

# **Canterbury Cathedral as a stage for late Anglo- Saxon miracles**

The production of space and sanctity in Osbern's *Miracula Sancti Dunstani*

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Master's Thesis

Cultural History

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April 2025

Master's Thesis

## **Cultural History**

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**Canterbury Cathedral as a stage for St. Dunstan's miracles: The production of space and sanctity in Osbern's *Miracula Sancti Dunstani***

**Number of pages:** 65 pages, 6 appendices

This thesis examines the production of the space of Canterbury Cathedral in the late 11<sup>th</sup>-century miracle collection of St. Dunstan, authored by the monk Osbern of Canterbury. The miracle collection, or *miracula*, consists of the posthumous miracles of 10th-century Archbishop Dunstan, presented alongside his saintly biography, or *vita*. By analysing the portrayals of the actions and movements of miracle-seekers throughout the church, I explore the meanings Osbern intends to convey through themes of accessibility, visibility, and topoi related to various areas of the church.

From my primary source, the *miracula*, I have selected eleven miracle accounts that depict a miracle-seeker moving within the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral. The key areas explored include the main entrance and Dunstan's memorial; however, this thesis also addresses the nave and the crypt of the church. To analyse accessibility and visibility in the physical church, I employ three space syntax techniques: the justified graph, Visibility Graph Analysis, and isovist maps. By supplementing traditional hagiographical analysis with space syntax methods in this experimental thesis, I offer an approach to merging textual and material sources in a new way.

In this thesis, I demonstrate how the spaces within the church affirm and celebrate Dunstan's sanctity while highlighting his loyalty and friendship to those in his community. Entering the church signifies an act of cleansing and can be interpreted as the beginning of a "miniature" pilgrimage, with the main entrance serving simultaneously as a space for spiritual transformation and the gateway to the heavenly church. The memorial, in itself, acts as an intersection where the heavenly and earthly realms collide, and where the miraculous deeds of Dunstan, now residing in heaven, reflect his actions while he was alive.

However, accessing his memorial, located between the choir and the sanctuary, required constant negotiations of space between the monks and the pilgrims. By accommodating the needs of pilgrims and ensuring accessibility, there was a greater likelihood of a miracle healing, which benefited the saintly cult. Conversely, this accessibility seems to have been regulated according to feast days or the suitability of the miracle-seekers. These restrictions and negotiations are not explicitly mentioned in the *miracula*, indicating Osbern's tendency to emphasize the topos of accessibility, wherein Dunstan is depicted as welcoming to people from all walks of life.

Dunstan's *miracula* provides an example of a hagiographical text infused with meanings that were collectively understood by contemporaries. By examining these meanings that were prescribed to church spaces and those operating in them and reflecting on them through the space syntax analyses based on the material space, I have provided an example of exploring hagiographical texts through lesser-known but well-established multidisciplinary techniques.

**Key words:** hagiography, Dunstan, Osbern of Canterbury, Anglo-Saxon, Canterbury Cathedral, miracle

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Research question and background

The end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century in England was a period of reorganization, turmoil, and disruption. After the death of the king, Edward the Confessor, in 1066, the tensions between Anglo-Saxon and Norman traditions in court escalated into a battle for succession. As Edward left no heirs or close relatives, a power vacuum was created with multiple eager claimants for the throne. With both Earl Harold Godwinson, a political powerhouse in England, and Duke William II of Normandy, Edward's closest male blood relative, asserting their claim to succeed Edward, the dispute culminated in the Battle of Hastings. William was crowned king on December 25, 1066, and England fell under the rule of the Normans.<sup>1</sup> The transition from an Anglo-Saxon world to an Anglo-Norman one was characterized by change and uncertainty. Nobility, abbots, and bishops were replaced with Norman supporters, and the Anglo-Saxon saints were now being evaluated by those who were not as intimately familiar with them.<sup>2</sup>

A hagiographical surge began at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with native monks collecting biographies, *vitae*, and postmortem miracle stories, *miracula*, of Anglo-Saxon saints and arranging them into cohesive written traditions. This effort aimed to either promote known cults after a period of change or to reinforce lesser-established saintly cults facing the threat of fading into obscurity.<sup>3</sup> The archiepiscopal see in Canterbury was least of all exempt from the effects of shifting clergy and changes in church politics. At that time, Canterbury Cathedral was a part of the Benedictine monastic community called Christ Church, which followed the *Rule of St Benedict*. Thus, it was not surprising that the community of Christ Church housed some of the first local miracle-collecting monks. The first of these collections was written after the death of the first Norman-appointed archbishop, Lanfranc, in 1089, who had come to accept the major English saints of Canterbury during his lifetime. Consequently, the miracles were written at a time when major saints had already proved their sanctity to Norman leaders through miracles.<sup>4</sup>

Among the forerunners of the miracle-collecting surge was Osbern of Canterbury, the precentor and subprior of Christ Church, who composed *The Life and Miracles of St.*

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<sup>1</sup> Crouch 2017, 16, 19–21.

<sup>2</sup> Browett 2016, 183.

<sup>3</sup> Hayward 2011, 320.

<sup>4</sup> Koopmans 2011, 88–89.

*Dunstan*<sup>5</sup> in the early 1090s.<sup>6</sup> Osbern arrived at Christ Church as an oblate, spending nearly his entire life in the Benedictine community.<sup>7</sup> As a hagiographer who spent his childhood and youth in the Anglo-Saxon church of Canterbury Cathedral and the remainder of his life in the Anglo-Norman world, he had a unique perspective of life from both sides of the Norman Conquest. Osbern's literary subject, Dunstan, was an Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury from 959 to 988, known for his involvement in the Benedictine reform movement in England.<sup>8</sup> Following his death, Dunstan's sainthood was quickly acknowledged within the Benedictine community of Christ Church.<sup>9</sup> Evidence of this can be found, in addition to his numerous *vitae* or saintly biographies, in a benediction from 1023. According to Koopmans, he is described in the text as a saint who "restored health to innumerable ailing ones" and was "associated with the company of angels by the flashing of miracles."<sup>10</sup>

In my thesis, I aim to understand how Osbern reproduces the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral, a space familiar to him, in the *miracula* of Saint Dunstan. I will use the miracles found in the text, which are depicted as having occurred in the Anglo-Saxon period, and analyse their relation to the physical Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral in which they took place. This thesis will combine hagiographical research and spatial analysis to bridge the literary and material dimensions. By integrating space syntax methods with both explicit and implicit portrayals of movement, interaction, and witnessing, I investigate Osbern's textual production of space and its use. This includes reviewing these portrayals of movement, interaction, and witnessing through the lens of hagiographical *topoi* and collectively understood meanings attached to church areas. The central church areas will be divided into two larger sections for the analyses: the body of the church and the most sacred areas of the church. I focus especially on accessibility and visibility within the material church and in the *miracula*, as the two sections of the church highlight these characteristics especially well. By merging digital archaeological methods with hagiographical analysis, I also aim to uncover new possibilities for combining textual and material sources.

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<sup>5</sup> *Vita et Miracula Sancti Dunstani*.

<sup>6</sup> Lynch 2022, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Koopmans 2011, 81.

<sup>8</sup> A monastic reform often associated with Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, and Oswald, archbishop of York, aimed to establish higher standards of monastic life within the Benedictine monasteries. However, the effort was not coordinated, with the churchmen's differing views and strategies mostly affecting their own monastic circles and areas of jurisdiction. Blair 2005, 350.

<sup>9</sup> Webb 2007, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Koopmans 2011, 85.

The beginning of the Anglo-Norman period was a pivotal time in England for solidifying the Anglo-Saxon saints. Whereas the motivation for collecting saints' posthumous miracles was found to be lacking at the end of the Anglo-Saxon age, the period after the Norman conquest was significant in its rectification. The interest in writing miracle collections for these saints became more widespread, and the gap in the continuity of hagiographical texts from the Anglo-Saxon age began to fill up quickly. According to Rachel Koopmans, author of the landmark study in High Medieval English hagiography, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England*, around seventy-five posthumous miracle collections were compiled between 1080 and 1220. A hagiographer, Goscelin, originally from St-Bertin, upon arriving at St. Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury in the early 1090s, undertook a commission to write hagiographies for St. Augustine's local saints. With his presence known to monks local to Canterbury, such as Osbern, he was soon followed and imitated by them, expediting the hagiographical surge.<sup>11</sup> With the help of the miracle collecting movement, circulating oral stories of saints from a bygone era were arranged into cohesive written traditions. From then on, they could be used for different purposes, such as increasing a saint's devotion in a monastic community, maintaining English identity in a post-Conquest world, or bringing more unknown saints into the light for prospective pilgrims.

The reasons for collecting miracles varied from monk to monk. Still, an overarching theme seemed to be a general interest in preserving oral stories from the Anglo-Saxon age.<sup>12</sup> Some hagiographers, such as Osbern's contemporary Eadmer of Canterbury, seemed to have harboured a degree of mistrust towards the changes originating from the Normans. However, Osbern's hagiographical writings do not impart any strong feelings toward the political and cultural shift. However, he still had concerns regarding the traditions of Christ Church, considering that he wrote a letter to Anselm, the second archbishop of Canterbury under the Norman rule, asking him to consult him before changing the community's customs. In the letter, Osbern states that the first Norman-appointed archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc, came to regret the changes he implemented at the beginning of his career as archbishop.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Koopmans 2011, 2 & 6.

<sup>12</sup> Koopmans 2011, 6.

<sup>13</sup> Rubenstein 1999, 282 & 299–300.

While Osbern's primary motivation for writing the *miracula* was to keep the cult of Dunstan alive, he may have also had a more rivalrous reason for its compilation. Goscelin had begun to write the hagiographies for St Augustine's Abbey, which included the *Life, Translation, and Miracles of St. Mildred* and the *Translation of St Augustine*. These texts were written to accompany the translation ceremonies prepared by Abbot Guy. As St. Augustine's is less than a mile from Canterbury Cathedral, Christ Church members undeniably knew of this enormous undertaking.<sup>14</sup> In the years between Lanfranc's death in 1089 and Anselm's archbishopric in 1093, Osbern and Eadmer began a search for relics in Christ Church. The search was fruitful, and the relics of St. Ouen were found.<sup>15</sup> As this happened around the same years as Goscelin's hagiography project and Osbern's writing of Dunstan's *miracula*, it is likely that the compilation of the *miracula* and the relic search were rather the result of imitation of a rival church than inspired by political distrust of the Normans.

The attitudes of the Normans towards English saints have been a topic of interest and ongoing debate, especially after Susan Ridyard's 1986 thesis "*Condigna veneratio: post-Conquest attitudes to the saints of the Anglo-Saxons*". In her thesis, Ridyard argues that the Normans were cooperative and embraced the English saints. According to medievalist Rebecca Browett, researchers currently agree that the situation was far more complex and varied between churches, with some saintly cults experiencing ambivalent reactions and some, at worst, suppression.<sup>16</sup> However, issues regarding church politics and monastic communities more often swayed the Normans' responses towards saints and actions concerning them. For example, during the early years of the Anglo-Norman age, Lanfranc had a more critical approach towards the emphasis on saints in liturgy at Christ Church, perceiving it as happening at the expense of the Eucharist.<sup>17</sup>

This complex religiopolitical atmosphere of maintaining English identity and writing one's community's history in the genre of hagiography creates the backdrop of this thesis. As I analyse the relationship between the imagined and material Canterbury Cathedral, it is done within the context of Benedictine monasticism and Osbern's own experience and perception of miraculous events. By focusing on the accessibility of the church and the visibility within it, I hope to uncover social dynamics between monks and the laity, as well as the process of

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<sup>14</sup> Koopmans 2011, 84.

<sup>15</sup> Muir & Turner 2006, xvi.

<sup>16</sup> Browett 2016, 199-200.

<sup>17</sup> Rubenstein 1999, 294.

writing a *miracula*. Accessibility and visibility can also be considered some of the most suitable and fruitful spatial elements to examine when very little information can be found about a certain area, as is the case with the Anglo-Saxon church.

## 1.2 Sources and methodology

The textual source used for this thesis is the miracle collection *Miracula Sancti Dunstani*, written by Osbern of Canterbury. The *miracula* was composed around 1090 in conjunction with the *vita* of Dunstan. Whereas the *vita* is based on at least two earlier *vitae*, the *Miracles of St. Dunstan* is the first of its kind.<sup>18</sup> I have chosen eleven miracle accounts<sup>19</sup> of varying length and detail from the text, focusing on mentions of areas in the church and movement and interaction within the space. Eight of these are from before Osbern's time, which he had chosen from those that had been orally circulating for years, and three are from his time, out of which two he explicitly says to have witnessed.<sup>20</sup> The miracles chosen all happen in Canterbury Cathedral and have at least one mention of an area of the church or movement through or towards it. The miracles that are not considered either do not mention the Cathedral or are concerned with events after the fire of 1067 and are, thus, part of the Anglo-Norman period. A table, which has the different miracles used in this thesis, can be found in the appendices as "Appendix 1: Table of Miracle Accounts".

As a literary genre, hagiography must be understood as part of a long-standing tradition of writing about holy people of the past. Authors of hagiographies understood the expectation of their texts becoming a part of a continuum of the experience of the sacred. Conforming to this required the inclusion of parallels and a mostly uncontradicted relationship with the Bible and previously established sacred writings. As interceding entities, saints had entire cults relying on their intercession, often raising questions regarding the texts' association with commercialization, imitation, or even fabrication. Due to this, hagiography has frequently been considered, in essence, a problematic source when interpreting the past.

To analyse miracle collections, it's imperative to understand what they can and cannot be used for. Although the compilation of miracles was done to promote and celebrate the saint concerned, they may be used as windows into the religious lives of the laity. However, as medievalist Anne Bailey writes, speculations of pilgrims from miracle collections may reveal

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<sup>18</sup> Koopmans 2011, 79-80.

<sup>19</sup> Accounts 2-9 and 11-13.

<sup>20</sup> Koopmans 2011, 81 & 85

more about present-day attitudes than historical facts. In her article “Revisiting Female Pilgrimage in Medieval Oxford”, she uses Henry Mayr-Harting’s hypothesis of the predominance of young women’s pilgrimages to Saint Frideswide’s shrine as one such example. Mayr-Harting interpreted pilgrimages as a release for women from social and gender expectations, which Bailey argues reveals “more about modern gender sensibilities than about twelfth-century women.”<sup>21</sup> However, it does not mean that miracle collections cannot be used at all or that hagiographical texts simply exist to promote the cult of a saint.

It is important to note that hagiographies are intrinsically tied to the sacred texts and traditions that came before them. As conveying biblical truths and shaping the sanctity of the saints concerned was of utmost importance, some events concerning a saint may have been omitted or modified in favour of educating or delivering an important message to readers.<sup>22</sup> Because of this, hagiographical texts are valuable sources that communicate the writers’ and their community’s attitudes, expectations, and hopes for the saintly cults and different social groups. Close reading is an essential tool when engaging with sources like hagiographical texts and is used accordingly in this thesis. A detail-oriented approach to the text, through practices such as examining the individual Latin words used, helps to formulate interpretations that are in line with what the hagiographer has aimed to communicate. Through these methods, Dunstan’s *miracula* is able to give us a glimpse into how Osbern recreates a space familiar to him to deliver the message of Dunstan’s irrefutable sainthood, encouraging his veneration.

To explore the materiality of this familiar space, I will employ a combination of space syntax methods. Space syntax is a toolkit consisting of different techniques that address spatial relationships, which can be used in a pick-and-choose approach in accordance with the research topic that is analysed. In their handbook “Introduction to Space Syntax in Urban Studies”, leading space syntax expert Akkelines van Nes and architect and urban planner Claudia Yamu describe it as broadly used to examine the spatial relationships within a built environment. However, early in its development, space syntax was also recognized as beneficial in the context of anthropological studies for analysing “spatial understanding of the social organization in settlements from different cultures, by demonstrating how buildings and settlement play a role in social relations.”<sup>23</sup> Space syntax can be utilized in many different

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<sup>21</sup> Bailey 2022, 605 & 609.

<sup>22</sup> Immonen 2003, 68.

<sup>23</sup> Van Nes & Yamu 2021, vii.

ways and on different scales, ranging from cities to a single living room, showcasing its greatest strength: adaptability. As a series of techniques, space syntax has gained a lot of traction in archaeological research and is often used on archaeological sites with high amounts of detail and data, such as Pompeii and Ostia. It has also been adapted to research concerning areas not yet excavated. For example, the *Dionysias Archaeological Project* has applied space syntax techniques to remotely sensed data to create new perspectives of space and society in the ancient settlement of Dionysias.<sup>24</sup>

I apply space syntax as a methodology. The results visualize and materialize relationships between the areas of the church, as well as between the people and the space, which may otherwise go unnoticed. Theoretically, I approach space through its two-fold nature of giving and receiving. Space functions as both a consequence and an active influencer of human activity, enfolding many meanings. Some meanings are constructed in the built environment's form to explicitly represent the dichotomy of the influencer and receiver, and some are created "naturally" through the everyday use, disuse, and modification of space. With this proposition in mind, the spatial techniques provide a concretization and visualization of the relations between society and space.

The three space syntax techniques that I use in this thesis are the justified graph, isovist maps, and Visibility Graph Analysis. According to Bill Hillier, the justified graph, or j-graph, visualizes the relations between a single area and the other areas within a spatial network. The graph is composed of nodes, which are the areas within the network, and links, the connections between the nodes. In a simplified example, the nodes would be the rooms in a house, and the links would be the doors. Using Figure 1 as an example, a single node is chosen as the root (node B), and the rest are assembled into layers (five layers in this case). This showcases the different route choices available and the number of nodes needed to pass through to get to the root. By analysing the node layers and the root's relation with the other nodes, it is possible to differentiate the different nodes' or areas' external qualities and usability, which ultimately affect movement patterns.<sup>25</sup> The connections between areas highlight the areas' intentional or unintentional accessibility and call attention to possible "gate-keeping" areas. These external and relational features can then be further analysed through the area's underlying properties and collectively accepted meanings.

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<sup>24</sup> Carpentiero & Tessaro 2016, 803 & 808.

<sup>25</sup> Hillier 2014, 36.

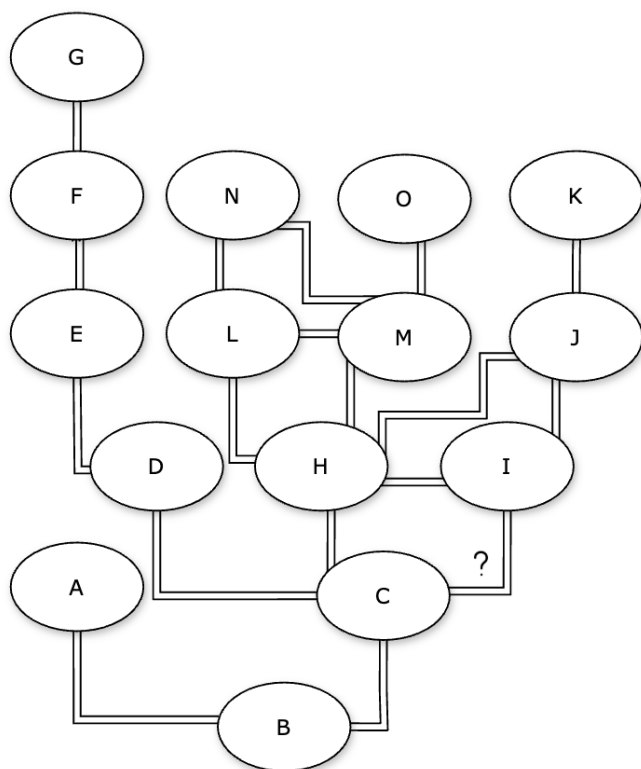


Figure 1: An example of the j-graph from Figure 5.

The isovist maps and the Visibility Graph Analysis are made from a floor plan I created with AutoCAD, which was based on the floor plan from Kevin Blockley's, Margaret Sparks's, and Tim Tatton-Brown's monograph *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture*. The analysis was then made with the DepthMapX -software, which creates images representing two-dimensional depictions of visibility. Van Nes and Yamu write that visual orientation is how humans perceive themselves within a given space and is the starting point in navigating an environment.<sup>26</sup> Often, people aim for a full overview of the space they are in, but this is not always possible in a static position. By applying these two techniques for visibility analysis, it is possible to clarify how people saw themselves within the church and how they saw the other spaces of the church from the vantage point they are in. Due to the lack of information on the structure of the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral, two-dimensional methods are applied to utilize the speculated church plan to its fullest. Isovists, found in isovist maps, are, simply put, eye-level fields of view of an observer through which visual accessibility can be depicted from a certain point in an area.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Van Nes & Yamu, 2021, 88.

<sup>27</sup> Paliou 2014, 118 & 126.

Visibility Graph Analysis, or VGA, uses an overlaying grid on the plan and creates isovists from the middle of each raster cell, visualizing mutually visible locations as a “heat map.”<sup>28</sup> This, in turn, helps to depict intervisibility within a single space. In their simplest forms, as I apply them in this thesis, these visibility methods are not to be understood as definitive results when analysing visual integration but as visual aids and tools for interpretation. As Van Nes points out, movement is also culturally dependent.<sup>29</sup> Also, when used at a beginner level, they may lack the subtle modifications required for the most ideal outcomes. However, due to the lack of information on the church plan, a certain degree of simplification and a focus on the bare bones of the structure are needed. For these reasons, I committed to a somewhat simplified spatial analysis for this building. It is important to note that space syntax may steer one towards modern interpretations due to its contemporary nature, which I have aimed to curb by using space syntax as a supplementary method alongside the analysis of the *miracula*.

The space syntax analysis will be based on the research in the archaeological report *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture* by Kevin Blockley, Margaret Sparks, and Tim Tatton-Brown. The monograph contains the results from the 1993 excavations, as well as additional interpretations and reconstructions of the church’s phases. It is currently the only large-scale excavation conducted in Canterbury Cathedral that has touched upon the Anglo-Saxon remains of the church. The excavation provided previously unknown material information on the structure and makeup of the Anglo-Saxon church. Because of this, the floor plans and recreations used in this thesis will be based on the drawings and interpretations found in this book.

### 1.3 Field of research and thesis structure

*Miracula*, as a source in social and cultural history, has been steadily increasing in popularity since the 1970s and is currently experiencing marked popularity. Studies have often gravitated towards the perceptions and representations of holiness, but research concerning topics that were not intended to be communicated by hagiographers, such as gender and disease, has been equally well-received.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, studies on lived religion have been on the rise, as snippets of information can be found in descriptions of pilgrims and their actions in hagiographical texts. Although hagiographical research has been advancing by leaps and

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<sup>28</sup> Thaler 2020, 303.

<sup>29</sup> Van Nes 2011, 102

<sup>30</sup> Allen Smith 2020, 376.

bounds, the question of space, its utilization, the meanings it possesses, and its influence on movement and action has been less examined. While this study analyses space and the material setting, it is still primarily categorized as hagiographical research due to the main source and research question.

High medieval miracle collections in England have been extensively explored and have reasonably established theoretical frameworks to work off the back of. Researchers such as Rachel Koopmans, Simon Yarrow, Anne Bailey, and Ruth Salter have made recent notable contributions to the field of English hagiography and serve as inspirations for this study.<sup>31</sup> Anne Bailey's article "Reconsidering the Medieval Experience at the Shrine in High Medieval England" has been particularly insightful, as she explores pilgrims' access to shrines and relics in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Her other articles also include research on pilgrims' gender and disabilities within the hagiographical genre. An important monograph to this thesis has also been Koopmans's *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England*, whose work dives deep into the miracle-collecting periods from around 1080–1140 and 1140–1200, concentrating on the collectors and the reasons for collecting.

Using spatial analysis to supplement the method of close reading has gained popularity. However, a notable shift had already occurred in the 1980s, often referred to as the "spatial turn", led by Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974), which has greatly impacted the humanities. Medievalist and early modernist Albrecht Classen clarifies in his introduction on the spatial turn in premodern studies that this approach is based on the understanding that all actions and their products "must be understood in relationship to the space where they are located or brought about."<sup>32</sup> By focusing on how space affects and is affected by society and culture, it becomes possible to uncover new perspectives of the past. An example of shifting the focal point towards space can be found in medieval historian Alexandar Z. Savic's multidisciplinary essay, which uses concepts from philosophy of space and literary studies to explore how space is narrated in medieval Serbian hagiography.<sup>33</sup> Historian Megan Cassidy-Welch notes in her article "Space and Place in Medieval Contexts" that, in contrast to

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<sup>31</sup> Koopmans: *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England*, 2011; Yarrow: *Saints and Their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth-Century England*, 2006; Bailey's multiple articles, such as: "Revisiting Female Pilgrimage in Medieval Oxford: Evidence from the *Miracula Sancte Frideswide*", 2023, "Reconsidering the medieval experience at the shrine in High Medieval England", 2021; Ruth J. Salter: *Saints, Cure-Seekers, and Miraculous Healing in Twelfth-Century England*, 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Classen 2012, 14–15.

<sup>33</sup> Savic 2021, 39–40.

Lefebvre's concept of sacred spaces as abstract, researchers now understand them as "spaces of religious and spiritual practice and discourse", which can be found in material, textual, or ritual form.<sup>34</sup> The *spatial turn* has also led to a shift towards experimenting with interdisciplinary approaches and more quantitative spatial technologies, such as Geographical Information Systems and space syntax. As medieval studies can be considered quite interdisciplinary, they provide fertile ground to experiment with newer technologies and aim to uncover new interpretations of old sources.

There have not been many studies that use space syntax techniques to complement textual analysis, especially in regard to churches. One such study is researcher Gunnar Almevik's article "Perusing space-time in medieval sacred architecture: Paths, bundles, and constraints in Endre church during a fifteenth-century mass", which explores the parishioners' experiences of liturgical rites. Almevik applies these different spatial methods to a re-enactment of a medieval mass based on a 15<sup>th</sup>-century mass instruction, creating a coherent cultural-historical study. However, his study is distinct in that it takes into account time, an essential proponent of movement and perception, in the form of time-space geography. Perhaps the addition of time-space geography could be possible in the future in more detailed accounts of miracles. Almevik concludes in his research that movement patterns, spatial organization, and human agency are relative and produced within their situated events. Hence, they are characteristically ever-changing, differing at varying times, and flexible within a distinct behavioural setting. These qualities can also be applied to events within the *miracula*, as movement, accessibility, and agency differ from account to account. The unification of textual and spatial analyses in Almevik's study visualizes "how main roles, in this case, the clergy and parishioners, follow different patterns of visibility/invisibility and integration/segregation over time during mass."<sup>35</sup>

Space syntax techniques have not been received without criticism. Building archaeologist Kate Giles writes that the "spatial turn" encouraged the innovation of theories and methods on subjects such as visuality and spatiality. These methods and theories may project a modern way of perceiving the past and often do not consider the subtle differences in medieval concepts of space. For instance, according to medieval treatises concerning sight, all senses were crucial in the bodily understanding of the world, and the division between them was less

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<sup>34</sup> Cassidy-Welch 2010, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Almevik 2017, 360-361, 363, & 377.

emphasized. In the medieval world, the theory of extramission, in which light issued from the eyes to touch an object, included the understanding that the object reflected light, having “affective power” on the spectator. Giles summarizes that the problem with most studies is the lack of theoretical approaches that could help define the premodern material and bodily features of spatiality and visuality, such as phenomenology and the previously mentioned time-space geography. These more creative techniques, however, also run the risk of employing one’s own experiences as a guideline.<sup>36</sup> However, by allowing the *miracula* to take the lead in analysis and viewing the spatial analysis through Osbern’s lens and the literary genre of hagiography, I aim to avoid these pitfalls.

This thesis is divided into two chapters, each focusing on a larger area of the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral. Chapter 2 examines the main entrance and the body of the church, which includes the nave and the areas freely accessible to the laity, such as the southern arcade areas. The chapter begins with section 2.1, which provides an overview of the most likely layout of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral and the changes it underwent from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. It also introduces the sections of the Cathedral, which are then used in later analyses. In section 2.2, the location of the main entrance of the church is assessed, and the relationship between the entrance and the other areas of the church is studied through the lens of access and restriction of movement. Section 2.3 focuses on two kinds of perception of the church: perceiving through visual observation and perceiving through collectively understood meanings. It explores visibility from the main entrance and throughout the church, comparing it to accessibility through movement. This section also investigates the *topoi* and meanings pertaining to entering the church and moving throughout it through literary analysis of the *miracula*.

In Chapter 3, the core of the sacred space containing the memorial erected for St. Dunstan and the underground crypt that holds his tomb is analysed. Section 3.1 focuses on accessibility, just as in section 2.2, with the help of the justified graph and depictions in the *miracula*. Section 3.2 is dedicated to studying the observation of miracles and miracle-seekers who are located near the memorial. This ultimately leads to assessing the production of meanings behind these events and the memorial itself. In the analyses, there is an emphasis on the

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<sup>36</sup> Giles 2007, 107–108.

relationship between the monks of the Benedictine community and the laity, which is especially important when discussing the portrayal of different social groups in the *miracula*.

## 2 The main entrance and the body of the church

### 2.1 The Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral

Before examining the events in the *miracula* and their meanings, it is important to consider the likely layout of the church. While some might argue that space is narratively constructed in the text in the style of hagiography and should be analysed solely from that perspective, it can also be argued that the space was based on a tangible model that Osbern intimately understood. Understanding the space as it was enables us to dissect what Osbern included and omitted in his recreation of it and may provide some insight into why. The most important areas that are analysed in the upcoming chapters are the main entrance, St. Dunstan's memorial, and the crypt, with Chapter 2 focusing on the main entrance and its relationship with other notable areas of the church.

As previously mentioned, the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral no longer exists, except in the form of its foundations beneath the current cathedral. The church is categorized by Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown into different periods, with period 4 representing the second Anglo-Saxon cathedral from the early ninth century until the fire of 1067. Period 4 is further divided into three categories: A, B, and C. The period 4C (10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> century) church was an alteration of the 4B (10<sup>th</sup> century) structure, which itself was a significant modification of the original second Anglo-Saxon church (4A). The specifics of the changes to the structure during period 4B remain unknown, as the walls of the earlier church were taken apart to the level of the foundations, erasing all traces of the rebuilding. However, a hearth, possibly built during the construction of 4B, was dated to 900-970 with 95% confidence, which aligns with Archbishop Oda's rebuilding of the cathedral from 942 to 958. In contrast, the changes in period 4C are known. Period 4C is marked by the disassembly of the western annex<sup>37</sup>, which was transformed into a western apse<sup>38</sup> as seen in Figure 2, a rarity at that time. The alterations during 4C were most likely made in the second half of the tenth century or the first half of the eleventh century. Canterbury Cathedral was ultimately destroyed in a fire in 1067 and

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<sup>37</sup> "Wing of a building." or "Part of a building, or any feature of a building, projecting from and subordinate to the main, central part." *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, 2021. Entries: annex(e) and wing.

<sup>38</sup> "A semicircular or polygonal eastern end to a chancel. It was a universal feature of the primitive basilican type of church architecture." *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2014. Entry: apse. "The terms chancel, choir, and presbytery are sometimes used as if they were interchangeable. Strictly speaking, the chancel, from the Latin *cancellus*, a screen, refers to that part of a church separate from the nave in which the clergy officiate." *The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art and Architecture*, 2013. Entry: chancel.

underwent extensive rebuilding under Archbishop Lanfranc from 1070.<sup>39</sup> The dating of the 4C church would place it either within the period of Dunstan's archbishopric or sometime after his death, making it the most significant category in this thesis.

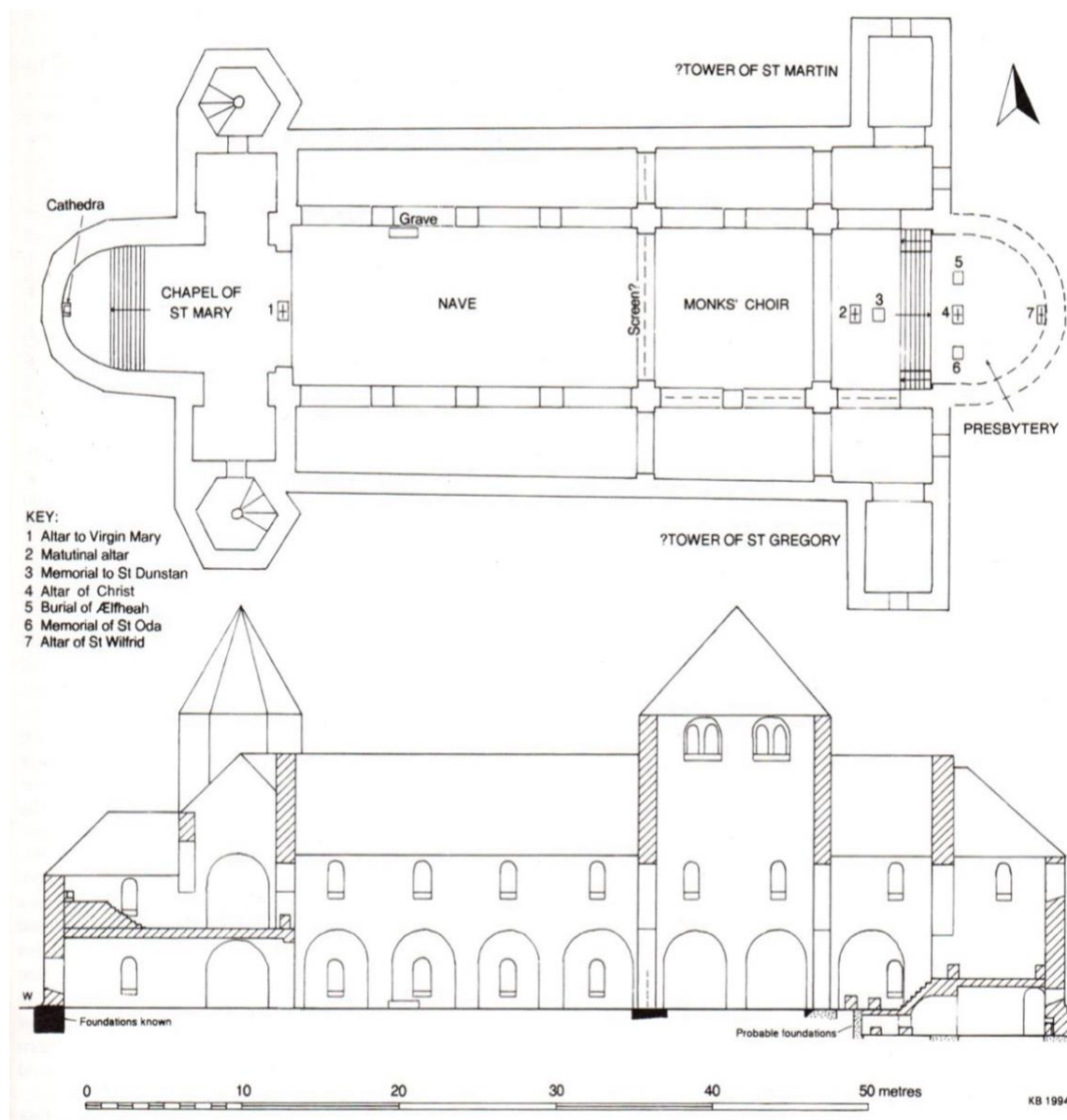


Figure 2: The reconstructed layout and section of the church. Blockley et al. 1997, 105.

In addition to the excavation findings, Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown use an account by Eadmer of Canterbury, Osbern's contemporary, for the reconstruction. Based on their evaluations, Eadmer's account should be approached with a healthy degree of caution, as his reports on the histories of the relics tend to conflict with one another. However, accurate records of relics were essential to maintain, in case their authenticity was challenged. Eadmer

<sup>39</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 14, 18 & 111.

likely aimed to describe the church accurately and, in all probability, succeeded in doing so, given that some of his early readers, who were his seniors, knew the church more thoroughly and likely corrected any possible mistakes.<sup>40</sup>

The 4C church featured a double apse, with apses found both east and west, which are depicted in Figure 2 as the Chapel of St Mary and the presbytery. The western apse was flanked by hexagonal structures containing stair turrets that led to Mary's chapel. The western chapel was elevated to about 5 meters above the nave<sup>41</sup> and housed the *cathedra*, the chair or seat of the Bishop. According to Eadmer, a "proper enclosure" separated the nave from the monks' choir. In the reconstruction of the church, the enclosure is illustrated as a rood screen surrounding the choir, leaving the southern aisle on the outside due to its function as a passage for laity from the southeast *porticus*<sup>42</sup> to the nave. The sanctuary<sup>43</sup>, or presbytery as seen in Figure 2, was raised above the choir<sup>44</sup> and, in addition to the main altar, held the altar of St. Wilfrid, the grave of St. Alphege, and the memorial of Saint Oda. Dunstan's memorial was located at the bottom of the stairs leading to the sanctuary, alongside the matutinal altar, which was used for the first mass of the day. Dunstan's tomb rested beneath Dunstan's memorial, accessible by descending stairways on both sides of the stairs to the sanctuary. In accordance with Figure 3, these stairs led to a ring crypt with a central passage, where the tomb at its end was separated by a wall featuring a hagioscope, or a small opening, for viewing.<sup>45</sup>

According to Osbern, Dunstan chose his own burial place, suggesting that the tomb was constructed soon after his death in 988.<sup>46</sup> In addition, the crypt for his tomb was built no later than the 990s when the cathedral became monastic. As Dunstan's memorial stood above the tomb, it may have been built at the same time as the crypt. The western apse and the towers of St. Martin and St. Gregory, which housed the entrances, were in all probability built after the

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<sup>40</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 107-108.

<sup>41</sup> "The main space occupied by the congregation in a church, from the entrance [the western end] to the choir, usually flanked on either side by aisles. The derivation from *navis* is partly because the nave is not unlike an upside-down ship, but also because it is the ark of Salvation." *The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art and Architecture*, 2013. Entry: nave.

<sup>42</sup> "Entrance-porch of a church" or "Room or side-chapel projecting from the nave of a church" *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, 2021. Entry: porticus.

<sup>43</sup> "...part of the choir of a large church which contains the high altar, or in a small church, the part inside the altar-rails." *The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art and Architecture*, 2013. Keyword: sanctuary.

<sup>44</sup> "Part of a large church appropriated for the singers, with stalls, situated to the liturgical east of the nave, often partially screened." *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, 2021. Entry: choir.

<sup>45</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 106-108 & 110.

<sup>46</sup> "Et ibi in eo loco quem ante biduum ipse dictaverat cum omni diligentia sepultus [...]", Osbern, *Vita S. Dunstani*, 126.

Danish sack in 1011, possibly during the translation of St. Alphege's body in 1023. Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown observe that the return of Alphege's body likely marked a period of reconsecration and rebuilding, which could coincide with the new structures.<sup>47</sup>

Consequently, this could place some of the earlier miracles in the *miracula* to a time before period 4C, which will be further addressed alongside the analysis of the accessibility of the entrance.

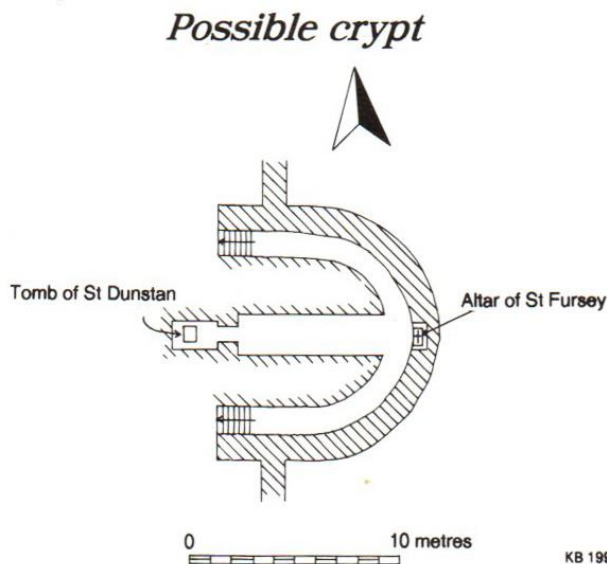


Figure 3: Possible layout of the ring-crypt. Blockley et al. 1997, 109.

The 4C church is divided into 15 areas, which can be observed in Figure 4: the tower entrance (A), the southern *porticus* (B), the southeast arcade<sup>48</sup> (C), the choir-adjacent southern arcade (D), the southern arcade (E), the nave (F), the northern arcade (G), Dunstan's memorial (H), the crypt stairs (I), the sanctuary stairs (J), the sanctuary (K), the choir (L), the northeast arcade (M), the choir-adjacent northern arcade (N), and the northern *porticus* (O). These areas are based on the reconstructed layout and are divided according to structural boundaries, such as arcade columns, stairs, and screens. The areas analysed in this thesis are those mentioned or heavily alluded to in the *miracula*: the entrance, Dunstan's memorial, the crypt stairs, and the stairs to the sanctuary. While the crypt stairs are not mentioned explicitly, I have included them to represent the area of Dunstan's tomb since they lead to the crypt where the tomb in question is located. I have excluded the western apse, which contains the oratory of Mary,

<sup>47</sup> Blockley et al 1997, 109 & 111.

<sup>48</sup> "Series of arches on piers [supports] separating nave from aisle and supporting the clerestory [the upper parts of the walls] in a church." *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, 2021. Entry: arcade.

from the spatial analyses because it is not mentioned in the *miracula*, and its function is irrelevant to this thesis.

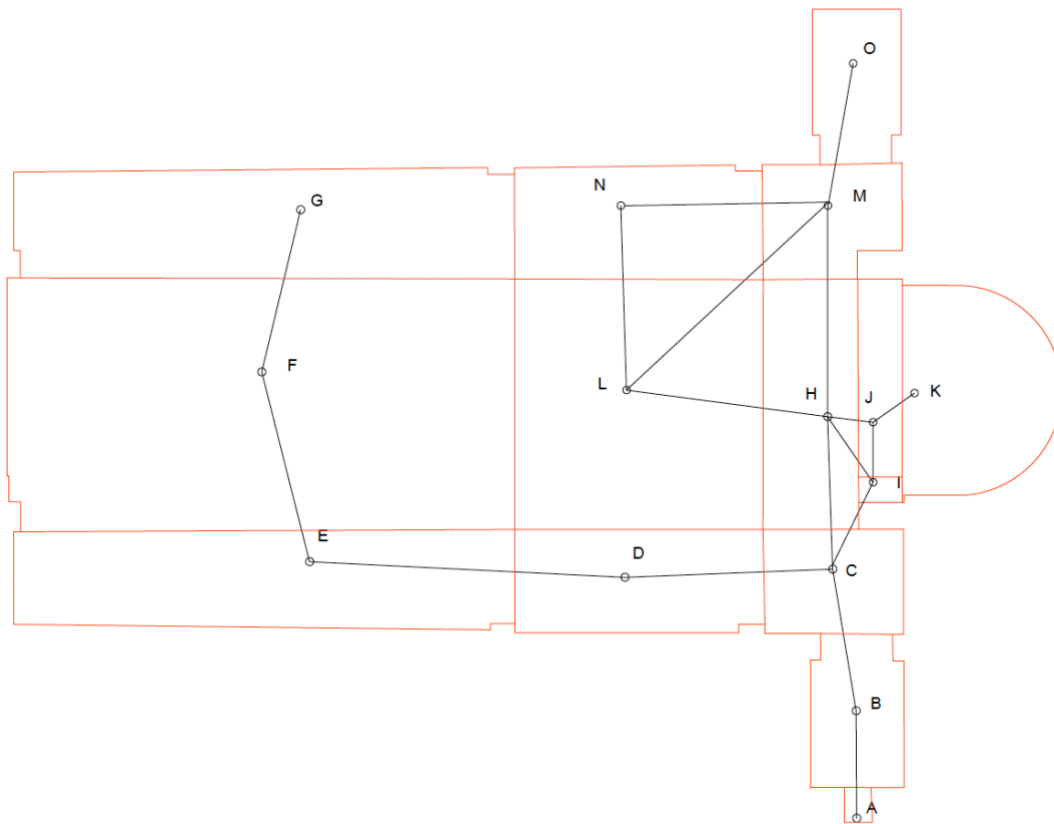


Figure 4: The division of areas in Canterbury Cathedral. Karuneva 2025.

To understand how Osbern might have perceived the space of Canterbury Cathedral and its meanings, it is crucial to consider his experience of space. This experience, which includes sensory encounters with various aspects of the environment, is closely intertwined with the relationship between society and the physical area. This relationship is shaped by various factors, such as accessibility and visibility, which are explored in this thesis. As a church, particularly one of such significant importance during its time, Canterbury Cathedral was built with intention through conscious deliberation, making it a structure that reflects the meanings and perceptions of its use prescribed by different social groups. To analyse accessibility, I employ the justified graph analysis in which each examined area is alternately represented as the root of the graph, illustrating its permeability and connections with other areas of the church. The accessibility of areas and movement in the *miracula* will then be compared to this material space.

## 2.2 Controlling access and the flow of the laity

The 4C church likely had two official entrances: the southern entrance and the northern entrance. The southern entrance was reserved for the laity, while the northern entrance belonged to the monks moving to and from the monastery building. It is clear that those entering the church in the miracle accounts are all part of the laity, so the northern entrance is excluded entirely from the analysis. This division between the laity and the monks was essential, as the monastery was reserved for the monks' community and aimed to preserve an atmosphere for contemplation. According to Julie Kerr, who has extensively researched monasticism in England, peace was maintained by restricting visitors and other distractions, such as noises emanating from the outer court. In addition, the door to the monastery, which likely would have included the northern entrance, was closely supervised and kept locked during the night before the nocturnal Office.<sup>49</sup>

The entrance, or the act of entering the church, is mentioned in three miracle accounts.<sup>50</sup> Account 2 describes a man entering the church using the verb *ingredior*. In contrast, accounts 3 and 4 refer to the entrance itself. Account 3 recounts three poor women arriving at the *porta*, or the entrance: "And when they had arrived at the entrance of the church, with joined hands, they entered together, and collapsing before the memorial of the man, they brought forth a lamentation with this prayer."<sup>51</sup> Account 4 describes the entrance as *januae* (or *ianuae*)<sup>52</sup>, a plural term referring to double doors<sup>53</sup>. These three accounts are found at the beginning of the *miracula* and likely date from before the 4C period, which is potentially problematic. The fact that all mentions of entrances may originate from this earlier period raises the question of how Osbern perceived these pilgrims entering the church. Was it in accordance with his time or based on possible knowledge of the layout of the 4B church?

According to Eadmer, the main entrance to the church during the 4C period and before the Norman Conquest was located on the southern wall. In their reconstruction, Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown positioned this entrance in the south tower, known as the Tower of St.

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<sup>49</sup> Kerr 2009, 21.

<sup>50</sup> Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*. accounts 2, 3, and 4.

<sup>51</sup> "Cumque ad portam ecclesiae venissent, junctis ad invicem manibus ingressae sunt, procidentisque ante memoriam viri hac moerorem supplicatione depromunt." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*. 131

<sup>52</sup> "Sed cum jam præ doloris magnitudine sibi ipsi esset intolerabilis, jussit feretrale equorum lateribus machinam coaptari, seque in ea positum ad ecclesiae januas, ubi memoratus sanctus requiescit, pertrahi." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*. 132

<sup>53</sup> LewisShort via Logeion. Entry: ianua.

Gregory. The reasoning behind this placement was the unlikelihood of the entrance being located to the west of the tower, as it would then be “close to the important liturgical heart at the east end of the nave.” Consequently, the choir screen dividing the nave from the choir excludes the southern aisle, as illustrated in Figure 2, to facilitate access from the tower to the nave.<sup>54</sup> A textual source that supports this is the *Vision of Leofric*, which Milton C. Gatch analyses in his article.<sup>55</sup> The *Vision of Leofric* is an Old English prose composed in the latter half of the eleventh century by an unknown author. The text describes visions experienced by the Earl of Mercia in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, with two occurring in the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral. This likely places Leofric’s visions in the 4C period of the church. The *Vision* has only one surviving copy, bound in a composite book, possibly from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, alongside fifteen other texts from seven manuscripts.<sup>56</sup>

In his article, Gatch examines the interior and architecture of Canterbury Cathedral and St. Clement’s in Sandwich from the perspective of the *Vision*. In the cathedral, he focuses on the entrance and the memorial of St. Dunstan. Gatch notes that the chief public entrance was described in Old English as having a *forehus*, a porch, which Leofric had access to while arriving at a closed Canterbury Cathedral in the evening to pray. Leofric attempts to rouse the drunken doorkeeper by “knocking very hard for a long time” at the entrance to the church proper. Gatch translates the verb *cnyllan* as “knocking” instead of “sounding the bell,” as it was more commonly used when translating Old English to Latin in liturgical contexts due to “the lack of evidence for bells at doors”. A knocker was a likely instrument, as large rings on doors were common at the time. The “porch” appeared adequately sheltered from the weather, since Leofric begins his prayers there after failing to wake the doorkeeper.<sup>57</sup> This leads us to presume that the porch was likely the tower itself, with the door featuring a possible knocker located between the southern *porticus* (B) and the southeast arcade (C), as illustrated in Figure 5. As the *Vision* describes events from the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, these would coincide with the relatively newly built towers of St. Gregory and St. Martin.

A relevant question would be whether the main entrance was perceived as leading to the possible church porch (A) or as the door to the church proper, located between the church porch (B) and the southeast arcade (C). This perception would entirely depend on how the

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<sup>54</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 106 & 110.

<sup>55</sup> Gatch 1993, 228.

<sup>56</sup> Stokes 2012, 529-530.

<sup>57</sup> Gatch 1993, 229–235.

entrance of the church was understood in Osbern's *miracula*. As mentioned earlier, Osbern used a term alluding to double doors, possibly aligning with the doors that required a doorkeeper at night in the *Vision*. Alternately, Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown state that, based on Eadmer's account, the tower housed the altar of St. Gregory and an area for the court of law, but both were situated on the upper floor.<sup>58</sup> This description is supported by Gatch's analysis of Leofric's nightly visit to the church in the *Vision*, according to whom there is no mention of Leofric praying at an altar in the porch area, which would have been otherwise mentioned. The altar area on the upper floor of the tower does not contradict the perception of the lower floor as being "outside", although it seems unusual.

The main entrance during period 4B seems to have been located in the same place as the period 4C church's entrance between the southern *porticus*, or porch (B), and the southeast arcade (C). The church's layout remained quite recognizable throughout period 4, despite modifications to the western structure and the addition of stair-turrets and *porticus* that altered the outer structure during this time. It is reasonable to suggest that the main entrance may have stayed in a similar location throughout the existence of the second Anglo-Saxon church. As mentioned by Blockley, Sparks, and Tatton-Brown, it is possible that an entrance existed at the western end of the 4A church. However, since the western apse from 4C functioned as a chapel, it likely fulfilled a similar role during the time of the 4A church. Eadmer's description of the entrance's location on the south wall during the 4C period further reduces the likelihood of a significant change in moving the entrance from the western to the southern part of the church.<sup>59</sup>

As there were no towers until the early eleventh century, the main doors described in the early miracles of the *miracula* led directly outside. However, they seem to have been in the same location as where one entered the church proper from St. Gregory's tower in the later miracles. In light of this interpretation, if the early miracles truly occurred in the period 4B church, the entrances of the miracle-seekers can be analysed similarly to those taking place in the later period 4C church. This is because they were technically situated in the same place, with the exception that the later miracle-seekers entered first through the tower before reaching the main entrance. In the justified graph in Figure 5, the southern *porticus* (B) will demonstrate the main entrance, which is located between itself and the southeast arcade.

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<sup>58</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 109.

<sup>59</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 100.

While the entrance to the tower, southern *porticus*, and southeast arcade could be combined as one single entrance area, I kept them separate to emphasize the structural differences in the areas and the shifts in experience when moving through them.

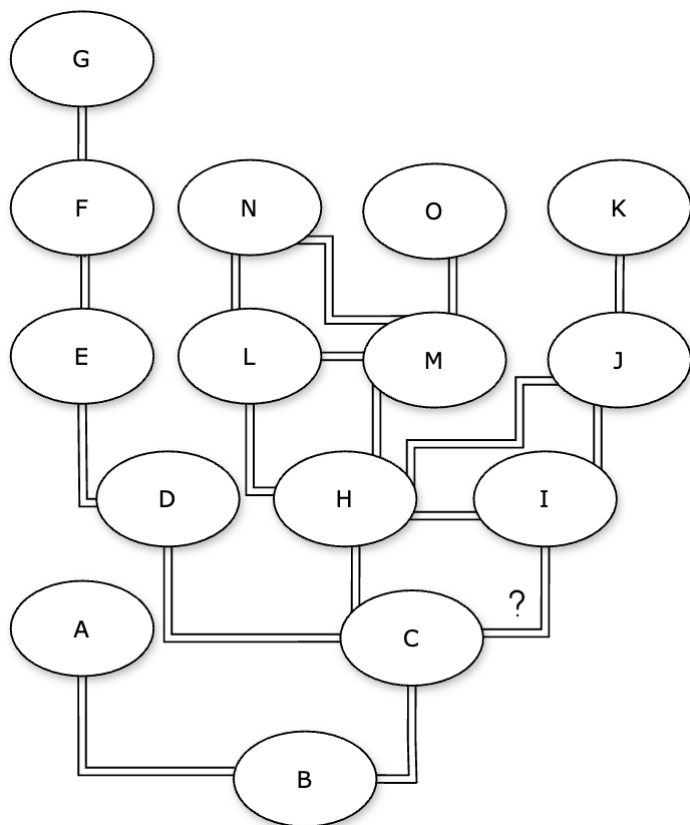


Figure 5: Justified graph with area B (the southern *porticus*), representing the main entrance as the root. Karuneva, 2025.<sup>60</sup>

Being the most publicly accessible area in the entire church, it may be surprising that the entrance cannot be considered very integrated. Analysing the graph in Figure 5 reveals that the pathway leading to the church's inner sections requires moving through the southeast arcade (C).<sup>61</sup> Likewise, the only other option from the main entrance is to go back through the tower and "outside," indicating that both the entrance and southeast arcade form a bottleneck of sorts. The *porticus* acts as a liminal space for pilgrims, signifying a transition from the mundane to the sacred. As a pilgrim passes through the tower (B) and enters the main part of

<sup>60</sup> Nodes in the justified graph are listed as follows. Root: B (the southern *porticus*); layer 1: A (the tower entrance) and C (the southeast arcade); layer 2: D (the choir-adjacent southern arcade), H (Dunstan's memorial), and I (the crypt stairs); layer 3: E (the southern arcade), L (the choir), M (the northeast arcade), and J (the sanctuary stairs); layer 4: F (the nave), N (the choir-adjacent northern arcade), O (the northern *porticus*), and K (the sanctuary); layer 5: G (the northern arcade).

<sup>61</sup> I have added a question mark to Figure 5 between areas C and I because of the uncertainty of the pathway between the southeast arcade and the stairs to the crypt. It is possible the stairs were accessible from the arcade for pilgrims, but it is also likely that one had to partially pass through the chancel area to reach them.

the church (C), there is a notable change in sound, smell, and sense of space. The scent of damp air and earth from the outside gives way to the rich aroma of incense, while the sounds of praying pilgrims and monks' devotions resonate off colourful stone vaults, and all these sensations are contained within this elevated, imposing space.

As one arrives at the southeast arcade (C), a clear shift occurs. To the left is the pathway to the nave (through D), and straight ahead is the entrance to the sacred core of the church, with Dunstan's memorial (H) and possibly the stairs to the crypt (I). While the bottleneck opens up, it does not signify a release of tension regarding accessibility and freedom. Therefore, the southeast arcade (C) can be viewed as a gatekeeping area: a space where the boundaries between social groups are made manifest. As this space is where local monks and visiting laity diverge into their respective areas, it makes the social division distinct and tangible. The continued control of the flow of people can be observed past this gatekeeping area, as the path leading to the nave remains less integrated.

The most significant piece of evidence pointing to restricting the flow of people in the Cathedral would be the integration of the nave, depicted in Figure 6. The analysis of the nave shows six nodal layers, as opposed to the recurring five nodal layers in other analyses. This means that there are generally more areas that one has to move through in order to reach the nave, making it less integrated. With direct access to only two areas from the nave (F), the northern and southern arcades, the nave appears to be a comparative "dead-end". The northern arcade (G) likewise does not lead anywhere if the rood screen placement is accurate, and the southern arcade (E) only ushers to another transitional area: the choir-adjacent southern arcade (D). The nave thus seems very final and acts as a destination point for the laity. Without a doubt, the Christ Church monks could move freely from area to area, such as from the nave to the choir, given that there were no immovable barriers preventing them from doing so. It is also important to remember there were stair turrets at the west end of the church leading to the chapel on the gallery. These pathways through the nave, available for monks but not for the laity, could be seen as invisible but necessary routes used for more "unofficial" tasks not intended to draw attention.

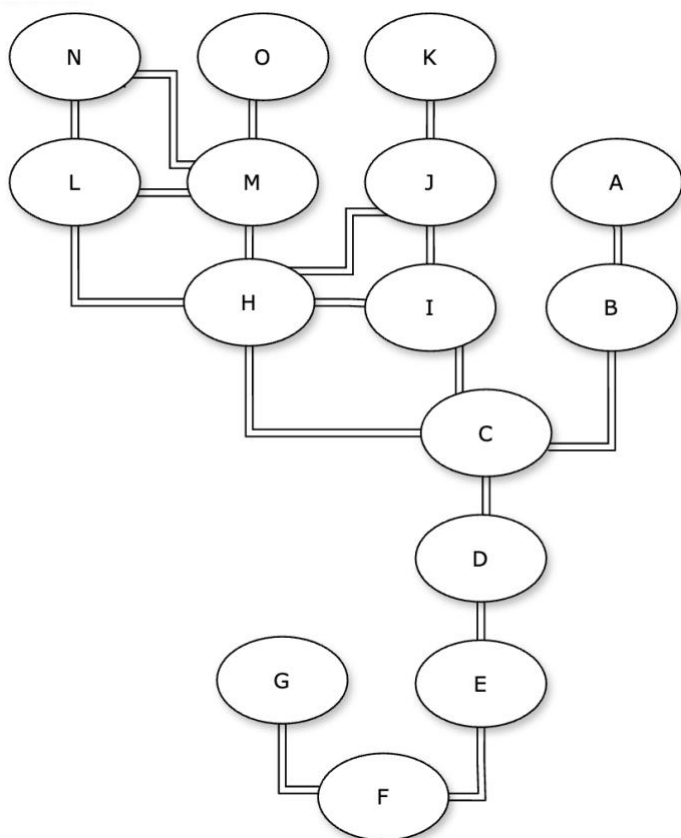


Figure 6: Justified graph with area F (the nave) as the root. Karuneva, 2025.<sup>62</sup>

While monks had more freedom of movement, the pathway for the laity was made very clear, just as in the analysis of the entrance. There is no space for deviation without permission, thus keeping sacred spaces and, most importantly, the relics protected. With their accessibility under the control of their guardians through both physical and normative barriers, there are fewer possibilities for disturbance by the overenthusiastic, the desperate, or the malicious. The message created with space seems quite clear, offering no opportunities for the laity to deviate from the intended path. On the other hand, upon entering the chancel from the southeast arcade, different routes open up for the monks. It is important to note that the main entrance for the monks was through the north tower, so the pathway through the southeast arcade was less likely to be used in plain sight. Consequently, for the laity, this space was likely perceived as a transitional area regarding the nave rather than a direct representation of the division between social groups, where the monks move in and out of areas inaccessible to others. There was, however, a visual barrier in this gatekeeping area, making the separation

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<sup>62</sup> Nodes in the justified graph are listed as follows. Root: F (nave); layer 1: G (the northern arcade) and E (the southern arcade); layer 2: D (the choir-adjacent southern arcade); layer 3: C (the southeast arcade); layer 4: H (Dunstan's memorial), I (the crypt stairs), and B (the southern *porticus*); layer 5: L (the choir), M (the northeast arcade), J (the sanctuary stairs), and A (the tower entrance); layer 6: N (the choir-adjacent northern arcade), O (the northern *porticus*), and K (the sanctuary).

evident, namely, the rood screen situated between the arcade and chancel. This will be further addressed in section 3.1. alongside visibility inside the church.

In the three miracle accounts that mention the entrance, each story is short and to the point. This might stem from Osbern's process of collecting miracles, as the later miracles, which he witnessed, were documented in greater detail than the earlier miracles he simply recorded. As the accounts rely on a witness other than himself, it seems that, possibly due to conscientiousness or hesitancy, he refrains from the vivid descriptions. He refers to the witnesses as *verissima verissimorum virorum*, the truest of the truest men, to reassure the reader of the validity of these miracles and to erase himself from the readers' mind, submitting to the role of reporter.<sup>63</sup>

The three miracle accounts provide a brief backstory of the miracle seeker or seekers before the narrative shifts and slows down to savor the miraculous events. Upon entering the church, only one account mentions the miracle seekers actually making their way to the memorial. The three impoverished women, "as they came to the entrance of the church, with joined hands, they entered together, and collapsing before the memorial of the man..."<sup>64</sup> In account two, the blind man "enters the church of Christ, [and] pleads for the liberty to stay the night at that same place to be granted to him."<sup>65</sup> In account four, the reluctant Ceowulf is persuaded to go to the renowned Dunstan to pray for healing from his paralysis. He commands "to be set down by the doors of the church, [and] to be dragged where the renowned saint rests," and "there, sustained on the shoulders of his companions, he was carried inside by a large crowd of relatives [from his father's side], with lamenting voices invoking Dunstan's name."<sup>66</sup> While the account does not explicitly mention movement toward the memorial, the invocation of Dunstan's name by Ceowulf's attendants may indicate that this procession led directly to him. It is, however, equally likely that he did not even manage to pass the choir screen.

In account three, the previous interpretation of a clear pathway for the laity leading to the nave is noticeably absent as the women make their way to the memorial without any obstructions. The only specific reference to control appears in account two, where the blind

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<sup>63</sup> Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 129.

<sup>64</sup> "Cumque ad portam ecclesiae venissent, junctis ad invicem minibus ingressae sunt, procidentisque ante memoriam viri..." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 131.

<sup>65</sup> "Ingreditor itaque caecus ecclesiam Christi, orat sibi pernoctandi ibidem licentiam dari..." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 130.

<sup>66</sup> "...seque in ea positum ad ecclesiae januas, ubi memoratus sanctus requiescit, pertrahi. Ibi clientum suorum humeris sustentatus intro illatus est, prosequente illum non parva multitudine agnatorum, flebilibus vocibus Dunstani nomen invocantium." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 132.

man requests to stay the night, meaning there was a requirement to request this. While it is not specified where he slept in the church, given that he observes *odoramentum*—a perfume or spice<sup>67</sup>—emanating from the tomb at midnight, he seems to be at least somewhat nearby.<sup>68</sup> Could this be a case of the pilgrim staying overnight in the crypt near the tomb, avoiding disturbance to the nightly services of the monks and experiencing the scent directly from the tomb? Like account two, account four does not mention where the wealthy Ceowulf was specifically taken inside the church. He may have also stayed the night in the church, having regained his health on the second day, but again, there is no explicit mention of where he may have slept.<sup>69</sup> Another account that mentions spending numerous days in the church, but does not touch upon where the miracle-seekers are at nighttime, is in account six. The *miracula* recounts the woman and her child as having already anxiously prayed in the church for several days. After begging the monks for assistance in prayers and staying steadfast in her faith, she is rewarded on the tenth day by the miraculous healing of her daughter.<sup>70</sup> Like with Ceowulf, it is unclear if they spent the nights in the church or if they retired elsewhere.

As the sanctuary was located on a raised platform of approximately 1.5 meters, it is possible that the perfume could be experienced all the way from the memorial to the nave, despite the memorial being beneath the sanctuary stairs. The visibility of the memorial within the church will be further addressed in section 3.2. The most likely place to stay the night for the laity was the nave, specifically reserved for them. However, the silence regarding where miracle-seekers spent the night may very well be purposeful, making Dunstan appear more accessible. As Bailey writes, the accessibility, or, in this case, the appearance of it, conveys two Christian truths: “that saints are easily approachable by those who make the effort, and second, that God’s mercy is available to all Christians irrespective of their social background or gender.”<sup>71</sup>

Despite these Christian truths, the church was structured hierarchically. According to Calvin Kendall, who analyzes Romanesque church portals and their inscriptions in his study *The Allegory of the Church*, this can be seen most clearly through the laity’s movement

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<sup>67</sup> LewisShort via Logeion. Entry: odoramentum.

<sup>68</sup> “Sequenti vero et media nocte coepit de tumulo viri Dei omne genus odoramentorum sentiri...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 130.

<sup>69</sup> “Secunda autem die factus in agonia...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 132.

<sup>70</sup> “Paupercula etiam cum cætera multitudine advenit ferens in ulnis triennem natam ex utero suo sine lumine natam; quæ cum per aliquot dies orationi pro salute filiæ suæ sollicita incubisset, nec exauditam se aliquatenus sentiret, deprecata est omnem clerum auxilio sibi apud Dei sanctum fore... Decima autem die dum forte materno gremio puella incumberet, subito apertis oculis clare omnia videbat...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 133–134.

<sup>71</sup> Bailey 2013b, 504

throughout the church. As they enter through the entrance, or “portal”, they encounter the barrier of the rood screen, which restricts their access to the clergy. As Kendall observes, “Dimly glimpsed ahead, the clergy’s space must have seemed more sacred, more heavenly.”<sup>72</sup> Medievalist Dawn Hayes describes in her book, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100–1389*, the different depictions of levels of sacredness within the church building, using Chartres Cathedral as an example. Frequently, the church is divided into three parts: the nave, the choir, and the sanctuary. The church building was associated with the body of Christ, as we will further examine in section 2.3, with the head and heart as the sanctuary and the choir. These were understandably considered holier and thus had an increased need for security as the “lifeblood” and “control center” of the church. The nave was considered the body of the church, which was important, but it was not the space where salvation was mediated and where Christ became present through transubstantiation.<sup>73</sup>

In the context of pilgrimages, Hayes describes the church's hierarchy as more flexible, intentionally or unintentionally. Although the saints’ bodies transferred sacredness to the place they resided in, the pilgrims' bodies and the non-liturgical use of the church that their accommodation required defied the church's intended use: worship. Some activities were considered more acceptable than others, but the presence of pilgrims produced constant negotiations of the sacredness of space, making them more accessible than official records may have depicted them. Simultaneously, they challenged the expectations of the monks regarding liturgical space, with the outside “mundane” world creeping into the vision of the church as a reflection of heaven. Groans and wails of distressed pilgrims may have more often conjured up visions of hell than created an accommodating atmosphere for spiritual contemplation and prayer.<sup>74</sup>

The somewhat conflicting interpretations of material and textual sources concerning accessibility highlight that neither text nor the configuration of space should be taken at face value. Despite the nave being the designated area for the laity, sacred spaces were likely more often than not under constant negotiation. Maintaining the balance of showing appropriate reverence to these sacred areas and answering the cries of ailing miracle-seekers, perhaps never yielded results that would have been entirely satisfactory to both monks and the laity. However, the *miracula* relays a message that miracle-seekers had a place in the fabric of the

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<sup>72</sup> Kendall 1998, 109.

<sup>73</sup> Hayes 2003, 7, 18 & 54.

<sup>74</sup> Hayes 2003, 54–55 & 68–69.

church community and an important role to play. Regardless of whether accessibility to the memorial was commonplace or a literary *topos*, Osbern communicates in the text that Dunstan does not discriminate against those who may not “belong” in the most sacred areas of the church and does not punish those who enter them to approach him.

### **2.3 Perceiving the body of the church in space and text**

After considering the accessibility of the Cathedral’s entrance, the ways it was perceived in space and text ought to also be analysed. Although movement is depicted to some extent in the *miracula*, sight is less emphasized. There are accounts of individuals regaining their sight and witnessing marvellous things. However, the focus is on how the miracle-seekers and onlookers might have experienced space and the miracles that occur in it. Similar to the chapter on accessibility, the entrance and other parts of the body of the church central to the *miracula* will be analysed from this new perspective.

With the help of Visibility Graph Analysis (VGA), we will first examine the intervisibility of the church's areas. Afterward, by using isovist graphs, we will explore the visibility from the entrance and further dive into the meanings that entering the church may evoke. However, it is essential to note that our analysis of visibility will have limitations. Features like fittings and furniture will not be included, as there are no records of them. We also lack sufficient knowledge about the appearance of the altars and memorials, but what we do know will be taken into account. As previously mentioned, visual accessibility will primarily rely on the church's floor plan. Despite its shortcomings, gaining insight into which areas of the church could have been seen and by whom can deepen our understanding of how the areas where miracles have happened were interpreted and how they have been reproduced in text. As we explore the meanings given to each area of the church through narrative analysis, we can better understand what Osbern aimed to convey in his *miracula* and how it highlights the production of St. Dunstan’s saintliness.

VGA, or Visibility Graph Analysis, is a grid-based method that illustrates the intervisibility of a larger space by meshing together “all isovist fields from all location points”. Isovists represent the field of view from a specific point in space. By overlaying a grid on the floor plan, where each grid cell is roughly equivalent to the area occupied by a single person, and calculating the relationships between the grid cells, we can combine all isovists from various directions. This analysis can be employed to assess the challenges of navigation and identify

visually accessible areas that attract people and serve as potential social spaces.<sup>75</sup> Within a church context, VGA and isovists offer models for understanding how visible different areas of the church were, and to what extent the laity's gaze was intrusive regarding more sacred areas. How visible were the sites of miracles, and what meanings might be derived from their locations? However, visiting a church, praying for intercession, and witnessing a miracle are all actions that involve movement and time, so it is important to remember that VGA and isovists only consider the church from a stationary perspective and do not capture the full experience.

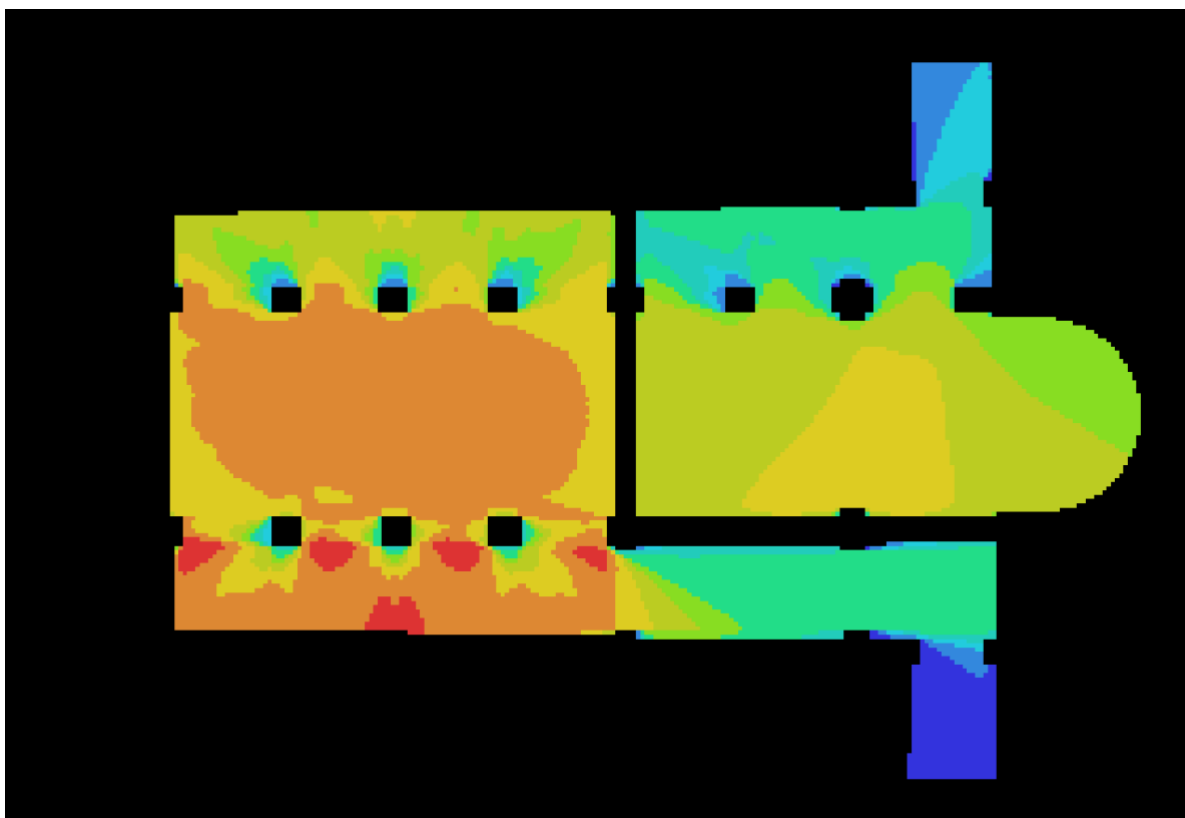


Figure 7: VGA with the choir screen based on the floor plan of the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral. Karuneva, 2025.

In the VGA (Figure 7), the intervisibility of the church is illustrated using different colours: black areas represent visual barriers (the columns and the choir screen), red areas denote the most integrated spaces, and dark blue indicates the least integrated areas. It may seem intuitive that the most accessible areas, such as the entrance and the pathway to the nave, would also be the most visually accessible. However, as shown in the graph, this is not the case. The VGA reveals that the laity's entrance is visually the most segregated area, while the

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<sup>75</sup> Van Nes & Yamu 2021, 94–95.

southern arcade and the nave are the most integrated spaces. The pathway and entrance serve as thoroughfares, which explains why they may not be as integrated as other areas. They are not designed to draw people in or capture attention. In contrast, the nave is intended for the laity to gather and participate in mass, benefiting from the audience being able to see as much of the church as possible.

Surprisingly, the most integrated areas, marked in red, are located in the southern arcade. This area offers visibility to both the nave and the pathway leading from the entrance, yet it is never mentioned in the *miracula*. It generally seems lacking in significance. It appears likely that this area holds no specific meaning, and its visual integration is simply a consequence of architectural design. However, the southern arcade, like many visually integrated areas, may have functioned as a vantage point for observing the surroundings. Given its location, it is also a space through which all laypeople pass to access the nave. As the uninviting choir screen directed people toward the nave, the openness created by the southern arcade seemingly allowed for greater freedom of movement. As shown in the graph, the choir screen significantly impacts intervisibility, creating a barrier between the choir and the nave. If a VGA were created of Canterbury Cathedral without the screen, the entire area between the aisles would be coloured red, indicating a high level of visual integration throughout the nave, choir, and sanctuary. However, we cannot know what the choir screen was like at the time, as it has not survived. Therefore, we must consider the possibility that it was a larger barrier that obstructed visibility to at least some degree.

Almevik had similar experiences when considering the screen in his analysis of the medieval church of Endre in Gotland. Since there is no documentation of these screens in rural Gotland, he, too, had to decide whether to include the screen in the visual analysis. While fragments of tall rood, or choir screens, exist in mainland Sweden, Almevik chose not to define Endre's screen as a barrier like a wall. He argues that because of its transparency and the raised chancel, or choir, the screen's purpose was not to obstruct visibility. In fact, visibility may have been enhanced by the effects of light and the latticework, amplifying the transformative spirit of the boundary between the chancel and the nave.<sup>76</sup> I chose to take a different approach and include the screen as a boundary comparable to a wall. Although the Canterbury Cathedral screen was likely not a complete physical barrier that prevented people from seeing

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<sup>76</sup> Almevik 2017, 365 & 371.

through it, it still acted as a clear visual obstruction, particularly at a social level, influencing the laity's perception of what occurred beyond it.

According to medievalist Carolyn Marino Malone, the choir screen in the post-Conquest Canterbury Cathedral acted as a focal point during Mass in the 12th century. This decorated screen was an important feature of the church, serving as a station before entering the choir as part of the holy processions.<sup>77</sup> However, the Anglo-Saxon screen is not mentioned once in the *miracula*, with the miracle-seekers seemingly walking into the choir area with ease and large crowds celebrating the miraculous healings taking place beyond the screen. This could imply a semi-transparent screen that one could theoretically pass through effortlessly. Nevertheless, the silence in the *miracula* regarding the screen or physical barriers reinforces the idea that Osbern's objective was to shape an image of Dunstan as a saint who worked beyond these social barriers and aided those outside of the monastic community. Additionally, rejoicing in a miraculous healing, whether it happened beyond the screen or in the nave, was an experience to be shared throughout the entire Christian community. It was not to be restricted to only the place where the divine touched the earthly realm.

As we move on from the intervisibility of space and dive deeper into the act of perceiving the church, the prominent spaces analysed in Chapter 2.1 must be reviewed from this new perspective. While VGA highlights the most visually integrated areas, isovists further illustrate the visual relationship of one point to other areas. Like the VGA, the isovists in this thesis operate solely on a 2D level and do not take into account raised platforms, stairs, or crypts. It is, however, essential to remember that the sanctuary was situated on a raised platform of approximately 1.5 meters, with stairs leading to it.<sup>78</sup> This structure would have enhanced the visibility of the sanctuary area.

In the justified graph analysis, the accessibility of the area around the entrance varied. On the one hand, it was accessible because it was the most frequented area, attracting all visiting laypeople passing through it. On the other hand, the nearby "gatekeeping area," the southeast arcade, likely restricted access to large parts of the church, particularly those areas reserved for the monks. The isovist map in Figure 8 illustrates that visual accessibility is comparatively less restricted, although movement possibilities were limited. The lighter grey beams depict

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<sup>77</sup> Malone 2019, 105.

<sup>78</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 105.

the unobstructed view from the entrance, which floods the entire southern aisle. The darker grey beams illustrate the obstructed view that is created by the choir screen.

From the entrance to the church proper, there was unrestricted visual access to the same areas identified in the justified graph (Figure 5): the southeast arcade (C), the choir-adjacent southern arcade (D), and the southern arcade (E). Furthermore, visual accessibility to the memorial, the choir, the northeast arcade, the choir-adjacent northern arcade, and even small portions of the nave and the northern arcade was likely limited. This assumption is based on the idea that the choir screen was, to some degree, transparent. Spaces that would be off-limits for laypeople, such as the choir, the northeast arcade, and the choir-adjacent northern arcade, suddenly garnered a number of curious eyes as people entered the church. Areas considered transitional pathways for monks (namely, the northeast arcade) now attracted a certain level of spectatorship from the outside.

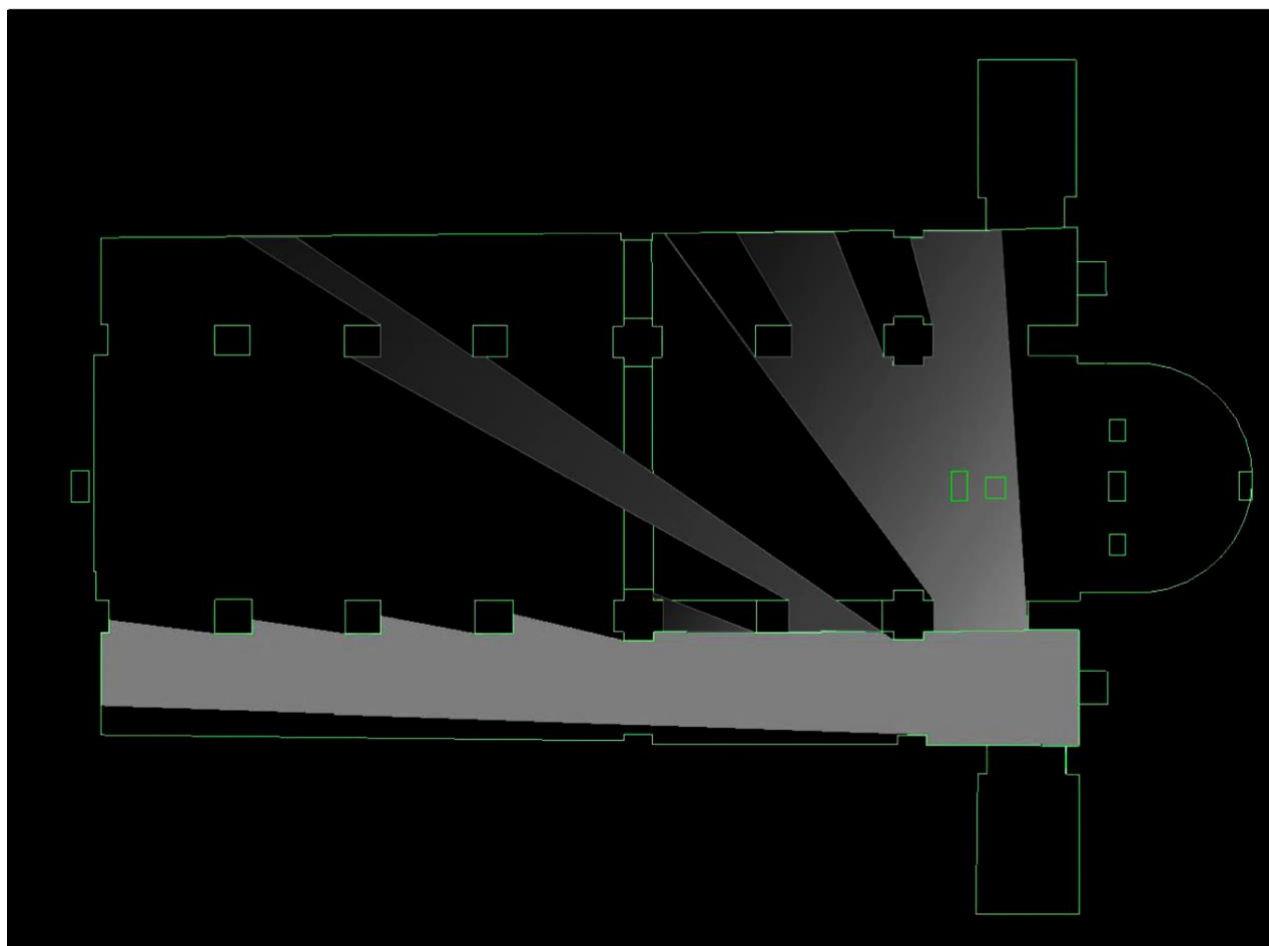


Figure 8: 180-degree isovist from the entrance. Karuneva, 2025.

The visibility from the entrance to the sanctuary is non-existent. This appears to be a deliberate architectural choice, as the line of sight halts right where the stairs begin and the

apse starts to develop. This aligns with the intention of ensuring the sanctuary remains peaceful, sacred, and protected. Given the sanctuary's proximity to the entrance, it was crucial that movement in and out of the church would not disrupt the daily office too much. This lack of visibility is reflected in account twelve, in which the old woman and her daughter catch Osbern and another boy by surprise: "By chance, I, along with another little boy of the same age, had attended to the altar of Christ, and the service having been completed, I began to descend the stairs...But we, just like boys of that age, having been frightened by the acts of the women, stood still..."<sup>79</sup> The shock of the ambush itself indicates that Osbern did not see the woman and her daughter approaching from far off. Perhaps they had waited behind the choir screen or by the entrance for the opportune moment. Nevertheless, the privacy and peace of the sanctuary were, for a moment, disturbed. The matutinal altar, on the other hand, was visible from the entrance, and so was Dunstan's memorial, which, according to the *miracula*, seemed to be one of the main motivations for a visit. An impressive memorial seen immediately upon opening the door functioned like a beacon or a lighthouse for a pilgrim in search of a miracle cure.

Medievalist Laura Varnam, who specializes in linguistics and literature, analyses the tenth-century *Ordo ad benedicendam ecclesiam* (*Order for Blessing a Church*), which offers insights into the significance of church space and its entrance in the context of the consecration of a church. She describes the start of the ceremony, which involves the inscription of consecration crosses, as setting "the church apart as a sacred space", depicting it as "the image of Jerusalem", and using "framing and performance to place the church at the centre of the new community." Following this, the church is purified of all things profane and evil to prepare for the sacred space. Between these two stages is a transitional phase, which occurs at the entrance that Varnam discusses:

The purification of the building begins with the expulsion of demons through the door. When the bishop knocks on the door and is admitted by the deacon he requests that "there be at the entrance of our humility a rout of demons"...The bishop's triumphant entry through the church door and his powerful subjugation of demons also re-enacts Christ breaking down the gates of hell at the harrowing. The imagery is striking because for a moment the church becomes hell, the epitome of profane space. But as soon as the bishop expels the demons and passes through the church doors, this profane symbolism is conquered and subjugated.

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<sup>79</sup> "Forte ego cum alio puerulo coetaneo meo ad altare Christi ministraveram, consummatoque ministerio per gradus descendere incipiebam... Nos autem, ut id aetatis pueri, foeminae expavescentes, hæsimus loco..." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 138.

The entry into the church has both sacred and profane significance; it represents the harrowing of hell and the entry into Jerusalem simultaneously...<sup>80</sup>

The description clarifies that in the ritual, the bishop symbolizes Christ as he enters the church. The church transforms from a space of profanity to one of sacrality and, symbolically, from hell—representing eternal separation from God—to the new Jerusalem, signifying eternal coexistence with God. As worshippers enter the church, they reenact the bishop's expulsion of demons and cleanse themselves, aspiring to become worthy of entering Jerusalem—or at least that is the expectation. Furthermore, entering the cleansed church is as if one is taken by the hand and pulled out of hell alongside the saints of the Old Testament. The bishop's request conveys a message for all, and the triumphant entry ought to be reflected in the hearts of those who enter the church.

Account 3 may allude to the view from the entrance to the memorial, as the three women arrive at the entrance, enter the church, and ultimately collapse before the memorial. While the view is not explicitly mentioned, narratively, the movement from one location to another is intentional, clear, and almost ritualistic. This creates the impression that upon entering the church, their final destination was immediately visible, welcoming them upon arrival. The sight of the memorial from the entrance serves as a reminder of the grace awaiting the women, just as they express to one another at the beginning of the account: “[He] who has been accustomed to drive out our poverty will deem worthy to rid us of the blindness of our bodies; he will have compassion for those about to die of hunger so that, with the light having been restored, he may show grace to the poor, henceforth determined to live by the works of their hands.”<sup>81</sup> Their healing journey had already commenced at the beginning of their account through their declarations of faith in Dunstan, but the tangible process begins as they enter with humility. As the women enter with noble intentions, their blindness, whether narratively symbolic or physical and the result of living in a fallen world, begins to be mended. Just as the church undergoes a sort of baptism through its consecration and as humanity's original sin is cleansed through baptism, the women are similarly purified from their impairments through their entry into the church and their faith in Dunstan's and Christ's mercy.

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<sup>80</sup> Varnam 2018, 47-48.

<sup>81</sup> “Qui nostram suevit depellere paupertatem, dignabitur corporis nostri profligare caecitatem; compatiatur fame morituris, ut reddita luce gratiam præstet pauperibus, operibus manuum suarum deinceps victuris.” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 131.

The experience of entering in the *miracula* is filled with meanings that are not explicitly written down but were nonetheless collectively understood by monks like Osbern. According to Kendall, church and monastic spaces were interpreted in a manner similar to the Bible, employing exegetical methods.<sup>82</sup> Exegesis is the practice of interpreting the Bible through spiritual senses in addition to its historical sense. St. Jerome, a Patristic exegete, viewed the text itself as the “word made flesh”, but by accessing the deeper meaning, one could “gain access to the spirit”.<sup>83</sup> The two most recognized methods of the exegetical tradition are the ‘threefold’ and the ‘fourfold’ methods. The Venerable Bede, one of the most influential early medieval English monks and scholars, had his works on exegesis widely circulated. He championed the fourfold method, which included four levels of interpretation: the literal, the typological (which pointed to Christ or the Church), the tropological (or moral), and the anagogical (which pointed toward heaven). Kendall notes that one of the examples Bede uses to explain the use of all four levels is the allegory of *templum Domini* or “the temple of the Lord”.<sup>84</sup>

...the temple of the Lord in the literal sense is the house which Solomon built; allegorically [=typologically], it is the Lord’s body, of which Christ said: ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up’ [John 2:19], or his Church, to whom the apostle Paul said: ‘For the temple of the Lord is holy, which you are’ [I Cor. 3:17]; tropologically, it is each of the faithful, to whom the Apostle said: ‘Know you not, that your Bodies are the temple of the holy Spirit, who is in you?’ [I Cor. 3:16, 6:15, 19]; anagogically, it is the joys of the heavenly mansion, for which the Psalmist sighed, when he said: ‘Blessed are they that dwell in your house, O Lord; they shall praise you for ever and ever’ [Ps. 83:5].<sup>85</sup>

The temple of the Lord, in its literal sense, refers to the temple built by Solomon but is generally understood to represent all churches in a material sense. In a spiritual sense, it signifies the body of Christ, the Church, the faithful individuals, and the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, entering the church is a profoundly public and declarative act, and the message it conveys is closely tied to the person entering it.

In its typological interpretation, the church's cruciform building symbolizes Christ, evident in the anthropomorphization of architecture during the Middle Ages. According to Kendall, in the Vita of Saint Raymond Gayrard, who died in 1118, the apse and transepts of Saint-Sernin

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<sup>82</sup> Kendall 1998, 3 & 7.

<sup>83</sup> Penn 2015, 145.

<sup>84</sup> Kendall 1998, 10-12.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

of Toulouse are referred to as *capitis membrum*, or “portion of the head”. Similarly, the nave is known as the *corpus*, or body.<sup>87</sup> If the tradition of naming architectural features of the church according to the body of Christ were practiced, the entrance would signify entry into the body of unity, thereby aiding in spiritual transformation<sup>88</sup>. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:12, 18-22:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”, nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable...

Just as each member of the body of Christ serves a specific function and is essential, each area of the church building where these members gather has its own unique purpose. The apse cannot suggest to the nave that it is unnecessary, and the more celebrated areas cannot dismiss the less prominent yet frequently used spaces as unneeded. The message of interdependence and a call to honour the humble, meek, and prayerful reflects the church’s role as a cohesive unit, where the faithful support one another in turn while ultimately adhering to their designated purpose.

The entrance, in its anagogical sense, can be summarized by Jesus’ words: “I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”<sup>89</sup> This powerful reference to the entrance of heaven underscores the importance of “Christological typology” concerning the main entrance of the church space. Kendall writes that the entrance, as a portal, is the heart of experiencing transcendence for the faithful. It represents a state of transformation and elevation that, however, is “conditional, unstable, reversible.” The church is understood both at its exalted allegorical level but retains its material and manufactured essence. According to Kendall, this material dimension, however, seeks to guide the faithful toward the allegorical through its form and decoration, making heaven feel immediate. Yet, in its imperfection, heaven is “constantly delayed.”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

<sup>88</sup> Kendall 1998, 16.

<sup>89</sup> John 10:9, New Revised Standard Version.

<sup>90</sup> Kendall 1998, 51, 99 & 109.

The act of entering and making one's way through the church is depicted as a "miniature" pilgrimage or a journey from the profane, where those with impairments rely on their own perseverance or the help of friends. By making their way to Dunstan's presence, be it by the memorial or somewhere a little further off, the miracle-seekers are simultaneously introduced to Christ's presence. In this event, the intercession, which they would hope for, becomes actualized. The pilgrim physically approaches the saint, and Christ answers with healing through the saint, highlighting that Dunstan is in the heavenly realm and able to intercede directly with Christ. The journey ends with joyous praise directed to God, which is evident in every single account. The production of Dunstan's saintliness and connection with Christ can be seen especially in account four, in which Ceowulf cries out: "The blessed Son of the living God in His good servant Dunstan, and His blessed good servant Dunstan in Him. Truly holy, truly almighty Christ, who has such mighty servants and endowed with such piety."<sup>91</sup> This reflects Jesus's promise to his disciples in John 14: "On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> "Benedictus Filius Dei viventis in bono servo Suo Dunstano, et benedictus bonus servus Ejus Dunstanus in Illo. Vere pius, vere omnipotens Christus, Qui servos tam potentes, tantaque pietate praeditos habet." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 132.

<sup>92</sup> John 14:20–21.

### 3 The memorial and the heart of the church

#### 3.1 Accessing the memorial and tomb of St. Dunstan

The area of Dunstan's memorial is central in both the text and the results of the spatial analysis. This is no surprise since his significance within the church's Benedictine community was substantial. According to Osbern, Dunstan chose his burial place two days before his death, with the sorrowful yet beloved memorial visible to both the choir and the steps to the main altar.<sup>93</sup> The intentionality of the crypt and memorial placements points to the devotion and high regard for Dunstan's wishes and authority, particularly in the years following his death. This would suggest Dunstan's spiritual patronage and ongoing close connection of sorts with the monks of Christ Church, especially considering that a hundred years later, devotion to Dunstan continued to be well-established among them. As Koopmans points out, Dunstan's popularity as an Anglo-Saxon saint was due to his frequent miracles, which then circulated and were written down, proving that he was alive and actively participating. In contrast, the more "quiet" minor saints, who were not as "active", were slowly forgotten.<sup>94</sup>

For this section of spatial analysis, I will focus on Dunstan's memorial, as well as the stairs to the crypt. Accounts specifically mention Dunstan's *memoria*, which can be understood as a monument to the saint rather than his tomb. However, it is essential to remember that the question of where the sick laity congregated is challenging, with no clear answers. Although Dunstan's memorial is technically close to his tomb in the crypt, the experience of being in the ring crypt would have been vastly different from that of the memorial. The monument was adjacent to the matutinal altar, which naturally raises questions about disturbances. Would the crypt not, in this case, have served as a more suitable place for the sick laity and their companions to gather in lamentation for even days at a time? The term "monument"<sup>95</sup> or *memoria*, is deliberate and appears in accounts three, four, five, seven, and eight. In contrast, the terms *tumulus* and *tumba* are only mentioned once: *tumulus* in account two and *tumba* in account five. However, *tumba* is used in conjunction with *memoria* in account five. "Then the sick man, having been lowered from the shoulders of the supporters so that he could be

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<sup>93</sup> "Et ibi in eo loco quem ante biduum ipse dictaverat cum omni diligentia sepultus [...] flebilem simul et amabilem cunctis, sive in choro psallentibus seu per gradus ad altare ascendentibus, sui memoriam dereliquit." Osbern, *Vita S. Dunstani*, s. 126–127.

<sup>94</sup> Koopmans 2012, 104–105.

<sup>95</sup> *LewisShort* via Logeion. Entry: memoria.

applied nearer to the memory of the saint, stood firm upon his feet as soon as he touched the tomb...”<sup>96</sup>

As Osbern uses the Latin terms *tumba* and *tumulus*, meaning “tomb” or “sepulchre”,<sup>97</sup> interchangeably with *memoria*, it poses a challenge to understanding the other accounts that describe Dunstan’s *memoria*. There are, however, some signs pointing toward the more likely option for the backdrop of this miracle. The miracle-seeking man in account five is described as touching the tomb, which may not have been possible if he were in the crypt. According to Eadmer, the tomb at the end of the central passage was made inaccessible by a wall. It was likely visible through a squint or a hagioscope, but touching it would have been impossible unless special permission was granted.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, Dunstan’s resting place lay beneath the monument, making it plausible that the memorial could have been interpreted as the “roof” of the tomb, which explains the use of both “memorial” and “tomb”. It is possible that in this instance, Osbern did not mention permission to access the tomb in the crypt, but the general location of the congregating pilgrims still remains a challenge. Therefore, I will also reference the crypt in the analysis of the memorial and contemplate the alternative it provides.

Based on the justified graph analysis in Figure 9, Dunstan’s memorial (H) is more integrated and, at first glance, relatively accessible, particularly when compared to the main entrance. The memorial is situated in a central location, allowing access to most areas of importance, such as the choir (L), the sanctuary (K), and the major transitional areas: the northeast arcade (M) and the southeast arcade (C). The northeast arcade functioned as a transitional space between the monks’ quarters and the church’s most sacred areas. As previously mentioned, the southeast arcade served as a gatekeeping space between the laity’s and the monks’ sections. There are fewer nodal layers in relation to the root compared to the analysis of the entrance, and those layers comprise more nodes, making the root, or the memorial, more integrated. Its centrality likely influenced daily movement and activities, and the physical memorial certainly took up space, at least visually.

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<sup>96</sup> “Tunc demissus ex humeris bajulantium se aegrotus, ut ad memoriam sancti vicinius applicari deberet, mox ut tumbam tetigit, in pedibus suis constitit...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 133.

<sup>97</sup> *LewisShort* via Logeion. Entries: *tumba* & *tumulus*.

<sup>98</sup> Blockley et al. 1997, 109.

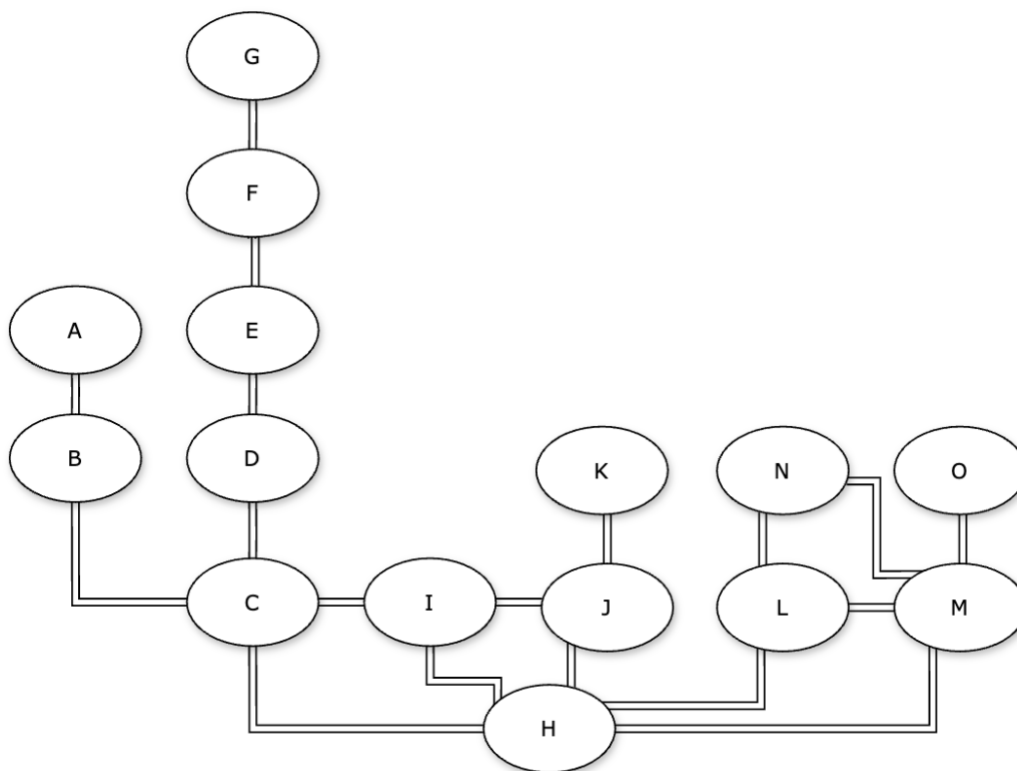


Figure 9: Justified graph with area H (Dunstan's memorial) as the root. Karuneva, 2025.<sup>99</sup>

Seven miracle accounts mention the miracle-seekers being near the memorial or the tomb. In addition, there are three mentions of offering or presenting the miracle-seeker to Dunstan, with the other also mentioning the memorial. In account nine, Elward was “offered to Father Dunstan”<sup>100</sup>, and in account five, the young man was “offered” to the saint, “elevated above their heads.”<sup>101</sup> According to the Lewis and Short dictionary, the use of *elevo*, to elevate, is rarely used literally and is more often, in late Latin, used to describe the lifting or raising of the voice.<sup>102</sup> The term *offero* is used in both accounts, meaning “to present” or “to offer”. However, in ecclesiastical Latin, it also means “to offer to God”, “sacrifice”, or “to consecrate”.<sup>103</sup> The term *oblatus*, also derived from *offero*, additionally means “oblatus”, a child offered to a monastic community, who would live out the vows made by their parents

<sup>99</sup> Nodes in the justified graph are listed as follows. Root: H (Dunstan's memorial); layer 1: C (the southeast arcade), I (the crypt stairs), J (the sanctuary stairs), L (the choir), and M (the northeast arcade); layer 2: B (the southern *porticus*), D (the choir-adjacent southern arcade), K (the sanctuary), N (the choir-adjacent northern arcade), and O (the northern *porticus*); layer 3: A (the tower entrance) and E (the southern arcade); layer 4: F (the nave); layer 5: G (the northern arcade).

<sup>100</sup> “...postea vero caro patri Dunstano oblatus...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 135.

<sup>101</sup> “Quem super capita illorum Celsius elevatum hiis precibus fletu permixtis sancto obtulerunt...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 133.

<sup>102</sup> LewisShort via Logeion. Entry: *elevo*.

<sup>103</sup> LewisShort via Logeion. Entry: *offero*.

for them.<sup>104</sup> However, the man in account nine is reported to have suffered from his impairment for 30 years, and the miracle-seeker in account five is referred to as *iuvenis* or “young adult”, making him an unlikely oblation candidate. Offering or giving someone to a saint likely signifies giving that person, impairments and all, into the possession of the divine and leaving their healing in their hands. This also could be a reference to biblical passages concerning offering oneself or one’s body to God, for instance: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual (reasonable) worship.”<sup>105</sup>

Historian Irina Metzler describes medieval attitudes towards impairment as ambiguous. Although the transition from the Old Testament view of impairment as a punishment and a prompt to submit to the divine to the New Testament emphasis on healing was important, Christ does not dismiss the possibility of a link between impairment and sin. In the miracle of Jesus healing the paralyzed man, mentioned in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke,<sup>106</sup> the man is healed only after Jesus says to him: “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven”,<sup>107</sup> implying a need to remove the sin before the impairment. Christ’s view that, at times, impairment came in conjunction with sin and, other times, it did not, was reflected through the complexity and changing attitudes towards disability throughout the Middle Ages.<sup>108</sup>

According to historian Edward Wheatley, in medieval literature and religious thought, the impairment of a miracle-seeker functioned as a stage for the saint, through whom God offered help, provided the miracle-seeker’s faith was not found lacking. Wheatley writes of the “discursive power of religion” in viewing disability, where it was often understood as “a pathological site of absence of the divine”, where God’s works could “be made manifest.” As a cure could possibly be granted through deliverance from sin and faith from the miracle-seeker or miracle-provider, a personal responsibility regarding one’s state of being impaired or healed is hinted at.<sup>109</sup> However, the experience of suffering from an impairment or disability with humility can be interpreted as a possibility given by God to display faithfulness and perseverance. This is especially evident in the interpretation of Job from the Old Testament. In the New Testament, the book of James mentions Job as an example for

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<sup>104</sup> Jong 1996, 1.

<sup>105</sup> Romans 12:1.

<sup>106</sup> Matt. 9: 1–8, Mark 2: 1–12, and Luke 5: 17–26.

<sup>107</sup> Matt. 9:2.

<sup>108</sup> Metzler 2006, 39–42.

<sup>109</sup> Wheatley 2010, 11

Christians<sup>110</sup>: “As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”<sup>111</sup>

From this Christian perspective on impairment, experiencing suffering with humility, presenting that suffering faithfully to Dunstan, and submitting to divine authority can be viewed as virtuous. Consequently, boundaries to the memorial may have been alleviated for these individuals, partially to accommodate their needs but also in the hopes of a miracle happening. This accommodation seems likely, as during the transition to the eleventh century, there was an increase in the presence of “outsiders” in miracle accounts. In contrast, earlier miracles focused more on the members of the saint’s community. The rise in pilgrims in accounts reflected a broader effort to welcome more visitors to churches, even though some communities remained more closed off than others.<sup>112</sup> However, disruptions to the monks’ daily routines were inevitable. Hospitality was an essential part of Benedictine observance, but guests could also interfere with other aspects of monastic life. Kerr writes that the guesthouse maintained by the monks was oftentimes located away from the monastery to keep the peace, and guests had to gain authorization to meet the monks, although the reality did seem quite different.<sup>113</sup>

Disruptions from visitors were common, especially during Feast days and other similar occasions, which attracted large crowds. Kerr uses St. Denis in Paris as an example of the church not being able to sustain the number of visitors. She writes that “the narrowness of the church forced the women to run to the altar on top of men’s heads, posing a danger to the monks celebrating the Eucharist.”<sup>114</sup> Similarly, historian Diana Webb writes that there were instances of people being crushed to death in large crowds, although this was rare. In St Martial monastery at Limoges, the vigil of the titular saint’s feast day attracted so many people that “more than fifty men and women were trampled to death.” These instances prompted the trend of rebuilding larger churches in the 12<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate visitors.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Steinhauser 2016, 66.

<sup>111</sup> James 5: 10–11.

<sup>112</sup> Bailey 2021, 222.

<sup>113</sup> Kerr 2009, 91.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. 91–92.

<sup>115</sup> Webb 2002, 31.

There are instances where hagiographers portray miracle-seekers in other less-than-flattering ways, highlighting the variety of disturbances they brought with them. According to Bailey, pilgrims often created mess and destruction. She describes how St. William visits the hagiographer Thomas of Monmouth in a vision, lamenting his tomb “being soiled by muddy feet and ‘by the foul spittle of many’”. The same author also recounts a woman, ill from poisoning, whose significant vomiting at the shrine drove away the other pilgrims.<sup>116</sup> However, in Osbern’s account, there are no such graphic disturbances, and the miracle-seekers are depicted in a better light, without mention of dirtying the memorial. One of the only depictions of bodily substances is in account eleven, where a virgin gained her sight near the resting place of Dunstan.

...when the virgin of God, enduring a furious itching on her face, began to rub her eyes with the strongest pressure of her fingers. Thenceforth, at once, departing blood flowed down abundantly onto the veil applied on her head and modestly signifying to the surrounding [people], she said: “Provide me a vessel that can receive blood, lest the holy ground be defiled by this filth.”<sup>117</sup>

The virgin makes it clear that the blood flowing from her eyes is impure, as it desecrates the “holy ground” or the floor of the church. Perhaps as an example for others and to demonstrate her virtue, she “modestly” or “discreetly” asks for a vessel, both to avoid disturbing the monks’ vigil and to keep the church clean. Although she is a woman in a male monastery, her status as a virgin, along with her understanding of what is appropriate, helps her gain access to the shrine. The only other account describing the emission of something is account eight, where Clement the Teuton is freed from demonic possession: “...then by chance, at the nocturnal vigils, the responsory “Videte miraculum” (“Behold the miracle”) began, he leapt on high, and he vomited the demon along with blood.”<sup>118</sup> The act of vomiting blood, along with the demon, seems to ultimately be a “necessary evil”, but serves as an essential sign of the dispelling of the diabolical.

Clement’s presentation before the memory of Dunstan is calculated. In the inventory related to the Winchester Troper, dated to the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century, the responsory: “Videte miraculum mater domini”, “Behold the miracle of the mother of the Lord”, is connected to the feast of

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<sup>116</sup> Bailey 2021, 210–211.

<sup>117</sup> “...cum virgo Dei vehementem in facie sustinens prurimum, arcissima (artissima) digitorum impressio coepit oculos perfricare. Inde statim sanguis ubertim exiens, in suppositum capitis sui velamen defluxit, modesteque illa circumstantibus innuens, “Praebete” inquit, “mihi vas, sanguinis susceptorium, ne terra sancta, ejus colluvione maculetur.” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 137.

<sup>118</sup> “...cum forte ad nocturnas vigilias responsorium “Videte miraculum” inciperetur, saltum in sublime dedit, daemonium cum sanguine evomuit...”, Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 135.

the “Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary”.<sup>119</sup> The purification of the BVM, also known as Candlemas, included the presentation of Christ in the Temple of Jerusalem, which happened 40 days after his birth.<sup>120</sup> This feast day is closely associated with Dunstan, as his first miracle occurred during it. During Candlemas, his father and pregnant mother attended mass with a large crowd. According to the *vita*, it was tradition to take part in it with lighted lamps, but as the service approached its culmination and the passage concerning the child Jesus being brought to the temple was recited, all lights were extinguished, creating a fearful atmosphere. However, a light from heaven illuminated the candle that Dunstan’s mother was holding, signifying the grace of God.<sup>121</sup> Presenting the possessed Clement before Dunstan during a feast day dedicated to purification and presentation seems very befitting. As a day associated with miraculous deeds from Dunstan, the exorcism on this day further signified that Dunstan was capable and willing to advocate on behalf of the sick in the earthly realm.

There are no miracle-seekers with diseases or conditions described as emitting anything besides these two. Out of the 11 accounts, five are of people born blind; three depict paralysis, two physical disfigurements, and Clement’s account describes demonic possession. Osbern clearly makes a conscious decision with his choice of conditions, as they all appear to have a biblical model. There are multiple cases of Jesus healing people from these conditions in the Bible, and with Dunstan imitating these healing miracles in the *miracula*, Osbern communicates Dunstan’s unity with Christ in heaven.

Although Dunstan’s memorial is naturally accessible to the monks, what other negotiations were necessary regarding the laity’s access? Since the memorial is situated next to the matutinal altar, the question that arises concerns the proximity of the laity to the altar. This issue becomes exceedingly crucial as all mentions of miracles occurring during evening or nighttime services describe the miracle-seekers as being close to Dunstan’s memorial. However, it is not clear where these services were held, except in account 12, where young Osbern descends the stairs of the sanctuary, where the altar of Christ was, after the vesper service.<sup>122</sup> The problematization of the matutinal altar certainly adds weight to speculations about people gathering in the crypt rather than at the memorial. However, there is no

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<sup>119</sup> Susan Rankin, Troper Inventory, *DIAMM*, 2017, electronic source.

<sup>120</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2022. Entry: Candlemas.

<sup>121</sup> Osbern, *Vita S. Dunstani*, 72–73.

<sup>122</sup> “...et inclinata iam die vespertinas orationes clerus in ecclesia agebat. Forte ego cum alio puerulo coetaneo meo ad altare Christi ministraveram, consummatoque ministerio per gradus descendere incipiebam...” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 138.

information on the accessibility of the crypt, and the fact that it is not mentioned in the *miracula* supports the interpretation that it was off-limits to the laity.

Bailey examines the pilgrims' access to relics and shrines in England during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. She points out that while larger churches, which were altered in the late eleventh century with "pilgrim-friendly" extensions, had the capacity to accommodate large numbers of disorganized pilgrims, most smaller Romanesque churches did not.<sup>123</sup> This appears to hold true for the 4B church of Canterbury Cathedral and possibly the 4C church as well, since there were no signs of ambulatories, which were passages leading to shrines that kept pilgrims out of the monks' way. It is possible that there was a pathway for pilgrims from the southeast arcade to the stairs of the crypt, but it should be noted that, without material evidence, it is just as likely that one had to pass partially through the chancel to reach the underground tomb.

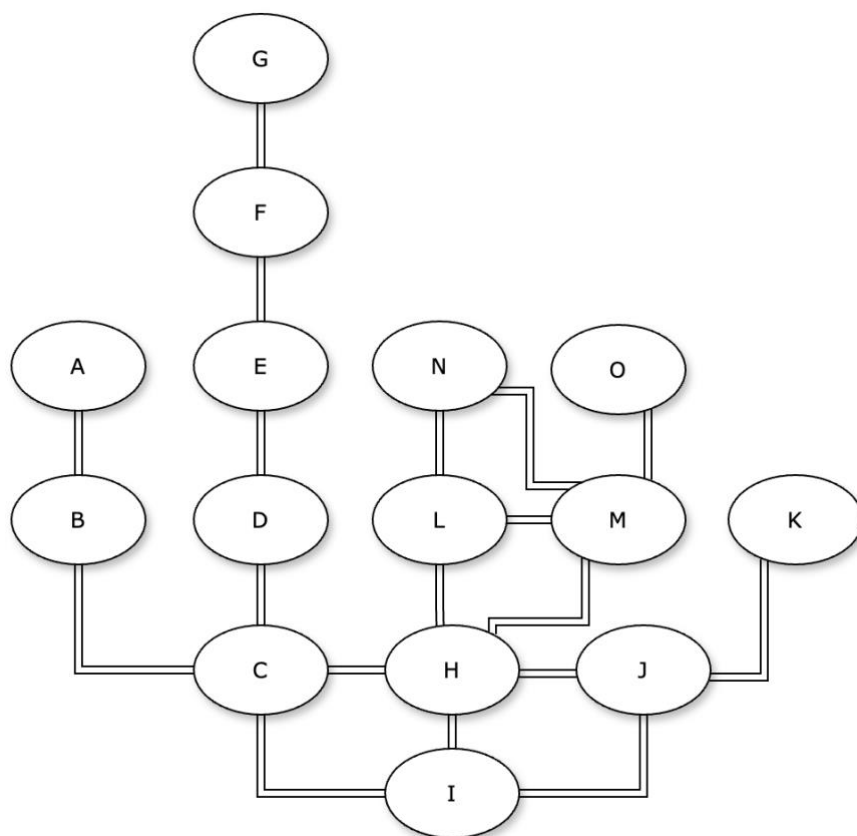


Figure 10: Justified graph with area I (the crypt stairs) as the root. Karuneva, 2025.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Bailey 2021, 210.

<sup>124</sup> Nodes in the justified graph are listed as follows. Root: I (the crypt stairs); layer 1: C (the southeast arcade), H (Dunstan's memorial), and J (the sanctuary stairs); layer 2: B (the southern *porticus*), D (the choir-adjacent southern arcade), L (the choir), M (the northeast arcade), and K (the sanctuary); layer 3: A (the tower entrance),

A brief examination of the crypt in Figure 10 reveals that the pressure of centrality seen in the memorial is somewhat alleviated, though not to a significant extent. Although the crypt stairs (J) are directly adjacent to the steps leading to the sanctuary (K), there is no longer a direct route to the choir (L) or toward the monks' quarters, both of which would place pilgrims directly in the monks' path. However, on the surface, it would be unusual if there was a certain spatial openness from the crypt stairs (I) toward the sanctuary (K), so proposals for barriers or more controlled pathways from the entrance directly to the crypt for the laity cannot be overlooked. It is also possible, as previously indicated, that access to the crypt was guarded, and that access was controlled by using the gatekeeping area (C).

In 1170, Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered in the cathedral and became England's most beloved saint, drawing large numbers of pilgrims. Initially, his tomb was located in the crypt. The church created a designated path for Becket's devotees, which included a visit to this tomb. However, once the crypt opened to the public on Easter 1171, the hagiographer Benedict of Peterborough commented on the number of people crowding at its entrance. Due to this influx of pilgrims, the tomb was moved to the Trinity Chapel to better accommodate them.<sup>125</sup> Although the 1170 cathedral was notably bigger than the 4C cathedral analysed in this thesis, there was still a risk of overcrowding, especially in small spaces such as the crypt. The likelihood of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral's smaller crypt becoming similarly crowded would have been significant, especially during important feast days.

According to art historian Cynthia Hahn, many Carolingian ring crypts in northern Europe were modelled after or took inspiration from the ring crypt or *confessio* in St. Peter's in Rome. However, these ring crypts restricted pilgrims' access to the saints' relics, keeping them out of view except during processions on feast days. This reflected the shift towards the care of cults and the saintly dead being solely the responsibility of the monks. Hahn describes the attitudes of monks towards the crypts as follows: "An eleventh-century illustration of the Merovingian text of a miracle in which divine fire appears in Liudger's crypt at Werden implies that the very space of the crypt was holy. The fire was blinding for even clerical eyes, and not to be approached casually." Thus, she interprets the ring crypt as a sacred place, which even clerics had to approach with reverence, making it unlikely that the laity had any

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E (the southern arcade), N (the choir-adjacent northern arcade), and O (the northern *porticus*); layer 4: F (the nave); layer 5: G (the northern arcade).

<sup>125</sup> Malone 2019, 3–4.

business being there.<sup>126</sup> Despite Dunstan's miracles happening 100–200 years after the Carolingian era, the eleventh-century illustration of the ring crypt may point to contemporary perceptions of the use of ring crypts. Nevertheless, the most telling piece of evidence towards the restriction of accessibility of the crypt is the lack of references to it in Dunstan's *miracula*. The crypt is never mentioned nor hinted at. Instead, the focus is on the visible memorial, placing the miracles happening near it in everyone's sight, instead of hidden beneath the ground.

### 3.2 From observing the miracles to producing meanings

As we approach Dunstan's memorial from the perspective of observing the locations of miracles and producing them in text, the memorial gains more gravity through new meanings. As the *miracula* builds Dunstan's sanctity, the culmination of this sanctity can be seen when someone approaches or is somehow in contact with his memorial, be it through sight or physical proximity. While analysing these events, Osbern's process of producing meanings in his text becomes more obvious and clear, even more than with the entrance. The memorial's visibility allows it to take centre stage at the church, evoking images of the border between the heavenly and earthly to those admiring it.

As mentioned earlier, the memorial, or shrine, was located at the bottom of the stairs to the sanctuary by the matutinal altar. Gatch, who studied the Cathedral in Leofric's *Vision*, writes that according to Eadmer's account<sup>127</sup>, the memorial was "a tomb above [his grave] lofty and sublimely built in the manner of a pyramid."<sup>128</sup> While this pyramid was not raised as the sanctuary was, its height and grandiosity likely still made it visible from the nave, despite the choir being located between. However, it is important to note that the structures of the stalls in the choir would have affected this to a great degree. Thus, there is little certainty regarding this interpretation.

Hahn describes the primary characteristics of the shrines as fourfold. Every detail of the shrine, including its spatial organization, is intentional. Shrines were constructed to showcase where heaven has touched earth and the saints who continued to support and advocate for the living members of the Church. She writes: "A saint's connectedness to a hierarchy or community was essential: while "alive" in his tomb, the saint was also a resident of the City

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<sup>126</sup> Hahn 1997, 1099–1101.

<sup>127</sup> The description can be found in Eadmer's text *De Reliquiis S. Audoeni, The Relics of St. Audoen* (or Ouen).

<sup>128</sup> "...tumba super eum in modum pyramidis grandi sublimique constructa." Gatch 1993, 236–237.

of God.” The heavenly community can also be observed in the early Middle Ages, as the saints were rarely depicted separately in art or through the locations of their relics. Thirdly, shrines also promoted “locality”, bringing the divine into a certain geographical location and point in time, thus becoming closer to those living in the community. Finally, a shrine’s intention is to teach about what is holy and how to venerate it, which, as Hahn describes, is especially seen in “hagiographic constructions, visual or verbal.”<sup>129</sup>

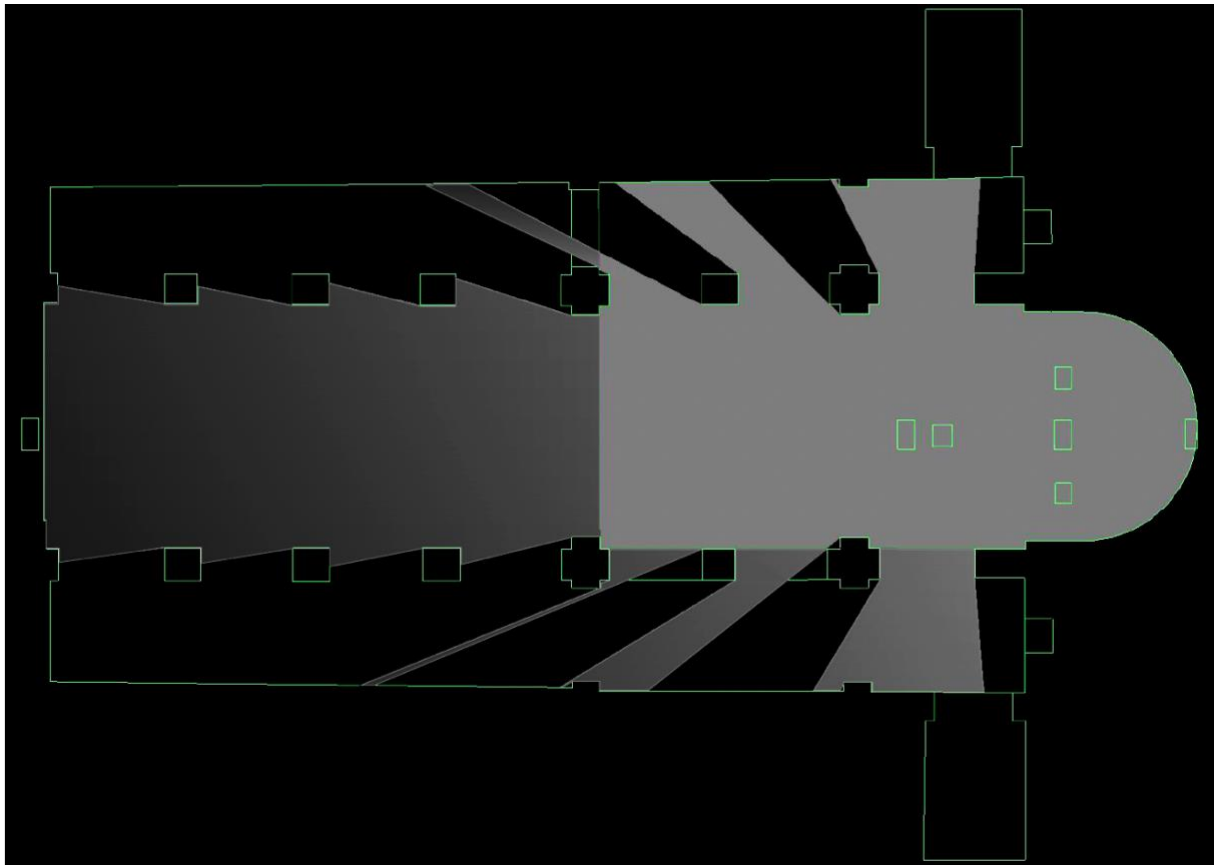


Figure 11: 360-degree isovist from Dunstan’s memorial. Karuneva, 2025.

The 360-degree isovist map in Figure 11 illustrates the memorial’s visibility without the interiors of the church. The lighter grey beams indicating the unobstructed view fill the entirety of the monks’ area: the choir, the northeast arcade, the choir-adjacent northern arcade, and the sanctuary. The obstructed fields of view are found in the middle of the nave, between the aisles, and in small areas in the southern aisle, such as the main entrance. This illustrates the centrality of the memorial, with the sacred “head” (the sanctuary) and “heart” (the choir) areas of the church in full view from it and the “body” (the nave) less so. This highlights Dunstan’s significance to the community of monks, which has been addressed previously. As

<sup>129</sup> Hahn 1997, 1080–1081.

Dunstan's memorial is fixed between the "head" and the "heart", his connection to both the community of monks in the choir and the heavenly realm symbolized by the altars, where Offices and Mass were celebrated, is made evident spatially. His loyalty and love towards his own community as a "patron" of sorts become visible in the memorial and encourage others to follow in his footsteps.

In his analysis of Leofric's *Vision*, which was discussed in section 2.1, Gatch examines the depictions of the memorial in Leofric's second vision at Canterbury Cathedral. In the vision, Leofric spends the night in the cathedral, praying "as close as he could get to St. Dunstan's tomb [or memorial]". Gatch describes Leofric as being in the monastic areas of the church and speculates that the choir is the most likely location. He also faces the question of whether Leofric prayed near the memorial or in the crypt by the tomb of St. Dunstan. However, the narrative strongly suggests the former option, as the *vision* describes a "miraculous light" shining from under the arm of a cross over an altar. Gatch interprets this cross as a standing cross, which was typical of churches of that era. He notes that the "pyramids" of Dunstan and Oda, referred to by Eadmer were understood by Anglo-Saxons simply as memorials to the saints and were typically constructed in the form of crosses. This implies that Dunstan's memorial was a reasonably sized stone cross. The cross could have belonged to either Dunstan or Oda, with Oda's altar located at the top of the stairs on the south side of the sanctuary, as shown in Figure 2. Alternatively, it may have been at the altar of Christ.<sup>130</sup> Given that Dunstan was the saint central to the vision, it seems likely that the light that shone "throughout the whole wide church" originated from under the arm of Dunstan's cross.

The practice of staying the night in the church, perhaps near Dunstan's memorial, is also found in the *miracula* in four accounts. In all four, the miracles are recorded to have happened at night, with one occurring during the nocturnal vigil of Easter Sunday. Account thirteen describes a young man entering the church on Good Friday and gaining his ability to walk on the night before Easter Sunday:

"Here, on that day in which the Son of God was deigned to die in the assumed flesh, [the man] worshiped along with the rest of the crowd after entering His church, the banner of the cross on which He destroyed our death by dying. He waited for the delight of the coming feast, remaining near the body of the venerable father Dunstan. And when the hour arrived in which our Lord Jesus Christ was believed to have risen from the dead, triumphing over the devil, a great clamor took place in the church, disturbing the young man to stand upright with

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<sup>130</sup> Gatch 235–242.

his whole body... Although the clergy knew this, they nevertheless awaited the rising of the sun both patiently and joyfully. Truly, on the morning of the Lord's resurrection, the entire city's countless multitude assembled in the church to see what the divine power had brought about in the man."<sup>131</sup>

In this account, Dunstan's memorial is not unlike Christ's tomb. When Christ is resurrected, the young man is also cured of his disability and given new life in a healed body. The hour of triumph mentioned is likely the moment when the procession of the vigil Mass begins. Mass is initiated by a subdeacon crying "*Accendite*" or "Light ye", also commencing the ritual of illuminating the church. The procession marks the return of the preconsecrated Host, symbolizing the return of Christ in the resurrection. This Host would have been reserved on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday and returned after midnight on Easter. If there were more than one Host, at least one of them is venerated and placed on the altar, while the rest are kept in a *conditorium*. The *conditorium* is understood as a "repository", but is also a term for a sepulchre, further strengthening the interpretation that the return of the Hosts is a "resurrection ceremony".<sup>132</sup> As the young man becomes aware of the clamour in the church, this may have resulted from the procession of the Host. The resurrection, as embodied in the Host, also envelops the young man, simultaneously healing him bodily and enclosing him in eternal life.

The connections between these miracles and other biblical events are clear. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas are imprisoned by the Romans, yet at midnight, they are praying and "singing hymns to God" in their cell. An earthquake occurs, and all the doors and chains are unlocked.<sup>133</sup> Likewise, in Acts 12, an angel sets Peter free from prison at night and rescues him from trial before King Herod.<sup>134</sup> Out of Christ's miracles, the miracle of walking on the water occurred just after Jesus had gone to spend the night in prayer on a mountainside. The most known nighttime miracles of the New Testament are the birth of Christ, the angels appearing to the shepherds, and, as mentioned, Christ's resurrection.

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<sup>131</sup> "Hic ea die in qua Filius Dei in assumpta carne dignatus est mori, Eius ecclesiam ingressus, vexillum crucis, in qua moriens mortem nostrum destruxit, cum caetera multitudine adorabat, et futurae festivitatis gaudia juxta corpus venerandi patris Dunstani manens exspectabat. Adveniente autem hora in qua Dominus noster Jesus Christus triumphato diabolo a mortuis resurrexisse creditus, clamor in ecclesia factus est magnus, tumultuans adolescentem rectum toto corpore stare... Quod quamvis clerus sciebat, patienter tamen simul et laetanter solis ortum exspectabat. Mane vero Dominicae resurrectionis convenit infinita totius urbis multitudo in ecclesiam videre quid in hominem divina potentia operata fuisset..." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 140.

<sup>132</sup> *LewisShort* via Logeion. Entry: *conditorium*.

<sup>133</sup> Acts 16:22–34.

<sup>134</sup> Acts 12: 1–18.

Nighttime is not only significant in the Bible, but it also held significance to Dunstan. In his *vita*, Dunstan is described as being especially devoted to the Night Office. In her article, Sophie Sawicka-Sykes examines different sources that describe the legend of Dunstan's vision of a heavenly choir of virgins in St. Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury. This analysis also includes Osbern's *vita*. According to Sawicka-Sykes, the first account of Dunstan's life, written by an unknown hagiographer simply called B., described Dunstan as "accustomed to perform psalmody at the holy sites of the city during the night." As he made his way to St. Augustine's Abbey and to its oratory of St. Mary to continue his nightly mission, the church was suddenly filled with light and virgins dancing and singing a hymn. Sawicka-Sykes writes that this vision was a reward for Dunstan's piety, especially for his "dedication to the Divine Office, as he witnessed the song straight after performing his own nocturnal praises." Simultaneously, his nightly mission demonstrates his steadfastness and faithfulness to his vocation and the self-discipline it requires.<sup>135</sup>

As evident from the accounts in the Bible and Dunstan's life, it is unsurprising that many of the miracles in the *miracula* occur during the night or to those who have spent one or more nights near his memorial. If stories from Dunstan's life were circulating orally, memorable ones, such as that of the aforementioned choir of virgins, were likely the most well-known. Imitating Dunstan's piety by attending the nocturnal Office may have provided the most probable conditions for having one's wish of being cured fulfilled. However, it seemed to be a privilege granted to few and perhaps only during the vigils of feast days.

Bailey writes in her article concerning pilgrim accessibility that nocturnal vigils, where miracle-seekers spend the night, may create the impression that shrines are accessible throughout the day, especially considering how frequently they appear in miracle accounts. However, as in the case of Clement, these events often occur in connection with feast days. Bailey notes that there are two reasons why many high-medieval miracles in England took place during these feast days. These days were generally favourable for the success of miracles, and access to relics was more easily facilitated at these times. Even if people could visit shrines outside of feast days, places like Ely Cathedral, which is used as an example in the article, had specific times, such as during the monks' mealtime, when the entrance was closed and monitored closely. Likewise, according to Bailey's analysis, William of Malmesbury mentions Beverley Minster being visited every year in hopes of gaining "the

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<sup>135</sup> Sawicka-Sykes 2022, 271 & 275–276.

favour of divine mercy”.<sup>136</sup> Out of the miracles in Dunstan’s *miracula*, only four are mentioned as having occurred during a feast day or its vigil, one being the story of the possessed Clement, which does not explicitly state this. The other three accounts are all from Osbern’s time, which he witnessed in his youth. This raises the question: did the other miracles also occur during these significant days, and was this information somehow lost to time and translation? Could the days when the miracle-seekers visited the church have been so obvious that they were deemed unnecessary to mention, especially if they occurred during St. Dunstan’s feast day?

The visibility of the memorial allowed all miracles that happened near it to likewise be very visible to nearly all in the church. In account twelve, during the vigil of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, an old woman with her daughter stopped Osbern and his similarly aged peer in their tracks:

It was the vigil of the blessed apostles of Christ, Peter and Paul, and with the day already having declined, the clergy performed the evening prayers in the church. By chance, I, along with another little boy of the same age, had attended to the altar of Christ, and the service having been completed, I began to descend the stairs; and behold, one old woman along with a well-grown daughter came to meet us, prostrating on the stairs and simultaneously crying out violently... But we, just like boys of that age, having been frightened by the acts of the women, stood still, asking sorrowfully the reasons for misery.<sup>137</sup>

In desperation, the woman and the girl had thrown themselves in front of the young boys, begging for advice after a long journey. As mentioned in section 2.2, the boys were horrified due to the women's shamelessness. The sanctuary stairs seemed to be an unlikely meeting spot, especially since the evening Office had just ended. The woman appears to have waited for the opportunity to not disturb the monks but catch them before they retreated to areas reserved for them.

Osbern’s decision to include this lamenting mother is interesting in that, according to Bailey, theologians often criticized noisy displays of grief. It was considered “pagan, irrational and ‘effeminate’” by patristic authors, such as John Chrysostom. Bailey writes, however, that there was a difference between “unregulated expressions of grief and those channelled

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<sup>136</sup> Bailey 2021, 211.

<sup>137</sup> “Vigilia beatorum Christi apostolorum Petri et Pauli erat, et inclinata jam die vespertinas orationes clerus in ecclesia agebat. Forte ego cum alio puerulo coætaneo meo ad altare Christi ministraveram, consummatoque ministerio per gradus descendere incipiebam; et ecce in occursum nostrum vetula quædam cum filia bene adulta obviam se dedit, procumbens gradibus simul et clamitans... Nos autem, ut id ætatis pueri, factum foeminae expavescentes, hæsimus loco, miseriam causas flebiliter sciscitantes.” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 138.

towards Christian ends under the watchful eyes of cult authorities.” This may be a reason why, despite being afraid, the boys decided to help point the way to Dunstan. Although the weeping mother is a *topos*, oftentimes alluding to the grief of the Virgin Mary, this account appears to point to a different biblical event.<sup>138</sup>

The account mentions that after the boys tell of Dunstan, the woman “having grasped the edge of her daughter’s garment, dragged her to the place.”<sup>139</sup> The story of the woman suffering haemorrhages can be found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In Mark and Luke, the woman is described as touching the fringe of her cloak and, after being found out by Jesus, is told, “Daughter, your faith has made you well.”<sup>140</sup> In Dunstan’s *miracula*, the old woman, with faith so strong she disregards common courtesy, grabs the hem of her daughter’s dress and pulls her to Dunstan’s memorial. Instead of the miracle-receiver, the mother acts as the main character and an image of the bleeding woman, not by touching Christ’s cloak but by acting as a conduit between her daughter and God’s healing grace that is transmitted through Dunstan’s memorial. Thus, the memorial itself continues to be a space where the heavenly and earthly realms collide, where events of the Bible are relived, and where the sacred can flourish.

The account, as expected, ends on a positive note. It is, however, not the only incident in the *miracula* in which a person approaches the monks directly, with similar positive results. In account six, a poor woman with a blind three-year-old begged the clergy to help her.<sup>141</sup> Despite this likely affecting the monks’ routines, the account reveals: “And so the monks, having been affected by [her] piety, instantly began to beseech the saint by prayer, on behalf of the mother’s pain and the daughter’s weakness, so that he might deem worthy to relieve [her] from suffering, with his usual benevolence.”<sup>142</sup> The prayer is then answered after ten days, which may signify a period of testing for all, the mother and the monks, before gaining everlasting glory, as in Revelation 2:10.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Bailey 2013a, 532 & 537

<sup>139</sup> “Tum illa comprehensa lacinia vestis filiae suae traxit eam ad locum...”, Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 139.

<sup>140</sup> Matthew 9:20–22, Mark 5: 25–34, & Luke 8:43–48.

<sup>141</sup> “...deprecata est omnem clerum auxilio sibi apud Dei sanctum fore...”, Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 134.

<sup>142</sup> “Affecti itaque pietate monachi pro dolore matris et languore puellae coeperunt instantissimi prece sanctum deprecere, ut earum affliction solita bonitate dignaretur subvenire.” Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 134.

<sup>143</sup> “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Rev.2:10.

These interactions are important in the context of miracles, as, according to Kerr, hospitality was a requirement in monastic communities, and a lack of observation could lead to eternal damnation. The biblical passages from Matthew 25<sup>144</sup> highlight the importance of receiving strangers and taking care of the poor and the sick.<sup>145</sup> The passages make it clear that all that is done for the hungry, the sick, and the strangers is likewise done to Christ. The passage continues with the remainder of Jesus's speech, condemning those who neglected the needy and declaring that eternal fire awaited them while eternal life was reserved for the righteous. Kerr notes that this passage had a significant influence on how hospitality was understood throughout the Middle Ages. Earlier authoritative texts, such as the *Rule of Benedict* and the writings of church fathers St. Jerome and St. Augustine, were shaped by this passage, with the *Rule* quoting it twice. In chapter 36 regarding sick brothers and in chapter 53 concerning the reception of guests:<sup>146</sup>

Care of the sick must rank above and before all else, so that they may truly be served as Christ, for he said: "I was sick and you visited me" (Matt. 25:36), and "What you did for one of these least brothers you did for me." (Matt. 25:40)...All guests that present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, for he himself will say: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me," (Matt. 25:35).<sup>147</sup>

Medieval historian Scott Bruce defines the *Rule of Benedict*, written in the early sixth century by the monk Benedict of Nursia, as a "normative guide for cloistered monks...[combining] theoretical reflections on the goals of the monastic vocation with practical insights about the day-to-day workings of a small religious house, based on the firsthand experience of its author." The monks fulfilled their duties through manual labor, spiritual reading, and observing the liturgy of the divine office eight times a day, even at night.<sup>148</sup> With the obligation of hospitality outlined in the *Rule*, it is clear that this act was not merely for the salvation of the individual but a demand for the entire community.

Despite clear moral guidance, the act of hospitality was not always practiced. This is evident in the concerns of authority figures. According to Kerr, Abbot Hugh II of Reading (1186-1189) "expressed his concern that although rich and powerful visitors to Reading were

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<sup>144</sup> '...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me'...And the king will answer to them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Matt. 25: 35-36 & 40.

<sup>145</sup> Kerr 2007, 24.

<sup>146</sup> Kerr 2007, 24.

<sup>147</sup> *The Rule of St. Benedict*, 59 & 73.

<sup>148</sup> Bruce 2020, 219.

warmly and honorably entertained, pilgrims and the poor received a less reverent welcome than was appropriate..." Alexander of Neckam (1157–1217), a scholastic theologian, also addressed the issue of warmly receiving those arriving "in the name of the king" while ignoring those "who had no lord save Christ."<sup>149</sup> Despite this, receiving the poor was an act that Dunstan was well-known for, as seen in account three: "Likewise, three women lived in one house, similarly stricken by a long period of blindness and oppressed by the burden of poverty. The great Dunstan, whilst he had been alive in body, was accustomed to feeding these poor [women] among the rest of the church's stipendiaries."<sup>150</sup> His actions simultaneously set an example for others but also remind others of Dunstan's ability to fulfill Christ's and St. Benedict's commands. Dunstan accepted Christ through attending to the poor and continued to do so after his death through greater, supernatural means.

In this case, the memorial, whether accessible or not, pointed to Dunstan, thus pointing to God's promises to his people, especially those in need. There are too many Bible verses pertaining to helping the poor and sick to list in this thesis, but the concept of generosity as a virtue in Christianity is well established. Dunstan's memorial is simultaneously a beacon of hope, illuminating the glories of heaven, and a hospital for those in need of a miracle healing, be it one of the soul or the body. Through his memorial, the now-alive-in-heaven Dunstan is a nurse advocating for his patient in the face of God, the doctor, and a friendly face to those seeking help, offering comfort and brotherly love to those still in the earthly realm.

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<sup>149</sup> Kerr 2007, 27–28.

<sup>150</sup> "Tres etiam mulieres in una domo commanebant, simili ex longo tempore caecitate percussae, et onere paupertatis oppressae. Has magnus ille Dunstanus dum in corpore vixisset, inter caeteros ecclesiae stipendiarios pauperes alere solebat..." Osbern, *Miracula S. Dunstani*, 131.

## 4 Conclusion

This thesis has been an experimental one, with questions and answers being formulated and defined in accordance with the realization of the parameters and possibilities of this research. Due to the nature of this study, the process has required constant alertness and sensitivity to change. However, the main question has remained fairly constant and has intrigued me for a long time. The question of the relationship between the material and literary dimensions can provide many perspectives and starting points for analysing how people produce known objects, people, or events in literary form to convey a message. For this purpose, the *miracula* has been invaluable as it encapsulates meanings and *topoi* that are well-known and frequently repeated in the hagiographical genre. By carefully examining actions and movement, thus also reading a little “past” the main message of Dunstan’s sainthood, details concerning socially constructed space and the expectations of its use, which are often overlooked or taken for granted, are highlighted.

Although the implementation of space syntax techniques in this research was rudimentary, it proved successful. The graphs and maps functioned as intended, providing visualizations of spatial relationships that would have otherwise been difficult to identify and dissect. Considering the extremely limited data available on the Anglo-Saxon Canterbury Cathedral, the space syntax analyses truly helped to extract valuable information from such a simple floor plan. Since the outcome of this experiment was positive, I would like to assert that space syntax analyses can also be utilized in locations with minimal information, but only as a supplementary technique. Although the results of this thesis were not groundbreaking, they certainly confirmed some previous findings regarding saintly cults, accessibility to shrines, and meanings attributed to church spaces.

This thesis has provided an examination of one of the first compiled *miracula* to emerge during the high medieval miracle-collecting surge. By analysing the church's space and its use within both the material and textual realms, it becomes clear that Osbern intended to create new depictions while building upon existing ideas of Dunstan’s sanctity. Osbern highlights accessibility, or the absence of restriction, to showcase Dunstan’s openness to receive people from all walks of life. Similarly, Dunstan’s memorial's visual accessibility, particularly from the main entrance, creates an image of it as the beating heart of the church itself. The memorial's centrality highlights Dunstan’s close connection to the Benedictine community and devoted miracle-seekers. Despite the disruptions caused by pilgrims, they were still

regarded as an essential, perhaps even necessary, aspect of the saintly cult, as providing access for them meant increasing opportunities for miracle healings.

While analysing the justified graphs, a conflict emerged between the textual and material church. Although the material church seemed to control the flow of the laity through choir screens and gatekeeping areas, the text made little mention of restriction of movement. However, upon further inspection, around half of the accounts did not mention approaching the memorial or presenting the miracle-seeker to Dunstan, suggesting a lesser degree of accessibility than previously thought. Additionally, whether these miracles occurred during feast days remained unanswered, but it is likely that the feast days were too self-evident to mention and were consequently omitted. This omission may have been deliberate to once again demonstrate Dunstan's acceptance of all people or to make the memorial seem more attractive as a destination. It is important to remember, however, as noted in section 3.1, that offering one's suffering to a saint can be understood as virtuous. Thus, accommodating the needs of pilgrims and granting access to the memorial could create the conditions for miraculous healing, which would have been beneficial for the saintly cult.

Dunstan's significance is emphasized throughout the church space and, as expected, in the *miracula* itself. While Dunstan's importance within the space is evident in the *miracula*, it could be argued that the physical church also affirms this to some extent. It is not surprising that Dunstan was regarded as the most important saint in Canterbury Cathedral until the emergence of Thomas Becket, partly due to Dunstan's own actions. By choosing to have his tomb in such a central location, he conveyed his willingness to continue advocating for and being part of the monastic community even after death. This is also illustrated by how Osbern portrays Dunstan as an exemplar for others. Dunstan's special dedication to the nocturnal Office is reflected in the several instances of healing that occurred during the night. Events that were transformative in Dunstan's life continued to be manifested in his miracles after death. This indicated a continuation of his story, with the miracles building upon characteristics of his life that were likely already known by the public. By mirroring the miracles that occurred during his lifetime, his postmortem miracles, which happened near his memorial, ensured through repetition that they indeed happened through Dunstan.

By further examining the *miracula* and the utilization of church spaces within it, it became clear that Osbern infused many meanings into the most significant areas of the church. Entering the church was akin to a miniature pilgrimage, representing purification before

coming face to face with the sacred. Similarly, the memorial served as a space for the intersection of earthly and heavenly realms, where Dunstan continued to advocate for the poor and afflicted. All of these meanings that emerge from the text serve the specific purpose of producing Dunstan's sanctity and illustrating his timeless friendship and loyalty to those who approach him. These spaces were active enablers of his sanctity, reminders of his virtue, functioning as a stage for his miraculous deeds.

This thesis has proven that combining textual and material analysis can once again yield new perspectives on extensively studied areas of research. To my knowledge, combining spatial techniques, such as space syntax, has not been used in the context of hagiographical research. When working with historical periods where there never seems to be enough literary or archaeological material, experimenting with digital methods and using them in collaboration with disciplines with well-established frameworks is the natural next step in the growing field of historical studies. This is, in itself, not new, but a fair reminder to look toward more multidisciplinary approaches and utilize other lucrative fields of study and their methods.

These approaches have been well-used in other historical studies, but for some reason, they have not quite broken through into hagiographical research. Although rudimentary in its application, I hope this experiment has provided an example of a successful way to introduce different techniques to this area of research. In regard to future research, it certainly opens up a wide range of new research questions regarding spatial relationships between shrines and the churches or other spaces they reside in, the production of space in hagiography, and relations between monks and pilgrims in monastic churches. Similar studies could be conducted on texts and spaces that contain much more information to play on, which would provide much more robust analyses and opportunities to utilize techniques such as 3D modelling. Likewise, the element of time could be included in future studies, offering a less static view of both miracles and movement within the church space. The *corpus* of possibilities continues to grow as digital and multidisciplinary methods evolve, and hagiographical research also deserves experimentation, innovation, and bold attempts.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Table of miracle accounts

Miracle accounts	4B church	4C church	Witnessed by Osbern	Entering/entrance mentioned	Near/in contact with memorial
Account 2: the blind man					
Account 3: the three blind women					
Account 4: the rich Ceowulf					
Account 5: the young man with paralysis					
Account 6: the woman with her three-year-old					
Account 7: the blind old woman					
Account 8: the possessed Clement					
Account 9: the paralyzed Elward					
Account 11: the blind virgin					
Account 12: the woman and her daughter					
Account 13: the young man with staves					

### Appendix 2: Summary in Finnish

Pro gradu -tutkielma “Canterbury Cathedral as a Stage for Late Anglo-Saxon Miracles: The production of space and sanctity in Osbern’s *Miracula Sancti Dunstani*” käsittelee Canterburyn katedraalin tilan tuottamista Osbernin 1090-luvulla kirjoittamassa ihmekertomuskokoelmassa, joka käsittelee Pyhän Dunstanin kuolemanjälkeisiä ihmeitä. Teoksen kirjoittaja, Osbern Canterburylainen, oli Christ Churchin benediktiiniluostariin kuuluva munkki, joka vietti kyseisessä yhteisössä lähes koko elämänsä. Canterburyn katedraali kuului osana Christ Churchin yhteisöä, jolloin yhteisön jäsenet viettivät katedraalissa messunsa ja hetkipalvelunsa ja toimivat kirkossa sijaitsevien reliikkien suojelijoina. Osbern eli yhteisössä suurta muutoksen aikaa, sillä noin kolmekymmentä vuotta aiemmin, vuonna 1066, normannit nousivat valtaan Englannissa. Tätä seurasi erinäisiä kirkkohallinnollisia muutoksia, kuten arkkipiispan vaihtuminen normannien valitsemaan Lanfranciin. Vuonna 1067 anglosaksinen Canterburyn katedraali paloi ja uutta kirkkoa alettiin rakentamaan Lanfrancin arkkipiispuuden alla vuodesta 1070.

Normannivalloituksen jälkeen, noin 1100-luvun alusta, alkoi suuri hagiografisten, eli pyhimyksiin liittyvien elämäkertojen ja ihmekertomusten, tekstien kirjoittamisen nousukausi. Syitä hagiografisten tekstien kirjoittamiselle on monia, mutta mitä ilmeisemmin kyseisiä kukoistuskauten tekstejä yhdisti normannivalloituksen jälkeinen kiinnostus kirjoittaa omasta menneisyydestään. Erityisesti ihmekertomuksia oli hyvin vähäinen määrä anglosaksisen kauden lopulla, jolloin tyhjiötä pyrittiin korjaamaan kokoamalla ja kirjaamalla ylös pyhimysten kuolemanjälkeisiä ihmeitä. Samalla haluttiin lisätä pyhimysten ja heidän kulttiensa tunnettavuutta, sekä tekstituotannon avulla luoda vankempia perustuksia

vähemmän tunnetuille pyhimyksille, jotta he eivät vaipuisi unohduksiin. Dunstan oli jo tunnettu pyhimys sekä luostariyhteisön jäsenille että suullisen perinteen kautta maallikoille, ja hänen kunnioituksensa näkyi katedraalissa hyvin keskeisellä paikalla sijaitsevassa muistomerkinä. Muistomerkin alta, kirkon maanalaisesta kryptasta, löytyi hänen hautansa.

Pro gradu -tutkielmassa pohdin kuinka Osbern tuottaa anglosaksisen katedraalin tilaa, joka on hänelle tuttu. Käytän Dunstanin ihmekertomuskokoelmasta löytyviä ihmeitä, joita kuvataan sijoittuvan anglosaksiseen aikakauteen ja tutkin niiden suhdetta itse anglosaksiseen Canterburyn katedraalin, jonne ne sijoittuvat. Käytän tutkielmassa hagiografista analyysia ja tilatutkimusta liittääkseni yhteen kirjallisen ja materiaalisen ulottuvuuden. Tutkin Osbernin tilan ja sen käytön tuottamista tekstissä hyödyntämällä tilasyntaksisia menetelmiä tekstissä ilmenevien liikkeen, vuorovaikutuksen ja havainnoinnin kuvauksien analyysiin. Tähän kuuluu myös näiden kuvauksien tarkastelua hagiografisten toposten ja kirkkotilaan liitettyjen yhteisesti ymmärrettyjen merkitysten kautta. Tutkimukselle keskeiset kirkkotilan alueet on jaettu kahteen laajempaan kokonaisuuteen: kirkon pyhimpiin alueisiin ja avoimiin kirkkotiloihin. Tutkielma keskittyy materiaalisen ja tekstuaalisen kirkon saavutettavuuteen ja näkyvyyteen, sillä nämä kaksi tilan laajempaa kokonaisuutta korostaa näitä piirteitä erityisen hyvin. Käyttämällä sekä digitaalisia arkeologisia menetelmiä että hagiografista analyysia, pyrin myös tarkastelemaan uusia mahdollisuuksia yhdistää tekstuaalisia ja materiaalisia lähteitä.

Tutkimuksen lähteinä käytän Osbernin kirjoittamaa Pyhän Dunstanin ihmekertomuskokoelmaa eli *miraculaa*, sekä Kevin Blockleyn, Margaret Sparksin ja Tim Tatton-Brownin teosta *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture*. Dunstanin *miracula* kirjoitettiin noin vuonna 1090 yhdessä Dunstanin *vitan* eli pyhimyselämäkerran kanssa. Siinä missä Dunstanin *vita* pohjautui kahteen aiempaan elämäkertatekstiin, ihmekertomuskokoelma oli ensimmäinen Dunstanin kuolemanjälkeisistä ihmeistä kertova teksti. Valitsin *miraculasta* yksitoista ihmettä, joissa on mainintoja kirkkotilasta tai siinä liikkumisesta. Ihmeiden pituudet ja yksityiskohtaisuudet vaihtelevat suuresti keskenään. Ihmeistä kahdeksan sijoittuvat aikaan ennen Osbernia, jotka mitä ilmeisemmin olivat kiertäneet suullisesti jo vuosia. Loput kolme ovat tapahtuneet Osbernin ollessa luostariyhteisön jäsen. Ihmeet, jotka eivät kuulu tutkielmaan eivät joko mainitse katedraalia ollenkaan tai sijoittuvat vuoden 1067 tulipalon jälkeen ja ovat siten osa anglonormanniaikaa. Tilasyntaksisten analyysien apuna käytän teosta *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture*, joka sisältää vuoden 1993 arkeologisten

kaivausten tulosten lisäksi tulkintoja ja rekonstruktioita Canterburyn katedraalin eri vaiheista. Vuoden 1993 kaivaukset ovat ainoat laajempimittaiset kaivaukset, jotka ovat jollain tavalla koskettaneet katedraalin anglosaksisia perustuksia. Osbernin aikalaisen Eadmer Canterburylaisen kirjoituksia on myös hyödynnetty teoksessa täydentämään kirkkotilaan liittyviä tulkintoja, joten on tärkeää ymmärtää, että kyseisen kirkon rakenteesta ei olla täysin varmoja.

Hagiografisen analyysin tueksi käytän tutkielmassa kolmea tilasyntaksista menetelmää materiaalisen kirkon piirteiden havainnollistamiseen. Nämä ovat ”justified graph”, ”Visibility Graph Analysis” ja isovistikarttoja. Justified graph -menetelmän avulla tehdään havaittavaksi tietyn alueen suhteet alueverkostossa sijaitseviin muihin alueisiin. Kaavio koostuu solmuista, jotka kuvaavat verkostossa sijaitsevia alueita, ja linkeistä, jotka havainnoivat solmujen välisiä yhteyksiä. Yksinkertaistettuna, solmut kuvaavat talon eri huoneita ja linkit ovat huoneiden väliset ovet. Tutkimalla kaavion muodostamia solmukerroksia ja juurisolmun suhdetta muihin solmuihin, on mahdollista erottaa eri solmujen tai alueiden ulkoisia piirteitä ja käytettävyyttä, mitkä vaikuttavat ihmisten tilansisäisiin reittivalintoihin. Alueiden väliset yhteydet korostavat alueiden saavutettavuutta ja tuovat esille mahdollisia portinvartija-asemaa omaavia tiloja. Näiden ulkoisten ja relationaalisten piirteiden avulla voi tutkia tietyn alueen kulttuurista ja sosiaalista luonnetta, sekä siihen liittyviä yhteisesti ymmärrettyjä merkityksiä.

Isovistikartat ja Visibility Graph Analysis tai VGA perustuvat *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture* -teoksessa kuvattuun pohjapiirrokseseen. Analyysit tehdään DepthMapX -ohjelmistolla, joka piirtää kaksiulotteista näkyvyyttä esittäviä kuvia. VGA asettaa pohjapiirroksen päälle ruudukkokerroksen ja luo isovistin eli näkökentän jokaisen ruudun keskeltä. Ohjelmisto piirtää näiden avulla eräänlaisen ”lämpökartan”, joka kuvaa keskenään näkyvissä olevia alueita. Isovistikartat taas kuvaavat tietyn pisteen näkökenttää, jonka avulla voi tutkia tietyn alueen visuaalista saavutettavuutta. Tutkielmassa käytetyt menetelmät hyödynnetään alkeellisella tasolla, jolloin niiden tuloksia ei tulisi tulkita absoluuttisiksi vaan visuaalisina työkaluina ja tulkinnan apuvälineinä. On tärkeää muistaa, että liike on ennen kaikkea kulttuurista riippuvainen. Yksinkertaistettu lähestymistapa tilan analyysiin on myös tarpeellinen sen vuoksi, että katedraalitalasta on hyvin vähän tilallista tietoa ja tyydyttäviä tulkintoja saadaan, kun keskittyy tilan rakenteen perustietoihin.

Luvussa 2 käsittelen aluksi Canterburyn katedraalin pohjaa ja kahteen eri aikakauteen liittyviä rakenteellisia piirteitä. Aikakaudet jakautuvat *Canterbury Cathedral Nave* -teoksen

mukaisesti kausiin 4B (900-luku) ja 4C (900-luvun lopusta vuoteen 1067). Alaluvussa 2.2 ensimmäiset kolme ihmekertomusta tapahtuvat 4B -kauden kirkossa ja loput ihmeistä 4C -kauden kirkossa. Ihmeiden jakaminen ajanjaksollisesti on sikäli merkittävää, että katedraalin ulkomuoto muuttui 900-luvun lopussa. Siitä huolimatta, tulen siihen tulokseen, että nämä muutokset eivät vaikuta analyysiin, sillä, pääsisäänkäyntiä lukuun ottamatta, muutokset koskevat alueita joita ei mainita *miraculassa*. 4C -kaudella sisäänkäynnin yhteyteen todennäköisesti rakennettiin varsinaisesta kirkkorakennelmasta ulkoneva torni. Tornia ei kuitenkaan ymmärretty sisäänkäyntinä vaan eräänlaisena umpinaisena kuistina, jolloin varsinainen sisäänkäynti oli ovi, joka johdatti tornista varsinaiseen kirkkorakennukseen. 4B -kauden sisäänkäynti sijaitsi mitä todennäköisimmin samassa paikassa, jolloin sekä 4B -kauden että 4C -kauden sisäänkäyntejä voidaan ryhmittää samaan analyysiin. Katedraalitalan määrittely tutkielmassa on tärkeää, sillä ymmärtääkseen miten Osbern mahdollisesti koki tilan ja siihen sisältyvät merkitykset, täytyy pyrkiä luomaan raamit sille, kuinka tilaa on ollut mahdollista kohdata sekä fyysisesti ja sosiaalisesti. Canterburyn katedraalin ollessa aikansa yksi merkittävimpiä kirkkoja, sen fyysisiä ominaisuuksia on rakennettu huolella ja ajatuksella, jolloin ne myös heijastavat eri sosiaalisten ryhmien asettamia merkityksiä ja käsityksiä.

Alaluku 2.2 jatkuu pääsisäänkäynnin ja siitä lähtevien reittien saavutettavuuden tarkastelulla. Justified graph -analyysissa tulee ilmi luoteisen pylväskäytävän portinvartija-asema, joka jakaa ihmiset kahdelle reitille: kohti kirkkosalia ja kohti kirkon pyhää ydintä, jossa sijaitsee Dunstanin muistomerkki. Maallikkovirran rajoittamista edesauttaa kuoriaita, joka ohjaa maallikot kohti päätepysäkkiään eli kirkkosalia. Maallikoiden reitti on selkeä, mutta munkeilla on enemmän liikkumisvapautta omassa kirkossaan. Kuitenkin ihmekertomuksissa maallikoiden rajoittamisesta ei juuri kirjoiteta. Kolme ihmekertomusta mainitsevat sisäänkäynnin. Yhdessä maallikot kävelevät suoraan muistomerkillä ilman rajoituksia, mutta kahdessa ei mainita minne maallikot päätyvät kirkon sisällä. Mainitsematta jättäminen voi olla tarkoituksellista, jolloin on luotu vaikutelmaa, että Jumalan armo on kaikille saatavilla ja pyhimys on helposti lähestyttävä. Siitä huolimatta, pyhiinvaeltajien läsnäolo kannusti kirkon rakenteellista hierarkiaa joustavammaksi, sillä heidän tarpeisiin vastaaminen kirkon eil-liturgisella hyödyntämisellä uhmasi kirkon alkuperäistä roolia jumalanpalveluksen tilana. Pyhiinvaeltajien mukana ulkomaailma ja sen kärsimykset hivuttautuivat kirkkoon, jonka tarkoituksena oli heijastaa taivasta.

Alaluvussa 2.3 tutkin kirkon avointen alueiden hahmottamista tilassa ja tekstissä. VGA -analyysissa tuli ilmi sisäänkäynnin olevan visuaalisesti saavuttamattomin alue. Taas eteläinen

pylväskäytävä, joka sijaitsi luoteispylväskäytävän ja kirkkosalin välissä oli visuaalisesti saavutettavin. Syyt näihin oli puhtaasti strukturaaliset, mutta oli selkeää, että eteläiseltä pylväskäytävältä näkyi koko kirkkosali, kannustaen ihmisiä liikkumaan sitä kohti.

Isovistikartan mukaan pääsisäänkäynnin näkyvyyttä rajoitettiin vähemmän kuin mitä liikettä rajoitettiin. Vaikka kuoriaita toimi jonkinasteisena näköesteenä, sisäänkäynniltä oli näkyvyys sekä muistomerkillä että joillekin muille alueille, joihin oli pääsy vain munkeille. Apsikseen eli pääaluttaria säilyttävän pyhän tilan päätyyn ei kuitenkaan ollut näkyvyyttä. Tällöin kaikkein pyhin tila pysyi rauhoitettuna. Sisäänkäyntiin liittyi monia merkityksiä, jotka heijastuivat ihmekertomuksiin enemmän tai vähemmän. Jo silloin kun kirkko siunataan käyttöön, rituaalissa kuuluva piispan sisääntulo nähdään symboloivan tuonelanporttien tuhoamisen. Tällöin piispa ajaa pahat henget ulos kirkosta ja kirkko pyhitetään, jotta se muuttuu maallisesta tilasta pyhäksi. Ihmeissä esiintyvät parannusta etsivät astuvat nöyrinä kirkkoon ja muuttuvat kirkon lailla puhtaiksi ja vapautuvat rajoitteistaan.

Kirkkotila symboloi Kristusta, mikä näky siinä, että sen tilat nimettiin Kristukseen ruumiinosien mukaan. Tämän tradition mukaan sisäänkäynti olisi tällöin ymmärretty sisäänkäyntinä Kristuksen ruumiiseen, jolloin se palveli yliluonnollisen kokemuksen keskuksena ja avusti ihmisiä kohti hengellistä muodonmuutosta. Kirkkoon astuminen oli itsessään ”pienimuotoinen pyhiinvaellus”. Tavoitteena oli pääsy Dunstanin läsnäoloon ja sen kautta myös Kristuksen läsnäoloon. Ihmettä etsivä fyysisesti lähestyy Dunstanin ruumista ja hän saa parannuksen Kristuksen armosta Dunstanin välityksellä. Parantuminen vahvistaa, että Dunstan on taivaassa ja kykenee toimimaan välittäjänä. Lopuksi tämä matka päättyy ylistykseen, joka toistuu jokaisessa ihmekertomuksessa.

Luku 3 syventyy muistomerkin ja haudan saavutettavuuteen ja merkityksiin. Alaluvussa 3.1 muistomerkin keskeinen sijainti heijastaa Dunstanin suosiota, erityisesti yhteisön munkkien kesken. Justified graph -analyysin mukaan, muistomerkki oli analysoitavista alueista kaikkein saavutettavin ja todennäköisesti vaikutti ihmisten päivittäiseen toimintaan ja liikkumisen. 7 ihmekertomusta mainitsevat ihmeen tapahtuneen muistomerkin lähellä. Määrä on merkittävä ja viestii jonkinlaisesta rajojen lieventämisestä tietyille parannusta etsiville. Kärsimyksen tuominen Dunstanin eteen, ja siten Kristuksen eteen, voitiin nähdä hyveellisenä ja mahdollisesti edesauttoi pääsyä muistomerkillä. Kannustimena toimi myös luostariyhteisön jäsenten toive ihmeperantamisen toteutumisesta, joka lisäisi Dunstanin kannatusta ja vahvistaisi hänen pyhimysstatustaan. Mitä ilmeisimmin vieraita vastaanotettiin tai haluttiin vastaanottaa enemmän 1000-luvun lopulla, sillä yleisesti englantilaisissa ihmekertomuksissa

”ulkopuolisten” määrä alkoi lisääntymään. Vaikka vieraanvaraisuus oli erityisen tärkeää, vieraiden lisääntyminen myös häiritsi munkkien päivittäisiä rutiineja. Näitä häiriöitä oli erityisesti juhlapäivinä, jotka houkuttelivat suuria joukkoja kirkkoihin. Vaikka joissakin englantilaisissa ihmekertomuksissa kuvataan pyhiinvaeltajien jättämiä sotkuja ja tuhoja, Dunstanin *miraculassa* näitä esiintyy vain kaksi, eikä niitäkään kuvata negatiivisessa valossa. 1000-luvun lopun Englannissa myös kirkkoja rakennettiin ja laajennettiin ”pyhiinvaeltajaystävällisiksi”, mutta Canterburyn katedraali todennäköisesti liittyi tähän trendiin vasta vuoden 1070 jälleenrakennuksen myötä. Pitkin tutkielmaa myös nousi esille kysymys kryptan käytöstä, missä Dunstanin hauta sijaitsi. Ottaen huomioon sen olemattomat maininnat, sekä muistomerkin korostaminen, on hyvin epätodennäköistä, että maallikoilla oli pääsy kryptaan.

Alaluvussa 3.2 tarkastelen kuinka muistomerkillä ja ihmeille tuotetut merkitykset vahvistavat Dunstanin pyhyyttä. Ennen kuolemaansa Dunstan valitsi oman hautapaikkansa munkkikuorin ja apsiksen välissä maan alla. Valinta oli tietoinen ja viestii Dunstanin halukkuutta toimia kytköksenä sekä oman maallisen munkkiyhteisön että taivaallisen valtakunnan välillä kuoleman jälkeen. Ihmeet heijastavat voimakkaasti Raamatun tapahtumia, joista yöllä tapahtuvat ihmeet viittaavat erityisesti Kristukseen ja apostoleihin. Ihmekertomus 13 kertoo pääsiäisihmeestä, jossa Dunstanin muistomerkki symboloi Kristuksen hautaa. Kristuksen ylösnousemuksen hetkellä muistomerkin lähellä oleva liikuntakyvytön mies nousee pystyyn ja ikään kuin saa uuden elämän parantuneessa kehossa. Yö oli merkittävä vuorokaudenaika myös Dunstanin elämässä, sillä hän oli erityisen omistautunut laulamaan psalmeja kaupungin pyhissä paikoissa öisin. Tätä omistautuneisuutta palkittiin myös yöllisellä näyllä katedraalin läheisyydessä sijaitsevassa Pyhän Augustinuksen luostarin kirkossa, joka täyttyi valosta, sekä tanssivista ja virsiä laulavista neitsyistä. Yön viettäminen kirkossa ja yölliset ihmeet antavat helposti kuvan, että muistomerkki oli saavutettava päivin ja öin. Kuitenkin, muissa englantilaisissa hagiografioissa yöpyminen tapahtui usein juhlapäivien yhteydessä. Dunstanin *miraculassa* esiintyy kuusi kertomusta, jotka mainitsevat yöpymistä, joista neljä tapahtuvat juhlapäivien yhteydessä. Näistä neljästä, kolme ovat Osbernin todistamia ja ovatkin ainoita Osbernin itse todistamia ihmeitä. On mahdollista, että muutkin ihmeet ovat tapahtuneet juhlapäivinä ja jääneet syystä tai toisesta mainitsematta.

Dunstanin elämän toisintamista nähdään myös vieraanvaraisuuden kautta. Vaikka vieraanvaraisuus oli välttämätön osa benediktiinimunkin elämää, se oli ominaisuus, josta Dunstan tunnettiin. Köyhien auttaminen ja anteliaisuus oli erityisen lähellä Dunstanin sydäntä ja hän jatkoi samaa työtä myös kuolemansa jälkeen ihmekertomuksissa. Muistomerkin

suunnatessaan katseen kohti Dunstania, se samalla muistutti Jumalan lupauksista apua tarvitseville. Samalla muistomerkki toimi päivittäisenä muistutuksena yhteisön jäsenille anteliaisuuden hyveestä ja Dunstanin esimerkistä. Ihmekertomusten kontekstissa, muistomerkki korostuu paikkana, jossa maallinen ja taivaallinen kohtaavat ja Raamatun tapahtumat koetaan uudelleen. Muistomerkki loistaa taivaan kunniaa, mutta toimii myös sairaalana heille, jotka kaipaavat hengellistä tai ruumiillista parannusta. Kuolemanjälkeisessä elämässä Dunstan palvelee sairaanhoitajana ja potilaan puolestapuhujana Jumalan, suuren lääkärin, edessä ja on ystävä apua etsiville tarjoten lohtua ja veljellistä rakkautta.

Tutkielmaa voisi luonnehtia kokeelliseksi. Materiaalisen ja kirjallisen ulottuvuuden suhteen kysymys on tarjonnut monia uusia näkökulmia ja lähtökohtia tutkia kuinka ihmiset kirjallisesti tuottavat heille tuttuja asioita, tapahtumia tai ihmisiä välittääkseen tiettyä viestiä. Tähän tarkoitukseen *miracula* on ollut korvaamaton alkuperäislähde, sillä se sulkee sisäänsä tunnettuja ja hagiografisessa genressä toistettuja topoksia ja merkityksiä. Analysoimalla kirkkotilaa ja sen käyttöä tekstissä ja fyysisessä muodossa on selvää, että Osbern pyrki sekä luomaan uusia kuvauksia Dunstanista että kehittämään olemassa olevia käsityksiä hänen pyhydestään. Tekstissä esiintyvät merkitykset tarkkaan ottaen palvelevat Dunstanin pyhyden tuottamista ja havainnollistavat hänen ajatonta ystävyyttä ja uskollisuutta häntä lähestyville. Kirkon tilat aktiivisesti mahdollistivat hänen pyhyttään, muistuttivat hänen hyveellisyydestä, sekä toimivat hänen ihmeellisten kuolemanjälkeisten tekojen näyttämönä.