

Shaping a Saint's Identity: The Imagery of Thomas Becket in Medieval Italy

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This article sets out to trace the visual responses to the sainthood of Thomas of Canterbury outside of his original cultural context, namely in Italy, where his cult was readily received, integrated and modified. At the same time, the veneration of the English martyr stimulated an impulse for the creation of novel concepts of holiness in Italy by providing a more tangible and accessible saint than was hitherto known. Becket's potential as an identification figure in a specific, genuinely Italian historical framework and the implications of this for the iconography of his martyrdom are discussed. Further, as an antidote to a mere political reading, liturgical aspects of his veneration and the relevance of family bonds for the fortune of his cult are considered.

IT has long been established that one of the earliest monumental representations of Thomas Becket in art known today is to be found in the apse mosaics of the cathedral of Monreale in Sicily.¹ Probably datable to before 1189, the year of death of the patron William II,² the programme presents the English saint among paladins of the early Christian Church only a few years after his canonization by Pope Alexander III in Segni on 21 February 1173.³ Scholarship has firmly rooted the emergence of the early representations of the Canterbury saint in southern Italy in the dynastic and political affiliations between Norman Sicily and England.⁴ Equally, the presence of Becket family members in Sicily may have played a role in the subsequent embracing of the cult of the new saint in Italy. A vivid testimony for the support given to 'parentes fugitivi [...] et quidam familiares ejus'⁵ who were exiled with the archbishop in 1164 — according to Guernes de Pont-Sainte-Maxence more than hundred alone in France⁶ — is the correspondence between the archbishop of Canterbury and eminent ecclesiastical and royal dignitaries of the Norman kingdom. In a letter of December 1167 Becket entrusts Richard Palmer, bishop-elect of Syracuse, with his nephew Gilbert, declaring 'we shall willingly suffer the shipwreck of exile as long as God pleases, scattered to all the winds with our unfortunate companions, one of whom is bearer of this letter, our sister's son, Gilbert. We recommend him to you, when he asks for your aid, as confidently as we trust in your affection'.⁷ Becket's appeal was apparently met with sympathy, as he subsequently thanks the queen regent of Sicily, Margaret of Navarre, in an epistle in late 1169 for having given 'solace to our fellow-exiles, outlawed for Christ, in their affliction, and to our own relatives, who fled to your lands before the face of the persecutor'.⁸ This personal allegiance may have facilitated the reception of the saint's cult, as is suggested by a reliquary pendant preserved today in the Metropolitan Museum.⁹ The rectangular gold pendant, which originally covered the relics of Becket's bloodied garments, shows an engraving on the front: the effigy of a blessing bishop with an episcopal staff faces a crowned female

figure opening her hands in a gesture of reception. The inscription framing the scene identifies them as Margaret of Sicily and Reginald Fitz Jocelin, bishop of Bath, who made this gift to the queen in the years of 1174–83. Interestingly, the engraving does not feature an image of the saint or the reliquary itself, but the symbolic act of receiving, thus lending authority to Jocelyn as a privileged agent of the cult. This provides a starting point to consider how personal interests of Becket supporters, familial bonds of exiled family members and aspirations of religious communities intertwined and shaped Becket's imagery in Italy.

Three bulls of March 1173 announced the inclusion of Thomas in the community of saints and the celebration of his liturgical feast on his *dies natalis*, 29 December, which was within short time added to the Vatican *Ordinarium* and to the calendar of the Roman Curia at the Lateran. This laid the foundations for a prosperous cult of the English martyr in Italy. Indeed, two weeks before the official recognition of Becket as a saint in 1173, the pope had already celebrated the first mass in honour of Thomas Becket at Segni.¹⁰

In the years immediately following his canonization, Becket's relics had reached even the most remote places in Italy. To give but a few examples, prior to 1196 fragments of Becket's robe were inserted into the main altar of the Cistercian abbey church of Fossanova di Priverno.¹¹ In addition, the *Inventarium* of 1432 records a 'gladius sancte Thome de Cont(er)beria diversis formis',¹² which may have been given to Sant'Andrea at Vercelli by Guala Bicchieri, papal legate in England between 1216–18.¹³ The particles 'ex brachio, ex ossibus, ex veste ex pallio et tunicella' of the saint in the cathedral of the same town perhaps indicate the amicable relations between the Vercellian Canon Cotta (d. 1193) and Herbert of Bosham, one of the key figures promoting Becket's canonization.¹⁴ The *Rubricae ecclesiae* or *Ritus in ecclesia servandi* (late-12th-century) of Santa Reparata, the old cathedral of Florence, even mentions eight relics of Thomas.¹⁵

After the translation of the saint to the new shrine in Canterbury cathedral, which was sanctioned by Pope Honorius III and solemnly celebrated by Archbishop Stephen Langton on 7 July 1220, the stream of relics did not ebb: already in autumn of the same year Langton himself presented a relic *ex corpore* to the pope on the occasion of his journey to Rome.¹⁶ Somewhat later, in 1266, the high altar of the cathedral of Nepi was consecrated with the inclusion of a Becket blood-relic and a portion of his chasuble.¹⁷ Indeed, the frequent dedications of churches to St Thomas confirm a widespread veneration of the saint across Italian ecclesiastical institutions at that time.¹⁸

Liturgical service books, such as the *Liber Ordinarium Ecclesiae Paduanae*,¹⁹ offer at least some insight into medieval cultic practice in honour of the English saint in Italy. The text itself contains rites pertaining to the diocese of Padua, giving instructions for processions, liturgical dramas, and directions *inter alia* for the feast of Thomas of Canterbury: for the vigil on 28 December the antiphons *Martyr Thoma martyr Dei* and *Martyr constantissime*, and the oration *Deus pro cuius ecclesiae* were envisioned. Further, the *Liber processionalis*²⁰ of the 14th century maps an itinerary for an annual procession connecting fifteen churches in the southern part of the city. The parochial church of St Thomas Martyr figured as a station on the designated route departing from the cathedral and heading to the bridge of St John:²¹ prayers and chants thereby designed and structured the rhythm of the ceremony through the urban space of medieval Padua, which was thus blessed and protected by the titular saints of the city (Fig. 1).

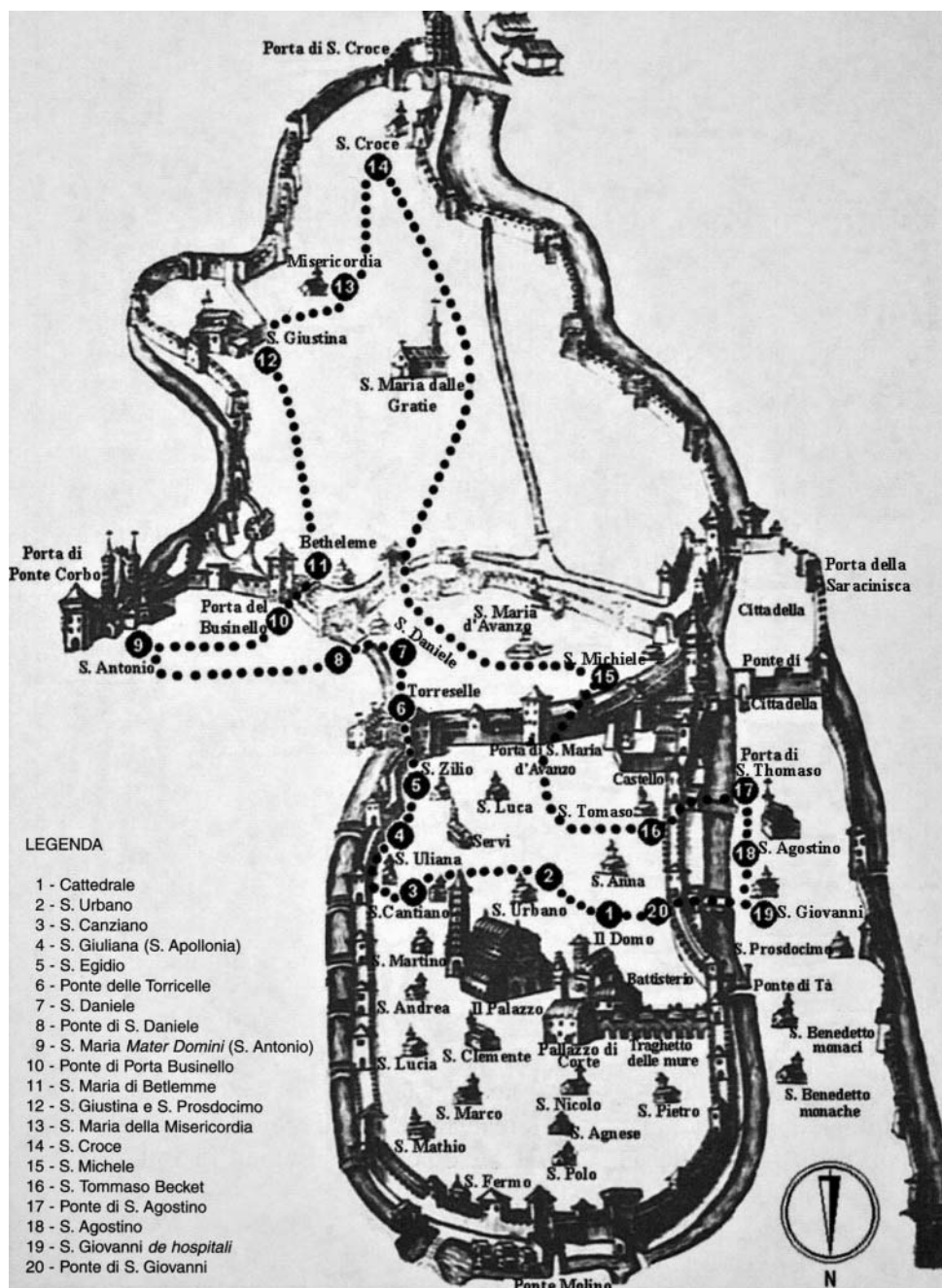


FIG. 1. Reconstruction of one of the three Procession Routes in medieval Padua (Route III) on the basis of the *Liber Processionalis* (Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS C55. a, MS C56)

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In Piedmont, in the cathedral of Vercelli, the celebration of Becket's feast was confined to the interior of the church. On the eve before his holy day, the clergy solemnly walked in procession to the altar of St Honoratus that preserved Becket-relics to chant his vespers.²²

For Florence, two sources — the *Ritus in ecclesia servandi* and the *Mores et consuetudines canonice florentine* (13th century)²³ — give an insight into a further regional variant of the cult. According to Marica Tacconi's reading of the liturgical sources, the altar set against the retro-façade of Santa Reparata north of the main entrance was consecrated to St Thomas.²⁴ This altar took centre stage in a ritual performance dedicated to the Canterbury martyr: it was illuminated by candlelight and adorned with myrrh and laurel;²⁵ after ringing four bells 'sicut in summis festis', for vespers and matins, the canons read eight lessons from the life, the passion, and the miracles of the saint.²⁶ The now-lost antiphony *De sancto Thomaso di Conturbia*, recorded in an inventory of 1418, confirms the importance the old cathedral church of Florence accredited to Thomas Becket.²⁷ Two fine examples of illuminated initials in antiphonaries, depicting the bust of the saint in episcopal vestments, offer a visual record of the devotion to Saint Thomas in medieval Tuscany. One is dated to the second decade of the 15th century and attributed to Giovan Battista di Biagio Sanguigni;²⁸ the other originates from the first half of the 15th century and is probably a work of Jacopo da Firenze in collaboration with Giovanni di Pietro di Tommeo.²⁹ An even more interesting image is the fragment, probably of a choir book, which shows Becket's martyrdom inscribed in an initial S (Fig. 2).³⁰ The illumination by Pacino di Bonaguida or his workshop presents Thomas in a frontal and upright position, dressed in a preciously ornate chasuble. While he celebrates the eucharistic sacrament — indicated by a loaf of bread, an open missal on the covered altar, and the presence of an acolyte with a burning candle — a single knight assaults him with a sword, targeting his head. The sad expression of the altar server alludes to the inevitability of the saint's fate, while the liturgical setting lends great sacredness to the moment.³¹

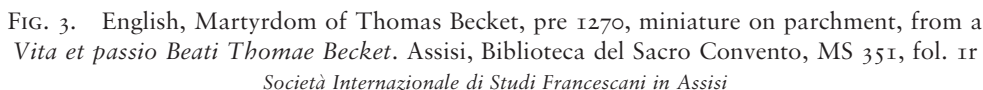
That the Italian people embraced the new saint may be understood through some of the wonders recorded by William of Canterbury and Benedict of Peterborough in the *Miracula S. Thomae*, which mention both the intercession of St Thomas in Italy, as well as Italian pilgrims at the saint's tomb in Canterbury: Giovanni, a clerk from Pisa, was saved from a storm and enemies at sea after praying to the martyr;³² phials with diluted holy blood healed Hingram and his son in the town of San Giacomo near 'Monte Garganum', who had been suffering from 'nightly epilepsy';³³ the son of Boso, viscount of Aosta, was cured after receiving water from pilgrims coming from Canterbury.³⁴ These examples suggest that the fame of the saint's miraculous power reached audiences even at a great distance to his burial place. On the other hand, peregrination to Canterbury — on one of the three main pilgrimage roads of medieval Christendom, the *via francigena* from Canterbury to Rome — can only be estimated by a few examples: inspired by a vision of St Thomas,³⁵ Gregorio of Lucca, bishop of Tarsus, travelled to England after visiting the shrine of the three kings in Cologne and made a gift of three iron plaques worn on his body to Becket's tomb.³⁶ A pilgrimage to Canterbury is also documented for Pietro of Genoa.³⁷ The brother of a blind woman in Lucca, who regained her sight after praying to Becket, asked the merchant Franco from Brindisi to offer an image of silver eyes as an *ex voto* at the sepulchre of the saint.³⁸



FIG. 2. Pacino di Bonaguida (attr.), Martyrdom of Thomas Becket, c. 1320–30, miniature, S-Initial, fragment of a choir book, 21 × 18 cm. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, inv. no. 2078
Fotothek, Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Wien

Even though Italian people, inspired by the presence and power of his relics, perceived Becket as a wonder-working saint and readily undertook the strenuous journey to England, at this time, the thaumaturgical aspect of his sanctity was not represented in Italian art: while the stained glass windows of Trinity chapel in Canterbury provided a magnificent framework for experiencing and intensifying the physical presence of the saint by visualizing the veneration of St Thomas at his tomb,³⁹ in southern Europe images of saints' shrines and miracles happening there were developed only with the Franciscan movement in the second quarter of 13th century.⁴⁰ The Franciscans encouraged a change in papal attitudes to popular devotion in favour of more emotive responses to the relics of saints.⁴¹ Indeed, it would be interesting to pursue elsewhere the question of whether the model of Thomas Becket gave a boost to the Franciscan concept of holiness — in what concerns the tangibility of a coeval saint and his miracle based-cult as well as the readiness for martyrdom in the name of the Church — something which is suggested by the fact that the mother church of the Order in Assisi held several manuscripts relating to his *vita* and his liturgical feast.⁴² A particularly interesting example is a copy of the *Quadrilogus de vita et passio beati Thomae Becket* attributed to Elias of Evesham (Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento, MS 351),⁴³ written in England and originally in the possession of Bishop Raul Grosparmi (d. 1270) showing the Martyrdom on the *incipit* page (Fig. 3). The manuscript was bound at the Franciscan Convent in a collation of eight quaternions with Thomas of Celano's *Vita prima Sancti Francisci* and other legends of Franciscan saints.⁴⁴

The figurative representations of Becket in Italy — predominantly murals in the Duecento and panel-painting in the Trecento — confine themselves to two principal formulas: the standing, hieratic figure integrated into the communion of saints — as for example the fresco in the lower church of the Benedictine monastery of the Sacro Speco on Mount Subiaco⁴⁵ — and the narratives scenes of the *passio*. The latter is represented on the upper part of the north wall in the nave in the small parish church of Santissimi Giovanni e Paolo in Spoleto (Fig. 4). The mutilated fresco shows losses and is on the left partly covered up by later additions, so that it remains uncertain whether the scene originally continued beyond this.⁴⁶ The artist employs the visual formula of Becket celebrating mass at the moment of his slaughter.⁴⁷ The ciborium frames the liturgical setting visualized by the fine altar-cloth, the chalice embellished with a cross symbol, oil-lamps and thurible, and the open missal displaying 'DOMINUS VOBISCU(M)'.⁴⁸ The particular emphasis of the fresco lies on the interpretation of the scene as a sacrifice at the altar. This mode of representation is known from early English examples, such as the illumination in the British Library copy of John of Salisbury's *Life of St Thomas*,⁴⁹ and was spread particularly by reliquary chests all over Europe.⁵⁰ However, the injury to the acolyte Edward Grim, who is very rarely depicted on reliquary *châsses*, and the more elaborate composition demonstrate that the Spoleto image does not depend on such models. Those behind the commission appear to have had some knowledge of the details of the murder as described in written sources.⁵¹ The inclination of Becket's head towards the knight corresponds to the words 'et inclinatio capite' mentioned in one of the reports of the murder;⁵² further, the inscription in the frame below the episode gives the names of the main protagonists, known from the early biographers, such as Edward Grim and Benedict of Peterborough: 's. THOMA ...' and 'ADVARD. ...' Grim on the right, while the fragments '...INA.D.' might be read as Reginald Fitz-Urse, one of the assailants.⁵³ That the fresco was painted before the compilation of the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine (1260/70) — which provided a canonical text source for medieval hagiographic



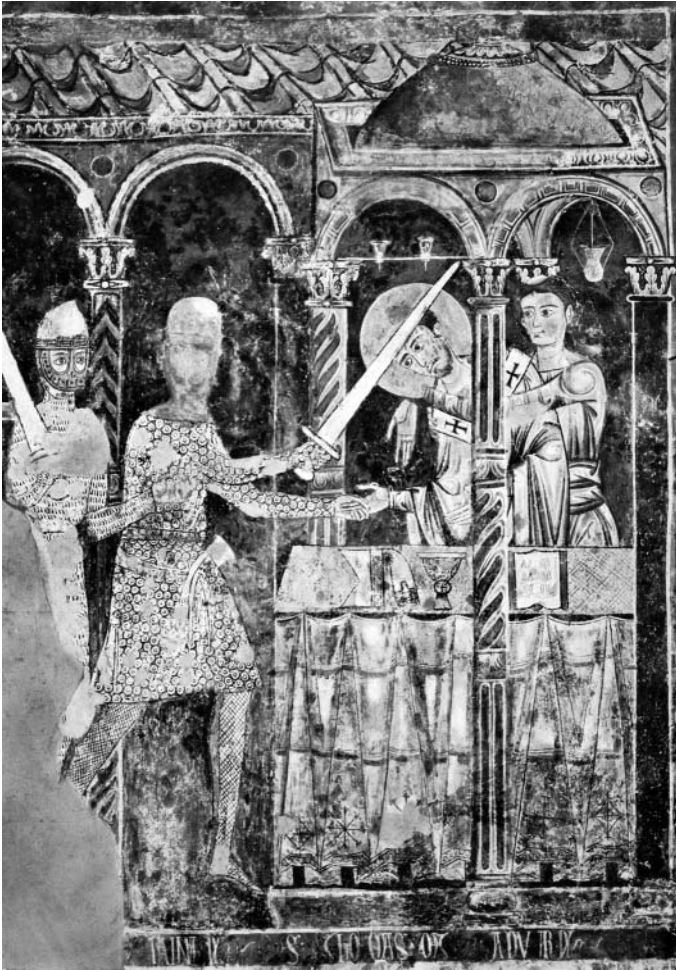


FIG. 4. Umbrian workshop, Martyrdom of Thomas Becket, early 13th century, wall-painting, Spoleto, Santissimi Giovanni e Paolo
Fotothek, Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Wien

imagery and gave new impulse to the illustration of saints' lives⁵⁴ — indicates that Becket's iconography had already been established in Italian art at an early stage by different means. According to Ulrike Liebl, the fresco evolves out of a historical context that shaped the religious and political identity of the Italian communes that were strained by an ongoing conflict between pope and emperor in the aftermath of the Controversy of Investiture — an event that also proved to be decisive for the history of Spoleto.⁵⁵ Due to its geographical position in Central Italy, the duchy became a particularly vulnerable target in the controversy, providing both an outpost for the emperor and a buffer zone for the pope; even though Frederick and his troops exerted particular pressure on the region, it remained loyal to the pope. When forced to leave Rome, Gregory IX also visited Spoleto and he returned there for a longer period in 1232. Liebl therefore conjectured that this historical situation provided an ideological context for the illustration of Becket's martyrdom in Spoleto. Honoured

as defender of the rights of the Church in the official recognition of his sanctity by Pope Alexander,⁵⁶ it seems plausible that Thomas Becket might have provided a prototype for those fighting against secular power. However the stylistic evidence indicates that the fresco should not be dated later than the early 13th century.⁵⁷

Furthermore, even if Saint Thomas' cult was charged with political overtones, it is questionable whether the representation of his martyrdom can be placed so easily in a political framework in the absence of visual evidence. In comparison to the wall-painting in Spoleto, we suggest that in two Italian examples of the Duecento there are stronger arguments for such a reading: in these cases a very distinctive iconography was developed, which freely reinterpreted the English hagiographic tradition and thus allows for the introduction of a more abstract and timeless reading of Becket's story reaching beyond the individual saint's life.

Within a short distance of the place that saw his canonization in 1173 lies the town of Anagni which was a popular papal residence in the 12th and 13th centuries. Descending a flight of stairs situated in the northern aisle of the cathedral church of St Mary, one arrives at the level of the crypt that is located below the presbytery of the church. Turning to the right to follow a small passageway, the visitor descends into a small rectangular room, the so-called Oratory of Thomas Becket (Fig. 5).⁵⁸ The architecture of the small chapel has a rather improvised character, resembling the cistern of San Rufino cathedral in Assisi: uneven walls support a small barrel-vault,



FIG. 5. Anagni cathedral: Oratory of Thomas Becket, interior view
Constanza Cipollaro, Veronika Decker

tiny windows have been inserted into the splays on the north side which still bear fragments of the medieval murals. The space is entirely covered by frescos, which, despite recent restorations led by Alessandro Bianchi, are in a problematic state of preservation. This poses a true challenge for both the stylistic assessment and iconographic reading of the images. Therein might lie the reason for the variety of dates advanced, running from the end of the 12th century to the middle of the 13th century.⁵⁹ Given what is known of the development of painting in high-medieval Latium a date after the beginning of the 13th century seems difficult to sustain.⁶⁰ What can be observed is the lack of homogeneity within the programme, deriving from both the absence of correspondence in the layout of the individual frames and from the evident differences between pictorial hands. This evidence may lead to the conclusion that the decoration was realized in successive campaigns. It remains therefore uncertain whether the four passion scenes of St Thomas on the south wall of the sanctuary were originally conceived as parts of the now preserved extensive cycle, which visualizes an interpretation of salvific history beginning with the Old and New Testaments, moving to the apostles, holy popes, bishops and Benedictine saints, and culminating in Becket's martyrdom (Fig. 6).⁶¹ The moment of the fatal sword-blow emerges from the fragments of the heavily damaged painted surface only after careful study of the wall. The figure of the saint sunken to his knees forms the centre of a composition structured by two groups facing one another. On the right, a congregation of tonsured men in brown cowls — presumably Benedictines — form a compact unit, aligned by their common expression of sadness. The intrusion of the four knights, identifiable by



FIG. 6. Anagni cathedral: Oratory of Thomas Becket, interior view
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their swords and shields with gules and argent bends, is emphasized by the change of background from an open space to an arcaded ecclesiastical structure. The scene of the martyrdom is preceded by two episodes that have become almost illegible on the walls, but can be better understood by photographs in the Federico Zeri Foundation.⁶² The first episode must have shown a seated figure accompanied by a second person and surrounded by architecture with Corinthian columns and three approaching men on the right.⁶³ In the second field, a male figure dressed in green, appearing already in the previous group, seems to turn himself towards a structure that resembles a covered altar. After the murder of the bishop, the cycle terminates in the depiction of a wooden barrow covered by a red embroidered cloth, surrounded by clerics and positioned in front of an imposing, nimbed figure portrayed in pontifical vestments. The mural behind the altar shows the seated figure of Christ, symmetrically framed by three female and three male standing saints. Thomas Becket, who has been identified by two inscriptions, takes a central position right next to the Redeemer. Considering that the Treasury of Anagni cathedral also preserves a Becket-reliquary-casket, it seems plausible that the commission of the paintings relates to the church's possession of Thomas-relics. Even if there is no documented evidence for the identification of the patron, the fact that Anagni housed a papal palace and that both Innocent III and Gregory IX were natives of this town, suggests that he might be situated in the papal entourage.

The most evident characteristic of the Anagni cycle — the juxtaposition of groups of clerics and soldiers — can also be found in Treviso. The fragmentary wall-painting was rediscovered in 1960 during restoration works in the episcopal palace in Treviso and is now preserved in the Diocesan Museum (Fig. 7).⁶⁴ It shows the martyrdom in



FIG. 7. Venetian workshop, Martyrdom and *Elevatio animae* of Thomas Becket, third quarter of the 13th century, wall-painting, Treviso, Diocesan Museum

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a static narrative, contrasting the hieratic figure of the king with the murder of the saint. The motif of Henry II sending out a knight finds a parallel in a baptismal font in Lyngsjö of the late 12th century,⁶⁵ where the identification is made clear by the inscription 'Henricus rex'. An exception to the iconography of Becket in Italy is his *elevatio animae* in the apex of the Trevisan lunette. As in Anagni, the scene features a group of ecclesiastics supporting the bishop's cause. The architectural background structures the narrative in a very clear way: it visualizes the change of setting and time, and achieves a differentiation of sacred and profane spheres indicated by domes and battlements. This figurative interpretation of the saint's death significantly differs from illustrations of the same subject, like the already mentioned illumination in the *Life of St Thomas* by John of Salisbury and the Spoletan fresco.

In Treviso, except for the injury to Edward Grim, the canonical details of hagiography — such as the three or four knights — are neglected. Here Becket does not fall down in front of the altar, which is typically used to highlight his sacrifice. Rather, the pictorial emphasis lies on his episcopal office: unusually for illustrations of his martyrdom, Becket clutches a crosier with his left hand, while the right hand makes a gesture of blessing. The artist was also careful to show Becket wearing a mitre while receiving the blow to his head — a moment when his headgear logically should fall off, as shown in the Spoletan fresco. This focus on the ministerial dignity of the saint is hardly surprising given the provenance of the fresco from the palace of the bishop of Treviso; it indicates how certain qualities of Becket's personal story could transcend the specific and be read in more general terms, thereby acquiring new meaning. The pictorial interpretation of the saint's martyrdom as an opposition of Church and king in the wall-painting significantly coincides with a political climate of anti-imperial resentments in the Trevisan March, which reached its height during the oppression of the region by the Ghibelline *condottiero* Ezzelino da Romano.⁶⁶ Married to Selvaggia, daughter of Frederick II, Ezzelino was a vital supporter of the emperor's cause in Italy, for example in the defeat of the *Lega Lombarda* in the Battle of Cortenuova (1239) and during the imperial besiege of Parma (1247/8); the pope excommunicated him as a heretic in 1248 and launched a crusade to oust him from power but he was seized only in 1259.⁶⁷ Given such a historic context, a dating of the fresco to the third quarter of the 13th century, as suggested by Otto Demus, seems more convincing than that of 1180/90.⁶⁸ Italian scholarship has up to now focused on relating the proposed date to the quest for patronage: for the late-12th-century Olderico III was suggested as possible candidate, for the 1260s the Franciscan Alberto Ricco, both bishops of Treviso and known for their Guelph loyalty.⁶⁹ However, considering that there is no documentary evidence whatsoever for who commissioned the mural, such attempts to identify a possible patron are highly problematic.

When considering Becket's medieval imagery outside of England, scholars have referred to his exemplary role as defender of Church rights and for those oppressed by unjust secular rulers. It seems plausible that this notion might theoretically pervade all Becket imagery in medieval Italy. In the fresco in Treviso, however, this *topos* can be pinned down in a very concrete way, as the pictorial representation of his martyrdom *itself* suggests such a reading; it visually reflects on a concept of sainthood in which the holy person is committed to facing the threats of secular power and emerges from a historical context of long-standing political contentions between Guelphes and Ghibellines.

During the Trecento the visual formulation of Becket's cult changed; the monumental depictions of Becket's martyrdom give way to individual representations of Thomas in panel painting.⁷⁰ In this medium, the English saint loses his role as the main protagonist and martyr, merging instead into the vast community of saints relegated to the side panels or predellas. A small painting, originally part of a polyptych and today preserved in the Collezione d'arte dell'Ente Cassa di Risparmio in Florence (Fig. 8), shows St Thomas in archiepiscopal vestments with a crosier and devoid of any indication of his martyrdom; only the inscription 's. THOMAS/ARCI/EPS' on his left identifies him. In fact, the representation of Thomas of Canterbury virtually appears to be a mirror image of the Florentine Bishop St Zenobius depicted in the same altarpiece.⁷¹ The painting was attributed to Pacino di Bonaguida by Miklós Boskovits and Mina Gregori and can be dated 1315–20.⁷² It has been suggested that the polyptych stood on the altar of the St Thomas Becket in the Minerbetti chapel in the western aisle below the rood-screen of Santa Maria Novella in Florence:⁷³ indeed, Giorgio Vasari, in 1568, mentioned an altarpiece in the same chapel that he attributed to Gaddo Gaddi, a contemporary of Pacino.⁷⁴ The foundation of the Becket altar is not documented, but the Minerbetti ownership of the *jus patronatus* is recorded at an early date. In his testament of 6 November 1308, Maso Minerbetti commended his soul to God, the Virgin Mary and Thomas Martyr, in front of whose altar he asked to be buried. Bequeathing a piece of land to the friars, he obliged them and his family to annually celebrate the feast of St Thomas at the same altar. He further arranged that a light should burn there in eternity 'pro anime sue remedio et salute', thus connecting the cult of the saint to his own commemoration, while at the same time invoking the intercession of the Canterbury martyr.⁷⁵ A similar relationship between the English saint and an Italian donor is suggested in a polyptych by Vitale da Bologna in the church of Santa Maria di Reno and San Salvatore in Bologna (Fig. 9). Ludovico Frati has identified it with an altar mentioned in a document of 6 July 1353,⁷⁶ where the Augustinian Prior Riniero di Guglielmo Ghisilieri commissioned the Bolognese artist to produce a polyptych at the cost of 60 gold *scudi*.⁷⁷ The altar of St Thomas, which had been founded within a short time after Becket's martyrdom by Ildebrando Grassi, cardinal regent of Santa Maria di Reno until 1178,⁷⁸ and restored in 1203 with the alms of English students,⁷⁹ had been refurbished in 1353 by Prior Riniero.⁸⁰ Considering the correspondence of the dates and the representation of a kneeling Augustinian donor figure recommended to the Virgin by a holy archbishop (Fig. 10), it seems plausible that the work was conceived to decorate the Becket altar of this church.

Unlike the example from Bologna, the veneration of Thomas by the Minerbetti was based on a very particular relationship to the saint. Over centuries members of the Florentine family have been substantiating their descent from the family of the archbishop of Canterbury. In a family chronicle of the 1760s, they explain the etymology of their name as originating from 'Minor Becket' — the cadet branches of the Becket clan who arrived in Tuscany when Henry II exiled the archbishop and his family members.⁸¹ Even if the heartless banishment of the Becket kinship by Henry II has been given great prominence in the hagiography of the saint and its illustrated versions — for example, the Becket Leaves⁸² — only a few written sources provide a limited, but rewarding, insight into their settlement in Italy. The first archival material that documents the presence of the Minerbetti family in Florence dates from the



FIG. 8. Workshop of Pacino di Bonaguida, St Thomas, 1315–20, tempera and gold transferred on canvas and attached to a wood-panel, 68.2 × 29 cm. Florence, Collezione d'arte dell'Ente Cassa di Risparmio, inv. no. 002

By permission of the Collezione d'arte dell'Ente Cassa di Risparmio



FIG. 9. Vitale da Bologna, Polyptych with the Incoronation of the Virgin, c. 1353, tempera and gold on wood. Bologna, San Salvatore

Cesare Gnudi

1260s.⁸³ A painting in the Oratory of San Martino dei Buonomini shows the genealogical tree of the family in front of the cityscape of Florence (Fig. 11). It springs from Ugo and features the names of the *patres familias*, among them his grandson Ruggerino who died in c. 1279 and who is recorded in the *Cappelle e Sepulture di Santa Maria Novella* as ‘Ruggieri Canturbiensi’.⁸⁴ The family crest — Gules, charged with three swords with edges converging downwards, Argent — which can still be seen in the third bay of the nave of Santa Maria Novella and on the tomb slab of the Friar Ugolino Minerbetti (d. 1348) in the same church (Fig. 12),⁸⁵ might further support their claim of descent, seemingly referring to the martyrdom. The fact that Maso Minerbetti also granted a bequest to celebrate the feast of his name saint in San Miniato fra le Torri,⁸⁶ may suggest that — exceptionally for laymen of his time — he was decisive for imbedding and shaping the cult of Thomas Becket among the Dominican Order in Florence. The kinship with Becket, whether actual or only perceived by Florentine contemporaries, might have allowed the Minerbetti to participate actively in the establishment of his cult. This phenomenon was not new in Florence. Family members of the Tertiary Blessed Umiliana de’ Cerchi (d. 1246) contributed with their memories to the writing of her *vita* and initiated the translation of her body in 1314 to the new family chapel in the Franciscan church of Santa Croce. Around 1360 Giovanni di Riccardo, a descendant of Beata Umiliana’s brother, commissioned a fine silver reliquary-bust for her relics that was to become the focus of devotional attention, laying the basis for a prosperous cult in medieval Florence.⁸⁷ A similar situation can be reconstructed for the family Alberti del Giudice. The privilege to bury their



FIG. 10. Vitale da Bologna, Polyptych with the Incoronation of the Vergin, detail: St Thomas Becket and Augustinian donor-figure. Bologna, San Salvatore, c. 1353, tempera and gold on wood
Cesare Gnudi



FIG. 11. The family tree of the Minerbetti, detail, first half of the 17th century, oil on canvas.
 Florence, Oratory of San Martino
Costanza Cipollaro

family members within the presbytery of Santa Croce was certainly due not only to their generous donations for the construction of the basilica, but particularly to the fact that two ancestors, Michele and the blessed Giuseppe, belonged to the earliest Franciscans in Florence and were buried in the crypt right below the main altar.⁸⁸

These two examples might provide a useful framework for appreciating the familial associations between the Minerbetti donors and their titular saint articulated in Santa Maria Novella. This Florentine case study also shows the complexity of the patronage of the Canterbury saint's cult in Italy and its visual implications. Different layers of perception appear to have shaped his identity. The historic situation lent Thomas Becket's individual fate great topicality, as reflected in the affirmative representations of his cruel murder. The consideration of liturgical material and illustrated chant books allows us to capture another aspect of the saint's profile. Despite the pronounced regionalism of the cultic landscape in medieval Italy, due to clerical initiatives and family associations, the English martyr was widely accepted and integrated into the festive religious culture of the communal society.



FIG. 12. Tomb slab of Ugolino Minerbetti, d. 1348, with inscription framing the family crest: 'HIC IACET FRATER UGOLINUS DE MINERBETTIS SACRE THEOLOGIE MAGISTER ORDINIS FRATRUM PREDICATORUM QUI OBIT ANNO DNI MCCCXLVIII', marble. Florence, Santa Maria Novella
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NOTES

1. T. Borenius, *St. Thomas Becket in Art*, 2nd edn (Port Washington, NY/London 1970), 13. M. Bottazzi, 'Tomaso Becket nella basilica di Aquileia: celebrazione o propaganda?', *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge*, 123 (2011), 2, 561–76, esp. 569.

2. O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (London 1949), 129–39; T. Dittelbach, *Rex Imago Christi: Der Dom von Monreale. Bildsprachen und Zeremoniell in Mosaikkunst und Architektur* (Wiesbaden 2003).

3. Another example of the early imagery of Becket in the kingdom of Norman Sicily is the bust in *cloisonné* enamel on the cover of a Gospel Book (Capua, Tesoro della Cattedrale, Palermo, c. 1176–82, 34 x 24 cm), presented by Alphanus, archbishop of Camerota, to the Capuan cathedral. Thomas Becket can be identified by an inscription: ‘S(anctus) Thomas Martir v(enerabilis) m(emorie) Normanni’. Alphanus was one of the two representatives of the Norman king negotiating the marriage of William II and Joan of England, daughter of Henry II in autumn 1176. Cf. Dittelbach, *Rex Imago* (as n. 2), 38–39.

4. See E. Jamison, ‘Alliance of England and Sicily in the Second Half of the 12th Century’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 6 (1943), 20–32. This route of dissemination also proved to be relevant at Castilian and Saxon courts of Eleanor and Matilda Plantagenet as sign of their *pietas filialis* towards Henry II. Cf. M. Guàrdia, ‘Sant Tomàs Becket i el programa iconogràfic de les pintures murals de Santa Maria de Terrassa’, *Locus amoenus*, 4 (1998–99), 37–58; R. Gameson, ‘The Early Imagery of Thomas Becket’, in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. C. Morris and P. Roberts (Cambridge 2002), 46–89, esp. 51.

5. ‘Vita Sancti Thomae, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi et Martyris’, in *Materials for a History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. J. C. Robertson, 7 vols, Rolls Series LXVII (London 1875–85), II, 353–450, esp. 404.

6. Guernes de Pont-Sainte-Maxence, *La vie de Saint Thomas le Martyr, Archeveque de Canterbury*, ed. C. Hippeau (Paris 1859), 91.

7. Letter 159, December 1167: A. J. Duggan, *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury 1162–1170*, I (Oxford 2000), 736–39, esp. 739.

8. Letter 221, 1169: Duggan, *The Correspondence* (as n. 7), 966–70, esp. 969.

9. New York, Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters Collection, Accession Number 63.160. Dimensions: 5 x 3.1 x 0.7 cm. Reginald and Margaret on image, ‘+ DE SANGUINE S(AN)C(TI) THOME M(ARTI)RIS, DE VESTIBUS SUI S(AN)G(UE)NIS SUO TINCTIS, DE PELLICIA, DE CILICIO, DE CUCOLA; DE CALCIA MENTO, ET CAMISA’ on the side of the image ‘+ISTUD REGINE MARGARETE SICULOR(UM) TRA(N)SMITTIT PRESUL RAINALD(US) BATONIOR(UM)’. See M. D’Onofrio, *I Normanni: popolo d’Europa 1030–1200*, exhibition catalogue (Rome 1994), cat. no. 329, 518–19.

10. The three bulls *Gaudendum est*, *Redolet Anglia* and *Qui vice beati Petri* are published in *Materials* (as n. 5), VII (London 1885), Letters 784, 785, 786, 545–50; A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1997), 109; cf. L. Tomasetti et Collegii adlecti Romae virorum s. theologiae et ss. Canonum peritorum, *Bullarium Romanum*, II (Turin 1859), 758–59.

11. G. Beltrame, *S. Tommaso Becket, arcivescovo di Canterbury e il suo culto a Padova e in Italia* (Padua 1970), 12.

12. The *Inventarium bonorum monasterii Sancti Andreae Vercellarum* is cited by S. Castronovo, ‘Il tesoro di Guala Bicchieri cardinale di Vercelli’, in *Gotico in Piemonte*, ed. G. Romano (Turin 1992), 166–239, esp. 222.

13. Cf. G. A. Frova, *Gualae Bicherii Presbyteri Cardinalis S. Martini in Montibus vita et gesta collecta a Philadelpho Libico* (Milan 1767), 117; U. Nilgen, ‘La *tunicella* di Tommaso Becket in S. Maria Maggiore a Roma: culto e arte intorno a un *santo politico*’, *Arte medievale*, 9 (1995/96), 105–20, esp. 111. For Guala, cf. J. Gardner, ‘Legates, Cardinals and Kings. England and Italy in the Thirteenth Century’, in *L’Europa e l’arte italiana*, ed. M. Seidel (Venice 2000), 74–93, esp. 79–81.

14. G. Pezza, ‘La memoria di San Tommaso di Canterbury nell’Italia settentrionale’, *Dall’Italia a Canterbury. Culto e pellegrinaggio italiano per Thomas Becket*, ed. R. Stopani, *De strada francigena*, XX/1–2 (2004), 117–37, esp. 119. Cf. D. Arnaldi and F. Gabotto, *Le carte dell’Archivio Capitolare di Vercelli*, II (Pinerolo 1914), 320–22.

15. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 3005. Cf. M. Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence. The Service Books of Santa Maria del Fiore* (Pennsylvania 2005), 117, table 3.3.

16. C. Holdsworth, ‘Stephen Langton’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, XXXII (Oxford 2004), 516–21, esp. 520.

17. A. Ciarrocchi, ‘Ac S. Thomae Episcopi Martyris. Testimonianze del culto di S. Tommaso Becket nella Tuscia meridionale’, *Biblioteca e società*, 9 (1992), 30–36, esp. 33.

18. To name a few examples: the cathedrals of Naples (1187) — dedicated to St Gregory and St Thomas — and Fermo (1188), the episcopal court of Aosta (1330), the archpriest churches of Verona (1180s) and Marsala (1174), the parochial churches in Padova (1178) and Corenno Plinio (1380), the Templar churches

with hospitals in the district of Cavalli in Treviso (12th century) and Cabriolo (late 12th century), the priory church in Riva del Garda (1195), and, in the monastic sphere, the Benedictine church in Marsicovetere (late 12th century). Laymen, as the Marquises Malaspina in Pallerone di Aulla, also selected Thomas Becket as patron of their private oratories. See G. Beltrame, *S. Tommaso Becket* (as n. 11), passim. Concerning the support of Becket's cult by the Knights Templar, see G. Ligato, 'Penitenza, pellegrinaggio e crociata in nome di S. Tommaso Becket', in *Studie sull'Emilia occidentale nel Medioevo: società e istituzioni*, ed. R. Greci (Bologna 2001), 133–56.

19. Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS E57. Dated after 1234.
20. Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS C55. a, MS C56.
21. A. Lovato, 'Le processioni della cattedrale di Padova nei secoli XIII–XV', in *Il Liber Ordinarius della Chiesa padovana* (Padova, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS E 57, sec. XIII), ed. G. Cattin and A. Vildera (Padua 2002), cx–clxxii, esp. cxlvi.
22. *Consuetudines*, Vercelli, Archivio Capitolare, MS VL III, fol. 13. Cf. Pezza, *La memoria* (as n. 14), 120.
23. Florence, Archivio dell'Opera del Duomo, MS 1a.3.8. Cf. G. Ciappelli, *Carnevale e Quaresima: comportamenti sociali e cultura a Firenze nel Rinascimento* (Rome 1997), 160. For the dating of the text, see D. Moreni, *Mores et consuetudines florentinae codex ex archivo aedilium S. Mariae Floridae* (Florence 1794); R. Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, it. edn, I (Florence 1972), 1063–71.
24. Tacconi, *Cathedral* (as n. 15), 64 and fig. 3.6.
25. 'Pro S. Thoma martyre pulsamus IIII vicibus, sicut in summis festis, et preparetur et ornetur ejus altare et lampades apponantur, nec non et mirtus et laurus, si haberet potest . . .' (*Mores et consuetudines*, Florence, Archivio dell'Opera del Duomo, MS 1a.3.8., fol. 71r): cit. Tacconi, *Cathedral* (as n. 15), 98 n. 47.
26. 'In natale sancti Thome martiris/Reliquias habemus. Pro legenda eius require in Zenobio. Pulsamus quattuor vicibus in Vesperis et Matutinis/ad Matutinum omnia fiant de uno martire. Lectiones legimus de vita, passione et miraculis eius, nonam tamen lectionem legimus de sermone Nat(ivitatis)' (*Ritus*, Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 3005, fol. 141r): cit. Tacconi, *Cathedral* (as n. 15), 126.
27. Tacconi, *Cathedral* (as n. 15), 128. For the Inventory of 1418, see Florence, Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, I. 3. 10, fol. 23v. For another testimony of liturgical chants in honour of Thomas Becket, see G. Vecchi, 'Celum mercatur hodie: mottetto in onore di Thomas Becket da un codice bolognese', in *Quadrivium*, 12 (1971), 65–70.
28. Prato, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo (inv. no. SBAS FI 239209).
29. Pistoia, Museo della Cattedrale di San Zeno (inv. no. SBAS FI 211558).
30. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, inv. no. 2078. Cf. G. M. Canova, 'Le miniature della Fondazione Giorgio Cini nella storia del collezionismo e dello stile', *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte*, 27 (2003), 100–31.
31. Cf. R. Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting, Section III, Vol II. The Fourteenth Century*, ed. M. Boskovits and M. Gregori (Florence 1987), 224–25, pl. LXXXIV.
32. William of Canterbury, *Vita, Passio, et Miracula S. Thomae Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, in *Materials* (as n. 5), I (London 1875), 447–48.
33. *Ibid.*, 165–66.
34. *Ibid.*, 478.
35. A very interesting example of a vision of St Thomas of a later date is recorded for the mystic St Catherine of Bologna to whom the saint appeared and offered his hand to be kissed. Cf. J. Morris, *The Life and Martyrdom of S. Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, II (London/New York 1885), 509–10.
36. Benedict of Peterborough, *Miracula Sancti Thomae Cantuariensis*, in *Materials* (as n. 5), II (London 1875), 21–281, esp. 273–79.
37. F. Vanni, 'O felix Cantuarua! Il culto e il pellegrinaggio italiano a San Tommaso Becket nelle fonti del secolo XII', in *Dall'Italia a Canterbury* (as n. 14), 63–86, esp. 73.
38. William of Canterbury, *Vita* (as n. 32), 452.
39. M. H. Caviness, *The Windows of Christ Church Cathedral*, *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi*, Great Britain 2 (London 1981); A. Harris, 'Pilgrimage, Performance and Stained Glass at Canterbury Cathedral', in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. S. Blick and R. Tekippe, 2 vols (Leiden 2004), 243–81.
40. These conclusions have already been proposed by the authors in the paper *Der Personenkult am Heiligengrab — Formen und Funktionen der Verehrung im spätmittelalterlichen Kontext*, given at the University of Vienna in June 2009. The only significant exception is the mural cycle of St Clement in the lower church of St Clemente in Rome. One of the first testimonies of Franciscan imagery laying a great emphasis on the veneration of the saint's tomb and the related miracles is the *pala* in San Francesco in Pescia, attributed to Bonaventura Berlinghieri (c. 1240).

41. See Vauchez, *Sainthood* (as n. 10), 158–73.
42. In this context it is worth mentioning that the murals of the ancient Benedictine abbey of Subiaco feature only two representations of modern saints: Thomas Becket and Francis.
43. Parchment, 61 fols, 175 × 250 mm. The miniature has already been published in *I libri miniati di età romanica e gotica*, ed. M. Assirelli, M. Bernabò and G. Bigalli Lulla (Assisi 1988), 241–44, fig. XC.
44. The feast of Thomas Becket is also mentioned in the MS 599 (Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento, 1230–55): a manuscript probably of Canterbury provenance, since it includes among Franciscan saints also English bishops such as St Dunstan. Cf. *Inventario dell'antica Biblioteca del S. Convento di S. Francesco in Assisi compilato nel 1381*, ed. L. Alessandri (Assisi 1906), 218–19.
45. *Il Sacro Speco e il Monasterio di S. Scolastica: guida artistica per la visita dei monasteri*, ed. B. di Subiaco (Subiaco 1979).
46. Borenus says to have here detected the rare iconography of Henry II issuing his orders to the knights to kill Becket. Cf. Borenus, *St. Thomas Becket in art* (as n. 1), 96. To the right of the martyrdom, there is a standing figure of St Nicholas, who is identified by an inscription. It is interesting that the same saint is also depicted in Monreale and Subiaco close to Thomas Becket.
47. U. Nilgen, 'The Manipulated Memory: Thomas Becket in Legend and Art', in *Memory and Oblivion*, Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art (Amsterdam, September 1996), ed. W. Reinink (Dordrecht 1999), 765–72.
48. Ruth 2:4, 2 Chronicles 15:2.
49. London, British Library, MS Cotton Claudius B. II. fol. 341r, c. 1180–90. For an illustration see P. Binski, *Becket's Crown. Art and Illumination in Gothic England, 1170–1300* (New Haven 2004), 42 fig. 39. For a recent publication on the early iconography of Thomas Becket in English seals, cf. K.B. Slocum, 'Martir quod Stillat Primatis ab Ore Sigillat: Sealed with the Blood of Becket', *JBAA*, 165 (2012), 61–88.
50. For illustrations: Borenus, *St. Thomas Becket in art* (as n. 1), 84–92, and S. Caudron, 'Les châsses de Thomas Becket en émail de Limoges', in *Thomas Becket*, Actes du Colloque International (Sédières, August 1973), ed. R. Foreville (Paris 1975), 223–41. Id., 'La diffusion des châsses de saint Thomas Becket dans l'Europe médiévale', in *L'oeuvre de Limoges et sa diffusion*, ed. D. Gaborit-Chopin and E. Antoine (Rennes 2011), 23–41.
51. For the *vitae* of Becket compiled within a short time after the murder of Becket, see M. Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers* (Woodbridge 2006). The injury of Edward Grim is mentioned in Grim's own account of the martyrdom: Grim, *Vita* (as n. 5), 437.
52. Benedict of Peterborough, *Passio Sancti Thomae Cantuariensis*, in *Materials* (as n. 5), II (London 1876), 1–19, esp. 13.
53. Ulrike Liebl first pointed out the existence of the inscriptions and their possible meanings: U. Liebl, 'Nuovi contributi sugli affreschi più antichi della chiesa di SS. Giovanni e Paolo a Spoleto', *Spoletium*, 36/37 (1992), 42–61, esp. 47.
54. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. W. G. Ryan, I (Princeton 1993), 59–62. Thomas Becket is one of only four modern saints (among Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, Dominic of Osma and Peter Martyr of Anghiera) mentioned by Jacobus.
55. Liebl, 'Nuovi contributi' (as n. 53), 45–46.
56. Cf. Letter 786, in *Materials* (as n. 5), VII (London 1885), 549–50.
57. We thank Prof. Caleca for discussing this matter with us.
58. The room is of c. 4.14 × 8.57 m (measurements taken by authors). For a groundplan of the crypt-level, see D. Fiorani, 'La cripta e la cattedrale: annotazioni sull'architettura', in *Un universo di simboli: gli affreschi della cripta nella cattedrale di Anagni*, ed. G. Giammaria (Rome 2001), 9–26, esp. 10 fig. 1.
59. The oratory is usually related to the extensive mural campaign in the crypt known for the cycle of Saint Magnus in the apse. For the various datings that have been suggested, see P. Toesca, *Gli affreschi del Duomo di Anagni* (Anagni 1902); M. Boskovits, 'Gli affreschi del Duomo di Anagni: un capitolo di pittura romana', *Paragone*, 30 (1979), 3–41; F. W. N. Hugenholtz, 'The Anagni Frescoes: A Manifesto. An Historical Investigation', *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome*, 41 (1979), 139–72; F. W. N. Hugenholtz, 'A manifesto politico', in *Un universo di simboli: gli affreschi della cripta nella cattedrale di Anagni*, ed. G. Giammaria (Rome 2001), 47–69; H. L. Kessler, 'L'oratorio di San Tommaso Becket', *ibid.*, 93–103.
60. Prof. Caleca, pers. comm.
61. The formats of the scenes are defined by a height of c. 93 cm and vary significantly in length between c. 148.5 cm (first scene) and c. 109.5 cm (fourth scene). Measurements taken by authors.
62. Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. nos 6281 and 6293.
63. Due to its poor state of preservation, it is impossible to identify this scene; like the illustration in the copy of John of Salisbury's *vita* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Claudius B. II. fol. 341r), it might

depict the archbishop receiving the knights on the day of his murder. Equally, it might just as well depict Henry sending out the knights like in the example in Treviso discussed below.

64. The lunette was discovered together with another fragment, representing Christ's Entry in Jerusalem and the Anastasis. Cf. E. Cozzi, 'Treviso', in *La pittura nel Veneto. Le origini*, ed. F. Flores d'Arcais and C. Paviano (Milan 2004), 89–121, esp. 101–03.

65. W. Anderson, 'Schonen, Helmarshausen und der Kunstkreis Heinrichs des Löwen', *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 11 (1938/39), 81–102, esp. 99.

66. Cf. Rolandino, *Vita e morte di Ezzelino da Romano*, ed. F. Fiorese (Milan 2005).

67. Ezzelino's persecutions of his enemies laid the foundations for his notoriety as villain and tyrant as described by his contemporary Salimbene of Parma or the Guelph Chronicler Giovanni Villani who described him as 'the most cruel and feared tyrant that ever existed among Christians'. Cf. Giovanni Villani, *Villani's Chronicle being Selection from the First Nine Books of the Croniche Fiorentine of Giovanni Villani* (London 1906), 168.

68. On the question of dating the fresco to 1180/90, see Cozzi, *Treviso* (as n. 64), 102–03.

69. *Ibid.*, 103.

70. With the exception of a fresco in the small church of San Giorgio in Vado di Rualis (Friuli) of c. 1380, representations of the saint's passion in Italy confine themselves to the 13th century. For the Dugento two further examples must be cited: the mural in San Lanfranco in Pavia and the fresco, originally in the crypt of the Cistercian church of Santa Maria di Reggimento today displayed in the Archaeological Museum of Casamari.

71. Florence, Collezione d'arte dell'Ente Cassa di Risparmio; tempera and gold transferred on canvas and attached to a wood-panel, 68.2 x 29 cm. Information and photograph kindly given by Emanuele Barletti and Marco Salis, Collezione d'arte dell'Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze.

72. R. Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting, section III, vol IX. The Fourteenth Century. The Painters of the Miniaturist Tendency*, ed. M. Boskovits and M. Gregori (Florence 1984), 50, 254, pls CII–CIII.

73. *Ibid.*, 50.

74. G. Vasari, *Le vite piu' eccellenti . . .* (Florence 1568), 152: 'Di pittura poi fece molte tavole, e fra l'altre quella che è in S. Maria Novella nel tramezzo della chiesa alla cappella dei Minerbetti . . .' (Vita di Gaddo Gaddi).

75. Florence, Archivio di Stato, Normali, 64, S. Maria Novella, Inv. no. 1931, 137, fol. 68v (notary: Bonacosa del fu Compagno).

76. Bologna, Archivio di Stato, *Memoriali*.

77. L. Frati, 'Un polittico di Vitale da Bologna', *Rassegna d'arte*, 10 (1909), 171–72; *Vitale da Bologna*, ed. R. D'Amico and M. Medica (Bologna 1986), 63–67, cat. no. 5.

78. L. Cardella, *Memorie storiche de' cardinali della Santa Romana Chiesa*, I (Rome 1792), 74–75.

79. Another example of English students in Italy associated with the cult of Thomas Becket can be found in 14th-century Rome: cf. B. Kuhn-Forte, *Handbuch der Kirchen Roms*, IV (Vienna 1997), 21–22.

80. Frati, 'Un polittico' (as n. 77), 171–72.

81. Montecastello, Villa Torrigiani Malaspina, Archivio Torrigiani, Fondo Minerbetti, 71. The *Codicetto di memorie della nostra famiglia Minerbetti* consists of eight leaves outlining the family history. A note of 1761 therein claims that the Minerbetti descended from Becket and settled in Italy when his kinship was forced into exile. Cf. L. G. Lisci, *I Palazzi di Firenze nella storia e nell'arte*, I (Florence, 1972), 180. As for the family of Becket, it is known that the archbishop had at least three sisters: Agnes probably had a son, called Theobald de Helles, whilst Gilbert and Geoffrey, mentioned as nephews in Becket's letters, seem to have been the sons of his sister Mary. After his stay in Sicily, Gilbert is recorded to have been in Bologna in 1168. Cf. Materials (as n. 5), VI (London 1882), 485–86, Letter 449; C. Rossi, *Marie de France et les érudits de Cantorbéry* (Paris 2009), 177–78. Concerning other possible family members of Thomas Becket, who settled in Italy, see Morris, *The Life and Martyrdom* (as n. 35), 445–510.

82. Collection of J. P. Getty Jr, fol. 11, c. 1220–40. Cf. J. Backhouse and C. de Hamel, *The Becket Leaves* (London 1988).

83. The mention of Ruggerino di Cambio Minerbetti in the *Libro di Montaperti* (1260) provides an important early record of the family in Florence: *Il Libro di Montaperti*, ed. C. Paoli (Florence 1889), 6, 74, 192. Further, his wife is documented by her will of 1261, when she bequeathed her house to the Dominicans to support the construction of Santa Maria Novella: V. Fineschi, *Memorie storiche che possono servire alle vite degli uomini illustri del Convento di S. Maria Novella di Firenze dall'anno 1221 al 1320 . . .*, I (Florence 1790), 132.

84. Florence, Archivio di Santa Maria Novella, MS I. A. 11, dated 1617. Cit. F. Schwartz, *Il bel cimitero, Santa Maria Novella in Florenz 1279–1348. Grabmäler, Architektur und Gesellschaft* (Berlin/Munich 2009), 201 n. 958.

85. The inscription on the tomb reads: 'HIC IACET FRATER UGOLINUS DE MINERBETTIS SACRE THEOLOGIE MAGISTER ORDINIS FRATRUM PREDICATORUM QUI OBIIT ANNO DNI MCCCXLVIII'. The slab was originally situated in front of the Minerbeti altar, as the diagram of pavement tombs beneath the *ponte* of Santa Maria Novella, published by Marcia Hall, shows: M. B. Hall, 'The *Ponte* in S. Maria Novella: The Problem of the Rood Screen in Italy', *JWCI*, 37 (1974), 157–73, esp. 160 fig. 1.

86. San Miniato fra le Torri was the parochial church of the district where Maso Minerbeti lived. Cf. Schwartz, *Il bel cimitero* (as n. 84), 201 n. 959.

87. F. Cionacci, *Vita della Beata Umiliana de' Cerchi, vedova fiorentina del Terz'Ordine di San Francesco* (Florence 1682); A. Benvenuti Papi, 'Umiliana dei Cerchi. Nascita di un culto nella Firenze del Duecento', *Studi Francescani*, 77 (1980), 87–117; S. B. Montgomery, 'Fashioning the Visage of Sainthood: The Reliquary Bust of Beata Umiliana dei Cerchi and the holy Portrait in Late-Medieval Florence', in *Italian Art, Society, and Politics: A Festschrift in Honor of Rab Hatfield*, ed. B. Deimling, J. K. Nelson and G. M. Radke (Florence 2007), 33–57.

88. A secret passage connected the two levels. For the documents and bibliography, see C. Cipollaro, *Agnolo Gaddi e la Leggenda di Santa Croce. La Cappella Maggiore e la sua decorazione pittorica* (Foligno/Florence 2009), 16–18.