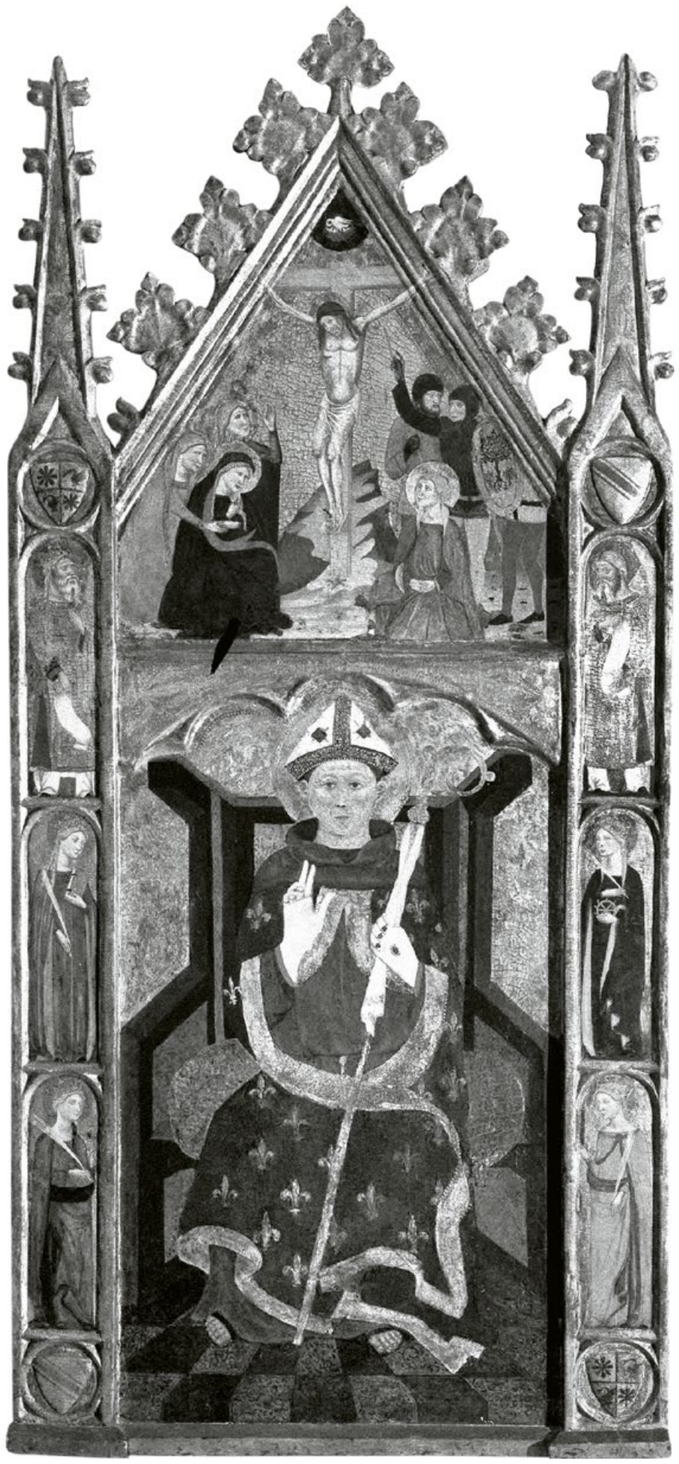


Fig. 27 . Jaume Serra. *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* originally from the Cathedral of Barcelona. Madrid, private collection.

The altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse for the Cathedral of Barcelona

One of Rosa Alcoy's first steps, which was fundamental and of great historiographic magnitude when it came to reconfiguring the figure of Ramon Destorrents and Francesc and Jaume Serra, came about with the deletion, from the first artist's catalogue of paintings, of the center section of an altarpiece, along with its respective mullions, kept in a private collection in Madrid, depicting *Saint Louis of Toulouse and Calvary* (fig. 27). Up to that point it has been associated with Destorrents due to its affinity with the works that Verrié had attributed to him.[105] Working intuitively, however, Alcoy related it to two documentary references from 1359 and 1364 which demonstrated that it could be the remains of an altarpiece that Guerau d'Ardèvol and María de Prats had commissioned for their family chapel in the cloisters of the cathedral of Barcelona dedicated, specifically, to Saint Louis of Toulouse.[106] According to Alcoy, work on the altarpiece was started by Francesc Serra, who signed a contract with Ardèvol in 1359, the contents of which are unknown. However, it is fairly clear the contract was for the painting of the altarpiece, given that same year Guerau had acquired the saint's chapel in the cathedral cloister and, the following year, his wife, María, founded a chaplaincy dedicated to the Franciscan saint.[107] It was logical that at the same time they should hire a painter to undertake the altarpiece that was going to preside over that space. All the same, the death of Francesc Serra in 1362 meant that in 1364 his brother Jaume admitted, before Pere Alquer, canon of the cathedral of Barcelona and acting as executor for Guerau d'Ardèvol, having received a sum of money from the latter for the undertaking of two altarpiece that "*ego facere debeo*", in other words, that the painter was obliged to carry out.[108]

For Alcoy, the analysis of these two documents indicated that Francesc had started work on the altarpiece and that it had been Jaume who completed it, which led her to catalogue the central section housed in a private collection in Madrid as a collaborative work by the two brothers. This suggestion allowed Alcoy to open up a far-reaching line of research which she would develop in successive studies, and which have given rise to the complete reconfiguration of Ramon Destorrents' canon of works and, by extension, that of Francesc and Jaume Serra. As such, the attribution of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* to Francesc and Jaume Serra led her to do much the same with the Iravals *Altarpiece of Saint Martha* (fig. 26) and other similar works, which the studies of Verrié (and others) had considered to be by Ramon Destorrents.[109] As an alternative, Alcoy came up with a new artistic persona for Destorrents, identifying him with the Master of Rubió, the author of the altarpiece from the church of Santa María de Rubió (Barcelona).[110] In short, what the aforementioned specialist has managed to do is to make a claim, on the part of the Serra brothers, for a series of works that traditional historiography had included in the Destorrents catalogue, who is now presented as a painter with a different style to that which was previously thought.

In her reconfiguration of the figure of Destorrents, Alcoy also addressed the case of the aforementioned altarpiece in the chapel of the Royal Castle in Palma, the Almudaina, which Pere the Ceremonious had commissioned from the Bassas around 1345, and which Destorrents completed in about 1358 (fig. 22). As we have already seen, the discovery of the 1358 document bearing witness to the involvement of Destorrents

allowed Verrié to link the surviving panels from that ensemble with the group of works of which the most important is the Iravals altarpiece. From a stylistic perspective, Alcoy suggested the Bassas had played a greater role in its execution, side-lining that of Destorrents. She did grant him a more prominent role in the execution of the four prophets and the *Maiestas Domini* that we find on the top of the altarpiece housed at the Museu de Mallorca, and which may also have belonged to the Almudaina ensemble (fig. 28).[111]

Alcoy's theories concerning the Barcelona cathedral *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* were taken on by Francesc Ruiz, who attributed to Francesc Serra the *Saint Vincent* originating from the church of Sant Vicenç dels Horts (Museu Diocesà de Barcelona), dating it to around 1350.[112] This was a work that had primarily been situated somewhere between the Bassas and the Serras, only then to be associated with a supposed Master of Sant Vicenç dels Horts, to whom the aforementioned compartments from the altarpiece originating from Santa Oliva del Penedès were attributed, among other works. It was finally related to the Master of Rubió,[113] a theory that held up in the historiographic panorama for some years until Ruiz attributed it to Francesc Serra.[114] For Ruiz, on the other hand, the Santa Oliva del Penedès panels were either the work of his workshop of that of a master from his circle. Meanwhile, the early chronology of the *Saint Vincent* led Alcoy to suggest Bartomeu Bassa as a possible author, although without conclusive arguments to support the hypothesis.[115]

In the wake of Alcoy's suggestions concerning the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* and the one presiding over the chapel of the Almudaina castle, there has been no shortage of voices arguing against the changes in the artistic personas she had posited for Destorrents, the Master of Rubió and the early Serra brothers. It was thus that Frederic-Pau Verrié, who had been the one to build up a picture of Destorrents in the 40s, accepted certain minor modifications to his initial theory regarding the altarpiece of the Almudaina in Palma (fig. 22). He accepted Arnau Bassa had played the main role in the design and drawing of the central compartment kept in Lisbon,[116] but he continued to defend and uphold Destorrents' leading contribution to the ensemble's second surviving narrative panel, the *Calvary*. This allowed him to continue to argue the validity of his linking the work to the Iravals altarpiece and similar pieces, which he still defended as being the work of Destorrents.[117]

Fig. 28 . Ramon Destorrents (?). Altarpiece pinnacles, possibly from the altarpiece of the chapel of the palace of La Almudaina. Palma, Museu de Mallorca.

He refused to budge with regard to the panels from the polyptych housed in Barcelona, Lille and Krakow (fig. 38), continuing to attribute them to Destorrents and associating them with the Iravals group of works.[118]

Santiago Alcolea also continued to argue Destorrents' authorship of the panel depicting Saint Martha and Saint Eulalia housed in the Archive of the Cathedral of Barcelona and the rest of the works linked to the Iravals *Altarpiece of Saint Martha* (fig. 26).[119] More recently, Favà and Cornudella have grouped together a portion of the works formerly associated with the Iravals group around Francesc Serra, although with regard to the altarpiece at the group's origin they admit that its style is highly reminiscent of that of Francesc Serra, but they do not feel this painter was the artist behind the work. This led them to consider whether it might have been executed in around 1360-65 under the lead of Jaume Serra, who could have taken over its completion.[120]

Having analyzed the repercussions of Rosa Alcoy's attribution of the Ardèvol-Prats *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* to Francesc and Jaume Serra, we think that it is possible to undertake a new reading and interpretation of the 1364 document relating to the execution of said ensemble. And we would venture to say that this re-reading will lead us to a different interpretation with repercussions for the way Francesc and Jaume are considered artistically. We can draw a number of conclusions from examining the document. Firstly, that it is not certain that Francesc ever got to start the altarpiece even though he signed a contract with Guerau d'Ardèvol in 1359, contrary to what Alcoy once suggested. The document from 1364 makes it fairly clear that the person being paid for the works completed at that point was Jaume. In other words, if Francesc wasn't paid anything then it is fair to assume he hadn't made a start on the work. If, on the other hand, he had started it and had been paid, this would most certainly have been mentioned in the 1364 document, because it was money paid in advance by the patron and would be included in the newly-drafted contract agreement with Jaume, as was the case with money previously paid to the latter. In terms of the causes that might have led Francesc not to start work on the Ardèvol-Prats altarpiece, we should consider health grounds, given that, as we shall see shortly, it is quite likely that by 1361 the painter was suffering from some kind of illness that would be the cause of his death the following year, a situation clearly stopping him from making progress meeting the commitment he had entered into.

It is equally significant that, in the 1364 document, Jaume should use the future verbal construct "*ego facere debeo*" to refer to the two Ardèvol altarpieces, which could mean two things, either that he needed to finish them, or that they had still not been started. In either case, the Ardèvol-Prats chapel in the cloister of Barcelona cathedral must have been terminated by around 1367, because from that year there is a documented payment by the aforementioned Alquer of 100 of the 200 Barcelonese *lliures* spent in its construction. Proof that the chapel works were coming to a close is in the fact that the grille closing it off was executed that year by the blacksmith Guillem Orelles.[121] In short, everything points to Jaume Serra having painted the altarpiece between 1364 and 1367. The conclusion we draw is that Jaume worked on the altarpiece on his own, that is to say without his brother Francesc, who had died two years earlier. The work's central panel, housed in a private collection in Madrid, should therefore be attributed to Jaume. Another very different question is that of whether his younger brother Pere also worked on the altarpiece, and this is an issue we are currently in no position to resolve.

Either way, Alcoy's theory regarding the origin of the altarpieces is irrefutable, given the Ardèvol chapel was dedicated to Saint Louis of Toulouse and, furthermore, the heraldic escutcheons included on the mullions present the same coat of arms as in the corresponding chapel in the cloisters of Barcelona cathedral.[122] We first see a heraldic emblem with a narrow band which must relate to the Ardèvol arms, as it matches one of the escutcheons that appear in the Ardèvol family sepulchre housed at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, originating from the chapel the family had in Tàrrega containing the mortal remains of Guerau himself and other member of the family (fig. 29).[123] The second escutcheon we find in the altarpiece and the cathedral chapel is quarterly: first and fourth, a rose with eight petals; second

Fig. 29 . Tomb originally from the chapel of the Ardèvol family in Tàrrega. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

and third, a cluster of vegetation with three branches.[124] Although it is not mentioned in historiographic sources, we believe it must be the coat of arms of María de Prats, Guerau's wife, combining paternal and maternal arms. As such, it is well known that the Prats family used eight-petalled roses on their heraldic arms.[125] We also know that María was involved in the founding of the chapel given, as mentioned earlier, in 1359 she founded a chaplaincy dedicated to Saint Louis of Toulouse. It is therefore entirely logical for the altarpiece and the chapel to also bear her family coat of arms.

The conclusion we draw from the analysis of the two documents from 1359 and 1364 concerning the Ardèvol-Prats commission is clear and unequivocal: there is a need to dismantle the current historiographic perception of Francesc Serra's style. We will develop this idea at greater length in subsequent chapters as there are other arguments pointing in the same direction and which involve the group of three altarpieces in the church in Tobed (fig. 31) as well as the panels depicting Christ's Passion in the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44). As we will argue when the time comes, clarification with regard to the authorship of the central section of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* must necessarily conclude it to be the work of Jaume Serra, the only painter who could have worked on it. Ignoring the 1364 document and putting forward Francesc as either co-author or principal author of the panel does not seem to us to be the wisest option from a methodological perspective. Basically, because it would mean handing all debate over to stylistic conjectures that collapse under their own weight. In addition, direct access to the panel has not been available, it only being known through black and white photos which, to make things worse, make it clear that a number of obvious repainting works have been carried out. All of this, combined and taken together, puts us before a work about which we can only speculate and draw conclusions without solid foundations.

Our suggestion is, therefore, to classify the piece as the work of Jaume Serra and, from there, reorganize the painter's oldest paintings based on what historiography once grouped together around the Iravals altarpiece (with the exception of the Almudaina altarpiece), and on what more recent authors have in recent years attributed to Francesc Serra. This task will mean attributing to Jaume Serra groups of works such as the aforementioned Ardèvol-Prats ensemble for the cathedral of Barcelona, the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, the Tobed altarpieces (fig. 31-33), the panels depicting Christ's Passion at the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44), the deacon saint originating from Sant Celoni, the Sant Vicenç dels Horts panel and other comparable works. With regard to the Iravals altarpiece (fig. 26), Alcoy suggested the joint authorship of Francesc and Jaume Serra,[126] whereas Favà and Cornudella chose to catalogue it, with doubts, as the sole work of Jaume from around 1360-1365.[127] This ties in perfectly with what we are suggesting. Which is, therefore, to eliminate Francesc from the picture and leave Jaume as the author of this group of works, for the execution of which he must have had the help of the family workshop and, naturally, that of his brother Pere when the latter joined it.

We have already seen that, as early as in Verrié's day, the Iravals group was recognized as not being homogeneous, and that it might include works by different artists. Perhaps in the future we should look there for the brush of Francesc Serra and even that of the enigmatic Bartomeu Bassa. Personally, we would prefer not to proffer any theories and proceed with caution in this matter. Be that as it may, we feel it is necessary to note the need to undertake an in-depth review of the works making up said group, as it is highly possible that the answer to the mystery lies there. A superficial analysis does indeed confirm the group of works is far from uniform. And we can expand our scope to include paintings not comprised in that group. We are referring here to a *Calvary* auctioned a few years ago (Arte Subastas Bilbao, 2014) (fig. 30),[128] which presents undeniable similarities with the work that historiography has tended to attribute to Francesc Serra or the early Serra brothers. In the first place, the compositional type draws directly on the Serra brothers' models as well as certain iconographic details, such as the presence of the pelicans at the top, which we find once again in the Iravals altarpiece or the Tobed Saint John the Baptist one. This is a motif that had already appeared in works from the Bassa workshop. If we look at the faces that have not suffered the effects of copious retouching work, that is to say, those of Christ, the group of Marys on the right-hand section and the Saint John the Evangelist, we see that they remind us of those expressionistic faces, with wrinkled brows and slanted eyes we find in works associated with Destorrents, such as the *Calvary* in the Almudaina altarpiece (fig. 22), or Jaume Serra's early works or in those by the group including the Iravals altarpiece (fig. 26). The comparisons with the panel from Mallorca really are quite obvious, but in the Iravals *Calvary* we also observe figures with undeniable parallels.[129] Even Christ's *perizonium*, despite the Iravals transparency, presents identical folds and a side knot. We see the same sort of exaggerated and desperate facial expressions in the *Burial of Christ* as in one of the panels depicting Christ's Passion in the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44).[130] We would also make note of the great similarity between the Mary Magdalene figure, in profile and making a very specific gesture with her hand, and the same figure in the *Calvary* at the top of the panel from Sant Celoni, housed in Barcelona's Museu Diocesà, and currently attributed to

Fig. 30 . Jaume Serra or Serra family workshop. *Calvary*. Private collection.

Jaume Serra.[131] The fact that Saint John the Evangelist presents identical position, gesture and physical features in both works is also highly significant. All the same, the modelling is not quite the same in the Jaume Serra works we are using as a reference. This is confirmed if we compare their style with the *Calvary* housed at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya and originally belonging to the old Gallardo collection (fig. 46).[132] These differences lead us to ponder the possibility of there being another, different painter, and yet without doubt part of the Serra clan. Is it perhaps here that we should be looking for the brushwork of Francesc? Or is it a work by Jaume with the intervention of other workshop members?

The altarpieces of Sant Pere de les Puel·les and Santa María del Pi

One of the most important commissions the Serra brothers took on in the 1360s was that of the main altarpiece in the monastery of Sant Pere de les Puel·les, in Barcelona, an important religious center for which Francesc had already worked in around 1352, as we saw earlier. Now, on 9 June 1360, Francesc himself signed a contract with the Abbess and other nuns from the monastery to undertake the painted compartments of the main altarpiece, for which he was to receive the sum of 60 Barcelonese *lliures*.[133] Next we find another key piece of information that might help us to understand the Serras' working processes at that time. A few days later, on 30 June, Francesc's brother Jaume entered into an agreement to carry out the painting and gilding of the aforementioned altarpiece's tabernacle, for the sum of 55 Barcelonese *lliures*. In the contract signed to that effect, his brother Francesc appears as a witness.[134]

It is extremely odd, and by no means normal, for both brothers to sign individual contracts for the same altarpiece, which makes one wonder about their working arrangements. If, as historiographic tradition has been arguing in recent years, Francesc and Jaume collaborated within the framework of a family workshop, why wasn't the entire job contracted in one agreement signed by both brothers? Why did Francesc sign a separate contract for the compartments and Jaume another one for the painting of the central tabernacle? In our opinion, documented arrangements of this nature might suggest that Francesc and Jaume ran separate workshops, which would not stop them from collaborating on specific projects. In Girona we saw how Jaume entered into individual contracts, with Francesc acting as guarantor. And in Cardona, Jaume signed a contract with Bartomeu Bassa. It all points to a clear differentiation and to parallel paths which, on occasion, crossed. Another possibility is that it was all the result of some commercial strategy that escapes us, but this is difficult to fathom. In Sant Pere de les Puel·les it seems logical to imagine that the most important commission is the one Francesc received, as it involved painting all of that ensemble's compartments, other than those painted spaces that might include the tabernacle, which fell to Jaume. Does that mean that Francesc, the older brother, enjoyed greater prestige and renown among the Barcelona clientele, or was it just a case of the two brothers' specialties?

According to the contract signed by Francesc, the main altarpiece of Sant Pere de les Puel·les had four *carrers* (sections) and two "*banchs*", that is to say, a predella split into two. Each *carrer* included five compartments which had to be painted with stories from the life of Saint Peter. The gilding was also the job of the painter. With regard to the contract signed by Jaume, we read that the tabernacle he was to paint and gild was made of three parts. The framework Jaume had to gild and polychrome is described, mentioning a Calvary scene made up by Christ, the Virgin and Saint John, which also had to be painted and gilded. It is not clear if these latter images were sculpted. But the work was left unfinished because, as we shall see shortly, another contract for it was signed by Jaume and Pere Serra on 1 March 1362.

It is highly probable that the Sant Pere de les Puel·les altarpiece remained incomplete due to Francesc Serra's precarious state of health. And the same may be said for a possible altarpiece commissioned for the monastery of Santa Eulàlia del Camp in Barcelona on 11 May 1361.[135] Furthermore, July that year saw the cancellation of the contract for another major project on which Francesc had been working for some years, the altarpiece and tabernacle for the main altar of the church of Santa María del Pi in Barcelona. We have already mentioned the works carried out by Francesc in this church in 1355, which resulted in him receiving a summons in 1356. The next we hear is from 17 August 1360, when he agreed to complete a tabernacle there by February the following year, for the sum of 54 Barcelonese *lliures*.[136] What is interesting about the document is that the artist is described as "*sculptor ymaginum*", a definition we do not ever see again in professional documents referring to him, and which must have had something to do with the sort of commission he was accepting, involving the carving and gilding of a wooden structure.[137] As such, on 8 February 1361, Francesc appears as "*pictor de reetaules*" (altarpiece painter) on a payment receipt amounting to 16 Barcelonese *lliures* for his works on the "*retrotabulo altaris maioris dicte ecclesie, quod ego depinxi*" (altarpiece of the main altar of said church, which I painted), which makes it pretty clear that his work on the church went beyond the execution of a tabernacle.[138] A few days later, on 1 March, Francesc signed a new payment receipt, this time for six *lliures*, for his work on the tabernacle.[139] On 21 June that same year the painter recognized that the church *obrers* had, to date, paid him 80 Barcelonese *lliures*, "*racione tabemaculi et reetaule*" (for an altarpiece and a tabernacle),[140] which confirms that Francesc was working on an overall project for the main altar, and that good progress had been made.

In any case, 24 July 1361 saw the aforementioned cancellation of the Santa María del Pi contract[141], probably due to the reason we mentioned earlier, the artist's health. This is partly borne out by a payment dated 25 November from the same year to his wife and related to her dowry, which might mean that Francesc could already see the end was near.[142] His death came before 15 February 1362,[143] date on which his wife returned a sum paid to Francesc, plus an unpainted altarpiece, relating to a commission he had signed for on 30 April 1361 and which he had not been able to complete. The document, which does not mentioned what location the altarpiece had been commissioned for, was signed by Jaume Serra as a witness.[144] All the same, we know the location thanks to the fact that the work was taken on by the painter Llorenç Saragossa who, recently arrived from Valencia in 1363, received a commission for an altarpiece and tabernacle for the town of Castellnou de Bages (Barcelona), in which we see some of the same patrons as appear on the document from 1362.[145]

New professional horizons: Jaume and Pere Serra

The death of Francesc at the beginning of 1362 meant that on 1 March that same year Jaume and his brother Pere (doc. 1357-1405), who up to then had only appeared on the documents dated 1357 when he joined Ramon Destorrents' workshop as an apprentice for four years,[146] turned the family business upside own. We have seen how Jaume had been sporadically working alongside Francesc for some time, whereas in the case of Pere, the death of his eldest brother must have served as an incentive to reorganize his professional life and join his brother Jaume. From that point on it would seem that the managing and contracts dynamics changed, with Jaume and Pere taking on joint commissions for altarpieces, which had never been the case with Francesc and Jaume.

In the light of these changes, it is highly significant that Francesc Serra II, son of the deceased, should not have joined the family company being launched by Jaume and Pere. Although at the time of his father's death he must have been a young boy of ten at the most,[147] once he had learnt his trade it seems he kept to one side and is not recorded as working with his uncles. In July 1376 we find him involved in the polychrome works on the main ceiling of Barcelona's Palau Reial Menor, along with another painter, Jaume Castellar.[148] Something serious must have happened soon after, because he was charged with an abuse of trust of one of his partners, only being reprieved by Pere the Ceremonious and John I in 1382 and 1394.[149] It is possible that these circumstances forced him to leave Barcelona, as after 1379 he is recorded as residing and working in Valencia, from where he would never return, with documentation placing him there until 1396.[150]

The new panorama taking shape at the heart of the Serra family forced Jaume and Pere to take on joint responsibilities and, in the first place, they took care of the commissions that their brother Francesc had left unfinished when he died, as Francesc Serra II was no more than a child in 1362. This can be seen with regard to the main altarpiece of the monastery of Sant Pere de les Puel·les, for which they signed a joint contract with the Abbess and the representatives of the religious house on 1 March that year, a few days after the death of their brother. They undertook to carry out the works in accordance with the terms established in the contract signed by Francesc, and agreed on a new total price of 58 Barcelonese lliures. In the document the aforementioned Bernat Roca, in charge of works at Barcelona cathedral, acted as guarantor, along with Suana, the painters' mother.[151]

In 1363 Jaume and Pere Serra accepted a commission from the All Saints' confraternity for an altarpiece for the chapel dedicated to said devotion in the church of Santa María in Manresa (Barcelona).[152] This was both an important and very well-paid commission (150 Barcelonese lliures) involving highly interesting iconography that is described in detail in the document. The upper body of the altarpiece was to have six main compartments painted to depict the history of All Saints, each with processions of angels, prophets, apostles, virgins, martyrs and saints. The predella was to be dedicated to Christ's Passion, the top panel to the Calvary and the main compartment to the Coronation of the Virgin. The guarantors representing the Serra brothers were their mother, Suana, and the aforementioned miniaturist, Arnau de la Pena, who we have already seen as a guarantor for Jaume on a contract signed for Girona in 1358, and who once again appeared alongside Jaume and Pere in 1365.[153] Ruiz noted that the fact that the panels dedicated to the angels were already drawn could mean that the ensemble was previously commissioned from either Ramon Destorrents or Francesc Serra.[154]

Despite the success of what was now a family workshop, the problems with the Sant Pere de les Puel·les altarpiece continued. Once again, there must have been some kind of obstacle stopping the work from being completed, because on 16 July 1366 Pere and (on this occasion) Joan signed a new contract with the nuns and representatives of the monastery.[155] The document specifies that the structure had been installed with four carrers with four compartments in each (five, according to the contract signed by Francesc Serra in 1360). The price agreed was now 85 lliures, less than the 115 lliures total of the two contracts signed by Francesc and Jaume Serra six years earlier, and more than the 58 lliures stipulated in the 1362 contract signed by Jaume and Pere.[156] Reading the document one might conclude that the scenes from the body of the altarpiece were already drawn, given it states that the painters should paint them "en aquella manera que vuy son ja deboxades e's demostren" (in the way that they are currently drawn and presented). This would mean that work had already got underway, but not been terminated. This would appear to be confirmed by the document's reference to the compartments of the predella that Pere and Joan had to gild and paint: "fer deurar e pintar dos banchs qui son posats en lo peu del dit retaule, e en los quals s[on] diversas miges ymages, segons que se son depoxades [?] e's demostren".[157] And yet oddly enough, when the payment deadlines were detailed, it stated that Pere and Jaume Serra would be paid 30 lliures once the altarpiece's drawing had been completed and the gilding was ready to begin, a clause that contradicts what is stated in earlier points. Finally, we do not know whether the problematic execution of the altarpiece became a lengthy process, but what is for certain is that as late as 1377 we find records of a donation of 30 lliures from King Pere the Ceremonious for works to it.[158]

Another matter of note is the fact that it is not Jaume Serra's name that appears on the 1366 document alongside his brother Pere's signature, but that of their brother Joan (doc. 1365-1386), a fourth member of the clan about whom we know rather little, and who we have no record of having taken on any individual commissions, suggesting he played something of a secondary role in the workshop.[159] We do not know if there was some kind of problem with Jaume, but the fact is that in 1366 we only have one document alluding to him and his activity as a painter. This is a record from 1 January, when the queen summoned him to Tarragona to affix the raisable cover of a series of andas the painter had constructed.[160] We do not know whether he was busy with other projects or if he suffered some kind of illness. In fact, on 16 July that year Pere Serra received the final payment of the altarpiece of the chapel of All Saints in the church of Santa María in Manresa, the contract for which he had signed with Jaume in 1363, as we saw earlier. Pere signed for them both, which is far from insignificant.[161] On the other hand, something similar would occur in 1367, when only Jaume Serra would appear on the documents in an agreement with Constança de Valls, a nun from the monastery of Santa María de Jonqueres, in Barcelona.[162]

The altarpieces of Santa María in Tobed and other Aragonese altarpieces

One hypothesis that might explain the partial disappearance of Jaume Serra from the documentation dated 1366-67 could be his involvement in the completion of the three altarpieces that Enrique II of Castile, also known as Enrique of Trastámara (he was from the House of Trastámara), had commissioned for the church of Santa María in Tobed. The absence of documentation bearing witness to the execution of this important set of altarpieces by the Serra brothers has been explained by historiography through a series of hypotheses that range from the stylistic to the dating of the three altarpieces in question. They were designated for the three altars in the chevet of the church, dedicated to the Virgin (main altar) (fig. 31), Saint John the Baptist (fig. 32) and Mary Magdalene (fig. 33), three devotional figures that match the surviving compartments, which have since been split up.[163]

In their dating certain issues we should bear in mind were taken into account. Firstly, that the construction of the chevet of the church got underway on 1 April 1356, being terminated around 1359.[164] We would therefore suppose that the execution of the altarpieces was carried out subsequent to the conclusion of the architectural works. The historical context encouraging the execution of the three altarpieces is also key. This was a highly complex situation, affected by two wars, where the crowns of Castile and Aragon faced each other, known as the War of the two Pedros (1356-69), in which Pedro the Cruel was fighting against Pere the Ceremonious; and the Castilian Civil War (1366-69) between the aforementioned Pedro el Cruel and Enrique of Trastámara, his half-brother and rival.[165]

We can therefore situate the construction of the church chevet, with its three altars, towards the start of the War of the two Pedros, as we have documentary evidence that the altars had been installed by 1359. Enrique of Trastámara was involved not only in the execution of the altarpieces, but must also have paid for some of the architectural works, as the emblems of the royal house of Castile appear in numerous parts of the two first sections of the nave, next to the coat of arms of the house of Aragon and the patriarchal cross of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher. Furthermore, Enrique had become a servant of Pere the Ceremonious, which enabled him to take possession of a number of nearby towns including Épila, where in 1358 his son John was born, Ricla, Tamarite de Litera and others.[166]

Fig. 31 . Jaume Serra. *Virgin with Child, Angels and Donors, Henry II of Castile, his wife, Juana Manuel, and two of their children*, originally from the church of Santa María de Tobed. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (right-hand side panel).

Fig. 32. Jaume Serra. *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist*, originally from the church of Santa María de Tobed. Sitges, Museu Maricel (central panel); Barcelona, Museu Diocesà (left-hand side panel); Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (right-hand side panel).

We should take into account that said conflict saw a number of major battles take place not far from Tobed, close to the border with the crown of Castile, where the Order of the Holy Sepulcher played a role, with important possessions in the region, along with Enrique of Trastámara himself. Pedro the Cruel ended up controlling a good deal of the current provinces of Zaragoza and Teruel, until 1366, when Enrique of Trastámara and his allies unleashed their offensive move. As such, some of those who have written about the Serra commission for the church in Tobed have agreed in pointing out that Enrique's generosity should be interpreted not only as a gesture of religious favor or gratitude for the support provide by the Aragonese during the war, but also as an attempt to legitimize his image as king, something that was very much in the balance following his self-proclamation.[167] Following a series of victories and defeats, the offensive that Enrique, at that time no more than the Count of Trastámara, started in 1366, led him to win the land that his half-brother Pedro the Cruel controlled in Aragon, and to make inroads into Castilian territory, naming himself king in Calahorra on 16 March 1366. He was crowned just a few days later in the monastery of Huelgas (Burgos).[168]

Enrique of Trastámara's conquest of the Aragonese lands that Pedro the Cruel had controlled between 1362 and 1366, including towns as important as Tarazona, could be a good reason for promoting the project for three altarpieces in Tobed and offering up thanks to the Virgin as an ex-voto,[169] as we can see in the only surviving panel, the main one, from the altarpiece that stood over the church's main altar, dedicated to the Virgin, now housed at the Prado (fig. 31). This is a depiction of Our Lady of Humility surrounded by angels and, at her feet, the married couple made up of Enrique of Trastámara and Juana Manuel, accompanied by two of their children, a girl and a boy. The first is John, born in 1358 in the nearby town of Épila as we mentioned above, the future John I of Castile, and the girl is Eleanor, born around 1362. The donors do not include the second daughter, Joanna, who according to some sources was born in 1367,[170] meaning in principle that the depiction could only have been carried out between April 1366, when Enrique proclaimed himself King, and 1367, prior to the birth of this second daughter.[171]

As we can see, this series of events links up with what we commented earlier regarding Jaume Serra, who is almost completely absent from Barcelona-based documentation during 1366-67, perhaps because he had got involved in the execution of that commission. It is fundamental to bear in mind that the panel proudly displays the royal emblems, not

Fig. 33. Jaume Serra. Side panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint Mary Magdalene*, originally from the church of Santa María de Tobed. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

just in the heraldic escutcheon in the top right, with the arms of Castile (the left-hand side corresponds to the Manuel family, the queen's lineage), but also in the crowns worn by the four donors, and in the two helmets with castles and rampant lions we see at the feet of Enrique and his son. If that were not enough, the image is reinforced with the inscription "Enrico re[ge]" at the feet of the monarch. Contrary to the suggestion made by Alcoy,[172] we do not believe Enrique would have been bold enough to have himself depicted with the royal emblems before his proclamation as king in 1366, so that the 1359-63 chronology she put forward for the altarpiece would seem a little far-fetched.[173] It was highly unusual for someone who was not the king to use the king's emblems. As Faustino Menéndez Pidal wrote, Enrique II only started using them after his self-proclamation in 1366.[174] Were this not to be the case, the depicted images would go against all iconographic logic, placing us before a *unicum* in the history of western art.[175] In any case, as mentioned earlier, the emblems of Enrique as king appear in other parts of the church, in the two first sections of the nave. This part of the temple was built in the second stage of construction works, from 1369 onwards,[176] once the military conflict had concluded and the matter of who would succeed to the throne of Castile had been settled. As such, the logical thing would be to think that the propagandist iconography exalting royalty seen in the central *Altarpiece of the Virgin* must have been executed at around that time or just before, but definitely after Enrique's proclamation in 1366.

It is possible that at that time Enrique II, safely recognized as king and free of the concerns arising from the previous situation, might have focussed on the projection of his image as a legitimate monarch, grateful to those who had supported him. As such, within the framework of his own legitimization, and the consecration of the royal house that he now represented, we see how he made a series of major donations to different churches. These took place following his self-proclamation in 1366, just when we believe the Tobed project was being got underway. We are referring, for example, to the reform works, patronage and support for a range of Franciscan monasteries, such as San Francisco in Palenzuela, Santa Clara in Carrión, the Clarist Order of Jaén, Santa Clara in Valladolid or Santa Clara in Toledo. We should stress that all of these actions took place in 1366, which would seem to indicate that his self-proclamation went hand in hand with a major policy of prestige which may have included the Tobed project. It is worth adding two considerable financial legacies made to the church of Guadalupe included in the privileges granted by the king in 1367 and 1369, where he appears as "*cavallero e servidor de Ihesu Christo*" (knight and servant of Jesus Christ);[177] as well as the 1370 construction of a chapel in the cloisters of the Augustine Order of Valencia, for which he awarded the sum of 3,000 maravedíes.[178]

If we consider 1366-1367 to be the correct date for the project getting underway, we need to rule out Rosa Alcoy's theory of Francesc Serra and Bartomeu Bassa as the authors of the three Tobed altarpieces. To this we should add something important that has been revealed in recent studies into this matter. Alcoy had detected a duplication of styles in the altarpieces that justified attributing their authorship to at least two different artists. She noted a more old-fashioned touch and linear style on the central panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist*, kept today at the Museu Maricel in Sitges (fig. 32), while the second style corresponded to a painter more in keeping with the Italianate tastes popular to Catalan painting in the first half of the 14th century. She called them the "First Master of Tobed" and the "Second Master of Tobed". This allowed her to introduce the figures of Francesc Serra and Bartomeu Bassa, although she was never quite clear which one was which.[179]

The complex panorama described by Alcoy was invalidated when the restoration and technical analysis of the central panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist* was carried out, revealing profound repainting processes that entirely distorted the style of the work. This was highlighted by Favà and Cornudella, while the original polychromy had survived with varying degrees of damage in the Calvary and the part of the panel given over to the predella, the central compartment with the full-length depiction of Saint John the Baptist presented (and still does) an almost complete repaint. The conclusion drawn was that the supposed old-fashioned style of the panel corresponded, in reality, to the intervention of an art restorer retouching the work at the end of the 19th century or beginning of the 20th century.[180]

This discovery ruled out Alcoy's theory and, at the same time, the existence of the old-fashioned painter she had identified in other parts of the Tobed altarpieces, and in a range of works she labelled as "the early Serra brothers", such as the

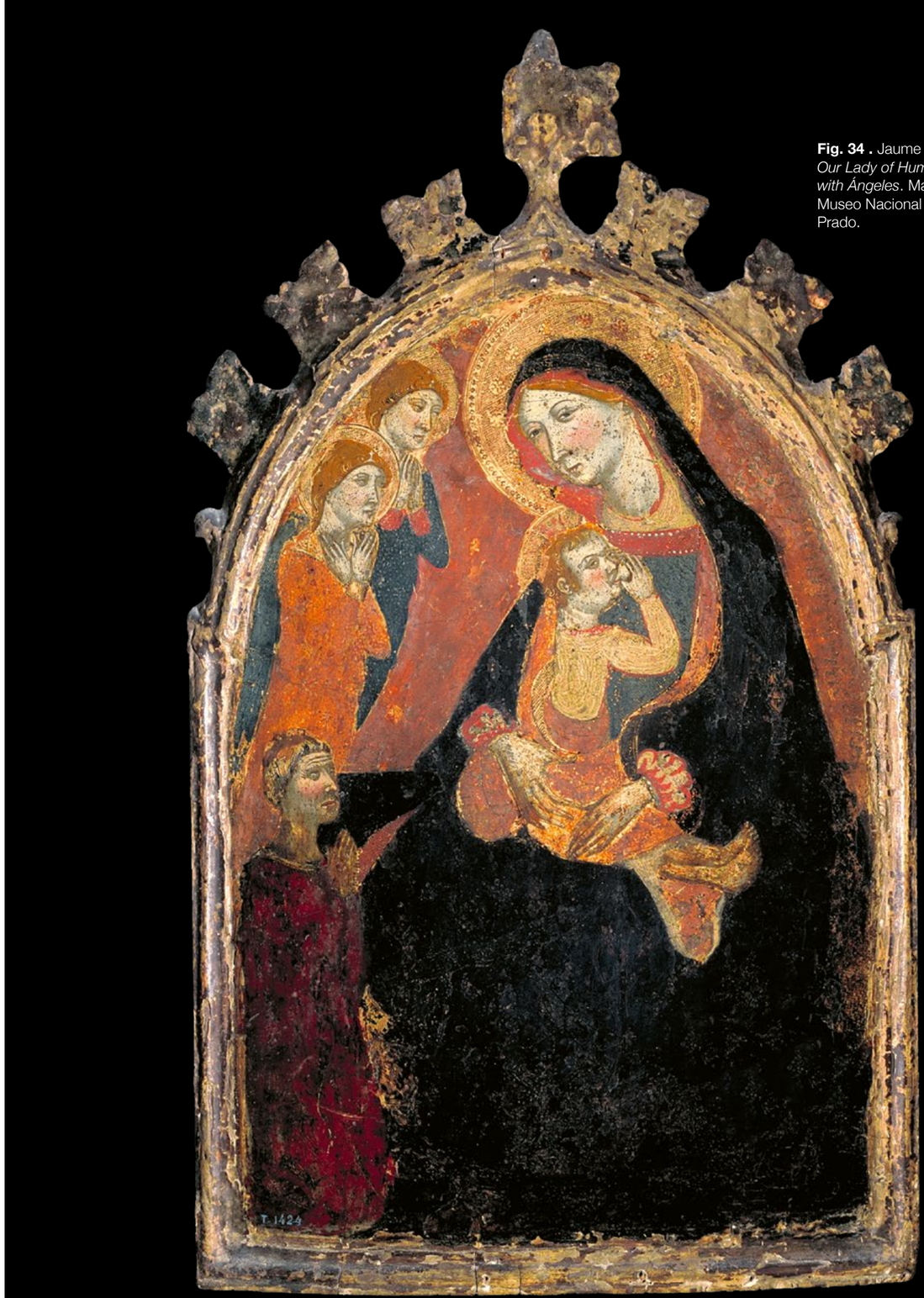


Fig. 34 . Jaume Serra. *Our Lady of Humility with Ángeles*. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

Fig. 35. Jaume Serra. *Virgin with Child and Angels playing Instruments*. Private collection.

missing Virgin that presided over the Barcelona-Lille-Krakow polyptych, or the Iravals altarpiece.[181] This led her to posit that this First Master of Tobed must have been the one to receive the commission from Enrique II,[182] when in fact it was the result of the work of a contemporary restorer. Our insistence here is not to dwell on Alcoy's mistake, which is perfectly understandable, but to demonstrate the sheer complexity of the issue we are addressing here, and as a warning against the dangers of reconstructing artistic identities based on weak arguments and hypotheses that lack solidity.

According to Alcoy,[183] and based on arguments of a stylistic nature, we should rule out the traditionally-accepted timeline for the central compartment of the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, that is to say between 1369, the year that Enrique of Trastámara finally took the throne following his victory at the battle of Montiel, and 1379, when he died. Her belief is that this dating is at fault by being too late, given that the style of the panel matches works that she herself has attributed to Francesc and Jaume Serra. If the first of these had died in 1362, then the altarpiece in question must have been painted before that. As such, Alcoy's chronological theory is built around two key dates, 1359, the date of the termination of the chevet and altars in the church of Tobed, and 1363, the date Bartomeu Bassa died being, according to her, Francesc Serra's supposed partner in the Tobed project.[184]

This theory's first problem is that it prioritizes stylistic arguments over historical facts such as the self-proclamation of Enrique II in 1366 or his depiction as king in the Tobed panel. As such, the style of the Tobed altarpieces, characterized as more brusque, direct and less delicate than the more sugary works that Jaume and Pere Serra would create at a later date, appears to have dragged historiography onto the shifting sands of indefinition and conditioning. It is true these pieces bear similarities with the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* commissioned in 1359 from Francesc Serra and finished in around 1364 by his brother Jaume (fig. 27), and also with the panels from the altarpiece depicting the Passion of Christ from the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44) as well as with other similar works. And yet we can detect differences with the altarpiece paid for by Martín de Alpartir around 1381 for said monastery in Zaragoza, housed today at the Museo de Zaragoza (fig. 40), which has become a touchstone for organizing the Jaume Serra catalogue. We will need to explain this discrepancy later. In any case, the similarities with the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* puts us in a perfectly acceptable situation from a chronological point of view given, as we suggest, that these works were closely contemporaneous to, being just before, the start of the Tobed project. The second problem with Alcoy's theory is that we have no idea about the style of Francesc Serra and Bartomeu Bassa, in spite of the suggestions she has been putting forward for a number of years. As such we previously ruled out Francesc's involvement in the Ardèvol-Prats *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse*. Meanwhile, we have also seen how the supposed figure of the First Master of Tobed actually related to a recent restorer. These arguments had been used by Alcoy to justify her chronology and authorship theory, but they must be firmly rejected.

The main problem she came up against when building up her theory was matching up the most logical chronological timespan for the Tobed Virgin (that is to say, as of 1366-69) with the style it presented. And in resolving this issue it is clear that the aforementioned chronology and the possible involvement of Francesc Serra and Bartomeu Bassa (who died, respectively, in 1362 and 1363) had a huge bearing on her hypothesis. It is as such that what Alcoy argues so vehemently in the following passage is highly revealing: "No és factible mantenir la coherència dels estudis i admetre cronologies anteriors a les establertes solament per a una part de les obres que van constituir l'antic grup d'Iravals. No és congruent donar per bones datacions entorn de 1350-62 per a retaules germans dels de Tobed i no acceptar-les per a aquests últims. Ni l'estil de Jaume ni tampoc el de Pere responen al visible en les obres realitzades a Barcelona per a Enric de Trastàmara".[185]

One of the explanations for the dysfunctions that we are trying to emphasize could be the excessive importance Alcoy gave to the role of Francesc Serra in her research, especially in her early work where she tried to build up his artistic persona through the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* from the chapel in the cloisters of Barcelona cathedral (fig. 27).[186] We have already seen the tricky issues presented by said work,

as the altarpiece was commissioned from Francesc (1359) and finished by Jaume (ca. 1364-1367), and where Francesc's involvement is highly unlikely to judge by the documents. If we also take into account the fact that the ensemble's central panel is in a private collection, and only known through black and white photos, which reveal the many repaints that it has undergone, then our only conclusion has to be that the stylistic construction of Francesc Serra's artistic persona is speculative, ill-defined and characterized by structural shortcomings. All of this hardly helps in the formulation of reliable conclusions with which to be able to construct new theories regarding the Tobed altarpieces.

And it is here that the most important issue lies. To justify the involvement of Francesc Serra in the altarpieces paid for by Enrique II of Castile and Juana Manuel based on a hypothesis as feeble as that of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* is hardly advisable. We have already seen the result in the case of one of the Tobed altarpieces; what was once thought to be the work of an old-fashioned painter was, in fact, the fruit of a contemporary art restorer. The first conclusion to be drawn would be that until it is possible to gain direct access to the central panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* and be able to verify how much of the original polychromy remains and evaluate the degree to which it has been retouched, we should be cautious about any hypothesis put forward based on said work. And secondly, we would conclude that the figure of Francesc Serra has been built up on foundations sunk in sand, leading historiography down a number of blind alleys. If to this we add that there are other painters fundamental to understanding the style of the early Serra brothers who are equally shrouded in mystery, such as Ramon Destorrents and Llorenç Saragossa, or even the Master of Rubió, then the picture we get of painting in Barcelona from around 1350 is hardly inspiring in its clarity.

Although Alcoy's arguments regarding Tobed are consistent with what she herself has published over the years, they may be questioned from other perspectives. It is evident that Francesc and Jaume Serra's putative Barcelona workshop (if they really did manage one together, which we doubt) is riddled, even today after all that has been written, with stylistic uncertainties conditioned by a number of factors. Firstly due to the lack of documentation helping to establish clear authorship. And, especially, due to the particular dynamics of medieval workshops

Fig. 36. Jaume and Pere Serra. Central compartment from the altarpiece of the shrine of Bell-lloc. Palau de Cerdanya, parish church.

where different artists collaborated to a degree that is hard to determine. The fact that Jaume took on commissions that Francesc failed to complete does not mean that they co-managed a workshop until the death of the latter, as the documents do not bear this out. It would, therefore, be a conclusion reached *a priori*. We are also unaware of the real role of painters such as Bartomeu Bassa, whom the documents place working closely with the two brothers. To this we must add other factors, such as the confusion generated by the death of Francesc in 1362, leading to Jaume taking on greater responsibilities and Pere's arrival on the scene, about whose early style we have little solid or firm evidence beyond a series of suggestions that can only be regarded as hypothetical, such as the one that theorizes he may have been the author of the altarpiece in the monastery of Santa María in Sijena (fig. 39).

When it comes to the original style lying below the repainted central panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist* and in what remains of the two side panels in Tobed (fig. 32), Favà and Cornudella argue that it is the same as that of a group of works they attribute to Francesc Serra, that is to say the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, a panel depicting the Pentecost housed in Barcelona's Museu Diocesà, an *Our Lady of Humility* from the Prado (fig. 34), a *Virgin with Angels playing Instruments* from a private collection (*ad cautelam*, being a work only known by black and white photo images, fig. 35), and the four Christ's Passion panels from the church of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44).[187] Broadly speaking, grouping these works together seems to us to be correct, although they could be joined by others from the old Iravals group. One issue on which we do not agree is in attributing them all to Francesc Serra.

As soon as Favà and Cornudella suggest that Francesc was the author of the Tobed side panels, that is to say those of Saint John the Baptist (fig. 32) and Mary Magdalene (fig. 33), they are accepting that the commission for the works must have taken place prior to 1362, when the painter died.[188] As

Fig. 37. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Virgin with Child and Angels*. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

we saw earlier, that date needs to be pushed back a bit, as it is possible that Francesc was already ill by 1361, leading him to cancel a number of recently-signed contracts. In any case, we feel it is highly unlikely the Tobed altarpieces were commissioned at that time, for the reasons set out earlier.

On the other hand, Favà and Cornudella's position is different when it comes to the only known compartment from the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (fig. 31), depicting Enrique II of Castile and his queen alongside their children, as they prefer to attribute it to Jaume Serra.[189] This can only be regarded as a rather contradictory stance, given it is evident that the author of said panel is the same as the painter who executed the *Our Lady of Humility*, also in the Prado (fig. 34), and which, as we have already seen, Favà and Cornudella attribute to Francesc Serra. Both the style and the model used for this little panel are a complete match for the compartment of the Tobed Virgin. The sensation one gets is that the debate regarding the chronology of Enrique II and Juana Manuel's panel has had an effect on said specialists, as the identity between one work and the other is crystal clear. That is to say, one gets the feeling that the impossibility of dating the Tobed Virgin to earlier than 1366 has played a role in their decision to attribute it to Jaume Serra and not to Francesc. Be this as it may, and focusing exclusively on style, if the small panel depicting *Our Lady of Humility* is by Francesc Serra, then the Tobed work must also be so. The problem is that, as mentioned earlier, Enrique of Trastámara, however much he yearned for the throne, would never have had himself depicted with the attributes of the King of Castile in 1362 or earlier, as it would have seemed incongruent to him. As such, Francesc Serra could not have painted the Tobed panel. And if we conclude that this is the case, then he can't have been the author of the Prado's *Our Lady of Humility*, either. And, by extension, the rest of the works that Favà and Cornudella have associated with this panel in terms of style could not have been by Francesc, either, which means we are forced to tear the artist's stylistic profile into shreds.

On the other hand, if we accept that the Tobed compartment was executed by Jaume Serra, we need to consider whether the little *Our Lady of Humility* panel[190] was too, and, as such, all those other works stylistically comparable to it. In other words, the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, the *Pentecost* from Barcelona's Museu Diocesà, the *Virgin with Angels playing Instruments* from a private collection (fig. 35) and, also, the four panels from the church of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44). With regard to the latter, Favà and Cornudella suggested that they might have been the result of a collaboration between Francesc and Jaume Serra,[191] but this is a matter we will turn to later when addressing the group of works in question.

Given our lack of knowledge regarding the pictorial style of Francesc Serra, having already commented on the risks inherent to Alcoy's theory about the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), we would prefer not to formulate any other theories concerning said painter's artistic practices for two reasons. Firstly, because it is not clear that Francesc ever started the altarpiece in question, and secondly, because any attempt to reconstruct the canon of an artist based on a hypothesis with so many weak points right from the outset would be incapable of raising even the most minimally solid of edifices. And the same reasons would dissuade us from speculating on the supposed style of Bartomeu Bassa.

All the same, it is clear that there are artistic connections between some of the subjects from the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse*, the Tobed altarpieces and the Christ's Passion panels in Zaragoza, and for as long as we are unable to construct something more solid around Francesc Serra, these are the links that lead us to posit a different theory for Jaume Serra, considering him to be the sole author of the abovementioned works, and of those stylistically associated with them, such as the Prado's *Our Lady of Humility* (fig. 34), the *Predella of Saint Onophrius* and the works attributed to the old Iravals group.[192] Jaume is the only painter we know of who, with all certainly, worked on the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse*, which makes it only logical to reconstruct his initial artistic persona based on said work. What Jaume may have painted alongside Francesc up until 1362, and what he did with Pere subsequently, or what he painted with Bartomeu Bassa until 1363 is, at the time of writing, impossible to discern without getting bogged down in speculation.

Having reached this juncture, we should mention, firstly, the stylistic differences present at the heart of the group of works listed above, which were already highlighted by Verrié in the 1940s, and which could be explained by the many artists active in the same workshop. We also ought to mention the

contrasts with works documented or attributed to Jaume Serra from later periods, which we justify in terms of the painter's artistic evolution, taking into account the fact that the Martín de Alpartir (ca. 1381) altarpiece was painted some 15 years after the Tobed group of works. Another factor to bear in mind is that over time Jaume's workshop must have grown, leading to shifts in style due to the involvement of a wide range of artists on the altarpieces being produced by it.

Let us turn now briefly to one specific matter. The model of *Virgo lactans* surrounded by angels as depicted in the Tobed ensemble (fig. 31) is the same, as has been mentioned, as that of the small panel also housed at the Prado (fig. 34), and it is also faithfully repeated in the central panel of the altarpiece from the shrine of Bell-lloc (Dorres, France), kept today in the church of the Palau de Cerdanya (fig. 36).[193] With regard to the compositional and iconographic model this is beyond doubt, given the three compositions are like twins. Details are repeated as specific as the position of the Virgin's hands or the fold in the cloak on the right-hand side (depending on the point of view of the viewer) of Mary's chest. In stylistic terms, however, the most obvious parallels are between the Tobed panel and the one from the Prado. We observe clear signs of that rough style and direct brushstroke, with a faintly-defined modelling effect. The panel from the Palau de Cerdanya, meanwhile, corresponds to the softer Jaume we find in altarpieces such as the Martín de Alpartir (fig. 40) one, or the *Virgin with Child and Angels* that joined the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya from the Gallardo collection (fig. 37),[194] meaning we feel that the dating of the Palau de Cerdanya work ought to shifted up to the 1380s.

Now that we're dealing with depictions of Mary of this type, it is worth taking a moment to consider one work to which we have already alluded, a little-known *Virgin with Child and Angels playing Instruments*, only ever briefly mentioned by Favà and Cornudella, who included it along with other possible works by Francesc Serra (fig. 35).[195] It is a relatively recent discovery, and we only know it graphically, with Barcelona's Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic having a color photograph from 2000, when the work was on the market in the city.[196] We have also been able to confirm that it was recently (2013) sold by the Bader Gallery (Cousset, Switzerland). The composition is not dissimilar to the central panel of the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, or the generic model of *Our Lady with Child and Angels playing Instruments* popularized by the Serra brothers through a number of altarpieces. The style, meanwhile, is reminiscent of the Tobed panel, despite certain discernible differences that do not, however, rule out its attribution to Jaume Serra.

This differentiation is what served to attribute the four panels to varying authors, because while the Palau de Cerdanya altarpiece has recently been associated with Jaume without causing too much debate,[197] the recently-sold panel depicting *Our Lady with Child and Angels playing Instruments*, the Tobed piece and the little panel at the Prado have undergone a great deal of toing and froing in terms of the attribution of authorship, ranging from Destorrents, through Francesc and Jaume Serra in collaboration, to either of the two brothers working alone. In any case, and basing our argument on the fact that the Tobed panel could not have been worked on by either Francesc Serra or Bartomeu Bassa, it is our belief that the name behind the Tobed works has to be Jaume and his workshop, without there currently being any need to attempt to determine who else might have worked on the pieces, as any arguments used could only serve to further complicate the situation due to the lack of any solid proof. We do not know what Pere Serra's style would have been at the time. In any case, his two surviving recorded altarpieces, both of which originated from Manresa and were executed in the 1390s, show no connection with the Tobed ensemble, which would make Pere's involvement in them highly questionable. Another thing altogether is how Jaume tackled the project from the point of view of its material execution. He must surely have had people working with him, and it remains to be seen to what degree they played a role in the final result.

As such, when it comes to understanding the style of the Tobed works and the validity of our argument, comparative analysis is brought to bear with the documented works of Jaume, such as the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse*, in Barcelona cathedral (fig. 27), although this work does present all of the problems outlined above. The second altarpiece that should be taken into account is the one that Martín de Alpartir commissioned for the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza around 1381 (fig. 40), that is to say, some 15 years after the hypothetical execution of the central panel of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in Tobed. Clearly we can also consider other undocumented works that historiography has more or less unanimously attributed to Jaume, such as the altarpiece of Sant Esteve in Gualter (Lleida), housed today in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (fig. 50),[198] or the aforementioned altarpiece from the Palau de Cerdanya, we should bear in mind that these are undoubtedly works from the 1380s. However, being later works, we should not forget that Pere may have worked on them, as has been suggested for some of them, in particular the Gualter altarpiece.

In short, and as a last word on the Tobed ensemble, to understand the stylistic and chronological issues surrounding these three altarpieces, we should ask ourselves when and at what moment Enrique II of Castile commissioned them. This is key, as any specialists who think that it was prior to 1363 are inviting Francesc Serra and Bartomeu onto the scene. We have seen how the three altars that would house them had been finished as early as 1359, which invites one to suppose that the execution of the altarpieces was more or less immediate. However, it would not be so unusual for the altars to be left without altarpieces for a few years, all the more so in a church that was in the middle of being built and with a war raging a few miles from its doors. In fact, we have already mentioned that works on the church in Tobed were interrupted just after the completion of the chevet and its altars in around 1359, and that work on the sections of the nave did not get going until as late as 1369, which is to say not until the military conflict had finished following the decisive victory of Enrique of Trastámara in the battle of Montiel.

Our suggestion is that the three Tobed altarpieces were executed between 1366 and 1367, with our hypothesis built on the series of arguments we have developed above: the fact that there is practically no documentation for Jaume Serra during those two years; the self-proclamation of Enrique of Trastámara in 1366; the policy of prestige and legitimation launched by the monarch as of that year, as well as the termination of the war and the return to building works on the church. All of the above leads us to reject the theory dating the execution of the three altarpieces to before 1362-63, as we think it suffers from one important handicap, the need to find a style for the ever-elusive Francesc Serra and Bartomeu Bassa.[199] As such, and with regard to the elements making up the panel's royal and courtly iconography, Alcoy devised a theory that was conditioned by stylistic assumptions that led her to identify the Tobed group of works with what she called "the early Serra brothers" (Francesc and Jaume), and with works such as the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), which she herself slotted into the same time span.[200]

Furthermore, and in much the same vein, "the more than possible connection" Alcoy establishes between the Ardèvol-Prats family, the patrons of the aforementioned Barcelona altarpiece, and Enrique II, seems more than a little optimistic. That the monarch should have received the town of Tàrrega as part of the agreement with Pere the Ceremonious, and for the Ardèvol family to hail from said location, is not a strong enough argument to turn the family into "Count Enrique's mediators or advisors in matters of painting".[201] The result, in our opinion, is an excessively bold proposition that attempts to establish a direct link between the Barcelona altarpiece and the Tobed one, in order to thereby justify the possible involvement of Francesc Serra in all of them. Once again, said hypothesis appears to have been predicated on *a priori* stylistic assumptions.

The altarpieces in the monastery of Pedralbes

It was towards the end of the 1370s that Jaume and Pere Serra would jointly take on one of the most important commissions of their professional careers, the execution of the main altarpiece in the Clarist Order monastery of Santa María de Pedralbes, in Barcelona, one of the most iconic monasteries in Catalonia, founded in 1327 by Elisenda de Montcada, widow of King Jaume II. On 24 November 1368, Jaume and Pere signed the contract with the monastery Abbess, Sibil·la, although it would appear that it was the presbytery Jaume Despujol, the monastery executor, who oversaw the transaction.[202] The documents give a description of an enormous altarpiece, made up of a central panel presided over by a tabernacle, plus six side *carrers*. It measured almost nine meters wide, and the tabernacle reached a height of almost ten meters, while the side *carrers* were more than seven meters high. Its cost was budgeted at 8,000 *solidi*, an extraordinary sum for the time. We know the monastery had been intending to build an altar of this kind for some years, as the back of the 1343 contract for mural paintings for the chapel of Saint Michael, signed by Ferrer Bassa, included a sketch or outline which is structurally reminiscent of what would later become the Serra

Fig. 38. Jaume Serra. Compartments of a polyptych dedicated to the Virgin and the apostles. Saint Paul, Saint Matthew and Saint Jude. Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts.

brothers' commission. It is therefore possible that the plague of 1348, or a lack of financial liquidity, brought the project to a halt, not finally materializing until 1368.[203] Unfortunately nothing has survived of that impressive altarpiece.

In terms of subject, the work was to be dedicated to the Joys of the Virgin and the Passion of Christ, and was to be terminated within a period of two years. It was as such that, on 4 May and 6 November 1369, Jaume and Pere Serra issued payment receipts for 1,500 and 2,000 *solidi* for their work on the altarpiece, which must have been making good progress. This is shown by the fact the second of these mentioned that the altarpiece was "*deboxiatum et positum de boloermini*", which is to say that the drawing had been completed and that gilding work had commenced using bole, following the normal procedure before applying paint.[204] Shortly after, on 28 February and 12 November 1370, they signed two new payment receipts, these being the last records we have on the execution of the commission as, in accordance with the agreed terms, it had to be finished by Christmas that year.[205] It is significant to point out that the second of these receipts was signed by Pere and Joan, and not Jaume, who perhaps was busy with some other project outside of Barcelona.

It cannot have been the only commission the Serra brothers carried out for the Barcelona monastery. Although the authorship is disputed, another such might be the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, housed today in Barcelona cathedral, which came courtesy of the legacy of Canon Vallet. Its origin lies in Pedralbes, and it has been associated with a documentary reference mentioning that a certain Beatriu d'Òdena, a nun at the monastery who died in 1389, had paid for a "*bancale super altare XI milium virginum ubi est depicta vita beati Onofrii heremite*".[206] Stylistically, it was one of the works that Verrié attributed to Destorrents following his documentary discoveries concerning the altarpiece at the Almudaina palace in Palma (fig. 22),[207] and current historiography is caught between attributing it to Destorrents, with the possible participation of the young Pere Serra who trained under him,[208] or an attribution to Francesc Serra, due to the stylistic connections that exist with works such as the compartments dedicated to Christ's Passion at the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 41-44), among others.[209] The latter link (regardless of the fact that we have serious reservations about Francesc's artistic persona) is the most feasible in terms of form, given the style of the predella bears little similarity, for instance, with the Rubió altarpiece, authorship of which Alcoy suggests attributing to Ramon Destorrents.

Another of the works that the Serra brothers may have carried out at the Pedralbes monastery are a series of panels that must have been part of a polyptych and are now housed between the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lille and the National Museum of Krakow (fig. 38). These are small-scale compartments of a vertical format with miter-shaped tops, depicting full-length images of Saint Peter, Saint Matthew, Saint Jude Thaddaeus, Saint John the Evangelist, Saint James the Great and Saint Mathias. The Virgin with Child that must have presided over the ensemble was destroyed in 1940. As with the Predella of Saint Onophrius, these were attributed at one time to Destorrents, although recently it has been argued that the panels were commenced by Francesc Serra and that, on his death in 1362, they were completed by Jaume and Pere.[210] Leaving stylistic considerations to one side, the fact that the surviving panels depict six apostles leads one to suppose that the ensemble must have been made up of a further six about which we know nothing. It would be rash to speculate about the structure of the altarpiece of which they formed part, although Alcoy's suggestion we consider them as two-faced panels should be rejected on technical grounds and due to the system of construction. In any case, the most interesting thing is that they have been linked to an inventory from Pedralbes monastery dated 1376, reading "Item unes taules en les quals son pintats tots los apòstols les quals ha fetes Sor Corbera ab la confraria dels apòstols" (Also some painted panels depicting all of the apostles whose execution has been ordered by Sister Corbera with the confraternity of Apostles). The document refers to Sister Saurina of Corbera, who died in 1385, and who founded the aforementioned confraternity.[211]

Historiography has associated a third set of panels with Pedralbes, on this occasion clearly originating from the monastery. Our knowledge of the compartments, whose current whereabouts is unknown, comes through a series of old drawings made by different artists (Pau Milà i Fontanals, Macari Golferichs and Josep Puiggarí) who felt an attraction for the representations and the clothing depicted in them. They are also mentioned in old descriptions from when they were still in Pedralbes. They were subsequently sold and dispersed throughout the Barcelona art and antiques market. Francesca Español compiled a list of sources bearing witness to the existence of these panels, which depicted episodes from the lives of Saint Francis, Saint Catherine, Saint Helena and a bishop saint. There were five in total, and we do not know for which altar or altarpiece they were painted. Saying that, they included the heraldic emblems of the Cruïlles and Cardona families, which leads one to associate the panels with Constança de Cardona, widow of Jofré de Cruïlles (†1348), who must have commissioned them before her death in 1387. The drawings that give us an idea of the panels (some better than others) serve to associate them with Pere Serra, which means one more commission carried out by the family of painters for the aforementioned monastery.[212]

While Jaume was working with his brother Pere on the main altarpiece in Pedralbes, it appears he was also carrying out a commission for an altarpiece for the church of Sant Joan del Mercat in Valencia, as shown by a payment dated 14 January 1370.[213] Since Pere entered the workshop in 1362, the joint signing of contracts had become their normal practice, contrary to what had been the case while Francesc was still alive. Both Jaume and Pere would tend to appear together even on partial payment receipts, although here there was the occasional exception. One of the few occasions on which Pere appears being paid on his own is for the execution of a little triptych with silver hinges for the king in 1368.[214]

We have already seen how Jaume had his own commissions while his brother Francesc was alive, and there is no surviving contract featuring both of their names. They did work together on the main altarpiece of Sant Pere de les Puel·les, but with each one signing his own contract. In the light of the above, the change in working relations between Jaume and Pere is substantial, as they now started to sign joint contracts with patrons. In any case, it is worth noting that as long as Jaume lived, Pere never signed his own individual contract, nor did he tend to receive partial payments, which is something that should not be ignored when examining the workshop's internal hierarchy. All of this suggests Jaume was in charge of administrative responsibilities and that it was he who called the shots.[215]

Jaume on the other hand did sign both individual contracts and payment receipts, as we have seen in Valencia in 1370, and also in the case of the Virgin altarpiece he completed for the church of La Selva del Camp (Tarragona), whose first payment is recorded in 1374. The contract was for a total of 2,300 *solidi*, and there are records of two further payments in 1375 and 1379.[216] In 1375 we also have documented evidence of a second order received by Jaume from the parishioners of Cardona, who in 1358 had commissioned him to paint an altarpiece dedicated to Saint Michael. Now they were requesting an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin, for which Jaume was paid 250 gold florins.[217] All of the above leads one to conclude that Pere remained a secondary figure, while it was Jaume who dealt with clients and who tended to sign official documents. Applying the same logic we used in the case of Francesc and Jaume, if Pere had managed his own independent workshop there is no doubt we would have recorded evidence of his professional activities in legal documentation from Barcelona from the 1362-89 period, that is to say, from the time he started to work with his brother Jaume until the latter's death. This is a period during which it is striking that Pere should feature so little on his own in legal documentation.

Fig. 39. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, originally from the monastery of Santa María de Sijena. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

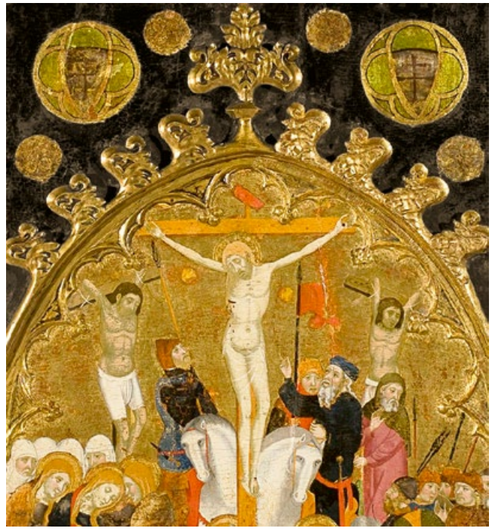
Commissions for Aragonese monasteries: the altarpieces of Santa María de Sijena and those of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza

Once Enrique II of Castile's commission for the three Tobed altarpieces from around 1366-1367 (fig. 31-33), had been undertaken and completed, followed by the execution of the now-disappeared main altarpiece in Pedralbes, recorded between 1368 and 1370, and the completion of the altarpiece for the church of San Joan del Mercat in Valencia, on which he was working in 1370, reports of Jaume Serra's professional activities start to dry up. It is possible that the undertaking of a project of such prominence as the Tobed ensemble opened up the doors to Aragon for the Serra brothers. And all the more so if you consider that behind said commission there was a highly influential patron who was, moreover, surrounded by powerful figures who could become potential clients. These new professional horizons on Aragonese soil may have brought on the circumstantial distancing of Jaume and Pere Serra from their Catalan clientele.

We do not know if it was someone fairly close to Enrique II of Castile, but one figure who does at least partially fit the bill described above is Fortaner de Glera. This was an individual with close links to King Pere the Ceremonious and Queen Elionor of Sicily, who commissioned the Serra brothers to paint an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin for one of the most important Aragonese monasteries of the time, that of Santa María de Sijena (Huesca), housed today in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (fig. 39). It was a female monastery belonging to the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, founded in 1188 by Queen Sancha of Castile, the wife of Alfonso II of Aragon. One can quickly see that the commission shared similarities with those we shall be looking at when we come to address the case of Martín de Alpartir, who around 1381 commissioned the Serra brothers to execute an altarpiece for the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza (fig. 40). What we are dealing with here are two female monasteries belonging to military orders and two male patrons closely linked to said religious centers. And two figures, moreover, with close ties to royalty and power.

Fortaner de Glera had himself depicted in the Sijena altarpiece as a donor at the feet of the Virgin and Child from the central panel, and his heraldic emblems appear in a number of secondary areas throughout the altarpiece. It is therefore clear that this was a personal commission. His name and position (monastery commander from 1367-81) may be read on the Fortaner's cloak, which helps us with an exact dating of the work.[218] Two factors are crucial to establishing authorship of the ensemble. Firstly, the style clearly points to the work being undoubtedly that of the Serra workshop.[219] And secondly, when it comes to seeking a precise attribution it would seem that Francesc is ruled out, having died in 1362.[220] So then, comparisons with the rest of the documented works attributed to Jaume and Pere do not allow us to determine whether it was the sole work of one or other brother, which at one time gave rise to its being attributed to an anonymous Master of Sijena.[221] Everything therefore points to it having been a workshop commission carried out in joint fashion, with both painters collaborating on the work.

Favà and Cornudella, meanwhile, note that the style of the main author of the Sijena altarpiece is reminiscent of one of the two artists they believe worked on the Christ's Passion panels housed at the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza, this being an issue we will be turning to shortly. This led them to suggest that this painter may have been Jaume Serra, who would have collaborated with his brother Francesc on the Passion panels, taking on a leading role in the execution of the Sijena altarpiece.[222] In our opinion, and as was the case with the Sijena altarpiece, despite the existence of stylistic differences between the four Santo Sepulcro panels, it is difficult to justify with complete precision any such distinction between artists in the two works, and we would therefore prefer to consider them to be the joint works of Jaume and Pere. One matter, then, on which historiography has not dwelt, is that of the clear stylistic links identifiable between the Sijena altarpiece and the *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy*, also housed at the Santo Sepulcro monastery, and which was completed around 1384-1385 (fig. 47). The parallels are quite clear, and take shape on different levels: style, punch marks in the gilding, types of subject depicted and compositional execution. This leads us to date the execution of the first work to the end of the 1370s, just before Fortaner de Glera left his position as monastery commander. The conclusion would be that both works correspond to a time at which Jaume and Pere were working together side by side in the same workshop, executing



commissions from Aragon. The documentation from Barcelona from that period does not show this for obvious reasons, as these commissions would have been contracted on Aragonese soil. And the difference in artistic language compared to previous projects might point to the fact that Pere had taken on a more definite and decisive role in the execution of the commissions the workshop was receiving.

During that period, the only important Serra brothers' project for which we have documented evidence is the altarpiece Martín de Alpartir commissioned from Jaume for the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza, housed today in the Museo de Zaragoza (fig. 40).[223] Alpartir, who had himself depicted as a donor in two of the work's compartments, was a highly prominent Aragonese figure, and the most important patron of said monastery in the medieval period. He acted as treasurer to Lope Fernández de Luna, Archbishop of Zaragoza (1352-1382), he was knight commander of the Holy Sepulcher temples in Tobed, Santa Cruz, Nuévalos and Torralba de los

Fig. 40. Jaume Serra. Compartments of the *Altarpiece of the Resurrection*, originally from the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza. Zaragoza, Museo de Zaragoza.

Frailes, a canon of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, Patriarch of Jerusalem and Royal Chancellor. In his 1381 will he gave instructions that he was to be buried in the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza, which he had been generous to in life, and to which he dedicated 70% of the clauses of his final instructions.[224] He arranged to be laid to rest in the chapter-house, where an altar had to be installed with his altarpiece dedicated to the Resurrection of Christ, and which had already been commissioned from Jaume Serra at a cost of 300 Aragonese gold florins:

> *"Also, as I agreed with Jaume Serra, a painter from Barcelona, the execution of an altarpiece that he must paint for the chapterhouse of the nuns' monastery of said Order of the Holy Sepulcher in the city of Zaragoza for a price of three-hundred Aragonese gold florins, of which Jaume has received 100 florins in advance payment, for this reason it is my desire and command that when said altarpiece is completed, for my testamentary executors to use my assets to pay the aforementioned Jaume Serra the remaining two-hundred florins; and also whatever it costs to bring said altarpiece to Zaragoza so that it can be installed in said chapterhouse in front of my tomb, where I instructed".*

From this text we can deduce that, barring setbacks, Jaume Serra worked on the altarpiece between 1381 and 1382. The existence of the document has long been known of,[225] but some confusion was generated by its having been dated 1361, which led to the commission being considered one of the painter's earlier works.[226] In any case, the link between the altarpiece and Jaume Serra has been a historiographic constant thanks to this documentary evidence. Once the dating error had been corrected in the 1990s, thereby giving both the document and the altarpiece its correct date, the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece has come to be considered one of fully mature Jaume's twilight works. Its chronology is from a time for which we have little information concerning the contracts signed by the painter. We do not know whether these were years when Jaume and Pere continued to work together, but we can assume that was the case judging by the works that have survived and the coming together of styles one can observe in them. However, beyond the customary similarities shared by the works of the two Serra brothers, one cannot detect in the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece the *maniera* that Pere demonstrated in his two documented Manresa altarpieces from the 1390s. This by no means rules out Pere having collaborated with his brother on secondary or auxiliary jobs, or that it might have been a work carried out solely by Jaume. What we do see, however, is a marked difference compared with certain altarpieces executed not long after or before, as would be the case with the Sijena ensemble (fig. 39), which must have been executed shortly beforehand, towards the end of the 1370s. In Sijena, Pere undoubtedly played a more important role than on the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece. Despite this, the similarities presented by the two compositions are fairly obvious, as we can see in the *Coronation* episode, where few differences may be detected.[227]

The most obvious thing of all is the stylistic gulf between this piece and those works we assume to be Jaume's from an earlier period, such as the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), those associated with the old Iravals group or the Tobed altarpieces (fig. 31-33), dated to around 1355-70. Working with Pere after 1362 must have led Jaume to change his artistic language, something we see take shape in the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece, executed 20 years later. Pere had trained under Ramon Destorrents, the most important altarpiece painter in Catalonia until the consolidation of the Serra workshop, so it is possible he brought with him some of the background he had learnt there when he joined the family workshop, serving to dynamise and renew his brother's style over the years.

Nor is it hard to explain the differences observed between the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece and the central panel of the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (fig. 31), which we attribute to Jaume Serra and which we have dated to around 1366-67. As such, the angels surrounding Mary in this work are not a mile away from the angels with similar faces, hands and gestures we find in the *Dormition of the Virgin*, the *Resurrection* or the *Descent of Christ into Hell* from the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece. Although sweeter and presenting greater degrees of modelling, the subjects depicted are extremely similar, with identical halos, hair parted the same way falling down on each side, in braids tracing the edge of the face.

We do not know how Martín de Alpartir contacted Jaume Serra, but one possibility would be that it was through the artist's execution of the three altarpieces that Enrique II commissioned for the church in Tobed. Support for the Order of the Holy Sepulcher was decisive in terms of progress in the church's building works, in which Martín de Alpartir was involved being, at that time, the knight commander of Tobed.[228] In the light of the above, it seems obvious he would call on Jaume Serra to execute the altarpieces at the Zaragoza monastery. One other possibility is that Martín de Alpartir was put in touch with Jaume through someone like Archbishop Lope Fernández de Luna, whose treasurer he was, who had previously been the bishop of Vic (Barcelona), and who had commissioned Catalan artists such as Pere Moragues, a sculptor with close links to the Serra brothers, for artistic projects such as the prelate's sepulcher in the *Parroquieta* of Zaragoza cathedral.[229]

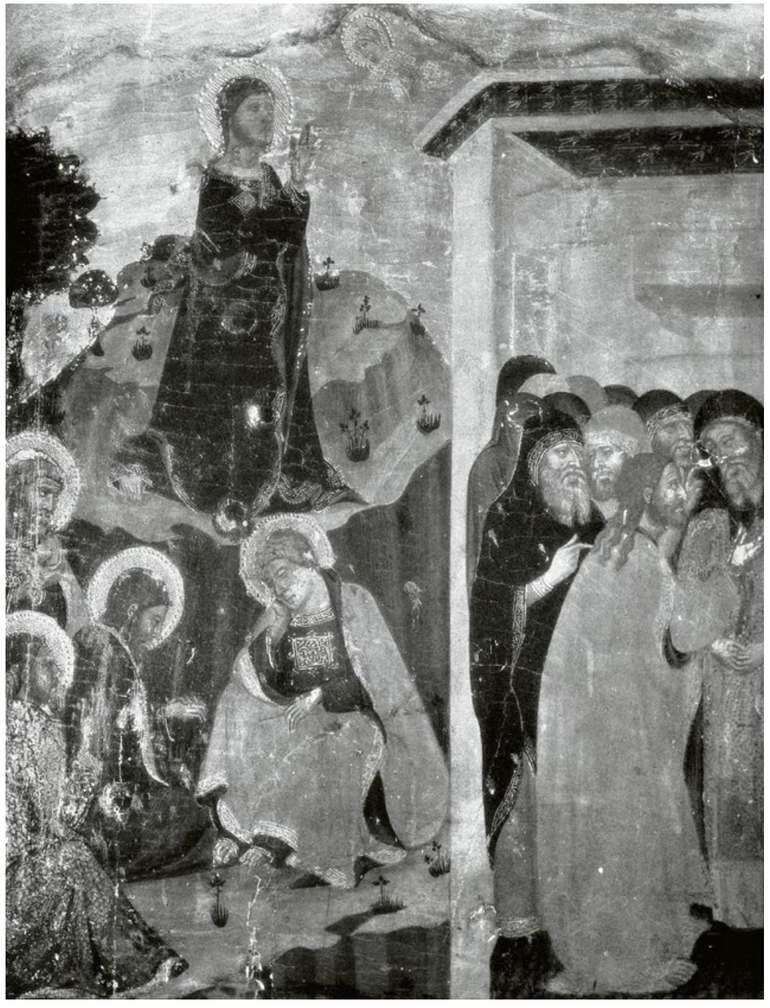
We should not be surprised by the Martín de Alpartir commission, given the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza was a religious center for which the Serra brothers had previously worked. We have already mentioned on repeated occasions that four compartments are preserved there from an altarpiece in all probability dedicated to the Passion of Christ, currently being recycled for use in a Baroque altarpiece dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary in the nearby church of San Nicolás, which is linked to the monastery (fig. 41-44). Given their current condition and their prominence and artistic/historical importance, the works are in grave need of restoration. Stylistically they form a nexus with what recent historiographers have been attributing to Francesc Serra, which has led to the conclusion that they must have been executed prior to 1362. It has also been suggested that Jaume may also have worked on them.[230]

The Passion panels are not documented, but there are records dating to 1369 that may allude to them. These are the clauses of the will of Pedro García de Rada, canon of Tarazona and ecclesiastic officer of Zaragoza, in which he left instructions for the founding of two chaplaincies "*en la dita eglesia de Sant Nicolau, en el altar de Santa María, do yes figurada la historia de la pasión et resurrección del Santo Sepulcro de Nuestro Senyor Jhesu Christo*" ("in the aforementioned church of San Nicolás, in the altar to the Virgin, depicting the history of the Passion and Resurrection of the Holy Sepulcher of Our Lord Jesus Christ"). This annotation also includes the possibility the panels may have belonged to the ensemble mentioned in the document, meaning they would have been painted by 1369. All the same, the link between the paintings and their source is by no means conclusive, as they may also have belonged to the main altar described in the 18th century by Antonio Ponz which, given the terms in which it is referred to, must have been medieval and included panels dedicated to Christ's Passion.[231]

Our feeling is that it is entirely plausible that the execution of the altarpiece to which the panels belonged had something to do with some major event that affected the church where they are kept today, the old parish of San Nicolás de Bari. This church is an annex of the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro, of which the nuns were beneficiaries, using it since the 14th century. It was, in fact, in 1361 that Martín de Alpartir, always extremely involved in the day-to-day running and finances of the monastery, convinced Archbishop Lope Fernández de Luna (over whom he had considerable sway as his treasurer) to grant the annexing of the church to the monastery and, the next year, the prioress's privilege of being able to submit candidates for the position of vicar. Both honors were confirmed in 1364 by the Cardinal of Santa Sabina.[232] Until that point, the church had been an independent parish, and so the annexing may have been an incentive for Martín de Alpartir, or for any other private benefactor or the community itself to promote the execution of the altarpiece to coincide with these important developments affecting the parish and the monastery.

Fig. 41. Jaume Serra. Compartment with the *Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Betrayal of Judas*. Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.

Fig. 42. Jaume Serra. Compartment with the *Kiss of Judas and the Arrest of Christ.* Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.



With regard to the panels, Favà and Cornudella have quite rightly addressed the issue of two artists being involved, based on the differences that can be observed from one compartment to the next. As such, they have grouped together the panels depicting the *Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane,* the *Betrayal of Judas* (fig. 41), the *Kiss of Judas* and the *Arrest of Christ* (fig. 42) on the one hand, and the *Holy Burial* and the *Resurrection of Christ* (fig. 43), and the *Descent into Limbo* and the *Marys at the Sepulcher* (fig. 44) on the other. The two experts then fine-tuned their appraisal of the stylistic distinction, because where they really detected it was in the *Descent into Limbo* and the *Marys at the Sepulcher.*[233] According to them, the main artist involved was Francesc Serra, leading them to include the ensemble as part of a reduced core body of works making up the Iravals group, consisting of the three Tobed altarpieces (fig. 31-33), the Ardèvol-Prats *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 27), the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, the panel depicting the Pentecost from Barcelona's Museu Diocesà, the little panel with *Our Lady of Humility* housed at the Prado (fig. 34) and the *Virgin with Angels playing Instruments* in a private collection (fig. 35), with certain doubts surrounding this last work.[234]

When it comes to the second painter of these panels at the Zaragoza monastery, Favà and Cornudella argue that the style appears to "more or less match the intensity of the human model found in the *Altarpiece of Santa María* in Sijena", which led them to conclude that the artist working with Francesc in Zaragoza was the main author behind the Sijena altarpiece (fig. 39). Historically, and despite the occasional subsequent dalliance with Pere Serra,[235] the Sijena altarpiece had been associated with his brother Jaume, and this is the authorship Favà and Cornudella put forward for the work.[236] It is our opinion that Jaume's involvement in the Sijena altarpieces is clearly marked in a number of parts of the ensemble, such as the *Calvary* (fig. 45), for instance, where we see Christ anatomically depicted in exactly the same way as in Jaume Serra's *Calvary* housed at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya and originally from the Gallardo collection (fig. 46).[237] Both scenes also include the presence of almost exactly the same figures, the bearded High Priest pointing to the Son of God in Sijena, transformed into a soldier in the panel from the Catalan museum, and the soldier positioned just to the left looking at the previous figure. We could also mention the Calvary from the church of Balenyà (Barcelona) currently housed in the Museu Episcopal of Vic (fig. 62), attributed at one time to the Sijena painter and, it seems to us, clearly the same artist who painted the aforementioned *Calvary* from the Gallardo collection.[238]

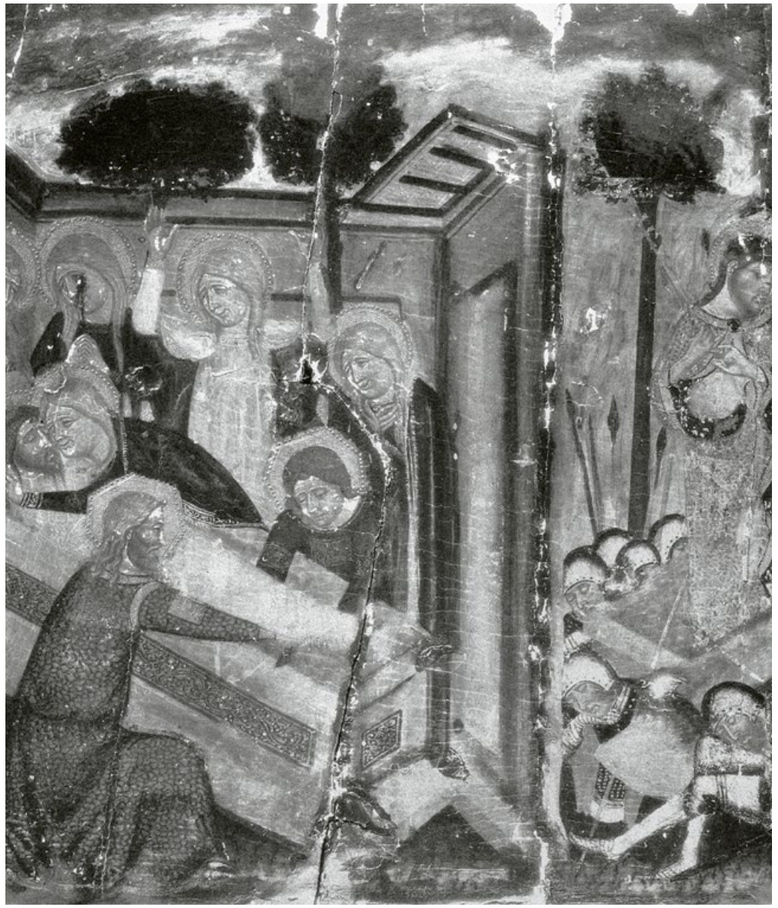


Fig. 43. Jaume Serra. Compartment with the *Holy Burial and the Resurrection of Christ*. Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.

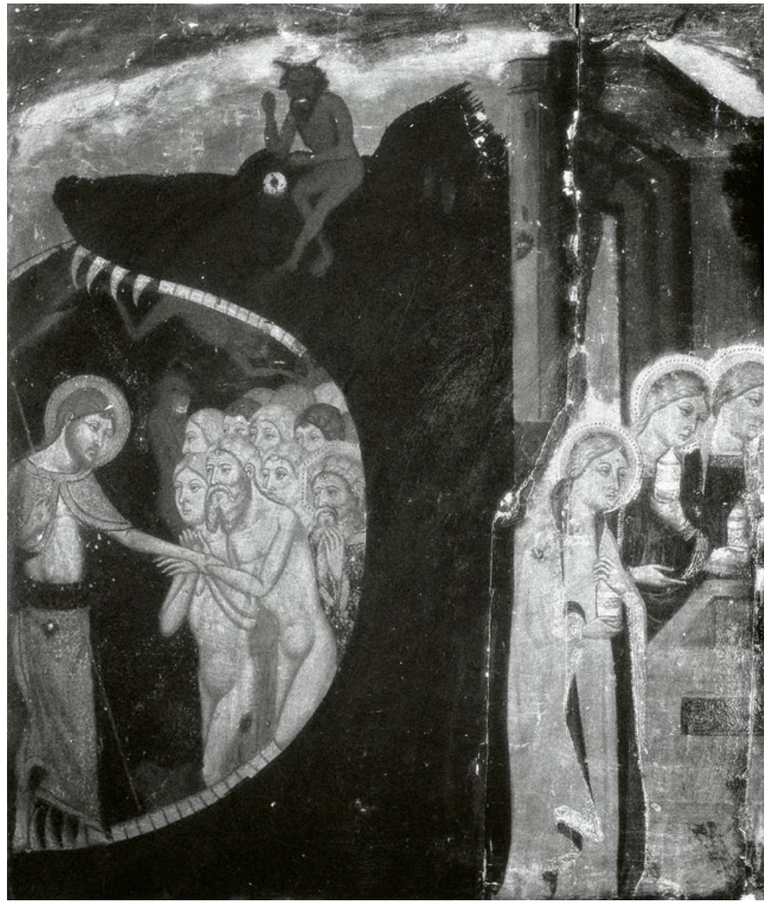


Fig. 44. Jaume Serra. Compartment with the *Descent into Limbo and the Marys at the Sepulcher*. Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.

Going back to the differences detected in the Zaragoza panels, we do not feel they are of great import, as the two bearded apostles seen in profile in the foreground of the *Prayer in the Garden*, which corresponded to the first artist, present the same type of face as the apostle in the foreground we see in the *Burial of Christ*, which we have to associate with the second artist. On the other hand, the Marys who visit Christ's tomb or the Holy Fathers Jesus rescues from Limbo, which would correspond to the second artist working on the ensemble, do indeed present differences with regard to the rest of the panels from the ensemble. These differences may be explained, in our opinion, either due to the internal dynamics of a workshop where a number of artists were actively involved, or due to Jaume Serra's versatility, being able to depict different face types depending, for instance, on the level of dramatic emphasis demanded by the scene. We see this for example, in the aforementioned *Calvary* from the old Gallardo collection, where the Marys and the soldiers on the left are depicted using various expressive approaches when it comes to representing two differentiated groups of figures.

Our comments regarding the Tobed works, along with what we have set out here, lead us to conclude that the Passion panels from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza must be attributed to the joint workshop of Jaume and Pere Serra, and should be dated to an unspecified moment during the 1360s. The aforementioned annexing of the church of San Nicolás to the monastery in 1361 would be a good *terminus post quem* for its execution, while another date we have mentioned, the documented record from 1369, could serve as an *ante quem* limit. Extrapolating our hypothesis from this time span would rule out Francesc Serra as the altarpiece's author, as he cancelled a couple of work commitments in Barcelona in 1361, quite possibly on the grounds of the health issues that would take him to the grave the following year. It is therefore plausible that Jaume and Pere Serra took on the commission within the context of the new workshop they had set up on the death of their older brother. The commission would thus be somewhat prior to the execution of the Tobed altarpieces, and may have served to put Jaume Serra (and Pere?) in touch with Martín de Alpartir with a view to future projects, such as the three

Fig. 45. Jaume and Pere Serra. Calvary. Detail of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, originally from the monastery of Santa María de Sijena. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

Tobed altarpieces that Jaume (and Pere?) would undertake in 1381 for the monastery as directly commissioned by Alpartir.

The Serra brothers' connection to the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza was not limited to the two groups of works mentioned, as it still houses, intact though in dire need of urgent restoration, a third altarpiece which, on grounds of style, has been attributed to Pere Serra and his workshop. This work was dedicated to Saint Julian the Hospitaller and Saint Lucy, now preserved in what was the monastery dormitory (fig. 47). The altarpiece was commissioned by the siblings Sancho and Oria de la Foz, citizens of Zaragoza who in 1384 founded a chaplaincy dedicated to the worship of both saints in the monastery cloisters. At the moment it was founded, the patrons stipulated that "*obligamos a vos ditas priora et duenyas por reverencia de Nuestro Senyor Dios et de la capiella sobredita que vos a nos et a los nuestros fiança dades de fazer hun retaulo nuevo en la dita capiella, dentro spacio de hun anyo apres que esti contratto testificado sera*".[239] We may therefore conclude that Pere Serra's execution of the altarpiece was more or less immediate, and that the work's chronology should be kept close to that of the founding of the chaplaincy.

Stylistically, the work strays from what we tend to see most often in the work of Jaume Serra. Looser and less tight drawing, more modelling effect in the shapes and less rigor in the faces. We can clearly observe a degree of evolution or, perhaps, the brushwork of someone other than Jaume. One might assume, then, that Pere Serra decided to play a key role in its execution. All the same, in some scenes of more evident affectation, we once again see those frowning faces with almost closed eyes and the diagonal arrangement so often found in the work of Jaume Serra, not to mention the human types in general, which so clearly draw on Jaume's models. We see this on numerous occasions, such as when comparing the Holy Father Jesus rescues from Limbo and whose hands are pressed together in prayer in one of the Passion panels (fig. 44), with the figure bearing the polygonal halo (Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus) on the right-hand side of the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* we find in the De la Foz altarpiece. The similarity and parallels are clear. The type of face used for Saint John the Baptist appearing in the *Lamentation* is clearly reminiscent of those presented by the same character and the Marys in the aforementioned *Calvary* from the Gallardo collection, now housed in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, a work by Jaume Serra dated to around 1375-1385 (fig. 46).[240] This final comparison (there are others we could mention) is particularly illustrative in concluding that Jaume Serra was also involved in the altarpiece commissioned by Sancho and Oria de la Foz in around 1384.[241]

One matter that is worth noting with regard to the De la Foz altarpiece which, of the three groups of works by the Serra brothers that are preserved in, or originate from, the Santo Sepulcro monastery, has received the least historiographic attention, is the great stylistic similarity between its compartments and the Sijena monastery altarpiece (fig. 39). As we have already seen, the latter must have been painted towards the end of the 1370s, and certainly no later than 1381, which is when Fortaner de Glera stopped being knight commander of the monastery. This would make it a work dating from slightly earlier than the one we are dealing with here. A comparison of the two altarpieces' styles is significant, as we observe on contrasting the face of Mary Magdalene in the

Fig. 46. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Calvary*. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

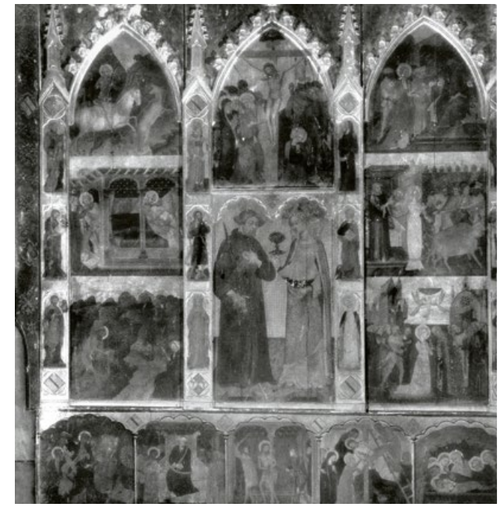


Fig. 47. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy*. Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.

main compartment of the Sijena altarpiece with a range of female figures from the Santo Sepulcro ensemble, such as Saint Lucy from the main panel (fig. 49), both depicted with identical small mouths, button noses and similarly executed eyes, eyebrows, cheek carnation and chins. They even present the same type of golden crowns with fleur-de-lis and cabochons and stones embedded at the base. Meanwhile, the face of Saint Anthony the Great, who appears in the lower part of one of the mullions of the De la Foz altarpiece bears a striking resemblance to the High Priest from the *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple* from the Sijena ensemble. It could also be compared with the Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea in the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* from the De la Foz altarpiece. All of which leads us to conclude that both groups of works were completed during much the same time and within the context of the same workshop, where it would appear that Jaume Serra played a secondary role to his brother Pere.

These commissions carried out for the monastery in Zaragoza during the 1380s could, at least partially, justify the relative lack of documented altarpiece commissions received by Jaume and Pere Serra in Barcelona at that time. However, we do not know if this was also due to some hypothetical drop in the workshop's profile in that pictorial context of the city, perhaps owing to the arrival of Lluís Borrassà, who would control

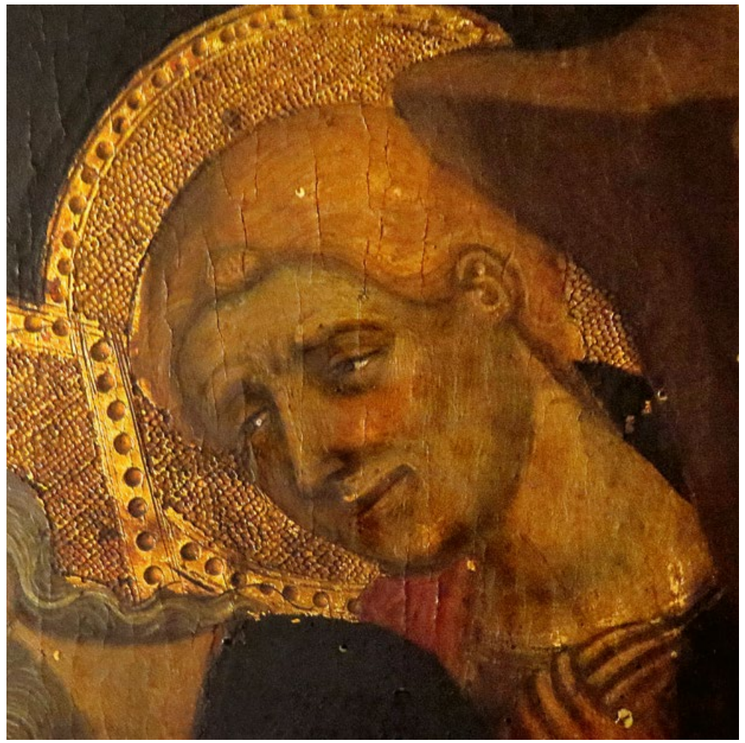


Fig. 48. Jaume and Pere Serra. Saint John the Evangelist. Detail of the compartment with the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ from the Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy*. Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro.

the Barcelona market over the next few decades. Then again there is the odd appearance of Jaume's name as a merchant on legal documentation from 1383,[242] which might refer to some second occupation at the time. The same document refers to Pere as Jaume's executor, but the fact is that the last reference we have of the two brothers working together on the painting of an altarpiece is from 1370, when they were collaborating on the main altar of the Pedralbes monastery. In 1395 Pere acted as testamentary guardian to his brother's children,[243] which suggests healthy family relations. We do not know whether the two brothers carried on working independently, but the premise we put forward earlier stands firm: the few contracts or payment receipts we know of are always signed by Jaume, which perhaps suggests Pere's subordination to him, although he did start to play an increasing role in the material execution of some of their projects.[244]

It is also possible that they focussed their efforts on art markets beyond the capital, as the loss of numerous local legal archives precludes us from getting a precise idea of the professional situation of the workshop at that time. Be this as it may, they had qualified artists working for them, as in the case of Bernat Franch, who in 1386 buried a son that had just been born while the father was working for Jaume Serra.[245] We also know that Jaume entered into an agreement on 20 February 1388 for the execution of an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin, with the prominent citizens of Castellfollit de Riubregós (Barcelona) for 85 *lliures*, the contract for which has not survived, although we do have one document dated 1397 in which Pere (Jaume having died) confirms a partial payment made at that time. We also have records of a second payment document, this one from 1399, mentioning that Jaume Serra had completed the plasterwork on the altarpiece, but that the ensemble had been completed by Pere, who was now receiving the final payment on the works.[246]

Some undocumented works have survived from that period, which clearly point to the internal working dynamics

Fig. 49. Jaume and Pere Serra. On the left, Mary Magdalene, detail from the central compartment of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, originally from the monastery of Santa María de Sijena (Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya). On the right, Saint Lucy, detail from the main compartment of the *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy* (Zaragoza, monastery of the Santo Sepulcro).

suggested by the documents, and which we have already addressed when dealing with the Aragonese altarpieces. Jaume continued to play a central role in their material execution, but it is obvious that Pere took on an increasing role, which benefitted the end result. We are therefore witness to the juxtaposition of two pictorial models, and this is reflected in a series of works that still survive today.[247] Altarpieces such as that of the monastery of Sant Esteve in Gualter (Lleida), housed today in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (fig. 50),[248] the aforementioned Palau de Cerdanya work (fig. 36), or the panels previously kept in Castellar del Vallès,[249] whose location is currently unknown, and partially repainted, present a more dynamic style of painting, more rounded, with more monumental and complex figures than in earlier works. To this group we could add the *Virgin with Child and Angels* now in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya but once a part of the Gallardo collection (fig. 37).[250] All of these share the common denominator of presenting a highly-evolved style compared to Jaume Serra's early works, which would suggest two things, firstly their late execution and secondly the probably involvement of Pere. In our opinion, these should be considered joint works, the fruit of a workshop working with models that Jaume had successfully developed and that Pere now helped to enrich.

The stand-out work among all these is the Gualter altarpiece, dated to around 1385 (fig. 50). Dedicated to the protomartyr Saint Stephen, its compartments depict various episodes from the hagiographic legend of the Saint. One of these scenes is absolutely extraordinary, illustrating as it does how Stephen, in the middle of the 12th century, freed Galcerán de Pinós from captivity at the hands of Muslims in Almeria. This is the earliest depiction of said episode, predating the first known texts narrating the story.[251] Galcerán was lord over the important barony of Pinós, whose dominions were not so far from Gualter. This episode was one that lent the family prestige, and for that reason it was suggested by the patrons, a male and female donor who are depicted at the feet of the saint in the main compartment and who could well have been members of the Pinós family, in all probability Pere Galcerán de Pinós and his wife. Pere died in 1383, a chronology that matches that of the altarpiece.[252]

One work with similar characteristics might be the altarpiece of Abella de la Conca (Lleida), housed today at the Museu Diocesà d'Urgell (La Seu d'Urgell, Lleida) (fig. 51). Dedicated to the life of the Virgin, its main compartment once again shows the donor on his knees, although on this occasion we can definitely identify him reliably. This is Berenguer d'Abella, a figure who rose to the heights of councilor and steward to Pere the Ceremonious, but who would end up sentenced to death and executed in 1387 by order of the king.[253] This date should be used as a *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the panel, although it cannot have been painted long before. The model used for the kneeling man and donor follows one that was repeated frequently by Jaume Serra right from the beginning of his career, as seen in the Sant Celoni panel,[254] through to the main compartment of the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (fig. 31), the tiny panel depicting the *Our Lady of Humility* at the Prado (fig. 34), the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece

(fig. 40) or the Gualter one (fig. 50), in addition to a few other examples we will be turning to shortly.

Another work from that time in very much the same stylistic vein is the altarpiece from the shrine of Bell-lloc (Dorres, France), housed today in the church close to the Palau de Cerdanya (fig. 36).[255] Here we find ourselves in an odd northern area, known as *Catalunya Nord*, or North Catalonia, now part of France, and where Jaume Serra had worked previously, assuming we really do attribute the Iravals ensemble to him. Once again, the altarpiece was the consequence of the designs of a private patron, this time unknown, who had himself depicted in the central panel, at the feet of the *Our Lady of Humility*, arranging for his family's heraldic emblems to be included on the mullions, which we have not been able to identify.[256] The image of the Virgin presiding over the ensemble is one we have already seen repeated in the Tobed model (fig. 31), but in spite of their compositional parallels, the stylistic contrast with the Enrique II of Castile altarpieces is quite clear. Alcoy places the ensemble in a different chronological and stylistic context, either 1360-65 or 1365-75, and does not mention the involvement of Pere Serra alongside his brother Jaume, to whom she argues the work should be attributed.[257] Saying that, the evident stylistic similarity to the altarpieces of Martín de Alpartir (fig. 40) and Gualter (fig. 50), as noted by Ruiz,[258] leads us to date it to the 1380s and argue for the involvement of both brothers. This is borne out by the presence of a dynamism in the figures and some of the faces that point to a clear connection with works considered to be the fruit of the brothers' collaboration. Furthermore, let us not forget that Jaume Serra signed a contract for another altarpiece in Cerdagne during the same period (1389), for the town of Puigcerdà.

The Puigcerdà altarpiece was, in fact, the last documented project in Jaume's career. He undertook it for the main altar of the Franciscan monastery of Sant Francesc in Puigcerdà (Girona). This commission was connected to the testamentary instructions of the jurist Francesc Valieles, which his brother Pere, a merchant, carried out on 28 July 1389, with a payment of 150 *lliures* to the guardian of said monastery, Brother Jaume Llompart.[259] The document shows that Jaume Serra had been paid a total of 96 florins for his work, paid in three instalments of 50, 40 and 6 florins, which suggests, at least, that he had made considerable progress on the project's execution. We do not know if it was completed, as the amount paid to the painter does not tally with the sum set aside by the deceased patron and, furthermore, it is possible that Jaume died leaving the altarpiece unfinished.

The document relating to Puigcerdà was drafted some three months after Jaume drew up his will in Barcelona on 19 April 1389,[260] although it is quite possible that those signing it did not know this. There is no mention of Jaume having died, but it is probable. In any case, what this legal document does show is that Jaume kept on working right to the end. We do not know exactly when he died, but we know that by 1395 he appears as deceased, as it is his brother who then acts as testamentary guardian to his children.[261] Supposing that Jaume died shortly after drawing up his 1389 will, then we can understand the record, dated 15 March 1390, of Pere granting power of attorney to Pere Cerverisa, a Barcelona-based lawyer, who he appointed "*certum et specialem*" executor, to take care of any legal proceedings, lawsuits or litigation that might affect him in the future.[262] It is possible that, following the death of his brother, Pere was seeking legal security in the face of any possible conflicts or lawsuits lodged by those who had signed contracts with Jaume for unfinished commissions. In any case, documentation subsequent to Jaume's death only mentions the case of one unfinished altarpiece, the aforementioned Castellfollit de Riubregós ensemble, whose contract was signed in 1388 and whose completion appears to have been reached in 1397. There is even evidence of further payment from two years later.[263]

This was the start of a new era. Pere Serra took on the baton from his brother and started to sign documents and receive part payments. We see this on 1 October 1389, a few months after Jaume's death, when Pere is paid a sum of money as the second stipulated instalment for an altarpiece dedicated to Mary Magdalene for Barcelona cathedral.[264] The altarpiece must have been started while Jaume still lived, but we do not know whether he signed the contract for it. From that moment on, commissions and contracts became commonplace in Pere's professional life, in a way they had not been during Jaume's lifetime. Work engagements flooded in from different parts of Catalonia, for towns such as Tivissa, Manresa, Barcelona, Vic, Ripoll, Albi, Teià, Valls and the monasteries of Santes Creus and Montserrat, as well as for the towns of Cagliari and Alguer, on the island of Sardinia, then under the Crown of Aragon.[265] Our last record of Pere Serra dates from 1405, when he sold a *censal* (a sort of life assurance bond common in Medieval Aragon). Three years later his wife was recorded as a widow.[266]

Fig. 50. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of Saint Stephen*, originally from the Gualter monastery. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

STYLE: A JOINT WORK BY JAUME AND PERE SERRA

Preliminary considerations

As we have already explained in an earlier section of this text, the documents show that from 1362-89, that is to say from the time that Pere Serra started working professionally with his brother Jaume until the death of the latter, both were in charge of a family-run altarpiece-painting workshop in which their brother, Joan, was also involved. In addition, we have documentary records referring to other artists, such as Bernat Franch (1386), joining the workshop, who must have enjoyed the status of qualified artisans, and who undoubtedly played an important role for as long as they were under contract. We are also well aware of the working processes of medieval painting workshops, with the leading artist constituting an important link in the chain of production of altarpieces, as he was the one who decided on the direction and style to be adopted by the workshop, although there is no doubt that the others involved in the material execution of projects would have an impact on the end result.

In the case of the Serra family, there are a number of fundamental issues that need to be taken into account when it comes to organizing the catalogues of its respective members. On the one hand we have the information contained in the documents, from which we can draw numerous conclusions regarding the functioning of the workshop, its internal hierarchies and collaborators. We also have the surviving works, quite a few in the case of the Serra brothers. And we can also make use of the opinions and contributions of the historians and experts who have gone before us in studying the Serras and their output. All the same, it is a shame that no technical studies have been published resulting from the preservation and restoration endeavors undertaken with the works of the Serras in recent years. These would undoubtedly serve as a great source of vital information for applying a different perspective when justifying or verifying attributions that art historians have posited based on visual and stylistic analysis. Let us hope that in the future this lack will be remedied by the publication of works that make available to the scientific community the conclusions reached after the aforementioned restorations. It is as such that we must undertake to give its fair due to the technical study by Rafael Romero and Adelina Illán, included as an appendix here, being the first to be published on the Serra workshop.

If we undertake a close examination of the historiographic discourse relating to the authorship and cataloguing of the Serra brothers' works, we quickly note that the conclusions are by no means unanimous, with changes in opinion and uncertainty being predominant to a far greater degree than for other masters of Catalan Gothic painting. This is in part due to the fact that the first monographic studies of the Serra brothers date from the first third of the 20th century, when the majority of the body of documentation on Francesc, Jaume, Pere and Joan Serra had still not been published by Josep Maria Madurell.[267] This lack of extensive or valid documentary material, along with the few documented works known of at that time, led to specialists such as Sanpere i Miquel, Josep Gudiol Cunill and Chandler Rathfon Post formulating attributions that, as time has passed, have been revised and changed.[268] Once the documentation had been published, the importance of this family of painters, along with the

Fig. 51. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, originally from the church in Abella de la Conca. La Seu d'Urgell, Museu Diocesà d'Urgell.

Fig. 52. Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of the Holy Spirit*. Manresa, church of Santa María.

number of surviving works by them, have made them the subject of frequent discussion among experts, encouraging an accumulation of opinions, many of which are at odds with each other.

All the same, the early decades of the 20th century saw the documentation of three works that would subsequently make it possible to organize the catalogues of Jaume and Pere Serra. We are referring, firstly, to the altarpiece commissioned by Martín de Alpartir for the chapterhouse of the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza (Museo de Zaragoza) (fig. 40), which was documented in 1908 thanks to the publication of his will and testament. The document showed it to be the work of Jaume Serra.[269] Based on this revelation, historiography built up a catalogue of works on which the future fortunes of the painter have pivoted. However, when it was published, the date of Alpartir's will was misinterpreted, as it did not date from 1361, but from 1381, as was shown 80 years later.[270] In any case, this discovery finally allowed for the style of one of the Serra brothers to be defined. Once the error had been remedied, the 1990s saw a number of specialists attempt to reorder the painter's career, inserting those surviving altarpieces we have into it, most of which are not documented.[271]

It was not until 1993 that another Jaume Serra work was documented, when Rosa Alcoy made the link between two known documentary references from 1359 and 1364 relating to two altarpieces commissioned by Guerau d'Ardèvol, first from Francesc Serra and then from Jaume. One of these altarpieces was the aforementioned retable for their chapel in the cloister of Barcelona cathedral, dedicated to Saint Louis of Toulouse, which Alcoy linked to a central altarpiece panel, depicting the Saint and the *Calvary*, kept in a private collection in Madrid (fig. 27). This discovery enabled Alcoy not only to reorganize Jaume Serra's oeuvre, but also to build up a preliminary catalogue of his older brother Francesc's works, none of which was known at that point.[272] All the same, and as we explained in the relevant section, the documentation does not support the conclusion that Francesc ever started the altarpiece, and as such the grouping of works around Francesc suggested by Alcoy must be approached with caution. Be that as it may, Alcoy's work is especially valuable because the association between the work and the two documents allowed us to introduce a second piece into the Jaume Serra canon.

With regard to Pere Serra, in 1907, at almost the same time as the publication of the Martín de Alpartir will, Joaquim Sarret i Arbós uncovered a payment receipt from 1394, which certified that Pere was the author of the altarpiece from the chapel of the Sant Esperit in Santa María de Manresa (Barcelona), still housed today in the original church (fig. 52).[273] A few years later, in 1916, the same researcher published the contract for the *Altarpiece of Saint Bartholomew and Saint Bernard*, which the merchant Bernat de Gamisans commissioned in 1395 for the Sant Domènec monastery in the same town,[274] the main compartment of which is housed today in the Museu Episcopal de Vic (fig. 53).[275] Thanks to Sarret's two discoveries, both related to Manresa and to the painter's late works, the specialists that came later were able to fill out the catalogue of works by Pere Serra.[276]

Jaume and Pere's respective catalogues were structured around these four documented works, two each, but as time has passed there have been shifts in terms of criterion and opinion among experts dealing with the subject. Looking at the body of historiographic studies in perspective, we observe a common and, in a way, logical phenomenon. Since the initial attempts at classification by Sanpere i Miquel, Gudiol and Post,[277] right up to almost the present day, the majority of researchers have approached the figures of Jaume and Pere Serra in a relatively individualized manner, presenting their catalogues one by one, and ignoring as far as possible the chance that they may have worked closely together for a large part of their careers.

The latter approach, however, has started to gain favor in recent studies of the Serra brothers, where we see that in spite of the occasional stutter or uncertainty, the collaboration between Francesc and Jaume on the one hand, and between Jaume and Pere on the other, have now been firmly suggested for major works such as the Iravals group's *Altarpiece of Saint Martha* (fig. 26), the Lille-Barcelona-Krakow polyptych (fig. 38), the *Predella of Saint Onophrius* from the Pedralbes monastery, the Tobed altarpieces (fig. 31-33), the Sijena *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (fig. 39), the Passion panels (fig. 41-44) and the *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy* (fig. 47) from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza, the Gualter *Altarpiece of Saint Stephen* (fig. 50), or the *Altarpiece of the Virgin*

from Abella de la Conca (fig. 51).[278] One could say that in recent years there has been a slight shift in historiographic trends, with major works that had previously been attributed to Jaume and Pere without distinction, now being considered the collaborative works of the both of them, such as the altarpieces from Gualter and Abella de la Conca. One such, the Sijena altarpiece, is attributed indistinctively to either one of the two, with the involvement of the other taken as a given, which comes down to practically the same thing.

In spite of this, we ought still to comment that those studying the works of the Serra brothers in recent years have tended to focus their attention on the individualization of the artists' contributions, and on a differentiation between their artistic personas. And they have done so by superimposing or accumulating hypotheses that are generally founded on indirect documentary information or conclusions drawn from stylistic analysis. Although this may be perfectly acceptable for certain parts of their artistic careers, it is clear that others call for a different interpretative approach. It is as such that one particular reality that becomes evident through the reading of the documentation and the study of the empirical proof (the works themselves) has been left almost to one side. And this reality is none other than the need to approach the Serra brothers from a more global and less individualizing perspective, less obsessed with the stylistic differentiation or separation of the different artists, and more focussed on the analysis of the works as the result of collaboration. From that point of view, the pared-down reality of some orphan altarpieces still awaiting confirmed authorship could become less volatile than it is at present, as some of the interpretative paradigms that are still taken as valid regarding the style of each of the Serra artists are in fact built on sand. It is for that reason that our suggestion, which we feel to be more neutral for one specific stage in Jaume and Pere's career, is to allocate more open and broad-profiled attributions, based on what the documents tell us, which is that at certain times they worked together, with joint commissions for altarpieces, and that at others they also worked individually, or at least Jaume did, as we will see.

The style of the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* we are studying in this book corresponds to a very particular stage in the artistic careers of Jaume and Pere Serra. It is clear that it cannot be linked with those works that relatively recent historiography has attributed to Francesc and Jaume, in other words what Alcoy labelled "the early Serra brothers",

Fig. 53. Pere Serra. Compartment from the altarpiece with *Saint Bartholomew and Saint Bernard*, originally from the monastery of Sant Domènec de Manresa. Vic, Museu Episcopal de Vic.

and which previously had been grouped together around the Iravals *Altarpiece of Saint Martha* (fig. 26).[279] We shall see that there are human types that clearly do match, but that the style of *Saint Martin and the Beggar* is more akin to the following stage in the Serra brothers' output, starting with Francesc's death in 1362. It was just at that moment that Jaume and Pere's period of collaboration was getting underway, coinciding with Pere leaving Ramon Destorrents' workshop. This collaboration would last until 1389, the year of Jaume's death, and stands as the chronological period in which both artists carried out the works that are most similar in style to our *Saint Martin and the Beggar.* As we will attempt to demonstrate shortly, the clearest stylistic parallels may be observed in the works undertaken at that time, although they were based on models that Jaume had already used in his previous period. We should add one further stylistic nuance here. The style of the panel does not match up with the works Pere Serra carried out on his own after 1389, organized around the two documented Manresa altarpieces (fig. 52-53), explaining its designation to the preceding period, being the most logical and reliable explanation.

The complexity involved in studying the altarpieces carried out by Jaume and Pere between 1362 and 1389 is reflected in the stylistic differences that may be observed between the most important ones painted in the period. This is a group of works separated by only a few years, and they are a clear indication of this stylistic variation. Here we are referring to the Sijena *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, almost certainly executed towards the end of the 1370s (fig. 39); the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece, the contract for which Jaume Serra signed in around 1381 (fig. 40); the *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy* from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza, undertaken in about 1384 (fig. 47); the *Altarpiece of Saint Stephen* originating from the Gualter monastery, and which must have been carried out in around 1375-1385 (fig. 50); and the Abella de la Conca *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, painted prior to 1387 (fig. 51). The disparity of styles has led to some of these works being either attributed to Jaume, others to Pere, to Jaume in collaboration with Pere, or to

Pere with the involvement of Jaume. And many others have been labelled simply “Serra workshop” or “workshop of Jaume and Pere Serra”. Faced with such a mass of opinions and classifications, perhaps the most sensible option would be to label them as the works of Jaume and Pere Serra, in spite of the fact that this does not faithfully cover the existing diversity and contrast of styles.

A review ought also to be undertaken of the works grouped together around the old Master of Sijena and Pere Serra,[280] given that some of these could join those we suggest attributing to the binomial formed of Jaume and Pere. This might be the case for the *Altarpiece of Saint Nicholas* housed today at the Institut Amatller d’Art Hispànic, which was thought to have originated in the Maresme area (Barcelona) (fig. 54). Said region includes the parish of Sant Genís de Vilassar, which is where Joaquim Graupera recently suggested the work was from.[281] Although it had been attributed to the Master of Sijena,[282] Alcoy labelled it as being simply from the “Serra workshop”,[283] and the fact is that its style, rather more rapid and less painstaking that the Sijena altarpiece (fig. 39), does allow us to group it together with the abovementioned ensemble of works. As it happens, traditional historiography had already toyed with the notion of it being a collaborative work by the two painters.[284]

We are not currently in a position to take on this task, but it is clear that this restructuring of the Jaume and Pere Serra catalogues would call for a complete evaluation of this group of works to determine exactly the level of collaboration between the two brothers. Analyzing them overall, the first question we should ask ourselves concerns the role played by Pere in the altarpiece-painting workshop he set up with this older brother Jaume. In answering this question, perhaps we will be able to explain the differences of

Fig. 54. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Altarpiece of Saint Nicholas* probably originating from the church of Sant Genís de Vilassar. Barcelona, Institut Amatller d’Art Hispànic.

style that may be detected in the altarpieces we are dating to between 1362 and 1389, and the preceding works we attribute to Jaume.

The most plausible answer, in our opinion, is to be obtained by interpreting the documents and analyzing the works. More than 30 years went by from Pere Serra leaving Ramon Destorrents’ workshop in around 1361, to his undertaking the documented altarpieces in Manresa in the 1390s. If we take notice of the published documentation, he spent a large portion of that time without entering into any individual contracts for major projects, but not without working. Whatever the case, it is hard to imagine that Pere could have managed an independent workshop without leaving any documentary trace of having signed contracts for altarpieces on his own until just after the death of his brother. He did not do so while Jaume lived, which might well suggest that the latter was in charge of the business. However, although Pere remained a secondary figure in administrative and contractual terms, it is clear that he did take on a leading role in the material execution of the commissions.

The alliance between Jaume and Pere Serra constituted a before and after in the formulation of the style that characterized the altarpieces that the workshop they both managed would turn out. Pere’s four years of training under Destorrents may have served to modernize Jaume’s visual and stylistic discourse, taking on innovative aspects that meant a break with the lexicon he had used up till then. This forces us to consider whether, in spite of Jaume’s supposed leadership in the workshop, Pere played a central role in terms of projecting his style onto the altarpieces they produced. Which goes to explain why the works produced between 1362 and 1389 differ from those executed by Jaume in his previous period. Equally, internal workshop dynamics that we are not entirely familiar with today could explain the stylistic disparity observed within the groups of works carried out during the period of collaboration. Perhaps it was a case of the brothers’ job distribution depending on the volume of commissions being carried out at the same time, or maybe it was due to the employment of secondary painters, or even the fact that Jaume was busy with other solo projects, such as the Martín de Alpartir altarpiece. What we do know for sure is that altarpieces such as the Sijena, Zaragoza, Gualter or Abella de la Conca ensembles do not present one single unitary style.

He have to suppose that Pere took on a central role as soon as he joined the family business in 1362. That very year the two brothers undertook to complete the main altarpiece of the monastery of Sant Pere de les Puel·les, whose original contract had been signed, separately, by Francesc and Jaume, the former taking care of painting the compartments while the latter was in charge of painting and gilding the central tabernacle.[285] In the 1362 document, however, Jaume and Pere sign equal terms on the legal document, suggesting the latter already enjoyed a senior position within the hierarchy of the family workshop. It is as such that Pere’s brushwork and style should in some way be observable in this work from the early 1360s, a time at which figures such as Bartomeu Bassa also appear on the workshop’s horizon, serving to further justify the stylistic variety presented by the works. On the other hand, Pere’s contribution does not appear to be noticeable on works such as the Tobed altarpieces, from around 1366, or the Martín de Alpartir ensemble, painted in 1381.[286] Perhaps this is the result of what we commented earlier, that despite the collaboration that took shape between the two brothers, Jaume reserved the right to carry out certain commissions on his own. Or, perhaps, while Jaume focussed on certain workshop projects, Pere did the same with other commissions that were also due.

Fig. 55. Details of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*, of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* (Madrid, private collection), of the *Virgin with Child and Angels* (Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya), and the *Virgin of Tobed* (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado) and of one of the compartments from the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza

Style and attribution

Leaving these necessary reflections of a general nature to one side, we will now focus on justifying our attribution of *Saint Martin and the Beggar* to Jaume and Pere Serra. When it comes to looking for parallels for the panel we are examining here we will not be able to use arguments relating to the composition of the iconographic subject, because what the artists depicted is unique across the entire output of the Serra brothers. There is no other surviving work with the Saint's cloak being cut in two. We are therefore limited to matters relating to the nature of the human types, their faces, and details appertaining to the horse and its depiction, or secondary decorative motifs.

With regard to the figures portrayed, Saint Martin's face presents certain characteristics found in the works of Jaume Serra at different times. For example, it bears a close resemblance to one of the saints on the left-hand mullion of the central panel of the *Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse* from Barcelona cathedral (fig. 55).[287] In both cases the tilt of the head and direction the eyes are looking similar, while the noses take on a comparable outline with their pointed ends. We also observe how the hair is pulled back behind the eye in the same way, with both cases presenting almost identical morphologies. We also notice the same hair arrangement along the sides of the forehead, forming a sort of triangle framing the face. The eyebrows have been traced in the same way, and we also observe how the joining of the nose and right eyebrow produce the same effect of continuance.

In the *Virgin with Child and Angels* from the old Gallardo collection, a work by Jaume and Pere kept today at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (fig. 37),[288] dated to around 1375-1385, we find a couple of faces that also seem linked to that of our Saint Martin (fig. 55). We are referring to the Virgin and the angel from the top left corner, which present the same facial features as our Saint. In the case of the Virgin, she shares Martin's type of nose, though rather smaller in her case, the *philtrum* or nasal cleft, the globular eyes, arched eyebrows, and carnation tones on the cheekbones. In the case of the angel we see the same parallels, but we should also add the type of gaze, self-absorbed and in an oblique downwards direction. The tone of the hair, which is the same for the rest of the angels, also matches that of Saint Martin.

One work that we attribute to Jaume Serra, although somewhat earlier than our *Saint Martin*, is the central panel from the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin* at the Prado (fig. 31)[289]. There too we find angels with similar faces to that of Saint Martin, especially those that appear in the upper left section of the panel, which are some of the best parallels to be found (fig. 55). We observe the same tilting of the head and, overall, identical facial features. The similarities may even be seen in the way they have been depicted, with the nasal cleft just above the upper lip, and also in the globular aspect of the eyes, though this is not overly pronounced. We notice that the eyebrows are arched in exactly the same way and that the surface of the cheeks has been executed in the same way, with light pinkish touches. One of the most interesting points is the similarity in the shading of certain areas of the face, such as the chin, but most of all the area between the left eyebrow and eyelid, drawn as a little blotch. The shading also matches in the lower eyelid, although in the case of the Tobed angels it is more pronounced. The color of the hair is a similar golden hue, and its shine has been executed with similar clearer tones, forming the same undulations. We observe a clear parallel in the tone chosen to outline the nose and eyebrows, which oscillates between grey and green. Saying this, the angels' faces are not the only ones in the panel that may be compared to that of Saint Martin. We can also extend the

comparison to include the figure of Prince Juan, who appears kneeling down next to Enrique II, and whose face draws on the same prototype as our Saint. To the similarities we have noted for the angels, we could also add the way they pull their hair back behind their ears. Saint Martin's delicate features also tally with those of the queen, Juana, and her daughter, Eleonor.

In the surviving sections of the other two Tobed altarpieces we also find figures who could be compared with Martin. This is the case of the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist*, where in the predella area of the side panel housed at Barcelona's Museu Diocesà we can observe a crowned saint with a comparable face (fig. 32).[290] In spite of contrasting modelling effects and an antiquated appearance, the outline and features are identical, as is the way in which the hair is arranged behind the ear, similar of the examples we saw earlier. On the ensemble's other side panel, housed in the Prado, we see different figures who also merit comparison. This is the case of Herodias in the scene from *Herod's Banquet*, which presents the same sort of head, although this time in an inverted position, as well as shoulder-length blond hair. One of the servant girls accompanying Salome on the left of the *Decapitation of the Baptist* presents exactly the same head of hair and facial features. Towards the bottom of the same side panel, in the area dedicated to the predella, the saint with book and the Saint Laurence both belong to the same human model. With regard to the surviving side panel from the Tobed *Altarpiece of Mary Magdalene*, housed at the Prado (fig. 33),[291] in the scene in which the Marys approach Christ's tomb, the female figures are also depicted following the same human type as our Saint Martin, although the comparison would need for them to be inverted.

And even when we turn to those works attributed to Jaume Serra and his workshop, Saint Martin's face finds itself closely reflected in those of the three Marys approaching Christ's tomb with oils to anoint him in one of the Passion panels from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza (fig. 55). They present an identically triangular shape in the opening of the hair over the forehead, the same self-absorbed gaze, straight and pointed noses and their lips are similarly executed. The curve of the eyebrows is also extremely similar, as is the pink carnation of the cheeks. Their hair generates the same undulations and shine that we have seen in other works by Jaume. In the same compartment for the Santo Sepulcro altarpiece, in the scene in which Jesus is rescuing the holy fathers from Limbo, we see a female figure on the left who, despite being inverted, has facial features that are reminiscent of Saint Martin (fig. 44).

Another interesting reference point for Saint Martin's face is found in the compartment with Saint Martha and Saint Eulalia from the Archive of the Cathedral of Barcelona, specifically the martyr saint in the upper part of the right-hand mullion, although once again inverted.[292] The tilting of the head, the eyes, the pointed nose and the morphology of the mouth are all matching details. Equally similar is the Saint Helena we find just underneath on the same mullion.

Moving on to the second figure, the beggar with whom Saint Martin shares his cloak, we are once again reminded of the main compartment from the Tobed *Altarpiece of the Virgin*. There we find the depiction of Enrique II of Castile, whose face is also comparable, though once again in an inverted position (fig. 56). Despite the obvious differences, we observe the same sort of closely-trimmed beard, going down from the sideburns, the sides of which are shaded, an identical pointed mandarin-style moustache, as well as hair emerging from the lower part of the bottom lip. Both figures have much the same gaze. There is one other minor detail that is also worth mentioning here. This is the morphology of the fingers of the beggar's left hand, in which

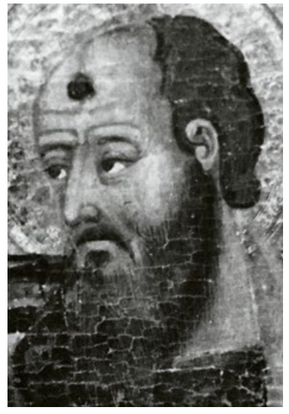


Fig. 56. Details of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*, of the *Virgin in Tobed* (inverted) (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado), of the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist* in Tobed (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado), and of one of the compartments from the monastery of the Santo Sepulcro in Zaragoza.

he is holding the stick that helps him to walk. We observe that the end of the thumb, as well as the nail, are identical to those of Enrique II's right hand. Another repetition is also to be found in the type of brushstroke used to outline the fingers, extremely thick in a grey-green tone that matches the one we described earlier.

We could make much the same comments for some of the figures included in the *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist* in the same Tobed church. As we mentioned for the previous case, the stylistic parallel is not exact, but we would point to the similarities as suggesting the existence of human prototypes that continued to be used from one period to the next. As such, in the lower part of the side panel housed at the Prado we see a Saint Paul who presents similar physical features (fig. 56), while in *Herod's Banquet* we find three male figures presenting the same type of faces with clipped, pointed beards; King Herod and the two subjects who appear next to him (fig. 32). This is a type of face that we find once again in the Saint John the Baptist from the *Preaching in the Desert* or the *Baptism of Christ*, scenes that appear on the side panel that is kept at Barcelona's Museu Diocesà. In this last case, we see the same unkempt locks of hair emerging from the saint's head that we see sticking out of the beggar's bandages in the *Saint Martin* panel. As for the Tobed *Altarpiece of Mary Magdalene* (fig. 33), in the scene in which Mary appears at Christ's feet, we also see bearded faces that are reminiscent of our beggar, while that of Jesus, despite presenting a different typology, is depicted in a pose and with a gaze that remind one of that of Saint Martin.

In spite of the differences, in some of the panels from the Lille-Barcelona-Krakow polyptych (fig. 38), we once again come across faces with the same type of expression and features; the wrinkled brow, the deep gaze, the marked, straight nose, which would suggest that they are based on the same prototype. In our opinion, the polyptych is a work from Jaume Serra's early period of activity, although Alcoy argued for the involvement of Pere (along with that of the problematic Francesc) in some of the compartments, which we fail to see.[293] Be that as it may, in the group of panels there are various faces that bear a similarity to those of the subject of *Saint Martin and the Beggar.* The clearest parallels would be those found in the Saint Paul (although in an inverted position) and, most

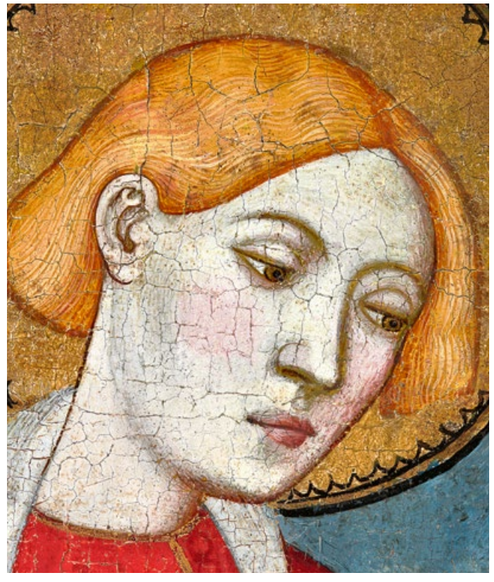



Fig. 57. From left to right: details of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*; and of the main compartment, the *Coronation* (inverted) and the Epiphany (inverted) from the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* from Santa María de Sijena (Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya).

of all, the Saint Matthew, both in Lille's Musée des Beaux-Arts. The Saint John the Evangelist (Krakow National Museum) is also fairly similar to our Saint Martin. Other than the latter, they all share our beggar's shading around the beard and identical dark skin coloring, as well as the mandarin-type moustaches we mentioned earlier.

In the Passion panels at the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza we can also find parallels for the human type seen in our beggar, specifically in the scene in which Christ is rescuing the holy fathers from Limbo (fig. 44),[294] where some of these are depicted with a similar facial profile. Although the beggar's face is longer and more pointed, we can identify similarities with the bearded holy father Christ takes by the arm, especially in the nose, mouth and shape of ear (fig. 56). In another of the panels, the one depicting the *Arrest of Christ*, Jesus' face presents certain physical features that are equally close to those of our beggar (fig. 42). These belong to a type of human face that bears a resemblance to those of the soldiers who appear on the left of the cross in the *Calvary* from the Gallardo collection, housed today in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (fig. 46), attributed to Jaume Serra and dated by Favà to around 1375-1385.[295] Whatever the case, if we invert the work, we see that the faces bear numerous similarities to the beggar from our panel. The gaze is the same, with brown irises and small black pupils. We find the same curved and slightly open mouth in both works. The same can be said for one of the soldiers appearing on the extreme right of the Crucifixion from the central panel of the Sant Celoni altarpiece, housed at the Museu Diocesà de Barcelona,[296] with his forked beard outlined on the edges, as well as the similar moustache and half-open mouth.

If we move on now to those works corresponding to the period of Jaume and Pere Serra's collaboration, where the two brothers' styles appear to fuse together, we will first examine the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* from Santa María de Sijena (Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya). Saint Martin's face from our panel could be compared with that of the Virgin from the main panel of the Aragonese altarpiece, with it being possible to spot significant similarities, despite the differences (fig. 57). Perhaps the most interesting comparison is that of the face (inverted here) of the Virgin contemplating the *Resurrection of Christ* in the Sijena altarpiece.[297] Exactly the same is the case with the midwife who appears on the right-hand side of the scene in *Nativity*, whose tilting head and gaze are identical; and also the Virgin in the *Epiphany*, in both cases in an inverted position (fig. 57). We might also take this opportunity to mention the angels who appear in the scene depicting the *Baptism of Christ*, as well as those that appear behind Jesus in the *Dormition of the Virgin*, the Mary depicted in the *Pentecost* and, finally, the Saint John the Evangelist who is pictured behind the archangel in the *Announcement of the Death of the Virgin*, with a similarly tilting head, absorbed gaze and similarly executed hair in terms of shine, undulations and the way it is gathered behind the ear.

When it comes to the second figure from the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel, it is once again in the Sijena altarpiece that we find one of the most interesting parallels, specifically that of Saint John the Baptist, depicted baptizing Jesus in one of the compartments (fig. 58). Although the Saint's beard is thicker, we see that the position of the head is the same, and that he has a highly-familiar pointed nose. We once again see wrinkles at the bottom of the forehead, forming from two arches coming out of his brow. His ear presents the same sinuously-shaped cartilage, and his unruly locks of hair appear to be out of his control, even in the forehead area, as we see in the Beggar/Christ of our panel. These unkempt locks, which in the case of the beggar are sticking out from under his bandages, also appear in certain figures from the Tobed altarpieces, such as in the *Baptism of Christ* from the *Altarpiece of John the Baptist* (fig. 32), which demonstrates that Jaume Serra had already started to use this expressive motif. We see it again subsequently in certain works by Pere Serra, such as the *Altarpiece of Santa María* from Manresa,[298] once again in the *Baptism* scene and with the same figure as before.

Returning to the Sijena altarpiece, in the episode of the *Coronation of the Virgin Mary*, we again find a Christ whose face bears comparison with that of our beggar (fig. 58). Once again we observe the same kind of closely-trimmed beard with narrow sideburns shaded around the jawline, as well as the pointed mandarin-style moustache. The position and tilting of the head is the same again, and we see that Jesus also has a lock of hair on his forehead. In the *Nativity* we see a shepherd with an air instrument also with identical locks of unkempt hair, while in the *Epiphany*, one of the Magi presents the same

Fig. 58. Left, detail of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*. Right, detail of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* from Santa María de Sijena (Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya).

human type, with a long forked beard and a shaded jawline. With regard to the *Resurrection* scene, Christ's face invites comparison with our beggar due to the type of outlined beard and its shading along the sides of the face, and the subtle way it forks in the same area of the chin, the type of moustache, drooping down, and a lock of hair coming out of the middle of Christ's forehead. The bony chest anatomy of both figures is another similarity. In the *Holy Supper* we observe apostles who also present affinities, some of which have the aforementioned forked beards. We could also mention the apostle who appears behind Peter in the *Ascension*, and who in inverted form is depicted with extremely similar characteristics, in particular his facial features and the little lock of hair on his forehead. The same is the case for the Fortaner de Glera portrait, depicted with a resemblant profile.

There is no doubt that the Abella de la Conca altarpiece is one of Jaume and Pere Serra's works with which the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel shares the most clear stylistic parallels.[299] The similarities between the face of Saint Martin and that of the Virgin in the central compartment (fig. 59) are hard to miss. The same position and tilting of the head, the same meditative gaze looking downwards, and the iris of the eyes with a little black spot to mark the pupil. And in the Abella de Conca altarpiece we also find an interesting parallel for the beggar, although lacking the clear evidence of the previous example. Here we refer to the donor, Berenguer d'Abella, whose face holds a similar gaze and, in particular, sports a similarly-outlined and shaded beard. In the *Annunciation*, the face of the Virgin, in inverted position, bears a highly significant resemblance to that of Saint Martin (fig. 59). As for the *Nativity*, the Virgin and the midwife behind her are once again clear and direct examples of all of the aspects we have mentioned above. In the case of the midwife, we should add the way her hair is depicted, shoulder-length, almost straight and with a blond coloring which, with its center parting, forms a triangular shape at the level of the forehead (fig. 59). In the *Pentecost* there are two further decent examples of similarities with the figures from our panel. Firstly, in the Saint John the Evangelist, which becomes another one of the most interesting points of comparison with our Saint Martin (fig. 59). And then there is the apostle raising his hands on the right-hand side of the composition, who is reminiscent of the beggar. In the *Coronation* work we once again find another major parallel with the face of Saint Martin in the Virgin herself (fig. 59), whereas comparisons of Christ's face with that of the beggar are less conclusive. The same occurs with the soldiers from the *Calvary* or the Christ in the *Resurrection* which, in fact, all present similar beards and faces. Finally, we could compare the face of our beggar with the unidentified saint who appears just to the right of Saint George in the work's predella. He boasts a similarly-outlined and shaded beard, forked once again, and the modelling effect on the face is analogous. Other parallels include his half-open mouth and mandarin-style moustache. Furthermore, if we examine the figure of Saint Martin, going beyond his face, we see that he is pictured as very much the same sort of figure as the aforementioned Saint George, for instance in the type of head and hair, and the stylized depiction of his body. On the predella we also find a *Man of Sorrows* whose anatomy bears a close resemblance to that of the beggar, with underdeveloped pectoral muscles drawn using two curved lines, and the abdominal area outlined by an equally curved line in the upper area, and straight lines down the sides. The *Mater Dolorosa*, in spite of her eyes being slightly more tightly shut, also bears a close physical resemblance to Saint Martin.

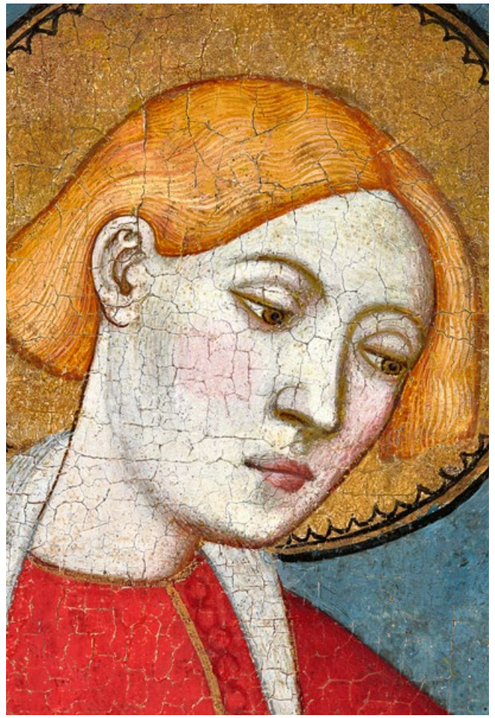
One of the most interesting details about the Abella de la Conca altarpiece when it comes to comparisons with the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel, and which has nothing to do with the two main figures, lies in the starred patterns we find in the interstitial areas at the top of the three upper compartments, which are almost exactly identical to the ones included on the blue background of our panel (fig. 60). Similar motifs also appear on the clothing covering the Virgin's bed in the *Annunciation* scene. The *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel, the Gualter altarpiece and the Abella de la Conca ensemble are the only cases in the entire Serra output where we can identify this motif. In the light of all of these parallels to our panel's two figures, in addition to this decorative detail that also links up the two works, we feel that the Abella de la Conca altarpiece is one of the works bearing the closest and most significant resemblances to our *Saint Martin and the Beggar* when it comes to justifying the panel's attribution and chronology. The altarpiece had recently been attributed to Pere Serra, although most recently the involvement

of other members of the family workshop has also been suggested[300], or quite simply that it was a collaboration between Jaume and Pere Serra.[301] This is the option we would go with, in accordance with the arguments we have set out above. The stylistic parallels would lead us to date the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel to a similar period as the Abella de la Conca altarpiece, thought to be some time before the execution of its patron, Berenguer d'Abella, on the orders of King Pere the Ceremonious. A time span between 1375 and 1385 would seem to fit the bill.

One work that should be included in the list of those considered fruit of the two brothers' collaboration would be a *Christ Man of Sorrows* housed in a private collection, which was part of an ensemble with an *Our Lady of Sorrows* from Lisbon's Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga.[302] Christ's face is immediately reminiscent of that of the beggar. The compartments from the altarpiece originating from the parish church of Moià (Barcelona), kept today at the local town museum, form another ensemble of works that we would suggest adding to the group of works that Jaume and Pere Serra completed together.[303] These are three altarpiece compartments depicting *Saint John the Evangelist*, the *Man of Sorrows* and a *Virgin with Child and Angels*, of which only fragments have survived. The first two were definitely part of the predella. Their style bears a close resemblance to the Sijena altarpiece (fig. 39), as we see when we compare the compartments depicting the Virgin on both ensembles. We could also add the comparison of the *Virgin with Child and Angels playing Instruments* sold in Switzerland a few years ago (fig. 35), apart from anything else on the grounds of the angels' faces and halos, although this may be an earlier work. In any case, what interests us here are parallels with the Moià panels and, specifically, the *Man of Sorrows* and his similarity with the beggar from our *Saint Martin and the Beggar* (fig. 61). They both share the furrowed brow and arched wrinkles rising out of it, as well as the forked and closely-trimmed beard, the jawline shading following the beard and even the unkempt locks of hair.

Another work we might mention here is the *Calvary* from Balenyà (Museu Episcopal, Vic), traditionally attributed to the same painter who executed the Sijena altarpiece (fig. 62).[304] The centurion who appears on Christ's left (as we look) shares the same human model as our Saint Martin. However, the most interesting thing is that he is riding a horse with the same type of bit as Saint Martin's steed, with the same structure of parallel side rods, crosspiece and chain of links, just like the High Priest's horse in the same *Calvary*.[305] Furthermore, both horses have a harness pendant hanging from their foreheads just like in the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel. We find an identical type of bit worn by the horses in a *Calvary* originating from the chapel of Mas Pradell, in Gurb (Barcelona), destroyed 1936 (fig. 63).[306] We should also note that in the *Calvary* from the Sijena altarpiece we once again come across an identical bit device (fig. 64), as we also do in the *Miracle of Saint Julian and the Stag* from the *Altarpiece of Saint Julian and Saint Lucy* from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza.[307] It is as such that the depiction of this form of equine harness equipment remains consistent throughout a number works that came out of the Serra brothers' workshop over the years. We should add that it must have responded to a real type of equipment that existed at the time, as we also find it in a *Calvary* by Fra Angelico housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, dating from around 1418-1420.[308]

To conclude our search for points of comparison between the works we associate with the period of collaboration between Jaume and Pere Serra, we should refer to one of the most prominent ensembles from those years, the work commissioned by the siblings Sancho and Oria de la Foz in around 1384 for their chapel in the cloisters of the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza (fig. 47).[309] The human model used for our Saint Martin, in particular his haircut and the outline of his body, bears a resemblance to the Knight Saint Julian who appears in three scenes from the aforementioned altarpiece. For example, in the compartment in which Saint Julian mistakenly kills his parents, the Saint's head and face are extremely similar. In the upper compartment of the left-hand side panel we also see a horse which, despite being in full gallop, presents anatomical characteristics that are reminiscent of the horse ridden by Saint Martin in our panel. The faces we find in the main compartment of the altarpiece present human types and features that merit comparison with the two figures from our panel, though here they are in an inverted position. We observe how Saint Julian's eyebrows and nose have been outlined using a thick dark brushstroke, just the same as with our Saint Martin. The irises of the eyes of the two subjects of the compartment, each with its tiny black dot of a pupil, are technically identical to those of the f*igures from Saint Martin and the Beggar*. When it comes to the beggar, we can identify good points of comparison in the figure of Christ in the various Passion scenes on the predella, especially in *Christ before Pilate*, where we again see the unkempt head of hair. All the same, the most notable parallel is to be found in one of the mullions, in the figure of Saint John the Baptist, although in an inverted position. Apart from the physiognomic similarity, we also see the figure adopt an analogous bodily posture, with his feet arranged the same way



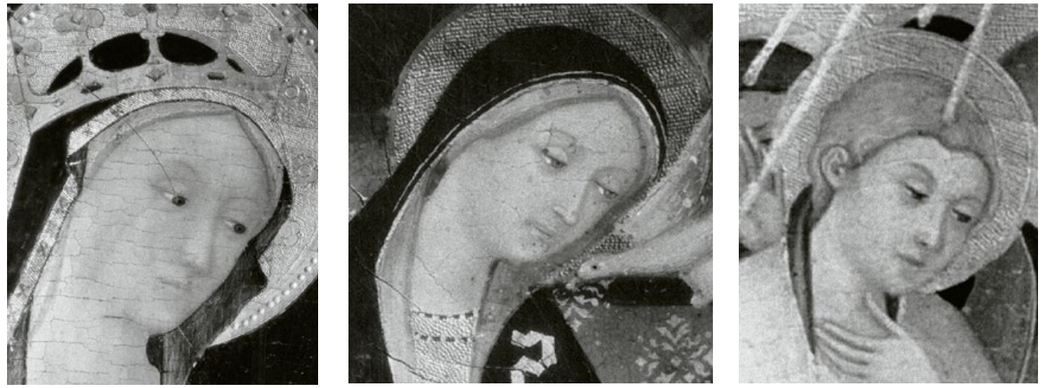


Fig. 59. Previous page, detail of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*. This page, from left to right and from top to bottom, the main compartment, the *Annunciation* (inverted), the *Pentecost*, the *Nativity*, and the *Coronation* from the Abella de la Conca *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (La Seu d'Urgell, Museu Diocesà d'Urgell).

Fig. 60. From left to right, details of rosette star motifs in *Saint Martin and the Beggar* (Jaime Eguiguren), the Abella de la Conca *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (La Seu d'Urgell, Museu Diocesà d'Urgell), and the Gualter *Altarpiece of Saint Stephen* (Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya).

and his knees slightly bent. We also observe another repeated motif, that of the unkempt hair. There is a new point of comparison in the compartment in which Lucy is about to be dragged away by oxen, in the figure of the Roman Governor, whose features are once again similar to those of the beggar, in an inverted position. And we might mention yet another parallel in the compartment of the *Last Communion of Saint Lucy*, in the figure behind the deacon pressing his hands together in a sign of prayer.

A comparison of the Saint Martin panel with those for which we would suggest an attribution to Pere Serra working alone does not throw up direct or clear parallels. All the same, there are some cases where similarities do appear, which can be explained in terms of inertia, with Pere continuing to use models from his earlier period when collaborating with his brother. We can see this in one of the predella bodies from an altarpiece that Pere painted in all probability on commission from the notary Bernat Macip for Tortosa cathedral at the end of the 14th century, and housed today in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, where we see Saint Clare depicted with a face that is reminiscent of Saint Martin.[310] The most obvious parallels may be observed in the thick brushstroke and shading joining the nose to the right eyebrow, and in the half-open eyes expressing a similar melancholy. Although Clare's eyes are somewhat more rounded and globular, the similarities are striking. The slightly drooping eyelids, the brown iris with a little black dot depicting the pupil in the middle, the white of the eye traced with fine lines that outline the eyelids and the iris itself, are characteristics that lend an oddly similar appearance to both pieces, and which we have seen in works from the previous period. The central panel from the same Tortosa ensemble is preserved in the same museum, depicting the *Virgin with Child and Angels* (fig. 65). We once again find faces with identical features in the two angels in the top left and in the Virgin. Exactly the same occurs if we invert our Saint Martin and compare him with the two angels on the upper right-hand side. Although the modelling effect and forms are sweeter and softer in the Tortosa panel, as often seen in the works of Pere Serra, there is no denying the fact that stylistic aspects and nuances are repeated.

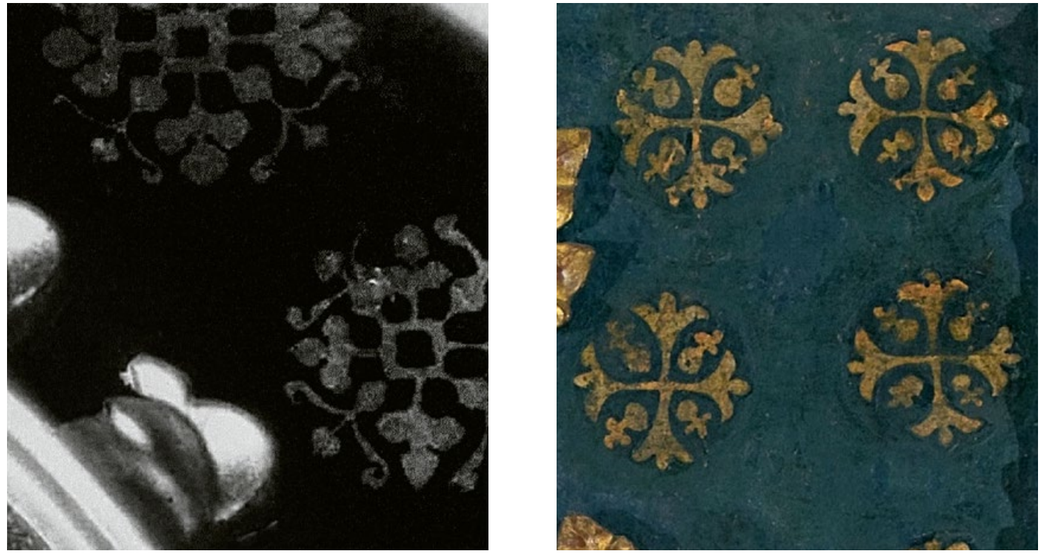


Fig. 61. Jaume and Pere Serra. Left, detail of *Saint Martin and the Beggar*. Right, detail of *Man of Sorrows*, originally from the church of Moià (Moià, Museo Municipal).

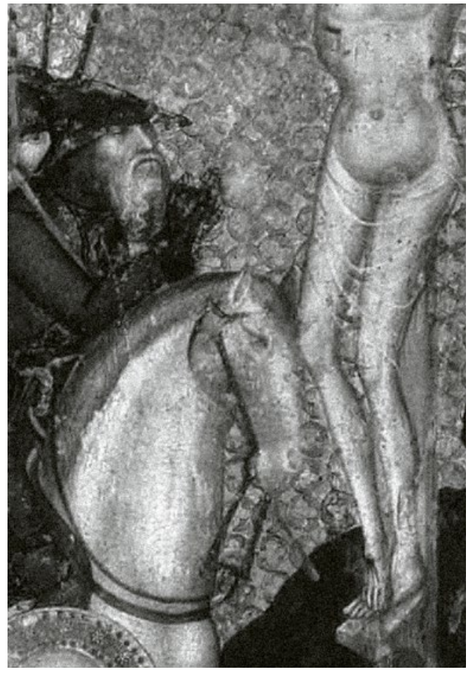


Fig. 62. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Calvary*, originally from the church of Balenyà. Vic, Museu Episcopal.

Fig. 63. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Calvary* (detail). Chapel of Mas Pradell in Gurb, destroyed in 1936.

We find the same repetitions in the altarpiece of Sant Llorenç de Morunys (Lleida),[311] where the Saint Catherine on one of the mullions presents the same type of face as our Saint Martin, as do other female figures from the ensemble and some of the angels. The Saint John the Baptist who baptizes Christ in the corresponding compartment is not a mile away from the beggar, but in this case the figure has been depicted according to more developed parameters and with a markedly different expressiveness. Something rather similar may be observed in the *Saint John in Patmos* from the compartment at the top of the central panel, characterized by its sweeter modelling effect and features. This evolution is seen even more clearly in the fragmented compartments from the Curullada (Lleida) altarpiece from around 1390-1400, housed today in the Museu Diocesà i Comarcal de Solsona.[312] These panels show a Pere Serra who has moved on from the models of his brother Jaume, now using rounder figures that are more monumental and delicate. All the same, the face of the Christ who appears to the apostles is still reminiscent of the beggar from our panel. It is as such that we could allude to the *Altarpiece of All Saints* from the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès (Barcelona),[313] where the faces of the female figures in some of the compartments still bear some resemblance to our Saint Martin, as does the Virgin from the central compartment.

To conclude, in the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel we see highly schematic floral elements executed using black brushstrokes that reappear in numerous works by the Serra brothers (fig. 12). Of the older works that we should consider here we have the Iravals *Altarpiece of Saint Martha*, where this kind of plant motif is to be found in a couple of its compartments.[314] This is the same kind of arid vegetation that we find in the *Predella of Saint Onophrius*, currently

Fig. 64. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Calvary* (detail). *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, originally from the monastery of Santa María de Sijena. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

Fig. 65. Pere Serra. *Virgin with Child and Angels*, originally from the Cathedral of Tortosa. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

attributed by some to Ramon Destorrents, and by others to Francesc Serra, which demonstrates that the piece's rather odd style of depiction had become entirely established by the time of the early works of Jaume Serra and his workshop.[315] Similar plant motifs may be found in the main panel of the Tobed *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist*, also arranged against a plain monochrome background heightening their presence, as is the case with our Saint Martin panel.[316] Of the works Jaume and Pere undertook in collaboration we could mention the Sijena altarpiece, where we find the same motifs in the *Resurrection* scene and in one of the predella compartments, depicting the miraculous reappearance of the host, although here they are somewhat more developed.[317] In terms of works from the same period, we also ought to mention the Gualter *Altarpiece of Saint Stephen*, where we find similar plant motifs in a couple of its compartments.

All of the above leads us to conclude that the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel should become a new addition to the group of works attributed to Jaume and Pere Serra during the years in which the existing documentation records them as working within the context of one single workshop, in other words from 1362-89. Its stylistic characteristics link it directly to a series of altarpieces where the involvement of both brothers is particularly obvious, all of which were executed during the 1370s and 1380s. As we have seen, some of these works have their own chronologies allowing us to situate them perfectly within the time and context of the two master artists' careers, which is of great assistance when we attempt to insert the Saint Martin panel into a period spanning approximately 1375-85.

ENIGMAS CONCERNING THE WORK'S ORIGIN AND ITS PATRON

We do not know the whole story of the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* panel prior to it becoming part of the Laurent Horny collection. A great mystery surrounds it, stopping us from being able to find out what altarpiece it belonged to, who commissioned it, or for what church it was intended. Nor do we know at what time said altarpiece stopped serving its purpose in the original church, or under what circumstances it was sold and left Spain, or even whether, once in France, it joined some other major collection. In any case, the style of the work is beyond question, and it transports us back in time to Catalonia, specifically mid-14th-century Barcelona, the city where the Serra brothers were working. From there, Jaume and Pere Serra undertook a large number of altarpieces for towns throughout Catalonia, Aragon and even Valencia. Once Jaume had died, Pere also carried out the occasional commission for the Italian island of Sardinia, at that time part of the Crown of Aragon.

As we explained in the relevant section, the fact that from 1362 to 1389 Jaume and Pere Serra worked particularly in Catalonia, and most of all in Barcelona, invites us to wonder whether the altarpiece this compartment belonged to might have originally adorned the altar of some church from that region. Nor can we rule out the possibility that it might have been painted for some Aragonese parish, as the Serra brothers also left documentary evidence of having worked in Aragon.

The iconography of the compartment portrays the most symbolic scene from the hagiographic legend of Saint Martin, and yet that has not helped us to identify the ensemble's possible origin or even to formulate some kind of hypothesis in that regard. Of all known or surviving Serra brothers works there is no other compartment depicting any scene from the life of Saint Martin that we might be able to link to this one, and of all the documents detailing the commissions the brothers received, there is only one mentioning an altarpiece including scenes from the legend of the saint from Tours. Here we are referring to one of the two altarpieces that Pere Serra undertook, on his own, for the two chapels in Barcelona's Sant Pere de les Puel·les monastery. The order for the execution of these two altarpieces is from 1392, with the establishing of the chapels' respective benefices based on the will of the notary Guillem d'Orta.[318] One of these chapels and, as such, one of the altarpieces, was dedicated to Saint Martin and Saint Catherine. The commission must have got delayed because Pere Serra was still working on the altarpiece in 1401, when he received payment of one of the stipulated instalments.[319]

One element that might help to provide some information on the origin of the altarpiece to which the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* compartment belonged, as well as on the person who might have commissioned it, is the pair of heraldic escutcheons included in the upper section. The heraldic element presiding over the escutcheon is a water fountain on a golden background. The coat of arms was as follows: in gold, a water fountain gules, two spouts out of which silver water is flowing. The water fountain is a common Catalonian and Aragonese heraldic element, relating to documented families in both regions. Here we are referring to the following families: Font, Fonts, Fontana, Fontanella, Fontanelles, Foncillas, Fontaner or Fontanet, among other surnames whose etymological root stems from the word "fuente", Spanish for fountain or spring.[320] All the same, the documentation relating to the altarpiece commissions carried out by the Serra brothers does not mention any patron that might be associated with this coat of arms. What we have, then, is the remains of an undocumented altarpiece that Jaume and Pere Serra must have executed on commission from a private individual who wanted to embellish, at his own expense, the altar of some church, either his own or his family's private chapel, the main altar of a major place of worship, or the altar of some monastery or other.

Another striking aspect is the location of the heraldic emblems on the inside of the compartment, within the painted surface. In 14th-century Aragonese altarpieces these elements tended to be included on the framework of the ensemble, either on the mullions, the *guardapolvos* (dust cover) or in the interstices between the arches at the top of the compartments. In the case of the Serra brothers we can see this in the Sijena monastery *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (fig. 39), where the coat of arms of the patron, Fortaner de Glera, and the emblems of the Order of Saint John, appear in the framework of the predella. The same can be said for another altarpiece the two brothers worked on together, that of *Saint Julian and Saint Lucy* from the Santo Sepulcro monastery in Zaragoza (fig. 47), with the De la Foz coat of arms appearing on the mullions, the dust cover and the predella. We also see it in the central panel of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* from the church of Tobed (fig. 31), where the coat of arms of Enrique II of Castile and Juana Manuel are included in the interstices of the poly-lobed arch that frames the panel. We should also mention the central panel of the altarpiece that Guerau d'Ardèvol and his wife María de Prats commissioned for their chapel in the cloister of Barcelona cathedral, dedicated to Saint Louis of Toulouse (fig. 27). In this case we find the escutcheons on the mullions, as is the case for the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* preserved at the church of the Palau de Cerdanya, originally from the shrine of Bell-lloc (fig. 36).

Given the unusual location of the heraldic emblems, one can conclude that the altarpiece was designed without any mullions, which would go to explain the lack of painting in the marginal border space under the perimeter molding (added afterward) framing the panel. The absence of said elements must have forced the painter to look for somewhere else to put the patron's coat of arms, in this case in the upper area of the blue background that dominates the composition. We can see something similar in the Tobed *Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist*, where the heraldic emblems of Queen Juana Manuel are included in the main compartment, level with the Saint's legs and waist (fig. 32).

The dimensions of the compartment make it clear that the panel must have belonged to an altarpiece of monumental proportions. With regard to format, its measurements are almost square, although it is slightly wider than it is tall, giving it something of a horizontal appearance. This type of landscape format for compartments was fairly common for ensembles attributed to the Serra brothers, and we find it time and time again on the side panels of altarpieces. It is therefore fairly feasible to rule out the possibility of the *Saint Martin and the Beggar* compartment being the main panel of the ensemble to which it belonged, because in that case it would have been of a more vertical, portrait format, and less landscape. One typical example of an altarpiece with compartments of a similar structure is that of the church of Iravals (fig. 26). We also find a horizontal format being used for the auxiliary compartments of the two side altarpieces in Tobed, where the central panel is narrower than the side ones in order for the narrative scenes to take on more of a landscape format.[321]

NOTES

1. Madurell 1949-1952, VII, p. 188, rec. 531.

2. In the interests of brevity, we refer to the compiling of information, in particular on all of the brothers, undertaken in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 52-57, which includes the origin of each one.

3. There is also information on Francesc Serra II included in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 59-60.

4. Favà 2016c.

5. Antonini 2018.

6. Sigüenza 2000, pp. 145-146.

7. García 1966, pp. 341-342; Moreu-Rey, 1964; Moreu-Rey 1986; Moreu-Rey, 1987; Fernández 2003; Hernández 2017.

8. "It was as such that one day when he was wearing nothing other than his weapons and a simple soldier's cloak, in the middle of winter when the cold was biting more harshly than normal, to the extent that quite a lot of people were succumbing to the violent freeze, he met a naked beggar at the gates to the city of Amiens [...]". See Sévère 1967, vol. I, p. 257.

9. Rosenwein 1978; Brennan 1997.

10. Brennan 1997, p. 129; Griffiths 1987.

11. As such, in the 11th century we know that there were 97 churches dedicated to him. See Moreu-Rey 1987, p. 666).

12. Delcor 1972; Delcor 1981.

13. Villanueva 1821b, p. 12; Catalunya Romànica 1997, pp. 391-393.

14. Melero 1997, pp. 123-124; Fernández 2007, pp. 229-230.

15. Moreu-Rey 1987, pp. 666-669.

16. Moreu-Rey 1987, pp. 669-674.

17. Villanueva 1850, p. 202; Moreu-Rey 1987, p. 671.

18. As Moreu-Rey indicated, the text of the chronicle of Ramon Muntaner provides an excellent illustration of the monarch's devotion for "senct Marti, cavaller de Deus". Regarding the subject of Saint Martin and the Catalan monarchy, see Moreu-Rey 1987, pp. 671-673.

19. Moreu-Rey 1986, p. 156; Moreu-Rey 1987, p. 672.

20. Rubió i Lluch 1908-1921, vol. I, p. 118, doc. CII.

21. Moreu-Rey 1986, p. 155; Ferreiro 2010; Hernández 2017, pp. 412-416.

22. Moreu-Rey 1987, p. 673.

23. Serra-Miquel 2009; Ruiz 2013.

24. Moreu-Rey, 1986, pp. 156-157.

25. Español 2001a, p. 277.

26. Villanueva 1821, p. 214.

27. Moreu-Rey 1987, pp. 677-679; Español 2001b, p. 123.

28. Sévère 1987.

29. Fontaine 1976; Van Dam 1988; Van Dam 1993.

30. Vorágine 1982, vol. II, pp. 718-728.

31. Sévère 1967; Stancliffe 1983; Augello 1983.

32. Vauchez 1988, p. 332 and 335.

33. Sévèro 1987, pp. 142-143; Vorágine 1982, vol. II, p. 719.

34. On this subject, see, among others, Mérindol 1985; Bureau 1989; Labarre 1998; Lorincz 2001, pp. 14-24; Fernández 2007, pp. 229-232.

35. Sauvel 1956, p. 171, fig. 3.

36. Holcomb 2009, pp. 136-38, no. 39.

37. Sauvel 1956, pp. 170-176; Bureau 1989, pp. 40-42; Gómez-Asiáin 1995.

38. Orriols 1998, pp. 125-127; Fernández 2007, p. 228; Bertrán 2008.

39. Moreu 1987, p. 666-669; Hoch 1987.

40. Vallejo 2007, p. 32.

41. Fernández 2007, pp. 229-230.

42. Rodríguez 2010.

43. Bureau 1989, pp. 35-71.

44. Warr 2004.

45. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 312-313, docs. 287 and 288.

46. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 113-115, doc. 112.

47. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 60 and 63-64, docs. 54 and 59.

48. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 212-215, doc. 190.

49. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 325-327, docs. 307-310; X, p. 211, doc. 661.

50. Madurell 1945-1946, IV-3 and 4, pp. 329-330, doc. 25.

51. Freixas 1984.

52. Serrano Sanz 1917, p. 446, doc. XC.

53. Vid. supra n. 20.

54. Alcoy-Montserrat 1998, p. 144, fig. 6.

55. Lacarra 1987.

56. Regarding the central section from the Riglos altarpiece and its attribution to the Blasco de Grañén workshop, see Velasco 2005-2006, pp. 94-95.

57. Meiss 1951.

58. Alcoy 2005a, pp. 208-212.

59. Verrié 1944a; Verrié 1944b; Alcoy 2005b.

60. Verrié 1948; Alcoy 2000.

61. García Marsilla 2015.

62. See the documents included in Llonch 1967-1968; Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 59-60. Also in Ruiz-Montolío 2008, pp. 127-128, with more recent interpretations.

63. See the latest on this thorny issue in Ruiz-Montolío 2008, pp. 125-136 and Ruiz-Montolío 2014, including previous contributions from other authors and their varying positions.

64. The latest contribution concerning this work is in Obón 2017, pp. 50-53.

65. The connection with the Valencian region is formulated in Alcoy 2005d, p. 251 and 253. This panel was seen and depicted in a watercolour by Macari Golferichs in the early 20th century, now housed in the Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (IAAH, ref. number obj. 52087).

66. Gudiol 1955, p. 65.

67. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52, cat. No. 118, fig. 240.

68. The main compartment of the altarpiece is now kept at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, while the rest of the ensemble is still housed in the original church. See Ainaga-Criado 1998.

69. Alcoy-Buttà 2005.

70. Martínez 2006.

71. Alcoy 2003; Domenge 2005.

72. Rubió i Lluch 1908-1921, vol. II, p. 397, app. VI.

73. José 1979-1981; Alcoy 2005d; García Marsilla 2015.

74. Madurell 1949-1952.

75. Among recent conclusions read, for example, Alcoy 2005e and Alcoy 2005f.

76. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 53.

77. Madurell 1945-1946, III, 4, p. 317, n. 171.

78. 78 Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 25, doc. 397.

79. References to them are included in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 56.

80. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 12-13, doc. 5.

81. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, p. 33, doc. 23.

82. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 13-14, doc. 6.

83. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 26, doc. 400.

84. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 28-30, doc. 404. It is possible that the Barcelona altarpiece was also executed by one of the Serra brothers, although we do know that it was not always suggested that painters follow models of altarpieces that they themselves had painted.

85. This is a figure for whom there are numerous documentary records in Barcelona who, as with Bernat Roca, must have enjoyed a good working relationship and friendship with the Serra brothers, as his name appears in other family records (1358 and 1365). See the documents on him included in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 53-55. For Arnau de la Pena, see Dame 2005.

86. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 32, doc. 406.

87. Madurell, 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 15-17, doc. 9. We also know of a payment receipt dated 1 April the same year for the sum of 10 Barcelonese lliures (Madurell, 1949-1952, X, p. 35, doc. 411). For more on Bartomeu Bassa, see Alcoy 2005f, p. 263.

88. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 30-31, doc. 405.

89. Regarding these sorts of display cases and Roca's role in their dissemination, see Español 2002, pp. 192-193; Español 2009, pp. 91-93. Cfr. Ortoll 1999, pp. 289-291.

90. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 17-20, doc. 10.

91. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 47, doc. 429.

92. Yarza 1987, pp. 141-142.

93. Soler i March 1933.

94. Verrié 1944a, p. 72.

95. Alcoy 2005e, p. 272.

96. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 76.

97. See the chart on attributions and documented works included in Alcoy 2005f, pp. 256-261.

98. Verrié 1948.

99. Alcoy 2000.

100. Post 1947, pp. 740-742.

101. Verrié 1944a; Verrié 1944b.

102. Verrié 1944a, p. 72.

103. Alcoy 2005c, p. 211 and Alcoy 2007, p. 170.

104. See, for example, Alcoy 2005b.

105. It was revealed by Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 208, cat. 690, fig. 1040.

106. Alcoy 1993, pp. 137-142; Español 2008, pp. 144-145.

107. Borau 2003, p. 292, note 27.

108. For the documentary references from 1359 and 1364, see Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 33 and 45, docs. 408 and 426. With regard to the second altarpiece mentioned in the 1364 document, as commented by Francesca Español, it was in all probability commissioned for the town of Tàrrega (Lleida), where the Ardèvol family had a residence and its own chapel. See, Español 1993, p. 122; Español 2008, pp. 144-145. For more on the Ardèvol family, also see Costafreda 2013, pp. 149-152.

109. Alcoy 2005c; Alcoy 2017, pp. 148-149. A suggestion which was accepted by Favà and Cornudella, who link the Iravals altarpiece with the family workshop's early years, without discerning the brushwork of Francesc, but identifying Jaume's contribution, who would have overseen the works in around 1360-1365 (Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 76).

110. Alcoy 1992b; Alcoy 2005b; Alcoy 2006.

111. This theory was first set out in Alcoy 1989a. Subsequently in Alcoy 2000.

112. Ruiz 1997a.

113. Gudiol 1955, p. 68.

114. Despite not being conclusive, the suggestion is still quite convincing, supported as it is by an indirect documentary association linking Francesc Serra and his wife to the town of Sant Vicenç dels Horts in 1351, at just the time the altarpiece would have been being painted. See Ruiz 1997a.

115. Alcoy 2005e, p. 275.

116. Verrie 1992a.

117. Verrié 1992b.

118. Verrié 1997.

119. Alcolea 1992. Regarding the panel depicting Saint Martha and Saint Eulalia in the Archive of the Cathedral of Barcelona, currently attributed to the workshop of Francesc and Jaume Serra, it is not clear whether it originated from one of the cathedral altars. Be this as it may, it has been linked to a document from 1360 in which Francesc Serra admits to having received 250 Barcelonese solidi from Romeu Ferrer, an incumbent of Barcelona cathedral, against the 20 Barcelonese lliures promised for undertaking a "tabernaculum sive retaule" (Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 39-40, doc. 416). The possible connection between the work and the document is due to the fact that the panel in question includes a heraldic escutcheon with a horseshoe sable on a gold field, which due to its nature as armes parlants could be connected to the Ferrer surname (Alcoy 1993, p. 132, n. 23). All the same, the document's use of the word "tabernaculum", even if used to mean "altarpiece" invites doubt. The presence of a second escutcheon presided over by a band gules on a gold field (Alemany? Alanyà?) calls for caution when interpreting and associating said document.

120. Favà-Cornudella 2010, pp. 71-76.

121. Alcoy 1993, p. 135; Borau 2003, p. 359.

122. See a detail from said chapel escutcheons in Alcoy 1993, p. 129, figs. 7-8. All the same, Cristina Borau would subsequently reveal certain details taken from the pastoral visit books which do not entirely serve to confirm the work's origin. Although the altarpiece is not mentioned in the pastoral visit of 1391, it is in that of 1421, where we are told that the curtain covering it included not only a depiction of Saint Louis, but also one of Saint Francis. This could mean that it was an ensemble work dedicated to two saints, as confirmed by the pastoral visit of 1530, which does indeed mention it as an altarpiece dedicated to both saints. Although it would seem unlikely, given the short time since its execution, it is possible the Serra brothers' altarpiece had been replaced with a new one prior to 1421, date by which we know that the Ardèvol chapel was given over to the cult of Saint Francis. See Borau 2003, pp. 499-500.

123. For more on this crypt, see Español 1993, pp. 120-125. Also see Alcoy's comments regarding this escutcheon and its connection with the Ardèvol family (Alcoy 1993, pp. 134-137).

124. In the case of the altarpiece, as already established by Alcoy, the repainting works the panel had undergone also affected the arms on the shields, with occasional damage (Alcoy 1993, p. 135).

125. Riquer 1982, vol. I, p. 253. The eight-petalled roses appear, for instance, on the tomb of Berenguer de Prats, Bishop of Tortosa (1316-1340), kept at Tortosa cathedral. We have not been able to identify the plant motifs that also appear on the María de Prats escutcheon, which must be from her mother's side of the family.

126. For example, in Alcoy 2005f, p. 265.

127. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 76.

128. Arte 2014, p. 52, lot 237.

129. Alcoy 2005c, p. 214, fig. 17.

130. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 77, fig. 9.

131. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 50, cat. 102, fig. 217; Alcoy 2005e, p. 275.

132. Favà 2016b.

133. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 35-36, doc. 412.

134. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 36-38, doc. 413.

135. The document, a binding agreement signed by the prior of the monastery and the painter, is incomplete, so we do not know all of its content. See Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 316, doc. 797.

136. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 38, doc. 414. We cannot be sure if this commission was complemented with that of 1355-66, but it is plausible.

137. The main altarpiece of Santa María del Pi was a combination of painted panels and sculpted images, as we can conclude from a document dated 16 October 1358 in which Pere Moragues entered into an agreement with the painter Ramon Destorrents for the execution of seven images in wood, one of which had to be the Virgin with Child (Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 14-15, doc. 8). The document suggests the sculptor follow the models found on the main altar of Santa María del Pi, which in all probability had just been completed within the framework of the project in which Francesc Serra was

involved. It is possible that the author was Moragues himself (Terés 2007, p. 276).

138. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 40, doc. 417.

139. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 40-41, doc. 418.

140. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 41, doc. 419.

141. The cancellation note is attached at the end of the document dated 17 August 1360. See Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 38-39, docs. 414.

142. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 53.

143. Ruiz has suggested that, perhaps, he died as a result of the outbreak of plague recorded in Barcelona that year (Ruiz 2005, p. 284).

144. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 42, doc. 421.

145. We owe the connection between the two commissions to Ruiz-Montolío 2008, p. 127.

146. For more on the apprenticeship contract between Pere Serra and Ramon Destorrents, see Verrié 1944a; Verrié 1944b.

147. In the aforementioned 1362 document, Elisenda, Francesc Serra's widow, appears as the guardian of the couple's two children, Suana and Francesc (Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 42, doc. 421). Francesc Serra, senior, and his wife got married in 1352 (Madurell 1945-1946, III, 4, p. 317, n. 171).

148. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 38-40, doc. 31.

149. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 43-43, doc. 37.

150. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 59-60. For more on Francesc Serra II, also see Alcoy 2005f, pp. 269-271.

151. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 42-43, doc. 422. The relationship between the Serra family and the Roca family must have lasted beyond the death of the maestro, because in 1389 his widow effected a sale to the carpenter Pere Janer and Pere Serra signed as a witness (Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 89-90, doc. 491). Their professional and personal relations were already highlighted in Yarza 1987, pp. 147-148.

152. Sarret 1910; Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 19-24, doc. 11.

153. See the documents included in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 53-55.

154. Ruiz 2005, p. 284.

155. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 47-49, doc. 430. The circumstances and issues of the main altarpiece of Sant Pere de les Puel·les are also addressed in Ruiz 2005, p. 284.

156. When evaluating these sums of money one should take into account what the painters are paid at the time of signing a new contract, which one must suppose is subtracted when it comes to calculating the total sum due in successive contracts.

157. "Gild and paint two predellas that are arranged at the foot of said altarpiece, in which there are a range of half images, as they are drawn [?] and presented".

158. Ruiz 2005, p. 284.

159. We find him documented for the first time in 1365 acting as a witness on a document relating to his mother, Suana (Madurell 1949-1952, VII, pp. 189-190, rec. 535). He appears once again in 1370 signing a receipt for work on the main Pedralbes altarpiece along with his brother Pere (Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 60, doc. 444), and in 1376 acting as executor for his brother Jaume (Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 63-64, doc. 451). He is still documented in 1381, when he accused two gold beaters from Barcelona of assault (Gudiol [n. d.], p. 209; Madurell 1949-1952, VII, pp. 189-190, rec. 535; X, pp. 67-70, docs. 457-459). He died in 1386 (Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 83-84, docs. 477-478 and 480).

160. Jaume Serra worked for the royal house on other occasions (1361, 1362, 1365 and 1386), although only ever on minor and unimportant commissions (Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 54).

161. Gudiol (n. d), p. 20.

162. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, p. 33, doc. 23.

163. 163 There is an extensive bibliography dealing with the series of altarpieces. To summarize, we would refer to the most recent studies, which are those of Alcoy 2007, Favà-Cornudella 2010 and Silva 2013, pp. 16-19, which include previous bibliography.

164. Gallardo 1991 and Pieper 2000, among others.

165. Alcoy 2007; Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 82; Silva 2013, p. 16.

166. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 82; Silva 2013, p. 19.

167. Ruiz 2009, p. 72.

168. Valdeón 1996; Valdeón 2002.

169. For more on the central panel of the Tobed altarpiece as an ex-voto, see Borrás 2014, p. 174.

170. We cannot understand why Alcoy converted Joanna into the older daughter, ahead of Eleanor, when all historiographic sources dealing with Enrique II (in spite of the little existing information about Joanna) have her as the younger daughter of the marriage. See Alcoy 2007, pp. 185-186 and 194

171. Ruiz 2009, pp. 72-73; Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 84.

172. 172 Alcoy 2007.

173. Before said researcher, a similar timeline had been argued in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 51-52 and Piquero 2001.

174. Menéndez Pidal 1982, pp. 166-168. Cfr. Menéndez Pidal 2011, pp. 264-265.

175. This was the position argued at the time by Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 84, who noted another option, which we consider less plausible and rather far-fetched: that the royal emblems we added a posteriori.

176. Pieper 2000, pp. 291-292.

177. Beceiro 2018, p. 326 and 330.

178. Blaya 1996; Ruiz 2009, p. 73.

179. Alcoy 2005f, pp. 265-266; Alcoy 2007, pp. 170-180.

180. Equally, and even without technical analysis, repainting was detected on the rest of the surviving Tobed altarpieces. All of these issues are addressed in Favà-Cornudella 2010, pp. 76-78.

181. Alcoy 2007, p. 177.

182. Alcoy 2007, pp. 158-159 and 170-171.

183. The study in which she provides the most extensive exposition of her arguments is Alcoy 2007. Also in Alcoy 2005f, pp. 265-266.

184. Regarding 1363 as the date of the death of Bartomeu Bassa, see Alcoy 2005f, p. 263; Alcoy 2007, p. 177, n. 54.

185. "It is not feasible to maintain the coherence of the studies and accept chronologies that are earlier than the established ones just for a part of the works that made up the old Iravals group. It is not coherent to approve a dating of around 1350-62 for altarpieces closely related to the Tobed ones and not accept it for these latter ones. Neither Jaume's nor Pere's styles match what we can see in the works carried out in Barcelona for Enrique of Trastámara" (Alcoy 2005f, p. 268).

186. Alcoy 1993.

187. Favà-Cornudella 2010.

188. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 82 and 86.

189. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 82.

190. At one time this was the position of, for instance, Gertrud Richert (Richert 1926, p. 48)

191. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 74.

192. We are referring to those works that appear, grouped and updated, in Alcoy 2007, p. 169.

193. Folch i Torres 1925; Alcoy 2005c, pp. 225-233.

194. Favà 2016a.

195. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 74.

196. IAAH, digital ref. number 00268016, including an attribution to Ramon Destorrents. Measurements: 50cm x 34cm.

197. This is the attribution with which it was first introduced at the time by Folch i Torres 1925.

198. Ruiz 1997c, who does not rule out Pere Serra's intervention in the work.

199. Nor are we convinced by the suggestion made by Borrás, and previously argued by Post (Post 1930, p. 270), which dates the execution of the central panel of the Altarpiece of the Virgin in Tobed to around 1375, as we do not feel that the argument concerning the crowns worn by the princes and their possible allusion to the weddings held at that time is compelling (Borrás 2014, p. 174). The crown is a common princely attribute in royal iconography (and heraldry), so there would have been no need for weddings in order to make use of it.

200. A similar criticism is formulated in Borrás 2014, p. 174.

201. Alcoy 2007, p. 196.

202. Fita 1896, pp. 145-149; Anzizu 1879, pp. 89-91; Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 51-53, doc. 435.

203. Ruiz 1997b, p. 75. For more on the main altarpiece in Pedralbes, also see Brouwer 2014, pp. 34-37.

204. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 55-57, doc. 438-439.

205. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 57 and 60, docs. 441 and 444. Cfr. Ruiz 2005, p. 285.

206. Trens 1936, p. 22. Beatriu d'Òdena appears as one of the nuns who survived the Black Death in 1348 (Castellano 1998, p. 246). I owe this piece of information to Cristina Sanjust, to whom I am grateful for having shared it with me.

207. Verrié 1944a.

208. Alcoy 2005b, pp. 239-240. More recently, Alcoy appears to have shifted in her opinion, hinting that it might have been a panel started by Arnau Bassa and completed by Destorrents (Alcoy 2017, pp. 132-133).

209. Favà-Cornudella 2009; Favà-Cornudella 2010, pp. 71-74.

210. Verrié 1997; Alcoy 2005f, pp. 268-269; Alcoy 2017, pp. 150-151.

211. Español 2002, p. 70.

212. Español 1999. Cfr. Ruiz 2005, p. 288; Bassegoda 2012, p. 24, figs. 4-6. It has been suggested it may have originated from the chapel of Saint Michael and Saint Peter (Carbonell-Castellano-Cornudella 2005, p. 27, n. 9; Brouwer 2014, p. 38), founded by the family of Constança de Cardona, although the iconography of the compartments does not quite match the saints to which said space was dedicated.

213. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 57, doc. 440.

214. Rubió i Lluch 1908-1921, vol. II, p. 397, app. VI.

215. You will find a similar conclusion in Alcoy 2005e, p. 274.

216. Gudiol (n. d.), pp. 195-201. The first of these is interesting in that it was received by Jaume's executor, the painter Guillem Ferrer, at that time resident in Barcelona.

217. Gudiol (n. d.), p. 201.

218. For more on Fortaner de Glera, see Sáinz de la Maza 1994-1998, vol. II, pp. 5-7, as well as the numerous documents mentioning him and which are included by this author in the documentary appendix. Although different publications have noted that he took up the post in 1363 (for example, Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52), it would appear not to be the case, which invalidates the chronological theory Alcoy made recently for the ensemble, dating it to between 1363 and 1365 (Alcoy 2017, pp. 154-159). Meanwhile, it is difficult to imagine that Fortaner de Glera would have paid for the altarpiece after 1381, the date at which we have records stating that he became embroiled in an open argument with the prioress of the monastery (Favà 2017, p. 461).

219. Alcoy thought it to be one of the early works of Pere Serra, once he had joined the family workshop in 1362 (Alcoy 1992a; Alcoy 2017, pp. 154-159; cfr. Ruiz 2005, p. 285), whereas Favà and Cornudella made a more recent attribution to Jaume Serra, without ruling out Pere's involvement (Favà-Cornudella 2010, pp. 75-77; cfr. Favà 2017, pp. 455-472).

220. As noted in Ainaud 1990, p. 56. Cfr. Alcoy 1992a.

221. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 51-52.

222. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 74. Cfr. Favà 2017, pp. 468-472.

223. 223 Lacarra 2011, which includes the same author's previous conclusions regarding said altarpiece.

224. López 2009, p. 99.

225. Odriozola 1908.

226. Regarding this matter, as well as the case of Martín de Alpartir and his relations with the monastery, see Rincón 1991; Lacarra 1991; Rincón 2010, pp. 15-22; López 2009, pp. 99-102. An updated transcription of the will is found in López 2004, pp. 62-87, doc. 11.

227. This similarity between the two scenes was already commented on by Alcoy 1992a, p. 242.

228. See, Alcoy 2007, p. 203, which mentions the involvement of Martín de Alpartir in the order in 1360 for 50,000 "rejolas" or bricks for the construction of Tobed church. Cfr. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 86.

229. Alcoy 2007, pp. 203-204; Lacarra 2011, p. 177. Moragues was an excellent sculptor for whom we have a couple of documented records alongside Jaume Serra. In 1361, when both acted as guarantors for Bernat Roca in a contract for an tabernacle-altarpiece for the church of the Mercè in Barcelona (Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 17-20, doc. 10), and in 1384 when they signed as witnesses in the will of Jaume Conesa, a citizen of Tarragona (Madurell 1949-1952, VII, p. 189, rec. 534). Furthermore, Moragues worked on a number of occasions with Bernat Roca, who as we have already highlighted was professionally and personally linked to the Serra family (Yarza 1987, p. 148; Ortoll 1999, p. 290).

230. Favà-Cornudella 2010, pp. 74-76. Rosa Alcoy meanwhile believes they were the work of Ramon Destorrents, although her hypothesis is founded on a somewhat weak stylistic argument (Alcoy 2017, pp. 134-135).

231. Lacarra 2005, p. 283; Lacarra 2011, pp. 186-187.

232. López 2009, p. 102.

233. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 74.

234. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 72.

235. Alcoy 1992a; Ruiz 2005, pp. 285-286.

236. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 74.

237. Favà 2016b.

238. For more on the attribution to the Master of Sijena, see Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52, cat. 113, fig. 235.

239. "We hold said Prioress and revered ladies of Our Lord Jesus and from the aforementioned chapel to give us and ours surety to make a new altarpiece in said chapel, by one year from the time that the contract has been witnessed". The transcription of the document recording Sancho and Oria de la Foz's founding of the chaplaincy is in López 2004, pp. 87-94, doc. 12. Cfr. Rincón 2010, p. 82. For more on the altarpiece, also see Lacarra 2011, pp. 182-185; Alcoy 2017, pp. 170-171.

240. Favà 2016b.

241. In the chart of attributions to the Serra brothers published by Rosa Alcoy some years ago (Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261), this altarpiece is attributed to the workshop of Jaume and Pere, and we agree entirely with her judgement on this. Ruiz, on the other hand, attributes it exclusively to Pere Serra (Ruiz 2005, p. 291).

242. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 75-76, doc. 465.

243. Gudiol (n. d.), p. 28.

244. This is also noted in Alcoy 2005f, p. 256.

245. Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 84, doc. 479. That Franch was a known painter is

demonstrated by the fact that the year before he took on the 13-year-old Antoni Coser as apprentice (Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 83, doc. 476; Ruiz 2005, p. 289).

246. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, p. 48 and 53-54, docs. 42 and 49.

247. As commented by Ruiz 2005, p. 286.

248. Ruiz 1997c.

249. Alcoy 1989b.

250. Favà 2016a.

251. On this scene and the exceptional nature of the Gualter case, see Molina 1997, pp. 18-24. On the legend and some of its depictions, also see Velasco 2018.

252. Ruiz 1997c, p. 120.

253. Català 1992.

254. Reproduced in Alcoy 2005e, p. 275.

255. Folch i Torres 1925; Alcoy 2005c, pp. 225-233.

256. There has been no shortage of suggestions, such as that of Maties Delcor, that it may have been Jaume Fabre, canon of La Seu d'Urgell (Delcor 1987, pp. 330-331).

257. Alcoy 2005c, p. 233; Alcoy 2005e, p. 274.

258. Ruiz 1997c, p. 119.

259. Webster 1990, p. 6.

260. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 54.

261. Gudiol (n. d.), p. 28.

262. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 90-91, doc. 493. In 1408, Angelina, Pere's widow, took similar measures with the lawyer Francesc Martí (Madurell 1949-1952, X, p. 105, doc. 516).

263. Vid. supra n. 246.

264. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, p. 42, doc. 35.

265. See the documentary evidence included in Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 56 and Alcoy 2005f, pp. 256-259.

266. These two documents are included in Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 104-105, docs. 515-516.

267. Madurell 1949-1952.

268. Sanpere (n. d.), pp. 270-289 and 305-339; Gudiol (n. d.), pp. 20-68 and 195-209; Post 1930, pp. 221-289.

269. Odriozola 1908, p. 25; Sanpere [n. d.], p. 271.

270. Vid. infra n. 225.

271. For the catalogue of Jaume Serra works, see Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 54-55, cat. 119-122, as well as the updated list published in Alcoy 2005f, pp. 256-261.

272. Alcoy 1993.

273. Sarret 1907.

274. Sarret 1916, pp. 18-21.

275. For more on both ensembles, see Alcoy 2017, pp. 172-179.

276. For the catalogue of works by Pere Serra, see Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 57-59, cat. 123-145, as well as the updated list in Alcoy 2005f, pp. 256-261.

277. Sanpere (n. d.), pp. 270-289 and 305-339; Gudiol (n. d.), pp. 20-68 and 195-209; Post 1930, pp. 221-289.

278. See, for example the studies by Alcoy 2005c; Alcoy 2005e; Alcoy 2005f; Ruiz 2005; Favà-Cornudella 2010.

279. Alcoy 1993.

280. For more on the Master of Sijena catalogue, see Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, pp. 51-52, cat. 110-116 (said figure has been erased from current historiography). For works related to Pere Serra, see Ibidem, pp. 57-58, cat. 123-145 Alcoy 2005f, pp. 258-261.

281. Graupera 2011, pp. 194-198.

282. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52, cat 111, fig. 232.

283. Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261.

284. Among others, Gudiol 1955, p. 79.

285. Vid. infra n. 132 and 133.

286. Due to the problematic issues we explained in the relevant chapter, we are leaving the Ardèvol-Prats Altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse, which Jaume Serra undertook to complete in 1364, to one side.

287. See a detail in Alcoy 1993, p. 124, fig. 2.

288. Company 1993; Favà 2016a.

289. Silva 2013, pp. 16-19.

290. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 64, fig. 1.

291. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 65, fig. 2.

292. Alcolea 1992.

293. Alcoy 2005f, pp. 268-269.

294. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 78, fig. 10.

295. Favà 2016b.

296. Alcoy 2005c, p. 275.

297. See a detail in Alcoy 2017, p. 157.

298. Post 1930, p. 256, fig. 163.

299. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 58, cat. 135, fig. 270.

300. Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261.

301. Ruiz 2005, p. 286.

302. Gudiol and Alcolea attributed both panels to Pere Serra (Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 57, cat. 131, fig. 1042), although recently it has been labelled as the fruit of the Serra workshop. See Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261.

303. Gudiol and Alcolea included them in their catalogue of works by the Master of Sijena (Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52, cat. 112, figs. 233-234), whereas Rosa Alcoy labelled them as pieces from the workshop of Jaume and Pere Serra (Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261).

304. 304 Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 52, cat. 113, fig. 235. Alcoy attributes it to the workshop of Jaume and Pere Serra (Alcoy 2005f, pp. 258-259), although her dating for it is somewhat earlier (ca. 1365-1370), along with the rest of the panels making up the ensemble.

305. IAAH, ref. number Gudiol 513.

306. Gudiol and Alcolea attribute this work to Pere Serra (Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 57, cat. 129, fig. 258), whereas Alcoy felt it to be by Jaume (Alcoy 2005f, pp. 260-261). In our opinion the style is most similar to the collaborative works of Jaume and Pere.

307. IAAH, ref. number Gudiol S-4.

308. Strehlke 2019, pp. 110-111.

309. There is a good reproduction in Alcoy 2017, p. 171.

310. For more on the Tortosa panels, see Ruiz 1997d; Ruiz 1999; Favà 2011.

311. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 58, cat. 133, fig. 265; Ruiz 2005, p. 292 (color reproduction).

312. Trullén 1990.

313. Gudiol-Alcolea 1986, p. 58, cat. 138, fig. 275.

314. Alcoy 2017, p. 149.

315. See a color reproduction in Alcoy 2005b, pp. 240-241.

316. Favà-Cornudella 2010, p. 64, fig. 1.

317. Alcoy 2017, p. 157.

318. Madurell 1949-1952, X, pp. 93-94, doc. 498.

319. Madurell 1949-1952, VIII, pp. 63-64, doc. 59.

320. See, for example, Riquer 1983, vol. I, p. 283; Tey 2006, p. 97-98; Nicolás-Minué 2006, p. 97.

321. Alcoy 2007, p. 158.

TECHNICAL SINGULARITIES OF THE CATALAN GOTHIC MASTERPIECE, *SAINT MARTIN AND THE BEGGAR,* BY JAUME AND PERE SERRA

RAFAEL ROMERO ASENJO
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The analytical study of the work in question, St. Martin and the beggar by Jaume and Pere Serra (doc. 1358-1396), provides key information to understanding the technical and material procedures used by one of the more active and renowned workshops in the area of Catalonia, and part of Aragon, during the second half of the 14th Century; that of the Serra brothers: Francesc, Jaume, Pere and Joan (fig. 1). The activity and workings of this workshop is complex. The artists that make up the workshop changed over the years and include not only the brothers but possibly collaborations with other artists such as Bartomeu Bassa.

Besides being able to establish procedural patterns characteristic of this workshop, as well as technical characteristics that can be linked to the artistic personality of Jaume, the fact that evident technical links with the Tuscan trecento can be derived is of special importance. This aspect is rarely addressed in specialized bibliography. A key artist, Ferrer Bassa, is known to have probably traveled to Italy. He was greatly influential in the context of Catalonia during the thirties and forties of the 14th Century, and must have undoubtedly incorporated the knowledge gathered in the transalpine peninsula. Although there were Italian artists also working in Barcelona at the time, Ferrer Bassa adopted the trecento aesthetic, mainly from Siena, and disseminated it across several Catalan artistic spheres. His influence would go beyond this geographical area to bordering regions in Valencia and Aragon. We cannot forget the obvious historical link between the Crown of Aragon and Italian territories such as Sardinia or Naples[1].

As we shall see below, panel works carried out in Catalonia are certainly indebted to Italian techniques from the quattrocento, mainly from Tuscany, in regard to certain technical aspects. However, we should point out that, in regard to other aspects, they are strongly linked to traditional materials and techniques from the Crown of Aragon.

This great panel of St. Martin is a representative example of all these pictorial and constructive techniques. However, it also presents interesting singularities, an exhaustive analytical study of which evinces the rich personality of a key artist with extraordinary resources and training.

Fig. 1. Jaume and Pere Serra. *Saint Martin and the Beggar*.

I. Nature and characteristics of the support

This work was carried out on a considerably large panel (134.5 x 145.5 cm) in pine wood (probably pinus sylvestris), formed by four horizontal panels assembled with edge-to-edge joints, with a width that varies slightly between 33 and 34 cm **(fig. 2)**. The joint between them is extremely precise, achieving perfectly adhered joints, without irregularities or spaces between them. Paradoxically, a regular aspect in the building of wooden pictorial supports in the Aragonese school, especially during the 15th Century, is the presence of imprecise joints, with large gaps which are filled in with "spacers" or small wood pieces and plaster filler. Furthermore, in this piece, the joints are secured with wooden pegs in different places **(fig. 3)**; this differentiates it from proper 15th Century Aragonese panels, which commonly used iron pegs[3]. Iron pegs are also common in 13th and 14th Century paintings from central Italy; a representative example of this would be the famous Madonna Rucellai by Duccio, found at the Uffizi Gallery, Florence[4].

Although the back side of the piece underwent sanding, with a cradle added at some time between the end of the 19th Century and the start of the 20th Century, X-Ray imaging

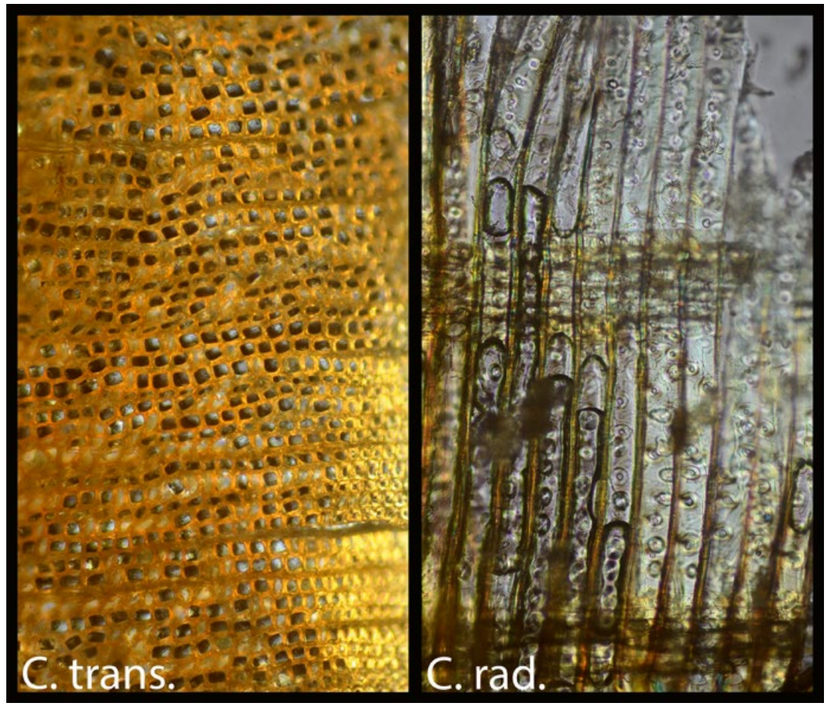
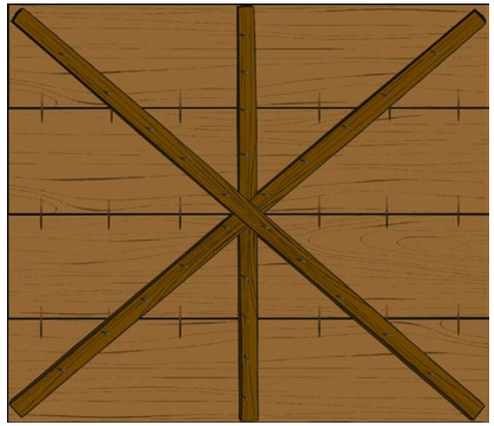
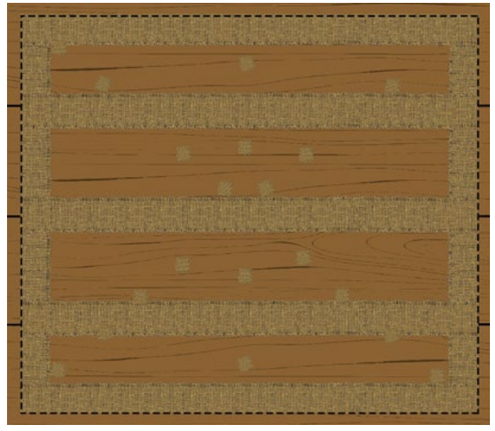


Fig. 2 Microscopical analysis of the Wood. Transversal and radial cuts 500X.





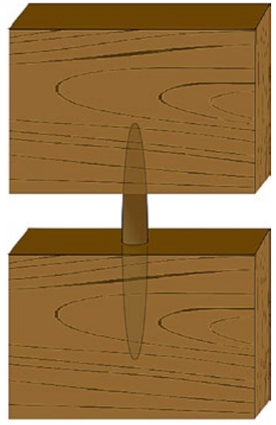


Fig. 3. Diagram showing the way the internal wooden pegs were inserted in the joints between panels.

Fig. 5. Reconstruction of the original structure of the panel's back side.

Fig. 6. Diagram showing how the iron nails were placed in the original reinforcement bars (now lost).

Fig. 7. Pieces of fabric adhered to the front of the support covering the nail heads and joints between panels.

allows us to fathom the original structure and reinforcement of this panel **(fig. 4)**. We also know, by the presence of the wooden pegs mentioned earlier, that the sanding of the back side wasn't too deep and that the panel must have been approximately 20 mm thick, and reduced through sanding to the current 16 or 18 mm[5].

The horizontal structure of the pinewood panels was reinforced at the back by bars arranged in a crosspiece, which is a typical structure of panels built in the Crown of Aragon in the 14th and 15th Century, especially for large works, although examples of smaller panels with such structure also exist[6] **(fig. 5**). Besides the crosspiece bars, a vertical bar at the centre completed the structure. There are no marks left of bars along the perimeter, which according to Manuel Prieto would gradually be incorporated at later times[7].

Although this is typical of panel paintings in the Aragonese school, its origins can be found in the early times of the Florentine school. Examples of Tuscan artists from the duocento are known, such as the Enthroned Virgin and Child, painted by Coppo di Marcovaldo circa 1260, at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Florence, where the same crosspiece structure and parallel bars are found, or the Virgin of the People by the Master of St. Agatha (perhaps Coppo di Marcovaldo himself), in the Carmine Church, also in Florence. The presence of circular pegs (cavicchi) has also been detected in the joints of these two examples[8]. These are undoubtedly the origin of this type of support in the Crown of Aragon.

Also from the Serra workshop, the altarpiece of John the Baptist from the church of Santa María in Tobed (Diocesan

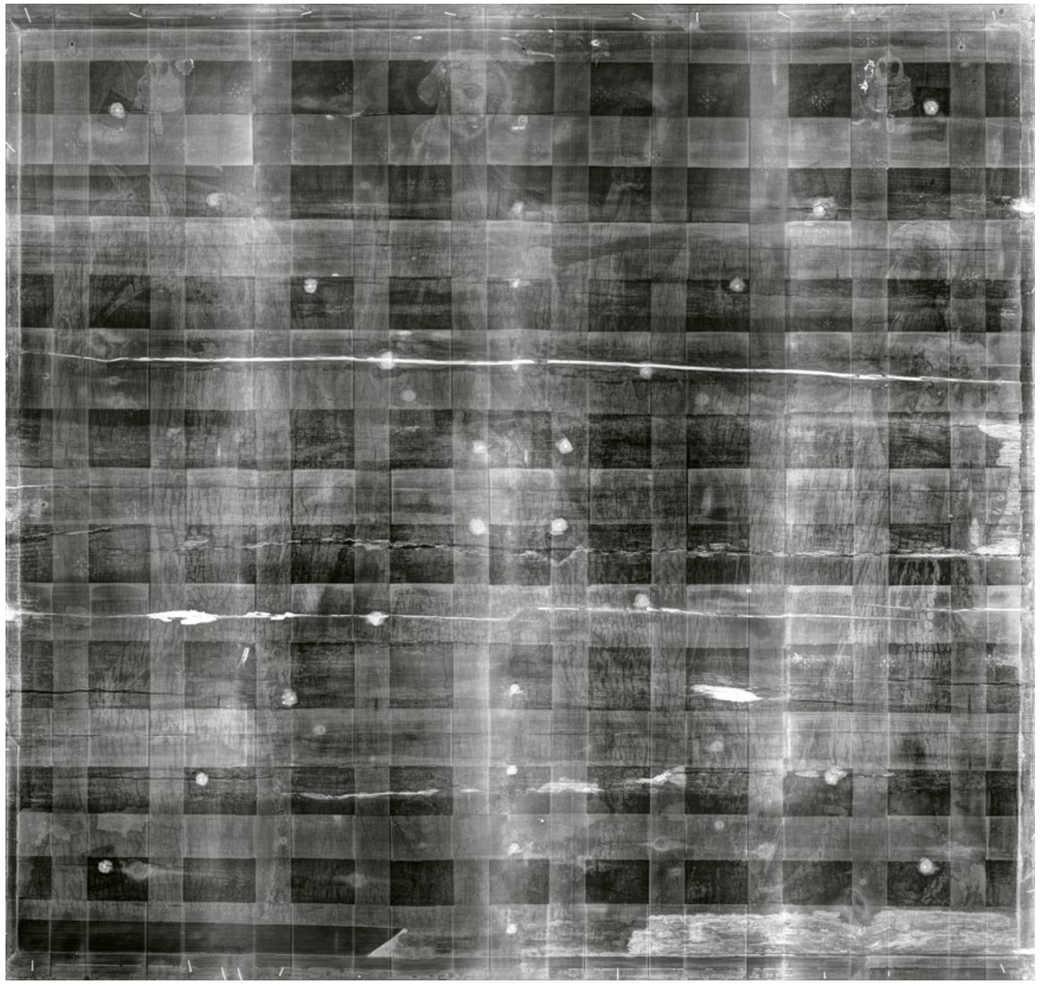


Fig. 4. General X-ray of the work.

Museum of Barcelona) also boasts a crosspiece structure, at least in the central panel representing the Saint, as well as transversal parallel bars, in another carefully crafted structure[9].

Traditionally, these bars were set with wrought iron nails entering at the front, with the protruding points folded over the bar using a hammer **(fig. 6**). The existence of these nailheads and the corrosion linked to them can be seen clearly on the X-Ray. Undoubtedly, on "restoring" the support, the bars were eliminated and the nails were sawed off.

The sophisticated and detailed manufacturing of the support is made clear by the fact that after placing these iron nails, small quadrangular pieces of fabric were glued to the nailheads to prevent any future rust from being transfered to the preparatory layer of the panel **(fig. 7)**.

The panel still has its original edges, with no preparation or painting, which should be covered by an integrated frame or by the casing of the altarpiece, currently covered by a simple red and gilt moulding[10]. This shows that this is the original size of the panel.

An interesting technical feature is the placing of perimeter strips of fabric across the four borders of the wooden panel, at the front, with a width of between 3.5 and 5 cm. An explanation for their presence could be that the panel originally had a frame that was nailed to the border and that these strips of fabric were stuck, also covering the moulding. This was common practice at the time to avoid cracks from appearing on these added elements. When the moulding was eliminated at a later time, the fabric was cut at the same level, with the part mounted on the main panel remaining.

Strips of fabric can also be seen under the preparatory layer, covering all the areas corresponding to the joints between the panels that make up the support.

II. Panel preparation

The way in which the wooden panels were prepared, following Italian techniques, remained unchanged from the Middle Ages to the 16th Century. It was based on the use of gypsum bound to animal glue (gesso), which in many cases followed the method of applying gesso sotile over a layer of grosso[11]. This is the procedure described by Cennino Cennini in his treatise on artistic techniques written in Florence at the end of the 14th Century. This is the structure found in the panel we are writing about[12].

This preparatory layer offered a soft and uniform surface which was optimum for the pictorial execution that followed and to create golden and silver decorations.

The following stage involved creating a preliminary detailed drawing, which could be done using a paint brush, quill, dry point or other instrument, establishing the main elements of the composition. This drawing, also known as underlying, has been considered since the fifties or sixties of the past century, as a distinctive mark of each artist, garnering significant reputation among art history specialists due to the valuable information it provides.

Preparatory drawings by medieval artists in Spain have rarely been studied or published, with isolated cases in the sphere of 15th Century Aragon and Valencia. During this Gothic period, in doing this preliminary drawing, the artist would simply establish the contours, shapes and details of the composition by way of lines, scarcely defining volumes or chiaroscuro. In later periods, such as during the international Gothic period or in the Spanish-Flemish style, artists would suggest these three-dimensional and even tonal notes, mainly by drawing lines.

The underlying drawing on the panel in question, recorded by means of digital infrared photography, clearly shows these line sketches, probably carried out using a fine brush [13]. Certain areas allow us to see how the outlines are skillfully repeated to suggest shading or the falling of a cloth. Those areas that are transparent under infrared radiation, such as, for instance, Saint Martin's red cape or certain parts of the horse, allow us to clearly see these outlines. Some interesting corrections or pentimenti are visible around the horse's neck: initially, the artist designed different reins in the part of the neck closest to the head, which he wouldn't paint later on; similarly, the reins were initially longer and were shortened at the time of painting. The breastplate across the horse's chest was also initially designed to be much wider and with a more pronounced curve **(fig. 8 and 9)**.

In 1990, I carried out black and white infrared photographs of Virgin and Child and Angels by Jaume Serra, when it belonged to the Caylus gallery in Madrid (later bought by Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona). I was able to record an underlying drawing that was very similar to the one we see in this painting[14]. It would be very interesting to have a graphic record of the underlying drawings of documented works by other members of the Serra family in order to establish distinctive characteristics.

Fig. 8. Digital infrared photograph (detail) showing variations in the horse's breastplate.

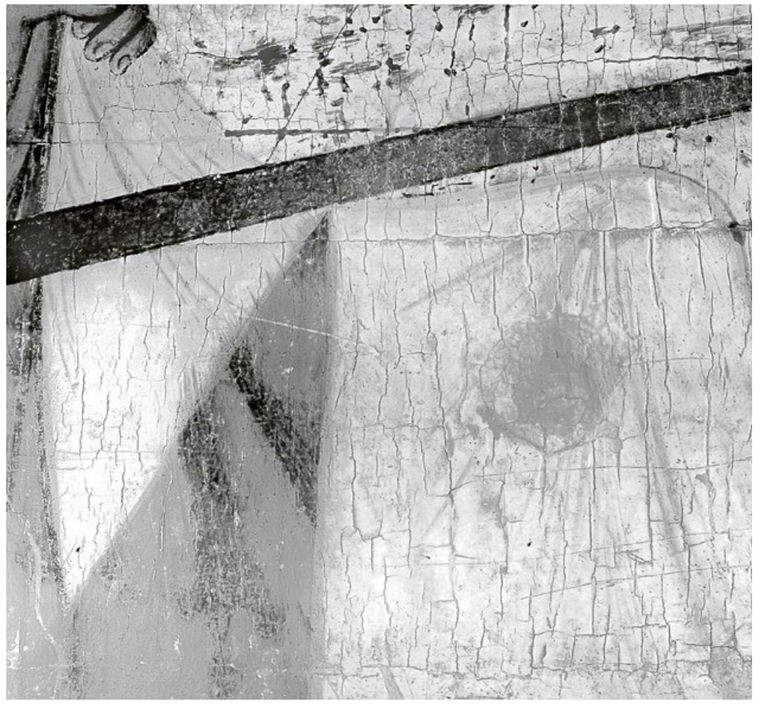


Fig. 9. Digital infrared photograph (detail) showing the lines drawn in the areas of the saint's cloak.

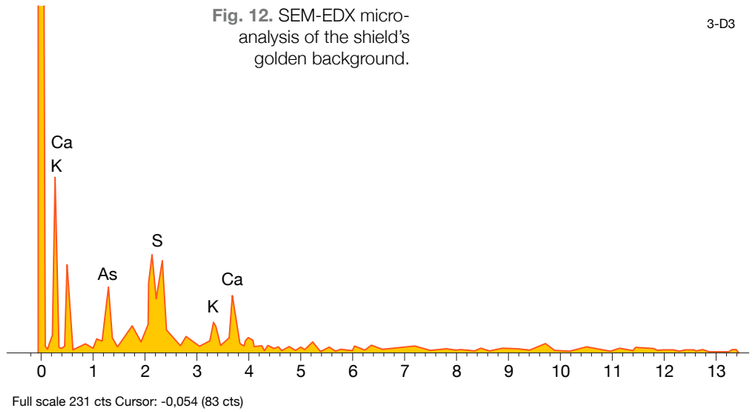


Fig. 12. SEM-EDX micro-analysis of the shield's golden background.

3-D3

III. Painting execution process

The work methodology was clearly defined, and procedures in the workshops followed an inherited pattern, even from centuries ago. The guild's rules certified the quality of the works and the correct functioning of workshops, whose works, especially in regard to altarpieces, were stipulated in detail in the few contracts that have reached us.

In regard to Saint Martin, we know the artists started working directly on the backgrounds, as was the custom for this type of panel at the time. The background in this case is made up of a purplish-colored terrain, with grayish topographic nuances, with stones and some plants; in the top half, a flat blue background, painted using loose and transparent brushstrokes, includes two types of decorations in the shape of a cruciform rosette, one of which has been lost almost completely.

Analysis shows that the pigment used in the blue background was aerinite, a mineral pigment used widely in Romanesque mural paintings in Catalonia, Aragon and Andorra. There are records of its use until the 16th Century[15]. Certain areas in the blue background, which for centuries had been covered by the rosette decorations now lost almost completely, show that the background color was originally darker and more intense **(fig. 10**). Spanish painting at the time usually employed azurite for this type of background. Opting to choose aerinite was, most probably, a question of costs. Painting such a large surface with azurite would have raised the cost of the work extraordinarily. Detecting aerinite in a 14th Century panel painting is exceptional when studying medieval art techniques. This highlights the special and singular nature of this painting[16].

Fig. 11. Detail of the coat of arms on the right.

Fig. 10. Macro photograph of one of the golden rosettes decorating the background that have been almost completely lost.

The decorations that remain intact were painted using pure lead white, while those that were lost almost completely must have been gilt, using the mordant gilding technique[17]. It should be pointed out, referring back to the paragraph above regarding processes and models used by the workshops, that these motifs repeat, in similar fashion and in a slightly smaller scale, those found in the top half, over a blue background, of the altarpiece of St. Stephen from the church of Santa María in Gualter (Museu Nacional d´Art de Catalunya, Barcelona) and the altarpiece in Abella de la Conca (Museu Diocesà d'Urgell, La Seu d'Urgell, Lleida).

The wide range of technical resources exhibited by this artist is clearly shown by the different types of gilt used, undoubtedly with the intention of finding different hues for each element. Compared to the mordant gilding mentioned in the rosettes, also used for the horse's reins, orpiment, an unstable and toxic arsenic pigment typically used in Medieval times, is used for the background of the shields in the corners **(fig. 11 and 12)**[18].

As extraordinary as the use of aerinite in this panel, as mentioned earlier, is the use of a rare medieval pigment in the saint's halo: mosaic gold. This pigment has been found in some illuminated manuscripts and in polychrome sculptures, especially in certain Italian works from between the 13th and 15th Century. However, it has rarely been found in easel paintings. Only very few examples of its use have been documented in Spain[19].

Energy-dispersive X-Ray Fluorescence spectroscopy (EDX-RF) of these areas shows high levels of sulfur and a clear presence of tin, which, together with the microscopic analysis of the samples taken, clearly reveals the presence of mosaic gold[20] **(fig. 13)**. This is tin sulfide (SnS2), which in medieval texts is referred to as aurum musicum, porporini, purpurino or purpurinos, and its use is described in 14th Century texts such as Il Libro dell Arte de Cennino Cennini, and in De arte

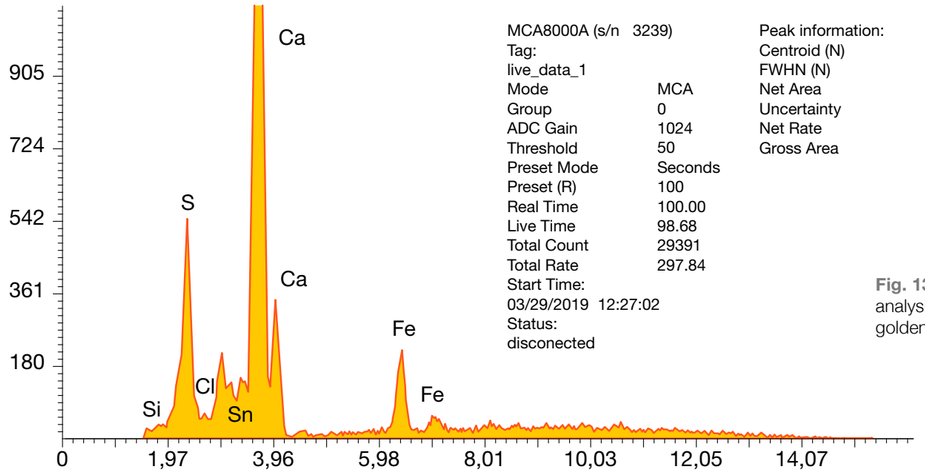


Fig. 13. EDXRF analysis of the golden halo.

Iluminandi, a southern Italian treatise that focuses on the pictorial decoration of manuscripts.

Section 143 of the Bologna Manuscript (15th Century) describes the preparation process:

> *Take stirred tin, sulfur, quicksilver and ammonia salt, all in equal measure, place all these things in an ampoule and cover it with luto sapiente: seal the mouth of the ampoule with a metal sheet and pierce a hole through it, then expose it to a flame and cook it slowly until yellow smoke comes out of the orifice, then remove from the flame and set aside to cool. Break the ampoule and you will find good and beautiful metallic paint, distemper it with an adhesive water size and use it to make miniatures and other things.* [21]

Cennini is also clear about porporino:

> *I would now like to show you a color similar to gold, suitable to decorate miniatures on paper and also on panels; but you should avoid it whenever possible. Make sure this color, called porporino, touches no gilded area […] that would be enough to spoil it completely.* [22]

The 12-Century Codex Matritensis already described the preparation of an almost identical pigment based on tin and mercury [23]

It is as such that we know that this rare type of pigment with a golden appearance was commonly linked to medieval illuminated manuscript workshops. Although it seems the Serra workshop did not partake in this artistic activity, leading artists in Barcelona from earlier generations would use it regularly, such as the Destorrents or Bassa workshops. Perhaps the connection between Pere Serra and Ramón Destorrents, during their training, may have afforded him this knowledge regarding the world of illuminated manuscripts and the materials it uses[24].

Once the background was executed, leaving aside the areas corresponding to the characters and the horse, the artists would then execute the scene, although carrying out slight corrections in some of the contours. Take a look, for instance, at the changes in the profile of the horse's abdomen. There are also slight variations in the choice of pigments. For instance, to execute Saint Martin's trouser, the artist required a richer blue than the one used in the background, opting for a combination of azurite and an organic blue, probably indigo.[25]

The intense use of color in the red jacket and the cloak, are the result of using minium mainly as the red pigment, implementing a thin glaze of red organic lacquer. To correct the color, the artist added a small amount of azurite. In dark red areas, corresponding to the darker folds, the glaze is thicker and there is a larger amount of azurite.

An interesting technical aspect, typical of Gothic and Spanish-Flemish paintings carried out in the territories of

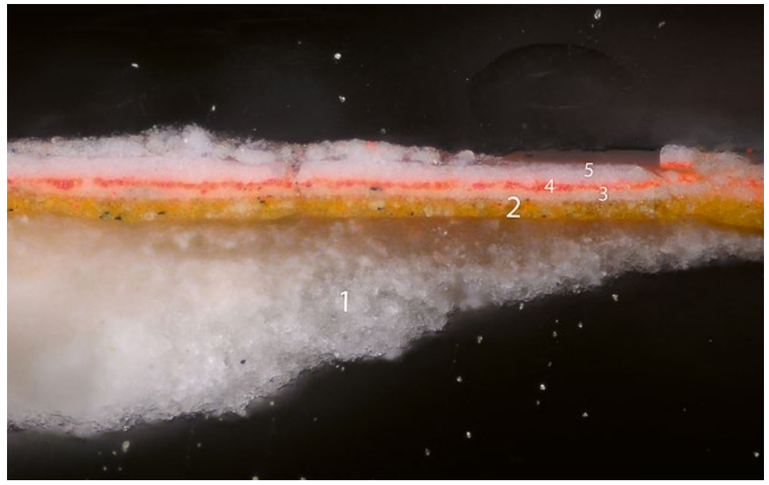


Fig. 14. Cross-section (X200) of a micro-sample taken from the saint's right cheek.

the Crown of Aragon, is the presence of greenish priming, verdaccio, in areas with flesh tones. This technique was also inherited from Tuscan duocento paintings and is described by Cennini in detail:

> *[…] take some green earth with some well-tempered white lead and coat extensively over the face, hands, feet and naked areas, twice. This background layer is suitable for young faces with fresh skin, where you need to temper both the background and the skin with the egg yolk of a city, countryside or village chicken.*[26]

In the panel in question, this verdaccio is made up of green earth, yellow earth, charcoal black and white lead, which provides a tone that is certainly more ochre than is usual in these grounds in Italy. **(fig. 14)**.

It is worth mentioning at this stage that the analysis of paint layers suggests the use of egg tempera, except in the cross-section taken from the green saddle, where only a superficial layer is observed, which colour has turned to greenish brown, with a clear oily-resinous content due to oxidation aging. The structure of the color is a first layer of malachite and lead-tin yellow, and a darker, more intense second layer of verdigris and some white lead. The surface would have then been coated with the aforementioned altered copper resinate glaze.[27]

Other elements also present are pigments that were common at the time, such as in the saint's hair, where a combination of lead yellow (massicot), yellow and red earth, white lead and traces of vermillion are used. The black details in the saint's breeches and sword's sheath are mostly bone black.

The execution of gold and silver gilding (except in the saint's halo, undertaken with mosaic gold, as mentioned), was always carried out using the mordant technique which consists in implementing the gold or silver gilt over an adhesive that hasn't dried completely, usually colored and of an oily or oily-resinous nature. As mentioned, the mordant in this panel presents an ochre tone, composed of ochre earth, minium and traces of organic black, bound with secative oil. [28] The silver on the sword has faded almost completely, leaving the color of the mordant exposed.

IV. Conclusions

The panel of *Saint Martin and the Beggar* provides interesting technical aspects that enrich our understanding of Catalonian Gothic painting and, most of all, about its material and procedural aspects. This is a field that is rarely found in specialized bibliography. This is of transcendental importance and, also, paradoxical if we consider we are dealing with a first-rate artistic workshop that had a key influence in other areas of the Iberian Peninsula and, even, across the Mediterranean.

Despite the technical wealth and the wealth of resources used in this painting, it also gives rise to fascinating questions, especially in regard to the choice of materials used and to alternative resources that were occasionally available to Catalonian Gothic painters. What was the reason for using mosaic gold (a pigment used in illuminated manuscripts) for a golden halo while choosing the traditional mordant gilding in other details? Why was a pigment typical of mural paintings at the time, and at much earlier times, chosen for the blue background? An economic reasoning to these issues cannot be considered given that this workshop was greatly successful at the time, with extensive resources, which kept an outstanding level of quality in the materials used throughout its works. Rather, we'd be looking at a search for options that could add richness to polychrome surfaces, as well as variation in chromatic and textural aspects. Only further studies of the works of the Serra brothers can provide answers to these questions, as well as discovering new information about the origin and original context of this panel.

The mysteries mentioned here add to those raised by this piece in the field of art history and iconography, as aptly and profusely presented by Albert Velasco in this book. This work thus becomes a fascinating challenge in the field of future research.Despite being narrowly defined and "steered" by a variety of strict rules and conditioning factors regarding the guild, training, iconography, contracts, resource limitation, etc, this medieval work is surprising as a result of the artist's freedom of choice in the materials used and his subtle search of the potential of each material. This, again, shines a light on the unpredictability of artistic creation and genius, even at times dominated by strictly inherited rules and decorum.

The text by Cennino Ceninni, mentioned earlier in this text, is especially revealing. After defining the Godly origins of the Universe and how Adam and Eve were required to work with their own hands after the original sin, he explains the origins and creative magic of art in Creationism terms:

> *[..] He then took on many necessary arts, each different from the other; some requiring greater dexterity than others, as they could not be the same: for the most dignified of all is science; once learnt, he proceeded with those that derived from it, […] and art called painting, which requires fantasy and dexterity in one's hands, to capture things unseen, making them seem natural and catching them in his hand, succeeding in making it what it isn't. […] In the same way, the painter is free to represent the figure standing, sitting, half man-half horse, as he wishes, according to their own fantasy.*[29]

Perhaps this creative genius in the procedures of the medieval artist is partly found in this fantasy, with innovative and, in this case, unpredictable details.

NOTES

1. Romero, R. and Illán, A., La conservación de un retablo viajero. El caso del Retablo de la Virgen, san pedro Mártir y san Marcos de Juan Figuera, in the magazine "Patrimonio" no. 60, Fundación Santa María la Real, Aguilar de Campoo, Palencia 2017, pp. 36-40

2. Wood species analyzed under the microscope at the Icono I&R laboratory by studying cross-section, radial and tangential cuts. Scotch pine is the tree species that was most employed in the Crown of Aragon to manufacture panels; however, in Catalonia, pinewood is combined with poplar wood and other minority woods such as that of the walnut tree; in this regard, refer to: Prieto, M., Los antiguos soportes de madera, fuentes de conocimiento para el restaurador, doctoral thesis. Universidad Complutense de Madrid 1987.

3. Pending publication, Romero, R. and Illán, A., Pintura aragonesa sobre tabla: algunas consideraciones sobre aspectos constructivos y técnica pictórica, Madrid 2018

4. Castelli, C., Tecniche di contruzione dei supporti lignei dipinti, in "Dipinti su tavola. La técnica e la conservazione dei supporto" Florencia 1999, pp. 59-98

5. Quite possibly, given the back side, the joints between panels and their adjoining areas must have be covered with *estopa* (vegetable or animal fibers) soaked in plaster, which were obviously lost during modern planing.

6. Véliz, Z., Wooden panels and their preparation for painting from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century in Spain, in "The structural conservation of panel painting" GCI Los Angeles 1995 pp. 138-148.

7. Prieto, M., Op. Cit. 1988 pp. 221-224; Illán, Romero, Op. Cit. 2018

8. Uzielli, L., Historical overview of panel-making in central Italy, in "The structural conservation of panel painting" GCI Los Angeles 1995 pp. 110-135.

9. Favà, C. and Cornudella, R., La taula central del Retaule de sant Joan Baptista, procedent de Tobed, i la primera etapa dells Serra, in Butlletí dell Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya vol 11, Barcelona 2010.

10. These borders with the exposed wood, left unprepared, are 4 cm in width. The panel must be set with some sort of casing or altarpiece framework, covering these borders.

11. Alba, L., García-Máiquez, J., Jover, M., and Silva, P., Las prácticas artísticas de los pintores "hispano-flamencos" en la Corona de Castilla en el siglo XV, Boletín Museo del Prado Tomo XXXII Num. 50 Madrid 2014 pp. 122-147; San Andrés, M., de la Roja. J.M., Sancho Cubino, N., and Santos-Gómez, M., Reconstruction of documented preparation methods for gesso grosso an gesso sotile in Spanish School panel paintings, in "Art technology. Sources and Methods" Londres 2008, pp. 178-181; Santos Gómez, S., Las preparaciones de yeso en la pintura sobre tabla de la escuela española, doctoral thesis. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2005; Santos, S., San Andrés, M., Baldonedo, J.L., Conejo, O., Báez, M.I., and Rodríguez, A., Contribution to the study of grounds for panel paintings of the Spanish School in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in "Painting techniques, history, materials and studio practice", Dublin 1998 pp. 115-119.

12. Analysis using energy dispersing X-rays (SEM-EDX), carried out by Enrique Parra (Larco Química y Arte S.L.), confirms that the layer of gesso sotile is made up of very pure gypsum that is quite uniformly ground, while microscopic examination of the first layer or gesso grosso is made up of an irregular mix of anhydrite and plaster. The binding material has been identified as animal glue using gas chromatography- mass spectrometry (GC-MS).

13. The technique used at Icono I&R is digital infrared photography, using a Nikon D70 camera with a CCD sensor, modified by removing the IR pass filter. A suitable filter was used to eliminate visible radiation.

14. Kodak High Speed Infrared Film using a Kodak Wratten 87 gel filter with special developing for this type of film.

15. Aerinite was initially identified by means of X-ray fluorescence (EDXRF) and optical microscopy at the Icono I&R laboratory in Madrid, and by means of SEM-EDX by Enrique Parra; significant amounts of aluminum, calcium and silica were found in all cases. The color was mixed with white lead to lighten the tone.

16. Tera Saavedra, M.R., and Parra Crego, E., Información relevante que pasa a ser anecdótica: aerinita en las pinturas murales de San Martín de Elines, in "GE Conservación" no. 8, 2015, pp. 37-50; Ibáñez-Insa, J., Oriols, N., Elvira, J.J., Álvarez, s., and Plana, F., Heat alteration of the blue pigment aerinite: aplication to Sixena´s romanesque frescoes, in MACLA no. 12, 2012; Pallet, A. and de Andrés, J., La aerinita como pigmento azul. Naturaleza, uso y estabilidad, in VII Congreso Conservación de Bienes Culturales, Bilbao 1998, pp. 475-483.

17. This is a thin translucent layer (always less than 15 µm thick) that is mainly composed of drying oil, ochre earths, minium and a little organic black.

18. The cross-section taken from the gilded background of the shield on the right shows a thick layer of pure orpiment. EXCRF and SEM-EDX analysis confirms this by finding clear peaks of arsenic and a highlight of sulfur.

19. Bogovic-Zeskoski, Gold and not so real gold in Medieval treatises, in "Conservar Patrimonio 22" 2015 pp. 51-58; Edwards, H.G.M., Farwell, D.W., Newton, E.M., Rull Pérez, F., and Jorge Villar, S., Raman spectroscopic studies of a 13th century polychrome statue: identification of a "forgotten" pigment, in "Journal of Raman microscopy" vol. 31 Issue 5, 2000, pp. 407-413; Smith, A, Reeve, A. and Roy, A., Francesco del Cossa´s St. Vicent Ferrer, in "National Gallery Technical Bulletin" Vol. 1981, London, pp. 45-57; Ross, J.L., A note on the use of mosaic gold, en "Studies in Conservation" vol. 18 no.4, London 1973.

20. This pigment was found by means of EDXRF, getting a clear tin peak at 3.68 KeV and a highlight of sulfur at 2.31 KeV. Identification was confirmed through the microscopic characteristics of the pigment particles.

21. Merryfield, M., Original Treatises dating from the 12th to the 18th centuries on the art of painting, 2 Vol, London 1849.

22. Cennini, C, El libro del Arte, Akal Fuentes de Arte, Madrid 1988, pp. 197-198

23. Córdoba de la Llave, R., Un recetario técnico castellano del siglo XV: el manuscrito H490 de la Universidad de Montpelier, in "En la España medieval" 2005 pp. 7-48.

24. Private communication from Alberto Velasco González.

25. The EDXF spectrograph shows clear copper peaks at 8.05 and 8.90 KeV. The significant calcium highlights at 3.69 and 4.01 KeV, the sulfur highlight at 2.31 KeV and the presence of potassium at 3.59 KeV suggest there is an organic blue coloring present, precipitated in a plaster substrate, with potassium being a sub-product of this preparation.

26. Cennini, Op. Cit. 1988 pgs. 183-184.

27. The constant presence of phosphorus in all EDXRF spectrographs taken of the work could point to the use of egg tempera. Staining tests to detect proteins carried out with 2,7 Dichlorofluoroscein and fuchsine acid gave positive results. In the case of the green saddle, the surface layer stained positive for lipids with Amido Black and Rhodamine B. It also tested partially positive for natural resins with antimony pentachloride.

28. Staining tests for lipids, in the gilt with mordant layer were clearly positive for Amido Black and Rhodamine B.

29. Cennini, Op. Cit. 1988 p. 32.

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