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PERFORMED TOPOGRAPHIES
AND TOPOMIMETIC PIETY.
IMAGINATIVE SACRED SPACES
IN MEDIEVAL ITALY

How frequently, and to what extent, are holy places thought, in religious feeling, to be concretely grafted onto a natural landscape? Do they exist more in space or in individual and collective imagination? Is it more important to visit them or to reconstruct them in a believer's devotional experience? We are accustomed to think of them as liminal phenomena, both opening and closing human access to the supernatural sphere, and as divine dwellings inscribed in the dimension of terrestrial experience: be they mountain peaks, springs, stone-altars or spatially organized precincts, they present themselves as the only still points in this transient world, marking the sites of God's enduring revelation to His believers. At least at a first glance, one is led to admit that nothing on earth is considered by humans to be so firmly inscribed into the ground; the link appears to be so strong, that even when Holy Lands are replicated, as is evident in the case of the "New Jerusalems"¹, it proves important to evoke the entire system of spatial and symbolic connections between each holy site and their natural environment.

Yet some of the New Jerusalems, especially the later ones, look now terribly inaccurate and disappointing. If compared to Patriarch Nikon's analytically reconstructed *Novaya Ierusalim*, most of the *Sacri monti* dotting Catholic Europe from Portugal to Poland prove to be only generic evocations of a topographic entity, and are more clearly intended to give a spatial dimension to such devotional rituals as the performance of the Via Crucis procession on Holy Fridays or the more intimate recitation of the

¹ On this topic see, most recently, the thoughtful articles collected in: Новые Иерусалимы. Иеротопия и иконография сакральных пространств (in English: New Jerusalems. Hierotopy and Iconography of Sacred Spaces) // Ed. A. M. Lidov. Moscow, 2009.

Rosary mysteries, as in Varese². They can even happen to have no connection at all with Jerusalem, and to be used as settings for the commemoration of the most important events in Saint Francis's life, as it happens in the Sacro Monte on the Orta lake³.

In its present setting, even the famous Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, hidden in the woods of Central Tuscany, seems to display a rather incongruous topography, as it includes chapels commemorating events not actually taking place in Jerusalem, like the Annunciation or the Meeting with the Samaritan Woman⁴. Anyway, historical and archaeological research has evidenced that

² On the general history of Catholic *Sacri monti* cf. S. Gensini (ed.). La "Gerusalemme" di San Vivaldo e i sacri monti in Europa. Proceedings of a congress (Firenze-San Vivaldo, 11–13 September 1986), Pisa, 1989; Sacri Monti. Devozione, arte e cultura della Controriforma / Eds. L. Vaccaro, F. Ricardi. Milan, 1992; Terra Santa e Sacri Monti / Ed. M. L. Gatti Perer. Milan, 1999; Atlante dei Sacri Monti, Calvari e complessi devozionali europei / Ed. A. Barbero. Novara, 2001; Di ritorno dal pellegrinaggio a Gerusalemme. Riproposizione degli avvenimenti e dei luoghi di Terra Santa nell'immaginario religioso fra XV e XVI secolo // Proceedings of a congress (Cosenza, 12–13 May 2005) / Eds. A. Barbero and G. Roma. Vercelli, 2008. On the devotion to the Via Crucis and its spatial and performative aspects cf. H. Thurston. The Stations of the Cross. An Account of Their History and Devotional Purpose. London, 1906; Kneller K. A. Geschichte der Kreuzwegandacht von den Anfängen bis zur völligen Ausbildung. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1908; Keppler P. W. Die XIV Stationen der hl. Kreuzwegs. Eine geschichtliche und kunstgeschichtliche Studie. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1926; Storme A. La voie douloureuse. Jerusalem, 1984; Sticca S. 'The Via Crucis: Its Historical, Spiritual, and Devotional Context' // *Mediaevalia* 15 (1989), p. 93–126; Zwijnenburg-Tönnies N. 'Das Kreuzwegandacht und die deutschen Pilgertexte des Mittelalters' // D. Haschenbett, R. Herz and F. Sczesny. Fünf Palästina-Pilgerberichte aus dem 15. Jahrhundert. Wiesbaden, 1998, p. 223–260; Teetaert van Zedelghem A. Saggio storico sulla devozione alla Via Crucis. Casale Monferrato, 2004; Kirkland-Ives M. 'Alternate Routes: Variation in Early Modern Stational Devotions' // *Viator* 40 (2009), p. 249–270.

³ Il Sacro Monte d'Orta e San Francesco nella storia e nell'arte della Controriforma // Proceedings of a congress (Orta San Giulio, 4–6 June 1982), Torino, 1983; De Filippis E., Mattioli Carcano F. Guida al Sacro Monte d'Orta. Orta San Giulio, 1982; Orta San Giulio. La Fabbrica del Sacro Monte. Conoscenza Progetto Restauro / Ed. A. Marzi. Torino, 1991.

⁴ Cf. especially Cardini F., Vannini G. 'S. Vivaldo in Valdelsa: problemi topografici ed interpretazioni simboliche di una "Gerusalemme" cinquecentesca in Toscana' // Religiosità e società in Valdelsa nel basso medioevo. Florence, 1980, p. 11–74; Vannini G. 'S. Vivaldo e la sua documentazione materiale: lineamenti di una ricerca archeologica' // S. Gensini (ed.), La "Gerusalemme" di San Vivaldo e i sacri monti in Europa. Montaione-Pisa, 1989, p. 241–270; Gensini S. 'La "Gerusalemme" di San Vivaldo tra agiografia e storia' // L. Vaccaro and F. Ricardi (eds.), Sacri Monti: devozione, arte e cultura della Controriforma. Milan, 1992, p. 65–84; Forsgren F. 'Topomimesis: the "Gerusalemme" at San Vivaldo' // P. Sivefors (ed.), Urban Preoccupations: Mental and Material Landscapes. Pisa 2007, p. 171–196; Gensini S. 'Un luogo di pellegrinaggio sostitutivo: la "Gerusalemme" di San Vivaldo in Toscana' // A. Barbero and G. Roma (eds.), Di ritorno dal pellegrinaggio a Gerusalemme: riproposizione degli avvenimenti e dei luoghi di Terra Santa nell'immaginario religioso fra XV e XVI secolo. Ponzano Monferrato, 2008, p. 151–166.

such structures were later additions being not present in the original plan designed by friars Tommaso of Florence and Cherubino Conzi. In these two Franciscans' mind, who had a deep knowledge of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem had to imitate the original one rather philologically, by transposing onto the ground the location of each site and the distances between each one, even if only in a diminutive scale. This diagram (fig. 1) shows distinctly enough that the two topographic systems tend to overlap with a good approximation. Such a topomimetic attitude resulted also in the imitation of the Mount of Calvary's vertical articulation (fig. 2) and in the architectural reproduction of the Holy Sepulchre (fig. 3), the Coenaculum, and the Chapel of the Ascension (fig. 4). The material appearance of some holy spots were eventually imitated, including the crack in the rock of Calvary (fig. 5) or the stone of Christ's Ascension (fig. 6). Nonetheless, in most cases the Franciscans preferred to make use of a generic building type, where the evocation of the connected event was made possible by its visualization with a polychrome terracotta image (fig. 7).

Pope Leo X's 1516 concession of indulgences to visitors to San Vivaldo probably played a role in shaping the site's role as a valuable surrogate to pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but I am not pretty sure that this was indeed the primary goal pursued by its designers. Although we are very badly informed about San Vivaldo pilgrims's ritual behaviour in the early 16th century, we can suppose that by visiting each one of the original thirtyfour chapels, by saying a congruous prayer, and by looking at the polychrome terracottas displaying the corresponding event of Christ's life they were enabled to better visualize and meditate on the entire economy of salvation, which the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord had granted to humanity. With the sites corresponding to each step of this story concentrated in a small area, it was possible to follow in Jesus's footsteps in a much quicker and, on the whole, more comfortable way than in the Holy Land itself.

Admittedly, for Jerusalem pilgrims it was impossible to visit all the evangelic sites in their precise chronological sequence. The Dominican Ricoldo of Montecroce, in 1289, managed to reenact Jesus's path from Gethsemani to Golgotha by visiting the holy spots on the *via Dolorosa* then still in embryo, but most of Latin pilgrims, in the Mamluk and Turkish periods, were accustomed to visit the same sites in the opposite direction, starting from the square in front of the Holy Sepulchre and going back towards St Stephen's Gate⁵. Time was short for pilgrims and it was both more convenient and safer to devote one's strength to visit the largest number of sites within the town walls and in its immediate neighbourhoods; holy spots had multiplied so much, after the setting in the Holy Land of the Franciscan Custodia di Terrasanta in 1342, that it took three or four

⁵ Storme, *La voie*, p. 84–105.

days to do a good *cercha*, or quest, as they were used to call a correctly performed peregrination. In 1480, as we learn from friar Francesco Suriano's *Treatise on the Holy Land*, there were sixteen holy spots within the town walls and another fourteen within the Holy Sepulchre, five in the Josaphat Valley, twenty-four between the Valley of Josaphat and the Mount of Olives, six in the Siloam Valley and up to twenty-two on the Mount Zion⁶: alongside the major holy places, pilgrims were led to pay their devotions to such curious sites as the place where the disciples had roasted the Easter lamb⁷, the olive-tree located close to the house of Hannah where Christ was said to have been bound (fig. 8)⁸ or the stone on the Mount of Olives where the Virgin Mary, who was said to have initiated the Christian practice of pilgrimage immediately after the Saviour's entombment, was accustomed to seat and have some rest during her daily quest⁹.

In the cumulative approach of late Medieval devotion, quantity mattered much more than quality. The multiplication of holy sites promoted by the Franciscans in the 14th through the 16th centuries managed to offer an extraordinary opportunity to accumulate spiritual benefits for each visitor's soul's sake. Even if they were said to have been granted by Pope Sylvester I¹⁰, it was under the Friars' responsibility that indulgences of different kind were attributed to each one of the holy spots, so operating an important distinction

⁶ *Suriano F.* Trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente / Ed. G. Golubovich. Il Trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente di frate Francesco Suriano, missionario e viaggiatore del secolo XV. Milan, 1900, p. 23–24, 89–90, 98–99, 102–103, 107–109.

⁷ Cf. *Brygg Th.* Itinerarium in Terram Sanctam domini Thomae de Swynburne, castellani Ghisnensis et postea Burdigalensis maioris [1392] / Ed. P. de Riant. Archives de l'Orient latin 2/2 (1884), p. 378–388, esp. 385; *Suriano*, Trattato, p. 109; *Nicola de' Martoni.* Liber peregrinationis ad loca sancta (1394–1395) / Ed. L. Le Grand, 'Relation du pèlerinage à Jérusalem de Nicolas de Martoni, notaire italien (1394–1395)' // Revue de l'Orient latin 3 (1895), p. 566–669, esp. 617; *Louis de Rochechouart*, bishop of Saintes. Itinerary to the Holy Land [1461] / Ed. C. Couderc // Revue de l'Orient latin 1 (1893), p. 226–274; Anonymous Franciscan pamphlet [1486] / Ed. B. Dansette, 'Les pèlerinages occidentaux en Terre Sainte: une pratique de la "Dévotion moderne" à la fin du Moyen Âge?'. Archivum Franciscanum Historicum 72 (1979), p. 106–133, 330–428, esp. 352; *Fabri F.* Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem / Ed. K. D. Hassler, Stuttgart, 1843–1849, vol. I, p. 256–257; Friedrich II of Liegnitz and Brieg [1507] / Ed. R. Röhrich and H. Meisner, 'Die Pilgerfahrt des Herzogs Friedrich II. von Liegnitz und Brieg nach dem Heiligen Lande'. Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins 1 (1878), p. 101–209, esp. 130; *Anselmus of Krakow*, OFM. Descriptio Terrae Sanctae [1508] / Ed. H. Canisius-I. Basnage. Thesaurus monumentorum ecclesiasticorum et historicorum. Amsterdam, 1725, vol. IV, p. 779–794, esp. 790.

⁸ *Fabri*, Evagatorium, vol. I, p. 263–264. Cf. *Meinardus O.* 'A Stone-Cult in the Armenian Quarter in Jerusalem' // Revue des études arméniennes, n.s., 14 (1980), p. 367–375; *Hintlian K.* A History of the Armenians in the Holy Land. Jerusalem, 1989, p. 58; *Hieromonk E. Atajanyan and Madoyan G.* Армянские святыя места в Иерусалиме (The Armenian Sanctuaries of Jerusalem). Moscow 2003, p. 31.

⁹ Cf. *Suriano*, Trattato, p. 103.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 126.

between the major shrines, associated with a plenary remission of sins and faults, and the minor sites, where pilgrims could be awarded a spiritual “discount” of seven years and seven carines. In order to win such indulgences, pilgrims had to behave according to the rules suggested by the Friars themselves and listed in the processional booklets that could be bought in the Zion convent¹¹; in each site they had to sing or pronounce a specific hymn and were supposed to either prostrate or make genuflections, to shed abundant tears, to kiss stones and ruined walls, and, most of all, to evoke the memory of the events there commemorated, by means of a mental reconstruction which integrated the bleak appearance of most places in both visual and spatial terms. By experiencing the physical spots where the crucial steps of sacred history had taken place, visitors were enabled to locate their actors in space and to contemplate the actual course of events; especially in the sites connected to the Passion, they were supposed to feel compunction and compassion for the harsh torments inflicted on Christ’s body, some of whom were revealed by visible clues provided by the places themselves, such as, for example, the diminutive dimensions of His prison within the Holy Sepulchre (fig. 9)¹².

Such a practice of imaginative devotion was connected with the pious exercise of meditation on Christ’s life which had been promoted by the Franciscan order since its very beginnings. Ascetic techniques of mental reconstruction of evangelic events had long been developed within the walls of monasteries, where mystics had often been rewarded for their piety by gaining emotive access to the sanctified time of sacred history, especially by means of visions, obtained sometimes in connection with the reenactment of Christ’s Incarnation, Death and Resurrection during the Mass. Visions were not infrequently inspired by contemporary iconography, and in the 13th and 14th century they also took some inspiration from the topographic transcription of the same events in the Holy Places¹³.

¹¹ As witnessed by *Fabri*, *Evagatorium*, vol. I, p. 244.

¹² Cf., for instance, the emotionally charged description by Mariano da Siena in 1431: *Mariano da Siena*. *Viaggio fatto al Santo Sepolcro 1431* / Ed. P. Pirillo. Pisa, 1991, p. 107.

¹³ On the overlapping dimensions of meditation practices and mental evocations of the Holy Places cf. *Stegmaier-Breinlinger R.* “Die hailigen Stett Rom und Jerusalem”. *Reste einer Ablaßsammlung im Bickenkloster in Villingen* // *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 91 (1971), p. 176–201; *Miedema N.* *Following in the Footsteps of Christ: Pilgrimage and Passion Devotion* // *The Broken Body. Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture* / Ed. A. A. MacDonald, H. N. B. Ridderbos, R. M. Schlusemann. Groningen, 1998, p. 73–92; *Rudy K. M.* ‘Den Aflaet der Heiliger Stat Jherusalem ende des Berchs van Calvarien’: Indulged Prayers for Mental Holy Land Pilgrimage in Manuscripts from the St. Agnes Convent in Maaseik // *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 74/3 (2000), p. 211–254; *van Herwaarden J., Shaffer W.* *Between Saint James and Erasmus: studies in late-medieval religious life: devotions and pilgrimages in the Netherlands*. Leuven, 2003, p. 67–76.

Because of their strong emphasis on Christ's humanity and deliberate parallelism with Saint Francis of Assisi, the Minor Friars played a major role in popularizing such practices. In their convents and in the associated confraternities were worked out devotional manuals intended for both friars, nuns, and laypeople, which instructed individuals in the correct way of performing this pious exercise, which basically aimed at providing devotees with a deeper, and more vivid knowledge, of sacred history, by integrating the silence of Scriptures with a well balanced use of imagination. It was no mystery that the Gospel narratives were incomplete, since John the Evangelist had clearly stated it in the close of his text; imagination was so described as a legitimate way to get access especially to the more neglected aspects of the Saviour's passage onto earth. As the author of the most widespread Franciscan manual — the early 14th century *Meditationes vitae Christi* — recommended to his dedicatee, a Clarissan nun:

Do not believe that all the things we can imagine that He said or did have been actually written down. On the contrary, in order to cause a greater emotion, I will tell you even the written ones in the way as we can believe that they happen or happened, by means of imaginative descriptions that the mind perceives in different ways. In fact, as to the Holy Scripture, we have the possibility to meditate, expose, and understand in different ways, as we think it better — provided that it does neither oppose the truth of life, justice, and doctrine, nor contradict Faith or good customs¹⁴.

The individual believer, in the same way as the pilgrim in the Holy Sites, should have not hesitated to figure out especially those traits that were omitted by the Gospels; just on the contrary, he or she was encouraged to mentally evoke each episode by reconstructing its spatial setting, integrating neglected details, and visualizing scenes as they were supposed to have happened, and was so enabled to feel physically involved in the sacred events and to become an eyewitness of Christ's deeds and suffering.

There were several ways to gain this privileged access to the contemplation of evangelic events. The first was to read such texts as the *Meditationes* continuously and in the correct sequence, distributing the meditations in the different days of the week while taking care to concentrate those on the Passion on Fridays and Saturdays. The second was to make use of painted images including a wide selection of scenes from the Gospels as visual stimuli

¹⁴ *Meditaciones vite Christi*, Prologus / Ed. M. Stallings-Taney, *Iohannis de Caulibus Meditationes vite Christi olim S. Bonaventuro attributae*. Turholt 1997, p. 10.

for imagination. The third was to scrupulously attend the feasts of the liturgical year and the daily mass while trying to mentally visualize the commemorated events. The fourth was much more radical and consisted in imitating the Lord's suffering physically, by mortifying one's flesh with painful punishments: in this sense, it is meaningful that Flagellants often described their activities as "keeping alive the memory of Christ's Passion"¹⁵.

We can get an idea of these different practices by looking at the life of a 15th century Sicilian nun, Blessed Eustochia, abbess of the Observant convent of Santa Maria di Montevergine near Messina. As many of her contemporaries, she was convinced of being indebted to Christ for His Sacrifice on the cross; she felt guilty for having caused, with her sins, the Lord's utter humiliation and thought that the only way to honor her debt was to meditate incessantly on His Passion with all possible means. She prayed to be granted the privilege to suffer Purgatory pains already in this Life, in order to replicate Christ's penance; for this reason, as we are informed by her first biographer, she always thought up new ways of reenacting the Passion both mentally and physically. Attending Mass, especially during the Holy Week, was an upsetting experience for her: while thinking of Christ's death on the cross at the moment of the consecration, she started weeping so violently that her sisters felt her pain was not inferior to that of Mary at the foot of the cross¹⁶. She supported her meditation with appropriate readings and, at night, replicated the Flagellation on herself in the solitude of her cell, which she had wanted to be built under the main stairway because the noise of steps would have reminded her of the hammer blows by which Christ had been nailed to the cross¹⁷.

This evocation of the Passion was paralleled with a mental reconstruction of its places and setting. According to her biography, in her eyes her convent was literally transfigured into the Holy City and in each site she had the feeling to see the connected event:

Being so in the convent, she made it like the city of Jerusalem: she arranged each building as in the Holy Places. So she set out the house of the Virgin Mary and the Temple as when Christ preached, and the Mount of Olives, and the Coenaculum of the Supper, and the Garden, the houses of Hannah and Caiphas and Pilate, and the Mount of Calvary, the garden and the sepulchre. She arranged these holy

¹⁵ Cf. *Bacci M.* 'Imaginarie repraesentationes'. L'iconografia evangelica e il pio esercizio della memoria // *Iconografia evangelica a Siena dalle origini al Concilio di Trento* / Ed. M. Bacci. Siena, 2009, p. 7–25, esp. 12.

¹⁶ Text edited by *M. Catalano*. *La leggenda della beata Eustochia da Messina, testo volgare del XV secolo*. Messina-Florence, 1950, p. 262–265.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 79–81, and 141–142.

places mentally and observing a rigorous silence, so that she really pronounced no more than three words each week. And she started contemplating the Incarnation of the Lord and all His life and Passion: she stayed in her cell or walked alone or in company without leaving such thoughts; her mind set off and she had the feeling to see in all these places the Lord troubled and offended in his humanity, and thought to be in the same time as when He was pilgrim in this world; and she saw him preaching and felt his voice everywhere. For sure she saw Him in her mind in the same way as He was seen by Mary Magdalene at the moment of His physical Passion. She then got accustomed, at compline, to contemplate the Supper and His Prayer in the Garden, and it seemed to her to see the grieved apostles and the turmoil of weapons, and so she thought of the whole Passion step by step until she left Him at the Sepulchre¹⁸.

Even if later sources pretended that Eustochia had materially built a kind of new Jerusalem within her convent¹⁹, her biography points out that she limited herself to attribute a topographical meaning to structures and rooms within her enclosure; by transposing the commemorated events into a familiar environment, she finally managed to better get inside and to feel spatially and visually involved in the holy scene. It was a meditation technique which a contemporary devotional pamphlet, the *Giardino d'orazione* written in 1454 and attributed to Niccolò of Osimo, defined as “locative memory” (*memoria locale*). According to this text, which relied on Medieval treatises on *ars memorativa*, the devotee had first to visualize Christ’s body in a very detailed way and, second, “to give shape mentally to the places, lands, and rooms where he talked, as well as the people who were, one by one, in His company”. When thinking of the Passion, he was supposed to figure out the urban space of Jerusalem as it were that of a familiar town; in its buildings, squares, and streets he would have recognized the sites of the Passion events, from the House of Hannah to the Mount of Calvary, and other like-places which he had “to build up in the mind”²⁰.

The author recommended to practice this pious exercise in the solitude of one’s room, by focusing all thoughts on a methodical reconstruction of

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 81–82.

¹⁹ On the cultic characteristics of Blessed Eustochia cf. Terlizzi F. La beata Eustochia. Messina, 1982; Miligi G. Francescanesimo al femminile: Chiara d’Assisi ed Eustochia da Messina. Messina, 2004.

²⁰ Bolzoni L. La rete delle immagini. Predicazione in volgare dalle origini a Bernardino da Siena. Torino, 2002, p. 194–195.

the evangelic events. Meaningfully, Blessed Eustochia was accustomed to both meditate in her cell and to walk from one to another of her domestic holy places, in a probable attempt at physically reenacting Jesus' painful itinerary during the Process and the Way to Calvary. More structured reproductions of the Holy Sites, such as those erected by the Blessed Álvaro of Córdoba in the Dominican convent of Escalaceli in the Andalusian town in the early 15th century, probably enabled the devotee to better replicate this itinerary²¹.

More structured forms of, so to say, "kinetic" devotions that were developed during the 15th century apparently took inspiration from both the practice of pious meditation and the actual experience of pilgrimage to the Holy Land. A widespread pamphlet written in Dutch between 1471 and 1490 by a mysterious "heer Bethlem" and translated in several European languages in the 16th century, proposed an innovative way of meditating on Christ's Life and Passion by performing a spiritual pilgrimage to the sites of the Process and the Way to Calvary. According to the author, by covering within their own town the exact distances that separated the holy places of Jerusalem and pronouncing the corresponding prayers, the devotees could win the same indulgences that were granted to Holy Land pilgrims, provided that, in the same time, they felt involved in Christ's painful mysteries and never stopped to meditate on His suffering with contrite heart²². As it happened with the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, the exercise was distributed in the different weekdays: on Mondays, for example, they had to cover the distance from the Coenaculum to Gethsemane, and on Tuesdays they were followed in Christ's steps to the houses of Hannah, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, whereas the *via dolorosa* was distributed into the following days of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. If on Saturdays he prescribed only a short walk, replicating that of Jesus's body from the Cross to the Sepulchre, on Sundays one had to undertake a much more tiring trip covering the distances from the Sepulchre to the Mount of Olives, and then to Mount Zion and up to the House of Nazareth!

Heer Bethlem's work postulated the idea that sacred topography could be replicated not only by means of a spatial transcription or an architectural mimesis of its holy places, but also as a dynamic-motional process resulting basically in a reproduction of its internal distances, which proved flexible enough to be adapted to any orographic context, urban system, and road

²¹ *Huerga A.* Escalaceli. Madrid, 1981; *Sanchez Herrero J.* La semana santa de Sevilla. Madrid, 2003, p. 61–62.

²² Text edited by C. J. Gonnet, 'Overwegingen op het lijden des Heeren voor degenen, die in den geest de heilige plaatsen willen bezoeken' // *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het bisdom van Haarlem* 11 (1884), p. 324–343.

network. Most probably, such pilgrims as Niccolò da Poggibonsi, who was scrupulous enough to take note on two small tablets of all measures and distances of the Holy City²³, already understood that such data could have been useful for those people who wanted to meditate on sacred history and win some spiritual benefits. Their accounts could be used not only as guides for future pilgrims, but also as devotional manuals for pious readers willing to undertake a mental trip to the sites of Christ's Passion.

A curious text, written in Tuscany in the 14th century, provides a precocious testimony to the use of pilgrims' accounts as devotional guides for the performance of topomimetic devotions. It consists of a short, though analytical, list of the holy sites not only of Jerusalem, but also of the rest of Palestine, Syria, Sinai, and Egypt; they are described as parts of a walk starting in the Holy Sepulchre and passing through the Armenian quarter up to Mount Zion, then descending to Siloam, and continuing to Gethsemane by walking close to the Haram es-Sharif, and so on. Since precise indications are given as to directions, cultic foci, and distances, one gets the idea that it may have originated as a practical instruction for pilgrims, such as those that were sold in the Zion Convent. Yet, an annotation on the upper margin informs us that it was intended for both material and spiritual travellers:

Herewith are the travels to be undertaken by pilgrims going overseas for their soul's sake and that can be done by everybody staying at home, thinking in each place of what is written below, and saying in each place an *Our Father* and one *Ave Maria*²⁴.

In this way, the spiritual visit to the holy places and the connected meditation on Christ's life could be achieved even by walking in the streets of one's own town, or even staying at home, and accompanying each stop with the recitation of prayers. When the earliest "New Jerusalems" were built up in the early 16th century, they could be used not only as "topographic icons", but also as reliable settings for the performance of kinetic evocations of the Holy City in both its real and supernatural dimension.

²³ Niccolò da Poggibonsi. *Libro d'Oltremare*, chap. 13 / Ed. A. Lanza and M. Troncarelli, *Pellegrini scrittori. Viaggiatori toscani del Trecento in Terrasanta*. Florence, 1990, p. 42–43.

²⁴ This text was first published by Melga M. *Viaggi in Terra Santa descritti da anonimo trecentista e non mai fin qui stampati*. Naples, 1862, p. 7–11 (10–11); new edition by Lanza A. // A. Lanza and M. Troncarelli. *Pellegrini scrittori. Viaggiatori toscani del Trecento in Terrasanta*. Florence, 1990, p. 315–318, esp. 317.

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СВЯЩЕННАЯ ТОПОГРАФИЯ И ТОПОМИМЕТИЧЕСКОЕ
БЛАГОЧЕСТИЕ. ВОСПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЕ САКРАЛЬНЫХ
ПРОСТРАНСТВ В СРЕДНЕВЕКОВОЙ ИТАЛИИ

В позднем Средневековье и раннем Новом Времени благочестивые католики осваивали новаторские формы молитвы, включая некоторые виды духовной «гимнастики», ориентированной на демонстрацию в открытом или закрытом пространстве. По мере того как для большинства из них паломничество в Святую Землю становилось все менее и менее доступным, верующие стали задумываться о возможности интенсивно переживаемого умозрительного и духовного путешествия в святыням, включая ритуализированную медитацию по поводу главных евангельских событий, организованную в соответствии с топографической, а не с хронологической последовательностью. Произносимые молитвы обычно должны были сопровождаться ритуальными жестами и движениями, включая разные формы кругового обхода церкви и шествий с учетом реальных расстояний между святынями Палестины, вычисленными на основе свидетельств самых популярных паломников в Святую Землю. Согласно такой практике, для благочестивых верующих, не имевших возможности отправиться в далекий Левант, открывалась перспектива заслужить отпущение грехов, связанное с таким хождением, пройдя путь паломника в собственном городе или даже в частном доме: каждая остановка соответствовала воображаемому посещению одного из святых места Иерусалима и ассоциировалась с точно отсчитанным количеством молитв.

Одним из наиболее ранних письменных свидетельств такой «перформативной топографии» является анонимный флорентийский текст второй половины XIV в. Он включает короткий список святых мест, и благочестивый читатель приглашается к тому, чтобы ментально и физически реконструировать их в топографической последовательности. В этом тексте нет никаких прямых указаний на связь с современной ему практикой медитации по поводу жизни Христа, принятой в нищенствующих орденах, или позднейшими молитвами, призванными воспроизвести и пережить Страсти Христовы, особенно Его Крестный путь; текст рассчитан именно на тех, кто не может отправиться в путешествие и хочет совершить своего рода «суррогат» паломничества в Святую Землю. Это становится очевидно из списка, в котором содержатся не только памятные святыни Иерусалима, но и святые места Иудеи, Самарии, Галилеи, Синаи и Сирии, включая и те, что не ассоции-

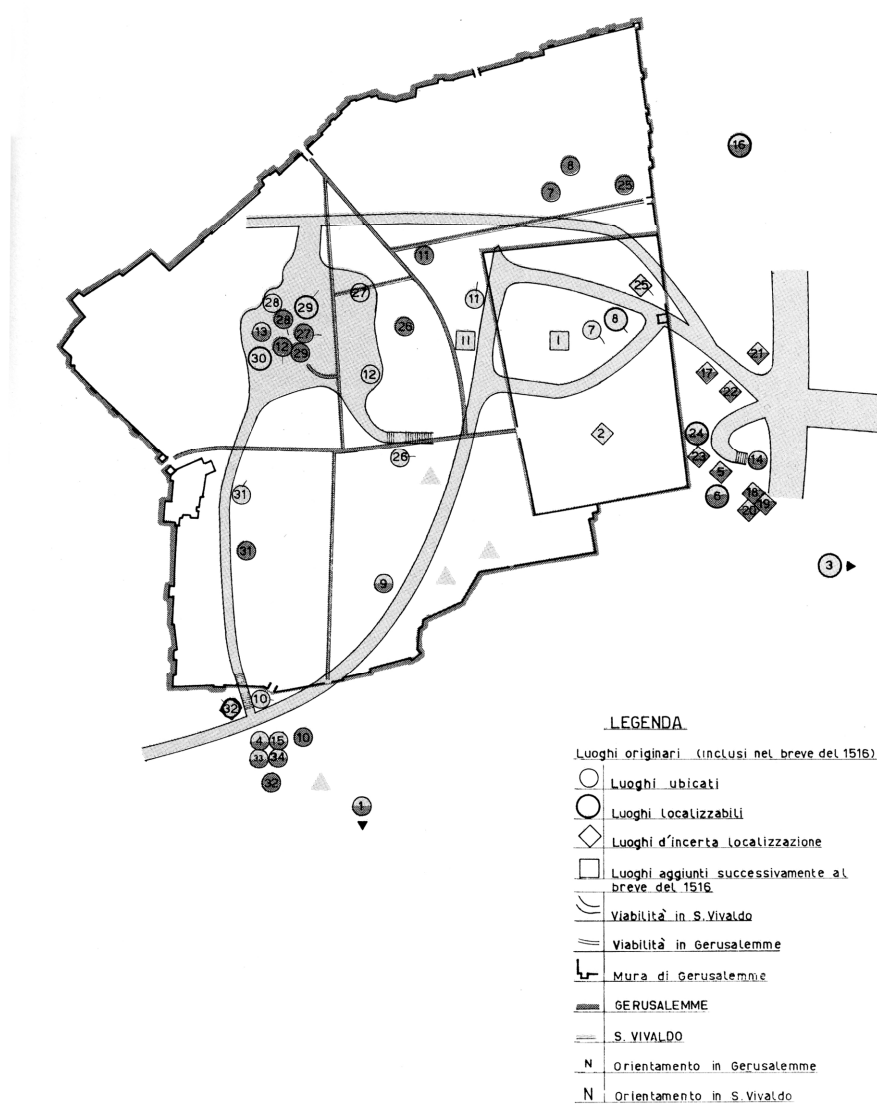
руются с земной жизнью Христа: например, монастырь Саидная. Основным источником вдохновения для этого текста служат дневники современных паломников, которые представляют собой и личный отчет путешественника, и справочник для благочестивых читателей, планирующих отправиться в паломничество или просто желающих извлечь пользу, хотя бы через знакомство с литературным описанием, из духовных преимуществ, даруемых соприкосновением с местами, связанными с памятными событиями евангельской истории.

Верующие позднего Средневековья прекрасно знали, что личное участие в паломничестве было не единственным, хотя и наиболее очевидным способом получить полное отпущение грехов. Хорошей альтернативой могла послужить, например, оплата расходов на путешествие человека, согласного отправиться за море и вознести молитвы в местах, где жил Христос, за душу другого. Такая практика была широко принята среди купцов, ростовщиков и других состоятельных людей, в том числе она часто совершалась после смерти донатора, по его завещанию. С другой стороны, весьма вероятно, что медитация над описаниями святынь воспринималась как менее дорогой, хотя и неполный путь извлечения духовных преимуществ, получаемых паломником. С тех пор как минориты организовали в Святой Земле свою миссию, с начала XIV в., в Палестине утвердился точный *calcolo* — учет индульгенций, связанных с каждым святым местом с Иерусалиме, Вифлееме и остальной части святой Земли. Минориты вели такой учет среди прибывающих паломников и тут же отсылали данные на Латинский Запад. Как правило, подобные индульгенции могли быть пленарными (т. е. предоставляющими отпущение *a culpa et pena* — по вине и взысканию) или рассчитанными на семь лет и сорок дней. Таким образом, удавалось не только зафиксировать различие между святыми местами, заслуживающими поклонения, и другими пунктами, напоминающими о событиях священной истории, но и в точности выстроить топографическую иерархию внутри первой группы. В рукописях типология индульгенций, ассоциирующихся с каждым святым местом, упомянутым в изучаемом тексте, была визуально выражена специальными отметками, завершающими фразу, например — X и Y, как это было предложено Николя де Мартони в конце XIV в. Таким образом, читатели могли с первого взгляда понять и усвоить духовную ценность и самих мест, и событий, о которых те призваны были напомнить.

Более того, благодаря таким книгам, как *Viaggio d'Oltramare* («Путешествие за море») Николо да Поджибонси, настоящему «бестселлеру» XIV–XV вв., дотошно регистрирующему расстояния между всеми святыми местами, читатели могли ясно представить себе расписание пути паломника по Святой Земле и воспроизвести его в пределах сво-

его города или даже внутри дома, переживая те же трудности и физические нагрузки. В течение XV–XVI вв. подобные практики все больше и больше ассоциировались или даже совмещались с благочестивыми упражнениями по посещению в определенной последовательности группы церквей, посвященных разным эпизодам Страстей Христовых. В то же время верующие получали возможность совершить умозрительное паломничество, оставаясь дома, произнося молитвы и медитируя по поводу самых важных событий Страстей, в соответствии с инструкциями, содержащимися во все возрастающем числе благочестивых брошюр. Все эти практики вносили вклад в формирование ритуального поклонения Крестному Пути, который впоследствии оказал влияние на сакральную топографию самого Иерусалима, когда был создан феномен, известный теперь как «Виа Долороза».

Такие формы «топомиметического» благочестия были в значительной, если не в исключительной мере вдохновлены миноритами, которые разработали специальные декорации и мизансцены, чтобы помочь верующим лучше представить себе евангельские события. Так называемые «Новые Иерусалимы» и «*Sacri Monti*» («Святые Горы») XVI–XVII вв. воспринимались как топографические схемы для молитвенной практики с целью заслужить отпущение грехов в Святой земле, а не просто миметическими репликами святых мест. Подобные бесхитростные пространственные построения оказались настолько эффективными и функциональными с точки зрения реализации благочестивого опыта, что смогли даже стать местом для религиозных представлений, не имевших прямых связей со Святой Землей, когда верующие воспроизводили события жизни св. Франциска или мистерии Розария.



1. Sketch showing the overlapping topographies of Jerusalem and San Vivaldo
(after *G. Vannini*. *S. Vivaldo e la sua documentazione materiale*, 1989, fig. 4)



2. Chapel of Calvary. The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



3. The Holy Sepulchre. The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



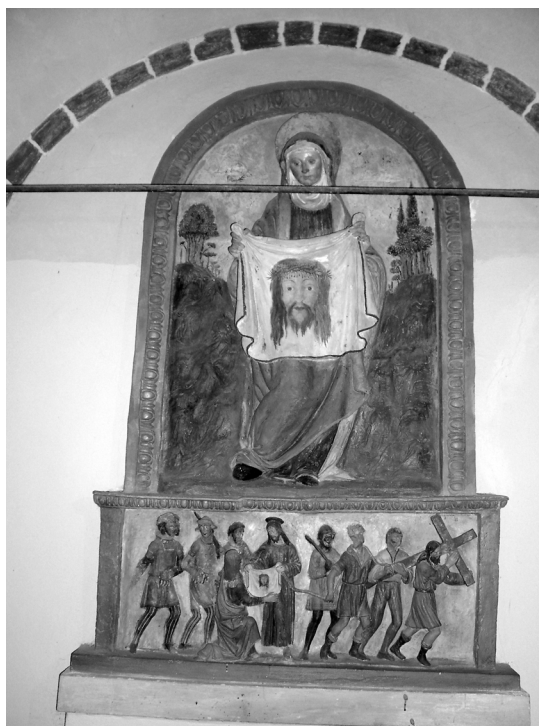
4. Chapel of the Ascension. The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



5. Spots of the Holy Cross and crack in the rock of Calvary, Chapel of Calvary.
The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



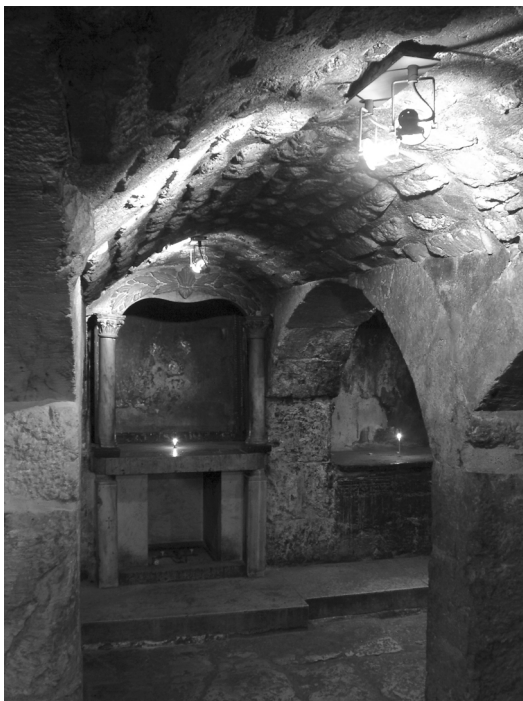
6. The Stone of Christ's Ascension, Chapel of the Ascension.
The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



7. Polychrome terracotta showing the meeting of Christ with St. Veronica,
Chapel of St. Veronica. The New Jerusalem of San Vivaldo, Tuscany



8. Olive tree near the House of Hannah, Armenian Patriarchate, Jerusalem



9. The Prison of Christ. The Complex of the Holy Sepulchre. Jerusalem