based on reciprocal acts: he sent them the collection in return for their favour and kindnesses. As he was writing directly to the nuns, the possibility that they had no prior relationship with Engelhard seems remote – he likely does not specify the kindness they did him because to do so in a letter to them was unnecessary. He was not a Cistercian monk writing to a nearby convent

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[85] 'Dominae et matri suae, M., venerabili atque amabili in christo, abbatissae in weterswink, sanctoque ac Deo dilecto conventui filiarum eius, E., ipsarum servus et filius debitum utriusque sed filii amplius. Gratias pro gratia debeo, quas vellem persolvere si daretur posse... Quid igitur retribuam dominae meae pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Quid filiabus eius sanctissimis pro dulcedine gratiae singularius... Res honestas libentas auditis maxime quod edificat, quodque veritas cum narrantis auctoritate comendat. Dedi operam hoc modo servire vobis, scribere quod audivi quodque auditu sit utile... Laudem non quaero non curo calumpniam vestrum in his; venerabor affectum dum modo aedificem vel certe laetificem corda legentium. Quanta audivimus et cognovimus ea et patres nostri annuntiaverunt nobis, quae male deleret oblivio, obliviscenda tamen si non reciperentur et affigerentur stilo?' Engelhard's dedication letter, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 133v–134r.

[86] Freeman, 'Cistercian Monk Writes to a Cistercian Nun', 332; Freeman, 'Sermons for Nuns', 273.

[87] Maude, *Addressing Women*, 2.

of nuns for whom he had institutional responsibility; the prologue demonstrates an emotional and amicable connection between them, and a mutuality to their interactions. Spiritual friendships between religious men and women in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been much studied, to the extent that Dyan Elliott has even coined a term for it: 'heteroasceticism'.[88] These celibate friendships are understood to have provided religious men and women with mutual spiritual support, as well as some of the emotional content of a carnal marriage. In this way, monastic structures and relationships could parallel secular ones: the nun as bride of Christ, for example, with her monk-friend as *paranymphus* – bridesman, or friend of the bridegroom.[89] In his use of familial terms, and considering the kindnesses he received from the nuns, Engelhard's relationship with them as constructed in this letter mimics many of the tropes seen in these spiritual friendships. However, the courtly language of service he used alongside familial terms gives it a different nuance. While they were all part of the Cistercian family, and so Mechthild could be mother-abbess to her own nuns and Engelhard too, Engelhard does not seem to have been born into an exalted family. He occupied a very different social position to the abbess, who corresponded with respected contemporary mystics and consorted with royal women in the convent. There is deference here based not on the nuns' superior holiness or mysticism (a dynamic sometimes seen when men addressed religious women, especially mystics) but an awareness of their social status and high birth.

Nevertheless, Mechthild had not commissioned Engelhard to write this exempla collection, at least according to the evidence of his dedication letter. Is Engelhard's collection then an example of a monk providing unasked-for spiritual advice to a community of women? Maude argues that, along with the claim of intimate knowledge that a direct textual address such as this made, writing for a woman or group of women forced medieval authors to imagine them specifically, in so doing recognising them as religious subjects.[90] Engelhard's prologue demonstrates both his knowledge of the nuns and that his collection was written with them in mind. The collection was a service or offering rendered to the nuns, supposedly written because Engelhard knew that the convent loved to hear examples of edifying events. Perhaps this was part of the moral education that Mechthild herself offered to her nuns, prompting Engelhard's composition of the collection for them. The prologue to the *Dialogus miraculorum*, for example, as

[88] Dyan Elliott, *The Bride of Christ Goes to Hell: Metaphor and Embodiment in the Lives of Pious Women, 200–1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 150–64. See also McGuire, 'Holy Women and Monks', 351–72, and Griffiths, *Nuns' Priests' Tales*, 141–75. Coakley has examined this dynamic from the perspective of men who collaborated with female saints on their *vitae* and other religious writings, John W. Coakley, *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
[89] Griffiths, *Nuns' Priests' Tales*, 178.
[90] Maude, *Addressing Women*, 2–8.

well as passages about the novice master at Clairvaux in the *Liber miraculorum*, show that novices in Cistercian abbeys were frequently taught through the telling of exempla, and Mechthild may have taught her nuns in a similar fashion.[91] In the dedication letter, Engelhard both claimed knowledge of the nuns and sketched out a portrait of them, as a community who were kind and pious, who had some kind of relationship with Engelhard and perhaps other Cistercian men, and who enjoyed learning through exemplary narratives. Far from imposing a didactic text on them, the claim of this letter is that he was offering them something they wanted.

The other exempla collections construct a general audience – all Cistercian monks, or Cistercian novices in particular, in the case of the *Dialogus miraculorum* – and we can read them with this imagined audience in mind, and study how the authors used and manipulated their readers' knowledge and expectations. With Engelhard's collection, a named woman and the community at Wechterswinkel were addressed and imagined in the prologue, and so his collection can be read through this prism, to understand the exempla he selected and the didactic strategies he employed to communicate his vision of appropriate conduct for Cistercian nuns. As Catherine Sanok has argued in relation to saints' lives, medieval writers assumed women read and interpreted these *vitae* as women, making gender a salient category of analysis for modern scholars.[92] This means that a gendered lens not only can be applied to an analysis of this collection, but is crucial to our understanding of it, since Engelhard imagined an audience of women as he wrote.

If the dedication letter encourages us to think of this as a collection for religious women, it also suggests a more specific way to read it, since there are two distinct audiences of women addressed: firstly, Mechthild as abbess, and, secondly, the ordinary nuns. The second half of this chapter thus explores Engelhard's collection through the prism of this dedication letter. In the following section I read Engelhard's collection against the other Cistercian collections, asking whether there were gendered differences in the moral lessons offered to the nuns, and situating the collection within the literature of spiritual formation written for women in this period. The final section then considers whether this collection contained guidance for Mechthild in her responsible position as abbess, again placing it within the wider context of the role of abbess in

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[91] 'When it was my duty, in my responsible post, to recite to the novices some of the events that have been miraculously wrought within our Order in our own time, and that still occur daily, I was asked with much insistence by certain people to perpetuate them in writing.' *Dialogus miraculorum*, prologue. See note 1 in chapter one of this thesis for the Latin.

[92] Catherine Sanok, *Her Life Historical: Exemplarity and Female Saints' Lives in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), ix-xiv and 24–32. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne has also researched how male writers made saints' lives relevant to women, addressing social practices and contemporary issues, Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'Saints' Lives and the Female Reader', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 27, no. 4 (1991): 314–32.

the twelfth century, and the descriptions of abbatial qualities offered by normative texts like the Rule.

Turning Women into Nuns: Moral Lessons in Engelhard's Exempla

Newman has argued that Engelhard's collection shows his belief that Cistercian men and women should share religious practices and spiritual development.[93] In asking the nuns to learn from exempla about monks, he assumed that monks and nuns could and would learn the same things from them.[94] This analysis raises several questions. Firstly, in the exemplum about Joseph, Engelhard said that women should wonder at the story, but that he was an example for men; so were the nuns supposed to follow the examples of men in the same way as monks?[95] Secondly, thinking about the totality of the collection, is it true that Engelhard included all of the same kinds of exempla as did the authors of the male exempla collections, or were specific examples selected for the nuns? Herbert's collection contained numerous stories that could be used in a preaching tour like that undertaken by Henry of Marcy in 1178 – enclosed nuns would not be working in the world, and so it seems natural that they might be offered different stories. What themes predominate in his moral lessons for nuns, and what vision of female religious life is constructed? This section and the next argue for a gendered crafting of the collection and the moral and spiritual formation it offered. They explore Engelhard's moral lessons for the nuns through a comparison with the other Cistercian collections, as well as texts of spiritual formation for women, written by men, like the *Speculum virginum*, and other exemplary genres read by women, such as saints' lives. A comparison with the male exempla collections alongside the best-known text written to aid the religious formation of German nuns will enable a full examination of the gender-specific education Engelhard offered in his collection.

Teaching by Example: Virtuous Cistercian Men

Engelhard offered the nuns examples of the men who had inspired him – Gottschalk (cc. 4, 7, 10), Volmar (c. 22), Bertholf (c. 23), Reinbart (c. 24) and Otto (c. 25) – as well as other virtuous Cistercians like Abbot Pons and his monk (c. 9) and Peter of Igny (c. 32). It is with these stories that we find the most support for Newman's argument that Engelhard thought the same stories could teach monks and nuns, and so I will consider these first before exploring the ways in which Engelhard's collection differs from those for a male audience.

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[93] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 2.
[94] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 42.
[95] 'Velim haec miraculo feminis, viris exemplo.' c. 34, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 166v.

As explored above, some of these exempla appear early in the collection, in the section on visions, and some come after the section on vices. The middle section, which includes warnings against bad behaviour and sinfulness, is bookended by these examples of virtuous Cistercian conduct. The example of Reinbart is typical of these. Engelhard described him as remembered and celebrated by everyone in his community; he was already an edifying example to the monks of Langheim when Engelhard offered his story to the nuns. Reinbart's qualities were described in detail:

> Who was kinder [*benignius*] than our Reinbart, who never refused anything?... It was customary for him to give bountifully with sweetness, to show compassion with cheerfulness, so that he himself was happier [*laetior*] when he had given than when he had received. Nor was he only blessed in this. He had a peace-making tongue, to such an extent that he would often drink another's poisonous disparagement without it harming him... He was also chaste, so that he told me after the first encounter with the enemy in which he evaded him, victorious, he felt nothing carnal in his body, and with blessed Job he made a covenant with his eyes that he would not even think about young maidens.[96]

In this exemplum, Engelhard described Reinbart's virtues and character with reference to his inner self. He was kind, and so he never refused any request; he was made happier by giving to others; his inner self was not changed by the disparagement of others and so he could make peace; he felt nothing carnal, and did not even think of young maidens. The way he thought and felt are foregrounded, and are shown to be the foundation of how he behaved: being generous to others, making peace, not sinning carnally. As with the exemplum discussed in chapter one of this thesis, it was not simply the imitable behaviour of a past Cistercian that was offered to the nuns, but the example of the person in their entirety. In following Reinbart's example, the nuns had to 'exhibit in themselves' his qualities, which entailed thinking and being like him: feeling compassion and cheerfulness, being happy when serving others, feeling nothing carnal, not thinking of sexual temptations. Having absorbed his inner self, the description of Reinbart's

[96] 'Quid benignius Reginberto nostro, qui nichil negavit umquam... Solitum habuit largiri cum dulcedine, in hilaritate misereri, ut laetior esset ipse cum daret quam ille cum acciperet. Nec hoc solo beatus. Linguam pacificam habuit adeo ut aliquae venena detrahentium aliis saepius biberit, nec eum nocuerint, nec ulli bibenda ultra propinaverit. Fuit et castus ut mihi post primum cum hoste congressum in quo victor evasit nichil se in carne carnale sensisse, et cum sancto Iob pepigisse foedus cum oculis suis ut ne cogitaret quidem de virgine.' c. 24, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 157v.

virtues implies, the nuns would then act as he did as a result of his feelings. In imitating Reinbart's example, the nuns would embody his whole self, and so be like him.

As Newman has argued, Engelhard deliberately made his exempla come alive through his frequent use of the present tense and direct speech; he was asking the nuns to immerse themselves in these stories and characters.[97] But the thoughts and feelings of the individuals in his exempla are not just a narrative strategy to make them vivid or memorable; his focus on the inner selves of other monks is central to the kind of teaching by example his collection offered. With his presentation of the example of Reinbart, and others of virtuous Cistercian monks, Engelhard was showing the nuns how to be Cistercian, inside and out. As with the other Cistercian exempla, teaching and learning by example in Engelhard's collection thus worked from the inside out; it was thoughts and feelings that Engelhard focused on, and which motivated individual's behaviour. The inner self was the starting point, and so Engelhard suggested to the nuns that they embody the entire example of the virtuous Cistercians he offered to them.

Engelhard offered the nuns of Wechterswinkel a number of Cistercian models to imitate, 'to exhibit those virtues in themselves, so that they grow in faith'. His *apologia* suggests a process of learning and growing through example, in the same way as Conrad's prologue in the *Exordium magnum* spoke of the need for monks to follow in the footsteps of their forebears and follow their example of monastic perfection. Engelhard's collection for the nuns saw them as monastic subjects on a religious journey – as Newman puts it, becoming Cistercian gave them a religion, and now they had to grow in faith.[98] The spiritual and moral formation offered by Engelhard's exempla functioned in the same way as I have argued it worked in the other Cistercian collections. By embodying the examples of past Cistercians, the nuns reproduced the models of Cisterciannness that Engelhard offered to them, and lived the same lives as these Cistercian men in their convent. These examples showed them how to be Cistercian, both inside and out.

Virginity and Sex in Engelhard's Collection

Engelhard did not only include examples of Cistercian virtue in his collection: they bracket a section on sinful behaviour to avoid. Newman's argument that Engelhard thought the same stories could teach monks and nuns is based on the fact that he likely sent an early copy of this collection to the male community at Prüfening; she does not compare Engelhard's text to the Cistercian collections written for men. But Engelhard's inclusion of exempla about Cistercian

[97] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 64.
[98] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 11.

misbehaviour, alongside examples of Cistercian virtue, is highly unusual when viewed against the other collections, as is his focus on issues of sex and virginity. Having explored the exempla that are similar to those in other collections, this chapter now studies the differences, to understand the gendered dimension of the moral formation offered to the nuns.

Nearly half of the exempla in Engelhard's collection focus on stories of bad behaviour for the nuns to avoid. These examples of 'shameful deeds' were a key part of Engelhard's methodology, as outlined in his *apologia*. Unusually, most of these were about Cistercian monks; in the *Exordium magnum*, Conrad's examples of bad behaviour were often about non-Cistercians, and many of Herbert's featured lay people or clerics. Engelhard's use of Cistercian monks to show sinful behaviour is not the only unusual feature of his collection. When compared to Herbert and Conrad's works, he also included an unusual number of exempla on themes of virginity, chastity and sex, which this section explores.

Sixteen of Engelhard's exempla are about some kind of sinful behaviour, doubt, loss of faith or misdemeanour, of varying levels of seriousness. At one end of the scale of consequences is a doubting priest who sees an angel dividing a baby made of bread on the altar and is quickly reaffirmed in his faith (c. 2); or a young monk who is guilty of singing for praise and is gently rebuked (c. 15). In the middle are, for example, the monk who had already deserted and returned once but who was scared into staying in his monastery thanks to his visit to Hell (c. 8); the monk who despairs and considers leaving the monastery until Abbot Pons agrees to act as guarantor of his salvation (c. 9); or a pugnacious monk scared into repenting of his anger by a vision of the Virgin Mary (c. 16). Then there are the examples of sinful behaviour that are harshly punished: a monk who despairs of his sins and cuts his throat, and who is only saved when Mary stops demons carrying him off (c. 17); a story about a prideful monastic chamberlain who sleeps in an excommunicated bed and is killed horribly by demons (c. 18); a Cistercian infirmarian who has sex with a woman in the monastery's cellar and is then killed by a demon and buried outside the monastery's cemetery (c. 19); or the tale of the two necromancers (c. 33).

Engelhard included four exempla about sexual sins – chapters 5, 8, 19, and 20. The story of the necromancers could additionally have been hinting at male homosexuality, since it mirrors two earlier stories from the *Liber miraculorum* about clerics or students joined in 'carnal love'. In both of these, one also dies first and comes back to warn the other to repent and join a monastery. In Engelhard's version the two necromancers are extremely close: one describes knowing the other 'both inside and out'.[99] His audience may have read between the lines and seen this as another story warning of the dangers of sexual sins, or at least particularly intimate

[99] "'Ego novi te intus et in cute'". c. 33, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 163r.

friendships, which were discouraged by other monastic writers.[100] Engelhard also included one short chapter (c. 27) in which he expounded the virtue of chastity, urging his readers to not even touch their own naked bodies, and one exemplum valorising female virginity (c. 11). The sins of the men in chapters 17 and 18, while not sexual, are to do with bodily pleasures: the first stole food and was 'a slave to his appetite', and the second slept in a bed more luxurious than the others in the dormitory. Six or seven chapters thus spoke to concerns about virginity and sexual temptation, and two more about the temptations of the flesh writ large. This may not seem like a significant number, but together these chapters comprise between one fifth and one quarter of the collection. Virginity and sex dominate this work.

During the twelfth century, virginity and chastity were increasingly privileged in spiritual treatises, canon law and hagiographical writings.[101] The precise spiritual meaning and importance of virginity as it was applied to nuns is, however, a matter of debate among modern scholars. Barbara Newman has argued that in this period the virgin was the ultimate feminine ideal in the literature of spiritual formation written about and for (though not by) women – as brides of Christ, nuns could theoretically not only equal but surpass religious men.[102] Such a model left religious women in a state of being, their spiritual life reduced to the need to guard their eminently breakable purity.[103] Several historians have disagreed with this interpretation. Elizabeth Bos instead contends that treatises written in England and France portrayed virginity as a constant process of resisting temptation, and it was the success of this battle that spoke to a virgin's spiritual condition.[104] In this way, the values that underpinned male and female religious life in the twelfth century were similar, if not the same. Mews reiterates this in his analysis of the *Speculum virginum*, arguing that the dialogue between Theodora and Peregrinus clarifies that the goal of a virgin is not just to maintain her virginity, but to progress in humility and purity as she fights temptation.[105] Jocelyn Wogan-Browne sees the concept of virginity itself as inherently unstable, describing virginity as a 'dynamic stasis... No sooner is virginity defined as inhering in technical bodily intactness, than it is shifted to inhering in the will'.[106] What is not debated by modern scholars is the gendering of women's bodies in the minds and writings of male clerics

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[100] Close friendships were not encouraged in the Rule, which warns that monks should not defend one another or allow blood-ties to influence them, *Rule of Benedict*, c. 69. For a discussion of Cistercian friendship with reference to the exempla collections, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'The Cistercians and the Transformation of Monastic Friendships', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 37 (1981): 1–63, reprinted in McGuire, *Friendship and Faith.*

[101] Elliott, *Bride of Christ*, 106–109; Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 39–42.

[102] Newman, *Virile Woman to WomanChrist*, 6.

[103] Newman, *Virile Woman to WomanChrist,* 29–30.

[104] Elizabeth Bos, 'The Literature of Spiritual Formation for Women in France and England, 1080 to 1180', in *Listen, Daughter*, 202–207

[105] Mews, 'Virginity, Theology, and Pedagogy', 21–34.

[106] Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*, 41.

and the anxieties about the sexuality and chastity of nuns, as can be seen in the move towards their strict enclosure across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, demonstrated by the Cistercian statutes.[107] Certainly, the saintly models offered to nuns emphasised virginity and the martyrs who had died to remain chaste.[108]

Unlike most of the literature of spiritual formation discussed in the historiography, Engelhard did not write to the nuns in a didactic tone, as their spiritual father, but as their son and servant. As the examples of Cistercian virtue he provided them with show, Engelhard was presenting the nuns with ways of being Cistercian; he was including them in his vision of Cistercian community, and asking them to embody the example of male Cistercians. Nonetheless, there is a high proportion of stories about sex and virginity when compared to texts written for male Cistercians. In the following discussion I explore this ambivalence, and argue that Engelhard saw the nuns both as Cistercians, for whom certain kinds of formative texts were appropriate, and as women, in need of both specific warnings about sex and strict enclosure.

Virginity, Romance and Martyrdom

While the exempla concerning the dangers of sexual temptation he featured in the collection were about male Cistercians, Engelhard did include one story (c. 11) about a holy female virgin. This chapter is about a virginal young woman and explores the choice many of the nuns may have made – or had made for them – when they entered the convent. It stands out in the collection as the only exemplum to straightforwardly have a woman as the main protagonist (other than the Virgin Mary, who we might consider more of an apparition than a flesh and blood character).

The story is set near to Langheim, and Engelhard's use of the present tense emphasised the contemporaneity of this narrative: 'A small hamlet lies near to us, in which a woman raised her daughter well, who is now of marriageable age, but intends to be married to no one but Christ.'[109] Christ and the girl's mother have different ideas about what is best for her: 'Her mother arranged one thing for her, but it happened as Christ willed. She who gave birth to her

[107] For the association between women and the body, see, for example, the essays in Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991). On the problem of the bodies of nuns and enclosure in the twelfth century, see Sykes, 'Rewriting the Rules', 107–31.
[108] The best study of the saints' lives written for women remains Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*.
[109] 'Viculus est nobis vicinus, in quo mulier filiam bene nutrierat, iam quidem nubilem, sed non alii quam Christo nupturam.' c. 11, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 141v.

preferred the world; He who made her preferred Heaven.'[110] The girl tells her mother that she knows she will not marry but will die soon, since she saw it in a vision:

> "For a young man, more splendid and in appearance handsome beyond the sons of men, came to me while I slept, drawing me up and leading me away by the hand… We came to a church of amazing work and much splendour, full of young girls and virgins [*puellis et virginibus*] clothed in precious garments of such splendour that neither then nor now would I be able to describe their splendour to you. Sitting in their midst was a woman brighter than the sun, adorned with every precious stone, who wore on her head a crown of flashing gems such that she on her own could illuminate the earth with her light. Upon my entering, everyone had stood up, bowing reverently, and stopping me with my guide before that lady. She received me kindly, speaking to me sweetly and asking whether I wished to stay in that place. I said that I wished to, and that I freely chose it with every vow. She responded: "Return home to your village, and after a short while I will send for and summon you." Thus I returned... Now, mother, do as you should and make it so, and have a care for your daughter... [the wedding clothes] which you prepared for me for the world, send them up to heaven so that I may enjoy them there. Give the Holy Mary these garments so that they may be turned into purple and silk for me among the angelic chorus."[111]

The girl sickens and dies soon after, and her mother takes the wedding gown she has been making to the monks of Langheim as her daughter requested. By giving it to the monastery she does as her daughter asks, with the donated cloth metaphorically becoming the purple silk she will wear as part of Mary's virgin chorus.

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[110] 'Aliud de illa disposuit mater sed non accidit nisi quod voluit Christus. Saeculo volebat illa quae genuit sed caelo ille qui fecit.' c. 11, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 141v.

[111] "'Nam iuvenis splendidior et speciosus forma prae filiis hominum venit cum dormirem. Educens et deducens me per manum... Venimus ad ecclesiam miri operis magnique splendoris. Puellis et virginibus plenam et hae vestibus praeciosis vestitae tam splendidis ut nec tunc splendorem illarum potuerim nec proferre nunc tibi. Sedit in medio earum una solae praeclarior, ornata omni lapide praecioso coronam homines in capite de gemmis fulgentibus, ita ut sola posset mundum illustrare suo lumine. Intranti mihi assurgeberat omnes, reverenter inclinantes et me cum illo duce meo ante dominam illam sistentes. Suscepit me illa benigne dulciter alloquens et an vellem ibi manere perquirens. Dixime velle et libenter votis omnibus id optare. Respondit: "Revertere domum hac vice et post paululum mittam et accersiam te." Sic redii... Ergo mater ut debes fac sicut mater et filiae tuae curam habe. Quae ad saeculum parasti, mitte in caelum ut fruar ibi. Da sanctae Marie pannos hos ut inpurpuram sericumque vertantur mihi inter choros angeliae.'" c. 11, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 142r–142v.

A less fatal way for a girl in twelfth-century Germany to become a consecrated virgin was to become a nun. The Virgin is portrayed in this exemplum as the Queen of Heaven, surrounded by young girls and virgins. Just as nuns left their birth families to enter a convent, so the young girl in this exemplum leaves the world and her mother – who is arranging her marriage – for Mary. This opposition between earthly and heavenly family is emphasised at the beginning, with two different sets of carnal relationships compared to their spiritual equivalent. Her mother wishes her to marry a man, while the girl wishes to marry Christ (mirroring the description of nuns as brides of Christ). Secondly, Christ does not wish her to remain on earth with she who birthed her, but to go to Heaven to be with He who made her. Mary and her chorus of virgins are analogous to the abbess and her nuns; the community has become their family, and the abbess their new mother. This familial imagery mirrors that found in Engelhard's dedication letter. Like Mary and her court, Mechthild was mother to a community of women, many of them young virgins.

The robe that her mother was weaving, and which after her daughter's death she takes to Langheim, emphasises the equivalency between the community of nuns and Mary's heavenly court. Upon taking their vows, monks and nuns received a new habit.[112] Imagery of taking off old clothes, and with them the old person, and putting on new was also common in monastic writings. This imagery is used several times in the other exempla collections: in one exemplum that appears in both the *Liber miraculorum* (LM 44) and the *Exordium magnum* (EM II.15), Bernard of Clairvaux claims a condemned man for the Order by dressing him in the habit of a lay brother. In another chapter (EM II.14), Conrad told a story about Bernard blessing and clothing novices in the monastic habit, which begins, 'Certain novices, after being blessed by the holy father, put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man', equating a literal change of clothes with a metaphorical change of life.[113] In Engelhard's story, the gown the girl would have worn at her wedding becomes the purple silk she will wear as a heavenly virgin, but it does so via the abbey of Langheim.[114] By portraying the monastery as the portal through which earthly things become heavenly, the monastic community becomes a prefiguration of Heaven, and so Abbess Mechthild and her nuns can see themselves as analogous to or foreshadowing Mary's court of female virgins. Their choice to become nuns (or at least their existence in the

[112] Giles Constable, 'The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century', reprinted in Giles Constable, *Culture and Spirituality in Medieval Europe* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum, 1996), 771–834.
[113] 'Ad benedictionem huius sancti patris quidam aliquando novicii eius veterem hominem cum actibus suis exuentes novum'. *Exordium magnum*, II.14.
[114] Newman also describes the monastery as a portal to heaven in this exemplum, but argues that it illustrates how women's labour can produce sacramental signs, Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 143–44.

community, if it was a life chosen for them) is validated and valorised by this exemplum as it was in other contemporary hagiographical texts, in which holy virginity is shown to be preferable to earthly goods and marriage.

The imagery of cloth and clothing can be read as relating to the condition of virginity itself, as well as to the change of clothing and life upon entry into the monastery. Such imagery appears in the *Speculum virginum*, the most popular and widespread text of spiritual formation for women from twelfth-century Germany.[115] 'While browsing through the meadows of scripture, we have at the same time gathered flowers to weave a crown for the virgin's head, until we are able to cover the rest of her body as well with mystical garments', one passage reads.[116] The entire third part of the text is about 'the Holy Spirit's address to the daughter of the Church on the mystical garment of virginity, which adorns the daughters of Zion.'[117] The young virgin in chapter 11 of Engelhard's collection, and the ideal virgin constructed in the *Speculum virginum*, therefore share imagery related to mystical, heavenly garments. Both the monastic resonance and this link to the mystical garment of virginity would have suggested themselves to the nuns as they read, especially if they were familiar with the *Speculum virginum* and its ideas through the men who ministered to them. This is likely, given the number of surviving manuscripts from male German houses, including Cistercian ones. The double meaning of the clothing metaphor suggests that Engelhard saw the nuns both as Cistercian monastics and as female virgins; their gender was a relevant aspect of their monastic vocation. Engelhard's collection was part of a tapestry of texts that made up the nuns' horizon of expectation, which he signalled to with his choice of imagery in this exemplum. By invoking other texts like the *Speculum virginum* where such imagery was used, but which elaborated further on the theme of virginity, this exemplum could be a starting point or aide memoire to a nun's meditation on the value of virginity, and so help to affirm and bolster her life as a consecrated virgin in the convent.

With its language of queens, courts and purple silk, this exemplum additionally has a distinctly aristocratic, even imperial, feel. The dichotomy created between the girl's mother and Mary suggests that Mary and her virgins in Heaven (and so, by association, Mechthild and her nuns) are like a family. The description of Mary as a queen, dripping in jewels, and her virgins with their splendid garments, draws parallels between the convent and a court. As discussed

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[115] As the best surviving example of this kind of literature, other didactic texts by or for German religious women are often read against it, see, for example, Kienzle's reading of Hildegard's exegetical sermons in its light, Beverly Mayne Kienzle, 'Hildegard of Bingen's Teaching in Her "Expositiones Evangeliorum" and "Ordo Virtutum"', in *Medieval Monastic Education*, 75.

[116] Newman, trans. '*Speculum virginum*', 275. 'dum per prata scripturarum gressum mittimus, mitram uirginali capiti collectis interim floribus texuimus, donec cetera membra misticis indumentis contegamus'. *Speculum virginum*, c. 1.

[117] Newman, trans. '*Speculum virginum*', 271. 'Tertia pars est de allocutione spiritus sancti ad filiam ecclesiasticam, de indumento mistico uirginali, quo filiae Syon exornatae'. *Speculum virginum*, epistula.

above, the nuns Engelhard was addressing may well have come from aristocratic families; the other religious women we know he associated with, in writing the *vita* of St Mechthild, were from the powerful Andechs-Merania family. His use of courtly, almost subservient, language in the dedication letter, so different from other male Cistercian addresses to nuns, is further evidence of the social status of the nuns, and especially Mechthild herself. Engelhard used courtly imagery in chapter 11 to further emphasise that the aristocratic nuns should see themselves as the holy virgins who made up Mary's court. Imagery that recalled the social world they had inhabited prior to their conversion enabled them to imagine more clearly the heavenly world they were working towards through their monastic life.

However, the young girl in the story is from a small village near Langheim, the daughter of a weaver; certainly no noble. Yet she is still asked by Mary to join her court, to be clothed in purple silk. There were two messages here for Engelhard's nuns. Firstly, that though they had renounced their noble status and kinship networks by entering a convent, they would be ennobled again in the next life, when they entered Mary's court. Secondly, and paradoxically, it was a sly rebuke to the idea that social status and family on earth are important. This poor girl is chosen by Mary and elevated to the wearing of purple silk because of her piety and virginity. Engelhard used the logic that courts and jewels are markers of status, to show the nuns the rewards that await consecrated virgins like themselves, and simultaneously rebuffed these outer markers in favour of inner spiritual worth. The text played with the nuns' secular expectations, ultimately showing the primacy of spirituality and virtue; it undoes the lessons of the world.

The collection is courtly in another way too: in Engelhard's use of the tropes of both romance and hagiography. Medieval German romance texts survive from the middle of the twelfth century, and the nuns at Wechterswinkel in 1190 may well have encountered them before they joined the convent.[118] Our knowledge of convent libraries is sparse, but there is evidence that nuns in England were occasional readers of romances.[119] Monks certainly read romances, and even Cistercian houses owned and read them.[120] There was significant crossover between romances and hagiographic works. Both genres had similar audiences – courtly, aristocratic – and romances are often found in manuscript compilations with hagiographic and didactic texts, since both could be read as exemplary genres.[121] In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,

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[118] Ann Marie Rasmussen, 'Medieval German Romance', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 185–86.
[119] David N. Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Medieval English Nunneries* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1995), 223–42; Melissa Furrow, *Expectations of Romance: The Reception of a Genre in Medieval England* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2009), 156.
[120] Furrow, *Expectations of Romance*, especially chapter 6 and Appendix.
[121] Simon Gaunt, 'Romance and Other Genres', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, 49–50; Furrow, *Expectations of Romance*, especially chapter 1.

vernacular hagiographies often drew on the themes and techniques of courtly romances, and included exotic and spectacular plot-lines.[122] Martyrdom was a particularly popular theme for this reason, and Brigitte Cazelles has argued that both romances and hagiographies espoused an ideology of suffering for women.[123] The most famous twelfth-century example of a medieval religious woman who was portrayed using the tropes of both romances and virgin martyr narratives was Christina of Markyate, whose *vita* was written by a monk at St Albans.[124] Both romantic heroines and martyrs were described as aristocratic and beautiful, just like Christina, and, though she did not die, she was portrayed as an ascetic martyr who suffered greatly.[125]

As she dies to consecrate herself to Christ, the nuns may have read the young girl in chapter 11 of Engelhard's collection as akin to a martyr; her advent into the court of Mary could also have registered her as an aristocratic romantic heroine. The horizons of expectation of these two genres would have been in the nuns' minds as they read. Engelhard's use of tropes from these genres was likely designed to appeal to his aristocratic, female audience, and shows his use of secular literature in the service of teaching monastic virtues and undoing what they may have learned in the world. However, after signalling to these other genres, Engelhard subverted many of their central logics and motifs in chapter 11. Unlike a romance, a heterosexual union is not the culmination of the narrative, but rather an aristocratic, heavenly female community. Unlike hagiography, there are no parents who oppose the girl's wishes (her mother had been planning her wedding, but makes no move to force her to marry after the girl's vision), no rapacious husband-to-be, and no bloody death. What did Engelhard gain by signalling to and then subverting the nuns' horizon of expectations in this way?

Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* also features stories of female virgins, but they are patterned after the more violent virgin martyr narratives. Two (LM 63–64) feature virgins (one of whom is also a nun) who are threatened with rape or marriage and mutilate themselves in response. One woman cuts off her nose and lips so she will not be forced to marry, and the nun plucks out her eyes and offers them to the king who wishes to violate her. Another (LM 97), discussed in chapter two, concerns a recent convert to Christianity who is almost assaulted by a knight. After she defends her virginity, he is so enraged that he kills her, and a divinely-sent dragon swoops down and kills him. When Pope Alexander III hears about her death, he proclaims her a virgin

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[122] Brigitte Cazelles, ed., *The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 7–8.
[123] Cazelles, *Lady as Saint*, 13–88.
[124] C. H. Talbot, ed. and trans., *The Life of Christina of Markyate: A Twelfth-Century Recluse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959). See also the essays collected in Samuel Fanous and Henrietta Leyser, eds., *Christina of Markyate: A Twelfth-Century Holy Woman* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).
[125] Samuel Fanous, 'Christina of Markyate and the Double Crown', in *Christina of Markyate: A Twelfth-Century Holy Woman*, 53–63.

martyr, baptised in her own blood: 'it was judged by him that... she should be held as a martyr among the martyrs; because for the love of chastity she lay dead'.[126] In all of these, as with virgin martyr narratives, the women resist the attention of powerful men to protect their virginity; they fight against sexual temptation, made manifest by the lusts of the men who pursue them. In contrast, Engelhard's exemplum is almost entirely populated by women. There are no male authority figures who oppose the girl's choice, and even the prospective husband is unnamed and absent from the narrative. It is an exemplum not about the lusts of men, but instead positively reinforces the choice of a young woman to stay a virgin and, unlike in a romance, join a community of like-minded girls. It offers an alternative to the choices presented by romance and virgin martyr narratives: marriage, or violent death in defence of your virginity. There is a third way – the life of the consecrated monastic virgin.

One of Engelhard's exempla, however, at first glance seems to confirm the logic of the virgin martyr narrative: the story of Brother Joseph (chap. 34), though about a trans man, is plotted like a *passio*, with a series of obstacles that Joseph must overcome. Firstly, his father dies in the Holy Land, and then he is robbed and abandoned in Tyre by the man charged with his protection. After making his way back to Germany, he is accused of being a robber and condemned to death, but is saved by the ordeal of the hot iron. Still, he is hanged anyway by the companions of the real robber. He hangs for several days, supported by his guardian angel, who does not let him die or feel pain. Upon being cut down, he finally joins a Cistercian monastery, only to die a few short years later. This combination of constant danger, one violent incident after another, and the constant protection of a guardian angel, is clearly patterned after a virgin martyr narrative.[127] However, Engelhard commented at the end that the nuns should not look to his life as an exemplum – they should wonder at it, but not imitate it. In using hagiographic tropes in this story, but telling the nuns not to see Joseph as an example to follow, Engelhard was suggesting the unsuitability of these kinds of hagiographical writing as formative texts for the nuns. Cistercian writers were often concerned that monks not attempt to distinguish themselves through excessive fasting or bodily mortification.[128] The Cistercian life, lived in community, was sufficient to attain salvation. Virgin martyrs, the models often offered to religious women, were exceptional, and underwent extreme suffering. With the story of Brother Joseph, when read in combination with chapter 11, which uses and subverts the motifs of both romance and hagiography, Engelhard implicitly argued that his exempla collection, with its

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[126] *Liber miraculorum*, c. 97. See note 81 in chapter two of this thesis for the Latin.
[127] See Fanous, 'Double Crown', 54, for how Christina's *vita* is also plotted like a *passio*.
[128] Martha G. Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues: Monks, Lay Brothers and Women in Thirteenth-Century Cistercian Saints' Lives', in *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Carol Braun Pasternack (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 189–90.

realistic stories of contemporary Cistercian monks and young German virgins, was a more appropriate formative text from which the nuns of Wechterswinkel should learn. He offered Cistercian monks as models instead of those hagiographic works more typically read by religious women: the life of the enclosed nun, in community, is implicitly shown to be a superior form of female religious existence.

Moreover, by contrasting, in chapter 11, the girl's secular ties (her mother and future husband), and the heavenly ones offered by Christ and Mary's choir of virgins, Engelhard argued for a withdrawal from the world into an all-female space, a community of virgins, as behind the walls of the convent. He did not set up the conflict in this exemplum as between men and women, but the secular and the heavenly (or monastic). Several of the other stories about sex and virginity in the collection also present a dichotomy between the monastic or heavenly and the secular, and describe the world or worldly things as a source of temptation. A man leaves Langheim to take a wife, and so relinquishes the spiritual life offered by the monastery (c. 5). Another monk is prevented from leaving the monastery for a second time by Mary, after having once before abandoned his vocation to marry (c. 8). Three other exempla also discuss monks who consider fleeing the monastery for the world: Abbot Pons' monk, Gottschalk, and Engelhard himself. Temptation is everywhere in the collection, and the devil's attempt to trap monks are frequently to do with tempting them to leave the monastery, or tempting them with luxurious or worldly things. Pons' monk was hindered and tempted by the devil, and Gottschalk was pursued by the enemy and his trickery, and both considered fleeing. The monk who was scared into staying in the monastery by Mary had been tempted once and yielded; the second time the devil sets all kinds of snares and tries to entice him with the delights of the marriage bed he had enjoyed before.

The threat of the world must be set alongside the lack of exempla set outside the walls of the monastery in the collection; the majority take place inside a religious house, as with Conrad's *Exordium magnum*. In the previous chapter, I argued that Conrad was advocating for a vision of Cistercian life that did not include activity in the world, such as the preaching that Henry of Marcy had been involved with. These exempla have a different tenor in a collection written for women, who are assumed to have been enclosed. In the *Speculum virginum*, the second section of the text is dedicated to arguing for the strict enclosure of nuns, in order to limit mental distraction and avoid temptation.[129] Peregrinus describes how the virgin must reject the world, spiritually as well as physically. Nuns should be removed from the world and enclosed, but then

[129] Mews, 'Virginity, Theology, and Pedagogy', 21–24.

also grow in humility and purity to completely detach themselves from the world and its temptations. Their enclosure enabled their spiritual progress.

The oppositional contrast Engelhard drew between the world and the cloister worked to construct one specific model of female religious life: the enclosed Benedictine nun. In the last decade of the twelfth century, other kinds of female religiosity existed. As Lester has shown, the animating spirit of female religious life in northern France and the Low Countries was based on charity, penance, and poverty. Though these women would later become Cistercian, their religious vocation was based on charitable service, and they did not live enclosed lives directed only towards prayer and contemplation. Other contemporary examples can be enumerated, such as Yvette of Huy (d. 1228), who, from around 1180–1190, lived in a leper hospital and cared for its patients.[130] Likewise, Mary of Oignies (d. 1213), whose hagiography was written by Jacques de Vitry, nursed lepers with her husband, and lived a life of asceticism and labour.[131] However, across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, male prelates and abbots used laws, like the Cistercian statutes, to enforce the boundaries between approved and illicit forms of religious life for women. As Sethina Watson has argued, canon 26 of Lateran II (1139), on false nuns, shows prelates reacting to forms of female religious life based around work in hospitals; they believed nuns should be fully cloistered, in a monastic community, and incipient hospital communities may have become nunneries in the mid-twelfth century as a result.[132] In 1190, this was the model of female religious life that Engelhard again constructed for the nuns of Wechterswinkel, especially in chapter 11 of his collection. With this exemplum that most closely mirrored the lives they lived, the nuns were not encouraged to be charitable or serve others, but primarily to be virgins, and to serve Christ and Mary. This exemplum argued that the nuns had to withdraw from the world, choosing virginity and female community over anything else.

Sexual Temptation in the Convent

The cloister could still be a place of temptation. Scholars have in the past commented on the lack of tales of sexual immorality featured in the Cistercian exempla collections. Sexual temptation is considered a minor theme in Cistercian literature in general, and when it did appear it was accompanied by a conviction that it could be overcome – there is little suggestion in the

[130] Hugh of Floreffe, *The Life of Yvette of Huy,* ed. and trans. Jo Ann McNamara (Toronto: Peregrina Publishing, 2000).
[131] Margot H. King trans., 'The Life of Mary of Oignies by James of Vitry', in *Mary of Oignies: Mother of Salvation*, ed. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 35–127.
[132] Sethina Watson, *On Hospitals: Welfare, Law, and Christianity in Western Europe, 400–1320* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 53–55.

other collections that monks might commit sexual sins.[133] Given this, it is unusual that sexual activity appears in three of the chapters in Engelhard's collection, and masturbation in a fourth. In these, Engelhard portrayed the lusts of Cistercian men, and showed women to be sexual temptations. In the exemplum of the shepherd who carries around a host wafer to protect his sheep (c. 5), the man is brought to Langheim when his father becomes a monk. He soon decides the monastic life is not for him and leaves so that he may lead a worldly life, and specifically to take a wife: 'he returned to the carnal life, relinquishing the spiritual.'[134] He dies whilst living in the world, punished for carrying a host wafer in his pocket but also as a consequence of his decision to leave monastery.

Similarly, in the exemplum of the monk shown a vision of Hell by Mary (c. 8), he has already left the monastery once, taken a wife and fathered children, and then returned: 'Having been tempted, at first he yielded and departed for the world. He married and brought forth much fruit.'[135] Engelhard employed word-play in this sentence with 'fructum': whilst it refers to the children the man had (a consequence of sex), *fructus*, as a noun or participle derived from *fruor*, could also be used to talk about enjoyment, delight, and having the use or enjoyment of a thing (with possible sexual connotations).[136] His sexual enjoyment of the marriage is made clear. When he is tempted to leave the monastery a second time, it is because he is reminded of the sexual pleasure he had enjoyed in the world, and is tempted with 'more delights than he could ever have.'[137] But Mary takes him to Hell, to show him what he would be leaving the monastery for:

> She [Mary] goes before him, and he follows. He is brought to the enemy of the church. He takes hold of the monk with his hand and holds him tightly. And dragging him outside he says to him, "Behold! The woman and your son!" He saw and look! the pit of Hell, and lying submerged in the abyss, a dragon, most horrendous to look at, with gaping jaws, and with fire sparking from its nostrils and mouth. Near it was the woman

[133] McGuire, 'Structure and Consciousness', 85; McGuire, 'Lost Clairvaux Exemplum, 60; McGuire, 'Les mentalités des cisterciens', 112.
[134] 'rediit ad carnalem vitam spiritualem relinquens.' c. 5, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 135r-135v.
[135] 'Temptatus primus cessit et discessit in saeculum duxit matrimonium et fructum fecit multum.' c. 8, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 138r.
[136] *Latin Dictionary, ed.* Lewis and Short, s.v. "fructus", "fruor".
[137] 'plures quam umquam habere posset delicias.' c. 8, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 138r.

> with her children, and the dragon was pulling them near with his tail, and continually blowing fire into their mouths.[138]

The Virgin then compares herself directly to the kind of woman he is thinking of abandoning his monastic life for: "'You love a woman; love me more, for I am of more use to you than she.'"[139] Again, the carnal and the heavenly (and monastic) are opposed. Women and the temptation they represent are linked explicitly to the devil throughout this exemplum, since the devil tempts him through this woman and the thought of the sex he enjoyed during their marriage. The suggestion is also that the man's lusts have led to the damnation of this woman and her children too, although this is not explicated.

Finally, chapter 19 is about a Cistercian infirmarian who has sex in the monastery and then dies; he is found 'naked in the cellar, insane and dying'.[140] A naked woman is later found hiding in the monastery, and it becomes apparent that the infirmarian has been killed by a demon in the shape of her: 'at night, he had slept with this woman, and a demon taking the appearance of the woman had tricked him.'[141] A real woman tempted him to sin, and a demon impersonating her was then able to kill him – the repetition of 'mulier' puts the woman and his lust at the centre of his downfall. When the truth of his life and death is discovered, the monk's body is buried outside the monastery in unconsecrated ground, meaning that his sexual sin (and the woman) has condemned him to eternal punishment. In all three of these exempla, men in Cistercian monasteries are tempted by the idea of sex with women, and in two the men die and are damned as a result.

The topics of virginity and monastic chastity appears in the male exempla collections only briefly. Herbert included several exempla featuring nuns and virgins who mutilated themselves to avoid marriage or rape (LM 63–64) and one of a woman martyred for fighting to remain chaste (LM 97), as well as the story of two sisters who wished to become nuns (LM 67). In all of these cases, virginity and chastity are represented by women. They are not portrayed as the instigators of sexual acts, but rather fight against the lusts of men. Herbert also told the story of Peter (LM 3), a holy monk at Clairvaux, who suffered from sexual temptation and had a vision in which he was castrated, at which point his temptation ended. There are no women, or

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[138] 'Preit illa, ille sequitur. Ad hostium ecclesiae pervenitur. Capit monachum manu, fortitur tenet trahensque foras, "En!" Inquit, "Mulier et filii tui." Prospexit ille et ecce! chaos et abyssus subiacens et draco maximus horrendus aspectu et hians ignemque de naribus et ore scintillans. Circa haec mulier illa cum liberis suis quas omnis draco cauda sua stringebat et ignem iugiter in eae ora spirabat.' c. 8, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 138v.
[139] "'Amas mulierem, me potius ama nam ego tibi utilior quam illa.'" c. 8, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 138r.
[140] 'nudus amens et moriens in cellario invenitur.' c. 19, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 151v.
[141] 'nocte cum muliere dormisset quod ei sub specie mulieris demon illusisset.' c. 19, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 151v–152r.

tempting female flesh, in this story; Peter's temptation is described abstractly as coming from 'the most hostile spirit of fornication'.[142] In the *Dialogus miraculorum*, exempla featuring sexual immorality, such as those about clerics who violated Jewish maidens (DM II.23–24), or the woman who sinned with a demon in the form of a man (DM III.9) do not feature monks, and certainly not Cistercians. Engelhard's collection is unusual on three counts. Firstly, it stands out based on the number of exempla about sex or virginity. Secondly, it is unique in including several exempla of Cistercian men committing acts of fornication. Finally, Engelhard showed these Cistercian monks interacting with the women who tempt them. The sexual temptation experienced by monks is not just an abstraction or a case of demonic attack, and the women in these stories are not virtuous maidens bravely resisting sexual attacks. Engelhard portrayed flesh and blood women tempting and having sex with real Cistercian men.

There was a reflexive medieval link between women and sex; thirteenth century confessors' manuals tended to concentrate on sexual sins as those that women might commit.[143] One way to read these exempla is that Engelhard was teaching a lesson about women as sexual beings and sources of sexual sin, whether or not they intended to be: he was teaching the nuns that they could tempt men. Such an argument might have been familiar to women exposed to those works like the *Speculum virginum*. In this, Peregrinus tells Theodora the story of a cleric who is enraptured with a prioress; she suspects nothing, 'for her spirit was united with Christ and she would rather have endangered her life than her chastity.'[144] Peregrinus tells Theodora this story 'so that you may know how to spare your modesty when you see and converse with the male sex.'[145] He then goes on to talk about the biblical story of Susanna: if she had bathed at home and been modest, there would have been no occasion for lechery on the part of the elderly men who watched her. The sin was theirs and already in their hearts, but her immodest actions gave occasion for it to be revealed and fulfilled. In the story of the cleric, he is struck dead for trying to sleep with the prioress, but she recognises that her beauty was the cause of his disaster and so prays with all her sisters for his soul to be saved. The lesson Peregrinus teaches is ambiguous: so long as they are chaste and virtuous, virgins are not to blame for the sexual sins of men, but their actions and appearance can inflame or bring to fulfilment men's lusts, which makes them partly responsible.

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142 'Super omnia uero spiritum fornicacionis infestissimum tolerabat.' *Liber miraculorum*, c. 3.
143 Jacqueline Murray, 'Gendered Souls in Sexed Bodies: The Male Construction of Female Sexuality in Some Medieval Confessors' Manuals', in *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and A. J. Minnis (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1998), 79–93.
144 Newman, trans. '*Speculum virginum*', 276. 'quippe cuius spiritus unus erat in Christo et mallet periclitari uita quam pudicicia.' *Speculum virginum*, c. 2.
145 Newman, trans. '*Speculum virginum*', 276. 'ut in aspectu uel colloquio uirilis sexus uerecundiae tuae noueris parcere.' *Speculum virginum*, c. 2.

Reading in a similar vein, another possible interpretation of Engelhard's exempla is that they warned the nuns about the lusts of men, including monks from the Cistercian Order. The nuns would have had contact with clerics and monks who came to minister to them, just like the cleric in Peregrinus' story, and they had to be circumspect around them – anxiety about sexual contact between nuns and their priests was a recurrent theme in literature of this period, not just in the *Speculum virginum*.[146] These exempla are unusual because they show Cistercian men being tempted by women; Engelhard was showing the fallibility even of white monks. A comment in Engelhard's story about Reinbart, the holy monk, makes explicit a link between the chastity of monks and the temptations offered by virgins: 'He was also chaste, as he told me that after his first encounter with the enemy when he evaded him, victorious, feeling nothing carnal in his body, and like blessed Job made a covenant with his eyes that he would not even think about virgins.'[147] Engelhard here suggested that for those monks less holy than Reinbart, a lust for nuns may have been a real and present danger. Reinbart's lack of carnality is only assured thanks to his decision not to even think about virginal maidens. The implication is that men who had to minister to nuns and interact with them were constantly opened to temptation. These exempla warned the nuns about the lustful eyes of men who might then bring women like themselves to ruin – as with the deserting monk who sees his own wife in Hell. They also made a positive case for the separation of female communities from male houses, and the enclosure of nuns for their own protection. For men who may have read this collection, these stories then also functioned to show the dangers for them should they succumb to any desire they felt around the women in the communities they served.

There is a third possible reading of these exempla, and one that best accounts for how the nuns themselves would have read these stories. As Mary Anna Campbell urges, we must read as women male-authored texts of instruction for religious women; let us then read as a Cistercian nun.[148] Engelhard was sensitive to his female audience. In chapter 11, he described Mary's heavenly court as populated with beautiful virgins in splendid robes, to aid his audience of aristocratic nuns in imagining themselves as Mary's chorus of virgins. Likewise, in the dedication letter he used both familial and courtly language to indicate the social status of the nuns before entering the convent and their place now within the Cistercian family; he was aware of the expectations and horizons of his audience. All of the exempla concerning sexual temptation feature Cistercian men being tempted by worldly women. If these exempla were attempts to

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[146] Griffiths, *Nuns' Priests' Tales*, 11–31.
[147] See note 96 above for the Latin.
[148] Mary Anna Campbell, 'Redefining Holy Maidenhood: Virginity and Lesbianism in Late Medieval England', *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 13, no. 1 (1992): 14.

teach the nuns about the tempting nature of their own bodies, Engelhard was asking the nuns to see themselves as the secular women in these stories. This is the opposite reading practice to that suggested by the examples of virtuous Cistercians with which he also presented them. With these examples, Engelhard encouraged the nuns to form both their inner and outer selves according to the example of the Cistercian men. In order to 'exhibit those virtues in themselves' that they admired in the Cistercian men like Reinbart, they had to read themselves into these narratives, imagine themselves as these men, and copy their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It seems implausible that with the exempla about sexual temptation, Engelhard expected the nuns to see themselves as the sinful, secular women he was portraying, and so to learn about the tempting nature of their own bodies when interacting with Cistercian men.

The notion that these exempla taught the nuns about the lusts of men equally would require the nuns to read them in a different way to the examples of virtuous Cistercian men, or indeed the other exempla concerning sinful acts. As Engelhard explained in his *apologia*, he hoped that his audience would be recalled from sin through terror; to feel this fear, they had to imagine themselves as the sinner, and so be motivated to reform. Feeling like the sinner whilst reading the exempla about sexual temptation would require the nuns to imagine themselves as the Cistercian men, being tempted by sex with women.

Akin to how queer theorists have argued, deliberately provocatively, that lesbians are not women, since womanhood is defined as explicitly heterosexual in the modern sex and gender system, medievalists have argued that virgin female bodies were like lesbian bodies: they inhabited a 'queer space' in the medieval sex and gender system.[149] The rejection of marriage and heterosexuality, and the retreat to woman-only spaces is also described as akin to lesbianism.[150] It should not surprise us then that concern about the potential for inappropriate intimacies between nuns stretches back to the early days of communal religious life for women, as Jacqueline Murray has shown. In *c.* 423, St Augustine wrote a letter to a community of nuns in which he warned: 'The love between you, however, ought not to be earthly but spiritual, for the things which shameless woman do even to other women in low jokes and games are to be avoided'.[151] In the seventh century, chapter 32 of Donatus' rule for nuns warned against 'particular friendships': 'That none take the hand of another or call one another "little girl". It is

[149] For a discussion of this scholarship, see Lisa M. C. Weston, 'Virgin Desires: Reading a Homoerotics of Female Monastic Community', in *The Lesbian Premodern*, ed. Noreen Giffney, Michelle M. Sauer, and Diane Watt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 93–95.
[150] Campbell, 'Redefining Holy Maidenhood', 15.
[151] Quoted in Jacqueline Murray, 'Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible: Lesbians in the Middle Ages', in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland, 1996), 195.

forbidden lest any take the hand of another for delight or stand or walk around or sit together.'[152] Lesbian acts among nuns were frequently condemned in early medieval penitentials, as in the eighth-century Penitential of Bede: 'If nuns with a nun, using an instrument, seven years [penance].'[153] Twelfth-century abbesses likewise feared that nuns might seduce one another. In Heloise's third letter to Abelard, she warned of the dangers of female same-sex desire: 'Surely nothing is so conducive to a woman's seduction as a woman's flattery, nor does a woman pass on the foulness of a corrupted mind so readily to any but another woman.'[154] Elsewhere in the same letter, where she asked Abelard for a specific rule for religious women, her arguments were based around lived experience. The undergarments prescribed in the Rule, for example, were insufficient, she wrote, because women menstruate. As Karma Lochrie argues, Heloise's worries about sex between nuns were likewise based on her experience of living in and heading a convent, and her belief in the weakness of women: 'Female celibacy and chastity are, according to Heloise, always fraught with the temptations and provocations of female desire for other women.'[155] Hildegard of Bingen also condemned same-sex intimacy: 'And a woman who takes up devilish ways and plays a male role in coupling with another woman is most vile in my sight.'[156]

Alongside these condemnations, we have fleeting evidence of actual lesbian desire, including between nuns. Not all of this is implicitly sexual. However, using lesbian theorist Adrienne Rich's notion of the 'lesbian continuum', Murray argues that we can see a continuity of experience between women-loving women across time, especially important when we have so few sources to work with: 'the notion of a lesbian continuum allows for a more nuanced understanding of women's relationships, one that encompasses primary emotional, erotic, and social bonds that stop short of genital sexual expression.'[157] Several scholars have examined the lesbian-like desire expressed in surviving letters between nuns.[158] In one twelfth-century example, 'B' begins her letter thusly: 'To C—, sweeter than honey or honeycomb, B— sends all the love

[152] Quoted in Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 196.
[153] Quoted in Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 198.
[154] Quoted in Karma Lochrie, *Heterosyncrasies: Female Sexuality When Normal Wasn't* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 31.
[155] Lochrie, *Heterosyncrasies*, 42–44.
[156] Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 199.
[157] Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 193–94; Adrienne Rich, 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence' *Signs* 5, no. 4 (1980): 631–60.
[158] The first study of same-sex activity between nuns in the premodern era was Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). For medieval nuns, see E. Ann Matter, 'My Sister, My Spouse: Woman-Identified Women in Medieval Christianity', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2, no. 2 (1986): 81–93; *Weston*, 'Virgin Desires', 93–104; Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 207–11.

there is to love.'[159] B addresses C as her 'lover' [*amantem*] and compares herself to a turtle-dove who has lost its mate as she laments their separation.[160] Her feelings for C are clearly and romantically expressed:

> 'you are sweeter than milk and honey, you are peerless among thousands, I love you more than any. You alone are my love and my longing, you the sweet cooling of my mind, there's no joy for me without you... So I truly want to tell you, if I could buy your life for the price of mine, (I'd do it) instantly, you who are the only woman I have chosen according to my heart.'[161]

In another contemporary example, 'A' writes to her 'her one-and-only rose'.[162] This letter is explicit about the sexual nature of the relationship: 'When I remember the kisses you gave, and with what words of joy you caressed my little breasts, I want to die as I am not allowed to see you.'[163] Though the surviving evidence we have is sparse, the existence of these letters, as well as condemnations from abbesses, shows that sexual and romantic relationships between nuns did occur. Engelhard's focus on sex in his collection, therefore, and specifically the lusts of Cistercians, was not just a warning to the nuns about the greedy eyes and desires of men, but about their own lusts for the women with whom they lived. If they were to imagine themselves as the monk in chapter 8, gazing down at the pit of Hell and the woman wrapped in the dragon's tail, they were seeing not only their own potential downfall, but also the fate that awaited the women they might be in relationships with. Engelhard was asking the nuns to think of their own souls and those of their fellow nuns who might sin with them.

Warnings against same-sex desire appear in the male exempla collections too, but they never feature Cistercian men. Herbert two stories (LM 151–152) about men joined in carnal love are about scholars and clerics. In both, one dies and returns to the other to warn him of the torments he is facing, and urges him to repent. Herbert's audience were warned about the awful

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159 'C. super mel et favum dulciori/B. quidquid amor amori.' The love letter is translated and edited in Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric*, vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 478–79. This letter is included as an appendix to Murray's article, although not analysed, Murray, 'Twice Marginal', 211.
160 'sed quasi turtur, perdito masculo/semper in arido resident ramusculo... Circumspicio et invenio amantem'.
161 'dulcior es lacte et melle/ electa es ex milibus/ te diligo pre omnibus/ tu sola amor et desiderium/ du dulce animi mei refrigerium/ nil mihi/ absque te iocundi... Unde dicere volo veraciter/ si fieri posset quod vite precio te emerem—non segniter/ quia sola es quam elegi secundum cor meum.'
162 'G. unice sue rose/ A.' The love letter is translated and edited in Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric*, 480–81.
163 'Dum recordor que dedisti oscula/ et quam iocundis verbis refrigerasti pectuscula/ mori libet/ quod te videre non licet.'

punishments awaiting men who had sex with other men, but distance was created from the Cistercian cloister – he did not depict Cistercian monks being intimate with other men. Similarly, Caesarius included a story about an older and younger monk who have a sexual relationship (DM III.24), but these are non-Cistercian monks. Warnings were issued without telling stories of Cistercian monks so sinning. The exempla in Engelhard's collection, of Cistercian men being tempted by and having sex with women, likewise created distance from the nuns, while warning them of the dangers of being tempted by the other women in the convent. Reading as the nuns, it does not make sense that they were supposed to learn of themselves as temptations to men, or even just that the monks they infrequently interacted with might be a threat. The people they saw every day, with whom they had the greatest opportunity to sin, were the nuns with whom they lived.

Chapters 17 and 18 provide further evidence that Engelhard was warning the nuns against the desires of their own bodies. These exempla warn of greed and luxury, sins related to bodily desires that women were considered especially susceptible to. Chapter 17 concerns a canon in a Premonstratensian house who becomes infirmarian so that he can abuse his position and feed his greed: at night, he would steal and eat the leftovers from the huge plates of food made for the sick under his care. His appetite and greed are emphasised: 'Thus, O Lord, he surrendered himself to be a slave to his appetite; in this way, alas, he devotedly served it, ignoring nothing that his appetite ordered.'[164] He eventually falls into despair and kills himself: 'He committed the murder and, with his knife, pierced the gullet whose appetites he had served... in that place the ravenous and gluttonous man would have died.'[165] He is carried off by demons but saved by Mary and he is later found by his brothers, 'with his throat, nerves and veins cut open, still breathing'. It is made clear that this is a sin that comes from his body and its desires: his gullet or throat is the body part whose appetites he fed, and that he then cut open. There are echoes here of the warning in the *Speculum virginum* that virgins must guard all their five senses to keep the enemy out – it is not just sexual temptation, but all kinds of sin relating to the body that nuns must worry about.[166] Similarly, John Godard, in his thirteenth-century treatise to the Cistercian abbess of Tarant, focused on temptations rooted in the needs of the body and the senses: fine foods, luxurious clothes and distracting sights.[167] It was through their senses and bodily needs that women were particularly susceptible to sin. With these exempla, Engelhard warned the nuns about the appetites that might lead them to sin.

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[164] 'Sic domine gulae servum se dederit, sic ei devote serviebat ut nichil obmitteret quod illa imperaret.' c. 17, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 147v–148r.
[165] 'Homicidam facit et cultro cuius incisione gulae servierat gulam transfodit.' c. 17, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 148v.
[166] Mews, 'Virginity, Theology and Pedagogy', 20–30.
[167] Freeman, 'Cistercian Monk Writes to a Cistercian Nun', 323–36.

As Newman argued, Engelhard did also see equivalencies between the spiritual formation and growth of monks and nuns, sending them stories about Cistercian men who had struggled, been tempted, and later reached perfection. Monks like Reinbart, whose many qualities – of which chastity was only one – were listed in full, gave the nuns models to follow, and suggested to them the virtues they should cultivate in their spiritual journey. However, a quarter of Engelhard's collection encouraged the nuns to think about sex, virginity, chastity and other sinful appetites, a disproportionate amount compared to the other collections, suggesting an anxiety about sex and virginity. Engelhard's text reflects the concerns of the German literature of spiritual formation for women, exemplified by the *Speculum virginum*, which was concerned with the chastity of nuns and their relations with the men who ministered to them. In this way, Engelhard's collection is inextricably connected to this literature; contrary to Newman's argument, it has a gendered dimension because it was part of the wider gendered discourse of religious men writing to and about religious women.

Similarly, many of Engelhard's exempla warned about the temptations of the world and displayed anxieties about monks fleeing the spiritual for the carnal, showing the nuns the benefits of strict enclosure. On this point too Engelhard's collection sits in the same currents as the *Speculum virginum*, which was an older twelfth-century text. In his collection, Engelhard constructed a model of Cistercian female life that was lived enclosed, in community, in prayer and contemplation. This differed from some new contemporary models of female piety, which focused on acts of charity and penitence, such as care for lepers; his collection does however mirror the enclosed life that the thirteenth-century General Chapter statutes would mandate. However, the enclosed female life could also be fraught with sexual temptation, from the monks who ministered to them but also from the women they lived with, a concern displayed by contemporary abbesses. To only think Engelhard was warning of the dangers of sex between men and women in his collection is to read in a heteronormative and wholly anachronistic way; medieval nuns wrote passionate love letters to one another, and their abbesses fretted about the possibilities for seduction within the convent. Using vivid stories of Cistercian men succumbing to the temptations of women, Engelhard asked the nuns to imagine themselves as these fellow Cistercians, and to be terrified away from any lesbian desires, for their sake, and the sake of the women they might tempt to sin with them.

Virgin Mary as Abbess, Mechthild as Abbess

The Cistercian exempla collections are generally seen as works of socialisation and education, aimed at novices, lay brothers and monks, and as such have not been explored for any advice or

formation they might have offered to monastic superiors. But Engelhard's collection was not only addressed to a community of nuns; it was addressed in the first instance to the abbess, Mechthild. The final section of this chapter now seeks to understand Engelhard's collection through the prism of this address.

The exempla dealing with themes of chastity and sexual temptation, explored above, and those that relate examples of sinful behaviour more generally, have two things in common. Firstly, many of the misbehaving monks in Engelhard's collection have ineffective abbots, whose pastoral care is insufficient to help or reform them. Secondly, several of the monks are saved instead by the Virgin, who is such a common apparition in the collection that it was occasionally mis-labelled as a Marian miracle collection.[168] Monastic superiors were generally portrayed in a positive light in the Cistercian exempla collections; in the *Exordium magnum*, Conrad wrote that the abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux were the holiest men in the Order. One exemplum from the *Collectaneum*, studied by McGuire, also features a monk with a sexual problem (in this case nocturnal emissions) and his abbot.[169] While Mary offers the monk assistance, he also receives help from his abbot, who is compassionate and sensitive. The exemplum ends not with Mary's aid, but with the abbot's peace of mind being restored when he sees that his monk has overcome temptation. In McGuire's interpretation, the abbot's exemplary behaviour was intended to encourage monks to go to their superiors to confess and seek help. Engelhard's exempla are unusual in their focus on abbatial failure.

Moreover, Mary is an active presence in Engelhard's collection: she speaks, she acts, and is not just an intercessor between the monks and Christ (who is remarkably absent in this collection). As Newman writes, 'Engelhard's stories... depict Mary as a disciplinarian who enacted the care expected of a monastic superior.'[170] However, she concludes that Engelhard did not intend for Mary to be a female role model for the nuns, since his collection was also shared with monks when he sent it to Erbo. Instead, she sees this depiction of Mary as part of Engelhard's decentring of priests: 'His depiction of Mary focused the attention of his audience on the importance of individual reform and the understanding of the sacramental signs that this reform encouraged.'[171] In other words, the audience should learn from the monks aided by the Virgin, not Mary or even the failing abbots. But how might Mechthild – who was addressed by name in Engelhard's dedication letter and so constructed as one possible audience for his collection – have read these exempla, as an abbess and not just a nun? The final section of this

[168] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 149.
[169] McGuire, Les mentalités des cisterciens', 112–15.
[170] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 153.
[171] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 153.

chapter first explores the failures of pastoral care in Engelhard's exempla and the few examples of good abbots, and secondly the portrayal of the Virgin, to understand how she was presented to Mechthild as a model for her in her role as abbess.

Failures of Pastoral Care

Engelhard included seven exempla where abbots fail in their duty of care. These can be divided into three categories, with some abbots making mistakes on multiple fronts. These are: an inability to discern problematic behaviour, a failure to persuade a monk to repent or change his behaviour, and a lack of effective emotional or psychological support.

The first category of failure includes, for example, chapter 13: two monks return to their abbot after death to prove they have been saved, but one reveals he was guilty of a sin his abbot did not know about, that of singularity. Newman has studied this kind of failure, where those in positions of authority in Engelhard's collection do not discern the conscience of those they are responsible for, arguing that Engelhard was doubtful that abbots or the community could correctly read outward behavioural signs to see into someone's soul. Despite this, he rarely chastised these superiors; it was the sinners themselves who were at fault.[172] For Newman, these stories are further proof of Engelhard's resistance to the clericalization of monastic life.[173] However, a lack of discernment is only one way in which abbots in Engelhard's exempla are at fault.

The second category of failure concerns those superiors who do not or cannot convince those under their care to change course. The monk who had already left the monastery once and returned is not convinced to stay by his abbot, but by the vision of Hell shown to him by the Virgin Mary. In a similar fashion, a hot-tempered monk who starts a brawl in the chapter house (c. 16) is not moved to repent by his superiors, but by Mary in a vision: 'he refused penance, but was able to be corrected by the Virgin.'[174] The third category, overlapping significantly with the second, features abbots who do not offer sufficient emotional or psychological support to their monks. This is the case in the two exempla concerning suicidal monks. In the first (c. 17), a canon in a Premonstratensian house is moved to confess, but his abbot refuses to hear it at that moment; when the abbot comes to him later his heart has been hardened: 'he confesses nothing of those grave sins, but instead those which everyone has done.'[175] He then returns to his crimes, before falling into despair: 'He hated life and wanted to make his hand the avenger of himself.

[172] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 159–86.
[173] Newman, *Cistercian Stories,* 169.
[174] 'penitentiam renuit et qui virga potuerat emendari.' c. 16, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 147r.
[175] 'confitetur nichil tamen horum quae gravia essent, sed ea quae nemo non faceret.' c. 17, MBS Clm 13097 148r.

He did the murder, and, with his knife, pierced the gullet whose appetites he had served.'[176] Despair is a theme in chapter 20 as well: a Cistercian monk is guilty of a hidden sin (Newman infers it is masturbation), and while his abbot recognises his despair and gets him to talk, he refuses to make a full confession, believing his sins could not be forgiven:

> The abbot was a good and sensible man [*vir bonus et prudens*], having been taught by Solomon to diligently examine the appearance of his flock. He wanted to know the conscience of the ill brother... He approaches him with beneficial admonitions to feel his pain. He had only patience. He opened up his conscience, prepared to carry with him whatever his sin might be, by which he was burdened in his soul.... Then he, having been pricked by these stings, said, "If only I had done the work of God, and not done more the work of the devil. I was a servant of God in public, but a servant of the enemy in secret. And truly I deserve punishment, so that I may be punished in accordance with the sins I have committed in him, for by this hand I have defiled the temple of God, if indeed it is true that our bodies are a house of the Holy Spirit. This has been my behaviour for a long time, in which I have continued up until today." No confession followed, no penance, no satisfaction. What was the abbot to do [*Quid abbas faceret*]?[177]

His despair leads him to drown himself, and his body is found by his brothers submerged in a latrine: the abbot has failed in his duty to his flock. Although his abbot is compassionate, he has no authority or persuasive abilities: he cannot make his monk confess or do penance, and so the monk slips further into despair. Engelhard asked his audience the question: what was the abbot to do? No answer is provided, and the story ends with the brother dying by suicide. The abbot's ignorance of what to do directly contributes to his monk's death.

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[176] 'Odisset vitam et in se ultor manus suam sui faceret. Homicidam facit et cultro cuius incisione gulae servierat gulam transfodit.' c. 17, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 148v.

[177] 'Abbas vir bonus et prudens doctus a salamone diligenter inspicere vultum pecoris sui. Scire voluit conscientiam fratris infirmi... Adgreditur eum salutaribus monitis condolere se illi. Haberet modo patientiam. Aperiret conscientiam, paratum se portare cum eo quicquid esset illud quo forte gravaretur in animo... Tum ille conpunctus ad punctum et, "Utinam," ait, "opus Dei fecissem, ac non magis opus diabolis. Dei eram servus in publico, sed inimici servus in occulto. Et vere digna retributio ut in quo peccavi in ipso et puniar, nam hac manu pollui templum Dei, si tamen verum est quod corpera nostra domus sunt spiritus sanctis. Hoc mihi ex longo mos fuit in hoc usque hodie persevero." Non secuta confessio, non paenitentia, non satisfactio. Quid abbas faceret?' c. 20, MBS Clm 13097 152v–153r.

In the majority of these exempla, Engelhard blamed the monks for their sin or despair and not the abbots. The abbot in the exemplum quoted above, for example, is described as a 'good and sensible man'. However, his insistence on the fault of the individual sits uncomfortably alongside other exempla he included, like that of Abbot Pons, who does convince a monk not to leave the monastery by agreeing to act as guarantor for his salvation. This chapter follows on directly from the story of the monk who is convinced to stay in the monastery by Mary, not his abbot, creating a contrast between the two abbots. At the end of the story about Pons, his monk has a vision where he sees two beds with purple silken sheets. On one bed he sees one crown; on the other there are two crowns. The meaning of this vision is explained to the monk:

> "'This was said to me: the bed with the one crown is yours, the other with the two is your abbot's; one [of the crowns] is deserved for his way of life, and the other for your conversion. For as is said in scripture, just as Christ laid down his life for us, thus we ought to give our life for our brothers (I John 3:16). This man fulfilled this, laying down his life for you.'"[178]

This exemplum not only provided Engelhard's audience with an example of an abbot who did save his struggling monk, it presented such behaviour as following the sacrifice of Christ. At the other end of the collection, chapter 32 is about Peter of Igny, and his monk who came back to life so he could confess. The reason given for this is so that Peter would not have to bear responsibility for the man's sins, suggesting that abbots would always have to answer for the sins of their monks. Despite him laying the blame for sinful behaviour at the door of the misbehaving monks, other of Engelhard's exempla undercut this by suggesting that abbots were responsible for the behaviour of their flock, and so ultimately a failure to correct them was their fault.

These are shortcomings that a Cistercian audience would have picked up on. When Engelhard asked the question, *Quid abbas faceret?*, a monastic audience would have had an answer based on the Rule. The Cistercian customary, the *Ecclesiastica Officia*, had little to say about the qualities of the abbot, describing his duties but not the sort of man he should be (EO110). But two chapters in the Rule do discuss the position: chapter 2 describes the qualities of an ideal

[178] 'Dictumque est mihi: lectus unus cum una coronia tuus est. Alter cum duabus abbatis tui, et unam meruit pro conuersatione sua, et alteram pro tua conuersione. Nam quod ait scriptura sicut pro nobis Christus animam suam posuit, ita et nos pro fratribus debemus animas ponere. Hoc iste implevit, ponens animam suam pro te.' c. 9, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 140r–140v.

abbot, and chapter 64 lays out the procedure for electing a new abbot, including the instruction that: 'Goodness of life and wisdom in teaching must be the criteria for choosing the one to be made abbot.'[179] In both chapters the abbot is described as a steward or shepherd of his monks' souls; on the Day of Judgement, he will be judged for his care of them and their obedience, and he will win praise or blame based on his flock's behaviour and whether they have been saved. Pons, then, was not an exceptional abbot, since all abbots were to be judged on whether or not they aided their monks' salvation. Engelhard's audience would have interpreted his actions as an example of how an ideal Benedictine abbot should behave, and the others in Engelhard's exempla as falling short. An abbot's ability to be flexible, and 'adapt himself to each one's character and intelligence', is also specified in chapter 2:

> 'he must vary with circumstances, threatening and coaxing by turns, stern as a taskmaster, devoted and tender as only a father can be. With the undisciplined and restless, he will use firm argument; with the obedient and docile and patient, he will appeal for greater virtue, but as for the negligent and disdainful, we charge him to use reproof and rebuke.'[180]

The abbots in Engelhard's collection did not have this adaptability, since they could not persuade their monks not to leave the monastery, to confess their sins, or to come out of a depression.

In his *apologia*, Engelhard claimed that he had provided his readers with both virtuous examples to follow and stories of impious and sinful behaviour. In terms of the monastic behaviour expected of all members of the community, alongside the negative examples of monks who committed sexual sins, desired to leave the monastery, or had moments of faithlessness, Engelhard provided plenty of clear examples of virtuous behaviour. The Wechterswinkel nuns would constantly have been moving between examples of good conduct to follow, and warnings of the punishments for bad behaviour.

For Mechthild, who was consistently shown the ways in which she might fail as a monastic superior, the positive examples are at first glance less obvious. There are perhaps three exempla about good abbots, and one about another monastic superior, the prior (cc. 9, 13, 25, 32), but two of these exempla are ambiguous. The abbot whose monks visit him after death to show they have both been saved (c. 13) provided a monastic environment where these two 'flourishing' young men could offer 'the flower of their youth before God', and both were saved, but the

[179] Rule, c. 64.
[180] Rule, c. 2.

vision shows that he had missed the sin of one, who did not carry a crown in the vision as did the other.[181] Equally, Abbot Peter (c. 32) is described as praying so hard that he misses the moment of his monk's death, and so does not hear his confession. Nevertheless, the exempla about Peter and Prior Otto (c. 25) do suggest some of the traits of a successful abbot or abbess. Peter's fervency and faith are described, and he is shown to be a shining example to his community, only teaching what he himself already knew and could show in his own behaviour – his life was literally exemplary:

> While he was the abbot at Igny, he shone forth like a fire, burning with the fear of God he was aflame with zeal, shining by example [*lucens exemplo*]. He taught nothing that he had not previously done himself, teaching and doing all that which he knew was the will of God, and he was fragrant with the glory of the Most High.[182]

This is an abbatial virtue described in chapter 2 of the Rule of Benedict, where abbots are encouraged to teach through words and example, but primarily through example.[183] This is yet another moment in one of the Cistercian collections when the practice of teaching by example is explicitly praised, and shown to be a key strategy in the formation of Cistercian members in the monastery. Engelhard's dedication letter also suggests the nuns liked to learn through exemplary narratives; the suggestion with this exemplum is that Mechthild should shape herself to be an exemplar for her nuns, as Peter was, as well as edifying them through exempla. Engelhard also highlighted Prior Otto's imitability and teaching through example: 'He was the first[184] in our house, both by his merit and by his office, humble in his own eyes, but in the eyes of others elevated by his saintly life... he made his monks blessed by the imitation of him.'[185] But Otto was also able to advise and talk to his monks. In this exemplum, Engelhard highlighted Otto's ability to see the problems he faced and respond to them, helping him through a period of difficulty when he entered the monastery:

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[181] 'In hac inquam domo duo iuvenes flores iuventutis suae florentes ante Deum obtulerunt.' c. 13, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 143v.
[182] 'Igniaco dum praeesset quasi ignis effulsit ipse, fervens in timore Dei ardens zelo, lucens exemplo. Nichil docuit quod prius ipse non faceret, docens et faciens omnia quae domini sui sciret uoluntatem, et gloriam altissimi redoleret.' c. 32, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 161r.
[183] 'he must point out to them all that is good and holy more by example than by words'. Rule, c. 2.
[184] There is a nice pun here, with *prior* meaning both 'first/leading' and indicating the office of prior.
[185] 'Prior fuit in domo nostra tam merito quam officio, humilis ipse in oculis suis, in aliae pro vitae sanctitate sublimis... beatos faceret imitato res suos.' c. 25, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 157v.

> For in the early years of my youth, when the ever-changing and shifting enemy was attacking me and had already triumphed, I was considering fleeing when the blessed Otto ran to meet me. He roused me as I was wavering, corrected me as I was erring, and by his words sent me back again to the fight stronger and braver.[186]

Otto was able to 'vary with circumstances, threatening and coaxing by turns', so as to persuade Engelhard not to flee, as described in chapter 2 of the Rule. *Quid abbas faceret*? The answer to the question Engelhard posed in chapter 20, partly answered by the Rule, is also shown several chapters later in Engelhard's exemplum about Otto. A key component of being a successful monastic superior is this ability to be responsive, to understand the needs of the individual in trouble, and to act accordingly. Engelhard's story of Otto brings to life and shows by example the virtues of an abbot or other monastic superior, as described in the Rule: it is a normative or legislative text made flesh and blood, and given the persuasive force of a narrative.

The exemplum that shows most fully a successful abbot at work is the one about Pons of Grandselve (c. 9). At first, his monk strives eagerly towards perfection, and Pons rejoices:

> having been accepted and tested, he was made a monk. He grew in days, aiming towards perfection, and was accomplished in monasticism, over and above the company of his knights in his order. All were glad thanks to this [*Gaudium ex hoc omnibus*], but above all the abbot, who rejoiced that he had given birth to such a one in whom Christ was formed.[187]

After three years, the monk begins to be tempted and is thrown into despair due to the sinful life he lived before entering Grandselve:

> The good soldier received a wound, pierced with arrows in the dark. The venom crept into his breast, and his heart was stricken with sadness, and the sword reached all the way to his soul. His face became sadder, his

[186] 'Nam primis adolescentiae annis cum me multiplex adgregeretur inimicus et iam iamque triumpharet. Fugam meditanti, Otto sanctus occurrit. Nutantem erexit, correxit errantem rursumque fortiorem et meliorem de verbo remisit ad pugnam.' c. 25, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 157v.
[187] 'susceptus, probatus et monachus factus est. Crescebat in dies tendens ad perfectum et proficiebat in monacismo supra militos coetanos suos in ordine suo. Gaudium ex hoc omnibus sed prae omnibus abbati, quod talem parturisset in quo formatus est Christus.' c. 9, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 139r.

> appearance harsher, his words more bitter, his actions more sluggish, his speech less prepared.[188]

This greatly affects Pons, who does all he can to help the monk. In what we might think of as a typically Cistercian rhetorical move, Engelhard used gender-fluid imagery to describe Pons' state of mind:

> All noticed that the man was changed, and all were thrown into confusion by this, but especially the father. All his organs were troubled, and changing from father to mother [*fit mater ex patre*], attended to his womb so that he could again give birth and reform the deformed form of Christ in his son. He soothed him, he cherished him, he coaxed him, he dug out the walls, and look! a door in the wall. He confessed, and did not deny that he had covered up the truth of his sin, the size of his crime, the torrent of his wrong and the sea of his injustice.[189]

The monk decides the only thing to do is to leave the monastery, since staying is pointless; he believes his crimes can never be forgiven. Pons is troubled by this: 'The abbot was frightened [*pavet*] upon hearing this, saddened [*dolet*] that he had cared for him so badly, bewailing that he had not been aware of the wolf dragging away his sheep'.[190] Here Engelhard used the imagery of abbot as shepherd that also harks back to the Rule. Eventually, Pons says he will take the man's sins as his own, and act as guarantor of his salvation. With this guarantee the monk agrees to stay, and before his death sees the vision described above, of the two heavenly beds, one for him and one for Pons. At each stage of the monk's rise, decline and redemption, Engelhard made his audience privy to Pons' emotions and thoughts. He is glad when the monk initially does so well, intensely troubled at the negative changes he sees in his behaviour, frightened when the monk seems to have fallen into despair, and finally 'satisfied' when the man agrees to stay. He is emotionally attuned both to this monk and the rest of the community: all were proud of the

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[188] 'Vulnus acceperat bonus miles, sagitatus in obscuro. Virus serpebat in pectore, appraehendit cor dolor et pervenit gladius usque ad animam. Vultus tristior, visus asperior, sermo acerbior, actus segnior, loquela paratior.' c. 9, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 139r.

[189] 'Animadversum est hominem esse subversum movit omnes universi turbantur et praecipue pater. Conmota sunt omnia niscera eius, fit mater ex patre, parans uterum ut iterum parturiat et reformet in filio formam Christi deformatam. Mulcet, fovet, blanditur, fodit parietem et ecce! ostium in pariete. Confessus est et non negavit se vere peccatorem, se mole criminum, se torrente iniquitatis et pelago iniusticiae obrutum.' c. 9, MBS Clm 13097 139r.

[190] 'Abbas pavet auditu, male se vigilasse dolet, lupum non cauisse conqueritur ovem trahi.' c. 9, MBS Clm 13097 139r.

monk, but especially him, and all are disturbed when he changes. As Pons is successful and the monk is ultimately saved, this emotional intelligence and fellow-feeling is shown to be an important component of the abbot's role as head of the community and a reason for his proficient pastoral care. Again, it brought to life chapter 2 of the Rule, showing the emotional intelligence and adaptability required of an abbot. This exemplum also provides further evidence for the definition of Cistercian exempla proposed in chapter one. Pons' feelings lead him to act; his emotional turmoil is what prompts him to turn from father to mother and coax and nurture his monk until he confesses. In order to follow the example of Pons and form herself into a successful monastic superior like him, Mechthild would first need to inhabit his thoughts and emotions, and feel the same inner turmoil and compassion if one of her nuns strayed; these would then motivate her to act, like Pons, in such a way as to save her errant daughter.

Pons was twice described by Engelhard in a maternal way. He rejoices at having given birth to such a perfect monk, and later reverts to being a mother figure to again give birth to the monk and reform his character. As a mother, he cherishes and coaxes him. This is common twelfth-century Cistercian imagery, as explored by Bynum, and is linked to the role abbots had to fulfil.[191] She argues that Cistercian authors were more concerned about issues of pastoral care because Cistercian communities had to nurture adult recruits who had a more difficult path of spiritual growth to tread, as is the case in this exemplum. Imagery that described God, Jesus, or the abbot as a mother allowed authors to imbue authority figures with traditionally feminine traits – love, tenderness and compassion – exactly those that Pons displays towards his struggling monk. These traits are also celebrated in the Rule, where the abbot is instructed to be temperate and merciful, and to love his monks even as he hates their sins.[192] He should also be loved by them in return, and not feared. Adam of Perseigne (d. 1221), abbot from 1188 until his death of the French Cistercian abbey of Perseigne, talked in his letters about the need for good abbots and bishops to be both fathers and mothers. Like mothers, they must give birth to, nurture and care for their monks, a sentiment he expressed using avian imagery: 'in what way are you yourself named father or mother of little ones, you who do not jealously watch over your chicks with tender affection as a hen does, or like an eagle provoking her chicks to fly flutter over them and bear upwards in your wings both by word and example those little ones commended to you?'[193] This care explicitly involved teaching by example. Engelhard was thus using familiar Cistercian imagery in his description of Pons. In the story of how he reformed his monk, the feminine side

[191] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 110–68. Newman also discusses the gendered imagery in this exemplum, Newman *Cistercian Stories*, 169–71.
[192] 'He should always let mercy triumph over judgement so that he too may win mercy. He must hate faults but love the brothers... Let him strive to be loved rather than feared.' Rule, c. 64.
[193] Quoted in Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 124–25.

of the abbot – caring and nurturing, rather than any disciplinary action – predominates. It is through cherishing and coaxing that Pons is able to find out what is wrong with his monk, and so come up with a solution.

An earlier version of the story of Pons appeared in the *Liber miraculorum*. It emphasised themes of confession and contrition, since the monk fears his sins can never be forgiven, even if he confesses them. In his own rewriting of the story in the *Exordium magnum*, Conrad added a final paragraph that emphasised this: 'Let us gird ourselves for penitence, brothers, and with this penitence let us come before the face of the Lord in confession and contrition of heart'.[194] As Newman has argued, the focus of Engelhard's collection is on Pons and his Christ-like sacrifice for his monk, as shown by the use of the quote from John.[195] But she argues that the maternal imagery takes it a step further:

> 'by presenting the abbot as a mother as well as a father, the imagery of the story encouraged its audiences to imagine parallels between the abbot and Mary as well as Christ... Engelhard's depiction of Mary's interventions as an idealised abbot became intertwined with his presentation of a real abbot who enacted a maternal responsibility for the spiritual condition of her monks.'[196]

Though we would think of the description of Pons as mother as typically Cistercian, this is imagery that is not used in the earlier version of the story in the *Liber miraculorum*. Pons' contract with his monk is the same, but he is described as neither father nor mother. Engelhard added this imagery into a story about a male Cistercian, for a community of women. There is thus a deep entanglement in Engelhard's collection and in the imagery he used between abbots and the Virgin, a connection created by his rewriting of the story of Pons and his inclusion of maternal imagery. Bynum has argued that the use of feminised imagery for Cistercian monks only occurred within texts written by and for men: within a same-sex male monastic environment, this kind of spiritual gender swapping could take place, but it was not included in texts for women. Engelhard's collection shows that the imagery of abbot as mother was not exclusively used in Cistercian texts for men, but could be used to create meaning in a text for women as well.

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[194] 'Accingamur ad paenitentiam fratres, et cum hoc paenitente praeveniamus faciem Domini in confessione et cordis contritione'. *Exordium magnum*, II.26.
[195] Newman, *Cistercian Stories,* 169–71.
[196] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 171.

Though Newman argues that Engelhard did not intend for Mary to be an example for the nuns, in reading this exemplum, Mechthild, as a fellow head of a Cistercian house, would surely have seen herself in the role of Pons and so as likened to Mary as well. She would likely have felt similar emotions about the progress or sins of her charges, or be able to imagine that clearly. Maternal imagery occurs frequently in descriptions of Benedictine abbesses in saints' lives and miracle collections in this period.[197] Engelhard's address to Mechthild uses the most common word used to describe abbesses: 'mater'. Katie Bugyis has explored how abbesses were described as bringing forth spiritual fruit, just as secular women bring forth biological children, and how their responsibilities were likened to parental ones: they must be caring and moderate, and nurture their charges.[198] The use of the maternal imagery for Pons thus connected him both to Mary and to Mechthild as abbess, who was also the mother of a monastic community. This exemplum, in showing Pons' imitation of Mary, implied that the abbess should shape herself according to the model of Mary too – in forming herself to the example of Pons, she was forming herself to the example of Mary. Furthermore, Pons was shown to be a successful abbot because he was able to change between stern father and nurturing mother. This is the same adaptability and responsiveness to the needs of his flock shown by Otto, and discussed in chapter 2 of the Rule. Pons was portrayed as emotionally in-tune with his community, and especially the needs of the struggling monk. The abbots who fail in Engelhard's collection do not appropriately read and react to the emotional state of their monks. In the story of the suicidal monk in chapter 20, for example, the problem is not, as Newman argues, a failure of discernment on the part of the abbot. He understands his monk is in trouble, but cannot persuade him to confess truthfully, unlike Pons, or indeed Otto. Pons' movement between mother-abbot and father-abbot symbolises his embodiment of the qualities of a good abbot as laid out in chapter 2 of the Rule. The only other character in Engelhard's collection who is multi-faceted and changeable in this way is the Virgin Mary, and thus Engelhard created a deliberate link between Mechthild as abbess, Pons as abbot, and his portrayal of Mary. In this way, Mary clearly was constructed as an example for Mechthild.

The Many Faces of the Virgin

The role of the abbess as the leader of the nuns in her care in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries has received scant scholarly attention, perhaps part of the general lack of attention paid

[197] Katie Ann-Marie Bugyis, *The Care of Nuns: The Ministries of Benedictine Women in England during the Central Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 95–103.
[198] Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*, 95–103.

to the pastoral care nuns undertook.[199] The authority of abbesses is therefore a matter of some scholarly disagreement. In a 1996 article, Felice Lifshitz asked how an abbess could rule as a mother, a position that came with little authority and was not associated with command: 'Father Jesus rules with authority, while Mother Jesus loves and nurtures.'[200] Similarly, Valerie Spear argues that the various requirements placed on abbesses by the Rule, which was designed for a male community head, and society, which constructed women as submissive, were 'both complex and onerous'.[201] However, Bugyis suggests that this was not a question that troubled medieval authors or audiences, since abbesses were predominantly described as maternal but their authority rarely challenged within their communities; their maternality was what made them good monastic leaders.[202] She argues that: 'Benedictine nuns could be and were indeed ministers of Christ, curates of the souls entrusted to their keeping.' Nevertheless, she admits that abbesses were frequently described paradoxically in hagiographical and historical writings as fecund virgins who brought forth spiritual fruit, as chaste mothers, and often as manly women or viragos, and suggests that abbesses were given little direction about how to inhabit these ambiguous roles.

As well as Pons, who appears as a feminised abbot, Engelhard also introduced a Mary who is more like Jesus or an abbot, as Newman has argued, and so is masculinised, adding to the gender confusion.[203] Mary is depicted as a strict disciplinarian, like a good abbot; she is an active presence, and not shown as an intercessor with her Son, as in other collections. But it is not only as disciplinarian that she is presented: the six exempla about Mary portray her in several different modes. In this discussion I will proceed in the order in which the exempla appear in the collection. Engelhard addressed this text to Mechthild, so of all the nuns, we can be most sure that she would have read it in order and in full. Reading in this way gives a sense of how the portrayal of Mary varies and develops over the course of the collection. In the first (c. 4), Gottschalk, who is described as worthy of experiencing a vision, sees her on the altar:

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[199] This is the argument made by Bugyis in the introduction to her recent book: Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*. Felice Lifshitz made a similar argument in 1996, Felice Lifshitz, 'Is Mother Superior? Towards a History of Feminine Amtscharisma', in *Medieval Mothering*, ed. John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Routledge, 1996), 117–38. While Valerie Spear's book explores the role of the abbess, this is for a later period (1280–1540), Valerie Spear, *Leadership in Medieval English Nunneries* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005).
[200] Lifshitz, 'Is Mother Superior?', 117–20.
[201] Spear, *Leadership in Medieval English Nunneries*, xvi.
[202] Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*, 78–131.
[203] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 150.

> 'at the moment of the fraction of the saving host [he saw] the blessed Mary seated on the altar and dividing an infant child with a golden knife, the blood from whom flowed from each incision into the chalice.'[204]

Newman has shown how this description mirrors contemporary artistic representations of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple, and echoes Bernard's sermons for the Purification of the Virgin, which link the Purification with the Presentation and the Passion.[205] Mary is therefore here portrayed by Engelhard in a salvific role, sacrificing her son to redeem the sins of humanity. It sets up a theme that will continue: the Virgin in Engelhard's collection cares about people, and sinners in particular, and works to save them. Additionally, it is important that the first depiction of Mary has her in a quasi-sacerdotal role, carving the baby on the altar as the priest divides the host.[206] She is both a caring mother, sacrificing her son for the good of humankind, and a figure of religious authority, reflecting the double role played by the Benedictine abbess as well, as a caring mother to her nuns, charged with caring for and disciplining them, but also ultimately responsible for their salvation.

The second exemplum (c. 8) is the one discussed above, in which the Virgin takes a monk to Hell to persuade him not to abandon his monastic vocation. Here, Engelhard portrayed her as mournful but stern:

> Mary appeared, seeming sorrowful with sorrow [*tristi tristis apparens*], and speaking to him in this manner: "What are you thinking about, wretched one? What, foolish one, are you turning over in your mind – pondering flight, fleeing salvation? You love a woman; love me more, for I am of more use to you than she."[207]

After he is shown Hell, Mary makes him swear that he will be obedient, lest he have to return there. This exemplum immediately precedes the one about Pons. In chapter 8, Mary reacts emotionally to the possibility that one of her monks might fall, as Pons does in the next chapter. Like her, Pons then persuades his monk to stay through a personal connection and agreement.

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[204] 'in hora fractionis hostiae salutaris sanctam Mariam in altari considentem et parvulum culto aureo dividentem, sangrinem quoque illius ad incisiones singulas in calice decurrentem.' c. 4, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 135r.
[205] For a detailed discussion of this exemplum, see Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 115–19.
[206] Newman would disagree: she argues that Mary was not depicted as a priest, but instead that this imagery was aimed at downplaying the significance of priestly consecration, Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 119.
[207] 'Adest Maria, tristi tristis apparens et eum sic alloquens. "Quid miser cogitas? Quid stulta versas in animo, fugam meditando, salutem fugiendo? Amas mulierem, me potius ama nam ego tibi utilior quam illa."' c. 8, MBS Clm 13097 137r.

These paired exempla thus increase the connectivity between the portrayal of Pons – one of the only good abbots in the collection – and Mary, and so between Mechthild and Mary. Both Mary and Pons act as good abbots, recognising when their monks are faltering and feeling sorrow about this, and then convincing them to stay in the monastery through vows, making the monastic vow of obedience personal and individual. Although Mary is angry in this exemplum, calling the monk 'wretched' and 'foolish', she also pities him, and works to prevent his ruin – she is both a stern father and a feeling mother, in the Cistercian dichotomy outlined by Bynum, and thus has all the attributes of a good abbot.

The next exemplum (c. 11) to feature the Virgin is the one in which she calls a young virgin to Heaven. Here Engelhard added another facet to his portrayal of Mary, depicting her as the resplendent Queen of Heaven. The Mary of this exemplum is regal but caring. She summons the girl and speaks to her gently, asking her what it is that she wants. She is also shown as maternal, but superior to an earthly parent, since she displaces and supersedes the girl's mother: the mother weaves the robe for her daughter's wedding, but it is Mary who knows the true use for the cloth, as the purple robe for a heavenly virgin, which accords with the girl's own desire. The mother literally has to 'make it so' (the instruction her daughter gives her) and hand over her daughter and her robe to the Virgin. This then is another facet of Mary's personality: the kind queen and mother of virgins. As argued above, Mary and her virgins are analogous to the abbess and her nuns, and so the inclusion of this exemplum further strengthens the link between Mary and Mechthild, reinforcing that the former should be an example to the latter.

In the next exemplum (c. 14), Mary is once more the tender Queen of Heaven rather than a strict disciplinarian. This is the story of her visiting the cellarer during the harvest, explored in chapter one. In this vision she is there in her guise as patron of the Cistercian Order, to tell them that their work is meaningful to her and her Son. There are echoes of the exemplum where the monk vows obedience to her in her pronouncement to the cellarer: "'What I receive, I remunerate'". All Cistercians, everywhere, so long as they engage in work that pleases Mary and Jesus, will receive the reward of salvation from her: Mary had a pact with the entire Order as their patron.

The next exemplum (c. 16) is about the monk who starts a brawl in the chapter house and refuses penance, but 'was able to be corrected by the Virgin.' Her correction involves visiting him in his sleep:

> 'The following night in his sleep he saw himself being attacked by two wolves who violently dragged him away and were going to devour him.

> The splendid Virgin opposed them; armed [*armata*] with staffs she beat them. She plucked him up and said, "Do you know what they are? They are the enemies of your soul, who have come to destroy you, and certainly they would have done so, if my person had not defended you. Your disobedience strengthened them against you, they would have dared nothing nor been able to if obedience had protected you. I am Mary and I do not want your ruin; I admonish you: come to your senses!'"[208]

Here again, Mary is shown both discipling a monk and expressing a level of concern. She admonishes him but is concerned enough not to want his ruin; she comes to his aid even in the face of his own disobedience. Like a mother, his bad behaviour does not drive her away. But she is not depicted as maternal or passive: she is 'armata', beating off the wolves and putting her body between them and the monk. Newman points out that Mary is here implicitly likened to Jesus or an abbot, with her staff and the wolves calling to mind familiar metaphors of a shepherd guarding his flock.[209] But Mary is not just his saviour on this one occasion. Having made satisfaction in chapter the next day, he is described as 'tamed' and becomes better behaved than any of the other monks. The wolves, while here described as representing the enemies of his soul, also seem to represent his hot-tempered nature; he is described in the chapter title as 'iracundus'. It is this temper that Mary tames with her intervention; this vision brings about long-term reform of his character and continued spiritual growth. Again, this monk's feelings – his hot temper – influence his behaviour, and similarly after his inner self is tamed, he behaves himself. In the Cistercian exempla, outer actions do not influence the inner self; behaving well does not reform the soul. Instead, behaviour proceeds from the inner self, and so thinking and feeling like a fellow monk is the first step to following their example.

This exemplum shows an image of a female monastic superior who took on "masculine" identities such as shepherd of her flock, like Jesus, or like the abbot as described in the Benedictine rule. Like a parent, abbesses were expected to raise and educate their monastic

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[208] 'Nocte insecuta videt in somnis a duobus lupis se invadi, violenter trahi et iamiam devorari. Occurit his virgo splendida. Virgis armata percutit illos eruit illum dixitque, "Scis qui sunt isti? Hostes sunt animae tuae rapere venerunt te et certe rapuissent nisi mea te praesentia defendisset. Inobedienta tua fortes illos contra te fecit, nam nichil auderent nichil possent si obedientia te protegeret. Maria sum ego, perditionem tuam nolo. Resipisce te moneo!'". c. 16, MBS Clm 13097 fol. 147r.
[209] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 149–53.

children, provide for their needs and protect them from temptations, but also discipline them when necessary, as Mary does here.[210]

This is reinforced in the final chapter in which Mary appears (c. 17), which follows on from that of the angry monk. In this exemplum, the canon who falls into despair and eventually cuts his own throat does not die, but demons attempt to carry him away, taking him up to the church roof. Mary stops them, and his brothers then find him and bring him down. Newman has discussed this exemplum and the way it differs from a similar tale in Conrad in detail, showing that Engelhard rewrote the story to have Mary play a greater and more active role than in Conrad's version.[211] Coming after the previous exemplum, it reiterates Mary's role as saviour, standing between monks and demons who can affect them because of their own bad behaviour. Mary is described as 'arguing' with the demons, and then admonishes the canon to guard himself more fully against temptation in the future, reinforcing the active role of the abbess in striving for the salvation of her daughters.

In other Cistercian exempla collections, Mary was a passive presence, generally appearing with Jesus or acting as an intercessor. Engelhard's Mary is unusual: multi-faceted, both a maternal and caring figure and a disciplinary shepherd of her flock. She is not like the failing abbots. She is portrayed as having the qualities of the ideal Cistercian abbot, according to the literature explored by Bynum, who had to be both father and mother. She also embodies the attributes of abbots as outlined in the Rule: she responds to different monks according to their varying temperaments and behaviour, she loves them through their sins, she is a shepherd who takes responsibility for the wellbeing of her flock, and she even sacrifices her son for their salvation. *Quid abbas faceret*? The answer Engelhard presented was to be more like the Virgin that he had constructed. The active model of Mary is a corrective to the failing male Cistercian abbots, and also shows a woman taking on this role. In other Cistercian writings that discuss these gendered qualities, it is Jesus or abbots (i.e. male figures) who are encouraged to have female attributes like care and compassion. Engelhard in his collection portrayed Mary as having both those qualities labelled as feminine (maternal care and emotion) and behaving in an active way, fighting off wolves and demons and admonishing her monks harshly. In so doing, he created a female example for the abbess, in her role as mother to her nuns, that combined the maternal imagery commonly applied to abbesses with an active, ministering role, as shepherds and stewards of the souls under their care.

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[210] Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*, 96.
[211] Newman, *Cistercian Stories*, 149–53.

In the works of women writers from twelfth-century Germany, Anne Clark has shown, Mary was often an ambiguous figure who blurred the divide between clerics and laity through her depiction as a priest, despite her gender.[212] In the same way, Engelhard's Mary is continually crossing boundaries, acting more like a priest or abbot, but also shown more traditionally as the maternal Queen of Heaven or as messenger for her Son. Through this multi-faceted portrayal, Engelhard created a Mary who could hold paradoxes of gender and position within her, in so doing creating a rich and nuanced exemplar for an abbess who also had to be both mother and father, a virgin who gave birth to spiritual offspring, and a woman who had to care for the souls of her nuns and discipline them without being able to undertake priestly duties like confession.[213]

Little of the literature of spiritual formation produced in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries addressed the needs of abbesses; Mechthild would have had few places to turn to for instruction on how to be a good abbess. Those hagiographic writings that did show an active role for abbesses often did so in terms of institutional activity: founding religious houses, seeking patrons, constructing new monastic buildings, and interceding with powerful men, secular and ecclesiastic.[214] But what of her pastoral duties inside the abbey? The Rule and Cistercian customary were brief in their description of abbot's duties, and these were written for men, as Heloise complained to Abelard when she wrote to ask him for a set of observances for the Paraclete; as Mews has shown, they would eventually argue over the role and power of the abbess within her own community.[215] Abelard felt that nuns should be subject to a father abbot and disliked the term 'abbess' for the female head of the community. Heloise defiantly called herself abbess, and stated clearly in the observances she wrote: 'The duty of obedience is shown only to the abbess and prioress.'[216] In texts like the *Speculum virginum*, a man took responsibility for the care and training of nuns, literalised by the dialogue format. But by deferentially addressing Mechthild as abbess and mother, and describing himself as her son and servant, Engelhard did not portray himself as a man providing spiritual advice and care to nuns who were his daughters. This displacement of himself as the figure of ultimate authority in the text allowed him to imagine and construct a woman (symbolised by Mary) as the one providing pastoral care to a monastic community, in so doing creating an opportunity to provide guidance to the abbess in her role as monastic superior. Without his textual presence as instructor and authority,

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[212] Anne L. Clark, 'The Priesthood of the Virgin Mary: Gender Trouble in the Twelfth Century', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 18, no. 1 (2002): 5–24.
[213] Although Bugyis has found evidence that nuns continued to confess one another illicitly, Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*, 174–224.
[214] Bugyis, *Care of Nuns*, chapter 2; Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*, chapter 6.
[215] Mews, 'Negotiating the Boundaries', 116; Mews, 'Imagining Heloise', 430–31.
[216] Translated in Mews, 'Imagining Heloise,' 441.

Mechthild could inhabit the role of monastic superior as she read, rather than being relegated to a subordinate position. Reading as abbess, Mechthild could imagine herself as both the good and bad abbots in Engelhard's collection, and ultimately learn from and model herself after the Mary constructed by Engelhard. The collection is unique in this not just as a Cistercian exempla collection, but in much of the literature written by men to religious women in this period. Engelhard saw the abbess as the primary minister to her nuns, and provided her with a complex Marian model to imitate in the fulfilment of her duties.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Engelhard's collection was written specifically for the nuns of Wechterswinkel and their abbess, Mechthild. Although the subject matter of the exempla seems at first to correspond to the Cistercian collections written for men, Engelhard's different emphases are shown through his many exempla featuring bad behaviour, especially sexual sins, failures of abbatial care, and the high number of chapters in which the Virgin Mary appears. Through this contrast between examples of sub-standard abbots and the saving Virgin, Engelhard created a model for the abbess to follow in her role as leader of her community, whilst the examples of sinning monks warned her nuns of the sins they might be tempted to commit, if motivated by a desire for sex and worldly things. Depending on who was reading these exempla, they therefore provided a different moral formation. It is not only its address to a community of women that makes this collection unique, but its address to a monastic superior too, and Engelhard's attempt to provide guidance for her as abbess, not just as a nun.

Implicit in Engelhard's collection is a vision of Cistercian community that included women. Work has been done on the economic and material support that male communities provided to women's houses, as well as the ministries of clerics. Engelhard's collection suggests something more expansive and inclusive: women were not an addition to the Order that men were forced to deal with, but an integral part of the Cistercian community. He did not write a didactic treatise for the nuns, or sermons to be preached to them, but an exempla collection, a literary form that with the recent creation of the *Collectaneum* and Herbert's *Liber miraculorum* was in his day becoming established as a crucial method of textual moral formation amongst the white monks, and one that was embedded in the Cistercian practice of teaching by example. The Cistercians have been described as a storytelling order; many of the exempla recorded in the collections were passed around amongst abbots at the General Chapter, or while visitations were conducted. Throughout this thesis I have challenged the scholarly consensus that the collections aimed to create a single Cistercian identity, but I do not dispute that they were vehicles through

which stories about the Order were recorded, shared and passed down, even as they were rewritten to suit different aims; they were intra-community texts. By writing an exempla collection for the nuns of Wechterswinkel full of miracles that had taken place at other German Cistercian houses, Engelhard demonstrated their inclusion in the community of the Order. His use of the exemplum about Mary visiting the harvesters shows this clearly: though he rarely included exempla that could be found in other texts, Engelhard did tell a changed version of this one, which could be found in all the previous collections. This exemplum perhaps more than any other demonstrated divine approval for the Cistercian Order and the care taken of them by Mary, their patron, and Cistercian authors retold it repeatedly in the collections intended for an audience of their fellows. Over and above any other exemplum that he used, Engelhard's inclusion of this vision of Mary in his collection shows an unquestioning assumption that the nuns were a part of the Cistercian family.

The statutes from the General Chapter in the thirteenth century have been read as showing an Order working to keep nuns out. With Engelhard's collection, we see a twelfth-century Cistercian monk emphatically including women in the Cistercian community, by writing an exempla collection for them that paralleled the kind of texts being created for the moral and spiritual formation of Cistercian men. Moreover, there is no suggestion that he was writing because he thought he had a duty to care for the nuns, or to gain spiritual benefits for himself. According to his letter of dedication it was the nuns who had first helped him, not the other way round. This personal connection, manifested materially in the collection crafted by Engelhard, takes us inside the world of real Cistercian men and women in a way the statutes simply cannot. Here we see an actual woman, Mechthild, who had rendered services to a fellow Cistercian, Engelhard. The details of their relationship and the kindnesses of the nuns are lost, but the fact of their existence remains.

More than this, it nuances existing understandings of both the relationship between Cistercian men and women, and spiritual friendships between religious men and women more broadly. In the familial relationship he constructed with Mechthild and the nuns, Engelhard was not their father or even brother, but their son; he put himself in a subservient and filial position. He also described himself as their servant, and repeatedly addressed Mechthild as his lady, to whom he was rendering a service. If 'homoasceticism' is a deep, spiritual friendship between a religious man and woman that replicates the emotional content of a secular marriage, what Engelhard displays in his dedication letter could perhaps be termed 'monastic romanticism'. He addressed Mechthild in the courtly language of the romantic hero: she was his lady, and he her *servus*, making this collection a service to her but also a sign of his devotion. The *cura monialium*

has been seen as a burden to male communities, or alternatively as something they undertook willingly for their own spiritual improvement. In the dedication letter, Engelhard suggests another motive: love and service, modelled after ideas of courtly romance.

Nevertheless, Engelhard did see the nuns of Wechterswinkel as women – including them within the Cistercian Order did not erase their gender. Engelhard's collection included stories about sexual sins and temptations in far greater numbers than the male exempla collections, and shares with a text like the *Speculum virginum* a number of similarities in imagery, moral lessons, and the models offered to the nuns to imitate. Like the *Speculum virignum*, Engelhard's collection betrays an anxiety about enclosure and the chastity of nuns, and the need for them to guard their senses and bodies, including controlling their potential lusts for other nuns. It offers a traditional model of female monastic life, disconnected from the lives being lived by many of the women whose *vitae* were written in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, such as Yvette of Huy and Mary of Oignies, whose religious lives were based on acts of penance and charity, often in hospices or leper hospitals. Compared to these *vitae*, Engelhard's vision for the nuns of Wechterswinkel feels old-fashioned for a text written *c.* 1200, but shows the continued relevance of existence of such model of female religiosity.

Engelhard's collection, and in particular his address to Mechthild and her nuns, suggests two things to consider in future studies of Cistercian men and women. Firstly, we should not assume that gender was the only determinant of the power dynamics in a relationship between a religious man and woman; we should consider other markers of social status alongside gender in our analyses. Secondly – and this only reinforces the excellent work done on our standards of inclusion for female Cistercian houses – is not to use legal frameworks as the sole basis for deciding whether a female community really was Cistercian. Engelhard did not once reference in his collection the status of the nuns or their identity as Cistercian; he simply wrote to them in the same way Herbert wrote for monks at Clairvaux or Conrad wrote for monks in Germany. The status of the Wechterswinkel nuns as Cistercian seems to have been taken for granted. Engelhard addressed Mechthild as his mother, and like her nuns he was her child. They were all part of the same Cistercian family.

Conclusion

It is a truth almost universally acknowledged that storytelling is a meaningful and productive activity. Exemplary narratives are vehicles through which individual character can be formed, group identity created, and lessons taught. In the modern age, we find a formulation of this truism in the words of the author Terry Pratchett: 'People think that stories are shaped by people. In fact, it's the other way round.'[1] Or, as the novelist Ursula K. Le Guin wrote: 'We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel... is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become.'[2] This belief in the formative power of stories, rooted in the Cistercian practice of teaching by example, was shared by the authors of the exempla collections. From the twelfth to the twenty-first century, from Cistercian monks to science-fiction authors, a belief in the value of stories and examples to teach, inspire and form individuals has remained constant. It is the work of this conclusion to reflect on the practice of teaching by example in a specific time and place, among Cistercians between 1178 and 1220, in the collections of exempla that certain monks wrote to form their fellows and argue for their vision of the Cistercian Order.

The Development of a Textual Tradition

This thesis has studied the Cistercian exempla collection tradition before Caesarius' *Dialogus miraculorum*. Each chapter focused primarily on three questions. Firstly, what are the structure, content and main themes of the collection? Secondly, how did Herbert, Conrad or Engelhard select, rewrite, compose and arrange exempla to create a collection that both included individual examples of virtuous or sinful conduct, and constructed a vision of Cistercian life? Thirdly, what was the relationship between the composition of the collection and the challenges and opportunities, both within and without the Order, faced by the Cistercians at the time the author was writing? The current understanding of these collections, as attempts to create a uniform Cistercian identify through shared stories of their past, does not capture the distinctiveness of each one. Most of the collections are not comprised of stories of the Cistercian past: half of Herbert's exempla were about the world outside the monastery, while Engelhard and Caesarius both included predominantly stories from contemporary Germany. Only Conrad created a

[1] Terry Pratchett, *Witches Abroad* (London: Corgi Books, 1992), 12.
[2] Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*, ed. Susan Wood (New York: Putnam Adult, 1979), 31.

narrative of Cistercian origins with his collection and relied on written sources. As chapter one also demonstrated, even when stories of the Cistercian past were shared between the collections, they shape-shift from one text to another, and so the collections do not retell shared historical narratives. How each author received and changed the exemplum of the Virgin and the harvesters reveals the unique character of the collections.

Moreover, chapter one also argued that the collections were not collections of stories, but of examples, often examples of the conduct of other Cistercian for the audience to absorb and embody. As argued in chapter one, and demonstrated throughout the subsequent chapters, the Cistercian exempla were not generalised illustrative narratives, designed to be applicable and comprehensible to a wide audience, as sermon exempla were. By exploring the thoughts, emotions and behaviour of Cistercian monks, they encouraged the Cistercian reader to form themselves according to the example of first the inner and secondly the outer self of the subject of the exemplum, and so to be like them entirely. They reproduced Cistercian life across time and space, through the embodiment of the example of other members of the Order. As such, they were textual artefacts of the Cistercian practice of teaching by example in the monastery, something referenced by every author at some point in his collection. In combination, the kinds of examples presented created different visions of the Cistercian Order. These divergent models of Cistercian life were then explored in subsequent chapters.

In his *Liber miraculorum*, Herbert included a mixture of Cistercian and non-Cistercian exempla. The first half of the collection, as other scholars have demonstrated, reminded monks of the norms of Cistercian life within the cloister, and formed them according to past Cistercian examples. In chapter two, I argued that Herbert arranged the exempla in the second half of his collection to create repeated themes: miracles of the eucharist, crusade and the possibilities for conversion, and the sins committed by the laity. The miracles of the eucharist were literally central to the collection, and created links with many of the other themes, thanks to the symbolic, unifying power of this ritual within medieval Christian thought. The references to heretics in the exempla, especially those who disparage the sacrament of the altar, place the collection amongst the anti-heretical work conducted by Herbert's abbot, Henry of Marcy, a context unexplored in relation to Herbert's work. The miracles of the eucharist and those featuring recent converts on the fringes of Christendom argued for the necessity of the kind of work Cistercians were carrying out on behalf of the papacy, such as the 1178 preaching tour that Henry and Herbert were involved with. They also showed the power of miracle stories and preaching to console the faithful and convert unbelievers, and provided the exempla that Cistercian preachers might use in such sermons. In the second half of his collection, Herbert

thus offered to the laity who might hear such sermons the same kind of teaching by example given to Cistercian monks; the presentation of examples of virtuous or sinful behaviour, and an exploration of the emotions and psychology of the subject of the exempla.

I argued that the *Liber miraculorum* was likely conceived of between Herbert and Henry on the 1178 anti-heresy mission, as both a resource for preachers and a manifesto for Cistercian involvement in papally-mandated preaching missions. The second half was thus likely written first, and the examples of Cistercian monks added later, once Herbert returned to Clairvaux. The structure of the collection in its final iteration urged Cistercian monks to first reform themselves. The exempla concerning holy monks constructed a model of monastic behaviour according to which Herbert's audience could form themselves; once reformed, the second half of the collection justified and encouraged preaching and missionary work. In the *Liber miraculorum*, Herbert displayed an evangelical sensibility usually ascribed to the mendicants or extra-church groups such as the Waldensians, in which the saintly life of the preacher precedes and lends credence to his teachings. In Herbert's collection, we see a Cistercian evangelism, in which the rigours and values of monastic life fit the preacher to contend with heretics and convert pagan peoples on behalf of the papacy.

In his *Exordium magnum*, Conrad reused and rewrote earlier Cistercian texts rather than using word-of-mouth stories from his friends and associates, as Herbert did. As I argued in chapter three, this use of written sources, alongside the evidence of his recently rediscovered autograph manuscript, and internal textual clues, strongly suggests that Conrad created the entire collection at Eberbach between *c.* 1210 and *c.* 1220. This was a deeply nostalgic text, constantly looking back to the abbey he had left behind, and trying to communicate something of it to his German brothers. In rewriting the *Exordium parvum* to create a new foundation narrative, Conrad moved the locus of Cistercian perfection from the foundation of Cîteaux and the institution of its rules by Stephen Harding, to the life of Bernard and his abbey of Clairvaux. Eberbach was not a peripheral house; it was arguably the most important Cistercian house in Germany. Nevertheless, Conrad did not reflect back German Cistercian life for his audience at Eberbach, as Caesarius would in the *Dialogus miraculorum*. Instead, he encouraged them to look to the Order's French heartlands, and model themselves after the example of the monks at Clairvaux. As well as attempting to reform the behaviour of his contemporaries and bring an end to 'negligences', his collection also promoted uniformity of life and observance through copying the example of Clairvaux under Bernard. Even as the Order spread and diversified, Conrad sought to direct the attention of German houses to the centre of the Order, which in his mind was Clairvaux.

This chapter argued for a new understanding not just of the dating of the collection, but also its structure. Conrad prefaced his exempla about holy Claravallian monks with a new history of Cistercian foundations, which argued that Bernard represented the culmination of the Order's founding principles. I demonstrated that this structure – historical introduction, plus rules or models of Cistercian life – was based on the customary manuscript. By aligning his work with this important legislative document, Conrad encouraged his audience to see the *Exordium magnum* as similarly prescribing how to live a good life as a Cistercian monk. He also argued for the value of teaching the rules of monastic life through exempla. By taking material from the *Liber miraculorum*, but primarily using those exempla that featured other Cistercians and took place within the monastery, he rebutted Herbert's argument about the importance of preaching and missionary work. The Cistercian vocation in his conception was entirely bounded by the walls of the monastery. At a time when other monastic orders, clerical authors and even the papacy were criticising the Order for their greed, possession of property and assumption of ecclesiastical offices, the General Chapter took steps to curb the behaviours that invited such censure. Conrad's portrayal of Bernard in particular, as an abbot and not a churchman or statesman, illustrated the value of withdrawal and disengagement from the affairs of the world and wider church.

Engelhard's collection stands in stark contrast to the *Exordium magnum*. Not only was it decidedly German in its focus and content, but it was also written for a community of Cistercian nuns; women are mostly absent from Conrad's collection. In chapter four, I explored this collection through a gendered lens, a perspective not afforded to it in previous work. In the dedication letter that prefaces the collection, Engelhard addressed both the nuns of Wechterswinkel and their abbess, Mechthild. For the nuns, he constructed examples of holy, male Cistercian conduct to follow, and also showed the temptations that might afflict monks and nuns. Compared to the collections written for men, Engelhard included many more stories about virginity, chastity and sex. These exempla warned the nuns of the dangers of associating with men, but also encouraged them to imagine themselves as Cistercian men, tempted by women, suggesting a concern about sexual intimacy between women in the convent. This concern with the physical intactness and enclosure of nuns places his work in a twelfth-century German tradition, exemplified by treatises of spiritual instruction for women like the *Speculum virginum*. It does not reflect the lives of charity and service being lived by contemporary communities of women in France and the Low Countries, who were incorporated into the Cistercian Order in the early years of the thirteenth century.

However, Engelhard did show concern for the spiritual progress of the nuns, providing them with the examples of Cistercian men who showcased monastic virtues of obedience, simplicity, devotion and care for their fellows. As well as representing a certain kind of female religiosity, the exempla Engelhard chose reflected the social background and literary horizons of his audience. In several cases, the stories in his collection replicated the plotlines and tropes of romances and the *vitae* of female martyrs, texts that would have been familiar to the aristocratic nuns to whom he wrote. Nevertheless, he subverted the expectations of these narratives and warned his nuns not to model themselves after such women; instead, the lives of holy Cistercian men were presented as more appropriate examples for his audience. The most common vision in Engelhard's collection is the Virgin Mary, but she is unlike the Mary commonly found in Cistercian exempla; she is active in the salvation of her monks, a shepherd in the mould of Jesus or an abbot. Yet she is also kind, maternal and nurturing. This multi-faceted portrayal of Mary was created a female example of active pastoral care for the abbess, Mechthild, who, behind the walls of the convent, had to be both nurturing mother and disciplinarian father.

During a time of increased female religiosity in late twelfth-century Germany, Engelhard took up the challenge of the *cura monialium* willingly, sending the nuns of Wechterswinkel a book of exempla in exchange for a service they had done for him. Their mutual relationship shows the reality of interactions between some Cistercian men and women, not visible in the thirteenth-century mandates that came down from the General Chapter, which have been interpreted as showing that nuns were a nuisance or burden. Engelhard included the nuns in his vision of the Cistercian community by sending them an exempla collection, a kind of formative text that was becoming established as distinctly Cistercian. Though the exempla were chosen specifically for a female audience, as I argued, Engelhard still admitted them into a Cistercian textual community formed around the practice of teaching by example.

Caesarius read all three of the exempla collections studied here: he borrowed exempla from Herbert, Conrad, and Engelhard, demonstrating his familiarity with these texts.[3] This thesis does not directly study the *Dialogus miraculorum*; nonetheless, in exploring the collections that came before, it is now clear which elements of the tradition Caesarius adopted. Modelling his collection after the *Collectaneum* and *Exordium magnum*, Caesarius arranged his exempla into thematic books, and included a prologue at the beginning and a summary at the end. Though he did not construct a historical narrative, his collection still has a temporal rhythm to it, perhaps influenced by Conrad's inclusion of stories of good deaths in the final book of his collection. The *Dialogus miraculorum* begins with a book on conversion to monastic life, and the final two

[3] McGuire, 'Written Sources', 229–34, 247–54.

books concern dying, and the punishment and glory of the dead. Common with Engelhard, Caesarius mostly chose to include stories from his native Germany, showcasing the dynamism of Cistercian life in that part of the world. Heisterbach was only founded in 1189, and its daughter-house, Marienstatt, in 1212; German Cistercian life was flourishing, and Caesarius reflected this positivity with the many contemporary miraculous occurrences he recorded. Like Herbert, Caesarius chose to include exempla from both within and without the Order, so long as they were edifying, although they are mixed up in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, where they are separated into two distinct corpuses in the *Liber miraculorum*. His most important innovation was the dialogic format, which allowed him to direct his reader's interpretation of exempla more clearly. But even this was an elaboration and clarification of the comments all three previous authors included at the beginning and end of the exempla they used, where they told their audiences where they had heard their stories, or informed them of the lesson they taught. Caesarius' collection may be the most famous, both among modern scholars and medieval monks, friars and canons, but it was not unique. It was the culmination of a decades-long effort by other Cistercians to create efficacious formative texts, and drew heavily on this tradition, reusing the most successful elements of previous collections.

This thesis is necessarily an exploration of the three most significant exempla collections that came before the *Dialogus miraculorum*, and not a survey of the entire tradition. Nevertheless, the texts chosen for this thesis are the most like Caesarius', and provide both a temporal and geographic spread, as well as an examination of texts for both monks and nuns. Future study of the other collections could add to the conclusions drawn here, regarding the place of the exempla collections in the literary and formative culture of the Cistercian Order between *c.* 1170 and *c.* 1230. They might also present additional visions of Cistercian spirituality, or show the dominance of one strand of Cistercian thought regarding the Order's identity. This research, as presented here, also does not include an analysis of every exemplum in Herbert, Conrad and Engelhard's collections, an impossible task. Instead, the methodology throughout has attempted to mediate between the details of individual narratives and the structure and composition of the collection as a whole. It takes the collection seriously as a medieval literary form, and studies how each exemplum was specifically chosen and placed to create meaning. A close reading of an individual exemplum is inseparable from its place within the text, and each one can only be fully understood in the context of the exempla that surround it. It is the act of creating a collection, and the meaning created through this, more than the writing of lone exemplary narratives, that this thesis has studied.

Teaching by Example and Models of Cistercian Life

McGuire has argued that, unlike the Franciscans, the Cistercian Order was never split apart by debates about their spirituality and vocation.[4] There were tensions – between withdrawal and active life in the world, between stability and tradition and the desire for reform and renewal – but these existed within a larger Cistercian unity. This fundamental underlying unity is suggested by the type of text all three authors chose to create: they all wrote exempla collections, and so contributed to a kind of literature that in this period was uniquely Cistercian, and helped to create a textual tradition that other white monks would participate in. This was also a kind of literature rooted in the common Cistercian practice of teaching by example; the collections are textual snapshots of the culture of formation in Cistercian monasteries. The basic norms underlying most of the exempla of quotidian Cistercian life moreover show agreement around what that existence, lived within the cloister, was. Common themes emerge among the moral lessons taught: the value of chastity and virginity, obedience to superiors and the Rule, the need to confess before dying, harmony and cooperation within the monastic community, and devotion to prayer and the Divine Office. There are also commonalities across the collections in the visionary experiences that monks encountered – visions of Christ and the Virgin Mary, deathbed visions that assure salvation, or the return of deceased brothers to converse with their abbot. Some themes of Cistercian spirituality are also similar, such as a devotion to the Virgin, an affective sensibility, and a sense of the Cistercian community that encompassed the living and the dead.

However, for Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collections, I have demonstrated that the whole of the collection was more than the sum of its parts; exempla were chosen and arranged by the authors so as to make arguments about Cistercian life and spirituality. As this thesis has argued, Cistercian exempla were fundamentally different from those in sermons. The collections must also be seen in a different category to the collections of exempla created by the mendicants from the thirteenth century. The collections were not catalogues of illustrative narratives; the exempla were chosen and arranged to make wider arguments in combination. One of the key contributions of this thesis has been to reveal the divergences between the three collections, visible when they are considered as wholes, and individual exempla not pulled out and read alone. The composition of the collections was inseparable from the moment in Cistercian history in which the author was working, the challenges and opportunities for the Order he was responding to, and his own life experiences. Each author constructed a different

[4] McGuire, 'Cistercian Spirituality', 108.

vision of Cisterciannness that responded to this context. These differences were not merely cosmetic. They pertained to who should be allowed to participate in Cistercian life, the extent to which monks have duties beyond the monastery, and how important identification with the founders and heartlands of the Order are. The admission of women, the active versus contemplative life, and uniform identity based on shared origin myths are key themes in Cistercian studies. The exempla collections, far from creating a single Cistercian identity, show the diversity of Cistercian thought, even regarding principles seen as foundational by many modern historians. As scholars like McGuire and Jamroziak have argued, what it meant to be a Cistercian and what the Cistercian Order should look like was contested across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[5] The collections provide differing versions of the meaning and activities of Cistercian life; the meat on the legislative bones. This is the central claim of this thesis: that teaching by example through the exempla collections was a key way in which Cistercian spirituality was constructed, contested and propagated in this period, since these were texts that were so widely read, copied and distributed, and that they are evidence that multiple visions of Cisterciannness existed in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This thesis therefore adds to a new understanding of thought within the Order as more diverse than previously recognised, and shows how such diversity was constructed and widely communicated.

A word like 'identity' might seem helpful here, to describe the various models of Cistercian life offered by Herbert, Conrad and Engelhard. However, a better word is perhaps 'spirituality', as McGuire defines it. He offers three definitional remarks. Firstly, spirituality is 'the interior life of the institution as perceived and expressed by its members'. It is also 'a sense of God-oriented inner meaning and identity present in individuals and groups as a whole.' Finally, spirituality is 'an interior dimension experienced by monks in their search for God through life in community. Such a definition of spirituality means a way of saying who one is in terms of a life with others in a common desire for God.'[6] This conception of Cistercian spirituality is helpful on several levels. It seeks to describe the interior life not just of individuals, but the institution itself. It gestures towards the way each member understood and expressed their understanding of what it meant to be part of the Cistercian Order, not just as set out in the Order's legislative texts or constitution – there could therefore be discrepancies between individuals, or between an individual and the community around them, in their conception of what it meant to be a Cistercian. Being a Cistercian was both an individual and communal experience. This definition also puts the desire for God and spiritual growth and progression as the ultimate goal of

[5] McGuire, 'Cistercian Spirituality', 108; Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 19.
[6] McGuire, 'Cistercian Spirituality', 92–93.

Cistercian life. Cistercian spirituality is often seen in terms of Bernard's sermons on the Song of Songs. As expressed by Jean Leclerq in his description of Cistercian culture and spirituality:

> The Canticle of Canticles is the expression of both desire and fulfilment; it is a song and a love-song, a song one listens to with one's whole being and a song that one sings in one's heart. In this way it accompanies and sustains the progress of faith, from grace to grace, from vocation, conversion to monastic life, until one's entrance into the life of the blessed.[7]

McGuire suggests that this union with God was the hoped-for end of monastic life, but that there were other aspects of this spirituality, including how individuals understood and negotiated the norms, values and practices of Cistercian life. It is these divergent spiritualities that are visible in the exempla collections. They represent individual perceptions of the Cistercian Order, viewed from the inside, and different constructions of what attitudes and actions constitute the core of Cistercian life and spirituality – in other words, they represent different ways of being Cistercian.

Leclerq further characterised the teaching provided by the Song of Songs and Bernard's sermons: 'It is not pastoral in nature; it does not teach morality, prescribe good works to perform or precepts to observe; not even purvey exhortations to wisdom.'[8] He quotes from Bernard's prologue to the sermons, in which he opposed knowing and experiencing: 'A canticle of this kind, fervour alone can teach it; it can be learned only through experience. Those who have experienced it will recognise this. Those who have not experienced it, may they burn with desire not so much to know as to experience.'[9] The orientation of monastic life, in Leclerq's reading of Bernard, is towards experiencing, not knowing; desiring union with God, not searching for answers. Monastic life is lived in contemplative yearning and seeking.[10] Other scholars have clarified how exactly Bernard thought monks could achieve this inner orientation; how they might progress spiritually. Learning was achieved through living a monastic life, with the cloister providing the framework for this existence. He urged his audience to first imitate a teacher or guide. Through this imitation they could perform actions and gain experiences, which they could then reflect on, to bring the self to knowledge.[11] Unlike the sermons, the exempla collections were pastoral in nature: they taught morality and prescribed good works to perform.

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[7] Leclerq, *Desire for God*, 5.
[8] Leclerq, *Desire for God*, 85.
[9] Quoted in Leclerq, *Desire for God*, 5.
[10] Leclerq, *Desire for God*, 85.
[11] Sønnesyn, 'Word, Example and Practice', 525–27.

Each was ultimately invested in the salvation of its audience. They provided a framework for monastic life, and examples of Cisterciannness for their audience to embody and form themselves in accordance with, within the ultimate orientation of monastic life – a desire for God. The exempla collections were guides to the experiential learning and living described by Bernard. By following the examples they presented them with, their audiences could mould themselves in the image of other holy Cistercians and so progress spiritually.

Teaching by example was a deeply monastic activity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, practiced by the Cistercians and others. Scholars such as Bynum have argued that joining a religious group involved following a model of behaviour, moulding the outer man so as to shape the inner.[12] An inner desire for God and spiritual progression was informed by outer actions, and so monastic life involved the following of a script; texts guided the reader in enacting this model.[13] However, this thesis has shown that while the Cistercian exempla explored both the inner self and the conduct of other Cistercians, they did not aim to mould the audience's inner man (or woman) by first moulding the outer. The teaching by example they offered instead worked from the inside out, not the outside in. The exempla all described in detail the emotions and thought-processes that caused a person to act, either virtuously or sinfully. The audience was therefore encouraged to embody the entirety of the person and be like them, by first thinking and feeling like them, and then being motivated to act like them. Feeling the fear of someone punished for their sin and being scared to repent and reform as they did, or experiencing the wonder of a monk seeing a vision of the Virgin and being moved to similarly live more fervently and obediently. This interplay between forming the outer and inner self stands in contrast to the model of monastic teaching by example offered by scholars such as Bynum.

Although the moral and spiritual formation worked from the inside out, and not the outside in, the different conceptions of Cistercian spirituality in Herbert's, Conrad's and Engelhard's collection can still be understood as divergent scripts or models of monastic behaviour, of the kind identified by Bynum and Spijker. Herbert offered a model of Cistercian behaviour, likely based on Henry of Marcy, where the active life was preferable to the contemplative when the unity of the church was threatened, for example by heresy. Cistercian holiness within the cloister, as outlined in the first half of the *Liber miraculorum*, had to be joined where necessary to preaching and missionary work. Only then, as Henry wrote, could the monks reconvene and rest in the heavenly Jerusalem. Conrad offered a model based on Bernard and the

[12] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 90.
[13] Spijker, *Fictions of the Inner Life*, 80, 235.

monks formed in the school of Clairvaux. There were no concessions to regional difference; Cistercian life culminated in Bernard, and the example of his monks ought to be followed by Cistercians across Europe. He urged his audience to mould themselves in the image of the men who had themselves conformed to Bernard's example. Engelhard uniquely offered examples to Cistercian women, but the proffered model was of a particular type. In the last decade of the twelfth century, there were other kinds of female religiosity than the enclosed Benedictine nun, yet Engelhard offered the nuns of Wechterswinkel a script for a purely contemplative monastic life that emphasised virginity, chastity and enclosure.

This thesis thus builds on and adds to existing scholarship on twelfth- and thirteenth-century religious orders, showing the centrality of teaching by example to the formation and contestation of group identity. Historians have argued that twelfth-century religion was concerned with members conforming to a behavioural model; having such an articulated model is what made a religious order into such.[14] But this model could be contested, and the formation of new members, including through texts, was a key battleground in this fight.[15] The exempla collections lend further support to this argument, from a Cistercian perspective. Through the construction of a certain model or script for Cistercian life, Herbert, Conrad and Engelhard each presented an alternative version of Cistercian spirituality, whilst remaining within the legislative scaffolding of the Order and the quotidian rhythms of monastic existence. Much of the existing scholarship looks at medieval treatises on education. This thesis presents an example from the Cistercian Order that shows how such a model could be constructed, communicated, and contested through exempla collections, and so by the practice of teaching and learning through example.

The form of the exempla collections was indispensable to their ability to create diversity within unity. Firstly, they were a distinctly Cistercian kind of formative text in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, before they were taken up by the mendicants and others. They were a form of textual teaching by example, a practice advocated by Bernard and part of the training of Cistercian novices. Herbert recorded the ability of Achard, the novice master at Clairvaux, to tell edifying stories and teach by example (LM 5); likewise, he related exempla told by Abbot Gerard as part of his preaching in chapter (LM 134). Conrad was familiar enough with teaching by example that he could confidently opine that simple brothers learn better by example than by word (EM V.21). Moreover, Caesarius wrote in the prologue to the *Dialogus miraculorum* that it had been his role as novice master to relate edifying miracle stories from within and

[14] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 105.
[15] Snijders, 'Communal Learning and Communal Identities', 43–45.

without the Order to the novices in his charge. This was not a teaching practice current only in houses of Cistercian men. Engelhard, in his letter to the nuns, referred to how they 'gladly hear honest events of piety that most edify' – they too learned by example and were edified by exemplary stories. Writing an exempla collection as a means to construct and argue for a specific model of monastic life was a deeply Cistercian activity.

The collection or compilation form also mirrored the diversity and unity of the Order. Every exemplum, especially those about other Cistercians, showed Cistercian life as reflected in the Rule or *Ecclesiastica Officia*. Monks and nuns were taught to follow the examples of monks who were chaste, confessed promptly and felt contrition, obeyed their superiors, preserved the peace of the monastery, prayed around the bed of dying brothers, and did not keep property upon entering the monastery. Here then is the unity, based around the Rule and the customary. Yet by collecting and arranging these individual examples in a certain order, by including exempla on some themes more than others, by taking some material from previous sources and leaving the rest, or by combining them with stories of clerics and laypeople, an entirely new script for Cistercian behaviour could be written. The exempla are like mosaic tiles – individually, all very similar. But they could be chosen and arranged in multiple ways to create different pictures, and so to argue for divergent Cistercian spiritualities.

A Changed and Changing World

The writing of exempla collections was only a Cistercian activity in the period *c.* 1170 to *c.* 1230; none had been created in the early decades of the Order's existence. The later twelfth century was a period in which some historians have argued Cistercian identity and spirituality were in flux. With the deaths of the founders, including Bernard, the early stage of the Order's existence had come to an end. It was often the case that the first generation of a new religious order was not the one to create accounts of their foundation, or to articulate a clear identity; they were too busy doing. The second and third generations have been shown to be the ones who wrote the origin myths and argued about what it meant to be a Cistercian.[16] As Newman argues in a recent article, from the mid-twelfth century until Conrad wrote the *Exordium magnum*, the history and meaning of the entire Order's foundation was continually revised.[17] This thesis contributes to the field of Cistercian studies by showing that the exempla collections, offering different scripts for

[16] McGuire, 'Charity and Unanimity', 290. For a similar dynamic in medieval Franciscan historiography, see Michael F. Cusato, 'Talking about Ourselves: The Shift in Franciscan Writing from Hagiography to History (1235–1247)', *Franciscan Studies* 58 (2000): 37–75.
[17] Newman, 'Reformed Monasticism', 537–56.

Cistercian behaviour, and so arguing for differing Cistercian spiritualities, were part of this activity. However, rather than showing a Cistercian move to create one uniform identity across Europe, I argue that they lay bare the contested spirituality of the Order. Can women be part of the Order? Is the Cistercian life solely contemplative and withdrawn, or active in the world? How important a role should the memory of the founders and especially Bernard play in the modern Order? Is Cistercian perfection only to be found at Clairvaux, or even in small German houses? The collections demonstrate that this was indeed a period of reflection and introspection for the Order, when even those principles that modern historians see as foundational were questioned. Each author was answering one overarching question – what does it mean to be Cistercian? – and each came up with a different answer.

The Cistercian Order faced many challenges between 1170 and 1230 that historians have argued prompted this questioning of who they were. By the end of the twelfth century, it has been shown that Cistercian houses, as well as other Benedictine monasteries, were attracting fewer novices.[18] The clericalisation of religious life served to marginalise monasticism, and after approval was given to the Franciscans in 1209 and Dominicans in 1216, they became the preachers and missionaries of choice for the papacy, and Cistercians were side-lined to some extent. Schools and universities gradually superseded monasteries as centres of education and intellectual culture; this changing centre of gravity can be seen in the Cistercian foundation of the College of St Bernard at the university of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century. Though scholars no longer see an absolute division between monastic and scholastic culture, Leclerq formulated the difference in terms of the practices of learning and their orientation. The schools used questions and disputes to gain knowledge, whilst in the monastery monks used meditation and prayer to move towards God – this was a distinction made by Bernard himself.[19] Monks followed scripts of behaviour not to gain knowledge, but to gain experience, and so reform themselves outside and in.

The final argument of this thesis is that the exempla collections represent an attempt by Cistercians to adapt to the changing world they found themselves in between 1170 and 1230. Each author created a model of Cisterciannness that responded to the challenges and opportunities of the time and place in which he lived, but in a way that was deeply monastic, rooted in the Cistercian practice of teaching by example. They sought to reform their members and create a Cistercian spirituality that responded to contemporary circumstances, be that papal requests to preach against heretics or the responsibility of the *cura monialium*. Shortly after the

[18] John Van Engen, 'The "Crisis of Cenobitism" Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050–1150', *Speculum* 61, no. 2 (1986): 269–304.
[19] Leclerq, *Desire for God*, 5.

final exempla collection was written, an abbey was selected in each region to be the site of a school of theology for Cistercian monks, and a college was established in Paris. For Herbert, in 1178, an exempla collection was a sufficient tool to train Cistercian preachers. They could model themselves after the holy Claravallian monks in the first half, and then use the exempla in the second half in their own sermons. By the middle of the thirteenth century, the Order had to compete directly with the mendicants and schools, and so founded their own rival college. The exempla collections represent a specific moment in Cistercian history, where the world was changing, but they were still able to respond to it on their own terms, through texts that taught by example.

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