

From Patinir's Workshop to the Monastery of Pedralbes. A Virgin and Child in a Landscape

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ABSTRACT

Among the paintings of netherlandish origin imported into Catalonia during the first half of the 16th century, preserved at the Monastery of Pedralbes, there is a small panel featuring the Madonna and Child in a landscape which is attributed here to Patinir's workshop, not excluding the possibility of some autograph intervention by the master. Whatever the case, this article sets out to situate the piece both in the context of its production and in that of its reception, that is, the community of nuns of Saint Claire of Pedralbes. What is interesting about this apparently modest work is the fact that it combines a set of ingredients typical of Patinir in a composition that is otherwise atypical as regards his known output as a whole, above all in terms of the relationship between the figure and the landscape, although also of its presumed iconographic simplicity. The final section of the article examines the piece in relation to the ever-controversial issue –which still remains to be definitively resolved– of the authorship of the figures in the works of Patinir.

Keywords:

Joachim Patinir; 16th Century Netherlandish Painting; landscape painting; The Virgin suckling the Child; The Rest during the Flight into Egypt; Monastery of Santa Maria de Pedralbes

RESUM

Del taller de Patinir al monestir de Pedralbes. Una Mare de Déu amb l'Infant en un paisatge

Entre les pintures dels Països Baixos importades a Catalunya al llarg de la primera meitat del segle XVI que es conserven al monestir de Pedralbes, hi ha una petita taula amb la Verge i l'Infant dins d'un paisatge que aquí s'atribueix al taller de Patinir, sense descartar una intervenció autògrafa del mestre. El present article pretén situar la peça tant dins del context de la seva producció com en el context de la seva recepció, és a dir, una comunitat de monges clarisses. L'interès d'aquesta obra aparentment modesta rau sobretot en el fet que combina una sèrie d'ingredients típics de Patinir dins d'una composició que, tanmateix, resulta atípica dins de la seva producció coneguda, sobretot pel que fa a la relació entre la figura i el paisatge, però també per la seva aparent simplicitat iconogràfica. En l'última secció de l'article es discuteix la peça en relació amb el problema, sempre controvertit –i encara no ben resolt–, de l'autoria de les figures en les obres de Patinir.

Paraules clau:

Joachim Patinir; pintura dels Països Baixos al s. XVI; pintura de paisatges; Mare de Déu de la Llet; Descans durant la fugida a Egipte; monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes



Founded in 1327 by Queen Elisenda de Montcada, third wife of Jaume II of Aragon, the Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes, which housed a community of Poor Clares, is one of the most outstanding monuments of Catalan Gothic architecture and preserves a remarkable collection of artworks, quantitatively the most important in all Catalan convents and monasteries of medieval origin¹. And prominent in this varied heritage is a set of paintings, alongside a few sculptures, that were imported from the Low Countries at the end of the 15th century and, above all, during the initial decades of the 16th century. Although perhaps none of them may be described as a masterpiece, some are of incontrovertible interest and, above all, constitute a historical collection that has been preserved over the centuries and provides us with a bountiful sample of the kinds of images that served as visual references for the practices of worship and contemplation in which the nuns at a convent of the order of St Clare engaged.

Unfortunately, no information has come down to us as to how these works were acquired. Many of them may have been purchased in the Low Countries, for example at the fairs of Antwerp, either by relatives of the Pedralbes nuns or else by their order. It is also possible, however, that some of the Netherlandish paintings had been available on the Catalan market. In 1529, by way of just one curious example, a Barcelona craftsman, chain-mail maker Francesc Serra, obtained a privilege from Emperor Charles V which allowed him to sell in the city a number of tapestries and devotional paintings he had brought back from Flanders, a sale that, to judge from the concession document, would have taken the form of an auction or even a raffle². If most of the

devotional paintings that reached Pedralbes were fruit of the kind of speculative output that already flooded markets in the Low Countries, it would certainly not be far-fetched to assume that some were commissioned. This would apply at least to a triptych attributed to the circle of Pieter Coecke van Aelst, the central panel of which represents the *Holy Family at Work*—that is, a scene from Jesus’s childhood highly appropriate to Franciscan worship—, while its wings feature the figures of *St Clare of Assisi and St Agnes* (left) and of *St Gabriel and St Francis* (right). It seems clear, as Didier Martens contends, that this iconographic selection responded to the ideas of a nun “who was very clear about the work she wanted made for her³”. This nun would most certainly have been Abbess Teresa de Cardona (+1562), since the triptych was incorporated together with other paintings into a made-up or ‘composite’ altarpiece that bears the coat of arms of this abbess from the high nobility. We should note that Teresa was the daughter of Joan Ramon Folc IV (+1513), Duke of Cardona, sister of Duke Ferran I (+1543) and cousin of Ferdinand the Catholic. Furthermore, among her brothers there was Lluís (+1532), who was Bishop of Barcelona and later Archbishop of Tarragona, and Enric (+1530), Bishop of Barcelona and subsequently Archbishop of Monreale and Cardinal of the title of San Marcello⁴.

Towards the mid-sixteenth century, precisely during the long abbacy of Sor (Sister) Teresa de Cardona (1521–1562) and, perhaps, throughout the entire second half of the century, at Pedralbes many rooms of relatively small dimensions were built that in the tradition of the Monastery are referred to as ‘day cells’. These rooms, located in the cloister galleries and else-



Figure 1.
Composite retable of the 'St John' cell. Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes (Barcelona). Photograph by Robert Ramos.

where in the Monastery, bore the coats of arms of the noble families of the nuns who had them built and who made use of them, or so it seems, as private quarters. Each cell contained a small altar on which a retable was placed that usually also displayed the coat of arms of its owner. Thanks to the presence of the altar and the retable, we know that these cells were prayer rooms whose owners could use them for individual prayer and for meditation and contemplation. Since they were private rooms, it may also be

that some of the nuns used them, as has been suggested, to mortify the flesh in solitude⁵. In short, these possibilities have suggested that the day cells may have been conceived in a way as hermitages, a notion apparently confirmed by the fact that one of them, located in the NW wing of the cloister, includes a troglodytic space, a grotto gouged out of the rock on which the common dormitory rests⁶.

I must stress at this point that most of the altarpieces, such as the one belonging to Abbess



Figure 2.
Old photograph of 'St. John' cell. Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes (Barcelona).

Teresa de Cardona, were of the made-up type, since they consisted of elements from a variety of provenances combined in structures made *ad hoc* during that same period, around the mid-sixteenth century or perhaps a little later. Many of the devotional paintings that had been imported from the Low Countries were incorporated into the made-up altarpieces. Although other monasteries and convents on the Iberian Peninsula contain examples of made-up altarpieces, which are more or less comparable, so far as I know in none of them has such a profuse series been preserved as the one at Pedralbes. Unfortunately, no documentary or literary references have come down to us regarding why the sisters at Pedralbes built their prayer rooms or made these kinds of altarpieces. All I may do is call attention—even though this might constitute a redundancy—to the fact that they constitute a unique testimony to the worship routines and social uses of this community of sisters, whose members were essentially daughters of the Catalan nobility and of the Barcelona urban oligarchy.

The made-up retable of the 'St John' cell

The panel I shall examine in this article was incorporated into one of these altarpieces, which figures among the most interesting in the entire

collection by virtue both of its architectural structure and of the notable set of pieces it contains (figure 1). The architectural composition consists of two storeys and an attic. The uprights, specifically balustraded columns, demarcate three vertical sections, while the horizontal mouldings delimit two storeys in the side sections and three in the central one, which is narrower and surmounted by the attic, crowned in turn by a mixtilinear pediment with ornate scrolls. The right angles that form where the attic and the upper body of the retable meet are adorned with equally ornate scrolls.

The coat of arms that most probably embellished the socle has vanished, so that today it is difficult to identify the first owner of the retable. Old photographs show it located in a first-floor cell, the Sant Joan cell, which features an interesting 16th century wooden coffered ceiling whose centre constitutes a polychrome vault keystone featuring the Foixà family coat of arms⁷ (figure 2). Some of the old photographs show a small wooden sculpture of *John the Baptist* in the altarpiece niche, while in others we see the same niche occupied by a crucifix. Whatever the case, the carving of St John fits perfectly into this recess and is consistent with the traditional denomination of the Sant Joan cell. The fact that the retable stands in a cell presided over by the Foixàs' coat of arms might suggest that it was the property of a nun

belonging to this lineage. Nonetheless, we learn from the old photographs that the ends of the second-body cornice had to be cut off in order for the altarpiece to fit into the cell niche. Furthermore, the altarpiece base is visibly wider than the tile-clad table on which it rests, which suggests that it had not originally been conceived for this space. Lastly, we must take into account that on the NW side of the cloister there is another day cell with a 16th century gypsum Gothic vault whose keystone also features the Foixà family coat of arms. As we learn from Joan Bassegoda and Assumpta Escudero, this room was traditionally known as the *cel·la de la Foixana*, that is, the cell of a nun from the Foixà family⁸.

Despite the fact that, given the information currently available to us, we cannot state categorically that this altarpiece belonged to a member of the Foixà family, it strikes me as expedient to recall that in the 16th century there were at least two nuns belonging to this lineage who could have been its owners. These were Sor Cecilia Foixà, documented in the 1550s and 1560s, and Sor Àngela de Foixà, documented from the 1550s until the 1580s. In her history of the convent Sor Eulàlia Anzizu makes no mention of them. On the other hand, she does speak on one occasion of Canon Martí Joan Foixà, who in 1507 took possession of the convent as representative *ad litem* of Sor Violant de Montcada, who had recovered her abbacy from Sor Teresa Enríquez after a long, drawn-out lawsuit⁹. Whatever the case, Martí Joan Foixà i de Cruïlles, Archdeacon of Andorra, canon at La Seu d'Urgell and canon at Barcelona Cathedral, died early in the 16th century, while our composite altarpiece, as well as the decoration of the Sant Joan cell, cannot date from much before halfway through the century (taking into account, for example, the *rollwerk* forms of the corbel that frames the coat of arms on the cell's coffered ceiling). The canon was –if I am not mistaken– the son of Bernat Guillem, vavasour of Foixà and of Boixadors, and his first wife, Joana Maria de Cruïlles, but I am not in a position to specify the family relationship Sor Cecilia and Sor Àngela de Foixà would have had with the lineage of the vavasours of Foixà. All I may state is that in his will (June 18 1511), Canon Martí Joan de Foixà mentions a niece of his named *Sicilia* –that is, Cecilia–, who was the daughter of his brother Berenguer¹⁰. Since it is feasible that she would have been the future Sor Cecilia, might she not have been the owner of the altarpiece?

As I mentioned, this retable is particularly rich in images. The carving of John the Baptist fits perfectly into its niche and may date from either halfway through or the second half of

the 16th century, the work of a sculptor then active in Catalonia. On either side of the niche, in the lower section of the altarpiece, there was one painting each, both of somewhat mediocre quality. The one on the right depicts *The Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child*. It is particularly hard to classify this rather provincial-looking work, though it is clearly influenced by Italian models; indeed, the volumetric synthetism of the figures brings Lombardy to mind, although in this case it might be that Italian canons were adopted and interpreted by a northern –possibly Germanic– artist active in Catalonia around the second quarter of the 16th century¹¹. The painting left of the niche depicts *The Visitation*. In 2005, when the altarpiece was disassembled in order to be restored, it was discovered that the painting was signed in the bottom right-hand corner with an inscription that was concealed by the frame (OPVS / FRANCOIS / VERHVLTE). The work, therefore, is by François Verhulste, a Netherlandish painter who, so far as I know, had not been hitherto documented. While *Verhulste* seems to be an uncommon form, the surnames *Verhulst* or *Van der Hulst* were apparently concentrated mainly in Brabant and in particular in Mechelen. Hailing from Mechelen was, for example, the painter Mayken Verhulst (c.1520-1600), also known as Bessemers, the second wife of Pieter Coecke van Aelst and mother-in-law of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. To judge from the Pedralbes panel, François Verhulste was a painter of very modest talent. The scene is rendered in direct narrative and a somewhat naïf style, plain and lacking in expressive and compositional rhetoric in which the figures, synthetic in volume and rather stiff in movement, with puppet-like gestures, are juxtaposed in the foreground as in a high relief. The Virgin and St Isabel occupy the centre with the two secondary actors, St Joseph and Zacharias, slightly behind, which endows the group of figures with a certain convex relief, although in the overall composition, to which an urban setting is added as a backdrop, what predominates is a simple stratification based on frontal planes. It would not be far-fetched to imagine François Verhulste as being one of several northern painters who worked in Catalonia in the 16th century, although it seems more probable that the *Visitation* was an imported work, like the other two Netherlandish paintings on the upper section of the Sant Joan retable.

In the central compartment of the upper section we see the dove of the Holy Ghost in relief and, on either side, one imported painting each, both flanked with two images each of standing saints, doubtlessly added when the altarpiece was built. These latter were ex-



Figure 3.
Joachim Patinir and workshop, *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*. Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes (Barcelona). Photograph by Robert Ramos.

ecuted by a modest local painter and feature *St Jerome* and the Franciscan *St Bonaventure* on the left and *St Francis* and *St Clare* on the right. The two imported panels on this second storey of the altarpiece are both Netherlandish, although they differ from each other in terms of quality. The one on the left, *The Virgin and Child in a Landscape*, is the subject of this article, so I shall discuss it below. The one on the right shows *The Virgin and St Bernard* or, more exactly, *The Miracle of the Lactation of St Bernard*. The phylactery above the saint's head contains an inscription that reads: "Monstra te esse matrem", which is a line from the *Ave Maris Stella*. Ainaud, Gudiol and Verrié (1947) described the panel as a Flemish piece from the 15th century, although it may be classified much more precisely. Indeed, the same composition may be seen in other variants attributed to –or associated with– the Master of the Gold Brocade¹². In 1918, one of these was in the hands of Berlin antiquarian G. E. von Mallman and, in 1935, another was in those of Munich antiquarian A. S. Drey¹³. The first mentioned most resembles the Pedralbes panel, in terms both of the physiognomies and of the arrangement of the phylactery, as well as of other details I need not mention here. As critics have stressed, the corpus of work conventionally attributed to the Master of the Gold Brocade is uneven in quality and, consequently, poses problems when it comes to its ascription. Even so, a number of such pieces, of very mediocre quality, closely resemble the one at Pedralbes, such as the fragment with *The Angel of the Annunciation*, the whereabouts of which are currently unknown, and that of *The Virgin and Child*, documented in 1913 in Paris¹⁴.

The heteroclit set of paintings that go to make up the composite retable is completed with the one placed in the attic, which depicts *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*. The work of some painter active in Catalonia, from its late style we would judge it to be from around 1600. Instead of fitting neatly into its frame, this panel was nailed to the altarpiece from behind, which attests to the fact that it was added later to replace an older, earlier piece that would have adapted better to the frame. As we have seen, the altarpiece combines three works of Netherlandish origin with others that would most probably have been executed in Catalonia, that is, a kind of combination observable also in other made-up retables at the convent. Amidst the stylistic hodgepodge that characterises the ensemble, we observe at least some iconographic preferences: the Virgin is given pride of place in all the paintings, together with the Child, except, of course, in the four images



Figure 4. Anonymous (copy after Robert Campin), *Virgin and Child in an Apse*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

of saints, three of whom are Franciscans, as only to be expected in an altarpiece made for a nun of this order. And if the carving of John the Baptist had, as it seems, originally occupied the central niche, it would have met another of the devotional needs of the nun who had the retable composed.

A Patinirian adaptation of the Flémallesque Virgin in an Apse

The highest-quality work that makes up the Sant Joan altarpiece is undoubtedly *The Virgin and Child in a Landscape* (figure 3). Ainaud, Gudiol and Verrié (1947) described this small-format panel as "a copy of Patinir" and left it at that with no further comments. They shed no light, therefore, on the original or originals on which the copy was based; nor do they specify what the panel's status would be: whether it was a copy by Patinir's own workshop or, rather, by a follower. Neither Max J.

Friedländer¹⁵ nor Robert A. Koch¹⁶ included any reference to this panel in their respective catalogues of Patinir's work; nor does it feature in the recent catalogue for the *Patinir* exhibition at the Museo del Prado, either in its own right or in relation to others of the catalogued works¹⁷.

There is no signed painting by Joachim Patinir that presents the same overall composition, although the landscape setting on the Pedralbes panel does come from the repertoire of Patinir and his workshop. On the other hand, the group with the Virgin and Child constitutes a famous motif that refers back to a prototype acknowledged by most critics as a lost original by Robert Campin, the Master of Flémalle, an aspect that Ainaud, Gudiol and Verrié overlooked. The original of the *Virgin in an Apse* must be sought in an early period in the evolution of Flemish Realism and in that of Campin himself, although the true popularisation of this devotional image would have taken place between the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries to judge from the copies and variations still preserved, sixty or so, practically all of which apparently belong to this late period. It is generally accepted today that the versions at the Metropolitan Museum, New York (figure 4) and in the Diamond Collection in the same city figure among the most faithful copies of the original¹⁸.

The group of the Virgin suckling the Child in her arms, which links back to the Byzantine *Panagia Galactotrophousa* type, appears in the prototype flanked by two angels, one playing the lute and the other the harp, and located in an apse—or, if you prefer, in front of an apse. This may allude, as some have contended, to the Virgin as personification of the Church and also as *Ara Coeli*, since she occupies the place of the altar. This latter, moreover, would reinforce a Eucharistic meaning that other keys would have, such as the cloth on which the Child lies, a possible allusion to the shroud in which Christ's body was wrapped at the moment of his burial, symbolised in liturgy by the corporal, that is, the linen cloth that is spread over the altar on which to place the chalice and the host. The apse, which along these same lines might be interpreted as a genuine presbytery, is therefore a motif consubstantial with the prototype and appears in the most faithful variants. Nonetheless, at a later stage this Flémallesque *Virgo lactans*, with or without angels, reappeared in countless variations that, besides slightly altering the postures of the Mother and Child, also replaced the apse motif with a wide diversity of other settings. Even so, in most cases these settings consisted of more or less sumptuous mon-

umental or architectural frames, often opening onto landscapes. The exclusively landscape variant that the Pedralbes panel constitutes would therefore seem to be an exception.

As part of her notable efforts to catalogue and classify all the copies and variations of this Flémallesque composition, M.-L. Lievens-de Waegh does not overlook the Pedralbes panel, which she classifies as belonging to a set of "adaptations associated with the oeuvre of Barend van Orley"¹⁹. Besides the Pedralbes version, the author records a further two in which the Virgin appears also standing against a landscape background, reversed with regard to the Flémallesque prototype and with the little finger of her right hand (her left hand in the prototype) pointing upwards. These two versions are of inferior quality compared to the one at Pedralbes and date probably from a later period²⁰. In these two the landscape is identical in structure and bears no relation to Patinir's. On the other hand, the low wall or parapet behind the Virgin may be understood as a vestige of the architectural settings that predominate in the variations associated with Van Orley, without overlooking the possible iconographic association with the *hortus conclusus* motif. We observe a similar solution in a painting by either Quentin Massys or his workshop, in which the standing Virgin and the Child are placed also in a 'proscenium' separated by a low wall from a landscape that unfolds as a backdrop beyond the wall and acquires a notable leading visual role, even though the horizon lies at a relatively low level and the panoramic aspect of Patinir's landscapes is absent. In terms of the group of the Virgin and Child, this painting is a variant of the *Madonna Seilern* by Quentin Massys, from which the angels have been removed and the architectural structure replaced by an outdoor setting with landscape²¹. Significantly, an operation has been conducted here similar to the one I have described for the landscape variants of the Flémallesque *Virgin in an Apse* with regard to their prototype—that is, the angels and the architecture have been eliminated—, although in this case without leaving Massys's workshop. Although this is an original composition, it has been pointed out that the *Virgin in an Apse* might constitute one of the sources of inspiration for this composition by Massys, regarded by critics "as one of the most insistently traditional images of the artist's output"²². To sum up, the combination of the tender ensemble of the Virgin and Child with a sumptuous Italianate-style architectural structure has a clear parallel in the versions which the "Van Orley group" produced of the Flémallesque prototype.

Certainly closer in concept to the Pedralbes panel is the remarkable *tondo* at the National Gallery in London (NG 1864), which Max J. Friedländer attributed to Isenbrant and, recently, Lorne Campbell ascribed to Albert Cornelis, who would have executed it in collaboration with an anonymous landscape painter whose style derived from that of Patinir²³ (figure 5). In this London panel the Flémallesque model of the *Virgo lactans* is converted into a figure seated on the ground and, consequently, associated with the theme of the Virgin of humility²⁴. Thanks to the circular format, the foreground, which accommodates the Virgin and Child, leaves more room for the landscape, which consequently becomes more all-enveloping. Furthermore, as in the Pedralbes panel, the landscape unfolds in spectacular fashion and no wall or fence separates the foreground from either the middle distance or the backdrop.

According to Lievens-de Waegh, it might have been Barend van Orley who, regarding the Flémallesque prototype, introduced a new arrangement of the feet of the Child, in which the foot further away reveals the sole, a variant also observable in the Pedralbes painting. The same author also observes that the detail of the Virgin's upward-pointing right-hand little finger, which we see in the prototype, is absent from most of the versions associated with Van Orley. However, the enigmatic little finger –the virtual meaning of which, if indeed it has one, has yet to be ascertained–, is present in both the Pedralbes version and in the other two mentioned above that have a landscape backdrop. We may pinpoint further variations that the Pedralbes panel shares with other late versions, such as the head of the Child in strict profile, on which we therefore see only one eye, while in the prototype we see both. This peculiarity of the head in profile we find, for example, in a version which Friedländer attributed to Gerard David (then in the Mrs Lucile E. Selz Collection, New York)²⁵, in which the composition is also reversed with regard to the prototype, and in some of the versions associated with Van Orley, such as the one at the Museo de Cádiz²⁶. Nonetheless, I believe we must rule out the assumed direct connection between the Pedralbes panel and the group associated with Van Orley. In the variants attributed or related to Barend van Orley, the outline of the Virgin and the folds in her clothes present a characteristic alteration with regard to the Flémallesque prototype. In this latter, for example, the Virgin's cape, as it drapes over the ground, acquires a rightward-pointing lanceolate profile (leftward-pointing in the reversed versions), which is noticeably moderated and shortened in the versions associated



Figure 5.
Albert Cornelis and associates (?), *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*. London, National Gallery, NG 1864.

with Van Orley. On the other hand, the sharply lanceolate shape, which is so characteristically Flémallesque, is maintained in the Pedralbes version, which on the whole is closer to the prototype in terms of the folds in the cloth, as is, for example, the version I allude to above in the Selz Collection, as well as the other two landscape variations I also mention. Lastly, the Virgin in the Pedralbes panel does not display the chubby canon that seems to predominate in the Van Orley group.

On the other hand, the Pedralbes version presents a number of particular traits that differ from those of the prototype and from virtually all the other known variants. I refer, above all, to the modifications introduced into the figure of the Child. In the first place, we note that his size diminishes in relation to that of the Virgin. His little feet, which in the model stick out, or almost do, from the outline of the Mother, in the Pedralbes version they are comfortably contained within the outline. The other distinctive trait is the fact that the head, bust and arms of the Child shift towards the left, which creates the unfortunate impression that the trunk is disproportionately elongated away from the legs, which in this way seem to be too small and poorly coordinated with the rest of the body.

Thanks to infrared reflectography²⁷, I have been able to examine the underdrawing execut-



Figure 6.
Joachim Patinir and workshop, *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*. Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes (Barcelona). Infrared reflectography. (c) Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona (2016). IRR: Campuzano, Pedragosa, Ramells.

ed in a dry medium (figures 6-7). The strokes, which are considerably blurred, correspond to a rough draft with numerous hesitations and corrections that mark the outlines, the folds in the cloth and the basic elements that define the forms. On the other hand, there is no sign either of pouncing or any other evidence of a mechanical process of transfer of the model. Although the artist copied a model, he allowed himself a certain degree of freedom which took the form of a number of variants apparently exclusive to the Pedralbes panel. The creative process, though minimal, may be observed at both the preliminary drawing and the painting stages. From the infrared reflectography we learn that the initial sketch of the Child's arms and head, in relation to the Mother's hands, is more faithful to the original. On the other hand, the underdrawing reveals corrections that seek to shift the head and arms towards the left, something that seems to be even further accentuated at the painting stage. The result is that the space is extended between the Child's right arm and the Mother's right hand, while in the prototype they appear juxtaposed, almost in contact, as we observe in all or almost all the known versions of the Flémallesque model. A comparison between the underdrawing and the visible painted surface reveals another modification with regard to the model: in the underdrawing, the sketch of the Child's left hand seems to coincide with the one in the prototype, since what we see basically is the back of the hand; when it came to executing the painting, however, the artist twisted the hand so that we see it sideways on with the fingers arched, so that between the thumb and index finger a small shaded cavity is formed.

Other corrections may be observed in the definition of the outline and folds in the clothes, especially in the cloth on which the Child lies. The trials and errors and corrections are visible both on the left, on the part of the cloth that covers the Virgin's right shoulder, and on the far right, which covers part of the Virgin's left arm and falls in a cascade of folds. The margin of variations was reduced when it came to drawing the outline and folds in the dress and cape of the Virgin, although here too we observe adjustments and rectifications. In particular, we notice a correction in the lanceolate outline of the cape that spreads out on the ground towards the left, which was shortened so that it would fit into the limits of the frame rather than be severed by it –a problem arising from a slight 'error' when it came to accommodating the figure inside the frame. Whatever the case, we must confess that by virtue of the delicacy of its rendering, the group of the Virgin and Child



Figure 7. Joachim Patinir and workshop, *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*. Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes. Infrared reflectography. Detail. (c) Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona (2016). IRR: Campuzano, Pedragosa, Ramells.

at Pedralbes stands among the finest figures in the foregrounds of landscapes by Patinir and his workshop.

As in other late versions, in the Pedralbes painting the figure of the Virgin maintains its original leading visual role and stands in the foreground, very close to the frame –of the pictorial plane–, so that the landscape unfolds essentially behind her. The Virgin stands in a narrow strip of land in which a variety of plant species form a dense green mass, like a small, minutely described botanical garden. Some of these plants are in flower, such as the harebells on the left and the irises on the right, so typical of Patinir's repertoire. Beyond this strip, raised like a terrace in the fictitious space, the mountainous landscape descends through a succession of levels that recede into the distance, defining a set of intermediate planes and the corresponding spatial jumps. Further beyond these intermediate planes, our gaze plunges, as if in a bird's-eye-view, into a vast panorama that includes a port city and a great water mass that forms an estuary and a bay flanked by mountains. As invariably occurs in Patinir's landscapes, the bird's-eye-view takes inconsistent form: while the large horizontal land or water-mass surfaces are foreshortened, as we should expect from a high-to-low perspective, the architectural elements, for example, appear as if in a frontal



Figure 8.
Joachim Patinir and workshop, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Former Collection of Comte de Vogüé, Dijon. Source: Robert A. Koch, *Joachim Patinir*, Princeton University Press, 1968.

eye-level view, without the foreshortening that would correspond to a view from above²⁸.

If in the Flémallesque prototype, to judge from the most faithful copies, the Virgin wears a white mantle and a white dress over another dress, this one blue, visible only in the sleeves and collar, on the Pedralbes panel she wears a red mantle over a blue dress and, beneath, a purple dress visible only in the sleeves. The red-pink nuances of the mantle stand out crisply against the range of greenish, earthy and bluish hues that combine in the landscape in characteristic sequence. Indeed, greens predominate in the foreground, while in the middle distance greens combine with earthy browns, while in the broad background panorama a pale bluish range predominates with greenish, pink and cream nuances. In fact, the landscape setting is divided into two major, well-defined areas: one comprising the foreground and the middle distance, in which greens and browns predominate, and the other comprising the more distant backdrop and the sky, where cold, pale bluish tones prevail. The chromatic sequence therefore coincides with spatial stratification. Thus, the illusion of depth is based both on the progressive reduction in scale and on the differentiated

pictorial treatment of the different planes, in which the strongest colour contrasts are associated with the foreground while the contrasts and clarity are progressively reduced as the setting recedes into the background. In this way, despite the perspective ambiguities and despite the obvious problems of coordination and suture between the different planes, the landscape composition creates a striking visual effect. The curvilinear strokes rendering hillsides, rocks, mountains and winding rivers constitute the most dynamic aspect of a composition whose major tectonic constituents are the vertical figure of the Virgin and the horizon line, on the same level as the Virgin's neck, which makes her head stand out against the bluish-white sky. The vertical axis is in fact perfectly defined by the edge of the Virgin's mantle and, on this same vertical line, the heads are located of the Child and the Mother, who looks tenderly and protectively towards her Son.

As I pointed out above, Ainaud, Gudiol and Verrié (1947) deserve the credit for having signalled out the connection between the Pedralbes panel and Patinir. Nevertheless, they failed to better define the precise relationship between the landscape and the corpus works attributed to

Patinir, to his workshop or to his followers. Indeed, as many as four paintings exist, all of which share the subject of the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, in which the perfectly identifiable motif appears of the panoramic background with a view of the walled port city, the bridge over the river and the bay enveloped by mountains, including the detail of the architectural complex –perhaps a monastery– on the right, emerging from behind a clump of trees. Three of these panels were catalogued by Robert A. Koch in his monograph on Patinir, which still today constitutes an indispensable work of reference. Of the three, the one in the former Comte Georges de Vogüé Collection, Dijon, would be of the highest quality²⁹ (figure 8). Koch catalogues it as being by the workshop, although he admits that this ‘well painted composition is conceivably by Patinir himself’. He also attributes the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* at the National Gallery, London (NG 3115), to his workshop (figure 9), while the third, at the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (inv. 2595) (figure 11), would be attributable, in Koch’s view, to a ‘late follower’³⁰. To these three works we should add a fourth panel, now lost, which belonged to the Museo Civico Gaetano Filangieri, Naples (figure 10), which is a replica with minor variations of the version in London³¹.

Apart from the two panels in Brussels and Naples, in which the same overall composition is repeated, the versions I mention present different overall compositions. On the other hand, all of them, according to Koch, may be described as pastiches “that involved knowledge of more than a single painting by Patinir”. This implies, certainly, a principle of Patinirian coherence –as it were– that might suggest a certain proximity to the master’s workshop, whether they be works executed at Patinir’s workshop or else by pupils of his or, at least, by painters who had access to Patinir’s repertoire of motifs and combined them in the Patinirian way. I would contend, as Koch does, that the panels in Dijon, London and Brussels are apparently by three different artists –leaving aside for now the issue as to whether or not, in each of them, the figures and the landscape are by the same hand–, and it also strikes me as clear that the one in Dijon is closest to Patinir’s signed works while the one in Brussels is the furthest removed. Further removed still would be a *Flight into Egypt* documented in the former Dr Beermann Collection, Berlin, which features the same panorama with port motif³². On the other hand, the set of Holy Family figures –and of the angels who bend the palm trunk and branches so that St Joseph may pluck the dates– bear no relationship to any of the figure types present in the works regarded as by Patinir



Figure 9.
Workshop of Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. London, National Gallery, NG 3115.



Figure 10.
Follower of Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, lost. Formerly in the Museo Gaetano Filangieri, Naples. Source: N. Barella, *Il Museo Filangieri*, Napoli, Guida Editori, 1988.



Figure 11.
Follower of Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Brussels, Royal Museums of fine Arts of Belgium, inv. 2595. ©RMFAB, Brussels / Photo: J. Geleyns.

or his workshop; furthermore, the way the different motifs are combined is far removed from Patinirian syntax.

The Dijon panel is undoubtedly the most interesting, so it is a shame that it has been somewhat overlooked in most recent studies on Patinir (like so many other historians, I myself have also been unable to examine this piece, which has been reproduced in black and white only)³³. To judge from Koch's description, this would be one of the few works signed by the master (JOACHIM DE PATINIER), although the specialist concludes that "The signature in one line is orthographically not in Patinir's manner". The fact that this signature may be false does not, of course, rule out the possibility that it was added to an original by the master. In this painting several motifs were combined that may be found in other works by Patinir or his workshop. In the landscape, for example, we see basically two: in the distant panorama the port city with which we are now familiar is repeated, while for the foreground and the middle distance the composition is quite faithfully reproduced from the *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* at the Antwerp museum, regarded by most specialists as one of Patinir's earliest signed works. This section occupies approximately two thirds of the painted surface, while the panorama with port occupies the remaining third, which leads Koch to conclude that the Dijon painting constitutes an adaptation of the Antwerp landscape with the addition of the port landscape. Turning now to the figures, the Virgin and Child do not seem to appear in any other work by Patinir, by his workshop or by any of his immediate followers, although—as I shall argue later—I believe that by virtue of their style they may be related to other figures present in works by Patinir³⁴. On the other hand, the figures of St Joseph and the grazing ass do seem to have parallels. Indeed, the ass may have been taken—as Koch contends—from the central panel of the *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* in a private Wiesbaden collection (formerly belonging to the Kaus Collection, Frankfurt), and in my opinion the crouching figure of St Joseph may be based, though reversed, on the same character in the central panel of this triptych (the ensemble of St Joseph and the grazing ass was reused, moreover, in other works from Patinir's workshop, such as the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* with the coats of arms of Lucas Rem and his wife, in the Kidston Collection, Bristol, and in the panel featuring the same theme at the Brussels museum).

It seems improbable that such a combination of motifs, all of which are strictly Patinirian, would not have emerged either from the master's workshop or from the tight circle of his pupils

and associates. I should stress that the 'adaptation' of the Antwerp landscape, in the Dijon painting, is fruit of substantial remodelling: not only did the composition become enriched with a host of new details, which was only to be expected given the painting's rather larger format, but it also acquired a new articulation, which coincides with Patinir's more mature works. The treatment of the planes defined by the hillsides and rocks in the Antwerp panel retains much of the somewhat impressionist, imprecise style characteristic of the *Landscape with St Jerome* at the Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe, which might be—as many specialists agree—the earliest painting in Patinir's autograph catalogue. On the other hand, the landscape in the Antwerp painting acquires a very different physiognomy in that of Dijon, in the form of greater crystallization of the rock formations, which denote a much more solid plasticity. The more articulated and tangible pictorial definition would therefore place the Dijon painting among the mature works by the master or his workshop—from either the intermediate (1515-1519) or late (1520-1524) periods as defined by Koch. Furthermore, the addition of the section with the view of the port is perfectly consistent with this *aggiornamento* of the early composition at Antwerp. It would seem to be above all this status as pastiche of Patinirian motifs that has led to the exclusion of the Dijon panel from Patinir's autograph works, although Koch—as I have stated above—was somewhat undecided in this regard. In opposition to this idea, the possibility exists that it was Patinir himself who made this pastiche, taking into account, on the one hand, the naturalness with which the different Patinirian motifs combine, in accordance with an equally Patinirian manner of composing and, on the other, the high artistic quality that Koch himself perceived in the Dijon panel. The absence of this panel from the Prado exhibition deprived me, unfortunately, of the opportunity to form a more grounded judgement of its status and weigh up, once again, the possibility that it might be an autograph work by Patinir.

On the other hand: who other than Patinir would be in a better position to 'translate' one of his early compositions (Antwerp) into the style of his maturity (Dijon)? Needless to say, supposing that this were the case, it does not imply that the landscape composition at Antwerp was updated for the first time in the Dijon painting. As regards the other landscape section, namely the backdrop with the port city, we have solid reasons to believe that it was created not for, but prior to, the Dijon panel. It is important to stress, in this context, that in the Dijon variant part of the composition is miss-

ing which, on the other hand, is present in the versions at London, at Brussels and at Pedralbes. I refer to the bottom right-hand section in which, among other things, we see a path that runs alongside a coppice. This portion was sacrificed in the Dijon painting in order to respect the part of the composition that came from the painting at Antwerp, in which we see a group of houses, close to which we glimpse the slaughter of the Innocents (Antwerp and Dijon) and the miracle of the wheatfield (Antwerp only). The prototype of the composition with the port landscape, therefore, would have appeared for the first time in a lost work by Patinir, as Koch rightly assumed (though without using the argument I have just put forward)³⁵. Of course, in the Pedralbes painting the port city composition had also to be adapted; in this case it was split into two parts which, once separated, served to fill the spaces on either side of the central figure of the Virgin.

In reference to the ensemble of the Virgin and Child, I have already commented on the results of the infrared reflectography examination, which reveals the presence of a somewhat overloaded underdrawing in which the strokes multiply as a result of hesitations and corrections. Very different, however, is the style of the preliminary drawing for the landscape that encompasses these figures. The strokes we perceive here, which are somewhat sparse, are also sketchy and hurried, as if they were mere notes by which to place the main –or some of the main– elements, such as the walled city precinct or the outlines of some of the mountains. We may therefore imagine that once these elements had been fitted into position, the painter worked directly from a model before him, not necessarily a drawing but perhaps another painting, since the different versions that have come down to us largely share a similar colour scheme. The thickest line, the only one traced out using a ruler, is the one that defines the sea horizon, in the right-hand section of the landscape. The reutilisation of the port city motif, spread out on both sides of the figure of the Virgin, led of necessity to a number of adjustments. At the same level as the Virgin's back and between this and the coast, we observe a set of very schematic underdrawing strokes that would correspond to a ship that was omitted from the final execution phase or else transferred to the other side, that is, to the Virgin's right. Although the Pedralbes panel has not been subjected to an x-ray examination, thanks to reflectography we observe a procedure characteristic of Patinir, namely that he first painted the trunk and major branches of the trees, subsequently to cover them with the leaves, so that most of the trunk and the branches remain hidden.

I should stress, in short, that the difference between the way the underdrawing for the figures and that for the landscape are executed is a recurrent characteristic in the oeuvre of Patinir and his workshop –even regardless of whether the style of the figure drawing is not constant in these works, just as the style of the figures in the finished painting also lacks constancy. In any case, the quick, sketchy underdrawing clearly predominates not only in Patinir's own landscapes but also in the output most unequivocally attributable to his workshop. In other words, there would seem to be nothing, either in the technique applied to the underdrawing or, needless to say, in the painting technique applied to panel to which this article is devoted, that is not compatible with the practices of Patinir and his workshop.

If we accept that the Pedralbes painting emerged –as I contend– from Patinir's workshop, we shall also have to accept that it is a somewhat atypical work. And this essentially because the figure of the Virgin and Child occupies the entire foreground of the composition, while Patinir's landscapes are characterised precisely by the fact that the size of the figures is substantially reduced in relation to the landscape, into which they are resolutely integrated. As I mentioned earlier, the Virgin stands on a natural terrace, which is covered with dense vegetation, an aspect which differs from the variants I refer to above of the Flémallesque *Virgo lactans*, in which a low wall separates the foreground, where the Virgin is placed, from the landscape beyond, which thereby plays the role of a backdrop. Obviously, this solution would hardly have been compatible with Patinir's canon, and the Virgin at Pedralbes continues in her own way to be a figure perfectly integrated into the landscape. However, unlike in practically all the works attributed to the painter or his workshop, in the Pedralbes panel the Virgin absolutely dominates the composition: while we contemplate her figure in the foreground our eyes are forced to plunge almost dizzily into a vast landscape. The stratification of the planes nearest us leads us abruptly into the distance and the contrast in scale inevitably monumentalises what is otherwise the tender, delicate figure of the Virgin suckling the Child.

Needless to say, this structuring of the spatial fiction was nothing new, since it refers back to the 'plateau type' formula –as defined by Millard Meiss– which had already been exploited by Jan van Eyck, whom we might also regard as being the true inventor of the panoramic landscape. The Pedralbes panel, in any case, offers us a characteristically Patinirian interpretation of this formula. Even so, the visual primacy of the

figure may certainly be regarded as an archaic aspect in contrast to the ‘modernity’ of Patinir’s canonical landscapes, in which the figures, even the leading ones, are drastically reduced in size in relation to the natural scenario. The vertical format itself of the panel, in keeping with the exclusive leading role played by the erect figure of the *Virgo lactans*, stands in clear contrast with the typically horizontal formats of Patinir’s landscapes. To find a comparable vertical format, with a large figure almost monopolising the foreground, we shall have to turn to the wings of the *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* (now in a Wiesbaden private collection), depicting John the Baptist (left) and Pope Cornelius (right)³⁶. Nonetheless, the Pedralbes panel is an autonomous piece, not a wing in a triptych, so the comparison, in this context, would seem to be of only relative interest. In the triptych no attempt was made to unify the landscape setting across the three panels; all that was sought was a balance between the three scenes and, of course, a symmetrical placement of the lateral saints, both rendered in three-quarter profile and looking towards the centre, an entirely conventional solution. As for the rest, the representation of figures of saints against a landscape background in the wings of a triptych was a traditional recourse that originated in the 15th century.

A Flight into Egypt?

In the case of the Pedralbes painting we must certainly examine the far from insignificant aesthetic, expressive and iconographical implications of the singular combination between the Flémallesque *Virgo lactans* and her new landscape setting, that is, the transfer of the Virgin from her original apse to this natural terrace that raises her above a vast panorama, which we might regard as belonging to the category of the *Weltlandschaft* or ‘world landscape’³⁷. In terms of visual realism, the ‘plateau type’ motif, which dates back to Jan van Eyck, justifies this association between a human figure that preserves its original iconic status and, by extension, its leading visual role, and a landscape background that serves as a genuine universal reference³⁸. As we have seen, the panoramic backdrop to this painting appears in a further four, all of which depict the same episode, namely the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt*, the theme most cultivated, together with the *Penitence of St Jerome*, by Patinir and his workshop. While this may be a simple coincidence, the fact is that the placement of the *Virgo lactans* in a landscape setting might almost automatically bring to mind the story of the flight into Egypt.

Of course, we may say in general that literary accounts preceded and nurtured iconographic interpretations of this episode. Laconically alluded to in the Gospel According to St Matthew (2: 13–15), the story of the flight into and the sojourn in Egypt was narrated in the New Testament apocrypha, especially in the Arabic Infancy Gospel, presumably an adaptation or translation of a 6th century Syriac archetype, and in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, drawn up in the West around the first third of the 7th century³⁹. On the other hand, among later reworkings of the story we should take into account those that in the Late Middle Ages appeared in the flourishing literature of the *Vitae Christi*. These offered an especially humanised image of the Redeemer and told his life story in a characteristically affective way, all this conceived to induce a state of empathic meditation in the reader (or listener). Methodical engagement in meditation was therefore associated with both a form of contemplative piety and the idea of the *imitatio Christi*, which had its forerunner in St Bernard and subsequently flourished in Franciscan spirituality and, later still, with the *devotio moderna* strand.

The famous *Meditationes Vitae Christi* by Pseudo-Bonaventure are, as most people know, fruit of the Franciscan milieu; however, the issue of their exact authorship has given rise in recent years to an interesting debate with both philological and ideological implications. Having traditionally regarded the *Meditationes* as the work of St Bonaventure, literature scholars subsequently accepted their assignation to the Franciscan John of Caulibus; however, more recently other alternative hypotheses have been formulated that should at least be mentioned – although I am not competent to evaluate their respective philological bases. To begin with, Sarah McNamer argues that the extensive Latin version of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* does not constitute, as has hitherto been assumed, the original form of this famous work, which would be a shorter text written in Tuscan, as apparently attested to by a single manuscript (the MS. Canon. Ital. 174 at the Bodleian Library, Oxford)⁴⁰. From all the versions we infer that the work was addressed to a Clarissan nun, but McNamer suggests that the original text was probably also written by a nun belonging to the same order, which would explain the “female viewpoint” that seems to pervade the entire narrative. Whatever the case, the affective register of this text, of great literary quality, would have been offset by whoever wrote the extensive version with a set of “didactic interpolations, expansions, and surprisingly reactionary corrections” that reveal an exegetical,

doctrinaire approach at a far remove from the work's original purpose and spirit –as well as the male viewpoint of a Franciscan monk, perhaps John of Caulibus himself. The operation, in short, would have resulted in the original text being either shelved or directly censored, in the same way that Thomas of Celano's life of St Francis was replaced by the version revised by St Bonaventure⁴¹. On the other hand, Peter Tóth and Dávid Falvai reject the hypothesis that the short vernacular text of the Canonical manuscript constitutes the original version; rather they go back to the idea that the work was written originally in Latin and argue, basing themselves on the *incipit* of some Italian manuscripts, that the author of the *Meditationes* was a Franciscan named Jacopo (or Jacobo), who thanks to a late annotation on one of these manuscripts may be identified as Jacobus da San Gimignano, who in 1312 led the revolt of the Spirituals in Tuscany⁴².

All told, we must acknowledge that it was the literary quality and the potent affective style of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* that assured the work's success and its ongoing circulation into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries⁴³. At a somewhat later date, halfway through the 14th century, the Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony wrote his equally successful *Vita Christi*, which took its inspiration largely from the *Meditationes*, although he combined the pious, affective vein with an even greater emphasis on the theological and doctrinal perspectives⁴⁴. Both Pseudo-Bonaventure's and Ludolph's works were translated into several vernacular languages and, as from the end of the 15th century, issued in multiple printed editions. And they continued to inspire new works devoted to the *Vita Christi*, in which the compilatory aspect is usually combined with more or less original contributions, depending on the sensitivity, the culture and the objectives of each author. In the Low Countries, for example, a compilatory version in the vernacular of the texts by Pseudo-Bonaventure and by Ludolph circulated widely in manuscript form until it was printed in 1479, in Delft, titled *Tractaat vanden leven ons Heeren Jhesu Christi*, while another more extensive version, the *Tboeck vanden leven ons Heeren Jhesu Christi*, was first published in Antwerp in 1487⁴⁵.

As for the rest, the Franciscan world continued to contribute decisively to the development, the dissemination and the consumption of this literary genre. In the Catalan linguistic sphere, it was precisely two Franciscans, first Francesc Eiximenis and later Isabel de Villena, who made the most important contributions to this field, both in the vernacular (Catalan) language⁴⁶. The remarkable literary quality of the *Vita Christi*

by Sor Isabel de Villena, who was abbess at La Trinitat Convent in Valencia, certainly explains its success: seven years after the author's death, in 1497, the first edition (Valencia: Lope de la Roca) appeared and two new editions, both with xylograph illustrations, were published in 1513 (Valencia: Jorge Costilla) and in 1527 (Barcelona: Carles Amorós). While McNamer's hypothesis regarding the possibility that an initial version of the *Meditationes* was written by a woman has not been accepted by everyone, in the case of Villena it is crystal clear that her version constituted a genuine feminisation –or re-feminisation– of the *Vitae Christi* genre. And I am not speaking merely of a 'feminine sensitivity' but rather of a militant 'proto-feminism', since in her text Sor Isabel countered each and every one of the platitudes and misogynistic arguments characteristic of her era. Furthermore, the *Vita Christi* by Isabel de Villena ascribed to the Virgin a role even more important than the one she already played in the texts by Pseudo-Bonaventure and Ludolph of Saxony, to the extent where, as has rightly been said, her version might equally be described as a *vita Maria*.⁴⁷ Indeed, the Franciscan abbess highlights the role of all the female characters and gives priority to those episodes in the life of Christ which are related to women, laying entirely natural emphasis on the role of Mary Magdalene, thereby converting her into the third fundamental character in the *Vita Christi*.

If the truth be told, the *Meditationes vitae Christi* somewhat skipped over the flight into Egypt and, incidentally, contain none of the chimerical episodes from the apocrypha. For its part, the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony not only extended the exegetical and doctrinal arguments associated with the episode, adding new authoritative citations, but also extended the narrative contents, laying emphasis on the affective passages and admitting two episodes from the apocrypha, namely the capture of the Holy Family by robbers and the fall of the idols of Egypt. In short, if we take into consideration other works, such as the ones in Catalan by Eiximenis and by Villena, we may observe that as regards the apocrypha the literature of the *Vitae Christi* as a whole carried out a twofold process of selection and amplification concerning the childhood of Jesus cycle. On the one hand, the most miraculous and picturesque episodes were either eliminated or modified; on the other, some of the contents regarded as meaningful and exemplary were extended, while the 'gaps' in the account were filled with new narrative elements, invariably enhanced by images and situations that might arouse the empathy of the devout reader.

It is more than likely that the owner of *The Virgin and Child in a Landscape* panel was familiar with this kind of literature, even with the work of Sor Isabel de Villena which, having gone through the Valencian incunabulum and post-incunabulum editions was published again in Barcelona in 1527. These texts therefore provide us with a legitimate point of reference by which to perceive the cultural and ideological framework that would have conditioned the reaction of a Clarissan nun of the time to the panel I am examining here. And needless to say, when more specifically it came to interpreting the image, they would have given her the keys by which to identify, or at least to connect, it with the story of the flight into Egypt. As Reindert L. Falkenburg states, Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi* contains a passage in which the subject of the lactation of the Child gives rise to a delicate, tender evocation of maternity, an image that has been taken as an exemplary theme for pious contemplation and affective projection⁴⁸. As one would only expect, Isabel de Villena did not overlook the theme, which appears twice in her account of the flight. The first, which coincides with the moment subsequent to the angel's warning St Joseph, before they abandon the house in Nazareth and bid farewell to St Anne:

And having said this, Our Lady dressed her Son, wrapping him up in all the clothes she possessed, although they were so few and so poor that she could barely put shoes on him and protect him from the cold, and she put a double cloth around his head, covering his face as well as she could, since the night was bitterly cold and the boy so delicate that he felt human hardships more acutely than any man. And then Our Lady suckled him, shedding onto his face the abundant tears that fell from her eyes...⁴⁹

And the second at an initial moment of rest, after having set off on the perilous journey to Egypt:

And thus they departed from Nazareth in great fear and apprehension until they were at a considerable distance from the village; and Our Lady, overcome with fatigue, sat down on a stone to suckle her divine Son.⁵⁰

The association—or even the identification—of the Pedralbes painting with the account of the flight into Egypt seems to be confirmed by the presence, which I pointed out earlier, of the tiny figure of the man with his ass, whom we should identify as St Joseph. In other versions

of the theme, such as in the Berlin painting, St Joseph and the ass are also two tiny figures, far removed from the group of the Virgin and Child. Perhaps—who knows?—it may have been by virtue of an afterthought that, in the Pedralbes panel, the vignette was added showing who we assume to be St Joseph to make more explicit the virtual association with the theme of the flight into Egypt, which was already suggested by the combination of the Virgin suckling the Child and the landscape. Other ingredients are certainly missing that would more clearly identify the theme; even so, this possibility invites us to make other observations that would place the Pedralbes painting in the context of a set of iconographical and compositional patterns widespread in the painting of the Low Countries at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the first place, we should consider Memling's small-format *Triptych with the Flight into Egypt*, now shared in a dismembered state between the Louvre and the Cincinnati Art Museum⁵¹. The wings, when open, showed the figures of John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene (Louvre), and when closed those of St Stephen and St Christopher (Cincinnati). Each of the images of the saints is complemented with small vignettes, integrated into the landscape, that depict major episodes from their respective lives. But what I would highlight is the central panel in the triptych (Louvre) (figure 12). Here the Virgin, holding the Child in her arms, stands isolated in the foreground, completely dominating the figurative field. In fact, from both the formal and the iconographical viewpoints, this central motif constitutes a perfectly independent unit, lacking in any particularly narrative connotation, if it were not for the fact that on the right and considerably further back we see how St Joseph gathers dates from a palm that bends down miraculously and, still further back, two vignettes that concisely depict the slaughter of the Innocents and the miracle of the wheatfield, which enhance the references to the story of the flight. Perhaps I should recall here that neither the miracle of the palm tree nor that of the wheatfield figure in the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* by Pseudo-Bonaventure or the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony (or, for that matter, in the lives of Christ by Eiximenis and Isabel de Villena), presumably because they were regarded as anecdotal episodes of doubtful veracity, while they do contain and comment on, needless to say, the canonical episode of the slaughter of the Innocents. Indeed, the miracle of the palm tree, as has been observed, figured relatively rarely in the painting of the Low Countries⁵². Lastly, Memling offers us still another major

example by virtue of the ambivalence of its thematic associations. I refer to a painting in the Capilla Real, in Granada, which depicts an enthroned *Virgo lactans* of clearly Rogerian affiliation sheltered in an atrium with columns that opens onto a landscape background⁵³. However, integrated into the landscape a small vignette showing St Joseph leading the ass alludes to the flight, thereby adding this association or thematic complement to a composition that would otherwise appear –and in fact does appear– as a perfectly self-sufficient image on the fringe of any narrative context⁵⁴. In fact, it seems that the figures of St Joseph and the ass were added by Memling at a later stage, since they are absent from the underdrawing and no place was reserved for them when the landscape was painted⁵⁵.

Memling, therefore, renders the subject of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* in the manner of a 'narrative *Andachtsbild*' and it is this formula that would be taken up and developed by the following two generations of masters. Thus, in the versions by Gerard David, the landscape setting acquires new interest and new consistency, although the group of the Virgin and Child continues to dominate the scene from the foreground⁵⁶. Now the Virgin sits on a kind of natural rocky step, while in the background we see a vignette with the Virgin and Child riding the ass and followed by St Joseph (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Madrid, Museo del Prado), or else we see St Joseph beating a chestnut tree with his staff to make the fruit fall (Washington, National Gallery of Art), which might be understood as a more realistic adaptation of the miracle of the palm tree –a modulation of the account along the lines I already mentioned of the *Vitae Christi*, in which the chimerical is often either eliminated, tempered or else transformed for the sake of greater verisimilitude, in which the daily life focus is emphasised. In any case, the group of the Virgin and Child –a *Virgo lactans* in the Madrid-New York version– continues to be an independent entity which we associate with the narrative theme of the rest during the flight into Egypt thanks to its placement in natural surroundings and the inclusion of a small additional scene.

The next step, as we know, consisted of a new amplification of the landscape and a correlative reduction in the scale of the Virgin and Child motif, coupled with enrichment of the iconographical ingredients related to the rest and the flight cycle. This is what we find in the well-known versions by Patinir, such as the fine panel at the Prado, and in those by other contemporary painters of his, like Joos van Cleve,



Figure 12.
Hans Memling, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 1974-30.

who may have been following in Patinir's footsteps. In any case and as Falkenburg has stressed, the group of the Virgin and Child continues to constitute the focal point of the composition and to refer back to a 'conglomeration' of familiar subjects that had enjoyed their own previous existence as independent *Andachtsbilder*, including the *Virgo lactans*, the *Madonna humilitatis* and the Virgin in the Garden of Paradise⁵⁷. Near the Virgin Patinir places the essentials of her luggage –basket, saddlebag, staff and from time to time a pumpkin– and also close by we observe the fountain mentioned in the story of the flight. These ingredients allude clearly to the journey, but the main scene in which the leading characters are the Virgin and Child is completed with the presence of St Joseph, invariably in the middle distance⁵⁸, obtaining food or simply leading the ass, as well as with other varied additional scenes, such as the slaughter of the Innocents, the miracle of the wheatfield or the fall of the idols, once again in the form of small vignettes integrated into the landscape.

As we know, Falkenburg took his iconographic exegesis further to contend that the theme of the flight into Egypt is enriched, in Patinir's paintings, by association with the idea of the pilgrimage of life: in this case, it would be the Holy Family's journey that is proposed as the model or *exemplum* that the observer—the devotee—must face, who in his own *peregrinatio vitae* is forced to choose between the hard road of the virtuous life, which leads to salvation, and the apparently pleasant road of vice, which leads in fact to perdition and eternal damnation. The theme had come to circulate widely in the devotional literature of the Late Middle Ages, particularly in the *devotio moderna* strand; consequently it would have been familiar to both the artist and to those clients who purchased this kind of work.

In fact, Falkenburg seems to contend that virtually all Patinir's landscapes should be interpreted in terms of a complex symbolic programme that would reinforce this association with the theme of the *peregrinatio vitae*. At least one case exists, specifically the panel depicting the *Landscape with Charon Crossing the Styx* (Madrid, Museo del Prado), in which the choice between the road leading to salvation and the road that leads to damnation is unequivocally rendered, since this is the actual subject of the painting⁵⁹. Charon's boat floats in the middle of a broad stream, bounded above by the horizon and below by the edge of the frame. At the point the boat has reached, the soul is presented with two watercourses from which to choose: on the left, a river whose mouth is flanked by jagged rocks, although it leads to Paradise; on the right, a river that flows placidly between meadows and coppices, although in fact it flows straight into the mouth of Hell. As a whole, therefore, the composition provides us with an unequivocal key by which correctly to interpret the distinction between the rough road of virtue and the pleasant road of sin, which in the afterlife become Paradise and Hell, respectively. Thus, in the Prado panel the landscape structure itself diagrammatically represents the theme of the life journey and dilemma—with a rather pessimistic message in this case, for the *animula* in Charon's boat seems to have chosen the bad road. The raised viewpoint over this broad *paysage moralisé* provides the observer with the knowledge that the good Christian is given by his faith, something of which the sinner is of course unaware, since by choosing the easy path he will find only perdition.

Falkenburg suggests that all Patinir's landscapes, although they may not be seen manifestly as diagrammatic devices—that is, in the manner of *Charon Crossing the Styx*—, are

conceived on the basis of this symbolic duality between the jagged rocks (essentially deserted) and the placid cultivated (and inhabited) plains. However, this approach is a somewhat risky one which has been criticised by other specialists⁶⁰. The desire to interpret as many elements as possible as components of a perfectly coherent allegorical message obliges the iconographer to select what meaning must be attributed in each case to motifs which in themselves may be polisemical—which lend themselves to multiple and sometimes contradictory interpretations.

Furthermore, Falkenburg contends that another essential key to the iconographic interpretation of Patinir's landscapes in general and to his versions of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* in particular may be found in the distinction that St Augustine established between the *civitas terrena*, that is, the sinful world, and the *civitas Dei* and the association between this metaphor and that of life as a pilgrimage and the theme of the choice between the good and the bad roads. The inhabitants of the *civitas terrena* are those who have opted for the easy road that leads to sin and perdition; the inhabitants of the city of God are those who choose the hard, rocky road that leads to salvation⁶¹. As in so many landscapes by Patinir, in the Pedralbes panel the motif of the city is literally rendered—in this case the port city we see in the distance, which plays an especial visual role. In accordance with Falkenburg's approach, we should evidently be obliged to interpret the meaning of this motif. Nevertheless, does the composition as a whole provide us with any unequivocal key by which to associate the theme of the city with a specific meaning? Was a contrast deliberately established, as Falkenburg's interpretative scheme seems to suggest, between the *civitas terrena* and the Virgin and Child? Or is it simply that two repertoire themes were innocently combined, that is, on the one hand a panoramic view created by Patinir and, on the other, a Flémallesque model that would have been much in demand on the market to judge from the great number of variants (by other painters) that have come down to us? In a conventional rendering of the Immaculate Conception with the symbols of the litanies, the *civitas Dei* would be included as one of the Marian symbols and its interpretation would obviously raise no doubts. This is what we see, for example, in one of the Flemish paintings at the Monastery of Pedralbes, which was inserted into the made-up altarpiece of Abbess Sor Teresa de Cardona: here, all the symbols are accompanied, as was often the case, by a phylactery with the inscription that identifies them⁶². The walled *civitas Dei* contains an ecclesiastical

structure with a dome that marks the highest point of the urban skyline. It is clear that the port city that appears in the background to our *Virgo lactans*, although the occasional building may be identified as a church, was not intended to play a predominant visual role: rather the wharf and the castle –both secular constructions– constitute the motifs that acquire greatest visual preponderance and mark the character of the urban panorama. This would appear therefore to warrant a reading that establishes an opposition between the *civitas terrena*, or at least a mundane setting, and the image of the Virgin, who in herself embodies the Augustinian idea of the *civitas Dei*.

In any case, the contents of the landscape and the spatial device of the Pedralbes panel might suggest other complementary readings. Indeed, the antithesis between high and low, combined with the isolation of the Virgin and Child, evokes a rich gamut of metaphorical virtualities⁶³. In the case of Patinir's landscapes, it has been remarked that the isolation of the Virgin and Child, or of the ascetic saints, constitutes a visual rendering of the themes of renunciation of and estrangement from the sinful world⁶⁴. In the Pedralbes panel this idea is given highly effective visual expression: the solitude of the Virgin and Child is further emphasised by the fact that whom we assume to be St Joseph has lagged behind, thereby remaining a certain distance away. Whatever the painter's intentions may have been, the fact is that few known paintings function so perfectly as possible illustrations of the Mariological perspective that Eiximenis, for example, puts forward in his *Llibre de les dones* (Book of Women), in which he extols the dignity of women in the figure of the Virgin, a viewpoint to which Isabel de Villena would certainly have subscribed with enthusiasm, given her proto-feminist thinking, and which would undoubtedly have been attractive to a host of other nuns belonging to the order of St Clare:

Think... how God has honoured women, since he made himself the son of woman, and made woman a sovereign creature, endowing pure woman with an angelical nature ... for she alone remained firm in her Catholic faith when all men in the world doubted the height of the divinity of the Son of God⁶⁵.

One of the traits that distinguish the Pedralbes panel from the other versions by Patinir of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* is the fact that in this painting isolation is combined with elevation: what we observe here is genuine exaltation of the Mother and Child, raised above

us common mortals. The statuesque isolation of the group is more intense than ever; the Mother and Child acquire the connotation of an eternal image intended for devout contemplation. The predisposition and the ability to interpret the image depend, today as in the 16th century, on the observer's (or the devotee's) experience, expectations and cultural stock. If, on the one hand, an iconographical reading on the part of an art historian may be inadequate or even mistaken, on the other it is often hard, if not impossible, to determine how far the artist's intentional message may reach, whether or not he is counselled by an 'iconographical mentor'. Needless to say, on certain occasions the result of innocent combinatorial, compositional praxis might generate hermeneutical possibilities that were far from the artist's intentions. And this will certainly be more often the case in the kind of works normally described as a *pastiche* –a label that may be applied not only to the Pedralbes panel but also to innumerable Netherlandish paintings of the period⁶⁶.

All in all, it is clear that in the case of Patinir –and of the other painters I mention– the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* is proposed as a subject for pious meditation. Since this is a limit case, we might be forcing analysis if we sought to fit the Pedralbes panel into the narrative *Andachtsbild* category, but we can define it as an *Andachtsbild* with narrative virtualities or accents that suggest, without imposing it, its association with the story of the flight into Egypt. Its ambivalence merely reinforces the evocative power of this small-format panel which, by virtue of its delicacy and lyricism, would be perfectly suitable for 'imaginative devotion'⁶⁷. And this leads us once again to the horizon defined by the meditation techniques proposed in the *Vita Christi* and other similar genres. The *Meditationes Vitae Christi* urge the devout reader to feel compassion for and consequently identify with the holy personages, with their suffering and their joy, with their most dramatic situations but also with their everyday tasks. The *Meditationes* at all times urge devotees to imagine that they accompany Christ, contemplating and even talking to him; to imagine that they are physically present, not only as observers but also as invited actors. And in the Infancy cycle it is a matter of accompanying the entire Holy Family on their pilgrimage: "Go along with them: help carry the Child, and serve in whatever way you can"⁶⁸. In short, the meditation technique proposed by the *Meditationes* does not limit itself to suggesting to reader-listeners that they mentally visualise what is being narrated; it also invites them to develop the story themselves and, as far as their imaginations allow, conceive other

situations on the basis of their own experience. For the canonical Gospels themselves are taken as open texts that may not only be expounded and understood in many different ways but also amplified, using the imagination to fill in the gaps left by the Evangelists⁶⁹. Faith, devotion and honesty would seem to be enough to channel this meditative exercise and guarantee the goodness of the contemplations. The different *Vitae Christi*, by being put forward explicitly also as open texts, thereby deliberately come to form part of a potentially infinite chain of compilation and *amplificatio*, the latter founded on the exercise of imaginative meditation.

Assuming, therefore, that a Franciscan nun of probably aristocratic stock would have been familiar with this kind of pious literature⁷⁰, and by extension with the theory and technique of imaginative worship, we may surmise the value she would attribute to a painting such as the *Virgin in a Landscape* at Pedralbes, whose thematic ambivalence would contribute to stimulating her meditation on Christ's infancy and the role of the Virgin, inviting her to participate in and identify with the delicacies of the Virgin's maternity and compassion; and with this, her ability spontaneously to shift her imagination between the levels of the historical and the timeless, transforming the icon into narrative and, inversely, narrative into icon –entwining evocation of the most intimate story of Jesus and the Virgin with contemplation of the mysteries of Christianity in accordance with the model suggested by the literature of the *Vita Christi* and other similar texts. As an alternative to traditional iconographical rendering, which summarised the theme of the Flight in a (narrative) image of the Holy Family on the move, often with a complementary vignette (such as the fall of an idol), the theme of the Rest provided the opportunity to fix the account at a moment of intimate seclusion, centred on the living icon of Mary's tender maternity, and to offer this scene as an image for meditation. In my opinion, this would explain the success of this iconographical formulation of the Rest, which would be a figurative corollary of the previous –and contemporary– developments in pious literature. This, which is valid for Patinir's most characteristic versions of the Rest, is also valid for the Pedralbes painting, which may be read alternatively as the iconic fixing or condensation of the theme of the Flight, or else as the narrative transposition of an iconic image. With this a return was made to Memling's formulation, although adding to it a by no means insignificant supplement of ambivalence.

We may imagine that the 'day cell' in which the nun might have contemplated her devotional images (brought together at a given moment

in the made-up altarpiece), would have been a space suitable for this kind of private worship, understood as a necessary complement to the formal experience of the liturgical cycle that took place in the community spaces. As Albert Hauf notes in relation to the contemplative modality of the *Vitae Christi*:

The technique makes it possible to imagine all the episodes of which our inventiveness is capable and engage in all kinds of loans from and adaptations of sacred and liturgical texts. If this were not enough, it leaves a very broad margin to feel and experience them from all angles or viewpoints, which means (...) that in mathematical terms the possibilities are nothing short of infinite. If to this we add that frequent recourse was apparently had, as in the case of Ubertino [da Casale], to a cyclical system based on repetition, it is clear that meditation created an intimate, timeless, circle of experience of or coexistence with Christ, far more intense than the one created by the liturgical cycle in the exterior sphere. The contemplative is thus immersed in a twofold concentric rotation movement with Christ Jesus at the core⁷¹.

It is obvious that in comparison with the typology that Patinir and his workshop normally presented of the theme of the rest during the flight into Egypt, the *Virgo lactans* at Pedralbes maintains her prevailing *Andachtsbild* status, which derives from the Flémallesque prototype. As I have stressed, the tender, delicate image of maternity becomes particularly isolated and magnified when it is raised above a panoramic landscape, a 'world landscape', and we may presume that this particular exaltation of the Virgin would have the power to stimulate meditation and sharpen contemplation of the entire gamut of Mariological concepts traditionally associated with the image of the *Virgo lactans*, including her role as mediator for the salvation of mankind⁷². And perhaps at this point we should stress the fact that the rest of the paintings that were incorporated into the made-up retable in the Sant Joan cell also define an iconographical context that would of necessity condition or enhance the meanings that a nun would attribute to each painting. As we have seen, the altarpiece includes four scenes in which the Virgin and Child appear: in the lower section, the *Visitation* (in which the Child is still in her Mother's womb) and an image of the *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child*; in the second section, our *Virgin in a Landscape*, in which the Mother suckles her Son, and the scene of the *Lactation of St Bernard*.

Needless to say, in a Franciscan context the presence of St Bernard is only to be expected, since his thinking, which laid especial emphasis on Christ's humanity, was one of St Francis's principal models. So far as we know today, the legend of the saint's *lactatio* appears in literature and iconography only from the beginning of the 14th century onwards⁷³, and we might understand it as the adaptation of a theme that had already been circulating in the collections of the Virgin's miracles, in which she heals a sick man by offering him her milk⁷⁴. Regarding St Bernard, however, it is a case not so much healing as of conceding a spiritual asset or, as the first known account says, of infusing divine science⁷⁵. On the other hand, the Bernardine transposition of the miracle of the *lactatio* had its justification in the Cistercian saint's Mariological formulations and, in particular, in the maternal symbolism and the metaphors related to milk and lactation he had employed when speaking of the mercy of the Virgin, who offers her intercession and protection to the whole of mankind. Thus, for example, in the sermon of the Dominica infra octavam Assumptionis we read: "What does human fragility fear when it approaches Mary? There is nothing harsh, nothing terrible, in her; she is all gentleness, and she offers milk and shelter to all"⁷⁶. This warm Bernardine view of the Virgin as universal nursing mother justifies in itself the juxtaposition that takes place on the composite retable of the two images of the *lactatio*. The authority and example of St Bernard invited the pious nun to put herself in his place as beneficiary of the most intimate favours of the Virgin. Remember that in this context the miracle of the *lactatio* of St Bernard was inserted into a broad thematic gamut related to the nuptial mysticism that was directly significant to monks and nuns and circulated widely during the Late Middle Ages⁷⁷. On the other hand, the likelihood is that the nun would have interpreted the scene in accordance with the earliest and most prevalent account of the miracle, according to which it occurred when Bernard fell asleep as he was praying before a statue of the Virgin. This reading might reinforce belief in the stimulating power of images, in particular that of the Virgin and Child, which would inevitably be projected onto the other image of the *Virgo lactans* on the Pedralbes altarpiece.

Even if we admit that the set of pieces the nun had at her disposal might have been partially fruit of chance acquisitions –for example, family heirlooms or gifts–, the way the altarpiece is assembled responds to preferences characteristic of Franciscan piety and spirituality in general and, more specifically, to a form

of feminisation of Christianity that might invoke St Bernard's perspective –summarised in the aphorism *Ad Iesum per Maria*– and which, among others, had characteristic expression in the *Vitae Christi* tradition written by both male and female Franciscan authors, from the seminal work by Pseudo-Bonaventure –the first version of which may have been written by a woman, as Sarah McNamer contends– to the work by Abbess Sor Isabel de Villena, in which the life of Christ is so often narrated from the point of view of the Virgin (and of other holy women, beginning with Mary Magdalene). What the modest set of images on the Pedralbes altarpiece offers is therefore an intimate, tender, domestic poetical view of the Incarnation, conceived specially for the contemplations and meditations of a Clarissan nun. We should note, on the other hand, that once the retable had been built the empty spaces remaining in the upper section were exploited to house the images of the doctors *St Jerome* and *St Bonaventure*, flanking Patinir's panel, and of *St Francis* and *St Clare*, flanking the *Lactation of St Bernard*.

If, leaving aside the context of its reception on the part of a Clarissan nun we return to that of its production, we should make some further observations on the *Virgin in a Landscape* at Pedralbes, in recognition of the fact that it is not an isolated work in terms of its compositional and iconographical typology. Netherlandish painting of the time presents other comparable examples in which an iconic image stands in the foreground against a panoramic landscape setting. I have already mentioned the *tondo* at the National Gallery, London (NG 1864), whose source of inspiration is the same Flémallesque model, although the standing Virgin is transformed into a figure seated on the ground and, consequently, into a Virgin of humility (figure 5). Naturally, in this case also the placement of the group in a natural environment might bring to mind the theme of the flight into Egypt, and yet the figure of St Joseph does not seem to have been included in the scene. In the middle distance, quite a way away from the protagonists, a number of men mounted on horseback "may not have any narrative significance" in the opinion of Lorne Campbell; on the right, a similar distance away, we see the adult John the Baptist carrying a lantern and apparently walking along beside the sheep. The lantern illustrates the way in which Christ refers to John the Baptist as *lucerna ardens et lucens* (John 5:35) and the sheep, as we know, to the way in which John refers to Christ as *Agnus Dei* (John 1:29 and 36)⁷⁸. If the inclusion of a St Joseph would have simply completed a narrative virtuality, it is clear that the presence of John the Baptist –as an adult,



Figure 13.
Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, cat. n° 608.

not a child— provides a symbolic complement that reinforces the Christological dimension of the main theme.

The painting of Bruges provides other examples in which an iconic figure in the foreground dominates a composition that also features a landscape inspired by those of Patinir. This would be the case of the panel with *St John the Baptist* attributed by Friedländer to Isenbrant, which was auctioned at Christie's (Amsterdam, 7-5-1997, lot 35) having formerly belonged to the Bertollo Collection in Genoa. In this case and also in the Patinirian manner, the landscape includes the scenes of John the Baptist preaching (left) and the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan (right)⁷⁹. On certain occasions, this iconic-landscape modality gives rise to solutions that from the strictly narrative viewpoint might appear forced, although this seems to lack importance if we read them as an *Andachtsbild* with narrative complements. This is the case at least of the panel at the Museo del Prado (cat. 2818), also attributed to Isenbrant⁸⁰, in whose foreground we see Christ sitting on a cubic stone with his hands tied, wearing the thorny crown and with the cross, which he holds upright between his hands and legs. This image would seem obviously to derive from the

type of Christ sitting on the cold rock, although the cross is added, thereby emphasising the symbolic dimension. On the other hand, this seated Christ does not seem to be on the top of Calvary, as would befit the theme of the cold rock, because Mount Calvary is seen in the distance. In short, the landscape, whose source of inspiration is once again Patinirian models, incorporates a rendering of the climb to the top of Calvary, in which the figure of Christ appears once again. The figure of Christ, isolated in the foreground, is in itself an image of meditation: the Saviour meditates on his own fate and, in this way, challenges the observers and obliges them also to meditate.

If, as we see, the iconic-landscape formula of the Pedralbes panel may be compared to that of other similar paintings, it continues to be evident that it constitutes a *rara avis* within the catalogue of the work of Patinir and his workshop. Even so, all the motifs that are combined in this atypical composition are consistent with Patinir's repertoire and style. This is clear in the case of the landscape components: the quality of their execution may be debatable, but it is nonetheless incontrovertible that they are strictly faithful to the workshop models. More complex is the problem posed by the figure,

and this because the overall question of the authorship of the figures in the 'landscapes of Patinir' continues to raise doubts difficult to dispel or which, at least, have not been satisfactorily resolved, not even subsequent to the ambitious monographic exhibition at the Museo del Prado. From among the range of stylistically heterogeneous figures that populate Patinir's landscapes, may we identify a style attributable to Patinir? Did he normally paint only the smaller figures or did he also occasionally paint the larger-scale figures in the foregrounds? In no way do I intend to settle this question. Even so, I believe it would certainly not be a pointless exercise to define the character of the group of the Virgin and Child on the Pedralbes panel in relation to other figures present in works that critics regard as either autograph or at least issuing from Patinir's workshop.

Some observations on the problem of the figures in Patinir

As is well known, at least in one case, namely *The Temptations of St Anthony* at the Museo del Prado, the figures in the foreground of a landscape by Patinir may be attributed to another master, specifically to Quentin Massys. This collaboration is recorded in the 1574 inventory of Philip II's collection at El Escorial, which indicates that the figures are "by the hand of the master Coytin" and the landscape "by master Joaquin", which undoubtedly reflects the truth, since the style of the figures—at least the larger ones—is absolutely consistent with that of Massys, while the landscape corresponds to the style of Patinir. Furthermore, extant documentation attests to the family and friendship links between Massys and Patinir, the former, for example, having been one of the tutors of the daughters from Patinir's first marriage subsequent to the premature death of the landscape painter⁸¹. On the basis of such evidence both Friedländer and, later, Koch, although each with his own nuances, laid particular emphasis on the connection with Massys of other figures present in some of Patinir's masterpieces.

Hence, for Friedländer the figures (in the foregrounds) of the *Baptism of Christ* in Vienna and of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* at the Prado, assumed to have been painted by Patinir, reveal that Patinir was "a competent disciple of Quentin"⁸²; while Koch contended that in the same *Rest* panel at the Prado and the *Landscape with St Christopher* at El Escorial, the larger figures were painted by Massys, or else under the influence of Massys, perhaps even by Patinir himself. On the other hand, in

Koch's view the figures in the *Baptism* at Vienna have nothing to do with Massys.⁸³ Beyond their discrepancies, however, both specialists concurred that Massys had exerted major influence over Patinir as far as figures are concerned.

For his part, Karel van Mander tells us that in the Melchior Wijntgis Collection he saw three paintings by Patinir and one by Joos van Cleve with a "very beautiful Madonna", to which Patinir had added an "especially pretty landscape"⁸⁴. This testimony, too, has given rise to observations, which do not always coincide, from critics when it comes to identifying possible collaborations between the two artists in the preserved works. Koch even put forward the hypothesis that the work that Van Mander saw was the *Rest during the Flight to Egypt* at the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (figure 13), or in any case he seemed to take it for granted that it was Van Cleve who painted the leading figures of the Virgin and Child. Other more cautious opinions support this supposed connection, although they suggest that the figures may have been painted by a "member of Van Cleve's workshop"⁸⁵. Later I shall discuss these proposals. In the meantime I should mention that other instances have been pointed out in which collaboration would have taken place—autograph on the part of both—between Van Cleve and Patinir. The most prominent would be that of the *Virgin and Child with a Dominican* at the Louvre (RF 2068), pointed out by Friedländer and seconded by Cécile Scaillérez⁸⁶, although in this case too there are those who cast doubt on the autographs of Van Cleve (John Oliver Hand⁸⁷) and of Patinir (Robert A. Koch⁸⁸).

Of what there can be no doubt, nevertheless, is that a fertile exchange of models took place between Joos van Cleve and Patinir, inevitably involving their respective workshops, collaborators and followers. Thus, in his *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* at the Brussels museum (figure 14) Van Cleve incorporated the motifs from a composition by Patinir with which we are familiar in more than one variant, including the one in the *Rest* at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (Madrid) and in the two fragments—from a mutilated painting—at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam) and in a private collection. Moreover, either Joos Van Cleve himself or his workshop used the same group of the Virgin suckling the Child for another composition, namely the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* at the Munich Pinakothek, combining it with a landscape background containing motifs from other compositions by Patinir⁸⁹. Nonetheless, in these paintings it is clear that the style and the repertoire deriving from Patinir were recreated by Joos van Cleve



Figure 14.
Joos van Cleve, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Brussels, Royal Museums of fine Arts of Belgium, inv. 2928. ©RMFAB, Brussels / Photo: F. Maes.

(with greater or lesser contribution from his workshop in each case). Also the group of the Virgin and Child in these two paintings by Van Cleve, in Brussels and Munich, repeat an earlier model, which would have enjoyed considerable prestige since it was exploited by other Netherlandish painters at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. The hypothetical prototype has not been preserved and it is possible that the oldest known variant is the painting attributed to the Master of the Legend of St Catherine (former Fink Collection; auctioned at Sotheby's, New York, no. 29)⁹⁰. If Winkler (1912) attributed the lost prototype to the Master of Flémalle, later Richardson (1939) thought more in terms of Rogier van der Weyden, pointing out the analogies with the *Virgin of St Luke* (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts) and with the figure of the half-length Virgin at the Art Institute of Chicago⁹¹. Without attempting to solve the dilemma, let me just say that the Campin-Van der Weyden prototype was faithfully interpreted by Van Cleve, although he also endowed it with his own personal style. In any case, it seems clear that it was Van Cleve's variant that was adopted for the works that emerged from Patinir's workshop, invariably addressing the same theme of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt*, that is, the painting at the National Gallery (NG 3115), which may be attributed to Patinir's workshop⁹², or at least to a "follower of Patinir's" as Lorne Campbell prefers⁹³, and the lost painting that had been at the Museo Civico Gaetano Filangieri in Naples⁹⁴. Both versions simplify Van Cleve's mod-

el and, needless to say, were not painted by this master. While it is difficult to assess the figures in the lost Naples painting, those in the London painting may conceivably be described as a Patinirian adaptation of Van Cleve's model, although the quality of their execution is inferior to that of Patinir's best figures. In this case, therefore, both the figures and the landscape may have been painted by one or more of Patinir's assistants⁹⁵. Although these examples may be insufficient, they allow us to surmise that the intense exchange between the workshops of Van Cleve and Patinir would have consisted mainly of an exchange of models –often drawings– rather than an autograph collaboration between both masters.

The issue of whether or not Patinir was responsible for at least some of the larger-scale figures in his landscapes has given rise to contradictory and often wavering replies, accompanied by the expression of a certain perplexity. As has rightly been observed, the hypothetical identification of a genuine figure style of Patinir's would have to meet two quite obvious requirements: that this style should be, if not dominant, at least recurrent in the works which –with greater or lesser consensus– have been placed in the nucleus of the Patinirian catalogue; and that this style may not be either identified or confused with that of any other master⁹⁶.

The issue is complicated, certainly, by the fact that one of the key works for this discussion, the above-mentioned *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* (today in a private Wiesbaden collection) (figure 15), is apparently inaccessible and has therefore not been examined in recent years by any of the specialists who have published studies on Patinir⁹⁷. This is an atypical composition in Patinir's catalogue by virtue, we might say, of its 'traditionalism'. In comparison with the wings, in the central panel the group of the Virgin suckling the Child occupies a substantially smaller portion of the surface, the group is placed a little further back from the picture plane, the Virgin is seated and the format of the panel is much broader. The leading figures therefore leave a considerable amount of space free for the landscape. Even so, in this central panel of the triptych the protagonists are granted a visual prevalence greater than the one they have in any other version of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* rendered by Patinir in the characteristic horizontal format. Hulin de Loo, Baldass and Friedländer accepted the triptych as an autograph work by Patinir. Friedländer wrote that it engendered "vivid recollection of the triptych" which then belonged to the Kau-

fmann Collection and in 1904 was damaged by fire⁹⁸, as a result of which it had to be restored. In reference to the central panel, he observed that both the landscape and the figures –those in the foreground, in the middle distance and in the background– reveal “a wholly convincing air of unity” and that in the composition as a whole “there are no sharp dividing lines, no stylistic jumps”. The same applies, according to Friedländer, to the wings of the triptych, in which the figures of John the Baptist and of Pope Cornelius completely dominate the composition from the foreground. More qualified is the opinion of Koch, who discerningly places the triptych “in the early mature style of Patinir”, attributes “the glorious landscape of the central panel” to Patinir, but suspects that he may have counted on collaboration from “an unidentified master” for the landscapes in the wings⁹⁹. Be that as it may, Koch casts no doubts on the figures of St John and St Cornelius and ends up admitting that all the figures on the three panels of the triptych –large, medium sized and small– would have been painted by Patinir himself¹⁰⁰. Recently, Alejandro Vergara has suggested that the figures may have been painted by two or more artists and only the figure of St John seems to him to be the autograph work of Patinir¹⁰¹. What is most disconcerting here is the way in which he devalues the central group of the Virgin and Child, which strike him as having been painted “by a specialist in figures belonging to Patinir’s workshop or else a collaborator with the same.” In my opinion, among the larger-scale figures on the triptych it is precisely this group of the Virgin and Child that best conforms to the Patinirian catalogue by virtue of its stylistic affinities with the figures in other landscapes that critics accept as autograph works. Needless to say, however, since I have not seen the triptych first hand I must remain cautious. In any case, the figures that arouse doubts in my mind are the ones on the wings, and of them that of St Cornelius more than St John. And in this context more emphasis should perhaps be laid than hitherto on the conspicuous imbalance that exists between the wings and the central panel, caused by the different scales of the leading figures, an imbalance we do not observe, for example, in the *Triptych with the Penitence of St Jerome* at the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

Evidence that the leading figures on the central panel of the *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* were particularly esteemed by Patinir –and by his clients– is the fact that they were repeated in another work from the workshop, the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* with the coat of arms of Lucas Rem and his



Figure 15.
Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Wiesbaden, private collection. Source: Robert A. Koch, *Joachim Patinir*, Princeton University Press, 1968.

wife (Jean Bonna Collection, Geneva) and in a painting that addresses the same subject which is now in Brussels (Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, inv. 2595), the work of one of the master’s followers, to which I have already alluded because it includes a variant of the port city motif that also appears on the Pedralbes panel. On the other hand, as has been noted, the St John on the left-hand wing took its inspiration from Gerard David, which obliges us once again to speak of the *Baptism of Christ* in Vienna, whose composition and figures –as Weale pointed out– are a free though unmistakable adaptation of the composition executed by David on the central panel of the great triptych in Bruges (Groninger Museum). As I have reminded the reader, Friedländer related these figures with the style of Massys, something that Koch rejected. In my opinion, we must nonetheless take into account

that Massys's style constituted at least one of the filters through which the painter of the Vienna figures –probably Patinir himself– interpreted David's models, above all as regards the figure of Christ¹⁰².

Of course, a certain margin of stylistic variation may be justified when the same master, Patinir in this case, has recourse to heteroclitic models so long as the common traits of the figures attributed to him are sufficiently manifest. And this margin becomes even more plausible in the case of an artist such as Patinir, who was apparently concerned with maintaining a recognisably personal style more in his landscapes than in his figures, if we accept that it was mainly on his innovative landscape idiom that the prestige of his signature or 'mark' was based. Having said this, I believe that the affinities between the foreground figures in the *Baptism of Christ* in Vienna, in the *Landscape with St Christopher* at El Escorial, in the *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* in Wiesbaden (at least on its central panel) and in the *Rest* at the Prado justify their assignation to the same master, presumably to Patinir –as contended by, among others, Friedländer and Koch. An additional, though insufficient, argument is provided by the fact that these figures –or almost all of them– were repeated with a greater or lesser number of detail variants in other works from Patinir's workshop or by his followers (who may or may not have trained at his workshop).

This typology of figures –and I continue to speak principally of larger-scale figures– is characterised by a certain archaism: such figures denote not only bonding with the models of the great masters from previous generations, which was something characteristic of Netherlandish painting of the time, but also a pacific, sober, respectful interpretation of what we might describe as the 'spirit' of 15th century Netherlandish painting, reinterpreted, doubtlessly, in accordance with a sensitivity peculiar to the first decades of the 16th century. The relative dependence of the presumed Patinir-figure painter on the styles of Gerard David and Quentin Massys places him in a strand of poetic archaism which, significantly, did not succumb to the temptation of 'Antwerp mannerism'. It was precisely this that distinguished Patinir the figure painter from his colleague Joos van Cleve, who did come close, albeit with talent and moderation, to the flamboyant, theatrical style of the contemporary Mannerists. In my view, it is highly significant that one of Van Cleve's most archaising compositions as far as the figures are concerned, namely the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* at Brussels, is at the same time

one of his most Patinirian works in terms of the landscape and the figure-landscape relationship.

Critics are unanimous in describing the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* at the Prado as one of Patinir's masterpieces (figure 16). As I mentioned, both Friedländer and Koch link the group of the Virgin and Child to the style of Massys, although the former contends that the work is by Patinir influenced by Massys, while the latter leaves the question more open by considering three possibilities: that the figures are the work of Massys, of Massys and one of his assistants, or of Patinir (taking it for granted that he was influenced by Massys). Recently, in the corresponding entry in the catalogue raisonné for the Prado exhibition, Pilar Silva concludes that, unlike the other figures in the background, the Virgin and Child may be attributed neither to Patinir nor Massys, but rather to a member of Massys's workshop. In my view –and here I agree with Friedländer– the group seems to be consistent with the style of the large-scale figures that predominate in Patinir's autograph landscapes. And such being the case, this would certainly be one of the finest figures ever painted by Patinir in terms of drawing, of composition and of pictorial rendering and would provide the yardstick for the master's talents as a painter of figures. I should add that the group of the Virgin and Child in the Prado painting was used, with some variants, in a painting of considerably smaller format (38 x 51 cm), where it was combined with a landscape which, though different, is clearly of Patinirian affiliation. This painting was auctioned at Sotheby's some years ago (London, 6-7-2011, lot 8), where it was attributed to the 'workshop of Joachim Patinir'¹⁰³. In the leading figures group the variants affect above all the Child, who adopts a more rigid pose, with his head in full profile. Furthermore, the colour of the cape (red) differs from that of its counterpart in the Prado painting (whitish blue). And lastly, the figure of St Joseph in the middle distance is taken not from the Prado painting but from the *Triptych with the Rest* in Wiesbaden. Evidently, the rendering of the *Rest* auctioned at Sotheby's has none of the strength, the precision and the subtlety that characterise the *Rest* at the Prado and it is also inferior in quality to the Pedralbes painting. If we accept that this latter is a product of Patinir's workshop, the same does not clearly apply to the work auctioned at Sotheby's.

As I noted earlier, we perceive how in his figures and on the basis of a sensitivity characteristic of the initial years of the 16th century Patinir managed to interpret the spirit of Netherlandish realism founded by the great masters of the fourteen-hundreds, linking up in particu-



Figure 16.
Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. Madrid, Museo del Prado.

lar with the strand initiated by Robert Campin and Rogier van der Weyden. The lyrical tone and somewhat academicising delicacy with which the painter reinterpreted these models constitute one of the stylistic options at artists' disposal during the first decades of the 16th century. With these figures it seems as though Patinir had set out to confer a seal of respectability on a set of works whose innovative quality lay, needless to say, in the leading visual role assigned to the landscape in detriment to the figure. We might say, therefore, that the boldness of the new landscape genre was offset not only by the seriousness of its religious content—with its narrative and symbolic ingredients—but also by the stylistic pedigree of its figures. By taking up this option, as I mentioned, Patinir-figure painter revealed that he was barely receptive or entirely unreceptive to the models of the Italian Renaissance and even to the suggestions that came from Dürer, whose influence was decisive on many other Netherlandish painters active in Antwerp—above all the 'Antwerp Mannerists'. Not even the happy encounter between Dürer and Patinir in 1520-1521—with which we are so familiar thanks to Dürer's travel diary—seems to have served to introduce Dürerian motifs or stylistic nuances into Patinir's later works.

Even so, I note a clear stylistic consistency in the group of larger figures we might plausi-

bly consider to be autograph works by Patinir, and this encompasses not only the facial types but also the drawing and the volumetric rendering of the folds in the clothes. Indeed, in my opinion this latter aspect constitutes one of the most easily controllable and clearly distinguishes Patinir's style from that of the other masters with whom he shared and exchanged ideas, like Quentin Massys and Joos van Cleve. And needless to say, the elegant, tempered style of his folds contrasts with the edgy decorative and calligraphic over-elaborateness so characteristic of the products of Antwerp Mannerism. In any case, it strikes me that there is a manifest correlation between the way the folds are treated in the figures of the Virgin and Child in the *Rest* at the Prado and in those of the *Rest* on the triptych belonging to the Wiesbaden private collection; furthermore, I believe this analogy may be extended to the group of St Christopher and the Child on the El Escorial panel as well as to the figures of John the Baptist and Christ in the foreground of the Vienna panel.

On the basis of these premises I believe we might throw new light on the figures of the Virgin and Child that occupy the central position in the *Rest* at the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, which by virtue of its landscape content is regarded unanimously as an autograph work by Patinir (figure 17). The first I must say is that



Figure 17.
Joachim Patinir, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, detail. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, cat. n° 608.

the group of the Virgin and Child derives unmistakably from a prototype created probably by Robert Campin, the *Virgin and Child before a Fire*¹⁰⁴. The oldest version of this composition, preserved at the Hermitage in St Petersburg (inv. 448), forms a diptych with the *Throne of Mercy* (inv. 447) and has been attributed either to the master himself or else to one of his collaborators or followers¹⁰⁵ (figure 18). The presence of a washbowl and the fact that the Child is naked have led to the belief that the Virgin may have bathed him or is on the point of doing so, although the presence of the fire has also suggested a more serious reading, namely that the child attempts to shun the fire in what is recognised as an allusion to the sacrifices described in the Old Testament and, consequently, to his own future sacrifice, while the Mother seems to protect him with her right hand, perhaps also in awareness of the fate that awaits her Son¹⁰⁶.

On transferring the Virgin and Child from a domestic interior to the open air, Patinir did the same with the motif of the fire. This may have

been merely the result of a mechanical adaptation, although we cannot rule out the possibility that he intended to preserve the virtual symbolic meaning of fire in relation to the Child. We should recall, in this context, the exegetical perspective according to which the sufferings Christ had to undergo as from his earliest infancy –the rigours resulting from the poverty of the Holy Family as well as the Circumcision and the Flight into Egypt– were merely the prelude to or even the beginning of his Passion. If the flight saved him from the worst, from the martyrdom of the Innocents, this was only because the Son of God had been reserved for a future sacrifice that would arrive in due time. Nonetheless, we might also consider the appropriateness of the fire motif in the narrative context of the flight. Although the fire may seem somewhat unusual in the iconographical tradition of the rest during the flight into Egypt as it was codified from the end of the 15th century, in fact it is by no means inconsistent with the account. It is easy to imagine that on the

long, arduous road the Holy Family would have sought comfort several times by lighting a fire, which also served as a stove. Indeed, in the Berlin painting we see water boiling in a pot over the fire, which does not appear in the panel at the Hermitage (or in the other versions that continue to place the scene in an interior). Without the need to assign a symbolic meaning to fire, it is perfectly imaginable as part of a purely narrative construction that sought to convey a credible view of the everyday and the necessary. This we find at least in Sor Isabel de Villena's *Vita Christi*, in which this motif gives rise to a considerable part of the narrative. The Franciscan author imagined that, at the moment of departure, St Anne had provided the Virgin and St Joseph with a mount and several provisions, including a flint with which to light a fire:

...here you have a flint so that you may light a fire on the barren mountains, and thereby you may find comfort, you and your Son, in the heat of the fire, and you may boil an egg every time you have the opportunity to make fire...¹⁰⁷

And in a subsequent passage, on relating how the Holy Family sought refuge in a cave, the Franciscan author returns to the theme and tells how St Joseph used the flint that St Anne had given them to light a fire, next to which they took comfort and on which, naturally, Joseph cooked an egg for the Child. And once they had eaten:

...they remained here close to the fire talking about the great divine mysteries hidden to mortal men but revealed to them through divine mercy¹⁰⁸

Hence the literary testimony of Isabel de Villena serves to underline the possibilities that the theme of the flight into Egypt offered when it came to assimilating the generic motifs of an everyday reality, either in the literary field or in that of pictorial rendering. Like the image of maternal lactation, that of the fire could be readily transferred from an interior to an exterior, and in this sense the cycle of the flight provided a perfectly plausible context.

The Flémallesque prototype, the *Virgin and Child before a Fire*, engendered a certain number of variations¹⁰⁹, among them a late 14th century engraving signed by the Master BM –normally regarded as a disciple of Schongauer's–, who recreated the model with a certain degree of freedom, also transferring the group outdoors although in this case without a panoramic view, only a foreground in which the presence



Figure 18.
Robert Campin (Workshop of?), *Virgin and Child*. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, inv. n° 443.

of grass denotes an exterior¹¹⁰. Furthermore, the engraver eliminated the fire motif, consequently altering the gesture of the right hand of the Virgin, who ceases to stretch it out and, instead, supports her Son's legs. In any case, the example of the *Rest* in Berlin is of maximum importance when it comes to situating the Pedralbes painting in the framework of the practices of Patinir and his workshop, since here also the Virgin was transferred from the Flémallesque church interior apse to a landscape exterior. Having said this, I should stress that the Berlin *Rest*, although the model from which it derives is evident, was adapted with a greater margin of freedom: the Virgin's head leans more to the left and downwards to emphasise her relationship with the Child and, above all, the pose of the Child himself is altered. On the other hand, in this case the composition is not reversed with respect to the prototype, unlike in that of the *Virgo lactans* at Pedralbes.

Another question to be debated is the affiliation of the group of the Virgin and Child on the Berlin panel. As I pointed out earlier, Robert Koch attributed it –apparently with great conviction– to Joos van Cleve, while other more cautious opinions ascribe it to “a member of Van

Cleve's workshop". It has also been indicated that the underdrawing of the Virgin and Child differs from Patinir's style, whereas "it resembles that of Joos van Cleve"¹¹¹. While it is true that the preliminary drawing differs from the most recurrent patterns in other figures on Patinir's panels, in my opinion it is debatable whether the figures may be attributed to Van Cleve or to one of his collaborators. The interpretation made here of a Flémallesque model strikes me as extraneous to the style of Van Cleve and closer to that of other figures in the foregrounds of other panels by Patinir, including the group of the Virgin and Child in the *Triptych with the Rest* (Wiesbaden), in the *Rest* at the Prado and also the Virgin and Child on the Pedralbes panel. The movement, volume and calligraphy of the folds in the cloth, in particular, strike me as differing from Van Cleve's patterns to the same extent that they come close to those of Patinir, perhaps with a slight drop in quality. It might also be expedient here to emphasise the extreme similarity between the Virgin's hands in the Berlin painting and those of the Virgin in the Monastery of Pedralbes painting. In short, while it may be that the figures of the Virgin and Child in Berlin do not constitute an autograph work by Patinir, they do seem to have issued from his workshop –from one of his collaborators or pupils– rather than from the hand of an independent master.

Lastly, I believe that my overview of the leading figures in Patinir's *Rests* should not neglect the panel in the Vogüé Collection in Dijon, although in this case I have to base my conclusions on a black-and-white photograph. Koch described it as a "very well painted composition" and, as I mentioned, although he classified it as a product "of the workshop", he did not rule out the possibility that it might be an autograph work of Patinir's. Nevertheless, the figures did not strike him as consistent with "his own style", but rather "suggestive of that of Joos van Cleve"¹¹². But though this might seem to be a somewhat rash statement, since I have not been able to examine the painting first hand, I get the impression that the leading group of the Virgin and Child is consistent with the style and typology of figures in the *Triptych with the Rest* in Wiesbaden and with the *Rest* at the Prado. In any case, the Vogüé painting features a finely composed group with an alert Child who stretches out his arms towards the little bird that flies away. And once again the type of the Virgin seems close to that of the Pedralbes painting. Her head and face, her high clear forehead, her small mouth and chin and the movement of the folds on her dress and cape all clearly recall the Virgin at Pedralbes.

It is my hope that these considerations will serve at least to reinforce the idea that Patinir himself would have executed many of the figures in his paintings, although his designation as a master who specialised fundamentally in landscape painting continues to be valid, something that most of his contemporaries would have acknowledged to judge from Dürer's famous description of him as "der gut landshafft maler". As Dan Ewing has suggested, for reasons unknown Patinir does not seem to have taken maximum advantage of the commercial opportunities afforded by the new landscape genre he had created¹¹³. Indeed, everything indicates that his productivity was rather low and that he never employed a large number of apprentices and journeymen. The fact that a number of paintings that presumably issued from his workshop are of uneven quality might therefore be due to their having been executed by these few apprentices or assistants. Whatever the case, the collaboration formulae would have varied: while in the *Temptations of St Anthony* at the Prado the figures were executed by such a prestigious master as Massys, in other cases it seems that the task of rendering the figures was assigned to modest painters, who might even have copied figure models by Patinir himself, as seems to be the case with the *Rests* in the Jean Bonna Collection in Geneva or at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid –in which the landscapes also might have been largely executed by members of his workshop. As a token of the complexity of the issue, we have the singular case of the *Crucifixion* at the Portland Art Museum (inv. 41.7), in which the landscape plays a very secondary role but the figures struck Friedländer as autograph works by Patinir¹¹⁴ (something that Koch denies). Friedländer's opinion is undoubtedly conditioned by his idea that as a figure painter Patinir largely imitated Massys. In my view, whoever painted the Portland panel would certainly have been a disciple of Massys's¹¹⁵, although he may also have had connections with Patinir, something far from improbable given the links between the former and the latter¹¹⁶. It would therefore be perfectly feasible to surmise that the painter responsible for the *Crucifixion* at Portland combined models and traits deriving from the workshops of both masters.

My conclusion, therefore, is that *The Virgin and Child in a Landscape* at Pedralbes, although it is an atypical composition compared to Patinir's oeuvre as a whole –by virtue of the visual importance of the figures and of its vertical format–, is nevertheless fruit of the combination of genuinely Patinirian motifs. The Flémallesque and Rogerian influences seem to predominate

in the figures by Patinir, especially in the groups of the Virgin and Child, and the *Rest* in Berlin provides us with a parallel, unequivocal example of exploitation of a Flémallesque model. The figures on the Pedralbes panel are entirely consistent with the figure style that prevails in Patinir's landscapes and even contribute to completing a coherent image of the typology I believe we may ascribe to Patinir himself. Perhaps we should classify the Pedralbes panel as largely a 'workshop' painting, so long as we

bear in mind that Patinir would have closely supervised its creation and execution and may even have intervened himself. If the entire piece is by a collaborator, it must be confessed that he superbly imitated the master's style and painting technique, as regards both the landscape and the figures. In my opinion, the Pedralbes painting is undoubtedly closer to the core of Patinir's output than other works which at the Prado exhibition were assigned, perhaps over-generously, to his workshop or circle¹¹⁷.

* This article has been translated from the Spanish by Richard Lewis Rees. I published a first version of my study of this painting in 2005 as an entry in a catalogue raisonné; consequently and of necessity in reduced form. See R. CORNUDELLA (2005), “Joachim Patinir (taller). Verge amb el Nen en un paisatge”, in M. CARBONELL, A. CASTELLANO and R. CORNUDELLA (eds.), *Pedralbes. Els Tresors del Monestir*, Barcelona, Ajuntament de Barcelona, p. 120-126. Since then, several studies on Patinir have been published and, above all, the ambitious monographic exhibition on Patinir was held at the Prado Museum, with its corresponding catalogue raisonné, in which no mention was made of the painting at Pedralbes. See A. VERGARA (ed.) (2007), *Patinir. Estudios y catálogo crítico*, Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado. Having now resumed my study of the Pedralbes painting, I have decided to place it in a broader critical perspective and pose a number of general questions on the output of Patinir and his studio, comparing and contrasting my ideas with the most recent contributions to furthering knowledge on Patinir. Moreover, for the purposes of this new study I had access to a recent reflectography examination (December 2016) conducted by technical staff at the Museo Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

1. Abundant bibliography exists on the history of the Monastery of Santa Maria de Pedralbes. In particular, see E. ANZIZU (1897), *Fulles històriques del Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes*, Barcelona-Sarrià, F. Xavier Altés; and A. CASTELLANO i TRESSERA (1998), *Pedralbes a l'Edat Mitjana: història d'un monestir femení*, Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat.

2. A procedure that, incidentally, would have caused either the sovereign or his civil servants some qualms, since to “ease the conscience” of the monarch the seller was obliged to donate one fifth of his earnings as alms to the Convent of Jerusalem in Barcelona. See A. DURAN i SANPERE (1975), *Barcelona i la seva història*, 3. *L'art i la cultura*, Barcelona, Curial, 1975, p. 328-329.

3. D. MARTENS (2005), “Pieter Coeck van Aelst (entorn), ‘Santa Clara i santa Agnès, Sagrada Família treballant, arcàngel Gabriel i sant Francesc’, segon quart del segle XVI”, in M. CARBONELL, A. CASTELLANO and R. CORNUDELLA (eds.), *Pedralbes. Els Tresors del*

Monestir, op. cit., p. 102-105. The same author subsequently extended his study in another major article: D. MARTENS (2006), “Le triptyque de la Sainte Famille au travail de Pedralbes, une oeuvre flamande ‘hispanisé’”, *Oud Holland*, 119 (1), p. 41-64.

4. We should note, moreover, that Ferdinand the Catholic had contemplated marrying his cousin Teresa to Lorenzo de Medici, Duke of Urbino and grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent. See R. CORNUDELLA (2005), “Retaule factici de l'abadessa sor Teresa de Cardona”, in M. CARBONELL, A. CASTELLANO and R. CORNUDELLA (eds.), *Pedralbes. Els Tresors del Monestir*, op. cit., p. 100-102.

5. See C. SANJUST I LATORRE (2010), *L'obra del Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes des de la seva fundació fins al segle XVI: un monestir reial per a l'orde de les clarisses a Catalunya*, Barcelona, Promocions i Publicacions Universitàries, Institut d'Estudis Mòn Juïc, p. 411-419.

6. Cfr. C. SANJUST I LATORRE (2010), *L'obra del Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes...*, op. cit., p. 418.

7. A. ESCUDERO I RIBOT (1988), *El Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes*, Barcelona, Edicions de Nou Art Thor, p. 49-50.

8. J. BASSEGODA I NONELL (1978), *Guia del Monestir de Pedralbes*, Barcelona, Edicions de Nou Art Thor, p. 42; A. ESCUDERO I RIBOT (1988), *El Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes*, op. cit., p. 70.

9. E. ANZIZU (1897), *Fulles històriques del Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes*, op. cit., p. 125-126.

10. Arxiu Històric de Protocols de Barcelona, 257/63, Joan Vilana, *Primus liber testamentorum*, 1490-1519, f. 102-105.

11. See J. GARRIGA (2005), “Anònim. Sagrada Família de la mosca. Segon quart del segle XVI”, in M. CARBONELL, A. CASTELLANO and R. CORNUDELLA (eds.), *Pedralbes. Els Tresors del Monestir*, op. cit., p. 128-131.

12. Regarding this anonymous artist, see M. COMBLEN-SONKES and N. VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN (1986), *Les Primitifs flamands, I. Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle*, 14. *Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de*

Dijon, Bruxelles, Centre national de recherche Primitifs flamands, p. 233-242; M.-L. LIEVENS-DE WAE-GH (1991), *Les primitifs flamands, I. Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle*, 16. *Le Musée national d'art ancien et le Musée national des carreaux de faïence de Lisbonne*, Bruxelles, Centre national de recherche Primitifs flamands, p. 243-256; N. TOUSSAINT (1998), “Les petits maîtres de la fin du XV^e siècle à Bruxelles”, in B. DE PATOUL and R. VAN SCHOUTE (eds.), *Les Primitifs flamands et leur temps*, Tournai, La Renaissance du Livre, p. 524-560.

13. Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie/RKDimages (henceforward RKDimages), no. 6243 and no. 62407.

14. RKDimages, nos 35772 and 49845.

15. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1931), *Die altniederländische Malerei*, Leiden, A. W. Sijthoff's Uitgeversmij, vol. 9, p. 101-124; addenda (Patinir) in M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1937), *Die altniederländische Malerei*, Leiden, A. W. Sijthoff's Uitgeversmij, vol. 14, p. 118-119; M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1973), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, Leiden, A. W. Sijthoff Editions, vol. 9b, p. 99-138.

16. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press.

17. A. VERGARA (ed.) (2007), *Patinir. Estudios y catálogo crítico*, op. cit. On the other hand, they do mention the Pedralbes painting and quote my study, D. MARTENS, “Le triptyque de la Sainte Famille au travail de Pedralbes...”, op. cit., p. 59 and p. 63, note 45; and L. CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings, with French Paintings before 1600* (National Gallery Catalogues), London, National Gallery Company, vol. 1, p. 291 and p. 293, note 15.

18. M. W. AINSWORTH (1996), “‘The Virgin and Child in an Apse’: Reconsidering a Campin Workshop Design”, in S. FOISTER and S. NASH (eds.), *Robert Campin: New Directions in Scholarship. Papers delivered at the Robert Campin Symposium (March 12-13, London, National Gallery)*, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 149-158; L. CAMPBELL (1998), *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings* (National Gallery Catalogues), London, National Gallery Company, p. 100-103.

19. M.-L. LIEVENS-DE WAEGH (1991), *Les primitifs flamands, I. Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle*, 16. *Le Musée national d'art ancien et le Musée national des carreaux de faïence de Lisbonne*, op. cit., p. 117 (no. 56).
20. RKDimages no. 47249 and no. 47250.
21. The *Virgin Standing with Angels* or *Madonna Seilern* is preserved at the Courtauld Gallery, London (Count Antoine Seilern bequest; P.1978. P.G.245). The landscape variant is documented as belonging to a private collection in Switzerland. See L. SILVER (1984), *The Paintings of Quinten Massys, with Catalogue Raisonné*, Oxford, Phaidon, p. 75-76 and cat. no. 13 (B. Variant), p. 207, with preceding bibliography.
22. L. SILVER (1984), *The Paintings of Quinten Massys...*, p. 75-76.
23. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1974), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, op. cit., vol. 11, no. 176; L. CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings...*, p. 288-293.
24. As Campbell points out, in the context of Bruges the Flémallesque *Virgin in an Apse* was adapted also for the scene of the Presentation in the Temple, the central panel in a triptych attributed to Isenbrant: in this case it proved necessary evidently to conceal the Virgin's naked breast, since it would have been out of place. See CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings...*, p. 291 and figure 5, p. 290.
25. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1971), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, op. cit., vol. 6b, no. 217.
26. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1972), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, op. cit., vol. 8, no. 126c.
27. A reflectography examination conducted by Mireia Campuzano, Núria Pedragosa and Carme Ramells, from the Department of Restoration and Preventive Conservation at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Barcelona), in December 2016, carried out using an OSIRIS camera by Opus Instruments Ltd, with a 900-1700nm wavelength InGaAs sensor. When it came to interpreting the underdrawing, I was assisted by opinions from the members of this technical team, for which I sincerely thank them.
28. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 16.
29. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 46, cat. no. 21, p. 79 and Fig. 59.
30. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 46, cat. no. 32, p. 83 and Fig. 58.
31. N. BARELLA (1988), *Il Museo Filangieri*, Napoli, Guida Editori. On p. 119 she reproduces the panel with a caption that generously attributes it to 'Jan van Eyck'. See also RKDimages no. 52116.
32. RKDimages no. 52222. The photograph in the M. J. Friedländer archive documents the panel as 'Beermann 1924 / Privatbesitz Berlin'.
33. See A. VERGARA (2007), "Las pinturas de Patinir y su taller, y su cronología", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 373-377, here p. 377, note 3.
34. According to Koch, the figures in the Dijon panel "are not in Patinir's own style, but they are suggestive of that of Joos van Cleve".
35. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 46, note 76. The hypothesis is accepted also by W. S. GIBSON (1989), *Mirror of the Earth. The World Landscape in Sixteenth-Century Flemish Painting*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, p. 15.
36. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 25-28, cat. no. 8, p. 74, figs 16-18.
37. See W. S. GIBSON (1989), *Mirror of the Earth?*..., op. cit.
38. See M. MEISS (1956), "Jan van Eyck and the Italian Renaissance", in *Venezia e l'Europa (Atti del XVIII Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'arte, 1955)*, Venezia, Arte Veneta, p. 58-69; included later in M. MEISS (1976), *The Painter's Choice. Problems in the Interpretation of Renaissance Art*, New York, Harper & Row, p. 19-35.
39. *Evangelia Apocrypha*, ed. Constantinus Tischendorf, Avenarius et Mendelssohn, 1853, p. 50-105 (Pseudo-Mathaei Evangelium) and 171-202 (Evangelium infantiae Salvatoris arabicum).
40. S. McNAMER (2009), "The Origins of the 'Meditationes vitae Christi'", *Speculum*, 84, p. 905-955; S. McNAMER (2010), *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.
41. S. McNAMER (2009), "The Origins of the 'Meditationes vitae Christi'", op. cit., p. 949 and note 73.
42. D. FALVAY and P. TÓTH (2015), "L'autore e la trasmissione delle 'Meditationes vitae Christi' in base a manoscritti volgari italiani", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 108, p. 403-430; D. FALVAY and P. TÓTH (2015), "New Light on the date and authorship of the 'Meditationes Vitae Christi'", in S. KELLY and R. PERRY (eds.), *Devotional Culture in Late Medieval England and Europe: Diverse Imaginations of Christ's Life*, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 17-105.
43. For the long version in Latin see *Iohannis de Caulibus Meditationes vite Christi, olim S. Bonaventuro attributae* (1997) (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, 153), ed. by M. Stallings-Taney, Turnhout, Brepols; for an English translation see *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (2000), translated by Francis X. Taney, Sr., Anne Miller, O.S.F. and C. Mary Stallings-Taney, Asheville, North Carolina, Pegasus Press.
44. LUDOLPHUS DE SAXONIA (1878), *Vita Jesu Christi ex evangelio et approbata ab ecclesia catholica doctoribus sedule collecta*, ed. novissima curante L.M. Rigolot, Paris, V. Palmé - Bruxelles, G. Lebrocquy.
45. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir. Landscape as an Image of the Pilgrimage of Life*, Amsterdam-Philadelphia, John Benjamins, p. 47.
46. For a study on and partial edition of Eiximenis's *Vida de Jesucrist* see A. G. HAUF (1976), *La 'Vita Christi' de Fr. Francesc Eiximenis (1340?-1409) y la tradición de las 'VC' medievales: aportación al estudio de las principales fuentes e influencia de la VCE y edición de los cinco primeros libros*, (unpublished) PhD thesis, 2 vols., Universidad de Barcelona. For a recent, though brief study of the question see D. GUIXERAS and S. MARTÍ (2014), "Francesc Eiximenis", in L. BADIA (ed.), *Literatura medieval (II). Segles XIV-XV* (Història de la Literatura Catalana), Barcelona, Enciclopèdia Catalana - Editorial Barcino - Ajuntament de Barcelona, p. 21-59, here 51-53. Among the many studies of the *Vita Christi* by Isabel de Villena,

- see A. HAUF I VALLS (1987), “La ‘Vita Christi’ de Sor Isabel de Villena y la tradición de las ‘Vitaes Christi’ medievales”, in *Studia in honorem prof. M. de Riquer*, vol. 2, Barcelona, Quaderns Crema, p. 105-164; A. HAUF (2006), *La ‘Vita Christi’ de Isabel de Villena (s. XV) como arte de meditar: introducción a una lectura contextualizada*, Valencia, Generalitat de València; L. K. TWOMEY (2013), *The Fabric of Marian Devotion in Isabel de Villena’s Vita Christi*, Woodbridge, Tamesis; and the recent article by R. CANTAVELLA (2015), “La Vita Christi d’Isabel de Villena: referents i escriptura”, in L. BADIA (ed.), *Literatura medieval (III). Segle XV* (Història de la Literatura Catalana), Barcelona, Enciclopèdia Catalana – Editorial Barcino – Ajuntament de Barcelona, p. 390-408, with preceding bibliography.
47. R. CANTAVELLA (2015), “La Vita Christi d’Isabel de Villena: referents i escriptura”, op. cit., p. 399.
48. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 44-48.
49. [ISABEL DE VILLENA] (1497) *Vita Christi de la Reverent abbadessa de la Trinitat*, València, Lope de la Roqua, f. CI: “E dit açò la senyora vestí lo seu fill e bolca’l posantli tota la robeta que tenia, ab tot fos tan poca e tan pobreta que no’l podia molt calçar ni guardar del fret, e posa-li un drap doble al cap cobrint-li la careta tant com podia, car la fredor de la nit era gran e lo senyor tan delicat que sentia les penalitats humanes pus vivament que nengun altre home. E après sa senyora li donà a mamar, regalant-li la cara ab les làgrimes abundoses que dels seus ulls exien...”
50. [ISABEL DE VILLENA] (1497) *Vita Christi...*, f. CIIV: “E axí exiren de Natzaret ab molta por e recel fins que foren luny del poblat; e sa senyoria plega morta y cansada, e sigués damunt una pedra per donar a mamar al seu divinal fill.”
51. Reconstruction of this piece was conducted by N. REYNAUD (1974), “Reconstitution d’un tryptique de Memling”, *Revue du Louvre*, 24 (2), p. 79-90. See also, among others, D. DE VOS (1994), *Hans Memling*, Ghent, Ludion Press, cat. no. 41, p. 186-189; B. G. LANE (2009), *Hans Memling. Master Painter in Fifteenth Century Bruges*, London, Harvey Miller, p. 204, 231-232, 305-306, no. 58.
52. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 18.
53. D. DE VOS (1994), *Hans Memling*, op. cit., cat. no. 91, p. 330-331.
54. See R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., especially note 63, p. 116.
55. D. DE VOS (1994), *Hans Memling*, op. cit., p. 330.
56. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 19-20. See also Maryan W. Ainsworth, *Gerard David. Purity of Vision in an Age of Transition*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998, p. 245-252.
57. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 24-33.
58. On narrating the episode of the flight, in his Gospel St Matthew (2, 12-14) assigns St Joseph what is clearly a leading role. As he dreams, the Angel of the Lord appears to him and tells him to take the Child and the Mother and seek refuge in Egypt, which he does immediately. Although protecting the Child was the reason for the journey, both Jesus and his Mother appear as passive subjects in Matthew’s brief account. We must turn to the New Testament apocrypha to find the narratives on Jesus’s childhood that, when addressing the Flight, assign a major role to the figures of the Mother and Child, which provided the source for subsequent literary accounts. In any case, it is the iconography of the Flight, so long as it depicted the Holy Family on the move –with or without other travelling companions–, that granted St Joseph his deserved leading visual role as he led the ass on which the Virgin and Child rode. In contrast to this option, the new iconography of the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt*, as it took shape in the interpretations by Memling, Gerard David, Patinir and other painters from the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, tended to ‘push’ the straining St Joseph towards the background, thereby diminishing his role as protagonist in favour of the Virgin and Child. The Pedralbes panel, if we accept its association with the theme of the Flight, represents one of the most extreme versions of this relegation of St Joseph to a secondary position.
59. See R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 73-82.
60. See, for example, the following reviews of Falkenburg’s book: E. BUIJNSEN (1989), “R. L. Falkenburg, Joachim Patinir: landscape as an image of the pilgrimage of life” (review), *Simiolus*, 19, p. 209-215; L. O. GOEDDE (1990), “Reindert Falkenburg, Joachim Patinir: Landscape as an Image of the Pilgrimage of Life” (review), *The Art Bulletin*, 72 (4), p. 655-657.
61. R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 72, 85-90, etc.
62. See A. MUNTADA, “Anònim flamenc, seguidor de Jean Belle-gambe (?), Immaculada Concepció amb els emblemes de les lletanies (*Tota pulchra*), c. 1535”, in M. CARBONELL, A. CASTELLANO and R. CORNUDELLA (eds.), *Pedralbes. Els Tresors del Monestir*, op. cit., p. 108-111. However, I doubt whether the attribution to Belle-gambe’s circle that the autor proposes is justified.
63. The antitheses between high and low, the mountain and the plain, as allegories of the opposite roads in life, of the easy and the hard, evidently have iconographical parallels that must be taken into account. Thus, in his iconographical reading of Patinir’s landscapes, Falkenburg fell gladly back on the interpretation that Panofsky proposed for two works that represent the theme of the choice between the two opposite roads of Virtue and Pleasure, that is, *The Dream of Scipio* (London, National Gallery), a work from Raphael’s youth, and Dürer’s engraving of *Hercules at the Crossroads* (or *Hercules Assisting Virtue in her Battle against Lust*): the landscapes in both works establish a contrast between a castle raised on a mountaintop, which should be interpreted as the ‘castle of virtue’, and the buildings on the plains next to a lake or a placid watercourse. See E. PANOFSKY (1971), *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press (first edition 1943), p. 73-75; R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 80-81.
64. Besides R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., see also B. BAKKER (2012), *Landscape and Religion from Van Eyck to Rembrandt*, Burlington, Ashgate, p. 102.
65. “Pença... Déus com ha honrades les dones, car fill de dona s’és fet, e dona ha feta sobirana creatura, pura dona ha posada sobre angelical natura... que sola estech ferma en la fe cathòlica cant tots los hòmens del món duptaren

en la altea de la divinitat del Fill de Déu...”, F. EIXIMENIS, *Libre de les dones*, Biblioteca de la Universitat de Barcelona, ms. 79, f. 24. Quoted by see A. HAUF I VALLS (1987), “La ‘Vita Christi’ de Sor Isabel de Villena...”, op. cit., p. 135. While it is true, as Hauf comments, that when speaking of women Eiximenis “sometimes gives the impression of taking away with one hand what he gives with the other”, Villena’s stance is invariably a feminist one and she turns to all possible lines of argument to defend women’s dignity, not only as opposed to, but even above, that of men.

66. In reference to the danger of overinterpretation, one of Falkenburg’s critics, E. Buijnsen, recalled the acute observation by Gombrich: “in iconography no less than in life, wisdom lies in knowing where to stop”. See E. H. GOMBRICH (1972), *Symbolical Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance II*, London, Phaidon Press, p. 95; quoted by E. BUIJNSEN (1989), “R. L. Falkenburg, Joachim Patinir...”, op. cit., p. 213. Equally true is the fact that appealing to common sense and prudence does not by itself solve what is probably the unsolvable question of the limit we should impose upon ourselves when it comes to proposing a specific, more or less closed, iconographical reading.

67. See S. RINGBOM (1965), *Icon to Narrative. The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting*, Åbo, Åbo Akademi; S. RINGBOM (1969), “Devotional and imaginative devotions. Notes on the place of art in late medieval private piety”, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 73, p. 159-170; R. L. FALKENBURG (1988), *Joachim Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 41.

68. “Et uade cum eis et adiua puerum portare, et seruias in omnibus quibus potes”, *Iohannis de Cavlibus* (1997), op. cit., p. 51. I take the English translation from *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (2000), op. cit., p. 44.

69. In his *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae Jesu*, Ubertino da Casale advocated most strongly this exercise of imaginative freedom. See A. A. G. HAUF (1976), *La ‘Vita Christi’ de Fr. Francisc Eiximenis (1340?-1409) y la tradición de las ‘VC’ medievales...*, op. cit., p. 22.

70. For the Franciscan nuns in the Kingdom of Castile see P. M. CÁTEDRA (2005), *Liturgia, poesía y teatro en la Edad Media. Estudios*

sobre prácticas culturales y literarias, Madrid, Gredos, p. 31-59 and 75-91.

71. A. G. HAUF (1976), *La ‘Vita Christi’ de Fr. Francisc Eiximenis (1340?-1409) y la tradición de las ‘VC’ medievales...*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 24.

72. Regarding the *Baptism of Christ* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 81), Friedländer observes that: “Against such a background of cosmical solitude, the solemn baptismal scene gathers added symbolic meaning”; M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1973), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, op. cit., vol. 9b, 1973, p. 101. Something similar may be said of the Pedralbes panel.

73. See in particular C. DUPEUX (1991), “La lactation de saint Bernard de Clairvaux. Genèse et évolution d’une image”, in F. DUNAND, J.-M. SPIESER and J. WIRTH (eds), *L’image et la production du sacré*, Paris, Meridiens-Klincksieck, p. 165-193. The earliest iconographical rendering of the *lactatio* of St Bernard might be, as is increasingly assumed, the one housed in one of the compartments of the St Bernard altarpiece at the Museu de Mallorca (inv. DA05/09/0028), although this altarpiece might date back to 1320-1330 and not to the end of the 13th century as has often been supposed.

74. Besides the article mentioned in the note above, see also P. V. BÉTÉREOUS (1975), “À propos d’une des legendes mariales les plus répandues. Le ‘lait de la Vierge’”, *Bulletin de l’Association Guillaume Budé*, 3, p. 403-411.

75. The first known account of the miracle is contained in one of the early 14th century *exempla* collected in the *Ci nous dit*. See J. BERLIOZ (1988), “La Lactation de saint Bernard dans un exemplum du ‘Ci nous dit’ (début du XIV^e s.)”, *Citeaux*, 39, p. 270-284.

76. “Quid ad Mariam trepidet humana fragilitas? Nihil austerum in ea, nihil terribile: tota suavis est, omnibus offerens lac et lana”; *Sancti Bernardi opera* (1968), vol. 5 (*Sermones*, II), ed. J. Leclerq, O.S.B. and H. Rochais, Editions Cistercienses, p. 263. This passage is quoted by R. M. DURÁN (1990), *Iconografía española de San Bernardo*, second edition, corrected and extended, Monestir de Poblet, p. 39.

77. J. WIRTH (2011), *L’image à la fin du Moyen Âge*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, p. 12-135.

78. L. CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings...*, op. cit., p. 290.

79. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1974), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, op. cit., vol. 11, no. 208. See also RK-Dimages no. 18629.

80. P. SILVA MAROTO (2001), *Pintura flamenca de los siglos XV y XVI – Guía*, Madrid, Museo del Prado, p. 110.

81. Patinir first contracted matrimony with Francine Buyst, daughter of Jan Buyst. One of Buyst’s sons, Cornelis, married a daughter of Quentin Massys’s prior to 1531, although he divorced her in 1540. Furthermore, in 1520 Patinir and his first wife bought a house in Gasthuisstraat, near the home of Quentin Massys, who had been living in Schuttershofstraat since 1508. For an overview of all this data see M. P. MARTENS (2007), “Joachim Patinir, ‘el buen pintor de paisajes’, en las fuentes escritas”, in A. VERGARA (ed.) (2007), *Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 47-59.

82. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1973), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 9b, p. 101 and 105-106.

83. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 49-50: “It is difficult to decide whether Patinir himself, Quentin Massys with the help of an assistant, or Massys alone painted these figures.”

84. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 8, note 28, and p. 52, with references to the source.

85. A. VERGARA (2007), “Paisaje con el descanso en la huída a Egipto, ca.1515. Joachim Patinir”, in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 4, p. 176-181.

86. C. SCAILLÉREZ (1991), *Joos van Cleve au Louvre* (Les dossiers du Département de peinture, 39), Paris, Musée du Louvre, Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, p. 28-31.

87. J. O. HAND (2004), *Joos van Cleve. The Complete Paintings*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p. 21, cat. no. 104, p. 178-179.

88. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 52.

89. On the other hand, at the Museo del Prado a later panel is preserved featuring the *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* (inv. 1613)

- whose Virgin suckling the Child is taken from Joos van Cleve's model. At the museum it is attributed to a "disciple of Patinir's", although it would be better attributed to a "follower", since it is by no means sure that the painter in question trained at Patinir's workshop. See P. SILVA MAROTO (2001), *Pintura flamenca de los siglos XV y XVI – Guía*, op. cit., p. 170-171.
90. On the different variants and the lost prototype see D. MARTENS (1998), "La 'Sainte Anne trinitaire au chartreux' de Poznán: primitif hollandais ou primitif flamand?", *Annales de la Société royale d'archéologie de Bruxelles*, 62, p. 65-102, here 84-89.
91. D. MARTENS (1998), "La 'Sainte Anne trinitaire au chartreux' de Poznán...", op. cit., p. 87-88.
92. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 29 and cat. no. 23, p. 79-80.
93. L. CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings...*, op. cit., p. 620-626.
94. In a freer, though perfectly recognisable, version the group of the Virgin and Child was used also by an imitator of Patinir's for a *Rest during the Flight into Egypt* that was auctioned at Sotheby's (London), 2001-13-12, no. 102; for a photo see RKDimages no. 114642.
95. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 79-80, contends that "The nursing Madonna, not painted in the style of Patinir, has been adapted from Joos van Cleve's *Rest*." Even so, the difference between the style of this Madonna and the dominant style of the figures attributable to Patinir is not so great as to warrant ruling out the possibility that the Virgin and Child in the London painting is, as I suggest, by a workshop assistant. For his part, L. CAMPBELL (2014), *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings...*, op. cit., p. 624, concludes that "The painter had so wide a knowledge of Patinir's repertoire of landscapes and figures that he can perhaps be identified as an imitator working during Patinir's lifetime."
96. In this respect see VERGARA (2007), "¿Quién era Patinir? ¿Qué es un Patinir?", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 19-45: p. 30.
97. For this reason, the *Triptych with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt* was unfortunately not included in the exhibition at the Museo del Prado. Although he devoted a catalogue entry to the work, the autor (that is, the exhibition curator himself) states that he failed to secure authorisation to see it first hand. I myself have also had to base my observations on available black-and-white photographs.
98. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1973), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 9b, p. 106.
99. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., p. 26-27. Regarding the timeline, Koch specifies that the triptych would have been executed "shortly after 1515 when Patinir became freemaster in the Antwerp guild", which strikes me as very feasible. For a differing opinion see A. VERGARA (2007), "Tríptico con el Descanso en la huida a Egipto, San Juan Bautista y San Cornelio, ca.1518-24. Joachim Patinir y taller", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 8, p. 202-203.
100. Once again, however, Alejandro Vergara disagrees with this opinion. See A. VERGARA (2007), "Tríptico con el Descanso en la huida a Egipto...", op. cit., p. 202, since he sees the hand of Patinir only in the figure of John the Baptist: "Patinir would have drawn the composition and probably painted St John and, perhaps, parts of the landscape, while other artists were responsible for the remaining figures and the rest of the landscape."
101. A. VERGARA (2007), "Tríptico con el Descanso en la huida a Egipto...", op. cit., p. 202.
102. See also A. WIED, A. HOPPE-HARNONCOURT and M. STROLZ (2007), "Paisaje con el Bautismo de Cristo, ca.1521-24. Joachim Patinir", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 11, p. 216-225, who put forward a variety of possibilities without formulating a conclusive opinion.
103. See <<http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2011/old-master-british-paintings-evening-111033/lot.8.html>>.
104. See W. S. GIBSON (1989), *'Mirror of the Earth'...*, op. cit., p. 9: "The Virgin and Child, from the hand of another artist, probably Joos van Cleve, have been lifted from their domestic comfort in Robert Campin's Virgin by the Fireplace and, with some changes in pose and costume, incongru-
- ously deposited on a hillside overlooking a world landscape". Vergara ignores the connection with the Flémallesque model and suggests other less plausible sources of inspiration; A. VERGARA (2007), "Paisaje con el Descanso en la huida a Egipto, ca.1515. Joachim Patinir", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 4, p. 176-181.
105. For the state of the question regarding the diptych at the Hermitage see J. SANDER (2009), "Master of Flémalle. Diptych with the Throne of Mercy and the Madonna", in S. KEMPERDICK and J. SANDER (eds.), *The Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden*, exhibition catalogue, Frankfurt, Städel Museum, and Berlin, the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museum, cat. no. 11, p. 238-242, with preceding bibliography.
106. See C. F. O'MEARA (1981), "In the Hearth of the Virginal Womb': The Iconography of the Holocaust in Late Medieval Art", *Art Bulletin*, 63, p. 75-88; and also B. LANE (1984), *The Altar and the Altarpiece. Sacramental Themes in early Netherlandish Painting*, New York, Harper & Row, p. 1-11; B. WILLIAMSON (2004), "Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion", *Speculum*, 79, p. 341-406, here 387-404.
107. [ISABEL DE VILLENA] (1497), *Vita Christi de la Reverent abadesa de la Trinitat*, op. cit., f. CII: "...e veus ací un esclavó per què pugau encendre foch en les montanyes desertes, e recreareu-vos e lo fill vostre a el calor del foch, e coureu-li un ou cada dia com haureu oportunitat de fer foch..."
108. [ISABEL DE VILLENA] (1497), *Vita Christi de la Reverent abadesa de la Trinitat*, op. cit., f. CIIIV: "...stigueren aquí al foch raronant dels grans misteris divinals als homes amagats e a ells per sola misericordia revelats."
109. On these variations see V. LOEWINSON-LESSING and N. NICOLINE (1965), *Le Musée de l'Ermitage. Les primitifs flamands, I. Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays Bas méridionaux du quinzième siècle*, vol. 8, Brussels, De Sikkel, p. 5-20; M. DAVIES (1972), *Rogier van der Weyden*, London, Phaidon, p. 251-252; L. CAMPBELL (1998), *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings*, op. cit., p. 83-91.
110. For the engraving see J. C. HUTCHISON (1991), *The Illustrated Bartsch. 9 Comentario, Part 2*.

Early German Artists, New York, Abaris Books, p. 354-355, with preceding bibliography.

111. A. VERGARA (2007), "Paisaje con el Descanso en la huída a Egipto, ca.1515. Joachim Patinir", op. cit., p. 176.

112. R. A. KOCH (1968), *Joachim Patinir*, op. cit., cat. no. 21, p. 79.

113. D. EWING (2007), "Ventajas múltiples, producción moderada: reflexiones sobre Patinir y el mercado", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 81-95. See also A. F. KOLB (1998), "Varieties of Repetition: 'Trend' versus 'Brand' in landscape paintings by Joachim Patinir and his Workshop", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 28, p. 167-200. Kolb's article puts forward interesting, provocative viewpoints, although the conceptual polarisation she proposes between 'trend paintings' and 'brand paintings' carries with it a certain simplification that perhaps tends to distort a reality

that was more free-flowing and complex. See also A. VERGARA (2010), "Patinir and the Art Market. 'Look, logo, and knock-off'", in S. SCHROTH (ed.), *Art in Spain and the Hispanic World. Essays in Honor of Jonathan Brown*, London, Paul Holberton, p. 195-210.

114. M. J. FRIEDLÄNDER (1973), *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 9b, p. 107, no. 224.

115. Not only the canon of the figures but also the conventions in the folds of the cloth and the chromatic style of the Portland panel strike me as closer to Massys than to Patinir. The figure of Mary Magdalene kneeling at the foot of the cross would be inconceivable without Massys's influence, as would be the holy woman wrapped in a blue cape, whose volume and bell-like outline undoubtedly come from Massys. On the other hand, the physiognomy of St John the Evangelist certainly recalls some of Patinir's types, like the St Joseph on the central panel of the *Triptych*

with the Rest during the Flight into Egypt (Wiesbaden).

116. A. VERGARA (2007), "Quién era Patinir? ¿Qué es un Patinir?", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., p. 31, wonders whether the painter of the Portland panel might be "an artist who occasionally painted figures for Patinir but who here was working independently".

117. In this context see A. VERGARA (2007), "Paisaje con la Crucifixión en el Monte Calvario, ca.1520-24. Círculo de Patinir", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 12, p. 226-231; A. VERGARA (2007), "Paisaje con el encuentro de San Antonio y San Pablo en el desierto, ca.1521-24. Joachim Patinir", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 15, p. 256-25 (this painting had already been attributed to Patinir by Robert A. Koch); and L. KLAASSEN, "Paisaje con San Jerónimo, ca.1520-24. Círculo de Patinir", in A. VERGARA (ed.), *Patinir...*, op. cit., cat. no. 26, p. 338-341.

