

Miraculous Prints in Early-Modern Emilia-Romagna

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PhD Thesis

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I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Abstract

This doctoral thesis focuses on a selection of rare Italian early-modern prints from Emilia-Romagna which are believed to be miraculous images and have functioned as local cult objects since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By analysing these prints and the circumstances of their veneration, the thesis attempts to shed light on the impact that prints had within the context of miraculous imagery. While the use of prints in the dispersion of cult images is well-known, less attention has been paid to prints that became miraculous images in their own right. By analysing prints within the broader category of miraculous imagery produced in more permanent media, my research examines relatively neglected but crucially important aspects of the print medium, thus contributing a new chapter to the history of printmaking as well as to the discussion of miraculous imagery.

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Introduction

My doctoral thesis examines a selection of rare miraculous prints, which have been venerated in churches in Emilia-Romagna since the early-modern period and are still objects of devotion today. If it is already very rare that miraculous prints have survived till the present day, it is even more unusual that they have survived *in situ* in their place of veneration, with related archival documentation. It is indeed almost exclusively due to the extraordinary survival of these prints in their original contexts that it is possible to analyse the historical phenomenon of miraculous prints in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as contributing elements of the devotional visual culture of the time. As we will see, it is otherwise very difficult to establish whether a devotional print that is now preserved in an archive or museum was once associated with miraculous properties.

While focusing on six case studies of rare surviving examples, my thesis aims to demonstrate that the attribution of miracle-working properties to standard devotional prints was commonplace in early-modern Italy.

Miraculous prints constituted an important part of the visual culture of the time. In particular, my research aims to analyse prints within the broader category of miraculous imagery produced in a range of different, often more permanent, media. Once institutionalised in churches and supervised by clerical authority, miraculous prints functioned in ways very similar to other cult images, yet the medium of printing in the context of miraculous imagery deserves further attention. My research examines these relatively neglected

but crucially important aspects of the prints as cult objects, thus contributing a new chapter to the history of printmaking as well as to the discussion of miraculous imagery.

Prints were related to miraculous images in two different ways. In the first place, the print as a reproductive medium was used for the dissemination of existing miraculous images in other media.¹ In this form, the miraculous prototypes could be venerated at long distances, sometimes by worshippers who had never seen the original. Prints had the ability to make visible in different localities the sacrality encoded in distant objects. While the use of prints in the dispersion of cult images is well-known, less attention has been paid to prints that became miraculous images in their own right – whether original devotional prints or reproductive prints that copied an existing miraculous image in another medium. Such miraculous prints were contradictory objects: executed in a reproducible medium, yet treated as a unique instance of that medium with special properties, tied to a specific location.² Prints that had acquired a miraculous status could even be reproduced in other prints but also in images in other media (this reversing

¹ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Robert Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 81-95; David Areford, "Multiplying the Sacred: The Fifteenth-Century Woodcut as Reproduction, Surrogate, Simulation," in *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Peter Parshall (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2009), 119-53; Megan Holmes, "Reproducing 'Sacred Likeness' in Renaissance Italy," in *Nichts Neues Schaffen. Perspektiven auf die treue Kopie, 1300-1900*, eds. Marion Heisterberg, Susanne Müller-Bechtel, and Antonia Putzger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 27-44.

² Lisa Pon, "Place, Print and Miracle: Forlì's Madonna of the Fire as Functional Site," *Art History* 31, no. 3 (2008): 303-21; Lisa Pon, "Il tabernacolo e la processione: la Madonna del Fuoco di Forlì come sito funzionale," in *I territori del patrimonio: dinamiche della patrimonializzazione e culture locali (secoli XVII-XX)*, ed. Roberto Balzani (Bologna: Società editrice Il mulino, 2015), 63-94.

the dynamics of printmaking as a reproductive technique) – which in their turn once again had the potential to become miraculous images themselves!

My thesis does not only focus on the miraculous prints as objects, but also on the people who were involved with them. It explores the use people made of these prints, the ways they were understood to work miracles and the devotional practices associated with them, both before and after miracles were attributed to them. Since these prints were anonymously produced and were understood as items of devotion and adoration, my research draws on art history, but also on other disciplines, such as history, anthropology, sociology, and religious studies. My study explores the perception of miracles and how this perception had an impact on the material nature of devotional imagery, in particular printed images.

Since the year 2000, Italian early-modern miraculous imagery has become the focus of sustained scholarly enquiry. The conference, *The Miraculous Image in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (2004), held at the 'Accademia di Danimarca' in Rome, with papers exemplifying different approaches, opened the way to a series of studies on the theme.³ Scholars such as Robert Maniura, Jane Garnett, Gervase Rosser, and Megan Holmes have brought the challenging and long overlooked theme of Italian miraculous imagery to

³ Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004).

attention.⁴ However, despite the growing interest in the subject, Lisa Pon's *A Printed Icon in Early Modern Italy. Forlì's Madonna of the Fire* is the only existing book to date, which specifically deals with a miraculous print, preceded by her article *Place, Print and Miracle: Forlì's Madonna of the Fire as Functional Site*.⁵ Although Pon's work offers great insight into the Madonna of the Fire (a fifteenth-century coloured woodcut on paper venerated in the Cathedral of Forlì, Emilia-Romagna), it does not examine the broader category of miraculous prints, to which the woodcut belongs,

⁴ Robert Maniura, "Voting with Their Feet: Art, Pilgrimage and Ratings in the Renaissance," in *Revaluating Renaissance Art*, eds. Gabriele Neher and Rubert Shepherd (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 187-99; Robert Maniura, "Pilgrimage into Words and Images: The Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri in Renaissance Prato," *Journeys: The International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing* 3/1 (2002): 40-60; Robert Maniura, "The Icon is Dead, Long Live the Icon: The Holy Image in the Renaissance," in *Icon and Word: The Power of Images in Byzantium*, eds. Simon Coleman and John Elsner (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 87-104; Robert Maniura "Image and Relic in the Cult of Our Lady of Prato," in *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds. Sally Cornelison and Scott Montgomery (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 193-212; Robert Maniura, "Ex Votos, Art and Pious Performance," *Oxford Art Journal* 32, no. 3 (2009): 409-25; Robert Maniura, "Persuading the Absent Saint: Image and Performance in Marian Devotion," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 3 (Spring 2009): 629-54; Robert Maniura, "Icon/Image," *Materia Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 7/1 (2011): 50-6; Robert Maniura, *Art and Miracle in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Gervase Rosser, "Reliquie o immagini? Culti e miracoli in Liguria," *Quaderni Franzoniani: Semestrare di bibliografia e cultura ligure* 2 (2000): 125-37; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "A Miracle-Working Orthodox Icon in Italy: Comparative Image Cults in East and West," in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow: 2003), 351-60; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, *Miracoli dell'immagine sacra* (Oxford: Holywell Press, 2004); Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "The Virgin Mary an the People of Liguria: Image and Cult," in *The Church and Mary*, ed. Robert Norman Swanson (Woodbridge: The Ecclesiastical History Society by The Boydell press, 2004), 280-97; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "Miraculous Images and the Sanctification of Urban Neighbourhood in Post Medieval Italy," *Journal of Urban History* 32 (2006): 729-40; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "Representing Spectacular Miracles," *Forum for Anthropology and Culture* 4 (2007): 269-74; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "Sacred Space in the Light of the Miraculous Image. A Case-study from Seventeenth-Century Italy," in *Hierotopy. Comparative Studies of Sacred Spaces*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow: Indrik, 2008), 162-76; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "Notes from the Field: Anthropomorphism," *Art Bulletin* 94, no. 1 (2012): 22-4; Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles: Transforming Images in Italy, from Renaissance to the Present* (London: Reaktion, 2013); Gervase Rosser, "True Icons? The Power of Supernatural Images in Late Medieval and Early Modern Italy," in *La vérité: Vérité et crédibilité: construire la vérité dans le système de communication de l'Occident (XIII^e-XVII^e siècle)*, ed. Jean-Philippe Genet (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne and École française de Rome, 2015), 287-302; Megan Holmes, "The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence," *Art History* 34, no. 3 (2011): 432-65; Megan Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

⁵ Lisa Pon, *A Printed Icon in Early Modern Italy. Forlì's Madonna of the Fire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Pon, "Place, Print and Miracle," 303-21.

leaving the door open for a more systematic study on this peculiar sub-category of miraculous images. When, in her 2008 article, Pon reported that the Madonna of the Fire is an unusual example of a print losing its constitutive 'Ortlosigkeit' ('placelessness'), she did not consider that this is a feature, that the woodcut has in common with other miraculous prints and that there are additional aspects that are specific to these miraculous images. The exceptional survival of miraculous prints *in situ* in Emilia-Romagna makes it possible, for the first time, not only to analyse six case studies in detail, but also to draw broader conclusions about prints as a category of miraculous images and to give the miraculous printed image its proper place in both the discourse of art history and that of the image as a cult object. As evidenced by Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, miraculous imagery challenges the traditional definition of Art.⁶ Form and material are perceived and valued quite differently from their reception in the world of Art. The aesthetic qualities of these images do not deserve particular attention and are irrelevant for their miraculous powers. However, miraculous prints were an important component of the visual culture of the early modern period.

Methodology and Historiography

Despite the widespread diffusion of miraculous imagery in early-modern Italy, my thesis focuses on a particular area, which more or less corresponds to the current region of Emilia-Romagna. Here, a significant group of

⁶ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 7-8.

miraculous prints has been venerated in churches since the early-modern period, thus offering a wide variety of still existing examples of miraculous prints. However, what is known today as the region of Emilia-Romagna was not a defined unit in the early-modern period. On the contrary, the area discussed of my thesis was split into different entities: the Papal States, the Duchy of Este, the Grand-Duchy of Florence, fiefs, senatorial families, municipalities, and so on. The region is excellent for study, situated at the crossroads of diverse influences. These prints were part of the devotional world of early-modern people in that region. Other remaining surviving examples of Italian miraculous prints which are known today are also located in areas adjacent to modern Emilia-Romagna, such as East Liguria and Northern Tuscany. In total, I found fifteen surviving early-modern miraculous prints, eleven of which are situated in what is now Emilia-Romagna. It remains unclear whether the presence of a group of miraculous prints in this region reflects a specific concentration of such images compared to other areas (possibly due to a larger than average number of prints being available in Emilia-Romagna, although again, this is difficult to prove), or the density of miraculous prints was equally high elsewhere and their survival in Emilia-Romagna is merely a matter of historical contingency. The prints that I will examine in detail all stem from the period of the early sixteenth to the late seventeenth centuries; it is evident that multiple cults revolving around miraculous prints have their origins within this time frame, coinciding with the increasing use of prints for the reproduction of other miraculous images.

It is interesting to note that the chronological scope of my thesis hinges around the Tridentine decree on images of 1563, which specified that no image should be the object of particular veneration that was made of fragile material.⁷ As we will see, bishops did not overlook the fragile material of these venerated images, and like many of their peers at that historical moment, questioned their validity. As reported by Garnett and Rosser, the Catholic ecclesiastics 'busied themselves to vet, to censor and to edit these popular devotional images. Yet, their interventions, focused as they were on details of iconographic and verbal orthodoxy which tended to be of secondary concern to the devotee, usually missed the mark.'⁸ Devotion towards prints was almost impossible to control and, as we shall see, miraculous prints were at the end treated as other miraculous images. The translation into ecclesiastical spaces, that characterises all my case studies and almost all the other publicly venerated miraculous images in any medium is however a consequence of this controlling spirit. After all, although some prints are dated to the early sixteenth century, all the prints analysed in this thesis were associated with miracles only after the Council of Trent and so reflect this spirit.

The existing secondary literature on early-modern miraculous imagery from Emilia-Romagna is virtually limited to Pon's studies, already mentioned above.⁹ Pon aside, there is also hardly any literature specifically focused on miraculous prints. My thesis is the first systematic study of the topic. This

⁷ Garnett and Rosser, "Representing Spectacular Miracles," 272. See also Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 2, 775-7.

⁸ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 213.

⁹ Pon, "Place, Print and Miracle," 303-21; Pon, *A Printed Icon*.

may be a consequence of the fact that many of these prints have not survived through the centuries and very few were published until recently. Before Pon's study, the Madonna of the Fire had already been an object of study as one of the earliest known Italian woodcuts.¹⁰ Outside of the Madonna of the Fire, however, it has been difficult to put together a corpus based on existing literature. Only Garnett and Rosser have found further examples of miraculous prints in their in-depth and long-term study of miraculous imagery in Liguria, and Robert Maniura accidentally came across an early-modern print in a manuscript about Saint Mary of the Prisons that could be hypothetically associated with miracles.¹¹ Another early surviving miraculous print, the Madonna of the Blood of Bagno di Romagna, has been examined by Lorenzo Gigante in his article *The Madonna del Sangue. A Miraculous Print in Bagno di Romagna*, analysing the existing primary sources concerning the origins of this cult, and by me in my article *Stampe miracolose nell'Emilia-Romagna del 1400-1600: la Madonna del Sangue*.¹²

Taking these known examples as my starting point, I had to compile my own list of early-modern Italian miraculous prints, based on the extensive research on Italian sanctuaries presented on the website *Censimento Santuari Cristiani in Italia*, a project coordinated by the French historian André Vauchez, which provides a survey and description of the different

¹⁰ Lionello Venturi, "Sulle origini della xilografia," *L'Arte* 6 (1903): 265-70.

¹¹ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*; Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri."

¹² Lorenzo Gigante, "The Madonna del Sangue. A Miraculous Print in Bagno di Romagna," *Print Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2018): 379-91; Margherita Clavarino, "Stampe miracolose nell'Emilia-Romagna del 1400-1600: la *Madonna del Sangue*," *Grafica d'arte* 119 (2019): 8-14.

sanctuaries of Italy and of the cult objects venerated in each.¹³ Additionally, *BeWeb Portale dei Beni Culturali Ecclesiastici*, the online database of Italian ecclesiastical cultural heritage, and the *Census of Italian Renaissance Woodcuts*, a project of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini on single-sheet woodcuts, provided updated information on many surviving devotional and sometimes miraculous prints.¹⁴ Once I found out that most of the surviving miraculous prints are located in modern Emilia-Romagna, I also made use of surveys of sanctuaries in the region, such as Giuseppe Adani's *Arte e santuari in Emilia-Romagna* and Stefano Pezzoli's *Repertorio generale dei santuari in Emilia-Romagna*, and of sanctuaries in the different provinces of Emilia-Romagna, such as, for the Bologna area, Orfeo Facchini and Imelde Bentivolgi's *Andar per santuari: 50 santuari mariani bolognesi* and *Santuari della provincia di Bologna* and, for the Modena area, Gian Carlo Montanari's *Itinerari mariani: Viaggio attraverso i santuari dedicati a Maria nel Modenese*, Carlo Silingardi's *Santuari mariani modenesi*, and Elio Golinelli's and Alfonso Garuti's *Modena, le chiese della provincia: Storia e immagini: La Bassa*.¹⁵ These texts provided information about all of the sanctuaries of the region and their respective histories. Finally, I referred to early-modern universal catalogues on miraculous imagery, in particular the *Historia vniversale delle imagini miracolose della Gran Madre di Dio riuerite in tutte le parti del mondo*

¹³ <http://www.santuaricristiani.iccd.beniculturali.it/Default.htm>.

¹⁴ http://beweb.chiesacattolica.it/?l=en_GB; <http://italianrenaissancewoodcuts.com>.

¹⁵ Giuseppe Adani, ed., *Arte e santuari in Emilia-Romagna* (Bologna: Consorzio fra le banche popolari cooperative dell'Emilia-Romagna, 1987) and Stefano Pezzoli, *Repertorio generale dei santuari in Emilia Romagna* (1987); Orfeo Facchini and Imelde Bentivolgi, eds., *Andar per santuari: 50 santuari mariani bolognesi* (Pianoro: Editografica, 1995) and *Santuari della provincia di Bologna* (Bologna: Ente provinciale turismo); Gian Carlo Montanari, ed., *Itinerari mariani: Viaggio attraverso i santuari dedicati a Maria nel Modenese* (Fidenza: Mattioli), Gian Carlo Silingardi, *Santuari mariani modenesi* (Modena: Teic, 1979), and Enio Golinelli and Alfonso Garuti, *Modena, le chiese della provincia: Storia e immagini: La Bassa* (Modena: Tipo-Litografia Paltrinieri, 1993).

(1624), published by the Venetian cleric Giovanni Felice Astolfi, and the *Atlas Marianvs: sive, De imaginibvs Deiparae per orbem Christianvum miracvlosis* (1652), by the Bavarian Jesuit Wilhelm Gumpfenberg or its Italian version by the Veronese priest Agostino Zanella (1847).¹⁶ Both texts attempted to catalogue what were considered to be the most important and respected Marian miraculous images of the time, which were most likely reproduced in print. Gumpfenberg's text itself contains a series of schematic engravings after the miraculous prototypes.

For the detailed investigation of the individual prints and their alleged miraculous powers, I consulted parish, sanctuary, diocesan, and archdiocesan archival material, particularly miracle books, sanctuary histories, deeds, reports, inventories, pastoral visits, indulgences, deliberations, letters, sermons, and other miscellaneous documents containing information about the history and cult of these images. In combination with these written sources, I examined the artistic expressions often associated with miraculous printed imagery, such as ex-votos, frescoes, paintings, sculptures, and also the sanctuary architecture itself, which can all reveal further information about the objects of veneration.¹⁷

¹⁶ Giovanni Felice Astolfi, *Historia vniversale delle imagini miracolose della Gran Madre di Dio riuerte in tutte le parti del mondo* (Venice: li Sessa, 1624); Wilhelm Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianvs: sive, De imaginibvs Deiparae per orbem Christianvum miracvlosis* (Ingolstadt: Officina typographica Ioannis Ostermeyer, 1659); Wilhelm Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano ossia origine delle immagini miracolose della B. V. Maria venerate in tutte le parti del mondo*, translated by Agostino Zanella (Verona: Tipografia Degiorgi, 1847).

¹⁷ On the role of sanctuary architecture, see Paul Davies Paul, "The Madonna delle Carceri in Prato and Italian Renaissance Pilgrimage Architecture," *Architectural History* 36 (1993): 1-18; Paul Davies, "The Early History of S. Maria delle Carceri in Prato," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 54, no. 3 (1995): 326-35; Paul Davies, "Framing the Miraculous: The Devotional Functions of Perspective in Italian Renaissance Tabernacle Design," *Art History* 36, no. 5 (2013): 898-921; Paul Davies, Deborah Howard, and Wendy Pullan, eds., *Architecture and Pilgrimage, 1000-1500: Southern Europe and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

These written and visual sources provided the essential information for a contextual analysis. Similarly, retrospective legends about the prints and their powers, verbal or written, offered interesting clues about their reception over the centuries.

Furthermore, I have made use of primary sources chronicling history: the history of the cities and provinces where the miraculous prints were venerated, such as Giovanni Battista Spaccini's *Cronaca di Modena* or Lodovico Vedriani's *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona*, which often contain references to miraculous events; the history of local churches, such as Marc'Antonio Guarini *Compendio storico dell'origine, accrescimento, e prerogative delle chiese, e luoghi pij della città, e diocesi di Ferrara, e delle memorie di que' personaggi di pregio, che in esse son seppelliti*, which even more frequently refer to religious manifestations; the history of the miraculous prints themselves and their miraculous prototypes, such as Tommaso Pintuci's *Istoria della miracolosa immagine di Maria Santissima che sotto il titolo dell'adorazione si venera nella chiesa dell'insigne prepositura di Fivizzano di cui è patrona principale con le convenienti annotazioni* and Alfonso Isachi's *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi intorno l'origine, solennità, traslatione, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio*, which contain valuable information concerning cults and their related miracles; and, finally, more general chorographic surveys, such as Serafino Calindri's *Dizionario corografico, georgico, orittologico, storico ec. ec. ec. della Italia*.¹⁸ I also

¹⁸ Giovanni Battista Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena* (Modena: Panini, 1993); Lodovico Vedriani, *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona*. 2 vols. (Modena: Soliani Stampator Ducale, 1667); Marc'Antonio Guarini, *Compendio storico dell'origine, accrescimento, e prerogative delle chiese, e luoghi pij della città, e diocesi di Ferrara, e delle memorie di que'*

perused diocesan and local bulletins and periodicals, booklets made on the occasion of centenaries, as well as secondary literature about the places or the churches where these prints or their miraculous prototypes were venerated.

My conceptual framework owes also to David Freedberg's *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*.¹⁹ Although he was not interested in the phenomenon of miraculous imagery per se and its material culture but merely in the more general psychological response to images, Freedberg first brought the powers of the so-called 'lesser images' to attention. However, Freedberg used the term 'lesser images' referring to all sorts of secondary imagery associated with a shrine, without distinguishing between prints and other kinds of copies and without considering the peculiar role that print technology played in this context. In his chapter, entitled 'Image and Pilgrimage', he stated

We must consider not only the way, in which the central image of the pilgrimage works and is made to work [...] but also how the lesser images work, differently or similarly, more effectively or less so, and finally the degree, to which their efficacy may be dependent on their visual and physical relation with the central image or archetype at the shrine.²⁰

personaggi di pregio, che in esse son seppelliti (Ferrara: Heredi di Vittorio Baldini, 1621); Tommaso Pintuci, *Istoria della miracolosa immagine di Maria Santissima che sotto il titolo dell'adorazione si venera nella chiesa dell'insigne prepositura di Fivizzano di cui è patrona principale con le convenienti annotazioni* (Parma: Stamperia Carmignani, 1802); Alfonso Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi intorno l'origine, solennità, traslatione, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio* (Reggio Emilia: Flaminio Bartoli, 1619); Serafino Calindri, *Dizionario corografico, georgico, orittologico, storico ec. ec. della Italia composto su le osservazioni fatte immediatamente sopra ciascun luogo per lo stato presente, e su le migliori memorie storiche e documenti autentici combinati sopra luogo per lo stato antico* (Bologna: Stamperia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino, 1782).

¹⁹ Freedberg, *The Power of Images*.

²⁰ Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, 100.

Freedberg pointed out that, within the culture of pilgrimage and cult images, the 'lesser' images could work miracles as well, raising questions that are essential to my thesis. He discussed whether the power of these secondary images lay in the fact that they more or less resembled the original or had been in direct physical contact with a central prototype, or in indirect contact, having touched an item, which in its turn had touched the prototype. Most of the prints discussed in my research were in fact originally conceived as secondary images of this kind. Nevertheless, Freedberg makes a blanket assumption based on psychological theory, of the working of miraculous images, without saying much about the specifics of individual cults. As we will see, each cult has indeed its own particular history.

Freedberg also drew attention to the concept of reproduction in itself. He stated that 'reproduction both enables and facilitates repetition; and repetition, sheer repetition – whether in pattern or as evident multiple, whether of motif or of whole visual theme – engenders a new and compelling aura of its own.'²¹ His analysis of the role of the copy within the context of cult images, which does not depend on close physical resemblance, and has the potential to create new prototypes, is also important for my study. My thesis demonstrates that even prints, probably considered the least among the 'lesser images', but at the same time representing the reproductive medium par excellence, could become independent miraculous prototypes, regardless of any iconographical or physical connection they may have had with the original.

²¹ Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, 126.

Freedberg aside, my research depends also on specific studies dedicated to the role of the copy within the context of cult imagery. For instance, in his essay *The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri*, Robert Maniura examines, among other things, the miraculous function of certain copies of the miraculous Prato fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons, paper pictures included.²² His research, however, is limited by the fact that the only known surviving paper image is a print, which cannot be connected with miracles with any certainty. Maniura discusses the paper images within the context of the miracles operated by the prototype, and not as miraculous images in their own right. Similarly, in their *Translation of the Miraculous: Cult Images and Their Representations in Early Modern Liguria* and in their subsequent book *Spectacular Miracles: Transforming Image in Italy from the Renaissance to the Present*, Garnett and Rosser have explored the role secondary images played in the translation of cults, printed images included. However, they were mostly interested in the uncontrollable spread of cults, which reached its climax after the invention of the new technology of printmaking.²³ My research, however, shows that, even in the form of copies, prints could actually become new prototypes and be subjected to the same kinds of ecclesiastical control of other images. In his essay *Multiplying the Sacred: The Fifteenth-Century Woodcut as Reproduction, Surrogate, Simulation*, David Areford suggests that certain early-modern devotional prints may once have been reproductions of cult imagery in other media,

²² Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri," 81-95.

²³ Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous: Cult Images and Their Representations in Early Modern Liguria," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 205-22; Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*.

even though we can now no longer trace the originals. He stated that these prints had functions that are often difficult to reconstruct, because most of them have not survived in their original contexts.²⁴ My research, by contrast, concerns prints that have survived in their original settings and that, while copying other cult imagery, became miraculous prototypes themselves, venerated in their own bespoke sanctuaries. Again, differently from traditional art, the role of copy is prominent within the category of miraculous imagery. Copies are not in a subordinate relationship to the originals and often become themselves originals.²⁵ This is not only the case with prints. Garnett and Rosser, for instance, report that the miraculous statue of the Madonna of Lezzeno, venerated in Bellano, Lombardy, actually copied the miraculous image of the Madonna of the Peace at Ponte di Nobiallo, also in Lombardy, or that the statue of the Madonnetta, venerated in Genoa in the sanctuary of the same name, is a copy of a statue venerated in Trapani.²⁶ Although issues of copy and the transmission of miraculous powers will be important topics in my thesis, the central focus is on the understudied aspect of the print itself as a miraculous image. I also aim to show that while prints conformed to general trends in miraculous imagery, they also formed a specific sub-category with peculiar features of its own, mainly due to the reproductive nature of the medium.

The workings of devotional imagery and religious cults aside, my study also seeks to contribute to the history of printing as a medium. This history has been outlined in introductory books, such as Arthur Hind's *A Short History of*

²⁴ Areford, "Multiplying the Sacred," 119-53.

²⁵ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 191-3.

²⁶ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 90-1 and 203.

Engraving & Etching and *An Introduction to a History of Woodcut* and Antony Griffiths' *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking, 1550-1820*; and in surveys such as David Landau's and Peter Parshall's *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550*, Peter Parshall's and Rainer Schoch's *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*.²⁷ Of more particular relevance to my research have been studies on early Italian prints, such as Evelina Borea and Fiora Bellini's *Xilografie italiane del Quattrocento da Ravenna e da altri luoghi* (the catalogue of an exhibition on the known surviving fifteenth-century Italian single-sheet woodcuts) and Roberto Cobiانchi's *The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (discussing some peculiar devotional uses of early woodcuts), and more specifically studies on prints which have been produced in a devotional context, such as Mark Zucker's *Early Italian Engravings for Religious Orders*.²⁸ These sources have helped me to historically situate and contextualise the prints that are the subject of my thesis. The developments of the religious print is described in publications, such as Alberto Vecchi's *Il culto delle immagini nelle stampe popolari* (a comprehensive study on the different theoretical aspects of devotional printed images) and Walter Melion's *The Meditative Art: Studies in the*

²⁷ Arthur Hind, *A Short History of Engraving & Etching: For the Use of Collectors and Students* (London: Constable, 1908); Arthur Hind, *An Introduction to a History of Woodcut: With a Detailed Survey of Work Done in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Constable, 1935); Antony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking, 1550-1820* (London: British Museum Press, 2016); David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994); Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, eds., *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*, exh. cat. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

²⁸ Erwin Rosenthal, "Two Unrecorded Italian Single Woodcuts and the Origin of Wood Engraving in Italy," *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 5 (1962): 353-70; Evelina Borea and Fiora Bellini, eds., *Xilografie italiane del Quattrocento da Ravenna e da altri luoghi*, exh. cat. (Ravenna: Longo, 1987); Roberto Cobiانchi, "The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-Century Italy," *Print Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (2006): 47-54; Mark Zucker, "Early Italian Engravings for Religious Orders," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56, no. 3 (1993): 366-84.

Northern Devotional Print, 1550-1625 (on Netherlandish prints as religious instruments of meditation and contemplation).²⁹ The more general function and reception of prints is explored in studies such as Peter Parshall's *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe* (on the social and personal contexts of early woodcuts); David Areford's *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* and Areford's earlier article, *The Image in the Viewer's Hands: The Reception of Early Prints in Europe* (on the material nature of prints); and Susan Karr Schmidt's *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life* (on the applications of Renaissance prints) and *Interactive and Sculptural Printmaking in the Renaissance* (on interactive and sculptural prints).³⁰ Ursula Weekes's *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, Ca. 1450-1500* analyses another category of prints that, like miraculous prints, survived in their original context, namely in manuscripts.³¹ Shifting the focus from matters of style, authorship, and dating, these publications are part of a growing literature on early-modern prints as functional objects, to which my thesis seeks to add. Before being art-historical images, miraculous prints were objects of devotion and veneration.

²⁹ Alberto Vecchi, *Il culto delle immagini nelle stampe popolari* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1968); Walter Melion, *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550-1625* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2009).

³⁰ Peter Parshall, ed., *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2009); David Areford, "The Image in the Viewer's Hands: The Reception of Early Prints in Europe," *Studies in Iconography* 24 (2003): 5-42; David Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010); Susan Schmidt, ed., *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011); Suzanne Schmidt, *Interactive and Sculptural Printmaking in the Renaissance* (Boston: Brill, 2017).

³¹ Ursula Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, Ca. 1450-1500* (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2004).

The majority of prints around which I have built my case-by-case investigation have never been the object of study before. Some are rare single sheets hitherto not included in the know corpus of Italian devotional prints. Although it is often difficult to establish dates and authors for these prints, especially in the absence of comparable surviving examples, this thesis examines these early-modern prints in their original context, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the functions and usages of these images. My discussion of the widespread use of prints as cult objects to be venerated within churches constitutes an important contribution to the study of the early-modern print, which has never been fully examined so far. Most of the prints which have until now studied in ecclesiastical contexts have been decorative prints rather than devotional ones, such as the ones that used to decorate the roof of what is today the Monastery of Saint Mary of the Mount near Varese.³² Yet, prints connected with their own miracles were among the first prints produced in Italy.

The surviving testimonies about the origins of these cults have allowed me to analyse the more or less private functions of these prints, preceding their life as cult objects; this analysis provides concrete information about the use to which private devotional prints could be put in the modern era, which hitherto has mainly been a topic of speculation. Private devotional prints have indeed scarcely survived in their original environments, unless they were preserved into books or manuscripts – as was the case with Jacopo Rubieri's prints

³² Laura Aldovini, "The Woodcut-Covered Ceiling of the Monastery of the Romite Ambrosiane in Varese," *Print Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (2019): 251-63.

collection, today preserved in the Classense Library of Ravenna.³³

The printed images discussed in my thesis were mounted on different kinds of supports and displayed in different locations: outdoors, as in the case of the Madonnina of Saint Luke (Chapter III), originally affixed to a column in a field, or Saint Mary of the Village (Chapter II), originally attached to the wall of the tower of the village; or indoors, as in the case of the Madonna of the Fire (Chapter IV), originally venerated in a schoolhouse, or the Virgin of the Graces (Chapter I) and the Madonna of the Blood, formerly affixed to the walls of private houses. My research highlights aspects of devotional prints which have remained in the shadow until now. For instance, it demonstrates that the practice of affixing devotional prints to trees and the subsequent building of tree shrines around these images, so far mainly known from northern Europe, was also popular in Italy. This was the case with the Madonna of the Graces and the Madonna of Passau (Chapter II), which were originally affixed to oak trees, but also with other surviving miraculous prints still venerated in Emilia-Romagna, such as Our Lady of Carmel (Chapter II), the Madonna of the Maple (Chapter V) or the Madonna of the Willow. My thesis examines the material quality of these prints and the changes and embellishments to which they were subjected (including veils, crowns, and different kinds of ex-votos) once they were considered miraculous. Lastly, it also sheds lights on the people behind these prints, who publicised them and contributed to their fame, including ambassadors and Apostolic Nuncios, as in the case of the Madonna of Graces and the Madonna of Passau (Chapter

³³ Borea and Bellini, eds., *Xilografie italiane*. See also Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public*.

II). What however remains almost unknown (because of the lack of evidence) is how people actually interacted with images. As stated by Garnett and Rosser, given that cults needed to be legitimated, the surviving documents almost always show a restricted account of what concerned the devotees' real behaviour with these images, being censored by the clerical authorities.³⁴

My thesis shows that prints as miraculous images deserve special attention within the broader category of cult objects. By examining the features which are unique to the print medium, it makes a contribution to the literature of miraculous imagery. First of all, it confirms the already signalled important role that prints had in promoting the veneration of miraculous imagery across long distances, as in the case of the Madonna of the Graces and the Madonna of Passau (Chapter II), and sometimes into remote places, as in the case of the Blessed Virgin of Adoration and the Madonnina of Saint Luke (Chapter III). Prints could be employed to spread a cult almost without limits of quantity or space. My research, however, reveals that this purpose of prints failed once they became miraculous prototypes themselves, enshrined in the altars of churches. Such prints also lost their expendability as a medium and required permanent conservation. It is here that the reproducibility of prints was adapted for new purposes. For instance, substitutive miraculous prints could be pasted on top of an original, as in the case of the Madonna of the Maple (Chapter V). The reproducibility also made it possible to have a potentially infinite number of identical copies, allowing in

³⁴ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 182.

turn a potentially infinite number of identical miraculous images, something that was not possible in any other medium. In one case, we find two prints of the same subject, both venerated in the city of Forlì (Chapter IV).

My thesis reveals, furthermore, that despite their sometimes-lowly origins, miraculous prints could be appropriated by important aristocratic families and institutionalised in their own bespoke shrines, as with the Madonna of the Graces and the Rangoni family (Chapter II), the Madonna of Passau and the Aldrovandi family (Chapter II), the Madonnina of Saint Luke and the Montecuccoli family (Chapter III), and the Madonna of the Maple, whose substitutive miraculous printed version was commissioned by the noble Arnoaldi family (Chapter V). This process of institutionalisation was typical of all miraculous images, but in the case of prints, it testifies to the fact that prints were more than merely poor substitutes for miraculous imagery in other, more permanent media.

My thesis demonstrates that devotional prints were not exclusively the poor alternatives for churches that could have not afforded other kinds of images; the Madonna of the Fire, for instance, was venerated in the Cathedral of Forlì. As miraculous images, prints were not certainly a medium exclusively for poor people. Ottavia Caprara, widow of the Marquess Giovanni Battista Montecuccoli-Laderchi, built a family oratory around the Madonnina of Saint Luke (Chapter III). Such prints were not only sponsored by members of the aristocracy, but they were actively venerated by them, as with Our Lady of Carmel (Chapter II). Even prints that had originally been themselves

inexpensive reproductions of renowned miraculous images could become venerated in sanctuaries as miraculous prototypes and could in turn generate a tradition of copies. This was the case with the Madonna of the Graces (Chapter II), a reproduction after the Virgin of Montserrat that started working miracles in Stuffione di Ravarino; its own printed copies refer to the print in Stuffione di Ravarino, losing any connection with the original in Montserrat. Furthermore, prints could also be relative expensive objects. Paper could in some cases be expensive and prints like the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration were on parchment, a more luxurious material.³⁵ Printed images have in the sixteenth century also been chosen by the pope himself. Pope Julius II chose printed wallpaper (which even displayed his coat of arms) for the sacristy of the Sistine Chapel.³⁶

As stated by Garnett and Rosser, most cults of miraculous images had their origins in so-called popular lay culture.³⁷ Cults were experienced as empowering for disenfranchised groups. Miraculous images and especially miraculous prints were the *palladia* of local relatively weak communities, whose possession could become their strength. However, every cult is unique and complex. As stated by Megan Holmes, ‘each individual image cult was born out of a particular material context and a nexus of interpersonal relationships articulated around the image, influenced by a number of factors including the interests, necessities, and fears of the social groups and

³⁵ On the theme of paper, see Orietta Da Rold, *Paper in Medieval England: From Pulp to Fictions* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

³⁶ Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 50.

³⁷ Garnett and Rosser, “Representing Spectacular Miracles,” 272.

institutions involved.³⁸ The interests around miraculous images were many. My thesis suggests that the concept of ‘popular culture/religions’ is too blunt to contain the interesting interactions between local communities, religious orders, lay confraternities, authorities, and aristocratic patrons.

I will present a total of six case studies from the region of Emilia-Romagna. All of them have the Virgin Mary as subject, the most common object of devotion in Italian miraculous images in different media from the fifteenth century.³⁹ Chapter I will offer a general discussion of the phenomenon of miraculous prints, detailing the characteristics of the genre and how prints differentiate themselves from miraculous imagery in general. Chapter II will discuss two miraculous prints which are copies of other, famous miraculous images at a distance. Both of these prints are still venerated today in two small villages of Emilia-Romagna. The first is the so-called Madonna of the Graces, a sixteenth-century water-coloured printed reproduction of the Virgin of Montserrat, Spain, which was initially affixed to the trunk of an oak tree in the village of Stuffione di Ravarino, and was later relocated to a church, after numerous graces were attributed to it. The second is the Madonna of Passau, a mid-seventeenth-century hand-coloured printed copy of the Mariahilf of Passau, a painting venerated in the town of Germany of the same name, in turn a copy of Lucas Cranach the Elder’s miraculous Mariahilf, venerated today in the Cathedral of Innsbruck. This engraving, brought to the village of Pragatto by an Apostolic Nuncio, was also originally affixed to an oak tree on the land of the local priest, and was transferred to a

³⁸ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 157.

³⁹ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 42.

purpose-built church after different miracles were attributed to it. These case studies will demonstrate the function of prints in the dispersion of cults and show how the vehicles of that dispersion could become items of veneration in their own right.

Chapter III will analyse two further miraculous prints, this time reproductions of two renowned miraculous images worshipped in two major cities of Emilia-Romagna. The first is the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, a sixteenth-century woodcut on parchment, which reproduces the much more famous Madonna of the Gravel fresco venerated in Reggio Emilia. This print was moved to the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony in Fivizzano, Tuscany, after it miraculously appeared in the house of a sick girl named Margherita in that same town. The second print is the Madonnina of Saint Luke, a seventeenth-century printed copy of the well-known Madonna of Saint Luke worshipped in Bologna. Having worked many miracles while attached to a column, the woodcut was translated to a purpose-built oratory built by the Montecuccoli family in Guiglia. This chapter will demonstrate that even with more localised cults, where the miraculous originals were not hundreds of miles away, printed reproductions acquire a miraculous life of their own in their areas.

Chapter IV revolves around Saint Mary of the Vow, a sixteenth-century hand-coloured woodcut on paper now venerated in the eponymous church in Forlì. This print was claimed to have been miraculously found among the remains of a destroyed church and to have healed a little girl called Iustina. The print is related to another miraculous print of the same subject, also worshipped in

Forlì: the Madonna of the Fire, previously discussed by Lisa Pon. Both prints have been venerated in the city of Forlì from the Renaissance till today. This case study is particularly interesting because Saint Mary of the Vow is not the direct copy of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì; it is a copy of the Madonna of the Fire venerated in neighbouring Faenza, which similarly survived a fire that destroyed a church. This chapter will show, among other things, that in spite of the few examples that survive today, the phenomenon of miraculous prints was once widespread.

Chapter V, finally, will examine the Madonna of the Maple, a sixteenth-century miraculous image, which has, at least from the seventeenth century onwards, been covered with other prints that in their turn have become the actual objects of veneration. These prints, identical to each other and thus replaceable, had the function of protecting the original prototype. This chapter, in other words, will demonstrate how the reproducibility of prints added a unique feature to the practice of cult imagery. Through all these different examples, I hope to prove beyond a doubt that miraculous prints merit attention as a sub-category of cult imagery, and that prints in general, in the context of religious cults, are much more than what David Freedberg dubbed 'lesser images.'

After all, within the category of miraculous images, there are in effect no 'lesser images.' The success of a cult did not depend on the material value of the image at its heart. Devotees were willing to recognise supernatural powers in any medium. A print once miraculous was not looked upon as

cheap, regardless of its material status (and some prints, as mentioned above, were not even materially all that cheap). The efficacy of miraculous images was the product of the attitude of the beholder rather than the material qualities of the objects. What is more, images that were too ornate or aesthetically attractive were frowned upon in the context of veneration. In the eyes of the Council of Trent, miraculous images should not display attractive materials and captivating forms. The Council explicitly stated that images should not be 'painted or adorned with seductive charm.'⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Norman Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (London and Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), vol. 2, 776: 'ita ut procaci venustate imagines non pingantur nec ornentur.'

Chapter I – Miraculous Prints: An Introduction

This chapter aims to shed light on the phenomenon of miraculous prints: devotional prints, to which miracle-working properties were attributed. It will offer insight into a number of key factors pertaining to the attribution of miraculous powers to prints. It will start with the use of prints for the reproduction of miraculous images in other media. Then, it will deal with the emergence of prints that are miraculous in their own right, and their relationship to earlier forms of ‘miraculous imprints.’ It will analyse miraculous prints according to type and discuss the complications of miracle-working powers in images that could be multiplied. It will show how miraculous prints were institutionalised as cult objects and thereby deprived of some of their fundamental characteristic as prints. Finally, it will address the problem of the perishability and the rarity of the survival of miraculous prints into the twenty-first century.

I.I The Reproduction of Miraculous Imagery Through (Miraculous) Prints

Although the reproductive functions of prints are often stressed, there is no evidence of prints reproducing cult images from before the last third of the fifteenth century.⁴¹ Certain formal elements may suggest that early fifteenth-century miraculous woodcuts were themselves copies after miraculous images. For instance, the print known as the White Madonna, already

⁴¹ Peter Schmidt, “The Multiple Image: The Beginning of Printmaking, Between Old Theories and New Approaches,” in *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*, ed. Peter Parshall (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 47. On the reproduction of cult imagery through printmaking, see Areford, “Multiplying the Sacred,” 119-53.

discussed by Garnett and Rosser, venerated in Portovenere in Liguria, shows a crowned Virgin and Child flanked by proportionally smaller figures of saints, which may refer to a now lost prototype of a miraculous Virgin who had been honoured with a crown.⁴² Yet, fifteenth-century prints that can be associated with pilgrimage sites are extremely rare. Before the invention of printmaking, lead or tin tokens were used as pilgrimage souvenirs. From the Middle Ages onwards, casting in such metals was another efficient and inexpensive technique of the replication of cult images.⁴³ It is perhaps no coincidence that before inventing the printing press, Johannes Gutenberg (1394/1399-1468) was a manufacturer of pilgrims' tokens. Both the sale of prints and pilgrims' tokens aimed at a large market and were a profitable business.⁴⁴

The earliest known prints to reproduce miraculous imagery were Northern European rather than Italian. For instance, in 1466, the German printmaker Master E.S. (1450-1467) issued three engravings of different dimensions (small, medium, and large) at three different prices after the Madonna of Einsiedeln, a sculpture venerated in the Swiss town of the same name (Fig. 5).⁴⁵ Similarly, between 1490 and 1500, Israhel van Meckenem (1440/1445-1503) was commissioned by the Carthusians of the Holy Cross to make engravings reproducing the mosaic icon of the so-called *imago pietatis* in the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem in Rome, a favourite pilgrimage site,

⁴² Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 208-13.

⁴³ Schmidt, "The Multiple Image," 51.

⁴⁴ Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?: Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), 442.

⁴⁵ Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned*, 65; Henk Van Os, ed., *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300-1500* (London: Merrell Holberton in association with Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, 1994).

again with a smaller version for those who could not afford the large-size one.⁴⁶ There were also prints reproducing relics, such as the fifteenth-century woodcut of the *Blessed Symon Martyr*, which even bears the inscription ‘Das ist halig vnd / tüt zaichen manig falt. Das haben gesehen cristen jung und alt’ (‘It is holy and / performs many miracles. Christians young and old have seen it’), referring to the miraculous properties of the object.⁴⁷

Among the earliest known Italian-made prints after a miraculous image are those, which the Prato judge Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi ordered to advertise Saint Mary of the Prisons, a local fresco that started working miracles in 1484.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, prints reproducing miraculous imagery became only truly widespread during the Counter-Reformation. In the *Historia della Madonna del Bagno*, it was reported that ‘copies [of the Madonna of the Baths, in Casalina, Umbria] were imprinted and distributed by the hundreds, or rather, thousands.’⁴⁹

In his 1584 text, *Dell’educazione cristiana e politica de’ figliuoli*, Cardinal Silvio Antoniano (1540-1603) suggested that prints were for those who could not afford devotional paintings.⁵⁰ The cheapest reproductive prints after

⁴⁶ Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 58; Van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, 110

⁴⁷ *Blessed Symon Martyr*, 1479, coloured woodcut, 118 239 D, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich.

⁴⁸ Maniura, “The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri,” 81-95.

⁴⁹ *Historia della Madonna del Bagno de’ Padri Casinensi di Perugia scoperta l’anno MDCLVII. Composta da persona assai beneficata, e tenuta a questa Regina Celeste* (Perugia: Archive Saint Peter, mazzo XXVI/1, cc. 1r-36v), 31v-32r: ‘Ne furono impresse, e distribuite le copie à centinaia, anzi à migliaia.’ Unless otherwise noted, all translations here are the author’s.

⁵⁰ Silvio Antoniano, *Dell’educazione cristiana e politica de’ figliuoli: libri tre* (Florence: Tip. della casa di Correzione, 1852), 151: ‘Ed in quanto alle puttore dei Santi, che, come si è incominciato a dire, è molto spediante averne nell’interno delle case, e per quelli che non possono comperarne delle dipinte in colori e con maggior artificio, basterà supplire con quelle stampate.’

miraculous imagery were sold by pedlars at fairs or at the shrine itself.⁵¹ In his memorandum book, judge Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi reported that he bought many paper copies of the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons in Prato for only 'soldi sedici' ('sixteen silver').⁵²

Due to their mass production and mainly low selling price, prints became widely available, affordable surrogates for the miraculous prototype.⁵³

Countless devotees could thus have their very own copy of a venerated miraculous image at home. Some even owned a printed copy without having ever seen the original. For instance, a certain Margherita living in Fivizzano, Tuscany, was miraculously cured by a printed copy of the Madonna of the Gravel from Reggio Emilia without having visited the shrine of the prototype.⁵⁴ Prints facilitated the creation of secondary cult sites.

Prints could make miraculous images that were normally hidden from view more accessible. For instance, the Servites of the Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation in Florence authorised printed reproductions of the rarely seen (because usually covered) miraculous fresco in their church, especially a 1586 engraving by Cesare Capranica, printed in Rome. This happened

⁵¹ Corry, Howard and Laven, *Madonna & Miracles*, 66-7.

⁵² Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi, *Memoriale*, Codex 759, fol. 21v, Roncioniana Library, Prato, Italy: 'io comperai [...] tante Vergini Marie delle Carcere. Spesi soldi sedici. Cioè Vergini Marie di charta di più fatte.'

⁵³ Otto Clemen, *Die Volksfrömmigkeit des ausgehenden Mittelalters* (Dresden: C. Ludwig Ungelenk, 1937), 14.

⁵⁴ On the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, see Pintuci, *Istoria della miracolosa immagine*. On virtual pilgrimage, see Sarah Blick and Laura Gelfand, eds., *Push me, pull you* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

shortly after that the Medici family authorised painted copies of the image, showing that prints coexisted with other officially sanctioned reproductions.⁵⁵

Another useful feature of prints was their mobility. Due both to their lightness and small dimensions, prints reproducing miraculous imagery could be carried anywhere. Prints had the potential to advertise a miraculous image even at great distance from the sanctuary. As will be discussed in Chapter II, a copy of the originally Lutheran image of the Madonna of Passau was brought to Italy by an Apostolic Nuncio. Missionaries used prints to promote miraculous imagery globally, especially during the Counter-Reformation. The Jesuit Saint Francesco Borgia (1510-1572) ran a printing workshop, from which he 'sent [...] innumerable prints, of diverse forms and materials, to the East and West Indies, to Japan, to Germany, to Poland, to Spain and to other provinces.'⁵⁶ In the seventeenth century, the papacy and the Jesuits distributed tens of thousands of engraved copies of the Roman image known as *Salus Populi Romani* to promote its veneration around the world.⁵⁷ They recognised the promotional value of such images.⁵⁸ It is interesting to note that this was the result of an attempt by the pope to establish a single universally recognised venerated miraculous image of the Virgin Mary. This contrasts with the proliferation of local and vernacular miraculous prints discussed in this thesis. As noted by Garnett and Rosser, nothing could be

⁵⁵ Marion Heisterberg, Susanne Müller-Bechtel, and Antonia Putzger, *Nichts Neues Schaffen. Perspektiven auf die treue Kopie, 1300-1900* (Berlin: De Gruyter 2018), 35.

⁵⁶ Pasquale D'Elia, "La prima diffusione nel mondo dell'immagine di Maria 'Salus Populi Romani'," *Arte e Fede* 2 (1954): 301-11: 'spedi [...] innumerevoli stampe, di forme e di material diverse, alle Indie Orientali e Occidentali, al Giappone, in Germania, in Polonia, in Spagna, e nelle altre provincie.'

⁵⁷ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 46.

⁵⁸ Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety*, 157-8.

done to 'contain the proliferation of hundreds of rivals', especially in the form of prints.⁵⁹

In short, printmaking changed the way people related to miraculous imagery, opening up new possibilities. This function was enhanced by the fact that prints were often believed to preserve the miracle-working properties of the image they reproduced. For example, the miraculous Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, venerated in the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony in Fivizzano, Tuscany, was a printed copy of the miraculous Madonna of the Gravel in Reggio Emilia (Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, 1590-1599, woodcut on parchment, 350 x 290 mm. Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony, Fivizzano. (Photo: BeWeb.)). In the same way, prints could be as efficacious as the prototype in granting indulgences, thus gaining their own agency. This was the case, for instance, with the *Mass of Saint Gregory* (1490-1500) by Israhel van Meckenem, which granted an absolution of 20,000 years to those who

⁵⁹ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 46.

recited three prayers before it (



Fig. 7).⁶⁰

A metalcut of *St Jerome and the Lion*, pasted in a late fifteenth-century book of exorcism that at one point belonged to the Carmelite Monastery of Frankfurt, reports in erroneous Latin: 'Possit non eiciam [sic] picture demon ut nullus apparere suo tato / temuit [?] ipse pauore. Obiectum [sic] fuerit nam si quod demone corpus / hunc mox in tuitus [sic] depellet ymage [sic] alme.' ('No demon can appear before this picture or it will be filled with fear. If a

⁶⁰ Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 58.

body is subjected by a demon, the sacred image will dispel it when it is displayed.'). This passage appears to originate from an apocryphal letter by a certain Cyrillus to Augustin about the miracles associated with Saint Jerome.⁶¹ Evidently, prints could be credited not only with the miraculous powers of other miraculous images, but also with the miraculous powers attributed to the saints they represented. Another print preserved today in Munich bears the same inscription, but since it is not inserted in a book of exorcism, it is difficult to know if it was once connected with miracles.⁶²

As underlined by Garnett and Rosser, the activation of miraculous powers often depended on crucial contextual variables.⁶³ Since miraculous powers were attributed to images by their early-modern beholders, the mental and physical engagement with the print of the latter may often have been a decisive factor. Sometimes, individuals in search of salvation wanted to touch devotional prints, the sense of touch playing a key role in the process of the copy manifesting its powers. In a 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence in Portovenere, it is reported that a fifty-year-old possessed woman called Domenichina was healed after touching the woodcut of the White Madonna in that church. Although this woodcut was already considered as miraculous at that time, its powers were believed to be activated by skin-to-skin contact with the sick. A certain Vincenti d'Alexandro da Laia, a former sacristan of the Cathedral of Pisa, even kissed a paper

⁶¹ *The Viewer and the Printed Image*, 81-3. *Saint Jerome and the Lion*, 1470, metalcut, 200 x 138 mm, 1943.3.706, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; The late fifteenth-century book of exorcism is today in Frankfurt: Lat. Ms. Oct. 113, Stadt- und Universtiätsbibliothek, Frankfurt.

⁶² *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome*, 1480-1490, woodcut, 254 x 172 mm, 118250, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich.

⁶³ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 168.

figure of the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons to be recovered from a fever.⁶⁴ Similarly, the Virgin of the Graces, venerated today in the Church of Saint Reparata in Terra del Sole, Emilia-Romagna, resuscitated a man after contact. This seventeenth-century water-coloured engraving on paper of the Virgin Mary worked its miracle only after it was moved from the wall of the sick room, where it was originally hung, to the cold corpse.⁶⁵

Sick people, such as Domenichina, could travel to miraculous prints, but prints could also be brought out to them.⁶⁶ As reported by Garnett and Rosser, in 1663, an apparently lifeless three-year-old child was believed to have been revived thanks to a miraculous framed paper engraving of St. Francis Xavier, which was urgently brought by the scribe Antonio Maria Villavecchia from his own house (the print already protected his wife during a difficult pregnancy), and held close to the head of the boy.⁶⁷ Prints could be used in active therapy, and applied to infected parts of the body like a

⁶⁴ Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi, *Historia della apparitione et altri miracoli di Madonna Sancta Maria del Carcere di Prato*, codex 87, fol. 49r, Roncioniana Library, Prato, Italy: 'Et quando decto prete Vincenti, mi narrò tale miracolo: lui haveva la quartana: et io gli donai una figura, di charta della Gloriosissima Vergine Maria del Carcere del mese di magio MCCCCLXXXV.'

⁶⁵ Claudio Bulgarelli, *Storia della veneranda Immagine della Beata Vergine delle Grazie protettrice di Terra del Sole* (Modigliana: Stab. Tip. V. Piani, 1901), 14-15: 'Ma un bel pensiero se la rappresentò alla mente; pensò che se con preghi ferventi si fosse rivolta all'Immagine di Maria, che pendente dal muro stava sul capo del morto marito e a cui ella e tutta la famiglia nutrivano accesissima divozione, avrebbe ricuperato il marito. Scaccia ogni dubbio, toglie dal muro l'Immagine, la pone in sul freddo cadavere e con la famiglia prega focosamente. Eh oh miracolo! si rianimano quelle membra mute, si schiude la bocca per dar luogo al respiro, si aprono gli occhi alla luce, torna alle gote il roseo calore, in breve il morto uomo è novellamente vivo osservandolo la moglie e i figli tra meraviglia, gioia e tremore.'

⁶⁶ The information is reported in the 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, Liguria: 'Il medesimo giorno alla sera di notte essendo in detta Chiesa incirca da quattrocento persone, quali stauano vegiado in oratione, & ecco che vna Donna chiamata Domenichina, d'anni cinquanta, quale era stata per spatio di otto anni tormentata da maligni spiriti, quali visibilmente se gli vedeuano fra la carne, e la pelle, andò a toccare la detta Gloriosa Immagine, subito fu liberata da detti maligni spiriti.'

⁶⁷ *Manuscript*, 1663, Fondo Grazie e Miracoli, Archive of the Archiepiscopal Curia Genoa, Genoa, Italy. On the story see, Garnett and Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous," 209-10.

poultice. Paper and the other pliable materials out of which prints were made adapted very well to this purpose. For instance, in 1485, Mona Lisabetta, the wife of Sancti della Orechiata, from Pisa, was believed to have been revived from her illness by a paper copy of the miraculous fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons in Prato, which was applied to her mouth and then to her body.⁶⁸ Printed images could even be orally ingested. Paper copies of miraculous images, which could be cut into small pieces and swallowed in case of sickness, were distributed at pilgrimage sites.⁶⁹ A surviving example can be found in Balthasar Montcornet's (1600-1668) seventeenth-century engraved *Schluckbilder* (images for swallowing), preserved today in the Art Collections of the Fürst Waldburg-Wolfegg at Schloss Wolfegg.⁷⁰ This practice had a long history: the ascetic saint Simeon Stylites (390-459) said that tokens with

⁶⁸ Guizzelmi, *Historia della apparitione et altri miracoli*, fols. 42v-44r: 'Di decto mese di luglio 1485, Mona Lisabetta donna di Sancti della Orechiata: lanaiuolo nella città di Pisa: giovane di età d'anni XXVI incirca: andando per casa si vide apparire innaçi una donna vestita di bianco: & vedenola ispauri: & incominciò a gridare: & chiamare Sancti suo marito: & Sancti uditala gridare, corse a lei: et domandòlla quello che haveva: & lei gli dixè, quanto haveva veduto: & lui el meglio che gli fu possibile: la confortò, dicendo che certo nonvi era persona: & lei gli rispuose dicendo: io so bene quell oche io ho veduto: et così dicendo cadde in terra tramortita: & stette tramortita & chome morta hore cinquantadua, proprio chome se fusses tata morta: non parlando, ne facendo alcuno segno, di salute, o, di vita, senone che era calda: & in questo tempo, S davino procuratore pisano, venne a me, & domandò mi una Vergine Maria, che havebbe toccata la Madonna del Carcere di Prato, per porla addosso, a, una donna, che era stata tramortita, & chome morta, presso a tre di: la quale lui stimava, che in brevi hore fosse morta in tutto: se non fusse aiuata, da Messere Domenedio, miracolosamente: onde io gli donai: una figura della Vergine Maria del Carcere: la quale haveva roccato la Sua Gloriosissima figura: la quale lui prese, con divotione: & portòlla a sua madre: che la portasse & ponesse adosso a decta meschinella: così tramortita: & più morta che viva: et la madre la prese, et portòlla, lei com più altre donne a casa la decta Mona Lisabetta, la quale loro trovarono, chome morta, a modo usato: & raccomandole e frati l'anima. Quella figura di charta, puosono alla bocca di decta Mona Lisabetta: & poi gliela puosono adosso: & incontinenti decta Mona Lisabetta, la quale prima era chome morta: tornò in se: & incominciò a ramalicarsi: & a dolersi: & hebe grandissimo travaglio: & per spatio di hore dua, dimonstrò essere in gran passione: Et dipoi tornò altutto in se: & incominciò a parlare: & dixè chome haveva veduto porsi alla bocca quella Gloriosissima Vergine Maria: & chome a lei si raccomandò, di buono cuore: & chome haveva ricevuto gratia: dalla sua Maiestà: & incominciò a mangiare: & bere: chome se mai non havebbe hauto travaglio: ne male alcuno: & questo fu mercoledì, a dì XX di luglio MCCCCLXXXV. Et sulle posto adosso la figura di Sancta Maria del Carcere: a hore xxii incirca: & a hore xxiii fu sana et libera: chome disopra.'

⁶⁹ Jérôme Baschet and Jean-Claude Schmitt, eds., *L'image: fonction et usage des images dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Léopard d'or, 1996), 159.

⁷⁰ See also Album 221 (Andachtsbilder und Gebete), always at the Art Collections of the Fürst Waldburg-Wolfegg, for other early seventeenth-century examples.

his image made of the holy dust of the soil close to where he lived could similarly be drunk with water.⁷¹

I.II The First Miraculous Prints

Miraculous images not made by human hands, or *acheiropoieta*, included some that were believed to be imprints of Christ's body. These formed an important precedent for miraculous prints.⁷² Prints were similarly the result of a hands-off process, from an unseen matrix. *Acheiropoieta* were considered as contact relics and were venerated as particularly authentic images of the Saviour. The two most famous examples, the *Veil of Veronica* (or *Sudarium*) and the *Mandyllion* (or *Image of Edessa*), were supposed to be the impression of Christ's face on the veil which Saint Veronica used to wipe His brow on the way to Calvary, and an impression of Christ's face on a towel which He used to dry His face, respectively. According to legend, the *Mandyllion* cured King Abgar of Edessa of his leprosy, converting both him and his realm to Christianity.⁷³ These contact relics were also, technically,

⁷¹ Gary Vikan, "Ruminations on Edible Icons: Originals and Copies in the Art of Byzantium," in *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions*, ed. Kathleen Preciado (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1989), 47-60.

⁷² On 'acheiropoieta', see Herbert Kessler and Gerhard Wolf eds., *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1988); Gabriele Finaldi, ed., *The Image of Christ*, exh. cat. (London: National Gallery, 2000); Cristoph Frommel and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *L'immagine di Cristo dall'Acheropita alla mano d'artista: Dal tardo medioevo all'età barocca*, exh. cat. (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica del Vaticano, 2006); Michele Bacci, *The Many Faces of Christ: Portraying the Holy in the East and West, 300 to 1300* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014).

⁷³ Ewa Kuryluk, *Veronica and her cloth: history, symbolism, and structure of a "true" image* (Cambridge and Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1991); Tiziana Maria Di Biasio, *Veronica: il mistero del volto: itinerari iconografici, memoria e rappresentazione* (Rome: Città nuova, 2000); Daniel Spanke, *Das Mandyllion: Ikonographie, Legenden und Bildtheorie der "Nicht-von-Menschenhand-gemachten Christusbilder"* (Recklinghausen: Museen der Stadt Recklinghausen, 2000); Gerhard Wolf, Colette Dufour Bozzo, and Anna Rosa Calderoni

prints, the matrix of which was none other than Christ Himself. The first prints were thus contact relics, this contributing to the mystification of the medium of printing.

These imprinted images of Christ indeed provided legitimacy to the act of printing as a method of creating sacred and potentially miraculous images. As stated by Gertsman, printmakers were conscious of the connection between medium and meaning.⁷⁴ Joseph Koerner has argued that Albrecht Dürer, in his famous print of the *Sudarium held by an Angel* (1516), drew parallels between *acheiropoieta* and prints, the angel supporting the veil alluding to the process of printing and, especially to the moment when the image is hung out to dry (Albrecht Dürer).⁷⁵ Christopher Wood, too, has made the point that Dürer, but also other early-modern printmakers, such as the Master of the Playing Cards (1430-1450) or Martin Schongauer (1440/1453-1491), played with the Veronica's veil and its relationship to printing.⁷⁶ After all, printing is the transfer of the ink from a matrix to a support and, as stated by Lisa Pon, 'placing things into physical contact in an indexical relationship, laying one onto the other, was for centuries before the advent of printing in Europe understood as a means to transform a mundane object into one charged, even to thaumaturgy.'⁷⁷

Masetti. *Mandylion: intorno al Sacro Volto, da Bisanzio a Genova* (Milan: Skira, 2004); Mark Guscini, *The Image of Edessa* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Andrea Nicolotti, *Dal Mandylion di Edessa alla Sindone di Torino: metamorfosi di una leggenda* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2011).

⁷⁴ Elina Gertsman, "Multiple Impressions: Christ in the Winepress and the Semiotics of the Printed Image," *Art History* 36, no. 2 (2013): 327.

⁷⁵ Joseph Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 222-3.

⁷⁶ Christopher Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction: Temporalities of German Renaissance Art* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 223.

⁷⁷ Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 59.

More broadly, there is a correspondence between prints and contact relics-objects, which acquired the miraculous status of relics due to their contact with primary relics (usually the material remains of holy people). Prints were similar to secondary relics (but also Host wafers) also because they could be several times stamped, without losing their 'effectiveness.'⁷⁸ Printed copies of miraculous images were sometimes made to touch the miraculous prototype to have some of its power transferred to the print. Miraculous printed copies after the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons in Prato had supposedly obtained their powers by touching the original.⁷⁹ Bartolomeo Ricceputi, writing about printed copies of the Madonna of the Fire in Forlì, itself a print, speaks of images that people carried on their person, which had touched the original.⁸⁰

The very process of printing by pressing matrix to paper bore similarities to that of pressing holy remains against other objects and thus infusing the latter with their power, just like the act of printing the figures of Christ or the Virgin on paper, parchment, or fabric could be compared to the act of imprinting Christ's body on a cloth as in the case of the Veronica and the Mandylion. Christopher Wood has argued that 'although strictly speaking indexical only to its wooden block or copperplate, [the printed image] was

⁷⁸ On this reproducibility, see Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 63-4.

⁷⁹ On this aspect, see Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri," 81-95.

⁸⁰ Bartolomeo Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa di Maria Vergine detta Madonna del fuoco della città di Forlì* (Forlì: Io Selua, 1686), 77: 'rare sono le persone, che non se porton addosso un'Immaginetta [...] di seta c'habbia toccata l'originale.'

readily taken for an authoritative index of something in the world.⁸¹ In its association with *acheiropoieta*, the printed image could however be equally taken for such an index of something 'outside' the world. The 'reassignable indexicality' to the objects depicted lent authority to prints throughout the early-modern era.⁸² This aura of reliability in its turn facilitated the attribution of miraculous powers similar to those of the original to printed copies of miraculous images. As already noted, copies in other media could also be miraculous. However, prints had reproducibility on their side.

In the sixteenth century, the relative novelty of the medium of printing contributed further to the potential for prints to be assigned a miraculous status. As mentioned by Garnett and Rosser, some of the earliest known reported miracles associated with prints involved their exotic qualities as a new invention.⁸³ The so-called White Madonna of Portovenere, a woodcut on parchment, dated to the first quarter of the fifteenth century, belonging to the Church of Saint Lawrence in Portovenere in Liguria, illustrates this phenomenon. The woodcut was revered as miraculous after its material nature was perceived to have changed. A 1612 parchment (a re-worked version by the Augustinian friar Antonio de' Benedetti of the original fourteenth-century notarial deed, which had perished in a fire) preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, relates the miracle:

⁸¹ Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction*, 40.

⁸² Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction*, 40.

⁸³ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 208.

There being printed on an old paper the Image of the Exalted Virgin Mary in the House of a certain man called Luciardo inhabitant of the Region of Portouenere the said paper was so dark on account of its age that nothing could be seen so that he deemed it of little or no value, now this Luciardo [...] kneeling in front of another Image of the Madonna that he kept in front of that old Image [...] by chance turning the face toward the left side of the House, miraculously saw the Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary as it was printed on that old paper, attached to the wall by a nail [...] and he saw also how still that Image miraculously painted itself, and assumed fresh colours.⁸⁴

In other words, while Luciardo was praying in front of another image of the Madonna, he witnessed how his old, darkened print of the Madonna suddenly brightened and then acquired a new colouring. The faces of the Virgin and Child revealed their intrinsic paleness and the Virgin's robe coloured itself in an intense sky blue. Giuliano Lamorati, a seventeenth-century historian from Lunigiana, tells us that the woodcut gradually lost its smoky hue and became snow-white.⁸⁵ The above-cited parchment also reports that Saints Christopher and Anthony Abbot, both invisible until that moment, appeared to the left and right of the Madonna, considerably smaller in scale than the central figures.⁸⁶ Saint Christopher was shown bearing Jesus on his shoulders, conforming to the etymology of his name and his

⁸⁴ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'Essendo in vna carta antica sculpita l'Immagine della Gloriosa Vergine Maria in Casa di vn certo huomo chiamato Luciardo habitatore della Terra di Portouenere e detta carta era tanto oscura per la sua antichita che niente si uedeua perciò da lui era poco e niente stimata, hora questo Luciardo [...] ingennechiato dinanti ad un altra Immagine della Madonna quale esso teneua dinanzi a quella Immagine antica, [...] per sorte riuoltando la faccia verso la banda sinistra della Casa vidde mirabilmente l'Immagine della Beata Vergine Maria qual era sculpita in quella carta antica, essere attaccata al muro con un chiodo [...] vidde ancora miracolosamente quella Immagine dipingersi, e ripigliar nuoui colori.'

⁸⁵ Giuliano Lamorati. *Historie di Lunigiana* (Bologna: Forni, 1967), 54: 'smarrire à poco à poco li colori di fumo, e cangiarsi in nieue.'

⁸⁶ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'era ancora dipinto nella detta carta Santo Christofaro dalla parte destra della Beata Vergine Maria e Santo Antonio dalla sinistra, la quale per la sua antichità non si poteuano vedere nondimeno in presenza del Scriuano e di tutto il Popolo miracolosamente diuentarono chiari e splendidi a' tale che tutto il Popolo restaua stupefatto gridando sempre misericordia e pace.'

standard iconography, and Saint Anthony, also shown in traditional guise, was represented as a holy hermit, with a tunic and a stick.

According to Garnett and Rosser, the foundation legend referenced two aspects of printmaking. The miraculous application of colour alluded to the manual addition of colours to prints, which were originally in black and white. The fact that the print miraculously appeared from behind another image seems to refer metaphorically to the technology of the woodblock, in which the ink was transferred from the matrix to another support. Not by chance, the printed image moved to another wall as if it was transferred there from its matrix.⁸⁷ Thus, the miracle seems to be intrinsically connected with the new technology of printmaking, itself a source of wonder.

Although the 1612 parchment concerning the flying print dated the miracle to August 1399, it is highly likely that the White Madonna of Portovenere was actually not made before the first quarter of the fifteenth century.⁸⁸

Documents relating the foundation of a cult are often not historically correct. Peter Schmidt argues that there is no evidence to date any surviving woodcuts earlier than the fifteenth century.⁸⁹ Over the years, legend probably ante-dated the real time of production: the year 1399 presumably stood as an indicative date for a time in the past, when people would have been unfamiliar with printmaking and would have been more in the grip of its novelty.

⁸⁷ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 210-11.

⁸⁸ On the dating of the White Madonna, see Spartaco Gamberini, *La Spezia: Volti di un territorio* (Rome: Laterza, 1992), 729-30.

⁸⁹ Schmidt, "The Multiple Image," 39-41.

The inscription on the print is in a dialect that suggests a Venetian origin.⁹⁰ This is not surprising given that Veneto was the region, in which the first Italian woodcuts appear to have been made.⁹¹ The print may have been brought to Liguria by a merchant. Owing to the common practice of copying already circulating models, dating devotional prints is notoriously difficult. A retrospective legend maintains that Luciardo's ancestors found the woodcut inside the trunk of a Lebanon cedar, which is still visible in the left nave of the Church of Saint Lawrence. This seems to recall an Eastern origin, which, according to Garnett and Rosser, was a typical trope for miraculous images at the time, the oriental provenance lending greater prestige to the image.⁹² The historian Lamorati reports that the trunk was 'so vile outside' that it was not deemed fit for any use other than firewood; when they started to split it with an axe, however, it revealed the presence of unexpected treasures. Apart from the miraculous image, there were three precious crosses, five ivory boxes and about thirty silver tabernacles containing as many relics.⁹³

⁹⁰ The inscription on the print reads: 'Madre mia ço che te piace me contenta / Pur chel peccatore dal mal fare se penta' (My mother, what pleases you makes me happy / provided that the sinner regrets of doing evil). On a Venetian origin of the print, see Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello, ed., *Nicolò Corso, un pittore per gli Olivetani: Arte in Liguria alla fine del Quattrocento*, exh. cat. (Genoa: Sagep, 1986), note 3 p. 142.

⁹¹ Cobianchi, "The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-Century Italy," 50.

⁹² Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 28.

⁹³ Lamorati, *Historie di Lunigiana*, 53: 'Picciola barchetta de poueri Pescatori di Porto Venere, dal ritorno che fece da suoi affaticosi esercitij, si tirò dietro in Porto vn traue trouato à caso, e tolto dal bersaglio dell'onde, tanto vile al di fuori, che non riputando atto ad'altro uso, che al fuoco, l'incominciario sono con scuri a diuidere. Aperto il traue, percosse il loro sguardo vn'improuiso splendore d'oro, di gemme, di pietre pretiose di diuersi colori, e fattezze. Quai merauiglie! quai allegrezze! quali estasi! Ne volò di subito d'ogn'intorno la fame, & alla preferenza di numerosa corona di popolo s'estrassero fuori: Trè Croci veraci, vestite d'argento, ornate di gemme, e pietre pretiose vna delle quai vestita d'oro in grana teneua scritto, esser stata vsata nelle battaglie del gran Constantino: Cinque cassette d'Auorio d'artificio tale, ch'è forza dire esser state estratte dal gabinetto di qualche gran Regina l'ornamento più nobile: Borse, & inuogli di broccato: Tabernacolini d'argento, da Poster accresciuti al num. di 30. Tutte d'Insigni Reliquie ripiene, con di ciascuna il nome.'

The legend would make the White Madonna of Portovenere the earliest known miraculous woodcut in Italy, and possibly one of the earliest known per se. The White Madonna aside, miracle-working properties were attributed to four other Italian woodcuts from the fifteenth century: the Madonna of the Fire in the Cathedral of Forlì; the Madonna of the Blood in the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption in Bagno di Romagna, Emilia-Romagna; Saint Mary of the Village, belonging to the Church of Saint Mary of the Village in Budrio, Emilia-Romagna; and the Madonna of the Willow, kept in the Basilica of Saint George in Ferrara until it was stolen in 1984.⁹⁴ Believers attributed to prints the same kind of miraculous powers, which were attributed to images in more permanent media. The Madonna of the Fire was believed to have survived a fire in February 1428; the Madonna of the Blood was believed to have bled in January 1498; the Madonna of the Willow miraculously healed a farmer from Villanova di Denore, Giovanni Pietro Farolfo, who was suffering from an intestinal disorder, in June 1502; Saint Mary of the Village, so named because it was originally affixed to the wall of the tower of the village, was associated with many different miracles from 1510 onwards.⁹⁵ Such evidence shows that prints could be as effective a vehicle of the miraculous, in the eyes of devotees, as images in other media. These four prints, which have survived as miraculous prints till the present day because they were each made into the object of a public cult, are probably representative of a much more widespread practice of attributing miraculous powers to prints.

⁹⁴ The image today venerated is a 20th-century painted ceramic by the artist Marcellio Miani.

⁹⁵ Giuseppe Antonio Scalabrini, *Memorie storiche delle chiese di Ferrara e de' suoi borghi* (Ferrara: Per Carlo Coatti, 1773), 40-1 and Guarini, *Compendio storico*, 396; Domenico Golinelli, *Memorie storiche antiche e moderne di Budrio terra nel Contado di Bologna* (Bologna: per Lelio della Volpe, 1720), 127-35.

Rivalling the legendary early date of the White Madonna, the Madonna of the Fire has long been considered as the first woodcut ever produced in Italy. Referring to the print in 1903, Lionello Venturi went as so far as to say that 'the belief that Italian woodcuts arose from German ones [...] is thoroughly discredited from now on.'⁹⁶ Although this view does not seem tenable, the woodcut may be dated to before 1428, the year when it was believed to have survived a fire. Giuliano Bezzi and Bartolommeo Ricceputi, the earliest commentators on the Madonna of the Fire, took the alleged date of the fire seriously as a *terminus ante quem*.⁹⁷ As we have already seen with the White Madonna of Portovenere, however, such dates based on legends tend to be unreliable from an art-historical point of view. A painting in tempera on panel by Giovanni di Mastro Pedrino, which visualises the story of the fire, and is preserved today in the Treasury of the Cathedral, can be dated 1450-1460 and may be more accurate as a *terminus ante quem* for the print.

In his seventeenth-century official account of the history of the Madonna of the Fire, one of the earliest monographs written on a printed image, the author named Giuliano Bezzi states that 'at that time, that artifice (printmaking) was still new, and, who knows, that it was not the first print, which came out from its first Artificer, as the Virgin was the first to come out of the hands of the Maker of Everything.'⁹⁸ This passage points to a

⁹⁶ Venturi, "Sulle origini della xilografia,": 'la persuasione che la xilografia italiana sia sorta dalla tedesca [...] sia da oggi in poi distrutta.'

⁹⁷ Giuliano Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante: Racconto della traslatione della miracolosa imagine detta la Madonna del Fuoco, protrettrice della città di Forlì* (Forlì: G. Cimatti 1637); Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*. On the dating of the Madonna of the Fire, see Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 48.

⁹⁸ Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante*, 7: 'Era ancor nuouo allhora quell'arteficio, e chi sà, che non fusse la prima stampa, che uscisse dal suo primo Artefice, come la Vergine fù la prima ad uscire dale mani del Facitore del tutto?'

miraculous origin of printmaking itself. Not only is printmaking designated by Bezzi as an 'arteficio' ('artifice'), with connotations of a magical device, but the Madonna of the Fire was believed to have come directly from God. By positing God Himself as the print matrix, Bezzi drew an implicit parallel between prints and *acheiropoieta* images, lending authority to the Madonna of the Fire. Furthermore, the figure of the Virgin represented in the print is metaphorically related to the Virgin Mary in person. By comparing the birth of the print with that of the Virgin, Bezzi further legitimated the status of the print; since both the Virgin and the print came out of the hands of God, they had a similar elevated status. If Bezzi's claim has roots in earlier tales surrounding the print, it would be an indication that Italian printmaking was associated with supernatural properties from its earliest days. As mentioned above, the aura, which surrounded the technological innovation of printmaking may have contributed to the veneration of early-modern prints that rolled off the press.

If such an aura existed in the early decades of the fifteenth century, it may have then faded. Reports by Benedetto Tenaci, the Camaldolese Abbot of Bagno di Romagna, on the miracle that the Madonna of the Blood performed in 1498, are ambiguous. In his diary of the same year, Tenaci referred to the Madonna of the Blood as simply an 'imaguncula' ('small image'), neglecting to mention that it was a print.⁹⁹ He appears to have apprised the general of

⁹⁹ Benedetto Tenaci, *Diario Tenaci*, 1498, 148r-v, Municipal Library Bagno di Romagna, Bagno di Romagna (FO), Italy: "Yesus. Anno humanae. Redemptionis MCCCCLXXXVIII, XIII Kal. Februarii. In oppido Sanctae Mariae in Balneis, cum simulatibus odioque passim laboraretur, cedesque plurimae inter oppidanos paratae forent, prodigio novo admirandoque

the Camaldolese Order, Pietro Dolfin, of the physical nature of the image; Dolfin, basing himself on Tenaci, wrote a letter to Bernardino Gadolo, vicar general for the Venetian monasteries of the Camaldolese order, informing the latter that the Madonna of the Blood was 'an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, printed on paper and coloured.'¹⁰⁰ Tenaci, however, had also told Dolfin how old the wall was, to which the print was originally affixed.¹⁰¹ In other words, his mentioning that the Madonna of the Blood was a print may have been merely a factual statement. A devotional print, around this time, was probably a commonplace object.

I.III Miraculous Prints According to Their Powers

Like miraculous paintings or sculptures, miraculous prints can be divided into three categories according to the type of miracles they worked: miraculous prints that acted; miraculous prints that spontaneously changed; and miraculous prints that survived disasters.¹⁰² Prints that acted generally performed miracles of healing and rescue from disaster, or of averting evil influences and bad luck. Prints that miraculously changed their aspect either emanated bodily fluids, such as blood or tears, or altered their colours or

miraculo e medio fere omnium discordiae iublate: sunt. In aedibus enim Deciuti cuiunadam, in medio prope oppido, divae Virginis Mariae imaguncula in cubiculo parietis affissa fuit.'

¹⁰⁰ Pietro Dolfin, *Bernardino Gadulo Vicario*, 23 January 1498, 753-4, epistola LXXXX, liber IX, pars II, Mss. Lat. XI, 92 (=3828), Biblioteca Marciana, Venice, Italy: 'Hoc nobis ... Abbatis Balnei ... significatum est.'; The original letter is lost but the text survives in a manuscript copy: Dolfin, *Bernardino Gadulo Vicario*: 'imago quaedam beatissimae Virginis Mariae, folio impressa atq. Depicta.'

¹⁰¹ Dolfin, *Bernardino Gadulo Vicario*: 'non quidem lateritio, aut lapideo, sed ligneo, et vetustissimo.'

¹⁰² On the categories of miraculous imagery according to their miracles, see Gerhard Wolf, "Le immagini nel Quattrocento tra miracolo e magia per una "iconologia" rifondata," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 317.

figures. Prints that survived disasters miraculously emerged from fires, floods, or earthquakes unscathed. The distinctions are theoretical and the three categories often overlapped in practice. For instance, as mentioned above, the White Madonna of Portovenere was revered as a miraculous image after its colours were perceived to have changed. According to tradition, however, it was simultaneously associated with the miraculous disappearance of a plague from the Ligurian town of Portovenere.

Among the prints that acted, there were prints, which acted towards individuals, and prints, which acted towards whole communities. The former category includes prints, which healed individuals prompted by their personal prayers, while prints of the latter category healed entire communities under threat. Again, the two categories overlapped. The White Madonna, for instance, was famous for having saved an entire community, but also healed individuals.¹⁰³ A 1612 parchment concerning the White Madonna attests that the woodcut healed, among others, the wife of Bartolomeo of Ortonovo Luchese, a certain Domenichina and the daughter of one Girlanda.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ On the miracles of the White Madonna, see the 1612 parchment preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, Portovenere, Liguria; Lamorati. *Historie di Lunigiana*. On the miracles of Our Lady of Succour, see Carmine Cordiviola, *Compendio storico della prodigiosa immagine di N. Signora del Soccorso venerata nella chiesa prepositurale di S. Bartolomeo di Ginestra, Diocesi di Brugnato* (Chiavari: Tip. Provino, 1831); Ferdinando Podestà, *N.a S.ra del Soccorso in S. Bartolomeo di Ginestra Sestri Levante* (Florence: Stabilimento Tipografico S. Giuseppe, 1915).

¹⁰⁴ The information is reported in the 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, Liguria: 'quali per non essere troppo tedioso non sono nominati ma solo à deuotione, e riueranza della Beate Vergine Maria scriueremo alcuni miracoli da essa Beata Vergine operati, e da tutto il Popolo visibilmente veduti, tra li quai fu questo, che l'anno sopradetto nel mese di Settembre la Vigilia della Natiuità della Madonna Bartolomeo di Ortonouo Luchese, essendo venuto à visitare detta Gloriosa Vergine dopo di essersi diuotamente Confessato e Communicato, essendo dinanzi all'Altare della Beata Vergine Maria alla presenza di molti Genouesi disse che essendo sua Moglie Inferma amore fece voto di venire à visitare detta Gloriosa Vergine se la sua donna riceueua la sanità, e che subito fatto il voto fu libera. Il medesimo giorno alla sera di notte essendo in detta Chiesa incirca da quattrocento persone, quali stauano vegiando in oratione, & ecco che vna Donna

Miraculous prints often protected entire communities without discrimination. Giuliano Bezzi (1592-1674), in the title of his 1637 monograph on the Madonna of the Fire, commissioned by the magistrates of Forlì as the official account of the print and its miracles, described the Madonna of the Fire as the protectress of the city of Forlì.¹⁰⁵ They could also protect specific categories of people. For instance, the White Madonna was considered a protectress of sailors, while the Madonna of the Maple, venerated in Lizzano in Belvedere in Emilia-Romagna, was seen as a protectress of deaf-mutes, and the Madonna of the Fire was thought to protect the salt makers of the town of Cervia in Emilia-Romagna.¹⁰⁶

chiamata Domenichina, d'anni cinquanta, quale era stata per spatio di otto anni tormentata da maligni spiriti, quali visibilmente se gli vedeuano fra la carne, e la pelle, andò a toccare la detta Gloriosa Immagine, subito fu liberata da detti maligni spiriti. Alli quindecim di Settembre, circa all'ora dell'Aue Maria, vna donna hauendo mandato Domenichina figlia di Girlanda di grauana che la dovessero mandare dinanzi all'Immagine della Beata Vergine Maria, e subito ch'ella fu dinanti, toccando la detta Immagine senza alta oratione fu liberata in presenza del Rettore di detta Chesa e di molte altre persone degne di fede: A di Venitsette di Settembre Messere Prete Antonio Rettore della Chiesa di S. Martino di Lucca, venendo in compagnia di grand'huomini e Donne, vestite tutte di bianco, per visitare detta Immagine disse hauer veduto con i suoi occhi proprij l'infrascritto miracolo Cioè che a Sarzana era vna donna la quale haueua fatto voto di venire à visitare detta Immagine in compagnia di molte donne, e promesse alla Beata Vergine Maria la liberua da vna infermità grandissima la quale per molti anni l'haueua tenuta oppressa, di fare la spesa a tutte quelle donne, che menerebbe in sua compagnia e di più li donarebbe dieci fiorini per ogniuna, & ecco che essendo giute alla Chiesa, doue era detta Immagine, stando auanti alla Gloriosa Vergine Maria, subito fu liberata da detta infermità partendosi poi verso Casa per amore della Beata Vergine Maria fece le spese à tutta la sua Compagnia. per il camino, e di più gionta à casa gli donò dieci fiorini, come gli haueua promesso, la qual cosa vedendo un suo figliolo commciò a gridare con la madre non volendo à partito alcuno che ella desse li diece fiorini alla detta donne. All'ora per miracolo di Dio e della Gloriosa Vergine Maria in presenza della madre e di tutta la compagnia, subito diuentò tanto furibondo che pareua che lui huaesse tutte le fuire dell'inferno addosso, & essendoli sopragionto vna grandissima febre fece voto di venire a visitare detta Immagine e subito fu liberato da detta febre e così lasciò che la sua madre desse li promessi fiorini alle prede donne.'

¹⁰⁵ Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante*: 'Il fuoco trionfante: Racconto della traslatione della miracolosa immagine detta la Madonna del Fuoco, protrettrice della città di Forlì.'

¹⁰⁶ The White Madonna was considered as the Mother of the Sailors and its altar ever bears the inscription 'Mater Navigantium' (Mother of the Sailors). The foundation legend of the Madonna of the Maples is connected with the miraculous healing of a deaf-mute child and the print was then considered as the protectress of this category of people. On the Madonna of the Fire as the protectress of the salt makers of Cervia, see Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 205-10.

Prints that changed their aspect appear to have been less common, or at least have survived in smaller numbers. The Madonna of the Blood venerated today in Bagno di Romagna, Emilia-Romagna, is the clearest representative of this group (Fig. 3 Madonna of the Blood, ante 1498, coloured woodcut on paper, 375 x 345 mm. Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption, Bagno di Romagna. (Photo: Author.)). According to the fifteenth-century diary of Benedetto Tenaci, the Camaldolese Abbot of Bagno di Romagna and a witness of the miraculous event, the Virgin's left arm bled on the 20th of January 1498, because of the rivalry and hate that befell the town. The abbot reports that the print stopped bleeding after two hours. It started shedding drops of blood again as Santa and Lucrezia, two women from the town, who hated each other, entered the room.¹⁰⁷ This miracle seemed to be a sort of repetition of a miracle that had taken place in Bagno di Romagna in 1412, 86 years earlier, when during Mass, the wine contained in the chalice miraculously started to boil, staining the corporal.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Tenaci, *Diario Tenaci*, 148r-v: 'Yesus. Anno humane. Redemptionis MCCCCLXXXVIII, XIII Kal. Februarii. In oppido Sanctae Mariae in Balneis, cum simulatibus odioque passim laboraretur, cedessque plurimae inter oppidanos paratae forent, prodigio novo admirandoque miraculo e medio fere omnium discordiae iublatae: sunt. In aedibus enim Deciuti cuiunadam, in medio prope oppido, divae Virginis Mariae imaguncula in cubiculo parietis affissa fuit. Ad horam noctis circiter tertiam, cum Botius, Deciritu filiam de more, quod sabbati in esset dies, accensa facula iconam veneraretur, e sinistro imaginis brachio multum cepit sanguinis profluere. Pertanto invenis percules, Paulum fratrem vocas; Paulus exanimatu, è vicina plurimos. Mortaloum f confluxus ingens: iniversus concurrir populusm cumque omnes perscatentem sangiune conspicarentur, pacem misericordiamque orantes conclamarent, prominere sangui siam iamque deflutus videbatur. Cum vero prodigium bini siam boris perdurasset, contrabit deman et sanguis ac sistit. Paulo autem post ecce feminae duae, Sancta ac Lucretia, quese quidem inimicitiis conflagrabant, ad visendu, et ipsae prodigum accedunt; e vestigio rusrus ubi ante imagineme steterunt, guttare sanguinis duae paulo supra priores extare via sunt. Relata est paucis post diebus imago populi Benedictique abbatis consus, in abbatiae templum. Ibi are extrcuta, ubi a fidelibus quottidie divae Virginis imago adoratur, miraculisque innumeris floret. Petrius de Portico eddit. Ad perpetuam memorian soprascriptarum, quae oculis viimus, ergo Benedictus abbs Balnesi scripsi die XXII augustu 1498.'

¹⁰⁸ Martina Caroli, Alba Maria Orselli, and Raffaele Savigni, eds., *Romagna* (Rome: De Luca, 2013), 176-7.

Another print to demonstrate spontaneous change was the above-mentioned White Madonna, which was believed to have changed its colours. It was given its name in response to a noticeable blanching of the faces of the Virgin and Child.¹⁰⁹ Interestingly, this happened in a context of urban discord in the town of Portovenere similar to that of the Madonna of the Blood in Bagno di Romagna.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, on both occasions many people rushed towards the image invoking 'mercy and peace.'¹¹¹

The category of the changing prints also includes prints which miraculously changed their position rather than their aspect. Some prints resisted being transferred from the place, where they worked their first miracle, miraculously returning to it. For instance, according to legend, the Madonna of the Maple, a print venerated today in the eponymous Sanctuary of Lizzano in Belvedere, Emilia-Romagna, once resisted being moved to a nearby parish church, coming back to the maple tree, where it first miraculously appeared.

¹⁰⁹ On this miracle, see the 1612 parchment preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, Portovenere, Liguria: *vidde ancora miracolosamente quella Imagine dipingersi e ripigliar nuoui colori bianchi, e celesti, [...] atteso che vedeuano che la faccia della Beata Vergine Maria insieme con quella del suo Figliolo Giesù Christo Signor Nostro sempre appariua di maggior chiarezza e bianchezza, doue prima era tanto oscura che niente si vedeua.*

¹¹⁰ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'Si è degnato vedendo il mondo tutto inclinato al malfare e massime all'homicidij, incendij, adulterij & ad ogni altro vitio, non curando, ne facendo stima di pestilenze, guerre, presure e fame, terremoti. & altri segni euidenti quali manifestano l'ira di Dio, per preghiere donque, e meriti della sua dolcissima Madre s'è degnato nouamente visitare il mondo, e richiamare quello sotto l'habito della Sua Sacratissima Madre a pace nostra, e specialmente delle misere Città Genouese perle continue guerre conquassate, e guaste e disfatte, ma specialmente più di tutte l'altre ha voluto visitare, & ornare questa Terra di PORTOVENERE la quale per gran tempo era stata tribulata da grandissimi trauagli.'

¹¹¹ Tenaci, *Diario Tenaci*, 148r-v: 'Mortaloum f confluxus ingens: iniversus concurrat populism cumque omnes perscatentem sangiume conspicarentur, pacem misericordiamque orantes conclamarent, prominere sanguis iamque deflutus videbatur'; the 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'chimoò tutti li vicini à vedere un tanto miracolo & vi venne vna grande moltitudine di huomini e donne della Terra, e molti forestieri, quali erano in essa di passaggio, qual vedendo tale e tanto miracolo, insieme con quelli della Terra cominciorono a gridare misericordia, e pace.'

Giuseppe Zanarini's 1894 *Storia miracolosa di Maria Santissima dell'Acero* reports that the print left marks on all the trees that it encountered along the route back to its beloved maple tree.¹¹² In this case, as often happens, a new sanctuary was built in the original location of the miraculous print.

Within the final category of prints, which miraculously survived calamities, the most famous example is without a doubt the Madonna of the Fire. As mentioned above, the Madonna of the Fire survived a fire, which accidentally destroyed the schoolhouse in which it was displayed in the town of Forlì. The Madonna of the Fire was hardly alone as a print on paper that miraculously refused to burn. Alfonso Isachi, in his *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi intorno l'origine, solennità, traslatione, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio* (1619), similarly refers to an *immaginetta* of the Madonna of the Gravel, which survived in a burning domestic residence of Reggio Emilia.¹¹³ Other prints were also left untouched by different disasters.

¹¹² On this resistance, see Giuseppe Zanarini, *Storia miracolosa di Maria Santissima dell'Acero* (Florence: Tipografia Salani, 1894).

¹¹³ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 165-6: LXXXVIII. Alii 5. del mese di Agosto dell'anno presente 1597. Sendosi all'improviso acceso fuoco in una Casa dell'Hospitale grande contigua ad alcune case delli Reuer Padri Canonici Regolari della Congregatione di S. Salvatore, qui nel Monastero di S. Marco in Reggio: & quiui abbruggiando da ducento Carra di Legna; & altra materia combustibile, caduto il tetto; s'innalzarono le fiamme fino alle stelle, che però portate dal vento gagliardo d'all'hora; attaccarono fuoco in trè luoghi del sodetto Monastero; & in un luogo del detto Hospitale, abbruggiando fin l'herba delli terraglin in quel luogo della Città, sopra della quale cadendo posauano, con spauento di tutta la Città, che vi concorse, & Magistrati, & pericolo di tuto quel contorno circonuicino, & massimamete di quel Monastero i Padri del quale prostrati nelle Celle loro supplicauano il Signore, & la Madre di misericordia, & d'intercessione. Era nel Muro della Casa vicina al fuoco dalla parte di dentro una Carta dell'IMAGINE, di detta Santis. MADONNA, attaccata al detto Muro con cera rossa, & sebene quella muraglia ardeua di maniera, che non vi si potea, ne pure accostare la mano, & forse il piombo si sarebbe liquefatto, non che la cera molle; nondimeno quella cera, con che l'Image era attaccata non si liquefece, ne anco s'inteei: mà sempre stette afissa al detto muro, come riparo, che più oltre il fuoco no passasse, come in effetto non andò più auante.'

I.IV Mass Production of Miraculous Imagery: Divine Art or Infernal Machine?

In her 2011 book *Divine Art, Infernal Machine*, Elizabeth Eisenstein refers to printing as both a 'divine art' and an 'infernal machine.' This definition, which derives from a long-lived conflation of Johan Fust (1400-1466), Gutenberg's partner, with the necromancer Johann Georg Faustus (1480-1541), suits to the ambivalence that surrounded miraculous prints.¹¹⁴ On the one hand, the infinite reproduction of miracles through prints could be seen as a sign of divine favour, but on the other, it had characteristics of an uncontrollable 'infernal machine.'

In partial response to the iconoclasm of the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent encouraged greater ecclesiastical control in the matter of miraculous imagery (1562-1563).¹¹⁵ It is therefore likely that the concomitant uncontrolled dissemination of miraculous imagery through printmaking was frowned upon by the Church. To make matters worse, since the Council of Trent did not approve the veneration of statues made out of fragile materials for fear that they could be easily damaged, the Church may have been even less enchanted with the veneration of prints, especially those on paper.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Elisabeth Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of an Ending* (Philadelphia and Oxford: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 1.

¹¹⁵ Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*.

¹¹⁶ Garnett and Rosser, "Representing Spectacular Miracles," 272. See also Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 2, 775-7.

The position towards cult imagery adopted at Trent was more or less a repetition of the one from the second council of Nicaea (787). The Catholic Church defended the cult of images

not because some divinity or power is believed to reside in them, for which they are revered, or because anything is to be expected from them, or because trust should be placed in images, as was done by the ancients, who put their hope in idols: but because the honour bestowed on them refers to the prototype, which they represent: thus, through the images [...] we adore Christ and we venerate the saints, whose likeness they bear.¹¹⁷

In short, cult images were to be held in respect because of the sacred characters whom they represented. However, since these images facilitated an unmediated access to the divine, which could easily result in superstition and idolatry, only authorised images should be venerated. Although some Church leaders had more moderate views, the Council of Trent dictated

All superstition must be removed from [...] use of sacred images [...] no one is allowed, outside or inside the church, without exception, to install or oversee the installation of any image, unless it has been approved by the bishop. Nor are any new miracles to be accepted [...] without the bishop similarly examining and approving them. Who as soon as he learns of such an event, should consult with theologians and other devout men and decide according to what truth and pious tradition advise.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 2, 775: 'non quod credatur inesse aliqua in iis divinitas vel virtus, propter quam sint colendae, vel quod ab eis sit aliquid petendum, vel quod fiducia in imaginibus sit figenda, veluti olim fiebat a gentibus, quae in idolis spem suam collocabant: sed quoniam honos, qui eis exhibetur, refertur ad prototypa, quae illae representant: ita ut per imagines [...] Christum adoremus, et sanctos, quorum illae similitudinem gerunt, veneremur.'

¹¹⁸ Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 2, 775-6: 'Omnis porro superstitio in [...] imaginum sacro usu tollatur, omnis turpis quaestus eliminetur, omnis denique lascivia vitetur, ita ut procaci venustate imagines non pingantur nec ornentur; [...] nemini licere, ullo in loco vel ecclesia, etiam quomodolibet exempta, ullam insolitam ponere vel ponendam curare imaginem, nisi ab episcopo approbata fuerit. Nulla etiam admittenda esse nova miracula [...] nisi eodem recognoscente et approbante episcopo. Qui simulatque de his aliquid compertum habuerit, adhibitis in consilium theologis et aliis piis viris, ea faciat, quae veritati et pietati consentanea iudicaverit.'

Some of the requirements to authenticate the cult of a miraculous image were: its antiquity, its noble or prodigious origin, the intensity of the devotion of the faithful, and the quality of the miracles that were reported.¹¹⁹ Over the course of the seventeenth century, the Church even attempted to catalogue what were considered to be the most respected miraculous images of the time. The local cataloguing operations merged into Wilhelm Gumpfenberg's monumental 1659 *Atlas Marianvs*.¹²⁰ The enormous influence of this text in the campaign against iconoclasm was demonstrated by the fact that it was repeatedly burnt in public by Protestants.¹²¹

Despite these measures, devotion for cult images was hard to supervise. Manifesting itself in the form of mass-produced prints, miraculous imagery could be easily disseminated out of the Church's sphere of control. According to Garnett and Rosser, 'inexpensive printing had put into the hands of almost anyone a potential catalyst of miracles.'¹²² Other than with the printed word, the Church did not systematically attempt to censor images.¹²³ Yet, while printmaking was an important technology for the early-modern Church, the unlimited production and reproduction of miraculous imagery also resulted in practices that were condemned.

A decree from 1610, preserved in the Archive of the Cathedral of Chiavari, refers to an illicit trade in copies of the miraculous Madonna of the Garden,

¹¹⁹ Michele Bacci, *Il pennello dell'Evangelista: Storie delle immagini sacre attribuite a San Luca* (Pisa: ETS, 1998), 356.

¹²⁰ Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianvs*.

¹²¹ Bacci, *Il pennello dell'Evangelista*, 363; Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, note 86 p. 273.

¹²² Garnett and Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous," 209.

¹²³ Corry, Howard and Laven, *Madonna & Miracles*, 162.

venerated in the Cathedral of Chiavari, printed in Genoa by the printer Giuseppe Pavoni (1551-1641) before the conclusion of the above-mentioned mandatory canonical process.¹²⁴ The document states that these prints were illegal and had to be destroyed. Within two days, all the copies should be returned to the Reverend vicar of Chiavari, under pain of excommunication. The story, already discussed in detail by Garnett and Rosser, shows that there was a tension between popular practice and demand and the official sanctioning of cults.¹²⁵ In the end, the print was licensed on the condition that the image should bear the word 'grazie' ('graces') instead of the word 'miracula' ('miracles').

Furthermore, the document highlights that those who sold the prints in the piazzas of Genoa were 'publishing miracles' for unethical profit. Revenue

¹²⁴ The text of the document is reported in Barbara Bernabò and Rossella Bruschi, *La manifestazione della Madonna dell'Orto: Testimonianze e documenti* (Chiavari: Internòs, 2010), 89: 'Papiniano Denalio di Reggio dottor d'ambo le leggi, pronotaro apostolico, canonico della Chiesa di Santa Maria in Via Lata di Roma, in l'arcivescovato di Genova vicario generale. Sendo venuto a nostra notitia che sono state stampate, ancorché senz'ordine nostro, molte copie della Gloriosissima Vergine intitolata la Santissima Madonna dell'orto di Chiavari, stampate in Genova per Giuseppe Paovoni, quali copie si vendono per le piazze di Genova da alcuni che per l'avidità del guadagno vanno pubblicando miracoli successi in detto luogo di Chiavari et intendendo anco che nel luogo di Chiavari son stati pubblicati miracoli et gratie che si pretendono essere successi a molti alla Madonna dell'orto di Chiavari, dando fuori in scritto copie di pretesi miracoli et gratie et non essendo lecito ad alcuno pubblicare miracoli se prima non sono riconosciuti et approvati canonicamente da quelli ai quali tocca negotio tanto grave, conforme alla disposizione dei sagri canoni, et non convenendo dar occasione a persone lontane col rumore di miracoli che veramente non fussero tali di levarsi dalle case proprie, particolarmente in tempo di calore eccessivo, et concorrere con opinione erronea a devotione non ancora approvata canonicamente come conviene. Perciò per obviar ad ogni abuso et disordine et per altri degni rispetti, si ordina che non possino senza espressa nostra licenza stamparsi né venderi imagini né altre cosa concernente detti miracoli, commandando anche ad ogni e singola persona, si ecclesiastici come secolari, di che stato o conditione siano, che fra dui giorni prossimi debbano ogniuno di loro haver consegnato in mano del reverendo vicario foraneo di Chiavari, o vero del cancellerie infrascritto, dette immagini stampate et tutte queste scritte che havessero presso di sé et in loro potere concernenti li suddetti miracoli et gratie, né presumano scrivervi in l'avenire affermando esser successi miracoli, se prima non sariano stati approvati dai superiori a quali tocca, sotto pena di scomunica da incorrersi in questo fatto da tutti quelli che non ubbidissero o contrafacessero a qualsivoglia delle cose suddette, da quale censura non potranno essere assoluti senza nostra espressa licenza. Dato in Genova nel palazzo arcivescovile il 9 agosto 1610.'

¹²⁵ Garnett and Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous," 205-6.

manifestly was the reason for the reproduction of miraculous imagery. For example, a Dominican monk named Antonino published false miracles and printed engraved reproductions of Our Lady of Health of Naples for profit. He even hung these prints around the neck of some goats, selling their milk as miraculous.¹²⁶

In other cases, printed copies could deceptively authenticate the cult of unsanctioned images. This was the case with Our Lady of Montallegro, venerated in Rapallo, Liguria, whose unusual iconography was strictly condemned by Catholic Reformers. The image contained an unorthodox three-headed Christ with a single body and was formally condemned by Pope Urban VIII in 1628. This iconography had been already criticised in late medieval Tuscany because it was considered a mockery. As analysed by Garnett and Rosser, in order to demonstrate that it actually showed three heads on three bodies and thus the three distinct persons of the Trinity, the seventeenth-century Jesuit Giovanni Agostino Molfino, one of the promoters of the cult, made use of prints. He tried to destroy all the existing prints showing the actual iconography, pretending that they derived from an unsanctioned engraved copy made in Palermo, and then issued his own engraving, which, in blatant denial of the evidence at the sanctuary, showed three distinct bodies, in this way authenticating the cult.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Pierroberto Scaramella, *Le Madonne del Purgatorio: iconografia e religione in Campania tra Rinascimento e Controriforma* (Genoa: Marietti, 1991), 170-2.

¹²⁷ On the authentication of the Madonna of Montallegro through prints, see Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 214-17 and Giovanni Molfino, *Di alcune memorie storiche della miracolosa Madonna celebrata su'l monte Leto in Liguria, volgarmente del mont'Allegro di Rapallo* (Venice: 1681), 21-6.

I.V Ecclesiastical Enshrinement

In light of what has been said in the preceding section about the dissemination of prints outside of the control of the Church, the notion of the ecclesiastical enshrinement of miraculous prints seems to be a contradiction in terms. However, once their miracles were publicly recognised, prints were moved to churches, or churches were constructed around them, their powers being sanctioned and appropriated by the ecclesiastical authorities in this way. As mentioned above, the White Madonna, a woodcut on parchment that had undergone a material change, was moved from the 'House of a certain man called Luciardo' to the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, which was later referred to as the Sanctuary of the White Madonna.¹²⁸ Although the miracle of the print changing its colours and forms was first witnessed by Luciardo within his home, it was almost immediately communicated to passers-by and the local community, the cult thus being made public. Institutionalised in churches, prints functioned very similarly to other miraculous imagery produced in more permanent media. Yet, the ecclesiastical enshrinement is particularly important for the study of the miraculous print as a functional object.

Mass-produced copies of miraculous paintings or sculptures could themselves end up being venerated in a church. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter II, the Madonna of Passau, an engraving venerated today in the eponymous Sanctuary of Pragatto, Emilia-Romagna, is a printed copy of

¹²⁸ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'Casa di vn certo huomo chiamato Luciardo.'

the painted miraculous Madonna venerated in the German town of Passau. This shows that a print could be considered to have miraculous powers similar to but also distinct from those of the painting it reproduced. Similarly, the Madonna of the Graces, a woodcut venerated today in Stuffione di Ravarino, Emilia-Romagna, is a printed reproduction of the Spanish Virgin of Montserrat, venerated in Catalonia.

Ecclesiastical enshrinement formalised the cult of printed miraculous imagery.¹²⁹ Once they had been installed in the churches, prints and their cults could be kept under control and protected from possible causes of deterioration. Miraculous prints could be transferred to existing churches, but sometimes new churches or chapels were also purposely built to house them, often due to the donations made by ardent devotees. The Sanctuary of the Madonna of Passau in Pragatto was purposely built around the miraculous print in 1670, exclusively financed by monetary gifts from its worshippers.¹³⁰ Existing churches or chapels could also be rebuilt or renovated because they were no longer considered to be suitable to house the increasingly miraculous print and accommodate the pilgrims, who flocked to the shrines in ever greater numbers. The Sanctuary of the Madonna of Passau was rebuilt from ground level in order to better accommodate the many devotees, who continually visited the miraculous image.¹³¹ Similarly,

¹²⁹ On this aspect, see Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 211-55.

¹³⁰ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 4, 322: 'B. Vergine della Provvidenza che fù fabbricato circa l'anno 1670 con le elemosine de' devoti a persuasiva del Parroco Maranesi, e fù questo edificato con grandiosità, ed a forma di Chiesa con magnifica cuppola, demolita nel 1715, in un terreno donato dalla famiglia Landini lungo la via maestra a detto effetto.'

¹³¹ *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna ritratte e descritte* (Bologna: Tipografia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1844-1851), vol. 1, 87: 'ma a circa il 1817 il parroco D. Luigi Lenzi, tra perché in qualche parte minacciava ruina, tra perché l'antecedente Chiesa non era capace di contenere i molti divoti che a quella miracolose immagine ricorrevano, procurò che

Saint Mary of the Village, an anonymous fifteenth-century coloured woodcut on paper probably of German origins, was located in a provisional chapel at the beginning of its cult in 1517. One hundred years later, in 1617, it was transported to the much bigger purpose-built sanctuary that since that time has been known as the Church of Saint Mary of the Village.¹³²

When a miraculous print was not housed in a genuine church, para-ecclesiastical structures could then be built around the location, where the image first worked miracles. For instance, the Madonna of the Blood, till around 1798, was venerated in an oratory built within the house where the print was first seen bleeding, in Bagno di Romagna, Emilia-Romagna.¹³³

Similarly, before it was transported to the Basilica of Saint George in Ferrara, the Madonna of the Willow, an anonymous fifteenth-century woodcut on paper representing the Virgin and Child holding a pomegranate, was venerated in an oratory known as the Oratory of the Madonna of the Willow, or, more vulgarly, of the Schiappa. This latter name alludes to the nature of the land where the oratory was built: the alluvial soil of the River Po.¹³⁴ The

venisse rifabbricata dalle fondamenta ed ingrandita come al presente, aiutandosi colle oblazioni dei fedeli; ed è in forma di croce greca con magnifica cupola, ed il tutto di elegante architettura: disegno del celebre Venturoli; la qual Chiesa fu compita nel 1837.'

¹³² Golinelli, *Memorie storiche antiche e moderne*, 128: 'Ma, perché la suddetta Cappella, eretta sul passo comune, riusciva di qualche incomodo a' passeggeri, e non era assai capace per contenere il Popolo, che vi concorrea; quindi è, ch'è pensarono que' Confratelli di fondare una nuova Chiesa molto più grande; la quale, benché incominciata quasi nello spuntare di questa divozione, nondimeno non restò poi perfezionata, a cagione degli eserciti stranieri, delle discordie civili, pestilenze, e carestie patite, come altrove si disse, se non nell'anno 1617. nel quale, sotto il dì otto Settembre quella Santa Immagine restò trasportata nella nuova Chiesa, e riposta sopra l'Altare Maggiore, da cui di presente molto ben conservata si adora.'

¹³³ Anna Benvenuti, ed., *La Madonna del Sangue: Un miracolo a Bagno di Romagna alla fine del 15. Secolo* (Bagno di Romagna: Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta, 2000), 108.

¹³⁴ Scalabrini, *Memorie storiche*, 40: 'In questo Borgo si vede il bello, ed antico Oratorio detto della Schiappa, edificato sopra di un terreno Schiappivo, e vegro di ragione del Monastero di San Giorgio. Dicesi schiappivo, perché terreno portato, e condensato dall'aluvione del Pó verso la ripa, e quando vi corre l'acqua chiamasi piarda.'

oratory was built in the proximity of the Monastery of Saint George, at the expense of the poet and Giudice dei Savi Ercole Strozzi (1471-1508), who obtained the permission to do so from the Olivetan Monks of Saint George on the 26th of May 1503. It is interesting that the willow tree to which the print was originally affixed was also enclosed in the oratory in its entirety.¹³⁵ After the Napoleonic suppression, the oratory was demolished in 1804 and, on the 5th of February of the same year, the image was translated, together with a small piece of the willow, to the second right altar of the Basilica of Saint George in Ferrara.¹³⁶

Similarly to miraculous imagery produced in more permanent media, but unlike any other type of prints, miraculous prints were also deemed worthy of coronation, which was generally reserved for those images that were the subject of a long-established veneration. Garnett and Rosser have established that through coronation, the pope in this way accommodated, but also controlled, the cult of images. The Capuchin Father Girolamo Paulucci, who was originally from Forlì, initially promoted the practice of coronation in 1571, which was subsequently carried on by his friend Count Alessandro Sforza Pallavicini. Given that the enterprise was too big, the latter eventually decided to bequeath this practice to the Chapter of Saint Peter, and thus to the pope. The crowns were usually made in Rome and a ceremony followed.

¹³⁵ Scalabrini, *Memorie istoriche*, 41: 'laonde mosso Ercole Strozza Giudice de' dodici Savij, ed ottenuto da Monaci di San Giorgio con instrumento rogato Bartolommeo Codegori Notaro l'Anno 1503. 26 Maggio il sito, vi fece edificare il presente Oratorio, in cui fra il grosso del muro, dietro l'Altare fu chiuso lo stesso Salice coll'Immagine di Maria Vergine, che tuttavia qual'era, benché arido, si conserva coll'Immagine sopradetta, come se fosse stata di recente impressa.'

¹³⁶ Caroli, Orselli, and Savigni, *Romagna*, 155.

A copy of each crowned image had then to be preserved in Saint Peter.¹³⁷ A notarial deed dated 1725, regarding the White Madonna of Portovenere, and preserved in the District Notary Archive of La Spezia, Liguria, reads:

Having first seen and carefully considered the miracles worked, and graces received by many people according to established procedures. Such rare and special graces that we owe to the Almighty every act of deference and gratitude, that is possible, and with contrite and humbled heart we implore Our Holy White Madonna to intercede with her beloved Son for forgiveness for our sins [...] and like she allows us to love Her, adore Her and now to see Her crowned in this life, so we can love, adore and see Her crowned in Paradise.¹³⁸

Thus, the White Madonna received her crown in 1725. The Madonna of the Fire had borne a crown long before, given by Bishop Corrado Tarantini of Forlì on the 26th of August 1601.¹³⁹ The official Roman coronation certainly lent authority to the print.

The relatively heavy metal crowns were affixed to light paper, parchment or textile supports. This factor became a consideration in 1902, in the request for the coronation of Our Lady of Succour, an eighteenth-century etching on paper, showing the Virgin crowned by twelve stars and venerated in the Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra, Liguria. The parish priest expressed fears that the fact that the print was made of paper would be an obstacle to the coronation. He pointed out that the print was not only miraculously well preserved, but that it was also mounted on a canvas to be

¹³⁷ On the coronation of images, see Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 128-34.

¹³⁸ *Notarial Deed*, District Notary Archive La Spezia, La Spezia, Italy: 'Visti prima e ben considerati li miracoli fatti, e grazie da più persone ricevute come da processi che se ne sono formati. Di sì rare e speciali grazie se ne devono dunque all'Altissimo tutti quelli atti di ossequio e di ringraziamento possibili, e con cuore contrito et humiliato supplicare detta Nostra Santissima Madonna Bianca intercederci dal suo diletissimo Figliolo la remissione delle nostre colpe [...] e siccome ci permette d'amarla, adorarla e vederla ora coronata in questa vita, così possiamo amarla, dorarla e vederla coronata in Paradiso.'

¹³⁹ Caroli, Orselli, and Savigni, *Romagna*, 204.

regarded as a *quid unum* with it, just like a painting.¹⁴⁰ The eventual acceptance of the coronation request took a range of factors into consideration, of which the fragile material of the image was still one.¹⁴¹

In 1987, a restorer of Bologna, Carlo Bellei, decided, as a conservation measure, to remove the crowns, which had been mounted on the Madonna of the Blood. The crowns had been in place since 1894, when the bishop of Sansepolcro, Raffaello Sandrelli (1892-1911), had honoured the print on the feast day of the Coronation of the Virgin. After the restoration, the crowns, together with a golden cross and a necklace (probably ex-votos, which had also been attached to the image) were moved to a lower part of the print that was already heavily damaged. There had originally been more ex-votos, but these were melted and turned into a golden frame shortly after the Second World War.¹⁴²

When their cult was institutionalised, miraculous prints lost many of their characteristic features as prints. First of all, enshrined in luxurious altars, they could no longer be circulated freely – or as Lisa Pon put it, when the Madonna of the Fire was moved to the Cathedral of Forlì, it lost its constitutive ‘Ortlosigkeit’ (‘lack of a fixed location’).¹⁴³ Miraculous prints were instead granted a permanent home and a higher status than had previously been accorded to them. In 1502, the Madonna of the Blood, venerated in the

¹⁴⁰ *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra, Sestri Levante* (Rapallo: Tipografia Emiliani, 1988), note 9 p. 202.

¹⁴¹ See for instance the request for the coronation of Our Lady of Succour in *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra*, note 9 pp. 201-2.

¹⁴² Caroli, Orselli, and Savigni, eds., *Romagna*, 176.

¹⁴³ Pon, “Place, Print and Miracle,” 303. On Ortlosigkeit, see Hans Körner, *Der früheste deutsche Einblattholzschnitt* (Mittenwald: Mäander Kunstverlag, 1979), 40.

third chapel on the left in the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption in Bagno di Romagna, was even placed under lock and key by the abbot of that town. An inscription was placed on the verso of the print on the occasion of the inauguration of the altar and the tabernacle that were to contain the print:

In perpetual memory of the things narrated above, which we saw with our own eyes, I, Benedetto of Andrea, of Paolo, of Guido of Pianetto of Galatea, unworthy abbot of Bagno, have written this on 6 November 1502; on which day I installed and put with my own hands in this tabernacle the present most devout image of the glorious Mother of God, locking it, so that no evil hand could kidnap it and somehow give offence to it.¹⁴⁴

The abbot locked the print away for security reasons, but its installation in the tabernacle further facilitated its cult. In 1505, the tabernacle was inserted into a further frame, made in Florence, paid for by donations of devotees.¹⁴⁵

In the eighteenth-century, the above-mentioned Our Lady of Succour was similarly locked in a marble tabernacle by Bishop Domenico Tatis, who also ordered that the print was to be carried in procession only once every five years (Our Lady of Succour, early 18th century, etching on paper, 680 x 540 mm. Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra, Sestri Levante. (Photo: BeWeb.)).¹⁴⁶ In fact, the only times at which

ionalised prints were moved again was usually during processions. This, however, was a carefully planned and monitored mobility. Prints were

¹⁴⁴ See the verso of the print.

¹⁴⁵ The inscription on the case reads: 'TABERNACULUM HOC EX ELEMOSINE EFFECTUM EST FLOERNTIAE ... 1505.'

¹⁴⁶ Podestà, *N.a S.ra del Soccorso*, 37: 'Monsignor Vescovo prima partire di San Bartolomeo, per pubblico decreto, ordinò che, a maggiore custodia, la prodigiosa Immagine fosse chiusa a doppia chiave, una da tenersi dal Sig. Prevosto, l'altra dai Fabbricieri, imponendo altresì che non si potesse togliere dall'urna e portarla processionalmente se non ad ogni cinque anni, e, o nel giorno del Nome di Maria, o nella seconda domenica di ottobre.'

transferred from their church tabernacles to processional arks on specific feast days. Since the processional ark was conceived as a sort of secondary altar, this was more a temporary relocation than free circulation.

Furthermore, since processions generally followed prearranged routes, the movement of the print was predetermined.

In years when Our Lady of Succour was not carried in procession, a copy in the form of a sculpture took her place, reversing the usual dynamics of printmaking as a technique of replication (Procession of Our Lady of Succour. Sestri Levante. (Photo: Parishioner.)). The use of such a processional substitute was hardly a new development; in other instances, prints were used as substitutes for paintings or sculptures in processions. Roberto Cobiانchi (2006) discusses the process of canonisation of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in Rome in 1446, referring to a procession winding through streets decorated with numerous paper images of the saint, probably prints.¹⁴⁷ Similarly, on the feast-day of Saint Catherine of Siena, the church in her hometown was decorated not only with flowers, but also ‘de facili multiplicabiles in cartis’ (‘with easily reproducible prints on paper’).¹⁴⁸ Yet, when a print itself became the primary object of cult, it was carefully preserved on its altar. Once enshrined, it no longer had a reproductive function, but was reproduced itself instead.

¹⁴⁷ Cobiانchi, “The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-Century Italy,” 50-4. See also “Solemnia Canonizationis Sancti Nicolai de Tolentino,” *Analecta Augustiniana* 3 (1909-1910): 236: ‘Vie seu strade a conventu nostro usque ad sanctum petrum inferius et superius a latere dextro et sinistro plene erant ramis arborum, floribus et cartis depictis cum sancto Nicolao et arma pape.’

¹⁴⁸ Henri Saffrey, “Ymago de facili multiplicabilis in cartis, un document méconnu, daté de l’année 1412, sur l’origine de la gravure sur bois à Venise,” *Nouvelles de l’estampe* 74 (1984): 4-7 See also Marie Hyacinthe Laurent, ed., *Il processo castellano* (Milan: F.lli Bocca, 1942), 41.

Miraculous prints were the only early-modern prints to be surrounded by magnificent architectural frames on church altars. Like the churches, in which the prints were venerated, these architectural frames were repeatedly rebuilt in order to enhance their status. For instance, in 1741, only a few years after the realisation of its first altar, Our Lady of Succour was moved from what was at the time considered a humble wooden tabernacle, even if decorated 'with gilded carvings with fine intricate patterns with putti in half relief', to a marble one 'selected with a miscellany of Spanish brocade patterns in Sicilian Seravezzese jasper.'¹⁴⁹ According to parish priest Marco Domenico Toso, only the second, marble tabernacle was an appropriate 'indelible monument of so many graces.'¹⁵⁰ Perhaps even more than miraculous paintings or sculptures, the presence of small devotional prints needed to be signalled to the devotees.

Once installed on altars, miraculous prints were frequently provided with veils or curtains. Through veiling, the attention of the devotees was drawn to what was hidden from view. The practice of covering miraculous images was common in the early-modern period.¹⁵¹ It was considered a way of preserving both the image and its powers. The veils or curtains were only removed on special annual feasts, by the priest or the custodians of the cult. The above-mentioned Virgin of the Graces of Terra del Sole, for instance, was uncovered every first day of the year, on the anniversary of its principal

¹⁴⁹ Podestà, *N.a S.ra del Soccorso*, 29: 'con fregi dorati in bell'intreccio con angeletti a mezzo rilievo.'; *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra*, 99: 'scelti co' mischi di brocatello di Spagna, diaspro di Sicilia Seravezza.'

¹⁵⁰ Cordiviola, *Compendio storico*, 9: 'monumento indelebile di tante grazie.'

¹⁵¹ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 218-27.

miracle, the resurrection of a dead man.¹⁵² As a result, devotees could no longer closely examine a miraculous print or hold it in their hands; ecclesiastical enshrinement inevitably transformed the way prints were experienced by their early-modern viewers.

Similarly to miraculous imagery in more permanent media, prints were also provided with accessories. Apart from a crown, the printed image of Our Lady of Succour also bears gilded earrings, bracelets, rings, and a necklace. The necklace was probably donated by a certain Luisa Malvisi, who stipulated that it should never be removed from the Virgin.¹⁵³ The above-mentioned Virgin of the Graces, venerated in the Church of Saint Reparata of Terra del Sole, has two necklaces, one of them with a pendant cross inscribed 'Rosa Albonetti, 1855.'¹⁵⁴ Such ornaments were offered to the image in gratitude for miracles performed. They were also believed to increase the efficacy of the miraculous print. In his 1582 *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, Archbishop Gabriele Paleotti of Bologna (1522-1597) stated 'that for greater veneration of sacred pictures, gold, and precious ornaments are useful.'¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, through being 'dressed-up', materially modest images became more attractive.

¹⁵² Bulgarelli, *Storia della veneranda Immagine*, 15: 'E da quel tempo in poi si fa ogni anno, nel primo giorno, memoria di questo fausto avvenimento. Si tiene scoperta la Immagine tutto il dì, la mattina si dicono molte Messe, delle quali una si canta solennemente, e la sera si fa una solenne sacra Funzione col canto del Tedeum a rendimento di grazia.'

¹⁵³ Parisio Ciampelli, *Storia di Bagno di Romagna e delle sue terme* (Bologna: Atesa 1989), 117.

¹⁵⁴ Bulgarelli, *Storia della veneranda Immagine*, 36: 'Le sono state anche, in processo di tempo, sospese al collo due collane, di cui una porta una croce, sulla quale si legge: Rosa Albonetti, 1855.'

¹⁵⁵ Paolo Barocchi, ed., *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento, fra manierismo e Controriforma* (Bari: Laterza e Figli, 1960-2), vol. 2, 508: 'Che nelle pitture sacre vi convengono ornamenti d'oro e preziosi et altre cose per maggiore venerazione.'

A consequence of the encasement of prints in tabernacles, however, was that large parts of their iconography could be rendered invisible. For instance, inside its tabernacle, the Madonna of the Fire does not reveal the figures of saints, which flank the Virgin and Christ Child. As a result, most of its copies do not include these hidden figures and its iconography has been misunderstood over the centuries.

I.VI Survival Rates of Miraculous Prints

Like early-modern prints in general, miraculous prints have survived in very limited numbers and generally only in one miraculous impression.¹⁵⁶ The White Madonna, a fifteenth-century coloured woodcut on parchment, was probably printed in thousands of impressions, but the miraculous one in Portovenere, Liguria, is the only one to survive (White Madonna, early 15th century, coloured woodcut on parchment, 650 x 400 mm. Church of Saint Lawrence, Portovenere. (Photo: Author.)).¹⁵⁷ Given that parchment was more expensive than paper, the Portovenere impression was probably prestigious. According to Griffiths, even within the category of religious imagery, the top-level prints were more likely to survive.¹⁵⁸ However, the White Madonna was mainly preserved for its publicly recognised miraculous powers. After it was perceived to have undergone a material change, the White Madonna was

¹⁵⁶ On the survival of prints, see Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 195-213.

¹⁵⁷ It has more than once been suggested that the White Madonna is an early 15th-century woodcut. However, it is unlikely not possible to closely look at the print. See Pon, *A Printed Icon*, note 110 p. 224.

¹⁵⁸ Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 196.

moved to the right altar of the Church of Saint Lawrence, where it is still venerated today.¹⁵⁹

As recorded in a 1612 parchment preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, the earliest known location of the print that would become the White Madonna was the wall of the house of 'a certain man called Luciardo'; had it not been moved to the local church and become the centre of a public cult, it would likely not have survived.¹⁶⁰ Of impressions of prints to which miracles were attributed, those which were institutionalised as the focal point of a public cult had the best chance of long-term preservation; most others would suffer the fate of the majority of early-modern devotional prints and simply disappear. Miraculous prints whose veneration remained limited to a form of private devotion have generally not survived. They would have been nailed to the walls of houses, which themselves might have been demolished, as in the case of the White Madonna, or they were carried on the body or in a person's pocket as amulets, where the risk of degradation and damage was even higher.

In his 1686 *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa di Maria Vergine detta Madonna del fuoco della città di Forlì*, Bartolomeo Ricceputi, the chaplain of the Cathedral of Forlì, stated that 'rare are the people who do not carry on their person an Immaginetta of [...] silk, which has touched the original.' The original he was referring to was the Madonna of the Fire, itself a print

¹⁵⁹ On the story of the White Madonna, see the 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria.

¹⁶⁰ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'Casa di vn certo huomo chiamato Luciardo.'

venerated in the Cathedral of Forlì (see below for further discussion);¹⁶¹ the 'Immaginetta' of silk may have been a printed copy on silk. Prints on silk were more durable than those on paper, but even they would not have lasted for long being subject to frequent touching and kissing in the context of devotion.¹⁶² Ricceputi also reports that 'to cultivate well this particular way of devotion, it will be good to say some prayers out loud, which is usually fruitful ... Adding at times a cordial kiss to the same little images, or to another effigy of Mary that one has at hand.'¹⁶³ The woodcut *Christological Monogram* preserved today in the Diocesan Historical Archive Udine was even scribbled on with chalk by its owner; in fact, it only survived because it became evidence when the Inquisition put the owner on trial for defiling the sacred image in 1582.¹⁶⁴

Two rare exceptions of devotional prints surviving from a non-ecclesiastical setting are preserved today at the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, respectively. These are images of devotion, which cannot, however, be connected with any miracles. Similar to miraculous prints venerated in churches, these works may have been intended for display,

¹⁶¹ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 77: 'rare sono le persone, che non se porton addosso un'Immaginetta [...] di seta c'habbia toccata l'originale.'

¹⁶² On domestic sacred imagery, see Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior, 1400-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991); Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, eds., *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, exh. cat. (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 2006); Gail Feigenbaum and Sybille Ebert-Schifferer, eds., *Sacred Possessions: Collecting Italian Religious Art, 1500-1900* (Los Angeles: 2011); Corry, Howard, and Laven, eds., *Madonna & Miracles*.

¹⁶³ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 77-9: 'Per ben coltiuare questo modo di particular deuozione, sarà bene seruirsi d'alcune Orazioncelle giaculatorie, che sogliono essere assai fruttuose ... Aggiungendo qualche volta vn bacio cordiale alle medesime Immaginette, o ad altra effigie di MARIA che s'habbia commode.'

¹⁶⁴ *Christological Monogram*, 1500-1505, woodcut, 413 x 303 mm, 7, ex S.Officio-busta, 6, Fondo Disegni e Stampe, Diocesan Historical Archive Udine, Udine. As this study focuses on prints, all dimensions are given in mm. Unless otherwise noted, the dimensions of the prints are those of the folio.

which in turn may have increased their chances of survival. They have large dimensions for fifteenth-century devotional prints: 536 x 412 mm and 650 x 457 mm, respectively. The British Museum print is an anonymous fifteenth-century woodcut on paper, with stencil colouring, of the Virgin and Child, which was found in a private house in Bassano del Grappa in Veneto, that was demolished before 1884.¹⁶⁵ Two further, similarly coloured devotional prints of the Madonna were found in the same dwelling; they are preserved today in the Berlin State Museums.¹⁶⁶ The Victoria and Albert Museum print is a fifteenth-century hand-coloured woodcut on paper, again of the Virgin and Child, which is still pasted to the wood to which it was originally affixed.¹⁶⁷

As attested by Bartolomeo Ricceputi (1686), prints of this kind were frequently displayed on doors; as mentioned above, Ricceputi states, with regard to printed copies of the Madonna of the Fire, that ‘rare are the doors, which do not have one affixed.’¹⁶⁸ The practice of stabilising prints by attaching them to a portable rigid support, as in the case of the Victoria and Albert Museum print, was also common, both for purposes of conservation and perhaps to make devotional prints more similar to paintings. Even when not working miracles, such prints were subject to human interaction in the context of devotion. Evidence of such interaction can be seen in another

¹⁶⁵ *Virgin Enthroned Suckling her Child, Surrounded by Angels*, 15th century, woodcut with stencil colouring on paper, 536 x 412 mm, 1895,0122.1187, British Museum, London.

¹⁶⁶ *Madonna and Child in Glory*, 1489?, woodcut, 363 x 248 mm, 888-301, Drawings and Prints Room, Berlin State Museums, Berlin; *Suckling Madonna*, 1470-1490, woodcut, 350 x 263 mm, 887-301, Drawings and Prints Room, Berlin State Museums, Berlin

¹⁶⁷ *The Virgin with the Infant Christ Child on Her Knee*, 1450-1475, hand coloured woodcut on paper, 650 x 457 mm, 321A-1894, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

¹⁶⁸ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 77: ‘che si stampano ogn’anno migliara, e migliara delle sue Imagini. Casa certo no v’è, doue no se ne vedano o stampate, o dipinte: Rare sono le porte, che non l’habbiano affissa.’

surviving devotional print, showing the *Madonna Enthroned Suckling the Child and the Last Supper*, preserved in the Diane and Andrea Woodner Collection.¹⁶⁹ This coloured woodcut is similar to the British Museum print, but reversed. The many pinholes scattered across the print were probably caused by pinning prayers or votive gifts onto the image, suggesting that this woodcut, too, was an object of worship.¹⁷⁰

Many miraculous prints appear to have had their origins in a domestic and intimate setting. The Madonna of the Blood, for instance, a fifteenth-century coloured woodcut on paper venerated today in the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption in Bagno di Romagna, Emilia-Romagna, shed its first reported drops of blood in the private house of a certain Deciaiuti in the centre of the town. Benedetto Tenaci, the Camaldolese Abbot of the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption, a witness of the event, reports that Bozio, the son of Deciaiuti, used to pray in front of the image every Saturday, showing how the image functioned as a focus of private devotion.¹⁷¹

Similarly, the White Madonna of Portovenere came from the home of one Luciardo; according to a 1612 parchment, Luciardo prayed before it every

¹⁶⁹ *Madonna on the Throne, Suckling the Child, and the Last Supper*, 1440-1480, woodcut, 508 x 386 mm, Diane and Andrea Woodner Collection.

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/prints-multiples/north-italian-school-madonna-lactans-with-the-6054047-details.aspx?from=salesummery&intobjectid=6054047&sid=97cef083-6c0b-4650-a3a5-4e38c68cb137>.

¹⁷¹ Tenaci, *Diario Tenaci*, 148r-v: 'Yesus. Anno humane. Redemptionis MCCCCLXXXVIII, XIII Kal. Februarii. In oppido Sanctae Mariae in Balneis, cum simulatibus odioque passim laboraretur, cedessque plurimae inter oppidanos paratae forent, prodigio novo admirandoque miraculo e medio fere omnium discordiae iublante: sunt. In aedibus enim Deciuti cuiunadam, in medio prope oppido, divae Virginis Mariae imaguncula in cubiculo parietis affissa fuit. Ad horam noctis circiter tertiam, cum Botius, Deciritu filiam de more, quod sabbati in esset dies, accensa facula iconam veneraretur, e sinistro imaginis brachio multum cepit sanguinis profluere. Pertanto invenis percusses [...] ergo Benedictus abbs Balnesi scripsi die XXII augusti 1498.'

Sunday night, dressed in white, fasting and kneeling.¹⁷² Luciardo may have been a member of the Confraternity of the Bianchi, a religious movement of the time, which frequently used prints for their devotional practices.¹⁷³ The Virgin of the Graces, an anonymous seventeenth-century engraving on paper venerated today in the Church of Saint Reparata in Terra del Sole, worked its first miracle, resurrecting a dead man, in the house of a poor family in the village, while attached to wall, opposite to the public street, on the ground floor. The print still appears to bear traces of the smoke of wood fires burning in the small poor home.¹⁷⁴

As attested by a lost drawing once attributed to Annibale Carracci (1560-1609), prints were often the devotional images of the poor.¹⁷⁵ The drawing shows how the family cooks, eats, and sleeps all in the same room, where a paper image of the Virgin has been hung on the wall.¹⁷⁶ The early fifteenth-century *Annunciation* by the Flemish painter Robert Campin includes a coloured woodcut of Saint Christopher affixed to the chimney above a fireplace, suggesting the origins of the smoke traces on the Virgin of the

¹⁷² The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'giorno di Domenica dopo il Vespro [...] hora questo Luciardo hauendo fornito di fare la sua oratione, e processione, che era solito di fare in habito bianco era ancora digiuno ingennecchiato dinanti ad un'altra Immagine della Madonna quale esso teneua dinanzi a quella Immagine antica, & iui orando, pregaua il Grande Iddio, che si volesse degnare di operare qualche miracolo in questa Terra accioche l'habitanti d'essa quali per lora catiua disposizione niete temeuan l'ira di Dio; si conuertissero dal mal operare.'

¹⁷³ On this aspect, see Carlo Carosi, "Il documento notarile, prova privilegiata in materia di eventi straordinari e miracolosi: La Madonna Bianca di Portovenere (1399)," in *Notai, miracoli e culto dei santi: Pubblicità e autenticazione del sacro tra XII e XV secolo*, ed. Raimondo Michetti (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 2004), 722-4.

¹⁷⁴ Bulgarelli, *Storia della veneranda Immagine*.

¹⁷⁵ Maria Goldoni, ed., *I legni incisi della Galleria estense: Quattro secoli di stampa nell'Italia settentrionale*, exh. cat. (Modena: Mucchi, 1986), 26; Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety*, 159-62.

¹⁷⁶ Annibale Carracci, *Interior of a Poor Household*, late 16th century, drawing. Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, *At Home*, 326.

Graces; exposure of prints to smoke and keeping them in the vicinity of fire would not have aided their survival.

The Madonna of the Fire, already mentioned above, started working miracles not in a private dwelling, but affixed to the wall of a schoolhouse, where it served as a devotional tool and focus of the morning prayers at the beginning of every school day. These origins are indicative of a different, semi-public use of prints.¹⁷⁷ It also demonstrates that a schoolteacher of the early-modern period was able to own such a rather fine woodcut.

More devotional prints than we are aware of today may have performed miracles. In the absence of documentation, however, it is difficult to establish whether what looks like a simple devotional print was once associated with miraculous powers. For example, a printed copy of the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons, venerated in Prato, was accidentally found by Robert Maniura fixed to the inside front cover of Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi's 1505 manuscript, entitled *Historia della apparitione et altri miracoli di Madonna Sancta Maria del Carcere di Prato*.¹⁷⁸ Even if the text of the manuscript states that paper copies of the fresco were believed to have acquired miracle-working properties through physical contact with the prototype, it is impossible to say whether the surviving woodcut in the manuscript corresponds to one of these. It is perhaps unlikely that a print associated with miracles would have been pasted into a book. The manuscript also mentions that Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi (1446-1518), an itinerant judge from

¹⁷⁷ Pon, *A Printed Icon*, 107.

¹⁷⁸ On this print, see Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri," 81-95.

Prato, used printed copies of the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons to advertise the Prato shrine around Tuscany. The print inside the front cover of the manuscript may have simply been one of those advertisements. The problem, however, is that we cannot know for certain.

The Prato example demonstrates that it is hard to distinguish between prints, which are or were held to be miraculous, and prints that are simply paper copies of a miracle-working image that were not themselves channels of divine grace. Sometimes, inscriptions on either the recto or verso may indicate that a print was associated with miracle-working properties. Yet, the captions such as 'vera effigie' ('true image') or 'vero ritratto' ('true portrait'), which are sometimes found on printed copies of miraculous imagery, could refer to the miraculous prototype and do not necessarily mean that powers were attributed to the prints in their own right. A seventeenth-century engraving of Our Lady of Montallegro, an icon venerated in the eponymous Sanctuary of Montallegro in Liguria, reads 'True Portrait and Size of the Mysterious and Miraculous Picture.' This print simply asserted to be a life-size reproduction of the prototype; it is impossible to determine whether it was associated with miraculous powers of its own.¹⁷⁹ After all, from 1671 onwards, engravings of Our Lady of Montallegro were printed by the hundreds.¹⁸⁰

Practically the only prints that can securely be called miraculous are those with a public cult that has continued uninterruptedly till the present day. As

¹⁷⁹ *Iconografia minore N. S. di Montallegro: Rapallo* (1997), 37: 'Vero Ritratto e Grandezza del Misterioso e Miracoloso Quadretto.'

¹⁸⁰ *Iconografia minore N. S. di Montallegro: Rapallo* (1997), 47.

Robert Maniura asserts, 'It is not the image that makes the miracle but image-related performance.'¹⁸¹ When the owner of a miraculous print advertised its powers or when the miracles worked by a print were witnessed by different people, the image was usually moved to para-ecclesiastical or ecclesiastical structures, or at the very least became the object of public devotion. For instance, the Madonna of the Fire was moved to the Cathedral of Forlì after it was publicly recognised to have survived a fire (Fig. 2).¹⁸² The fact that this print is still venerated in the cathedral today confirms its miraculous status.

I.VII Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the category of miraculous prints within the broader context of miraculous imagery. It has addressed the origins of the phenomenon in the culture of reproduction of miraculous images, described the emergence and different types of the genre, discussed the veneration and institutionalisation of cults, and finally the scant survival of miraculous prints into the modern era. The next chapters will analyse several case studies from Emilia-Romagna, some of which already mentioned as examples, which allow us to follow the general trends set out here in greater detail.

¹⁸¹ Robert Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images in the Fifteenth Century: The Origins of the Cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 182.

¹⁸² On the translation of the Madonna of the Fire, see Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante*.

Chapter II – Miraculous Printed Reproductions of Foreign Miraculous Imagery

The Madonna of the Graces (Madonna of the Graces, 16th century, coloured woodcut on paper, 320 x 230 mm. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.)), venerated today in the Sanctuary of Stuffione di Ravarino, near Modena, is a print copy of the famous Virgin of Montserrat, the miraculous sculpture venerated in Catalonia, while the Madonna of Passau (Madonna of Passau, mid-17th century, water-coloured engraving on paper, 250 x 200 mm. Church of Pragatto, Pragatto. (Photo: Andrea Baratta.)), venerated in the Sanctuary of Pragatto, near Bologna, is a print copy of the Mariahilf of Passau, a miraculous painting venerated in Bavaria in Germany. These rare prints illustrate the important role printed images played in the circulation and diffusion of miraculous imagery during the Counter-Reformation. As mentioned above, printed copies of miraculous images were distributed to promote the veneration of these images across large geographical areas, sometimes around the world.¹⁸³ The medium of printing was eminently suitable for this purpose, as prints were often used to reproduce other

¹⁸³ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 46.

images, could be produced in large quantities, were easily portable, and therefore had potentially a wide dissemination, being able to reach even the most remote places and devotees. As Paolo Guidotti stated already in 1977,

The ways of diffusion [of prints] were not only the few well-documented routes, but an extremely dense network of paths even if limited to travellers on foot, beasts of burden, the pulling of sledges; and the carriers were not only pilgrims, but also shepherds who migrated from the Apennines to the plain of Emilia-Romagna.¹⁸⁴

The movement of prints was thus closely intertwined with the movement of people: peddlers, who carried prints among their other wares, but also various other individuals, who moved around on the basis of their professions and often also transported printed images. These travelling individuals made it possible for miraculous images to be venerated at a significant distance from the original site: Stuffione di Ravarino is located 836 kilometres away from Monistrol de Montserrat, Catalonia, and Pragatto is 482 kilometres away from Passau, Bavaria. While the general phenomenon of prints reproducing miraculous images has been widely discussed, the prints in Stuffione di Ravarino and Pragatto stand out as possibly the only surviving examples in Italy of printed reproductions of foreign miraculous imagery, which in turn came to be venerated as miraculous images in their own right. This chapter will analyse the formation of cults around these printed images in detail, thus showing how their becoming objects of worship transformed their status, while at the same time clarifying aspects of the development of local religious shrines in Northern Italy.

¹⁸⁴ Achille Ardigò, ed., *Ceramiche devozionali in Emilia-Romagna: Religione, arte e classi subaterne: Materiali per una analisi critica* (Bologna: Atesa, 1977), 29: 'Le vie di diffusione non erano solo le poche strade solitamente ricordate, ma un reticolo di sentieri estremamente fitto anche se limitato a pedoni, bestie da soma, traino di treggie; e i tramiti non sono solamente i pellegrini, ma pastori che dai settori appenninici transumavano al piano emiliano-romagnolo.'

II.I The Madonna of the Graces

II.I.I The Original and Its Influence

The print of the Madonna of the Graces is, as mentioned above, a reproduction of the Virgin of Montserrat, a renowned black sculpture dated between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries (Virgin of Montserrat, 12th-13th centuries, wooden sculpture, 950 mm. Sanctuary of Montserrat, Montserrat. (Photo: Wikipedia.)). About 95 cm tall, this wooden sculpture is venerated in the eponymous sanctuary in Spain, located about 37 kilometres from Barcelona (Abbey of Montserrat, Monistrol de Montserrat. (Photo: Wikipedia.)). According to the Jesuit Wilhelm Gumpfenberg (1659), the miraculous statue of the Virgin was found in a cave of the Mountain of Montserrat after seven young shepherds reported to have seen the cave bathing in a divine light every Saturday night.¹⁸⁵ At first, a small chapel was built to host the miraculous statue, but on 11 July 1599, in the presence of King Philip III of Spain (1578-1621), the image was translated to the splendid

¹⁸⁵ Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianvs*, 42-64: 'Pascabant interea lanigeras oves & saltantes in montibus capras Catalaunorum pastoritij pueri omnino septem. Hi, delabi nocturnis horis è cęlo splendorem, & in cavernae cujuspiam cacumine considerare obervarunt non semel; & divinum quid eo lumine portendi credebant, quòd non alijs, quàm sabbathinis haec noctibus contingerent. Itaque parentibus indicant, quae vidissent: qui semel iterúmque splendorem à se conspectum ad subjecti pagi Curionem deferunt. Postquam & hic rem exploraturus unam, alterámve sabbathinam noctem vigilasset, eadémque, quae referabantur, intuitus esset, rem Episcopo loci, qui tum Manresae degebat, totam, ut erat, explicat. Is conestim proximo sabbatho, in rem praesentem ipse venturus, locum accredit, è quo conspici descendens è caelo radius posset, quem ubi, ut caeteri, conspexit, postero moc die misit, qui quàm solertissimè locum indagarent. Ventum non difficulter ad cavernam est, quam non obscure indicaverant pridie cęlestes radij, repertàque Virginis est Deiparae, non minùs venusta, quàm vetusta imago.'

purpose-built church, in which it is still housed today (the church had taken thirty-nine years to construct).¹⁸⁶

As Spain's empire rapidly expanded in the early-modern period, the cult of the Virgin of Montserrat rapidly became global in its scope. The importance of the holy site is underlined by a priest from Verona, Agostino Zanella, who, in his 1847 *Atlante mariano*, reported that the pilgrims, who visited the sanctuary came from all over Europe and that the Sanctuary of Montserrat was the most famous in the world, second only to the Sanctuary of Loreto, the shrine of the Sacred House of the Virgin.¹⁸⁷ The existence of numerous priorates and confraternities dedicated to the Virgin of Montserrat, the connections between the Abbey of Montserrat and other Benedictine monasteries, the divulgation of the miracles worked by the Virgin by pilgrims, and, last but not least, the presence of Bernardo Boyl (1440/1445-1507/1509), a hermit of the Mountain of Montserrat, on Christopher Columbus's second voyage across the Atlantic (1493), were all factors, which contributed to the fame of this miraculous sculpture around the world.¹⁸⁸

Due to the reputation of the image, printed copies after the sculpture were produced from at least the early sixteenth century onwards, with the aim of

¹⁸⁶ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 9.

¹⁸⁷ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante Mariano*, vol. 9, 395-463: 'La ricchezza delle suppellettili sacre gareggia con quella del tempio, che splende in ogni parte, sopra tutto nelle sue feste, di arredi preziosi, doni di cavalieri, di principi, di vescovi, imperatori e pontefici, che professarono sempre una singolare venerazione al santuario di Montserrat, il più famoso e cospicuo del mondo, dopo quello di Loreto.'

¹⁸⁸ Giorgio Fava, ed., *La parrocchia di Stuffione dalle origini ai giorni nostri: Cinquecento anni di storia* (Modena: Artestampa, 2009), 114. On Bernardo Boyl, see Giorgio Fava, "Le Virgen de Montserrat en Italia: Stuffione de Módena," *Montserrat revista* 6 (2012): 8.

further promoting the cult. In printed reproductions, the Virgin commonly holds a three-flowered lily, which alludes to her virginity before, during, and after giving birth, while the Christ Child raises His right hand in blessing and holds an orb in His left hand.¹⁸⁹ This is the iconography chosen by Wilhelm Gumpfenberg in his 1659 *Atlas Marianvs* (Virgin of Montserrat, 1659, engraving. *Atlas Marianvs. (Photo: Gumpfenberg, Wilhelm. Atlas Marianvs: sive, De imaginibus Deiparae per orbem Christianum miracvlosis. Ingolstadt: Officina typographica Ioannis Ostermeyer, 1659.)*) and it recurs in many prints of the early eighteenth century, such as those by the engraver Hubert van Otteren (1671-1713) (Fig. 15), the Spanish engraver Francisco Gazàn (1684-1732) (Fig. 16), and the Catalan woodcutter Domènec Pauner (1720-1783) (Fig. 17). Another recurrent feature of the Virgin of Montserrat iconography from this era is the sacred topography of the Mountain of Montserrat, which is usually represented in the background (see Fig. 10). The focus here is on the many hermitages scattered around the Abbey of Montserrat, later destroyed in the Battle of Montserrat (29 July 1811) during the Napoleonic Wars in Spain.¹⁹⁰

An alternative iconography found in early-modern prints after the Virgin of Montserrat shows Christ Child sawing a mountain. This iconography probably derives from the literal meaning of the name 'Montserrat', which in Catalan stands for 'sawn mountain' (*Montesserado* or *Monserato*, probably referring to the saw-tooth profile of the site); according to legend, the Mountain of Montserrat had indeed been sawn by God Himself. One of the earliest known instances of the iconography including the saw can be found

¹⁸⁹ Pia Subias, *Nigra sum: Iconografia de Santa Maria de Montserrat* (Montserrat: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1995), 237.

¹⁹⁰ Jordi Molas i Rifà, *Montserrat. Official Guide*, translated by Janet DeCesaris (Barcelona: Ausiàs Marc, 1998), 60.

in a painting signed by the Spanish artist Bartolomé Bermejo (1440-1498), preserved today in the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption of Acqui Terme in Piedmont; this painting is unique in having the Virgin actually seated on the saw (Fig. 18). A report by a visitor to the Abbey of Montserrat from 1660 refers to the Christ Child of the statue holding a saw;¹⁹¹ it is therefore possible that the prototype itself at one time or another was provided with a saw.

The iconography of the saw is the one used in the Madonna of the Graces of Stuffione di Ravarino, but also in other prints, such as an engraving published by Jacques Granthomme (1588-1622) in France. The latter engraving also includes a prayer that, if recited before the Virgin of Montserrat, carried a one-hundred-day indulgence granted by Pope Boniface.¹⁹² As discussed in Chapter I, prints could be as efficacious as the prototype in bestowing indulgences on devotees, one of the reasons why prints copying miraculous images were a profitable medium for publishers. It thus seems likely that the sanctuary itself instigated the production of prints, probably following repetitive models.¹⁹³ The Madonna of the Graces, however, is more than just a printed copy of a venerated original: it became venerated as a miraculous image on its own. Like its prototype, this miraculous image has survived *in situ* till the present day. What is more, it

¹⁹¹ José García Mercadal, *Viajes de extranjeros por España y Portugal* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1952), vol. 2, 699.

¹⁹² 'Bonifacius Papa centum dies indulgentiarum concessit, / ys omnibus qui subscriptam orationem, ante B. Mariae / Virginis de monte serrato imagine deuote recitabunt.'

¹⁹³ *Seleccio de gravats de la Mare de Deu del castell d'Agres segles 17. al 19.: 5e. centenari de l'aparicio: 1484-1984* (Sueca: Imprempta palacios, 1984).

became itself a prototype, giving rise to a local production of copy prints, as will be discussed below.

II.1.11 The Printed Object

The Madonna of the Graces is a sixteenth-century woodcut on paper measuring 320 x 230 mm. As was common among early-modern devotional prints, the woodcut was coloured by hand in green and red watercolour, which is largely faded today. It has various inscriptions. Capital letters in the background spell the names of the hermitages formerly located around the Abbey of Montserrat, represented by means of stylised pictograms. To the right of the Virgin, we find 'S. PAVLVS' ('Saint Paul'), 'S. SIMIVN' ('Saint Simon'), and 'S. MRIA' ('Saint Mary'), and on her left 'S. CHRISTOF' ('Saint Christoph'), 'S. MADELENA' ('Saint Magdalene'), 'S. ANNA' ('Saint Anne'), 'S. IACOB' ('Saint Jacob'), and 'S. PETER' ('Saint Peter'). As mentioned above, the hermitages were a standard ingredient of the Montserrat iconography, due to the fact that the pilgrims usually visited these hermitages before going to the Abbey of Montserrat itself, according to the standard itinerary. The earliest known print to represent the hermitages was produced by the German printmaker Johann Leuschner in 1499.¹⁹⁴ Like Granthomme's engraving, the Madonna of the Graces may have been conceived originally as an instrument to facilitate a 'virtual pilgrimage.'¹⁹⁵ The verses on the print explicitly state that the 'painter' aimed to render in images the position of the temple of Montserrat and its surroundings, so that one could pretend to be

¹⁹⁴ Jordo López Camps, *Les ermites de Montserrat: espiritualitat i paisatge*, 9.

¹⁹⁵ On virtual pilgrimage, see Melion, *The Meditative Art*.

there; these verses may have been directed at devotees contemplating the print without having ever gone to Montserrat.¹⁹⁶

Unfortunately, the verses on the print have become partially illegible today. Despite the claim by the parish priest Nicola Zoboli, who states in a 1822 manuscript that the Madonna of the Graces 'is made of well-preserved paper, being neither Dirty nor Worn-out, safe for some pin pricks that perhaps [...] were made by the grateful piety of the faithful who attached notes to it, or other votive offerings because of the graces they had received', the print is actually in a bad condition.¹⁹⁷ Today's parishioners report that until recently, it was regularly touched by devotees. There is, however, enough text left to interpret its meaning, interconnected with the story of the Virgin of Montserrat.¹⁹⁸

At the top in the centre, the title is given in capital letters: 'IMAGO B. MARIAE VIRGINIS / AD MONSERATVM' ('IMAGE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY / IN MONTSERRAT'), referring to the prototype sculpture venerated in Spain. At the bottom in the centre, we find the address and then name of the publisher: '[...]gusta Vindelicorum[...] Melchiorem M[...]ferum in vico Saxonico minori.' The precise identity of this 'Melchior M' remains uncertain, especially as the print is neither dated nor signed. The only certainty we have is that the

¹⁹⁶ 'En voluit pictor tibi praesentare Mariam, / Vt Monserati cernere cuique datur. / Nam uoluit positum templi et confinia cui vis, / Virginis et formam pingere imaginibus.'

¹⁹⁷ Nicola Zoboli, *INFORMAZIONE ESATTA DELLA CHIESA PARROCCHIALE DI STUFFIONE GOVERNATA DALL'ANNO 1800 FIN AL PTE 1822 DAL SACERDOTE NICCOLA ZOBOLI*, 1822, 18-19, ORIGINE E MEMORIE della Parrocchiale di STUFFIONE, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy: 'è di carta bene conservata, non essendo ne Lorda, ne Logora, prescindendo da alcune punture d'aghi che forse [...] le furono fatte dalla riconoscente pietà de' Fedeli, che le appendevano brevi, od altri voti per ricevute grazie.'

¹⁹⁸ For the full text and translation, see Appendix 1.

woodcut was made in the German city of Augsburg ('[Au]gusta Vindelicorum') in the 'alley of Lower Saxony' ('in vico Saxonico minori').

The style of the print perhaps suggests southern influences, in particular in the sweet expressions of the Virgin and Christ Child, and it is possible that the Abbey of Montserrat sent a model to a publisher in Augsburg, one of the major printing centres of Europe at the time, in order to have printed copies made to be distributed to pilgrims, a practice not uncommon among sanctuaries hosting miraculous images.¹⁹⁹ Yet, the idea of creating a print after the sculpture of Montserrat may also have come from the Augsburg publisher himself. The Virgin of Montserrat was famous and devotional prints of this kind were, as mentioned above, a profitable choice for publishers. The 'southern' stylistic elements might in this case have resulted from the publisher copying a pre-existing circulating model.²⁰⁰ Be that as it may, the print survives only in one single impression today – hardly exceptional, given that it is very rare for more than one impression of such devotional prints to survive from the same matrix.

The image shows an imposing seated Virgin, holding Christ in her lap, gazing at Him affectionately while holding her hands on His hips. This image deviates strongly from the prototype, in which the Virgin supports the orb of the universe with her right hand and does not look at the Child. Furthermore, unlike in the prototype, the Christ Child neither holds an orb nor raises His right hand in blessing; instead, He operates a saw with both hands, cutting

¹⁹⁹ *Seleccio de gravats de la Mare de Deu*; see also Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 54.

²⁰⁰ Fava, *La parrocchia di Stuffione*, 120.

the rock, on which the Virgin is sitting – a metaphorical reference to Montserrat as explained above.

II.I.III Arrival of the Print

The fact that the Madonna of the Graces has survived for centuries in a small village is in itself remarkable. Its location provides clear evidence that in the early-modern period, prints could reach the most remote places, greatly contributing to the impact of miraculous imagery. Stuffione di Ravarino is a district of Ravarino, a village in the plain of Emilia-Romagna, which counts circa 6000 inhabitants today, and it is situated on the border between the province of Modena (at circa 19 kilometres distance) and the province of Bologna (at circa 34 kilometres distance). Given the extensive Spanish presence in Italy, following the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (2-3 April 1559), which granted large areas of Northern Italy to Habsburg Spain, the woodcut of the Madonna of the Graces may have reached the province of Modena directly from Spain via the Spanish territories. It may also have arrived from Augsburg, where it was published. In the *MEMORIE sulla B.V. DELLE GRAZIE*, compiled by the parish priest Carlo Malerba in 1890, a German origin is suggested; the priest, referring to the extensive network of peddlers between the regions, asserts that the print was sold either by a 'private individual' or by 'some stranger.'²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Carlo Malerba, *MEMORIE sulla B.V. DELLE GRAZIE*, 1890, 4, FABRICERIA, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy: 'Come poi trae la sua origine dalla Germania è facile capire che fu acquistata dal pellegrino, di cui accenna il volgo, o da privata persona od anche che qualche persona estranea si portasse qui a vender dette Immagini. Anche la tradizione orale non si accorda su questo punto.'

Regardless of the provenance of the woodcut, the Sanctuary of Montserrat was well-known in early-modern Emilia-Romagna. Connections between the area of Modena and the sanctuary go back at least till the days of Giuliano della Rovere (1443-1513), who was Abbot of Montserrat before he became Pope Julius II in later life.²⁰² A manuscript registering all the offerings made to the Virgin of Montserrat, the *Book of the Benefactors* preserved in the Archive of Montserrat, indicates that Cesare d'Este (1562-1628), the first Duke of Modena, made an offering to the sanctuary in 1609 (the year when he became a grandfather for the first time).²⁰³ The reputation of the sanctuary is further underlined by a letter preserved in the Diocesan Historical Archive Modena Nonantola, dated 3 May 1636, and signed by the Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597-1679). In it, it is reported that the Procurator of the Abbey of Montserrat 'sends one or more people who go to the cities of Italy collecting offerings and signing up those who want to take part in the Confraternity, which is under the protection of the Most Blessed Virgin.'²⁰⁴ The connection with Giuliano della Rovere, moreover, is also important for Stuffione di Ravarino in particular, as the village is situated at a mere 10 kilometres from the major Benedictine Abbey of Nonantola, where Giuliano was also abbot for a time.

²⁰² Fava, "Le Virgen de Montserrat," 11.

²⁰³ *Libro de Bienhechores*, 27 v., Archive of Montserrat, Montserrat, Spain: 'En el mismo año (1609) el Sr. Duque de Modena ofrecio una copa de agata guarnecida de oro con su tapador de lo mismo, un safiro de mucho valor, y una ninfa de oro esmaltada, y los demas remates de la copa sembrados de pedreria de mucho valor.'; Fava, *La parrocchia di Stuffione*, 128.

²⁰⁴ Diocesan Historical Archive Modena Nonantola, Modena, Italy: 'invia una o più persone le quali vanno per le città d'Italia raccogliendo l'elemosine et aggregando quelli che vogliono partecipare alla Confraternita che vi è sotto l'invocazione della B.ma Vergine.'

The arrival of the Madonna of the Graces in Stuffione di Ravarino is the subject of several contradictory legends. The earliest and most firmly established tradition has it that the print was bought in Stuffione di Ravarino by a farmer. Indeed, in his *Cronaca di Modena* (1588-1630), the chronicler Giovanni Battista Spaccini (1570-1636) reports

31 October 1622. On the 31st, Monday. It being the eve of All Saints' Day, I want to narrate here briefly something worthy of amazement, but those who would like to know more details should read about it in the records made of testimonies worthy to be believed. In Stufione, territory of the Dukedom of Modena and jurisdiction of the illustrious Marquesses Giacomino, and Counts Taddeo and Fulvio Rangoni most noble gentlemen of this city, a Madonna printed after the portrait of the Madonna of Montserrat in Spain was bought by a farmer, and pasted onto a plank, and [the farmer] put it on a small altar as it is tradition of the countryside, where it has been preserved for eight years.²⁰⁵

Clearly, according to Spaccini, the print had been in Stuffione di Ravarino since 1614. By 1622, at the time of Spaccini's writing, it was already working miracles, as reported in the second part of his text.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Giovanni Battista Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena* (Modena: Panini, 1993), 291: '31 ott 1622. Adì 31, lunedì. Sendo già la vigilia d'ogni Santi, voglio qui raccontare da puoco in qua cosa degna di stupore, ma chi più ne vorrà sapere legerà in processi fabricati da testimoni degni di fede. In Stufione, territorio del ducato di Modona e giurisdizione degli illustrissimi signri marchesi Giacomino, e conti Tadeo e Fulvio Rangoni gentiluomini nobilissimi di questa città, fu da un contadino comperato una Madonna stampata del retratto della Mad di Monserato in Ispagna, et incolata sopra ad una assa, e la messe sopra ad un altarino com'è costume del paese, dove s'è conservata da otto anni.'

²⁰⁶ Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 291-92: 'Puochi di sono certi mercanti passando per di notte tempo dov'era questa gloriosa imagine alle cofina del Bolognese, videro da lontano un gran splendore, ma venendovi d'appresso ritrovarono nell'istesso luogo in cambio di splendore la sudetta Madonna Santissima, ma non vi vedevano più il splendore, ma sì da lontano s'vedeva il splendore, essendo però scurissimo, anzi pioggia, come poi hanno con lettere autenticato questo. Ha poi fatto infiniti miracoli, et in fra gli altri un contadino, avendo un suo figliuolo su una carrada dove vi aveva il carro con buoi, quali così all'improvviso si misero in fuga e passarono sopra il detto figliuolo e col carro insieme, il padre corse per piangere il figliuolo morto, avendo visibilmente visto andarvelo adosso. Quando pensava piangerlo morto lo ritrovò che dormiva senza aver sentito niente, né meno il strepito, per la intercessione fatta alla santa imagine, Lo cominciarono a publicarlo, ma non vi vedendo segno alcuno fu creduto che fosse falsità. Ma da indi a puoco s' vide sopra la sua persona li segni e la lividezza, e a puoco s'ne andarono. Una compagnia di San Felice puochi di sono vi viené processionalmente a visitarla; nel ritornare a casa molti ragazzi andarono su la loro torre per suonare da festa, ma essendone un vicino ad una finestra fu spinto, non si potendose ritenere cadè e diede su certi copi, e ropé il tasello, diede a traverso a travi: finalmente arivò in terra senza alcuna ofesa nella persona. Corse gente al spettacolo, et

An alternative account is given in the *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona*, an important survey of the history of the city of Modena written by the historian and priest Lodovico Vedriani (1601-1670) in 1667:

Going into the next year [1623], our Bishop Bertacchi returned from his embassy in Spain, and being pleased the Great Mother of God worked miracles, and graces, through Her devout Image placed in the Church of the County of Stuffione, [and] a stream of people began to seek recourse to use that [image] according to their needs.²⁰⁷

According to the historian, the print was in Stuffione di Ravarino at the time of Bishop Pellegrino Bertacchi of Modena (1567-1627) and started working miracles upon the latter's return from Spain in 1623. The Bertacchi family enjoyed prominence because of their close ties with the Este. The historian Girolamo Tiraboschi (1794) reports that Pellegrino Bertacchi was elected bishop in 1610, with the help of Cardinal Alessandro d'Este (1568-1624), and that in 1622, he was sent as a special ambassador to Spain by Duke Cesare d'Este of Modena.²⁰⁸ As the Madonna of the Graces is a copy after a miraculous sculpture venerated in Spain, it is conceivable that the print was brought to Stuffione di Ravarino by Bishop Pellegrino Bertacchi himself in

vedendo non aveva macula alcuna vi domandarono come s'era salvato, rispose: 'Una donna vestita di bianco, simile alla presente imagine', onde tutti laudarono la Santissima Verg della ricevuta grazia. Altri infiniti miracoli opera continuamente, rimettendomi come io ho detto d sopra. Solo dico che alle feste v'è tanto concorso di gente che a fatica se può entrare in chiesa del paese circonvicino, esaudisse per me peccatore. Amen.'

²⁰⁷ Lodovico Vedriani, *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona* (Modena: Soliani Stampator Ducale, 1667), vol. 2, 645: 'Entrando poi il prossimo anno ritornò il nostro Vescouo Bertacchi dall'Ambasciaria di Spagna, & essendosi compiaciuta la gran Madre di Dio d'operare miracoli, e gratie, in vna sua diuota Imagine posta nella Chiesa della Contea di Stuffione, cominciò il concorso de' popoli à ricorrere a quella conforme il bisogno loro.'

²⁰⁸ Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Memorie storiche modenese* (Modena: Società Tipografica, 1793-1795), vol. 4, 78-9: 'PELLEGRINO BERTACCHI da Castelnuovo nella Garfagnana. Fu eletto Vescovo di Modena nel Febbrajo del 1610. Per opera singolarmente del Card. Alessandro d'Este, a cui era carissimo. Nel 1622. fu inviato dal Duca Cesare suo Ambasciadore straordinario alla Corte di Spagna, e tornatone finì di vivere in Moderna a' 22. d'Agosto del 1627.'

1623. There are accounts, however, that place the woodcut in Stuffione di Ravarino already in the early sixteenth century, and Spaccini claims it was *in situ* in 1622. Thus, it seems more likely that Vedriani thought the print, while having been in the village long before, only started working miracles at the time of Bishop Bertacchi's return from Spain.

An additional piece of information, namely that the print was originally mounted on an oak tree, is reported in a manuscript, entitled *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, preserved in the Parish Historical Archive of Stuffione di Ravarino (this manuscript was started to be written in 1622).²⁰⁹ Neither Vedriani nor Spaccini mention this detail. Spaccini only briefly reports that the woodcut was pasted onto a plank by the farmer who brought it, but he does not refer to a tree. The manuscript, however, claims: 'This revered Image was affixed to an oak tree planted in the land of Lady Diamante Carrandini, in a place called the Muzza, when God started to glorify through it His Most Sacred Mother.'²¹⁰ The land called the Muzza is located just a few kilometres away from Stuffione di Ravarino. The manuscript also mentions that the devotees religiously removed the branches of the oak tree.²¹¹ The oak tree itself may have been treated as a form of contact relic, believed to be miraculous because of its contact with the venerated woodcut. It is

²⁰⁹ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, 1622, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy.

²¹⁰ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Era questa venerabile Immagine affissa ad una Rovere piantata nella Carrata della Sig.ra Diamante Carandini, in un luogo detto la Muzza, quando cominciò Iddio à glorificar' in essa la sua Santissima Madre.'

²¹¹ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'e che quella Rovere anchorche affatto scorticata per divozione di chi ne voleva presso di sé.'

impossible to establish, however, whether the reference to the oak tree had a basis in historical fact.

Although there were many images on tree shrines associated with miracles (most famously the Madonna of the Oak Tree near Viterbo), it might at first glance seem strange to use a print on paper as an outdoor image.²¹² Yet, if the Madonna of the Graces was ever affixed to a tree, it would hardly have been exceptional. As will be discussed in the second part of this chapter, the Madonna of Passau, an engraving venerated in a Sanctuary at Pragatto near Bologna, was similarly attached to an oak tree before it started to work miracles.²¹³ Our Lady of Carmel, an anonymous coloured print on paper venerated today in the Church of Our Lady of Carmel in Spilamberto, near Modena, was originally also installed on an oak tree.²¹⁴ Judge Giuliano di Francesco Guizzelmi, in his 1505 manuscript, entitled *Historia della apparitione et altri miracoli di Madonna Sancta Maria del Carcere di Prato*, reports that a man was healed by a miraculous reproduction on paper after the fresco of Saint Mary of the Prisons in Prato; this print was mounted on an olive tree (it is not certain that this image was a print; it could also have been

²¹² On the Madonna of the Oak Tree of Viterbo, see Nicolò Maria Torelli, *Miracoli della Madonna della Quercia di Viterbo, e sua istoria* (Venice: Andrea Poletti, 1725).

²¹³ *Donazione di una Pezza di terra da fabbricarvi la Chiesa di Passavia fatta dai Sig. Lenzarini alla Parrochial Chiesa di Pragatto l'anno 1681 22. S.bre.*, 1681, STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy: 'dedicata a Maria Vergine detta del Passavia, la cui Immagine in carta fu donata da Mons.or: Pietro Bargellini al suddetto D. Giacomo, e che è stata ed è apposta in un arbore di Quercia nel campo delli suddetti Fratelli Donatori.' For the full text and translation, see Appendix 2.

²¹⁴ Alberto Albertini, *Memorie storiche spilambertesì: chiese degli Agostiniani, delle Cappuccine e monumenti Rangoni* (Modena: Giovanni Ferraguti e C, 1911), 81: 'Nell'ubicazione ove oggidì vedesi il portico che immette direttamente in quel piccolo Santuario, sorgeva, in antico, una quercia, in cui era appesa una cassetina di rozzo legno, che nel suo fondo lasciava apparire una immagine, in carta a stampa, della B.V. del Carmelo.'

a drawing).²¹⁵ The so-called Madonna of the Willow started working miracles on a willow tree, on 13 June 1502, before it was transferred to the Basilica of Saint George in Ferrara, from which it was stolen in 1984.²¹⁶ Finally, the Madonna of the Maple, venerated in a sanctuary at Lizzano in Belvedere near Bologna, was miraculously found in the hollow of an ancient maple tree. This latter image has been replaced by a nineteenth-century painting; among the original images, however, were prints.²¹⁷

With the latter two images, the Madonna of the Willow and the Madonna of the Maple, the trees themselves were included in the initial sanctuaries that were built on the sites of the first miracles, and parts of them have been preserved on the respective sanctuary altars up to the present day. It is worth noting that what looks like a print attached to a tree branch by means of a thin string is represented in an altarpiece, dated between 1470 and 1500 and attributed to Antonio Leonelli (1438/1441-1513/1525), also known as Antonio from Crevalcore, who, perhaps not by coincidence, worked in the area of Bologna.²¹⁸ Arboreal shrines including prints were also common in the Low Countries.²¹⁹ In the upper right corner of *The Peasant Dance* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1568), a print glued onto a plank can be seen affixed on a tree, in a construction that could be similar to how the Madonna of the

²¹⁵ Guizzelmi, *Historia della apparition et altri miracoli*, codex 87, fol. 23r: 'vide in un ulivo, posta una charta, nella quale era dipinta, la simola figura, della Madonna del Carcere di Prato: alla quale com divozione racomandòsi: si senti libero: et così com gran festa, sença grucce, giunse alla Madonna.'

²¹⁶ On the Madonna of the Willow, see Guarini, *Compendio storico*, 396.

²¹⁷ On the Madonna of the Maple, see Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 1, 27-30.

²¹⁸ Cobianchi, "The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-Century Italy," 50-3.

²¹⁹ On arboreal shrines in the Low Countries, see Hugo Van Der Velden, "Petrus Christus's Our Lady of the Dry Tree," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 60 (1997): 89-110.

Graces was installed according to Spaccini (Fig. 19).²²⁰ The veneration of the print in Bruegel's painting is suggested by the fact that a jug of flowers has been placed below the image. While the phenomenon of the tree shrine has been discussed for north-west Europe, however, its existence in Italy has so far not received a great deal of attention.

II.I.IV Origins of the Cult

Whether or not it was affixed to a tree, believers who walked past the Madonna of the Graces in Stuffione di Ravarino, soon began to use it as their personal devotional aid. People started to pray, asking for graces and miracles. The material aspect of the image – a woodcut on paper – clearly did not affect their veneration. It was quickly established in the popular mind that the image was working miracles, attracting the attention of both the inhabitants of the village and passers-by. The cult thus had its beginning in lay culture.

There are once again different legends on how the print performed its earliest miracles, and the date of the first miracle remains unknown. What is more, each of the supposed first miracles of the Madonna of the Graces were not typical for this woodcut, but rather were tropes of popular devotion in the early-modern era. The Madonna of the Graces is exceptional among miraculous prints in that some of its miracle books have survived. The first of these, the 1622 manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi*

²²⁰ Stephanie Porras, "Rural Memory, Pagan Idolatry: Pieter Bruegel's Peasant Shrines," *Art History* 34, no. 3 (June 2011): 486-509; Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 291.

miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato gives ‘a blind person having light restored to his eyes and a deformed man who was straightened’ as the first miracles.²²¹ These, however, seem to be merely two instances of miracles that were frequently worked by the print. Both the 1622 manuscript and a 1680 booklet, entitled *SCIelta D’alcune delle principali Grazie fatte DALLA B. VERGINE DI MONSERATO Posta nella Chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione*, list the restoration of sight to the blind and the healing of cripples as the types of miracles recurring most often.²²² The 1680 booklet, in fact, states explicitly that healing the blind seems to be the ‘specialisation’ this image has been allocated by God.

Yet, Giovanni Battista Spaccini, in his *Cronaca di Modena* (1588-1630), presents a different account. According to Spaccini, the woodcut first started working miracles some days before Monday the 31st of October 1622, in the presence of some merchants:

31 oct 1622 [...] Some days ago, certain merchants passed at night where this glorious image was at the border with Bologna. They saw from afar a great

²²¹ *Racolta d’alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: ‘V’e fama che le prime grazie fatte p. essa fossero un Cieco illuminato e uno stropio radrizzato.’

²²² *Racolta d’alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*. For the full text and translation, see Appendix 3. For further miracles associated with the sense of sight, see miracles XX, XXXIII, LXXXV, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, 131, 142, 143, 173, and 280; for further miracles to do with the healing of cripples, miracles 3, 9, XIII, XVII, XXXIX, XLVII, LXIII, 111, 119, 120, 125, 129, 159, 171, 180, 189, 202, 209, 212, 219, 223, 225, 254, and 28; *SCIelta D’alcune delle principali Grazie fatte DALLA B. VERGINE DI MONSERATO Posta nella Chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione. Data in luce per-occasione della su translatione solenne fatta li 8. Settembre 1680*. (Modena: Degni, 1680), 10-11: ‘Antonia moglie di Simone Ottano era già da due anni diuennuta orba; quando raccomandatasi alla Santa Imagine della Beatissima Vergine di Stuffione ricuperò la vista. Et in questo genere vi sono grazie bellissime fatte da questa Vergine. Alcuni del tutto ciechi hanno rihauuta la vista, altri offesi negl’occhi sono stati liberati: altri che in certi tempi non ci vedeuano, hanno hauuto grazia dell’vso perfetto degl’occhi, & in questo particolare pare, c’habbi hauuto in piacere il Signore di glorificare singolarmente questa Santa Imagine, proseguendo quello, che cominciò fin da principio di farla gloriosa con l’illuminazione de’ Ciechi.’ For miracles involving the healing of cripples, see Miracles 6, 10, and 22.

splendour, but coming closer, they found in the same place, instead of the splendour, the above-mentioned Most Holy Madonna, but they did not see the splendour anymore, but from afar the splendour was visible, even though it was very dark and it was raining, as they subsequently attested in letters.²²³

This miracle is reminiscent of the one that started the cult of the print's prototype, the Virgin of Montserrat, which, as mentioned above, was found in a cave in the mountains after it similarly emanated divine light. It may be that Spaccini merely followed the *topos* of the miraculous discovery; this version of events certainly creates a direct connection between prototype and copy.

Last but not least, the parish priest Carlo Malerba, in his 1890 *MEMORIE sulla B.V. DELLE GRAZIE*, records a third variant of the first miracle, stating that it is believed that the print first restored speech to a mute young boy. The boy's mother was taking him to the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Saint Luke in Bologna to be cured, but when they walked past the much humbler print of the Madonna of the Graces, her son exclaimed: 'Such a beautiful Madonna, mother.'²²⁴ As with the healing of the blind and cripples, this was a standard type of miracle in miracle collections. Malerba is the only source to connect it to the Madonna of the Graces and admits that he is not sure it was truly the first recorded miracle of the image. The story shows, however, that powers similar to those of the most venerated miraculous images could be

²²³ Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 291-2: '31 ott 1622. Adì 31, lunedì [...] Puochi di sono certi mercanti passando per di notte tempo dov'era questa gloriosa immagine alle cofina del Bolognese, videro da lontano un gran splendore, ma venendovi d'appresso ritrovarono nell'istesso luogo in cambio di splendore la suddetta Madonna Santissima, ma non vi vedevano più il splendore, ma si da lontano s'vedeva il splendore, essendo però scurissimo, anzi pioggia, come poi hanno con lettere autenticato questo.'

²²⁴ Malerba, *MEMORIE*, 6: 'Oltre le prime grazie già riportate, la tradizione dice che una donna mentre passava per di lì volendosi recare a Bologna alla Madonna di S. Luca per ottenere la grazia della loquela il proprio figlioletto avesse ad affermare per la prima volta Mamma che bella Madonna. E questa grazia da alcuni la si vorrebbe far passare per la prima ma non è certo. E ciò avveniva nel 1622.'

attributed to a humble print (moreover, a copy print after another miraculous image). In the eyes of believers, the print was as beautiful and effective as a painting, independent from any kind of material or artistic hierarchy. This confirms the argument put forward by Constanze Hoffman-Rendtel, who has concluded that there was no competition among media in working miracles.²²⁵ On the contrary, the familiar devotional network was inclusive of images in many different media. As mentioned above, the Council of Trent made an explicit point that images should not be adored for their media. The focus had to be instead on the sacred figure represented in the image, in this case, as in many, the Virgin Mary.²²⁶

If there was no hierarchy between different media, there was (and is) frequently a hierarchy between different cults within the same church, or nearby churches. Although the latest cult generally takes over, its dominance is sometimes only temporary. For instance, the Madonna of the Fire was the leading miraculous image of the Cathedral of Forlì from 1428, but its veneration was overtaken by the cult of the Madonna of the Wound around 1480.²²⁷ In 1618, however, the attention shifted back to the Madonna of the

²²⁵ Constanze Hofmann-Rendtel, "Wallfahrt und Konkurrenz im Spiegel hochmittelalterlicher Mirakelberichte," in *Wallfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, eds. Gerhard Jaritz and Barbara Schuh (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), 131.

²²⁶ See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 2, 774-6.

²²⁷ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 39-40: 'Del mille quattrocento ottanta in circa fiorirono gl'insigni Miracoli della Madonna detta della Ferita (o in altro modo della Canonica) vicinissima al Duomo: e tra' l miracolo di veder grondar sangue vn pezzo di muro con l'effigie di MARIA Vergine, ferito empianente da vn giocatore ribaldo; e tra le subbite sanitadi a persone disperate concesse per mezo di tale Immagine; tanto di concorso e di fede tirò a se di tutta la Città di Forlì, e de' contorni, che vi s'eresse in brieve quella gran fabbrica della Cappella ricca di marmi, e di preziosi lauori, la quale pur'oggi si vede far lugo braccio sinistro al corpo di questa Basilica: Cappella che ben presto serui ancora di teatro per l'Esposizioni, che occorreuano della Madonna del Fuoco; siccome poi ha seruito di modello alla più sontuosa Cappella, che al dirimpetto s'è fabbricata per destro braccio della Basilica istessa in honore della medesima Carta miracolosa di cui scriuiamo, come fra poco diremo.'

Fire, for which a new chapel was set up in that year.²²⁸ Evidently, a paper print could be on a par with a fifteenth-century mural painting. Miracles could be attributed to all kinds of objects.

Furthermore, in the early-modern period, the cult of the Virgin frequently replaced older cults. As already noted, in the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption of Bagno di Romagna, the Madonna of the Blood substituted the older cult of the corporal, also connected with blood.²²⁹ In the Church of Saint Mary of the Village, on the other hand, the cult of a miraculous crucifix, which was thought to have belonged to the Saint Philip Benizi (1233-1285), did not replace, but rather added to the cult of Saint Mary of the Village – a fifteenth-century woodcut, probably of German origin, which represents the Virgin with the Child, enclosed in a shield surmounted by a crown and supported by two angels (the sleeping face under the two figures in this print is most likely a misinterpretation of the motif of the Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon, the same iconography that is found in the Madonna of the Blood). The crucifix, donated in 1610 by the Servite Fathers of the Annunciation of Florence to the Company of Saint Mary of the Village, revealed to be miraculous, but, originally located in the third chapel on the left, it was moved to the main altar only in 1857.²³⁰ In that same year, the woodcut was moved

²²⁸ Adani, *Arte e santuari in Emilia-Romagna*, 232.

²²⁹ Caroli, Orselli, and Savigni, eds., *Romagna*, 176-7.

²³⁰ Golinelli, *Memorie storiche antiche e moderne*, 129-30: 'il miracoloso Crocifisso, che fu di S. Filippo Benizi, quale Santa Immagine da' RR. PP. Serviti di Firenze fu donata a questa Confraternita nell'anno 1610. allora quando essendosi portati molti di que' Confratelli per loro divozione a visitare quella Santissima Annunziata, con grande umiltà, ed esemplarità, accompagnati da buon numero di Musici, nell'atto del partire fu loro da que' divoti Religiosi presentato questo Santissimo Crocifisso, per mano del P. M. Antonio Zenobio Baglioni.' See also Antonio Benedetti, *Viaggio fatto dalla Veneranda Compagnia del Borgo di Budrio alla SS. Annunziata di Fiorenza, e dono fatto da' RR.PP. de' Servi di Maria del Miracoloso Crocifisso che fu di S. Filippo Benizzi*, 1610, Parish Historical Archive Budrio, Budrio, Italy

to the second chapel on the right, where it is still venerated today. While the crucifix is possibly considered to be the more important cult object today, it never acquired the same importance as the printed Virgin in the early-modern period. It is also worth noting that a cameo, inserted in the frame surrounding the print, contains another relic: a precious fragment of the veil of the Virgin, which appears to have cohabited peacefully with the print.²³¹ Even within the context of the coexistence of different cults, prints managed to stand their ground.

Irrespective of the precise beginnings of the cult of the Madonna of the Graces, following the first manifestations of miraculous powers, the faithful flocked from everywhere. Spaccini (1588-1630) reports that, already in 1622, during feast days devoted to the Madonna, there were so many worshippers that it was difficult to enter the church.²³² The 1622 manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato* includes no fewer than two hundred eighty-four graces and miracles reportedly performed by the woodcut by the time of publication.²³³ The fact that the events were narrated by renowned local historians, such as Lodovico Vedriani and Giovanni Battista Spaccini, suggests that the woodcut was known throughout the province of Modena by that date. It is also interesting that, because of the many graces it dispensed, the print, initially simply known as the Virgin of Montserrat, was then

and Francesco Caprara and Lorenzo Servetti, *Arte e storia nelle chiese di Budrio: San Lorenzo e Santa Maria del Borgo* (Bologna: Compositori, 2006), 82.

²³¹ Caprara and Servetti, *Arte e storia nelle chiese di Budrio*, 77.

²³² Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 292: 'Solo dico che alle feste v'è tanto concorso di gente che a fatica se può entrare in chiesa del paese circonvicino.'

²³³ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*.

renamed as the Madonna of the Graces.²³⁴ Although it remains unknown when this change of title happened exactly, it is crucial that the print lost its reference to the original image, becoming a prototype in its own right.

A 1793 inventory preserved in the Diocesan Historical Archive Modena Nonantola, under the heading sixty-three, seems to add a further fascinating dimension to the cult. The inventory states that in the recess on the main altar is preserved: 'The Image representing the one of Montserrat, of miraculous paper, and much venerated because of it.'²³⁵ It could be that in the original Italian, the adjective 'miraculous' refers to the image shown in the print, but it is combined with the noun 'paper' ('di carta miracolosa') and it is therefore possible that it is actually the material on which the image is printed that it is here defined as miraculous. The miracle-working quality seems to have been transferred from the image to the medium, which casts an interesting light on the discussion of the reliability of the print medium referred to in Chapter I.

II.I.V Expansion of the Cult

²³⁴ Geminiano Varini, *A MEMORIA DEL III. CENTENARIO DELLA TRASLAZIONE DELLA MIRACOLOSA IMMAGINE DI MARIA SS. DELLE GRAZIE NELLA CHIESA PARROCCHIALE CELEBRATO IN STUFFIONE (Modena) DAL 15 AL 26 APRILE* (Modena: Tipografia Pontif. E Arciv. Immacolata Concezione, 1923), 17: 'Per le tante grazie e prodigiosi miracoli operati, da questa Santa Immagine, fu cangiato il titolo di Monserrato o Monteserato, forse abbreviazione di Mons-segato, in quello di Santa Maria delle Grazie e sostituita al Santo titolare, che v'era, e cioè a S. Pietro in vincoli.'

²³⁵ *Inventario delle sacre suppellettili spettanti alla Chiesa di Stuff.e, sotto il Titolo della B. V. detta delle Grazie*, 1793, 3, Stuffione Parrocchia Concorsi, Abbatial Archive Nonantola, Nonantola (MO), Italy: 'L'Immag.e stessa rappresentata quale di Monserrato, di carta miracolosa, e molto venerata particolare.'

Following its initial success, the Madonna of the Graces needed to be preserved in a safer place. According to the 1622 manuscript, *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, the Madonna of the Graces was translated to the local Church of Stuffione di Ravarino mainly because of the rapidly increasing veneration of the print. The manuscript, however, also makes mention of the bad condition of the oak tree, to which the print was affixed. After the Madonna of the Graces began to work miracles, the tree began to wither and became infested with ants. The above-mentioned removal of the branches at the hands of the devotees is likely to have been the principal cause of its demise. The manuscript reports, furthermore, that on the day of the translation, the ants miraculously followed the woodcut to the altar of the church.²³⁶ In his booklet published on the occasion of the third centenary of the translation of the print in 1923, the Knight of Modena Geminiano Varini specifies that the ants were divided into seven lines, this number matching the number of the seven companies or confraternities of Bomporto, Solara, Camposanto, Ravarino, Caselle, Crevalcore, and Stuffione di Ravarino, which, from that moment on, would accompany the woodcut in all of its processions.²³⁷ The booklet adds that, following the translation, the oak tree started to sprout again, and was still fresh and full of branches in 1656.

²³⁶ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'onde, n'avvenne, che gran popolo concorresse a riverirla, e perciò fù determinato trasferirla nella Chiesa Parocchiale come fù fatto solenemente alli 15 Aprile 1623 dal Sig.r D. Vincenzo Muzzarelli, e dicono, che le formiche, le quali trovansi in quella Rovere, onde fù levata l'Immagine. La seguissero sempre sin'ad andar a perdersi nell'Altare della Chiesa, e che quella Rovere ancorche affatto scorticata per divozione di chi ne voleva presso di se, si rimettesse e rinvestisse: sicche l'anno 1656 si vedeva ancora fresca, e fronzuta.'

²³⁷ Varini, *A MEMORIA DEL III. CENTENARIO*, 20: 'Ogni qualvolta fu fatta la solenne processione per grandi necessità, fu tenuto l'antico itinerario quel medesimo che si percorse allorchè dalla rovere fu trasalta la S. Immagine in questa Parochiale, trecento anni or sono, sempre con sette Compagnie o Confraternite, in memoria delle sette file di formiche che

The original location of the oak tree has always been regarded as sacred. A chapel, still present there today, was built in place of the tree by Giovanni Pederetti, the owner of the land, in 1888 (Fig. 20).²³⁸ The chapel is commonly known as the 'Oratory of the Column', after the column, which had been erected in place of the by then dead tree on the original site. Inside the oratory, there is a rather generic ceramic image of the Madonna, which does not resemble either the Madonna of the Graces or the Virgin of Montserrat. The importance that this location has for the cult is evident from the fact that processions follow the itinerary from this oratory to the church even now, retracing the steps of the ants in the translation of the woodcut from the tree to the Parish Church of Stuffione di Ravarino.

As for the precise date of the translation of the print to the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, the accounts differ. The date given on the cover of the above-mentioned booklet, *SCIelta D'alcune delle principali Grazie fatte DALLA B. VERGINE DI MONSERATO Posta nella Chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione*, 8 September 1680 seems to be unlikely. The publisher, Demetrio Degni, probably confused the year of the translation with the year in which the booklet was printed, or referred to another translation. Indeed, according

erano nella rovere e che accompagnarono allora la Sacra Imagine alla Chiesa. – Le Compagnie furono, sono e saranno sempre quelle e cioè: Bomporto – Solara – Camposanto – Ravarino – Caselle – Crevalcore e Stuffione. – La processione si fa sempre al mattino.’
²³⁸ Varini, *A MEMORIA DEL III. CENTENARIO*, 19: ‘Il pilastro poi venne tramutato nell’attuale Cappella nel 1888, sempre volta a levante, per cura del proprietario d’allora, il Sig. Giovanni Pedretti, Vice Priore della Confraternita dell’Addolorata di questa Parrocchia, morto il 24 Novembre 1896, d’anni 71, e posto in una tomba di destra, entrando nel vecchio cimitero. _ Ora è proprietaria del piccolo Oratorio, col fondo, certa Signora Caterina Zuzzi di Crevalcore, vedova di Geminiano Dondi. _ Si dice che questo fondo, dove esiste l’Oratorio, sia stato acquistato da certo Baraldi Angelo, che ne andrebbe in possesso il Novembre prossimo, al quale si raccomanda una migliore manutenzione e conservazione degno di tanto di tanto ricordo.’

to the *Memorie della Chiesa Parrocchiale di Ravarino*, preserved in the Parish Historical Archive of Ravarino, the 8th of September 1680 is the date of the translation of the print from the lateral altar to the main altar of the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino.²³⁹ The content of the 1680 booklet, by contrast, gives the date of the translation to the church as 15 April 1623, and states that it took place in the presence of the parish priest Vincenzo Muzzarelli.²⁴⁰ Yet, Geminiano Varini, in some handwritten notes, dated 10 November 1922, in the margin of the above-mentioned 1622 manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, points out that there is a discrepancy between the date of the 15th of April 1623, mentioned in this latter manuscript, and 1622, written on the title page of the same manuscript.²⁴¹ In the entry of the first miracle, the manuscript states that the print was already in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino in March 1622.²⁴² Spaccini, finally, claims that the print was venerated on an altar in October 1622, and had been there since eight years.²⁴³ The print may thus have been in the church from as early as 1614.

²³⁹ *Memorie della Chiesa Parrocchiale di Ravarino I*, 49, Parish Historical Archive Ravarino, Ravarino (MO), Italy: 'promuovere la traslazione di questa S. Immagine di Maria Vergine da una Capella Laterale alla Capella dell'Altar maggiore [...] il dì 8 sett.e dell'anno 1680.'

²⁴⁰ *SCIelta D'alcune delle principali Grazie*, 5: 'e perciò fù determinato trasferirla nella Chiesa Parochiale, come fù fatto solennemente alli 15. Aprile 1623 dal Sig.r D. Vincenzo Muzzarelli.'

²⁴¹ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'ella però n'è una incognita per questa ragione lo scritto di questo libro ammette la traslazione che sia avvenuta il 15 aprile 1623, mentre il frontespizio dice: Raccolta ecc. ecc. 1622?'

²⁴² *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Miracolo p:mo Stuffione: Mese di Marzo 1622 et altro tempo. Michele Meschiari della Motta riferisce, come ridotto in articolo di morte abbandonato da Medici, e Chirurghi p. male di gola, con la lingua grossa come è un braccio con grandiss:mo dolore, ed inquietudine p. sette gironi continvi non potendo più parlare fece voto di visitare L'Imag.e della sud:ta Gloriosa Verg.e di Monserato posta nella sud:tta Chiesa di Stuff.e ed in spazio di due hore cessò il dolore, e l'infiaggione, e restò libero, e ciò affermò in sua coscienza p. verità.'

²⁴³ Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 291: '31 ott 1622. Adì 31, lunedì [...] In Stufione, territorio del ducato di Modona e giurisdizione degli illustrissimi signri marchesi Giacomino, e conti Tadeo e Fulvio Rangoni gentiluomini nobilissimi di questa città, fu da un contadino comperato una Madonna stampata del retratto della Mad di Monserato in Ispagna, et

An inventory dated 17 August 1599 complicates the situation even further.²⁴⁴ This document explicitly lists a series of items that had been found together with the woodcut before it was removed and transported to the church. The print may have thus been in the church even from 1599. Giorgio Fava has suggested that the more conventional date of the 15th of April 1623 may actually have been the date of an official translation with procession, organised by the parish priest Vincenzo Muzzarelli, to confer more authority to the event.²⁴⁵ This explanation would make sense of the discrepancies within the 1622 manuscript and between that manuscript and other sources.²⁴⁶

Geminiano Varini's handwritten notes in the 1622 manuscript state that the manuscript mentions ex-votos, which had previously been affixed to the wall of 'the old temple', but which were burned accidentally.²⁴⁷ The 'old temple', to which the manuscript refers may have been the oratory built by Count Guido

incolata sopra ad una assa, e la messe sopra ad un altarino com'è costume del paese, dove s'è conservata da otto anni.'

²⁴⁴ *Die 17 mense Augusti 1599 Invent.io delle robe che si sono trovate alla Immagine levata et trasportata alla chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione*, 1599, Stuffione Parrocchia Concorsi, Abbatial Archive Nonantola, Nonantola (MO), Italy: 'Die 17 mense Augusti 1599 Invent.io delle robe che si sono trovate alla Immagine levata et trasportata alla chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione / Una collana d'allare et argente / Item doi ochi d'argenti / Item una testa d'argente da donna / Item un altro rotto d'argente d'una donna / Item doi drapisini di filadini uno nuovo et uno ad uso / Uno una tellera di maia lavorata di seda rossa et bianca / Item doi di filadini novi / Item due torce di cera bianca d(e) una lira l'uno / Item doi candeletti / Item una scudetta con uno cavallo / Item doi altri rotti di cera di varie sorte / P(rese)nte Ms Mattheo Barbieri et Biasio Barbieri testimoni alle Suddet)te cosse et Ms And(rea) Pedretti tutti da Stuffione / Qui M(agnific)us et M(ultum) reverendus D(ominus) Ioh(annes) B(a)p(tis)ta et stante.'

²⁴⁵ Fava, *La parrocchia di Stuffione*, 118.

²⁴⁶ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'e perciò fù determinato trasferirla nella Chiesa Parochiale come fù fatto solenemente alli 15. Aprile 1623.'

²⁴⁷ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Il Dimostrano chiaramente quelle tavolette, che offerte in gratitudine de ricevuti benefizy, coprivano gl'anni addietro le mura del vecchio Tempio, e per pura inavvertenza, furono dal fuoco consunte.'

Rangoni. In his *Storia dell'augusta Badia di S. Silvestro di Nonantola* (1784-1785), the historian Girolamo Tiraboschi reports regarding this oratory:

The destruction of Castel Crescente, of which we do not know when it happened, probably also caused the collapse of the two above-mentioned Churches [of Saint Justina and Saint Biagio]; and thus the inhabitants had the Church of Ravarino as their Parish Church, about which I spoke in the first chapter. But then, the Church of Saint Mary of Stuffione was built, which still exists [...] Earlier, Stuffione was subject to the Parish Church of Saint John in Horto Veclo of Ravarino; but it was so far away, that during winter in particular, the parishioners could not reach it. Therefore, Count Guido of Count Ugucione Rangone, nicknamed the Great to distinguish him from the other Count Guido, the famous general of the army, who lived at that time, and was nicknamed the Lesser, had an oratory dedicated to S. Mary of the Graces raised at his own expenses in that same village, and obtained [permission] from Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, on 6 May 1509. It was erected in the parish.²⁴⁸

It thus seems even more likely that the woodcut was already enclosed within a building by the early sixteenth century and that the translation of April 1623 was merely a ceremonial one. In his notes to the manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, the parish priest Carlo Malerba suggests that the print could have been installed in the oratory in 1509, and that the translation of 1623 could have been from the oratory to the church.²⁴⁹ It is

²⁴⁸ Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Storia dell'augusta Badia di S. Silvestro di Nonantola* (Modena: Società Tipografica, 1784-1785), vol. 1, 258: 'La distruzione di Castel Crescente, che non sappiamo quando avvenisse, dovette probabilmente recar seco ancor la rovina delle due Chiese suddette; e allora quegli abitanti ebbero a lor Parrocchia la Chiesa di Ravarino, di cui si è detto nel primo Capo. Ma fu poi fabbricata la Chiesa, che tuttor sussiste di S. Maria di Stuffione [...] Era esso in addietro soggetto alla Parrocchiale di S. Giovanni in *Horto Veclo* di Ravarino; ma ne era distante per modo, che nel tempo di verno singolarmente non potevano i Parrocchiani sin colà trasferirsi. Perciò il C. Guido del C. Ugucione Rangone soprannomato il Grosso per distinguerlo dall'altro Conte Guido celebre Generale d'armata, che a quel tempo vivea, e che era soprannomato il Piccolo, fece a sue spese innalzare nella Villa medesima un Oratorio detto di S. Maria delle Grazie, e dal Card. Giuliano Cesarini ottenne sotto i VI. di Maggio del MDIX. Che fosse eretto in Parrocchia.'

²⁴⁹ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'e poi dice ancora che nelle tavolette dei miracoli abbruciarono nella vecchia Chiesa dunque questa Immagine sembra che fosse anche in questa Chiesa, se vi erano il voto, a meno che non trattasi dell'Oratorio innalzato, da Rangoni Conte Guido, nel 1509. che lo innalzava a S. Maria delle Grazie, ma se è così la traslazione dalla rovere non sarebbe avvenuta ai 15 Aprile 1623 ma molto tempo prima e per lo meno nel 1509, quando Rangoni fece l'Oratorio, ed allora può darsi

unclear, however, whether the oratory was actually built in 1509, and whether it was specifically built to host the print.

As noted by the parish priest Nicola Zoboli in his 1822 manuscript, Girolamo Tiraboschi's *Storia dell'augusta Badia di S. Silvestro di Nonantola* (1784-1785) is the only surviving text that addresses the foundation of the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino.²⁵⁰ Tiraboschi indicates that when the oratory was erected in the parish church, Count Guido Rangoni took the *jus patronatus* of the church and, in this role, he presented Guglielmo Campana (1460-1541)

che la predetta traslazione del 15 Aprile 1623 sia stata, non dalla Rovere ma dall'Oratorio Rangoni. È una cosa un po' intricata, ma che non turba la sostanza della miracolosa Immagine.'

²⁵⁰ Zoboli, *INFORMAZIONE ESATTA DELLA CHIESA PARROCCHIALE DI STUFFIONE*, 3-6: '1° Sull'origine, e fondazione di questa Chiesa, altro non si può riferire che l'esposto dallo Storico Tiraboschi nella sua Storia di Nonantola Parte II.^a Cap.^o III.^o Pag.^e 257, e 258, dove dice che 'La Chiesa di Stuffione fù fabbricata nell'Anno 1333 ed era soggetta alla Parrocchiale di Ravarino. Che per maggior comodo del Popolo, il Conte Guido Rangone fece innalzare a Sue spese, in questa Villa medesima, un Oratorio detto di S. Maria delle Grazie' e che Il Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini ottenne, sotto li 6 Maggio 1509, che fosse eretto in Parocchia, unendovi due Benefici della Badia; quello cioè di S. Bartolommeo di Calanco, nel distretto della Villa medesima; e quello di S. Claudio, che era nel distretto di Nonantola, riservando a sé il diritto di Giuspatronato e della presentazione del Paroco. Li due soprannominati Benefici furono poi conceduti, nell'Anno 1567 al Seminario di Nonantola. 2° Niun reccapito si trova nell'Archivio di questa Chiesa comprovante l'Origine, e fondazione della medesima. 3° Non potrebbesi indicare che il privato Archivio dell'Eccellentissima Casa Rangona. 4° Ne dentro, ne fuori di questa Chiesa, ne in verun'altro luogo riscontransi Epigrafi o Lapidi riguardanti l'origine ricercata, ne che per verun altro rapporto appartengano a questa stessa Chiesa. 5° Nessun'antico monumento esiste presso veruna famiglia di questa Parrocchia risguardante l'origine, e la fondazione di questa Chiesa. 6° La più comune tradizione del Villaggio, si è, che da rimoto tempo esistesse in Stuffione, e nello stesso luogo dov'ora si trova, una piccola Cappella: che questa sia stata in più volte, ed in epoche diverse ampliata, e ridotta allo stato di magnifica Chiesa, come ora si vede: che la Famiglia nobilissima de' SS.ri Marchesi de Rangoni, ne siano stati i primi fondatori, e che molto abbia poi contribuito alla sua magnificenza S. E. il Signor Marchese Fulvio de' Rangoni suddetti, alloraquando, sul principiare del p.p. secolo, era Governatore di Reggio, mediante l'opera di certo Silvestro Campiotti Architetto: Che questa Chiesa fosse dapprincipio dedicata a S. Pietro in vincoli, e soggetta alla Parrocchiale di S. Gio: Battista in Orto di Ravarino, dalla quale, come fù detto al N^o: I, venne smembrata, ed eretta anch'essa in Parrocchiale sotto il titolo di S. Pietro in vicoli sud:^o per opera sempre della sullodata Eccellentissima Casa Rangona, già Feudetaria si di Stuffione, che di Ravarino. Che fino dall'anno 1509 la Chiesa di Stuffione fosse eretta in Parrocchiale, si riferiva da un'antico Registro di Matrimoni esistente frà i pochi libri di codesta Parrocchia medesima, quale dà un'autentica prova che a quell'epoca eravi un Parroco Governatore di questa Chiesa.'

of Modena as the first parish priest on 15 October 1509 (*ius praesentandi*).²⁵¹ Tiraboschi claims that what he writes is attested by documents by the public notary of Modena Geminiano dalla Cappellina, a version of which, dated 1509, was still preserved in the Diocesan Historical Archive Modena Nonantola at the time of his writing²⁵²

In his work, entitled *Dizionario topografico-storico degli Stati Estensi* (1824-1825), Tiraboschi reports that the King John of Bohemia (1296-1346), who was Lord of Modena for several years, gave the fief Castel Crescente (the present Stuffione di Ravarino) to his doctor of Modena Pietro Della Rocca in 1333. The Della Rocca family in their turn handed the fief to the Rangoni family in 1421.²⁵³ As recorded in a 1453 diploma preserved in the State Archive of Modena, Borso d'Este (1413-1471), Duke of Ferrara and Modena, formally granted the fief of Castel Crescente (the present Stuffione di Ravarino) and of Borgo Franco (the present Ravarino) to the Rangoni family in 1453, and specifically to Ugucione I Rangoni, father of the above-mentioned Count Guido. In that year, the fief was also elevated to the rank of a noble fief, a county to be precise, and it became almost an independent

²⁵¹ Tiraboschi, *Storia dell'augusta Badia*, vol. 1, 258: 'e riservando a sé il diritto del Patronato, e della presentazione del Parroco [...] Essendo poscia nel suddetto anno MDIX. il Cardinale venuto a Nonantola, il C. Guido a' XV. di Ottobre gli presentò per primo Parroco di Stuffione Guglielmo Campana Sacerdote Modenese, il quale fu da lui approvato. Delle quali cose veggonsi i documenti negli Atti di Geminiano dalla Cappellina.

²⁵² Geminiano dalla Cappellina, *Draft*, 1509, Abbatial Archive Nonantola, Nonantola (MO), Italy. For the full text and translation, see Appendix 4.

²⁵³ Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Dizionario topografico-storico degli Stati Estensi* (Modena: Tipografia camerale, 1824-1825), vol. 1, 174-175: 'che nel 1333. Giovanni Re di Boemia donollo a Pietro della Rocca suo Medico, e che questi poscia cedetelo alla famiglia Rangone. Questa ne fu poscia formalmente investita dal Duca Borso con suo diploma ad essa onorevolissimo de' 9. di Settembre del 1453.'

state within the Este Dukedom – characteristic of the portioning out of lands to different families within the feudal system.²⁵⁴

Pope Pius IV (1499-1565) stated that the Rangoni family was so prestigious that no Christian prince or king would have refused to become their relative.²⁵⁵ The Rangoni had blood ties to the Este family. The mother of Ugucione I Rangoni was one of the many children of Niccolò III d'Este (1383-1441), Marquess of Ferrara. During the period in which Stuffione di Ravarino was their domain, which lasted till the suppression of the fiefs in 1795, the Rangoni raised many buildings. In addition to the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, they built, among other things, the Old Palace of Stuffione, the Palace of Donna Clarina, and the Pretorian Palace. Furthermore, as recorded in volume IV of the *Book of the Baptisms*, the Marquesses Bonifacio and Giovanni Maria Rangoni restored and rebuilt the Parish Church of Stuffione di Ravarino in 1763.²⁵⁶

Guido Rangoni's only child Elena married a member of the Bentivoglio family, resulting in the rights on the Parish Church of Stuffione di Ravarino being transferred to the Bentivoglio family between 1509 and 1640, as recorded by Tiraboschi (1784-1785); after 1640, they returned to the Rangoni

²⁵⁴ Borso d'Este, *Diploma*, 1453, State Archive Modena, Modena, Italy: 'jure feudi nobilis de terra Castri Crescentis et de terra Burgi Franchi, ecc. et cum fundo aque Panarii hoc loco 'detto Volta Salara' et. per valles usque in fundum canalis Navigii [...] et ab hinc in antea creati et veri comites ab omnibus appellari et nominari haberi.'

²⁵⁵ *Dizionario biografico universale: contenente le notizie più importanti sulla vita e sulle opere degli uomini celebri* (Florence: David Passigli, 1840-1849), vol. 4, 757: 'famiglia modenese di remotissima antichità e di tanta illustrazione, che papa Pio IV soleva dire di essa, che non era principe o re cristiano che con lei non si fosse potuto volentieri stringere in parentado.'

²⁵⁶ *Libro IV. Battesimi dal 1730 al 1773*, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy: 'Supradicto anno constructa fuit edef hec Parochialis sumptibus S.S, Marchionum Bonifacii et Joanis Marie de' Rangonibus.'

family, who enjoyed them till 1880.²⁵⁷ In 1880, according to the *Decreto con cui S. E. Vescovo di Modena dichiara decaduto il juspatronato della fam. Rangoni sulla chiesa di Stuffione*, the Marquess Lodovico Rangoni Terzi lost all of his rights when he refused to undertake some urgent repair works to the roof of the church.²⁵⁸ Down to the negligence of the third Marquess, the Rangoni had a vested interest in sponsoring the cult of the Madonna of the Graces. They may even have had the oratory built specifically to house the miraculous woodcut. The Rangoni simultaneously promoted the cult of Our Lady of Carmel, another miraculous print, venerated today in the Church of Our Lady of Carmel, in Spilamberto, only 28 kilometres from Stuffione di Ravarino. The fact that an important aristocratic family such as the Rangoni invested in churches hosting miraculous prints forms a clear indication that the medium of printing enjoyed prestige as a form of miraculous imagery, and that the fact that the Madonna of the Graces was a copy print after another miraculous image did not matter.

Our Lady of Carmel was, according to legend, a devotional print, once again affixed to an oak tree, like the Madonna of the Graces, which miraculously saved the life of one Martino Pedroni (or Pedrucci) of Spilamberto, also known as Martino de' Mascheroni, in 1641. Hidden behind the aforementioned oak tree, a certain Casanova, born in Brescia, and rival of

²⁵⁷ Tiraboschi, *Storia dell'augusta Badia*, vol. 1, 258: 'Il Juspatronato insieme co' beni di Stuffione passarono poscia nella famiglia Bentivoglio insieme colla Contessa Elena unica figlia del C. Guido, e presso essa rimasero fin verso il MDCXL. nel qual tempo la Marchesa Antonella Bevilacqua Rangona madre del Marchese Giacomino e del March. Giovanni, dalla casa Bentivoglio ricomperò il palazzo e i beni di Stuffione, e con essi il Juspatronato di quella Chiesa.'

²⁵⁸ *Decreto con cui S. E. R.ma Mons. Giuseppe M. Guidelli dei Conti Gujdi [...] dichiara decaduto dal Jus patronato su q. Chiesa par.e il Sig.r March. Lodovico Rangoni=Terzi per essersi rifiutato nel 1880. Al rifacimento del tetto di q. parr.le*, 1880, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy.

Martino in the trade of arquebusier, wounded him by a strong blow to the head. Poor Martino, however, was saved from death by the miraculous image of Our Lady of Carmel: a brightly coloured woodcut representing the Virgin with the Child. What is worth noting is that, due to the offerings by the devotees (about 12,150 lira of Modena), a chapel in *cotto tile* was built in place of the tree during that same year, in a territory belonging to the Rangoni family. The ardent devotee Silvestro Piazza of Spilamberto then built the Church of Our Lady of Carmel, still extant today, enabled once again by the concession of the above-mentioned territory by the Rangoni. As in the case of Stuffione di Ravarino, the family had enjoyed the fief of Spilamberto since the fifteenth century, once more resulting from a gift by Borso d'Este, made in 1453. The church was inaugurated on the 2nd of August 1647.²⁵⁹ The historian Vedriani cites the print in his *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona* (1667), mentioning that it was still highly venerated in 1667.²⁶⁰ Sadly, however, the original print was lost, and was substituted in 1826 with a painting attributed to a certain 'Toni', which is still preserved in the rectory, then with an oil painting on canvas by the artist Emilio Giusti of Spilamberto in 1974 and, finally, with another, bigger copy in 2006.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ On the Our Lady of Carmel, see Albertini, *Memorie storiche spilambertesesi*, 81-6.

²⁶⁰ Vedriani, *Historia dell'antichissima città di Modona*, vol. 2, 718-19: 'La Madonna anch'essa non manca di far molte gratie à quelli, che ricorrono ad adorar la sua Sacratissima Imagine à Spilimberto, a Fiorano, & a quella del merlo a Sassuolo.'

²⁶¹ On the old print, see Giuseppe Savigni, *Memorie sull'Oratorio del Carmine*, 1836, Filza 11, Parish Historical Archive Church of Saint Adrian III Pope, Spilamberto (MO), Italy: 'L'immagine della Madonna certamente era in carta, e nell'anno 1825. 6. Ottobre fu trasportato da me il nicchio con la Madonna a Modena in Vescovado, e nell'anno 1826. fu collocata al posto, in cui ora si trova dal Sigr. Toni, che ne fu il Pittore e il nicchio, ch'era ovale, fu ridotto in quadro, e indossi di nuovo i raggi laterali, e in pari tempo fu compito il contorno d'argento, che prima era imperfetto, furono due Angeli, che restavano a Modena, e furono sostituiti i due presenti cornacopi dorati.' In 1824-1829 the Bishop of Modena was Giuseppe Emilio Sommariva.

What is of interest in this instance is not only that the cult was promoted by an important family such the Rangoni, but also that the print was an object of veneration for different members of the aristocracy over time. Laura Martinozzi (1639-1687), wife of Alfonso IV d'Este (1634-1662), Duke of Modena, visited the Virgin twice a week in fine weather, namely every Wednesday and Saturday. The Marchioness Vittoria Bentivoglio Rangoni, wife of Guido Rangoni, a descendent of the Guido, who had the *jus patronatus* of the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, not only donated her bridal dresses as furnishings to the Church, but also arranged to be buried in front of the main altar of Our Lady of Carmel (her wish was fulfilled on the 13th of September 1654, with the help of her husband).²⁶² For his part, Guido Rangoni not only hung a silver heart in front of the altar of Virgin (which at his death was converted into an ornament of hammered silver, also in honour of the Virgin), but he also declared in his will that, at his death, his actual heart had to be stored in a lead box in the church (his wish, too, was fulfilled, on the 16th of June 1693).²⁶³ The church thus, in addition to being the sanctuary for the miraculous print, also became a form of mausoleum of the Rangoni family. As will be discussed below (Chapter III), this was not the only example of a rural oratory church, connected with an important family, being transformed into a burial site.

As with the Madonna of the Graces, the devotion of the Rangoni was still undiminished in 1728, when a Baroque frame for the image was donated by

²⁶² The epigraph on the tomb reads: 'D.O.M. / D. D. VICTORIAE BENTIVOLAE / UXORI, DILECTISSIMAE / OMNI. VIRTVTVM, GENERE, EXORNATAE / D. D. GUIDO RANGONI / AMORIS ERGO / SIBIQ. AC. SVCCESORIBVS. SVIS. P. CVRAVIT. A. DNI / MDCLIV / IDIB. SEPT.'

²⁶³ See Albertini, *Memorie storiche spilambertesì*, 81-6.

Emilia Gonzaga Rangoni.²⁶⁴ Although these prints were originally lowly works, affixed to oak trees and the subject of a rural cult, both the Madonna of the Graces and Our Lady of Carmel, once their status as miracle-working images was established and they attracted large numbers of devotees, were eventually appropriated by the aristocracy, that used them as *palladia* of their power.

II.I.VI Early-Modern Prints in Devotional Settings

After the print was translated to the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, the experience of devotion became less direct and spontaneous than it appears to have been on the oak tree, where it was (or may have been) originally venerated. The woodcut was installed upon a purpose-built altar and its status became much loftier than that of a standard devotional print. The translation, supported by the Rangoni family, concealed the rural roots of the cult. As related above, on the 8th of September 1680, the Madonna of the Graces was further translated from a lateral altar to the high altar of the church.²⁶⁵ This shows that, like a miraculous painting or sculpture, a print could acquire a dominant position among the images in a church. In the mid-eighteenth century, the Madonna of the Graces was translated again, this time to a bespoke polychrome altar made of *scagliola* (a marble imitation in plaster). The new altar has an inscription at the top, reading 'IN ME GRATIA OMNIS VIAE', referring to the agency of the print. From 1765 onwards, this

²⁶⁴ Lidia Righi Guerzoni, *Testimonianze storico-documentarie del culto mariano a Spilamberto* (Spilamberto: tip. Soragni, 1987), 15-16.

²⁶⁵ *Memorie della Chiesa Parrocchiale di Ravarino I*, 49: 'E promuovere la traslazione di questa S. Immagine di Maria Vergine da una cappella laterale alla cappella dell'Altare maggiore.'

altar was further adorned with two impressive votive candles of Bologna of circa 70 kilograms each, decorated with arabesque motifs and religious symbols. According to the priest Nicola Zoboli (1822), these candles were offered to the Madonna of the Graces by the Countess Maria Vittoria Caprara of Bologna, owner of the Castle of Ronchi, in the nearby Crevalcore, in gratitude for the saving of her husband Francesco, who had fallen into a hole in the same year (showing, incidentally, how the print was now a channel for the devotion of the local nobility).²⁶⁶

In 1928, to accommodate the ever-increasing veneration, the woodcut was moved a final time, into the present purpose-built chapel behind the altar, clad in red and yellow Veronese marble. This new chapel was inaugurated on the 8th of September 1928, in the presence of Ferdinando Bussolari, Archbishop of Modena and Abbot of Nonantola. According to the priest, the archbishop was so astonished at the sight of the chapel, that he had the impression of being not in a village church, but on the Mount of the Guard at Bologna, where a famous icon of the Virgin attributed to the hand of Saint Luke is venerated.²⁶⁷ The chapel, in which this humble devotional print was hosted, was thus compared to that of one of the most renowned miraculous images of Emilia-Romagna.

The access to the chapel is regulated today by two flights of stairs at either side of the high altar, protected by doors. The miraculous print itself is

²⁶⁶ Zoboli, *INFORMAZIONE ESATTA*, 20-1: 'Li sopranominati due cerei, che sono giudicati di pesi otto, furono offerti a questa Beata Vergine da una nobil donna, della Nobilissima Famiglia Caprara Bolognese, proprietari dei Ronchi nel 1765.'

²⁶⁷ Giovanni Monari, *Memorie e Informazioni sulla Parrocchia di Stuffione*, 180, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy.

protected by a small door covered in silver, decorated with sea-shell motives at the four corners, and bearing a capital letter 'M' for Maria in bas-relief in the centre (Fig. 21). It is unclear if access to the image was ever restricted before this door was installed. However, the print may have been covered by drapes, as some miracles of the years 1667-1668 were said to have taken place at times when the print was unveiled.²⁶⁸ On the frame of the modern silver door, there are two sculpted angels holding a small crown over the head of the Madonna. Three further crowns are attached as revetments to the print itself, one silver on the top of the Mountain of Montserrat and two golden on the heads of the Virgin and the Child. The silver one was already attached to the print before the 1923, the other two were instead installed in 1969, on the occasion of the marriage of parishioners Guerrino Gualtieri and Claudina Molinari in the sanctuary.²⁶⁹ There is, however, no information regarding an official coronation ceremony (as in the case of the Virgin of Montserrat, which was crowned by Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) in a ceremony on the 11th of September 1881). The crowns and other tributary objects

²⁶⁸ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo 272. Adi 6 Xbre: anno sud.to La Madalena Scagliarini da Cento in luogo detta la Filippina essendo spiritata da un spirito, che parlava, essendo condotta qui d'avanti ala B.ma Verg.e avendola fatta inginocchiarsi avanti l'Altare della sud.ta nel scoprirsi che si fece la Gran Miracolosa Madre delle Grazie subito fu da quello liberata alla presenza di molto pop:o, e da lì a pochi giorni portò qlla Tavoletta dove è dipinto quel Sacerdote che l'asperse con l'acqua benedetta, e si cantò il Te Deus Laudamus in ringraziam.to della B:ma Vergine di Stuff.e ... 273 Adi 22 Maggio 1668 La Geronima fig.a di Giulio Cesare Martini alias de Guidi da Campos.to spiritata da un spirito loquacis:mo, il Martedì della Pentecoste doppo essersi celebrata la p.ma messa alla pnza di tutto il pop.o che s'era ritrovato alla messa; mentre si cantavano le Litanie della B.a V.e nel scoprirsi, che si fece la SS.ma Imag.e, nel prouniziarsi S.a M.a ora pro nobis sub.o fù libertata con grandiss.ma consolaz.e n. solo delli suoi parenti; ma eziandio di tutto il pop.o tanto terriero, che foras.o, che si trouò pn.te, ed il Mercoledì seg.te ed ancora il sabbato fecero cantare la messa solenne in ringraziam.to del Sig.re e della B.a V.e p. la graz.a ricevuta, e la Giovane vi lasciò un abito, e adi p.mo di 7bre portò qsta Tavoletta grande con la cornice verde dorata in mem.a della grazia ricevuta dalla B.a V.e, e si cantò il Tedeum.'

²⁶⁹ Giorgio Fava, *Stuffione in cartolina* (Nonantola: Archivio Abbaziale: Centro Studi Storici Nonantolani and Modena: Il Fiorino, 2019), 27; *I° Centenario della costruzione oratorio 'La Colonna.'* 1888-1988 (1988), 1, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy.

aside, the chapel is filled with numerous ex-votos, including silver hearts, plaques, and also some wooden crutches.

Apart from the high altar, the church has six other altars, two of which are also dedicated to the Madonna of the Graces. This emphasises the important role that the miraculous woodcut played within the community of Stuffione di Ravarino. Upon entering the church, the first altar on the right, known as the Altar of Saint Anthony, shows a votive oil painting on canvas representing the Virgin of Montserrat with Saint Joseph, Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Francis of Paola, the donor Girolamo Bolognini, and his son Francesco Maria (Fig. 22). The marble tombstone in the chapel floor records that Senator Girolamo Bolognini, a nobleman of Bologna, commissioned this votive image after his only son, Francesco Maria Bolognini, was cured from a serious illness by the intercession of the Madonna of the Graces.²⁷⁰ This miracle is not included in the 1622 manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, nor in the 1680 booklet *SCIelta D'alcune delle principali Grazie fatte DALLA B. VERGINE DI MONSERATO Posta nella Chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione*. Formerly attributed to none other than Guido Reni (1575-1642), the painting is now thought to be the work of Reni's pupil Simone Cantarini (1612-1648), also known as *Il Pesarese* (from Pesaro), and is thought to

²⁷⁰ 'D.O.M. / HYERONIM: BOLOGNINVS SANCTOR / MAVRIT. E LAZZARI COMENDATARIVS / IN FRANCISCI MARIAE VNIGENITI / SVI SALVTEM / HANC TABELLAM / VIRGINI DICAUIT / MDCXXXVII' (TO THE GREATEST AND BEST GOD: GIROLAMO BOLOGNINI KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE SAINTS MAURICE AND LAZZARO DEDICATED THIS PAINTING TO THE VIRGIN FOR THE HEALING OF HIS ONLY CHILD FRANCESCO MARIA).'

have been made in 1637.²⁷¹ In his 1678 *Felsina pittrice*, a collection of biographies of artists of Bologna, the art historian Carlo Cesare Malvasia reports that Guido Reni could not stop praising one of his student's paintings, which, based on the description, closely resembled the one today in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino.²⁷² Although Malvasia states that the painting in question was made for a Church in Crevalcore, he seems to have confused the painting with another work probably commissioned by the same family. As in the miraculous print, the Christ Child is represented sawing the Mountain of Montserrat, upon which the Virgin is seated. The Virgin's costume is also very similar to the clothing worn by the Virgin in the print. In this instance, veneration by a member of the aristocracy resulted in the miraculous image being copied in a painting that in a material sense was probably more expensive than the original print on paper.²⁷³

As demonstrated by the above-mentioned miraculous etching of Our Lady of Succour, even an entire church could serve as an ex-voto for a print. Our Lady of Succour was thought to cure San Bartolomeo della Ginestra, Liguria. A solemn inscription on the church façade testifies to the print's effectiveness in this respect: 'In the year 1855, after having overcome all sort of difficulties,

²⁷¹ Andrea Emiliani, ed., *Simone Cantarini detto il Pesarese (1612-1648)* (Milan: Electa, 1997), 103-4.

²⁷² Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice: Vite de pittori bolognesi* (Bologna: Errede di Domenico Barbieri, 1678), vol. 2, 439: 'L'istesso Guido concorrea a questo suo credito, perche oltre che lo comendaua per quel gran virtuoso ch'egli era, non capitaua opra di considerazione per i suoi allieui, che a lui non l'appoggiasse, con gran suo vtile, sostenendolo ne' prezzi, che troppo bassamente ei porre voleua; fra le quali vna tauola con la B. V. e certi Santi, che fece fargli il Commendator Bolognini per vna sua Chiesiuola nella villa di Creualcore, e nella quale, ritraendo l'istesso Commendatore, il fece cosi simile, e con sì felice maneggio, che Guido stesso non si saziua di lodarla, facendogliene perciò dare anche più dell'accordato.'

²⁷³ It is also worth noting the difference in size between the original Madonna of the Graces, a fragile woodcut measuring 320 x 230 mm, and the monumental painted altarpiece that served as her ex-voto, measuring 2450 x 1640 mm, ca 55 times as large.

the community of Ginestra rebuilt from the foundations this temple, dedicated to the Apostle Saint Bartholomew and to Mary Virgin of God, under the title of Succour, as a consequence of the Virgin Mary's protection from cholera and owing to the precarious state of the old church.²⁷⁴ According to legend, the parish priest, Father Giovanni Battista Ghio, made a vow to the image in 1836, at a time of illness. The provost Ferdinando Podestà, historian of the church, reports his exact words: 'Oh Mary, if You will assist us in such extreme [moments], I promise to raise, together with my community, an eternal monument, a sign for posterity of the grace received.'²⁷⁵ In short, Father Ghio promised he would have a new church built in gratitude. The cholera epidemic did not spread, because Our Lady of Succour was thought to have protected the entire village. As a result, only two years after the danger had passed, in 1838, Father Ghio fulfilled the vow, appointing the Ligurian architect Giovanni Battista Prato to design a new sanctuary in honour of the print. The Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra, finished in 1855, can be thus considered as a votive gift.²⁷⁶

In the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, the second reference to the Virgin of Montserrat is on the second altar on the left, known as the Altar of Saint Lucy. It has a large oil painting, measuring 2340 x 1530 mm, representing Saint Anthony Abbot, Saint Blaise, Saint Dominus, Saint Sebastian, Saint Agatha, Saint Lucy, and Saint Apollonia (which, since the 2012 earthquake in

²⁷⁴ *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra*, 160-2: 'Sancto Bartholomaeo Apostolo / ac Deiparae Mariae Virgini sub titulo de Succurso / templum hoc dicatum / eius protectione ab asiatico morbo / Ecclesiaeque veteris angustia impellente / superatis adversis / a fundamentis reaedificabat Ginestrensis populus / anno MDCCCLV.'

²⁷⁵ Podestà, *N.a S.ra del Soccorso*, 51: 'O Maria, se Voi ci soccorrerete in questo estremo io vi prometto di compiere assieme al mio popolo, monumento perenne in segno ai posteri della grazia ottenuta.'

²⁷⁶ *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra*, 160.

the region, has been preserved in the Nonantola's Benedictine and Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art). The saints in the altarpiece pay homage to a second, smaller painting that is inserted in the centre at the top, set in a gilded frame supported by painted angels; this smaller painting represents the Virgin of Montserrat with the mountain and the saw. The altarpiece is dated to the second half of the sixteenth century and is currently attributed to the painter of Ferrara Domenico Mona (1550-1602). If this attribution is correct, this painting could be further proof that the print was inside the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino from at least the second half of the sixteenth century. More importantly, this painting, too, shows how the cult of the Madonna of the Graces gave rise to reproductive images in media more 'prestigious' than the original, reversing the dynamics of printmaking as a technique of replication.

II.I.VII Copies as Prototypes

In light of the above discussion, it would not make sense to make a hierarchical distinction between the original prototype of the Virgin of Montserrat and its printed copy, the Madonna of the Graces in Stuffione di Ravarino. The humble print was considered worthy of veneration in the same way as the original and was never treated as a mere copy. As already stated by Garnett and Rosser, any kind of hierarchical distinction between original and copy makes no sense within the context of miraculous imagery.²⁷⁷ It is indeed likely that most of the local devotees not only never saw the original

²⁷⁷ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 193.

miraculous prototype in Montserrat, but also did not even know of its existence. The two pilgrimage sites can thus be considered as virtually independent from one another. In other words, the inscription and the sacred topography represented on the print lost their original function of invoking the standard pilgrimage to Montserrat. To the devotees, the woodcut became a miraculous image in its own right.

Originally, the print collapsed the distance between a small provincial village and one of the most renowned sanctuaries of the time, making the prototype more accessible; the Virgin of Montserrat is present in every image that proclaims to be its copy. As Garnett and Rosser have indicated, however, copies opened up ‘a spectrum of active engagement with the miraculous image within particular political and social contexts.’²⁷⁸ The case of the Madonna of the Graces took that engagement to a different level, attracting veneration of its own. The copy became an image of the Holy Virgin, just like the Virgin of Montserrat herself, rather than a copy of the venerated statue, or an image referring to a faraway site.

Like the prototype in Montserrat, the Madonna of the Graces began to work its own miracles – ‘endless miracles’ according to the historian Spaccini.²⁷⁹ Interestingly, at least one of these miracles was performed indirectly, channelled through the above-mentioned painting by Domenico Mona, displayed in the Sanctuary of Stufione di Ravarino. According to the 1622 *Racolta d’alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa*

²⁷⁸ Garnett and Rosser, “Translations of the Miraculous,” 207.

²⁷⁹ Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 291: ‘Ha poi fatto infiiniti miracoli.’

Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato, a certain Margherita was healed in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, in front of the Altar of Saint Mary of the Graces, after she was recommended to 'the image of the Glorious Saint Anthony Abbot' represented in the painting alongside the Madonna of the Graces.²⁸⁰ Although this miracle could be interpreted as a miracle of Saint Anthony Abbot, the glory was shared with the Madonna of the Graces. Thus, it seems that even a painted copy of the printed copy of the Virgin of Montserrat, with the participation of Saint Anthony Abbot, could be effective in miraculous healing.

There was evidently no fundamental difference between media when it came to the miraculous powers of images. While in some cases, prints to which miraculous abilities were attributed were brought to the sick or injured in emergency situations, prints whose cult had become institutionalised could also operate at a distance, like other images in more permanent media.²⁸¹ In 1622, a young man in the nearby village of San Felice sul Panaro tumbled from a tower and survived his fall without injury; he reported that on his way down, he saw 'a woman dressed in white' assumed to be the Madonna of the

²⁸⁰ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo. 260. Adì 7. Maggio 1650. Gio fig.o And.a Luppi da Stuff.e La m.a del S. Gasparino Malagola sua mog: in contra loro aff.no ed attestano, che avendo la Margherita sua fig.a d'età mesi sei, la quale era apta dalla parte sinistra la quale pativa grandem.te, ed una matt.a ritrovandosi nella Chiesa avanti l'Altare della Mad.na delle Graz.ie si raccomandò all'Imag.e del Glorios.o S. Ant.o Abbate, che è dipinto nello stesso quadro delle graz.e, e subito che ebbe fatto voto di portargliela tre sabbati, e di porvi un voto p. la fanciulla le budella si calarono da ambidue le parti, e poi ritornarono al luogo proprio e naturale, e così perfettam.te guarita, e però oggi l'hà portata p. tal effetto, e messovi il voto.'

²⁸¹ On prints in emergency situations, see *Manuscript*, 1663, Fondo Grazie e Miracoli, Archive of the Archiepiscopal Curia Genoa, Genoa, Italy. On remote miracles, see Christopher Nygren, "Metonymic Agency: Some Data on Presence and Absence in Italian Miracle Cults," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 209-237.

Graces.²⁸² Despite their fragile appearance, prints could also at times perform their miraculous interventions with unexpected force. In the seventeenth century, a deaf woman, Giovanna Fiorini from Ferrara, came before the Madonna of the Graces; she felt as if her head was split into two parts and was quite literally thrown to the ground before she was healed.²⁸³ These examples show to us some aspects of the relationship that the devotees may have had with these images.

²⁸² *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo 201 Il Martedì della Pentecoste dell'anno 1622: essendo venuti processionalm.te li Fretti della Comp.a del Corpus Dni. di S. Felice con moltiss.mo popolo assieme alla divoz.e della sud.ta Imag.e e ritornando La d.ta Comp.a a casa essendo lontani da 14 miglia S. Felice mandarono avanti Bartolomeo fig.o di Ing. Luigi Porta, che era con suo Padre in d.ta Comp.a, seguito da Angelo a cavallo, p. ordinare al Campanaro, che sonasse le Campane p. il ritorno di detta Compag.a. Il Putto d'età d'anni sette andò velocissim.te, in modo tale che qdo udirono sonare niuno pensava che fossero anco a mezzo viaggi,o e tutti si stupirono della velocità del Putto. Ma in un istante sentirono anche sonare il Capanone della Rocca n. solito a sonare se n. p. occas.e di rumori, fuoco, ed armi e questo fù perche qdo il Putto ebbe dato l'ord.e di sonare volle salire la Rocca e pieno d'allegrezza chiamò seco alcuni altri putti tutti magg.i di Lui, e salirono la Torre quasi miracolosm.te pche la Torre e difficiliss.a da salire. Giunti, che furono su la Torre il Putto si volse trarre ad un legno, e fallando caddè giù da merli, e nel picarsi fù udito raccomandarsi alla SS.ma Verg. di Stuff.e. Cadè da merli su li coppi della roccella altezza, e lontananza Braccia 43: misurati dal Sig.re Arcip.te di quel luogo con un sforzino, e piombo, e ruppe coppi, lambrecchie ed un trave di d.to Coperchio, e si fermò sul p.mo tavello. Intanto giunto il Pre., che aveva avuto la novella, e parendogli morto lo prese nelle braccia e divotissim.te piangendo, e dolendosi della sua sciagura. Intanto il Putto aprì gl'occhy, e rimirando il Pre; gl'addimando ove siamo noi? Quillo rispose nella Rocca. Il Putto disse come siamo noi venuti quà? Il Pre rispose come fig.o mio non sai tu che sei cascato giù dalla Torre? Il Putto rispose nol sò, solam.te mi ricordo, che essendo nella Torre una donna vestita di bianco mi ha preso nelle braccia ne mai piu credevo tornare in terra. Il Pre gl'addimando come si sentiva, gli rispose sentirsi bene, del che Il Pre lodò, e ringraziò Dio, e la SS.ma Verg.e di Stuff.e, e levato in piedi dal Pre il fig.o portato a casa s'accorge, che il braccio sinistro gli cadeva, e disse tu hai rotto un braccio, ma lodato Iddio, e la Mad.na SS.ma si aggiusterà ancora quto. Lo porta a casa cira le 23 ore, lo pone in letto, poi prepara gli necess.i medicam.ti p. accomodargli il braccio essendo pratico in tal arte, ciò fatto va p. medicarlo, e trova il braccio saldato senza male alcuno p. il che magnificò, lodò la gran Verg.e e la domenica seguente, che fu della SS.ma Trinità lo ricondusse vestito da Angelo come era p.ma nela process.e accompagn.to da boniss.ma musica, e circa 200 vestiti a sacco a ringraziarne la B. V. con numerosiss.mo popolo con loro, che ascendevano al n.° più 800 persone, quali tutti facevano fede della verità di d.to caso, a lode, a gloria di Dio, e della SS.ma sua Madre M.a Titolare di Stuff.e.'

²⁸³ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo. 121. Mag.ca Gio.na Fiorini di Ferrara della Cura di S. Paolo sorda come mai avesse avuto orecchie, ed intrando in Chiesa in coscienza sua aff.ma, che parve a lei d'aver tamburi, e trombe nell'orecchie, e giunta avanti alla S.a Imagine parve le se spezzasse la testa in due parti, e p. spazio d'un miserere le venne un accidente, e cascando con la testa sul scabello dell'Altare della SS.ma Imag.e di lì a poco si levò perfettam.te sanata alla presenza del Sig.re Angelo, e Sign.re Baldasserre Livizzani.'

The Madonna of the Graces, as a miraculous image, generated its own tradition of copy prints. Three of these prints, dated to the seventeenth century, have survived to the present day. Made in the Emilia-Romagna area, they are the remnants of a probably much larger local production. The first print, preserved in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino itself, is a woodcut resembling the Madonna of the Graces relatively closely (Fig. 23). The parish priest Carlo Malerba, writing in 1895, tentatively associates this woodcut with the publisher Giuliano Cassiani (1608-1652), active in Modena in the seventeenth century. Malerba notes that the woodcut was positioned behind the miraculous prototype and he explains that it is thanks to this close copy that he managed to transcribe the verses, which had become illegible on the original print.²⁸⁴

Whereas the text inscriptions on the two prints are indeed identical (as far as can be established), the publisher of the copy print made numerous mistakes in transcribing the verses. It seems that he did not know Latin very well. For example, in the first verse on the lower left, he wrote 'accrium' instead of 'aerium' and, in the first verse on the lower right, he wrote 'cremio' instead of 'gremio.'²⁸⁵ The copy woodcut has also been trimmed compared to the original; the title and some words of the couplet on the upper left have been partially cut off, with the title now only reading 'AD MONSERATVM.' The

²⁸⁴ Carlo Malerba, *Iscrizione e Distici che porta l'Immagine di Maria ss.ma di Monserato venerata in questa Chiesa Arcipetratale di Stuffione sotto il Titolo di santa Maria delle Grazie*, 1895, Parish Historical Archive Stuffione, Stuffione di Ravarino (MO), Italy: 'La presente trascrizione fatta da riporsi dietro alla B.V. che si conserva in Chiesa, venne ricopiata all'intento che non andassero adulterati i Distici che furono stampati sull'Immagine della Madonna, e che in parte sono anche inintelligibili ancor al presente quelli dell'Originale, e non si sarebbero copiati se dietro alla vera Immagine non se ne fosse stata una seconda, portante gli stessi Distici edita in Modena da – non si capisce il nome – Cassiani. Non vi si trova l'anno.'

²⁸⁵ For the full text and translation, see Appendix 5.

copy deviates further from the prototype in that the verse couplets are separated by decorative motifs instead of vertical black lines as in the original *Madonna of the Graces*. The same decorative motif returns at the end of the verses at the bottom of the image. Although it seems likely that the publisher sought to produce as close a copy of the prototype as possible, the reproduction is more crudely carved. The faces of the Virgin and Child are not as expressive as in the original. Certain details, such as the navel of Jesus, are lacking, while others, such as the foot of Jesus, are only sketched.

The second copy print, also preserved in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, is a hand-coloured engraving, which also contains roughly the same verses as the miraculous print, but is additionally surrounded by scenes of miracles (Fig. 24). The engraving is signed 'Gio: Paolo Zanardi' at the lower right; it was probably made by Giovanni Paolo Zanardi (1658-1718), a printmaker who was active in Bologna from the late seventeenth century. The engraving deviates from the original in that the names of the hermitages in the background are in italics and are positioned differently in relations to the images of the hermitage themselves. The hermitage of 'S. MADELLENA' ('SAINT MARY MAGDALENE') is missing. Furthermore, the title of the print is no longer in Latin but in Italian, reading: 'IMAGINE DELLA BEATA VERGINE. / DI MONSERATO. / Posta nella Chiesa di Stuffione' ('IMAGE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN. / OF MONTSERRAT. / Placed in the Church of Stuffione'). It seems likely that this translation into the vernacular was made for a local audience that was literate, but could not read Latin.²⁸⁶ It is

²⁸⁶ For the full text and translation, see Appendix 6.

interesting that, while the inscription refers Montserrat to identify the iconography of the prototype, it specifically refers to the print in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino as the miraculous image that it is seeking to reproduce, suggesting that this copy print was a local production. The iconography is the same as in the prototype, with the Christ Child sawing the mountain, on which the Virgin sits enthroned; the faces of the Virgin and Child, however, are drawn more sharply than in the original (see Fig. 23).

In the copy print, the image of the Virgin of Montserrat is surrounded by eight scenes of miracles. Reading from top to bottom and left to right, they show: a praying man; a crippled man, who offers his crutches to the Virgin; a woman being exorcised; a second praying man; a person falling out of a window; a woman falling into a well; a third praying man; and, finally, a farmer crushed under a wagon. These miracles, though of generic types, correspond to miracles listed in the above-mentioned miracle books of the Madonna of the Graces. In the 1622 manuscript *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato*, crippled men offer their crutches to the Madonna at least three times (Miracles LX, 212, and 242).²⁸⁷ The woman who is exorcised has a

²⁸⁷ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo. LX. Dom.co Borghi avendo un anno le ferle n. potendo andare fece voto di visitare tre sabbati la sud.ta Madonna, e sub.o fatto il voto cominciò a star bene, e nelle visite ha lasciato le ferle, e perferram.te sanato ... Mlo 212. N. fig.o di Giacomo Rovatti da Bagnara stroppiato da tutte due le gambe con dolore tale, che giorno, e notte gridava ad alta voce fatto voto visitare la sud.ta Imag.e la sd.a volta, che la visitò che fu la dom.ca 20 doppo la Pentecoste lasciò le ferle e se ne ritornò a casa sano ... Mlo. 242: La sud.ta aff.ma che Pelleg.o Veneziano il cognome del quale disse non si ricordava abitante nella Stellata era leproso in modo tale, che n. poteva andare senza ferle ne manco porsi le mani alla bocca ed avendo visitata la sud.ta SS.ma Imag.e la prima volta vi lasciò una ferla, ed in breve tempo fù liberato, e vi lasciò l'altra ferla.'

parallel in Miracle 278 in the same *Racolta*.²⁸⁸ The miracle concerning a man falling out of a window corresponds to a specific episode related in both Spaccini's *Cronaca di Modena* (1588-1630) and the above-mentioned *Racolta* of 1622 (Miracle 201).²⁸⁹ The 1622 *Racolta* and the 1680 *SCIelta D'alcune delle principali Grazie fatte DALLA B. VERGINE DI MONSERATO*

²⁸⁸ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Adi 9 Lug.o 1666 Mlo. 278. Adi 9 Lugo 1668 La M.a Poluzza dalla Vallata essendo spiritata, ed oppressa da quattro capi di demony l'uno nomato Leone, l'altro Lessone, il terzo Pullepatto, e il quarto Chiù fù liberata la quarta, o quinta volta che visitò la SS.ma Imagine, e quel Dom.o Magg.e cioè Leone diceva che Marzia lo cacciava via, e semp.e ogni volta che visitava detta Imag.e sempre uscivano demony da quel corpo, e il dì 29 d.to portò la tavoletta, e lasciò un abito alla B.a V.e, e si cantò la Messa, e Tedeus. In ringraziam.to alla gran V.e.'

²⁸⁹ Spaccini, *Cronaca di Modena*, 292: 'Una compagnia di San Felice puochi di sono vi vienè processionalmente a visitarla; nel ritornare a casa molti ragazzi andarono su la loro torre per suonare da festa, ma essendone un vicino ad una finestra fu spinto, non si potendose ritenere cadè e diede su certi copi, e ropé il tasello, diede a traverso a travi: finalmente arivò in terra senza alcuna ofesa nella persona. Corse gente al spettacolo, et vedendo non aveva macula alcuna vi domandarono come s'era salvato, rispose: 'Una donna vestita di bianco, simile alla presente imagine', onde tutti laudarono la Santissima Verg della ricevuta grazia.' This miracle is also reported in the *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari*: 'Mlo 201. Il Martedì della Pentecoste dell'anno 1622: essendo venuti processionalm.te li Fretti della Comp. Del Corpus Dni di S. Felice con moltiss.mo popolo assieme alla divoz.e della sudt.a Imag.e, e ritornando la d.ta Comp.a a casa essendo lontani da 14 miglia a S. Felice mandarono avanti Bartolomeo fig.o di Ing. Luigi Corta, che era con suo padre in d.ta Comp.a, vestito da Angelo a cavallo, p. ordinare al campanaro, che sonasse le Campane p. il ritorno di detta Compag.a. Il Putto d'età d'anni sette andò velocissim.te, in modo tale che qdo udirono sonare niuno pensava, che fossero anco a mezzo viaggio, e tutti si stupirono della velocità del Putto. Ma in un istante sentirono anche sonare il Capanone della Rocca n. solito a sonare se n. p. occas.e di rumori, fuoco, ed armi, e questo fù perche q.do il Putto ebbe dato l'ord.e di sonare volle salire La Rocca, e pieno d'allegrezza chiamò seco alcuni altri putti tutti magg.i di lui, e salirono la Torre quasi miracolosm.te pche la Torre, e difficiliss.a da salire. Giunti, che furono su la Torre il Putto si volse trarre ad un legno, e fallando caddè giù da merli, e nel spicarsi fù udito raccomandarsi alla SS.ma Verg.e di Stuff.e. Cadè da merli sù li coppì della rocella altezza, e lontananza Braccia 43: misurati dal Sig.re Arcip.te di quel luogo con un sforzino, e piombo, e ruppe coppì, lambrecchie ed un trave di d.to Coperchio, e si fermò sul p.mo tasello. Intanto giunto il Pre., che aveva avuto la novella, e parendogli morto lo prese nelle braccia e divotissim.te piangendo, e dolendosi della sua sciagura. Intanto il Putto aprì gl'occhy, e rimirando il Pre; gl'addimando ove siamo noi? Quillo rispose nella Rocca. Il Putto disse come siamo noi venuti quà? Il Pre rispose come fig.o mio n. sai tu che sei cascato giù dalla Torre? Il Putto rispose nol so, solam.te mi ricordo, che essendo nella Torre una Donna vestita di bianco mi ha preso nelle braccia ne mai piu credevo tornare in terra. Il Pre gl'addimanda come si sentiva, gli rispose sentirsi bene, del che Il Pre lodò e ringrazio Dio, e la SS.ma Verg.e di Stuff.e e levato in piedi dal Pre il fig.o portalo a casa si accorge che il braccio sinistro gli cadeva, e disse tu hai rotto un braccio, ma lodato Iddio, e la Mad.na SS.ma si aggiusterà ancora quto. Lo porta a casa circa le 23 ore, lo pone in letto, poi preparagli necess.i medicam.ti p. accomodargli il braccio essendo pratico in tal arte, ciò fatto va p. medicarlo, e trova il braccio saldato senza male alcuno p. il che magnificò, lodò la gran Verg.e; e la domenica seguente, che fù della SS.ma Trinità lo ricondusse vestito da Angelo come era p.m nella process.e accompagn.to da boniss.ma musica, e circa 200 vestiti a sacco a ringraziarne la B. V. con numerosiss.mo popolo con loro, che ascendevano al n.º più 800 persone quali tutti facevano fede della verità di d.to caso, a lode, a gloria di Dio, e della SS.ma sua Madre M.a Titolare di Stuff.e.'

Posta nella Chiesa Parochiale di Stuffione each include two miracles concerning a woman falling into a well (Miracles 172 and 264 in the *Racolta*; Miracles 30 and 39 in the *SCIERTA*).²⁹⁰ The same texts also each include two miracles involving farmers crushed under their carts (Miracles 194 and 246 in the *Racolta*; Miracles 31 and 37 in the *SCIERTA*).²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo. 172. Dom.ca fig.a di Girolamo Cornetti di Rivara cavando acqua cadde nel pozzo col capo in giù giunta al fondo si raccomandò alla sud.ta Imag.e sub.to ritorna sopra l'acqua sino alla cintura e ivi stette gran pezzo, e chiamando aiuto finalm.te essendo udita fù cavata dal pozzo sana, e salva ... Mlo 264. Il giorno di tutti li Santi dell'anno sud.to 1650 la Lod.c fig.a di Ing. Gabrielle Zioli di Stuffion.e essendo al pozzo p. cavare un secchio d'acqua lasciata la delta del pozzo, quale era di pietra coperta di grossi assoni di rovere cade nel pozzo seguitata da una parte della delta, e da un assone. stette in d.to pozzo circa un ora, e raccomandata alla sud.ta SS.ma Imag.e fu estratta da detto pozzo senza lesione alcuna affermando che mentre era in d.to pozzo n. aveva altra memoria, che dell'Imag.e miracolosa di Stufi.e. Il che tutto conferito a Sig.ri Medici e periti affimarono esser stato evid.te mlo. pche n. è possibile naturalmente conservar la vita tanto tempo nell'acqua, e particolarmente in quella di un pozzo piu dell'altra frigida, ed la seguente Dom.ca Ing. Girolamo suo Padre fece cantare una messa avanti la sempre Laudabile Verg.e SS.ma p. la ricevuta grazia'; *SCIERTA D'alcune delle principali Grazie*, 17-18 e 22: '30 Domenica figliuola di Girolamo Cornetti, della cura di Rivara, cavando acque dal pozzo, vi cadde dentro col capo in giù, mà giunta al fondo, invocò la Beatissima Vergine di Stuffione, e subito risorse sopra dell'acque fin'alla cintura, stando così lungo tempo immobile, finche chiamando aiuto, fù udita, e cavata fuori sana, e salva ... 39 Lodouica Zilioli cadde in un pozzo mentre cavava acqua, e sopra li cadde un pezzo di muro, con un grand'assone, ma invocato l'aiuto della Santa Imagine: doppo un'hora in circa, ne fu cavata senza offesa veruna con stupore di tutti.'

²⁹¹ *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli*: 'Mlo 194. Pelleg.o fig.o di Ant.o Cavallini volendo aiutare un carro carico di piante che cadeva nel canale d.to Panaro, essendovi gran precipizio cascò egli prima e poi il carro carico addosso, et in questo pericolo si raccomandò alla sud.a Imag.e n. avendo altro aiuto, s'aperse il carro in due parti, e parimenti le piante si dividero in due parti, e così p. mezzo a quelle uscì senza offesa alcuna ... Mlo. 246. Nicolò Giacomo Garuti da Stuff.e conducendo subito dopp: l'aggiustmam.to della Guerra una vascella di vino al fort'Urbano di Castello Franco dopo esser passato li Monti del Castellazzo quasi dpo la piana si rovesciò il carro, e la vascella piena di vino, ed egli rimase sotto, e restò quivi p. buona pezza sotto a tal peso come morto sinacche un Fanciullo che aveva con lui ebbe ritrovato persone che gli levassero tal peso d'addosso, che fu p. spazio di molte ore, e perché già lo stimavano morto gli voltarono la d.ta vascella sop.a il Capo p. alleggerire il Carro con pericolo di schiacciargli il Capo, e lo portarono a casa come morto, ma p.che s'era come riferisce raccomandato da sè in tal pericolo alla d.ta Imag.e e poi anche la madre sua lo raccomandò alla stessa pciò. egli in breve tempo si riebbe ne si perse pure una gocciola di vino e non ebbe altro danno si nella roba, che nella persona'; *SCIERTA D'alcune delle principali Grazie*, 18 e 21: '31 Pellegrino d'Antonio Cavallini cadde in Panaro, con addosso un Carro carico di piante, nè havendo alcun'aiuto humano, si votò alla nostra Santa Imagine, e subito s'aperse il Carro per mezzo, si divisero le piante, & egli uscì fuori senza lesione alcuna ... 37 Nicolò Garuti, conducendo una Botte. di vino à Forte Urbano, hebbe la disgrazia, che se li rovesciò il Carro, & esso vi restò sotto, e vi rimase per molto tempo, finche un putto, ch'era seco trovò persone, che li levassero quel peso d'addosso, e perche lo crederono morto, li girarono la botte sopra del capo, per alleggerire il Carro; trovatolo nondimeno vivo, li portarono à casa come morto; ma essendosi egli raccomandato alla Santissima Vergine di Stuffione, dond'egli era; ricuperò ben presto la sanità, né hebbe altro danno.'

Interestingly, even though the second copy print is an engraving, a rare surviving woodcut matrix in the Galleria Estense at Modena has an iconography that is quite similar to it, showing once again the Madonna of the Graces surrounded by scenes of miracles (Fig. 25).²⁹² This matrix, probably dating from the seventeenth century, was previously owned by the Soliani, a family of printmakers active in Modena from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries; it may well stem from the workshop of Giovanni Paolo Zanardi, identified as the maker of the engraving.²⁹³ The preservation of an engraving and woodcut matrix with comparable iconography, both based on the Madonna of the Graces, suggests indeed a wide-ranging local production of copy prints, possibly commissioned by in order to promote the cult of the Madonna of the Graces throughout their territories.

Last but not least, the third surviving copy print of the Madonna of the Graces is another seventeenth-century woodcut. Unlike the two other surviving copies, it does not bear an inscription except for the title and the names of the hermitages (Fig. 26). Remarkably, the title in this woodcut reads 'RITRATO DELLA MADONÃ DI STVFION. / NEL MODENESE' ('PORTRAIT OF THE MADONNA OF STUFFIONE. / AT MODENA') and does not mention Montserrat at all, indicating that the Madonna of the Graces had become a fully independent miraculous prototype.²⁹⁴ The omission of any reference to

²⁹² Matrix of the Madonna of the Graces, 17th century, 293 x 271 mm, Fondo Soliani 4582, Galleria Estense, Modena. See also *Catalogo generale delle incisioni in legno per uso di tipografia di varie epoche di antica spettanza degli eredi di Bartolomeo Soliani* (Modena, 1864), 37.

²⁹³ Renato Roli, *Pittura bolognese, 1650-1800: dal Cignani ai Gandolfi* (Bologna: Alfa, 1977), 298.

²⁹⁴ Varini, *A MEMORIA DEL III. CENTENARIO*, 17: 'Per le tante grazie e prodigiosi miracoli operati, da questa Santa Immagine, fu cangiato il titolo di Monserrato o Monteserato, forse abbreviazione di Mons-segato, in quello di Santa Maria delle Grazie.'

Montserrat and the language used suggest again a local production. The iconography of the woodcut resembles that of the prototype, but the saw that the Christ Child is using to cut the mountain is much bigger than in all the other prints. The matrix of this very woodcut is also, albeit partially, preserved in the Galleria Estense, missing the lower part with the title (Fig. 27).²⁹⁵ Both the woodcut and the matrix are signed with the initials 'BS.' It is not certain to whom these initials refer, but Chiara Travisonni points out that there are other matrices of devotional prints in the Galleria Estense signed with either the same initials, 'BS', or the abbreviated signature 'Bal. S.', which can be all attributed to the same woodcutter.²⁹⁶ It is possible that 'BS' refers to the printer Bartolomeo Soliani, who established a print shop in 1646. The third copy woodcut after the Madonna of the Graces appears in fact in the Soliani catalogue of 1864.

To conclude, it is worth noting that the above-mentioned woodcut associated with the publisher Cassiani is currently in use as the substitute processional print of the Madonna of the Graces (see Fig. 23). It is so close to the original that most of the devotees appear to believe that it is in fact the miraculous print itself when it is carried in procession. The processional woodcut is exhibited on the altar of a prefabricated church built to replace the temporarily closed Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, under restoration since the major earthquake in the region in 2012. As the miraculous prototype of

²⁹⁵ Matrix of the Madonna of the Graces, 17th century, 241 x 159 mm, Fondo Soliani 4669, Galleria Estense, Modena. See also *Catalogo generale delle incisioni in legno per uso di tipografia di varie epoche di antica spettanza degli eredi di Bartolomeo Soliani* (Modena, 1864), 145.

²⁹⁶ Chiara Travisonni, "Firme di xilografi seicenteschi nelle matrici lignee della Galleria Estense di Modena," *Venezia Arti* 26 (2017): 206.

the Madonna of the Graces is nowadays kept in the rectory of Ravarino, the processional copy has permanently come to replace the cult object itself. Both as a processional copy and as a general substitute, Cassiani's print has, over the years, been credited with further miracles, showing that even copies of copies could inhabit miraculous powers.

II.II The Madonna of Passau

II.II.I The Original as a Copy

The second miraculous print in Emilia-Romagna reproducing a miraculous image from abroad is the Madonna of Passau, venerated in Pragatto. As mentioned above, the Madonna of Passau is a reproduction of the *Mariahilf* of Passau, an early seventeenth-century painting, which itself is a copy of an early sixteenth-century painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder (about 1537), venerated today in the Cathedral of Innsbruck (Fig. 28 and Fig. 29).²⁹⁷

Cranach's painting was originally painted for the Saxon court in Dresden and it was intended for the Church of the Holy Cross of the same city. As images of the Virgin Mary were fell out of favour during the Protestant Reformation, it was removed from the church to the *Gemäldegalerie* of the Elector of Saxony.²⁹⁸ During a diplomatic mission to Dresden in 1611, Archduke Leopold V of Austria (1585-1633), brother of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II (1578-1637), chose the painting as a guest gift from the Elector

²⁹⁷ Jörg Probst, *Reproduktion: Techniken und Ideen von der Antike bis heute; eine Einführung* (Berlin: Reimer, 2011), 16.

²⁹⁸ Jürgen Emmert, *Maria-Hilf: ein Cranach-Bild und seine Wirkung* (Würzburg: Marmelsteiner Kabinett, 1994), 9.

of Saxony John George I (1585-1656), in spite of the fact that there were more valuable objects in the *Gemäldegalerie*. Neglected by the Protestant Electors of Saxony, the image of the Madonna was highly regarded by the Catholic Archduke Leopold. The Veronese priest Agostino Zanella (1847) reports that Leopold V actually felt the need to release the Virgin (which Zanella calls 'a sacred jewel') from the other profane items, by which it was surrounded, and that, over the years, he attributed many miracles to the painting, among which the success in childbirth of his wife Claudia de' Medici (1604-1648), who gave life to their son Sigismund Francis (1630-1665).²⁹⁹ Zanella also mentions that Leopold V always kept the image in his room and used to carry it with him during his travels, as a kind of portable altar.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 11, part 1, 557-72: 'Leopoldo austriaco, fratello dell'imperatore Ferdinando II, nato da Carlo austriaco ed Anna bavarese, erasi recato a Dresda, metropoli della Sassonia, col seguito della sua corte, per visitare Giorgio elettore di quel regno. Ei ricevette il duca con tale magnificenza, che fece stupire quanti videro la grandezza di quella corte. Or, egli avvenne che un giorno fu condotto l'austriaco dal duca nella sala del tesoro: ma non tesoro di denaro e d'oro, custodito pei bisogni della repubblica; tesoro che serviva a dilettere i riguardanti coi miracoli dell'arte in conflitto colla natura; opere di pittura, di plastica, di scultura, e di altri artificiosi e preziosissimi lavori. Leopoldo esaminò tutto con gran diligenza, perciocchè era di sì fatte cose intelligentissimo. Gliene piacquero molte: ed essendogli dal conte stato offerto, come si suole, di scegliersi uno di quegli oggetti che più aggradisse, né dubitando che l'Austriaco si sarebbe volto alle gemme; questi scelse in vece un'immagine di MARIA santissima di elegante lavoro. "A che (diceva egli a sé stesso) dee star qui questo sacro gioiello, in mezzo a tante profane cose?" Che anzi poscia era usato di raccontare frequentemente, che vedutala la prima volta, erasi, sentito una certa pia commozione nell'animo, che spingevano a liberare la santa effigie da quel luogo; ma non aveva coraggio di domandarla. Il duca assai della buona voglia consentì a soddisfare al desiderio di lui, meravigliandosi non poco che l'Austriaco andasse contento di un dono sì vile [...] Tra le altre, il parto della serenissima Claudia, nel quale diede alla luce il secondogenito Sigismondo, si tenne condotto a buon termine per favore della gran Vergine, pregata in questo simulacro: ed ella stessa, a chi la interrogava, era solita sempre raccontare l'inevitabile pericolo suo e della prole; e come, posciachè fu portata questa immagine nella camera di lei ch'era soprapparto, svanito ogni timore, successe prodigiosamente il puerperio: siccome si può leggere diffusamente nell'archivio della sacra effigie.'

³⁰⁰ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 11, part 1, 557-72: 'Leopoldo finché visse non dipartì mai da se stesso codesta tavola di legno, alta cinque palmi, e larga quattro all'incirca, tenendola sempre nella sua camera, decorosamente ornata. Ne' viaggi per lo più la recava seco, come un altare portatile: e molte grazie ricevette dal cielo, ch'egli attribuiva all'intercessione di MARIA per questa effigie.'

Before this event took place, however, Leopold V was bishop in Passau from 1598 till 1625, where the painting was seen by Father Marquard von Schwendi (1574-1634), Dean of the Cathedral of the city, who liked it so much that he wanted to have his own copy.³⁰¹ He commissioned an enlarged reproduction from a 'pio pictore passaviensis', who remains anonymous.³⁰² At first, this copy was venerated by Von Schwendi in his own room. Similarly to what happened with the Virgin of Montserrat, however, the dean repeatedly witnessed from his vegetable garden how divine lights appeared on a nearby mountain, especially on Saturdays, and he concluded that the Virgin wanted to be venerated in her own proper location.³⁰³ A wooden chapel was built on the mountain in 1622. Soon after, between 1624 and 1627, this chapel was transformed into a splendid church by the Baroque architect Francesco Garbanino (Fig. 30).³⁰⁴ A roofed staircase leading to the church was added in 1628.³⁰⁵

³⁰¹ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 10, part 2, 1165-70: 'L'origine di questa celebratissima immagine fu così. Leopoldo austriaco, fratello dell'imperatore Ferdinando II, ebbe un'immagine, della quale parlerò a suo luogo. La vide l'illustrissimo don Marquardo de Schwendi, canonico di Passavia, uomo non tanto per prosapia quanto per virtù nobilissimo; e con preghiere ottenne d'averne una copia.'

³⁰² Probst, *Reproduktion*, note 2 p. 30.

³⁰³ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 10, part 2, 1165-70: 'Ottenuta questa immagine dipinta da maestro pennello, e similissima all'originale, il predetto canonico la venerava nella sua camera con lunga e quotidiana orazione. Or egli avvenne che, passeggiando una notte nel domestico suo orto, vide il monte vicino, già folto di alberi selvaggi, circondato da parecchi lumi disposti come in ordine di processione, e che si movevano girando intorno. Si meravigliò a quell'insolito spettacolo: ma non sapendo che cosa mai quei lumi volessero predire, né ignorando cangiarsi talvolta lo stigio Alastore in angelo di luce, dispregiò affatto l'apparizione. Ma ripetutasi un'altra volta la stessa visione, e assopito ogni timore, cominciò a gustare un gaudio celeste, prese a passeggiar sulla sera più di frequente nell'orto, e ricrearsi a quello spettacolo giocondo. Egli osservò per tanto che nei giorni di sabato i lumi comparivano più splendidi ed in maggior quantità. Questa circostanza del sabato, gli mise qualche pensiero che forse la Vergine, ch'egli costantemente nella sua immagine venerava, desiderasse da lui un culto pubblico sopra quel monte, ov'egli solo avea veduto il portento; sebbene v'abbia chi sostenga essere stati veduti que' lumi anche da altri. Perché dunque era solo a vederli ed era abbastanza bene di sostanze provveduto, pensò che fosse la sua immagine che ciò domandasse.'

³⁰⁴ Thomas Raff, *Wallfahrt kennt keine Grenzen*, exh. cat. (Munich: Das Nationalmuseum, 1984), 299.

³⁰⁵ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 10, part 2, 1165-70: 'Del resto lo stesso tempio di MARIA, e la magnifica abitazione al santuario annessa, insieme colla scala coperta fino alla

In the meantime, in 1626, Archduke Leopold V had married Claudia de' Medici (1604-1648) and they took the original painting by Lucas Cranach with them to Innsbruck, where Leopold V was appointed regent of Tyrol and Further Austria. In 1650, after the death of his father, Ferdinand Charles (1628-1662), the eldest son of Leopold V and Claudia, donated the painting to what is known today as the Cathedral of Innsbruck.³⁰⁶ Even during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), however, the painting had already been worshipped publicly in the chapel of the Hofburg.³⁰⁷ In the winter of 1646-1647, the Tyrolean country estates vowed to build their own church for the Mariahilf if Tyrol was saved from the war; they honoured their vow, even if their church did not obtain the original painting (Fig. 31).³⁰⁸ Cranach's miraculous Mariahilf thus became a symbol of the Counter-Reformation during this period.³⁰⁹ Leopold V himself had played an important role within the Counter-Reformation movement, having established the Jesuit academy, the Leopoldinum, in Passau as early as 1612, against the will of the local cathedral chapter.³¹⁰

The Mariahilf of Passau became subsequently also associated with a victory over the Turks. During the Siege of Vienna, the Holy Roman Emperor

cima del monte, furono ben presto redintegrate: e la devozione, d'altronde sempre grande, ora è grandissima.'

³⁰⁶ Carolin Pecho, *Fürstbischof, Putschist, Landesherr: Erzherzog Leopolds Herrschaftsentwürfe im Zeitalter des Dreissigjährigen Krieges* (Berlin: Lit, 2017), 404.

³⁰⁷ Michael Cole and Rebecca Zorach eds., *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 295-6; Gisela Luther, *Sinnlichkeit und Heilserwartung: Lucas Cranachs Mariahilfbild und dessen Rezeption im kleinen Andachtsbild und Bildvotiv* (Marburg and Lahn: Philipps-Universität Marburg, 1978), 44.

³⁰⁸ Luther, *Sinnlichkeit*, 44.

³⁰⁹ On this aspect, see Cole and Zorach, eds., *The Idol in the Age of Art*, 295-6.

³¹⁰ Michael Weithmann, *Kleine Passauer Stadtgeschichte* (Regensburg: Pustet, 2004).

Leopold I (1640-1705) went to take refuge in Passau, where he prayed daily in front of the miraculous image. For this reason, the Christian defeat of the Turks on the Kahlenberg, fought under the motto *Mariahilf* on 11-12 September 1683, was attributed to the picture. Some of the weapons used in the battle were taken to the sanctuary.³¹¹ As a consequence of this increased fame, many copies were made, especially in the Alps and Southern Germany, and some of these images became in turn miraculous. One of the earliest of these copies is the one donated in 1660, by the Barnabite Cölestin Joaneli, to what was at the time a cemetery chapel, and then became the baroque *Mariahilf* Church of Vienna in 1687.³¹²

Although the *Mariahilf* was, in both its Innsbruck and Passau versions, one of the token images of the Counter-Reformation, it is worth mentioning that Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553), the author of the original *Mariahilf*, was, from 1505 till his death, the court painter of the Electors of Saxony in Wittenberg, the heart of the Protestant Reformation, and he had a close relationship with Martin Luther (1483-1546). Not only was Luther the godfather of his daughter, but Cranach was also both a witness at Luther's wedding and the godfather of Luther's firstborn.³¹³ Since Luther (1522) was averse to the veneration of images, it is one of the little ironies of history that one of Cranach's paintings became a Roman-Catholic cult object. Such cannot have been the wish of either the German artist or the Elector of Saxony, John George I, who gave the picture to Leopold V; yet, the same

³¹¹ Probst, *Reproduktion*, 25.

³¹² On this aspect, see Ernest Blaschek, ed., *Mariahilf einst und jetzt* (Wien: Gerlach & Wiedling, 1926).

³¹³ Bonnie Noble, *Lucas Cranach the Elder: art and devotion of the German Reformation* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2009), 12.

picture had different roles within different cultures.³¹⁴ As stated by Bonnie Noble, Cranach's images of the Madonna were expressive of an ecumenical spirit and could meet the needs of both Protestants and Catholics.³¹⁵ The *Mariahilf* could be read as a so-called Lutheran *Merkbild*, a didactic illustration of Christian doctrine; it lacks a halo or crown and the Virgin is simply represented as a mother.

As a consequence of its devotional success, the *Mariahilf* was widely copied not only in paintings but also in prints, which further contributed to the fame of the image. Probably the earliest print ever made after the *Mariahilf* is one signed by the Augsburg engraver Lucas Kilian (1579-1637) ('Lucas Kilian sculpsit') and dated 1625 (Fig. 32 Fig. 33). Since the print was made when the Sanctuary of Passau was still under construction, it seems likely that it was made with the intent of publicising the sanctuary at its beginning. An Augsburg publisher may have been chosen specifically for this purpose, as Augsburg was the most important printing centre of Germany and possibly of Europe at the time, and an Augsburg publisher could guarantee a wide dispersal. It is probably no coincidence that there are also later versions of this print by Kilian, one of them surrounded by a heavily decorated frame.³¹⁶ Since Cranach's painting was not an object of public veneration until 1650, the earliest prints copying the *Mariahilf* were more likely reproductions of the Passau version and not of the original by Cranach. Prints such as those by Kilian do not refer explicitly to Passau, however. At the outset of the cult, it

³¹⁴ Arno Herzig, *Der Zwang zum wahren Glauben: Rekatholisierung vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 93.

³¹⁵ On this aspect, see Noble, *Lucas Cranach the Elder*, 163-96.

³¹⁶ Probst, *Reproduktion*, 17-20.

may not have been considered good form to state that a print was a copy of a copy and that the object of veneration was indeed itself a copy. Yet, the Sanctuary of Passau became one of the most important pilgrimage sites of Europe, long before the Cathedral of Innsbruck. In a sense, therefore, the version in Passau was the original object of the public cult.³¹⁷ The status of the Passau image was boosted by the Capuchin Order, in charge of the cult, and a new Mariahilf Confraternity, which counted many German aristocrats among its members.³¹⁸

In printed reproductions, as in the paintings, the Christ Child is usually held by the Virgin, with His arms around His mother's neck. Most prints after the Mariahilf bear the following Latin verses (or their German translation): 'Tu nos iuuando respice / Et nos ab hoste protege / Pestem famemque remoue / Horaque mortis suscipe' ('Regard us lending us your aid / Protect us from enemies / Remove from us hunger and pest / Sustain us in the hour of death').³¹⁹ One well-known example displaying these verses is a seventeenth-century engraving of which the British Museum has three impressions (Fig. 33).³²⁰ As in the print venerated in Pragatto, the title reads: 'SANCTA MARIA AVXILIATRIX PASSAVIENSIS MIRACVLIS CLARA' ('HOLY MARY AID OF THOSE OF PASSAU MIRACULOUS LIGHT'). The print is thus explicitly a copy after the Mariahilf of Passau; it is a reproduction of a reproduction. The British Museum engraving is signed at the bottom:

³¹⁷ Probst, *Reproduktion*, 17-20.

³¹⁸ Raff, *Wallfahrt*, 299.

³¹⁹ Probst, *Reproduktion*, 17.

³²⁰ Jean Boulanger (after Andrea Solario?), *Seated Virgin*, 1623-1680, engraving on paper, 408 x 300, V,1.81, British Museum, London; Jean Boulanger (after Andrea Solario ?), *Seated Virgin*, 1623-1680, 408 x 200 mm, 1877,0811.644, British Museum, London; Jean Boulanger (after Andrea Solario ?), *Seated Virgin*, 1623-1680, engraving on paper, 408 x 300 mm, R,8.19, British Museum, London.

'Boulangier sculp.' (left) and 'Herman Weyen exc.' (right). Jean Boulangier (1608-1680) was a famous French engraver and Herman Weyen (1638-1669) a French publisher of high-quality devotional prints. Since Boulangier went to Bologna when he was very young and spent most of his life in Italy, it is theoretically possible that the artist saw the revered image in Pragatto and copied the motif, including the verses, from there; alternatively, even if this seems unlikely, he could have been the first to make the iconography known in Pragatto.³²¹

II.II.II The Printed Copy

The Madonna of Passau, venerated in Pragatto, is a mid-seventeenth-century engraving on paper, which, like the Madonna of the Graces, exists only in one miraculous impression. As stated in its inscription ('S. MARIA AVXILIATRIX PASSAVIENSIS, MIRACVLI CLARA'), the print is explicitly a copy of the Mariahilf of Passau and not of Cranach's painting. The print thus implicitly affirms to be the miraculous copy of a miraculous copy of an original that at the time may or may not yet have become a miraculous image in its own right.

There are other similar cases. For instance, the eighteenth-century coloured miraculous engraving of Jesus the Nazarene, a copy of the Roman copy of the original miraculous image of Jesus the Nazarene in Madrid, venerated today in the Church of Saint Donato (to which was given), in Genoa, is also

³²¹ Michael Bryan, *A Biographical and Critical Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* (London: H. G. Bohn, 1849), 104.

twice removed from the original prototype. The inscription on this print (possibly a later addition) reads: 'JESUS NAZARENUS / Miraculous Image which is venerated / in the Collegiate and Parish Church / of Saint Donato in Genoa.'³²²

In its turn, the Madonna of Passau also bears the four above-mentioned verses that occur standardly on copies of the *Mariahilf*, with their German translation (substituting 'submoue' for the more common 'remove').³²³ At the bottom in the centre, we find the name of the publisher, Gaspar Huberti (1625-1624), an engraver of reproductive prints, especially after paintings by Rubens, active in Antwerp in the seventeenth century. The print of the Madonna of Passau may thus have been conceived as a reproductive print after a work of art, as Cranach, the author of the original *Mariahilf*, was a famous Renaissance painter. It seems more likely, however, that Gaspar Huberti simply published devotional prints as well as artistic reproductions. The style of the print is northern and of a much later date than Cranach's painting. The Pragatto print was, at a later stage, coloured by hand in watercolour by local nuns; an array of colours is still visible, including yellow, brown, white, red, blue, and light pink.

Unlike the Madonna of the Graces, the printed reproduction of a sculpture, the Madonna of Passau is quite similar to the miraculous image that it

³²² 'JESUS NAZARENUS / Miracolosa Immagine che si venera / nella Chiesa Collegiata e Parochiale / di S. Donato in Genova.' On the engraving, see Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 205-6.

³²³ The inscription on the print reads: 'Tu nos iuvando respice Et nos ab Hoste protege / Pestem Famemque Submoue Horaque Mortis suspice / Mit deiner hilff sihe uns an Vorm feindt befchutze uns [...] / hunger undt pest wende hu[...]. / In todts noth mntb dich unser an.'

copies. As in the painting, the Virgin is shown in half-length, holding the Christ Child in a caring embrace. The Child's right leg is tenderly interwoven with the Virgin's left arm, while His right hand caresses His mother's chin, seeking her attention. The Child looks at his mother, while the Virgin looks at the viewer. As in the Passau painting, and unlike Cranach's original, the veil, which covers the head of the Virgin, does not also cover the head of the Child. In a deviation from both paintings, the figures in the print have haloes, attributes omitted from the ecumenical original. Once installed in the church, the print was also fitted with two golden crowns in relief, each encrusted with three gems, and with a cross of diamonds, which was once used as a pendant for a necklace which was around the neck of the Madonna. These items were probably donated by devotees. An official coronation ceremony is indeed unknown. The necklace is probably an *ex voto*. It is worth noting that neither Cranach's original, once established as a miraculous image at Innsbruck, nor the Passau copy of the *Mariahilf*, have ever been officially crowned.

The print further differs from the paintings in its colouring. The colour scheme of the Virgin's clothing is inverted: instead of a red cloak and a blue dress, she has a blue cloak and a red dress. It is unclear whether the inversion is due to carelessness or was done by design (obviously, the nuns did not have access to the original and the traditional attributes are generally a blue cloak and a red dress), but in general, the hand colouring betrays a lack of sophistication. The necklace that the Virgin wears in the painting has been given the same colour as her dress and looks more like a collar in the print;

the lips of the Christ Child appear not to have been coloured at all; and the Virgin's originally blond hair has been coloured brown.

II.II.III A Gift by Monsignor Pietro Bargellini

Regarding the arrival of the Madonna of Passau in the village of Pragatto, there are none of the contradictions in the sources that are found in the case of the Madonna of the Graces. Only the date of the arrival is left unspecified. Pragatto is a district of Crespellano, a small village in Emilia-Romagna, which, like Stuffione di Ravarino, is located between Bologna (at circa 16 kilometres distance) and Modena (at circa 22 kilometres distance). In his *Dizionario corografico* (1782), the historian Serafino Calindri (1733-1811) speaks of 'an Image of Mary on illuminated paper representing the Blessed Virgin of Passau in Germany, which [was] given by Monsignor Bargellini Nuncio in Germany to Father Giacomo and the Brothers Lanzerini, [and] was by them at first placed in a wooden niche on an oak tree in view of passers-by.'³²⁴ This account seems to be confirmed by a notarised deed, dated 22 September 1681 and kept in the Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, which states that 'the paper Image was donated by Monsignor Pietro Bargellini to the above-mentioned Giacomo, priest of Pragatto, which was affixed to an oak tree in the field of the above-mentioned Brothers Donators.'³²⁵

³²⁴ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 4, 322: 'un Immagine di Maria in carta miniata rappresentate la B. V. di Passavia in Germania, che donata da Monsignor Bargellini Nunzio in Germania a D. Giacomo e Fratelli Lanzerini, fù da essi in prima posta in un nicchio di legno in una Quercia alla vista de' passaggieri.'

³²⁵ *Donazione di una Pezza di terra da fabbricarvi la Chiesa di Passavia*: 'la cui Immagine in carta fu donata da Mons.or: Pietro Bargellini al suddetto D. Giacomo, e che è stata ed è

The print thus appears to have reached the village of Pragatto in the possession of Monsignor Pietro Bargellini (1630-1694), who, according to the scholar Antonio Masini (1666), was, in 1665, 'appointed by Pope Alexander VII Apostolic Nuncio to His Royal Highness of Savoia, & also as Archbishop of Thebes, succeeding Monsignor Annibale Bentivoglio.'³²⁶ Pietro Bargellini seems to have carried a printed copy of the *Mariahilf* of Passau with him on his way back from Germany, subsequently donating it to the priest of Pragatto, Giacomo Lanzarini, and to the priest's brothers. This may have happened in or after 1665, when Pietro was appointed as Apostolic Nuncio. The print is an extraordinary example of those prints, which travelled over long distances in the early-modern period.³²⁷ It remains unknown whether the *Madonna of Passau* was the only print in Bargellini's luggage. The engraving may have been part of a larger set that Bargellini brought with him in order to publicise the German sanctuary. Why Bargellini decided to leave this particular print in the small village of Pragatto is unclear. This version of the events has an interesting parallel, however, in Vedriani's above-mentioned theory according to which the *Madonna of the Graces* was similarly brought to Stuffione di Ravarino by ambassador Pellegrino Bertacchi, suggesting perhaps that association with a prominent historical figure could lend further prestige to a miraculous print and its cult.

apposta in un arbore di Quercia nel campo delli suddetti Fratelli Donatori.' For the full text and translation, see Appendix 2.

³²⁶ Antonio Masini, *Bologna perlustrata* (Bologna: Erede di Vittorio Benacci, 1666), vol. 3, 148: 'da Papa Alessandro VII. fù dichiarato Nuntio Apostolico all'Altezza Reale di Savoia, & insieme Arcivescovo di Tebe, in luogo di Monisg. Annibale Bentivoglio.'

³²⁷ A classic case is the Prato fresco of the *Madonna of the Prison*, the cult of which reached the far corners of the world via prints. Guizzelmi, *Historia della apparitione et altri miracoli*, fol. 6r: 'et tale è decta figura quale si vede et quale oggi per tutto si dipinge, et quale è formata per molti impressori et divulgata per tutto el mondo.'

There are certainly other cases in which a miraculous print was known to have arrived in the baggage of named travellers. In Sestri Levante, Liguria, an etching on paper was given to the Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra by two Jesuits, Cancellotti and Costanzo, who were sent there on a rural mission in 1715. According to tradition, the Jesuits donated a printed banner to every parish church in the area. In the early-modern period, the various religious orders generally fostered Marian devotion in their missions, mediating between the institutional centre and the provinces.³²⁸ The Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra was the only one in the region to preserve its image carefully over the years, probably because the etching was connected by the people with a positive historical event: the moral and civil revival carried out by the Jesuits. In a reversal of the regular process, the print became associated with miracles as a consequence of its collocation in a church.³²⁹

According to the historian Calindri, the Madonna of Passau, like the Madonna of the Graces, was initially affixed to an oak tree. The historian reports that the image was placed in a 'wooden niche on an oak tree.'³³⁰ This is again reminiscent of the construction shown in Bruegel's *The Peasant*

³²⁸ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 46.

³²⁹ *San Bartolomeo di Ginestra*, 93-4; On the latter aspect, see Cordiviola, *Compendio storico*, 3: Il culto, che riscuote grandioso al presente, non si formò tutto ad un tratto. Vi sono dei Santuarj, che incominciati da qualche strepitosa apparizione, od altro memorabile evento, destano in mezzo ai Paesi un improvviso indicibil trasporto di Religione, ed un omaggio riscuotono tanto più infervorato, quanto meno si distacca dai tempi del loro incominciamento: coll'andar poi degli anni se ne indebolisce colla memoria anche il culto. Ve ne ha di quelli per l'opposto, che nati in origine da qualche casualità poco considerabile, crescon d'onore cogli anni, e l'onore indi si afforza colla esperienza delle grazie ricevute. Tal è di questo nostro.'

³³⁰ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 4, 322: 'in un nicchio di legno in una Quercia.'

Dance mentioned above (see Fig. 19).³³¹ According to an account of 1817, written by the parish priest Luigi Lenzi and preserved in the parish archive, the image remained there for more than thirty years.³³² It seems unlikely that a print on paper could have survived in the open air for that long. Regardless of its basis in fact, it is interesting to contrast this legend with Martin Luther's condemnation of the frequent association between rural religion and pagan rites, which the reformer saw as a symptom of the deterioration of the Catholic Church. A century before the Madonna of Passau was venerated as a tree shrine in Emilia-Romagna, similar rural shrines encapsulated inside trees were actively destroyed by the iconoclasts in northern Europe.³³³

II.II.IV A Mysterious Miracle-Working Print

The first miracles worked by the Madonna of Passau remain obscure. The existing documents, which are mostly of a much later date, only mention that the print performed many miracles, without specifying either their nature or their number. For instance, the above-mentioned copy of the notarised deed, dated 22 September 1681, reports that the image is 'Renowned for the multitude of miracles received by the devotees of Mary who came in numbers.'³³⁴ The account of 1817 states that the print 'prodigiously

³³¹ Porras, "Rural Memory, Pagan Idolatry," 291. See also Martin Luther, *An den Christlichenn Adel deutscher Nation: von des Christlichen standes besserung* (Wittenberg: Zu Wittenberg, 1520).

³³² Luigi Lenzi, *Bologna li venti 20 Maggio 18diciasette 1817*, 1817, STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy: 'per circa trent'anni consecutivi era stata esposta su di una quercia.'

³³³ Porras, "Rural Memory," 493.

³³⁴ *Donazione di una Pezza di terra da fabbricarvi la Chiesa di Passavia*: 'Immagine Insigne per la moltitudine di miracoli ricevuti dai devoti di Maria concorsivi in molto Popolo.' For the full text and translation, see Appendix 2.

dispensed innumerable graces to its devotees.³³⁵ The few miracles that are specified are ones, which concerned the community as a whole. In an indulgence dated 1682, for instance, the image was named as a protection against plague, hunger and war, suggesting that it was standardly associated with miracles of this kind.³³⁶ The potential of miraculous prints (and perhaps miraculous images in general) was generally only triggered by specific situations, when individuals or groups might direct prayers or vows at the image. According to nineteenth-century documents found in the parish archive, the image was also associated with the preservation of cattle in 1814, with the preservation of fruits in 1819, and with the liberation from an insect plague in 1839.³³⁷ Unfortunately, however, there are no miracle books giving more precise details.

Its miracle-working capacity eventually caused the print to be translated from the oak tree to a newly-built oratory. The Sanctuary of the Madonna of Passau was constructed in order to keep the miraculous print in more appropriate surroundings. As reported in the above-mentioned copy of the notarised deed, the patch of land on which the oak tree with the print was originally situated, 110 feet long and 40 feet wide, owned by Father Giacomo and his brothers, Matteo and Vittorio, all sons of Domenico Lanzarini, was donated to the priest Pietro Maranesi. The document specifies that the donation was made with a view to build, as soon as possible, a Chapel

³³⁵ Lenzi, *Bologna*: 'dispensò prodigiosamente innumerabili grazie ai di lei divoti.'

³³⁶ *Indulgence*, 1682, STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy: 'la Chiesa della Miracolosa Immagine della SS. Vergine detta la protettrice Passaviense sopra la peste, fame e guerra.'

³³⁷ STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy.

dedicated to the 'Virgin Mary called of the Passau', which had to be at least ten feet long and eight feet wide. The document also contained the clause that if the chapel was not constructed fast enough, the donation would be withdrawn.

The magnanimity of the faithful made this latter clause redundant.³³⁸ In the 1844 book *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, it is recorded that the chapel was raised in a very short time due to the generous financial donations made by many.³³⁹ After the construction of the chapel, the image was moved from the oak tree to the newly-built structure on the second Sunday of July in 1670, which has remained the annual Feast day of the Madonna of Passau until this day. Unlike with the Madonna of the Graces, there is no controversy regarding the date of the translation. There is, however, no physical marker of the event other than the sanctuary itself, raised in the location of the oak tree, on which the print started working miracles. Nothing remains of the tree itself.

The patronage of the sanctuary chapel was, for a long time, in the hands of a noble senatorial family of Bologna, the Aldrovandi. According to the 1844 book *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, the Aldrovandi were the patrons of the Church of Pragatto from 1464 till 1844.³⁴⁰ Around the beginning of the sixteenth century, the family built a villa in nearby

³³⁸ *Donazione di una Pezza di terra da fabbricarvi la Chiesa di Passavia*. For the full text and translation, see Appendix 2.

³³⁹ *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, vol. 1, 87: 'Ma essendosi in breve estesa a molti popoli la devozione a questa effigie, e venendole offerte molte limosine.'

³⁴⁰ *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, vol. 1, 87: 'Solamente siamo assicurati, che fin dal 1464 il diritto di nomina appartenne alla famiglia Aldrovandi, come da comuniti che trovansi nell'Archivio Arcivescovile; ed ora, per le spese incontrate ne' recenti restauri, tanto la Chiesa quanto la nomina appartiene ai parrocchiani.'

Crespellano, at that time when various other senatorial families of Bologna also bought their country residences in that area. It seems thus likely that, as the Rangoni in Stuffione di Ravarino and in Spilamberto, although on a more modest scale, the Aldrovandi were interested in taking possession of the cult of the Madonna of Passau and sponsoring it. Again, a rural cult (albeit one initially promoted by the Apostolic Nuncio Monsignor Pietro Bargellini) was eventually appropriated by the aristocracy.

II.II.V The Institutionalisation of the Cult

Once the Madonna of Passau had been moved to the newly-built oratory, the experience of its veneration changed. The rural cult, which had its roots on a tree, was now institutionalised within the walls of an oratory. It is worth noting that in a document dated as early as 1681, it was referred to as the 'Blessed Virgin of the Tavern', which probably referred to the presence of a tavern in the vicinity of the sanctuary.³⁴¹ This points to the rural context of the cult, but more importantly, it also shows that this printed copy of the *Mariahilf* had gained a status of its own as a miraculous image, completely separate from its prototype, by the later seventeenth century (comparable to the case of the Madonna of the Graces).

Between 1814 and 1837, the oratory was completely rebuilt by the architect of Bologna Angelo Venturoli (1749-1821), due to an initiative of the parish priest Luigi Lenzi, and once again financed by the generous offerings of

³⁴¹ *Donazione della terra dove si fabbricò la Chiesa della B. V. d. a dell'Osteria a Pragatto*, 1681, STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy.

devotees (Fig. 34). The new church has three altars. The high altar, which hosts the print, is made of *scagliola* and was designed by Agostino Canturi in 1854.³⁴² The historian Calindri (1782) reports that already the first oratory 'was grandly built in the form of a Church with a magnificent dome.'³⁴³ However, according to the 1844 book *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, the existing sanctuary had been damaged, and was too small to accommodate the many devotees, who continually visited the miraculous image.³⁴⁴

The print is today preserved under glass and has been inserted in a frame decorated with flowers and coloured stones, which is in its turn inserted in a golden structure decorated with naturalistic elements and four putti, two of whom are holding an extra crown over the heads of the Madonna and Child. The frame is festooned with pastel flowers, and white sculpted angels are standing on either side of the print (Fig. 35). Below the image, there is a coloured terracotta bass-relief attributed to the sculptor of Bologna Giovanni Putti (1771-1847), which shows the original veneration of the print on the oak tree. Finally, nails on either side of the altar suggest that the wall was once full of *ex-votos*, which have now been removed. It remains unknown if access

³⁴² *Cenno descrittivo del Santuario della B.V. Auxilium Cristianorum detto di Passavia*, 1908, STORIA SANTUARIO (DOCUMENTI), Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto, Pragatto (BO), Italy.

³⁴³ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 4, 322: 'fù questo edificato con grandiosità, ed a forma di Chiesa con magnifica cuppola.'

³⁴⁴ *Le chiese parrocchiali della diocesi di Bologna*, vol. 1, 87: 'ma a circa il 1817 i il parroco D. Luigi Lenzi, tra perché in qualche parte minacciava ruina, tra perché l'antecedente Chiesa non era capace di contenere i molti divoti che a quella miracolose immagine ricorrevano, procurò che venisse rifabbricata dalle fondamenta ed ingrandita come al presente, aiutandosi colle oblazioni dei fedeli.'

to the image was regulated, but it is certain that the print was covered in the early twentieth century.³⁴⁵

Like the Madonna of the Graces, the Madonna of Passau developed into an institutionalised prototype at the centre of its own cult, being venerated in a church and working its own miracles. The engraving does not seem to have generated a tradition of printed copies similar to that of the Madonna of the Graces. There is, however, a late eighteenth-century engraving, kept today in the Collection Sisera Borgia in Bologna, and it is possible that other prints have simply not survived. The Madonna of Passau, furthermore, has a processional substitute, perhaps dating back to the eighteenth century (Fig. 36). An inventory dated 1778 lists the processional ark of the Madonna of Passau with its own substitute image (Fig. 37).³⁴⁶ The processional copy, in this case, is almost identical to the miraculous prototype. The only difference is in the halos of the Virgin and Child, which are not straight but angled. The copy print even reproduces the relief crowns (but not the diamond cross, which may have been donated as an ex-voto at a later stage). Once again, as in the case of the Madonna of the Graces, many devotees do not seem to realise that it is not the original print that is carried around in procession.

³⁴⁵ *Cenno descrittivo del Santuario della B.V. help of cium Cristianorum*: 'In ogni sabato scoperta la S. Immagine, previa la recita delle Litanie lauretane, vi è la S. Messa, poscia esposto il SS.mo Sacramento si leggono tre proteste e si termina colla Benedizione. Nel mese di Maggio ogni giorno un'ora circa prima dell'Ave Maria, scoperta la venerata Immagine e cantate alcune divote laudi vi è la recita del S. Rosario, e poscia letto il fioretto, si termina colla benedizione del SS:mo Sacramento.'

³⁴⁶ *Inventario degli Aredi, supelletti, e altre robbe spettanti alla Chiesa Parrocchiale di S. Maria di Pragatto fatto l'Anno 1778*, Parrocchie della Diocesi Pragatto, Archiepiscopal General Archive Bologna, Bologna, Italy: 'Un'Immagine della B. V. di Passavia con Frontale di legno, ornato di fiori assai vecchj, con corona di ottone inargentato, e angoli di foglia d'argento.'

II.III Conclusion

Although scholars such as David Areford, David Freedberg, Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser, and Robert Maniura have explored the impact that printed reproductions of miraculous imagery could have in disseminating cults and transferring the perceived powers of cult images across sometimes large distances, the working of printed copies of venerated images as miraculous prototypes in their own right has not been a subject of study before.³⁴⁷ Like images in less fragile media, prints could become endowed with miraculous abilities, be installed on shrines, have chapels and churches erected around them, and be objects of lasting worship. This worship, though potentially tied to the working at a distance of the cult image reproduced in the print, would ultimately become exclusive to the print itself as an object, completely separate from the miraculous original that had generated the print in the first place.

Garnett and Rosser refer to the phenomenon of the dissemination of a miraculous prototype as the 'translatibility' of the miraculous image, meaning that a miraculous image had 'a zone in which it is current', expressing itself in every possible way.³⁴⁸ This was the case, for instance, with the miraculous Madonnas venerated in Liguria, copies of which were venerated in many private homes within the area of influence of the particular miraculous

³⁴⁷ See Freedberg, *The Power of Images*; Garnett and Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous"; Robert Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri"; Areford, "Multiplying the Sacred."

³⁴⁸ Garnett and Rosser, "Translations of the Miraculous," 205-22.

Virgin.³⁴⁹ Giovanni Agostino Molfino, the first historian of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Montallegro, reports that the image of Our Lady was venerated through countless copies put up on the walls in every religious establishment and secular dwelling of Rapallo.³⁵⁰ The invention of printing greatly expanded the 'zone of currency' of miraculous images, making it, in effect, almost limitless. As discussed above, miraculous images venerated in north-east Spain and southern Germany extended their 'zone of currency' to places as remote as small villages in Emilia-Romagna.

The movement of people was at the basis of this movement of prints. The two miraculous prints in Stuffione di Ravarino and Pragatto whose cults were analysed in this chapter may have arrived in their respective villages in the baggage of an ambassador and an Apostolic Nuncio, two different ranks of travelling ecclesiastical dignitaries. Other religious functionaries could contribute to the circulation of miraculous imagery, too, especially during the Counter-Reformation. The Jesuit Francesco Borgia, who, as mentioned in Chapter I, owned a printing workshop himself, sent innumerable printed copies of the *Salus Populi Romani* to the rulers of Europa, instructing them on how to venerate these images, and expanding the 'zone of currency' of this cult far beyond the confines of Rome or even Italy.³⁵¹ In the case of the Madonna of the Graces in Stuffione di Ravarino, however, there is also the alternative origin story claiming that the print was brought to the village by a farmer, showing that the mobility of lay people could equally contribute to dispersion of printed images.

³⁴⁹ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 16.

³⁵⁰ Molfino, *Di alcune memorie istoriche*.

³⁵¹ Belting 485-6.

Undoubtedly, the large-scale movement of prints reproducing miraculous images served not only religious purposes, but also economic ones, as the income generated by major shrines could be significant. Prints themselves were traded commodities that created revenue. Printed reproductions of miraculous images were produced either at the shrines or commissioned from affiliated local printing shops; their matrices were generally re-worked and re-used many times in order to maximise the profits. They were then traded in different ways: in the same shops and sanctuaries where they were produced, but also on markets and by travelling peddlers and pilgrims. Religious functionaries of the type mentioned above may have procured batches in order to disseminate them and stimulate an interest in a cult across a wider area. Among consumers, whether they be individuals or communities, the prints generated devotion, which occasionally translated in one of the copy prints themselves being credited with working miracles.

The two prints of Stuffione di Ravarino and Pragatto are perhaps the only surviving examples in Italy of printed reproductions of foreign miraculous imagery, which in turn became venerated as miraculous images in their own right. Yet, they stand out as indicators of a broader phenomenon. As mentioned above, the reproduction of miraculous images in the form of prints was very common even if the great majority of this production has perished over time, and it is to be assumed that more such prints would have ended up at the centre of a local cult. One interesting aspect is that such local, print-

based cults may well have been especially likely to spring up in regional and rural areas and outside of the larger centres of population.

This chapter has shown how printed copies such as the ones in Stuffione di Ravarino and Pragatto could develop into full-fledged independent miraculous prototypes. The devotees at the respective village sanctuaries were venerating two images that had become entirely separated from their prototypes in Spain and Germany. Although the former print self-advertised as a copy of the Virgin of Montserrat, it was nonetheless transformed into the Virgin of Stuffione di Ravarino, better known as Madonna of the Graces. This latter denomination in particular signifies a self-contained cult image unconnected to the Virgin of Montserrat. Its autonomy is further attested by the fact that some of the later prints reproducing the Madonna of the Graces do not mention either the Virgin of Montserrat or the location of Montserrat, but simply refer to the beloved print of Stuffione di Ravarino, the new prototype. The production of these copy prints also demonstrates that, once established, the cult of a miraculous print functioned in ways similar to that of other miraculous images, and the new miraculous print acquired its own 'zone of currency.'

This chapter has also shown that although the market for reproductive prints is traditionally associated with classes of people who could not afford images in more prestigious media, and the veneration of copy prints that became miraculous in themselves may often have originated among commoners, those prints that did indeed become the focal point of a successful cult were

subsequently appropriated by elites. The Madonna of the Graces may have reached Stuffione di Ravarino in the possession of a farmer who put up the print on a local oak tree, but its cult was ultimately supported by the Rangoni, an important family with fiefs throughout North-Central Italy and close ties not only with the Este, but also with other prominent Italian houses of the period. The Rangoni built an oratory for the print that has all the trappings of the aristocracy rather than a simple village church. They sponsored the production of copy prints, as attested by some of the surviving matrices and prints, and they honoured the Madonna of the Graces with tokens of their devotion just as they would have done with any other cult image. The promotion of the miraculous print by the Rangoni could be thus compared, albeit on a smaller scale, with the promotion of the cult of the Most Holy Annunciation by the Medici in Florence. Given that a printed copy of another image and a fresco that had been venerated for centuries could end up on similar levels of aristocratic sponsorship, there was, as already noted, a democracy of media among miraculous images.

The examples from Stuffione di Ravarino and Pragatto thus show how, without physical changes, a specific specimen of a reproductive image produced in multiple copies could be transformed into a unique original singled out solely by its associated qualities, and could become venerated, honoured, and ultimately reproduced itself because of those. It was the power of the miracles that caused what had started its life as a lowly paper 'advertisement' for a faraway shrine nailed to a tree in a small village to be elevated to a prestigious object for which altars were raised and around

which entire churches were built. It is particularly ironic that some of the copy images of these miraculous prototypes were executed in media that were traditionally much more precious than that of the original at the centre of the cult. Having demonstrated these principles using the two surviving examples of copy prints after miraculous images in renowned foreign shrines, the next chapter will explore the formation of cults around printed copies of images venerated in cities in Emilia-Romagna, whose 'zone of currency' included villages of the region.

Chapter III – Prints as Local Substitutes

The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration (see Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, 1590-1599, woodcut on parchment, 350 x 290 mm. Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony, Fivizzano. (Photo: BeWeb.)), venerated today in the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony of Fivizzano in Tuscany (in the region bordering Emilia-Romagna), is a printed reproduction of the Madonna of the Gravel, a miraculous fresco in Reggio Emilia; the so-called Madonnina of Saint Luke (Fig. 38 Madonnina of Saint Luke, early 17th century, woodcut on paper, 260 x 170 mm. Oratory of the Madonnina of Saint Luke, Guiglia. (Photo: Author.)), venerated in the eponymous Sanctuary of

Guiglia, near Modena, is a printed reproduction of the Madonna of Saint Luke, a miraculous icon in Bologna. These two prints are thus copies of two of the most important miraculous images of Emilia-Romagna, worshipped in two major cities of that region; they in their turn have their own cults in two remote small villages of mere 7,500 and 4,000 inhabitants, respectively.

This chapter will continue our investigation into the important role prints played in the dissemination of miraculous imagery, focusing this time on two rare surviving prints that functioned as local substitutes for two more central miraculous images. Despite the fact that the miraculous prototypes of these prints were geographically a lot closer than the 'foreign' prototypes discussed in Chapter II, the prints also managed to obtain a miracle-working status of their own, and have long been revered miraculous images of the region.

III.I Fivizzano and Its Madonna of the Gravel

III.I.I The Madonna of the Gravel

The print of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, is, as mentioned above, a reproduction of the Madonna of the Gravel, a miraculous fresco dated to the sixteenth century. The name Madonna of the Gravel refers to the location of the image nearby the ancient gravel-bed of the rivulet named Crostolo in Reggio Emilia.³⁵² According to Wilhelm Gumpfenberg (1659), it remains unknown when and by whom the original fresco was made. The image,

³⁵² Andrea Bacchi and Massimo Mussini eds., *Il santuario della Madonna della Ghiara a Reggio Emilia* (Turin: U. Allemandi, 1996), 17.

illegible in 1573, was restored in that same year, thanks to the munificence of a citizen of Reggio Emilia, Lodovico Pratissoli. The restoration was carried out by Giovanni Bianco, called Bertone, after a 1569 drawing by the local painter Lelio Orsi, which is preserved in the Museum of the Sanctuary today (Fig. 39 Giovanni Bianco called Bertone, Madonna of the Gravel, 1573, fresco, 156 x 145 mm. Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia. (Photo: Website of the Sanctuary.)).³⁵³ Alfonso Isachi, in his *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi intorno l'origine, solennità, traslatione, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio* (1619), claims that the wall of the vegetable garden of the Servite Order, where the image was originally located, was an abject place. The Servites, however, refused to sell this plot of land to the Confraternity of the Servants of the Cross, who wanted to build their oratory there. Shortly after, on the 29th of April 1596, the image worked its first and best known miracle: a young deaf-mute named Marchino regained both hearing and speech (later, he would decide to become a Capuchin monk).³⁵⁴ It is worth noting that, according to

³⁵³ Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianvs*, 182-5: 'Huius Imaginis miraculosę initia Sacramentum Confessionis illustrata facti, à quo factum credi potest, quòd tanti hęc beneficia caelum conferat. Ad murum religiosi horti R R. PP. Servitarum Imaginem Deiparae cum Puero JESV, nescio quis, olim pinxit, manu non indoctâ. Facile fuit perire nomen artificis, quando nec Imagini ampliùs reverentia constitit, utique postquam ei nec coeli quidem injuriae pepercerunt. Anno 1573. civi cuiusdam Reggensi (Pratisolo nomen fuit) placuit Imaginem suis sumptibus renovare, & colores novos à pictore induci. Rogatus Joannes Biancus, pictor non incelebris, operam suam non invitatus locavit; sed quia Imaginē nimirū quantū deresam, & penē nullam deprehendit, una penicilli liturā totam correxit, & meliorem picturus, contra quam alij solent, colores paravit; etenim honorem Virgini, & sibi Virginem propriā confessione sacra facturum, se quam accuratissimè paravit, ne quid nubilum oculi, aut tremulum manus retineret. Itaque B. Virgo Puero JESV affidens, eumque adorans (opus Lelio Orsi) prae alijs placuit. Hanc Imaginem factā, ut dixi, confessione pingit, non minore utique diligentia, quàm animi sui voluptate. Quis tum transeuntium fuerit sensus, non habeo dicere.'

³⁵⁴ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 4-5: 'Questa, benchè fosse in luogo abietto, e poco stimato, p'esser contigua ad vna stradetta poco honoreuole, al capo di sotto della strada, detta la Ghiara; tuttavia ella, ò per lo vago disegno, ò per segreto giudizio d'Iddio, rendeua molta diuotione à riguardanti, che non le passavano dauanti senza farle qualche atto di debita riueranza. Et è cosa (al creder mio) degna di consideratione, che trattando li Fratelli della Copagna de' Serui della Croce, ò vogliam dir della Morte, di comprare tanta parte del detto Horto de' Padri Seruiti, per fabricuarui l'Oratorio della loro Confraternità, Onde seria stato necessario gettare à terra quella parte del Muro, oue era dipinta la detta IMAGINE, et benchè si trattasse alla gagliarda lo stabilimento del contratto, che chi ne fosse però la cagione, no si conchiuse, e poco dopo l'IMAGINE si scoperse miracolosa, quasi che quel

the cleric Giovanni Felice Astolfi, before going to the Madonna of the Gravel, the boy had visited both the Basilica of the Holy House of Loreto and another shrine referred to as the 'Madonna of Imola' (probably the Madonna of Piratello).³⁵⁵ Evidently, the Madonna of the Gravel had no trouble competing with these centuries-old cults. Just one year after this miracle, in 1597, the first stone of a new sanctuary was laid in the presence of Duke Alfonso II d'Este of Ferrara (1533-1597) and his wife Margherita Gonzaga (1564-1618). Despite this quick start, the building process of the shrine was to last for a full 22 years (Fig. 40 Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia. (Photo: Wikipedia.)).³⁵⁶ Today, the image is preserved on the altar in the right arm of the resulting Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel.

luogo fosse dalla provvidenza d'Iddio, riseruatò à così grande, & principale diuotione. E però l'anno 1596. trovandosi di già la Città nostra molto afflitta per le crudeli penurie, che per gli anni adietro haueuano cotanto traugiata quasi tutta l'Italia, & per lo souuenimento datosi ad infiniti poueri, co tanta cura di questa Illustriss. Comunità, et in modo che altro ristoro alle miserie sue, altronde non attendeua, che dalla mano d'Iddio come di ciò la Quaresima del detto anno, diede segno, co'l publica, & priuamente, & con diuotione più, che ordinaria, hauer dato opera alli digiuni, discipline, et orationi: Ecco, che il predetto anno gli 29. Aprile circa le sette hore di notte, vegnete il Venerdì, successe, & si pubblicò con infinita merauiglia, e stupore della Città nostra, hoggi del modo tutto, la liberatione del fortunato MARCHINO nato Muto, Sordo, & senza lingua, & come à Suo luogo, nella quarta parte, io dirò.'

³⁵⁵ Astolfi, *Historia vniversale delle imagini miracolose*, 664: 'Questi, giunto à i sedici anni, mosso da diuotione, e da desio di sanarsi, andò prima à visitare il tempio Lauretano, & la Santa Case, poscia nel ritorno andò alla Madonna d'Imola. Quiui erando, & adorando, cominciò à sentire un non sò che nell'orecchie, & nella bocca. Indi parti; & continuando il uiaggio, peruenne à Reggio.'

³⁵⁶ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante mariano*, vol. 6, 163-92: 'Ma una più magnifica dimostrazione d'affetto di quella generosa città ora vedremo della fabbrica del tempio. Poiché, moltiplicando sempre le offerte dei popoli concorrenti, chiamato da Ferrara l'insigne architetto ducale Alessandro Balbi, ne fu eseguito il disegno; e, apparecchiati senza indugio i materiali, si fissò il giorno 6 giugno del 1597 a porre la prima pietra del nuovo edificio. Il vescovo monsignor Claudio Rangone fece la sacra cerimonia, assistendo un gran numero di sacerdoti, di cavalieri, e le serenissime altezze di Alfonso II d'Este duca di Ferrara e Reggio ecc., e madama Margherita Gonzaga sua sposa. Fra un devoto canto di salmodie, il prelado aspergeua d'acqua benedetta le fondamenta ed il recinto, ove il giorno innanzi era stata eretta la croce: quindi, a Dio rivolto, pregò giusta il rito di santa chiesa in queste parole: 'Poni, o Signore, in questo luogo il segno della salute, né permetti che qui entri l'angelo percuziente. Tu, o Signore, il quale, benché non sii capito dal cielo né dalla terra, ti degni d'auere in quella abitazione, dove sia invocato il nome tuo, visita questo luogo, fondato ad onore della beatissima Vergine col sereno sguardo della tua pietà; e, per la infusione della tua grazia, purificato lo conserva. TU, il quale compisti la devozione di Davide nell'opera del suo figliuolo Salomone, degnati di perfezionare in quest'opera i nostri desideri; quindi fuggano tutte le nequizie spirituali. Fallo, o Signore, non in grazia nostra, che siamo

Prints after the Madonna of the Gravel are mentioned as early as in Isachi's 1619 miracle book, and are claimed to have been made practically from the date of the first miracle. In the entry of miracle no. 89, it is recorded that, on 5 August 1597, a paper image after the Madonna of the Gravel miraculously survived a fire. It is not certain whether this image was a print or a drawing, but the former seems more plausible. The text speaks of 'a paper of the IMAGE of the aforementioned Holy MADONNA', which was affixed to the wall with red wax – a common procedure in the case of devotional prints.³⁵⁷

The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration was thus not the only printed copy to have worked miracles. Isachi claims that:

although the wall [to which the paper image was affixed] burned in such a way, that it was not possible to approach it, nor put a hand on it, and perhaps lead would have melted, and all the more so soft wax; nevertheless that wax, with which the image was attached [to that wall] did not melt, nor soften: on the contrary it always remained affixed to the above-mentioned wall, like a shelter, so that the fire could not pass, and it actually did not go further.³⁵⁸

peccatori, ma dell'unigenito tuo figliuolo nostro redentore.' Practicate poscia le altre cerimonie tutte le preghiere prescritte, il vescovo e le suddette altezze di propria mano nel fondamento deposero, nel nome del Padre, del Figliuolo e dello Spirito Santo, la lapide benedetta, scolpitavi sopra la relativa iscrizione. Si die' mano incontimente alla fabbrica del tempio, e, proseguita per corso di ventidue anni, nel 1619 condotta era a buon termine, né vi mancavano che solo alcuni ornamenti di perfezione.'

³⁵⁷ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 165: 'Carta dell'IMAGINE, di detta Santis.

MADONNA.'

³⁵⁸ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 165-6: 'LXXXVIII. Alli 5. del mese di Agosto dell'anno presente 1597. Sendosi all'improviso acceso fuoco in una Casa dell'Hospitale grande contigua ad alcune case delli Reuer Padri Canonici Regolari della Congregatione di S. Salvatore, qui nel Monastero di S. Marco in Reggio: & quiui abbruggiando da ducento Carra di Legna; & altra materia combustibile, caduto il tetto; s'innalzarono le fiamme fino alle stelle, che però portate dal vento gagliardo d'all'houra; attaccarono fuoco in trè luoghi del sodetto Monastero; & in un luogo del detto Hospitale, abbruggiando fin l'herba delli terraglin in quel luogo della Città, sopra della quale cadendo posauano, con spauento di tutta la Città, che vi concorse, & Magistrati, & pericolo di tuto quel contorno circonuicino, & massimamete di quel Monastero i Padri del quale prostrati nelle Celle loro supplicauano il Signore, & la Madre di misericordia, & d'intercessione. Era nel Muro della Casa vicina al fuoco dalla parte di dentro una Carta dell'IMAGINE, di detta Santis. MADONNA, attaccata al detto Muro con cera rossa, & sebene quella muraglia ardeua di maniera, che non vi si potea, ne pure accostare la mano, & forse il piombo si sarebbe liquefatto, non che la cera molle; nondimeno quella cera, con che l'Imagie era attaccata non si liquefece, ne anco s'inteeeri: mà sempre stette afissa

The print in Isachi's description was not the only printed copy of a miraculous image to have miraculously survived a fire. In Klanjec, Croatia, in the region of Hrvatsko Zagorje, a printed copy after the miraculous image of the Madonna of Trsat, venerated in the suburb of the same name, similarly miraculously survived a fire on the 31st of March 1716, which originated in a house next to the Franciscan monastery, where it was preserved. Other than the copy after the Madonna of the Gravel, the copy after the Madonna of Trsat has survived until the present day (it is a devotional engraving of the Virgin and Child surrounded by prayers – the text begins with 'Oratio' on the left, and with 'Gebett' on the right of the paper – and accompanied by an image of the monastery itself). Although the print is partially ruined, it probably survived due to the fact that it was hung on the wall of a monastery from the very beginning; it can be visited today in the Monastery of Trsat, in front of the sacristy, where it was moved by 1731.³⁵⁹

There, the print has been set into a large frame, which bears the inscription: 'CHARTACEA / IMAGO DEIPARAE VIRGINIS / AB IGNE SERVATA' ('PAPER / IMAGE OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD / SAVED FROM THE FIRE').³⁶⁰ What is interesting, is that the miracle is believed to be a miracle of the Madonna of Trsat, not of the print itself. The original icon, according to legend painted by Saint Luke himself, was said to have been donated to

al detto muro, come riparo, che più oltre il fuoco no passasse, come in effetto non andò più auante.'

³⁵⁹ Sanja Cvetnic. 2018. "Cartacea Deiparae Verginis ab igne servata: The Triumph of Our Lady of Trsat." Paper presented at the *Madonne: Reframing, Coronation and Re-Installation of Marian Images in Early Modern Spaces*, LMU, Munich, December 7-8, 2018; Marijan Bradanović and Emanuel Hoško, *La Tersatto di Maria* (Zagreb: Turistička naklada, 2009).

³⁶⁰ Claro Pasconi, *Triumphus coronatae reginae Tersactensis* (Venice: Apud Jo: Baptistam Recurto, 1731), 98: 'elaborato armariolo, vitro transparente'

Croatian pilgrims at Loreto by Pope Urban V (1310-1370). These pilgrims were in fact mourning the loss of the Holy House, which had been venerated at Trsat before its miraculous relocation to Loreto. After the fire, the small print, showing only the central panel of the original image, was considered to have enhanced the power of the prototype. The inscription on the lower part of the frame reads 'Hoc si potuit / Typus in Charta, quid non Archetypus possit in Ara? Tu vide, & vade' ('if the derivative ['Typus'] on paper had such capability, what could the original ['Archetypus'] on the altar do? See for yourself and go').³⁶¹ In the case of the Madonnas of Trsat and its printed copy, the print thus remained closely associated with the prototype and did not engender a cult in its own right as in the case of the prints in Emilia-Romagna discussed here.

It is interesting to note that printed images of Luther could be similarly miraculously saved from fires. In 1634, an engraving of Luther, attached to a door, reputedly survived a fire in the studio of the pastor of Artern, a small town in Germany today in the Kyffhäuserkreis district. The print thus resembles a Marian image from the Catholic world. As a consequence of the 'miracle', the image was also institutionalized by being sent to the Consistory in Mansfeld, where it was hung in the audience hall with an inscription attesting to the event. Although it cannot be established with certainty that this event happened (the earliest record dates 1706), the incombustible

³⁶¹ The inscription reads: 'IN CROATIA / ULTIMA MARTIJ IN CONVENTU NOSTRO CLANICENSI MINORum /Reformatorum ab irrestinguibili quil li incendio in vicina domo suborto, omnibus pro / pè igni consumptilibûs in favillas euntibiûs, Hac Imaguncula in Cella triduo flâman / te cādentes inter clavos, & ignitos cineres mirabilitêr, reperta est. Amburi Virgo / Tersactana permisit, quod naturaliter comburi debuit, ut Prodigij magnitude / manifestior evadata; Ipsâ tamen |: ut semper fuit |: prorsus intacta. Hoc si potuit / Typus in Charta, quid non Archetypus possit in Ara? Tu vide, & vade.'

Luther became an historical fact. There are indeed many other testimonies of images of Luther which refused to burn. The thaumaturgic image is alien to the Protestant imaginary. Yet, even though only a few examples are known, it is a feature of early-modern Lutheranism. Scribner argues that Protestants needed to see their creed as 'divinely inspired.'³⁶² It is noteworthy that the 'incombustible Luther' was fashioned by the leaders of the Lutheranism and not by the commoners. Scribner concludes that the Reformation was not such a radical break from Roman Catholic practices as one may think.

The print that survived the fire is not the only case of a miraculous printed copy of the Madonna of the Gravel referred to in Isachi's miracle book.³⁶³

The entry of miracle no. 23 involves Cesare, a sick prisoner, who was healed by a paper copy (again, probably a print) of the 'Most Holy IMAGE of that MADONNA [of the Gravel]', sent to him in the hospital in 1596 (the miraculous healing, however, took ten days to take effect).³⁶⁴ This is an example of a miracle in which it is not the sick person, who visits the original

³⁶² On the incombustible Luther, see Robert William Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London and Ronceverte: Hambledon Press, 1987), 323-53.

³⁶³ On other miraculous prints, see Elisa Bellesia and Angelo Mazza eds., *I servi di Maria a Reggio Emilia (1313-2013): la strategia delle immagini e il fenomeno della Ghiara* (Reggio Emilia: Tecnograf, 2015), 327-88.

³⁶⁴ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 188: 'XXIII. Cesare figliuolo del già Francesco Fenaruolo, nato in Cremona, & habitante hora in Reggio nella Parochia di S. Hilario in casa di M. Francesco Ruota suo Cugino; alli 26. Maggio 1596. fù per costione posto in una nuoua, & humida prigione in Milano nella quale stete vn'anno, & cinque di, & nell'ultimo di detto tempo per quattro mesi andò con le mani, & ginocchia per terra nella detta carcere, essendoseli per detta humidità ritirati tanto i nerui delle gambe, che non potea stare in piede perdetto tempo delli quattro mesi predetti, in capo del qual tempo fù sententiato alla galera, mà dal Senato veduto così stroppiato, fù liberato non solo della galera, mà dalla prigione ancora, anzi fatto curare nell'hospitale. In questo tempo li fù mandata dal detto M. Cesare vna Carta della Santissima IMAGINE di detta MADONNA, alla quale raccomandatosi fece voto di venire à visitarla, come fece, perché si fece condurre à Cavallo, & gionse à Regio alli 7 Luglio del detto Anno in casa di detto suo Cugino, doue andava pur per casa in ginocchio, & con le mani, come di sopra: & iui raccomandandosi continuamente alla detta MADONNA, in termine di dodici giorni si trouò sanato, & nel principio del mese d'Agosto seguente portò con le sue mani le ferle alla detta MADONNA, le quali s'hauera fatto fare in Reggio, mà però non potea adoperare, & vò per tutto senza alcuno impedimento.'

miraculous image, but it is a printed copy that is brought to them instead. In the entry of miracle no. 18, it is described how on 13 June 1598, Agnese, a girl of twelve years, who was very ill, was healed after her father made a vow in front of a 'Paper of that Most Holy IMAGE', which he had at home.³⁶⁵ Here, too, it is highly likely that the 'paper' was a print. In the entry of miracle no. 5, it is reported that a certain Madonna Catherina, very sick, could only sleep when she covered herself with a paper of the miraculous image of the Madonna.³⁶⁶ In the entry of miracle no. 20, a paper image is kissed by a sick woman, showing how intimate the interaction with a paper copy could become.³⁶⁷ There are several more miracles that involve healing printed copies, one (miracle no. 24) taking place as far away as Lecce.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 224-5: 'XVIII. M. Antonio Berni da Barbo, Diocese di Piacenza nella Vicinanza di S. Geruasio, & Protasio, con Madonua Isabetta Auia materna della Putta sotto notata, comparuero al detto Vfficio alli 13. Giugno 1598: & presentarono Agnese figliuola di esso M. Antonio di età di dodici anni, affermando con loro giuramenti; Che nel Mese di Ottobre prossimo passato detta Putta stete inferma in letto intorno ad ottanta giorni con febre, & ridotta in termine di morte haueua perduto il sentire, & la fauella, sendosi scorticata da vna parte la vita dallo stare in letto; & dall'altra parte non hauendo se non la pelle, & l'ossa, e stata per dodici giorni in circa senza parlare, & senza udire, si teneua, che la notte douesse morire; quando detto suo Padre l'auotò dinanzi ad una Carta della detta Santissima IMAGINE, c'haueua in casa, & subito migliorò, & in ispaccio di un mese diuenne sana.'

³⁶⁶ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 236: 'V. Madonna Catherina moglie di Giouanni Colombari da Pallidano su'l Mantouano, Diocesi di Reggio, la sera del dì, che fù spostata restò all'improuiso maleficiata, stropiata tutta da capo à piedi con Febre, & vomiti grandi, & così preseuerò nel letto per 15. dì, & notti, che mai puote riposare, nè dormire, se non quanto teneua addosso una Carta de l'IMAGINE Miracolosa, alla quale auotitasi, & da sé stessa & da quelli di casa in capo delli detti 15. giorni subito cominciò a mouer le gambe, & piedi, e difendersi, che prima era tutta ritirata, così pure con febre, restò con le mani immobili anco per un mese, e mezzo in circa, onde rinouato il voto adoprò subito ancor le mani, & si leuò dal letto libera, & sana d'ogni male.'

³⁶⁷ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 138: 'Catherina moglie del già Antonio Certoloni da Monzone, gouerno di Sestola per febre, & dolore ridotta in punto di morte, dopo l'hauer riceuuti tutti gli ordini di S. Chirsa, & segnata con la' candella benedetta, fù raccomandata à Dio, & quiui auotita da D. Francesco suo figliuolo, facendole baciare una di queste carte, oue dipinta si riuersce asta Sacra IMAGINI, & persuase al meglio, che puote alla periclitante Madre, che à quella s'auotisce, il che essequito subito cominciò à migliorare, & ripigliar il cibo, perduto già quattro giorni erano, onde in altri quattro di se ne uscì di letto, & risanta venne à sciore il voto alli 15. Ottobre.'

³⁶⁸ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 139-40: 'Alli 3. pur di Settembre trouandosi in Leze Città in terra di Ottranto, vna Donna, che per hauer la creatura morta nel Ventre, non potea partorire, fù dal dolore ridotta in pericolo di morte, onde un R. Prete della Compagnia di Giesù di quella Città, andando per confessarla le mostrò vna di queste S. IMAGINI in carta, alla quale essortò l'inferma à raccomandarsi, & lasciando esso detta Donna in

The most striking reference to printmaking, however, can be found in the entry of miracle no. 2, which narrates how in 1597, a certain Camillo Branchini, who had run up a debt of 80 ecus, wanted to escape Reggio Emilia, abandoning his family in order to avoid the debtor's prison. After he recommended himself to the Madonna of the Gravel, he had a vision in which he created a print matrix of the sacred image, which helped him to sell many prints to clear his debts. He promptly proceeded to manufacture the matrix according to instruction, and, in a few days, he earned in excess of 100 ecus, more than enough to pay his creditors.³⁶⁹ The description of this miracle gives an insight into the working of the market of reproductive prints after miraculous images, and shows how lucrative the trade could be. Camillo Branchini's prints may not have been miraculous in themselves, but in this case, it was the very medium of printmaking that became miraculous, allowing Camillo Branchini to pay off his debts.

A similar example can be found related to the miraculous image of Our Lady of Montallegro, venerated in Rapallo. Here, while the printmaker Antonio

moltasperanza di futura consolatione, gliela pose addosso, & ritirossi, mà rinforzanoi il dolore fù vicina à morire, onde il Sacerdote à pena hebbe tempo di dare l'assolutione Sacramentale, dalla cui santissima Medicina alquanto solleueta l'inferma in manco di mezo quarto d'hora partorì, & d'ogni pericolo liberata restò.'

³⁶⁹ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 229-30: 'Il. Camillo Branchini, altre volte gratiato come di sopra, trouandosi debitore alla somma di Scuti 80. & risoluto, anzi che andare prigionie, fuggirsene da Reggio, con grandissimo suo dolore, conuenendogli abandonar la Moglie, & i Figliuoli; facendo la veglia, la notte precedete al dì, che se ne volea fuggire, che fù la notte del Lunedì di Pasqua di Ressurrectione 1597. alla MADONNA, se le raccomandò nel detio suo vrgente bisogno, e trauaglio & hebbe in visione che formasse una stampa in disegno della detta Miracolosa IMAGINE; & la stampasse sù quella, & le vendesse, che caueria danari da pagare i suoi debiti, & souenirsi; la mattina seguente trovata la tavola di legno, a questo proposito, se ne andò fuori a far fare il taglio, su'l quale poscia ritornato fece tanti fogli stampati, & tanti ne vendè, che in pochi giorni ne cauò più di cento scudi, & pagò i creditori. Et queste furono le prime stampe di questa IMAGINE. Santissima, che uscissero fuori.'

Floradi was working on the very first matrix for a copy print in 1668, his daughter fell into the lit fireplace, but miraculously only reported minor burns.³⁷⁰ Once again, this miracle was not worked by one specific print, but rather by the process of printmaking – which may connect to the discussion, in Chapter I, about the potential of printmaking as a miraculous medium. In combination, all these references certainly show how numerous printed reproductions of miraculous images must once have been, and how distorting the picture created by the few examples that have survived until the present day, venerated in their respective sanctuaries.

According to both Isachi's miracle book and the *Veridico racconto dell'origine, progressi, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio con la descrizione d'alcune solennità, e del tempio*, published in 1666, the first prints after the Madonna of the Gravel were printed by the man (Camillo Branchini) who paid his debts due to a matrix of the image of the Madonna in 1597.³⁷¹ Thus, it was thought that the very first prints after the miraculous fresco were associated with a miracle.

Yet, it is likely that the 'Camillo Branchini' prints were not actually the earliest that were made. An engraving by Jan Sadeler I, an impression of which is preserved in the British Museum, bears the earlier date of 1596 (Fig. 41).³⁷²

This print, made when Jan Sadeler I was in Verona, closely resembles the

³⁷⁰ Michele Antola, *Annali del Santuario di Nostra Signora di Monte Allegro* (Rapallo: Tip. A. Devoto, 1931), 22.

³⁷¹ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 230; *Veridico racconto dell'origine, progressi, et miracoli della Madonna di Reggio con la descrizione d'alcune solennità, e del tempio* (Modena: Bartolomeo Soliani, 1666), 111: 'Et queste furono le prime stampe di questa Imagine Santissima, che uscissero fuori.'

³⁷² 1952,0405.193, British Museum, London, United Kingdom.

above-mentioned drawing by Lelio Orsi (1569), having the same curvature at the top, inscribed in capital letters 'QVEM GENVIT ADORAVIT.' At the bottom left, the engraving is signed 'Lelio Orsi Reg.s figuravit. Joa. Sadeler sculpsit', and, on the lower right, dated '1596', followed under by the writing 'IL VERO DISEGNO DELLA MIRACOLOSA MADONNA DI REGGIO' ('THE TRUE DRAWING OF THE MIRACULOUS MADONNA OF REGGIO'). A further inscription at the bottom reads 'Alphons Pratisoli.s Reg.sis excudenda cur.t.' This Alfonso Pratisoli, who commissioned the print, was the son of Lodovico Pratisoli, who had originally commissioned the drawing from Orsi. In a letter dated 28 June 1596, referring to Sadeler's print, Claudio Rangoni (1559-1621), Bishop of Reggio Emilia, wrote to the Duke of Modena that the reason why he had not sent him any print of the Madonna of the Gravel up to that point was that he had not seen a good one (suggesting that others were already in existence).³⁷³ In addition to the 1596 print, Sadeler I also made a second print after the Madonna of the Gravel, which is dated to 1597.³⁷⁴

Another print, known to have been produced in Siena, can be dated to the spring of 1596, although no impression of it has survived.³⁷⁵ Also in Siena, Matteo Florimi (1540-1615) made a print that can be dated to after the 9th of October 1596.³⁷⁶ The very first known print after the Madonna of the Gravel,

³⁷³ *Filza 5284*, 1596, Cancelleria ducale, Suprema giurisdizione ecclesiastica, State Archive Modena, Modena, Italy: 'Non ho mandato ritratto alcuno di quell'immagine miracolosa della B.V. a Vostra Altezza Singolarissima perché sin qui non s'è vista cosa bona. Hora che per diligenza d'un cittadino di qui s'è cavata da una stampa fatta in Verona qualche cosa che vien giudicato a proposito ne mando copia a V.A.'

³⁷⁴ Jan Sadeler I (after Lelio Orsi), *Virgin and Child of Reggio*, 1597, engraving on paper, 147 x 107 mm, 1952,0405.194, British Museum, London.

³⁷⁵ *Veridico racconto*, 24: 'Furono in questi medesimi giorni portati a Reggio due disegni in rame di questa Santiss. Imagine, l'vno del famoso Sadler, fatto in Verona, l'altro in Siena con li due muti già risanati.'

³⁷⁶ Bellesia and Mazza, eds., *I servi di Maria a Reggio Emilia (1313-2013)*, 327-88.

however, may well have been the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration itself; this print can be dated to before the 5th of May 1596, only six days after the deaf-mute Marchino's miracle, as will be discussed further below.

Later in the seventeenth century, other prints were then produced by the Servite Father Cherubino Ranzani (1579-1675), then the custodian of the Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel. A manuscript preserved in the Archive of the Temple of the Blessed Virgin of the Gravel reports that Ranzani produced 'many and different engravings adorned with the main miracles.'³⁷⁷ Furthermore, as attested by a deed dated 17 October 1661, Father Pietro Maria Pellegrini gave to the Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel a little house, with the rent from which the two clocks of the tower and the sacristy of the basilica could be maintained. Father Pellegrini determined that the surplus should be spent to print images of the Blessed Virgin using the matrices cut by the same Father Cherubino Ranzani.³⁷⁸

With regard to the iconography, most of the reproductive prints follow Lelio Orsi's drawing from 1569 rather than Bertone's later painting. The Christ Child is generally represented naked with open arms, sitting on a pillow while looking at the Madonna, while His mother adores Him with praying hands. This is also the iconography used by Wilhelm Gumpfenberg in his *Atlas* (Fig. 42). Additionally, the words 'QVEM GENIVIT ADORAVIT' are often inscribed

³⁷⁷ *Campione del Convento*, 176 r., Archive of the Temple of the Blessed Virgin of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia, Italy: 'fu così zelante del culto e divozione della S. Imagine della B.V. che non contento d'averla fatta scolpire in molti e diversi rami adornati de' principi miracoli.'

³⁷⁸ *Filza 77*, 17 October 1661, Rogiti, Archive of the Temple of the Blessed Virgin of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia, Italy: 'che il soprapiù si spenda [...] in far stampare Imagini d'essa Beata Vergine, ovvero lunari con li rami fatti intagliare dal medesimo padre Cherubino, li quali di presente sono conservati nel tesoro, et sono quattro, due de' quali mostrano alcuni miracoli.'

in the centre at the top. As in the case of the Madonna of the Graces, the matrices of some seventeenth-century printed copies of the Madonna of the Gravel are preserved in the Fondo Soliani of the Galleria Estense, attesting to the broad fame of the image. One of these matrices bears the inscription 'LA MIRACOLOSA MADONA DA REZO' ('THE MIRACULOUS MADONNA FROM REGGIO') in addition to the usual Latin words; another one, like one of the two matrices of the Madonna of the Graces, is surrounded by scenes of miracles, explained by means of captions (Fig. 43 and Fig. 44).³⁷⁹

III.I.II The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration

The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration is a sixteenth-century woodcut on parchment, measuring 320 x 280 mm (circa 350 x 290 mm including frame and title). The print is (miraculously!) still in a good condition despite the fact that the wooden panel on which it has been mounted has suffered from woodworm infestation (the panel has been set into a copper case as a precautionary measure). At the top, in the centre, the print bears the inscription 'QVEM GENVIT ADORAVIT' ('[THE VIRGIN] ADORED WHAT SHE GAVE LIFE TO'), referring to the iconography. At the bottom, in the centre, there is the title: 'LA MADONA DE PRI DE SERVI DI REGGIO' ('THE

³⁷⁹ See also Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 364 x 254 mm, Fondo Soliani 4615, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century, 194 x 118 mm, Fondo Soliani, 4641, Galleria Estense, Modena; Master VZT, Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century, 265 x 186 mm, Fondo Soliani 4642, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 267 x 190 mm, Fondo Soliani 4665, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 350 x 280 mm, Fondo Soliani 4670, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 420 x 470 mm, Fondo Soliani 4671, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 290 x 430 mm, Fondo Soliani 4672, Galleria Estense, Modena; Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century-18th century, 650 x 560 mm, Fondo Soliani 4674, Galleria Estense, Modena.

MADONNA OF THE PRIORS OF THE SERVANTS OF REGGIO'), referring to the original image from the vegetable garden of the Servite Order.

The top edge of the print is rounded. The central image of the Virgin and Child is surrounded by a printed frame of vines, which are thinner in the part above the image. Above this artificial frame and the inscription, there is a band of dark brown tempera, which is probably a later addition. As mentioned above, the print does not imitate the 1569 drawing by Lelio Orsi, but the later painting by Bertone, especially in the proportions. There are, however, some small differences between print and painting. For example, the faces of Virgin and Child are less austere in the print.

The print is known as the Virgin of Adoration because the Madonna is represented in the act of adoring her Child; she sits on the ground with her hands clasped in prayer, while the Christ Child, naked, is supported by a pillow. Both have been adorned with revetments in the shape of gilded crowns placed on their heads, although nothing is known about an official coronation ceremony.³⁸⁰ The minimalist background of the print consists only of a sketchy plot of land with a few seedlings.

There are claims that the print is by a painter called Branchini – a name that corresponds to that of the above-mentioned debtor, who produced and sold

³⁸⁰ The prototype, the Madonna of the Gravel, venerated in Reggio Emilia, was crowned at least three times. On the 1st of May 1596, only two days after the miracle of the deaf-mute Marchino, some devotees took the initiative to put a silver crown on the head of the Virgin; on the 3rd of May 1674, the image was solemnly adorned with a precious crown made of pearls and precious stones, weighing almost two kilograms, which is now only exhibited on feast days; finally, in 1896, the Cardinal of Bologna, Domenico Svampa (1851-1907) crowned it with the two crowns, which are still in place on the image today. See Bellesia and Mazza, eds., *I servi di Maria a Reggio Emilia (1313-2013)*, 327-88.

prints of the Madonna of the Gravel to clear his debts. It is known, in fact, that the same Branchini, on another occasion, was also miraculously healed in the leg by the Madonna; in the entry of this miracle in the miracle book by Giovanni Miari and Pellegrino Vellani, he is referred to as having been a painter for thirty-five years.³⁸¹ It is thus conceivable that the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration is the only surviving example of the legendary batch of prints from the early miracle of the shrine – but I will argue below that the print actually predated that miracle.

On the 5th of May 1596, the print miraculously appeared to the Margherita, the daughter of a certain Baldassarre from Gassano and the wife of Simonimo from Cagliano (and for this reason known as ‘Caugliana’).³⁸² According to legend, Margherita’s neighbour and friend Nicolò Vaseschi, before going to the fair of Reggio Emilia, asked to Margherita, who was suffering from a long-standing affliction, if she needed something. The woman requested a printed image of the Madonna of the Gravel, venerated in that city, trusting her miraculous powers. Margherita had previously made a vow to the same miraculous Madonna. Perhaps stories about the Madonna of the Gravel already circulated in Fivizzano around the time of the first

³⁸¹ Giovanni Miari and Pellegrino Vellani, *Sommario delli miracoli, et delle gratie ricevute per intercessione della gloriosissima Verg. Maria, all'immagine sva miracolosa nella Città di Reggio* (Reggio: Appresso Flauio, e Flaminio Bartholi, 1606), vol. 2: ‘VNO SANATO D’VN’VLCERA IN VNA Gamba. Cap. XXXVIII. M. Camillo Branchini da Modena, habitante in Reggio Pittore già per anni 35. dal suo ricordo in qua hauendo patito male d’Vlcera rotta in vna Gamba, intorno alla quale hauea speso gran somma de scudi. Essendo la Giobbia Santa dell’anno passato 1596. alla Madonna, se le raccomandò, & le fece voto, ne passarono le Feste di Psca di detto anno, che si trouò santa la gamba, & serrata la piaga, ne mai più ne hà patito. Tanto depone con giuramento alli 9. d’Aprile essaminato 1597.’

³⁸² The miraculously healed woman is called Margherita and not Domenica. See *Annotazioni verdidiche e Giustificate*, I.a, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Pontremoli: ‘E si rileva ancora il di lei nome di Margherita dall’Istrum.o di S. Matteo d Nestore Nanta al di 26 Giug.o 1629. Domenia era figliuola dlla Margherita e di Simonino.’

reported miracle. On his return, Nicolò forgot to bring along the requested print for Margherita. Then, however, a print miraculously appeared on a wooden beam, and Margherita was cured from her illness of seventeen years.³⁸³

All this took place only six days after the Madonna of the Gravel worked its most popular, and according to Wilhelm Gumpfenberg, first miracle, on the 29th of April of that same year.³⁸⁴ Since the journey from Fivizzano to Reggio Emilia would have taken time, and the print is of good quality, it seems likely that the print was made well before the 5th of May 1596. Unlike the later prints after the Madonna of the Gravel, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration does not have the word 'miraculous' in the title, as was common when a cult was not yet institutionalised, but just the word 'Madona.'

The fact that a print of the Madonna of the Gravel was in Fivizzano, up in the Apennines, only six days after the first miracle occurred, suggests that prints

³⁸³ *Libro de Partiti e Delib Copy*, 24 Febbraio 1629, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Pontremoli: 'la Madonna de P.P. de Servi di Reggio miracolosam.e comparsa in Fivizzano li 5 maggio 1596' and Pier Carlo Vasoli, *Antiche memorie storiche di Fivizzano*, 67, Serie 'Carteggio e atti', Fondo della Parrocchia di San Giacomo Maggiore e Antonio Abate di Fivizzano, Complesso di fondi della Parrocchia di Fivizzano, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Aulla, Italy: 'Una tal donna detta la Cavugliana per nome Domenica, trovandosi da molti anni inferma / il Popolo dice anni 17. / fu visitata (in sua Casa posta in via Giulia, di proprietà oggi giorno della nobile famiglia Ratti) da Nicolò Vaseschi detto l'alone suo compare, il quale disposto di andare alla fiera di Reggio se li esibiva, di servirla, se qualche cosa li fosse occorso da detta Città. La donna lo pregò, che le portasse una imagine stampata della Madonna di Reggio, alla quale si era ella avvoitita. Il che il Vaseschi li promesse, et essendo egli di qualche giorno partito, vide domenica in una trave di sua camera esposta la sacra immagine stampata in carta, con infinita sua letizia. Tornò da Reggio Nicolò, e fu tosto a scusarsi con la comare di essersi non sapeva come, scordato di adempirla la promessa. Ma ella molto allegre ed ormai perfettamente sana, gli mostrò l'immagine bramata posta nell'accennata trave miracolosamente comparsa con la grande autentica del Miracolo, che fu la perfetta sanita ricevuta.' The printed image appeared after the return of Nicolò and not before. See *Annotazioni veridiche*, III.a: 'L'antica Tradizione perenne ancora fino ai nostri giorni ciassicura che L'Imagine Miracolosa dlla Madona di Reggio comparve prodigiosam.e alla Dona Inferma detta la Caugliana dopo che il di lei compare era tornato da Reggio e non già prima.'

³⁸⁴ Gumpfenberg, *Atlante Mariano*, vol. 6, 163-92.

after the Madonna of the Gravel must have been circulating widely even before the miracle of Marchino happened. As was mentioned above, in a letter dated June 1596, the Duke of Modena expressed his interest in obtaining one of these prints.³⁸⁵ In that same year, prints after the Madonna were produced in larger centres too, as far away as Verona and Siena. In September 1596, as also mentioned above, a printed image even worked a miracle from Lecce.³⁸⁶ This manufacture outside of Reggio Emilia could have been the consequence of the fact that in the city itself, the printing of images of the Madonna of the Gravel was actually prohibited.³⁸⁷ The 1661 deed instructing prints to be made from the matrices by Cherubino Ranzani also explicitly states that these prints 'should be donated to devotees and the curious and primarily to foreigners.'³⁸⁸ Meanwhile, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration survives in only a single known impression.

III.I.III The Translation

³⁸⁵ *Filza 5284*, 1596, Cancelleria ducale, Suprema giurisdizione ecclesiastica, State Archive Modena, Modena, Italy: 'Non ho mandato ritratto alcuno di quell'immagine miracolosa della B.V. a Vostra Altezza Singolarissima perché sin qui non s'è vista cosa bona. Hora che per diligenza d'un cittadino di qui s'è cavata da una stampa fatta in Verona qualche cosa che vien giudicato a proposito ne mando copia a V.A.'

³⁸⁶ Isachi, *Relatione di Alfonso Isachi*, 139-40: 'Alli 3. pur di Settembre trouandosi in Leze Città in terra di Ottranto, vna Donna, che per hauer la creatura morta nel Ventre, non potea partorire, fù dal dolore ridotta in pericolo di morte, onde un R. Prete della Compagnia di Giesù di quella Città, andando per confessarla le mostrò vna di queste S. IMAGINI in carta, alla quale essortò l'inferma à raccomandarsi, & lasciando esso detta Donna in moltasperanza di futura consolatione, gliela pose addosso, & ritirossi, mà rinforzandosi il dolore fù vicina à morire, onde il Sacerdote à pena hebbe tempo di dare l'assolutione Sacramentale, dalla cui santissima Medicina alquanto solleueta l'inferma in manco di mezo quarto d'hora partorì, & d'ogni pericolo liberata restò.'

³⁸⁷ *21 gennaio 1597*, Provvigioni, Comune, State Archive Reggio Emilia, Reggio Emilia, Italy. A monitor of the vicar general of the Bishop of Reggio Emilia was affixed to the column of the Palace of the Community in the piazza 'sul particolare di stampare e vendere miracoli della Immagine di Nostra Signora di questa città.'

³⁸⁸ *Filza 77*: 'donarsi a devote et curiosi et massime a forestieri.'

With regard to the arrival of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration in the town of Fivizzano, tradition has it that it appeared miraculously in the house of Margherita. In reality, the print must either have been made in Fivizzano or transported to the town by someone like Margherita's above-mentioned friend Nicolò Vaseschi, who travelled to Reggio Emilia to go to a fair and promised to bring back a paper reproduction of the Madonna of the Gravel. The possibility of printing in Fivizzano cannot be discarded; Fivizzano may be small, but it was quite important, and from the fifteenth century, it had its own printing press of some importance.³⁸⁹ Given that the prototype of the Madonna of the Gravel was in Reggio Emilia, however, transport from there is perhaps the more likely option. A fair such as the one visited by Nicolò Vaseschi would have been a typical place where a reproductive print could be purchased. The print of the Madonna of the Blood, for instance, may also have been acquired, by the Deciaiuiti family, at a local fair in the vicinity of Bagno di Romagna.³⁹⁰

After all, Fivizzano had at that time a certain prominence: it was not only part of the Grand-Duchy of Florence, from 1477 onwards, but it was also an important printing centre. In any case, the movement of prints was closely intertwined with the movement of people. A small and light print could indeed be transported around by any traveller without effort. A miraculous engraving of Jesus the Nazarene, venerated today in the Church of Saint Donato in

³⁸⁹ See <https://www.museimassacarrara.it/the-print-museum-jacopo-da-fivizzano/?lang=en>.

³⁹⁰ *La val di Bagno in età medievale e moderna* (Bagno di Romagna: Centro di studi storici Bagno di Romagna, 1991), 38: 'Il mercato di San Piero, che anche allora si teneva il giorno di mercoledì, era libero; gli abitanti del Capitanato potevano comprare 'ogni e qualunque cosa e mercanzia, senza alcuna gabella.' All'unica fiera che si teneva a San Piero, 'o vero mercato annuale, che si fa ogn'anno il primo d'Agosto', ne vennero aggiunte nel 1476 altre due, una la prima domenica di aggio e l'altra il 24 giugno, festa di San Giovanni, della durata ognuno di tre giorni, compresi cioè il giorno prima e il giorno dopo.'

Genoa, Liguria, was for instance transported from Rome to Genoa.³⁹¹

Garnett and Rosser refer that the print was bought in Rome in 1769 by the Genoese family Pittaluga.³⁹² However, the hypothesis that the image was printed in Fivizzano is also not to be excluded.

The house of Margherita, where the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration appeared originally, was located at the top of the street known today as the Via Giulia, the old Via di San Rocco, in Fivizzano. As late as the nineteenth century, this house was still known as the House of the Madonna of Reggio or the House of the Cagliana.³⁹³ It has been replaced with a chapel today. Unlike the prints discussed in Chapter II, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration did not acquire her own church. The print was simply brought to the nearby Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony of Fivizzano (Fig. 45), where the cult became institutionalised. This church had existed since 1377, when it was raised by Bernabò Griffi (1363-1378), Bishop of Luni. In 1576, twenty years

³⁹¹ *Esercizj divoti da farsi per nove giorni dinanzi alla miracolosa immagine di Gesu Nazareno divino redentor del mondo* (Genoa: dalle stampe di Paolo Scionico sulla Piazza delle Scuole Pie, 1769), 4: 'apprese la Nobilissima Dama un tenerissimo affetto verso di GESÙ NAZARENO, la di cui SS. Immagine Venerata in quell'alma città è cagione, che il Divin Redentore ricolmi di benefizi, e grazie segnalatissime i divoti adoratori della medesima. Venendo in Genova volle portarne seco un'Esemplare espresso al vivo. Verso di questo la Nobil Zitella continuò la sua divozione, e sebbene in ogni tempo ne abbia dati rimarchevoli contrassegni, pure ebbe motivo di darne nuove chiarissime riprove in occasione della stravagante malattia da lei per più di due mesi sofferta, e della guarigione indi seguita resa celebre per tutta questa Città.'

³⁹² Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 205-6.

³⁹³ Pintuci, *Istoria della miracolosa immagine*, note 8 p. 28: La casa, dove apparve alla Margherita suddetta la Santissima Vergine nella sua sopradescritta sacra Immaigine, è posseduta al presente dal Nobile Sig. Giulio Rossi. La medesima è situata quasi in cima alla via Giulia, detta anticamente la Via di San Rocco (Estimo del 1570 a carte 325). Vi si saliva una volta per una scala esteriore di pietra, che esisteva ancora a mio tempo, e come tutti hanno veduto. Ora nel muro esterno di detta casa vedessi dipinta l'istessa Santissima Vergine dell'Adorazione, fattavvi apporre dal fu Reverendissimo Signor Canonico Arciprete Agostino Rossi, allorché ne fece l'acquisto, in memoria della prodigiosa Apparizione della veneranda Immagine accaduta in quel povero ristretto abituro. Questa casa si chiama ancora oggi la casa della Madonna di Reggio, la casa della Cagliana.'

before the miracle of Margherita, the church was rebuilt so that it overlooked the main piazza of Fivizzano, Piazza Medicea.

No special preparations were made before the Madonna was translated to the church. The parish priest of the time, Father Ambrogio Bagnanini, simply put up the image in a simple frame next to the high altar.³⁹⁴ As reported in a document dated to the 9th of May 1598, preserved in the Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, the Congregation of the Holy Office soon ordered the print to be moved in the sacristy of the church. The same document also states that, because of its increasing worship, the image should be relocated to a more convenient place, where it could be visited and venerated by everyone.³⁹⁵

Remarkably, the translation happened in 1601, before the translation of the original Madonna of the Gravel, which was transferred to its purpose-built church only on the 12th of May 1619.³⁹⁶ The copy of Fivizzano was thus institutionalised prior to its miraculous prototype – although the Madonna of

³⁹⁴ Ezio Pandiani, *La miracolosa apparizione* (Fivizzano: Tip. Conti, 1966), 9.

³⁹⁵ *Delibrazione dei Priori*, 9 May 1598, Registro dei priori, Fondo della Comunità di Fivizzano, Complesso di fondi della parrocchia di Fivizzano, 1596-1605, cc, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Aulla, Italy: 'Di 9. menses May. 1598 [...] furono per esso ritratto risanati molti infermi e stropiati del che fattone consapevole Mons.e R.mo di Sarzana fù per sua Commissione da suoi ministri fabricato un processo sopra dette Gratie, che poi da esso fu mandato alla congregazione del S. Offio quali ordinò doversi Porre detta Imagine nella Sacristia dlla prrocchiale di Flviz.o et tanto fu eseguito, et perche detta Imagine da indi in qua no ha mai cissato di far gratie singoulari a chi devotamente a lei si raccomandava [...] Et altre infinite gratie dilli quali fanno Testimonianze gli Infiniti doni e voti che giornalmente sono portati da diverse parti a' detta Madonna e perciò è cresciuta tanto la Devotione di quisti Popoli verso di quilla chi supplicano V.S. Ill.ma et dy.ma dia ordine a Mons. R.mo di Sarzana chi essamine e considerate li sopdette Gratie conceda si possi collocare ditta Imagine nella Chiesa Parr.le in luogo che qli e comodo a potere da ciascuno esser visitata e venerita e sperando ch'ella per V.S. Ill.ma e R.ma satisfarsi a questo tanto giusto desiderio, facendoli R.za li pregano da N.S. somma felicità.'

³⁹⁶ Adani, *Arte e santuari in Emilia-Romagna*, 196-7. This translation took place in the presence of the Duke Cesare d'Este (1562-1628) and the Cardinal Alessandro d'Este (1568-1624).

the Gravel already had a chapel of her own, which had been completed on the 9th of April 1596.

In February 1629, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration was elected to be the official protectress of Fivizzano.³⁹⁷ In 1733, the print was moved to a purpose-made silver tabernacle in the church, and, in 1763, the altar was adorned with a domed tabernacle, financed by gifts from devotees.³⁹⁸ In 1766, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration was nominated as the patroness of Fivizzano. The votive chapel, which houses the print today, was erected only in 1946, by the Carrarese architect Enrico Remedi, at a point in time when the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony of Fivizzano was elevated to provostorial sanctuary (Fig. 46).³⁹⁹

After the initial healing of Margherita, the print continued to work miracles, both as a substitute for the Madonna of Reggio and as a miraculous image in its own right. The above-mentioned document, dated to the 9th of May 1598,

³⁹⁷ *Libro de Partiti e Delib Copy*, 24 February 1629: 'A dì 24 Febb.o 1629 Li Priori et Consig.ri della Terra di Fivizzano absente il Serg.te Sig.e Stefano Rossi uno de Priori alla presenza del Mto Ill.re Sig.r Commiss.o proposero, e fù approvata Protettrice di Fivizzano la Madonna de P.P. de Servi di Reggio miracolosam.e comparsa in Fivizzano il 5 maggio 1596, come apparisce dagli esami in atti. Estratta fedelm.te la presente copia dal suo Originale anzi da un libro ricoperto in carta pecora bianca intitolato Libro de Partiti e delib. dal 1620 fino al 1631, ove si riportavano le delib. magistrali, che si facevano dai Sig.ri Rapp.ti la comunità di Fivizzano, qual Libro si conserva nell'Archivio della Cancell.a di d.o l.o sotto la custodia di me Can.re infrscritto, e collazionata a C. 264 concorda in tutte le sue parti. questo di 21 Apr.e 1802. In quorum. Antonio Falchi Can.re.'

³⁹⁸ Vasoli, *Antiche memorie storiche di Fivizzano*, 68: 'si sparse la distinta notizia di questo Fatto, avendone voluto far esame attento il Rettore della Parochiale, che era in quel Tempo Tomaso della nobile famiglia degli Anderani, che s'era portato a tale effetto alla casa della sudetta Domenica Il quale di consenso della medesima portò l'immagine nella sua Chiesa et accomodatala in una tavoletta con suo adornamento, la collocò nell'Altar maggiore, di dove poi si levò essendo stato fatto un nichio di marmo accanto all'Altare, dove ora si venera, de Ill.i Benedetti.'; *Libro de Partiti e Delib Copy*, 6 February 1764, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Pontremoli: 'A dì 6 febbraio 1764 [...] Crescendo poi sempre più la divozione di questi Popoli verso la d.a Sacra Immagine nell'anno 1733 le fu' eretto nella d.a Parroch.le un onorevole Altare di marmo dove fu' collocata, qual Altare è stato adornato nel decorso anno 1763 di una bella ed elevata Cupola con l'elemosine dei Devoti.'

³⁹⁹ <http://www.chieseitaliane.chiesacattolica.it/chieseitaliane/centrocca.jsp?sercd=23268>.

reports that, only two years after the first miracle, many people were healed by the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration.⁴⁰⁰ Yet, although Vasoli reports that ‘volumes and whole books could be written and there are those who keep a very extensive record’, no miracle book has survived and the existing sources just repeat the same few miracles.⁴⁰¹ In 1598, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration healed a certain Marquess Cornelio Malaspina from Licciana from illness and saved a young man from Corsano from the gallows.⁴⁰² It is interesting that both of these miracles were worked at a distance from the printed image; it is indicated that the two men visited the print only after having obtained the grace. On the other hand, an interminable rain, which started in early August 1628, ended only on the 17th of November of that year, when the Virgin was carried around in procession.⁴⁰³ As a

⁴⁰⁰ *Deliberazione dei Priori*: ‘Dì 9. menses May. 1598 [...] furono per esso ritratto risanati molti infermi e stropiati.’

⁴⁰¹ Vasoli, *Antiche memorie storiche di Fivizzano*, 68: ‘si prebbero formare volumi, e libri interi, e v’è chi ne fa Registro numerosissimo.’

⁴⁰² *Deliberazione dei Priori*: ‘Dì 9. menses May. 1598 [...] furono per esso ritratto risanati molti infermi e stropiati del che fattone consapevole Mons.e R.mo di Sarzana fù per sua Commissione da suoi ministri fabricato un processo sopra dette Gratie, che poi da esso fu mandato alla congregazione del S. Offio quali ordinò doversi Porre detta Imagine nella Sacristia dlla prrocchiale di Flviz.o et tanto fu eseguito, et perche detta Imagine da indi in qua no ha mai cissato di far gratie singouolari a chi devotamente a lei si raccomandava come in particolare al Ill.mo Sig.r Cornelio Malaspina Marchise di Liciana quali essendo preso da grauissima Infermita e tali chi da medici era stato abandonato avvotitossi alla sopra ditta Imagine ch’intendeva aver fatto e far tanti gratie di subito recupero la sanità, onde poi venne à visitare la detta Madonna. Et a un altro Giovani da Corsano ch’essendo stato condannato alla forca raccomandatosi di cuore alla detta Imagine doppo l’essersi per buon spazio stato il carnefice sulle spalle strapiati tutti dua li capestri cadde in terra con il carnefice senza mali alcuno, e perciò è stato posto in una Tavoletta dove è dipinto sotto detta Imagine, e gli fù fatto Gra da S. A. S. della vita. Et altre infinite gratie dilli quali fanno Testimonianze gli Infiniti doni e voti che giornalmente sono portati da diverse parti a’ detta Madonna e perciò è cresciuta tanto la Devotione di quisti Popoli verso di quilla chi supplicano V.S. Ill.ma et dy.ma dia ordine a Mons. R.mo di Sarzana chi essaminate e considerate li sopdette Gratie conceda si possi collocare ditta Imagine nella Chiesa Parr.le in luogo che qli e comodo a potere da ciascuno esser visitata e venerita e sperando ch’ella per V.S. Ill.ma e R.ma satisfarsi a questo tanto giusto desiderio, facendoli R.za li pregano da N.S. somma felicità.’

⁴⁰³ Vasoli, *Antiche memorie storiche di Fivizzano*, 68: ‘Poi l’anno 1628. essendo dal dì primo di Agosto insino alla mattina delli 17 9bre all’ore 18. di tale giorno sempre piovuto, senza che in tanto tempo fosse giammai un dì sereno; né mai vedendosi tale consideratosi dall Ill.mo Sig.r Alessandro Vettori Nobile Fiorentino Comenario, e dal Sig. Rettore sudetto, che per costante pertinacia di Pioggie cessavano impedito le semenze, et altre coltivazioni della Campagna, rissoluevano di fare una Processione Generale con portarsi intorno la detta

consequence, the print was given a new gilded frame, bearing an inscription on the back reading: 'The present Miraculous Image of paper called the Madonna of Reggio appeared to a Woman who has been sick for years, and healed her. Year 1628.'⁴⁰⁴ The event was exceptional, as the precious print was normally carried in procession only once every ten years, on its feast day, probably in order to protect the fragile medium.⁴⁰⁵

The Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara contains a twentieth-century document, entitled *Relazioni di grazie*, which lists four further miracles, which were probably copied from a now lost older text. The first miracle, dated to the 7th of May 1733, concerns a certain Domenico Venturelli of Fivizzano, who had a nerve severed in his heel by a sharp iron.⁴⁰⁶ After he made vow to

santa Imagine. Così il d.to Sig.re Comessario, il suo Sig.re Anditone, il Sig. Cavalier Emilio Cavacani, il Sig.r Ascanio Vasoli, il Sig. Tomaso Teroni, Nicolò Bianchi Cancelliere delle Bande, et Aurelio Baroni Cancell.e del Commune portatisi assieme alla Canonica, et indi alla Chiesa con il Sig. Rettore, si pose poi in Camino della Processione; et appena fu in su la Porta della Chiesa la sacra Imagine, che rassenero l'aria, si vide chiaro il sole, si fece tutta la processione, et tornò tutta gente asciutta in Chiesa, né più si guastarono i tempi; si adempivano le semenze non solo, ma seguì una annata abondante di tutto.'

⁴⁰⁴ 'La presente Miracolosa Immagine di carta detta la Madona di Reggio comparve ad una Dona inferma di molti ani, e la risanò Anno 1628.'

⁴⁰⁵ A similar arrangement existed in Sestri Levante regarding the miraculous print of Our Lady of Succour, as mentioned above.

⁴⁰⁶ *Relazioni di grazie*, Diocesan Historical Archive Massa Carrara, Pontremoli: 'A dì 10 Luglio 1733. Io Domenico Venturelli di Fivizzano espongo ed attesto per l verità come il dì 7 maggio prossimo scorso, essendo io stato a girare per il mio Podere di Posara col falchino alla cintura detto volgarmente potarolo, nell'entrare in casa mi cascò questo ferro tagliente sopra il calcagno sinistro quattro dita in circa, e mi tagliò a traverso totalmente il nervo, che chiamasi corda magna. Per lo che subito feci voto di fare alcune devozioni alla miracolosa Imagine della S.S. Vergine detta di Reggio, che si adora nella chiesa Prepositura di Fivizzano, e medicato dal sig. cerusico Domco Pelli in giorni ventidue, mi trovai risanato senza avere in tempo della cura mai patito dolore, infiammazione né febbre, neppure altri accidenti e senza restare storpio riconoscendo questa grazia speciale per l'intercessione della S.S. Vergine. In fede di che io Francesco Antonio Baldiera di Fivizzano in nome, d'ordine ed in presenza del suddetto sig. Domenico Venturelli, per non sapere scrivere come disse ho scritta e sottoscritta la presente di mia propria mano. // a dì detto Io Domenico Pelli cerusico della comunità di Fivizzano attesto etiam con mio giuramento di aver medicato il Sig. Domco Venturelli di detto luogo d'una ferita fatta da ferro tagliente nella corda magna quattro dita in circa sopra il calcagno sinistro con la totale troncazione di detto tendine del 7 maggio 1733 fino a tutto 29 detto che saldò la ferita, nel qual tempo contro l'aspettativa non sopravvennero dolore, infiammazione, febbre né altri accidenti che ordinariamente sogliono succedere in simili casi. In fede di che Io Domenico Pelli cerusico sud.m. p. a dì detto Io

the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, Domenico was miraculously healed in a mere twenty-two days, without suffering or long-term consequences on his health. Because Domenico could not write, the miracle was documented by a certain Francesco Antonio Balderia of Fivizzano, in Domenico's presence, and also attested by the surgeon Domenico Pelli, by Gio Battista Mariani, another surgeon who attended the healing, and by Giovanni Battista Securani, witness of both the injury and the healing.

The second miracle, dated to the 24th of May 1763, concerns five people, who miraculously survived a collective fall into the local river Rosaro after the collapse of a local bridge.⁴⁰⁷ These people were devotees, who were transporting some materials for the domed tabernacle that was going to be built over the miraculous image. Four of them were saved immediately, while one young man from Signano remained stuck in the middle of the river for

cerusico Gio Battista Mariani di Fivizzano attesto p. la verità etaim con mio giuramento essermi trovato presente col sig. cerusico Domenico Pelli alla cura nel maggio passato da esso fatta al Signor Domenico Venturelli et aver veduto tagliata per traverso le corda magna quattro dita in circa sopra il calcagno sinistro del medesimo paziente e saldata la ferita in giorni ventidue senza accidenti di dolori, infiammazione febbre ne altro ecc. come per il più succede in simili casi e senza stropio ed in fede di mano propria // a di detto lo Giovanni Battista Securani di Fivizzano affermo et attesto per la verità e con mio giuramento come il dì 7 maggio prossimo passato, mi trovai presente alla disgrazia della ferita del calcagno sinistro del si Domenico Venturelli di d.l. et a vederlo medicare dal sig. Cerusico Domenico Pelli et osservai essere troncato affatto il nervo che chiamano corda magna, e dopo scorsi giorni ventidue averli veduta saldata la ferita e pochi giorni ventidue averli veduta saldata la ferita e pochi giorni dopo lo viddi, come anche in oggi esaminare libero. In fede manu propria //.'

⁴⁰⁷ Pintuci, *Istoria della miracolosa immagine di Maria Santissima*, note 18 p. 32 and *Relazioni di grazie*: 'Nel 1763, in occasione di doversi costruire la cupola sopra l'altare della S.S. Vergine, col suono delle campane nei giorni festivi, si invitava il popolo ad intervenire processionalmente a procurare dei materiali per tal uso con l'accompagnamento di due sacerdoti et un chierico avanti con uno stendardo ove era dipinta la sacra Imagine. Il dì 24 Maggio di detto anno dovendosi passare il fiume per provvedere sul monte dei tuffi, si ruppe il ponte di legno e caddero nell'acqua cinque persone, a quattro delle quali le fu dato soccorso, ma il quinto che era un giovane di Signano restò obbligato per buon spazio di tempo nel centro del fiume da un pezzo di trave che lo premeva sul petto. Fu invocato ad alta voce da quel numeroso popolo l'aiuto della S.S. Vergine e li sacerdoti li raccomandavano l'anima. Con grande ammirazione, sollevata la trave escì fuori quel giovane sano e salvo e si porto andantemente alla Chiesa a ringraziare la S.S. Vergine.'

longer, being trapped under a beam from the bridge; eventually, however, he, too, was rescued having invoked the Virgin's help.

The third miracle, dated 21 January 1767, concerns the protection of some devotees during an earthquake.⁴⁰⁸ Although the principal arch of the vault of the Church of Fivizzano crumbled while numerous people were inside seeking shelter after the first tremors were felt, nobody was injured.

Miraculously, the altar of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration was also the only one not to be damaged by the earthquake. It is worth noting that it was reported how during the earthquake, the image was exposed, indicating that it was normally covered. Not surprisingly given the geological instability of the region, miracles involving earthquakes were very common. Several of them are documented regarding the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì and the Virgin of the Graces of Terra del Sole.⁴⁰⁹ On the back of Saint Mary of the Village in Budrio, it is even recorded, in eighteenth-century handwriting, that the print

⁴⁰⁸ *Relazioni di grazie*: '1767 21 Gennaio. Alle ore 9 di detto giorno et anno si senti una fierissima scossa di terremoto, fu risoluto da tutto il popolo di ricorrere all'aiuto della S.S. Vergine, la quale si scoperse alle ore 10 di di mattina, e mentre la Chiesa era tutta piena del detto popolo, e incominciata la sacra funzione si senti un'altra replica simile a segno che si vidde aprirsi l'arco maestro della volta dal quale caddero due tagliole di ferro che passarono fra le genti senza offendere alcuno; tutti piangevano ed urlavano ad alta voce perchè non potevano uscire dalla chiesa, ma poi animati da una viva fede molto più nel vedere che cadevano dagli altari li candelieri, senza muoversi alcuni di quelli che stavano accesi all'altare di detta Sacra Immagine, termino la funzione con l'assistenza del popolo suddetto.'

⁴⁰⁹ Caroli, Orselli, Savigni, *Romagna*, 204; Bulgarelli, *Storia della veneranda Immagine*, 23-4: 'Nell'anno 1661, il dì 22 di Marzo, nel pomeriggio, venne un Terremoto sì terribile e spaventoso, che i danni per ogni parte furono presso che infiniti. Nella nostra Romagna rovinarono più di 90 Chiese e 1175 case particolari, perirono da 425 animali e ben 256 uomini furono morti dalle cadenti rovine. Il paese poi di Rocca S. Casciano, che trovasi circa a 11 miglia da Terra del Sole, restò quasi affatto distrutto. Ma Terra del Sole era sotto la guardia della Beata Vergine delle Grazie; il Popolo la aveva eletta a sua Protettrice ed ella mostrò veramente come ne avesse presa la protezione, perocchè in Terra del Sole non rovinò pure una Casa. I divoti Terrazzani riconobbero dalla loro compassionevole Avvocata uno scampo sì portentoso, le resero grazie solenni e amorose e fecero voto di ringraziarla pure ogni anno, nel giorno doloroso anniversario del terribile Terremoto. E mai s'è venuto meno alla solenne promessa, giacchè anche a' giorni presenti la sera del 22 di Marzo di ogni anno si fa la Funzione detta volgarmente del voto: si scopre cioè l'Immagine di Maria e nello splendore di molte faci si cantano le Litanie Lauretane ed il Tedeum.'

was carried in procession on the 9th of May 1603, after an earthquake, and again on the 24th of February 1703.⁴¹⁰

The fourth and final miracle took place in 1802, and concerns the miraculous healing, again after an unveiling of the image, of a certain Marco Rappi Venturelli, an inhabitant of Fivizzano who suffered from an affliction of the abdomen.⁴¹¹

III.II Guiglia and Its Madonnina of Saint Luke

III.II.I The Madonna and the Madonnina of Saint Luke

A second surviving miraculous print reproducing an illustrious miraculous image from Emilia-Romagna is the Madonnina of Saint Luke, venerated in Guiglia. As mentioned above, this woodcut is a reproduction of the famous Madonna of Saint Luke, an icon venerated in Bologna, believed to be by the hand of Saint Luke the Evangelist (Fig. 47). Ivanka Nikolajević has asserted

⁴¹⁰ The inscription reads: 'Fu portata processionalmente il di 9 Maggio / 1603 in rendimento di gratie p haverci / liberato dalle scosse del Teremote p tal / mossa vi concorse gran quantità di Po / pulo che così restarono amirati p non / haverla mai più veduta portare fuori / della sua Chiesa come in effetti / non era mai stata tirata via della / fondazione di q.ta Chiesa. / 24 Febb: 1703.' The second part of the inscription is not readable anymore.

⁴¹¹ *Relazioni di grazie*: 'Marco Rappi Venturelli di Fivizzano, in età di anni 70 circa, dopo una lunga fatica da lui fatta, fu sorpreso da una ritenzione totale di orina, così ostinata che per lo spazio di tre giorni lo teneva sul dubbio della di lui vita, essendosi il suo ventre tumefatto all'estremo e per detto tempo patendo dolori insopportabili, nonostante l'applicazione di tutti i rimedi nulla si potè ottenere di vantaggio per la di lui salute, e di già dal sig. Dott. Luigi Contigli era stato proposto di farlo stringare, ed infatti il signor Quintilio Contigli Chirurgo aveva posto in pronto il tutto per fare l'operazione. Ma prima fatta la proposizione di far scoprire la S.S. Vergine dell'Adorazione, e dopo un tal propimento parve che una mano le togliesse l'ostacolo frapposto per detta ritenzione e all'istante si sciolsero le orine così copiosamente e cessarono tutti i sintomi che facevano dubitare della sua vita, essendone del tutto restato libero, e sano Questo di 14 luglio 1802, alle ore 9 della mattina, tempo nel quale fu scoperta la S.S. Vergine dell'Adorazione. E delle sopradette cose esposte ne puole attestare e il paziente e il medico e il chirurgo curante. Io Marco Rappi Venturelli di Fivizzano affermo, confermo a quanto in questa si contiene per essere stato liberato della sopradetta ritenzione ed in fede Manu propria.'

that the panel was actually painted in Italy in the late thirteenth century, under the influence of so-called 'crusader icons.'⁴¹² It seems, however, that underneath the thirteenth-century paint layer, there is an older layer about which little is known. According to legend, the icon was brought to Bologna from the Near East by a pious pilgrim during the twelfth century. In 1193, the first stone of the bespoke building in which it was housed was laid on the Mount of the Guard, at the bequest of a woman called Angelica.⁴¹³ The Madonna of Saint Luke, however, only achieved miraculous status much later, with the so-called miracle of the rain in 1433. In that year, following incessant rains, the jurist Graziolo Accarisi (1380-1470) suggested to carry the venerated icon of Saint Luke around the city in a solemn procession, imitating what the Florentines did with the Madonna of Impruneta, also attributed to Saint Luke; the procession caused the rain to stop immediately.⁴¹⁴ The procession is still repeated every year up to the present day.

The Madonnina of Saint Luke, whose name presents her as the little cousin of the long-venerated Madonna of Saint Luke of Bologna, is an anonymous early seventeenth-century woodcut on paper, of a standard devotional type. At the bottom, in the centre, the print refers to the prototype in capital letters: 'VERO RITRATTO DELA MADONNA DI S. LVCA.' ('TRUE PORTRAIT OF THE MADONNA OF SAINT LUKE'). The word 'vero' ('true') aims to

⁴¹² Ivanka Nikolajević, "La Madonna del Monte," in *Arte romanica a Bologna: la Madonna del Monte*, eds. Ivanka Nikolajević, Franco Bergonzoni, and Francesca Bocchi (Bologna: Alfa, 1973), 82-3.

⁴¹³ Marta Fanti and Giancarlo Roversi eds., *La Madonna di San Luca in Bologna: Otto secoli di storia, di arte e di fede* (Bologna: Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna, 1993), 69.

⁴¹⁴ Fanti and Roversi, *La Madonna di San Luca*, 71.

strengthen the connection with the prototype; in this case, the print reproduces not only the external appearance of the prototype, but also its spiritual powers. Although there is no reference to Bologna in the title, the image is undoubtedly a reproduction of the Madonna of Saint Luke in that city. The iconography is that of the icon of Bologna: the severe Madonna, with a thin nose and almond-shaped eyes, holds a blessing Christ Child in her lap. The proportions and the posture of the two figures are slightly different. The quality of the print is not very high. The shadows are coarsely indicated by hatched parallel lines.

The matrix of the print (or a very similar one, also dated to the seventeenth century) is preserved in the Fondo Barelli of the Galleria Estense (where the collection of the Antica Stamperia modenese Soliani is kept) (Fig. 48).⁴¹⁵ The matrix has an inscription 'MS' at the bottom left, which is not present on the Madonnina, trimmed at that point. Like the 'BS' found on the Stuffione di Ravarino matrices, these initials may refer to the woodcutter. This suggests that although the Madonnina survives only in one known impression today, it was probably printed in greater numbers originally, part of the usual diffusion of the miraculous prototype.

III.II.II A Private Oratory

According to legend, the Madonnina of Saint Luke was originally venerated on a column at the edge of the upper field of the Convent of the Carmelite

⁴¹⁵ Matrix of the Madonna of Saint Luke, 17th century, 257 x 179 mm, Fondo Barelli 4664, Galleria Estense, Modena.

Fathers of Ancient Observance, at the foot of the hill on which the Castle of Guiglia is located, northwest of Guiglia itself. Like trees, columns were a common place to exhibit miraculous images. In Emilia-Romagna, another famous case of an image initially venerated on a column is that of the Madonna of Piratello, which, according to the historian Andrea Bernardi, may also have been originally a paper image.⁴¹⁶ The image today venerated is a fresco.

The column on which the Madonnina of Saint Luke was displayed was situated at an intersection of the old road, which led to Guiglia from the valley floor of the river Panaro. Columns were frequently used to mark crossroads, and images that were mounted on them protected travellers in the place of passage. The woodcut of Saint Mary of the Village was originally placed on a tower of the village (Budrio), the point where a bridge across the moat connected the local castle with the village (it is worth noting that this place was said to be scary especially at night).⁴¹⁷ Indeed, in the popular vision, such places were often associated with danger and thus required a special protection.⁴¹⁸ The print of the Madonna of the Maple originally marked a supposedly dangerous mountain passage at the border between Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna.

It remains unknown how and when the printed copy of the Madonna of Saint Luke reached the remote hilltop village of Guiglia. One option is that it was

⁴¹⁶ On this aspect, see Andrea Bernardi, ed., *Cronache forlivesi* (Bologna: R. Deputazione di storia patria, 1895-1897).

⁴¹⁷ Caprara and Servetti, *Arte e storia nelle chiese di Budrio*, 63.

⁴¹⁸ Fanti and Roversi, *La Madonna di San Luca*, 121.

brought there by Ottavia Caprara from Bologna, who, as will be discussed immediately below, promoted the construction of an oratory for the print, and was probably already devoted to the Madonna of Saint Luke of Bologna – or perhaps by some citizens of Bologna who belonged to her circle. It is also possible that it was affixed in its original location by one of the Carmelitan Fathers of the Convent; as argued by Michele Bacci (2000), the cult of the Virgin Mary was intensely promoted by that order. The order also had a connection with the Madonna of Saint Luke, in that it promoted the devotion towards Byzantine-style icons.⁴¹⁹ According to Joanna Cannon, the Carmelites venerated these images for devotion but also because they underlined the connection of the order with the Orient.⁴²⁰ Garnett and Rosser also emphasise that, in the early modern period, different religious orders, the Carmelites, but also Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits, fostered the Marian devotion, in order to mediate between the official central Church and its localised provinces.⁴²¹

A private oratory, variously called Oratory Montecuccoli, Oratory of the Madonna of Saint Luke or, more intimately, Oratory of the Madonnina or Chiesolina (literally ‘small church’), was erected next to the Castle of Guiglia to host the image around 1690, by the above-mentioned Ottavia Caprara (1627-1711), who belonged to an important senatorial family of Bologna and was the widow of the Marquess Giovanni Battista Montecuccoli-Laderchi

⁴¹⁹ On this aspect, see Michele Bacci, “*Pro remedio animae*”: *Immagini sacre e pratiche devozionali in Italia centrale (secoli XIII e XIV)* (Pisa: ETS, 2000), 55-6. On the identification of the Madonna of Saint Luke with image venerated by the first hermits on the Mount Carmel, see also Juan Bautista Lezana, *Maria Patrona, seu De singulari sanctissimae Dei genitricis, et Virginis Mariae patronatu, & patrocinio in sibi deuotos* (Bruxelles 1651).

⁴²⁰ Joanna Cannon, “Pietro Lorenzetti and the History of the Carmelite Order,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 19-21.

⁴²¹ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 46.

(1624-1688) – the second Marquess of Guiglia after Francesco Montecuccoli (1595-1645) (Fig. 49), who first transformed the Castle of Guiglia into a noble residence. The oratory was completed by their son Raimondo Montecuccoli (1659-1741), third Marquess of Guiglia, in 1715.

The printed image was solemnly translated to the purpose-built oratory in 1719, from the Parish Church of Saint Geminiano of Guiglia (where it had been provisionally placed), at the sound of music and artillery.⁴²² As in the case of the Madonna of the Graces, Our Lady of Carmel, and the Madonna of Passau, it was an aristocratic family, who promoted the cult of this peripheral paper printed copy, which had its origins on a column in a field. The Caprara, like the Aldrovandi, were a senatorial family of Bologna, and the Montecuccoli, with whose name the oratory is associated by marriage, were feudal lords of the Este Dukedom like the Rangoni. In fact, the Montecuccoli had been appointed Lords of Guiglia by Francesco I d'Este (1610-1658) in 1630. They wanted to sponsor the cult of the print, which according to legend (no miracle book survives), worked many miracles while displayed on its column.

Interestingly, the Oratory of the Madonnina, although much smaller, closely resembles the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Saint Luke in Bologna (Fig. 50).

Father Anselmo Giannotti (eighteenth century) reported that 'it is designed

⁴²² Francesco Gavioli, *Guiglia e il suo marchesato: Notizie e ricerche storiche* (Guiglia: Pro Loco Guiglia, 1984), 343-4 and Anselmo Giannotti, *Memorie storiche dell'antica e civil terra di Guiglia e sue giurisdizione*, 18th century, 209, Parish Historical Archive Guiglia, Guiglia, Italy: 'la Domenica fra l'ottava dell'Assunta l'anno predetto 1719. La sacra immagine, che pochi giorni prima era stata trasportata alla Parrocchiale, venne in detto giorno levata, e con solenne processione accompagnata al suono di scelta musica, ed allo sparo delle artiglierie.'

after the form of the Magnificent temple of the Blessed Virgin of Saint Luke on the Mount of the Guard outside Bologna.⁴²³ The sanctuary in Bologna, however, was erected by the architect Carlo Francesco Dotti only years later, between 1723 and 1757. It seems therefore likely that the present oratory at Guiglia was either built or modified after 1723; it would be implausible for the oratory of the original sacred image in Bologna to be a copy of the oratory of a derivative miraculous print.

As shown by Renzo Zagnoni, the oratory of the Madonnina is not the only oratory to have been built in honour of the Madonna of Saint Luke.⁴²⁴ In the seventeenth century, other oratories and small churches in the province of Bologna were built in imitation of the Sanctuary of Saint Luke, as peripheral substitutes not merely of the original image but also of its shrine.

Documented buildings included those in the Parish Churches of Castiglione dei Pepoli, of Sant'Agata Bolognese, of Castel San Pietro Terme, and of Savigno, all in the provinces of Bologna. These buildings generally also contained a reproduction of the Madonna of Saint Luke. This opens up the possibility that there were more printed copies of the Madonna of Saint Luke, which were venerated either as proxies for the prototype or in their own right, but which are lost today.

The only altar of the oratory, made of polychrome *scagliola* (a marble imitation in plaster) in Reggiano style, is dedicated to the Madonnina of Saint

⁴²³Giannotti, *Memorie storiche*, 209: 'disegnata sulla forma del Magnifico tempio della B.V. di S. Luca sul monte della Guardia fuori Bologna.'

⁴²⁴ On this aspect, see Renzo Zagnoni, "La venerazione della Madonna di San Luca nella diocesi di Bologna (secoli XVII-XIX)," in *La Madonna di San Luca*, eds. Fanti and Roversi, 122-3.

Luke. Indeed, it bears in the centre another image of the Madonna of Saint Luke, which is positioned above the coats of arms of both the Montecuccoli and the Caprara families, the faithful devotees who sponsored the building (Fig. 51). On the altar, the Madonnina itself was enclosed in a seventeenth-century carved wooden frame. Today, this arrangement has been replaced by a copy of the print enclosed in a frame of silvery clouds, little angels, and golden rays. In 2018, two nineteenth-century painted ex-votos from Modena were still registered on the left side of the oratory: a landscape with a man falling in a well and a man falling from horse invoking the Madonna; both these ex-votos, which indicate some miracles operated by the Madonnina, have since then disappeared.⁴²⁵

The most celebrated miracle of the Madonnina of Saint Luke (and the only one, which has been recorded officially) took place in 1763. Like the Madonna of Saint Luke in 1433, the Madonnina miraculously stopped an incessant rain, which had lasted for sixty days, being transported in procession from the Oratory to the Parish Church of Guiglia.⁴²⁶ It is undoubtedly not a coincidence that the main miracle of the reproductive print is a repeat of the original miracle of the prototype; the correspondence reinforces the connection between the two images. Miracles concerning the weather, however, were often connected to miraculous prints, and to miraculous images in general. According to Bartolommeo Ricceputi (1686), the Madonna of the Fire, for instance, was closely linked with the graces of

⁴²⁵ *Inventario dei Beni Mobili Ecclesiastici, Arcidiocesi di Modena-Nonantola. Elenco riassuntivo della Parrocchia di San Geminiano vescovo (7R6) - Guiglia. Oratorio della Beata Vergine di San Luca*, 6 February 2018, Parish Historical Archive Guiglia, Guiglia, Italy.

⁴²⁶ Gavioli, *Guiglia*, 344 and Giannotti, *Memorie storiche*, 209.

both the sun and of the rain, which were visually symbolised by the sun and the moon included in the print's iconography.⁴²⁷

Like the Madonna of Saint Luke, the Madonnina is also carried in procession to the Parish Church of Saint Geminiano every year. Although the oratory was private, owned by the Montecuccoli family, the Madonnina in this way acquired a wider public function. Differently from the prototype, which was crowned twice, the printed image has never been crowned.⁴²⁸

In 1859, Raimondo Montecuccoli-Laderchi, the last Marquess of the Montecuccoli family, who died without heirs, extensively restored the oratory to transform it into an aristocratic tomb monument for himself and his parents.⁴²⁹ In front of the high altar, there is still a white marble tombstone, bearing the names of the Marquess Francesco Enea Montecuccoli-Laderchi and Countess Carlotta Franco of Vicenza, who were buried there in 1869,

⁴²⁷ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 23-4: 'Ma quello che sopra tutto hà sparso il nome di sì prodigiosa Immagine per tutta questa Prouincia, e fuori ancor di Romagna, è sempre stato il coseguimento infallibile delle due Grazie singolari della Pioggia, e del Sereno: Grazie che ben saggiamente altri giudicò contenersi, come in figura nell'Immagine istessa, corteggiata (come dicemmo) dalla Luna, e dal Sole. Costumarono i nostri Antichi (ed io ne hò lette memorie di poco men di due Secoli) ne' maggiori bisogni Esporre, e portare in processione per la Città quest'Immagine; ma specialmente lo fecero in tempo di piogge souerchie, o di dannosa serenità: e ne prouarono così sicura l'impetrazione, che più non se ne dubbita, ma con viuissima fede si prosegue a far il simile a' nostri tempi, senza darsi mai caso, che vadano a vuoto le suppliche. Quindi gli Antichi stessi in testimonio di questo incisero in vn marmo i loro grati sentimenti cento cinquant'anni sono, che ancor si vede nella detta vecchia Cappella, con que' due versi: Hec Christi Genitrix Vrbi suffragia nostrae Cotra Igne, & Pluiias tradere sepe solet. Ed i moderni nelle Immagini, della SS. Madonna del Fuoco, che a migliaia ogni anno si stampano; siccome nei ripartimenti così dell'Argenteria dell'Altare, come dei volti della nuoua Cappella, v'hanno effigiato come per proprissimo trofeo di questa Immagine l'vno e l'altro di tali effetti del Cielo.'

⁴²⁸ The Madonna of Saint Luke in Bologna was first crowned by the Cardinal Alfonso Paleotti (1531-1610) on the 4th of May 1603 and then again by Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) on the 10th of June 1857.

⁴²⁹ Gavioli, *Guiglia*, 344.

and of Raimondo himself, who died in 1873.⁴³⁰ Their corpses were carried to the oratory accompanied by a solemn cortege.⁴³¹

In the remainder of the nineteenth century, the oratory was restored two more times. In 1888, it was restored by Father Ferdinando Fulloni, simultaneously with restoration works on the Parish Church of Saint Geminiano. In 1897, it was restored again by Father Domenico Ferrarini, after he purchased the oratory from the heirs Montecuccoli on behalf of the Parish Church of Guiglia. Although more restorations followed during the twentieth century, the oratory is in very poor condition today, remaining closed for most of the year owing to the lack of funds. As mentioned above, the miraculous print itself is no longer exposed to the public veneration, but stored in the rectory of the Parish Church of Saint Geminiano.

III.III Conclusion

This chapter has given a further insight into the use and working of prints as substitutes for miraculous images in other media. Prints were especially

⁴³⁰ The inscription reads: 'PACE IMPLORANO / LE ANIME PIETOSE DEI CONIUGI / MARCHESE FRANCESCO ENEA MONTECUCCOLI LADERCHI / E CONTESSA CARLOTTA FRANCO DI VICENZA / E DEL LORO UNICO FIGLIO / MARCHESE RAIMONDO MONTECUCCOLI LADERCHI / CHE NEL X MARZO MDCCCLXIX / VOLLE LE SPOGLIE MORTALI DEI GENITORI / RIUNITE IN QUESTO AVELLO DA LUI COSTRUITO / PREPARANDO A SE PURE L'ULTIMA DIMORA / OVE POSO / NEL GIORNO PRIMO DI APRILE / MDCCCLXXIII.'

⁴³¹ Aristide Bortolani, *Raccolta notizie storiche su Guiglia*, 1869, Parish Historical Archive Guiglia, Guiglia, Italy: 'Nel del 1869 le compagnie dei Confratelli e delle Consorelle del S.S. Sacramento e del S.S: Rosario si recarono lungo la strada per Marano, alla Casa della Vigna, ove, da Modena erano state recate d'ordine del Marchese Raimondo Montecuccoli le salme dei di lui genitori Marchese Enea Francesco morto nel 1830 e la di lui moglie Marchesa Carlotta Franco, per essere trasportate e tumulate nel sepolcro di famiglia posto in Guiglia, nella Chiesina della 'Madonnina' di S. Luca. Il trasporto, effettuato in forma solenne, richiamò il concorso di numerosissimo clero e di gran copia di popolo che riverente seguì il corteo lungo tutto il suo percorso.'

useful in the dissemination of cults from the big cities to small towns and villages in the periphery. The inhabitants of these towns and villages travelled to the bigger centres to attend fairs and brought home prints of the important cult images for themselves or for others, as in the case of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration in Fivizzano. Undoubtedly, this dispersion followed established road networks and prints may have ended up on important crossroads. Fivizzano, for instance, was a crossing point between the Apuan Alps and the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, and was also close to the Via Francigena, an important pilgrimage route.

The majority of these reproductive prints will have functioned as straightforward substitutes for their prototypes, venerated in private households or in settings such as the columns erected at road junctions. The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration and the Madonnina of Saint Luke are among the few examples of this category of local printed copies that survive today. No doubt this is due to the miraculous status they acquired in their own right, although primary sources attest to the fact that other printed copies of the Madonna of the Gravel worked miracles and were subsequently made into objects of devotion, as far away as Sestola (a village in the province of Modena), Piacenza, Palidano (a small village in the province of Mantua), and Lecce (Apulia). All these examples illustrate the long distances to which the 'zone of currency' of a miraculous image could be extended. Fivizzano, the hometown of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, is 65 kilometres away from Reggio Emilia, and it is today in the province of a Tuscan city, Massa-Carrara, whereas Guiglia, the residence of

the Madonnina of St Luke, is 33 kilometres away from Bologna, and is today in the province of Modena.

Despite their being mere local copies of the most renowned miraculous images of Emilia-Romagna, these prints, once working their own miracles could again attract the patronage of important aristocratic families. The Montecuccoli family, who ruled over the whole of Frignano, sponsored the cult of the small Madonnina of Saint Luke, regardless of the fact that the print was only a copy of the famous miraculous image of the Madonna of Saint Luke and was originally located in a field, its cult having its origins in rural culture. The Montecuccoli even built a dedicated oratory for the print, which eventually turned into their family mausoleum. As with the prints discussed in Chapter II, the setting of the oratory was undoubtedly what guaranteed the long-term preservation of the print, which had previously been exposed to the open air on a public column.

Yet, an association between the cult of a print and an important family was not a requirement for the success and institutionalisation of the cult and the long-term conservation of the object. The cult of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration needed an authorisation from the Congregation of the Holy Office, but it was never sponsored by an important family, remaining associated only with Margherita, the woman of the people who was the first recipient of the print's miraculous powers when she was healed from her long-standing ailment. The cult of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration did not have its own building, but was nonetheless institutionalised when the print

was translated from Margherita's private home to the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony of Fivizzano. There, it was installed on an altar and in due course covered with a curtain or veil, to be exhibited only on certain specific occasions. Once again, the institutionalised setting appears to have been crucial for the print's survival to the present day.

Neither of the two prints presented in this chapter bears a close visual resemblance to its prototype, confirming the assertion by Garnett and Rosser of a 'lack of concern with very close formal correspondence' between miraculous prototypes and their reproductions.⁴³² Printed copies of miraculous images were neither intrinsically miraculous, like contact relics, nor were they specifically produced to become miraculous, although they could on occasion act like 'ambassadors' of the prototype conveying its powers at a distance.

Like the prints analysed in Chapter II, the two prints discussed here became prototypes in their own right rather than mere substitutes for the miraculous images that they reproduced. Although devotees may well have been aware of the original miraculous Madonnas, which were after all venerated in the same region, the cults of prototypes and derivatives developed independently from one another. The *Madonnina of Saint Luke*, whose very dedication refers to the *Madonna of Saint Luke of Bologna*, even worked a duplicate of its prototype's first recorded miracle 330 years after the original

⁴³² Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 213.

event. The next chapter will deal with a print that also replicated a miraculous prototype, in this case at an even shorter distance from it.

Chapter IV – The Two Miraculous Printed Madonnas of Forlì

The Madonna of the Fire, a fifteenth-century miraculous print, venerated in the Cathedral of Forlì, has been the subject of different studies, most recently by Lisa Pon, as already mentioned in the Introduction (see Fig. 2).⁴³³ Yet, a second sixteenth-century miraculous print in Forlì, Saint Mary of the Vow, whose story is very much interconnected with that of the Madonna of the Fire, has remained in the shadows (Fig. 52). Although it is not a direct copy of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì, this second print is connected with another image also known as the Madonna of the Fire, venerated in Faenza, at circa 15 kilometres distance from Forlì. The story of the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza has much in common with that of the Madonna of the Fire of

⁴³³ Pon, *A Printed Icon*.

Forlì. Nonetheless, its copy, Saint Mary of the Vow, is not venerated in Faenza but in Forlì, together with the 'original' Madonna of the Fire. The fact that these two miraculous prints are both still venerated in the same city is extraordinary in itself, given the low survival rates of miraculous prints, and it allows us to reconstruct an interesting story. While two similar miraculous prints in one city is an exception today, however, it is likely to be representative of a phenomenon that was once widespread in the culture of the dispersion of printed derivatives of miraculous images. This chapter will discuss the relationship between the three miraculous images and the two cities.

IV.1 Two Madonnas of the Fire: Forlì and Faenza

The Madonna of the Fire of Forlì is a fifteenth-century coloured woodcut on paper, which is venerated in the Cathedral of Forlì today. This print has long been considered to be the first woodcut ever produced in Italy. Its history, however, is not documented and, as already discussed in Chapter I, Giovanni di Mastro Pedrino's 1450-1460 painting in tempera on panel, visualising the first miracle worked by the print, is the firmest *terminus ante quem*. Like the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, and probably in accordance with a recurring motif of legend, the woodcut is in a good condition despite the fact that the panel, to which it was originally attached, was eaten by woodworm.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁴ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 29-30: 'Ma vn Miracolo niente forse inferiore a tati, che si son detti, pare a me che possa stimarsi la conseruazione di questa Carta dai deti voraci del tempo. Sono ducento cinquanta e sette anni, ch'ella si preseruò dall'incendio, e Dio sà quanti ancora n'eran trascorsi, da che era vscita dal torchio: e pure in tanti secoli vn

Legend has it that the print miraculously survived a long-lasting fire, which, in the night of 4-5 February 1428, destroyed the schoolhouse of a certain Lombardino da Ripetrosa, where the woodcut was displayed. The wooden board, to which the image was affixed (probably with nails), also survived (attesting, incidentally, to the fact that from an early stage, prints were mounted on wooden boards).⁴³⁵ The image shows the Madonna and Child, surrounded by numerous figures of saints (much smaller in scale compared to the central figures). The sun and moon appear on either side of the Virgin's head, and above her, there is an image of the Crucifixion, flanked by the Archangel Gabriel (left) and the Virgin Annunciate (right). It remains unknown whether the print reproduces a now lost painting. In 2003, Sergio Fabbri ventured to attribute the hypothetical prototype to the Bolognese painter Michele di Matteo, based on the style and on the similarities with a *Madonna and Child* in tempera on wood today at the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Bologna, but this is merely a hypothesis.⁴³⁶

The Madonna of the Fire of Faenza, meanwhile, is a small Veneto-Cretan painting in tempera on oak panel, dated between the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries (Fig. 53).⁴³⁷ According to legend, and similarly to the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì, this panel, hanging from a silk

semplice foglio di carta senza vna memoria offesa tuttauia si conserua; ancorche piu volte parlata la tauola istessa di legno, cui stà attaccata, sia stato necessario mutarla.'

⁴³⁵ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 15-19: 'Saluossi miracolosamente l'Immagine, e saluossi per essa anche la tauoletta di legno, cui era (come si disse) imbroccata.'

⁴³⁶ Sergio Fabbri, *La Madonna del Fuoco di Forlì fra storia, arte e devozione* (Cesena: Stilgraf, 2003), 44-50.

⁴³⁷ Antonio Savioli, *Incisori faentini di immagini mariane dei secoli 16.-19. in fogli sciolti di collezioni private* (Faenza: Litografia Faenza, 1988), 97.

ribbon, survived a fire, which happened in the night of 1-2 August 1567 (more than one hundred years after the miracle of Forlì), in the small house of a widow in Vicolo dei Gerbuliani (today Vicolo Uglino d'Azzo Ubaldini), which was otherwise completely destroyed. According to the Dominican Father Giovanni Capalla, the fire was caused by the son of another widow, who lived nearby and fell asleep with a lit candle.⁴³⁸ The panel came to be venerated in a church purposely built in the place of the burned-down house in 1568. After the suppression of that church during the French Revolution, the panel was then moved to the Church of Saint Dominic in 1810 – to the

⁴³⁸ Giovanni Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innoxia; cioè, Auuertimenti, e deuttioni fatte sopra il miracolo della Madonna del Fuoco, occorso in Faenza, l'anno 1567* (Bologna: Alessandro Benacci, 1569), 1-3: 'Narrasi il fatto come che auenne. Visione qual si uidde sopra di FAENZA, ne' giorni di PIO V. Pontefice Massimo, nell'Anno M D L X V I I. alli 2. d'Agosto, la Notte precedete, che fù nel terminare il Venerdì, & entrar'in Sabato. Tra un Monastero di Monache, chiamato Santa Cecilia, dell'Ordine, Habito, Professione, Cura, & Osseruanza di S. Dominico, & un'Hospitale, chiamato l'Hospital nuouo de' Forastieri, poco più lontano dalla Chiese delle Monache d'un tiro di braccio, u'erano alcunec ase di prezzo, d'antichità, e di capacità molto anguste, abiette, e uili: perilche anchora da persone basse erano habitate, e queste erano semplici donicciuole uedoue, alle quali dette Monache, senza stipendio, & emolumento, accomodauano esse Case caritatiuamente, acciò hauessero almeno ridotto di dormire al coperto. Inoltre, esse Monache, auuega che d'entrata pouerissime, e d'habitazione ristrettissime fossero [...] Erano accomodati in una di quelle case al Monastero quasi cotigua copioso numero di fasci, sopra de' quali ui rimaneua una stanza, nella quale habitaua, e dormiua, una semplice, e pouera Vedoua sola, la quale per sua diuotione teneua uicino al letto una Figurina d'aspetto assai pietosa, e e diuota, in una picciola Tauoletta dipinta, nella quale ui era l'immagine della gloriosa Vergine co'l suo Bambino in braccio. Auuenne che un fanciullo figliuolo d'un'altra vedoua, che stantiaua cotigua à questa, portando la sera un moccolo acceso sopra quel soffitado, sotto il quale erano i fasci, & addormentatosi, cadde il moccolo acceso [...] coppia d'alcune paglie di certe poche spiche che haueuano ritrouato alla foresta i giorni auanti, s'accese il fuoco in esse, e cadendo à basso di quel fuoco, sopra, e tra quelle fascine, tanto fù presta quella fiamma, che quasi in un momento si uidde aredere, & auampare tutta quella casa: e questo fù verso le due hore di notte. Il fanciullo auanti che'l solaro cadesse (come DIO uolse) uscì dal mezo di quelle fiamme, che già lo circondauano: e tinsi che miracolosamente n'uscisse, poi he'l putto, né offeso in parte alcuna, né pure isbigottito parse in tanto pericolo [...] Et ecco, mentre che alla gran fiamma mirano, ueggono in mezo d quella, una picciola Tauoletta, attaccata al muro, com'è il solito di uedere, agitata dalla furiosa fiamma hor'in questa, & hor'in quell'altra parte. Ogn'uno si marauiglia, come sia sia consumato, e come non si consumi quel legnetto in mezo à sì ardenti fiamme, alle quali resister non puote al primo incontro ogni cosa combustibile. Erano appesi à quel muro, vicini, e d'ogni intorno à questa Tauoletta, mille altri stromenti, che sogliono usar simili persone à diversi loro esercitij, e bisongi; il tutto in un momento fu risolto in cenere, e distrutto, che consumata la muraglia si uedeua; per esser piu di due hore, che'l fuoco auampau di dentro: i chiodi, & altri ferramenti rosseggiuano nell'incendio, e'l Legnetto in tutto si discerne seza offesa.'

third chapel on the right to be precise.⁴³⁹ Today, it has been replaced in that location by a copy (the original being preserved in the Archive of the Church).

Like the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì, the panel shows the Virgin and Child, but without saints or scenes from the Life of Christ. The Madonna of the Fire of Faenza does not enjoy the same fame as the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì. Its cult is in fact unknown to many Faentines for whom it is secondary as a miraculous image to the Madonna of the Graces, venerated in the Cathedral of Faenza since 1760, which was made the patroness of Faenza.⁴⁴⁰ One reason for its lower status may be that the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza is associated with the dark period in which Faenza was considered a Lutheran heretical city (its miraculous survival of the fire has been interpreted as a salvation from the Lutheran creed). The Madonna of the Graces, on the other hand, was connected with the healing of Faenza from the infamous plague of 1631. Interestingly, the Madonna of the Graces was originally worshipped in the same Church of Saint Dominic where a copy of the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza was collocated.

IV.II Saint Mary of the Vow

Saint Mary of the Vow, the second printed Madonna to be venerated in Forlì 'next to' the Madonna of the Fire, is a small, anonymous sixteenth-century hand-coloured woodcut on paper, measuring 110 x 100 mm.⁴⁴¹ In the image, the Christ Child has a nimbus very similar to that of the Madonna of the Fire

⁴³⁹ Savioli, *Incisori faentini*, 36.

⁴⁴⁰ Alteo Dolcini, *I sacri fuochi di Forlì e Faenza* (Faenza: Tip. Faentina, 1997).

⁴⁴¹ Pon, *A Printed Icon*, note 71 p. 222.

of Forlì. Yet, both the iconography and the colours, probably added at a later time to imitate the original, recall the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza. The Virgin holds the Child in her lap. Christ makes a gesture of blessing with His right hand, while His left hand supports a globe topped with a cross. Furthermore, the Madonna has the same green clothing and brown cloak, and the Child the same red cloak, as in the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza. The background colours repeat the gold and red background colours of the icon. A star appears on the left shoulder of the Madonna, whereas the symbols of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì are the sun and a moon.

What is more, this print clearly alludes to the miracle, which happened in Faenza. The Madonna is surrounded by bricks, which are in turn surrounded by flames. Such flames are not present in the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì, which did not have any connection with fire before its first miracle of 1428.⁴⁴² Although this motif could equally allude to the fire of Forlì, the architecture in the foreground has been topographically identified with buildings in Faenza, which were close to the place where the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza survived the conflagration.⁴⁴³ On the right, there is (supposedly) the Convent of Saint Cecilia, the sisters of whose Order owned the burned house of the widow; on the left, there is the Hospital of Saint Nevolone; and, in the middle,

⁴⁴² Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 16: 'Non hà sotto di se quel trono di fiamme, che hora vi si dipinge nelle copie, che se ne formano; perche allora non era per anco cognominata la Madonna del Fuoco: ma vi s'aggiungono quelle fiamme al presente in riguardo al Miracolo, che diremo.'

⁴⁴³ Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innocua*, 1-2: 'Tra un Monastero di Monache, chiamato Santa Cecilia, dell'Ordine, Habito, Professione, Cura, & Osservanza di S. Dominico, & un'Hospitale, chiamato l'Hospital nuouo de' Forastieri, poco più lontano dalla Chiesa delle Monache d'un tiro di braccio, u'erano alcune case di prezzo, d'antichità, e di capacità molto anguste, abiette, e uili: perilche anchora da persone basse erano habitate, e queste erano semplici donicciuole uedoue, alle quali dette Monache, senza stipendio, & emolumento, accomodauano esse Case caritatualmente, acciò hauessero almeno ridotto di dormire al coperto.'

the house of the widow that burned down.⁴⁴⁴ The print also bears a cryptic inscription at the bottom in the centre, 'S.M. [?] D. A. F.', which may refer to its prototype in Faenza.

IV.III A Print from Faenza Venerated in Forlì

According to legend, Saint Mary of the Vow reached Forlì due to a certain Vangelista di Girolamo, also known as Bastardino. A notarial act from 1570 specifies that Vangelista di Girolamo was in charge of the House of God, a home for abandoned children.⁴⁴⁵ Since the House of God was in Forlì, it seems likely that Vangelista di Girolamo came from that city. He must have acquired the print at Faenza, however. It seems that he decided to place the woodcut in the ruined Church of the Hermits, on 11 June 1570, only three years after the miracle of the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza had taken place.⁴⁴⁶ He positioned the print in a small niche, where the ampoules for the mass had been preserved, for his own devotions. This was the result of a vow he had made (hence the name of the print).⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ Adamo Pasini and Alfredo Marini, "La Madonna del Fuoco," *Periodico bimestrale per il V Centenario 1428-1928*: 118.

⁴⁴⁵ Lattanzio Biondini, *Relazione autentica dell'origine dell'immagine di S.M. del Voto*, 1570: 'Vangelista di Girolamo, alevò della Casa di Dio (detto Bastardino).'

⁴⁴⁶ The Church of the Hermits had been destroyed in 1556 by the papal troops, to defend the city of Forlì from the Spanish, who could have easily occupied it. Franco Zaghini, *S. Maria del Voto nei Romiti* (Forlimpopoli: Nuova Tipografia, 1999), 52; Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'per voto che egli aveva fatto di questa azione.'

⁴⁴⁷ Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'Al nome di Dio. Amen. Io Lattanzio Biondini notaro di Forlì et della Corte Episcopale di detta Città fo fede ampia ed indubitata che dell'anno 1570 Indizione XIII, il dì XI del mese di Giugno si vide un gran motivo et di dentro et di fuori di Forlì, fuori della porta di Schiavonia nel luogo dove già era una Chiesa con un bellissimo Conventino di Padri Heremitani col nome della Madonna degli heremiti. quale era stato distrutto al tempo di Papa Caraffa per sospetti di guerre, et era nata voce che quivi era apparsa la Madonna miracolosamente con tanto concorso et devozione che è indicibile; et si vide una Madonna in carta, che era in una fenestrella, dove già si tenevano le ampolle per la Messa, et quivi furono posti molti lumi [...] che un Vangelista di Girolamo, alevò della Casa di

In his 1569 book, entitled *Scintille della Fiamma innoxia*, Father Giovanni Capalla makes it clear that the miraculous image of Faenza was already known in Forlì in that year. On page 160, he writes of a dropsical citizen of Forlì, who was healed after he made vows to the Madonna of Faenza.⁴⁴⁸ On the same page, he also writes of many people, who were in peril at sea near Ravenna, and were only saved after they made a vow to the same Madonna of Faenza, at the suggestion of a Carmelite monk – the prior of a convent in Forlì.⁴⁴⁹ Last but not least, referring to the Madonna of Faenza, Capalla claims that ‘many companies, many horses, many carts and many chariots of gentlemen and gentlewomen, not only Bolognese, Ferraresi, Ravennati and Forlivesi [...] were seen [there], and are continually appearing.’⁴⁵⁰

Capalla’s book not only displays a printed reproduction of the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza on its frontispiece (Fig. 54), but it also refers to another ‘figure’ or image copying the Madonna of Faenza, hanging in the room of a woman. This woman suggested to another woman, Cinthia, to make a vow

Dio (detto Bastardino) era venuto da Faenza, e gli aveva portato quella Immagine et posta nel detto finestrello per voto che egli aveva fatto di questa azione.’

⁴⁴⁸ Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innoxia*, 160: ‘Vna Nobile Bolognese, & una Cittadina da Forlì, Idropiche, con tutti quegli accidenti, che seco porta questa praua infermità, Fatti Voti, có prieghi personali, e per altri, alla detta Madonna, conseguirono la non pensata, & al Mondo disperata sanità.’

⁴⁴⁹ Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innoxia*, 160: ‘Ritrouandosi molti in Mare, sotto Rauenna, agitati da crudelissima Fortuna, con la Morte alla gola, Fatto Voto à suggestione d’un Padre del Carmine, Priore nel loro Conuento in Forlì, Per ispacio d’un’hora li fù si fauoreuole il Véto, che gli era importunissimo. E le onde che gli erano molestissime, come da quelle, quali più volte gli haueano coperti, che essi gionsero nel porto à saluamento, con stupor d’ogn’uno, che li uidde.’

⁴⁵⁰ Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innoxia*, 96: ‘molte compagnie, molti caualli, molte carrettem e molti cocchi de Gentil’huomini, e Genitldonne, non solamente Bolognesi, Ferraresi, Ravennati, e Forliuesi [...] si sono ueduti, e del continuo ueggonsi comparere.’

on behalf of her son in front of this image.⁴⁵¹ Although it is not certain whether this image was a print or a drawing, it seems likely that Capalla was referring to a devotional print of the type that was popular at the time. Thus, the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza was not only already known in Forlì before the arrival of Saint Mary of the Vow, but it was also represented by mobile printed copies.

Another surviving print, a woodcut in the Aurelio Saffi Library of Forlì, which can be dated to the seventeenth century, has an iconography very similar to that of Saint Mary of the Vow.⁴⁵² It is worth noting that printed copies after the more famous Madonna of the Fire of Forlì were probably produced only from the seventeenth century onwards. No earlier prints survive till today and the first testimony concerning prints after the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì dates from 1637.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ Capalla, *Scintille della fiamma innoxia*, 145: 'Tra gli altri, che uennero à uisitarmi, e consolar mia Madre, forse non meno di me afflitta, & adolorata, Venne una Gentildonna, la quale così parlò alla Madre mia. O Signora Cinthia, uoglio raccomandate il uostro figliuolo à quella Gloriosa Madonna del Fuoco, qual'apparse in Faenza, non molti giorni sono. Et hoggi s'è fatta tanto famosa, per tutto 'l Mondo, che d'ogn'intorno concorrono à lei ogni sorte di gente, & in ogni parte sentonsi lodi, e uoci di ringraziamento, per i gran beneficy, che molti n'apportano. Nuouamente in quel luogo essa si dimostra piena di gratie. Certo uoglio che à lei ui riuoltiate, Offrendo, e raccomandando il uostro figlio, ch'io spero in quella gloriosa, e benedetta Madre, sarete contentata. Io ho nella mia camera una figura di questa Madonna benedetta del Fuoco, Voglio la mandiamo pigliare, & auanti quella facciate qualche bel Voto, che sia in laude di essa gloriosa Vergine.'

⁴⁵² *Madonna of the Fire*, 17th century, 417 x 292 mm, Box 132/281, Carte Romagna, Fondo Piancastelli, Aurelio Saffi Library, Forlì. Anna Rosa Gentilini, ed., *Le sacre immagini del Settecento: Incisioni della pietà romagnola del tipografo Archi in Faenza*, exh. cat. (Faenza: Tipografia faentina, 1999), 98.

⁴⁵³ Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante*, 16: 'Non hauea allhora, come non hà tuttauia Casa publica, ò priuata, in cui non si vedesse dipinta in tela, ò almeno miniata in carta Santa Maria del Fuoco.' In 1686, Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*, 77: 'che si stampano ogn'anno migliara, e migliara delle sue Imagini. Casa certo no v'è, doue no se ne vedano o stampate, o dipinte: Rare sono le porte, che non l'habbiano affissa: e rare son le persone, che no ne portino addosso vn'Imaginetta o di tela o di seta, c'habbia toccato l'originale. Siano i Forluesi in qualunque remoto paese; o non partono senza questo accopagnamento, o non istano lotani senza procurarnelo.' Evidently, once printed copies after the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì started to be made, they quickly became quite popular.

Although the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza was known in Forlì from at least 1569, no historian of Forlì from that time ever seems to have dared to refer to it. What is more, early historians of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì similarly never mentioned either the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza or its printed copy, Saint Mary of the Vow, in their works. In his 1637 *Il fuoco trionfante*, Giuliano Bezzi does not say a word about this woodcut, although he refers to another image, the Madonna of the Oak, which is a copy of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì.⁴⁵⁴ In his 1686 *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa di Maria Vergine detta Madonna del fuoco della città di Forlì*, Bartolomeo Ricceputi similarly makes no mention of Saint Mary of the Vow.⁴⁵⁵

The first historian to refer to the woodcut was Paolo Bonoli who, in his 1661 book *Istorie della città di Forlì*, writes that the Church of Saint Mary of the Vow owes its name to the 'various marvels' worked by an image of the Virgin there.⁴⁵⁶ However, Bonoli does not acknowledge the origin of the miraculous image in Faenza nor the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza. Alessandro

⁴⁵⁴ Bezzi, *Il fuoco trionfante*, 17: 'Vn diuoto Cittadino fece dipingere in tela vn Ritratto della sacra Imagine, e l'affisse ad vn'antica Quercia della Villa di S. Pietro in Arco distante trè miglia dalla città sù la stradam che guida alla Terra del Sole dello stato del Sereniss. Gran Duca di Toscana. Il santo Ritratto partecipò quiui i soliti effetti delle sue gratie a Passaggieri in maniera, che si sparse per ogni contorno la fama di S. Maria dalla Rouere, per la Rouere, à cui staua affissata. Si vedeuano i circostanti e i più lontani tratti da la diuotione correre à schiere co votiuie tauolette, e con Imagini d'argento, e d'oro sciore i voti de l'ottenute gratie, nè ritornauano indietro senza i Verdi rami della benamata Quercia per la vittoria riportata delle passate infirmita, e de' superati trauagli. Monsig. Vescovo stimò poco decoro il lasciare più lungamente allo scoperto sù la publica strada Imagine così miracolosa. La fece processionalnte trasportare nella vicina parochial Chiesa di S. Pietro in Arco, quiui crescendo più, che mai il concorso delle diuote persone, si è fabricato di pietose limosine alla Vergine vn nuouo Tempio finite d'vna Bellissima Tribuna, e di cinque Cappelle, p trasportarui à suo tempo quella sacra Imagine. Nò è questa fabbrica di Villa, ma degna della più ragguardeuoli Città. Basti à dire, ch'egli è disegno del mentuato Francesco Brunelli.'

⁴⁵⁵ Ricceputi, *Istoria dell'immagine miracolosa*.

⁴⁵⁶ Paolo Bonoli, *Istorie della città di Forlì: Intrecciate di varii accidenti della Romagna, e dell'Italia* (Forlì: Cimatti, e Saporetto, 1661), 299: 'Reedificata poscia del 1570. la Chiesa di fuori sotto titolo della Madonna del Voto, per varie marauiglie iui operate mediante vna Imagine della Beatissima Vergine, fù di nuouo concessa con la cura dell'anime a' detti P.P. Eremitani l'anno 1573.'

Padovani mentions the existence of the print in his *Storie di Forlì*, but again without specifying its relationship to Faenza.⁴⁵⁷ This silence may be explained out of the local rivalry between Forlì and Faenza, which increased when the Faentines publicly declared to have rebuilt the city of Forlì at the time of Ancient Rome. The extent of this rivalry is evident from Ricceputi's 1673 text, *La verità rediviva à fauore della città di Forlì ouero difesa delle antiche ragioni dell'istessa città già offuscate dalla rediviva Faenza del sig. Pietro Maria Cavina Faventino*, in which the author publicly declares the statement that Forlì was destroyed by the Ravennati and rebuilt by the Faentines to be false.⁴⁵⁸ In light of this rivalry, it is evident that the citizens of Forlì would have never admitted that in Faenza, a miracle happened very similar to that of their own, and that Faenza also had a miraculous image venerated under the name of Madonna of the Fire.

IV.IV Reliability of the Miraculous Status of the Print

Saint Mary of the Vow was subject to close supervision and inquiry by the ecclesiastical authorities, as is evident from the above-mentioned 1570 act by the notary of the Episcopal Curia, Lattanzio Biondini.⁴⁵⁹ Although the print

⁴⁵⁷ Alessandro Padovani, *Storie di Forlì*, Aurelio Saffi Library, Forlì, Italy.

⁴⁵⁸ Bartolomeo Ricceputi, *La verità rediviva à fauore della città di Forlì ouero difesa delle antiche ragioni dell'istessa città già offuscate dalla rediviva Faenza del sig. Pietro Maria Cavina Faventino* (Forlì: Gioseffo Selua, 1673).

⁴⁵⁹ Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'et quivi furono posti molti lumi. Del che assentendosi Mons. Rev.mo, che fu il Sig. Antonio Gianotti, volendo certificarsi della verità, vi andò in persona, accompagnato da molti religiosi, et vide il tutto. Dopo sopra questo fece esaminare dei Padri Eremitani et alcuni testimonii, per li quali venne a cognitione che un Vangelista di Girolamo, alevo della Casa di Dio (detto Bastardino) era venuto da Faenza, e gli aveva portato quella Immagine et posta nel detto finestrello per voto che egli aveva fatto di questa azione. Il quale Vangelista fu esaminato col suo giuramento et affermò essere la verità con altre circostanze. Il che avuto sua signoria Rev.ma mandò detto Vangelista con don Ludovico Caronzi, detto Tinturino, a quel luogo, a notificare il tutto, acciò non si stesse in quella opinione che fosse apparsa da sè. I quali andarono a quel luogo e vi trovarono gran

had been placed in the ruined Church of the Hermits by Vangelista di Girolamo, the faithful initially believed that it was a miraculous appearance. This was the reason why the woodcut suddenly became a cult object, and an altar with many lamps was promptly prepared. At the time of the Counter-Reformation, however, this story aroused the suspicion of the authorities, and especially of Bishop Antonio Giannotti from Montagnana, whose mindset was particularly close to the spirit of the Council of Trent. Giannotti interrogated the Fathers Eremitani (the Gerolamini of the order of the blessed Pietro Gambacorta of Pisa (1355-1435), who were in charge of the Church of the Hermits) as well as other witnesses, who all unanimously declared that the print was actually placed in the ruined church by Vangelista di Girolamo. Vangelista personally confirmed this version of the facts and had to post a public notification. It is also likely that in this atmosphere Giannotti did not overlook the humble material of this venerated object, questioning its validity.

Nonetheless, the devotion towards Saint Mary of the Vow did not stop. On June the 25th, fourteen days after the 'miraculous appearance' of the print, a mass read by Father Stefano Gattini of Forlì was attended by many people. What is more, during that mass, a three-year-old crippled-born girl, called Iustina, was miraculously healed. Her mother, interrogated by the notary Biondini, sent by Giannotti, declared that the girl was brought to the church on a cart and had been incurable until then. Her uncle, Salomone da Liacchi, also publicly swore that the girl had been crippled and was healed only

moltitudine di gente, et con alta voce publicarono questo fatto et fecero sapere come gli era stata posta per voto del detto Vangelista, et ritornorno et così rifersero a sua Signoria Rev.ma dicendo che per questo non cessava il concorso et la devozione et che si vedeva che ciò era la volontà di Dio et della gloriosa Madre sempre Vergine Maria come appare negli atti della Corte Episcopale sotto il dì XII Giugno sotto rogito mio.'

during the second mass she attended.⁴⁶⁰ The cult of Saint Mary of the Vow thus became authorised on the basis of this miracle and not of the discredited notion of its miraculous appearance. In times of general suspicion, the miraculous status of the print had been highly scrutinised. The miracle of lustina allowed the sanctioning and subsequent rise in status of the new cult.

IV.V The Recognition of Saint Mary of the Vow in the City of Forlì

Despite the rivalry between the cities of Forlì and Faenza, the prints of the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì and the print after the Madonna of the Fire of Faenza were venerated in the same city from 1570. After the ecclesiastical authorisation, Saint Mary of the Vow became firmly established in Forlì.

Other than towns, miraculous images did not compete with one another.

Despite the fact that Saint Mary of the Vow was of a more recent date, the woodcut has never been considered to be subordinate to the Madonna of the

⁴⁶⁰ Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'Dopo sotto il XXV, del detto mese di Giugno comparse il R. P. Fr. Stefano Gattini da Forlì dell'Ordine dei Predicatori. Lettore innanzi a S. S. R.ma nel Vescovado, et riferse che in questa mattina è andato a celebrare la Messa a quella Madonna per divotione et per voto, e nel celebrare la Messa scoverse un gran strepito et rumore con gran concorso di gente, et mi fu detto che una figliola nata zoppa per grazia et miraculo esser fatta libera. et io volendo chiarire questa verità dissi ad una donna che aveva detta putta in braccio che si ritrasse in un capanno vicino, nel qual capanno lei non poteva entrare dalla gran moltitudine della gente, e talchè io me gl'intromessi et la feci entrare. Poi la interrogai della figliuola et di quanto era occorso: et che l'avevano portata su un carro et che avevano avuto la gratia. Et io la fesi camminare otto o dieci passi; per il che stando la verità che fosse zoppa, giudicai essere miracolosamente guarita. Et ordinai che fosse condotta da V. S. R.ma dopo disnare, acciocchè compiutamente si potesse chiarire di questo fatto. Et così dopo disnare venne un Salomone da Liacchi zio di detta putta, che ha nome lustina, di età di anni tre circa, la quale fecero camminare et recamminare, et fu vista essere libera. Et così il detto Salomone fu mediante il suo giuramento sopra di questo esaminato, il quale depose che questa sua Nipote era zoppa si dalla destra, come dalla sinistra mano, ma più dalla destra; et intendendo questa devozione io la vodai et l'ho portata sul carro in compagnia di mia madre et di una mia sorella, et giunti alla devotione tolsero giuso questa mia nipote dal carro et andava zoppa al solito; e dopo l'esser stata a due Messe nel mezzo dell'ultima Messa fu vista detta mia nipote essere liberata, e si cominciò a gridare: la putta è risanata.'

Fire of Forlì. The Madonna of the Fire of Forlì enjoyed a more widespread reputation, having been appointed as the patroness of Forlì in the sixteenth century.

Yet, the copy of Madonna of the Fire of Faenza was also given its own church in Forlì, albeit a peripheral one, located outside the city walls. This church, now known as the Church of Saint Mary of the Vow, was originally built by a confraternity of noble laymen from Forlì in 1504, and was subsequently given in custody to the Fathers Gerolamini.⁴⁶¹ In 1556, it was destroyed by the papal troops of Paul IV, who were defending the city against the Spanish. As its location was close to Porta Schiavonia (a door in the city walls of Forlì), it was feared that it could have become a stronghold of the enemies. In 1570, however, it was rebuilt again specifically to host the miraculous print of Saint Mary of the Vow. As evidenced by a notarial act from that year, the veneration of the print had grown speedily: the church was rebuilt due to the commitment of and the offerings made by the devotees.⁴⁶²

Exceptionally, Saint Mary of the Vow did not require an official 'translation' to its new church, because the church was constructed in the original location where the print had been placed by the devotee Vangelista di Girolamo. Inside the church, a commemorative plaque can still be seen today, which states

⁴⁶¹ Caroli, Orselli, Savigni, *Romagna*, 220.

⁴⁶² Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'Et vedendo S. S. R.ma il gran concorso et devotione sì de terrieri, come forastieri, et le grandi elemosine cominciò a riedificare quella Chiesa, e S. S. R.ma pose indulgenza a chi li portava materia, e così S. S. R.ma col clero cominciò a portare colle proprie mani delle pietre et tutto il popolo con gran fervore faceva il simile.'

FOR THE HIGHEST DEVOTION OF THE FORLIVESI, THIS TEMPLE, DEDICATED TO THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD AND MISERABLY RUINED, WAS REBUILT IN THE CARE OF BISHOP ANTONIO, WITH THE FAVOUR OF THE SAME VIRGIN AND THE HELP OF THE ADMIRABLE DEVOTION OF ALL THE CITY, IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD 1570, DAY 26 OF JUNE, WHEN PIUS V WAS PONTEFIX MAXIMUM AND ALESSANDRO SFORZA LEGATE.⁴⁶³

The church was formally consecrated in 1577, again at the presence of Antonio Giannotti, Bishop of Forlì.⁴⁶⁴ A remnant from this early period of its existence is the painting of the Visitation by Pier Paolo Menzocchi, a painter from Forlì, which dated to the 17th of April 1576, and can be seen today in the first chapel on the right.

After the cult of Saint Mary of the Vow took off, the church became an object of contention between the Municipality of Forlì, who operated the church at the time of the rebuilding, and the Fathers Gerolamini, who had to move out at the destruction of the building in 1556, and were only given their church back in 1573. This debate highlights the economic interests, which were as always connected with what should have been mere forms of spontaneous religiosity.⁴⁶⁵ Interestingly, the same church had previously hosted another venerated miraculous image, probably a fresco. This latter image was translated to the Church of Saint Michael of Forlì on the 21st of September 1556, where the Gerolamini had moved after the destruction of the Church of

⁴⁶³ 'SVMMA LIVIENSIS PIETATE / HOC TEMPLV DEIPARAE VIRGINI DICATV. / ET MISERIMME DIRVTV ITER AEDIFICAAN= / DV CVRAVIT ANTONIVS EPVS. EADE VI= / RGINE FAVENTE. AC VNIVERSAE CIVITATIS / MIRA DEVOTIONE ADIVVANTE / ANNO SAVTIS MDLXX DIE XXVI / IVNII. PIO V. PONT. MAX. / ET ALEXA= / DRO SFORTIA LEGATO'

⁴⁶⁴ Zaghini, *S. Maria del Voto*, 65.

⁴⁶⁵ Pasini and Marini, *La Madonna del Fuoco*, 121-4.

the Hermits.⁴⁶⁶ Unfortunately, however, any trace of this second image was lost from 1759 onwards.⁴⁶⁷

According to the 1570 notarial act, the print worked many other miracles, which were, however, not recorded.⁴⁶⁸ No miracle book has survived and *lustina's* miracle is the only one of which we know in detail. The woodcut remains an object of veneration today, when it is set in a gilded frame surmounted by a crown, in its turn enclosed in a gilded tabernacle. It is surrounded by four images of saints by Livio Modigliani (1535-1606), a painter from Forlì: Saint Andrew and Saint Cosmas on the left, and Saint Damian and Saint Francis of Assisi on the right. As a miraculous prototype, Saint Mary of the Vow also generated its own printed reproductions. One sample of this survives in a print preserved today in the Fondo Piancastelli of the Aurelio Saffi Library in Forlì.⁴⁶⁹ This derivative print, dated to the seventeenth century, shows the same lay-out as Saint Mary of the Vow, with the motif of the bricks and flames.

⁴⁶⁶ On this aspect, see Zaghini, *S. Maria del Voto*, 52-3.

⁴⁶⁷ When the nearby river Montone flooded in 1644, the Church of the Hermits was again destroyed. The present church, in a neo-Romanesque style, was designed by the architect Leonida Emilio Rosetti in 1923-1926 (Fig. 55). The main altar is covered today by a Byzantine-style roof, designed by Giorgio Rossi, a painter from Ferrara, in 1926. Zaghini, *S. Maria del Voto*, 95: 'TEMPLUM HOC REFECIT / INT. A. D. MDMXIV / FOR A. D. MCMXXVI / AB ARCHIT. MAG. L. E. ROSETTI / HUIUS CURIAE / AEM. GEZZI ARCHIP.'

⁴⁶⁸ Biondini, *Relazione autentica*: 'Di più S. S. R.ma verifico molti altri miracoli, quali però non furono registrati.'

⁴⁶⁹ *Madonna of the Fire*, 17th century, 417 x 292 mm, Box 132/281, Carte Romagna, Fondo Piancastelli, Aurelio Saffi Library, Forlì.

IV.VI Conclusion

The story of Saint Mary of the Vow, involving two different and unrelated prints being venerated in the same small city, gives an indication of how widespread the phenomenon of miraculous prints may once have been. It also gives a fascinating further insight into the dissemination of miraculous images via prints, which in this case led to a reproductive print after a miraculous image in one city becoming a cult object in a rival city – even more poignantly so alongside an already established miraculous print in that rival city, the legend of which was in its turn rivalled by the legend of the prototype of the reproductive print.

The story also underlines once again the importance of travellers in the dissemination of cults, as it was a man who travelled between Forlì and Faenza who brought the reproductive print after the Madonna of the Fire from the latter city to the former. Interestingly, this man was not an inhabitant of Faenza seeking to propagate the cult image of his city, but an inhabitant of Forlì bringing home a copy after the cult image from the rival town.

Once Saint Mary of the Vow started working miracles, its origins in Faenza were initially suppressed. A legend of the miraculous appearance of the print sprung up spontaneously, although this was quickly corrected in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, when greater accuracy in the documentation of miracles became the norm. The fact that it originated in Faenza did not prevent the print from becoming popular, to the point where the citizens of

Forlì decided to rebuild the ruined church where it had first started functioning as a miraculous image. The next chapter will deal with various prints replicating the same miraculous image within the boundaries of a single church.

Chapter V – The Madonna of the Maple

The Madonna of the Maple is a nineteenth-century miraculous painting venerated in the sanctuary of the same name in Lizzano in Belvedere, about 50 kilometres from Bologna. The original object of veneration is, however, an old sixteenth-century image made on cottonwool paper (Fig. 56). What is interesting in the present context is not so much that an ancient paper image was recently substituted with a modern painting, but that this original paper image was, at least from the seventeenth century onwards, covered with different prints, which in their turn became substitutes for the prototype,

turning into the actual objects of veneration. This demonstrates yet another aspect of the reproductive function of prints in promoting the veneration of a miraculous image. Since prints made it possible to have an almost infinite number of identical substitutes, one cult object was identified with many images. Nevertheless, the original paper image was preserved under the substitutive printed images, continuing to transmit its original power to the prints.

V.I Substitutive Miraculous Prints for the Miraculous Image

Those who go to the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple today do not see the original fragile miraculous sixteenth-century image made on cottonwool paper, carefully preserved in the rectory of the Sanctuary, but a copy of a copy. The painting most often on display is a painting on panel from the early nineteenth century (Fig. 59). It is a poor copy, lacking in detail (the Madonna's head is not surrounded by the stars and the comet found in the original, and Christ's head does not have a cross-shaped nimbus), of a painting on copperplate that is exhibited only during official celebrations. This latter work is probably by Mauro Gandolfi (1764-1834), the son and pupil of the Bolognese painter Gaetano Gandolfi (1734-1802), and is dated to around 1825 (Fig. 57).⁴⁷⁰ A lithography by Francesco Spagnoli, itself another copy of Gandolfi's painting and the only documentation of a late (second) coronation of the Madonna of the Maple, which seems to have been performed on the

⁴⁷⁰ Renzo Zagnoni and Gian Paolo Borghi eds., *Madonna dell'acero: Un santuario bolognese presso al confin toscano e modenese* (Porretta Terme: Gruppo di studi alta valle del Reno - Nueter and Gaggio Montano: Gruppo di studi gente di Gaggio, 2010), 60 and 66.

occasion of the completion of the new painting, is dated to this year (one impression of the print is preserved in the sacristy of the sanctuary) (Fig. 58).

Gandolfi's painting in its turn is a reproduction after the original sixteenth-century miraculous image of the Madonna of the Maple, of which unfortunately only a fragment (about half) survives today. The first information about this original image stems from the 1573 account of a visit by Ascanio Marchesini, Bishop of Calvi Risorta and apostolic visitor for the Diocese of Bologna: 'est ibi imago Virginis in arbore nominata asero, valde vetusta et venerabilis, in carta bombicina picta, quae imago est picturis modici valoris' ('there is an image of the Virgin in a tree named of the Maple very old and venerable, painted on cottonwool paper, whose image is a picture of moderate value').⁴⁷¹ The image in question is a mediocre rendition of the Virgin with her Child, probably dated to the first half of the sixteenth century. It is interesting that its relatively poor quality did not escape Bishop Marchesini, despite the miraculous and 'venerable' nature of the image. Ten years after the Council of Trent, there was a general suspicion concerning images made of fragile materials. The 'moderate value' may have indeed referred to the material. Although it has, over the centuries, been referred to as either a canvas, a print, or a painting, the original seems in fact to be a pencil drawing on 'carta bombicina', cottonwool paper.

The image is next referred to in a 1760 report, preserved today in the Archiginnasio Library in Bologna:

⁴⁷¹ *Visita Pastorale*, 4 September 1573, vol. 8, Archiepiscopal General Archive Bologna, Bologna, Italy.

that paper painted with the Image of Mary the Virgin, which was perhaps, by some devotee, superimposed on the first, and true Image, so that it would in the long term be protected from snow, and rain, which [paper] spontaneously came down from the other, so that the first true Image remained uncovered, in which Mary Virgin desired to be venerated.⁴⁷²

It is difficult to establish whether the 'painted paper' mentioned here was the original image made on 'carta bombicina' ('cottonwool paper') or another one. It seems likely, however, that the phrase indicates a later substitutive image of the original.

In 1782, the image was referred to again in Serafino Calindri's *Dizionario corografico* (1782), which complicates the situation even further:

whose Sacred Image is of printed Paper, enclosed in a very old Maple tree, which with its rind, albumen, and wood gathered around the opening made to contain the Image, has created a form of Tabernacle, or Niche. The Virgin is in the act of feeding with the left breast the Holy Child, she is dressed in the Greek manner, and she has a comet on the right shoulder. It is very well preserved, with the exception of a small external laceration, which can be seen in the right part made in attaching to it a piece of painted canvas, on which can be seen the remnants of another effigy of the Madonna. Here tradition has it, that as many times as the Sacred Image of paper was covered with the new painted image, as many times it was found uncovered, and the painting destroyed and worn.⁴⁷³

⁴⁷² Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini di Maria*, 1760, A.V.M.I.14, 336, Archiginnasio Library Bologna, Italy: 'quella carta dipinta coll'Imagine di M.a V.e, che forsi de qualche divoto fù sopra posta alla prima, e vera sua Immagine, acciò maggiormente restasse alla lunghezza del tempo difesa dalle nevi, e piogge, la quale da per se stessa callò giù sotto all'altra, perché così restasse, scoperta la prima vera Immagine, nella quale desiderava essere venerata M.a V.e.'

⁴⁷³ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 1, 28: 'la cui Santa Immagine è di Carta stampata, racchiusa dentro di un'antichissimo Acero, il quale colla sua scorza, albume, e legno aggruppandosi intorno all'apertura in esso fatta da prima per collocarvela, le hà formato come un Tabernacolo, o Nicchia. Sta la Vergine in atto di allattare colla mammella sinistra il Santo Bambino, è vestita alla greca, ed hà una Comèta sulla spalla destra. Tuttora è conservatissima, da una piccola laceratura in fuori, che vedevi sulla parte destra fattavi nello attaccarvi un pezzo di tela dipinta, nella quale ravvisasi alcun vestigio di atra effigie della Madonna. Quivi poi corre la tradizione, che colla nuova dipinta effigie sia stata più volte coperta la S. Immagine di carta, e che altrettante stasi trovata scoperta, e la pittura consumata e logora.'

According to Calindri, the original image to be enclosed in the tree was a printed image. It is interesting that he believes the tree formed a natural tabernacle around this image. Calindri's description of the print does not seem to refer to the image on cottonwool paper, in which no comet can be detected on the Virgin's right shoulder. Calindri, however, also states that the print is well preserved with the exception of a laceration in the right part. Here, he might after all be referring to the original, of which only the left part survives. Calindri claims that this laceration was caused by the fact that repeated attempts were made to mount a painted canvas on top of the print – attempts that were thwarted by the original miraculous image refusing to be covered.

Calindri may have seen a woodcut, dated 1658, which is now kept in the Archive of the Sanctuary (Fig. 60). This woodcut is in perfect condition and does not have a tear as Calindri indicates. Otherwise, however, it conforms to his description. It is the central part of a larger print by Bartolomeo Coriolano (1599-1676), in which the Virgin breastfeeds the nude Christ Child and bears a characteristic comet on her right shoulder. The woodcut fragment, pasted on a wooden board, seems to have been deliberately trimmed; originally, it also included a representation of a maple tree, the coat of arms of the Arnoaldi family, and an inscription. A different impression of Coriolano's complete print, preserved in the Diocesan Museum Imola in Imola, is inscribed in the centre at the bottom (Fig. 61)

True Portrait of the Miraculous, & Very Old Image / OF THE MADONNA OF
THE MAPLE / CALLED THE VIRGIN / Placed on the Alps in the City, and in the

Care / of Rocca Corneta Count of Bologna / TO THE VERY ILLUSTRIOUS AND MOST EXCELLENT LORD / ASTORRE ARNOALDI / Collegiate Doctor, Public Reader, and Protector of it. / The Knight Bartolomeo Coriolano has Made. Dedicated. And Donated / 1658.⁴⁷⁴

The inscription suggests that the print is an accurate reproduction of the original miraculous image. Two other impressions of the complete print are still preserved: one in the Archiginnasio Library of Bologna, in the above-mentioned 1760 report, and another in the rectory of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple.⁴⁷⁵ The latter impression, which is attached to a coloured wooden board, may be a later reprint, because it bears the inscription 'printed the Year 1765 At the time of the Sir / Benedetto Bernardini Parish Priest.'⁴⁷⁶ According to Father Alessandro Barozzi, this print was affixed to a confessional of the sanctuary in the 1940s.⁴⁷⁷

The artist named in the inscription, Bartolomeo Coriolano, was a renowned woodcutter. It is known that his brother Giovanni Battista Coriolano made a print after the Madonna of the Bridge of Porretta Terme, near Bologna (Fig. 62), this attesting to the activity of the two brothers in reproducing miraculous images in the area.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁴ 'Vero Ritratto della Miracolosa, & Antichissima Imagine / DELLA MADONA DELL'ASARO / DETTA LA VERGINE / Posta sù L'Alpi nella Villa, e Cura / di Rocca Corneta Contà di Bologna / AL MOLT'ILLVSTRE ET ECCEL.MO SIG. / ASTORRE ARNOALDI / Dottore Collegiato, Lettor publico, e Protettore di essa. / Il Cavalier Bartolomeo Coriolano Fece. Dedic. et Dona. / 1658.'

⁴⁷⁵ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini di Maria*. The latter impression in the rectory of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple was in 1982 preserved in the rectory of Rocca Corneta and, according to Father Alessandro Barozzi, was originally affixed to a confessional of the sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple in the 1940s. See Zagnoni and Borghi, *Madonna dell'acero*, 60.

⁴⁷⁶ 'stampata l'Anno 1765 al Tempo del Sig.r / Benedetto Bernardini Parrocho.'

⁴⁷⁷ Gianpaolo Borghi and Renzo Zagnoni eds., *Per grazia ricevuta: Mostra itinerante delle tavolette votive dipinte di nove santuari mariani della montagna bolognese* (Porretta Terme: Gruppo di studi locali Alta Valle del Reno, 1982), 32.

⁴⁷⁸ Giovanni Battista Coriolano, *Matrix of the Madonna of the Bridge*, 17th century, 200 x 142 mm, Church of Santa Maria Maddalena, Porretta Terme, Bologna.

The woodcut must have been commissioned by the Arnoaldi family from Bologna, possibly in order to cover the first, by then ruined miraculous image. The Astorre Arnoaldi named in the inscription is described as the protector of the Madonna of the Maple. The Arnoaldi seem to have had a long-standing connection with the Madonna of the Maple. The above-cited 1760 report mentions that, on the occasion of the coronation of the image in 1607, many things had been commissioned for the church by one Camillo Arnoaldi, another member of the family, who was particularly devoted to the Madonna of the Maple.⁴⁷⁹ Further gifts were made to the sanctuary in 1706, by another Camillo, the son of an Andrea Arnoaldi and a descendant of the first Camillo.⁴⁸⁰

Again, a miraculous print is connected with an aristocratic family, in this case from Bologna. According to the 1760 report, the image was also dear to other illustrious citizens from that city, despite the distance and the difficulties of the route to Lizzano in Belvedere, and despite the fact that the cult of the Madonna of the Maple had its roots in popular culture.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁹ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 338: 'la quale come si sa da certi scritti fù coronata cotesta divota Imagine dell'anno 1607 à tenore della memoria posta in Chiesa, che è la seguente, e in tale occasione furono fatte molt'altre cose à beneficio della detta Chiesa da Camillo Arnoaldi allora gran Benefattore, e Protettore.'

⁴⁸⁰ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 338: 'Camillus olim Andrea de Arnoaldis huius Ecclesiae Benefactor, et Congregationis in ha Ecclesia erecte. pariter Protector, et exemplum huiusque Congregationis imitando, Aram hanc Iconi S. Annae dicatam, Candelabris, Reliquiis, & ornamentis ad Virginis venerationem, & insimul ad Ecclesiae ornamentum adauxit. Anno Sal. MDCCVII. 1706.'; Borghi and Zagnoni, *Per grazia ricevuta*, 27.

⁴⁸¹ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 336: 'Su tal riflessione vedendo quanto si v` aumentando la divozione à questo Santuario non sola.te da quei delle nostre Montagne, mà per sino nelle Città, ed in particolare nella nostra Bologna, di dove più volte non solo i Sig.ri Arnoaldi anziani divoti, e Benefattori di cotesto Santuario, mà ancora d'altri Sig.ri Concittadini, che mossi unicamente dalla grande divozione di cotesta divota Imagine di M.a V.e, senza attendere alla difficoltà delle strade, e l'orridezza del luogo alpestre, e i gravi scomodi, e caldi da quel tempo eccessivi in un viaggio di 35. in 40. miglia distante da

The notion that the print was commissioned to cover the prototype is suggested by Calindri, who states that multiple attempts were made to cover the original image with a new one.⁴⁸² Different impressions of the same print may have been used to cover the prototype over the centuries. The reproductive medium of printing, known to reproduce also some of the power of a miraculous prototype, found a special application here. Calindri claims, however, that all the prints which used to cover the original ended up damaged to reveal the true image underneath. Unlike the miraculous prints discussed so far, generally preserved despite their fragility, these substitutive prints all demonstrated the lack of durability of the medium. The problem was probably solved only with Mauro Gandolfi's painting – a reproduction that was apparently resistant enough to substitute the prototype without ending up destroyed. It should be pointed out, however, that Calindri does not allude to the fragility of the print medium. He actually refers to the original as a print and the copy as a painting. His real argument concerned the power of the original, which in this case was superior to that of the copies.

V.II The Tree-Chapel

Bologna.'

⁴⁸² Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 1, 28: 'Quivi poi corre la tradizione, che colla nuova dipinta effigie sia stata più volte coperta la S. Immagine di carta, e che altrettante stasi trovata scoperta, e la pittura consumata e logora.' Barbieri also states that the image was covered to be protected. Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 336: 'quella carta dipinta coll'Immagine di M.a V.e, che forse de qualche divoto fù sopraposta alla prima, e vera sua Immagine, acciò maggiormente restasse alla lunghezza del tempo difesa dalle nevi, e piogge, la quale da per se stessa callò giù sotto all'altra, perché così restasse, scoperta la prima vera Immagine, nella quale desiderava essere venerata M.a V.e.'

According to the 1760 report, the original cottonwool paper image had been affixed to a maple tree, located along one of the transit roads on the Bolognese-Tuscan border, by either a devoted traveller or a shepherd.⁴⁸³ Interestingly, the author of the report specifies that similar images on paper were often attached to various kinds of trees 'now in a Sapphire tree, now in an Oak tree, now in a Service tree, now in a Plum tree, now in an Elm tree, now in a Chestnut tree, now in a Beech tree, and in all sorts of ways', this attesting to the custom of tree shrines being widespread.⁴⁸⁴

With regard to the image starting to work miracles, two different legends have survived: either the Virgin appeared to a pious young girl, saying that she wanted to be venerated on the maple tree (in this case, the image may have been thought to have appeared there miraculously), or someone was saved from a violent storm after having recommended himself to the image affixed to the maple tree.⁴⁸⁵ Later versions of the legends speak of two farmers as the recipients of both these miracles. According to these sources, one of these farmers, a deaf-mute, was also miraculously healed. A probably late eighteenth-century inscription on the architrave of the entrance door of the church where the image is preserved reads 'QVAE NEMORI CAECO

⁴⁸³ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 337: 'Presso dunque à detta strada distante alla cima dell'Alpi, che dividano il Bolognese dalla Toscano in luogo piano benché tutto circondato dalle Foggie, presso ad'un Rio, essendovi un bell'Asaro, ed in esso da qualche divoto viandante, ò Pastore si suppone vi fosse collocata l'Immagine di M.a V.e..'

⁴⁸⁴ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 337: 'ora in uno Zaffiro, ora in una Quercia, ora in un Sorbo, ora in un Prugno, ora in un Olmo, ora in un Castagno, ora in un Faggio, e in tante altre maniere.'

⁴⁸⁵ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 337: 'ella rivelasse ad'una divota Giovinetta che desiderava tal luogo fosse al suo culto dedicato, come in fatti ne provò benigni effetti, mentre uno trovatosi in questo luogo insorta una fiera tempesta accompagnata da continui Lampi, e Saette, che pareva più volte dovesse restare da quello sorpreso, ed estinto, quando ecco nel mirar coll'occhi scorge cotesta divota Immagine nell'Asaro, e raccomandatosi di vivo cuore à M.a V.e, si vide tosto fuor dal gran pericolo in cui si trovava di restarvi morto.'

RVTILO TAM LVMINE FVLSIT / E COELIS VENIENS VIRGO MARIA FVIT'
(‘IN THE DARK GLADE SHONE SUCH A GLARE OF LIGHT / AND
COMING FROM HEAVEN WAS THE VIRGIN MARY’), alluding to the
traditional divine light accompanying the miracle.

In due course, a chapel was built to protect the tree hosting the image, or indeed the two images, if the one of cottonwool paper was already covered by a woodcut; the 1760 report certainly speaks of two images but this would suggest the existence of further previous substitutive prints (Coriolano’s print is indeed dated to 1658). This chapel was built around the tree, without the latter being moved. The crown with the branches was cut, however, so that the small construction could contain the trunk. The 1760 report dates the building of the chapel to 1335, following an inscription on an old altar which does not survive today. According to the report, the image was found some years before 1335, i.e. around 1330. It is possible, however, that ‘1335’ is actually a misreading or misprint of ‘1535.’ The remaining fragment of the original image dates from the sixteenth century.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁶ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 336-7: ‘Di questa S. Immagine pochissimi documenti si trovano autentici della sua Origine per potere scrivere sinceramente le cose ad onore di essa B.a V.e, e per compiacere al pio desiderio d’alcuni, che ne bramano qualche breve notizia, e non trovandosi qualche tradizione, passata dall’antichità à i posterì, e così dà un’età all’altra, cioè dagli antenati di cotesta Comunità, e dall’altre circonvicine [...] Così si sente dire da tanti, e che da questo poi i Comunisti di Rocca Corneta mossi anche da cotesto secondo miracolo in detto luogo facessero edificare una Cappelletta, ò sià un Oratorio dentro il quale rinchiusero l’Asaro nel quale erano attaccate le due Immagini della B. V. in carta lasciando quelle nel Tronco dell’Asaro senza svellerlo dal terreno con le radici, ò reciderlo dal suolo come si suole praticare nel tagliare Arbori, questo si lasciò in piedi puramente di quella lunghezza, che richiedeva l’Immagine suddetta della B. V., e si tagliò quello, che non poteva capire dentro la Cappelletta, ò sia Oratorio, che si edificò in suo onore. Quando poi precisamente fu trovata questa divota Immagine di M.a V.e nell’Asaro non si può sapere, ma ben si può arguire, che fosse circa l’Anno 1330 poichè la Cappelletta, ò vero Oratorio della prima forma fu fabbricato del 1335, come parla, e fa noto una memoria trovata nel disfare il primo, ed antico Altare per poi riformarlo, come dissi di sopra. Così è da credersi, che la detta Immagine fosse stata trovata, trè o quattro anni prima, che si fabbricasse la predetta Cappelletta, ò Oratorio mentre ne richiede il materiale di tal fabbrica, che

A date in the early sixteenth century is more likely as this was a period in which many other images in the region were recorded to have started working miracles, including some of the ones discussed in the chapters above. Closer to the Madonna of the Maple, we find the Madonna of the Blessed Virgin of the Graces of Boccadirio, Bologna, whose first miracle was documented in 1480, and the Blessed Virgin of Poggio of Castel San Pietro, Bologna, in 1550.⁴⁸⁷

An early-sixteenth-century origin, albeit pre-dating 1535, is also suggested by another document – an act made up by the notary Dario Capacelli, dated 1505, which states that in that year an image of the Madonna, known today as Saint Mary of the Maple, appeared in a place called Pian di Zufardo.⁴⁸⁸ It is worth noting that the notary, who was not eyewitness, was very cautious in his description and used the phrase ‘quedam imago’, ‘some image.’ His hesitation may reflect the unusual medium of the original Madonna of the Maple (a drawing on cottonwool paper).

With regard to the later history of the sanctuary, it is worth noting that the 1573 account of a visit by Bishop Ascanio Marchesini, reports that a generous amount of wheat was left in the church; it is unclear whether this

dovevasi preparare per tempo, e per ciò si può congetturare, che fosse stato verso l'anno 1330 quando era vescovo di Bologna Mons. Arnaldo Accarisi Bolognese, che fù Vescovo eletto del 1322 per sino al 1332.’

⁴⁸⁷ Borghi and Zagnoni, *Per grazia ricevuta*, 24.

⁴⁸⁸ Dario Capacelli, *Notary Act*, 1505, Madonna dell'Acero, Ricuperi beneficiari n. 756, 31 agosto, 1505, Archiepiscopal General Archive Bologna, Bologna, Italy: ‘Cum sit quod alias in diebus ellapsis quedam Imago beate ac venerande Marie omnium fidelium cristianorum genitricis, apparuerit ac visa fuerit et sit in curia Roche Cornede comitatus Bononie in loco dicto Pian de Zufardo nunc vero nuncupata Santa Maria della sero vel ala Verzine et ibidem plurima ac maxima fecerit et facet miracula.’

was a votive gift, or if the church was actually being used as a store house.⁴⁸⁹ A commemorative plaque, preserved in the chapel of the ex-votos (the first on the right) states that a new *ancona*, which is still visible today, was kindly offered by devotees in 1650.⁴⁹⁰ In 1759, the church was restored and given its current appearance with a newly embellished high altar (Fig. 63).⁴⁹¹ A piece of what is considered to be the original maple tree, to which numerous ex-votos are attached, has survived behind the venerated image (see Fig. 59). In fact, it is recorded that as late as 1760, the roots of the tree were still growing.⁴⁹² A second monumental maple tree, on the lawn outside the church, seems to have been planted around the time at which the original image was first put up (Fig. 64).

V.III Miracles and Ornaments

The 1760 report refers to further miracles that occurred over time, and indicates that the devotion of the faithful was great, involving numerous gifts and offerings.⁴⁹³ The report is the only known source to list some of these further miracles. A number of them concerns the image inflicting punishment on those who showed a lack of respect to it. The first of these concerned a company of thieves, who went to the sanctuary in order to steal the offerings

⁴⁸⁹ *Visita Pastorale*, 4 September 1573, vol. 8: 'quantitas non modica frumenti seu hordei in spicis quod statim exportari dixit.'

⁴⁹⁰ 'DOM / HOC OPVS CHRISTI AVGVVS= / TISSIMAE PARENTI CONCORDES / TERRAE HVIVS COLONI EX ELE= / EMOSVNIS DICAVERVT. MDCL.' ('I contadini di questa terra concordi con elemosine dedicarono questa opera alla augustissima madre di cristo. 1650.')

⁴⁹¹ Calindri, *Dizionario corografico*, vol. 1, 29: 'e ne fu abbellito l'Altare maggiore nel 1759.'

⁴⁹² Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 336: 'IN terzo luogo dalle radici del detto Asaro che pullulano ancora e si vedono uscire fiori, e sebbene non si trovi altro documento sicuro, e perché essendo scorso da 430. anni in circa dopo che fu scoperta questa S. Imagine.'

⁴⁹³ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 337: 'Essendo poi la divozione de' Fedeli cresciuta verso cotesto Santuario, che contribuivano assai elemosine, ed offerte è sì vedeva non pochi prodigj operati da M.a V.e.'

and the ornaments. One of the thieves admonished the others, saying that they should have not stolen anything, because of the Virgin of the Snow, which was venerated there (the Virgin of the Snow being another name by which the Madonna of the Maple was known). The other thieves replied that they were not scared because it was summer, and the weather was good, but once they tried to escape with their loot, conditions suddenly changed; by the time they were crossing the Alps, it started to snow heavily and all except the one who was opposed to the theft died from exposure.⁴⁹⁴ A second incident occurred when, in 1745, a shepherd, who allowed his sheep to seek shade in the porch of the sanctuary despite the presence of numerous beech trees nearby, and caused his animals to soil the entrance, was reduced to poverty and forced to leave his home, condemned to an uncertain fate.⁴⁹⁵ Similarly, some people from Modena, who were travelling to Tuscany, let their beasts of burden sleep in the portico of the sanctuary; they later found the animals dead in the Alps.⁴⁹⁶ These punitive actions of the Madonna of the

⁴⁹⁴ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 337: 'come fù quello, che si dice comune.te dal volgo, d'un a compagnia di Ladri venuti à questo Sagro luogo non per ossequiare M.a V.e, ma per spogliare il Santuario del denaro offerto, e delle sagre suppellettili, ed essendo tutti d'accordo di ciò effettuare à riserva d'uno che li amonì, e pregò desistere da tale attentato, e si ricordassero bene, che questa era la B. V. della Neve, rispondendo uno di quelli, che non aveva paura allora della Neve perché d'estate è buon tempo, mà ne pagarono ben tosto il fio della loro ampia bestemia, a disprezzo della B. V., poiché nel passare che facevano l'Alpi si turbò il tempo, è venne così gran coppia di neve, che questi malvagi vi restarono morti tutti, a riserva di quello, che ammoniti per avere rispettato q.to Santuario perché era la B.V. della Neve.'

⁴⁹⁵ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 338: 'Da tal prodigio dovrebbero tutti massimamente i Pastori, che passano di questa strada presso detto Santuario, tenere lontano li Bestiami che non sporchino il recinto, che circonda presso questa Chiesa, ed avertino bene, chi à lasciato, ò disprezzo di cotesto Santuario à avuto cattivo fine. E di ciò ne posso farne chiara, e certa testimonianza, mentre dell'anno 1745, andaj d'Estate a celebrare la S. Messa ne i giorni festivi di comodo de Pastori, che allora stavano su dell'Alpi, e trovai l'Atrio, ò sia Portico avanti questa Chiesa, ch'era tutto quanto pieno di sterco delle Pecore, che un certo Pastore le lasciava stare all'ombra, benchè non manca quella delle Faggi, che vi sono appresso. Costui frà poco tempo cominciò andare di male in peggio, tanto che dalla povertà mal ridotto, se ne parti de Casa, e non si è mai saputo nuova alcuna se sia vivo, ò morto.'

⁴⁹⁶ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 338: 'Certi Modonesi, che andavano poch'anni sono con Bestia da Soma in Toscana passando si questa strada sporcando pur essi il Portico

Maple conform to a recurrent motif in legends. Another vindictive Madonna was the White Madonna of Portovenere, who caused a boy, who disrespected his mother's devotion towards the Virgin, to break out in fever, being healed after he himself made a vow to visit the Madonna.⁴⁹⁷ The Madonna of the Maple, however, did not only punish people, but also rescued them. For example, both in 1575-1576 and in 1630, the local population was saved by her from a terrible plague.⁴⁹⁸

As the veneration of the Madonna of the Maple increased in intensity, the image was officially crowned, for the first time, on the 6th of August 1607. The print was presented with a silver crown offered by the above-mentioned benefactor from Bologna, Camillo Arnoaldi. An inscription, accidentally

Maggiore di Cotesta Chiesa con tenervi dentro la notte le Bestie, restarono queste morte nell'Alpi.'

⁴⁹⁷ The 1612 parchment, preserved in the Treasury of the Church of Saint Lawrence, in Portovenere, Liguria, reads: 'A di Venitsette di Settembre Messere Prete Antonio Rettore della Chiesa di S. Martino di Lucca, venendo in compagnia di grand'huomini e Donne, vestite tutte di bianco, per visitare detta Immagine disse hauer veduto con i suoi occhi proprij l'infrascritto miracolo Cioè che a Sarzana era vna donna la quale haueua fatto voto di venire à visitare detta Immagine in compagnia di molte donne, e promesse alla Beata Vergine Maria la liberua da vna infermità grandissima la quale per molti anni l'haueua tenuta oppressa, di fare la spesa a tutte quelle donne, che menerebbe in sua compagnia e di più li donarebbe dieci fiorini per ogniuna, & ecco che essendo giute alla Chiesa, doue era detta Immagine, stando auanti alla Gloriosa Vergine Maria, subito fu liberata da detta infermità partendosi poi verso Casa per amore della Beata Vergine Maria fece le spese à tutta la sua Compagnia. per il camino, e di più gionta à casa gli donò dieci fiorini, come gli haueua promesso, la qual cosa vedendo un suo figliolo commciò a gridare con la madre non volendo à partito alcuno che ella desse li diece fiorini alla detta donne. All'ora per miracolo di Dio e della Gloriosa Vergine Maria in presenza della madre e di tutta la compagnia, subito diuentò tanto furibondo che pareua che lui huaesse tutte le fuire dell'inferno addosso, & essendoli sopragionto vna grandissima febre fece voto di venire a visitare detta Immagine e subito fu liberato da detta febre e così lasciò che la sua madre desse li promessi fiorini alle prede donne.'

⁴⁹⁸ Barbieri, *Serie di varie Immagini*, 338: 'Chi non sa, che due volte dopo la B. V. si è trovata in quest'Acero, e i nostri Paesi circonvicini furono oppressi, e travagliati dal morbo pestilenziale con la morte di tante persone, come ne fanno testimonianza i Cemeterj à tal effetto destinati lontani assai dalle Chiese, che in più luoghi, e siti si vedono, e di certo si sa, che ivi si sepelliva unicamente per la Peste, che molto infierì negl'anni 1575 e 1576 come ne appare dall'Episcopale notizia del Card. Gabriele Paleotti Primo arciv.vo di Bologna dal fol 194. per sino al fol. 205, e poi l'altra volta del 1630, e in q.ta comunità di Rocca Corneta non vi è ricordo alcuno, che di tal male contagioso fosse toccato per niente, e à chi si deve attribuire una grazia di tal sorta per sino due volte come sopra, se non alla nostra grande Avvocata M.a V.e.'

recovered only recently, and preserved today in the first chapel on the right in the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, attests to this event.⁴⁹⁹ The event may have been inspired by the crowning of the Madonna of Saint Luke in Bologna, which had taken place in 1604, only three years before, and may have provided a model for the entire diocese.

It remains unclear which of the images of the Madonna of the Maple was involved in the ceremony, but it seems likely that it was the original image made of cottonwool paper, especially as Coriolano's print is dated 1658. This early crown was not transferred to the copperplate painting by Gandolfi on display in the sanctuary today, and may not have appeared on the earlier substitutive prints either. However, as can be seen in some twentieth-century *immaginettes*, Gandolfi's painting once bore two golden crowns and one golden necklace around the neck of the Virgin – items that have been removed, but are still preserved by the parish priest. These crowns and the necklace were put up during the above-mentioned second coronation in 1825.

Further evidence of the success of the cult of the Madonna of the Maple are the numerous ex-votos, which are exhibited in the first chapel on the right of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple during the summer. As is attested by the account of the visit to the Madonna by Ascanio Marchesini in

⁴⁹⁹ 'D.O.M. / [DEIPARAE] VIRGINI DE ASARO / [HAEC] IMAGO [PER] M[ARC] AVRELIVM ARCHIP[RESBYTERVM] LIZANI / SOLA[MNITER ...] / [CA]MILLI [ARNOALDI] CIVIS BONONIE] / [...] CORONAM [...] / [...] / DONO DEDIT / [PA]VLO V P[ONTIFICE] M[AXIMO] / BENEDICTO CAR[DINALE] JVSTI[NIANO] / BONON[IE] LEG[ATO] / [AL]PH[VNSO] PALEOTO ARCHIEP[ISCOPO] BON[ONIENSI] / [II] [A]NNO SAL[VTIS] MDCVII / [JOHAN]NES MALINVS [...] DE MANDAT[O].'

1573, the presence of ex-votos is recorded from at least that date onwards.⁵⁰⁰ The most famous and peculiar ex-voto is the one representing the family group of the Brunori.⁵⁰¹ This sixteenth-century ex-voto consists of four almost life-size wooden figures, which were, according to tradition, donated to the Virgin by a certain Brunetto Brunori. The latter miraculously survived an attack on the road, during which he was pierced by a lance – an event that took place on the Tuscan-Emilian border on Brunetto's return from the Battle of Gavinana (1530). He is represented together with his wife Lupa, his daughter Nunziata, and his son Leonetto.

There is also a variety of votive tablets, of which the oldest is dated 1608 (Fig. 65). This early tablet shows a sick person lying in a bed, surrounded by what seems to be his family. At the top left is the image of the miraculous Madonna, while at the bottom left, there is an inscription 'VOTO DI MATTEO / DI DOMENICO / FIOCCHI 1608' ('VOW OF MATTEO / OF DOMENICO / FIOCCHI 1608'). The canopy bed and the clothing indicate that Matteo di Domenico Fiocchi was an affluent man. As already seen in its relations with the Arnoaldi family, despite being 'a piece of paper', the Madonna of the Maple enjoyed a great fame not only with common people, but also among the aristocracy. This is also demonstrated by a nineteenth-century ex-voto, which bears the inscription 'Conto.Cesaro.Montecucolo' ('Count Cesare Montecuccoli'), referring to a descendant of the same noble family who also

⁵⁰⁰ *Visita Pastorale*, 4 September 1573, vol. 8.

⁵⁰¹ Facchini and Bentivogli, eds., *Andar per santuari*, 304.

venerated the Madonnina of Saint Luke, coming from the Frignano region.⁵⁰²

An ex-voto of 1882, on the other hand, attests to the appeal of the Madonna of the Maple to less elevated folk, showing the common miracle of a man protected by the Virgin during a fall from his wagon.⁵⁰³

V.IV Conclusion

This last chapter has addressed possibly the most intricate case study concerning miraculous prints. No other comparable example has survived of a cottonwool paper image being covered, probably more than once, by a reproductive print (and according to legend 'rejecting' these covers). It takes the notion of the reproductive print as a substitute for the original to a new level, making the cult object itself, to an extent, reproducible and having its miraculous properties identified with not one single, but a series of images. The print medium was used here not so much for the diffusion of the reputation of the miraculous prototype, but to guarantee its continuous presence.

Nonetheless, the use of the substitutive prints did not mean that the original was discarded; it kept being preserved under the successive prints, suggesting perhaps that the printed reproductions alone were not sufficient to maintain its miraculous powers. In this particular instance, it seems that the original image transmitted through the copies by its invisible presence, and

⁵⁰² Ex-voto, 19th century, tempera on wood, 280 x 390 mm, Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere, Bologna.

⁵⁰³ Ex-voto, 1882, tempera on wood, 230 x 340 mm, Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere, Bologna.

not through physical contact with the copy, as was the case with other printed reproductions.

The total number of the prints that came to substitute the prototype in this manner remains unknown, unfortunately. One source (Calindri) states that there were many reproductive prints that were put on top of the original image, although every single one was eventually 'rejected' as the Virgin wanted to remain being venerated via the original image. The fact that in this case, both the original and the copies pasted over it are images on paper seems to have confused at least one author, who may have mixed up original and copy in his description.

We should be careful, however, not to interpret Calindri's reference to many copies that all ended up damaged as an indication of the fragility of the print medium. As other case studies have demonstrated, miraculous prints in particular often obtained a greater permanence, surviving fires and other disasters, or woodworm infestations of the panels that they were mounted on. Calindri appears to have wanted to emphasise the superiority of the prototype over its reproductions – which was a unique characteristic of the Madonna of the Maple, because in other cases, miraculous prototypes actually exerted their power through printed substitutes at a distance.

With the Madonna of the Maple, it appears to have been the original that was fragile, with one or more reproductive prints being used to 'restore' the image to a physically complete state. Prints, of course, were eminently suitable for

this purpose, as large numbers of identical copies could be produced. An eighteenth-century document suggests, however, that from the time an oratory was built around the miraculous image and the tree, only two images were present: the original and a printed reproduction that served as a protective cover.

With regard to the iconography of the printed reproduction, it is interesting to note that these prints, while identical to each other, are different from the original image, or at least from what can still be seen of it today. For instance, the comet, which appears on the right shoulder of the Virgin in the print, does not appear in the original image. The Christ Child also sits in a different position in prototype and copy. The printed substitutes also showed a maple tree, which references the origins of the cult, and a coat of arms (the latter features trimmed in the case of one of the reproductive prints that may have functioned as cover). It has been pointed out in other chapters that printed copies after miraculous images can differ from the originals while maintaining their ability to channel the power of the prototype, but the case of the Madonna of the Maple takes on special significance as the printed reproductions actually replaced the original *in situ*.

The Madonna of the Maple shows once again that paper images had the power to attract aristocratic patrons once they started working miracles. The reproductive print of which several impressions survive was commissioned by the noble Arnoaldi family from Bologna, who marked the reproduction with their coat of arms. It remains unclear whether they commissioned these

reproductive prints as *in situ* substitutes for the original image or simply to promote the cult in the usual manner. What is certain is that not all the different impressions of this substitutive print became themselves miraculous. Many may just have served as private devotional souvenirs.

Conclusion

It is well-known that from an early moment in print culture, reproductive prints started to be used to disseminate the cults of miraculous images around the world. Some of these reproductions appear to have been imbued with some of the power of the prototype, sometimes even at a great distance from the original. What has barely been the subject of research so far, however, is that some of these reproductive prints also started working miracles separately from the prototype, and became cult objects in their own right to be venerated on the altars of churches. One of the reasons that this phenomenon has remained understudied, and perhaps underrated, may be that relatively few of such miraculous prints survive. Certain prints that are kept in museums and print collections today may once have been miraculous, but this is difficult to establish. Only with prints that remain the

focus of a cult today can we be certain – but unfortunately there are only a handful of documented cases.

This thesis has sought to do justice to the miraculous print by focusing on the region of Emilia Romagna in central northern Italy, where, possibly by historical contingency, a remarkable concentration of early prints that are still venerated in churches and oratories can be found today. The thesis has analysed in detail six of these prints, which each highlighted a different aspect of the working of and the formation of a cult around the miraculous print. The six cases are, respectively:

- 1) The Madonna of the Graces of Stuffione di Ravarino, a printed copy of the more famous Virgin of Montserrat venerated on the mountain of the same name in Spain, which showed how prints reproducing miraculous imagery could travel over very long distances, ending up being venerated in small provincial villages. This case study, like the next one, illustrated the important role miraculous prints had in the promotion and worship of miraculous imagery across large geographical areas, but also showed how even in the case of famous miraculous images such as the Virgin of Montserrat, a reproductive print after the prototype could become a completely independent miraculous image on its own.
- 2) The Madonna of Passau of Pragatto, a printed copy of the Mariahilf venerated in the German town of Passau, in turn a copy of Cranach the Elder's Mariahilf venerated in the Cathedral of Innsbruck, which

demonstrated, among other things, how prints could become objects of cult even when they were twice removed from the original prototype. This case study also illustrated that the extended movement of prints was closely connected with the movement of people. Through 'international' travellers (in this case an Apostolic Nuncio, in the case of the previous print an ambassador or a farmer), miraculous printed imagery could be worshipped at a significant distance from the original site of veneration.

- 3) The Blessed Virgin of the Adoration of Fivizzano, a printed copy of the Madonna of the Gravel venerated in Reggio Emilia, which showed that miraculous prints could function as local substitutes for more central miraculous images within the same region (this is also the case with the next case study). Prints were particularly advantageous in the propagation of cults from the cities in small villages outside of the larger centres of population. The relatively short distance from the prototype did not prevent the miraculous print from generating a cult following in its own right.
- 4) The Madonnina of Saint Luke of Guiglia, a printed copy of the Madonna of Saint Luke venerated in Bologna, which showed that miraculous prints could be closely interlinked with and sponsored by aristocratic families. Regardless of the fact that this miraculous print was only a reproduction of what was probably the most important miraculous image of Emilia-Romagna and, despite it being originally located on a column in a field, the renowned Montecuccoli family built a dedicated oratory for the print.

- 5) Saint Mary of the Vow of Forlì, which showed that, in spite of the rare survival of miraculous prints, the phenomenon must once have been widespread. This print is, coincidentally, venerated in Forlì together with the woodcut of the Madonna of the Fire. It is also interesting that in this case the dissemination of miraculous imagery via prints led to the veneration of the print after a miraculous image in a city that was a rival to the city in which the original was venerated.
- 6) The Madonna of the Maple of Fivizzano, a sixteenth-century miraculous image, which, by having been covered with prints that in their turn have become substitute objects of veneration, showed a new aspect concerning reproductive miraculous prints. In this case, the miraculous prints did not replace the original at a long distance but *in situ*.

Through the six case studies, the thesis has sought to reflect on a crucial intersection between the broad category of the miraculous image and the equally broad category of the printed image, making new contributions to the understanding of each. In terms of the miraculous image, my thesis has shed light on the complicated working of miraculous powers through substitutes of the original image. It has shown cases in which reproductions of a miraculous image functioned as contact relics, as in the case of prints after Saint Mary of the Prisons of Prato, which were believed to have obtained their power by touching the prototype. It has also demonstrated that miracles could be worked through prints alone, in the absence of any prototype. It has made it clear that miraculous prints allowed for a more direct involvement

with the devotees: miraculous prints after the Madonna of the Gravel of Reggio Emilia could, for instance, be touched or even kissed by the sick. It has shown that miraculous prints could work the exact same miracles as the originals they reproduced: many years after the Madonna of Saint Luke of Bologna, its copy, the Madonnina of Saint Luke of Guiglia, similarly stopped an outbreak of incessant rain. It has made it clear that printed copies could work miracles very shortly after the first documented miracle of the prototype: the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration of Fivizzano worked its most famous miracle only six days after its original, the Madonna of the Gravel, was first believed to be miraculous. It has also shown how prints themselves could transmit their powers to further prints, as in the case of printed copies having touched the Madonna of the Fire of Forlì, or even to images in other media, as in the case of a miraculous painting after the Madonna of the Graces of Stuffione di Ravarino. And finally, it has presented a case (the Madonna of the Maple of Lizzano in Belvedere) in which the miraculous prototype was physically 'restored' by means of a substitute print, possibly more than once; the relationship between prototype and printed substitute appears to have remained strained on this occasion, as sources report that the miraculous original repeatedly 'rejected' a printed copy that was pasted over it.

Concerning the printed image, this thesis has expanded significantly on the observations of Lisa Pon, who examined in 2015 the case of a printed cult image in Emilia Romagna. Pon observed how acquiring a miraculous status negated the very nature of the print as a reproductive medium, by singling out one impression as a unique work with a special status. My thesis has

presented examples of prints that started their life as part of the 'reproductive cloud' surrounding a miraculous image and expanding its 'zone of currency' often to large distances, as in the case of the Madonna of the Graces of Stuffione di Ravarino, a copy of the Virgin of Montserrat venerated in Spain, and the Madonna of Passau of Pragatto, a copy of the Mariahilf venerated in Germany. Prints themselves, once established as cult objects in their own right, could also generate such a 'reproductive cloud', as in the case of the just mentioned Madonna of the Graces, after which local copy prints (which, rather extraordinarily, have survived to the present day, sometimes with their matrix!) and even paintings are known. My thesis has demonstrated that the study of miraculous prints offers great insights into the working of reproductive prints, as the acquisition of miraculous status gave prints a much better chance of survival. It is probably no coincidence that almost every single one of the miraculous prints discussed here (the exception being the Madonna of the Maple) survives in only one single impression, the object of veneration.

The physical survival of miraculous prints in a single impression underlines Pon's conclusion about the reproductive image being transformed into a unique single instance comparable to images in other, non-reproductive media such as painting. My thesis has demonstrated amply that a print elevated to this singular status enjoyed exactly the same privileges as miraculous images in other more durable and, outside of the context of the miraculous, more prestigious media. This is clear from the fact that they often attracted the patronage of wealthy aristocratic families, as in the case of the

Madonna of the Graces and Our Lady of Carmel, whose churches were financed by the prestigious Rangoni family from Modena; the Madonnina of Saint Luke, which had an oratory built and maintained by the Montecuccoli-Laderchi family, Lords of Guiglia; and the Madonna of Passau and the Madonna of the Maple, whose cults were respectively supported by the Aldrovandi and the Arnoaldi families, both from Bologna. In his 1582 *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, Archbishop Gabriele Paleotti analyses venerated images in a chapter entitled 'Sacred Images.' In the period after the Council of Trent, Paleotti distinguishes between different types of images and puts images directly authorised by God first. These include contact relics, images made by saints, and images not made by human hands and images through and in which God works miracles.⁵⁰⁴ Prints belonged in this prestigious category. They could be images through which God works miracles, and, as I have argued, they had the aspect of being an imprint from an original retaining some of the powers of the original in common with contact relics and images not made with human hands.

This aristocratic patronage notwithstanding, it should not be forgotten that many if not most miraculous prints started their existence as cult objects in the context of a humble village culture. Often prints that began to work miracles were images mounted on tree shrines (a phenomenon known primarily from northern European countries, which my thesis, however, has shown to have been widespread also in Italy), like the Madonna of the Graces, Our Lady of Carmel, and the Madonna of Passau, which were

⁵⁰⁴ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 6-7.

originally all mounted on oak trees; the Madonna of the Maple, which, as the name reveals, was mounted on a maple tree on the mountain village of Lizzano in Belvedere; and the Madonna of the Willow, which again as the name reveals, was mounted on a willow tree next to a river in Ferrara. With the latter two prints, fragments of the trees have been preserved on the altars till today. Not only prints but miraculous imagery in general were venerated by the poor and the rich indistinctly.⁵⁰⁵ As stated by Erik Thunø,

‘the cult image does anything but address only one level of culture. in considering the cult of miraculous images, it is thus extremely difficult to draw a line between popular and elite religion. In fact, the kind of devotional practice that centred on the cult image must be considered as both rural and urban, lettered and unlettered, and even counted the pope himself among its adherents.’⁵⁰⁶

Others were affixed to road markers at junctions, like the Madonnina of Saint Luke, which was originally attached to a column at the intersection of the old road, which led to Guiglia from the valley floor of the river Panaro; Saint Mary of the Village, which was originally placed on a tower, the point where a bridge across the moat connected the local castle with the village; and, finally, the Madonna of the Maple, which marked a mountain passage at the border between Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna. This in itself says something

⁵⁰⁵ See for instance the cases of the Madonna of the Fortune or the Madonna of the Garden discussed by Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, respectively 73-80 and 80-3.

⁵⁰⁶ Erik Thunø, “The Miraculous Image and the Centralized Church. Santa Maria della Consolazione in Todi,” in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: L’Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 38.

important about the use of reproductive prints and the way they made miraculous images accessible to a wide and essentially non-elite audience.

The involvement of the aristocracy usually only began once the cult of a miraculous print was well-established. It generally coincided with the printed cult objects becoming institutionalised, at which point aristocrats sponsored building works and other art work (the prints however almost all began their miraculous life outside a church, at sites removed from ecclesiastical institutions). This could mean the building of a church or oratory in the original location where the print started to work miracles, as in the case of Our Lady of Carmel, the Madonna of Passau, and the Madonna of the Maple, which had churches, then sanctuaries, built in place of the trees where they were originally affixed and venerated; of Saint Mary of the Vow, which had a church entirely rebuilt around it; of Saint Mary of the Village, which had a church built in close proximity to the tower where it was initially situated; of the Madonnina of Saint Luke, which had an oratory built in place of the column on which it was originally displayed; and, finally, of the Madonna of the Willow, which had an oratory built around the tree on which it was firstly situated (this print was later moved to the Basilica of Saint George in Ferrara). In other instances, the print was translated to an existing church nearby, like the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, which was put on the high altar of the Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony of Fivizzano; the Madonna of the Blood, which was translated to the third chapel on the left of the Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption; the Virgin of the Graces, which was placed in the right chapel of the transept of the Church of Saint Reparata;

and, finally, the Madonna of the Fire, which was translated to the Cathedral of Forlì. Such building projects, however, were not the exclusive domain of the aristocracy, as there were also cases where the buildings were paid for by donations from larger communities of devotees, such as in the cases of the Madonna of Passau, Saint Mary of the Vow, and Saint Mary of the Village, whose churches and cults were financed by the collective faithful. As stated by Garnett and Rosser, 'the miraculous image has always been the site of contestation and negotiation between different elements of the Catholic Church.'⁵⁰⁷ Both the local and central authorities had interests in promoting a cult. Miraculous images were desirable objects of prestige. However, this translation into ecclesiastical spaces was mainly a consequence of the desire to control these images, which, as we have seen, was an outcome of the Council of Trent. In the case of the prints here analysed, there does not seem to have been any resistance to such authoritarian attempts to appropriate the cults. However, as underlined by Garnett and Rosser, the ecclesiastical enshrinement did not prevent the image from being available to uncontrolled forms of devotion.⁵⁰⁸

The institutionalisation of cults around prints tended to conform to the general traditions of miraculous images. This included the offering of votive gifts, many of which are still present today, as in the case of votive paintings, votive candles, votive tablets, silver hearts, plaques, pieces of jewellery, and wooden crutches for the Madonna of the Graces; bridal dresses for Our Lady of Carmel; a cross of diamonds for the Madonna of Passau; sculpted figures,

⁵⁰⁷ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 34.

⁵⁰⁸ Garnett and Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 191.

votive tablets, silver hearts, plaques and pieces of jewellery for the Madonna of the Maple; a golden cross and a necklace for the Madonna of the Blood; and two necklaces for the Virgin of the Graces. Elaborate chapels were constructed and decorated, as in the case of the twentieth-century chapel clad in red and yellow Veronese marble for the Madonna of the Graces; the nineteenth-century altar made of *scagliola* designed by Canturi for the Madonna of Passau; the twentieth-century impressive votive chapel by Remedi for the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration; the seventeenth-century golden *ancona* for the Madonna of the Maple; the seventeenth-century wooden tabernacle for the Madonna of the Blood; the seventeenth-century chapel with frescoed domed ceiling for the Madonna of the Fire. These elements distinguished the miraculous images from other types of sacred images.⁵⁰⁹ The miraculous prints themselves were presented with gold or silver revetments in the shape of crowns, e.g. the Madonna of the Graces, the Madonna of Passau, the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration, and the Madonna of the Blood. These were once again special tributes that could be sponsored by aristocratic patrons. That sponsorship could also extend to that other hallmark of a successful miraculous image, the reproduction of the prototype image by means of prints, as in the case of the Madonna of the Graces.

All in all, this thesis has offered an exceptional opportunity to engage with early-modern prints in long-standing devotional contexts. A final aspect of the miraculous print is that, unlike the great majority of print production, prints

⁵⁰⁹ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 211.

turned into cult objects generated their own documentation in miracle books, regional historical accounts, and other written or printed sources. These sources add a unique layer of insight into the original use of the prints before they became miraculous (thus informing us about historical print culture) and the formation of the cult in all its successive stages once the print was recorded as miracle-working. Obviously, a single thesis does not offer the scope to present a truly exhaustive survey of the phenomenon of the miraculous print, let alone the general use of prints for the purpose of devotion. I hope, however, that my study will generate an interest in this rich but as yet not widely studied aspect of both the history of the miraculous image and the history of printmaking, leading to initiatives to expand our knowledge for other regions in Italy and Europe and in other periods. Especially additions of other miraculous prints (the survival of which, as mentioned above, is exceedingly rare) would be valuable for the study of the wider phenomenon, to put the print group from Emilia-Romagna presented here into a wider context.

Appendix

1. The following are the verses reported on the Madonna of the Graces, venerated in the Church of Stuffione di Ravarino:

En voluit pictor tibi praesentare Mariam,
Vt Monserati cernere cuique datur. (Upper left)

Nam voluit positum templi & confinia cuiuis
Virginis & formam, pingere imaginibus. (Upper centre)

In mentemq; tibi breuiter reuoca(re) stupenda
Istoq; fas est cernere mira loco. (Upper right)

Occupat aerium bellax Hispania montem
Quem Monserati nomeu habere fer(unt)
Nomen id inde tenet quòd conspiciedus apertè
Ceum terra fectus, culmine ad ima foret
Propterea hic infans manibus tractare videtur
Serram ceum montem ritè secare velit
Monte sub hoc latuit multos haud cognita soles
Virginis ist(i)us (forma) & imago sacra. (Lower left)

H(aec) (pe)tefacta fuit (mir)a ratione modo(que)
N(am) Deus hanc superia detegit (arce poli)
L(imina) Saturni cunctis venere die(bus)
Quae montem circa splendida visa nimis
Tand(em) inuenta fuit montis contecta caue(rni)s
Quam po(pu)lus magno semper honore co(lit)
Hocq; loco instructū est mul(t)ū venerabile té(mplu)
Fulgida quo fo(r)m(a) haec conspicienda tibi. (Lower centre)

Quem gremio puerum sustentat Virgo. Maria
Vix natum mense(s) qua(tt)uor esse putes:
Quisquis in hanc strictos formā cōuertit ocellos
Liuidus huic horror frigida membra quati(t)
Incip() huic meritò quisquis ma(l)efacta dolore,
E() sua deuotus crimina deflet homo.
Saepiu() hoc circa templum miracula videntur.

Ing(r)editur rectus qui modò claudus era(t). (Lower right)

Translation:

The painter wanted to introduce you to Mary, as She can be seen by everyone in Montserrat. (Upper left)

Indeed (the painter) wanted to represent to everyone with images the position of the temple and its borders and the figure of the Virgin.' (Upper centre)

Concisely calling to mind the wonderful things, which it is possible to observe in this place. (Upper right)

The bellicose Spain has a high mount, which is said to have the name of Montserrat The mount takes this name from the fact that is openly manifest as it was cut by a saw from top to base

For this reason, the Child is seen while He holds a saw with His hands as He wanted to benevolently saw the mount

The sacred figure and image of this Virgin remained hidden under this mount for many years, unknown.' (Lower left)

This (image) was discovered in an extraordinary way; God made it manifest from above the sky

In all of Saturn days lights appeared, which were extraordinarily seen to be resplendent close to that mount

Finally, she who is always venerated by the people, was found, honourably protected by the caves of the mount

In this place the most venerable temple was built where you can see this shining figure. (Lower centre)

You would hardly believe that the Child who the Virgin Mary holds in her lap has been born four months ago

Anyone who turns his shrunken eyes towards this figure: to him a livid horror shakes the cold limbs

Everyone starts for this reason to regret his misdeeds and the devout man cries his faults

Miracles are seen very often around this temple, he who was first limping, (now) walks straight. (Lower right)

2. 5 Sommario

1681 22 Settembre

Rogito in solido di Camillo Ugolini, e di Giuseppe Maria Lodi Autentico.

Donazione

delli sacerdoti Giacomo, Matteo, e Vittorio Fratelli, e Figli di Domenico Lanzarini del Comune di Pragatto Contado di Bologna, fatta d'avanti il Vicario Generale Arcivescovile per riportarne, siccome se n'è riportato il Decreto di approvazione, fatta a favore di D. Pietro Maranesi in rappresentanza della sua Chiesa Parrocchiale di S. Maria di Pragatto

Juspadronato della Casa Senatoria Aldrovandi di Bologna, di un pezzo di terreno di ragione dei Donatori quanto è per lunghezza piedi 110, e di larghezza piedi 40 compresi li Pedali ossia arbori di quercia, che vi sono sopra, e la quale parte di terreno confina da mattina e mezzo giorno li Beni dei detti Lanzarini, da Ponente D. Paolo Degni, e da settentrione gli Aldrovandi, e la Via pubblica, ed altro confine. E tale Donazione è stata fatta per l'intento, che il detto Rettore della Chiesa di Pragatto vi faccia fabbricare sopra quanto prima un Capella, secondo le prescrizioni sinodali, e dedicata a Maria Vergine detta del Passavia, la cui Immagine in carta fu donata da Mons.or: Pietro Bargellini al suddetto D. Giacomo, e che è stata ed è apposta in un arbore di Quercia nel campo delli suddetti Fratelli Donatori; Immagine Insigne per la moltitudine di miracoli ricevuti dai devoti di Maria concorsivi in molto Popolo, e le di cui copiose offerte sono state depositate nel Sagro Monte di Pietà per l'intento della Fabbricazione della Cappella nuova destinata ad esporvi la detta Sagra Imagine perche non se ne minori il culto, e la Devozione. Con questo però, che quanto prima abbiasi a cominciare la Fabbrica, altrimenti la Donazione abbiasi per non fatta; Ed a condizione, che in luogo visibile sia apposta una lapide indicante la suddetta Donazione. E si ritiene, che avrà effetto la Erezione della nuova Capella, dacché molti devoti si propongono di concorrere colla continuazione delle offerte, ed Elemosine; Ed il detto Rmo Vicario Generale con suo Decreto approva il predisposto, e ordina, che si faccia la Lapide, e la Cappella secondo le prescrizioni sinodali, e cioè di lunghezza almeno piedi 10, e di larghezza piedi otto, come pure ordina, che sia per questo effetto rilasciato al

detto Parroco di Pragatto la somma depositata nel Sagro Monte di Pietà per impiegarla in detta Capella dedicata a S. Maria di Passavia.

Translation:

5 Summary

1681 22 September

Deed jointly with Camillo Ugolini, and Giuseppe Maria Lodi Authentic.

Donation

Of the priests Giacomo, Matteo, and Vittorio Brothers, and Sons of Domenico Lanzarini of the District of Pragatto County of Bologna, made in front of the Archiepiscopal General Vicar to report, since it has been reported the Decree of Approval, made in favour of Don Pietro Maranesi on behalf of his Parish Church of Saint Mary of Pragatto patronage of the Senatorial Home Aldrovandi of Bologna, of a piece of land of the Donators, which is long 110 feet, and large 40 feet included the *Pedali*, which are the oak trees, which are above, and the land adjoins from morning to the South with the goods of the above-mentioned Lanzarini, to the West Don Paolo Degni, and to the North the Aldrovandi, and the public Street, and other border. And that Donation has been made so that the above-motioed Dean of the Church of Pragatto could build as soon as possible a Chapel, according to the synodal provisions, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary called of Passavia, whose paper Image was donated by Monsignor Pietro Bargellini to the above-mentioned Don Giacomo, which was and it is affixed to an oak tree in the field of the above-mentioned Brothers Donators; Image Renowned for the multitude of

miracles received by the devotees of Mary who numerously came, and whose copious offerings were settled in the Holy Mount of Piety for the Fabrication of the new Chapel addressed to display the above-mentioned Sacred Image so that the cult did not diminish, together with the Devotion. However, the Building should as soon as possible start, otherwise the Donation is not made anymore; And on the condition that a commemorative plaque indicating the above-mentioned Donation is placed in a visible place. And it is believed that the Erection of the New Chapel will be effective, since many devotees are willing to contribute with the continuation of the offerings, and Alms; And the said Right Reverend General Vicar with his Decree approves what was prepared, and commands, that the Commemorative Plaque and the Chapel are made according to the synodal provisions, namely long at least 10 feet, and large 8 feet, as it also commands, that is for this effect released to the said Parish Priest of Pragatto the sum, which was settled in the Holy Mount of Piety, to use it in the said Chapel dedicated to Saint Mary of Passavia.

3. The following are the miracles respectively concerning the sight and the healing of crippled people reported in the *Racolta d'alcune grazie Particolari e portentosi miracoli fatti dalla Gloriosa Immagine di Maria SS:ma di Monserato* (1622):

Mlo XX. Orsola fig.a di Giulio Pederzini in coscienza sua aff.ma, come haveva una fig.la che la sera mancava di vista, onde raccomandandola alla sud.ta Imag.e in term.e di sei giorni fù perfettam:te sanata.

Mlo. XXXIII. Gioan Ant.o Pignatti da Sala Diocesi di Bologna in sua coscienza aff.ma esser.segli turbata la vista in modo tale, che dalle 23 ore sino alla levata del sole del giorno seguente n. vedeva cosa alcuna ne manco con il lume, ne pure il lume stesso, e fatto voto alla sud.ta Imag.e in otto giorni fù perfettam.te illuminato.

Mlo. LXXXV. La sud.ta aff.ma che era debolissima di vista di modo tale che malam.te nieri poteva fare I fatti suoi raccomandatosi di nuovo alla sud.ta in due giorni fu sanata.

Mlo LXXXVII. Diamante mog.e di Paolo Reggiani riferisce come p. tre anni circa l'Ave M.a se le oscurava la vista totalm.te. e fatto voto alla d.tta Imagine fù totalmente sanata.

Mlo LXXXXVIII. Paolo Degoli del Finale riferisce et in coscienza sua aff.ma che Maria d'anni sette, e Lod.co d'anni tre suoi fig.i circa le 22 hore, e mezzo perdevano la vista ambidue in modo tale, che urtavano per le mura, verani, ed altri mobili di casa, e una volta il s.to Pre avvedutosi di ciò disse, che cosa fai? Il Putto rispose non vedo ove mi vada: ed egli informandosi dalla Madre, e dalle altre Donne di casa intese, che questi due Putti motlo tempo era che pativano questo incomodo: Giunta la notte p. meg.o verificarsi gli appresentò ad ambi una Lucerna accesa avanti agl'occhi, e gli disse vedete voi questa Lume? Quali n. vedendola risposero: queal Lume? Onde il Pre addolorato, n. sapendo come remediare a ciò voltatosi alla sud.ta Imagine con orazioni, e voti obligansoi di portarle due paia d'occhy, raccomandandosi caldam.te in termine di tre giorni furono perfettam.te sanati, e liberati.

Mlo. 131. Catterina Paltrinieri da S. Felice d'anni 56 in circa mancatale la vista in modo, che dal mezzo giorno sino alle 23 ore poco le vedeva, e dalle

23 non vi vedea punto fece voto alla sud.ta Imag.e e sub.o ricuperò la prima vista, ed ora vede meg.o la. Notte, che n. faceva p.ma il giorno.

Mlo. 142. Fabbio Capellina della Stellata riferisce che nel declinare del sole gli mancava la vista a poco, a poco talche nelle ore 24. N. vedeva niente ne manco con la lume, e fatto voto alla sud.ta Imag.e fù perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo 143. Paolo Diegoli del Finale riferisce che Lod.co d'anni 4., e Maria d'anni 7. suoi figli perdevano totalm.te la vista circa le 23. Ore, e raccomandateli con voti alla sud.ta Imag:e tutti due in un tempo, ed ore furono perfettamte sanati.

Mlo. 173. Dom.co Fregni da S. Pietro in età d'anni 18: in circa avendo attualm.te perduta la vista ricorse a questa B. V., e subito doppo averla visitata tre sabbati restò pienam.te sanata, e pose la tavoletta.

Adi 29 9bre 1681. Mlo. 280 Adi Dom.co Fregni da S. Pietro in Elda d'anni 28 in circa avendo totamte perduta la vista ricorse a qsta B.Ve, e subito doppo averla visitata tre sabbati resto pienamte liberato, e pose la tavoletta ita.

Terzo Miracolo. Salvatore Callanchi riferisce, ed in sua coscienza affma che Barbara sua Fig.a storpiata dalla parte destra gran tempo era, e fatto voto alla sud:ta Imag.e sub.to cominciò a star bene, ed in pochi giorni restò perfettam.te sanata.

Nono Miracolo Giulia Guidetti della Cura della Chiesa nova dioc; di Bologna riferisce, e in sua coscienza aff.ma come p. sei mesi stava stropiata dal galone destro, ne si poteva muovere senza aiuto, e fatto voto alla sudta Imag.e in term.e di tre giorni restò sana, e la notte seguente al voto dormì, e

passò benissimo non avendo mai prima trovato riposo ne giorno, ne notte p.
l'eccessivo dolore.

XIII. Mlo. Bartolomea Veronesi dal Finale stropiata da una gamba, che non poteva muoversi con gran dolore continuo tale, che non poteva manco con le ferle in modo alcuno muoversi da se; fece voto alla sud.a Imagn.e, e sub.o cessò il dolore, e cominciò a camminare, e incontinentem:te fù sanata.

Mlo: XVII. Bartolomea Guastaroba stropiata da una mano p. 20 anni avanti la sud.ta Imag.e fù sanata alla presenza di molte persone.

Mlo. XXXIX. Guido Francosini della Mirandola riferisce, ed aff.a, che egli era stropiato da una mano, piedi dogliosi, e tutta la vita dolente, e fatto voto alla sud.ta Imag.e subito fu sanato.

Mlo. XLVII. Biagio Guidetti da Ravarino riferisce come Michele suo fig.o era stropiato da una gamba e la p.ma volta visitò la d.ta Imag.e il putto stese la gamba, la sda. posò il piede in terra, e la terza ritornò a casa co suoi piedi camminando sanato affatto.

Mlo. LXIII. Domenica Fortina da Cento riferisce, come aveva una fig.a storpiata da un braccio, e fatto. voto alla s.a Imag.e fù subitam.te sanata.

Mlo. 111. Dom.ca Fantini di Cento riferisce che aveva un putto d'anni nove stropiato da un braccio, e fatto il voto fù sub.o sanato.

Mlo. 119. Alessandra Dossi della cura di Massa stropiata da un ginocchio facendo voto alla sud.ta Imag.e e visitandola la prima volta avanti di qsta. fù sanata perfettam.te.

Mlo 120 Matteo Pavattazzi della Cura di Levizzano storpiato in letto d'una percossa fece voto alla d.ta IMag.e e subito cominciò a star bene, e visitandola si partì perfettam.te sanato ritornando a casa sonando un flauto.

Mlo. 125. Per quanto riferito da chi con occhio ha veduto, un huomo da Francolino stropiato che n. poteva salire a cavallo d'un Asinello senza aiuto visitando in qsto stato la sud.ta Mad.na nell' hora delle Messe nel gran concorso della gente si partì sanato in modo che senza altro aiuto ve ne uscì fuori di Chiesa trovò l'Asinello, se ne montò a cavallo, e tornosene a Francolino diocesi, e Dist.o di Ferrara lungi di quà. 40: miglia senza pure dire Addio.

Mlo. 129. Oliviero Ortolano del Sig.re Co: Sigis.do Malvasia riferisce a nome d'un suo amico Ortolano del Finale, come un suo fig.o era stropiato da una gamba, e fatto voto alla Verg.e fù sanato ottimamente.

Mlo. 159. Bartolomeo Bascola della Cura di Massa riferisce che Dom.ca sua fig.a era stropiata dalla gambe, che non si poteva muovere, e fece voto di visitare tre volte la d.ta Imag.e prima che fornisce la visita fù perfettam.te sanata.

Mlo. 171. Giambatta. Frattini da Cento stropiato da una mano visitando la SS.ma Imag.e ritorna a casa sua perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo. 180. N. N. riferisce che Franc.o suo fig.o era stropiato da una gamba, che non poteva andare. La sera l'andò alla sud.a Imag.e e la mattina immediatam.te lo ritrova sano, e sub.to lo pigliò, e venne da lontano otto miglia p. ringraziare la Verg.e, e fece notare la ricevuta grazia.

Mlo 189. Frà And.a Brugniolo Terz.o di S. Fran.co della Mirandola stropiato da un galone con dolor continuo fece voto alla sud.ta Imag.e, e sub.o cessò il dolore ed in brevissimo tempo fù perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo. 209. La sud.a riferisce che essendo ella stropiata in letto p. tre mesi e n. potendosi muovere se non. quando era portata sub.o fatto voto alla SS.ma

Verg.e cominciò a camminare da. se, e in breviss.mo tempo fù perfettam.te sanata.

Mlo 212. N. fig.o di Giacomo Rovatti da Bagnara stropiato da tutte due le gambe con dolore tale, che giorno, e notte gridava ad alta voce fatto voto visitare la sud.ta Imag.e la sd.a volta, che la visitò che fu la dom.ca 20 doppo la Pentecoste lasciò le ferle, e se ne ritornò a casa sano.

Mlo. 219. M. Giuliano Peccinini come p. un salasso restò stropiato da un braccio p. l'infiammazione grande, la quale sparsa p. la vita in modo che restò tutto stropiato; levatosi p. diseraz.e dalle mani de' Medici fece voto alla Miracolosa Imag.e. e subito cominciò a servirsi del braccio, e in breve fù perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo 223 Giacomo Andrioli della Para. di Figaroli Dioc: di Ferrara stropiato dal galone destro, con dolore grandiss.mo p. mesi tre continui, che giorno, e notte gridava, e non si poteva muovere, fece voto alla sud.ta Imag.e, e sub.o cessò. il dolore, ed in tre giorni fù perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo 225. N Sig:re Silvio Cialotti della Mirandola p. una cascata da cavallo già molt'anni stropiato da un galone una sera vò a letto con dolore grandiss.mo ne potendo ritrovare riposo si raccomandò alla sud.ta SS.ma Verg.e, e sub.o s. addormenta, e la matt.a si leva perfettam.te sanato.

Mlo. 254. Gem.o fig.o di Dom.co Bratti dice d'aver più volte sentito a dire a sua Mad:e ed ella pure conferma lo stesso che quando questo era fanciullo era del tutto stropiato dalle gambe, a piedi in modo che se gli stravoltavano alla bocca ne vi si poteva regere sop.a ma erano in modo debilitate, che cadevano da ogni lato, ed ella avendo fatto voto alla sud.ta SS.ma Imag.e fu da qlla rasanato, e sano, ed è huomo fatto.

Mlo. 281. La Lucia N. riferisce che una Donna di Carpi, che venne. li 26
Lug.o 1648 a visitare questa SS.a Imag.e le disse che aveva un suo puttino
d'anni due affatto stropiato onde facendo voto a qsta gloriosa Imag.e fù
liberato, e venne come hò detto col puttino il dì sud.to a visitarla.

Translation:

Miracle XX. Orsola daughter of Giulio Pederzini in her conscience affirms,
that she had a daughter who in the evening lacked the sight and
recommending her to the aforementioned Image in terms of six days she was
perfectly healed.

Miracle. XXXIII. Giovan Antonio Pignatti from Sala Diocese of Bologna in his
conscience affirms that his sight was so disturbed that, from 11 pm until the
raising of the sun of the following day he did not see anything not even with
the light, nor the light itself, and made vow to the aforementioned Image in
eight days he was perfectly illuminated.

Miracle. LXXXV. The above-mentioned affirms that she had a very weak
sight so that she could badly mind her business recommending herself again
to the aforementioned (Image) in two days she was healed.

Miracle LXXXVII. Diamante wife of Paolo Reggiani refers that for about three
years the Hail Mary totally obscure her sight and made vow to the said Image
she was entirely healed.

Miracle LXXXVIII. Paolo Degoli from Finale refers and, in his conscience,
affirms that Maria of seven years, and Lodovico of three years his children at
about 10:30 pm both lost their sight so that they bumped into the walls, the

verani, and other furniture of the house, and once the aforementioned Priest having noticed this, said, what are you doing? The boy answered I don't see where I go: and the priest being informed by the Mother, and by the other Women of the house understood, that these two Children suffered from this problem for a long time: At night to better verify the Priest showed to both an open light in front of their eyes, and he said can you see this Light? The Children without seeing, said: Which Light? Thus, the sorrowful priest, who did not know how to remedy, turning to the aforementioned Image with orations, and vows willing himself to bring Her two pairs of eyes, strongly recommending himself in terms of three days the children were perfectly healed, and released.

Miracle. 131. Catterina Paltrinieri from S. Felice of 56 years without sight so that from noon until 11 pm she did not see much, and from 11 pm she did not see any point, made vow to the aforementioned Image and she immediately recovered the old sight, and now she sees better at night, than she saw before during the day.

Miracle. 142. Fabbio Capellina from the Stellata refers that when the sun set, he lost little by little the sight, so that at midnight he could not see anything even with the light, and made vow to the aforementioned Image he was perfectly healed.

Miracle 143. Paolo Diegoli from Finale refers that Lodovico of four years, and Maria of seven years his children totally lost the sight at circa 11 pm and recommending themselves with vows to the aforementioned Image both of them at once, they were perfectly healed.

Miracle. 173. Domenica Fregni from S. Pietro with an age of years circa 18: having actually lost the sight turned to this Blessed Virgin, and immediately after having seen her for three Saturdays she was fully healed and put a board.

On 29 October 1681. Miracle. 280 On the day Domenico Fregni from S. Pietro in Elda of years circa 28 having totally lost his sight turned to this Blessed Virgin and immediately after having seen her for three Saturdays he was fully released and put a board.

Third Miracle. Salvadore Callanchi refers, and in his conscience affirms that Barbara his Daughter was crippled in the right part for a long time, and made vow to the aforementioned Image immediately started to feel good, and in a few days, she was perfectly healed.

Ninth Miracle Giulia Guidetti from the Cura of the Church new diocese of Bologna refers, and in her conscience affirms that for six months she was crippled in the right part, and she could not move without help, and made vow to the aforementioned Image in terms of three days she was healed, and the night following the vow she slept, and spent the night very well not having before found rest neither during the day nor at night for the excessive pain.

XIII. Miracle. Bartolomea Veronesi from Finale crippled in one leg, that she could not move with big continuous pain so, that she could neither with the crutches in any way move alone; made vow to the aforementioned Image, and the pain immediately stopped, and she started walking, and she was incontinently healed.

Miracle: XVII. Bartolomea Guastaroba crippled in one hand for twenty years in front of the aforementioned Image was healed in the presence of numerous people.

Miracle. XXXIX. Guido Francosini from the Mirandola refers, and affirms, that he was crippled in one hand, painful feet, and aching waist, and made vow to the aforementioned Image he was immediately healed.

Miracle. XLVII. Biagio Guidetti from Ravarino refers that Michele his son was crippled in one leg and the first time he visited the said Image the boy stretched his legs out, the second he put his foot down, and the third he returned home with his feet walking totally healed.

Miracle. LXIII. Domenica Fortina from Cento refers that she had a daughter crippled in one arm and made vow to the aforementioned Image she was immediately healed.

Miracle. 111. Domenica Fantini di Cento refers that she had a boy of nine years crippled in one arm and made the vow he was immediately healed.

Miracle. 119. Alessandra Dossi from the Cura of Massa crippled in a knee making vow to the aforementioned Image and visiting her the first time in front of her she was perfectly healed.

Miracle 120 Matteo Pavattazzi of the Cura of Levizzano crippled in bed because of a blow made vow to the aforementioned Image and he immediately started feeling good and visiting Here he left perfectly healed returning home playing a flute.

Miracle. 125. As referred by who has with eyes seen, a man from Francolino crippled so that he could not ride a donkey without help, like this visiting the aforementioned Madonna at the time of the Masses with many people he left

healed so that without any other help he went out of the Church found the donkey, rode it, went back to Francolino diocese and District of Ferrara far 40: miles without even saying goodbye.

Miracle. 129. Oliviero Ortolano of the Lord Count Sigismondo Malvasia refers on behalf of his friend Ortolano from Finale, that one of his sons was crippled in one leg and made vow to the Virgin he was excellently healed.

Miracle. 159. Bartolomeo Bascola of the Cura of Massa refers that Domenica his daughter was crippled in the legs, so that she could not move, and made vow to visit three times the said Image before she visited her, she was perfectly healed.

Miracle. 171. Giambattista Frattini from Cento crippled in one hand visiting the Most Holy Image returns to his home perfectly healed.

Miracle. 180. N. N. refers that Francesco his son was crippled in a leg, that he could not go. The evening she went to the aforementioned Image and immediately the morning she finds him healed, and immediately she took him, and he came from afar 8 miles to thank the Virgin and he pointed the received grace out.

Miracle 189. Frà Andrea Brugniolo Terzo of S. Francesco from the Mirandola crippled with continuous pain made vow to the aforementioned Image, and immediately the pain stopped, and he was in a very short time perfectly healed.

Miracle. 209. The above-mentioned refers that being crippled in bed for three months without the possibility to move if not when she was carried, immediately made vow to the Most Holy Virgin he started to walk alone, and in a very short time she was perfectly healed.

Miracle 212. N. son of Giacomo Rovatti from Bagnara crippled in both two legs with such a pain, that day, and night he screamed out loud made vow to visit the aforementioned Image and the second time, that he visited her that was the Sunday 20 after the Pentecost he left the crutches, and returned home healthy.

Miracle. 219. M. Giuliano Peccinini due to a bloodletting remained crippled in one arm for the big inflammation, which scattered for the waist so that he remained all crippled: renouncing in despair to the doctors made vow to the Miraculous Image and immediately started to use the arm, and in a short time he was perfectly healed.

Miracle 223 Giacomo Andrioli from the Parish Church of Figaroli Diocese of Ferrara crippled in the right part, with great pain for three continuous months, that day, and night he screamed, and he could not move, made vow to the aforementioned Image and immediately the pain stopped, and in three days he was perfectly healed.

Miracle 225. Our Lord Silvio Cialotti from the Mirandola due to a fall from horse already from many years crippled one evening he goes to bed with great pain without finding rest he recommended himself to the aforementioned most Holy Virgin, and he falls immediately falls asleep, and the morning he gets up perfectly healed.

Miracle. 254. Geminiano son of Domenico Bratti says to have more times heard to tell to his Mother, and she also confirms the same that when this was a child he was totally crippled in the legs, in the feet so that they came to the mouth and they could not support him but they were so debilitate, that they fell on each side, and she having made vow to the aforementioned Most

Holy Image he was from her healed, and healthy, and he is made man-made.

Miracle. 281. The Lucia N. refer that a Woman of Carpi, that came on 26 July 1648 to visit these most Holy Image told her that she had a small child of two years crippled and making vow to this glorious Image was released, and came as I said with the child the above-mentioned day to visit her.

4. The following is the content of Geminiano della Cappellina's *Draft* (1509), preserved in the Abbatial Archive Nonantola:

In Christi nomine Amen, Anno a nativitate eiusdem millesimo quingentesimo nono, Indicione decimatercia, die forte decimo mensis octobris.

Magnificus et generosus Comes Guido Rangonus de Mutina consitutus coram Reverendissimo in Cristo principe et Domino Domino Iulliano previdentia divina Sancte et Excellentissime Ecclesie tituli Sancti Angeli diacono cardinale de Cessarinis vulgariter nuncupato preposito et commendatario Abbatie et monasterij Sancti Silvestri de nonantula ordinis Sancti benedicti mutinensis diocesis ad romam Ecclesiam nullo modio pertinentis Existente in castello nonantule in abbatiali pallatio in Camera sue residentie ad quem spectat Ius patronatus et presentandi Idoneum quenlibet presbiterum in rectorem Ecclesie parochialis sante Marie de gratijs site in Villa Stuphioni nuperrime constructa et Edificata sumptibus proprijs prefacti comitis Guidonis Ut continetur in bulla seu litteris patentibus prefacti Reverendissimi Domini commendatarij sub data iovis die sexta mensis maij tenoris quarum in eis omni meliori modo Iura sua et forma quibus magis et

melidus ac validius fieri pactibus et patentibus Vigore subscripti Iuri
patronatus presentavit et creavit Venerabilem Dominum Guilelmum
Campanam presbiterum mutinensem in rectorem dicte Ecclesie parochialis
Sancte Marie de gratijs cuius Ecclesie Sancte Marie limitata parrocchia et
extenditur ut infra cipiendo de Canali hoc est panario in loco dicto la ca mata
del Salcio et proseguendo per stratam illam Usque ad Muciam Versus dictam
Villam Stufioni quem coram prefacto Domino Comendatario presentavit
Instans humiliter per prefactum Reverendissimum Dominum
Comendatarium dictum Donum Guilelmum confirmari et Investiri de dicta
Ecclesia parochiali cum omnibus suis Iuribus et pertinentijs Universis
secundum formam Sacrorum canonum.

Qui prefactus Reverendissimus Dominus Comendatarius omni meliore modo
et dictum Dominum Guilelmum in rectorem Ut Eum presentatum prout in
flexis actibus de dicta ecclesia parochiali sancte Marie de gratijs sita in dicta
Villa Stuphioni cum omnibus Iuribus suis universis investivit recepto prius à
dicto Domino Guielmo iuramento in animam suam per dicto Reverensissimo
Domino Comendatario eiusque successoribus fideliter eum aderire et bona
dicte ecclesie non alienabit et alterabit pro parte et recuperabit ipsam
comperta, ecclesiam nichil aliquod in manibus alicuius non ressignabit nisi in
manibus prefacti Domini Comendatarij et suorum successorum et alia faciat
et olperabit quantum de suo et ex forma Sacrorum canonum et
constitutionum et privilegiorum dicte Abbacie tenetur et obligatus est rogantes
precantes me notarium superinde publice confiri.

Actum in Castello nonantule in abbatiali pallatio, ecc[...]

Ego Geminianus Filius Domini Andree de la Capelina civis mutine publicus apostolica et Imperiali auctoritate notarius ecc[...] rogatus scribere scipsi, ecc.

Translation:

In the name of Christ amen, the birth year of the same 1509, thirteenth Announcement, happy day 15 of the October month.

The magnificent and noble Count Guido Rangoni of Modena – assembled with the Right Reverend in Christ Prince and Lord Father Giuliano for divine providence Cardinal Cesarini, deacon of the Saint and Eminent Church with the title of Saint Angel, commonly called Prior and Commendatory of the abbey and the Monastery of Saint Silvestro of Nonantola of the order of Saint Benedict of the territory of Modena and belonging to the Roman Church, existing in the castle of Nonantola in the abbatial palace in its residential room – to him (Count Guido) is entitled the right of patronage and of presenting certain suitable priest as rector of the Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin of the Graces located in the village of Stuffione recently built and constructed at the expense of the above-mentioned Count Guido, as it is included in the edict, namely letters patent of the above-mentioned Reverend Lord Commendatory on the day Thursday 6 May, whose content is in them included in the best way according to its rights and the form, with which it is better and it is more forcefully possible according to the agreements and the letters patent, due to the above-mentioned right of patronage he (Count Guido) presented and created the venerable Lord Guglielmo Campana priest

of Modena as rector of the above-mentioned Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin of the Graces, the parish church of whose church of the Blessed Virgin has borders and extends as follows: starting from the Canal, namely from the Panaro in the place called Ca' Matta del Salcio and continuing on that street until the Muzza towards the above-mentioned village of Stuffione; (the above-mentioned Count Guido) presented that to the aforementioned Lord Knight Commander humbly insisting that the above-mentioned Father Guglielmo would be confirmed by the Reverend Lord Knight Commande and appointed of the above-mentioned parish church with its rights and all its jurisdictions according to the form of the sacred canons.

Whose Reverend Lord Knight Commander appointed in every best way the above-mentioned Lord Guglielmo rector and that presented, as in the deeds, and he invested him of the above-mentioned Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin of the Graces placed in the above-mentioned village of Stuffione with all its rights, after having before received from the above-mentioned Lord Guglielmo oath on his own soul of faithfully keeping his position in the name of the above-mentioned Reverend Lord Knight Commander and of his successors and that he won't sell in any way the goods of the above-mentioned Church and that he will recover the same recognised Church and he won't in any way reallocate it to other's power if not in the hands of the above-mentioned Lord Knight Commander and of his successors and still he will do what he has to do in the form of the sacred canons and constitutions and the privileges of the above-mentioned abbey; the presents asking, then, and imploring that I notary would publicly accomplish these things.

Made in the castle of Nonantola in the abbatial palace, etc[...]

I Geminiano son of Lord Andrea della Cappellina, citizen of Modena, public notary

in the apostolic and imperial authority etc[...] asked to write, I wrote, etc.

5. The following are the verses reported on the Madonna of the Graces published by Giuliano Cassiani in Modena:

voluit pictor tibi praesentare MARIAM,

[...]t Monserati cernere cuique datur (Upper left)

Nam voluit positum, templi, & confinia cuivis,

Virginis, & formam, pingere Imaginibus. (Upper centre)

In mentem quae tibi breuiter reuocare stupenda

Istoque fas est, cernere mira loco. (Upper right)

Occupat accrium bellax Hispania montem,

Quem Monserati nomen habere ferunt.

Nome id inde tenet, quòd conspiciendus apertè,

Ceu serrasectus, culmine ad ima foret,

Propterea hic infans manibus tractare videtur

Serram, ceu montem ritè secare velit,

Monte sub hoc latuit multos haud cognita soles,

Virginis istius form [...] Imago sacra. (Lower left)

Haec patefacta fuit mira ratione modoque,
Nam Deus hanc supera detegit arce poli,
Lumina Saturni cunctis venere diebus,
Quae montem circa splendida visa nimis,
Tandem inuenta fuit montis contacta cauernis,
Quam populus magno semper honore colit,
Hocq; loco instructum est multū venerabile templū,
Fulgida quo forma haec conspicienda tibi. (Lower centre)

Quem cremio puerum sustentat Virgo Maria,
Vix natum menses quatuor esse putes:
Quisquis in hanc strictos formam conuertit ocellos
Lividus huic horror frigida membra quatit,
Incipit huic merito quisquis malefacta dolore
Et sua deuotus crimina defler homo,
Saepius hoc circa Templum miracula videntur,
Ingreditur rectus qui modo claudus erat. (Lower right)

Translation:

The painter wanted to introduce you to Mary, as she can be seen by everyone in Montserrat. (Upper left)

Indeed (the painter) wanted to represent to everyone with images the position of the temple and its borders and the figure of the Virgin.' (Upper centre)

Concisely calling to mind the wonderful things, which it is possible to observe in this place. (Upper right)

The bellicose Spain has a high mount, which is said to have the name of Montserrat The mount takes this name from the fact that is openly manifest as it was cut by a saw from top to base

For this reason, the Child is seen while He holds a saw with His hands as He wanted to benevolently saw the mount

The sacred figure and image of this Virgin remained hidden under this mount for many years, unknown.' (Lower left)

This (image) was discovered in an extraordinary way; God made it manifest from above the sky

In all of Saturn days lights appeared, which were extraordinarily seen to be resplendent close to that mount

Finally, she who is always venerated by the people, was found, honourably protected by the caves of the mount

In this place the most venerable temple was built where you can see this shining figure. (Lower centre)

You would hardly believe that the Child who the Virgin Mary holds in her lap
has been born four months ago

Anyone who turns his shrunken eyes towards this figure: to him a livid horror
shakes the cold limbs

Everyone starts for this reason to regret his misdeeds and the devout man
cries his faults

Miracles are seen very often around this temple, he who was first limping,
(now) walks straight. (Lower right)

6. The following are the verses reported on the Madonna of the Graces by
Giovanni Paolo Zanardi:

En ueluit pictor tibi presentare MARIAM.

Vt Monserati cernere cuique datur. (Upper left)

Nam uoluit positum templi et confinia cui vis,

Virginis et formam pingere imaginibus. (Upper centre)

In mentemq: tibi breuiter reuocare stupēdi [...]

Isto que fas est, cernere mira loco. (Upper right)

Occupat aerium bellax Hispania montem,

Quem Monserati nomen habere ferunt.

Nomen id inde tenet, quòd conspiciendus apertè

Ceu serra sectus, culmine ad ima foret.
Propterea hic infans manibus tractare uidetur
Serram, ceu montem ritè sacare uelit.
Monte sub hoc latuit mūltos haud cognita soles,
Virginis istius forma, et Imago sacra. (Lower left)

Hęc patefacta fuit mira ratione, modoque,
Nam Deus hanc supera detegit arce poli.
Lumina Saturni cunctis uenere diebus.
Ouę montem circa splendida uisa nimis.
Tandem inuenta fuit montis contēncta cauernis,
Ouam populus magno semper honore colit.
Hocq: loco instructum est multū ūente templū,
Fulgida quo forma hęc conspicienda tibi. (Lower centre)

Que gremio puerum sustentat Virgo Maria,
Vix natum menses quattuor esse putes:
Ouisquis in hanc strictos formām conuertit ocellos,
Liūidus huic horror frigida membra quatit:
Incipit huic merito quisquis malefacta dolere,
Et sua deuotus crimina deflet homo;
Sępiu [...] circa templum miracula uidentur,
Ingreditur rectus, qui modo claudus erat. (Lower right)

Translation:

The painter wanted to introduce you to Mary, as she can be seen by everyone in Montserrat. (Upper left)

Indeed (the painter) wanted to represent to everyone with images the position of the temple and its borders and the figure of the Virgin.' (Upper centre)

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Miracles are seen very often around this temple, he who was first limping,
(now) walks straight. (Lower right)

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Fig. 8 *Our Lady of Succour*, early 18th century, etching on paper, 680 x 540 mm. Church of San Bartolomeo della Ginestra, Sestri Levante. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 9 Procession of Our Lady of Succour. Sestri Levante. (Photo: Parishioner.).



Fig. 10 *Madonna of the Graces*, 16th century, coloured woodcut on paper, 320 x 230 mm. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).



Fig. 11 *Madonna of Passau*, mid-17th century, water-coloured engraving on paper, 250 x 200 mm. Church of Pragatto, Pragatto. (Photo: Andrea Baratta.).



Fig. 12 *Virgin of Montserrat*, 12th-13th centuries, wooden sculpture, 950 mm. Sanctuary of Montserrat, Montserrat. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 13 Abbey of Montserrat, Monistrol de Montserrat. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 14 *Virgin of Montserrat*, 1659, engraving. *Atlas Marianvs*. (Photo: Gumpfenberg, Wilhelm. *Atlas Marianvs: sive, De imaginibus Deiparae per orbem Christianum miraculosis*. Ingolstadt: Officina typographica Ioannis Ostermeyer, 1659.).



Fig. 15 Hubert van Otteren, *Virgin of Montserrat*, 1671-1713, engraving, 410 x 300 mm (print). Fava Collection, Stufione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).



Fig. 16 Francisco Gazàn, *Virgin of Montserrat*, 1699, engraving, 175 x 120 mm. (Photo: Todocoleccion.).



Fig. 17 Domènec Pauner, *Virgin of Montserrat*, 1720-1783, woodcut, 250 x 180 mm (print). Fava Collection, Stufione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).

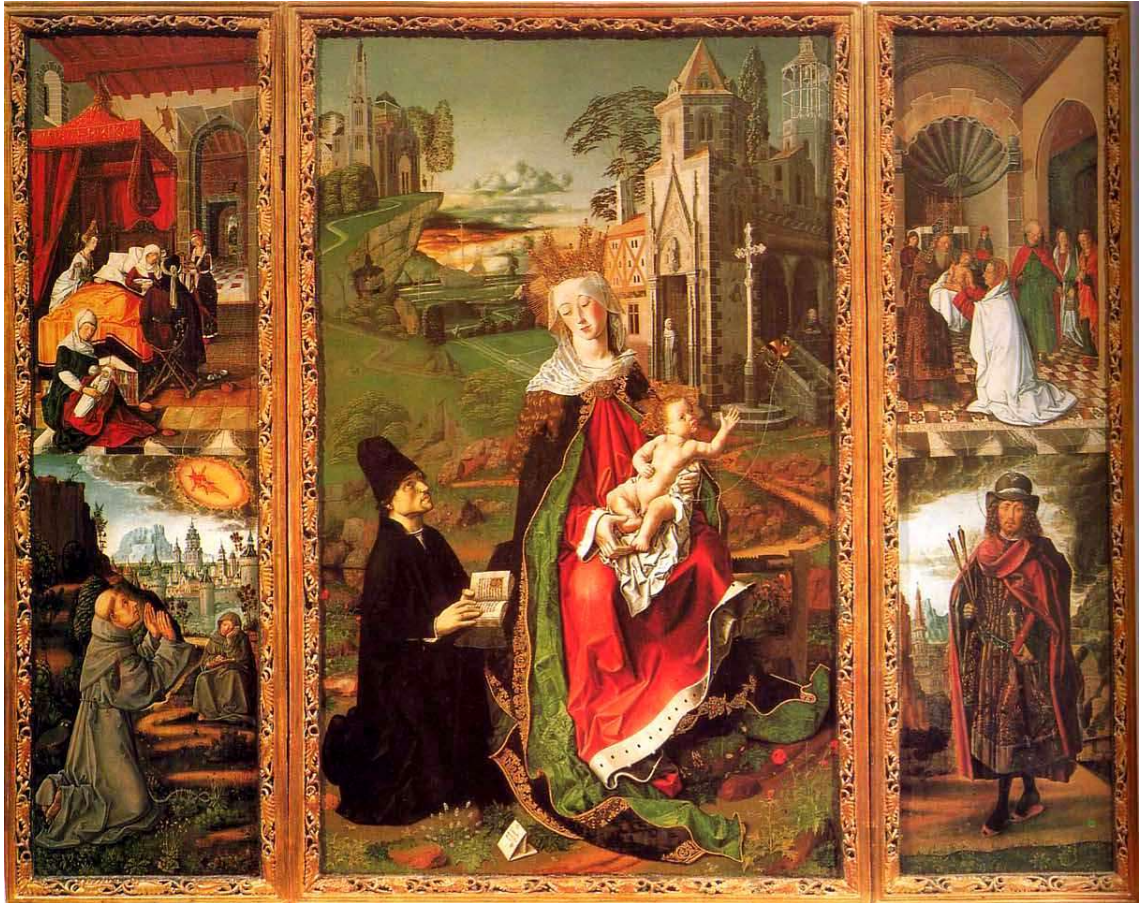


Fig. 18 Bartolomé Bermejo, *Triptych of the Virgin of Montserrat*, 1483-1489, oil on panel, 1565 x 2009 mm. Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption, Acqui Terme. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 19 Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Peasant Dance* (detail), 1567, oil on panel. Kunshistorisches Museum, Vienna. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 20 Oratory of the Madonna of the Graces, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 21 Tabernacle of the Madonna of the Graces. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 22 Simone Cantarini, *Virgin of Montserrat*, early 17th century, oil on canvas, 245 x 164 mm. Nonantola's Benedictine and Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art, Nonantola. (Photo: Nonantola's Benedictine and Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art.).



Fig. 23 Giuliano Cassiani, *Madonna of the Graces*, 17th century, woodcut, 345 x 235 mm. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).



Fig. 24 Giovanni Paolo Zanardi, *Immagine della Beata Vergine di Monserato Posta nella Chiesa di Stuffione*, 17th century, coloured engraving, 390 x 290 mm. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).



Fig. 25 Matrix of the Madonna of the Graces, 17th century, 293 x 271 mm. Fondo Soliani 4582, Galleria Estense, Modena. (Photo: Galleria Estense.)



Fig. 26 BS (Bartolomeo Soliani?), *Ritrato della Madonã di Stvfion. nel modenese*, 17th century, woodcut, 265 x 170 mm. Fava Collection, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Giorgio Fava.).



Fig. 27 Matrix of the Madonna of the Graces, 17th century, 241 x 159 mm. Fondo Soliani 4669, Galleria Estense, Modena. (Photo: Galleria Estense.).



Fig. 28 *Madonna of Passau*, early 17th century, oil on panel, 1300 x 950 mm. Church of Mariahilf, Passau. (Photo: Andrea Baratta.).



Fig. 29 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Mariahilf*, about 1537, oil on panel, 850 x 600 mm. Cathedral of Innsbruck, Innsbruck. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 30 Church of Mariahilf, Passau. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 31 Church of Mariahilf (Interior), Innsbruck. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 32 Lucas Kilian, *Mariahilf*, 1625, engraving, 150 x 880 mm. Wolfegg Collection, Wolfegg. (Photo: Jörg, Probst. *Reproduktion: Techniken und Ideen von der Antike bis heute; eine Einführung*, 2011.).



Fig. 33 Jean Boulanger, *Madonna of Passau*, 1623-1680, engraving, 408 x 300 mm. British Museum, London. (Photo: British Museum.).



Fig. 34 Church of Pragatto in the 1960s, Pragatto. (Photo: Parish Historical Archive Crespellano Pragatto.).



Fig. 35 Altar of the Madonna of the Graces. Church of Stuffione di Ravarino, Stuffione di Ravarino. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 36 *Processional Madonna of Passau*, 18th century, engraving, 250 x 200 mm. Church of Pragatto, Pragatto. (Photo: Andrea Baratta.).



Fig. 37 Processional ark of the Madonna of Passau. Church of Pragatto, Pragatto. (Photo: Andrea Baratta.)



Fig. 38 *Madonnina of Saint Luke*, early 17th century, woodcut on paper, 260 x 170 mm.
Oratory of the Madonnina of Saint Luke, Guiglia. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 39 Giovanni Bianco called Bertone, *Madonna of the Gravel*, 1573, fresco, 156 x 145 mm. Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia. (Photo: Website of the Sanctuary.).



Fig. 40 Basilica of the Madonna of the Gravel, Reggio Emilia. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 41 Jan Sadeler I (after Lelio Orsi), *Madonna of Reggio*, 1596, engraving, 218 x 234 mm. British Museum, London. (Photo: British Museum.).



Fig. 42 *Madonna of the Gravel*, 1659, engraving. *Atlas Marianvs*. (Photo: Gumpfenberg, Wilhelm. *Atlas Marianvs: sive, De imaginibus Deiparae per orbem Christianum miracvlosis*. Ingolstadt: Officina typographica Ioannis Ostermeyeri, 1659.).



Fig. 43 Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel, 17th century, 248 x 176 mm. Fondo Soliani 4741, Galleria Estense, Modena. (Photo: Galleria Estense.).



Fig. 44 Matrix of the Madonna of the Gravel and Miracles, 17th century, 373 x 271 mm.
Fondo Soliani 4564, Galleria Estense, Modena. (Photo: Galleria Estense.).



Fig. 45 Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony, Fivizzano. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 46 Altar of the Blessed Virgin of the Adoration. Church of Saints Jacopo and Anthony, Fivizzano. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 47 *Madonna of Saint Luke*, late 13th century, icon, 650 x 570 mm. Sanctuary of the Madonna of Saint Luke, Bologna. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 48 Matrix of the Madonna of Saint Luke, 17th century, 257 x 179 mm. Fondo Barelli 4664, Galleria Estense, Modena. (Photo: Galleria Estense.).



Fig. 49 Oratory of the Madonnina of Saint Luke, Guiglia. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 50 Sanctuary of the Madonna of Saint Luke, Bologna. (Photo: Wikipedia.).



Fig. 51 Altar of the Madonnina of Saint Luke. Oratory of the Madonnina of Saint Luke, Guiglia. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 52 *Saint Mary of the Vow*, 16th century, hand-coloured woodcut on paper, 110 x 100 mm. Church of Saint Mary of the Vow, Forlì. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 53 *Madonna of the Fire*, 16th century, tempera oak panel, 215 x 170 mm. Archive of the Church of Saint Dominic, Faenza. (Photo: Storia e memoria della Bassa Romagna.).



Fig. 54 *Madonna of the Fire*, 1569, woodcut. *Scintille della Fiamma innoxia*. (Photo: Capalla, Giovanni. *Scintille della fiamma innoxia; cioè, Auvertimenti, e deuttioni fatte sopra il miracolo della Madonna del Fuoco, occorso in Faenza, l'anno 1567*. Bologna: Alessandro Benacci, 1569.).



Fig. 55 Church of Saint Mary of the Vow, Forlì. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 56 *Madonna of the Maple*, 16th century, pencil drawing on cottonwool paper. Rectory of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Bologna. (Photo: BeWeb).



Fig. 57 Mauro Gandolfi?, *Madonna of the Maple*, ante 1825, copperplate painting, 280 x 260 mm. Rectory of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 58 Francesco Spagnoli, *Madonna of the Maple*, 1825, lithography. Sacristy of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 59 *Madonna of the Maple* (copy), 19th century, copperplate painting, 280 x 260 mm. Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 60 Bartolomeo Coriolano, *Madonna of the Maple*, 1658, woodcut, 230 x 180 mm.
Archive of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Bologna. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 61 Bartolomeo Coriolano, *Madonna of the Maple*, 1658, woodcut, 345 x 245 mm. Diocesan Museum Imola, Imola. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 62 Giovanni Battista Coriolano, Matrix of the Madonna of the Bridge, 17th century, 200 x 142 mm. Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Porretta Terme. (Photo: BeWeb.).



Fig. 63 Altar of the Madonna of the Maple. Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 64 Maple Tree of the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple. Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: Author.).



Fig. 65 *Madonna of the Maple*, 1608, painting in tempera on panel, 570 x 680 mm. Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Maple, Lizzano in Belvedere. (Photo: BeWeb.).