



PROJECT MUSE®

The Horn and the Relic: Mapping the Contours of Authority
and Religiosity in the Late Medieval Crown of Aragon

Michael A. Ryan

Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural, Volume
1, Number 1, 2012, pp. 49-71 (Article)

Published by Penn State University Press



➔ For additional information about this article

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/470474>



THE HORN AND THE RELIC: MAPPING THE CONTOURS OF AUTHORITY AND RELIGIOSITY IN THE LATE MEDIEVAL CROWN OF ARAGON

Michael A. Ryan

ABSTRACT

In their quests to acquire preternatural objects and exchange them with their social and economic peers, the last two count-kings of the Crown of Aragon, Joan el Caçador, “the Hunter” (r. 1387–96), and Martí l’Humà, “the Humane” (r. 1396–1410), applied the full range of mechanisms available in their courts and bureaucracies. The kings’ vigorous participation in a late medieval spiritual economy is evidenced in their choice of quest objects—respectively pieces of unicorn horn and relics of local and transnational Christian saints—and their use of diplomatic means to acquire these tangible pieces of the preternatural. This article investigates the reigns and spiritual proclivities of these sibling sovereigns, Joan and Martí, illuminating to scholars of the medieval past the kings’ markedly different personalities and ruling styles.

INTRODUCTION

Medieval travel across land and sea alike could be hazardous. Although sure-footed mules might traverse successfully well-worn paths on land, sailing the Mediterranean represented another, most frightening, prospect entirely. In the words of Jean de Joinville, biographer of Louis IX of France, the maritime traveler, “who would expose himself to such danger while in a state of mortal sin is foolishly bold, for there you fall asleep at night without knowing if you might find yourself at the bottom of the sea by morning.”¹ Whether traveling by land or sea, the medieval voyager would have needed an indispensable aid for his or her journey: the map, an object that is, in the words of Palmira Brummett, “a purposely visual crafting and circumscribing of space . . . a manifestation of history and imagination as well as science and function.”² Yet no *mappa mundi* exists that can help the scholar of the medieval past to delineate precisely the outlines

of any individual's particular religious practices and proclivities. How, then, does he or she attempt to do so for anyone, let alone for two particularly powerful individuals, King Joan el Caçador, "the Hunter" (r. 1387–96), and his successor and younger brother, King Martí l'Humà, "the Humane" (r. 1396–1410). The last two count-kings of the Crown of Aragon from a venerable dynasty that had been established by their ancestor, Count Guifré el Pelós, "the Hairy," in the ninth century, their late medieval reigns are perfect for investigating cultural and intellectual history in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Mediterranean. Their royal chanceries were veritable factories of document production; indeed, the interested scholar has a wealth of riches in the sheer quantity of sources available for consultation. Joan's and Martí's other sobriquets—respectively, "el Descurat" (the Negligent) and "l'Eclesiàstic" (the Priest)—hint at their contemporaries' perception of their actions and personalities. Both these characterizations, of course, elide the historical nuances that are central to understanding these two kings, but there is a grain of truth to them. Joan had a troubled rule over his kingdom and preferred to spend his time hunting, engaging with occult matters, consulting astrological works, and savoring troubadour music. Martí was a sovereign in whom religious and secular matters alike tightly converged, a king who would spend hours at devotions, yet never hesitate to resist actively any transgressions committed by powerful prelates, abbots, and bishops in his own kingdom, as he felt ecclesiastical matters were a natural extension of his royal privilege.

In this article, I rely on an interdisciplinary approach to study the manners, regnal styles, and personalities of King Joan and King Martí in order to explore the contours of their religious orthodoxy and secular authority. By investigating notarial sources, bestiaries, and artistic sources, I question the simultaneously similar and different methods by which both Joan and Martí acquired, distributed, and donated tangible, supernatural bits of material culture—respectively, unicorn horn and Christian relics—evidencing their participation within a much larger, late medieval religious economy.³ Both sovereigns engaged in an intense gifting and exchange of supernatural material culture with their social and economic peers in their own dominion, as well as with their contemporaries in other kingdoms. In applying the full range of the mechanisms of their royal bureaucracies in their hunt to acquire and distribute pieces of unicorn horn and relics, Joan and Martí enforced their monarchical prerogatives and demonstrated their individual religious and cultural proclivities.

HUNTING THE UNICORN HORN

Modern popular culture has relegated the unicorn to a less-than-serious status. A widely recognized fantastic animal with an equine body and a twisting meter-long horn that protrudes from the center of its head, the history of this preternatural creature is ancient. Nevertheless, within contemporary understanding the unicorn sometimes stands as a figure of saccharine sentimentality, outrageous camp, or postmodern irony. Within medieval reckoning, however, the unicorn occupied a far more illustrious and powerful place, and was a deeply symbolic animal, one celebrated in period art, music, and literature—and, perhaps most famously, in a series of late medieval tapestries that depicted a unicorn's interaction with a woman in a flowered glade, a narrative that represented the five human senses.⁴

The unicorn was also an object of desire for Joan el Caçador, who doggedly pursued obtaining a unicorn's horn, also known as an alicorn, during his tenure as both prince of Gerona and count-king of the Crown of Aragon. In discussing the unicorn's place in medieval culture, addressing the purportedly "superstitious" character of Joan, and investigating his use of the resources of the Crown of Aragon in pursuit of the unicorn's horn, Joan's quest reflects yet another aspect of the count-king's application of his monarchical authority, one that heretofore has not been adequately investigated.

At face value, the account of Joan's dogged pursuit of a unicorn's horn seems risible, even foolish. Joan was an avid sportsman and the hunt was his favorite pastime. Additionally, Joan also enjoyed contemporary fashion, troubadour music, and Provençal literature. Because of his search for the unicorn horn, in addition to his interest in the occult arts of alchemy, astrology, and divination—and instead of focusing on the quotidian administration of his realms or helping rectify the theological trauma of the Great Schism—Joan earned, perhaps unfairly, the opprobrium of many of his contemporaries, as well as later scholars. A century ago, when Josep María Roca i Heras wrote his monumental study on Joan and his dominions, he expended considerable energy focusing on the sovereign's character, especially his proclivities that Roca deemed "superstitious."⁵ Such a term is not value-neutral and, unfortunately, has colored subsequent studies surrounding the count-king, as some scholars, such as Jocelyn Hillgarth, have deemed him flighty and overly engaged with his purportedly flippant endeavors at the expense of ruling as a strong king.⁶ His behavior also earned him the lesser known, and much less flattering, sobriquet

of “el Descurat,” or the Negligent. He was, in premodern and modern eyes alike, perceived as a negligent sovereign who would rather spend his time at his fashion, his music, his stargazing, and his hunt.

Although Joan certainly had problems with prioritizing his actions and should have spent less time hunting and hunched over books of astrology and more time dealing with diplomatic and religious affairs, Roca’s disapproving assessment of the sovereign as “superstitious” proves both anachronistic and unfair, as it dismisses outright the worldview in which Joan operated. Applying it as such ultimately does a disservice to the medieval people for whom the preternatural represented potential reality. That which seems to us moderns as monstrous and fantastic was, for the medievals, if not quite real, at least real enough for them to modify within shifting geographic and cultural contexts.⁷ Put differently, the medievals were able to utilize and craft “a form of zoological identity . . . significant in the context of religious ceremony and display” that transcends the “rationalist accusation of a mistake or sloppy thinking.”⁸ Modern historians can thus gain much by reviewing this supposedly vapid king’s interests. Even though the unicorn has never historically existed as a living, breathing animal, certainly in the mind of Joan, and perhaps in the minds of his courtiers, his administrators, and his hunters, the unicorn existed if only to provide horns for the taking. In writing to his administrators across the length and breadth of his domain, Joan’s quest for the unicorn horn does not represent his supposedly superstitious or flighty inclination, but instead a concrete manifestation of his authority. At least as has been revealed in the documentary record, Joan never doubted the fundamental truth that there existed unicorns to supply horns. Nor was Joan unique among other medieval secular authorities, many of whom were also interested in obtaining a horn for their own royal treasuries, which they did (often mere ivory horns shaped accordingly).⁹ What is unique about this particular case and what modern historians can learn from studying and applying it to other venues and periods, is that we have evidence that demonstrates the full application of royal authority and power in pursuit of a precious object simultaneously real and fantastic, natural and preternatural. In his position as both prince and king of the Crown of Aragon, Joan exercised his full royal authority to marshal the resources and might of the state to obtain and traffic in an item that, to him, was indeed most precious.

Odell Shepard’s classic and deeply researched study on the role the unicorn played in medieval and early modern cultural history, although dated, is nevertheless still useful for the modern scholarly hunter of this mythical beast. Whether the unicorn existed is irrelevant. As Shepard waxed eloquently,

“A dream, if it is no more than that, of such great age and beauty as this of the unicorn, is far more worthy of consideration than the question whether we shall have one species more or less in the earth’s fauna.”¹⁰ What is important, however, and vital to any study surrounding the fantastic and monstrous, is the recognition that in the medieval worldview, fabulous beasts and fearsome monsters existed at the liminal space between the known world and uncharted territory. Thus, although they might not be seen in the flesh, so to speak, they still occupied the limits of what constituted civilization and simultaneously served as physical and cultural reminders that reflected the monstrous potential within each person.¹¹

The unicorn first trotted onstage in antiquity. The Persians in the fifth century B.C.E., the Greeks in the fourth century B.C.E., and the Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, in his first-century C.E. *Historia Naturalis*, argued that the unicorn lived in the environs of India. Julius Caesar, however, broke with this larger intellectual tradition and reported its existence in the forests of the Celts.¹² The most important ancient authority on the unicorn, however, which laid the foundation on which all subsequent bestiaries built their own collections, is the second-century Alexandrian compilation of beasts, the *Physiologus*, a name that refers to both the title and attributed author of the work.¹³ The various textual traditions of the *Physiologus* differ on minor details, but they universally agree on the following points regarding the unicorn: it is small, like a kid; that, despite its size, it is most ferocious and its horn served as a deadly weapon; and, due to its ferocity and speed, one cannot ever hope to take the unicorn by force, but must instead trick it.

Crucial to the narrative of the hunt for the unicorn is the presence of a virgin. The unicorn resists all manner of capture excepting the lure of a maiden’s virginity. If a virgin is used as bait, the unicorn will draw near and its ferocity will be tempered. Docile, the erstwhile wild unicorn places its head in the maiden’s lap, thus allowing for its capture and presentation before the king’s throne or its death by hunters and hounds.

Many of the most famous medieval bestiaries that I have chosen to study follow this narrative to the letter; the entry for the unicorn usually takes up no more than the length of a paragraph. For instance, the early thirteenth-century *Bestiaire* from Pierre de Beauvais, which heavily relies on *Physiologus*, describes the unicorn’s physical characteristics as kid-like and its spirit as wild, to be subdued only when it encounters the virgin. Other medieval bestiaries, however, emphasize the deeply sexual undertones in the narrative surrounding the hunt for, and ensnaring of, the unicorn. As Florence McCulloch has remarked, “In the

Syriac version, the emphasis is upon sexual attraction by the girl: "Then the girl offers him her breasts, and the animal begins to suck the breasts of the maiden and to conduct himself familiarly with her."¹⁴ Further, the oldest Old French version of the story, Richard de Fournival's thirteenth-century *Bestiaire d'Amour*, reinforces this notion and stresses the sexual physicality of the hunt by positing a pheromone linkage between the virgin and the unicorn: it is the particular scent of the virgin that attracts the beast to her lap.¹⁵ This sentiment echoes in later bestiaries as well. In two Catalan bestiaries, one from the early fourteenth century and the other from the fifteenth century, the purportedly cruel and wild nature of the unicorn is so tempered by "such a great odor of the scent of virginity," that it is tamed and places its hooves in the virgin's lap, thus allowing for its easy capture and execution.¹⁶ Yet the anonymous authors of these particular bestiaries suggest that such a task is impossible, as the beast cannot be captured by any means employed by the sinful and the wicked. To further underscore this point, and link the figure of the unicorn with Christ, both Catalan bestiaries relate the account of Saul of Tarsus's revelation of Christ on the way to Damascus, in which Jesus asked Saul, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"¹⁷

As medieval authors read allegorical meaning into every biblical figure and fantastic and mundane creature alike, the unicorn provided especially fertile ground. Medieval bestiaries, drawing on a position espoused in the sixth century by Pope Gregory the Great, suggested that the unicorn represented Christ. Almost universally, they "agree that Christ is the spiritual unicorn who, descending into the Virgin's womb, was incarnate, was captured by the Jews, and condemned to death."¹⁸ This was read in every physiological aspect of the unicorn: its twisting horn symbolized the intertwining of God the son with God the father, and its fierceness in combat—in which it fought frequently against lions or elephants, depending on the particular bestiary—signified "the inability of heavenly powers to know Christ and of Hell to hold him."¹⁹ Although ferocious, the unicorn was unassuming, and thus "its small size signifies Christ's humility in assuming humanity; and its kid-like appearance represents Christ's being made in the likeness of carnal sin."²⁰ The twelfth-century French bestiary of Philippe de Thaon reads the virgin's bosom as representing the Church, and her kiss that placates the unicorn as peace. A notable exception to reading the unicorn in this manner, however, appears in the high medieval Waldensian bestiary. In that particular source, the unicorn is a wholly wicked and diabolic creature that, like the unicorn in the *Bestiaire d'Amour*, can be overcome and captured only by the "scent of virginity, that is, by virtue and good works."²¹

Despite the rich symbolism of the narrative surrounding the unicorn hunt, we must now turn to the practical reasons why Joan sought the unicorn horn. Like many other medieval hunters of the horn, Joan wanted it for its therapeutic properties. The ancient *Indica*, reportedly written by the fifth-century B.C.E. Greek scholar Ctesias, and which echoed throughout subsequent medieval manuscripts, notes the horn's most important therapeutic qualities: when dipped in water or other spirits, the horn can detect the presence of poison and purify the liquid. The water in which it was dipped could also be drunk to cure a poisoned person. Moreover, the elixir could also ward off epileptic convulsions. This latter point would have been of particular interest to Joan. As a young boy, the prince frequently suffered epileptic attacks, which he would endure the rest of his life, and frequently he had to spend his summers staying put in his ducal city of Gerona in order for his custodians to monitor his health.²² Indeed, young Joan's health was so grave that ambitious individuals who could provide remedy to the young sovereign would be handsomely rewarded, as seen in the case of Guillem Metge, who created medicines and brought them to the sickly prince.²³ Due to his service to Joan, by 1356 Joan's mother, Queen Elionor, named him as a "domestic and familiar" and made him a regular member of the royal household.²⁴

Joan's ill health as a youth colored his later outlook on life, making him a hypochondriac. Throughout his reign, the Crown of Aragon suffered from waves of plague, which the king scrupulously, even obsessively, sought to avoid. In 1395, a particularly bad year, Joan and the queen, Violant, uprooted the royal court and fled from Catalonia to Majorca to avoid the disease. In 1396, with the plague having abated, the court moved back to Perpignan, the seat of the kings of Majorca. But Joan was quite cognizant of the medical properties of the unicorn horn and, indeed, such recognition appears to have been the driving force behind his search for the precious item. In June 1377, while he was duke of Gerona and thus the heir apparent to the throne of the Crown of Aragon, Joan wrote to his cousin, the Count of Urgell, regarding a unicorn horn. A month earlier, in June, Joan requested that his cousin send him the unicorn horn that was purportedly safeguarded in the chapel of Not de Montacada, part of the cathedral of Lleida.²⁵ In the July missive, Joan explicated further on the properties of the unicorn horn, the marvels of which he witnessed with his own eyes. While in Perpignan, the Count of Armangac sent a bit of unicorn horn as a present to Joan and reported that his vassal, the master of Rodes, proved the veracity the horn by setting up an experiment using two dogs. He gave them both strong poisons mixed in with their food and touched only one of the dogs

with the piece of unicorn horn. The count reports that “the dog that was not touched with the horn died and the other survived.”²⁶ To ensure that it was not a fluke, Joan repeated the experiment with two additional dogs and his own horn, and reported to his cousin that he received the same result. Moreover, Joan mentioned that he used this particular bit of horn for the public good, relying on it to provide assistance for his subjects who had been accidentally poisoned. He thus requested that his cousin send him other bits of unicorn horn that he had heard were present in his domain.

Throughout his principate, Joan hunted the unicorn horn, as well as other precious stones and relics. In July 1375 he wrote his aunt, the Countess of Urgell, to thank her for her gift of an unnamed precious stone that saved his life on many occasions.²⁷ Moreover, Joan sent along pieces of unicorn horn to his powerful peers. Such was the case in July 1378, when Joan sent Jaume d’Aragó, bishop of Valencia, a piece of unicorn horn. Before sending it to the bishop, and to ensure that the said horn was true, the young prince decided to engage in a horrific experiment by testing it against an anonymous Jew who was facing capital punishment. Joan had his vassals procure a powerful poison and administer it to the condemned Jew. Once he collapsed and was on the point of death, they forced open his mouth and gave him five spoonfuls of unicorn-horn-infused water. Five days later, the Jew fully recovered and was then hanged.²⁸ Joan even participated in a long-distance trade of precious stones and pieces of unicorn horn, sending them far afield from his realms—as in 1383, when he provided Leo V of the House of Lusignan, the king of Armenia, a bit of unicorn horn that also proved efficacious against poison.²⁹

The spring and summer of 1379 were fertile seasons, at least in terms of documentary evidence, for Joan’s hunting of the unicorn’s horn. In March, while residing in Barcelona, Joan wrote the prior of the monastery of Roncesvalles and offered him one hundred florins to remove the horn from behind the monastery’s walls.³⁰ Less than a month later, he also wrote his niece, the Princess of Sicily, honoring her request that he send her a piece of horn.³¹ In May of that same year, Joan wrote the Count of Cardona, who also requested, via the royal *mayordomo*, Mossen Francesch Sencliment, that the prince share his horn with him. Joan agreed and sent a piece, but stipulated that the count was to share the precious horn with his wife, the countess. Joan further encouraged the count not to fret about the size of his horn, “because even a small piece has the same worth as a great one.”³² Finally, in June 1379, Joan wrote the Viscount of Castribonus,

near Perpignan, and requested that he contact the monks at Roncesvalles for a horn, promising the viscount that he would provide whatever royal assistance he would need to procure said horn.³³ In the winter of 1380, Joan wrote his bureaucrat Jacme Pallaresii and commanded him to provide Pope Urban VI with a piece of unicorn horn, as well as instructions for its use: "Drink water in which the . . . piece was steeped, and you will face no danger from anything."³⁴ Later that year, Joan also sent the Duke of Brebono yet another piece of unicorn horn to be used against poison.

When Joan became king, he continued his pursuit for the unicorn horn and other precious relics, including the bezoar, a stone used to protect against poison, as well as another unnamed stone that promoted fertility, although the documentary evidence concerning Joan's quest for objects to ward off poison peters out during his tenure as king.³⁵ The last document available comes from June 1395, in which Joan wrote his daughter Joanna, Countess of Foix. Joan sent his daughter a bezoar and a serpent's tongue, which also were understood in the medieval mind-set as being able to detect and ward off poison. He related the good state of his and her mother's health, but urged his daughter to use the gifts that he would send, as her present welfare was dear to her parents and siblings alike.³⁶ Approximately one year later, Joan himself met his end while engaging in the pastime for which he was best known. On May 19, 1396, while the king was in hot pursuit of a stag in the wilds outside of Gerona, Joan slipped from his horse, fell hard on the ground, lapsed into a coma, and died, thus setting the stage for a dynastic crisis and the eventual ascension of his younger brother, the pious and stoic Martí, to the throne of the Crown of Aragon. As indicated in the historical record, Martí eschewed many of his older brother's diversions, including his attempts to obtain and trade in unicorn horns. Even if Martí believed the unicorn existed, he apparently did not consider procuring and sharing its horn to be tasks worthy of a monarch.

Although it is tempting to say Joan's death was not in vain, as he died doing something he loved, his interest in the hunt was far more important than just the sport of medieval kings. The hunt occupied a unique locus within the medieval world depending on the quarry pursued, and Joan's hunt for the unicorn horn was a quest for a tantalizing object that was both supernatural and real. The hands of authority hoped to, and frequently did, grasp the fantastic, and the king never hesitated to engage the mechanisms of his royal bureaucracy in his attempts to do so.

THE RELICS AND RELIGIOSITY OF MARTÍ L'ECLESIÀSTIC

Not unlike what his royal predecessor and older brother, Joan, did with pieces of unicorn horn, Martí exchanged powerful Christian relics with his social and economic peers. In the case of his acquisition and translation of the body of the venerable bishop of Barcelona, Saint Sever, he did so in order to demonstrate his sanctity, as well as to establish clearly his monarchical power. This certainly was not the only, nor even necessarily the most important, method by which he constructed said authority, but Martí's exchanging and gifting of relics, like Joan's acquisition, exchanging, and gifting of pieces of unicorn horn, represented his active participation in a much larger network of late medieval spiritual and supernatural economy.³⁷ There existed significant supernatural similarities between both unicorn horns and saints' relics. By their very nature, pieces of unicorn horn and bits of long-dead saints connect the natural and supernatural worlds. Further, horn and relic alike could be used for therapeutic purposes.³⁸ But the Catalan kings' particular choice on what to obtain and transmit is telling. Although their participation in a larger network of exchange helped demonstrate and legitimate their claims to monarchical authority, their specific choices concerning what to acquire and disseminate evidence greatly Joan and Martí's markedly different characters and styles of ruling. Joan's predilection for occult matters naturally led him to seek out the pieces of unicorn horn, whereas Martí's piety would not permit such a selection, despite the reading of the unicorn within a Christian framework. For him, relics of high-profile saints would suffice instead.

As Teofilo Ruiz has rightly observed, excepting the works of Alberto Boscolo and María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, as well as the classic collection of documents compiled by Daniel Girona Llogestera, there have been no biographical studies devoted exclusively to King Martí, although Rafael Tasis i Marca, H. J. Chaytor, and Thomas Bisson provided glimpses of information about this most pious king.³⁹ More recently, works by Brian Catlos and, most especially, Núria Silleras-Fernández have shed additional and important light on details surrounding the reign of Martí and his queen, Maria de Luna.⁴⁰ Newer studies, however, are devoting considerable energy to the character and reign of Martí along the lines of Josep Maria Roca i Heras's classic study on the reign and character of Joan el Caçador.⁴¹ Thus Martí does not dwell in complete darkness, and it is clear from the documentary record that Martí trafficked in a wide variety of powerful relics, all of which were significant in their own right.⁴²

Relics affiliated with the narrative of the Passion proved to be some of Martí's finest, and most favorite, forms of spiritual currency. In 1397, although Martí was unable to resolve formally the crisis of the Great Schism, he nevertheless provided his political ally and kinsman Pope Benedict XIII with a huge piece of the True Cross before departing in May of that year.⁴³ Early the next year, in January, Martí received additional pieces of the True Cross from the monastery at Vall de Jesu Christ, and in February, Martí's deputy general of the realm sent him two spines purportedly from the Crown of Thorns that were housed in a golden reliquary.⁴⁴ By March 1398 those thorns—as well as a comb attributed to be the former possession of the Virgin Mary, and the arm of Saint Jordi, whose cult was, and still is, closely linked with the identity of Barcelona and its environs—arrived and Martí instructed his councilors, Miçer Bernat Dalmau and Roman Torrelles, to go forth and meet the delegation who carried the relics with them.⁴⁵ Martí did not just seek the arm of the patriotic Saint Jordi; in July 1400 Martí wrote the Viscount of Roda to let him know that he had seen the cedula the viscount gave to Berenguer Çes Oliveres that reported that the Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaiologos, also had the head of Saint Jordi in his possession.⁴⁶ Martí commanded the viscount that he was to relieve the emperor of that relic or, at the very least, arrange it so that the Venetians would gain it, from whom he could ultimately acquire it.⁴⁷ And powerful relics that traveled great distances demanded dramatic veneration. No expense was to be spared, as seen in the demand, for instance, that came from Martí's *panicer*, Anthoni Areia, on behalf of the sovereign to the Barcelonan merchant Petrus Mironi for "two bolts of black Damascene silk, of the best quality you have," which would be used to drape the altars on which the various reliquaries rested.⁴⁸

These, of course, were not the only relics Martí sought and acquired, as he searched for, demanded, and obtained the bejeweled Holy Grail from the monks at San Juan de la Peña, and which purportedly took up residence in Valencia.⁴⁹ But it is evident that Martí ensured he would always put the full range of mechanisms into play when seeking whichever holy objects he desired. Toward the end of 1398, in November, Martí wrote Johannis de Sanct Johanne, a notary of Calatayud, demanding that he find out more about the rumored presence of a reliquary that was purported to house Christ's blood in the location surrounding Suriballa.⁵⁰ Moreover, it was not just Martí who got into the act; both his fellow nobles, as well as his queen, Maria de Luna, were greatly involved in the transmission and exchange of relics. In 1398 Martí wrote to the noblewoman Johanna Cathalana, daughter of Pere Guillem Cathala, regarding the piece of the True Cross that she had requested from Maria de Luna, via the

powerful and connected female religious Yoland Mulet. On behalf of his queen, Martí provided Johanna both the piece of True Cross as well as its pedigree—it was purported to be from the same relic that Saint Helena of Constantinople, the mother of the fourth-century supreme representation of both secular and Christian power, Emperor Constantine, gave to her son, which Emperor Constantine in turn gave to Pope Sylvester I.⁵¹ Although Martí did not disperse relics with complete abandon, apparently there were plenty of splinters of the True Cross to go around. For example, in November 1400 the king wrote his cousin, the Countess of Urgell, to let her know that his chamberlain, Pere Torrelles, would be providing her a piece of the True Cross, “where our Lord wanted to be hanged for the redemption and salvation of human nature.”⁵²

Martí was willing to search all across the Mediterranean when it came to the possibility of acquiring relics he found dear. He even was willing to engage, to a point, in interfaith dialogue. The year before contacting the Byzantine emperor for the head of Saint Jordi, in September 1399, Martí took the opportunity to write to the new sultan of Egypt, Al-Nasir Faraj—who had succeeded his father, Sayf ad-Din Barquq, who was the first sultan of the Mamluk Burji dynasty—to obtain another powerful relic. In an extraordinarily polite diplomatic letter, Martí explained that he had heard that the heart of Saint Barbara was in the sultan’s possession and, expressing his “singular devotion” to that particular relic, he requested that the sultan give it to Anthoni Ameler, a Barcelonan who was also consul of the Catalan merchant community residing in Alexandria.⁵³ In a separate letter from 1400 to Ameler, Martí encouraged him to weigh all the possibilities of stealing the heart of Saint Barbara, should the sultan seem less than receptive to providing it via diplomatic means, as there apparently had been a substantial delay in response.⁵⁴

Perhaps the best-known aspect of Martí’s interest in acquiring the remnants of the Christian holy dead, as well as the most prominent application of the full brunt of his royal prerogative in his quest for relics, appears in the 1403 translation of the relics of the bishop of Barcelona, Saint Sever. Within the hierarchy of Christian relics, for a local saint he was of particular importance as one of the earliest and most important bishops of Barcelona. It should be noted, however, that the ascription of Sever as bishop of Barcelona in the fourth century does not bear out in the documentary record, whereas there exist accounts of a similarly named seventh-century bishop of Barcelona. No matter—Sever was a prestigious local saint and Martí’s unflagging support of him in the early fifteenth century, which simultaneously saw an intensification of the saint’s cult, was due to the saint’s purported personal and direct intercession for Martí.⁵⁵

The king had suffered a significant leg injury that risked the loss of his leg and perhaps even his life. Sever supposedly visited the ailing king while he was sleeping and cured him; Martí credited his survival and complete recovery to the miraculous intercession of the long-dead bishop, and thus successfully petitioned Benedict XIII in 1404 to move the relics from their traditional home at the venerable Benedictine monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès to the cathedral in Barcelona.

This entirety of this narrative was commemorated in the sixteenth century through a series of oil-painted wooden panels created by the Portuguese artists Pere Nunyes and Enric Fernandes. Commissioned for the chapel of the Hospital de Pobres Sacerdots in Barcelona, the entire creative process from conception to execution took nine years. The final steps took place when, on March 14, 1541, Nunyes and Fernandes agreed to paint the narrative for the hefty sum of two hundred pounds; they completed the work on August 23, 1542. By 1685 the administrators of the Hospital of Saint Sever noted that the altarpiece was in dire need of restoration; afterward, the altarpiece was transferred to Olesa de Bonesvalls, near Garraf, where it remained until 1777. Although it stayed in the same town, it was eventually moved to the parish church and, by 1809, to the hospital chapel. By 1929 the panels were transferred to the Museu Diocesà, where they currently reside, and were once again restored in 1992.⁵⁶ The paintings themselves depict the narrative surrounding the life and deeds of Sever. The left panel portrays the miraculous election of Sever as bishop of Barcelona, as well as the episcopal consecration of Saint Sever. The right panel shows the martyrdom of Saint Sever and, of particular significance, the moment when Sever comes to the sleeping sovereign, whose crown rests on a bedside table within easy reach. Accompanied by four angels, one of whom lifts up the blanket covering Martí to show the saint the king's wounded leg, Sever heals the ailing king. The predella at the bottom of the altarpiece shows the physical presence of both the elder Martí and the young heir apparent, also named Martí, who arrived in March 1405, at the translation of Sever's relics from Sant Cugat to the cathedral in Barcelona.⁵⁷

Despite his interest in relics, Martí sought to restrict others' access to the preternatural. And like many a medieval sovereign, Martí did not hesitate to rail against those he felt richly deserved his wrath by interacting with those matters in a less than admirable manner. For example, in 1399 he wrote to the Majorcan alchemist Jaume Lustrach, who was working on a project searching for the philosopher's stone commissioned by Joan. Martí demanded to investigate it, despite Lustrach's misgivings about completing the project. After reviewing the

materials, Martí thundered to Lustrach that his work was naught but “all vanity mixed with great temerity, and that for good reason he would be worthy of being well punished,” and wrote to his administrators on the island, Berenguer de Montagut, lieutenant governor, and Mateo de Lostos, royal procurator, demanding that they imprison the disgraced alchemist. Lustrach’s punishment was staved off solely by the intercession of Queen Maria de Luna, and Martí wrote the *veguer* of Barcelona in May 1400 to set the alchemist free with all his goods.⁵⁸

To be sure, it is in Martí’s reaction to others’ religious proclivities and practices that help to paint a more complex, albeit contradictory, picture of the contours of Martí’s own faith. One of the most telling incidents surrounding Martí’s religiosity, as well as his policing of others’ religious practices, was his reaction to the gathering of *mudéjares*, the Muslims resident within the Christian-ruled dominion of the Crown of Aragon and its possessions, at Atzeneta. During his tenure as prince, he had very little problem with this local pilgrimage site—which was reputed to be the grave site of Galib ibn Hasan ibn Ahmed ibn Sid Buna al-Juzai, a known *qadi* whom devout Muslims also venerated posthumously as a prophet—and commanded local authorities to permit members from some twenty-five *mudéjar* families to go on pilgrimage to Atzeneta. By the time he was king, however, Martí took a far more radical stance. In 1400 Martí wrote his administrator, Guillem Martorell, commanding him to punish those *mudéjares* who continued to visit the site of Atzeneta and leave votive offerings at the shrine, despite royal prohibition. Perhaps reflecting on the proscription that Pope Clement V promulgated at the Council of Vienne in 1311, in which the pontiff argued that secular and ecclesiastical authorities were to prevent Muslims from publicly invoking the name of Muhammad, announcing the call to prayer, and going on pilgrimage to local saints’ sites. As these acts were considered “an offense to the Christian community,” by March 1403 Martí had lost patience with the *mudéjares* who continued visiting Atzeneta.⁵⁹ Claiming that the *mudéjares*’ religious devotion to the site constituted a “derision . . . of the holy Catholic faith,” he commanded his uncle, the Duke of Gandia, to destroy the mosque, to pulverize the body of the venerated Muslim saint, and to cast the ashes into the sea or let them be borne aloft by the wind.⁶⁰ For a monarch who knew very well the power and prestige of relics, who actively built his own power by receiving, moving, and in some cases demanding Christian relics, his proclamation to have the Muslim saint’s body exhumed, pulverized, and discarded is most illustrative. Although Martí believed the gathering of *mudéjares* at the

shrine of Atzeneta to be a matter of both diplomatic and religious security, had his uncle actually carried out his royal command, such actions would undoubtedly have resulted in an intense response within the mudéjar community and could have triggered outright rebellion. For what it is worth, there does not appear to be any documentary evidence, as far as I know, that Martí pushed the issue further, and the shrine of this Muslim saint survived well into the early modern era.

CONCLUSION

The mechanisms behind the fashioning of medieval religious identity, and how that identity shifts and mutates in response to various on-the-ground conditions, are extraordinarily complex and diverse. Joan's and Martí's participation in a late medieval spiritual economy by trafficking in powerful and preternatural items constitutes but a small part of this fashioning. Undeniably intriguing, these kings' participation poses important questions for scholars in late medieval cultural and religious history, and it is my hope that this research will inspire other scholars to investigate further the trafficking in tangible supernatural items. The choice of these kings' gifts sheds enormous amounts of light about these two sovereigns. For Joan, the unicorn horn was more than just an item to assuage his sense of hypochondria. It also manifested his own sanctity and thaumaturgy, for in his providing pieces of unicorn horn to his social peers and to those who needed it, he could heal as if he possessed the royal touch itself.⁶¹ In my estimation, because Martí inherited the throne as an older man and under dire circumstances—as Matheu de Castelbon, the Count of Foix, had invaded the Crown of Aragon to claim its throne after the sudden death of Joan via the hunting accident in 1396—Martí sought to distance himself significantly from the perceived excesses of his brother's reign. He did so by imprinting the culture of his court with a most pious stamp, as evidenced in his engagement with topics in the realm of *l'imaginaire*, such as matters surrounding the occult; the efficacy, power, and sanctity of relics; and his great concern about the possibility of a mudéjar uprising centered around the locus of the Muslim shrine. It is clear that the contours of Joan's and Martí's own religious sensibilities were far from static; they ebbed and flowed in direct response to the kings' construction and application of their monarchical power over the course of their respective reigns.

NOTES

Prior versions of this article have appeared as public presentations. My deepest gratitude goes to the participants of the 2010 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute on Cultural Hybridities, “Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Medieval Mediterranean,” especially Louisa Burnham, Brian Catlos, Stephen Epstein, Sharon Kinoshita, and Yuen-Gen Liang; audience members from the 45th Annual International Congress on Medieval Studies who attended the panel “In Honor of William D. Phillips and Carla Rahn Phillips II: Contributions to Comparative Work,” especially Don Kagay, Marie Kelleher, and Theresa Vann; and audience members from the 125th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association who attended or participated in the panel “Creating a Sacred History for Aragon in the Medieval and Early Modern Period,” including David Perry, William Chester Jordan, Laura Ackerman Smoller, Robin Vose, and, most especially, Teofilo Ruiz. Finally, I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers solicited by *Preternature* to review this article, whose comments were invaluable. I adhered to the majority of their suggestions and I accept full responsibility for any infelicities that may remain.

1. Cited in Sharon Kinoshita, “Medieval Mediterranean Literature,” *PMLA* 124, no. 2 (2009): 604 (translation by Kinoshita): “Et ces choses vous moustré je, que celi est bien fol hardi qui se ose mettre en tel peril . . . en pechié mortel, car l'en se dort le soir la ou en ne scet se l'en se trouverra ou fons de la mer au matin.”

2. Palmira Brummett, “Visions of the Mediterranean: A Classification,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37, no. 1 (2007): 24.

3. For more on medieval material culture broadly, see Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998); and Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone, 2011). For another take on late medieval material culture, see Robyn Malo, “The Pardoner’s Relics (and Why They Matter the Most),” *Chaucer Review* 43, no. 1 (2008): 82–102.

4. Jean-Patrice Boudet, “La Dame à la licorne et ses sources médiévales d’inspiration,” *Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France* (1999), 61–78.

5. Josep Maria Roca i Heras, “Johan I y les supersticions,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 10 (1921): 125–69. Medieval people conceptualized superstition in a variety of ways. For a study on Aquinas’s sophisticated notion on the matter, see Michael A. Ryan, *A Kingdom of Stargazers: Astrology and Authority in the Late Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 28–35. Other studies that investigate the multivalent nature of medieval superstition include Emilie Lasson, *Superstitions médiévales: Une analyse d’après l’exégèse du premier commandement d’Ulrich de Pottenstein* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010); Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, and Religion, 1250–1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Patrick Hersperger, *Kirche, Magie und “Aberglaube”: Superstitio in der Kanonistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2010). Michael D. Bailey has produced the most important recent scholarship on this topic, as evidenced in his “The Disenchantment of Magic: Spells, Charms, and Superstition in Early European Witchcraft Literature,” *American Historical Review* 111, no. 2 (2006): 383–404; *Magic and Superstition in Europe: A Concise History from Antiquity to the Present* (Lanham,

Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007); and "A Late-Medieval Crisis of Superstition," *Speculum* 84, no. 3 (2009): 633–61.

6. J. N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms, 1250–1516*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976–78).

7. Aleksander Pluskowski, "Narwhals or Unicorns? Exotic Animals as Material Culture in Medieval Europe," *European Journal of Archaeology* 7, no. 3 (2004): 293. Other scholars have addressed the deep cultural contexts surrounding purportedly fantastic animals. See Pamela Gravestock, "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?," in *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life, and Literature*, ed. Debra Hassing (New York: Routledge, 1998), 119–35; and Brigitte Resl, "Beyond the Ark: Animals in Medieval Art," in *A Cultural History of Animals*, 6 vols., ed. Linda Kalof and Brigitte Resl (Oxford: Berg, 2009), 2:179–201.

8. Pluskowski, "Narwhals or Unicorns," 304, 306.

9. Odell Shepard, *The Lore of the Unicorn* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1930), 109–15. See also Bruno Faidutti, "Images et connaissance de la licorne (Fin du Moyen Âge–XIX^{ème} siècle)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Paris XII, 1996).

10. Shepard, *The Lore of the Unicorn*, 21.

11. Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills, "Introduction," in *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, ed. Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 9.

12. Gérard Chandès, "Licorne," in *Dictionnaire historique de la magie et des sciences occultes*, ed. Jean-Michelle Sallmann and Priscille Aladjidi (Paris: La Pochothèque, 2006), 414–17.

13. Michael J. Curley, ed. and trans., *Physiologus* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979).

14. Florence McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 181.

15. *Ibid.* See also Richard de Fournival, *Master Richard's Bestiary of Love and Response*, trans. Jeanette Beer (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2000).

16. Saverio Panunzio, *Bestiariis* (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1964), 2:58. "Tant gran olor sent de la sua verginitat que encontinent se adorm als seus peus; e en aquesta manera lo casador lo pren e.l mata, car conex que és aquesta la sua natura." *Ibid.*, 1:89–90. All translations are mine.

17. *Ibid.*, 2:59. "Saule, Saule, per què.m persequexs?" *Ibid.*, 1:90. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine. In subsequent notes, I have included large passages of the original foreign-language text for the reader's benefit.

18. McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries*, 179–80.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. Anna Maria Raugei, ed., *Bestiario valdese* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1984), 202. See also A. Mayer, "Der waldensische Physiologus," *Romanische Forschungen* 5 (1890): 392–418; and Florence McCulloch, "The Waldensian Bestiary and the *Libellus de natura animalium*," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 15 (1963): 15–30.

22. See Bernat Metge, *The Dream of Bernat Metge*, trans. Richard Vernier (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2002), x; and Josep Maria Roca i Heras, *Johan I d'Aragó* (Barcelona: Institució Patxot, 1929), 420: "Fem vos saber que nos, pensam en qual manera lalt Infant en Johan, primogenti nostre molt car, Duch de Gerona e Comte de Cervera, del temps dela sua nativitat ançá, ses nudrit en partida en la Ciutat de Gerona e con laer daquella terra ses tota

vegada conformat abell, havem ordonat que aquests iii. meses del situ ço es, Puyol, Agost e Semtembre, stia en Gerona per que jatsia açó que nostra intenció sia que vosaltres, zelans tota vegada per la salud del dit Infant, ajats en açó bon voler. Emperó, havem provehit descriure sobre açó a vosaltres, perque volem, eus manam, que donets endressament quel dit infant vaja a la dita Ciutat de Gerona, segons que dit es.”

23. Metge, *Dream of Bernat Metge*, x.

24. Ibid.

25. Antonio Rubió i Lluch, *Documents per l'història de la cultura catalana mig-èval*, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2000), 2:185n1; and Archive of the Crown of Aragon (hereafter cited as ACA), Cancellería Real (hereafter cited as CR), Registro (hereafter cited as R) 1744, fol. 14v: “Car cosi. Per letres de nostre canceller lo bisbe de leyda . . . hauem entes que vos havets hauda en temps Passat vna banya dunicorn que era en la capella den Not de Montcada en la seu de Leyda et que jassie vos haiats diuerses vegades escrit a instancia dels dessusdits encara pero nolaus ha hom tramesa.”

26. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents*, 2:185: “E dix nos que lo dit scuder estant en Rodes veu a sos ulls que lo maestre de Rodes volent provar la banya del unicorn, feu donar metzines forts a dos cans, e a la un dels dits cans menjades per ells les dites metzines o pozons, feu tocar de la dita banya o part d aquella e al alter no, e aquell qui no fon tocat de la dita banya tantos mori e l altre guari. E nos huynt açó volguem provar si allo era ver, faem haver .ii. cans e fem los donar del veri pus fort que posquem haver e la .i. d aquells fou tocat de ço poch que teniem de la dita banya e lo dit scuder nos havie donat e guari, e l altre mori.”

27. ACA, CR, R. 1811, fol. 81; and Josep Maria Roca i Heras, *La Medicina Catalana en temps del Rey Martí* (Barcelona: Fidel Giró, 1919), 58: “Comtessa cara tia: Perço con sabem quen haurets pler, vos certificam quel senyor Duch marit e senyor nostre molt car e nos, som ben sans e en bona disposició de nostres presones, dues mercè: pregantvos que de la vostra salut nos certifiquets, car axi matex naurem pler. Sapiats cara tia, que la vostra pedra quens donats nos ha fet molt de be, e sapiats que som feta preyns de nadal ença, del qual preynat vos havets part, e del qual nos trobam ens sentim be, placie a nostre senyor deus quel nos aport a be: e nos maravellets con abans nous navem certificada, car per molts accidents e causes que si esdevenen, trossus quen fossem be certa, nou voliem dir.”

28. ACA, CR, R. 1745, fol. 137v; and Rubió i Lluch, *Documents*, 2:195–96: “Car cosi, vostra letra havem rebuda ab la qual nos demanats que us trametam .i. troç d una nostra banya d unicorn, que havets entes que es cosa fort apropiada contra totes metzines. e responem vos que us enviam lo dit troç dins la present e certificam vos, cosi car, que en .i. juheu que era condemnat a mort havem nos feta provar la dita banya per aytal guisa, que maestre G. Colteller e maestre Johan Dordas, de manament nostre, ordenaren les pus forts metzines que pogren, qui eren en quantitat d un petit got, e les quals bech lo dit juheu, presents mossen Johan de Gorrea, alguatzir nostre, e lo dit maestre G. e en Ber. de Castre, e quant begudes les hac, caech com a mort en terra e lavons donarenli obrinli la boca per força .v. cullerades d aygua en que la dita banya era estada banyada e feu li gitar mantinent totes les dites metzines e torna tantost en son sen, axi com si res no fos estat, e visch despuys .v. jorns aytan sa com d abans, mas despys lo faem penyar.”

29. ACA, CR, R. 1755, fol. 135v.

30. Roca i Heras, *La Medicina Catalana*, 53: “Porque vos rogamos que vos e el deto vuestro convent, la dita Banya nos querades atorgar e dar. E si dar aquella nos queredes, fazet nos lo saber por vuestra letra, porque nos enviariamos alla un escudero nuestro el qual vos dará Cient florines para almonia al dito monesterio e vos liurar ledes la dita Banya.”

31. Roca i Heras, *La Medicina Catalana*, 54.

32. *Ibid.*: “lo qual volem partescats ab vostra muller la Comtessa, car per poca peça que sia ha aytanta virtut com una gran.”

33. *Ibid.*, 55: “sabets queus pregam quens haguessets una banya dunicorn que ha en lo Monestir de Ronçesvalles, e no sabem que haiats res fet. E perçous tornam pregar ab la present, que en tot cas lans procurets car de res a ades nons poriets major servey fer. E si a açó son necessaries letres nostres, notificats nos ho per correu cuytat, car nos les vos trametrem aytals com hi facen mester. E encàs quey hage obs diners, bestrets los hi, car nos los vos farem entegrament restiutir: part quen enfarets agradable plaer et fort gran.”

34. *Ibid.*, 56: “beven aygua en que lo dit anell o troç fos banyat, no hauria perill de res.”

35. *Ibid.*, 52–58. For an early modern Andean context of the hunt for the bezoar, see Marcia Stephenson, “From Marvelous Antidote to the Poison of Idolatry: The Transatlantic Role of Andean Bezoar Stones During the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (2010): 3–39.

36. Roca i Heras, *La Medicina Catalana*, 57–58: “Molt car filla; Mossen Jacme, scriva, sen torna debes vos per lo qual vos trametem una pedra apellada betzar e una lengua de serp, que son bones a metzines e veri. E per relatio sabrets lo bon estat de nostra persona e de nostra molt cara companyona la Reyna e de nostres cares filla e sor la Reyna de naps e linfanta dona Isabel, pregant vos molt cara filla que de vostra salut haiam sovint vostres ardots e axi matex de totes novelles que saber puxats, car molt nos en complaurets. E sia molt cara filla lo sant esperit vostra guarda tots temps.”

37. Daniel Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí (1396–1410)* (Barcelona: Imprenta de Henrich y Compania en Comandita, 1916), 2.

38. For a perspective on the healing power of relics in Byzantium, see Alice-Mary Talbot’s *Faith Healing in Late Byzantium: The Posthumous Miracles of the Patriarch Athanasios I of Constantinople by Theoktistos the Stoudite* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1983); and “Pilgrimage to Healing Shrines: The Evidence of Miracle Accounts,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002): 153–73.

39. Teofilo F. Ruiz, *Spain’s Centuries of Crisis* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2007), 207n5. Ruiz refers to Alberto Boscolo, *La politica italiana di Martino il Vecchio re d’Aragona* (Padua: CEDAM, 1962); María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, “L’infant Martí I un projecto d’intervenció en la guerra de Portugal (1381),” in *La Corona de Aragón en el siglo XV*, ed. María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol (Valencia: Vives Mora, 1973), 205–33; Rafael Tasis i Marca, *Pere el Cerimoniós i els seus fills* (Barcelona: Editorial Teide, 1957); H. J. Chaytor, *A History of Aragon and Catalonia* (New York: AMS, 1969); Thomas Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

40. See Núria Silleras-Fernández’s *Power, Piety, and Patronage in Late Medieval Queenship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); and “Spirit and Force: Politics, Public and Private in the Reign of Maria de Luna (1396–1406),” in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval*

and *Early Modern Spain*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2005), 78–90. My thanks also go to Brian Catlos for kindly sharing with me his forthcoming article “Entre eulx pluseurs Sarrazins . . . : Els Jueus, els Musulmans i el regne de Martí I.”

41. Roca i Heras, *Johan I d'Aragó* (Barcelona: Institució Patxot, 1929). For more recent studies on Martí, see Josep-David Garrido i Valls, *Vida i regnat de Martí I: l'Últim rei del Casal de Barcelona* (Barcelona: Rafael Dalmau, 2010); and Ryan, *Kingdom of Stargazers*.

42. The bibliography on relics alone is staggering. See, among others, the classic and important study by Patrick Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); and, more recently, Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

43. Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 14.

44. ACA, CR, R. 2239, fol. 114; ACA, CR, R. 2240, fol. 42. See also Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 30–31: “Honrat pare en Christ. Lo religios et amat nostre frare Bernat Ça Fabrega nos ha demanat de part vostra del fust de la vera creu. Per que nos volents vos ne fer part vos trametem per lo dit frare Bernat dins un reliquiari una creu qui es estat partit d aquell troc, que nostre senyor lo papa nos dona en Avinyo com ab ell erem.”

45. ACA, CR, R. 2240, fol. 58; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 32: “Deputats. Pregam vos tan affectuosament com podem e de cor que si james nos desitjats servir e complaure, nos vullats trametre per qualche persona de qui puxats confiar, les dues spines que vosaltres ensemps ab altres nostres reliquies, tenets en penyora, car nos desijam hauer aquelles per singular devocio que hi havem; e no ns por dejats star per lo en que les dites spines stan, com molt mes volega lo fermall que nos vos hauem lexat que lo d aquella ne les altres coses que preses ne hauem e d aço de que satisfacets molt a la nostra devoció nos farets singular plaer e servey lo qual en son cas e loch nos recordara be.”

46. See also Holger A. Klein, “Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries Between Byzantium and the West,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004): 283–314.

47. ACA, CR, R. 2243, fol. 123; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 76: “Vista havem una cedula que havets tramesa en Berenguer Ces Oliveres en la qual lo certificats que ab lo emperador de Constantinoble ha vengut un avesque religios lo qua lab dos altres ensemps tenen lo cap de sent Georgi; e que si ells tres trobaven qualche senyor que ls faes algun be, que ells lo li liurarien; e que sobre aço, si a nos era plasant, que vos hi treballariets ab ell per nostre servi en tal forma que nos lo haguessen. Perque us certificam que a nos seria molt plasant que poguessem haver la dessus dita reliquia de Mossen sent Georgi, empero som duptos per ço com haviem hoit dir que aqueix gascó qui era senyor de la Leuadia lo havia liurat al emperador o empenyorat a venecians.” Note that it was from the Venetians that Louis IX acquired the Crown of Thorns, who held the relic in pawn from Emperor Baldwin II. In addition, Louis had acquired a piece of the True Cross and used these relics associated with the Passion to announce his Second Crusade. For more, see P. Riant, ed., *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Geneva: I. G. Fick, 1877), 45–56; and M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

48. ACA, CR, R. 2240, fol. 150; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 48: “Per fer nos tallar una cota la qual volem a la festa de les nostres reliquies, enviam de present aqui

a vos lo feel panicer nostre N. Anthoni Arera, pregant vos affectuosament que li donets e liurets decontinent dues peces de drap de seda damasqui negra del millor que tindrets per la dita cota.”

49. ACA, Pergaminos, 136; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari*, 67: “In Dei nomine. Pateat universis quod cum, excellentissimus princeps et dominus, dominus Martinus Dei gracia Rex Aaragonum Valencie Maiorice Sardinie et Corsice comesque Barchinone Rossilionis et Ceritanie desideraret et affectaret multum habere in Capella sua illum Calicem lapideum cum quo Dominus noster Ihesus Christus in sua sancta cena sanguinem suum preciosissimum consecravit et quem beatus Laurencius qui ipsum habuit a sancto Sisto existente summo pontifice cuius discipulus erat ac diaconus sancte Marie indomnite misit et dedit cum eius litera monasterio et conventui sancti Iohannis de la Pena sito in montaneis Iacce Regne Aragonum. Cum quo calice postea abbates priores et preberii dicti monasterii consecrare consueverunt. E pro dicto habendo calice dictus dominus Rex Reverendum in Christo patrem Anthonium Archiepiscopum Athenarum Consiliarium suum ad dictum monasterium destinasset. Tandem die veneris intitulata XXV In die Septembris anno a nativitate Domini Millesimo Tricentesimo Nonagesimo nono, dictus Reverendum Archiepiscopum et Religiosus frater Bernardus prior claustrum dicti monasterii fecerunt relacionem predicto domino Regis existenti in sua Capella minori Aliaffarie Civitatis Cesarauguste quod explicata credencia per ipsum Archiepiscopum ex parte dicti Domini Regis conventui predicti monasterii omnes priores et monarchi ipsius monasterii tenuerant capitulum super tradicionem Calicis spuradicti et finaliter deliberarunt concedere dictum Calicem nemine discrepante domino Regi predicto. Quibus recitatis predictos prior nomine suo et dicti Monasterii presentavit dicto domino Regi et tradidit in manibus suis calicem lapideum supradictum. Et ipse dominus Rex recepto in manibus suis calice supradicto, volens facere dicto monasterio gratiam aliquam pro eodem dedit et tradidit in manibus dicti prioris ad opus monasterii iamdicti unum Calicem aureum capelle sue ponderantem ad pondus Cesarauguste marchos quinque et uncia una in quoquidem Calice aureo supradicto sunt signa sequencia, videlicet: in pede tres esmalti duo timbra et unus crucifixus Ihesus Christi et in pono qui est in medio sex esmalti duo ad signum Aragonum, duo Regales et duo sancti Georgii cum. t. et in patena est unus esmaltus Dei patris. Quaquidem donacionem de predicto calice aureo fecit predictus dominus Rex Monasterio supradicto sub tali condicione, videlicet quod ipsum Calicem Abbas Maioralis et priores predicti monasterii vendere nec impignorare possint seu valeant ullo modo quinimo calix ipse serviat dicto Monasterio et ad sui servicium sit solum modo deputatus. Et de predicto calice non vendendo et impignorando dicti Abbas Maioralis et priores qui nunc sunt et pro tempore fuerint teneantur iuramentum prestare. Quiquidem prior recepto dicto calice aureo cum sua patena predicta a domino Rege predicto cum graciaram accione promisit dictum pactum de non vendendo nec impignorando calicem supradictum servare quantum in eo fuerit et in tradicionem per ipsum fienda de eodem calice conventui supradicto servari facere dictum pactum pro dictum conventum prout superius continetur. De quibus omnibus et singulis supradictus dominus Rex iamdictus mandavit per me Berengarium Sarta secretarium suum presens fieri instrumentum in testimonium premissorum presentibus testibus nobilibus Berengarius de Crudiliis, Rogerio de Montecateno et Olfo de Proxida militibus consiliariis et camerlengis dicti domini Regis. Sig+num mei Berengarii Sarta secretarii dicti domini Regis et auctoritate regis notarii publici per totam terram et dominacionem

ipsius domini Regis. Qui predictis ut continetur superius interfui et hec scribe feci et clause. Constat tamen de literis in raso positus in secunda linea preciosissimum consecravim et quem.”

50. ACA, CR, R. 2242, fol. 46; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 48–49: “la sancta reliquia de la sanch de nostre Senyor Ihesu Christ, la qual es stada trobada en loloch de Suriballa e de tots altres qui deposar vullen.”

51. ACA, CR, R. 2242, fol. 89; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 66: “Com per part de nostra molt cara muller la Reyna sia stat a nos humilment suplicant que us volguessem donar un troç de la vera creu, e nos volent satisfacer a les pregaries de la dita Reyna e a la vostra gran devocio, trametem vos per son Violant Mulet una creu dor hon ha dins una creueta del sant fust de la Vera Creu d aquella propria que lo sant pare nos dona quan fou en Avinyo; ço es d’aquella que santa Elena dona a Constanti e Constanti la dona a sant Silvestre, papa.”

52. ACA, CR, R. 2243, fol. 156; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 77: “on nostre Senyor volgue esser posat per redempcio e salvacio de humana natura.”

53. ACA, CR, R. 2242, fol. 177; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 67: “Al molt alt e molt noble lo solda de Babilonia, salut e Bonaventura. Sabut havem molt alt solda que dins vostra senyoria es lo sant cors de sancta Barbara en lo qual nos havem singular devocio e aquella havem per principal advocada. E com per la dita rao nos desijem sobiranament haver vers nos lo dit sanct cors, pregam vos, molt alt solda, tant cordialment com podem, que per amor e honor nostra, que en totes coses a vos plascents e agradables vos complauriem fort volenterosament, vos placim atorgar e dona nos lo cors de la dita sancta e aquell fer liurar, qui ls nos trametra de present, al feel nostre N. Anthoni Ameler ciutadan de Barchinona e consol de catalans en la vostra ciutat d Alexandria.”

54. ACA, CR, R. 2241, fol. 85v; Girona Llagostera, *Itinerari del Rey en Martí*, 75: “vos havem encaregat e manat qui si per altra via no podets haver lo dit cors de Madona sancta Barbara, que fessets tot vostre poder ajustant hi totes maneres possibles d aver lo per via de furt.”

55. Anna Àvila i Padron, *Millenium: Història i art de l'església catalana (edifici de la Pia Almonia, Saló de Tinell, Capella de Santa Àgata. Barcelona, del 3 de maig al 25 de juny de 1989)* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1989), 426.

56. Miquel Mirambell Abancó, *Christus Splendor: In Charitate* (Barcelona: Museu Diocesà de Barcelona, 2004), 300–303.

57. Àvila i Padron, *Millenium*, 426–27; Mirambell Abancó, *Christus Splendor*, 300–303.

58. José Ramón de Luanco, *La Alquimia en España* (Madrid: Editorial “Tres, Catorce, Diecisiete,” 1980), 159–60. See also Ryan, *Kingdom of Stargazers*, 154–56. See also Juan García Font, *Historia de la alquimia en España* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1976).

59. Martí quoted in María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, *Els sarraïns de la Corona catalano-aragonesa en el segle XIV: Segregació i discriminació* (Barcelona: CSIC, 1987), 95.

60. Michael A. Ryan, “Power and Pilgrimage: The Restriction of Mudéjares’ Pilgrimage in the Kingdom of Valencia,” *Essays in Medieval Studies* (2008): 115–28: “Al egregi baro don Alfonso duch de Gandia, oncle nostre molt car, salut e dileccio. Entes havem certament que en lo terme de Confrides es una mesquita de moros apellada Atzaneta, en la qual venen moros en gran nombre e diu se que y venen per devocio que damnadament han en .I. cors o ossa d un moro qui jau en la dita mesquita. On com aço torn en derrisio e scarn de la santa

fe catholica e nos no dejam sofferir en nostra senyoria semblants damnats actes, pregam vos affectuosament requerim e manam que façats enderrocar la dita mesquita e cremar e polveritzar la dita ossa o cors del dit moro e lençar aquella en mar o ventar per manera que alguna cosa no se n pusca trobar ne esser ne memoria d aquaianant.”

61. Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J. E. Anderson (London: Routledge, 1973).