

SACRED MOUNTAINEERING AND THE IMAGERY OF ASCENT FROM CATALONIA TO PROVENCE, C. 1370–C. 1520

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the history, imagery and function of stational cycles of wayside crosses and oratories deployed to structure the ascent of pilgrims to four mountain sanctuaries in the western Mediterranean (Montserrat in Catalonia; Lluc on the island of Mallorca; Notre-Dame de la Garde at Marseille and the Sainte-Baume, both in Provence). Focusing in particular on the relationship between a chosen sequence of pictorial narratives and their specific geophysical environment, this study is meant as a contribution to both the current debate on the furnishing, lay-out and iconography of the sacred mountain landscapes of premodern Europe and to the nascent field of Mountaineering Culture Studies.

KEYWORDS

Holy mountains; Joys of Virgin Mary; life of Mary Magdalen; pilgrimage; wayside crosses; Montserrat (Catalonia); Sainte-Baume.

Noi salvam per entro 'l sasso rotto,
e d'ogne lato ne stringea lo stremo,
e piedi e man volea il suol di sotto [...]
Lo sommo er'alto che vincea la vista,
e la costa superba più assai
che da mezzo quadrante a centro lista.

Dante, *Purgatorio*, Canto IV, 31–33, 40–42¹

This article investigates the collaboration between the human imagination and the geophysical environment during the closing centuries of the Middle Ages. We will explore four sacred mountains in the northwestern Mediterranean, one in Catalonia, one on Mallorca, and two in Provence, of which the first three are dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and the last to Mary Magdalen [Fig. 1]. What interests me in particular is not so much the summit shrines themselves, but the taxing paths that brought pilgrims there from the foot of the mountain and were in each case lined by programs of narrative scenes that unfolded over a succession of wayside crosses, steles, or tabernacled chapels. With the exception of the last site, which dates to the early sixteenth century, the places under discussion here feature some of the earliest stational imagery displayed in a landscape setting in the medieval West. Save for a few surviving fragments, however, the four image cycles no longer exist, so part of what I wish to do in the following is to reconstruct them as fully as possible. My reconstructions in turn provide the basis for pursuing further questions: What was the relationship of the successively presented imagery to its natural surroundings? Which scenes were featured at the base of the mountain, and which were chosen for its summit? How did the sequential viewing of the narratives inflect the bodily experience of scaling the mountain and what was the relationship between journeys of the flesh and journeys of the mind? And finally, what philosophical, theological, and devotional underpinnings informed the structured mountain ascents pilgrims undertook at these four sites?

There has been a recent upsurge of scholarship on the holy mountain landscapes of Byzantium, on the one hand, and of Counter-Reformation Europe on the other.² Indeed, the study of one

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“We were climbing within the broken rock, / and on either side the banks hemmed us in, / and the ground beneath us required both feet and hands [...] The summit was so high it vanquished sight, / and the slope was much haughtier / than a line from mid-quadrant to center” (*The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, II: Purgatorio*, ed. and transl. Robert M. Durling, Oxford 2003, 66–67).

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For holy mountains in the Byzantine sphere, see Veronica Della Dora, *Landscape, Nature, and the Sacred in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2016, esp. Part III; Svetlana Smolčić-Makuljević, *The Holy Mountain in Byzantine Visual Culture of Medieval [sic!] Balkans: Sinai – Athos – Treskavac*, in: Stiftung Bibliothek Werner Oechslin Einsiedeln (ed.), *Heilige Landschaft – heilige Berge: Achter Internationaler Barocksommerkurs 2007*, Zürich 2014, 242–263; Veronica Della Dora, *Gardens of Eden and Ladders to Heaven: Holy Mountain Geographies in Byzantium*, in: Keith D. Lilley (ed.), *Mapping Medieval Geographies: Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and Beyond, 300–1600*, Cambridge 2014, 271–299; see also the relevant essays in Sharon E. J. Gerstel (ed.), *Approaching the Holy Mountain: Art and Liturgy at St Catherine’s Monastery in the Sinai* (Cursor mundi 11), Turnhout 2010; Peter Soustal (ed.), *Heilige Berge und Wüsten: Byzanz und sein Umfeld; Referate auf dem 21. Internationalen Kongress für Byzantinistik, London, 21.–26. August 2006* (Denkschriften, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 2006).

specific type of holy mountain largely associated with the post-Tridentine period, the *Sacri Monti* of the Italian peninsula, has spawned a veritable cottage industry that has generated a flurry of conferences, publications, and doctoral dissertations over the past decade alone.³ Like another visual and topographical “translation” of the biblical *loci sancti*, the Stations of the Cross, which had appeared in northern Europe a few decades earlier, around 1440,⁴ Italy’s *gran teatri montani* revolved around a series of stational images – often contained within chapels – that were arranged sequentially across a given piece of elevated geography. These take the viewer on a substitute journey either through the entire Holy Land, as at Varallo Sesia in the Piedmont (begun in 1486), or along the *via dolorosa* and other sacred sites within and outside the walls of Jerusalem, as at San Vivaldo in Tuscany (begun in 1500).⁵

mie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 379), Vienna 2009; and Dimitri E. Conomos (ed.), *Mount Athos the Sacred Bridge: The Spirituality of the Holy Mountain*, Oxford 2005. For holy mountains in general, see Karl Gratzl, *Mythos Berg: Lexikon der bedeutenden Berge aus Mythologie, Kulturgeschichte und Religion*, Purkersdorf 2000. Cf. also the relevant essays in Mary D. Edwards and Elizabeth Baily (eds.), *Gravity in Art: Essays on Weight and Weightlessness in Painting, Sculpture and Photography*, Jefferson, NC 2012. For the sacred mountains of early modern Europe, see now the essays in the two conference volumes: Serenella Castri (ed.), *I monti di Dio*, Turin 2014; and *Heilige Landschaft – heilige Berge*; see also Vanja Konrad, *Heilige Berge – Fromme Wege: Eine motivgeschichtliche Annäherung zur Frage nach dem „richtigen“ Lebensweg des Menschen*, in: Ursula Röper and Martin Trembl (eds.), *Heiliges Grab – Heilige Gräber: Aktualität und Nachleben von Pilgerorten* (Schriftenreihe des Museums Europäischer Kulturen 13), Berlin 2014, 75–87.

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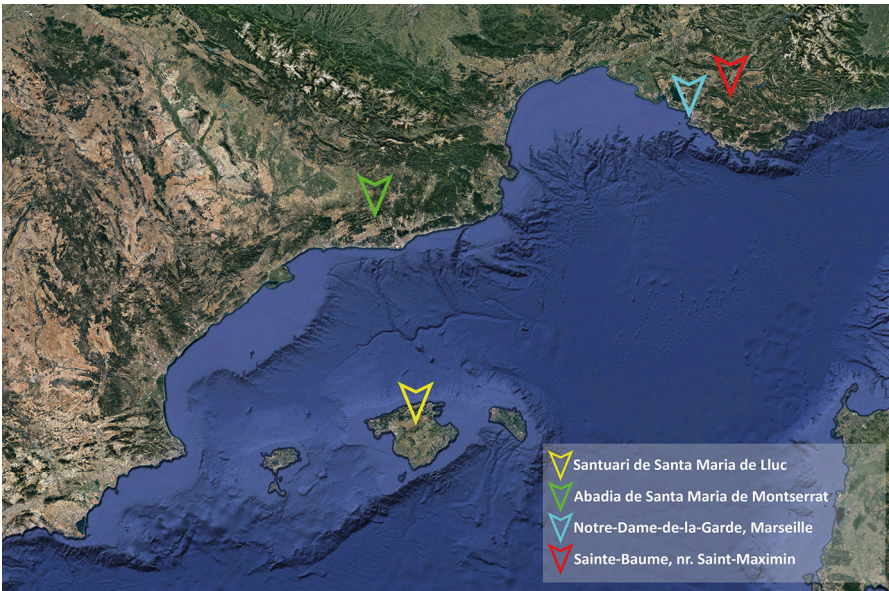
See most recently, Claudius Weykonath, Der „Sacro Monte“ von Varallo Sesia in paratouristischer Funktion, in: Dominic E. Delarue (ed.), *Bildräume, Raumbilder: Studien aus dem Grenzbereich von Bild und Raum* (Regensburger Studien zur Kunstgeschichte 26), Regensburg 2017, 141–156; Margaret F. Bell, Image as Relic: Bodily Vision and the Reconstitution of Viewer/Image Relationships in the Sacro Monte di Varallo, in: *Californian Italian Studies* 5, 2015, 303–331; Tsafra Siew, Translations of the Jerusalem Pilgrimage Route at the Holy Mountains of Varallo and San Vivaldo, in: Renana Bartal and Hanna Vorholt (eds.), *Between Jerusalem and Europe: Essays in Honor of Bianca Kühnel* (Visualising the Middle Ages 11), Leiden 2015, 113–132; Bram de Klerck, Jerusalem in Renaissance Italy: The Holy Sepulchre on the Sacro Monte of Varallo, in: Jeroen Goudeau (ed.), *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art and Architecture* (Radbout Studies in the Humanities 2), Leiden 2014, 215–236; and Christine Göttler, The Temptation of the Senses at the Sacro Monte di Varallo, in: Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (eds.), *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe* (Intersections 26), Leiden 2013, 393–451. See also the essays in Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoppa (eds.), *I rinascimento de Gaudenzio Ferrari*, Milan 2018; Dorino Tuniz (ed.), *I Sacri Monti: Itinerari ascetici cristiani* (Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà 28), Rome 2015; the relevant contributions in Amilcare Barbero and Giuseppe Roma (eds.), *Di ritorno del pellegrinaggio a Gerusalemme: riproposizione degli avvenimenti e dei luoghi di Terra Santa nell’immaginario religioso fra XV e XVI secolo*, Ponzano Monferrato 2008; Amilcare Barbero (ed.), *L’anima felice: parole e immagini del vissuto quotidiano nel cammino di Santiago e nei Sacri Monti*, Ponzano Monferrato 2007; and Antonio Diano (ed.), *Tra monti sacri, sacri monti e santuari: il caso veneto* (Carrubio 6), Padua 2006; cf. also Santino Langé, *Il misterio e il luogo: paesaggio e spiritualità nei nove Sacri Monti*, Busto Arsizio 2008; Luigi Zanzi and Paolo Zanzi (eds.), *Atlante dei Sacri Monti prealpini*, Milan 2002; and George Kubler, Sacred Mountains in Europe and America, in: Timothy Verdon (ed.), *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, Syracuse, NY 1990, 413–444.

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For the pre-Reformation history of the Stations in the German-speaking lands, see Achim Timmermann, *Memory and Redemption: Public Monuments and the Making of Late Medieval Landscape* (Architectura Medii Aevi 8), Turnhout 2017, 113–120, 149–168 *passim*, with further literature. A book-length monograph on the Stations of the Cross in late medieval Europe is currently in preparation.

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For a comparison of the different layouts of the two sites, see Siew, *Translations of the Jerusalem Pilgrimage Route*.



[Fig. 1]

Map showing the four principal sites under investigation. Photo: Ryan Waddell.

In addition to the growing scholarship on sacred mountain landscapes in different parts of Europe and the Near East, the past few years have also seen the emergence of a new area of intellectual enquiry called “Mountaineering Culture Studies,” an as-yet loosely defined field that studies the visual and textual representations of mountains and mountaineering, including travel literature and film, within a variety of historical, post-colonial, anthropological, and ecological frameworks.⁶ Much of the attention focuses on accounts of exploration from Victorian times onwards, especially in the Alps, the Himalayas, the Andes, and the Rocky Mountains, and pre-modern attitudes toward mountains and feats of alpinism get little attention. An exception to this is Martin Korenjak’s “Why Mountains Matter,” which looks at a variety of different discourses around early mountain ascents, including princely heroism (Peter III of Aragon climbing the Pic du Canigou in the eastern Pyrenees in 1285) and humanism (Francesco Petrarca famously scaling Mont Ventoux in Provence in 1336), as well as antiquarianism and proto-tourism.⁷ In another notable article that considers Petrarca’s ascent of the tallest peak in the Vaucluse as a spiritual quest and epistemological challenge, Albrecht Classen argues that while earlier medieval attitudes toward mountains were invariably negative, from the twelfth century onward mountain landscapes increasingly became a subject of curiosity. At first, they functioned as charged settings for the literary imagination, as, for instance, in Marie de France’s *lai* “Les deus amanz” (c. 1170) and its evocation of the fictive Mount Pitres.⁸ Both Korenjak and Classen also stress that throughout the entire Middle Ages pilgrimage was the only cultural practice that actually encouraged the physical scaling of mountains, at least those peaks in whose summit shrines Salvation could be sought and found. To these practices one can of course add hunting, mountain farming, and certain types of animal husbandry.

My article is intended as a contribution to both the growing study of “mountaineering culture” and to the current debate on western Europe’s holy mountains, with its preponderant focus on the *Sacri Monti* of Lombardy and the Piedmont. I argue that the deployment of sequences of stational images up the mountain slope had a decisive impact on the development of a particular form of pre-modern alpinism, which I here call “sacred mountaineering.” Though outwardly physical in nature, this practice was ultimately

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In 2017 the Nepal Mountain Academy, which is affiliated with Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, launched its Bachelor degree program in Mountaineering Studies (BMS).

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Martin Korenjak, Why Mountains Matter: Early Modern Roots of a Modern Notion, in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, 2017, 179–219.

8

Albrecht Classen, The Discovery of the Mountain as an Epistemological Challenge: A Paradigm Shift in the Approach to Highly Elevated Nature; Petrarch’s *Ascent to Mont Ventoux* and Emperor Maximilian’s *Theuerdank*, in: David Hawkes and Richard G. Newhauser (eds.), *The Book of Nature and Humanity in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 29), Turnhout 2013, 3–18.

configured to result in a parallel spiritual ascent. It is also my contention that series of mountain shrines fitted with sequences of images displayed *en plein air*, such as those at the sites explored here, were among the conceptual precursors of Italy's *Sacri Monti*. The goal of visiting them was not to vicariously experience the topography of another place and another time, but to seek Salvation before a locally venerated cult statue or else partake of the numinous nature of the mountain and its associations with the lives and miracles of particular saints.

Our Lady of Montserrat

Our first stop is the Benedictine monastery of Mare de Déu (Santa Maria in Castilian), which is nestled into a cluster of jaggedly bizarre rocks of Triassic sedimentary limestone more than halfway up the 1,236-meter summit of Montserrat, one of the highest points of the Catalan lowlands located some sixty kilometers to the northwest of Barcelona. Founded sometime between 1025 and 1035, the monastery only became an abbey in 1409; for the preceding three and a half or so centuries it had been a priory belonging to the powerful Abbey of Ripoll in the southeastern foothills of the Pyrenees.⁹ Montserrat's principal attraction was the miracle-working statue of a black Madonna, known as *La Moreneta*, which had drawn pious visitors to the mountain since at least the twelfth century.¹⁰ Pilgrims coming from the direction of Barcelona would usually arrive in the village of Collbató, the southern terminus of the final leg of the route to the monastery (now called the *Camí Vell*), which is

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For the history of Montserrat and its monastery, see Josep De C. Laplana, *Montserrat: Arte e historia*, Barcelona 2009; Anselm M. Albareda, *Història de Montserrat*, Montserrat 1977. For an anthropological perspective on Montserrat as a mountain sanctuary, see Marlène Albert Llorca, *La Vierge et les montagnes: l'exemple catalan*, in: Serge Brunet (ed.), *Montagnes sacrées d'Europe: Actes du colloque "Religion et montagnes"*, Tarbes, 30 mai – 2 juin 2002, Paris 2005, 207–213; for a discussion of Montserrat in the context of Catalan maritime shrines, see Francesca Español Bertran, *Le voyage d'outremer et sa dimension spirituelle: Les sanctuaires maritimes de la côte catalane*, in: Michele Bacci and Martin Rohde (eds.), *The Holy Portolano / Le Portulan sacré: The Sacred Geography of Navigation in the Middle Ages; Fribourg Colloquium 2013* (Scriinium Fribourgense 36), Berlin and Boston 2014, 257–281.

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On the image of *La Moreneta*, its history, and wider reception in the visual arts, see Francesc Xavier Altés (ed.), *La imatge de la Mare de Déu de Montserrat*, Montserrat 2003; and *Nigra sum: Iconografia de Santa Maria de Montserrat* (exh. cat. Barcelona, Museu de Montserrat), ed. by Josep de C. Laplana et al., Barcelona 1995. For the pilgrimage to Montserrat during the Middle Ages, its routes and rich material culture, see esp. Francesca Español, *Exvotos y recuerdos de peregrinación*, in: *El camí de Sant Jaume i Catalunya: actes del Congrés Internacional celebrat a Barcelona, Cervera i Lleida, els dies 16, 17 i 18 d'octubre de 2003*, Barcelona 2007, 297–317. But see also Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, *Pellegrinaggi e giubilei in Catalogna: I monasteri di Montserrat e di Sant Pere de Rodes e le destinazioni più lontani*, in: Luisa D'Arienzo (ed.), *Gli Anni Santi nella storia: Atti del Congresso Internazionale, Cagliari dal 16–19 ottobre 1999*, Cagliari 2000, 315–347; Gabriel Llompart, *Das Mirakelbuch des Abtes Pedro de Burgos und die Fahrten von Pilgern aus Mallorca zum Wallfahrtsort Santa Maria de Montserrat*, in: Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck and Gerda Möhler (eds.), *Wallfahrt kennt keine Grenzen*, Munich/Zürich 1984, 473–482; for the post-medieval period, see Ignasi Fernández Terricabras, *Montserrat, montagne sacrée: Spiritualization du territoire montagnard dans un massif catalan (XVIe – XVIIIe siècles)*, in: Serge Brunet (ed.), *Montagnes sacrées d'Europe: Actes du colloque "Religion et montagnes"*, Tarbes, 30 mai – 2 juin 2002, Paris 2005, 193–206.

some seven kilometers in length with a maximum altitude difference of 488 meters. It was from Collbató that wayfarers were able to get their first full view of “the admirable peaks of these rocks, arranged like the fortification towers of a large city,” to borrow the words of the Frenchman Barthélemy Joly, who visited the monastery in 1603–1604.¹¹

Between 1366 and 1372, during the priorate of Jaume de Viviers (1348–1375),¹² the *Camí Vell* was equipped with its distinctive visual-devotional infrastructure in the form of seven wayside crosses depicting the Seven Joys of the Virgin Mary. These were gifted by Peter IV, also known as “the Ceremonious,” King of Aragon (1336–1387), Mallorca (from 1344), Valencia (from 1348), and Count of Barcelona.¹³ As we will see, the pious donation and construction of this string of stational crosses aimed to make the taxing three-hour ascent more palatable to the growing numbers of pilgrims while also turning their journey to the summit into an edifying and spiritually uplifting experience. The principal artist recruited for the job was Pere or Pedro Moragues (c. 1330–1387/88), an increasingly prominent sculptor and goldsmith from Barcelona whom the king had appointed *familiarum et domesticum nostrum* a few years before.¹⁴ Moragues, who is now recognized as one of the key figures of the Catalan Italo-Gothic style, had previously collaborated on a number of altarpieces for some of Barcelona’s vast parish and conventual churches; in later years, he would distinguish himself by creating exquisite tomb monuments for his unusually high-ranking *clientèle*, such as Archbishop Lope de Fernández de Luna (d. 1382) whose remarkable alabaster sepulcher lies in Zaragoza cathedral. His liturgical metalwork also brought him renown – as evidenced by the so-called *Custodia de los Corporales*, an intricate rayed monstrance

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“[À] Colbatel [...] nous nous mettions à considerer les pointes admirables de ces roches, arranges à guise de fortes tours d’une grosse ville” (Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Le voyage en Espagne: Anthologie des voyageurs français et francophones du XVIe au XIXe siècle*, Paris 1998, 547–548).

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On Jaume de Viviers, who greatly expanded the land holdings and legal sway of Montserrat by acquiring a number of parishes and castles in the vicinity of the monastery and buying the rights to criminal jurisdiction in surrounding towns and villages, see Albareda, *Història de Montserrat*, 46–47.

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The extant documentation on these monuments was published by Ànselm M. Albareda, Pere Moragues, escultor i orfebre, in: *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 22, 1936, 499–514.

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For Moragues, his life and *œuvre*, see in particular Maria Rosa Terés, Pere Moragues, escultor, in: *L’art gòtic a Catalunya: Escultura I; La configuració de l’estil*, Barcelona 2007, 275–290. See also the entry by Renate Treydel in the *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon* 90, Berlin/Boston 2016, 404; and the recent studies by Víctor Daniel López Lorente, *Construyendo edificios de oro y plata: las relaciones entre la orfebrería y la arquitectura en la corona de Aragón (siglos XIV y XV)*, in: *Codex aquilarensis* 31, 2015, 167–184; Maria Rosa Terés, *La escultura del Gótico Internacional en la Corona de Aragón: los primeros años (ca. 1400–1416)*, in: *ARTigrama* 26, 2011, 149–183, at 154–161; and Maria Victoria Almuni Balada, Pere de Moragues, mestre major de l’obra de la seu de Tortosa, in: *Anuario de estudios medievales* 30, 2000, 423–449. Older publications treating the work of Moragues include Núria de Dalmases Balañá, *Orfebreria catalana medieval en Barcelona, 1300–1500*, 2 vols., Barcelona 1992, I, 67–74; Núria de Dalmases and Daniel Giralt-Miracle, *Plateros y joyeros de Cataluña*, Barcelona 1985, 105–106; and Albareda, Pere Moragues.

in the shape of a winged altarpiece likewise commissioned by King Peter (1384) and still in its original location, the collegiate church of Santa María in Daroca.

The relevant passage from the royal accounts relating to the erection of the crosses on the *Camí Vell* is dated 1 November 1366, and tasks Moragues with making “fourteen stories on seven stones [i.e. stone crosses]” that are to be “installed in certain positions amidst the rocks of Madonna Saint Mary of Montserrat. And these stories are those of the Seven Joys of the Madonna Saint Mary.”¹⁵ According to Anselm Albareda, who published this passage in 1936, Moragues was awarded the total sum of 25 gold florins and 1088 sous *barcelonins*, paid in several instalments, for his contribution to and coordination of the project. Other collaborating artists included Ramon Marenyà, a stonemason from Girona, who was given 600 sous *barcelonins* for making the columns supporting the actual cross heads; Bartolomeu Soler, a painter from Barcelona, who was paid 33 gold florins for polychroming the crosses; and an unnamed team of ox-drivers, masons, and auxiliary laborers tasked with the transport, assembly and erection of the crosses, who eventually received a total of 50 gold florins.¹⁶

Before we can attempt to tackle the intriguing question of how the “vij goygs de Madona sancta Maria” could have amounted to fourteen narrative scenes and how these might have been displayed on only seven crosses, a few words are in order about the Seven Joys themselves. Pertinent to this is a unique and partially illuminated compendium of religious poems and folk songs called the *Llibre Vermell*, which was produced at Montserrat and is still preserved in the monastic library there (MS 1). Devotional hymns and litanies, music, and imagery centered on the *Miraculum de septem gaudiis beatae Mariae virginis* are intimately associated with Franciscan mysticism, and gradually superseded a series of older cultural practices connected with the Virgin’s Five Joys (i.e. the Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension, and Heavenly Coronation) during the second half of the thirteenth century. At that time writers such as Henri de Valenciennes, Mechthild von Hackeborn, Gautier de Coincy, and the Parisian *trouvère* Rutebeuf added a series of new joyful miracles to the sequence of Marian mysteries; depending on context and author, these could vary from scenes of the Virgin’s early motherhood (Visitation, Adoration of the Magi, Presentation

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“Item, done an P. Moragues, mestre de ymages de la ciutat de Barcha. [Barcelona], los quals li eren deguts per raó di acurriment de salari de obrar .xiiij. istòries en .vij. pedres que de manament del dit senyor [King Peter IV] deuen ésser posades en certs lochs de les roques de Madona sancta Maria de Muntserrat. E les quals istòries són dels .vij. goygs de Madona sancta Maria [...]” (Albareda, Pere Moragues, 513).

¹⁶

Albareda, Pere Moragues, 505–514 *passim*.

in the Temple, and Finding in the Temple) to those of Pentecost and her Assumption.¹⁷

As Teresa Vincens has shown, the theme of the Marian Joys had a particular impact on the devotional, literary, musical and artistic landscapes of late medieval Catalonia.¹⁸ In the visual arts, the *goigs* were readily adapted for numerous retable schemes, such as Pere Serra's "Retaule d'Abella de la Conca" of c. 1375 (Museu Diocesà d'Urgell). Because of its sequential nature, the imagery especially lent itself to programs that were experienced spatially, keystone and mural cycles in particular, with the keystones in the Chapel of St. Michael in the Monastery of Pedralbes (c. 1343) furnishing the earliest documented example.¹⁹ Around the same time – sometime during the 1330s or 1340s – the famous *Llibre Vermell* (so-called because of its current red binding) was compiled at the

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The Seven Joys of the Virgin appear to constitute somewhat of a blind spot in current academic literature, very much in contrast to Mary's Seven Sorrows, which are, however, of later, fourteenth-century origin. For the role of the Joys in Franciscan spirituality, see B. Barban, *La corona dei sette gaudi*, in: *Quaderni di spiritualità francescana* 5, 1963, 124–133; for a look at the Joys in medieval German mysticism, see Gilles G. Meersseman, *Von den Freuden Mariens: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der niederdeutschen Mystik*, in: *Lebendiges Mittelalter: Festgabe für Wolfgang Stammer*, Fribourg 1958, 79–100, with references to a number of older editions. For the adaptation of the *septem gaudia* in the visual arts, see especially Teresa Vincens, *Els goigs marians: un programa iconogràfic del gòtic català*, in: *Butlletí del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya* 7, 2003, 25–50; see also André Louf, *Un triptyque de Simon Bening, commandité par Pierre van Onderberghen, abbé des Dunes (1515–1519)*, in: *Cîteaux* 43, 1992, 221–237; Norbert Schneider, *Zur Ikonographie von Memlings "Die sieben Freuden Mariens"*, in: *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 24, 1973, 21–32; and Mariette Fransolet, *Le retable des Sept Joies de l'église St. Nicholas de Tolentin, à Brou*, in: *Oud Holland* 48, 1931, 13–41. On the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, see now the contributions in Emily S. Thelen (ed.), *The Seven Sorrows Confraternity of Brussels: Drama, Ceremony, and Art Patronage (16th–17th Centuries)* (Studies in European Urban History 37), Turnhout 2015; Klaus Niehr, *Dürers Bild der „Sieben Schmerzen Mariens“ und die Bedeutung der retrospektiven Form*, in: *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 36, 2009, 117–143; and Carol M. Schuler, *The Seven Sorrows of the Virgin: Popular Culture and Cultic Imagery in Pre-Reformation Europe*, in: *Simiolus* 21, 1992, 5–28.

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Vicens, *Els goigs marians*. In contrast to other regions of Europe, in Catalonia – and even more so in Castile and Andalusia – the introduction of Marian iconography took place in a society that remained multi-confessional through the end of the fifteenth century, and in which interreligious and intercultural contacts, conflicts, and *rapprochements* determined the development of art well into the early modern period. For the status of Marian (as well as Christological) imagery amidst late medieval Spain's much-discussed "Three Confessions", see especially Felipe Pereda, *Images of Discord: Poetics and Politics of the Sacred Image in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Renovatio Artium), Turnhout 2018, and Cynthia Robinson, *Imagining the Passion in a Multiconfessional Castile: The Virgin, Christ, Devotions, and Images in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, University Park, PA 2013 (with a discussion of the reception of the Marian Joys in Castile on pp. 223–230). Other recent studies on Christian-Jewish-Muslim relationships in late medieval Iberia and their influence on artistic, religious and intellectual developments there include Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (eds.), *Special Issue: Interreligious Encounters in Polemics between Christians, Jews and Muslims in Iberia and Beyond* (Medieval Encounters 24), Leiden/Boston 2018; Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano (eds.), *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, Numen Book Series, Leiden/Boston 2013; Ana Echevarria, *Painting Politics in the Alhambra*, in: *Medieval Encounters* 14 (2008), 199–218; and ead., *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude towards Muslims in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Medieval Iberian Peninsula 12), Leiden/Boston/Cologne 1999.

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Vicens, *Els goigs marians*, 29.

Monastery of Montserrat.²⁰ Like other Occitan or Catalan texts, for example *Los VII gâutz de Nostra Dona* of 1263 by Guy de Foulques, the later Pope Clement IV (*reg.* 1265–1268),²¹ the ballad of *Los set gotxs recomptarem* recorded in the *Llibre Vermell* revolves around the following lineup of Joys, which I list here with the original stanzas on fol. 23v:

1. Annunciation	Ave Maria gracia plena Dominus tecum Virgo serena. Verge fos abans del part pura e sens falliment en lo part e prés lo part sens negun corrupiment.
2. Nativity	Lo Fill de Déus Verge pia de vós nasque verament.
3. Adoration of the Magi	Verge tres reys d'Orient cavalcant amb gran coratge al l'estrella precedent vengren al vostre abitatge. Offerint vos de gradatge Aur et mirr' et encenç.
4. Resurrection of Christ	Verg'estant dolorosa per la mort del Fill molt car romangues tota joyosa can lo vis resuscitar. A vos maire piadosa prima se volch demostrar.
5. Ascension of Christ	Verge lo quint alegratge que'n agues del fill molt car estant al munt d'olivatge al cel l'on vèès pujar. On aurem tots alegratge si per nos vos plau pregar.
6. Pentecost	Verge quan foren complitz los dies de pentecosta amb vos eren aunits los apostols e de costa. Sobre tots sens nula costa devallà l'esperit sant.

20

The dating follows Vicens, *Els goigs marians*, 30. For a partial facsimile edition of the *Llibre*, see Francesc Xavier Altés i Aguiló (ed.), *Llibre Vermell de Montserrat: Edició facsimil parcial del manuscrit num. 1 de la Biblioteca de l'Abadia de Montserrat*, Barcelona 1989; see also Maricarmen Gómez Muntané, *El Llibre Vermell: Cantos y danzas de fines del medioevo*, Madrid 2017. Iconographical aspects are explored in Sandra Sáenz-López Pérez, *A Late Medieval Tribute to God the Creator: the Geographical Compendium in the Llibre vermell* (Library of Montserrat, Barcelona, MS 1, ff. 68r–70r), in: *Word & Image* 33, 2017, 183–211; for the *Llibre* as a source for our understanding of the nexus between medieval music and pilgrimage, see Claudio Gallico, *Musica e pellegrinaggi: ricognizione di fonti; multiformità delle tradizioni*, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (ed.), *Le vie del medioevo: atti del convegno internazionale di studi Parma, 28 settembre – 1 ottobre 1998*, I convegni di Parma 1, Milan 2000, 61–72.

21

See C. Fabre (ed.), *Les Sept Joies de la Vierge: Los VII Gâutz de Nostra Dona, poème provençal par Guy, Folques (pape Clément IV), xiiiè siècle* (Mémoires de la Société scientifique et agricole de la Haute-Loire 16), Le Puy 1920.

7. Coronation of the Virgin	Verge'l derrer alegratge que'n agues en aquest mon vostre Fill amb coratge vos munta al cel pregon. On sots tots temps coronada Regina perpetual. ²²
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It is not certain when the *Los set gotxs* were composed let alone first put in writing, though like most of the other songs in the *Llibre Vermell* they probably predated the book's completion in c. 1399 by several decades. If we assume that the ballad of the Seven Joys originated at Montserrat just before or around the time of the seven crosses for the *Camí Vell* were begun in 1366, we can tentatively postulate that the Joys depicted on Moragues' stational cycle were probably identical to those described in the *Red Book*. Just how the Joys shown on the crosses functioned in relation to the singing of the ballad can only be surmised. We can certainly imagine pilgrims repeatedly chanting its verses as they walked past the monuments or paused in their shadow, though it is also possible to conceive of the sequence as a kind of visual prelude to the ultimate performance of the *Set gotxs* before the shrine of the *Moreneta*.

Having identified Moragues' likely choice of scenes, we can now return to the question of how the seven crosses might have depicted the Seven Joys in fourteen individual *istories* or narrative episodes. Soon after becoming an abbey in 1409, the monastery of Montserrat began to engage in vigorous pictorial self-promotion, which lasted well into the early modern period. Fascinatingly, the visual identity of the abbey coalesced not so much around the cult statue of *La Moreneta* but around abbreviated representations of the sacred mountain and its peculiar *genius loci* itself.²³ These invariably showed the monastic complex, located halfway up the summit, a

22

[1.] Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord may be with you, serene Virgin. Virgin, before your labor you were pure and faultless, from your labor and after it you remained uncorrupted. [2.] The son of God was truly born of you, pious Virgin. [3.] Virgin, three Kings from the Orient, riding with great courage, following the star, they arrived at your house. They offered you – one after the other – gold and myrrh and incense. [4.] Virgin, being grieved by the death of your beloved son, you are now full of joy, having seen him revive. He wanted to appear first to you, merciful mother. [5.] Virgin, the fifth joy that you received from your beloved son happened when, on Mount Olive, you saw him ascend to Heaven. We will be full of joy if you pray for us. [6.] Virgin, after the days of Pentecost, the apostles and the others were united by you. Above all came the Holy Spirit. [7.] Virgin, the last joy you is not found here; your son takes you to heaven with great courage, where you will remain crowned for all time, perpetual queen” (https://dick.wursten.be/Vermell_originaltexts_translations.htm; accessed 15 November 2018). For a musicological discussion of *Los set gotxs*, see Carmen Gómez i Muntané, *El Llibre Vermell de Montserrat: Cants i dances s. XIV*, Barcelona 2000, 37–44.

23

See in particular Nigra sum: Iconografia de Santa Maria de Montserrat, *passim*; for the post-medieval period, see esp. Silvia Canalda i Llobet, L'iconografia della Santa Immagine in Santa Maria in Monserrato a Roma: un incontro tra l'identità catalana e castigliana tra il XVI e il XVII secolo, in: Alexander Koller and Susanne Kubersky-Piredda (eds.), *Identità e rappresentazione: le chiese nazionali a Roma, 1450–1650*, Rome 2015, 65–92; ead., *Retratos de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat: la mirada tridentina de una imagen de culto medieval*, in: Dominique Allios (ed.), *Le plaisir de l'art du Moyen Âge: commande, production et réception de l'œuvre d'art; mélanges en hommage à Xavier Barral i Altet*, Paris 2012, 1004–1012; D. Jesús Pérez Morera, El grabado como fuente iconográfica: el tema de la Virgen de Montserrat en la pintura flamenco y peruana, in: *Homenaje al profesor Hernández Perera*, Madrid 1992, 399–407.

number of hermitages scattered across the mountainside, and – dominating it all – a large figure of the Virgin and Child near the jagged peaks. In some images, the Christ Child is depicted holding a carpenter’s saw and cutting notches into the top of the rocks, literally turning the mountain into a *mons serratus*. In others, we can see the *Camí Vell* with its string of crosses and the occasional pilgrim seeking spiritual succor.²⁴ It seems that Moragues’ crosses survived in their original form until the early 1520s, by which time they were enclosed within four-sided baldachin-chapels that offered some protection from the sun and inclement weather and, quite possibly, also seating for pilgrims [Fig. 2].²⁵ The decision to transform the monuments into so-called covered crosses (*creus cobertas* in Catalan, *cruces cubiertas* in Castilian)²⁶ probably came from abbot Pedro de Burgos (reg. 1512–1536), a Castilian who also oversaw the enlargement of the monastic church and the reconstruction of the monks’ dormitories and pilgrims’ quarters.²⁷ An image by an anonymous Catalan master dating to about 1650 and now in the Museu de Montserrat suggests that the crosses themselves lasted for another century or so within their early sixteenth-century chapels, after which they were removed and replaced by paintings presumably also depicting the Seven Joys of the Virgin.²⁸

Of particular interest here is the panel of the “Sancta Marya de Montserrat,” commissioned in 1479 from the Aragonese painter Martín Bernat (fl. c. 1450–1505) for the church of St Michael the Archangel in Alfajarín, which is located about twenty-three kilometers

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These include two woodcuts, both published at Montserrat, the first by Johann Luschner (1499), the second possibly by Johann Rosenbach (c. 1520), and at least two paintings, a panel executed in 1479 by Martín Bernat for a church in Zaragoza, and an altarpiece created by an anonymous Valencian master in c. 1510 and now in the Museo de la Santa Cruz in Toledo. See Nigra sum: Iconografía de Santa Maria de Montserrat, 64 no. 5.1, fig. p. 17, and 72 no. 9; for the first printing press at Montserrat, operated by Johann Luschner, see Anselm M. Albareda, *Die Drucke des Klosters Montserrat von 1499 bis 1500* (Philobiblion 9–10), Vienna 1936. For Bernat’s image, see the main text above, and note 29.

25

The baldachin-chapels first appear in a woodcut published in 1524 (Montserrat: Johann Rosenbach) and showing pilgrims on their way from Collbató to the abbey at the top of the mountain (Laplana, Monserrat, fig. p. 75; Nigra sum: Iconografía de Santa Maria de Montserrat, 78 no. 13).

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For this type of cross, see Albert Bastardes, *Les creus al vent*, Barcelona 1983, *passim*. Three such *cruces cubiertas*, with crosses from the late fourteenth century and baldachins dating to the first decades of the fifteenth century, still mark the limits of the old city of Valencia (see also the main text above). Two further such crosses, both dating from the fifteenth century, still stand at Selva del Camp and Gandesa near Tarragona. The type was also popular in Provence, where at least two late Gothic *croix couvertes* have survived, the first at Fourques near Beaucaire (1380s), the second at Pernes-les-Fontaines near Carpentras (after 1433).

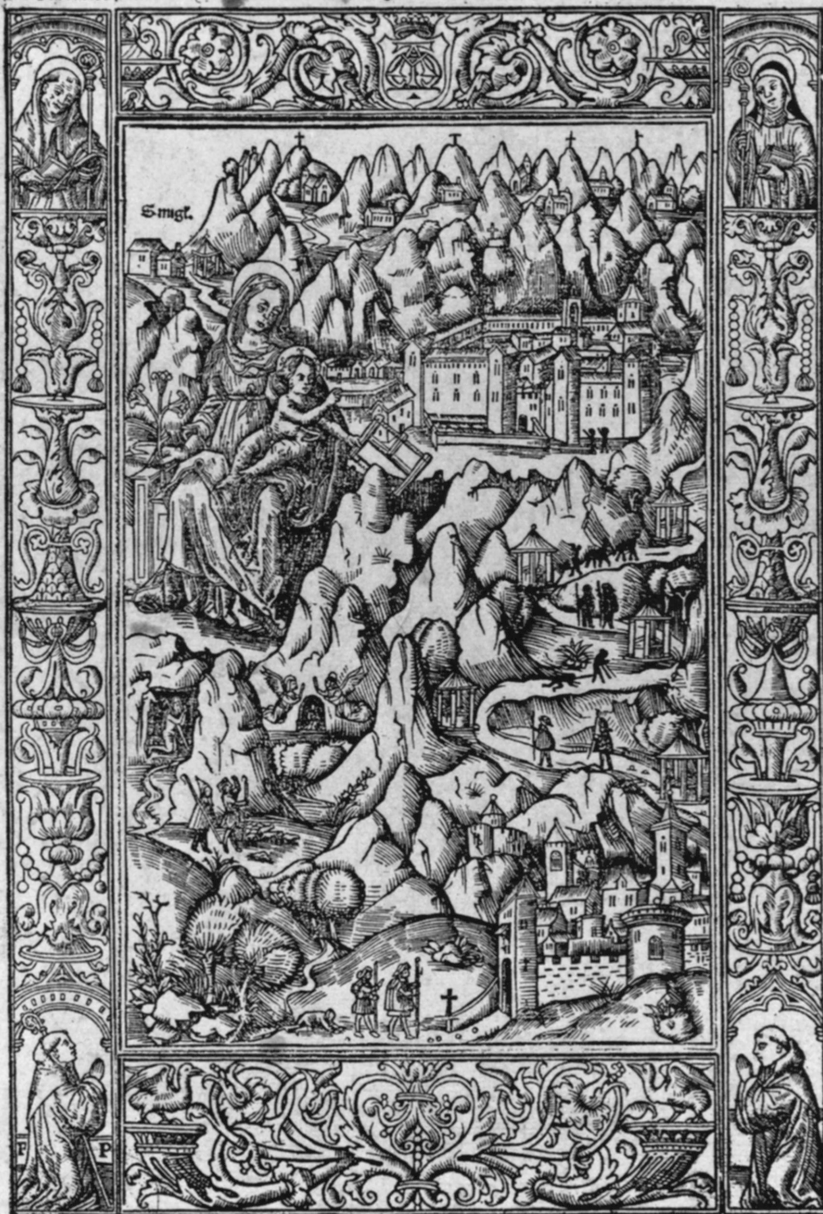
27

On the abbacy of Pere de Burgos, see Laplana, Monserrat, 73–86.

28

See Nigra sum: Iconografía de Santa Maria de Montserrat, 94 no. 20, with fig. (with an erroneous dating of the painting to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century).

Confadría del deuotissimo Monesterio y camera angelical de nra señora la virgen Maria de Montate instituida para q
 cō las limosnas de los fieles xpianos q̄ cu ella q̄hierē entrar se pueda cōseruar y mātener la grādissima ospitalidad q̄ en el
 dicho Monesterio se sostiene cō tanta multitud de gēte q̄ de d̄ueras partes del mūdo ael cōcurrē por los grādes milagros q̄
 nro Señor Dios por los mercederos e intercession de su gloriofissima madre de continuo en el obra.



Codo fiel xpiano assi hombre como muger: q̄ en la dicha cōfadría entrare y en el libro della se biere escruuir es fecho partā
 ocupante assi en vida como en muerte en todas las d̄issas. Oficios diuinos. Oraciones. deuotiones. Albormentas. Bys
 unos. Limosnas. Ospitalidad e en todas las otras buenas obras q̄ por la gracia de Dios en el dicho Monesterio se permit
 tas de su montaña e por los cōfades de la dicha cōfadría se celebrará e parara para siempre mas.

[Fig. 2]

View of Montserrat, with Cami Vell and creus cobertas; woodcut, Montserrat, 1524; var-
 ious collections. Photo: Nigra sum: Iconografia de Santa Maria de Montserrat, fig. 43.

southeast of Zaragoza [Fig. 3].²⁹ The image is dominated by a looming *virgo lactans* seated in front of a brocaded cloth of honor. While a chapel at her feet might well represent the village of Collbató, a turreted building and another chapel on the mountaintop to her upper left can probably be interpreted as the abbey of Montserrat. These structures are, of course, stereotyped representations, and they by no means depict the actual appearance of the edifices that would have dotted the landscape around the sanctuary. Shown on either side are several pious wayfarers negotiating two undulating paths, each punctuated by a string of seven crosses. While the two pilgrims on the Virgin’s right are making their climb, the single traveler on her left, who has paused before a cross to pray, seems to be on his way down. It thus appears that Bernat has depicted Moragues’ series of crosses twice, marking both the ascent to, and the descent from, the sanctuary of the “*Sancta Marya*.” His unusual representation of the visual-devotional framework of the iconic mountain offers a solution to the puzzle of how Moragues could have created fourteen scenes of the Seven Joys of the Virgin and deployed them across a total of only seven crosses (“[...] *xiiiij. istories en .vij. pedres [...]* E les quals istories són dels *.vij. goygs de Madona sancta Maria [...]*”). Moragues, it seems, simply fitted each cross with two carvings of the Joys, one, shown on the front, for the way up, the other, depicted on the back, for the way down. As we have seen, the ascent of the *Camí Vell* began with the Annunciation and concluded gloriously with the Virgin’s Coronation in Heaven. For pilgrims coming down the mountain it would have made little sense to view the sequence in reverse, so what Moragues seems to have given them instead was a second series of the “*vij goygs*” in their proper order, so that even when they had arrived back at the bottom of the mountain they would have ended their descent on a “high note”: another image of the Coronation of the Virgin. Using both the recto and verso sides of each cross, Moragues is likely to have arranged the fourteen scenes of the Seven Joys in the following order:

	<i>Ascent (recto side)</i>	<i>Descent (verso side)</i>
Cross VII	7. Coronation of the Virgin	8. Annunciation
Cross VI	6. Pentecost	9. Nativity
Cross V	5. Ascension of Christ	10. Adoration of the Magi
Cross IV	4. <i>Resurrection of Christ</i>	11. <i>Resurrection of Christ</i>
Cross III	3. Adoration of the Magi	12. Ascension of Christ
Cross II	2. Nativity	13. Pentecost
Cross I	1. Annunciation	14. Coronation of the Virgin

²⁹

For a more detailed look at this image and its position within Bernat’s *œuvre*, see Nuria Ortíz Valero, *Martin Bernat, pintor de retablos, documentado en Zaragoza entre 1450 y 1505*, Zaragoza 2013, 240–242; see also Nigra sum: Iconografía de Santa María de Montserrat, 66 no. 6, with the erroneous attribution of the panel to Miguel Jiménez and Juan de Bonilla.



[Fig. 3]
Martín Bernat, "Sancta Marya de Montserrat," 1479; San Miguel Arcángel, Alfajarín (Aragón, E). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

In this scenario, which is confirmed by a similar but slightly later sequence of monuments leading up to the monastery of Lluç on Mallorca (see below), pilgrims reaching the mid-point of their journey, either up or down, would have encountered the *quartum gaudium* with its core image of hope and Salvation, the Resurrection of Christ.

This is probably as far as we can safely take our interpretation of Bernat's image. It would, of course, be tempting to interrogate the painting about other aspects of Montserrat's stational sequence of *goigs*, in particular the design of the crosses themselves. However, it needs to be emphasized again that we are not yet dealing with a more accurate portrayal of the natural and built environment, but with a landscape that is informed by a long tradition of pictorial conventions. This also applies to another representation that purports to show the Monastery of Montserrat and one of the wayside crosses associated with it, the so-called "Virgin of Montserrat Triptych" in the cathedral of Acqui Terme in the Piedmont. It was created in 1481–1484 by Bernat's erstwhile collaborator, Bartolomé Bermejo (c. 1430/40 – after 1496), for Francesco della Chiesa, a native of Acqui who had strong business ties to Valencia [Fig. 4].³⁰ In the foreground, the donor's pictorial deputy is shown kneeling to the right of a richly robed *virgo coronata* holding the Christ Child playing with a gold finch tied to a string. A path winding its way through the middle ground takes viewers to a Gothic church in the left background, in front of which rises a tall cross that suspiciously looks like an oversized piece of liturgical metalwork.

While these pictorial sources thus offer no reliable information about the appearance of Moragues' monuments, we can consult a series of actual fourteenth- and fifteenth-century *creus al vent* that have survived in various parts of southern Catalonia, including those at Anglesola, Tàrrega, Claravalls in the province of Lleida, and at Ulldecona in Montsià,³¹ as well as in and around the city of Valencia. Though differing in their individual detailing, all of these monuments stand on stepped circular or polygonal bases and carry on their long shafts an elaborate headpiece with florid tracery on its arms and terminals and carvings of the Crucified and the Virgin Mary on its recto and verso sides, respectively. Crucially, all feature historiated capitals that separate the shaft from the surmounting cross proper. It stands to reason that Moragues' crosses were fitted

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For a recent discussion of the altarpiece, see *Bartolomé Bermejo* (exh. cat. Madrid/Barcelona, Museo Nacional del Prado/Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya), ed. by Joan Molina Figueras, Madrid 2018, 197–205 no. 15. The most detailed description of the altarpiece remains Gianni Reborá, Giacomo Rovera and Giandomenico Bocchiotti, *Bartolomé Bermejo e il Trittico di Acqui*, Acqui Terme 1987; see also Antonio León de Villaverde, *Bartolomé Bermejo y el Reino de Valencia* (Estudios Universitaris 104), Valencia 2006, 219–239; *La pintura gòtica hispanoflamenca: Bartolomé Bermejo i la seva època* (exh. cat. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya), Barcelona 2003, 184–189 no. 12; Judith Berg-Sobré, *Bartolomé de Cárdenas "El Bermejo": Itinerant Painter in the Crown of Aragon*, San Francisco/London/Bethesda 1998, 123–140.

³¹

See Bastardes, *Les creus al vent*, 147, 152, 153, and 189.



[Fig. 4]
Bartolomé Bermejo, Virgin of Montserrat Triptych, detail of corpus, 1481–
1484; Cathedral, Acqui Terme (Piemonte, I). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

with similar capitals on which the *septem gaudiis* were depicted. Especially close in date to the seven monuments on the *Camí Vell* are three boundary crosses, or *humilladeros*, that still mark the principal exit roads of the old city of Valencia. Dating to the 1370s and early 1380s, all were transformed into *creus cobertas* during the first decades of the fifteenth century and have therefore survived the ravages of time in a remarkably intact state.³² The oldest and best preserved is the so-called *Cruz Cubierta del Camino de Barcelona* (*Creu Coberta del Camí de Morvedre* in Valencian Catalan; [Fig. 5]), which dates to 1372–1373 and is therefore exactly contemporary with the stational crosses of Pere Moragues (1366–1372). Its florid head piece features the Crucifixion on the front side and the Virgin Mary on the back, whilst the eight facets of its capital provide a proscenium for four Marian scenes: the Annunciation, the Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, and the Assumption, which were all counted among the Seven Joys of the Virgin, and of which three recurred on the crosses of the *Camí Vell*. The tradition of fitting wayside crosses along the Iberian littoral of the Mediterranean with elaborately carved historiated capitals lasted well into the seventeenth century, and this form can be observed on the courtyard cross that stands in front of the abbey church of Montserrat itself. The current cross is probably a modern reconstruction, though if its early Renaissance forms are anything to go by, the original monument was in all likelihood commissioned during the rule of Pedro de Burgos (1512–1536), perhaps as part of his substantial reconstruction of the monastic church and compound. About four meters in height, this striking limestone cross is distinguished by a tall, octagonal capital adorned with eight individual images that include both the *Moreneta* and the *mons serratus*, surmounted by a carpenter’s saw and an abbot’s crozier [Fig. 6].³³

The question as to how exactly medieval pilgrims experienced Moragues’ Seven Joys in their wild natural setting will escape us forever. If an account of the ascent to the monastery written shortly after 1533 by the then-abbot of Clairvaux, Edmond de Saulieu (1485–1552), is anything to go by, early wayfarers on the *Camí* would probably have viewed the alien-looking landscape of the *mons serratus* with a good measure of terror and breathed a sigh of relief each time they reached the next cross. Saulieu, it should be noted, was a humanist who traveled for pleasure and out of curiosity. In spite of his religious education, he mistakenly identified the string of crosses – by then sheltered within their open chapels – as representing the Seven Stational Churches of Rome. But his narration probably at least approximates the kinds of impressions earlier

³²

See <http://www.arquitectosdevalencia.es/arquitectura-de-valencia/i-ac-xvi/cruces-de-termino>; and <http://www.jdiezarnal.com/valenciacruzdetetermino.html> (both accessed 17 November 2018).

³³

Laplana, Monserrat, 85.



[Fig. 5]
Valencia, Creu Coberta de Morvedre, detail of capital showing Dormition and Assumption of the Virgin, 1372–1373. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.



[Fig. 6]
Montserrat, courtyard cross before abbey church, 1520s–
1530s and/or modern reconstruction. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

visitors might have gathered along the route, so I quote here an especially vivid passage describing the central leg of the *Camí*:

“When one makes a detour via a scary circuit through the solitude of the desert one encounters a third cross after a painful ascent. After leaving it behind one must exercise one’s legs with a more vigorous effort since a strange route [now takes the traveler; literally: offers itself] below [the summit of] an immense pile of rocks, whilst below on the right [there] yawns a horrible chasm [*subtus a dextris horribili hiante caverna*]. A narrow road, created by the industry of man, [then] zigzags relentlessly [upward]. Its ascent is exceedingly tiring. Thus one reaches the fourth cross. After having passed this one in turn, one arrives at even more astonishing places, since the climb along a circuitous [and] very narrow path [eventually leads to] a flat rock, and soon one is lost amidst boulders in places without roads, deserted and incredibly dangerous were they not often frequented [*et postmodum inter saxea deperderis locis inviis desertis et incredibiliter (si non frequentarentur permaxime) periculis*]...”³⁴

The extract suggests that though replete with frightening vistas and physically taxing, the ascent was in fact rather manageable, thanks in part to the numbers of fellow-pilgrims making the same climb, and thanks in part to Moragues’ crosses, which broke up the hike into a number of shorter stretches. At least on the way up, the monuments also furnished a sequence of inspirational images that grafted the gradual unfolding of the Work of Salvation onto the mountain itself so that walking the *Camí* became a structured ontological ascent that one experienced through both increasing spiritual edification and growing physical exertion. Just as pilgrims slowly gained in altitude so did the Virgin’s Joys progress from miracles still tied to this earth (Annunciation, Nativity, Adoration of the Magi) to those decidedly anagogical or celestial in nature (Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Coronation of the Virgin).

From the later thirteenth century onwards a good number of the pilgrims who ventured out to scale the *mons serratus* came from the Balearic island of Mallorca, which had been wrested from Muslim control and annexed to the Crown of Aragon in 1229. Traveling in large well-organized groups, the island’s largely Catalan-speaking pilgrims markedly contributed to augmenting the monastery’s wealth through particularly magnanimous financial donations and the gifting of numerous silver *ex-votos*. The so-called “Book of Miraculous Acts,” compiled by the already-mentioned reform abbot

³⁴

Claude De Bronseval, *Peregrinatio Hispanica: Voyage de Dom Edmond de Saulieu, Abbé de Clairvaux, en Espagne et au Portugal (1531–1533)*, 2 vols., Paris 1970, vol. 1, 152–154. My translation.

Pedro de Burgos and first published in Barcelona in 1514,³⁵ records several miracles associated with their religious zeal and generosity.³⁶ Such was the devotion of the Mallorquins to Catalonia's most sacred mountain that they created a virtual copy of it on their own island, in the northern ranges of the Serra de Tramuntana. It is to these rugged karst peaks, well over 1,000 meters in height, and some 220 kilometers to the southeast of Montserrat, that we travel next.

Our Lady of Lluc

Established in 1230, a year after the conquest of Mallorca through James I of Aragon, the Santuari de Santa Maria de Lluc (Lluch in Castilian) sits on a high plateau of the Tramuntana range and is surrounded by several of Mallorca's tallest mountains, including the Puig Roig (1,002 m) to the north, and the Puig Major and the Puig de Massanella to the southwest, which both rise in excess of 1,300 meters.³⁷ Lluc's metamorphosis into a near-facsimile of Montserrat began soon after its foundation, and greatly accelerated during the second half of the fourteenth century. The shrine had its own miracle-working black Madonna, called *Sa Morenita*, which, according to the foundational legend, had been discovered by a Moorish boy named Lucas (= Lluc) on the eve of the island's *reconquista*.³⁸ The sanctuary was reached by an exacting trek along a mountain road, beginning at the village of Caimari, which was almost a metric replica of the Montserrat's *Camí Vell*.³⁹ By about 1400, pilgrims visiting the *Morenita* would likewise chant a version of the ballad of the Virgin's Joys, the *Goigs de Nostra Senyora de Lluc*,⁴⁰ and they would do

35

Pedro de Burgos, *Libro de la historia y milagros hechos a la inuocación de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat*, Barcelona 1514.

36

See Llompart, Mirakelbuch and Español Bertran, *Le voyage d'outremer, passim*.

37

For a concise guide to the sanctuary, see Victoria Lucia, *Lluc: Kirchen- und Klosterführer*, Petersberg 1997. For detailed histories of the site, see Gabriel Llompart, *Nostra Dona Santa Maria de Lluc*, in: *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensis* 60, 1987, 239–280; José Obrador Socias, *Santa Maria de Lluch: Historia de su colegiata*, Palma de Mallorca 1952; and Mateo Rotger, *Historia del Santuario y Colegio de Nuestra Señora de Lluch*, Palma de Mallorca 1914.

38

Current scholarly consensus holds that the figure dates to the fourteenth century; see Françoise Baron, *Un groupe de Vierges méridionales du XIVe siècle: Lluc (Majorque), Lyon, Toulouse*, in: Marie-Pasquine Subes-Picot and Jean-Bernard Mathon (eds.), *Vierges à l'Enfant médiévales de Catalogne: Mises en perspectives*, Perpignan 2014, 87–94; and Joana Maria Palou Sampol, *La imatge de la Mare de Déu de Lluc*, in: *Randa* 65, 2010, 65–72. For a comparison of the foundation legends of Lluc and Montserrat, see Rafael Juan and Gabriel Llompart, *Los santuarios de Montserrat y de Lluc: Una confrontación de orígenes*, in: *Studia monastica* 19, 1977, 361–385.

39

Initially known as the *Camí de ses Creus*, so-called because of its lineup of stational images of c. 1400 (see above), the old pilgrims' path between Caimari and Lluc is now likewise called the *Camí Vell*. Its total length is 8.12 kilometers (*Camí Vell* at Montserrat: 6.77 kilometers), its maximum altitude difference 467 meters (Montserrat: 488 meters), and it can be walked in just over three hours (Montserrat: a little under three hours).

so as they were passing – or had just passed – one of the seven stationary images depicting the Marian mysteries along the winding path to the sanctuary.⁴¹ The images were ordered in 1399 from the sculptor Llorenç Tosquella (also spelled Sosquella, Cosquello, or Tosqueyla; fl. 1368–1415)⁴² and the painter Pere Marçol (Merçol, Marsoll; fl. 1362–1411),⁴³ two Palma-based artists who had previously collaborated on a retable of Saint Bartholomew commissioned in 1379 by the Wool Carder’s Guild for their chapel in the cathedral there.⁴⁴ According to the surviving contract from 20 December 1399 between “Laurentius Cosquello” and Pedro Morro, a professor of medicine at the university of Palma and administrator of the church at Lluc, the artist was to fashion seven stone crosses for the path leading to Lluc, “on which [...] are carved the images and scenes [...] [from] the First [to the] Last Joys of the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary” (“[...] cruce[m] lapideam, factam causa standi in camino quo itur ad dictum locum de Lucho, in qua cruce sunt sculpta ymagines et figure denotantes primum et ultimum gaudia beate et inma-

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For the full text, see Llompart, *Nostra Dona Santa Maria de Lluc*, 248–249.

41

On these, see previously, Vicens, *Els goigs marians*, 31; Gabriel Llompart, *Miscelánea de arquitectura y plástica sacra mallorquina (siglos XIII–XVI)*, in: *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensis* 46, 1973, 83–114, at 88, 103–104 no. XIV; see also Juan and Llompart, *Los santuarios de Montserrat y de Lluc*, 373–374; and Llompart, *Nostra Dona Santa Maria de Lluc*, 246–250, *passim*.

42

Like the Parlers of central Europe, Llorenç Tosquella appears to have belonged to an extensive family of artists who drew commissions from some of the major building projects of their time. His son, also called Llorenç (fl. 1389–1442), was involved in the embellishment of the famous Portal del Mirador of Palma cathedral and created a series of angel figures for the episcopal seat and high altar there. Two other Tosquellas, Bernat and his son Francesc, were associated with the cathedral workshop at Valencia between c. 1360 and 1430; there was also a Narcis Tosquella in Barcelona. The extant documentation on Llorenç Tosquella *père et fils* was published by Llompart, *Miscelánea de arquitectura*, who however erroneously believed that the two were one and the same person. Of the two, Llorenç Tosquella the Elder, the author of Lluc’s stationary sequence, has so far received the least scholarly attention. For the two Llorenç Tosquellas, see in particular Joana M. Palou, *Els Tosquella*, in: Guillem Frontera (ed.), *Gran enciclopèdia de la pintura i l’escultura a les Balears*, 4 vols., Palma de Mallorca 1996, vol. 4, 329–332, with further literature. Studies that also cover other members of the family include Matilde Miquel Juan, *El coro de la Catedral de Valencia (1384–1395): la introducción de nuevos elementos decorativos del Gótico Internacional en Valencia*, in: Amadeo Serra Desfilis (ed.), *Arquitectura en construcción en Europa en época medieval y moderna* (Cuadernos ars longa 2), València 2010, 346–376 (366–367 with a brief discussion of the two Llorenç Tosquellas); Carme Llanes i Domingo, *Els Tosquella, fusters i mestres del cor de la Capella de sant Martí a Valldecrist (c. 1390)*, in: *Cartuja de Valldecrist (1405–2005): VI centenario del inicio de la Obra Mayor*, Valencia 2008, 223–246; Joan Domenge i Mesquida, *Le portail du mirador de la cathédrale de Majorque: Du document au monument*, in: Philippe Bernardi (ed.), *Texte et archéologie monumentale: Approches de l’architecture médiévale; Centre International de Congrès, Palais des Papes, Avignon, 30 novembre – 2 décembre 2000*, Montagnac 2005, 10–26; see also Gabriel Llabrés, *Galeria de artistas mallorquines*, in: *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana*, 1921, 274–275; and id., *Pintores inéditos que trabajaron en Mallorca: Siglo XIV*, in: *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana*, 1922, 186–190, at 188–189.

43

For the ample documentation on Marçol, see Gabriel Llompart, *La pintura medieval mallorquina*, 4 vols., Palma de Mallorca 1978–1980, 4 *passim* (with altogether twenty-nine archival mentions).

44

Llabrés, *Pintores inéditos*, 188–189.

culate virginis Marie”).⁴⁵ Just who was ultimately responsible for the bankrolling of this new circuit of Joys is not entirely clear; judging by the escutcheons shown on the only extant monument of the series, now in the Museu del Santuari and replaced *in situ* by a modern copy, funds for the crosses may have come from Morro himself and from a local nobleman, Gregori Sallambé, as well as from King John I of Aragon who had succeeded his father Peter IV “the Ceremonious” – donor of the crosses at Montserrat – in 1387.⁴⁶ An engraving dating to 1514 and reminiscent of the early images of Montserrat shows seven monuments probably meant to represent those carved by Tosquella lining the switchback road between the southern terminus at Caimari and the mountain shrine of Lluc, represented here by the altar of *Sa Morenita* set within a classicizing niche [Fig. 7].⁴⁷ In contradistinction to Moragues’ sequence of crosses, the series at Lluc, though explicitly identified as *cruces* in the contract, was in fact comprised of double-sided steles with ogival rather than cruciform head pieces. Extrapolated from an octagonal plan, each stele rose over a two-stepped base and carried on its eight-sided shaft a two-sided figural panel crowned by tracery, crockets, and a cross-finial. In tandem with another stele that still stands by the pilgrim’s way to Lluc and appears to be a sixteenth-century replacement of one of Tosquella’s original monuments, the one stele that has survived from the initial sequence [Fig. 8] suggests that – as I had assumed for the crosses at Montserrat – the cycle at Lluc featured two complete arrays of Mary’s Joys *running in opposite directions* and totaling fourteen individual scenes. Culminating here both on the ascent and descent with the Virgin’s Assumption, rather than her Coronation, Lluc’s stational *Goigs* were arranged as follows:

	<i>Ascent (recto side)</i>	<i>Descent (verso side)</i>
Stele VII	7. Dormition and Assumption (<i>Creu de Ca s’Amitger</i> , surviving <i>ex situ</i> , modern copy <i>in situ</i>)	8. Annunciation
Stele VI	6. Pentecost	9. Nativity
Stele V	5. Ascension of Christ (<i>Creu de Es Barracar</i> , sixteenth-century replacement of original, surviving <i>in situ</i>)	10. Adoration of the Magi
Stele IV	4. <i>Resurrection of Christ</i>	11. <i>Resurrection of Christ</i>
Stele III	3. Adoration of the Magi	12. Ascension of Christ
Stele II	2. Nativity	13. Pentecost
Stele I	1. Annunciation	14. Dormition and Assumption

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Llompарт, *Miscelánea de arquitectura*, no. XIV.

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Llompарт, *Nostra Dona Santa Maria de Lluc*, 249–250.

⁴⁷

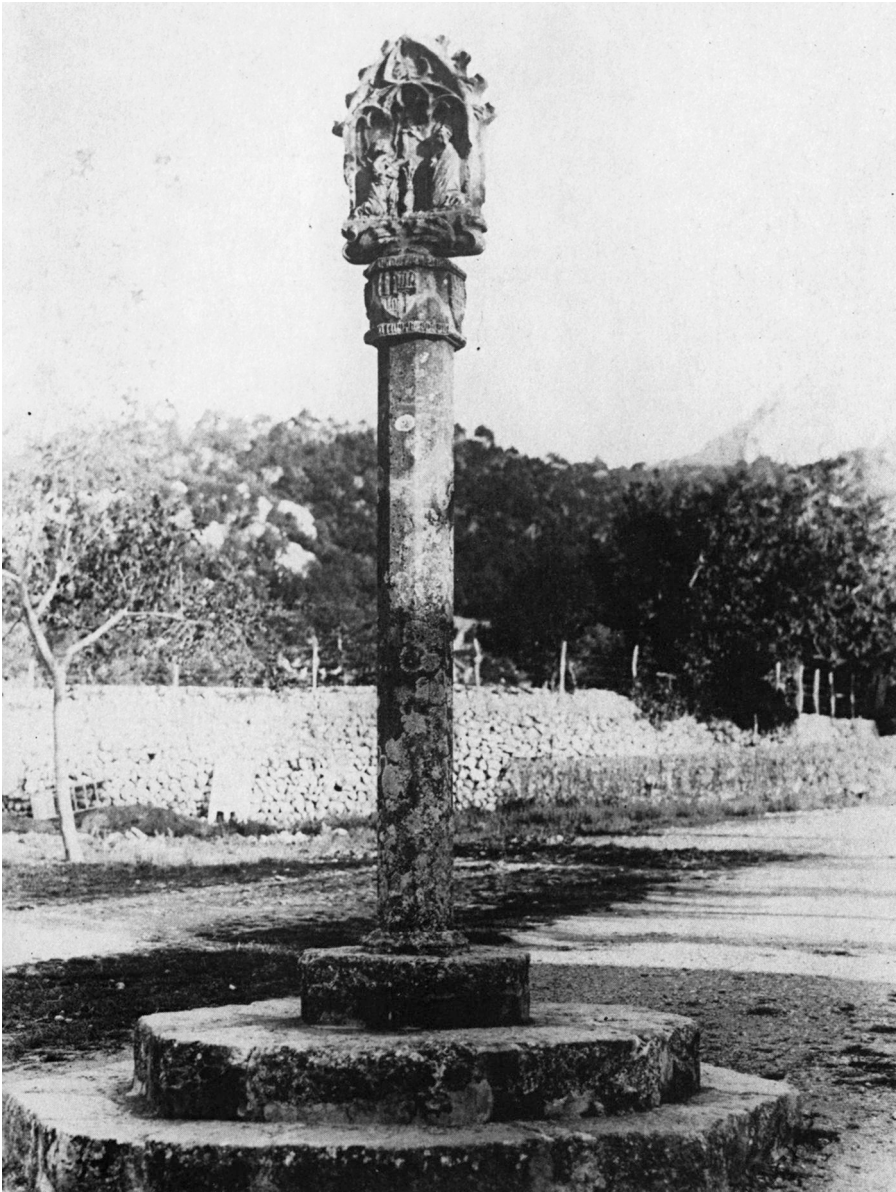
For the print and its artistic context, see Gabriel Llabrés, *Los estampadores en Mallorca*, in: *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana*, 1923, 243–245.



II Confreres de la Verge Maria de Luch de Mallorca.

[Fig. 7]

View of Lluç, with *Cami Vell* and image steles;
woodcut of 1514. Photo: Llompert, *Mirakelbuch*, fig. 215.



[Fig. 8]

Llorenç Tosquella and Pere Marçol, image stele before Santuari de Lluç, 1399–1400, now replaced by a modern copy. Photo: old postcard.

Given that virtually all other fourteenth- and fifteenth-century wayside crosses on Mallorca were cruciform in shape,⁴⁸ these steles guiding pilgrims to the shrine at Lluc must have represented a bit of an oddity. Tosquella probably chose the type because its two-sided head piece provided more space for the deployment of narrative scenes than the historiated capitals of Moragues' crosses at Montserrat. The steles also did away with the surmounting images of the Crucified and the Virgin Mary, so that the pilgrims' attention was completely focused on the unfolding narrative of the *septem gaudii*. To determine whether Tosquella came up with the design himself or adapted it from somewhere else lies outside the remit of the present study and must be left to future research. It should briefly be noted, however, that as his monuments were being put up by the wayside toward Lluc, the production of similarly shaped image steles was gaining momentum in northern Europe, for instance in the English West Country, Somerset in particular, where the two-sided head piece was usually given a gabled rather than ogival shape,⁴⁹ and in the southern German-speaking lands, where ogeed or roof-shaped terminations were preferred. It appears that this type, known as *Tafelbildstock* ("panel image stele") in German, was especially popular in Upper Franconia around the city of Bamberg, where a considerable number of these monuments from the fifteenth century still stand today.⁵⁰

While the transformation of Lluc with its cult statue, pilgrim's way, and stationary sequence of Joys into a simulacrum of Montserrat constituted an obvious case of *translatio loci*, the connections between the Provençal shrine explored next and its earlier conceptual counterparts across the Gulf of Lion are less clear cut, in part because of the fifty to eighty years that elapsed between their respective creations. As has already been pointed out, however, music, dances, hymns, and poems celebrating the Seven Joys of the Virgin Mary also had a long tradition in Provence, with *Los VII gâutz de Nostra Dona* by Guy de Foulques (1263) possibly representing the earliest vernacular treatment of the theme.

Notre-Dame de la Garde at Marseille

Our *parcours* of the western Mediterranean now takes us 440 kilometers or 240 nautical miles as the crow flies to the northeast, from the bare peaks of Mallorca's Serra de Tramuntana to the

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On Mallorca's late medieval *humilladeros* or *creus de terme*, see the numerous entries on individual monuments by Bartolomé Ferrà y Perelló in: *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana*, 1885, *passim*.

⁴⁹

See for instance Charles Pooley, *Old Stone Crosses of Somerset*, London 1877, 135–137 and 145–149, with figs.

⁵⁰

Timmermann, *Memory and Redemption*, 32–35, with figs. and further literature.

bustling port town of Marseille. During the fourteenth century the ancient city had been especially hard hit by repeated outbreaks of the bubonic plague, with the last major one occurring in 1361; its fortunes had further declined when it was ravaged by the Aragonese in 1423. However, with the arrival of René of Anjou, Count of Provence, in 1437 Marseille began to rebound, thanks to the count's enormous investment in the new civic defenses, which transformed the city into a powerful maritime bastion from which René later undertook to reconquer his lost kingdom of Sicily. The construction of the harbor ramparts in 1447 coincided with the initiation of another project, the commission of a sequence of seven stational *oratoires* or open-air chapels showing the Seven Joys of the Virgin. These were to line the route from the old church of Saint-Pierre-du-Paradis near the present Plan Fourmiguier on the south side of the harbor to the city's highest natural point, a 162-meter outcropping of Urgonian limestone topped by the pilgrimage church (and priory as of 1256), Notre-Dame de la Garde, which was a possession of the Abbey of Saint-Victor.⁵¹ The massive neo-Byzantine basilica that now looms over this peak had two earlier predecessors, the first a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary and erected between 1214 and 1218 by Master Pierre, a priest of Marseille, and its successor, begun in 1477 and built on an enlarged plan to cope with the increasing number of pilgrims. It should be pointed out that the establishment of this new religious site in the early thirteenth century was neither occasioned by a miraculous vision nor by a wonder-working statue, as at Montserrat and Lluç. Visitors, and later local pilgrims, were drawn there because La Garde was Marseille's very own sacred mountain, topped by a Marian shrine and affording dramatic vistas over the city and the surrounding countryside. The decision in 1447 to mark the 1.8 kilometer-long road from the harbor to the priory church of La Garde with a series of oratories would certainly have encouraged more travelers to make the steep half-hour ascent and was probably also instrumental in generating the necessary funds from the donations of pilgrims for the construction of the second, larger church. The instigators of the oratory project were the so-called *Prieurs de Lumière de Notre-Dame de la Garde*, a lay confraternity founded in 1379 and connected to the Abbey of Saint-Victor, while the actual execution of the stational images was entrusted to a northerner, who current scholarship rather confusingly refers to as both Audinet Stéphani and Étienne Audinet.⁵²

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The most thorough history of Notre-Dame de la Garde remains Gustave Arnaud d'Angel, *Notre-Dame de la Garde, Marseille*, Marseille 1923; but see also Françoise Hildesheimer, *Notre-Dame de la Garde*, Marseille 1985.

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The available archival documentation on the project was published by Louis Barthélemy, *Documents inédits sur divers sculpteurs*, in: *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques* 3, 1885, 442–452. A good account of the history of Audinet Stéphani's *oratoires* from their inception to their destruction in the French Revolution is given in Arnaud d'Angel, *Notre-Dame de la Garde*, 106–109, who also notes that the sequence replaced or perhaps complemented two earlier oratories gifted by private individuals in 1391 and 1400. For Stéphani's life and documented (and sometimes problematically attributed) *œuvre*, see

Stéphani, who went by even more spellings in his lifetime, and whom the sources variously refer to as an *ymaginarium lapidis et fustis*, *deboyssator ymaginum*, and *sculptor ymaginum*, was a slightly older contemporary of fellow-Provençal masters Enguerrand Quarton, Nicolas Froment, and Francesco Laurana. Today his name is all but forgotten, perhaps because his documented *œuvre* has been mostly destroyed or because he was simply a rather middling artist who failed to make it onto the rostrum of posthumous fame, or both. A native from the Cambrasis, Stéphani moved to Provence sometime in 1446 or 1447 before permanently settling in Aix-en-Provence in 1450, where he set up a workshop in the rue Droite from which he supplied his mostly middle-class clientèle with a range of tomb monuments, individual statues, ecclesiastical furnishings such as retables and at least one Holy Sepulchre, as well as wax *ex-votos*. He was still alive in 1476. While versatile out of necessity like many artists of his time, Stéphani appears to have enjoyed somewhat of a specialized reputation for making outdoor monuments and memorials, such as wayside crosses and open-air chapels, with the *oratoires* of Notre-Dame de la Garde of 1447–1455 representing his first documented commission. In the following years, between 1458 and 1465, he received at least three contracts for the creation of stone crosses in the Marseille region,⁵³ and another for the execution of a stone pillar topped by a carving of the Exultation of St. Mary Magdalen, the so-called *Petit Saint Pilon* of 1463. This work still stands in its original location to the south of Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume, and we will see more of it below.

According to the surviving contract between the Prieurs de Lumière and the artist, dated 23 April 1447, Stéphani was to produce within the span of five years seven low reliefs in Saint-Didier limestone⁵⁴ representing the Seven Joyous Mysteries of the Virgin; for his labor and expenses, he was to receive the total sum of 233 fl. and

Christine Gallissot-Ortuno, La Vierge volée d'Esparron-de-Pallières et le sculpteur Audinet Stephani, in: *Bulletin de la Société des Amis du Vieux Toulon et de Sa Région* 123, 2001, 51–59; *Saur Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon* 5, Leipzig 1992, 597; Françoise Robin, Les retables marseillais (1400–1530): tradition et modernité, in: *Provence historique* 161, 1990, 311–336, at 313–314; André Alauzen, *Dictionnaire des peintres et sculpteurs de Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur*, Marseille 1986, 35; Pierre-André Sigal, L'ex voto au Moyen Âge dans les régions du nord-ouest de la Méditerranée (XII–XVe siècles), in: *Provence historique* 131, 1983, 13–31; Jacques Baudoin, *Les grands imagiers d'Occident* (La sculpture flamboyante), Nonette 1983, 209–211; Jean Boyer, Le „Musée Lapidaire“ du Cloître de la Cathédrale Saint Sauveur d'Aix-en-Provence, in: *Provence historique* 25, 1956, 169–183, at 170–173 *passim*; Mathieu Varille, *Les peintres primitifs de Provence*, Paris 1946, 61; Henri Requin, Deux trouvailles intéressantes, in: *Réunion des Sociétés des Beaux-Arts des départements* 28, 1904, 505–515, at 505–510; see also note 63.

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These included a cross for Elias Delphin, a prior of Calas (1458); a cross for Paulet Malisanguinis, of Marseille, with a head piece showing the Crucifixion on one side and the Virgin and Child on the other (probably early 1460s); and a cross for Barthélemy Domandi, also of Marseille, made according to the same design as that used for the cross of Paulet Malisanguinis (1465).

54

A reddish coquina today mainly used as gravel in building and road construction.

4 gros.⁵⁵ While the artist supplied the reliefs, the Confraternity paid for custom-made masonry pillars, revetted also with Saint-Didier stone, which were to accommodate the scenes as they were delivered.⁵⁶ The contract (in Occitan) describes each scene in considerable detail, stipulating a lineup that echoes that of the stational *goigs* at Lluc rather than Montserrat, where, as will be recalled, the program concluded with the Coronation rather than the Assumption of the Virgin. It tasked Stéphaní with making the following labelled images:⁵⁷

1. *Annuntiatio*;
2. *La Nativitat*;
3. *L'Aparicio* (Adoration of the Magi);
4. *La Résurrection*;
5. *La Accension*;
6. *Pendecosta*;
7. *Assumptio beate Marie*.

Extant sources further indicate that the Annunciation and the Nativity were only delivered on 19 May 1449, with the scenes of the Adoration and the Resurrection following after a gap of five years, in 1454. The last three reliefs, the Ascension, Pentecost, and the Assumption, would have been completed around 19 November 1455, for which date Stéphaní wrote a final quittance over 230 fl.

It appears that some of Stéphaní's *oratoires* survived in one form or another until the French Revolution.⁵⁸ In contradistinction to the situation at Montserrat and Lluc (as well as at the Sainte-Baume, discussed in the following) there exist no contemporary or near-contemporary visual records of how the chapels might have looked, or how precisely they were arranged along the slope of La Garde. Two of them might well be shown in the right middle ground of a much later engraving of 1777, now in the Musée du Vieux-Marseille, that depicts a Corpus Christi procession moving up to the sanctuary, which had by then been integrated into a sprawling fort begun by François Ier [Fig. 9]. If this illustration can be trusted, the *oratoires* might have been extrapolated from a rectangular plan, with a broad front and narrower sides, and carried an upper, shrine-like compartment with a round-arched niche for the reliefs (not visible in the engraving), terminating in a triangular gable. This perhaps

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For each delivered relief, Stéphaní was to be given 25 fl. The remaining 60 or so fl. went toward the acquisition and transport of the limestone from the Saint-Didier quarries near Pernes in the Vaucluse to Marseille, a journey of some 100 kilometers.

56

Barthélemy, Documents inédits, 444.

57

For the original wording, see Barthélemy, Documents inédits, 451–452.

58

In the early nineteenth century a new sequence of chapels was created that now showcased scenes from the earthly life of the Virgin.



[Fig. 9]
View of Notre-Dame de la Garde, Marseille, as integrated into 16th- and 17th-century fortress, with two of Audinet Stéphan's *oratoires* visible in middleground; engraving of 1777. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

more classicizing form of image display stands in marked contrast to the columnar monuments deployed at Montserrat and Lluç. Given that *oratoires* of a similar design were also constructed to mark the approach to at least two other mountain shrines near Marseille, at Orgon and the Sainte-Baume, we may tentatively conclude that the pillar niche or open-air chapel with its large, single image (rather than the double-sided cross or stele) structured and enhanced the experience of sacred mountaineering in the Provence region. At Orgon on the Durance River, some eighty-four kilometers to the northwest of Marseille, a sequence of at least five pillared oratories with scenes from the life of the Virgin were constructed in the decades around 1500 to line the route that wound up to the chapel of Notre-Dame-de-Beauregard.⁵⁹ While Stéphanie's chapels were financed by a single confraternity, those at Orgon appear to have been commissioned by individual families. One gifted in 1516 by Amadeus Rovereli and his wife Alet, the Adoration of the Magi, flaunts both Flamboyant and Renaissance forms and represents the most impressive surviving monument of the series [Fig. 10].⁶⁰ In that same year a series of seven *all'antica* oratories were installed along the so-called *Chemin du Roi*, which took pilgrims to the grotto of Mary Magdalen, located deep in a cliff-face of the Massif de la Sainte-Baume ("bauma" meaning "cave" in Old Provençal). This formation rises to heights above 1,000 m and can be seen from the top of Marseille's La Garde summit, some seventy kilometers due southwest. Donated by a single individual, Archbishop Jean Ferrier I of Arles, this sequence of oratories depicts not the Joys of the Virgin but scenes from the life of the Magdalen. Leading pilgrims to the holy cave and through the truly stunning mountainscape they punctuate, Ferrier's *oratoires* are our next and final port of call.

The Grotto of Mary Magdalen in the Sainte-Baume

The Sainte-Baume with its cave of the Magdalen is part of a wider sacred landscape that extends northeastward for about twenty-five kilometers to the ancient town of Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume, whose skyline is dominated by the hulking pilgrimage church and Dominican convent of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine.⁶¹ Begun in 1288 by Charles II of Anjou, Count of Provence and King of Sicily, and

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Pierre Irigoien, *Montjoies et oratoires*, in: *Bulletin monumental* 94, 1935, 145–170, at 161, lists as their pictorial subjects the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, the Flight into Egypt, and Pentecost. Three of Orgon's *oratoires* have survived to this day.

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Irigoien, *Montjoies et oratoires*, 162 (with fig.).

⁶¹

For a detailed history of this church, see Jacques Paul (ed.), *Le couvent royal de Saint-Maximin* (Mémoire Dominicaine 8), Paris 1996; see also Ephrem Lauzière and Henri Daries, *La basilique de la Madeleine à Saint-Maximin La Sainte Baume*, Nans-les-Pins 2003; see also Michel Moncault, *La basilique Sainte-Marie-Madeleine et le couvent royal*, Aix-en-Provence 1985.



[Fig. 10]
Orgon (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, F), *oratoire* lining path
to Notre-Dame-de-Beauregard, 1516. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.



[Fig. 11]
Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, F), Audinet
Stéphani's *Petit Saint-Pilon*, 1463–1467. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

showcasing the relics of the Magdalen, which excavations at the site had brought to light nine years before, the great church of Saint-Maximin quickly eclipsed La Madeleine at Vézelay as the premier shrine to the saint. The Magdalen, as Provençal tradition had it, had arrived at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer in an oar- and rudderless boat soon after the Crucifixion of Christ to convert the Marseillais to Christianity before living out her last days in the *locus terribilis* of the Sainte-Baume.⁶² Just before her death she was said to have descended from her cave to meet St. Maximinus, one of the original companions on her voyage from the Holy Land and by then the first bishop of Aix, at the crossroad between the old Aurelian Way and the road leading to her grotto, to receive last communion from him. The event and its location were retrospectively commemorated by the so-called *Petit Saint-Pilon*, an impressive eight-faceted pillar supporting a sculptural ensemble of the Magdalen's angelic Exultation, ordered in 1463 from none other than the Aix sculptor Audinet Stéphani, who had completed the last of Marseille's seven *oratoires* some eight years before [Fig. 11]. The monument was a commission of Raymond Puget, a law professor at the University of Aix, and his wife, who were both initially depicted just below the Exultation group, but whose likenesses have since been lost to time. Stéphani's final quittance for the work is dated 5 June 1467.⁶³ Aside from mark-

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On the veneration of the Magdalen at Saint-Maximin, the Sainte-Baume and in the wider Provence region, see Yves Bridonneau, *Naissance de la Provence chrétienne: la chanson de geste de la Madeleine*, Aix-en-Provence 2008; id., *Le tombeau de Marie-Madeleine: Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume*, Aix-en-Provence 2002; Bernard Montagnes, Le pèlerinage provençal à Marie-Madeleine au XVe siècle, in: *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 85, 2001, 679–695; Philippe Devoucoux du Buysson, *Histoires du pèlerinage à Saint-Maximin et la Sainte-Baume*, 2 vols., La Sainte-Baume 1994, esp. vol. 1; Bernard Laluque, *Marseille fut-elle évangélisée par une femme?*, Marseille 1986; Bernard Montagnes, La légende dominicaine de Marie-Madeleine à Saint-Maximin, in: *Mémoires de l'Académie de Vaucluse*, 7th ser. 6, 1985, 73–86; Victor Saxer, Le culte et la tradition de Sainte Marie-Madeleine en Provence, in: *Mémoires de l'Académie de Vaucluse*, 7th ser. 6, 1985, 41–51; Victor Saxer, Les ossements dits de sainte Marie-Madeleine conservés à Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume, in: *Provence historique* 27, 1977, 257–311; and Joseph Escudier, *La Sainte-Baume*, Paris 1925. Still fundamental is Étienne Michel Faillon, *Monuments inédits sur l'apostolat de sainte Marie Madeleine en Provence et sur les autres apôtres de cette contrée, saint Lazare, saint Maximin, sainte Marthe et les saintes Jacobé et Salomé*, 2 vols., Paris 1848–1865. On the general cult and numerous cultural significations of the saint, see most recently Penny Howel Jolly, *Picturing the "Pregnant" Magdalene in Northern Art, 1430–1550: Addressing and Undressing a Sinner-Saint* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Farnham 2014; Peter V. Loewen (ed.), *Mary Magdalene in Medieval Culture: Conflicted Roles* (Routledge Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture 4), New York 2014; and Michelle A. Erhardt (ed.), *Mary Magdalene: Iconographic Studies from the Middle Ages to the Baroque* (Studies in Religion and the Arts 7), Leiden 2012. Older, but still useful studies on the Magdalen include Majorie Malvern, *Venus in Sackcloth: The Magdalen's Origins and Metamorphoses*, Carbondale, IL 1975; and Marga Janssen, *Maria Magdalena in der abendländischen Kunst: Ikonographie der Heiligen von den Anfängen bis ins 16. Jahrhundert*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Freiburg i. Br., 1961. Victor Saxer's two-volume *Le culte de Marie-Madeleine en occident des origines à la fin du moyen-âge* (Cahiers d'archéologie et d'histoire 3), Auxerre/Paris 1959, remains of particularly enduring value.

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The extant documentation on the *Petit Saint-Pilon* was published by Requin, Deux trouvailles intéressantes, with older literature. In an article published in 1966 M. Beaulieu proposed that the figure of the donatrix was in fact that of a female donor preserved in the Musée Cluny (Une œuvre inédite du sculpteur cambrésien Audinet Stéphani: la donatrice du 'Saint-Pilon' sur la route de Saint-Maximin à la Sainte-Baume, in: *Actes du X^Ce congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Nice 1965*, Paris 1965, 439–444); this hypothesis was subsequently debunked by Bruno Ely (Un fragment de mobilier funéraire aixois au temps du roi René: la donatrice du musée de Cluny, in: *Chronique méridionale* 1, 1981, 43–

ing the spot of the legendary last meeting between Bishop Maximinus and the Magdalen, the *Petit Saint-Pilon* was quite clearly also intended to function as a kind of *mons gaudii* or *montjoie*, because it was from here that wayfarers journeying northward could first espy the massive church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine looming over the roofs of Saint-Maximin. Moreover it was also from this site that pious men and women traveling in the opposite southwesterly direction were afforded a distant sighting of the mountain range in which the Magdalene had lived and done terrible penitence in her famous cave. Traveling southward for about twelve kilometers along the steadily rising road, pilgrims would next come to the village of Nans-les-Pins; from there, they would take the *Chemin des Rois* – so-called because it had been taken by numerous kings, queens and other luminaries since the early Middle Ages⁶⁴ – for another ten or so kilometers to a high plateau, from which they could view the soaring karst cliffs of the Sainte-Baume with the sacred grotto in all their daunting majesty. Such was the fame of this panorama that by the mid-sixteenth century it would appear in one form or another on numerous German, Italian, and especially Netherlandish panel paintings, created by the likes of Lucas Cranach, Quentin Massys, Herri met de Bles, and, above all, Joachim Patinir. These works depict not only scenes from the life of the Magdalen, but also Marian and Christological themes,⁶⁵ and by the last third of the fifteenth century at the latest, well-to-do pilgrims like the Saxon Hans von Waltheym, who toured Saint-Maximin and the Sainte-Baume in 1474–1475, were able to buy souvenirs of the site in the form of miniature grottos made from wax and charcoal.⁶⁶

48). The monument is also briefly discussed in Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 683; Marcel Durliat, *Une nouvelle revue d'histoire de l'art*, in: *Bulletin monumental* 141, 1983, 89–90; Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *La statue agenouillée de femme du Musée de Cluny*, in: *Bulletin monumental* 125, 1967, 94–95; and Irigoien, *Montjoies et oratoires*, 160–161.

64

These included Louis IX, who saw the grotto on his return from the seventh crusade (1254), five of the seven Avignon popes, saints Bridget of Sweden (1340) and Catherine of Siena (1376), Louis XI and his wife Charlotte of Savoy (1456), and René of Anjou, who took the *Chemin* at least three times to visit the Magdalen's sanctuary.

65

Representations of the Sainte-Baume (or versions thereof) in sixteenth-century painting are explored in Corinna Tania Gallori, *Il Noli me tangere e il culto della Maddalena nel primo Cinquecento*, in: Frédéric Elsig and Mauro Natale (eds.), *Le Duché de Milan et les commanditaires français (1499–1521)* (I libri di Viella Arte; Studi Lombardi 3), Rome 2013, 267–287; Brian Cohen, *Saint Mary Magdalen as a Cultural Symbol in the Low Countries, c. 1450–1530*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, SUNY Binghamton, NY 2001; Charles S. Ellis, *Fra Bartolommeo's Depiction of the Sainte-Baume*, in: *Paragone: Arte* 49, 1998, 39–47; Martha Mel Edmunds, *La Sainte-Baume and the Iconography of Mary Magdalene*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 114, 1989, 11–28; Edwin Buijsen, *Notes on Two New Views of La Sainte-Baume by Herri met de Bles*, in: *Rutgers Art Review* 7, 1986, 55–61; Craig Harbison, *Lucas van Leyden, the Magdalen and the Problem of Secularization in Early Sixteenth-Century Northern Art*, in: *Oud Holland* 98, 1984, 117–119; and Robert A. Koch, *La Sainte-Baume in Flemish Landscape Painting of the Sixteenth Century*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 66, 1965, 273–282. See also note 85.

66

Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 690. For a German edition of Waltheym's account, see Friedrich Emil Welti (ed.), *Die Pilgerfahrt des Hans von Waltheym im Jahre 1474*, Bern 1925; for a French edition and commentaries, see the contributions in *Provence historique* 166, 1991. For the grotto of the Magdalen in general and its actual-size European copies, see Marcello Scalzo, *Ascetismo reale, ascetismo immaginario: alcuni eremi di Maria Maddalena in Europa*, in: Stefano Bertocci and Sandro Parrinello (eds.), *Architettura eremitica:*

Once they had taken in the sweep of the cliffs, pilgrims would make their final and especially steep ascent along the last hour-long leg of the *Chemin des Rois*, which took them straight to the Magdalen's cave, located halfway up the rock face. Turning east after a bifurcation, they reached the top of the cliff itself, which was occupied by a small chapel, the so-called *Saint-Pilon*, and a second stele topped by an image of the Exultation of the Magdalen, now lost.⁶⁷

On 21 January 1516, the *Chemin des Rois* saw a group of particularly famous pilgrims make their way up the slope of the Sainte-Baume. The group was composed of a young Francis I (*reg.* 1515–1547), who had won a decisive victory against the Swiss at Marignano some four months before; his wife, Queen Claude; his mother, Queen Louise of Savoy; and his sister Margaret, later Queen of Navarre.⁶⁸ The visit resulted in generous benefactions from the royal company, especially to the Dominican convent attached to the sanctuary, which Francis found in a deplorable state. They also commissioned a commemorative plaque to be placed into the grotto itself,⁶⁹ but most important was the patronage of the creation of seven classicizing oratories of scenes from the life of the Magdalen that would mark the last two kilometers of the *Chemin*, between the village of Plan d'Aups at the cliff's foot and the shrines of the Magdalen's cave and the *Saint-Pilon* crowning the escarpment.⁷⁰ An inscription on the second of the four surviving *oratoires* names their donor as Jean Ferrier I, Archbishop of Arles (*reg.* 1499–1521),⁷¹ who, as one can surmise, may well have accompanied King Francis and his royal retinue on their visit. The identities of the responsible artists are not known, though it is possible, indeed likely, that they were recruited from Aix-en-Provence or Arles, where several shops working in the *all'antica* manner had begun to flourish.⁷² Like the grotto itself, the *tempietto*-like chapels suffered badly during the

sistemi progettuali e paesaggi culturali. Atti del Terzo Convegno Internazionale di Studi Camaldoli 21–23 Settembre 2012, Florence 2012, 210–217.

67

Montagnes, Le pèlerinage provençal, 683.

68

For the particulars of this visit, see Émile Baux, Victor-Louis Bourilly and Philippe Mabilly, *Le voyage des reines et de François 1er en Provence et dans la vallée du Rhône (décembre 1515 – février 1516)*, in: *Annales du Midi* 61, 1904, 1–36.

69

Baux, Bourilly and Mabilly, *Le voyage des reines*, 16.

70

For previous discussions of this series of monuments, see Timmermann, *Memory and Redemption*, 194–196; Barbara J. Johnston, *Sacred Kingship and Royal Patronage in the Vie de la Magdalene [sic]: Pilgrimage, Politics, Passion Plays, and the Life of Louise of Savoy*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida State University, 2007, 127–128; Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684; Irigoien, *Montjoies et oratoires*, 158–160; Faillon, *Monuments inédits*, cols. 1041–1042.

71

Joannes Ferrerius archiepiscopus arelatensis hoc monumentum [er]ligi curavit MDXVI. It is likely that the inscription was somewhat retrodated to coincide with the royal visit.

72

See the essays by Christine Gallissot-Ortuno and Vanessa Eggert in: Yves Esquieu (ed.), *Du gothique à la Renaissance: architecture et décor en France (1470–1550)*. *Actes du colloque Viviers*,

French Revolution, and the four that still line the *Chemin* are partially the result of reconstructions dating to the first decades of the twentieth century [Fig. 12]. Recalling the design of Stéphan's *oratoires* at Marseille, they incorporate a tall, broad plinth, an image niche flanked by decorated columns or pilasters and surmounted by a three-centered arch, itself crowned by a slightly projecting gabled pediment richly adorned with moldings and crenulations. The current reliefs are all modern, but an antiquarian account compiled by André Du Chesne (1584–1640) that first appeared in 1614 helps us to fill in the blanks.⁷³ His narrative is corroborated and complemented by a hitherto unpublished description written in 1586 by the pilgrim Jérôme Durant from which excerpts are quoted – in modern French – in Bernard Montagnes' recent study of the veneration of Mary Magdalen in fifteenth-century Provence.⁷⁴ The two accounts suggest that the sequence featured the following polychromed scenes:

1. Mary Magdalen, still in her worldly finery, listening to a sermon of Christ;⁷⁵
2. Mary Magdalen, “all changed in her manner of dress,” anointing Christ's feet and wiping them with her hair;⁷⁶
3. Mary Magdalen listening to Christ preach about the Resurrection “to the apostles, who were still unbelieving at this point”;⁷⁷
4. Mary Magdalen witnessing the Resurrection of Lazarus;⁷⁸
5. Mary Magdalen and her companions sailing in a boat, “to come to our France”;⁷⁹

20–23 septembre 2001, Aix-en-Provence 2003, at 33–50 (“Aux sources de la Renaissance provençale”) and 181–189 (“Demeures de la première moitié du XVIe siècle à Arles”).

73

André Du Chesne, *Les Antiquitez et recherches des villes, chasteaux et places plus remarquables de toute la France [...]*, Paris 1614, 261.

74

Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22.

75

“Elle estoit encore au monde, revestué de ses habits pompeux, avec ses chaînes d’Or, assise neantmoins devant nostre Seigneur qui prêche aux troupes” (Du Chesne, *Les Antiquitez et recherches*, 261; cf. also Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22).

76

“Vous la voyez toute changée en ses façons d’habits, déchevelée contre terre baisant les pieds de nostre Redempteur” (ibid.).

77

“[...] tantost écoutant la parole de son bien aymé, ores prêchant la Resurrection de Iesus-Christ aux Apostres, qui estoient encores incredules en ce point” (ibid.).

78

“Tantôt en un autre oratoire, vous la rencontrez non plus assise, mais debout, venant au rencontre et au-devant son époux, quand il venait pour ressusciter le Lazare” (Jérôme Durant, as quoted in Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22).

79

“Vous la voyez représentée dans une barque ou navire, venir vers nostre France, en la compagnie de plusieurs autres” (Du Chesne, *Les Antiquitez et recherches*, 261; cf. also Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22).



[Fig. 12]

La Sainte-Baume (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, F), *oratoire* on the *Chemin des Rois*, 1516. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

6. Mary Magdalen preaching to the people of Provence;⁸⁰
7. The penitent Magdalen, prostrate and holding a crucifix, and “contemplating the love that our God has brought to the human race.”⁸¹

There exists a group of several near-contemporary representations of the Sainte-Baume that may help us map these scenes onto the topography of the mountain itself. As with the early images of Montserrat, of course, we cannot take these depictions at face value, though as with the Montserrat material there are certain conclusions that can be drawn from studying features these representations have in common. Specifically, the Sainte-Baume with its string of *oratoires* is depicted in a grisaille medallion that appears in a manuscript illuminated by Godefroy de Batave in 1517 at the behest of Louise of Savoy, to commemorate the royal visit the year before;⁸² a panel belonging to a triptych with scenes from the life of the Magdalen, attributed to Jan Provoost and now preserved in the Museu de Arte Sacra at Funchal, Madeira (c. 1524–1526);⁸³ a woodcut accompanying François de Belleforest’s prodigious *Cosmographie universelle* of 1575;⁸⁴ and in the right wing of a triptych also dedicated to the Magdalen, created by the so-called “Master of 1518” (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Brussels), the only representation of the group that depicts all seven oratories [Fig. 13].⁸⁵ Below a beautiful Magdalen borne aloft by angels and to the left of a still-anonymous monastic

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“Non plus embarquée, mais en chaire, prêchant aux peuples” (Jerôme Durant, as quoted in Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22).

81

“Vous la remarquez couchée de son long avec un Crucifix en sa main, considerant l’amour que nostre Dieu a porté au genre des hommes” (Du Chesne, *Les Antiquitez et recherches*, 261; cf. also Montagnes, *Le pèlerinage provençal*, 684 n. 22).

82

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS français 24955, fol. 60r. The medallion in question forms part of a sequence of such roundels depicting scenes from the life of the Magdalen, the sights at the Sainte-Baume (including the interior of the grotto and the *Saint-Pilon*), and the reliquaries with fragments of her body that were shown to pilgrims in the church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine at Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume. See Myra D. Orth, *The Magdalen Shrine of la Sainte-Baume in 1516: A Series of Miniatures by Godefroy Le Batave* (B. N. Ms. fr. 24.955), in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 98, 1981, 201–209, at 205.

83

See Fernando A. B. Ferreira and Luiza Clode, *Museu de Arte Sacra do Funchal: Arte Flamenga* (Museu de Madeira), Lisbon 1997, 84–87; and *Feitorias: l’art au Portugal au temps des grandes découvertes (fin XIVe siècle jusqu’à 1548)*, Brussels 1991, 118 cat. no. 36.

84

François de Belleforest, *La Cosmographie universelle de tout le monde [...]*, Paris 1575, 340.

85

For a more detailed discussion of this work and its representation of the Sainte-Baume, see Annick Born, *Un témoignage des relations entre la France et les Pays-Bas habsbourgeois sous le règne de François Ier: une vue de la Sainte-Baume peinte par le Maître de 1518*, in: Geneviève Bresc-Bautier (ed.), *La France et l’Europe autour de 1500: croisements et échanges artistiques. Actes du colloque École du Louvre-musée national du Moyen-Âge-Thermes et hôtel de Cluny-musée national de la Renaissance-Château d’Écouen en partenariat avec l’Institut national d’histoire de l’art, 9, 10 et 11 décembre 2010* (XXVIIes Rencontres de l’École du Louvre), Paris 2015, 207–217; see previously Marguerite Roques, *Les apports néerlandais dans la peinture du sud-est de la France: XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles*, Bordeaux 1965, 249–251.



[Fig. 13]
"Master of 1518," Dieleghem Triptych, detail of right panel showing Exultation of Mary Magdalene and the *Chemin du Roi* with the *oratoires* of 1516; Brussels, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1518. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

donor is shown the meandering *Chemin des Rois*, on which several diminutive pilgrims make their taxing ascent past the string of *oratoires* to the two sanctuaries of the mountain. While it is impossible to discern the individual reliefs of the chapels in the painting, we can use the descriptions of Durant and Du Chesne to flesh out the picture. Traveling along the first stretch of the *Chemin*, pilgrims came to see scenes 1 to 4, which described the Magdalen's transformation from a vainglorious woman weighed down by golden ornaments to a fervent follower of Christ. At a bifurcation further up the mountainside they would encounter the fifth oratory with its visual narration of the sea voyage of the Magdalen and her companions to Provence. Pilgrims could then either walk up to the grotto in the forbidding rock face of *la Santa Bauma*, or, if they chose the left or eastern path, ascend further, past the two remaining *oratoires* with the scenes showing the Magdalen respectively preaching and doing penance before the crucifix, to the chapel of the *Saint-Pilon* and the adjacent pillar with the saint's Exultation at the very top of the cliff. Archbishop Jean Ferrier's series of chapels thus effectively projected the process of the Magdalen's conversion from sinner to a Christ-like figure onto the physical geography of the Sainte-Baume. Du Chesne fittingly uses the descriptors "au monde" for the first scene at the bottom of the incline and "couchée de son long avec un Crucifix en sa main" for the last image stationed some 350 meters further up, just below the cliff edge with the *Saint-Pilon*. Pilgrims witnessing the saint's stunning metamorphosis while walking up the strenuous – and in summer positively brutal – *Chemin* would similarly have left the world behind (quite literally at the bottom of the mountain) while also undergoing a change of sorts and experiencing a tectonic shift in their own spiritual geography, at least in theory. The narrative of the Joys of the Virgin at Montserrat, Lluç, and Marseille likewise progressed from the earthly plane to higher regions, both geographically and iconographically, though in contrast to the Magdalen cycle the trajectory described there was that of an already saintly woman who rises ontologically, rather than morally, from being the Handmaiden of the Lord to ruling as the Queen of Heaven. Whether the Sainte-Baume series was directly patterned on the three earlier Marian sequences remains to be seen, though as a native of Tarragona in Catalonia with frequent business in Marseille Archbishop Jean Ferrier, the patron of the *oratoires* dedicated to the Magdalen, would probably have been familiar with at least one of the older stational circuits. One could also argue that since the Passion of Christ appears to have been deliberately excluded from the selection of scenes shown to pilgrims visiting the Magdalen's cave, the chapels of the Sainte-Baume showcased nothing less than what might be called the "Joys of the Magdalen," which here culminated not in some kind of apotheotic glorification but rather in the attainment of the ultimate degree of *Christoformitas*. The fact that the Sainte-Baume sequence consisted, like the earlier lineups of Mary's Joys, of seven stops or stations seems equally significant in this respect, though this particular numerical choice

might also have been made to reflect specific stages in the Magdalen's *vita*. According to the *Golden Legend*, she preached in Provence for seven years before retiring to her grotto, where she was "carried aloft by angels" every day "at the seven canonical hours [...] and with her bodily ears heard the glorious chants of the celestial hosts."⁸⁶ We will see in the next section that numerical sequences were deeply encoded in medieval theories of religious and spiritual ascent and their allegorical emblems of the ladder, the stairway, the gradient road, and the mountain. "Septem sunt scale quibus ascenditur ad regnum celorum," writes the Alsatian abbess Herrad of Landsberg in her famous *Hortus deliciarum*, begun in 1167.⁸⁷ In what follows we will probe the compatibility between this sort of allegorical thinking and the image-oriented practice of sacred mountaineering.

Metaphors and Models of Ascent

The medieval Christian belief that the soul could meditatively and sequentially ascend on an upward path to the *regnum celorum*, to use Herrad's term, owes much to Plato's view of the material world as being but a poor image or mimicry of a higher, uncorrupted level of reality, the realm of forms, which remains inaccessible through the senses (*Republic*, 514a–520a, *inter alia*). It was the Neoplatonists who first gave this idea a structured armature, which itself opened the possibility for a kind of allegorical buoyancy. For Plotinus (205–269/70 CE), the universe essentially consisted of four concentric spheres, created through an ontological flow called emanation. At its center, it featured the One: a single, wholly transcendent entity that radiates a series of layers of reality below it, namely, the dimension of the Mind or Intellect, the region of the Soul, and, lowest of all, the material realm, a mere shadow world perilously close to evil and virtual non-being (*Enneads*). His follower Proclus (410/12–485), one of the last major classical philosophers, further divided this chain of being by containing each of its principal metaphysical elements within a triadic logic of unfolding, but he also reversed the process of emanation, thus allowing us to retrace the ontological movement that generated the universe back up from the material to the One (*Elements of Theology*, *Platonic Theology*). While the notion of outward or downward descent with its potentially negative implications continued to be discussed by later writers, it was the anagogical ascent which brought with it the possibility, indeed promise, of an ultimate reunion with the divine that held a particular fascination for Christian thinkers. First and foremost among these was Proclus'

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Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, transl. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols., Princeton, NJ 1993, vol. 1, 380.

⁸⁷

See note 92.

slightly younger contemporary, Pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite, whose great work on angelology and the soteriological aspirations of the soul, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, was in turn to have a lasting impact on the development of virtually all later medieval mysticism.⁸⁸

Gradual ascents to God of the kind first envisaged by Proclus are, of course, legion in medieval literature, theology, and art,⁸⁹ so in what follows I will limit myself to examples that are structurally or metaphorically similar to the upward visual-experiential trajectories taken by pilgrims en route to the four mountain shrines explored here. While Pseudo-Dionysius still operated with the Proclan triad, imagining a universe that encompassed nine orders of angels, other writers envisaged soul-climbing scenarios, with corresponding geographies, that revolved around the biblically charged number seven. As early as c. 540/50, St. Benedict of Nursia devised a seven-step program for the assumption of “the highest summit of Humility” (“summae humilitatis [...] culmen attingere;” *Regula*, chapter 7).⁹⁰ This was taken up by numerous later authors writing in a monastic milieu, including St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033/4–1109)⁹¹ and St. Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153), who also con-

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For meditative and ontological ascents in Neoplatonic and early Christian literature, see most recently Gerald P. Boersma, Let Us Flee to the Fatherland: Plotinus in Ambrose's Theology of Ascent, in: *Nova et vetera: The English Edition of the International Theological Journal* 14, 2016, 771–781; Nathan Eubank, Ineffably Effable: The Pinnacle of Mystical Ascent in Gregory of Nyssa's De vita Moysis, in: *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 16, 2014, 25–41; Christoph Helmig and Antonio L. C. Vargas, Ascent of the Soul and Grades of Freedom: Neoplatonic Theurgy between Ritual and Philosophy, in: Pieter D'Hoine and Gerd Van Riel (eds.), *Fate, Providence and Moral Responsibility in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought: Studies in Honour of Carlos Steel*, Leuven 2014, 253–266; Peter T. Stuck, Allegory and Ascent in Neoplatonism, in: Rita Copeland and Peter T. Stuck (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, Cambridge 2010, 57–70; James Lawson, In quo iniquit, adprehendam Dominum...? Plotinian Ascent and Christian Sacrifice in De ciuitate Dei 10.1-7, in: *Dionysius* 24, 2006, 125–138; John R. Meyer, “Assumptio carnis” and the Ascent to God: Hilary's Revision of Irenaeus' Doctrine of “salus carnis”, in: *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 9, 2005, 303–319.

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For medieval models of contemplative ascent, see Christel Meier, Krise und Conversio: Grenzerfahrungen in der biographischen Literatur des Hochmittelalters, in: *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 50, 2016, 21–44; Earline Jennifer Ashworth, Descent and Ascent from Ockham to Domingo de Soto: An Answer to Paul Spade, in: *Vivarium* 51, 2013, 385–410; Philip Ford, Neo-Platonic Themes of Ascent in Marguerite de Navarre, in: Gary Ferguson and Mary B. McKinley (eds.), *A Companion to Marguerite de Navarre* (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 42), Leiden 2013, 89–108; Joseph Chua, The Spiritual Itinerary of Ascent in Bernard of Clairvaux's Sermons on the Ascension, in: *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 47, 2012, 3–45; Ronald Patrick Glaspey, *Hildegard von Bingen – Dante Alighieri: Orthopraxis of Ascent*, Fresno, CA 2001; Nikolaus Largier, Aufstieg und Abstieg: Die Symbolik des Wegs bei Rudolf von Biberach, Meister Eckhart und Johannes Tauler, in: Paul Michel (ed.), *Symbolik von Weg und Reise* (Schriften zur Symbolforschung), Bern/Frankfurt a. M. 1992, 41–55; Vincent Paul Spade, The Logic of the Categorical: The Medieval Theory of Descent and Ascent, in: Norman Kretzmann (ed.), *Meaning and Inference in Medieval Philosophy: Studies in Memory of Jan Pinborg*, Dordrecht/Boston 1988, 187–222; and Grover A. Zinn, “De gradibus ascensionum”: The Stages of Contemplative Ascent in Two Treatises on Noah's Ark by Hugh of St. Victor, in: *Studies in Medieval Culture* 5, 1975, 61–79.

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For the Latin edition, see http://www.intratext.com/IXT/LAT0011/_P8.HTM (accessed 25 November 2018).

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“De monte humilitatis et septem gradibus eius,” in: *Patrologia Latina*, 159, 665B – 669A (<https://archive.org/stream/operaomnia00eadmgoog#page/n43/mode/1up> [accessed 25 November 2018]).

ceived of a corresponding descent down the seven steps of Pride.⁹² The already-mentioned abbess Herrad of Landsberg (c. 1125/30–1195) likewise wrote for a cloistered audience, inventing for her nuns an allegorical ladder with seven rungs representing specific monastic virtues including Chastity and Obedience, and ultimately leading to the attainment of the crown of eternal life (*Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 216r).⁹³ Closer in spirit to the idea of the soul rising through the celestial spheres first formulated by the Aeropagite were the writings of two Franciscans, the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* and *De triplici via* by the Latian St. Bonaventure (1217/18–1274), and *Die sieben Staffeln des Gebetes* (“The Seven Steps of Prayer”) by the Swabian David of Augsburg (d. 1272). While David’s treatise centers on the metaphor of the staircase, which he derived from Ezechiel’s vision of the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s Temple,⁹⁴ Bonaventura’s device of choice is again the ladder, which is variously fitted with six, seven, or nine rungs, and is employed to mean both the contemplation of “traces of God,” i.e., the world of things,⁹⁵ and incremental progress toward the “embrace of the cross,” “intuition of truth,” and the “sweetness of charity.”⁹⁶

Pride of place in this line-up of structured spiritual ascents no doubt belongs to Dante’s description of Mount Purgatory in the central part of his *Divine Comedy* (c. 1308–1320), quoted in the epigraph to this article. Vertiginously high and soaring straight from the ocean, Dante’s expurgatory mountain rises in a succession of ten terraces, of which the first two comprise Antepurgatory (Cantos

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“De septem gradibus humilitatis et superbiae,” in: *Patrologia Latina*, 182, 951–972 (<https://archive.org/details/patrologiaecurs62unkngoog> [accessed 25 November 2018]).

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Herrad of Hohenbourg (= Herrad of Landsberg), *Hortus deliciarum*, ed. Rosalie Green et al., 2 vols., Studies of the Warburg Institute 36, London 1979, I, 336: “(1) Hec scala significat ascensum virtutum et religiosum sanctitatis exercitium quo eterne vite corona adipiscitur [...] (2) Septem sunt scale quibus ascenditur ad regnum celorum. Prima castitas. Secunda mundi contemptus. Tercia humilitas. Quarta obediencia. Quintus patientia. Sexta fides. Septima caritas de puro corde.” The famous miniature that accompanies the text on fol. 215v curiously depicts a ladder with fifteen rungs.

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Ezechiel 40:22 “[...] et septem graduum erat ascensus ejus [...]” For the treatise, see David von Augsburg, *Die sieben Staffeln des Gebetes*, in *der deutschen Originalfassung*, ed. Kurt Ruh, Kleine deutsche Prosadenkmäler des Mittelalters 1, Munich 1965.

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As is implied by the title of the first chapter of the *Itinerarium*, “De gradibus ascensionis in Deum et de speculatione ipsius per vestigia eius in universo,” and by the subsequent assertion that “secundum statum conditionis nostrae ipsa rerum universitas [est] scala ad ascendendum in Deum” (Bonaventura, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum – Der Weg des Menschen zu Gott*, ed. and transl. Dieter Hattrup, Paderborn 1997, 14, 16). For notions of ascent in Bonaventure, see Lydia Schumacher, Bonaventure’s Journey of the Mind to God: A Traditional Augustinian Ascent?, in: *Medioevo: Rivista di Storia della Filosofia Medievale* 37, 2012, 201–230; and Timothy J. Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent: Bonaventure on Poverty, Prayer, and Union with God*, St Bonaventure, NY 2012.

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See the titles of sections 2 and 6 of chapter 2 in *De triplici via*: “De septem gradibus, quibus pervenitur ad soporem pacis: assensus rationis – affectus compassionis – aspectus admirationis – excessus devotionis – amictus assimilationis – amplexus crucis – intuitus veritatis,” and “De septem gradibus, quibus pervenitur ad dulcorem caritatis” (Bonaventura, *De triplici via*, ed. and transl. Marianne Schlosser, Fontes Christiani 14, Freiburg 1993, 7).

I–X) and the last a kind of platformed interface to Paradise (Cantos XXVIII–XXXVIII). Levels 3 to 9 (Cantos XI–XXVII) make up Purgatory proper, where souls culpable of having indulged in the Seven Deadly Sins suffer appropriate punishments before being allowed to experience spiritual growth. If Domenico di Michelino's fresco of Dante's Purgatory in Florence Cathedral (1465) is anything to go by, the poet's contemporaries and near-contemporaries appear to have conceived of his prodigious mountain of purification as consisting only of the seven levels associated with the Capital Vices; in this mural, a multitude of lumbering souls is shown making their arduous climb up a helical path that winds around a cone-shaped crest.⁹⁷ Dante himself describes Mount Purgatory variously as "alto monte" (Canto V, 86), "lo monte che l'anima cura" (*Paradiso*, Canto XVII, 20), and as "santo monte" (Canto XXVIII, 2), the latter term in particular suggesting that his multi-tiered peak to Paradise, while undoubtedly Neoplatonic in conception, might also have been inspired by the kinds of sacred mountains *cum* summit shrines investigated here.⁹⁸

Dante's soul-curing mountain remained a product of the literary imagination, but the notion that physical ascents could be spiritually cleansing was emphatically restated in an actual account of mountaineering, written by one of Dante's greatest admirers, Francesco Petrarca. It describes the latter's scaling, in 1336, of Mont Ventoux, which at 1,912 meters in height is the most dominant summit of the Vaucluse region, some one hundred kilometers straight north of Marseille.⁹⁹ While initially receptive to the beauty of the surrounding landscape, with its multiple vantage points from on high, Petrarca soon turned his thoughts inward and heavenward; somewhere halfway up the summit he re-read portions of St. Augustine's *Confessions* (another key narrative of spiritual anagogy), which in turn accelerated the transformation of his physical climb into an internal and ever more allegorical one. Having finally made it to the top, he exclaims: "The life we call blessed is to be sought on a high level, and straight is the way that leads to it. Many, also, are

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On Michelino's fresco, see Anna Matteoli, L'allegoria dantesca nel Duomo di Firenze: Contributi alla "Vexata Quaestio" sulla vera effigie del poeta, in: *Bollettino della Accademia degli Euteleti della Città di San Miniato* 90, 2012, 283–303; see also the new guidebook by Francesco Guerrieri, *Domenico di Michelino: Dante, la "Divina Commedia" e Firenze* (I "diamanti" dell'opera di Santa Maria del Fiore 1), Florence 2017.

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For Dante's use of mountain metaphors, see now Friedrich Wolfzettel, Berg(-Landschaft) bei Dante – mit einem Ausblick auf Boccaccio, in: *Deutsches Dante-Jahrbuch* 92, 2017, 106–121.

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For Petrarca's ascent of Mont Ventoux, see most recently Classen, *Discovery of the Mountain*; see also Enrico Santangelo, Petrarch Reading Dante: The Ascent of Mount Ventoux (Familiars 4.1), in: Martin L. McLaughlin (ed.), *Petrarch in Britain: Interpreters, Imitators and Translators over 700 Years* (Proceedings of the British Academy 146), London 2007, 95–112; Jean-Michel Agasse, *Umbra montis, umbra mortis: Pétrarque au Ventoux*, in: *Pallas: Revue d'études antiques* 75, 2005, 89–103; and Elke Waiblinger, *Augenlust und Erkundung der Seele: Francesco Petrarca auf dem Mount Ventoux*, in: Laetitia Rimpau (ed.), *Raumerfahrung – Raumerfindung: Erzählte Welten des Mittelalters zwischen Orient und Okzident*, Berlin 2005, 179–194.

the hills that stand in the way that leads to it, and we must ascend from virtue to virtue up glorious steps. At the summit is both the end of our struggles and the goal of our journey's end."¹⁰⁰

I conclude this last section with a look at two late medieval images that in one way or another put a visual spin on the entanglement of bodily and spiritual ascents – “up glorious steps” and other sequential means – and on the themes of gradual purification. They speak to the dichotomy between bottom and top, *mundus* and *coelum*, and the eventual “goal of our journey's end,” the attainment of the “eterne vite corona,” to speak with Herrad of Landsberg, or in the words of St. Bonaventure, the “amplexus crucis” and the “intuitus veritatis.” As Christian Heck has amply demonstrated, medieval art abounds with scalological imagery, which includes Jacob's famous Ladder from Genesis 28:10–19 and the equally well-known Ladder or *Κλίμαξ* of the eponymous Sinaite monk John Climacus (c. 579–649), but also all manner of other man-made means and aids to ascent, such as staircases, stairwells, flights of steps roughly cut into the rockface of a mountain, or, as in my first example, a scaliform sequence of scrolls inscribed with an assortment of soul-raising virtues.¹⁰¹

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Francesco Petrarca, The Ascent of Mount Ventoux, in: Julia Conaway Bondanella and Mark Musa (eds.), *The Italian Renaissance Reader*, New York 1987, 14–25, at 18. For the Latin original, see Francesco Petrarca, *Le familiari*, ed. Vittorio Rossi, 4 vols., Florence 1933–1942), vol. 1, 153–161.

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Christian Heck, *L'Échelle céleste dans l'art du Moyen Âge: Une image de la quête du ciel* (Idées et recherches), Paris 1997. For ladder imagery in the post-medieval period, see Martin Cico, *Passio Christi und Scala Sancta: Bemerkungen zur Ikonografie der Heiligen Stiegen und deren Beziehung zu den Kalvarienbergen*, in: Markus Hörsch (ed.), *Kunst-Politik-Religion: Studien zur Kunst in Süddeutschland, Österreich, Tschechien und der Slowakei; Festschrift für Franz Matsche zum 60. Geburtstag*, Petersberg 2000, 87–98; see also Karl Josef Hölting, *Arbor, Scala und Fons vitae: Vorformen devotionaler Embleme in einer mittellenglischen Handschrift*, in: Sibylle Penkert (ed.), *Emblem und Emblematikrezeption: Vergleichende Studien zur Wirkungsgeschichte vom 16. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Darmstadt 1978, 72–109. On the symbolic dimension of stairs and stairways in medieval architecture, see Toby Huitson, *Stairway to Heaven: The Functions of Medieval Upper Spaces*, Oxford 2014. For Jacob's Ladder in medieval art, see esp. Eva-Maria Kaufmann, *Jakobs Traum und der Aufstieg des Menschen zu Gott: Das Thema der Himmelsleiter in der bildenden Kunst des Mittelalters*, Tübingen/Berlin 2006; see also Nancy Freeman Regalado, *Angels on the Right Bank: The Celestial Ladder over Paris in BnF, MS fr. 146*, in: Joyce Coleman (ed.), *The Social Life of Illumination: Manuscripts, Images, and Communities in the Late Middle Ages* (Medieval Texts and Cultures in Northern Europe 21), Turnhout 2013, 311–337. For the Ladder of John Climacus and related images in Byzantium, see Rossitza Schroeder, *The Salvation of the Soul and the Road to Heaven: The Representation of the Ladder of Divine Ascent in the Vatopedi Katholikon*, in: Lynn Jones (ed.), *Byzantine Images and Their Afterlives: Essays in Honor of Annemarie Weyl Carr*, Farnham 2014, 215–228; Elena Ene D-Vasilescu, *The Last Wonderful Thing: The Icon of the Heavenly Ladder on Mount Sinai*, in: Antony Eastmond and Liz James (eds.), *Wonderful Things: Byzantium through Its Art; Papers from the Forty-Second Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, London, 20–22 March 2009*, Farnham 2013, 139–148; Kathleen Anne Corrigan and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Teaching of the Ladder: The Message of the “Heavenly Ladder” Image in Sinai ms. gr. 417*, in: Angeliki Lymberopoulou (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages, and Meanings: Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*, Farnham 2011, 99–120; Veronica Della Dora, *Turning Holy Mountains into Ladders of Heaven: Overlapping Topographies and Poetics of Space in Post-Byzantine Sacred Engravings of Mount Sinai and Mount Athos*, in: Sharon E. J. Gerstel (ed.), *Approaching the Holy Mountain: Art and Liturgy at St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai* (Cursor mundi 11), Turnhout 2010, 505–535; Elena Ene D-Vasilescu, *Spiritual Ascent in a Sianite Monastery: The Icon of the Ladder*, in: *Series Byzantina* 7, 2009, 101–114; Henrik Rydell Johnsen, *Rhetoric and Ascetic Ascent in The Ladder of John Climacus*, in: *Studia patristica* 39, 2006: 393–398; and Eva-Maria Kaufmann, *Abstieg Gottes und Aufstieg des Menschen: Das Bildmotiv der Himmelsleiter im Mittelalter*, in: *Das Münster* 59,

The image in question is a colored single-leaf woodcut produced in the Upper Rhine region during the 1480s [Fig. 14].¹⁰² Its original publishing context is not known, though given the subject matter and the fact that its principal protagonist is a nun, it is probably safe to assume that it was made for an audience of cloistered religious women. The composition is dominated by an almost impossibly steep rocky pinnacle overgrown with large thistles. The nun is depicted on the lower left, to whom God the Father signals from a bank of clouds suspended just above the peak's grassy summit. The only way up is via a rather insubstantial-looking ladder composed of twelve banderoles bearing the names of various virtues, including faith ("globen") at the bottom and divine love ("getliche lieb") at the very top.¹⁰³ Four larger banderoles arranged around the nun provide instructions that prepare her for the ascent.¹⁰⁴ The one closest to her head and hands is inscribed "You must powerfully resist all sin and vice, possess every virtue, and proceed mightily through thistles and thorns, then you may joyfully stand with me at the top of the mountain" ("Allain sunden vnd vn tugenden muostu crefftlichen wider ston, vnd alle tugend hon Vnd gewaltlich durch distel vnd dorn gon so magstu mit freden by mier vff dem berg ston"). Just how the nun was supposed to rid herself of all sin and vice, presumably before acquiring the virtues necessary for the climb, is suggested by the *arma Christi*-like whip and scourge laid out before her. The ultimate recompense for this difficult, indeed horrific, ascent is the crown of eternal life that God holds out to her from above. Some three hundred years earlier Herrad of Landsberg promised her nuns the same reward if only they would successfully manage to scale her seven-runged ladder of virtues, but the motif also brings to mind the scene of the Virgin's Coronation shown to pilgrims at the end of their strenuous climb up Montserrat.

My final image is also a woodcut, but a rather more enigmatic one [Fig. 15]. Created by an anonymous Tuscan artist, it accompa-

2006, 112–121; still useful is Martin John Rupert, *The Illustration of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus* (Studies in Manuscript Illumination 5), Princeton, NJ 1954. For the ladder motif in images of Christ ascending the cross, see Grazia Maria Fachechi, "Stairway to Heaven": L'immagine di Christo che sale alla croce nei codici liturgici medievali tra Oriente e Occidente, in: *Rivista di Storia della Miniatura* 11, 2007, 31–38; Anna Eörsi, *Haec scala significat ascensum virtutum: Remarks on the Iconography of Christ Mounting the Cross on a Ladder*, in: *Arte Cristiana* 85, 1997, 151–166; and Anne Derbes, *Images East and West: The Ascent of the Cross*, in: Robert G. Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (eds.), *The Sacred Image East and West* (Illinois Byzantine Studies), Urbana, IL 1995, 110–131. For a comparative discussion ladder imagery in both Christian and non-Christian contexts, see Friedrich Mielke, *Geistige Treppen: Treppen des Geistes* (Schriften zur internationalen Treppenforschung 12), Stamsried 2001.

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For a detailed discussion of the print, see *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public* (exh. cat., Washington, National Gallery of Art), ed. by Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, Washington 2005, 290–292 no. 91, with further literature; see also Heck, *L'Échelle céleste*, 154.

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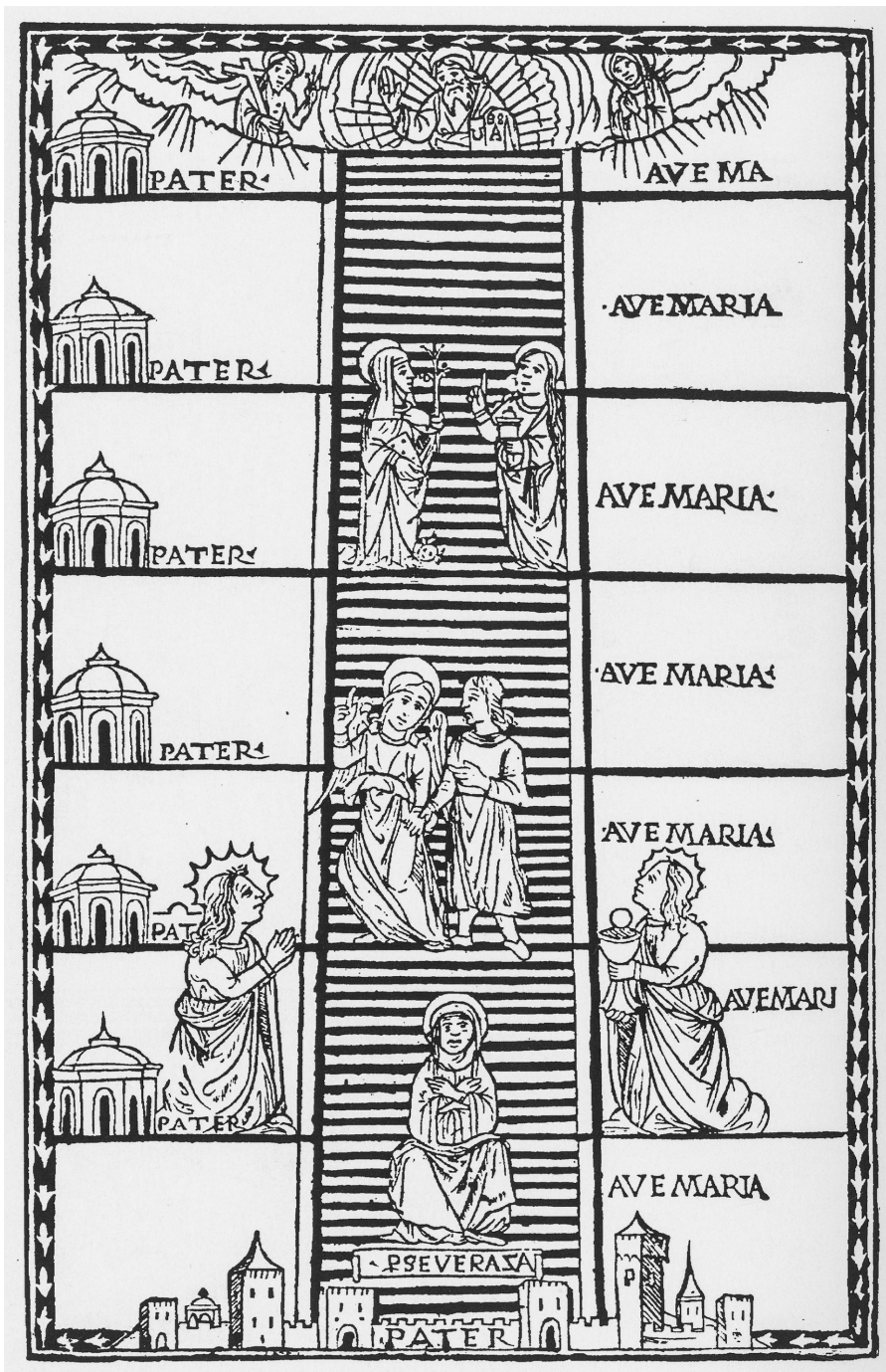
For a complete listing of the virtues, see Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, 290.

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All are transcribed and translated in Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, 291.



[Fig. 14]
Nun before mountain / ladder of virtues; woodcut, Upper Rhine, c. 1480.
Photo: © National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1943.3.640.



[Fig. 15]

"Mistica scala del Patriarcha Jacob"; woodcut, Florence, 1512. Photo: Sander,
Le Livre à figures italien depuis 1467 jusqu'à 1530, 617, fig. no. 3547.

nies a treatise on the “mistica scala del Patriarcha Jacob” published by Stefano di Carlo in Florence in 1512.¹⁰⁵ Populated by a number of biblical characters including St. Mary Magdalen and the Virgin Mary, the Archangel Raphael and the young Tobias and what appears to be the personification of Constancy (P[ER]SEVERANZA), whose exact meaning remains elusive, the print is divided into three vertical zones. That on the right is subdivided into seven fields bearing the words AVE MARIA; that on the left has a corresponding number of sections with the term PATER, presumably standing for the Lord’s Prayer “Pater noster,” next to which is a *tempietto*-like structure in all but the lowermost section. The central part of the image is occupied by a broad ladder inhabited by the five figures identified above, and connecting a large fortified city at the bottom, here inscribed with the first of the seven ascending PATERs, with a heavenly half-aureole containing God the Father, Christ holding the Cross, and the Virgin Mary, all looking on from above. With its seven-fold upward sequence of “Pater Nosters” (leading to the figure of Christ on the *dexter* side of God) and “Ave Marias” (rising up to the Virgin on the *sinistra domini*), the woodcut may well have been intended as a pictorial meditation on the so-called Franciscan Crown, a rosary consisting of seven decades in commemoration of the Seven Joys of the Virgin Mary and probably originating among the Friars Minor of Assisi in 1422. What makes this image especially relevant to my argument is not only its sept-partite analogical structure and its likely association with the *septem gaudiis Mariae*, but also its seemingly ancillary architectural details – the walled city at the bottom, and the series of chapels next to the word PATER on the left – that respectively call to mind the depictions of Collbató and Caimari in the early woodcuts of Montserrat and Lluç, with their strings of crosses, image steles, and *oratoires* that structured the pilgrims’ ascent to the four mountain shrines explored above. The fact that a devotional woodcut with a representational-semantic armature almost identical to that mapped onto sacred mountains of late medieval Catalonia, Mallorca, and Provence was produced in early Cinquecento Tuscany testifies both to the longevity and malleability of the visual-spiritual strategies here under scrutiny. It speaks as well as to their easy transferability from one context to another, here fitting the needs of sacred mountaineering that involved both body and mind, there being adapted for inward journeys only, launched from the base camp of one’s monastic cell or private oratory. At the same time, the clearly vicarious function of the print, with its repetitive depiction of *tempietti* on the left, also reminds us of the contemporaneous arrival on the Italian pilgrimage scene of a new type of mountain sanctuary, the *Sacro Monte* with its chapel-lined pathways, which no longer represented just itself (or at most, as at Lluç, a geographically close prototype),

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Max Sander, *Le Livre à figures italien depuis 1467 jusqu’à 1530: Essai de sa bibliographie et de son histoire*, New York 1941, 617 no. 3547; see also Heck, *L’Échelle céleste*, 151, and Cornelia Schneider (ed.), *Blockbücher des Mittelalters: Bilderfolgen als Lektüre*, Mainz 1991, 54.

but strove to replicate a place far removed in space and time, and yet seemingly familiar to all.

A brief conclusion

In this article we have scaled mountains in nature and mountains of the mind. While doing so, we have observed a correlation between the increasing mortification of the flesh and growing spiritual elevation, at least on the way up. It is of course unlikely that the majority of pilgrims hiking up Montserrat or the Sainte-Baume knew of the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius or carried with them a pocket edition of St. Augustine's *Confessions* (or Dante's *Purgatorio* for that matter). But given the persuasive collaboration between imagery and geographical terrain in these places and the ubiquity of both models and metaphors of ascent, as mediated, for instance, through Franciscan thought and teaching, this would hardly have been necessary. In addition, pilgrims had their prayers and ballads, which they said and sang either en route to or at the summit shrine. Since they usually journeyed in groups, their understanding of the sacred mountains they had chosen to climb must have been somewhat different from Petrarca's scaling of Mont Ventoux, not because the poet did not travel in company – he did, but soon left his friends behind – but because his ascent was neither punctuated by outwardly performative gestures or utterances nor was it primarily religiously motivated. Thanks to the counter-directional image programs designed by Pere Moragues and Llorenç Tosquella *père*, pilgrims visiting Montserrat and Lluç had the chance to experience their return journey down the mountain slope as a second spiritual ascent. The *oratoires* at Marseille and the Sainte-Baume afforded no such second opportunity, so that walking past the upwardly arrayed Joys of the Virgin and the Magdalen's *vita* for a second time must have been akin to reading a book in reverse. As the *concepteurs* of the stational monuments at Montserrat and Lluç probably realized, descents brought their own particular physical dangers, being hard on the joints and making one prone to stumble, and in the spiritual corruptions of *mundus* waiting to entrap pilgrims anew in the inns of Collbató and Caimari, the brothels of Marseille, or in the shop of some unscrupulous seller of fake relics and indulgences at Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume. One can only hope that viewing the Joys again in their proper order on the descent from the *mons serratus* and its simulacrum at Lluç helped pilgrims break their inexorable moral-ontological fall and gave them a reservoir of spiritual buoyancy with which to resist the temptations of this world just a little bit longer.

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