

The Nomadic Object

*The Challenge of World
for Early Modern Religious Art*

Edited by

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Propagatio Imaginum: The Translated Images of Our Lady of Foy

Ralph Dekoninck

In 1657, the German Jesuit Wilhelm Gumpenberg published the first edition of his *Atlas Marianus*,¹ a huge work recording the principal miraculous images of the Virgin all over the world. Without going into the complex history of the development of this sacred topography, we may note that one of its essential principles consists in giving an account of the vast web woven by Marian devotion throughout the entire Christian world. As Gumpenberg writes, the ‘idea is to show how much the world owes to Mary and how much it may expect from her’.² And he makes clear, in the address to the reader, that ‘by means of miraculous images, this Marian atlas will teach with what power the Mother of God preserves the World’.³ To do this, he brings together a wide variety of available information on Marian cults, whatever their historical origin or geographical location. In drawing up such an inventory in this way, Gumpenberg is taking part in the movement of universalisation of the particular (each localised cult of the Virgin) and of particularisation of the universal (the Virgin Mary in all these imaged instances).

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- 1 Gumpenberg Wilhelm, *Atlas Marianus sive de imaginibus Deiparae per Orbem Christianum miraculosis* (Ingolstadt, Georg Haenlin: 1657). Gumpenberg Wilhelm, *Marianischer Atlas: das ist wunderthätige Mariabilder so in aller christlichen Welt mit Wunderzeichen berhuembt durch Guilielmum Gumpenberg* (Ingolstadt, Georg Haenlin: 1657). Gumpenberg Wilhelm, *Atlas Marianus quo Sanctae Dei Genitricis Mariae Imaginum Miraculosarum origines duodecim historiarum centuriis explicantur* (Munich, Johann Jäcklin: 1672). See the French translation of the German edition of 1658 (Munich: Johann Jäcklin): *L’Atlas Marianus de Wilhelm Gumpenberg*, ed. and trans. O. Christin – N. Balzamo – F. Flückiger (Neuchâtel: 2015). See also Christin O. – Flückiger F. – Ghermani N. (eds.), *Marie mondialisée: L’Atlas Marianus de Wilhelm Gumpenberg et les topographies sacrées de l’époque moderne* (Neuchâtel: 2014).
 - 2 ‘Mens [...] est mihi, ostendere quantum Mariae mundus debeat, et quantum ab ea expectare possit’. Gumpenberg Wilhelm, *Idea Atlantis Mariani* (Trento, Caroli Zanetti: 1655) 7.
 - 3 ‘Endtlich, mit was Krafft die Mutter Gottes die Welt erhalte, wird diser marianische Altasz lehren mittels der wunderthaetigen Mariabilder’. Gumpenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 21; Gumpenberg, *L’Atlas Marianus* 54.

The Displacement of the Same into the Other

This idea of the dissemination of a unique figure through multiple images finds one of its most eloquent expressions in the frontispiece to the 1672 edition [Fig. 7.1].⁴ Mary appears there enthroned on the very top of the Holy House of Loreto, which floats between the celestial orb and the terrestrial orb. While at first sight we might recognise a fairly traditional representation of the Virgin of Loreto, *Mediatrice caeli et terrae* as we read below the image, the way in which the House of Loreto is represented is in fact rather original: it serves as it were as a prism through which the images of Mary, inscribed on the celestial globe, like Christianised signs of the zodiac, are diffracted over the earth by first being reproduced on the roof and floor of the House. This introductory engraving, which is also programmatic for the entire volume, seems then to send the following message: the Holy House, likened in metonymical fashion to the Virgin herself, is understood not only as the location of the Incarnation of the Word but also as the matrix from which all the images of the Virgin and her Son are generated, in a kind of iconic parthenogenesis or Marian iconogenesis.

This imaged theory of the diffusion of Marian images stands in deliberate opposition to the many Protestant criticisms which, since the sixteenth century, had denounced this gangrenous proliferation of an illusory sacred through the multiplication of images reputed to be miraculous, infecting, like cancerous cells, the Catholic Church to the very limits of the Christianised world. Thus they questioned the power of images to incarnate too materially the sacred, which cannot be deemed immanent of objects and therefore cannot be fragmented in order to be scattered. For here lies another sticking point between the opposed denominations: how can the same image seen as sacred by virtue of its miracles and ancient lineage, or even by virtue of its paternity (as, for example, when attributed to Saint Luke himself), ‘beget’ in turn new images that are just as efficacious as their iconic prototype whereas these new images do not enjoy the same pedigree? In other words, in a universe such as that of early modernity, which started to promote the value of authenticity and originality, how can one justify the transfer of the aura of the unique to the multiple? What we are going to examine here is therefore not so much the displacement of objects as their ‘replication’ (a word to be understood in its biological sense), giving the illusion of or founding the belief in a sacral ubiquity—in the present case, the universal presence of the Virgin through all her

4 Christin O. – Leutrat E., “Une théologie de l’image en images: Les frontispices de l’*Atlas Marianus*”, in Christin – Flückiger – Ghermani, *Marie mondialisée* 181–183.



FIGURE 7.1 Melchior Haffner, title page to Wilhelm Gumpenberg, *Atlas Marianus* (Munich, J. Jaecklin: 1672). Engraving, in-fol. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (ESlg/2 V.ss. 51).

IMAGE © BAYERISCHE STAATSBIBLIOTHEK, MUNICH.

material incarnations—that is to say, of a form of displacement, in space and in time, of the same into the other, a displacement whose methods and stakes we need to understand.

Rather than the idea of a reproducibility of the sacred leading to its fragmentation, as denounced by the Protestants, Catholic apologists defended the idea of the miraculous dissemination of a force that removes the contradiction between multiplicity and unity, in the same way that it seeks to avoid any confusion between the image and its model. Hence Gumpfenberg goes so far as to develop a theory on the ‘magnetism’ of Marian images that resonates with his frontispiece and its way of visually giving an account of the same energy diffusing like the rays of the sun. This contagious force affecting the whole world and moving across all geographical and social borders is also transmitted to replicas of images:

The magnet transmits its power to the iron ring in such a way that the ring may transmit it to another ring, in the manner of a chain. It is certain that the miraculous force that resides in the image of Mary comes from Mary herself and true believers know through long experience that this power also extends to images that have had contact with the original image. In this case, for what reasons may not images created on the model of the original, even outside the will of the master, exercise a greater efficacy than other images in a faithful heart?⁵

Such a power of emanation from the original image clearly finds its source in the Virgin herself, this origin thus guaranteeing the orthodoxy of a theory that is, one might say, magical, even if it seeks to base itself on the pseudo-scientific idea of magnetism theorised at the same moment by another Jesuit,

5 ‘Der Magnetstain gibt ein Krafft dem eysenen Ring auff solche Weisz, dasz ers einem andern und also fort in Form einer Ketten mag mithailen. Gewisz ists, dasz die wunderthaetige Krafft, so sich in dem Mariabild befindet, von Maria herkomt, unnd ist der Rechtglaubigen bestaendige Erfahrunsz, dasz underweilen solche Krafft auch in diejenige Bilder sich erstrecke, von welchen das erste beruehrt worden. Warumb wolten dann nit auch diejenige Bilder, so den Originalen gantz nachgemacht, auc wider den Willen desz Maisters in einem glaubigen Hertzen mehr dann andere vermogen?’ Gumpfenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 17–18; Gumpfenberg, *L’Atlas Marianus* 53. See Christin O. – Flückiger F., ‘Introduction: L’*Atlas Marianus* de Wilhelm Gumpfenberg: une topographie sacrée à l’âge de la science classique’, in Christin – Flückiger – Ghermani, *Marie mondialisée* 9–23, at 19; Deschamp M., ‘Von wunderthätigen Mariae-Bilder: De la défense et de l’illustration des saintes images de Marie’, in Christin – Flückiger – Ghermani, *Marie mondialisée* 195–210, at 198–200.

Athanasius Kircher, who defined the *virtus magnetica* as a force capable of attracting all similar bodies.⁶

Furthermore, this quotation seems to effect a slippage from the idea of the image as contact relic towards that of simple copy whose efficacy seems to depend on the faith of the believer, at least in theory; because this move from an object-based to a reception-based notion of copying founded on the resemblance between the copy and the model or on the preservation of the same designation hides a more complex mix of indexical and iconic (in the sense of Charles S. Peirce) logics, the first being founded on the idea of contact and the second on the idea of similitude. More precisely, the authenticity and efficacy of the replicated images depend on a formal, material, and institutional association between them and their iconic prototype.

The Nomadic Tropism of the Miraculous Image

Let's now look at the way Gumpfenberg gives a concrete account of this diffusion of power through specific images. The frontispiece of the *Atlas Marianus*, which in a certain way illustrates this theory of the image, relates to the Holy House of Loreto—a choice that is in no way random. This was none other than the main Marian cult of Europe from the sixteenth century and the paragon of all sacred nomadic objects.⁷ And it is to the Virgin of Loreto, whose image is the 'first among all Marian images'—just as its House is first among all churches—that the *Atlas Marianus* is dedicated. In the 1672 edition, Gumpfenberg relates that on 14 June 1643, when he had just arrived in Regensburg, the Virgin appeared to him to ask him to erect a replica of the Holy House of Loreto on the banks of the Danube.⁸ His undertaking was thus born out of an invitation to duplicate this matrix of images that is the Santa

6 Kircher Athanasius, *Magnes sive de arte magnetica opus tripartitum* (Rome, Biagio Deversini and Zenobio Masotti: 1654). See Baldwin M., "Kircher's Magnetic Investigations", in Stolzenberg D. (ed.), *The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher* (Stanford, CA: 2001) 27–36; Saussy H., "Magnetic Language: Athanasius Kircher and Communication", in Findlen P. (ed.), *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York, NY – London: 2004) 263–281.

7 See Bercé Y.-M., *Lorette aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles: Histoire du plus grand pèlerinage des Temps modernes* (Paris: 2011).

8 Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianus* (1672) 928. Most of the European and non-European copies seek to reproduce faithfully the smallest details of the Holy House whether in the external form or the internal appearance.

Casa, likened by Gumpenberg to a ship whose mast is the Cross of Christ and whose sail is the cloak of Mary: 'Moved on four occasions, this Holy House could never be located far from the sea, because it is a ship'.⁹ If the cult of Loreto was able to occupy such a position in European and world Catholicism it is precisely because it symbolised the nomadic nature of the miraculous image—and here in particular the building that sheltered it, but which stands metonymically for the image itself¹⁰—as well as the pilgrim condition of every Christian, perpetually on the move in the endless search for the sacred.¹¹

Furthermore, the exemplary case of Loreto reminds us that one of the constitutive dimensions of every miraculous image is its *translatio*. In the *Peritia* accompanying the *Atlas Marianus* from the 1672 edition on, and which presents itself as a genuine Marian iconology,¹² Gumpenberg devotes one of the twelve chapters to this question of the movement of the image. The transfer of the image from one place to another, we read, 'always gives rise to a beginning or increase of veneration'.¹³ This transfer may be either supernatural or natural, and is either pious (as when for example it consists in saving the image from danger) or impious (as when for example the image is moved from a sacred to a profane place), and will therefore be followed by a reward or by a punishment. Supernatural conveyance monopolises Gumpenberg's attention. He considers successively what is transferred (the materials of the place of worship, the place of worship in its entirety as with the Holy House, etc.), the places of origin and arrival (from one church to another, from a well to an altar, on a mountain, near a road, etc.), who performs the transfer (the Virgin herself, angels, an invisible power, etc.), and finally, the nature of the journey (long, wonderful, etc.).¹⁴ The *translatio* thus appears to be one of the foundational

9 Gumpenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 7; Gumpenberg, *L'Atlas Marianus* 58.

10 Dekoninck R., "Figuring the Threshold of Incarnation: Caravaggio's Incarnate Image of the Madonna of Loreto", in Melion W.S. – Palmer Wandel L. (eds), *Image and Incarnation: The Early Modern Doctrine of the Pictorial Image*, Intersections 39 (Leiden – Boston, MA: 2015) 341–370.

11 See for example Richeome Louis, *Le Pelerin de Lorete accomplissant son vœu faict a la glorieuse Vierge Marie mere de Dieu* (Arras, Guillaume de la Riviere: 1604).

12 See Dekoninck R., 'Une science expérimentale des images mariales: La *Peritia* de l'*Atlas Marianus* de Wilhelm Gumpenberg', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 232 (2015) 135–154.

13 'Hae translationes nunquam non dedere cultus, vel principium vel augmentum'. Gumpenberg, *Atlas Marianus* (1672), *Peritia*, no p.

14 Gumpenberg, *Atlas Marianus* (1672), *Peritia*, no p.

moments of the veneration and, if it is not at the origin of it, it is presented as a major auxiliary to it. In particular, it supplies the proof that the images are literally moved by an invisible power, the movement here being equivalent to the life that animates these fixed images. While these are venerated in a precise location, they arrived there only through the action of divine grace.

The Propagation of Power through Copies

The *translatio* concerns not only the journey of a miraculous image from its site of invention to its site of definitive installation. It continues to mark the diffusion of the same cult through a more or less extensive space, as if the initial and foundational movement of *translatio* is perpetuated, furthering the propagation of the *virtus* of the miracle-working image. We could therefore speak of a nomadic tropism characterising this type of image.

But what exactly happens when a new cult is born out of a replica of the original image? How can a particular image, without moving, ‘father’ subsidiary images that display at one and the same time dependence and autonomy with regard to their initial model? As Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood write, ‘pilgrimage [...] is an assertion that a replica would not suffice. [...] For if a replica were really just as good as an original, there is no need to send in the original by airlift’.¹⁵ And yet, as Nagel and Wood emphasise, ‘the medieval icons in Rome became ersatz originals at the very moment when they began to be intensively copied. The copying created them as originals. Until then they had been nothing more than models’.¹⁶ An image would thus become efficacious through its copies, or rather its sacral power would be increased by this phenomenon of spreading, which is also a phenomenon of propagation of the power reaching images that one might call relays, until constituting a web woven from the principal shrine. In the end, the copies, authenticated by the prodigious powers heaven grants them, can no longer be distinguished from the original.

15 Nagel A. – Wood C.S., *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York, NY: 2010) 195.

16 Ibidem 202.

From this point of view, the case of the icon of the Virgin in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome is exemplary.¹⁷ Following on from the Virgin of Loreto, which occupies the first place in the *Atlas Marianus*, Gumppenberg presents this equally famous and celebrated image, which later came to be known under the title of *Salus Populi Romani*. Gumppenberg relates that it was Francisco Borgia, third General of the Company of Jesus, who ‘was the first to obtain from His Holiness the Pope the privilege of copying this image of Mary, which he had done by the most talented masters’.¹⁸ He goes on: ‘It was produced in all forms and sizes, as well as in many different materials, before being distributed throughout all Christianity. Hence, in all countries, to this day this image is probably better known than any other’.¹⁹ The fame of the Madonna of Santa Maria Maggiore is thus founded on the spreading of reproductions, all supposed to lead back to their unique Roman model, the artists mentioned in the quotation having only to ensure, through their art, fidelity to the model so that a certain visual identity was guaranteed, even if this resemblance can appear to be rather tenuous. According to Mia Mochizuki:

to the early modern mind, what counted about all the copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* was that after the printing press model, they were ‘originals’ preserving and furthering canonical iconographical identity, and thus functioned as sacred art under the imprimatur of papal authority, regardless of their individual stylistic autonomy.²⁰

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- 17 This image has already been the subject of many studies, among which are: Wolf G., *Salus Populi Romani: Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter* (Weinheim: 1990); Belting H., *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago, IL: 1994) 68–72; Mochizuki M., “Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction: The *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* in the World”, in Hirakawa K. (ed.), *Sacred and Profane in Early Modern Art* (Kyōto: 2016) 129–143; D’Elia P.M., “La prima diffusione nel mondo dell’immagine di Maria ‘Salus Populi Romani’”, *Fede e Arte* 2 (1954) 1–11; Noreen K., “The Icon of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome: An Image and Its Afterlife”, *Renaissance Studies* 19 (2005) 660–672; Noreen K., “Replicating the Icon of Santa Maria Maggiore: The *Mater ter admirabilis* and the Jesuits of Ingolstadt”, *Visual Resources* 24 (2008) 19–37.
- 18 Gumppenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 26; Gumppenberg, *L’Atlas Marianus* 67.
- 19 Gumppenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 26; Gumppenberg, *L’Atlas Marianus* 67–68.
- 20 Mochizuki, “Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction” 137.

‘Authenticity relied upon a “believed association” with the Roman original, no matter how distant that connection may actually have been in reality’.²¹ ‘All copies lead to Rome’ as Akira Akiyama has rightly put it.²²

To return to the quotation from Gumpffenberg, we might say that so far we find ourselves within a, so to speak, propagandist logic which manifests itself through an iconic network on the global level. But the continuation of the text opens out towards a different perspective: ‘Mary’s mercy, moreover, extends so far that these images are also well known because of their miracles’.²³ Once again, Gumpffenberg insists on the true prototype of all these images, namely, the Virgin herself, which allows him to defend in a very orthodox manner the idea of a voluntary diffusion of her power to and through all these images, including and above all those that derive from a prototype already granted her miraculous grace. This is a very common position in the Catholic literature of the time. For example, one of the apologists of the Our Lady of Liesse says: ‘the Image of Our Lady does not only perform miracles in Liesse; the Images of this Image also have the power to make us see Mary’s power’.²⁴

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- 21 Ibidem 133. Commenting on a passage from Petrus Canisius’ *De Maria Virgine incomparabili* (Ingolstadt, David Sartorius: 1577) 697 (‘[...] tamen et aliae Virginis icones, licet aliena manu factae fuissent, Lucae nomine commendari potuerunt, quoniam cum primae inter vetustissimas ad Lucae archetypum essent expressae, non immerito, quocumque demum pervenerint, nomen gratiosus a primo autore illo Luca retinuisse videantur’), M. Mochizuki stresses that ‘Despite different styles and degrees of accuracy, representations of the Virgin could qualify as “Lukan images”, whether St. Luke painted multiple models himself or only a single archetype from which an unbroken chain flowed in an uninterrupted, almost biblical begetting of authorization by precedence, so long as it was formed directly after one of the representations attributed to him’ (Mochizuki, “Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction” 133). See Melion W.S., “*Quae lecta Canisius offert et spectata Diu*: The Pictorial Images in Petrus Canisius’ *De Maria Virgine* of 1577/1583”, in Melion W.S. – Palmer Wandel L. (eds.), *Early Modern Eyes*, Intersections 13 (Leiden – Boston, MA: 2009) 262–265; Noreen, “The Icon of Santa Maria Maggiore” 665–666; Bacci M., *Il pennello dell’Evangelista: Storia delle immagini sacre attribuite a san Luca* (Pisa: 1998), see in particular, chapter v: ‘Le icone di san Luca dopo il Concilio di Trento’ 329–380; Dekoninck R., “An Icon among the Statues: The Early-Modern Reception in the Southern Low Countries of the Sieneese Painting of *Notre-Dame de Grâce* in Cambrai”, in Coulie B. (ed.), *Path to Europe: Influences and Contacts between Byzantium and the Low Countries* (Brussels: 2017) 51–63.
- 22 Akiyama A., “The ‘Afterlife’ of Sacred Christian Images in Japan”, in Osano S. (ed.), *Annual Report of the Center for Evolving Humanities: Study of Cultural Exchange* (Tōkyō: 2007) 137.
- 23 Gumpffenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 27; Gumpffenberg, *L’Atlas Marianus* 68.
- 24 ‘L’Image de notre Dame ne fait pas seulement des miracles à Liesse, mais encore les Images de cette Image ont le pouvoir de faire voir celui de Marie’. Cériziers René de, *Image de Notre-Dame de Liesse ou son histoire authentique* (Reims, Nicolas Constant: 1632) 503.

From the dissemination of the *Salus populi romani Madonna*, Mochizuki concludes that this phenomenon had opened the door to ‘privilege the subject of replication over the object’s intrinsic uniqueness [...]’; material presence was minimized in the translation of subject from object to object’, even if ‘the arrival of new materials that arose from the discovery of raw resources via overseas trade’²⁵ contributed to reify the devotional object’s worth:

With replication, the reform of materiality of the object increasingly came under threat until content would ultimately subsume form. The subject matter, the meaning of an object, would become more important than its physical qualities until new materials could effectively launch a counter-claim for attention, a rebuttal to the loss of value.²⁶

If it is true that we are then facing a change of paradigm from ‘reliquary *translatio*’ or ‘carrying across’ to a ‘re-materialised translation’, there still exists or survives some material transfer where the simple resemblance no longer suffices, and even doesn’t matter.

The Transfer of Materiality

We will examine here only one case, which on more than one count seems emblematic. This is the cult, initiated at the beginning of the seventeenth century, of Our Lady of Foy, a place located near the Belgian town of Dinant, which at that time was part of the Principality of Liège. A small miraculous statue of the Virgin, some 22.4 centimetres high, roughly fashioned in terracotta,²⁷ was the focus of the cult [Fig. 7.2].²⁸ It was discovered by a carpenter in 1609 inside the hollow of an oak tree. Once the tree had been chopped down, part of the trunk was deemed to be unusable and so was chopped up for firewood. It was then that the image was found. Afterwards, it was placed in another oak tree.

²⁵ Mochizuki, “Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction” 138.

²⁶ Ibidem 140.

²⁷ See Pacco C., “La statuette miraculeuse de Foy Notre-Dame, état de la question”, *Annales de la société archéologique de Namur* 83 (2009) 131–152. Reesing I., “Notre-Dame de Foy: The Reuse and Dissemination of a Late Medieval Figurine of the Virgin in the Low Countries”, *Simiolus* 33 (2007/2008) 145–165.

²⁸ Dekoninck R., “Les Silènes de Gumpenberg: L’*Atlas Marianus* et la matière des images miraculeuses de la Vierge au regard du culte marial dans les anciens Pays-Bas”, in Christin – Flückiger – Ghermani, *Marie mondialisée* 211–221.



FIGURE 7.2
*Anon. (sculptor), Our Lady of Foy
(end of the sixteenth century).
Terracotta, 22.4 cm (height).
Foy-Notre-Dame, Church Notre-Dame
de Foy.*

IMAGE © CHURCH NOTRE-DAME
DE FOY.

It is not so much the destiny of this cult at the local and regional levels that need draw our attention but its expansion beyond the borders of the Southern Netherlands, and above all the relays, methods, and issues of such a propagation. For while copies of the statue are found in very great numbers in the Catholic Netherlands, they also reached the United Provinces, France, Germany, and even Canada and Brazil. Thus it is not only a matter of the simple souvenir of a pilgrimage made in Foy-Notre-Dame or evocations of the image of Our Lady of Foy, but for some of them of objects of veneration to which miracles were attributed and, in some cases, which were the focus of major pilgrimages.

The work of the Jesuits in this process of international diffusion has already been studied by Annick Delfosse, Muriel Clair, and André Haquin.²⁹ As they have noted, the first initiator and promoter of this movement of expansion was Pierre Bouille, who was also the author of the first pilgrimage booklet devoted to the image of Foy.³⁰ In 1620, he sent to the general of the Society of Jesus, Muzio Vitelleschi, an 'elegant image' of the Virgin of Foy, as well as a dozen fluorite crystals. These crystals, found with the statue when it was discovered and abundant in the surroundings of the sanctuary, appear to have been effective vectors in the transfer of sacrality since thaumaturgical powers were attributed to them. Bouille devotes an entire chapter in his *Brève histoire de l'invention et miracles de l'image Nostre Dame de Foy*³¹ to these 'blue stones found among an infinite number of other colours, which faithful pilgrims bring from above the field close to this oak'.³² He does not hesitate to compare the power of these stones 'shining, clear and translucent' to that of the stone David used to

29 Delfosse A., "La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy: Diffusion, appropriation, évangélisation", in Dekoninck R. – Delfosse A. – Pacco C. (eds.), *Foy-Notre-Dame: Art, politique et religion*, Special Issue of *Annales de la Société archéologique de Namur* 83 (2009) 153–166; Clair M., "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France (1669–1675): Histoire des statuets de Foy et des wampum des Hurons chrétiens", in Dekoninck – Delfosse – Pacco, *Foy-Notre-Dame* 167–192; Haquin A., "La dévotion à Notre-Dame de Foy au Québec (XVII^e s.) et à New-York (XX^e s.)", in Dekoninck – Delfosse – Pacco, *Foy-Notre-Dame* 193–203. See also Fries F., *Histoire de Notre-Dame de Foy* (Namur: 1909) 91–263.

30 Bouille Pierre, *Brève histoire de l'invention et miracles de l'image Nostre Dame de Foy, trouvée en un chesne à Foy lez Dinant, l'an 1609* (Liège, Jean Ouwerx: 1620).

31 Chapter VII: 'Des pierretes du Chesne, et du champ voisin'. Bouille, *Brève histoire de l'invention* 26–31.

32 '[...] pierres de couleur bleue telles qu'on trouve parmy une infinité d'autres de toute couleur que la dévotion des pelerins va ramassant de dessus le champ proche de ce chesne'. Ibidem 26.

conquer the giant Goliath.³³ For they can only be in this place by divine will, the Virgin having 'wanted them to be used to help the sick and suffering, either taken as a drink after crushing or rubbed on the affected parts to bring relief and healing'.³⁴ Fluorite crystals therefore appear to be one of the agents of the miraculous virtues of the image of Our Lady of Foy. This is why many of the cast copies of the statuette have these crystals in their make-up.

Some of these copies also contain sawdust supposed to come from one of the two trees that sheltered the original, when they are not themselves sculpted from these very trees. We are now touching on the second wave of copies, most of them created from the first or second oak on the model of the image of Foy. These copies were sent to Jesuit residences and colleges in the Flandro- and Gallo-Belgian provinces (Bruges, Mechelen, Aalst, Kortrijk, Nivelles, Namur, Douai, Tournai, etc.). Some of these statues, such as the one at Bergues, were even made up from both oaks, as if each one bore the trace of a divine intervention, that of invention for the first oak and that of miraculous consecration for the second. It was this type of image that spread at the same time (from 1620) to the Dutch missions under the name of *Moeder van Barmhartigheid*, Mother of Mercy (Rotterdam, Haastrecht, and Oudewater), as well as to French territory (Reims, Lille, and others). It is interesting to note the importance of the ritual that accompanied the arrival of these images: for example, the image in Tournai was blessed on its arrival by the bishop and then taken in solemn procession to the Jesuit church.³⁵ This phenomenon of the procession constituted a form of solemn entry establishing the image as efficacious *objet*, which could then be sited in a display, as is the case with the Gravelines image, which was placed in a monstrance of gilded silver.³⁶ These copies of Our Lady of Foy were also used in the context of internal missions aimed at the evangelisation of the countryside, like the image at Bapaume where miracles occurred in 1621, such as the one involving the cure of a child suffering from kidney stones.³⁷ The same thaumaturgical powers were claimed for the copies which would be exported, from the 1630s, to the New World. Two of these reached Paraguay,

33 Ibidem 26–27.

34 '[...] voulu que par l'entremise d'icelles fusent appliquez ses mérites aux malades et souffreteux qui ou les prennent en boisson, brisées et moulues, ou en frottent les parties intéressées avec soulagement et guérison'. Ibidem 29.

35 Colveneer Georges, *Kalendarium sacratissimae virginis Mariae novissimum* (Douai, Balthazar Bellère: 1638) vol. 2, 24 August. Delfosse, "La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy" 160.

36 Delfosse, "La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy" 160.

37 Ibidem.

through the offices of two Jesuits (one from Lille, the other from Antwerp) and were installed in reductions of Itatine Indians (Nuestra Senora de Fè and San José, on the Parana River) who honoured them for their miracles.³⁸

Another place that was conquered by these replicas of Our Lady of Foy, but four decades later, was Canada or New France, which we will examine in more detail. On this occasion it was a Jesuit from Nancy, Claude-Alix de Véroncourt, who in 1669 was to pass on a copy, today disappeared, made from the wood of Foy to Father Chaumonot, a Jesuit missionary in Canada working with the Huron. The certificate of authenticity that accompanied the consignment gives this description:

Our Lady [...], holding on her right arm the child Jesus and wrapped in a layette, painted blue inside and with little gold stars, is [...] of true wood from the first oak, in which was found [...] the miraculous image [...]. And this image [...] was made by Nicolas de Rieu, master sculptor, living in the said town of Dinant, at the expense of Damoiselle Marie Bastien who with Father Noël Noberti of the Company of Jesus, both presently residing in said place, have given it to Father Claude de Véroncourt.³⁹

In this new context, the Marian image became an instrument for the conversion of the Huron Indians, and quickly revealed itself, from 1670, to be endowed with miraculous powers, thus transforming what had been only a mission chapel into a sanctuary of pilgrimage. This was a new phenomenon in New France, for at that time very few churches possessed miraculous relics or effigies. We should note, moreover, that it was at the same time, around 1672,

38 Ibidem 165. Du Toict Nicholas, *Historia Provinciae Paraquariae Societatis Jesu* (Liège, Johannes Matthias Hovius: 1673) 373; Delatre P. – Lamalle E., “Jésuites wallons, flamands, français missionnaires au Paraguay (1608–1767)”, *Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu* 16 (1947) 141.

39 ‘la Nostre Dame [...], tenant sur son bras droict, son petit enfant Jésus, et enclose dans une layette, peinte en bleu au-dedans avec de petites étoiles d’or, est [...] du vray bois du premier chesne, dans lequel fut trouvée [...] l’image miraculeuse [...]. Et cette image [...] a esté faicte par nicolas de Rieu, maistre sculpteur, résidant en la dite ville de Dinant au frais de Damoiselle Marie Bastien laquelle et le Père Noël Noberti de la Compagnie de Jesus residants presentement audit lieu, l’ont donnez au Pere Claude de Veroncourt’. De Véroncourt C.-A., *Déclaration attestant que la statue de la Sainte-Vierge dans la chapelle de la bourgade des Hurons, près de Québec, avait été faite avec le bois du chêne dans lequel on avait trouvé l’image miraculeuse de Notre-Dame de la Foi, près de Dinant, 5 février 1669*, Archives of Canada, Jesuit collection. Quoted by Clair, “Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France” 176.

that Father Chaumonot brought to fruition a project he had had in mind since the 1630s: the construction of a Holy House modelled on the one in Loreto.⁴⁰ He succeeded in this thanks to the sending of a copy of the statue of the Virgin of Loreto, accompanied by a series of contact relics.⁴¹ In 1673, the Huron were to leave the village of Foy to establish the new chapel of Loreto on the Saint Gabriel coast around a dozen kilometres from Quebec. We might therefore conclude that one Marian cult replaced another. But the truth is that these two cults became mingled. Thus, in November 1674, on the occasion of the dedication of the chapel of Loreto, two statue-reliquaries of Foy were offered by the states of the Duchy of Lorraine in addition to the effigy of Our Lady of Loreto:

Of these three images, the first and principal one is that of Our Lady, sent here from Loreto, [...]. The other two are made from the true wood of Our Lady of Foy. One is a Virgin carrying her Son, and it was sent to our savages by the towns of Nancy and Bar. The other, that the princes and princesses of the [...] House of Lorraine have sent us, is a Saint Joseph, who is also holding the infant Jesus.⁴²

40 Sanfaçon A., "A New Loreto in New France: Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot, SJ, and the Holy House of Loreto", in Podruchny C. – Warkentin G. (eds.), *Decentring the Renaissance: Canada and Europe in Multidisciplinary Perspective, 1500–1700* (Toronto: 1996) 200–220; Clair M., "Une chapelle en guise de maison: Notre-Dame-de-Lorette en Nouvelle-France. Dévotions et iconographie", *Cahiers du centre de recherches historiques* 41 (2008) 89–146; Boglioni P. – Lacroix B., *Les pèlerinages au Québec* (Quebec: 1981).

41 'Le P. Poncet [...] a eu soin de m'envoyer non seulement une Vierge faite sur celle de Lorette [...], mais aussi une coiffe [...] de taffetas blanc qui a été sur la tête de l'image, laquelle est dans la Sainte Maison d'Italie, et une écuelle de faïence, faite sur la forme de celle du petit Jésus, à laquelle elle a touché, et de petits pains bénits qui ont été pétris dans les écuelles de la Sainte Famille, qu'on trouva, lorsque, pour rendre la sainte chapelle [...] plus commode, on en ôta le plafond; sur quoi l'on saura que toutes ces choses sont ici miraculeuses'. Chaumonot P., *Autobiographie du père Chaumonot et son complément par le R.P. Félix Martin* (Paris: 1885) 203. This therefore relates to contact relics recalling the Holy Family's Home.

42 'De ces trois images, la première et la principale est celle de Notre-Dame, envoyée de Lorette ici, [...]. Les deux autres sont faites du vrai bois de Notre-Dame de Foy. L'une est une Vierge portant son Fils, et elle a été envoyée à nos sauvages par les villes de Nancy et de Bar. L'autre, que les princes et les princesses de la [...] maison de Lorraine nous ont envoyée, est un Saint-Joseph, qui tient aussi le petit Jésus'. Thwaites R.G. (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* 73 vols. (Cleveland, OH: 1896–1901) vol. 60, 86; Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 184.

There is thus a certain hierarchy among these statues, which places the Loreto statue in first position. In the ordering of belief, however, the reality was a little different, for the copy of the statue of Loreto could base its efficacy on resemblance alone—even if it turned out to have been in contact with the Loreto miracle-working statue—and it could not lay claim to the same transfer of supposedly sacred materials as was the case with the statues of Our Lady of Foy.

Furthermore, one of these statues has the characteristic of containing relics. More than a contact relic, this is therefore a statue-reliquary, as is the statue of Saint Joseph that accompanies it:

These two small statues are no less notable for their relics than for their materials, their representation and their donors. These relics are a part of the veil of the Virgin, which is below Saint Joseph, and a small part of the belt of this same Saint Joseph, encased in a small badge held by Jesus, who is himself carried by his mother.⁴³

The way these relics and statues are combined is quite surprising, since the relic of the Virgin is encased within that of Saint Joseph and, conversely, the relic of Saint Joseph is set within the statue of the Virgin and Child. As Muriel Clair has noted,⁴⁴ these combinations are certainly not gratuitous for they must contribute to the cult of the Holy Family, as well as to the cult of the Holy House which sheltered it. The statues and their content celebrate and honour Mary, Joseph, and Christ in a kind of visual, material, and even corporeal, symbiosis.

Gifts and Counter-gifts: The Circulation of Devotional Objects

All these statues hewn from the wood of Foy, statues that ensured the transfer of sacrality between two places and two continents, were in turn to stimulate the circulation of devotional objects between New France and the Southern

43 'Ces deux petites statues ne sont pas moins considérables par leurs reliques, que par leur matière, leur représentation, et leurs donateurs. Ces reliques sont un morceau du voile de la Ste-Vierge, qui est au bas du S. Joseph, et une petite partie de la ceinture du même S. Joseph, enchâssée dans un petit écusson que tient le petit Jésus porté lui-même par sa mère'. Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* vol. 60, 86; Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 187.

44 Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 188.



FIGURE 7.3 Anon. (artist), *Huron's wampum with the inscription Virgini Pariturae votum Huronum* (1676). Sea shell pearls, 122 × 10 cm. Chartres, *Treasure of the Cathedral Notre-Dame de Chartres*.

IMAGE © CATHEDRAL NOTRE-DAME DE CHARTRES.

Netherlands. So, in thanks for the gift of the statue, Chaumont had the Huron make a *wampum*, that is, a belt or a necklace of pearls [Fig. 7.3],⁴⁵ a traditional object Christianised through the appearance, in black on a white background, of Elizabeth's words to Mary: *Beata quae credidisti* (Luke 1:45).⁴⁶ This wampum arrived in Dinant in 1672 and was received with great pomp:

The Jesuits, who have a college there, used this opportunity to incite more and more people to the cult [...] of the [...] Virgin. So they had a chariot made, on which the necklace and some other Huron works were carried as if in triumph, and carried by two men covered in bearskins, to represent our savages who made this gift.⁴⁷

Pupils from the Jesuit college in Dinant, dressed as Indians, accompanied the triumphal chariot, which went to meet the statue of Our Lady of Foy, also

45 This wampum is today lost, but we reproduce here the also Christianised wampum offered by the same Jesuits of the New France to the Cathedral of Chartres at the end of the seventeenth century, a wampum still preserved today in the treasure of the Cathedral.

46 Clair M., "Note de recherche: Fonctions et usages du wampum dans les chapelles sous tutelle jésuite en Nouvelle-France", *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* 35 (2005) 87–90; Turgeon L., "Le sens de l'objet interculturel: La ceinture de wampum", in Pichette J.-P. (ed.), *Entre Beauce et Acadie: Facettes d'un parcours ethnologique. Études offertes au professeur Jean-Claude Dupont* (Québec: 2001) 136–152; Sanfaçon A., "Objets porteurs d'identité dans les consécration amérindiennes à Notre-Dame de Chartres, 1678–1749", in Laurier Turgeon L. – Delâge D. – Ouellet R. (eds.), *Transferts culturels et métissages: Amérique/Europe, XVI^e–XX^e siècle* (Sainte-Foy: 1996) 449–466; Dekoninck R., "Des colliers plein de mystère: Les dons de la Nouvelle-France aux images européennes de la Vierge", in Du Crest S. (ed.), *Objets frontières* (Paris: 2017) 23–37.

47 'Les Jésuites, qui ont là un collège, se servirent de cette occasion pour exciter de plus en plus de monde au culte [...] de la [...] Vierge. Ils firent donc faire un char, où le collier et quelques autres ouvrages des Hurons étaient portés comme en triomphe, et soutenus par deux hommes couverts de peaux d'ours, pour représenter nos sauvages qui faisaient ce présent'. Chaumonot, *Autobiographie* 178–179; Delfosse, "La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy" 163.

carried in procession until it was raised up on to the chariot to return to its sanctuary, where the image was now adorned with the Huron gifts.

This sign of gratitude from the 'savages' for the miraculous virtues of the Virgin of Foy in return led to gratitude from the Dinant Jesuits, who made an offering to the Amerindians' Virgin of Foy of 'three robes presented here to her, and a rosary of stones from her field, which was to serve as a necklace, to her well-loved Daughter of Canada',⁴⁸ gifts that the Huron were invited to attach to the statue. The necklace of fluorite crystals with miraculous powers is thus offered in response to the Huron pearl necklace. We see here a relation of gifts and counter-gifts that creates a form of 'cultural alloy'⁴⁹ where different cultural identities are combined without becoming confused. We could also speak of a form of spiritual commerce, or even of a system of religious barter, for we must remember that *wampum* was a part of the 'Iroquoian tradition of thesaurisation and exchange of gifts':⁵⁰ 'all matters of importance here are carried out by means of gifts and the porcelain that takes the place of gold and silver in this Country [of the Huron] is all-powerful'.⁵¹

Resemblance and Material Identity

These practices are by no means unique to the statue of Our Lady of Foy.⁵² They are characteristic of many cult statues located in Europe but which spread

48 '[...] trois robes qui lui ont été icy présentées, et un chapelet de pierres de son champ, qui servira de Collier, à sa bien aymée Fille du Canada'. Quoted by Lindsay L., *Notre-Dame de la Jeune-Lorette en la Nouvelle-France: Etude historique* (Montreal: 1990) 159.

49 Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 170.

50 Ibidem 168. 'Quelques femmes [...], sont entrées dans un combat, à qui rendroit plus d'honneur à la [...] Vierge, [...]. Elles mettent à chaque fois, une de leurs perles [...]. Elles apportent tous les Dimanches, au Pere [...], le petit amas qu'elles ont fait pendant la semaine: afin de tirer de ce magasin, dequoy faire une Couronne, et une Echarpe, à la façon du pays à l'image de la sainte Vierge'. Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* vol. 40, 234; Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 169. See Becker M., "The Vatican Wampum Belt: An Important American Indian Artifact and Its Cultural Origins and Meaning within the Category of 'Religious' or 'Ecclesiastical-Convert' Belts", *Bolletino, monumenti musei e gallerie pontificie* 21 (2001) 363–411.

51 '[...] toutes les affaires d'importans se font icy par presens et que la Pourcelaine qui tient lieu d'or et d'argent en ce Pays [la Huronie] est toute puissance'. Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* vol. 10, 28; Clair, "Notre-Dame de Foy en Nouvelle-France" 170.

52 Note that the copy of the Loreto statue was obtained by Chaumonot thanks to the gift of a wampum that was placed inside the Holy House: 'Having learned through a leaflet how

throughout the world by means of copies and of a variety of objects linked to them circulating between continents and intended both to reveal and to exalt their value, the outcome of which was to confer on them a status that was in principle identical to that of their model.⁵³ But we should emphasise a modality of propagation of the sacred which was peculiar to the religious culture of the northern regions such as the Southern Netherlands in which miraculous images of the Virgin essentially took on the form of statues rather than of icons and maintained an intimate link with the natural location of their creation, many of them having been discovered in trees. While miraculous icons of the Virgin essentially established their prestige on the basis of their origin, in this way giving rise to copies which attempted to be as faithful as possible to the original, miraculous statues spread their power through the intermediary of copies that did not necessarily resemble their model but that contained in themselves a part of the material that constituted these models or which had been in contact with them.

In certain cases, material from two different miraculous statues might be combined. Such was the case of the statue sent to Saint-Omer and created out of wood from Foy and from Scherpenheuvel.⁵⁴ In other cases the statue might be sculpted out of wood originating in one sanctuary while bearing the features of a statue from another. Thus, in Prague, the Jesuits received a statue sculpted out of the wood of Foy but bearing the features of the Scherpenheuvel statue

our gift had been received at Notre-Dame de Foy, I formed the plan of sending another one to Our Lady of Loreto' ('Ayant appris par un imprimé la manière dont on avait reçu notre présent à Notre-Dame de Foy, je formai le dessein d'en envoyer autant à Notre-Dame de Lorette'). Chaumonot, *Autobiographie* 193. The letter from the Huron that accompanied the wampum is reproduced in Lindsay, *Notre-Dame de la Jeune-Lorette* 166–167. Two wampum were also offered to Notre-Dame de Chartres by the Huron and by the Abenakis, respectively in 1674 and 1699. In return, the chapter decided to offer a large silvered folder filled with relics. Langlois L.-C., "Deux ceintures en wampum à la cathédrale de Chartres", *Journal de la Société des Américanistes* 14–15 (1922) 297–298.

- 53 A similar study could have been conducted about the diffusion of the copies of Our Lady of Scherpenheuvel, copies that have been made from the oak tree where the miracle-working statue was found. See Wyhe C. van, "Reformulating the Cult of Scherpenheuvel: Marie de'Médicis and the Regina Pacis Statue in Cologne", *The Seventeenth-Century Journal* 22 (2007) 41–74; Delsalle P., "La diffusion en Franche-Comté des statuette de la Vierge de Montaigu (Brabant) à l'époque des Archiducs Albert et Isabelle (1598–1633)", in Béthouart B. – Lottin A. (eds.), *La dévotion mariale de l'an mil à nos jours* (Arras: 2005) 99–123.
- 54 Bourgeois Jean, *Societas Iesu Mariae Deiparae Virgini sacra* (Douai, Balthazar Bellère: 1620) 357–367; Delfosse, "La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy" 159.

[Fig. 7.4].⁵⁵ What matters, then, is not the appearance but the guarantee of a link with one or more famous cult sites. The fragments of the two trees that had sheltered the Foy statues and that had been collected by the Jesuits of Dinant were dispatched throughout their vast network before being sculpted. It was thus the community that received them that carved an image of the Virgin, an image that did not necessarily have to resemble the image kept in Foy-Notre-Dame. And, in fact, the many statues of Our Lady of Foy venerated throughout the world have scarcely any features in common with the original statue. This did not prevent them becoming the object of a local cult, or even of an independent pilgrimage, by virtue of the miracles they bestowed. We see then that the birth of Foy ‘colonies’, to use Bouille’s expression, came about essentially through the transfer of matter. While terracotta replicas obtained through the moulding process and ensuring thereby a perfect resemblance to the prototype seem to have been intended for private devotion, replicas in wood with no resemblance at all diffused sacrality. Each of these copies in wood was supposed to preserve a portion of the sacred contained in the original image.⁵⁶

It is interesting to note that, in the article devoted to Our Lady of Foy in the German edition of his *Atlas Marianus*, Gumpenberg, in contrast to the arguments he puts forward in the *Peritia* of the Latin edition, recognises the miraculous virtues attached to the precious stones and the oak wood:

the stones were extremely beautiful and strongly coloured, and held in high esteem because of their supernatural power. Many people suffering from sickness or the plague were helped if they put these small stones in their food or drink before consuming them. [...] And incredibly, the entire tree is impregnated with the miraculous power, as we know from people in various countries where there are churches housing an image identical to the original and sculpted in the wood of this tree.⁵⁷

55 Delfosse, “La Compagnie de Jésus et Notre-Dame de Foy” 159, n. 25.

56 Dekoninck R., “Between Denial and Exaltation: The Materials of the Miraculous Images of the Virgin in the Southern Netherlands during the Seventeenth Century”, *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 62 (2013) 148–175.

57 Here is the complete German quotation: ‘Nun hat diser Schatz nit sollen laenger noch auch wollen verborgen seyn, thails wegen etlicher und nit wenig Wunderwercken so under dem Volck kund worden, thails auch wegen der Stainlein, so umb die Gegend wo das heilige Bild in dem Aichbaum gestanden, sich in grosser Anzahl haben finden lassen, welche neben ihrer glantzenden und gefaerbten Schoene, derentwegen auch seynd in hohen Ehren gehalten worden, weilen sie durch uebernaturliche Krafft vilen Krancken und Pesthafften gute Hilff gethan, wann sie gemelte Stainlein in die Speisz oder Tranck gelegt, darab geessen oder getruncken haben [...]. Und welches schier unerhoert, hat



FIGURE 7.4 *Anon., Photography of Our Lady of Foy in the St. Nicholas Church in Prague. Reproduced in Fries F, Histoire de Notre-Dame de Foy (Namur: 1909) 123.*
IMAGE © ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, PRAGUE.

Furthermore, he attributes this power less to the Virgin herself than to the image of the Virgin of Foy: 'nobody doubted that this power came from the holy image rather than from the small stones'.⁵⁸ So, we have here a fine denial of the theory exposed to the test of practice, as Christian wonder prevails over orthodox rigour.

Conclusion

In the end, what does this phenomenon of derivative images—not to mention all those objects in turn derived from these images (souvenir-images and other objects related to the sanctuary, which were able to play the part of veritable talismans) all circulating on a very wide geographical scale—tell us about the efficacy of the image-archetype? Even more, what does it tell us about the issue of the transfer of sacrality? In the cases examined here, there is a displacement at one and the same time of forms and materials, the latter sometimes winning out over the former. The *translatio* of holy images, as of their replicas that retained something of the formal and material identity of their model, really does seem to be a precondition of their efficacy. To focus attention on such nomadic objects is to take an interest as much in the objects themselves as in the places they passed through, and in particular to their points of departure and of arrival, as in the relationship they continued to uphold between these two places. These places, however far apart, were thus interconnected, the 'subsidiary' image remaining connected to the image that produced it. The relationship between these two images is thus thought of as a filial relationship. This is explicitly stressed by the Jesuits in Dinant when they write:

If the daughter of Our Lady of Foy in Canada is so liberal towards her mother, Our Lady of Foy near Dinant, the mother would like not to appear less liberal towards her beloved daughter and new children [...] and

der gantze Baum dise wunderthaetige Krafft an sich gesogen, wie diejenige von unterschiedlichen Laendern bezeugen, in deren Kirchen ein Bild, so dem Original gleich, von disem Baum geschnitzlet zu finden'. Gumpenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 65–67; Gumpenberg, *L'Atlas Marianus* 356.

58 'Allweilen nun niemand zweifflet, dasz solche Krafft in die Stainlein minderst als durch das heilige Bild koente herfliessen [...]'. Gumpenberg, *Marianischer Atlas* (1658) 67; Gumpenberg, *L'Atlas Marianus* 356.

if she had received some presents, she gives some back to her dear daughter and to her new beloved children.⁵⁹

The production of holy sites described by Dominique Julia therefore goes together with the production of images created out of a place and an original image that all copies, whether based on a formal or material *translation*, have the aim of *representing*, in the double meaning of figuring but also of standing in for, or even replacing, the original, a power that is not only of the image, but also of all the gestures and words that accompany it.⁶⁰

As Bouille wrote about Our Lady of Foy,

[T]he two oak trees have served the glory of Our Lady, and are now smashed to pieces scattered through the world where the devotion of the people, having been pleased to obtain one, has brought them; and, as the staff of Moses, they are used as instruments for cures beyond nature's course and forces, according to the faith of the ones who used them if need be.⁶¹

Even if Bouille reminds that all the holiness and virtue of the image of Our Lady of Foy comes originally from its prototype, the Virgin herself, as rays come from the sun, streams from their spring, branches from the trunk, these last metaphors can be applied to all the copies made from the original image. And especially the metaphor of the tree is here a most suggestive one, for it expresses simultaneously the idea of local roots and global ramifications, while also finding its literal meaning in the natural genesis of these images. It opens a very rich reflection about what can be called an 'ecology of images'

59 'Que si la fille de Notre Dame de Foy, en Canada, est si libérale, envers sa Mère, nostre Dame de Foy, près Dinant, la mère ne veut point paraître moins libérale envers sa chère fille et nouveaux enfants, que la fille et ses bien-aimés enfants, envers leur mère, et si elle en a reçus des présents, elle en renvoye à sa chère Fille, et à ses nouveaux et bien-aimés enfans'. Lindsay, *Notre-Dame de la Jeune-Lorette* 159.

60 Julia D., "Sanctuaires et lieux sacrés à l'époque moderne", in Vauchez A. (ed.), *Lieux sacrés, lieux de culte, sanctuaires: Approches terminologiques, méthodologiques, historiques et monographiques* (Rome: 2000) 241–295.

61 'Mais proche de la cense estoient restez deux Chesnes, lesquels ont servi l'un après l'autre à la gloire de Nostre Dame, et sont pour le present mis en pieces esparses par le Monde, ou la devotion des peuples ayant eu le Bonheur d'en recouvrer, les a emportees, et à guise de la verge de Moyse, servent d'instrument à des cures au delà du cours et forces de la nature, selon la foy de ceux qui en usent au besoin'. Bouille, *Brève histoire de l'invention* 8.

that connects them to their natural and especially material locus, a materiality that, through its fragmentation and spreading, propagates the power of the archetypal image through its multiples replicas.⁶² The 'life of forms' theorised by Henri Focillon is here converted in the life of matter.⁶³

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62 I would to thank Mia Mochizuki and Christine Göttler for suggesting this reflection to me.

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