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Towards the end of his life, the Sienese beatus Pietro Pettinaio experienced a vision in Siena cathedral. After angels had sprinkled ash on the pavement from the main door to the high altar, Christ entered barefoot, dressed in poor clothing and with the wounds on his feet evident, and walked in the ash to the altar leaving his footprints visible. The twelve apostles then entered and walked in the footprints \((\text{vestigie e pedate})\) to join Christ and his mother at the east end of the cathedral. A multitude of other saints followed the apostles, placing their feet in the imprints with varying degrees of accuracy, and were honoured by Christ accordingly. This so disturbed the ash that by the time a barefoot friar minor arrived, identified as St. Francis by his stigmata, it seemed to be impossible to make out the footprints. However, Francis managed to locate them by blowing and wafting away with his tunic the dust covering each pair in turn, and planted his feet in them exactly. He was received with particular favour, and at the end of the vision seemed to Pietro Pettinaio to be placed in the open side of Christ.

The recipient of this vision was a combmaker, noted during his lifetime for his mildness, honesty, and strength of devotion.\(^1\) A cult appears to have sprung up immediately after his death in 1289, promoted by the Franciscans, with money being granted by the ruling council of the city towards the cost of an altar and ciborium over his tomb in the church of San Francesco.\(^2\) The vision as described above is found in the earliest known surviving life of Pietro Pettinaio, which dates from 1508 but claims to be a translation into Italian by Serafino Ferri of an earlier Latin life by the Franciscan Pietro da Montarone.\(^3\) A very similar account is given in another vernacular version of the Latin life – here attributed to Piero da Monterio – which exists in a manuscript from the convent of Giaccherino, near Pistoia, and was probably executed by Dionisio Pulinari in 1541.\(^4\) The similarity of the names given to the authors of the Latin texts suggests that the same person is meant. No copy of the Latin life has so far come to light, but two copies of the \textit{legenda} of Pietro Pettinaio were listed amongst the
holdings of the library of the Franciscan convent in Siena in 1481; these were presumably lost when the library was destroyed by fire in the late sixteenth century. The original composition of Pietro da Montarone’s life has been dated to around 1330-33, some forty years after Pettinaio’s death, and seen to respond to a renewed interest in the communal saints of Siena in the late 1320s. In the Giaccherino manuscript, the life is preceded by a letter dated 1336, from Piero da Monterio to a certain Fra Bartolommeo Ture da Siena, who had encouraged him to finish the work. The impetus for starting the life is said to have come from Fra Jacopo del Tondo (Minster for Tuscany and Umbria) and Fra Philippo Orlandi da Siena, both attested during the 1310s-30s. An early Latin sermon on Pietro Pettinaio by the Sienese Franciscan Bindo Scremi, which does not include the vision, is likely to predate the composition of the life and derive from an inner circle of associates. Correspondences between it and Ferri’s Italian life suggest that the latter is indeed a translation of a Latin original, which drew on the sermon as well as other sources.

Pietro Pettinaio’s vision is also described separately in later writings on St. Francis. Most notably, it is mentioned in Bernard of Siena’s vernacular sermon on St. Francis as the angel of the Apocalypse, delivered in 1427. In the sermon, Pettinaio sees only Christ at the altar and the other figures treading in Christ’s footprints are not identified, but the detail of the footprints being made in ashes is present. The vision is discussed too in the first prologue of Giacomo Oddi’s La Franceschina of c. 1480, also known as the Speculum ordinis minorum, which may draw on the Latin life or, more probably, on the abbreviated account given in Bernard’s sermon. Key aspects of the vision were therefore known in Siena in the early fifteenth century. It is difficult to assess how much of the detail in the Italian lives does indeed go back to the early fourteenth century, but Diana Webb has argued that there is nothing incompatible with such a date. The present article adopts the premise that the visionary footprints as described in the Italian lives belong to the original version.

The central message of the vision is clear. Immediately beforehand, Pietro Pettinaio was regretting that the apostolic life was extinct; what he sees proves otherwise, identifying St. Francis as the true apostle of Christ. Not only does Francis rival the original apostles in his fidelity to Christ’s
example, but he also surpasses other saints. The point is made explicit by St. Bernard: ‘E questo fu solo perché dimostrava d’essere tanto seguitante di Dio, che niuno si trovava che più avesse seguitate le vestigie di Cristo, quanto lui’. Similarly, for Oddi, the vision indicates ‘che non fo mai nullo santo che tanto se resimigliasse ad Christo in ogne sua cosa, quanto che santo Francesco’. In the Italian lives, Francis’s Christ-like qualities are apparent too in the fact that both figures are poorly dressed with bare and wounded feet. This is Francis as alter Christus: the idea prominent in writings and increasingly in artistic representations from Bonaventure onwards, the expression first found in the Actus beati Francisci et sociorum eius, composed c. 1327-37. On one level, the claims expressed in the vision can be seen in the light of ongoing resistance to numbering Francis amongst the first rank of saints, which has been discussed by André Vauchez. This could be expressed in terms of a succession of people over time; in around 1270 Nicholas of Lisieux wrote ‘there will come men who are no holier than those who preceded them, but who are impostors and seducers’…‘pseudo-Christs’. Opposition focused on the stigmata and their increasingly Christological implications. For example, in the early fourteenth century, a Dominican was said to have attempted to erase the stigmata in a fresco of St. Francis, complaining that ‘the Franciscans want to compare their saint to Christ’. At the same time, the vision also establishes a link between Pietro Pettinaio and St. Francis, who himself had various visionary experiences. In particular, a connection has been drawn by Alessandro Leoncini with Francis’s vision of Christ and the Virgin enthroned at the altar of the Porziuncola. Since a narrative account of the indulgence associated with the vision was composed around 1310-35, it might well have been circulating at the time Pietro Pettinaio’s life was written. Augustine Thompson amongst others has discussed Pietro Pettinaio as an example of communal sanctity, and even the Italian Lives make it clear that his piety was not exclusively Franciscan during his lifetime. In the Sienese political context of the 1320s and 30s, however, in which Pietro Pettinaio was being promoted as the Franciscans’ main candidate for civic cult, a connection with the order’s founder was worth stressing.

If the message of the vision is relatively apparent, the means used to communicate it are more striking than they may perhaps first appear. It is on this particular articulation of likeness that the
present article focuses, especially the ways in which following Christ’s footsteps could find expression within different spheres: visionary, verbal, material, and visual. In essence, the vision translates an idea into something visible, or an event that can be visualised, in which the footprints are thoroughly material objects. Carlo Delcorno, editor of St. Bernard’s vernacular sermons, has described the vision as ‘una visualizzazione del concetto di sequela, e più esattamente dell’adagio Nudus nudum Christum sequi.’ Although I will suggest, below, that even closer textual parallels can be found for the emphasis on Christ’s footprints, the sense that the vision stems from the verbal is an important one. However, we are so familiar with the language of following in someone’s footsteps, that the action can seem an unproblematic materialisation of the linguistic metaphor. In fact, I would argue that this visualisation of following Christ’s footsteps is remarkable, because by entering the physical dimension, even in visionary form, it touches on the independent tradition of the veneration of Christ’s material footprints, which Christians had identified in the Holy Land and elsewhere since Late Antiquity. The word *vestigia* is used in both contexts, as it is in Ferri’s Italian translation of the Latin *Life*. What is shown in Pietro Pettinaiio’s vision, that is to say saints literally placing their own feet in Christ’s footprints, is at odds with the way in which Christological imprints were actually treated. The first part of this article therefore sets out these two spheres, looking first at metaphorical *vestigia* and then at concrete imprints, in order to establish the novel – even radical – quality of the envisioned events.

Secondly, I discuss the negative and positive implications of standing on things, to suggest why the act of standing in the imprints could only be appropriate for St. Francis as *alter Christus*. While the visionary footprints can be seen to respond to the phenomenon of the stigmata, I suggest that they also reflect the wider use and associations of the floor surface. Finally, the article turns to the particular challenges of representing St. Francis’s actions, suggesting that what could be visualised as a result of a verbal description, could not have been depicted.

**Metaphorical and Actual Vestigia**
The idea of following Christ’s footsteps is found already in the New Testament. Peter states ‘Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps’: ‘passus est pro nobis, vobis reliquens exemplum ut sequamini vestigia eius’. The expression may draw on Old Testament precedents, such as Job 23: ‘My foot hath followed his steps (vestigia eius secutus est), I have kept his way and not declined from it’. Although without a specific reference to footprints, there is also God’s command to Solomon to ‘walk in my statutes (ambulaveris in praeceptis meis), and execute my judgements, and keep all my commandments to walk in them’. In common with other biblical verses which spoke of following Christ, the command to follow his footsteps was generally interpreted metaphorically, as a prompt to imitate particular aspects of his behaviour. For example, a sermon by Peter of Celle on the Passion of Christ, in which imitatio Christi is couched in terms of following Christ’s footsteps, describes the key moments of Christ’s life on earth as fourteen steps. Each step represents a particular quality or activity which the listener should emulate, so that Christ’s fasting in the desert is a model for abstinence and his trial a model for suffering injuries patiently.

As noted by Giles Constable, the concept could also be given different emphases in different contexts. Thus, in a monastic milieu it was taken to imply renunciation of the world; in mendicant and particularly Franciscan circles it was seen more as imitating the poverty of Christ. Chapter One of the Franciscan Rule of 1221 states that: “The rule and life of these brothers is this, namely “to live in obedience, in chastity and without anything of their own” and to follow the teaching and footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who says: “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me”’. From this it became associated with joining the order, so according to Bonaventure Father Silvester ‘leaving the world, ... clung to the footsteps of Christ with such perseverance that his life in the Order confirmed the authenticity of the vision which he had had in the world’. The term was also connected with the idea of passion and spiritual union with Christ achieved through participation in the crusades. Cecilia Gaposchkin has shown how, in the liturgical offices composed in honour of the newly sanctified Louis IX of France in around 1300, the idea of the king as following the footsteps of Christ ‘Christi sequens


vestigia' reflects the priorities of the religious orders concerned. In the Cistercian office the phrase appears in the context of general renunciation; in the Franciscan office it is used twice in terms of the king’s renunciation of family and wealth in order to participate and die in the crusades.31

The metaphor of following someone’s footsteps was also commonly employed for the emulation of saints and other worthy figures, especially within reformist circles.32 For example, Matthew Paris, writing the Life of St. Edmund Rich in the mid 1240s, presented the saint as following the footsteps of Thomas Becket in showing fearlessness in death; in his turn, St. Edmund was presented as a model for Isabel Countess of Arundel.33 St. Francis was held up as a model for imitation in the same terms. The authors of the Scripta Leonis gathered together their memories of the saint ‘for the instruction of those who wish to follow in his footsteps’ (‘ad … edificationem volentium vestigia immitari’).34 In the context of Pietro Pettinaio’s vision, it is noteworthy that following Francis was also a way of following Christ. Bonaventure in his Vita maior wrote that ‘many people as well, not only driven by devotion but also inflamed by a desire for the perfection of Christ, once they had condemned the emptiness of everything worldly, followed the footsteps of Francis’.35 Thus the idea of following someone’s footsteps was a common figure of speech, which was employed in Franciscan circles in relation to the imitation of both Christ and St. Francis. Generally speaking, the metaphor expressed an aspiration to likeness, tempered by a difference in status between the leaver of the vestigia and the follower. Indeed the Latin is simply to follow someone’s footsteps, rather than to follow in them, which emphasises the secondary quality of the activity, where the usual English phrase has greater implications of measuring up to the model by occupying the imprints. However, the way in which following St. Francis is presented as a means of imitatio Christi transcends this discrepancy, in keeping with the status claimed for the saint within Franciscan circles.

At the other end of the spectrum from these conceptual vestigia, Christ was also thought to have left behind physical vestigia, both footprints and other bodily impressions.36 Naturally, the majority were in the Holy Land, most famously the footprints at the site of the Ascension.37 Other footprints included those in the marble slab in the Praetorium first mentioned by the Piacenza pilgrim, while the
imprints in the Dome of the Rock were given a Christological interpretation shortly after the fall of Jerusalem to the crusaders. Christ’s footprints in Rome, off the Via Appia, where he was thought to have appeared to St. Peter, seem only to have been known from the fifteenth century. It seems likely that a Franciscan author and audience would have been aware of the examples in and around Jerusalem. The Order had long had an interest in the Holy Land, establishing the province of Terra Sancta in 1217 and setting up friaries in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Following the loss of the Latin Kingdom in 1291, the early fourteenth century saw the resumption of a Franciscan presence, with friars settling by the Holy Sepulchre in 1333 and Franciscan Custody in the Holy Land under negotiation from the 1320s and established in 1342.

Christ’s footprints in the Holy Land were venerated as part of a wider devotion to the land which he had trodden, often expressed in terms of the words of Psalm 132: ‘We will go into his tabernacle: we will adore in the place where his feet stood’. For example, in a formative period for Christian pilgrimage, Paulinus of Nola wrote that ‘no other sentiment draws people to Jerusalem than the desire to see and touch the places where Christ was physically present, and to be able to say from their very own experience: “We have gone into his tabernacle, and have adored in the places where his feet stood”’. Veneration of these places extended to the material of the ground itself, and stones from the loca sancta were placed in reliquaries and even used to consecrate churches. Although the relics usually came from the locations of particular events, and drew some of their significance from this, Christ’s presence was often expressed in terms of physical contact. For example, a Sienese reliquary tabernacle of c. 1350, some two decades after the likely composition of the Latin life of Pietro Pettinaio, shows the Virgin and Child encircled by lapidary relics from the Holy Land, including ‘a stone that touched Christ’s feet at the Ascension’. C. Griffith Mann has noted that Mary is shown standing on a platform of veined marble, perhaps to signal the way in which the relics visible in the frame drew their spiritual worth from contact with Christ and the saints. In addition to the gathering of tangible relics, the measurements of the footprints were taken, part of a wider tradition that saw devotional significance attached to the measurements of Christ’s body and side wound, as well as to
those of other imprints.\textsuperscript{46} Those of the Domine quo Vadis footprints in Rome also seem to have circulated.\textsuperscript{47}

Both the textual traditions surrounding these sites and their physical framing suggest that standing in the imprints was discouraged. In a tradition coined by Paulinus of Nola and Sulpicius Severus, and embellished by the Blickling homilist in the late tenth century, the prints at the site of the Ascension threw off anything placed on them.\textsuperscript{48} Essentially this is conceived in terms of material decoration, whether marble or precious metals, but the rationale is based on an opposition between human and divine: for Sulpicius they are ‘divina vestigia’ and the ground is ‘unwont to bear anything human’ (‘insolens humana suscipere terra respueret’).\textsuperscript{49} At a later date, emphasis on Christ’s incarnate qualities was reflected in descriptions of the land he had walked; the \textit{Palästinalied} of Walter von der Vogelweide states ‘Ich bin komen an die stat dà got mennischlichen trat’.\textsuperscript{50} However, the individual sites marked by his presence were still protected from human tread. The Ascension \textit{vestigia}, which from the early twelfth century were widely understood as imprinted in a stone, were situated beneath an altar and the stone faced with marble slabs, so that only a little of the top was exposed to be kissed by pilgrims.\textsuperscript{51} Access was also limited at other places where Christ had stood which did not preserve imprints but were marked by roundels. For example, in an account of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1185, John Phocas mentioned that the place on Mt Tabor where Christ had placed his feet during the Transfiguration was marked by a white roundel with a monogram of the cross and protected by a metal covering or railing.\textsuperscript{52} Similarly, when John Capgrave visited Rome in about 1450, by which time the Via Appia footprints had been transferred to the church of San Sebastiano, he noted that they had previously been placed under the altar of the church known as Santa Maria de Palma.\textsuperscript{53}

The care taken to rail off these sites and prevent one particular type of contact is particularly noteworthy, given the fact that it was still possible to touch the imprints and indeed there seems to have been increasingly somatic engagement with Holy Land \textit{vestigia} during the later Middle Ages. Burchard of Mount Sion, describing the Ascension footprints in 1283, noted that ‘one can easily put in one’s hand and touch the footprints, but cannot see them’ (‘potest bene aliquis inmittere manum et
This corresponds to a wider practice of placing one’s hand in impressions; in his *Libro d’Oltramar* of circa 1346-50, the Franciscan Niccolò da Poggibonsi speaks of people putting their whole arm in the socket of the cross for a blessing. There was also a long history of performing imitative actions for a blessing, which could have prepared the way for standing where Christ had stood. The Piacenza Pilgrim describes pilgrims pouring from the wine jugs at Canaan, while in the twelfth century Theoderic speaks of pilgrims being scourged at the place where Christ had been scourged. Theoderic does not make it clear whether this took place at the very column, but these traditions of contact and imitation subsequently met in Felix Fabri’s late-fifteenth-century *Evagatorium*, where he recounts how he and his companions interacted with the impression of Christ’s body preserved in a wall on the Mount of Olives: ‘we … laid our bodies, as far as we could, in the holy imprint, putting our arms, hands, face, and breast into the hollow, and measuring it by our own figures’ (‘et sacrae impressioni corpora nostra, prout potuimus, induximus, brachia, manus, vultum, et pectus concavitati imponentes, nos ipsos ipsi figureae commensurantes’). However, when describing the site of the Ascension itself, Fabri still speaks of pilgrims entering to kiss the footprints.

The saints were also thought to have left physical vestigia worthy of veneration. This was particularly true of saints with no bodily remains, such as the Archangel Michael, whose footprints had been venerated in the shrine of Monte Sant’Angelo on the Gargano Peninsula since the early Middle Ages. Another pair were housed in the Franciscan church of S. Maria in Aracoeli in Rome; linked to the appearance of the archangel to Pope Gregory the Great, they seem to have been first mentioned in a description of the Lateran and various churches near the Forum composed sometime after 1370. However, there are also examples of imprints made by saints for whom corporeal relics were available, including, in Italy, the knee-prints of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome where they had prayed against Simon Magus and the footprints of St. Christina at Bolsena, described by Abbot Nikulás Bergsson in the mid-twelfth century. Like the imprints of Christ, saintly vestigia were also protected and venerated. The footprints of St. Michael in Monte Sant’Angelo, impressed in the floor of the cave, may have been covered with an altar, while those in the church of S. Maria in Aracoeli, set in a slab, were inserted in
the choir wall, protected by a grill and positioned under a ciborium-style tabernacle that held the icon of the Virgin.\textsuperscript{62} The kneeprints of St. Peter are currently set into the wall of the church of S. Francesca Romana, and the footprints of St. Christina are placed vertically under an early medieval altar.\textsuperscript{63} It is partly in this tradition of saintly footprints that we should view veneration of St. Francis’s imprints. Thomas of Celano records an occasion when a woman exorcised by Francis kissed his footprints (‘osculabatur vestigia pedum eius’).\textsuperscript{64} According to Bonaventure, Francis met a leper who ‘out of devotion … wanted to kiss his footprints (vestigia)’; Francis refused and kissed the man on the mouth, restoring him to health.\textsuperscript{65} In Jordan of Giano’s \textit{Chronicle}, the physical footprints of the friars too were venerated by kneeling villagers.\textsuperscript{66} It seems probable that the leaving of imprints was not just a sign of sanctity but was seen as a Christ-like quality, and in a sense an imitative action in itself. In his \textit{Liber pontificalis}, Agnellus of Ravenna described Peter as the apostle of Christ in the context of his leaving imprints; similarly, in the life of St. Apollinaris in which this description appears, the holy bishop is himself identified as the disciple of St. Peter and is said to have left a miraculous footprint in the spot where he carried out baptisms.\textsuperscript{67} So in the physical sphere (whether real or imagined), imitation could be expressed through the leaving of \textit{vestigia}.

There was a chance for metaphorical and physical \textit{vestigia} to meet in the context of journeying to the Holy Land as a pilgrim or a crusader. We have already seen that crusading could be understood as following Christ’s example of suffering. It could also be seen as allowing the kind of veneration of the land focused on the \textit{vestigia} sites. In the first book of his \textit{Chronicle}, Fulcher of Chartres described how those participating in the first crusade ‘deservedly said “We shall worship in the place where his feet have stood”’.\textsuperscript{68} However, it is relatively rare to find the two ideas explicitly connected in the sense of following Christ over the same ground, rarer than one would think from the secondary literature, which often presents both types of journey as following or retracing Christ’s footsteps.\textsuperscript{69} One example is the so-called \textit{Letter from the Patriarch of Jerusalem and other Bishops to the Churches in the West}, which circulated in the context of the First Crusade. This not only urged people to imitate Christ through fighting, but placed emphasis on the shared location: ‘So come, we beseech you, to fight in the army of
the Lord in the very place where the Lord fought and where Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.” Even so, imitation was not expressed in terms of walking the same ground. In fact, the idea of walking on the ground Christ had trodden could be given a largely negative connotation in a crusading context. Peter the Venerable encouraged participation in the Second Crusade ‘lest the places where stood the feet of him who brought salvation into the midst of the earth, should again be trampled by the feet of the wicked’.

There were attempts to connect the physical vestigia to be venerated and the metaphorical vestigia to be followed in the context of pilgrimage. In his Evagatorium, Felix Fabri addressed the pilgrim at Emmaus, saying ‘these are the first footsteps of the Lord Jesus which you have been found worthy to kiss’. It is appropriate that ‘when the wretched pilgrim, worn out with toil, is hastening into Jerusalem, he should be met by that glorious pilgrim, our Lord, coming from thence’ and that ‘he should see first of all the most holy and glad footsteps made by the lord’s body after it had been glorified, to the end that refreshed and comforted by them he may be able in Jerusalem to follow the holy footprints of his shameful Passion, even as Peter bids us do in the second chapter of his first epistle. Christ, he says “suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps”’. However, the abstract example to be followed here is the suffering of a pilgrim; the actual footprints are to be kissed. To ‘follow the holy footprints of his shameful passion’ in Jerusalem can indeed be interpreted both physically and empathetically, though arguably the emphasis is still on suffering. But when he gets to Calvary, the pilgrim is taught that heavenly glory can only be achieved by ‘bearing his cross’; the footsteps again are to be kissed. In sum, it is likely that no one literally trod in the footprints of Christ as takes place in Pettinaio’s vision.

Desecration and Likeness

There was, then, a striking divergence between metaphor and practice, between verbal and material vestigia. This pattern is disrupted in Pietro Pettinaio’s vision in the description of Francis placing his feet firmly and exactly in the imprints left by Christ. True, this is modified by the description of the saint
first carefully blowing on the imprints, the proximity of his lips evocative of the way in which concrete *vestigia* were kissed. More importantly, this is not happening with an imprint one could visit oneself, but the life still provides a very visually and physically rich description of an action, played out on the familiar canvas of Siena cathedral. Exploring why the divergence existed in the first place is a useful step towards establishing why it was possible and indeed appropriate for St. Francis to break this pattern. Further inspiration for the visionary imprints can be sought in the saint’s stigmata and the wider use and associations of the floor surface, including correspondences drawn between the human body and the pavement of a church.

There are two reasons why standing on or in holy footprints might be seen as inappropriate. Most obviously, treading on something could be construed very negatively. As a deliberate expression of subjugation and triumph, it had precedents in the Bible, notably the trampling of the asp and the basilisk in Psalm 91, as well as in the Roman and Byzantine ritual of *calcatio colli*. In the later medieval West, trampling was still employed metaphorically and – possibly on occasion – literally; for example, in Ralph Glaber’s eleventh-century account of Henry II’s coronation as Holy Roman Emperor, the monks of Cluny are described as ‘those who trample underfoot the pomps of this world’, while Robert Grosseteste is said to have ground underfoot a letter sent to him by the convent at Canterbury. Moreover, as will be discussed further below, the gesture was also widely represented. There was commensurate concern if holy things or symbols of holy things were stepped on. If anything this was amplified in Franciscan circles. Bonaventure reports that St. Francis held the Lord’s name in such reverence that he told the friars ‘to gather all pieces of paper wherever they were found and to place them in a clean place so that if that sacred name happened to be written there, it would not be trodden underfoot’. King Louis IX of France is said to have ‘held the sign of the holy cross in such reverence that he feared to walk on it’, and as a result to have instructed ‘many religious houses that crosses should no longer be sculpted on the tomb-slabs in their cloisters and that those already sculpted should be penitently erased’. In this context, standing on Christ’s footprints might be expected to smack of sacrilege. We can get a sense of this from an episode in Agnellus of Ravenna’s *Liber pontificalis* in which
the column by which a local holy man had habitually stood in church was protected ‘lest any part of the base of the column, where the holy feet had stood, should be worn away by unworthy feet’. Even to touch Christ’s footprints with one’s hand could be conceived of in the same terms; in the early 1500s, a German monk said he had put his hands ‘unwerdlich’ on the footprints of Christ in the church of San. Sebastiano in Rome.

At the same time, standing in Christ’s footprints could also have been seen as inappropriate because this appeared to claim too great a likeness with Christ. Hints of this are found in both the verbal and concrete spheres. The logic of metaphorical vestigia itself provides a rationale: if following footprints signified emulation, attaining them could imply equivalence. While it was Christ’s incarnate quality that was confirmed by the impressions, his divinity made true equivalence impossible. Growing emphasis on the former may have allowed more imitative engagement with some imprints, employing equivalent body parts, by the fifteenth century. Nevertheless, when Fabri described placing himself in an impression of St. Catherine, he felt the need to defend the propriety of the act: ‘We bowed ourselves to the earth before the place in which the virgin lay, and placed ourselves therein, not out of presumption or curiosity, but out of piety.’ Zur Shalev implies that Fabri is anxious here to avoid seeming ‘too accurate and attached to figures’; I would suggest that the potentially presumptuous quality of the act lay as much in comparing oneself to a saint. Conversely, in a rare case where someone is described as actually standing in the footprints of those to be emulated, she is the candidate for sainthood, and the implication is that she more than matched the qualities of the original makers of the prints. In Jacques de Vitry’s early-thirteenth-century life of the notable Beguine Mary of Oegnies, the young Mary not only follows after Cistercian monks and lay brothers but places her feet in their imprints. This childhood action, which expresses a preference for the habit of the Cistercians over the worldly clothes in which her parents wished to dress her, demonstrates her natural affinity for the ascetic religious life, realised in her later life. The passage not only renders concrete the metaphor of emulation and discipleship, but goes beyond this to imply a more fundamental likeness. Indeed, since the life was probably compiled with an eye to canonisation and the legitimisation of the Beguines more
generally, the fact that Mary occupies the footprints can be seen to present her as the equal of the Cistercians. Although Jacques’ work was not necessarily known to the author of Pietro Pettinaio’s life, it is nonetheless significant that this acting out and elaboration of the footprints metaphor concerns a near contemporary of St. Francis, and it constitutes an important precedent for the events of Pietro Pettinaiolo’s vision. At the same time, it is notable that Mary’s imitation of Christ is expressed, more conventionally, in terms of his command ‘Who wishes to come after me, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me’, which she put into practice though obedience, abstinence, and a disregard for possessions. Self-inflicted wounds gave this imitation a strongly corporeal dimension, and have been seen as a manifestation of the stigmatic spirituality that would subsequently find even fuller expression in St. Francis’s divinely-engendered stigmata. However, they do not imply the sort of likeness claimed between St. Francis and Christ, or that between Mary and the Cistercians. Both impressions on the ground and impressions in the body are thus expressive of identity in a manner that prepares the way for the later treatment of St. Francis, but emphasises its distinctive nature.

If the vestigia left by Christ and the saints were usually exclusive sites, carefully guarded against further use of a similar nature, other places were trodden repeatedly by less exalted individuals, in a way that had the capacity to imply likeness between them. This might be a shared state or condition, a place in a succession of office holders over time, or membership of a wider community. In other words, such locations were significant in terms of their history of use, just as occupying top place on a tiered winners podium is not simply to be in a hierarchical relationship with those occupying second and third place, but also in an equal one with those who have occupied first place in the past. Rituals of penance, for example, seem to have exhibited an interest in designating certain places for, as well as particular gestures of, humility. In the Benedictine rule, after a monk had been excluded from the choir and common table for a serious fault he was to prostrate himself in silence before the entrance to the church (ante fores oratorii) while the brothers left after the office. Lanfranc’s eleventh-century Constitutions specify a location ‘before the step where the monks stand to receive blessings’, which both indicates the existence of places of grace as well and shows how places of penance might be defined in
opposition. Presumably it is at least partly within this tradition that we should interpret Franciscan references to ‘the penance of sitting upon the ground’, although it is not clear whether there was an assigned location for this action.

Standing in a particular place could also express more positive connections, which might be reflected in the decoration of the spot. In Old St. Peters, a porphyry roundel famously featured in the coronation ceremony of the Holy Roman Emperors, drawing on Byzantine precedents. Figurative pavement decoration also provided appropriate markers for individual office holders. The twelfth-century mosaic pavement of Novara cathedral includes roundels showing the symbols of the four evangelists. By the early fourteenth century these took on particular significance during the celebration of the pre-baptismal scrutinies, when four deacons read from the gospels standing on the appropriate roundels. Using the same place over time could also create a sense of wider community, and here too it appears to have been connected to rites of initiation and separation. As part of a long tradition in which dying monks were laid on the floor on sackcloth and ashes, a fixed spot might be used for the purpose. This is particularly clear at Marmoutier, where a lost thirteenth-century tiled floor in the infirmary chapel represented a dying monk in the place which would be occupied by such a monk, thus cementing a common bond between members of the community. The stone (‘petra’ or ‘magna petra’) in the infirmary chapel of Christ Church, Canterbury, on which dead monks were placed for the prayers of commendation during the fifteenth century, fulfilled a similar function. In thirteenth-century St. Albans, a stone in the infirmary was customarily used for the anointing of dying monks. Markers could also be used for rituals for those joining a community; in the twelfth century, the canons of Lyon swore their oaths ‘super lapidem capituli, juxta morem’ in the middle of the chapter house. While these stones were not necessarily flush with the pavement, they illustrate the importance that communities could give to repeated use of a particular marker.

These varied examples of where equivalence was implied by standing or lying in the same spot as others had occupied in the past give another reason why it was avoided in the case of the physical imprints of Christ and the saints, where such an equivalence was generally not entertained. Indeed, it is
possible to interpret desecration underfoot in terms of an inequality or lack of likeness between treading and trodden, that is to say, in the case of ground trodden by two individuals, when the second set of feet were ‘unworthy’ of the first. Standing in Christ’s footprints was not appropriate for anyone who was not fully Christ-like. At the same time, the fact that pavement markers in ecclesiastical spaces were used for rituals performed by particular office holders or members of religious communities, cementing their shared identities, could have contributed to the use of the church floor to express likeness in Pietro Pettinaio’s vision. It is as though the author of the life has translated the exclusive Christological vestigia of the Holy Land onto the church pavement, where repeated use to show likeness was more common. Seen as part of a spectrum, the rationale for avoiding and embracing particular spots explains why standing in Christ’s footprints is used to express St. Francis’s particular relationship with Christ; his feet were uniquely worthy. The qualities claimed for this relationship are not just implied within the vision, as others fail to place their feet exactly in the footprints. They are also implied by the innovative qualities of the vision itself, as it visualises an otherwise avoided action. Those who come before Francis, who also seek to imitate Christ, are not explicitly characterised as trampling or dishonouring the footprints. However, they not only fail to tread in the prints exactly themselves, but also make them, and thus Christ’s example, harder for others to follow. As such, they constitute negative exemplars whereas to follow Francis was to follow Christ.

The vision, and the actions it describes, were only possible in the light of a post-Bonaventuran image of St. Francis as a second Christ, accompanied and articulated by the changing emphasis placed on the stigmata. More specifically, the idea of the stigmata as impressions may underlie the interest in expressing likeness through vestigia. As Chiara Frugoni has noted, though Elias spoke of the ‘wounds made by the puncturing nails’, Thomas of Celano’s Vita prima described the raised form of nails in Francis’s skin as made from within, and it was only with Bonaventure that they came to be seen again as impressed from the outside. On occasion, the stigmata could themselves be described as ‘vestigia’ or traces. Thus, in Jacques de Vitry’s second sermon to the friars minor, St. Francis is said to have followed the crucified Christ so closely that ‘at his death there appeared in his feet, hands, and side the
traces of the wounds of Christ’: ‘vestigia vulnerum Christi’. It is perhaps not by chance that the word appears precisely in the context of following Christ. Bonaventure, in one of his sermons on St. Francis, even says that Christ left traces on Francis with his limbs: ‘et suis membris vestigia imprimebat’, as if the imprints of Christ commonly found on inanimate surfaces are here made on the body of the saint. More generally, Bonaventure repeatedly described Francis as sealed by God, on one occasion presenting the stigmata as Christ’s seal of approval for his rule, and thus drawing an implicit parallel with the papal bull with which Pope Honorius III approved the rule. The idea was repeated by Dante (‘Francis has taken from Christ his final seal’); and Francis is depicted displaying the stigmata in seals from the end of the thirteenth century onwards. Sacred vestigia too were often equated with seals, both through descriptions that described them as seeming to be impressed in wax, and through the way in which they could function to authenticate a holy place or the presence of a holy individual. In the twelfth century, Peter the Deacon described the footprint of the infant Christ in the Templum Domini as appearing ‘exactly as if it had been made in wax’; subsequently, Matthew Paris described the Westminster passus domini relic of one of Christ’s footprints from the site of the Ascension as bearing the impression ‘as if it were made of soft wax’. Even when the imprints were thought to be set in loose earth, piously carried away by pilgrims, Sulpicius Severus had described their miraculous preservation as proof (‘documentum est’) that they had been created by Christ, adding that it was as if the ground ‘had been sealed by the footprints impressed upon it’: ‘velut impressis signata vestigiis’. If Francis’s Christ-like nature was what enabled his actions in the vision, existing parallels between holy vestigia and the stigmata that more generally demonstrated this identity may have helped to suggest this further way of demonstrating his likeness to Christ.

Correspondences had also already been drawn between marks on the floor surface and those on a body, as part of wider associations between the church building and the faithful. The use of ash in Pietro Pettinaio’s vision is evocative of the rite for the consecration of a church in which a diagonal cross was drawn in ashes on the pavement, and the letters of the Greek and Latin alphabets inscribed in it by the consecrating bishop. By the thirteenth century, when discussion of the alphabet cross was
included in Sicardus of Cremona’s *Mitrale* and William Durandus’s *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, an elaborate Christological interpretation had developed, which made the line of ash a fitting recipient for Christ’s footprints in the vision. Specifically, the first arm of the cross, drawn from the left-hand eastern corner of the church to the right-hand western corner, symbolised Christ’s passage from Judea to the Gentiles. Within allegorical readings of the ritual, the floor surface was also given more general corporeal connotations, with the alphabets seen as inscribed in the human body. So, for Sicardus, the Greek and Latin alphabets represent the knowledge of the Old and New Testaments ‘written in the pavement of our breasts, in earthly hearts’: ‘Hec itaque scientia scribenda est in pavimento pectoris nostri, in cordibus terrenorum’. Similarly, Durandus presented the alphabet on the pavement as ‘the simple teaching of faith in the human heart’: ‘Scriptura ergo alphabeti in pavimento est simplex doctrina fidei in corde humano’. Other writers emphasised the act of impression; Peter Damian compared the impressing (*inpressare*) of the alphabets to the way in which the divine law should be inscribed (*debet inscribi*) in the temple of peoples’ hearts (*templo pectoris nostris*). It is hard to point to a specific dedication ceremony likely to have been witnessed by the author of Pietro Pettinaio’s life, but the symbolism of the alphabet cross was also recalled in sermons to be delivered on the feast of the dedication. By the fifteenth century, the library of the Franciscan convent in Siena included sermon collections by Jacopo da Voragine, and by the Franciscans Gilbert of Tournai and John of La Rochelle, all of whom wrote dedication sermons.

Moreover, if the church pavement was commonly compared to the human body, the body could also be compared to the pavement. Thomas of Celano, when describing the radiant appearance of Francis’s body at his death, compared the stigmata to ‘little black stones in a white pavement’ (‘sicut in pavimento albo nigri lapilli solent’). Paroma Chatterjee, in her discussion of this passage, notes the implication that these stones would lie flush with the rest of the pavement, and contrasts this with previous treatments of the stigmata as wounds breaking the skin. She links this to texts that treat scripture as an edifice, though there are perhaps closer parallels in the allegorical linking of body and building. The interpretation of the alphabet cross is part of a wider tradition of comparing the church
building to the members of the church, both within and beyond the context of church dedication, which goes back to biblical precedents such as Paul’s statement that ‘God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple’. It is possible that the comparison might also have been prompted by actual pavements, since the medieval floor mosaics of Tuscany (for example, in Florence, Arezzo, and Prato) were indeed predominantly black and white. However, whether or not the author of Pietro Pettinaio’s life had seen consecration crosses or decorated pavements of this kind (the current, largely intarsia, pavement of Siena cathedral was begun only in the third quarter of the fourteenth century), the verbal association of floor surface and flesh can be seen to have prepared the way for using vestigia imprinted in ash on a cathedral pavement to express a likeness otherwise vested in bodily stigmata.

Elaborate pavement decoration is alien to the Franciscan tradition, and some churches are likely not to have been paved at all. However, there was an existing Franciscan interest in the ground as a forum for manifesting the identity of their founder. Francis is often mentioned as sitting on the bare ground or on ashes, especially when inspired by thoughts of Christ. In Thomas of Celano’s Vita secunda, for example, a reference to the poverty of Christ causes Francis to get up from the table and finish his meal ‘supra nudam humam’. The choice of words is significant here, with the naked ground reflecting Francis’s focus on the naked Christ. On another occasion the saint is described as sitting on the ground, with his plate ‘in cinere’. This is usually translated as cinders, but the Latin is the same as for the ashes sprinkled on the pavement, and indeed for those with which penitents were marked. Francis also followed the model of St Martin of Tours in dying on the ground, but where the account of Martin’s death stressed the ashes strewn on the floor, the emphasis in Francis’s case was again on nakedness, with the saint lying naked on the bare earth: ‘super nudam humum se totum nudatum in spiritus fervore prostravit’. However, by the time Pietro Pettinaio’s life was written, a rather different characterisation of the ground was also possible. Bonaventure’s Legenda maior had introduced the story of the man who spread his cloak under St. Francis, like Christ in the entry into Jerusalem, the very opposite of the naked ground. Similarly, in the early fourteenth-century account of the Porziuncola indulgence by Francesco Bartholi, Francis walks to the church along a way that seems to be spread
with silks: `<strata> quasi de serico ornata`\textsuperscript{120}. Pietro Pettinaio’s vision combines these aspects, using the imprints on the pavement to express a particular conception of Francis’s Christ-like, apostolic nature, while also retaining the quality of humility through the medium of ashes in which these are made.

Pietro Pettinaio’s vision achieves a fusion of \textit{vestigia}, verbal and material, which had previously not been realised. What ultimately allowed these to be brought together, and made the act of standing in Christ’s footprints appropriate, was Francis’s identity as \textit{alter Christus} or a second Christ. The stigmata, as the primary sign of this identity, are an important point of departure for the vision. These bodily imprints might have suggested engaging with imprints in the ground, especially since they had been compared to paving elements. At the same time, I would suggest that the vision is informed by the wider use and understanding of the floor surface. The consecration cross traced in ashes on the church floor was associated with Christ and with bodily impressions; the repeated use of particular places and markers was used to suggest likeness between individuals; and within the Franciscan tradition itself descriptions of the ground had already served to present aspects of their founder.

**Visualisation and Depiction**

Like possession of the stigmata, standing in Christ’s footprints implied a unique likeness to Christ; arguably it was as novel and radical. Yet in some respects standing in the \textit{vestigia} was even more challenging than Francis’s stigmata, because it risked colliding with traditions of trampling. In other words, if the stigmata were essentially controversial for what they were taken to imply about St. Francis, standing in Christ’s footprints was also problematic for what it might be mistaken for. Above I suggested that that perceptions of what constituted desecration underfoot might depend on the comparative identities and values of what was trodden on and who was doing the treading; according to this logic, Francis \textit{alter Christus} could not be desecrating the imprints. However, the significance of standing on something is also affected by the medium in which it is manifested and communicated, with particular interpretations dominating particular media. The visionary nature of St. Francis’s actions
mediates between verbal metaphor and material imprint, but it also raises questions about the role of materiality within visionary experience, and the relationship between mental and painted images.

If the act of standing in Christ’s footprints was a novel and potentially shocking one, then the fact that it is described as taking place within a vision may serve to soften the contrast between a common metaphor and a highly uncommon action, providing only a partial materialisation of the ideas of emulation and likeness. Additionally, an aspect of the vision itself seems to acknowledge that boundaries are being pushed here. This is the fact that the imprints are made in ash rather than any more durable medium and function only within the parameters of the vision. Within the consecration ceremony, the ephemeral nature of the cross of ashes may have functioned to make sure that no one stood on it subsequently. In the case of the vision, where the ash is walked on, comparison can be also drawn with the liturgical and ceremonial use of other temporary floor coverings, such as textiles, which tended to be laid down under particular people, as much as in particular places. The early thirteenth-century *Ordo officiorum* for Siena cathedral, for example, notes that the bishop treads on textiles – ‘tabeta calcat’ – on his way to the altar; an expression of contempt for worldly things than nevertheless reflected his status.\(^{121}\) It is worth noting that this ephemeral quality goes against the tradition of *vestigia* in earlier medieval visions; even where these are imprinted in an ephemeral substance, they usually stay behind as proof of the vision and the lasting significance of the events witnessed. For example, a twelfth-century account of the restoration of the abbey of Mozac has a white deer (interpreted by Amy Remensnyder as an allusion to Christ) mark out the plan of the church to be built by its hoof-prints in the snow.\(^{122}\) When the snow melts, the hoof-prints are also found in the earth below. In a closer parallel with the Sienese example, accounts of the miraculous consecration of Westminster Abbey by St. Peter, dating from the late eleventh century onwards, have the saint inscribe the letters into the alphabet cross, which remains to be seen by the bishop as proof of the consecration.\(^{123}\) It is true that these *vestigia* demonstrate sanctity of place as much as the sanctity of their makers. Moreover, the ephemeral quality of the ash and the imprints is integral to the message of the vision; the whole point is that the traces are difficult to distinguish and almost gone by the time Francis arrives. Nevertheless, it is
significant in the context of the radical connotations of walking in the imprints that these are not given a place outside the confines of the vision.

The description of Pietro Pettinaio’s visionary experience conjures up a mental image of St. Francis’s actions in the mind of the reader or listener. However, visualising these actions was potentially fraught during the period in question, because it encountered an established visual convention. While following someone’s footsteps and trampling something underfoot coexisted as metaphors for emulation and distain, the negative connotations of standing were dominant when someone was actually shown treading on something. The representation of trampling has a long history. Christ was shown trampling on the asp and the basilisk, in fulfilment of Psalm 91.13, from Late Antiquity onwards; medieval Italian examples include the now-fragmentary tympanum of the early twelfth-century Porta dei Mesi at Ferrara cathedral. Christ was also shown standing on the devil and the doors of hell in depictions of the Anastasis or Harrowing of Hell, an image that would have been familiar to an early-fourteenth-century Sienese audience not least from the scene in Duccio’s Maestà (figure 1). Moreover, it was a common way to depict the relationship between personifications of the virtues and the vices, in an iconography that appears to have evolved within the tradition of Psychomachia illustrations during the ninth century. The arrangement is found, for example, in the late-twelfth-century dado frescoes in the abbey church of S. Maria in Summaga (Veneto), where the virtues trample on the reclining figures of the vices. In the depiction of King Robert the Wise and the virtues and vices in the Anjou Bible of 1340, the standing virtues tread on the feet of the vices, which fall almost directly downwards as if to indicate their opposing natures. The format could be adapted to show or include historical figures, and the Lateran palace contained early-twelfth-century frescoes of the reform popes using their antipopes as footstools.

St. Francis himself was included in such a schema in the early-thirteenth-century wall paintings in the Aula gotica of the SS. Quattro Coronati complex in Rome, held aloft on the shoulder of Amor celestis, who tramples underfoot Julian the Apostate (figure 2). Franciscan imagery subsequently partook of both these traditions to position Francis in a central, Christ-like role. The representations of
St. Francis as *alter Christus* identified by Henk van Os include a group in which he is shown trampling on personifications of pride, lust, and avarice.\textsuperscript{131} Donal Cooper has recently suggested that this tradition should be widened to encompass a number of depictions of St. Francis standing on a mappamundi as an expression of contempt for worldly things.\textsuperscript{132} The iconography flourished from the end of the fourteenth century; the earliest known example with a mappamundi may be the fresco in Orsanmichele attributed to Mariotto di Nardo of c. 1390-1400 (figure 3), while the first surviving instance with the vices is Taddeo di Bartolo’s Perugia altarpiece of 1403 (figure 4). Precedents include Giovanni del Biondo’s *St. John the Baptist Trampling on Herod* (1360-70) and *St. John the Evangelist Trampling the Vices* (c. 1380).\textsuperscript{133}

While it is therefore not likely that the author of Pietro Pettinaio’s life would have seen representations of St. Francis himself trampling negative things underfoot, the long history of the representation of trampling means that it is likely to have been familiar to him and to his audience. The implications of this for their imagining of St. Francis’s actions in the vision are difficult to ascertain, though it is noteworthy that the narrative, in which he reverently finds the footprints before placing his feet in them, allows a mental picture to be built up gradually and the tone established before the juxtaposition of foot and footprint. However, it is telling that the vision seems to have long remained within the sphere of mental images, without being realised in a concrete depiction, where such an unfolding was not possible and comparisons with other representations – including those of St. Francis himself – were stronger. This is not to imply that the absence of the vision from the surviving fourteenth- to sixteenth-century depictions of Pietro Pettinaio or St. Francis is purely or even primarily down to the nature of the central action; despite evidence of some circulation, it is not so well known that an explanation needs to be found for its absence from the visual tradition. Nevertheless, when the episode was depicted, it was in such a way as to avoid any appearance of desecration. In the early seventeenth century, the vision was the subject of two paintings by Raffaello Vanni: one now in Siena cathedral and the other in the Arciconfraternità di Misericordia (figure 5).\textsuperscript{134} In both, the footprints in
the ash are clearly shown on the pavement. However, St. Francis is not standing in them, but rather already kneeling before Christ at the altar.

Moreover, another occasion on which St. Francis walks on something sensitive is also found in textual but not visual sources. The episode takes place during Francis’s visit to Sultan Malik al-Kamil at Damietta in 1219, and features Francis treading on a textile marked with crosses, laid down by the Sultan to test his faith. Francis defends his actions by claiming Christian possession of the true cross, while assigning to the Muslims the crosses of the thieves crucified alongside Christ. Implied that the symbols underfoot were those of the wrong cross turned walking on them into an act of distain, arguably along Christ-like lines. The story is found in a Franciscan exempla collection composed between 1256 and 1273 and recorded in a later-thirteenth-century manuscript.\textsuperscript{135} It seems to have been picked up by preachers; the episode is mentioned, for example, in a sermon on the Sunday before Pentecost in the same compilation that includes the early sermon on Pietro Pettinaio. This makes it more explicit that Francis is actually trampling on the crosses: ‘hee sunt cruces latronis mali, expondende et calcande; crux autem Christi veneranda est’.\textsuperscript{136}

Again, it is not surprising that the event does not seem to get depicted in visual representations. To a greater extent, this must simply result from the fact that it is not included in the lives of the saint, from which scenes for illustration were chosen. However, it may also reflect a discrepancy between what could be represented in words and in images. In a written or spoken description, it was easy and quick to reverse the initial impression of Francis walking on the holy symbol of the cross, by revealing that the design of the Sultan’s textiles alluded to other crosses with negative connotations. Francis’s argument rests fundamentally on the existence of a wider set of objects to which the symbol could refer; in the words of the early sermon: ‘crux est multiplex, scil. Christi et latronis mali’. It thus also represents an acknowledgement of the multivalence of the symbol itself, suggesting a loose or potentially disruptable relationship between sign and signified. However, just as the textile itself could not determine which cross its design was seen to allude to, it would have been difficult to make Francis’s reading of the design evident in a visual representation of the scene. Indeed, given the
prevalent association of the symbol within Christian art, and the strong visual tradition of depicting figures standing on things to represent their triumph over them, the lasting impression would have been that the saint was trampling the cross of Christ. This story does not present the same issues as Pietro Pettinaio’s vision, since the element of ambiguity concerns the identity of the thing trodden on rather than the significance of the action itself, here read as straightforwardly negative. Yet it does show another way in which a mental image of objects underfoot was not necessarily easily translated into the sphere of visual images, as well as illustrating further the strength of a tradition of trampling against which Pietro Pettinaio’s vision has to be understood.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Pietro Pettinaio’s vision of St. Francis standing in Christ’s footprints left in ash on the pavement of Siena cathedral was, I hope to have shown, as innovative as the identity claimed for the saint by his followers. It bridged a gap between a common metaphor, which spoke of emulation in terms of following someone’s footprints, and the material *vestigia* of Christ and the saints, which were not trodden in. Thinking about standing on the ground as part of a spectrum, in which places trodden by holy individuals were protected from less worthy feet, while other locations were used repeatedly to establish a common identity between the users, helps to explain why St. Francis, as a second Christ, could be and was celebrated as acting in this manner. While correspondences between his stigmata and Christological and saintly *vestigia* are likely to have contributed to this visualisation, there are also ways in which the wider use and connotations of the floor surface may have informed the vision, from the corporeal allegories of the cross of ashes to the characterisation of the ground within other Franciscan treatments of the saint. Containing the action within a vision featuring an ephemeral substance also mediated between the verbal and material spheres. Nevertheless, even this remained complicated by the visual tradition of trampling, arguably preventing the depiction of this moment in the story. In Pietro Pettinaio’s vision, following the footsteps of Christ found material expression, but only within narrow parameters.
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Figure 1: Duccio di Buoninsegna, The Harrowing of Hell, from the Maestà, completed 1311. Tempera and gold on panel (51 × 53.5 cm). Siena, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo. © Mondadori Portfolio /Archivio Antonio Quattrone/Antonio Quattrone.
Figure 2: Amor Celeste with St Francis and Julian the Apostate, c. 1235-46. Fresco. Aula gotica, Santi Quattro Coronati, Rome. Reproduced by kind permission of the Soprintendenza Speciale per il Patrimonio Storico, Artistico ed Etnoantropologico per il Polo Museale della Città di Roma.
Figure 3: Mariotto di Nardo (?), St Francis with a Seraph over a Mappamundi, c. 1390-1400. Fresco. Orsanmichele, Florence. Photo: Donal Cooper.
Figure 4: Taddeo di Bartolo, St Francis in Glory with the Monastic Vices, central panel from the Perugia Altarpiece, 1403. Tempera and gold on panel. 198.5 x 63.5 cm. Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria, Perugia. Reproduced by kind permission of the Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria – Perugia (Italy).
Figure 5: Raffaello Vanni, The Vision of Beato Pietro Pettinaio, c. 1630s. Oil on canvas (107 x 120 cm). Arciconfraternità di Misericordia, Siena. Reproduced by kind permission of the Arciconfraternità di Misericordia.


7 MS I.G.2, fol. 186r; Pulinari, Cronache dei frati minori, xxvi-xxvii; Cenci, “Bindo da Siena,” 203-204.

8 Cenci, “Predicatore senese,” 5-30; Cenci, “Bindo da Siena,” 189-211.


12 Delcorno, Prediche volgari, 1:916.

13 Oddi, La Franceschina, 1:5.


17 One version of this story is given in Sabatier, Actus beati Francisci, ch 40, 130-32. In the Breslau manuscript, not used by Sabatier, the Dominican states ‘Illi minores volunt sanctum suum Christi
assimilari’, and the episode is dated to the papacy of Benedict XII (1334-42); Vauchez, “Stigmata,” 83 n. 66.

18 I am grateful to Janet Robson for this point.


22 For the events of the late 1320s, see Vauchez, “La commune de Sienne,” 757-67.

23 Delcorno, Prediche volgari, 1:916, n. 28.

24 1 Peter 2:21.

25 Job 23:11.

26 1 Kings 6:12.

27 Peter of Celle, Sermo XXIX, De passione Domini, PL 202, 725B-728A.


Psalm 132:7.


45 Griffith Mann, “Relics,” 255.


49 Sulpicius Severus, Chronica, 2.33, ed. Halm, 86.


Discussing a model crusade sermon by Gilbert of Tournai, Christoph Maier states that the author presented crusade in the Holy Land as allowing the crusader to ‘retrace the steps of the historical Christ’, whereas the sermon simply speaks of the chance to visit the Holy Sepulchre; Christoph T. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology: Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 60. Julie Ann Smith has written that pilgrims ‘traced holy footsteps and recreated holy events’, but the phrase is her interpretation; Julie Ann Smith, “‘My Lord’s Native Land’: Mapping the Christian Holy Land,” *The American Society of Church History* 76, no.1 (2007): 1-31, at 5.


Shalev, “Christian Pilgrimage,” 140.


93 Jean Beyssac, Les Chanoines de l'eglise de Lyon (Lyon: P. Grange, 1914), xxi.

94 The sixteenth-century paraphrase of the Giaccherino version of Pettiniao’s life describes the imprints as ‘tanto calpeste’; Razzi, Vita de’ santi e beati toscani, 390. However, the manuscript itself has ‘quasi cancellate’; MS I.G.2, fol. 197r.

95 I am grateful to an anonymous reader for this point.


107 Sicardus of Cremona, Mitrale, 1.6, ed. Sarbak and Weinrich, 30.

108 Durandus, Rationale divinorum officiorum, 1.6.23, ed. Davril and Thibodeau, 1:72.


111 Thomas of Celano, Vita prima S. Francisci, 2.9, Analecta Franciscana 10, 88; Thomas of Celano, “The Life of Saint Francis,” in Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, 1:280.


119 “… deponebat pallium, sternebat ipsius pedibus vestimentum”; Bonaventure, *Legenda major*, 1.1, Analecta Franciscana 10, 560-61; trans. *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, 2:531. The episode is shown in the upper church at Assisi, and also in the church of San Francesco at Montefalco; van Os, “St Francis of Assisi,” 131, fig. 19.


136 Cenci, “Predicatore senese,” 8.