Images of Adam and Engagements with Antiquity in Romanesque and Gothic Sculpture

A dissertation presented
by
Nadia Lares Marx
to
The Department of History of Art and Architecture
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
History of Art and Architecture

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2016
Images of Adam and Engagements with Antiquity in Romanesque and Gothic Sculpture

Abstract

In the abundant literature on the afterlife of classical forms in the Middle Ages, medieval “classicism” has generally been understood as a series of stylistic borrowings and iconographic quotations, occurring as either isolated instances of individual genius or as the result of a momentary cultural flourishing—a “renascence” to use Erwin Panofsky’s term. This dissertation reconfigures this discourse on antiquity and the Middle Ages. It frames medieval classicism as a set of expressive possibilities that encode and transmit culturally contingent meaning, arguing that classical models were invoked selectively by artists, in concert with a range of other representational modes, in order to communicate complex messages to an audience sensitive to differences in style. Presented as a series of case studies, it examines three sculptural representations of Adam and the Creation narrative from the Romanesque and Gothic periods in Italy and France, considering them as key sites for medieval engagement with the art of antiquity. The evocation of antiquity, effected through material and formal assimilations of sculpted objects to ancient artifacts, functioned as a rhetorical device in Romanesque and Gothic sculpture, constructing frameworks of meaning around a given object. This dissertation examines the particular character and purpose of such evocations in images of Adam from the cathedral churches of Modena, Paris and Auxerre, offering new interpretations of three important monuments in the history of medieval sculpture, engaging with landmark studies in medieval classicism, and reconsidering attitudes towards the public display of nudity in the centuries preceding the Renaissance, the period when, it is generally accepted, it became a part of common artistic parlance.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ................................................................. iii

Acknowledgments ........................................................... v

List of Figures ............................................................ vii

Note on Translations ....................................................... xviii

Introduction ............................................................... 1

I. MODENA: The Spolia Effect ............................................. 13

II. PARIS: Classicism and Enlivenment ................................. 53

III. AUXERRE: The Redemption of Antiquity ........................ 115

Conclusion ............................................................... 163

Figures ........................................................................... 167

Bibliography ............................................................... 268
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation, like all dissertations, would never have been written were it not for the generosity and forbearance of countless individuals and institutions. Thanks are due first and foremost to Jeffrey Hamburger, for introducing me to the sculpture at the heart of this project, for intuiting the research questions I wanted to pursue when I struggled to articulate them, and for reading every draft with great care and attention, even when those drafts arrived at inconvenient moments and after long bouts of radio silence. Without his incisive criticism, his kind encouragement, and his tremendous patience, I could not have made it to the finish line. I am deeply grateful to Joseph Koerner, whose genuine interest in my project rekindled my wavering faith in its value, and whose thoughtful critiques have shaped it so much for the better. Thanks are also due to Ioli Kalavrezou, whose course on Rome, Constantinople and Ravenna taught me so much, and who generously agreed to step into the breach and serve as my third reader just a few short months before my defense.

The faculty and staff of Harvard’s History of Art and Architecture department were instrumental to the success of this project. Ruth Bielfeldt’s insightful observations and suggestions transformed my thinking about key works in the dissertation. Frank Fehrenbach and Hugo van der Velden introduced me to crucial objects and ideas, and courses taught by Gülru Necipoğlu, David Roxburgh and Ewa Lajer-Burchardt expanded my worldview and made me a better art historian. I am grateful to Alina Payne for giving me a sense of competence at a time when so many things seemed to be going wrong, and to Deanna Dalrymple, without whom we would all be lost.

Funding from Harvard University, including an Arthur Kingsley Porter Travel Grant and a Dumbarton Oaks Dissertation Completion Fellowship, allowed me to carry out research in Italy and France and gave me much needed time to write. My semester-long
Readership at the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti was also invaluable. I owe huge thanks to the Villa’s wonderful staff, and to the Fellows who made my time in Florence as enjoyable as it was productive. Special thanks to spritz-aficionado and fearful adventurer Tim McCall for his continued friendship, and for taking me to see an Ely great cathedral. Thanks to my Doktorgeschwister Shirin Fozi and Beatrice Kitzinger for leading me on life-changing art-historical pilgrimages and answering endless questions, and to Charlotte Gray for never failing to find the humor in grad school’s many indignities. Thanks also to Shawon Kinew and Esther Lim, to the dazzling Marisa Mandabach, to Sarah Burke Cahalan, the world’s best housemate, and to Allie Rung, who always just gets it. Jaimie Varasconi and Mircea Raianu were sources of great fun in some otherwise tough years, and Giorgia Franchi and Tanya Thompson have been cheering me on since the beginning. I am grateful to Jessica Fahy and Kate Cowcher for many long talks over many shared pints, and to Hannah Armstrong for indulging my absurd BL obsessions. I am beyond grateful to my extraordinary cohort who made this long, hard decade worthwhile: Hyewon Yoon, Nozomi Naoi and Jaya Remond provided much needed levity; Josh O’Driscoll was a stalwart companion on grueling excursions; Maggie Cao inspired me to be a better scholar and a better baker; Catherine Girard gave me the gift of a perfect month in Paris; Anastassia Botchkareva, Merih Danali and Cara Rachele (+IVK) have been true friends through thick and thin. Thanks to Deniz Türker and Olivia Byron, the sisters I never had. Above all, thank you to my heroic family: my in-laws Esin, Murat and Can; my brother, Sasha, who shows me what hard work really looks like; my parents, Andrew Marx and Katherine Mulvihill, whose support has never wavered and who almost never ask me to stop talking; and my husband, Yankı Lekili, who has loved me at my most unlovable, who believed in me always, and without whom I would have long since starved in a ditch.
LIST OF FIGURES

I.

1.1  View of west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.2  First Genesis panel: Creation of Adam, Creation of Eve, Fall of Man, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.3  Second Genesis panel: Admonishment, Expulsion, Adam and Eve Tilling, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.4  Third Genesis panel: Sacrifices of Cain and Abel, Abel Murdered by Cain, Cain Admonished by God, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.5  Fourth Genesis panel: Cain Killed by Lamech, Noah’s Ark Upon the Waters, Noah and his Sons Disembark on Dry Land, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.6  Relief of the Prophet Isaiah, west portal interior, Sainte-Marie de Souillac.

1.7  Detail of Putto, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.8  Detail of Putto with ibis, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.


1.11 Atlas Farnese, Roman copy of Hellenistic original, Museo archeologico nazionale di Napoli, Naples, Inv. 6374.

1.12 Roman sarcophagus: Revenge of Orestes, detail of seated figure, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, Inv. 2839.

1.13 Ara Pacis Augustae, north face, detail of processional frieze showing members of the Senate, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome.

1.14 Ara Pacis Augustae, north face, detail of processional frieze showing members of the Senate, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome.

1.15 Third Genesis panel, detail showing cornice and jamb, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.
1.16 *Imago clipeata*, antique spoliate insertion, west façade, Cathedral of San Giorgio, Ferrara.

1.17 Detail of central portal, west façade, Basilica of San Zeno Maggiore, Verona.

1.18 Porphyry vase with gold additions (Suger’s Eagle Vase), Musée du Louvre, Paris, Inv. MR 422.

1.19 Cross for Archbishop Herimann, recto and verso, Kolumba (formerly Diözesanmuseum), Cologne.

1.20 Arch of Constantine, south face, Rome.

1.21 Roman sarcophagus: Hippolytus and Phaedra, reused for burial of Beatrice of Tuscany, Camposanto, Pisa.

1.22 Tomb of Buscheto with antique strigilated sarcophagus, west façade, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Pisa.

1.23 Tomb of Abbot Elia with antique sarcophagus, crypt (wall of right stairway), Basilica of San Nicola, Bari.

1.24 Architrave with boar hunt, lateral portal, Pieve di San Giovanni, Campiglia Marittima.


1.26 Sarcophagus of Bruttia Aureliana, Museo Lapidario Estense, Modena, Inv. 7164.

1.27 Funerary stele of C. Salvius Auctus and P. Plotius Urbanus (*Salvii stele*), Museo Lapidario Estense, Modena, Inv. 7144.

1.28 Central portal with inhabited scroll motif, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.29 Details of inhabited scroll motif, doorposts and lintel of central portal, west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.30 Velletri Sarcophagus with Labors of Hercules, Museo Civico Archeologico Oreste Nardini, Velletri.

1.31 Roman sarcophagus with *Putti* leaning on inverted torches, Museo Archeologico Oliveriano, Pesaro.

1.32 Detail of central portal prothyrum with frieze of antique spoliate and twelfth-century acanthus scrolls, west façade, Cathedral of San Giorgio, Ferrara.
1.33 Severan pilasters with inhabited vine motif, Grotte Vaticane, Rome. Formerly installed in the Oratory of Pope John VII, Old Saint Peter’s, Rome.

1.34 Enoch and Elijah with inscription, detail of west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena.

1.35 *Sator Arepo* inscription, detail of left transept exterior, Pieve di San Giovanni, Campiglia Marittima

II.

2.1 Adam, Musée de Cluny, Paris, Inv. Cl. 11657. Formerly installed interior façade of south transept, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris.

2.2 Venus *pudica* (Capitoline Venus), Musei Capitolini, Rome.

2.3 View of the north gallery of the Musée des Monuments français, Album Lenoir v. 1, RF 5279, fol. 34, Cabinet des Dessins, Réserve des grands alubms, Musée du Louvre, Paris.


2.5 Charles Marie Bouton, *La Folie de Charles VI*: *Vue de la salle du XIVe siècle au musée des Monumants Français*, Musée de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, Inv. 982.156.

2.6 Adam holding an apple with Eve and two prophets, central portal jambs, west façade, Church of St. Lorenz, Nuremberg.

2.7 Adam holding an apple from an English Book of Hours, MS W.102, fol. 28v, The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.


2.9 Hypothetical reconstruction of the medieval jubé and choir of Notre-Dame de Paris, after Viollet-le-Duc.

2.10 Descent into Limbo, fragment of the jubé from Notre-Dame de Paris, Département des Sculptures, Musée du Louvre, Paris, Inv. R. F. 991.

2.11 Last Judgment group: Christ the Redeemer with angels bearing the instruments of the Passion, interior façade of south transept, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris.

2.13 Genesis frontispiece, Bible of Charles the Bald (Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura), fol. 7v, Abbey of San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome.


2.15 Genesis frontispiece, Canterbury Psalter, MS Lat. 8846, fol. 1, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

2.16 Creation and Animation of Adam, detail of mosaic from the Genesis cupola, south portal of the west narthex, Basilica of San Marco, Venice.

2.17 Detail of roundel showing Creation of Adam from first page of Genesis, Lambeth Bible, MS 3 fol. 6v, Lambeth Palace Library, London.

2.18 Bonanus of Pisa, detail of bronze doors showing Creation of Adam, Porta Maggiore, Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, Monreale, Sicily.

2.19 God the Father as architect of the universe, frontispiece of the Bible moralisée, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, fol. 1, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

2.20 Creation of Heaven and Earth, frontispiece of the Bible moralisée, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 1v, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

2.21 Nicholas of Verdun and workshop, Shrine of the Three Kings, Hohe Domkirche St. Petrus, Cologne.

2.22 Visitation, detail of right jambs from central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Reims.

2.23 Expulsion of Adam and Eve, detail of capital from south porch, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.

2.24 Adam and Eve Admonished, detail of second dado spandrel from right embrasure, central portal, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.

2.25 Last Judgment, tympanum of central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.


2.27 Detail showing Resurrection and the Damned, tympanum of central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.
2.28 Creation cycle, detail of outermost archivolts, central portal, north transept porch, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres.

2.29 Creation of Adam and the Four-Legged Beasts, Creation of Paradise, detail of outermost archivolts, central portal, north transept porch, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres.

2.30 Adam Asleep, Adam Standing Among plants, the Fall, detail of outermost archivolts, central portal, north transept porch, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres.

2.31 God Calls Adam, God Admonishes Adam and Eve, the Expulsion, the Labors of Adam and Eve, detail of outermost archivolts, central portal, north transept porch, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres.

2.32 God Calls Adam, God Admonishes Adam and Eve, detail of outermost archivolts, central portal, north transept porch, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres.

2.33 Expulsion of Adam and Eve, detail of quatrefoil from outermost jamb of left embrasure, Portail des Libraires, north transept façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Rouen.

2.34 Baptism of Christ, Psalter leaf, MS Typ 997, recto, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge.

2.35 Spinario, Musei Capitolini, Rome, Inv. MC1186.


2.37 Fall of Man, Sins of Idolatry and Lust, Bible moralisée, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 7v, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

2.38 Nativity with Christ atop a column, Blackburn Psalter, MS Hart 21001, fol. 1r, Hart Collection, Blackburn Museum, Blackburn.

2.39 Christ Disputing with the Doctors with Christ atop a column, Psalter and Hours of the Virgin, MS M.440, fol. 9v, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

2.40 Christ Disputing with the Doctors with Christ atop a column, The Queen Mary Psalter, Royal MS 2 B VII, fol. 151r, British Library, London.

2.41 Reliquary of Sainte-Foy, Abbey Church of Sainte-Foy, Conques.

2.42 Madonna and Child as “Throne of Wisdom” (Golden Madonna of Essen), Essener Münster (Cathedral of Our Lady, St. Cosmas and St. Damien), Essen.
III.

3.1 View of north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.2 Creation of the World, detail of left embrasure, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.3 Left embrasure: Creation of Adam, Creation of Eve, Prohibition to Adam and Eve, Sacrifices of Cain and Abel, Abel Murdered by Cain, God Admonishes Cain, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.4 Right embrasure: Fall of Man, Admonishment of Adam and Eve, Expulsion of Adam and Eve, Cain Killed by Lamech, Noah’s Ark Upon the Waters, north portal west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.5 Scenes from the life of the Virgin, detail of archivolts and lintel, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.6 Last Judgment, tympanum of central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.7 Left embrasure: Scenes from the Life of Joseph (socle), Prophets of Judah (niches), Wise Virgins (doorpost), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.8 Right embrasure: Parable of the Prodigal Son (socle), Prophets of Judah and the Sibyl (niches), Foolish Virgins (doorpost), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.9 Joseph cycle, details of socle of left embrasure, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.10 Prodigal Son cycle, details of socle of right embrasure, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.11 Prodigal Son Window, bay 5, north ambulatory, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.

3.12 Prodigal Son Window, bay 17, north aisle of the choir, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Sens.

3.13 Hercules with the skin of the Nemean lion, detail of the left embrasure (Joseph cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.14 Dancing Satyr, detail of the left embrasure (Joseph cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.
3.15 Joseph Thrown into the Well, detail of the left embrasure (Joseph cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.16 Detail of the Midianite merchants, left embrasure (Joseph cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.17 Feasting in the brothel, detail of the right embrasure (Prodigal Son cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.18 Detail of kneeling servant, right embrasure (Prodigal Son cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.19 Luxuria, detail of the right embrasure (Prodigal Son cycle), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.20 Visitation, detail of tympanum with scenes from the Life of John the Baptist, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.21 Personifications of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts, detail of left embrasure, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.22 Personifications of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts, detail of right embrasure, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.23 Right embrasure: David Spies on Bathsheba at her Bath, Uriah Rides into Battle (niches), Personifications of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts (spandrels), south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.24 Left embrasure: Death of Uriah, Marriage of David and Bathsheba, David and Bathsheba Enthroned (niches), Personifications of Philosophy and the Liberal Arts (spandrels), south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.25 Bathsheba bathing, detail of right embrasure, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.26 Roman sarcophagus: Sea Creatures and Nereids with Clipus, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, Rome.

3.27 Female divinity wearing a diadem, fragment of a pediment from the Via di San Gregorio, Palazzo Clementino Caffarelli, Musei Capitolini, Rome.

3.28 Sleeping Cupid, detail of left doorpost, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.29 Detail of left embrasure (Joseph cycle) showing Hercules, the Satyr, Joseph cast into the pit, Pharaoh’s dream, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.
3.30 Creation of Adam, detail of left embrasure, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.31 Creation of Eve, detail of left embrasure, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.


3.34 God’s Prohibition to Adam and Eve, detail of left embrasure, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.35 Typological trumeau: Virgin and Child atop socle with scenes from the story of Adam and Eve, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris.

3.36 Typological trumeau: Virgin and Child atop socle with scenes from the story of Adam and Eve, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame d’Amiens.

3.37 Typological trumeau: Virgin and Child atop socle with scenes from the story of Adam and Eve (damaged), central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Reims.

3.38 Spandrels with scenes from Genesis, central portal embrasures, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.

3.39 Last Judgment, lintel, tympanum and archivolts, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges.

3.40 Terra Mater, detail of east front, Ara Pacis Augustae, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome.

3.41 Hygieia, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Inv. Sk 353.


3.43 Dancing Maenad, copy after a work by Kallimachos, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, Rome, Inv. MC 1094.

3.44 Dancing Maenad, mosaic from the Atrium House, Antioch, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Inv. 1933.52.1.

3.46 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of right embrasure, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.47 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of spandrel from nave arcade, Abbey of Sant’Angelo in Formis, Capua.

3.48 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of *ambo* spandrel, Cathedral of San Pietro, Sessa Aurunca.

3.49 Hanging Marsyas, Roman copy after an original from Asia Minor, Glyptothek, Munich, Inv, 280.

3.50 *Vignacce* Marsyas, Centrale Montemartini, Musei Capitolini, Rome.

3.51 *Ambos*: detail of caryatid figures, Cathedral of San Pietro in Sessa Aurunca.

3.52 Sarcophagus with standing figures in recessed corners (*Pedagogue* Sarcophagus), Museu Nacional Arqueològic, Tarragona, Inv. MNAT-P-60.

3.53 Arch of Trajan (Porta Aurea), built across the Via Appia, Benevento.

3.54 Detail of central archivolt with the month of March as the *Spinario* (third figure from right), portico, west façade, Cathedral of San Pietro, Sessa Aurunca.

3.55 Nicola Pisano, Pulpit, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Siena.

3.56 Giovanni Pisano, Pulpit, Pieve di Sant’Andrea, Pistoia.

3.57 Nicola Pisano, detail of pulpit with Sibyl (left spandrel below Nativity), Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Siena.

3.58 Giovanni Pisano, detail of pulpit with seated Sibyl, Pieve di Sant’Andrea, Pistoia.

3.59 Giovanni Pisano, detail of pulpit with seated Sibyl, Pieve di Sant’Andrea, Pistoia.

3.60 Nicola Pisano, detail of pulpit with lion, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Siena.

3.61 Roman sarcophagus, detail with lion, Camposanto, Pisa.

3.62 Giovanni Pisano, detail of pulpit with lion, Pieve di Sant’Andrea, Pistoia.

3.63 Roman sarcophagus, detail with lion, Camposanto, Pisa.

3.64 Nicola Pisano, details of seated female nudes, Last Judgment panel, pulpit, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Siena.

3.65 Roman sarcophagus with sea creatures, detail of seated Nereid, Camposanto, Pisa.
3.66 Roman sarcophagus with sea creatures, detail of seated Nereid, Museo dell’Opera della Metropolitana, Siena.

3.67 Nicola Pisano, *Spes*, detail of pulpit, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Siena.

3.68 Roman sarcophagus: Scenes from the Myth of Hippolytus (reused as tomb of Beatrice of Tuscany), detail of Phaedra’s handmaiden, Camposanto, Pisa.

3.69 Giovanni Pisano, detail of angel, pulpit, Pieve di Sant’Andrea, Pistoia.

3.70 *Dioscurus*, formerly in the Nicolas Koutoulakis collection.

3.71 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of first archivolt, north portal, west façade, Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Laon.

3.72 Prophet of Judah, detail of right embrasure, central portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

3.73 Villard de Honnecourt, leaf with seated male nude in a pointed cap, Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt, MS Fr 19093, fol. 22r, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

3.74 David spying on Bathsheba, David kneels before Christ, Psalter of Saint Louis, MS Lat. 10525, fol. 85v, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

3.75 David spying on Bathsheba, detail from Morgan Crusader Bible, MS M. 638, fol. 41v, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

3.76 Scenes from the life of David paired with moralizing lessons: David spying on Bathsheba and Christ sees the Holy Church washed of the stains of sinners (third and fourth roundels in right-hand column), *Bible moralisée*, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 152r, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

3.77 Scenes from the life of David paired with moralizing lessons: David spying on Bathsheba and Christ sees the Holy Church cleaned of all filth (third and fourth roundels in left-hand column), *Bible moralisée*, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, fol. 45r, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

3.78 Baptism of Christ, detail of tympanum, south portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre.

IV.

4.1 Scenes from Genesis, detail of first (leftmost) pier, west façade, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Orvieto.
4.2 Scenes from Genesis, detail of first pier, west façade, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Orvieto.

4.3 Scenes from Genesis, detail of first pier, west façade, Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Orvieto.
NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

Scriptural quotations are from the Douay-Rheims Bible. Unless a published source is cited, all other translations are my own.
INTRODUCTION

“And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them.”

Genesis 1:27

“. . . the heritage of classical antiquity, even though the threads of tradition had become very thin at times, had never been lost beyond recuperation . . . there had been vigorous minor revivals before the ‘great revival’ culminating in the Medicean age.”

Erwin Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences

In the abundant literature on the afterlife of classical forms in the Middle Ages, medieval “classicism” has generally been understood as a series of stylistic borrowings and iconographic quotations, occurring as either isolated instances of individual genius or as the result of a momentary cultural flourishing—a “renascence” to use Erwin Panofsky’s term. ¹

This understanding, which underpins the seminal works in the field, including Panofsky’s Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art and Jean Adhémar’s Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen Âge français, would appear to challenge the Vasarian vision of the Middle Ages as a fallow interval in the history of artistic progress, during which the genius of classical antiquity lay dormant awaiting the Renaissance of the fifteenth-century. ² But while Panofsky’s reappraisal of the classical tradition in the Middle Ages certainly complicates Vasari’s narrative, it does not fundamentally contradict it. The medieval period may no longer be termed “barbarous,” nor is it framed as an era devoid of classical influence, but it

¹ Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art.

² Vasari lays out this vision of a barbarous Middle Ages at the end of his chapter on the architectural orders, writing that: “There is another type of works called tedeschi, which in their ornaments and proportions are very different from the antique and the modern. Today they are not used by the most gifted architects, who instead flee from them as monstrous and barbarous and forsaken of all that comprises order—which should rather be called confusion and disorder . . . This maniera was invented by the Goths who, having ruined the ancient buildings and after the death of the architects in the wars, afterwards made . . . and filled all of Italy with this malediction of buildings; so that no more of them may be made their method has been entirely abandoned. May God save every country from the advent of such an idea and order of works, which, being so deformed in comparison with the beauty of our buildings, merit no further comment.” The translation is by Sankovich, “The Myth of the ‘Myth of the Medieval,’” 34. For the original Italian text, see Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti di Giorgio Vasari, 1:122.
remains inherently intermediary—an in-between age, conceptually separate from the Roman past and the Renaissance future, in which the heritage of classical antiquity was occasionally revisited and revived. Indeed, Vasari’s cyclical and stratigraphic conception of the history of art has proved remarkably enduring: to this day, studies of classical reception in medieval art must contend not only with his characterization of the centuries that make up the Middle Ages, but with the very idea of their “middleness.”

Of course, today’s historians of medieval art have roundly rejected Vasari’s assessment of the period. Beyond the vindication of the so-called maniera tedescha, the general trend of the last half century has been to identify and emphasize artistic and cultural continuities between antiquity and the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, such studies tend still to be presented as corrective counter-narratives to a persistent paradigm of the Middle Ages as an era of alienation from the classical past and its cultural patrimony. Moreover, Panofsky’s conceptualization of the classical tradition as a waxing and waning presence connecting the ancient world to the Renaissance—a conceptualization that incidentally upholds Vasarian periodization—continues to serve as a theoretical baseline for studies of medieval engagement with the art of antiquity. Within this framework, classicizing motifs and styles are of note primarily, if not exclusively, for their presence or absence. Instances of classicism

---

3 In addition to the passage above, Vasari also distinguishes between the “good antique manner” (“gli ordini antichi buoni”) and the “German and barbarous one,” (“la tedesca e barbaro”) in his life of Filippo Brunelleschi, see Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti, 3:201–202.


5 The literature in this vein is too abundant to list here, and spans a number of disciplines, from spolia studies to regional art histories, to literary history and the history of ideas. Examples include Bloch, “The New Fascination with Ancient Rome”; Bolgia, Rome across Time and Space, C. 500-1400; Caillet, “L’Antique dans les arts du Moyen Age occidental: survivances et réactualisations”; Castellotti and Giuliano, Esempla: la rinascita dell’antico nell’arte italiana; da Federico II ad Andrea Pisano; Comparetti and Ziolkowski, Vergil in the Middle Ages; Clark et al., Ovid in the Middle Ages; Fossi, “Nani sulle spalle di giganti? (a proposito dell’atteggiamento degli artisti medievali nei confronti dell’antichità”; Greenhalgh, The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages; Greenhalgh, Marble Past, Monumental Present; Kinney, “Spolia. Damnatio and Renovatio Memoriae”; Raby, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages.
are seen not as an ever present and multivalent aspect of medieval visual culture but rather as high water marks, indicative of surging interest in the ancient world and signifying simply Antiquity writ large.

Studies of classicizing forms and figures in the Middle Ages have generally treated these occurrences as historically or geographically localized events. Whether they focus on specific artistic phenomena (the use of spolia, for example), or particular historical moments (for instance the year 1200), such studies tend to overlook the way in which evocations of the classical past functioned throughout the Middle Ages as ciphers of connotative meaning, parsing them instead as mere indices of interest in antiquity at specific moments in time, or perhaps connecting them to contemporary politics or the local availability of ancient models.6

My dissertation reconfigures this discourse on antiquity and the Middle Ages. It frames medieval classicism as a set of expressive possibilities that encode and transmit culturally contingent meaning, arguing that classical models were invoked selectively by artists, in concert with a range of other representational modes, in order to communicate complex messages to an audience sensitive to differences in style. Presented as a series of case studies, it examines three sculptural representations of Adam and the Creation narrative from the Romanesque and Gothic periods in Italy and France, considering them as key sites for medieval engagement with the art of antiquity. I argue that the evocation of antiquity, effected through material and formal assimilations of sculpted objects to ancient artifacts, functioned as a rhetorical device in Romanesque and Gothic sculpture, constructing

---

6 The use of ancient spolia in the Middle Ages will be discussed at length in Chapter One; for an overview of the field, including bibliography, see Kinney, “The Concept of Spolia.” I will return to the so-called “1200 style” in Chapter Two; for an introduction to the subject, see Avril et al., The Year 1200: A Symposium; Hoffmann and Deuschler, The Year 1200: A Centennial Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, February 12 through May 10, 1970.
frameworks of meaning around a given object. My dissertation examines the particular character and purpose of such evocations in images of Adam from the cathedral churches of Modena, Paris and Auxerre, offering new interpretations of three important monuments in the history of medieval sculpture, engaging with landmark studies in medieval classicism by such scholars as Claussen, Vöge and Panofsky, and reconsidering attitudes towards the public display of nudity in the centuries preceding the Renaissance, the period when, it is generally accepted, it became a part of common artistic parlance.7

Much like the reuse of ancient *spolia* in medieval architecture and *ars sacra*, sculpted images of Adam were often coincident with—and emblematic of—a demonstrable antiquarian bent. In a sense, Adam is the quintessential nude, and throughout the Middle Ages, the full-length nude was consistently associated with the classical past, perhaps as much as its actual physical remains. A study of sculpted representations of Adam and the programs and polities in which they appear therefore affords an opportunity to track medieval attitudes towards antiquity and to examine how and why medieval sculptors made use of antique models. My aim is not to trace or catalogue a specific iconography but rather to explore the particular, nuanced understanding of antiquity and ancient art that certain individual images evince, and to frame them in relationship to a complex and contingent culture of polysemous and self-conscious classicism.

Located at the apex of divine creation, and with nudity as one of his defining characteristics, the figure of Adam is also crucial to our understanding of medieval ideas about the body and bodily beauty. Over the past several decades, the body has been the

---

subject of intense historical research and theoretical investigation. In keeping, however, with ongoing interest in the abject, the ugly and the contingent in medieval religious art, treatments of the nude and nakedness in the Middle Ages have focused almost exclusively on nakedness as a sign of vulnerability and shame. In a famous study of the nude in western art, Kenneth Clark confidently asserts that the very concept of bodily beauty was inimical to the medieval mindset, arguing that its association with the idols of paganism gave nudity a diabolical quality in the Middle Ages, and stating that during the medieval period, the body “ceased to be the mirror of divine perfection and became an object of humiliation and shame. The whole of mediaeval art,” Clark writes, “is a proof of how completely Christian dogma had eradicated the image of bodily beauty.” Having established this paradigm, Clark must necessarily view all instances of corporeal beauty in the Middle Ages—beauty here being equated with the fluid forms of classicism—as anomalous. Clark’s characterization of medieval art, which clearly echoes Vasari’s conception of artistic progress in which the twin pinnacles of classical antiquity and sixteenth-century Italy are separated by the disaster of the Gothic, has been challenged in the last half century—for example in the recent volume on The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art—but his vision of the medieval body as a site of abject suffering and humiliation has retained a surprisingly firm hold on the art-historical imagination.

---

8 The bibliography on the body in the Middle Ages is vast and expanding, but for an introduction to the topic, see Bynum, “Why All the Fuss about the Body?”; Dinzelbacher, “Über die Körperlichkeit in der mittelalterlichen Frömmigkeit”; Kay and Rubin, Framing Medieval Bodies; Le Goff, Une histoire du corps au moyen âge; Marek, Bild und Körper im Mittelalter.

9 See, for example, MacDonald, Ridderbos, and Schlusemann, The Broken Body; Hoffmann, Das Gabelkreuz in St. Maria im Kapitol zu Köln und das Phänomen der Crucifici dolorosi in Europa; Biessenecker, Und sie erkannten, dass sie nackt waren.

10 Clark, The Nude, 301.

11 This edited volume offers some valuable counter-examples to Clark’s theory of medieval nudity, but the contributions, which cover an incredibly broad range of subjects, from Romanesque sculpture to Flemish
My dissertation proposes an alternative to this prevailing narrative of the medieval body as a suffering body. Representations of bodily beauty, I argue, were not anomalous in the Middle Ages—on the contrary, interest in beautiful bodies was persistent and widespread. Moreover, sensuous, corporeal beauty was often figured using the visual vocabulary of classicism, and while the classicizing nude was indeed inextricably linked to the idols of paganism in the medieval imagination, the association was more ambiguous than today’s scholars might think. Somatic beauty, I suggest, like the classicism with which it so often went hand-in-hand, was deemed appropriate only to certain subjects and contexts, and its presence should be viewed not as the flowering of genius but as the deliberate deployment of a carefully calibrated communicative tool. The three case studies under consideration here are of particular interest both as sites of explicit engagement with the art of antiquity, and as examples of full-length nudes that defy conventional wisdom concerning the role and character of the naked body in medieval art. Indeed, in all three cases, interest in the beautiful nude body and interest in the motifs and materials of ancient art should be seen as two sides of the same coin.

Previous treatments of Creation cycles in medieval art have generally centered on the figure of Eve and her shameful role in the history of salvation. Given Eve’s prominence in both the biblical text and in the exegetical tradition that began with Ambrose and Augustine,
and in light of scholarly interest in the female body and female sexuality as a source of tremendous anxiety in the Middle Ages, this bias is not only understandable, it is historically grounded. The foregrounding of Eve in art-historical literature is also due to the importance she was accorded by a host of artists, for example the maker of Bernward’s doors at Hildesheim. This understandable focus on Eve, however, has resulted in a dearth of scholarly discussion of Adam’s place in the art of the Middle Ages, and the few broad iconographic studies of Adam and Eve that exist—when they consider the medieval period at all—fail to address two key issues of deep and abiding historical interest. Firstly, they fail to consider the particular meaning and function of sculpted images of Adam, focusing mainly on painting, and treating all media as essentially equivalent, iconographically speaking. Nor do these studies address Adam’s role as the archetypal nude, whose physical beauty was at once scripturally specified and highly suspect. Absent from the literature is a broad ranging examination of the figure of Adam as trope and iconographic type in medieval art, particularly in sculpture, a lacuna my dissertation addresses.

This specific focus on sculpted images of Adam also affords the opportunity to consider the peculiar qualities of architectural sculpture, in particular the spatiotemporal relationships it constructs between sculpted and fleshly bodies. This approach to the study of medieval sculpture, which takes into account its performative and spatiotemporally contingent qualities, is best exemplified by the work of scholars like Paul Binski and

---

13 Scholarship on the Hildesheim doors, which feature one of the best-known Creation cycles in medieval art, has often foregrounded Eve’s role as an antitype to the Virgin Mary, offering typological readings of the juxtaposition of Genesis and Christological imagery—an understandable focus given Eve’s importance in the relief cycle. For more on the typological relationship between Eve and Mary, see Guldan, *Eva und Maria. Eine Antithese als Bildmotiv*. On the Hildesheim doors see, for example, Cohen and Derbes, “Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim”; Stahl, “Eve’s Reach: A Note on Dramatic Elements in the Hildesheim Doors.”

Jacqueline Jung, both of whom have argued that in any study of architectural sculpture, the contingent nature of embodied reception must be taken into account.\textsuperscript{15} The work of Roland Recht is also of great importance in this regard, integrating, as it does, the study of architecture with the study of sacred images to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the function of medieval architectural sculpture in space, in liturgy, and in relationship to the medieval viewer.\textsuperscript{16} As recent dissertations in the field attest, approaches that rest on physically contingent theories of reception have clearly gained currency among historians of medieval art, and embodied reception remains an important and underutilized interpretative lens in the study of medieval sculpture.\textsuperscript{17} Building on this growing corpus of literature, I consider the “bodily rhetoric” of these specific representations of Adam, exploring the ways in which these sculpted figures engage with embodied beholders within the particular frameworks of their architectural, liturgical and cultural environments, and situating my dissertation within a growing discourse on dynamic processes of reception in contemporary art-historical scholarship.

***

The first chapter of the dissertation (“Modena: Pseudo-Spolia, Historicism, Legitimacy”) focuses on the Genesis reliefs of Modena cathedral (Figs. 1.1-1.5). Attributed

\textsuperscript{15} In an essay on the Angel Choir at Lincoln, for instance, Binski argues that the new bodily expressivity associated with the Gothic period was linked to a growing recognition of the metaphysical power of the body as a locus for the expression of ideas, and suggests that the significance of such sculptural cycles must be understood in temporal terms, as a function of bodily experience, see Binski, “The Angel Choir at Lincoln and the Poetics of the Gothic Smile.” Jung has also suggested that the highly expressive modes of sculptural representation that developed in the thirteenth century allowed for the communication of meaning through a dynamic process of empathetic engagement on the part of the beholder, see Jung, “Dynamic Bodies and the Beholders Share: The Wise and Foolish Virgins of Magdeburg Cathedral”; Jung, “Beyond the Barrier.” See also Michael Grandmontagne’s work on Claus Sluter and Geraldine Johnson’s contributions in the field of Renaissance sculpture, Grandmontagne, \textit{Claus Slater und die Lesbarkeit mittelalterlicher Skulptur}; Johnson, “In the Eye of the Beholder”; Johnson, “Activating the Effigy.”

\textsuperscript{16} See, for example, Recht, \textit{Le croire et le voir}.

\textsuperscript{17} Two examples, from the medieval and early modern fields, are Lakey, “Relief in Perspective”; Nolan, “Touching the Divine.”
to the sculptor Wiligelmus, these reliefs are dated to the first years of the twelfth century, and as part of the larger program of the façade they are among the most extensively published works of Romanesque sculpture in Italy. They have been linked to the so-called Gregorian reform, to the Investiture Controversy and the First Crusade, and to sermons and liturgical drama. In the abundant scholarship, however, discussions of the program’s meaning are few, and have generally focused on parsing its iconography while ignoring questions of form and style. My dissertation builds on historically informed readings of the program’s iconography offered by scholars like Dorothy Glass, but sets aside the problem of iconographic significance to focus on the culturally contingent process of visual signification. The style, format and arrangement of the reliefs, I argue, was intended to mimic the look of ancient artifacts integrated into the fabric of the building. In this chapter I discuss this “spolia effect,” exploring the way in which the deliberate imitation of what I term an aesthetic of reuse produced and encoded meaning in the context of political and ecclesiastical reform movements that looked to Rome as their source of legitimacy, forging a connection to the ancient past even in the absence of actual Roman spolia.

In the dissertation’s second chapter (“Paris: Classicism, Lifelikeness and Enlivenment”), I turn my attention to France, and to the figure of Adam from the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris, now in the Musée de Cluny (Fig. 2.1). This image is extraordinary in many respects: as a monumental nude, sculpted in the round in a fluid, graceful posture clearly appropriated from antique statuary, it upends commonly held assumptions about the naked body as a source of beauty, about the use and meaning of classicizing motifs, and about the cultural and theological significance of sculpture in thirteenth-century French art. Despite its undisputed status as a masterpiece of Gothic sculpture, and despite widespread scholarly interest in both classicism and the somatic in the art of the Middle Ages, the
Parisian Adam has been almost entirely overlooked by historians of medieval art. In the second chapter of my dissertation, I address the reasons for this scholarly neglect and discuss the way in which the appropriation of the Venus pudica pose, which would have been as recognizably classicizing to medieval viewers as it is to us today, invoked a complex structure of cultural associations in order to communicate particular ideas about beauty and skill, divine and artistic creation, lifelikeness and enlivenment. Referring to written accounts of medieval encounters with antique art and to visual exegeses of the Genesis narrative in sculpture, painting and mosaic, I offer a reading of the Parisian Adam as a discrete object, focusing on the cultural structures and associations that gave meaning to his form.

In the third and final chapter of the dissertation (“Auxerre: Narratives of Redemption and the Reclamation of Antiquity”) I consider the Creation cycle dating from around the turn of the fourteenth century that adorns the lower embrasures of the north portal from the west façade of the cathedral of Saint-Étienne at Auxerre (Figs. 3.1-3.4). The extensive program of narrative reliefs that span the basements of the cathedral’s west façade are widely regarded as a locus classicus of borrowings from the antique thanks to the presence of a few clearly classicizing figures—a nude Hercules, a dancing satyr, and a sleeping cupid among others. These figures have been the subject of focused iconographic and stylistic analysis by scholars of medieval classicism including Panofsky and Adhémar, but such studies have generally sidestepped the question of “the program,” treating these instances of classicism as discrete iconographic ciphers. Meanwhile, discussions of the façade’s program as a whole have largely ignored these classicizing images in favor of broader explorations of the narrative themes that connect certain of the relief cycles. Meaning, these studies suggest, can be deduced from a reading of the program’s narrative subjects against the backdrop of local politics and patronage. Both camps have essentially
ignored the north portal’s Genesis cycle, which appears irrelevant to arguments about patronage and does not offer clear evidence of classical borrowing. Not only are the Genesis reliefs subtly but unmistakably classicizing, however, they are crucial to understanding the program’s two central and intertwined concerns—the theology and mechanics of redemption, and the incorporation of the classical past into Christian salvation history. My dissertation proposes an integrated reading of the Auxerre socle reliefs which reconstructs their underlying theory of redemption and frames them as a reclamation or conversion of antiquity.

***

In each of these case studies, I deal with a different iteration of medieval classicism and engage with a different area in the vast body of scholarship on classical reception in the Middle Ages. Chapter One considers the materiality, meaning and mimicry of the classical past’s physical remains and intervenes in the field of spolia studies; Chapter Two explores the semiotics of classicizing styles and postures and engages with discussions of bodily beauty, lifelikeness and enlivenment; and Chapter Three frames the programmatic quotation of ancient forms and motifs as a reclamation of antiquity while addressing the limitations of the abundant literature on the afterlife of specific classical forms and iconographies. Taken together, however, these three discrete studies demonstrate that Adam and the Creation cycle served as a flashpoint for medieval experimentations with classicism: not only did the subject call for nudity, offering medieval artists an opportunity to engage with their classical cultural heritage as they sought appropriate models; the content of the Creation narrative prompted reflections on the origins of human history and the history of the church, the nature and purpose of creation, both artistic and divine, and the possibility of physical perfection—all of which, I argue, were bound up with the classical past in the medieval
imagination. Beginning with the figure of Adam, whose nudity constitutes a narrative necessity, and moving outwards to consider the Genesis cycles in which he most frequently appears, the churches into whose fabrics such cycles are integrated, and the visual, political, liturgical and theological contexts in which these buildings are located, my dissertation offers a clearer understanding of the meaning and function of the classicizing nude in the sculpture of the Middle Ages.
I. MODENA
The Spolia Effect

“And so the divine right hand coming to their rescue, the fabric of the foundation having now reached the higher parts, and while the nave was being built . . . the people began to fear lest through a lack of stone (for the supply was small) such a church would remain uncompleted . . . Persuading the hearts of men, you make the earth to be dug out; you deign out of the multitude of your mercy to disclose astonishing heaps of marble and stone, which seem sufficient to complete the task in hand. A machine is therefore erected; noteworthy marbles are uncovered; and they are carved with marvelous skill. The blocks are raised and fitted together . . . So the walls grow, and the building grows.”

Relatio de innovatione ecclesie sancti Geminiani

Embedded in the west façade of the cathedral of San Geminiano at Modena are four rectangular sculpted panels depicting scenes from Genesis (Figs. 1.1-1.5). The first two panels relate the story of Adam and Eve, from the moment of their Creation, through the Fall and Expulsion, concluding with the Tilling of the Soil. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve are shown naked, with plump, rounded bellies and sturdy limbs. Without visible genitalia, their bodies are close to identical, distinguished only by Eve’s breasts and Adam’s beard. They stand on broad, block-like feet; their hands, with which they clutch their cheeks and press fig leaves over their groins following the Fall, are large and flat, characterized by long, straight fingers of nearly equal length. Their oval faces—solemn and inscrutable, even at the moment of their Expulsion—are marked by straight, long noses, large, almond-shaped eyes with pronounced black irises, and blunt, wide mouths that turn down at the corners. Their hair is stylized in typical Romanesque fashion: outlining the shape of the skull, it molds itself to the head like a patterned cap, falling to the shoulders in thick, spiraling bunches in the case of Eve or, in the case of Adam, in thin, wavy lines. After the Expulsion, the pair don ankle-length, long-sleeved garments; soft and heavy, with fluttering hemlines, the drapery does not cling to their forms but skims them, falling nearly to the ground in thick, straight folds. Naked or clothed, these bodies have a weight and solidity quite unlike the attenuated
angularity of French Romanesque works like the figure of Isaiah at Souillac (Fig. 1.6). To the modern eye, they may lack the grace and fluidity we associate with works of classical sculpture; as monumental nudes, however, whose tragic history unfurls across a series of oblong slabs of marble roughly the size and shape of ancient sarcophagus panels, articulated by clearly classicizing architectural and ornamental devices and set into a façade made up of irregularly cut blocks that mimic the look of ancient architectural *spolia*, the figures of Adam and Eve deliberately evoke the sculptural detritus of antiquity that would have dotted the Modenese landscape. The format of the narrative and the arrangement of the sculpted panels in the façade create a kind of “spolia effect,” calling to mind the programmatic reuse of recognizably antique material in the churches and cathedrals of medieval Italy. This deliberate imitation of a spoliate aesthetic, in an era when cities like Pisa, Genoa and Ferrara were busily studding their buildings with fragments of ancient reliefs and inscriptions in a proclamation of *romanitas*, would have given the façade of the Modenese duomo a historicist texture, forging a connection to ancient Rome even in the absence of actual Roman *spolia.*

In this chapter, I will consider the Genesis reliefs as an example of “pseudo-*spolia*,” framing them in relationship to a visual culture of reuse, and exploring their meaning and function in the context of political and ecclesiastical reform movements that looked to Rome as their source of legitimacy and *auctoritas.*

---

1 The sculpture at Modena is often compared with French Romanesque works from the same period, and such comparisons often focus on the vocabulary of drapery folds. For example, in his study of Romanesque sculpture in Lombardy, Arthur Kingsley Porter compares the Modena reliefs to sculpture from the cloister at Moissac, noting a shared mannerism—“the use of two parallel incised lines to represent folds in the drapery”—and speculating that this may have been derived independently from ivory carvings, see Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 1: 274. The character and purpose of such comparisons is discussed below.

Attributed to the sculptor Wiligelmus, the reliefs are dated to the first years of the twelfth century, and as part of the larger program of the cathedral they are perhaps the most extensively published works of Romanesque sculpture in Italy. The narrative sequence, which begins with the Creation and ends with Noah and his sons disembarking from the ark, spans four bays, two to the north and two to the south of the central portal. The cycle includes scenes drawn from the first eight chapters of the Old Testament; reading from left to right, it unfolds within a classicizing architectural framework—a blind arcade of rounded arches decorated with various ornamental devices, all antique in origin, supported by fluted columns with Corinthian capitals and set beneath a cornice embellished with two acanthus leaf bands. The first panel (Fig. 1.2), located above the façade’s left portal, contains four scenes: a half-length Christ-Logos in a mandorla held aloft by angels, displaying an open book bearing the inscription LUX/EGO SU(M) MU/NDI//VIA VE/RAX/VITA PER/ENNIS; the Creation of Adam; the Creation of Eve; and the Temptation. The second and most abraded panel (Fig. 1.3), located to the left of the central portal, depicts the aftermath of the Fall: the Admonishment of Adam and Eve by God, the Expulsion from Paradise, and Adam and Eve Tilling the Soil. The third relief (Fig. 1.4), to the right of the

---


4 The inscription is based on John 8:12 (“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life”), see Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 167. Subsequent scenes are based on passages from the first three chapters of Genesis.

5 These scenes are drawn from Genesis 3, two directly (the Admonishment (Genesis 3:11-20) and the Expulsion (Genesis 3:23-24)) and one indirectly (Adam and Eve Tilling is based on God’s pronouncement: “cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life.” (Genesis 3:17)).
main portal, shows the Sacrifice of Cain and Abel, the Killing of Abel, and God Reproaching Cain, while the final panel (Fig. 1.5), installed above the right portal, depicts the killing of Cain by the blind Lamech, Noah’s Ark upon the waters, and Noah and his sons leaving the Ark.⁶

The first and fourth panels were moved to their current positions when the lateral doorways were opened by the Campionese masters during their late twelfth-century remodeling of the façade.⁷ In their original configuration, the reliefs would have formed a more coherent frieze, running just above eye-level across the four central bays, punctuated by piers and by the central portal but unified, visually, by the architectural device of the arcade, the stylistic consistency of the figures, and the clear rhythm of the narrative.⁸ In each of the four panels, the monumental, fleshy figures fill most of the available vertical space, their heads rising to the level of the Corinthian capitals.

The Modena panels have been associated with the so-called Gregorian reform, the Investiture Controversy and the first Crusade, sermons and liturgical drama.⁹ A handful of studies have identified prototypes for Wiligelmus’s large, solidly built figures in provincial

---

⁶ The story of Cain and Abel occurs in the fourth chapter of Genesis. Lamech’s accidental act of murder is also mentioned here (“And Lamech said to his wives Ada and Sella: Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech: for I have slain a man to the wounding of myself, and a stripling to my own bruising.” (Genesis 4:23)), although the details of the story are drawn from the apocryphal Old Testament, see Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 171–172. For more on the Death of Cain, see Papanicolaou, “The Iconography of the Genesis Window of the Cathedral of Tours,” 182–184. The story of Noah spans chapters 6-9 of Genesis, but the particular scenes shown here, the ark upon the water and Noah and his sons disembarking on dry land, are taken from Genesis 7 and 8 (specifically Genesis 8:18: “So Noe went out, he and his sons…”).


⁸ For more on the frieze in Romanesque art see Kahn, *The Romanesque Frieze and Its Spectator*.

Roman works.\textsuperscript{10} Despite this abundance of scholarship, however, and despite the cycle’s undisputed position at the beginning of a new era in monumental sculpture in Italy, the Genesis reliefs, and the sculptural program to which they belong, have received limited attention from scholars outside of Italy. Studies of the reliefs have generally retraced the same circular arguments about origins and influence that preoccupied the earliest historians of Romanesque sculpture. Few scholars have grappled with the problem of meaning, and those who have, have for the most part confined themselves to historically inflected readings of the program’s iconography, paying little heed to questions of style or form. I aim to integrate the analysis of narrative subject with an examination of representational mode, exploring the confluence of interest in classicism and the Genesis narrative as an expression of allegiance to and continuity with Rome, the papacy, and the past.

It is hardly surprising that the sculptural program of San Geminiano has attracted considerable scholarly attention—it is, after all, among the best-documented works of Romanesque sculpture in existence.\textsuperscript{11} Thanks to a pair of inscribed plaques, one on the façade and the other on the exterior of the apse, we know the date the works were begun (9 June 1099), and the name of the architect (Lanfrancus) and the sculptor (Wiligelmus) responsible for the first stage of construction and embellishment. Moreover, an illuminated thirteenth-century copy of an early twelfth-century manuscript by a canon named Aymo, the \textit{Relatio de innovatione ecclesie sancti Geminiani, ac de translatione eius beatissimi corporis}, gives a thorough account of the history and political context of the cathedral’s construction, listing key dates and detailing a dispute between the bishop and citizens of Modena regarding the

\textsuperscript{10} On Roman prototypes see, for example, Knauer, “Tribuerunt Sua Marmora Provinciae. Beobachtungen zu antiken Vorbildern von Wiligelmus’ Genesis-Fries an der Domfassade in Modena und zu den sog. Metopen.”

\textsuperscript{11} For a summary of the primary source material relating to the construction and consecration of the cathedral, see Glass, \textit{The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130}, 133–148. A more detailed account of the early literature can be found in Quintavalle, \textit{La Cattedrale di Modena}, 1: 265–352.
translation and display of Saint Geminianus’s relics—a dispute that was only resolved by the intervention of Matilda of Tuscany and Pope Paschal II.¹² This wealth of information, in the hands of art historians concerned with the twin problems of chronology and primacy and writing at a time of intense European nationalism, fueled a series of increasingly heated exchanges about style and dating, the ramifications of which can still be felt today.¹³

The central figures in this debate were Arthur Kingsley Porter and Emile Mâle, the former a native of Connecticut educated at Yale University and Columbia’s School of Architecture, the latter a devout Catholic born in Commentry in central France who studied at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris.¹⁴ Porter and Mâle were both concerned with the origins and development of Romanesque sculpture, and both believed that the pilgrimage routes that wended their way across Europe to converge on Santiago de Compostela functioned as a network for interregional artistic exchange.¹⁵ Porter, however, considered documents and inscriptions to be the most important tools for dating works of sculpture, while Mâle and his French colleagues based their chronologies on stylistic comparisons between and among monuments.¹⁶ Moreover, for French art historians in the years before

---

¹² Modena, Archivio Capitolare, Cod. 0.II.11, fols. 1-9v. A digitized version of the manuscript can be found here: [http://www.archivistodiocesano.mo.it/archivio/flip/ACMo-OII-11/](http://www.archivistodiocesano.mo.it/archivio/flip/ACMo-OII-11/). A recent edition of the manuscript’s text by Saverio Lomartire can be found in Armandi et al., *Lanfranco e Wiligelmo*, 757–758.

¹³ For the historiography of Modena cathedral and its sculpture, I have relied heavily on Dorothy Glass’s pithy account, and on the doctoral dissertation of Jeanne Fox-Friedman, see Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 148–157; Fox-Friedman, “Cosmic History and Messianic Vision: The Sculpture of Modena Cathedral at the Time of the Crusades,” 23–76.


¹⁶ Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 151.
and after World War I, nationalism was a powerful and defining force: they were deeply invested in the idea of France as the cradle of Romanesque invention, an idea that Porter’s study refuted.\(^1\)

Based in part on the inscriptions on the exterior of the apse and on the façade at San Geminiano, Porter argued in his book on *Lombard Architecture* that Modena—as opposed to Cluny, Toulouse or Moissac—was the birthplace of monumental Romanesque sculpture, and that Wiligelms’s work there and at Cremona anticipated key developments in French sculpture.\(^2\) Mâle and his followers were incensed by this view, and in a review of Porter’s book, Mâle railed against the American scholar, roundly rejecting his conclusions: \(^3\)

>`Tout ce système repose sur l’inscription encastrée dans la façade de la cathédrale de Modène. Elle nous apprend que les fondations de l’église furent jetées en 1099, et elle ajoute qu’entre tous les sculpteurs Guillelmus est digne de la gloire. Je ne suis pas le premier à remarquer que cette inscription n’établit aucune relations entre la date de la fondation de la cathédrale et celle des travaux de Guillelmus.\`

Mâle insisted that Wiligelms’s work at Modena, and northern Italian sculpture more generally, was but a pale imitation of French masterpieces; “La sculpture lombarde,” he wrote, “nous renvoie comme un miroir, qui déforme un peu, les divers aspects de la sculpture française.”\(^4\) Porter’s response was swift and scathing, reasserting his belief in mutual artistic exchange and influence between Italy and France, and suggesting that “If M. Mâle were more familiar with the Lombard monuments, he certainly would not be so rash as

\(^{17}\) For more on French nationalism and its role in the conflict between Mâle and Porter, see Mann, “Romantic Identity, Nationalism, and the Understanding of the Advent of Romanesque Art in Christian Spain,” 160–161; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 149–153; Glass, “‘Quo Vadis’: The Study of Italian Romanesque Sculpture at the Beginning of the Third Millennium,” 6–9.

\(^{18}\) For example, Porter suggests that it was Wiligelms who “instituted the motive of jamb sculptures” at Cremona, and writes that his art “paved the way not only for the masters of mediaeval sculpture in the Ile-de-France, but also for the artists of the Italian Renaissance,” see Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 1:275.


\(^{20}\) Ibid., 46.
to assign the activity of Guglielmo to the second half of the twelfth century.” Other French scholars weighed in, and soon thereafter Porter published his *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, in the opening volume of which the Modenese reliefs are included in a list of monuments which can be dated by inscriptions and other so-called “external” evidence. This vitriolic back-and-forth was clearly the product of a particular historical moment, a clash of personalities in the nascent field of medieval art history, set against a backdrop of intense European nationalism around the time of the First World War. But while the rancorous, politically charged debate between Porter and Mâle was ended by the former’s disappearance in 1933, the questions that preoccupied these early twentieth-century scholars continued to direct and define discussions of Modena’s sculpture for generations. Well into the second half of the twentieth century, studies of the program at Modena focused largely on the origin of Romanesque sculpture, employing stylistic analysis in an effort to identify vectors of influence in an artistic world that spanned all of Europe. For example, Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, whose first major monograph on the cathedral was published in 1964, focused almost exclusively on stylistic analysis when he argued that eleventh- and twelfth-century artistic production could only be made sense of when seen in terms of its European context, while Roberto Salvini’s preoccupation with the problem of

---


23 Porter’s direct engagement with Mâle ceased when Mâle left France in 1923 to assume the role of director of the École Française in Rome, but the mantle was taken up by Deschamps and Enlart, among others, see Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 152–153; Mann, “Romantic Identity, Nationalism, and the Understanding of the Advent of Romanesque Art in Christian Spain,” 158. Porter disappeared under mysterious circumstances off the coast of Ireland at Inishbofin where he had a home and was presumed drowned; for a complete biography see Seidel, “Arthur Kingsley Porter (1883-1933)”; Seidel, “Arthur Kingsley Porter: Life, Legend, and Legacy.”

origins and Wiligelmu’s place in the history of Romanesque sculpture is obvious from the title of his first book, *Wiligelmo e le origini della scultura romanica.* Both Quintavalle and Salvini sought to identify relationships between the Modenese sculptures and monuments elsewhere in Europe through analysis of key stylistic markers including drapery, figural proportions and facial types. Their studies, however, pay little heed to the social, political, economic or cultural contexts of the Modenese sculptures’ making, nor do they ever consider their particular style as a representational mode, deliberately deployed to communicate specific ideas to a visually literate audience.

In 1984, the eight-hundredth anniversary of the cathedral’s dedication by Pope Lucius III was marked by a number of major conferences and publications. These edited volumes—all in Italian—include essays from dozens of contributors on a wide range of topics, including the economic, cultural and religious history of Modena, materials and methods of construction, the reuse of antique objects, epigraphy, and restoration. Despite, or perhaps because of their broad scope, these imposing tomes are somewhat scattershot—Dorothy Glass points out that they fail to give the reader “any sense of the monument as a coherent entity, built and embellished in a specific time and place, in response to specific historical conditions.” Furthermore, with no solid foundation on which to build (no

25 Quintavalle wrote that the problems posed by architecture, sculpture, painting, etc. “non possono intendersi all’interno delle storiografie nazionali e, peggio, di quelli regionali, ma vengono chiariti solo da una visione a raggio più vasto, europeo.” Quintavalle, *La Cattedrale di Modena,* 1:7. Salvini was a generation older than Quintavalle, and his book on Wiligelmo was published almost a decade before his younger colleague’s, in 1956. He also published a later monograph on the cathedral at Modena in which he returned to these themes, see Salvini, *Wiligelmo e le origini della scultura Romanica;* Salvini, *Il Duomo di Modena.*

26 The methodological parallels between these two works are discussed by Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130,* 155.

27 The two most important are Armandi et al., *Lanfranco e Wiligelmo,* Castelnuovo, Peroni, and Settis, *Wiligelmo e Lanfranco nell’Europa romanica.*

monograph on the cathedral has been produced since those by Salvini and Quintavalle in the 1960s), and with discussions of the cathedral and its sculpture largely limited to a small circle of Italian scholars rehashing the same arguments and adhering to the same methodologies that have defined the field for half a century, Modena remains for the most part on the periphery of contemporary discourses in the history of medieval art.  

Nevertheless, the Genesis reliefs, as part of a seemingly unified sculptural program, have been the subject of a handful of studies that actually concern themselves with the question of historically-contingent meaning, as opposed to the usual musings on style and materials. Foremost among these are a number of works by Glass, whose incisive assessment of the methodological shortcomings in the Modena literature is quoted above. Glass’s particular approach can be defined, essentially, as iconographic analysis within a site-specific cultural/political/historical matrix. When applied to the sculptural program of San Geminiano, the result is a foregrounding of Modena’s political climate at the turn of the twelfth century, and of its role in the so-called Gregorian Reform and Investiture Controversy.  

Sculptures from the façade and the Porta dei Principi (on the south side of

---

29 When it comes to Italian Romanesque sculpture in general, and Modena in particular, Dorothy Glass’s analysis of the state of field is particularly eloquent and insightful, identifying key methodological shortcomings and offering suggestions for future directions, see Glass, “‘Quo Vadis’: The Study of Italian Romanesque Sculpture at the Beginning of the Third Millennium.” For more specific (and occasionally scathing) criticism of particular scholarly works, see Glass, *Italian Romanesque Sculpture. An Annotated Bibliography.*

the cathedral) are parsed iconographically, and interpreted as part of a program intended to celebrate the recently formed alliance between the city and the papacy.\textsuperscript{31} For example, the Old Testament stories depicted in the Genesis panels are read as a kind of visual treatise on the importance of the Church as a historical institution and its crucial role as administrator of the sacraments in the mechanism of redemption.\textsuperscript{32} As an allegory of good and bad priesthood, the story of Cain and Abel in particular, Glass suggests, would have resonated politically at a time when the stamping out of simony and the legitimacy of the sacraments administered by simoniacal priests were subjects of intense and widespread discussion.\textsuperscript{33}

Glass is not the only scholar to have grappled with the historically contingent meaning of the Modenese sculptural program. Francesco Gandolfo, for instance, has framed the Genesis reliefs in relation to the ideas of the reformer Bruno of Segni, while Anat Tcherikower has written on Modena, Nonantola, and the Investiture Controversy.\textsuperscript{34} Viewing the cathedral in the context of the First Crusade and the chronicles it inspired, Jeanne Fox-Friedman has drawn connections between the Porta della Pescheria on the north flank, with its scenes from Arthurian legend and images of the Labors of the Months, and the Porta dei Principi to the south, which depicts the life of Saint Geminianus along with images of apostles and clerics, interpreting both as heroic tales set against a backdrop of millenarianism and a twelfth-century obsession with the notion of a universal world history.\textsuperscript{35} Chiara

\textsuperscript{31} See Glass, “The Reform Programme of the Cathedral of Modena”; Glass, “Prophecy and Priesthood at Modena.” Glass views the Porta della Pescheria, on the cathedral’s north flank, as extraneous to the reform program.

\textsuperscript{32} Glass, \textit{The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130}, 165–174.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 171.

\textsuperscript{34} Gandolfo, “Note per una interpretazione iconologica delle Storie del Genesi di Wiligelmo”; Tcherikover, “Reflections of the Investiture Controversy at Nonantola and Modena.”

\textsuperscript{35} Fox-Friedman, “Cosmic History and Messianic Vision: The Sculpture of Modena Cathedral at the Time of the Crusades”; Fox-Friedman, “Messianic Visions.”
Frugoni has connected the Genesis cycle to an Anglo-Norman drama called the *Ordo representacionis Ade* or *Play of Adam*, and to contemporary attitudes towards labor as an instrument of redemption.\(^{36}\) None of these scholars, however, have seriously addressed the aspect of the Modena reliefs that I find most interesting, namely their conscious and explicit engagement with antiquity and their use of a classicizing visual idiom as a communicative tool. All of these scholars employ iconographic analysis to extract meaning from the program at San Geminiano—meaning which is then contextualized using written sources, with varying degrees of success. Glass’s work is the most thorough, and her arguments are compelling, but her particular preoccupation with meaning as the product of geographically and historically embedded iconographies, and her understandable frustration with the endless, fruitless debates about drapery folds and physiognomies that have dominated the field, has led her to focus on the narrative content of the reliefs to the near total exclusion of form. My discussion of the Modena reliefs builds on her historically-informed reading of the program’s iconography, setting aside the problem of iconographic significance, to a certain extent, to focus on the culturally contingent process of visual signification. In this chapter, I will consider the way in which meaning was produced and encoded in the sculptural program at Modena as part of a historicist project of legitimation centering on a pro-reform, pro-papacy, pro-church message, not only through the selection of specific narrative subjects including the story of Adam and Eve, but through the use of a particular, classicizing stylistic mode that deliberately evoked the aesthetic of *spolia.*

---

\(^{36}\) Frugoni, “Le lastre veterotestamentarie e il programma della facciata.”
The sculptural program of San Geminiano clearly draws on antique sources and employs a classicizing style, and generations of scholars have remarked upon the program’s obvious classicism. In the classic *Renaissance and Renascences*, Erwin Panofsky chose a symmetrical pair of reliefs from the Modena façade depicting winged *putti* holding wreaths and leaning with crossed legs against upside-down torches (Figs. 1.7-1.8) to illustrate a point about *interpretatio christiana* in medieval appropriations of antique forms.\(^{37}\) Salvatore Settis discusses these same *putti* as an example of *spolia in re*, a term I will return to later in the chapter, while Glass notes that the shape of the Genesis panels is based on antique sarcophagi, as is the structuring device of the arcade that runs along their length.\(^{38}\) *Lanfranco e Wiligelmo* (1984), one of the massive essay collections published on the occasion of the eight-hundredth anniversary of the cathedral’s dedication, contains a lengthy section devoted to the re-use of antique materials at Modena.\(^{39}\) Absent from these essays, however, is any real attempt to understand the use of antique or classicizing materials, motifs and stylistic modes as a visual language—one among many available, chosen for its appropriateness to the particular representational subject in order to convey specific ideas about the image, its content, its maker and its context in clearly legible terms. In the remainder of this chapter, I will consider the way in which the Modena reliefs mimicked the aesthetic appearance of antique *spolia*, examining the specific political and theological context at Modena and the cultural connotations carried by spoliate objects and their reuse in early twelfth-century

---

\(^{37}\) Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, 94–95.

\(^{38}\) Settis, “*Tribuit sua Marmora Roma:* sul reimpiego di sculture antiche”; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 148.

\(^{39}\) Essays in this section include the piece by Settis, and essays by Fernando Rebecchi and Maria Cecilia Parra, see Settis, “*Tribuit sua Marmora Roma:* sul reimpiego di sculture antiche”; Rebecchi, “Il reimpiego di materiale antico nel Duomo di Modena”; Parra, “*Pisa e Modena:* spunti di ricerca sul reimpiego ‘intorno’ al Duomo.”
Italian visual culture in order to understand what meaning this evocation of antique materials would have held for a contemporary audience.

Of course, the Genesis reliefs at Modena are not, in fact, an example of *spolia*, nor are the other sculpted and inscribed panels embedded in the façade—all of these objects were produced in the early twelfth century using new materials. As I have suggested above, however, these sculpted panels, and the irregularly sized blocks of the façade in which they are set, function as what could be termed pseudo-*spolia*: their motifs, figural style and architectural detail, the material, size and format of the panels, and the loose, fragmentary quality of their arrangement on the façade evoke the idea of *spolia* and all of its attendant meanings. In their style and format, their materiality, and their visual distinctness from their architectural surroundings, for example, the Genesis reliefs recall antique sarcophagi and their reuse in medieval structures. Not only is the architectural ornament within which the action unfolds clearly classicizing, the structure and rhythm of the narrative itself also evokes antique sources: the arrangement of the monumental, plastic figures within the horizontal band of the frieze is sparser than in familiar examples of antique narrative reliefs—bodies rarely overlap, and the level of relief is not varied to create a sense of depth—but the scale of the figures, who fill the available vertical space, and the way in which their heads turn in different directions, animating the relief and directing the flow of the narrative, suggest a pared-down version of the kinds of figural arrangements commonly seen on Roman sarcophagi. The structure of the narrative, its various episodes strung together as a continuous reel of action unfurling across a multi-faceted surface, articulated architecturally and featuring figural repetition, parallel movements, and bodies posed back-to-back to mark separations between scenes, calls to mind the narrative strategies used in many sarcophagi
The atlantid figure who kneels below the enthroned Christ-Logos in the foreground of the third panel evokes the Titan of classical mythology and, more obliquely, the defeated warriors so commonly found in the foreground of Roman sarcophagi (Figs. 1.11-1.12), while the way in which Noah and his son clasp their cloaks in their left hands as they disembark from the ark, pulling the cloth across their torsos in pleated swathes, recalls similarly draped figures from Roman sources (Figs. 1.13-1.14). Finally, despite their stolidity, so different in appearance from the expressive vigor associated with the mythological and historical dramas that adorn the sarcophagi of antiquity, the weighty bodies of Adam and Eve would surely have recalled ancient sculpture by virtue of their monumentality, their fleshy plasticity, and especially their nudity. Indeed, it seems clear that nudity, especially of the “heroic” or monumental, sculptural variety, was commonly associated with antiquity during the Middle Ages—full-length nudes appeared as figures of pagan idolatry, for example Venus or the Spinario, and as characters from classical mythology like Hercules or the Muses. 

This appropriation of motifs and episodic strategies does not amount to a direct quotation of an antique source, but to contemporary viewers, familiar with the syntax and cadence of Roman narrative reliefs, the referent would have been clear.

The Genesis reliefs also invoked the imperial and Early Christian past of Rome materially: the blocks from which the different scenes are carved represent an array of stones both local and exotic, including Greek marble which would have been brought to Italy at the

---

40 I am grateful to Ruth Bielfeldt for sharing her expert opinion on the relative “classicism” of the Genesis reliefs with me. In our conversation, Professor Bielfeldt noted the way in which the construction of a continuous narrative by means of figural repetition and parallel movements, and the creation of a marked separation of scenes through the positioning of back-to-back figures resembles the narrative strategies used in ancient sarcophagi, for example the Iphigenia sarcophagus now in the Schlossmuseum in Weimar, see Bielfeldt, Orestes auf römischen Sarkophagen, 207–239. For an introduction to the study of sarcophagi, see Koortbojian, Myth, Meaning, and Memory on Roman Sarcophagi; Zanker and Ewald, Living with Myths.

41 See Franzoni on “Nudity” in Grafton, Most, and Settis, The Classical Tradition, 643–647; Himmelman, “Nudità ideale.” This will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Two.
beginning of the first millennium. Dale Kinney points to this use of imported marble at Modena as evidence that ancient stones were valued first and foremost for their material properties and costliness. Marble’s material preciousness in the Middle Ages is inextricably linked, however, to its historical association with the imperial and Early Christian past. There were shortages of new marble throughout Europe up until at least the twelfth century: the quarries of Carrara were abandoned in the late antique period and were only reopened in the twelfth century, and imports of new marble from Byzantium ceased after the sixth century. Thus, sculpting or building in marble during this period necessarily entailed the use or reuse of found or stockpiled materials extracted from the earth many hundreds of years previously. Michael Greenhalgh and others have argued that reuse was therefore an act of expedience, and that scholars should avoid the “inevitable desire to find meaning in every reused stone.” At Modena, however, where previously unworked marble slabs are cut to the shape of sarcophagus panels, embellished with classicizing motifs, and inserted into the fabric of the building in such a way that they resemble the prominent, programmatic displays of spolia

42 Scientific analysis of the types of stone used in the execution of the Genesis reliefs was carried out when the cathedral was cleaned in the early 1980s; the results are reported in Bertolani, “Note sulla natura delle pietre usate nel Duomo di Modena.” See also Knauer, “Tribuerunt Sua Marmora Provinciae. Beobachtungen zu antiken Vorbildern von Wiligelmos’ Genesis-Fries an der Domfassade in Modena und zu den sog. Metopen,” 154.


44 Greenhalgh has suggested that the “long-accepted view that there was no quarrying for much of [the medieval] period requires re-evaluation, especially in view of the overwhelming evidence that the Muslims did indeed quarry limestone and marble in both Syria and Spain.” See Greenhalgh, Marble Past, Monumental Present, 138. It is clear, however, that the major Italian quarries were indeed closed at the time of San Geminiano’s construction, see Kinney, “Roman Architectural Spolia,” 145–146.

45 Greenhalgh, “Spolia: A Definition in Ruins,” 75.
to be seen elsewhere in the region, it seems clear that the materiality of the panels contributed to a deliberate simulation of *spolia* and a process of ideologically driven reuse.\(^{46}\)

An inscription inserted into the wall of the apse attests to the significance of the chosen materials, beginning as it does with the phrase MARMORI(BUS) SCULPTIS, and even Greenhalgh, who is generally reluctant to address questions of motivation and meaning in his studies of *spolia*, has argued that “the external walls [of Modena’s *duomo*] are clearly intended by the intricate jigsawed use of irregularly-sized blocks to look like old marble veneer slabs or blocks,” and that “Wiligelmo’s symmetrically balanced reliefs flanking the West door are surely intended to resemble sarcophagus panels.”\(^{47}\) The format of the various sculpted panels and the way they are inserted into the façade suggest that Wiligelmus was deliberately evoking not just an antique type, but the aesthetic of reuse. Indeed, at the point where it intersects with the jamb of the central portal, the cornice of the third Genesis frieze has been cut on an angle, suggesting it has been reworked to fit a new architectural setting (Fig. 1.15). As Eric Fernie has noted, however, the cornice and the first few moldings of the jamb are actually carved from the same block of stone; the cornice’s fragmentary appearance has, in fact, been purposefully manufactured.\(^{48}\)

This “fragment effect” is somewhat jarring to the modern viewer. Glass, for example, describes the relationship between sculpture and architecture at Modena as “loose,” while Quintavalle insisted for years, despite a total lack of physical evidence, that

---

\(^{46}\) The individual panels are one meter tall, the standard height of antique sarcophagi without their lids. The Genesis panels are longer than is usual for sarcophagi, but several scholars have suggested that they were deliberately cut and carved to resemble sarcophagus panels. Glass, for example, notes that “the very shape of the four Genesis panels, with their interior organizing arches, is based on antique sarcophagi.” Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 148.


\(^{48}\) Fernie, “Notes on the Sculpture of Modena Cathedral,” 89.
this incoherent quality was due to the Genesis reliefs having been moved to the façade from their original location on the pontile during the Campionese renovation.\textsuperscript{49} This particular, fragmentary aesthetic—characterized by a noticeable disjunction between sculpture and architecture, giving the façade a bricolage-like appearance—was, however, not uncommon in Italy during this period. There are numerous examples of twelfth-century religious structures in which the look of bricolage is achieved through the insertion of actual antique spolia into the fabric of the building. The façade of the cathedral of Ferrara features an imago clipeata (Fig. 1.16) which is almost certainly a fragment of an antique sarcophagus; at Genoa, more than twenty Roman sarcophagi can still be seen embedded in the cathedral walls; and in addition to a considerable number of columns, capitals and other architectural materials, the duomo at Pisa incorporated at least twenty sarcophagi and inscriptions into its fabric.\textsuperscript{50} At Modena, or at San Zeno in Verona (Fig. 1.17), this bricolage effect is, in a sense, “false,” the loose relationship between sculpture and architecture suggesting an assemblage of disparate elements when in fact the sculptural program was conceived and executed as a thematically if not a visually unified whole.\textsuperscript{51} Viewed in relationship to the spolia rich churches of central and northern Italy, however, the Modenese façade appears less like a loose amalgamation of sculpted objects and more like a deliberate emulation of a familiar aesthetic of reuse.

Key then to our understanding of the Modena reliefs as bearers of stylistically encoded meaning is the art historical discourse surrounding the concepts of spolia and

\textsuperscript{49} Glass, \textit{The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130}, 113; Quintavalle, \textit{La Cattedrale di Modena}, 184–201; Quintavalle, \textit{Wiligelmo e la sua scuola}, 3. This thesis was definitively disproved by Eric Fernie, see Fernie, “Notes on the Sculpture of Modena Cathedral.”

\textsuperscript{50} Greenhalgh, \textit{The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages}, 72; Settis, “Des ruines au musée,” 1365, 1361–1362.

\textsuperscript{51} Glass, \textit{The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130}, 111–198; Kain, “The Marble Reliefs on the Façade of S. Zeno, Verona.”
reuse. Coined as an art-historical term at the turn of the sixteenth century, the word *spolia*—a Latin word that referred particularly to the spoils of war—was used by sixteenth-century antiquarians to describe the reuse of ancient marble ornaments in medieval settings. In its etymology, and its sixteenth-century art-historical application, the term denoted plundered objects, specifically the artifacts of ancient Rome, and implied that such objects had been violently divorced from their original settings and consequently from their original meanings. In recent decades, the term *spolia* has come to be applied much more broadly in art-historical discourse; it no longer refers exclusively to the phenomenon of architectural reuse, or even to the reuse of ancient Roman objects. Indeed, many scholars now employ the term *spolia* very generally to describe any object that has been appropriated and reused by an individual or group historically or culturally removed from the object’s original context of creation.

This inclusive definition of *spolia* points to a relatively recent development in the study of such objects, namely an understanding of re-contextualization as a culturally meaningful practice, rather than simply as a symptom of the larger phenomenon of the survival of classical objects. Conceptually, the new interest in *spolia* on the part of art historians can be linked, as Joachim Poeschke points out, to a shift in focus away from form and towards subject or content, program, and the “language of materials.”

---


Of course, the broadening definition of the term raises questions about its utility as a descriptive or interpretive tool. As more and more objects are brought under the interpretive umbrella of *spolia*, it becomes necessary to consider what exactly defines an object as spoliate. Is material incorporation essential to *spolia*? Need an object be repurposed to qualify as *spolia*? What distinguishes a spoliate object from a relic? Does it require movement in time and space? An explicit reference to Rome? An imperialist agenda? How important are the settings and their function? Does the term imply a certain historical awareness on the part of the appropriator? Is the original function or meaning of the object necessarily preserved (or lost)? The term has evolved from its origins as a descriptor for a rather narrowly defined group of objects to its current usage referencing not just a class of objects but a mode of interpretation. The word *spolia* now designates a range of cultural practices of appropriation, carried out for different purposes and indicating differing levels of historical awareness on the part of those responsible for the appropriative act.56 Examining the use of *spolia* as a phenomenon throughout the Middle Ages allows us to trace shifting attitudes not only towards antiquity, but towards other historical periods and cultural groups, and more generally towards a concept of history.

Philippe Buc, whose model for interpreting *spolia* is informed by theories of material culture and the “life of things,” uses the term “object conversion” to describe the process of transformation that takes place when an object is reused and reclaimed.57 He argues that object conversion establishes a relationship of superiority; the present incarnation of the object is understood as superior to its past. Referring to the many acts of appropriation by

56 For a useful (and delightfully cantankerous) critique of the definitions and assumptions that characterize the field of *spolia* studies, see Greenhalgh, “Spolia: A Definition in Ruins.” Greenhalgh also offers an excellent categorization of the many ways in which antique material was repurposed in the Middle Ages.

57 Buc, “Conversion of Objects.”
means of embellishment carried out in the twelfth century by Abbot Suger of Saint Denis, Buc suggests that the objects he collected served as signs of authority.⁵⁸ Donated by royal patrons, they constituted a “memorial network” for Suger himself.⁵⁹ Suger’s refashioning of non-Christian objects—for instance his famous transformation of a porphyry vase into an eagle by the addition of a head, wings and feet fashioned out of gold, and its subsequent inscription (Fig. 1.18)—are familiar to any student of medieval art. By the addition of precious materials such as gold and precious stones, and also of inscriptions, some of which mention Suger explicitly, objects like the porphyry vase or the vase of Eleanor of Aquitaine were modernized, appropriated for liturgical or pseudo-liturgical purposes, and stamped with the mark of Suger’s ownership. These objects, whose genealogies were essential to their value, were not obscured or even transformed by this additive process so much as they were enshrined.

Suger’s great reverence for the old is readily apparent in his writings: at St. Denis he took great pains to incorporate the consecrated remains of the old structure into the new—his “first thought was for the concordance and harmony of the ancient and the new work”—and in his De Consecratione, he mentions an abandoned plan to outfit St. Denis with columns obtained from Rome, like the “wonderful ones” he had often seen in the Palace of Diocletian and other baths.⁶⁰ Suger’s account of the eagle vase does not suggest any particular interest in the object’s antique origins, but its enshrinement—a process which implies a possible conceptual connection with relics and reliquaries—and the form that this

---

⁵⁸ Ibid., 125.
⁵⁹ Ibid., 127.
⁶⁰ Abbot Suger and Panofsky, Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures, 91.
enshrinement took indicates an awareness of and interest in its pagan origins in keeping with his desire for *spolia* columns.\(^{61}\)

The Herimann Cross (Fig. 1.19), an eleventh-century crucifix donated by Archbishop Herimann and his sister Ida to the church of Santa Maria im Kapitol in Cologne (of which Ida was the Abbess), provides another instructive example of object conversion.\(^{62}\) Generally dated to c. 1036-1056, the Herimann cross has (nearly) square endings, and a squared crossing. This crossing is embellished with filigree, as is the lower portion of the cross, which is also studded with a pair of stones (though these represent later additions). Most striking, and most important for our discussion, is the gilt bronze *corpus* of the crucified Christ, which has been cast specifically to allow for the insertion of a Roman gemstone—a carved lapis lazuli head—in the place of the head of Christ. The Roman head actually represents a woman, most likely Livia, the wife of Augustus.\(^{63}\) Whether or not the “classical content” of the lapis head would have been accessible to medieval viewers cannot be established with certainty, but even absent any knowledge of the artifact’s original meaning, it would have held significance for medieval viewers on account of its material and age. The donors, depicted kneeling at the feet of a figure of the Virgin on the engraved reverse of the cross, were descendants of emperor Otto II and his Byzantine wife Theophanu, and some have suggested that the gem must have been a family heirloom.\(^{64}\) As a precious Antique object,

---

\(^{61}\) Regarding the eagle vase, Suger writes: “And further we adapted for the service of the altar, with the aid of gold and silver material, a porphyry vase made admirably by the hand of the sculptor and polisher, after it had lain idly in the chest for many years, converting it from a flagon into the shape of an eagle.” Ibid., 78.

\(^{62}\) Ilene Forsyth discusses this object at some length in her essay “Art with History,” and I have relied on her for most of the historical information surrounding the cross.

\(^{63}\) This is Forsyth’s identification, though Erika Zwierlein-Diehl identifies her as Livilla, wife of Drusus junior, see Zwierlein-Diehl, “Das Lapislazu-Köpfchen am Herimannkreuz.”

the gem would have served as evidence of the donors’ noble lineage, and it would have activated a range of associations—the material and symbolic value of lapis, the imperial connotations of its provenance, the connection to a glorious, ancient past. In this sense, the Herimann cross fits with Ilene Forsyth’s definition of *spolia* as “art with history”—what matters here is provenance, a sense that the object possesses a meaningful history even if that history is not entirely understood.

The programmatic use of architectural *spolia* in particular dates back to antiquity—most scholars identify the Arch of Constantine (Fig. 1.20) as one of the first structures to make extensive, purposeful use of spoliate objects. The arch is an instructive case, illustrating as it does the political dimension of the cultural/artistic practice of reuse: by incorporating reliefs stripped from monuments erected by previous emperors into his own triumphal arch, Constantine evoked an earlier Roman tradition, inserting himself into an unbroken imperial lineage and framing his reign as a continuation of the glorious past.

This deliberate mobilization of artifacts associated with a patron’s imperial predecessors in the service of a political, image-building agenda is paralleled in many medieval objects that incorporate *spolia*, particularly those commissioned by Holy Roman Emperors anxious to legitimize their own imperial claims. Charlemagne’s Palatine Chapel at

65 The reuse of older materials was not, of course, invented in the Constantinian era, but the Arch of Constantine is generally the point of departure for discussions of *spolia*, see Brenk, “Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne”; Brandenburg, “The Use of Older Elements in the Architecture of Fourth- and Fifth-Century Rome: A Contribution to the Evaluation of Spolia,” 56–59; Elsner, “From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics”; Kinney, “Spolia. Damnatio and Renovatio Memoriae”; Kinney, “Instances of Appropriation in Late Roman and Early Christian Art.” For a more general treatment of the Arch of Constantine, including a bibliography, see Pensabene and Panella, *Arco di Costantino*.

66 Maria Fabricius Hansen writes that Constantine “adorned himself with the Roman tradition” and “arrayed himself in the aspect of a classical Roman emperor,” demonstrating his intention to “continue the tradition of his model predecessors.” Hansen, *The Eloquence of Appropriation*, 248. Paul Zanker suggests similarly that the Arch was meant to communicate to the people of Rome that Constantine would follow in the footsteps of the “good emperors,” especially with regards to his religious devotion and his relationship with the senate, Zanker, “Der Konstantinsbogen als Monument des Senates,” 99–100.
Aachen, for instance, which was completed in 790, contains columns purportedly brought from Italy: in his life of the emperor, Charlemagne’s advisor Einhard wrote that Charles “was unable to find marble columns for his construction anywhere else, and so he had them brought from Rome and Ravenna.” This claim that the columns acquired for the chapel project were *spolia*, collected in Rome and Ravenna—both imperial capital cities—is especially interesting when we consider that a number of the capitals are apparently not actual antiquities, but Carolingian simulations thereof, while the authentic *spolia* may not have been acquired in either capital but rather from somewhere in the hinterland. Einhard’s insistence on a Roman or Ravennate provenance underscores the tremendous power the artifacts of imperial Rome held as instruments of political projection during the Carolingian period—a period characterized by a conscious effort to reclaim the heritage of the Roman empire, and bring about a *renovatio imperii romani*. Couched in terms of necessity in Einhard’s account, the appropriation of antique architectural materials was in fact a powerful act of political legitimation, conferring on the structure, and consequently on its patron, the authority of imperial Rome by means of physical incorporation.

In Italy, the reuse of antique materials in church architecture was commonplace throughout the Middle Ages, and as at Aachen, these acts of appropriation were politically charged, establishing concrete visual links between contemporary rulers and the imperial

---


70 The appropriation of columns in particular is especially interesting given their architectural function. The supposedly ancient imperial columns support the upper levels of the structure visually and literally and the building, like Charlemagne’s empire, was thus physically supported as well as politically legitimated by the ancient empire of Rome.
Roman past. Like the Arch of Constantine, old Saint Peter’s and the Lateran cathedral—both Constantinian projects—had colonnades composed of spoliate columns and capitals.\(^{71}\) In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Roman reliefs and capitals were considered indispensible to church construction, and were actively sought by the overseers of building projects.\(^{72}\) The eleventh-century Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino, for example, who would go on to become Pope Victor III, traveled to Rome to collect columns, colored marbles and other antique treasures to display in his new abbey church, spending a great deal of money and calling in a number of favors in the process:

> After having given orders to those who were to execute this work with the greatest dispatch, he went to Rome. After consulting each of his best friends and generously and wisely distributing a large sum of money, he bought huge quantities of [ancient] columns, bases, epistyles, and marble of different colors. All these he brought from Rome…\(^{73}\)

In the twelfth century, ionic capitals were confiscated from the Baths of Caracalla and used in the nave colonnades of Santa Maria in Trastevere when it was rebuilt by Pope Innocent II around 1140, demonstrating the pope’s prerogative as head of the papal state.\(^{74}\) The cathedral at Pisa, which was consecrated in 1118, also incorporated three enormous capitals from the Baths of Caracalla, along with more than two hundred fragments of antique sculpture and architecture, most of them collected from Rome and Ostia.\(^{75}\) And at Modena, potential disaster was allegedly averted when a shortage of building materials was made up

\(^{71}\) Kinney, “Roman Architectural Spolia,” 144.

\(^{72}\) Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français*, 103.

\(^{73}\) The account of this collecting trip is from Leo of Ostia’s *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, see Holt, *A Documentary History of Art*, 1:10–11.


\(^{75}\) Settis, “Des ruines au musée,” 1361.
by the discovery of a trove of antique stones and marble during the excavation of the
foundation.\textsuperscript{76}

And so the divine right hand coming to their rescue, the fabric of the foundation
having now reached the higher parts, and while the nave was being built … the
people began to fear lest through a lack of stone (for the supply was small) such a
church would remain uncompleted … Persuading the hearts of men, you [God]
made the earth to be dug out; you deign out of the multitude of your mercy to
disclose astonishing heaps of marble and stone, which seem sufficient to complete
the task in hand. A machine is therefore erected; noteworthy marbles are uncovered;
and they are carved with marvelous skill. The blocks are raised and fitted together …
So the walls grow, and the building grows.

Subsumed and enshrined in medieval structures, these antique objects functioned as symbols
of ancient Rome, assuming all the authority of a world now in ruins. As Salvatore Settis
writes, “the auctoritas that the Roman column carried with it was that of the city … capital of
the imperial majesty and of Christianity; but also, at the same time, the auctoritas of a
technical proficiency and of decorative and structural norms that were of one body with that
majesty.”\textsuperscript{77} The reuse of antique materials in foundations and pavements may, in certain
instances, have been simply a matter of expediency, but their visible inclusion in the walls
and façades of medieval churches was much more purposeful and politically charged.\textsuperscript{78}

We have seen how, at Aachen, antique spolia, whether authentic or simulated, were
central to the project of legitimation—imperial authority was validated by means of a
material association with Rome. Generally speaking, this holds true for many if not all of the
other instances of reuse described above. Desiderius of Montecassino, for instance, had

\textsuperscript{76} From the Relatio de innovatione ecclesie sancti Geminiani, translation in Greenhalgh, The Survival of Roman Antiquities
in the Middle Ages, 70.

\textsuperscript{77} Settis, “Continuità, distanza, conoscienza. Tre usi dell’antico,” 421–422. The English translation is by Kinney,
“The Concept of Spolia,” 245.

\textsuperscript{78} This distinction between the use of antique materials in construction, prompted by scarcity, and the
purposeful, meaningful reuse of antique objects in the Middle Ages has been central to discussions of spolia for
some time, see Brenk, “Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne”; Cutler, “Reuse or Use? Theoretical and
Practical Attitudes Toward Objects in the Early Middle Ages”; Greenhalgh, “Spolia: A Definition in Ruins.”
close ties to Pope Gregory VII, and his ambitious rebuilding of the Benedictine mother church gave physical expression to a political ideology of revival.\(^{79}\) Desiderius’s political goals—the purification of the Church, the consolidation of papal authority and a return to the glory days of the Early Christian past—were articulated visually in his reuse of Roman spolia and his revival of mosaic decoration, an art form associated with Early Christian churches that had not been practiced in Italy for centuries.\(^{80}\) Rome, the seat of papal authority and the home of the early church, was embodied in the architectural remains and artistic forms of a glorious, bygone era. The appropriation of Rome’s cultural patrimony, whether through spoliation or emulation, imbued the abbey church at Montecassino with the auctoritas of the empire and the early church, and broadcast the political and theological ambitions of its patron to its viewers.

Similarly at Modena, the use of actual and pseudo-spolia, and the self-conscious simulation of a spoliate aesthetic occurred within the context of a newly forged political alliance with the reform papacy. The independent city state of Modena lay within the sphere of influence of Countess Matilda of Canossa, a devoted supporter of the reform movement and the papacy.\(^{81}\) It was, however, ruled by its bishop, whose authority was subject to challenges by the city’s increasingly powerful citizens.\(^{82}\) Allied to the emperor during the reign of Bishop Eribert, Modena only transferred its allegiance to the papacy after Eribert’s

---


80 The dearth of local craftsmen led Desiderius to import mosaicists from Byzantium. Kitzinger suggests that the resulting mosaic, which has since been destroyed, was more Early Christian than Byzantine in character, and cites as evidence the inscription on the triumphal arch—an adaptation of that from the triumphal arch at Old Saint Peter’s, see Ibid., 95.

81 The Vita Matildis, an illustrated biography written by her chaplain Donizo, provides a contemporary account of her life, see Donizone di Canossa, Vita di Matilde di Canossa. For a detailed description of the role played by Matilda and the house of Canossa in the conflict between the papacy and the emperor, see Zema, “The Houses of Tuscany and of Pierleone in the Crisis of Rome in the Eleventh Century,” 157–169.

82 Tcherikover, “Reflections of the Investiture Controversy at Nonantola and Modena,” 159.
death sometime around 1095; thus, in 1099 when the building project was initiated, Modena had only recently (and contentiously) entered the papal fold. In this light, the programmatic use of *spolia* and pseudo-*spolia*, and the deliberate imitation of architectural forms, specifically the two-story porch portal, associated with Early Christian sites like Old Saint Peter’s, the Lateran, and San Clemente, acquires a conspicuous political tone.

Given the sheer volume of antique material available in Modena (and throughout Italy) in the Middle Ages, it seems clear that viewers of the San Geminiano façade would have immediately and intuitively recognized the formal relationship between Wiligelmu’s sculptural reliefs and the antique artifacts that littered their city. Sarcophagi in particular were highly visible—Isa Ragusa notes that in the twelfth century, at least six ancient sarcophagi stood in the public square in front of the cathedral at Modena, and according to Greenhalgh, ancient sarcophagi were re-cut and reused as early as the fourth century. The area around the Pisan Duomo functioned as a de-facto cemetery, housing dozens of ancient sarcophagi, many of which had been brought by sea from Rome; the most famous of these was the spectacular Hippolytus sarcophagus (Fig. 1.21) in which Beatrice of Tuscany, mother of Matilda, was buried, and which is mentioned by Vasari in his life of Nicola Pisano.

---

83 Ibid.

84 Christine Verzár argues that the porch portal was explicitly modeled on these Roman sources, and links this architectural innovation to the patronage of Matilda of Tuscany and the reform movement, see Verzár Bornstein, *Portals and Politics in the Early Italian City-State*.

85 In the Roman period, Modena (known then as Mutina) was the most important city in Cisalpine Gaul thanks to its strategic position at the crossroads of the Via Emilia and the road to Verona. In the Middle Ages, the architectural remains of the Roman past were everywhere, and the city’s medieval inhabitants would have been in contact with this cultural heritage on a daily basis, see Rebecchi, “Il reimpiego di materiale antico nel Duomo di Modena,” 322.


Sarcophagus panels bearing narrative or decorative reliefs were often incorporated into church fabrics in highly visible locations. At Pisa, for instance, the first architect of the Duomo, a certain Buscheto, was buried in an antique strigilated sarcophagus walled into the building’s façade (Fig. 1.22), while Abbot Elia, the builder of San Nicola in Bari, reposes behind the fragmented panel of a philosopher sarcophagus embedded in the south wall of the crypt (Fig. 1.23). At Campiglia Marittima, one hundred kilometers south of Pisa, the architrave of the lateral portal of the Pieve di San Giovanni is carved not with a biblical narrative but with a tripartite depiction of a boar hunt (Fig. 1.24). Like the Genesis cycle at San Geminiano, this is a work of pseudo-*spolia*, clearly intended to mimic an antique artifact—the boar hunt is a classic subject of ancient relief sculpture, frequently found on Roman sarcophagi, and while the hunters, like the Modenese Adam and Eve, may be rather stocky and inelegant, the way in which they stride forward on well-muscled legs, their short, belted robes swirling slightly to reveal the contours of buttocks and thighs, indicates first-hand knowledge of ancient depictions of this same subject (Fig. 1.25). Moreover, the visual effect of the architrave’s insertion into the lateral façade, characterized by a dramatic contrast between the brilliant white of the marble relief panel and the darker stone of the building’s fabric, reproduces the spoliate aesthetic we have seen at Pisa and elsewhere. Completed around 1173, the Pieve di San Giovanni and its classicizing architrave confirm that the manufacture of pseudo-*spolia* was a real phenomenon in twelfth-century Italy; with his Boar Hunt. See also Ewald on “Sarcophagi” in Grafton, Most, and Settis, The Classical Tradition, 860; Ragusa, “The Re-Use and Public Exhibition of Roman Sarcophagi During the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance,” 22; Settis, “Des ruines au musée,” 1362.


Genesis reliefs, Wiligelmus was invoking a familiar aspect of contemporary visual culture, the highly visible use of real and imitation *spolia*.

Wiligelmus’s program also contains motifs clearly lifted from antique sources, suggesting that such objects must have been available to him at Modena. For example, the sculpted arcade that runs the length of the Genesis frieze is plainly reminiscent not only of actual antique architectural forms, but of the architectural devices that frequently appeared on sarcophagi like the one belonging to Bruttia Aureliana (Fig. 1.26), and on funereal stele like the one dedicated to the Salvii (Fig. 1.27), both now housed in the Museo Lapidario Estense at Modena.90 The acanthus scroll, egg-and-dart, and bead-and-reel motifs, and the Corinthian capitals and fluted columns that feature in the Genesis reliefs, not to mention the inhabited scrolls that adorn the doorposts, lintel and archivolts of the façade’s central portal (Figs. 1.28-1.29), are also clearly classicizing.91 The acanthus scroll cornice of the Genesis reliefs in particular recalls antique objects like the Velletri sarcophagus (Fig. 1.30).

The most famous and the most literal of these quotations is the pair of *putti*, located to either side of the central portal, just below the loggia that runs across the second story of the façade (Figs. 1.7-1.8). These reliefs depict a nearly identical pair of winged figures, shown in mirrored poses, with their legs crossed at the ankle—right ankle over left in the left-hand relief, and left over right in the relief to the right. Their weight-bearing hips jut out and their faces turn in three-quarter view away from the central doorway; one arm (the one closer to the portal) is held crossed over the torso with the hand gripping the opposite shoulder, while the other, outer arm is extended along the length of the inverted torch, out of which flames

---

90 For more on these two funereal monuments see Rebecchi, “Il reimpiego di materiale antico nel Duomo di Modena,” 341, 345.

91 For more on the inhabited scroll motif in antiquity, see Toynbee and Perkins, “Peopled Scrolls.” On the inhabited scroll as a Romanesque revival of Early Christian and Carolingian precedents, see Verzár, “The Inhabited Scroll in Romanesque Sculpture.”
curl upwards. In the hands of their extended arms, each putto grasps a wreath. Like the figures of Adam and Eve, these naked putti have a remarkable fleshy plasticity, but the contours of their bodies appear more fluid, their proportions and poses lighter and more graceful. Unlike Adam and Eve, they have visible genitals. There are differences between the two reliefs—the putto to the left of the central portal is accompanied by a bird, identified as an ibis, while the one on the right stands beneath a delicate triple arcade, which replicates, in miniature, the arcaded corbel table under which the relief is situated. As every scholar to discuss these reliefs has pointed out, they could have been cut from a Roman sarcophagus. While the specific model that Wiligelmu was working from cannot be identified with certainty, that he was quoting from an antique source is beyond doubt (Fig. 1.31).

The iconography of these reliefs has been the subject of some dispute. Panofsky argues that to the medieval viewer, the putti would have represented carnal love, and should therefore be seen as an instance of interpretatio christiana—the Eros of classical antiquity transformed by Christian morality into Amore carnalis. Settis rejects this theory, arguing instead for a funerary interpretation: not only was the symbolic analogy between death and the extinguishing of a torch a common feature of Christian and pagan culture, the antique motif of paired putti leaning on upended torches would have been known from its ancient funereal context. More interesting, however, is Settis’s analysis of these panels as an


93 The ibis is key to this interpretation: “The ibis – owing to his supposedly unappetizing habits, of which his predilection for rotten food and his aversion to entering clean water are the least repulsive – is invariably held up as an example of the homo carnalis as opposed to the “Christian reborn from the Holy Spirit.” The putto with the ibis is thus identified as Amor carnalis, while his companion, whom Panofsky posits would once have possessed an “attribute” of his own, may conceivably be identified as Jocus, a companion of Cupid. Of course, this interpretation depends upon a knowledge of Horace and Prudentius, among others, and is in general highly unlikely. Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, 94–95.

94 As for the ibis, Settis argues that it adds a medieval allegorical dimensions, thanks to the bird’s description in the medieval bestiary as a symbol of the sinner. He also rejects Panofsky’s suggestion that the panels have been cut down, and that both would originally have included “attributes,” arguing that the architectural devices
instance of *spolia in re*, a term coined by Richard Brilliant to define the reuse of formal traits and motifs, as opposed to the reuse of actual objects.\textsuperscript{95} It is somewhat unclear what delimiting factors, if any, prevent this term from applying to any classical borrowing, but it seems to apply, according to Brilliant and Settis, in instances when the borrowing is purposeful and historicist in character. In this case, the descriptor is useful, suggesting as it does a self-conscious classicism; the antique motif of the *putto* with inverted torch has been faithfully and skillfully copied, lifted from antiquity and brought into the present where it remains completely recognizable.\textsuperscript{96} While the term may, however, be adequate to describe their iconography and style, when we consider the format of the reliefs as well as their form, it falls short of explaining their function within the program. The irregular contours of the panels and the way in which they are inserted into the façade suggests a deliberate effort to reproduce not just the appearance of an antique object but the apparatus of its acquisition and appropriation, an instance of *spolia in re* masquerading as *spolia in se*.

The pair of *putti* reliefs are not the only sculptural or architectural elements to mimic both the style and iconography of an antique motif and the materiality of a spoliate insertion: elsewhere on the façade, capitals, inscriptions and ornamental scrolls also evoked antique materials and medieval practices of recycling and reclamation. The inhabited scroll motif of the doorposts and lintel—two vertical friezes of acanthus leaves, inhabited by animals, hybrids, humans and vintage scenes, supported at the base of each doorpost by a telamon figure and converging at the center of the lintel in a nude Janus figure, an allusion to the pagan god who protects paths and bridges—seems to be drawn from specific antique

\textsuperscript{95} Brilliant, “I piedistalli del giardino di Boboli: spolia in se, spolia in re.”

\textsuperscript{96} Settis, “Tribuit sua Marmora Roma: sul reimpiego di sculture antiche,” 317.
sources, although it has been modified to suit the specific context. As Ladner notes, the reform movement of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries was characterized not only by an increased receptivity to ancient literature, philosophy, science and art, but by the prevalence of terms of renewal associated with nature, birth and growth. The motif of the acanthus scroll was therefore emblematic of the so-called twelfth-century renaissance both in its classicism and in its invocation of *natura*. Ladner describes the “surface classicism” of Italian art in the twelfth century as a separate phenomenon to the broader interest in *natura*-related themes, arguing that actually, the “conscious reaching back to art forms of Christian and pagan Antiquity” that occurred in Rome and Southern Italy during the period of the Gregorian Reform had “little to do with those aspects of the twelfth-century renaissance which were marked by a more comprehensive consciousness of spontaneous birth, growth, or even rebirth.”

The Modena acanthus scroll, however, represents a convergence of these two threads: the dense foliage surrounding the portal, which includes vine-bearing acanthus on the lintel (Fig. 1.29), clearly alludes to natural generation, growth, and even rebirth, but it also invokes a specific type of ancient architectural artifact, fragments of which frequently found their way into medieval constructions (Fig. 1.32). For example, it resembles the pilasters that once adorned the Oratory of Pope John VII at Old Saint Peter’s and are now

97 Peroni, “Acanthe remployée et acanthe imitée dans les cathédrales de Modène, Ferrare et Pise,” 314–315. For more on the scroll motif in its original imperial Roman context, see Toynbee and Perkins, “Peopled Scrolls.” For more on the content and function of the inhabited scrolls at Modena, see Castelnuovo, “Flores cum belius comitixos: i portali della cattedrale di Modena.”

98 Ladner, “Terms and Ideas of Renewal.”

99 Ibid., 22.

100 At Pisa, for example, the acanthus frieze on the portal dedicated to San Ranieri is made up, at least in part, of *spolia* fragments, Peroni, “Acanthe remployée et acanthe imitée dans les cathédrales de Modène, Ferrare et Pise,” 320.
preserved in the Grotte Vaticane (Fig. 1.33). A similar pair of Severan pilasters featuring scenes of putti harvesting grapes were incorporated into the Lateran in the Early Christian period. The use of the inhabited scroll motif at Modena thus invoked not only the artifacts of the imperial Roman past, but the appropriation and display of such artifacts at important papal sites. As part of the larger program and in the context of the recently reconfigured political landscape, this link with the visual culture of the papacy can be seen as a subtle articulation of Modena’s connection to Rome.

The inscription inserted into the façade and supported by the figures of Enoch and Elijah (Fig. 1.34) also invoked, though perhaps more obliquely, the material remains of ancient Rome as they were assimilated into contemporary visual culture. The panel containing this ensemble is located just to the left of the central portal, below one of the putti and above the second Genesis relief. Its raised, frame-like border, and the way it projects

---

101 This comparison is drawn by Christine Verzár, who argues that the motif was a defining characteristic both of Wiligelms’s sculptural workshop and of Matilda of Canossa’s patronage, see Verzár, “The Inhabited Scroll in Romanesque Sculpture.”

102 Brandt et al., Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen, 123–25.


104 Glass mentions the inhabited scroll motif in passing as one among many classicizing elements at Modena, and suggests a general connection to the imperial past, but the argument is developed more fully by Verzár. Glass, The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130, 121; Verzár, “The Inhabited Scroll in Romanesque Sculpture.”

105 On epigraphy in public spaces, see Petrucci, Scriptores in urbisibus: Alfabetismo e cultura scritta nell’Italia altomedievale; Petrucci, Public Lettering: Script, Power, and Culture.
slightly from the plane of the façade draw attention to the seams between architecture and sculpture, emphasizing its status as an insertion. The full text of the inscription reads:

DU(M) GEMINI CANCER / CURSU(M) CONSENDIT / OVANTES. IDIBUS / IN QUINTIS IUNII SUP T(EM)P(O)R(E) / MENSIS. MILLE DEI / CARNIS / MONOS CEN / TU(M) MINUS ANNIS. / ISTA DOMUS CLARI / FUNDATUR GEMINI / ANI. INTER SCULTORES QUAN / TO SIS DIGNUS ONORE. CLA / RET SCULTURA NU(N)C VUILIGLME TUA.

Enoch and Elijah were both known as prophets and associated with the Last Judgment. In the context of the reform movement, they had specific theological significance: they were identified as the unnamed witnesses in the Apocalypse whose miracles and preaching were to contribute to the defeat of the Antichrist, but their campaign would only begin when the Antichrist was revealed following the end of the Roman empire. This interpretation was due in part to a late tenth- or early eleventh-century version of the prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl, which foretells the role of the witnesses in the defeat of the Antichrist. This updated version of a supposedly ancient prophecy substitutes the names of contemporary rulers for that of Constantine, who “having put off the diadem from his head and laid aside the whole

106 “On the ninth day of June, when the constellation of Gemini joyfully overcomes the constellation of Cancer, in the year of our Lord 1099, the temple of the illustrious Geminiano was founded. Amongst sculptors, how worthy of honor and fame thou art, thy sculptures now show, O Guglielmo.” The Latin text is transcribed in Campana, “La testimonianza delle iscrizioni,” 378. The English translation is by Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 3:15.

107 Fox-Friedman, “Cosmic History and Messianic Vision: The Sculpture of Modena Cathedral at the Time of the Crusades,” 101; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 163–164. The relevant passage is Apocalypse 11:3-13; the witnesses are identified as Enoch and Elijah in several early apocryphal works, including the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the *Apocalypse of Paul*, see Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Bruno of Segni, an important figure in the reform movement, identified the witnesses as Enoch and Elijah, see Bruno of Segni, *Commentaria in Apocalypsim*, PL 165, col. 662.

108 Glass discusses the importance of this updated version of the Tiburtine Sibyl’s prophecy as the context in which the figures of Enoch and Elijah would have been seen and understood, though her conclusion—that the prophets were important figures in a reform movement which preached the supremacy of the papacy over the emperor—is somewhat vague, see Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, Ca. 1095-1130*, 163–165. The significance of messianic visions in general, and the prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl in particular, to the program at Modena is discussed in Fox-Friedman, “Cosmic History and Messianic Vision: The Sculpture of Modena Cathedral at the Time of the Crusades,” Chapter Two, especially 100-106. She is primarily concerned, however, with the iconography of the Porta della Pescheria and the Porta dei Principi, and mentions the façade reliefs of Enoch and Elijah only in passing.
imperial garb … will hand over the empire of the Christians to God the Father and to Jesus Christ his Son.”

Following this abdication of the emperor, the Antichrist will be revealed, and the all-important witnesses will get down to the business of vanquishing him. Enoch and Elijah, therefore, were key figures in an apocalyptic tradition propagated by reform thinkers because of its message regarding the importance of imperial subjugation to God as represented by the institution of the church. Their bracketing of the inscribed plaque served to associate its text with their own prophetic utterances, and with the prophecy of the Tiburtine Sybil, while the enshrinement of the panel in the façade gave it the appearance of a piece of spolia, suggesting a physical as well as a conceptual link to the early history of the church.

The reuse of ancient inscriptions in architectural structures was common throughout the medieval period, and in many instances it represented a solution to material scarcity, with no overt ideological program. In other cases, however, the prominent display of such fragments of ancient epigraphy suggests an effort to construct a material link to the imperial past. At Pisa, for instance, among the dozens of inscriptions to be seen in the exterior walls of the Duomo, are fragments that read HADRIANO, AUGUST, TITUS, HADRIAN, and TRAIANI, and several that read IMP CAESARI. At Florence, an inscription beginning IMP. CAESARI / DIVI ANTONIN was incorporated into the Baptistery when it was renovated in the eleventh century. Both cities were proud of their Roman connections—Florence was an epicenter of the reform movement, while Pisa’s antiquarianism has been


110 Coates-Stephens, “Epigraphy as Spolia—The Reuse of Inscriptions in Early Medieval Buildings.”

111 The inscriptions are mentioned by Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, 75. They are transcribed and reproduced in Neppi Modona, *Pisae*, 7–9, nos. 9, 10 & 12; 23, no. 29.

112 Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, 75.
widely documented—and their appropriation of ancient inscriptions served to broadcast that pride.\textsuperscript{113} Elsewhere, original inscriptions mimicked the material and rhetorical forms of ancient epigraphy. At Campiglia Marittima, a white limestone plaque embedded in the exterior wall of the north transept of the Pieve di San Giovanni (Fig. 1.35) bears the inscription SATOR AREPO M(a)TH(eu)S/ TENET OPERA/ROTAS M(ille) C(entum) S(extuagesiums) S(ecundum) V.\textsuperscript{114} Based on the well-known SATOR AREPO acrostic, a Latin palindrome of antique origins that acquired an apotropaic function in the Middle Ages, the Campiglia Marittima plaque clearly recalls antique inscriptions both in its textual content and in its materiality. The dedicatory/signatory inscription at Modena is similarly classicizing in both form and format: not only is it heroizing in character and composed, at least partially, in hexameter, suggesting a pronounced interest in the classical past, its materiality and placement in the façade mimic the look of a spoliate insertion.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{113} Nicholas II, a close ally of Gregory VII, served as bishop of Florence before being elected pope, and made Florence into an active center of the reform movement, see De Lachenal, \textit{Spola}, 194; Toubert, \textit{Un art dirigé}, 135; Weisbach, \textit{Religiose Reform und mittelalterliche Kunst}, 64. On Pisa’s antiquarianism see Scalia, “‘Romanitas’ pisana tra XI e XII secolo.” Evidence of this interest in the antique can be found in their obsession with spolia, and in texts like the early twelfth-century Pisan epic chronicling a military expedition to Majorca in 1114, which opens with the Virgilian lines “Arma, rates, populum, vindictam celitus actam.” For the full text of this epic, see Laurentius Veronensis Diaconus Pisanus, \textit{De bello Balearico}, PL 163, cols. 513–576. The epic is discussed in Haskins, \textit{The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century}, 162–163; Raby, \textit{A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages}, 2:152–162; Greenhalgh, \textit{The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages}, 75–76.

\textsuperscript{114} Belcari, “La Pieve di San Giovanni,” 605–610.

\textsuperscript{115} The first four lines of the inscription are composed in leonine hexameter—a rhyming variant of the classic hexameter of Roman antiquity—while the last two lines, which make up the tribute to Wiligelmus, are in pentameter, and according to Kendall form an elegiac couplet, see Kendall, \textit{The Allegory of the Church}, 73–74; Porter, \textit{Lombard Architecture}, 3:15. For a general discussion of the use of leonine hexameter in Romanesque church inscriptions, see Kendall, \textit{The Allegory of the Church}, 71–74. There is some debate in the literature as to whether or not leonine hexameter should be understood as classicizing; Verzár, for example, argues that the presence of heroizing verses in leonine hexameter in Northern Italian architecture “clearly suggests a classicizing tendency,” see Verzár, “Text and Image in North Italian Romanesque Sculpture,” 139. Others, however, have emphasized the distinctly medieval character of leonine verse, arguing that poets who favored a more classical style were critical of its rigid internal rhyming structure, see van der Velden, “The Quatrain of The Ghent Altarpiece,” 14–18. A discussion of leonine hexameter is beyond the scope of this dissertation and I am not qualified to weigh in on the debate; given the pronounced interest in antiquity evinced by the sculptural program of the façade, however, and given the appearance of the plaque, I believe that this inscription was intended to mimic ancient epigraphy, and the use of hexameter was likely a consciously classicizing choice.
Like the *putti*, the acanthus scroll and the inscription, the Genesis reliefs functioned as pseudo-*spolia*, evoking antique artifacts with their narrative structure, their visual vocabulary and syntax, and their materiality and format. Through their relationship with the surrounding architecture and the other reliefs of the façade they also recalled the composite effect of actual spoliate assemblages. The question, then, is why—why was this particular representational mode applied to this particular biblical narrative? I have argued that the “*spolia* effect” forged a visual connection to imperial and Early Christian Rome and thereby served as a tool of historicization and legitimation, laying claim to an imperial legacy and to the authority of the papacy. The incorporation of pseudo-antiquities into the cathedral façade suggested an unbroken historical thread running from ancient Rome to the present day. The use of pseudo-*spolia*, as opposed to actual antique materials, allowed for the crafting of a more specific and explicit political and theological message.

In iconographic terms, the Genesis cycle articulates the notion that salvation is only accessible through the institution of the church and its sacraments. Theologically, the Genesis narrative is the prehistory and the prefiguration of Christianity, and the particular episodes selected for inclusion in the Modena relief cycle emphasize the historical origins of the church and the priesthood, and their crucial importance in the redemption of mankind. The story of Adam and Eve is, in essence, the story of man’s estrangement from God, and it is only through the church and its rites that reconciliation is possible. The story of Cain and Abel emphasizes the importance of a virtuous and uncorrupted priesthood while Noah’s ark was widely understood as a pre-figuration of the church itself, accessible only through the rite of baptism: the Deluge is framed as a prefiguration of the baptismal rite in the New
Testament, and the ark/church parallel was discussed by the church fathers. The church was the mechanism of salvation, and the reform movement sought a renewal of that church, and the restoration of its original purity.

The use of classicizing motifs, narrative strategies, formats and materials rendered visible this conceptual link to the past; the world of antiquity was the historical era of the founding of the church, and the evocation of this era through material and formal imitations of ancient artifacts reminded the viewer of the contemporary church’s origins in the Early Christian past. Even more importantly, the simulation of a spoliare assemblage linked the cathedral of San Geminiano to key papal structures and emphasized the idea of continuity and lineage: the pure church of early Christianity was reborn in the reform church just as the physical remnants of Early Christian Rome were incorporated into the fabric of contemporary structures.

The display of antique objects in newly fashioned and materially precious settings was an act of conversion or translation; the auctoritas of a glorious past, embodied in a material artifact, was enshrined and laid claim to, and this act of material incorporation and display served as a physical expression of an ideological relationship between past and present. As I have mentioned, Buscheto, the architect of the Pisan Duomo, was buried in an antique sarcophagus embedded in the wall of his cathedral; in his epitaph, he is also

116 I will return to this reading of the Adam and Eve narrative at greater length in Chapter Three. On the importance of Cain and Abel in the context of the reform movement, see Glass, “The Reform Programme of the Cathedral of Modena,” 170–171; Saxon, The Eucharist in Romanesque France, 124–126. On Noah and the ark, see Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, 70–85. For New Testament discussion of the Deluge as analogous to baptism, see, for example, I Peter 3:19-21: “in which also coming he preached to those spirits that were in prison: Which had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe, when the ark was a building: wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. Whereunto baptism being of the like form, now saveth you also: not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the examination of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” On the church fathers’ comments on Noah’s ark as a prefiguration of the church, see Benjaminis, “Noah, the Ark, and the Flood in Early Christian Theology: The Ship of the Church in the Making”; Boblitz, “Die Allegorese der Arche Noahs in der frühmittelalterliche Bibelauslegung.”
favorably compared to two classical figures, Daedalus and Ulysses. Together, the appropriation of the spoliare sarcophagus and the laudatory inscription suggest that the architectural glory of antiquity has been absorbed into and surpassed by the Duomo itself. As with the Herimann Cross or Suger's eagle, the coopted object draws attention to its setting, and is converted and assigned new meaning in its new physical and ideological surroundings.

At Modena, the manufacture of pseudo-antiquities and their insertion into the fabric of the cathedral emphasized the reform church’s “ownership” of the Old Testament narrative and of the Early Christian past. It was as if a representation of the church’s history from the Early Christian era—the era the reform movement sought to revive—had been uncovered and enshrined like an antique gem in a contemporary setting. Formally speaking, the Genesis reliefs at Modena—their stylistic and material assimilation to antique spolia and evocation of an aesthetic of reuse—historicized and legitimized the institution of the church in its contemporary incarnation, laying claim to the story of man’s origin and asserting the crucial importance of the church in his redemption. The use of spolia has generally been discussed as an act of appropriation, but it is also an act of integration. At Modena, the spolia aesthetic, characterized by classicizing figures and motifs and visible seams between different material elements, served as a visualization of incorporation, the knitting together of the disparate strands of the Old Testament, Imperial Roman, and Early Christian past.

---

II. PARIS
Classicism and Enlivenment

“And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth: and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul.”

Genesis 2:7

“...he sculpted with marvelous skill a figure in snow-white ivory ... The features are those of a real girl, who, you might think, lived, and wished to move, if modesty did not forbid it. Indeed, art hides his art.”

Ovid, Metamorphoses

“This image is made from Parian marble with such wonderful and intricate skill, that she seems more like a living creature than a statue; indeed she seems to blush in her nakedness, a reddish tinge colouring her face, and it appears to those who take a close look that blood flows in her snowy complexion.”

Magister Gregorius, The Marvels of Rome

The striking figure of Adam from the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris, now in the Musée de Cluny (Fig. 2.1), offers clear evidence that medieval sculptors had access to, and made use of classical prototypes as they strove to develop new iconographies and stylistic modes. This extraordinary sculpture stands two meters tall—above life-size by medieval standards—the elegantly attenuated body characterized by a gentle S-shaped curvature. The head tilts slightly to the right; the smooth oval face, with its almond-shaped eyes and rather full lips, is framed by a halo of sharply defined corkscrew curls. The right arm is bent at the elbow, the hand raised in a gesture of benediction; the left arm is lowered, the hand lightly pressing a large fig leaf in place over the genitals. The leftward lean of the torso counters the angle of the head, and is in turn balanced by the delicate counterthrust of the legs. The fluidity of the body’s contours and the wonderfully soft, rounded modeling of the flesh suggest an awareness on the part of the craftsman of some of the greatest achievements in classical sculpture. The subtle poise of the contrapposto stance—the gentle sway of the hips, the firmly planted right foot, the left leg which projects slightly forward and bends delicately
at the knee—also evokes the works of ancient sculptors.¹ Perhaps most remarkable and
difficult to construe is Adam’s gesture, clearly a direct quotation of the Venus pudica type
known so well to us from such examples as the Capitoline Venus (Fig. 2.2). The soft slope
of the shoulders, the delicate inclination of the head, and of course the left hand’s coy
gesture of modesty all invoke the classical model in unambiguous terms.

A masterpiece of thirteenth-century French gothic sculpture, the Parisian Adam has
been overlooked in ways that suggest blindness to the beauty of the body not on the part of
medieval viewers, but rather on the part of modern scholars. Such a sensual treatment of the
idealized male nude was almost unprecedented in the medieval era. Moreover, despite
widespread interest in the importance of the somatic in the religious thought and imagery of
the Middle Ages, the Parisian Adam has been largely neglected by historians of medieval art.
This omission is due in part to the fact that the figure has lost its contextual framework,
dislocated as it is from its original physical surroundings. Housed not at the head of a grand
staircase in the Louvre, but in a room filled with fragments from Notre-Dame de Paris in the
rather more obscure Musée national du Moyen Âge, the Parisian Adam does not photograph
especially well; it was also subject to a series of nineteenth-century restorations at the hands
of a certain A. Geoffroy, which further obscured its original character.² I would argue,
however, that the chief reason for this neglect lies in an inability to frame the work
intellectually: for the kinds of questions that have largely concerned scholars of gothic

¹ Erlande-Brandenburg suggests a particular consonance with the great master Polykleitos, who in the fifth
century B.C.E. “defined a new canon in which frontality is abandoned in favor of this harmonious swaying of
contradictory movements, wherein balance restores itself” (translation mine). See Erlande-Brandenburg,
“L’Adam du Musée de Cluny,” 87.

² These nineteenth-century restorations, carried out by Adolphe Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume who lead the team
of sculptors working on the restoration of Notre-Dame under Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus, are discussed at
greater length below. They are described in some detail in Erlande-Brandenburg, Les sculptures de Notre-Dame de
Paris au musée de Cluny, 117–118. On Geoffroy-Dechaume and his career, see De plâtre et d’or: Geoffroy-Dechaume,
sculpteur romantique de Viollet-le-Duc; Finance and Lenfant, Dans l’intimité de l’atelier.
sculpture in France over the past century, the figure of Adam does not offer a particularly satisfying or useful case study.

***

It is not my aim to provide a comprehensive historiography of gothic sculpture, but at this juncture it would perhaps be useful to offer an abbreviated summary in order to better understand how the Parisian Adam could have slipped through the scholarly cracks. In the first half of the nineteenth century, gothic sculpture received hardly any attention from historians and antiquarians; when it was mentioned, however, it was almost invariably as an aside in a larger discussion of medieval architecture. Until well into the twentieth century, in fact, the study of gothic sculpture was equated with the study of the cathedral—the only sculpted images that merited serious investigation were those integrated into architectural programs. The interpretative lenses employed by scholars may have varied, but the class of objects upon which they were trained did not.

One might imagine that this understanding of gothic sculpture as monumental and architectural would have favored the study of figures like the Parisian Adam. After all, what could be more monumental than a larger-than-life-sized male nude, sculpted in the round and installed in an architectural niche? For most scholars of the great cathedrals, however, architecturally dislocated and stylistically anomalous objects such as this were too difficult to position within the historical narratives and theoretical systems that structured and circumscribed their research. For Emile Mâle and his followers, for example, the belief that the cathedral constituted a visual encyclopedia meant that each of its component parts must

---

3 For a thorough overview and analysis of the early historiography of gothic sculpture, see Brush, “Integration or Segregation among Disciplines?” Martin Büchsel also provides a short summary of the interpretative frameworks that have largely defined the study of gothic sculpture; his essay includes a bibliography, see Büchsel, “Gothic Sculpture from 1150-1250.”

4 Brush, “Integration or Segregation among Disciplines?,” 21–22.
function as a cog in the larger conceptual machine: sculpted images were important only insofar as they could be parsed as units of meaning consistent with the totality of the cathedral. Each discrete image contributed to the meaning of the program within which it was situated—a portal, for instance, or a façade; each program, in turn, encapsulated and enriched the meaning of the macrocosm—that is, of the cathedral as a whole; and finally, the cathedral itself functioned as a microcosm of the known universe, communicating the entirety of human knowledge to the viewer in visual form. Mâle’s assumption that the themes and forms of gothic art expressed and embodied Church doctrine, and that meaning was to be found in the ensemble rather than the individual image, was shared by many of his contemporaries and remains common to this day. While the notion of the cathedral as a perfect microcosm of the universe is no longer widely held, meaning is still understood largely as a product of the relationship between and among conceptually interconnected figures, and theology remains, for many, the key to unlocking that meaning. It is hardly a surprise that the Parisian Adam should have stymied such scholars. Displayed since the

---

5 Mâle, *L’art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France*. For a discussion of Mâle’s influence on a generation of art historians, see Boerner, “Sculptural Programs.”

6 For Mâle, the structure and imagery of the cathedral was a visual expression of such texts as Vincent of Beauvais’s *Sepulchrum Maius*, a compendium of all human knowledge which was widely circulated in the Middle Ages. For more on the *Sepulchrum*, see Lusignan and Paulmier-Foucart, “Vincent de Beauvais et L’histoire Du Speculum Maius.” On Mâle’s use of the *Sepulchrum in his L’Art religieux* see Gajewski, “Emile Mâle’s ‘L’art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France’.”

7 For much of the last century, it has been common practice to focus on sculptural programs (façades, portals, choir screens, etc.) as conceptually discrete systems, and for many, theology continues to be understood as the organizing principle around which such programs take shape. In the essay cited above, for instance, Bruno Boerner writes that sculptural programs, in which interrelated figures are organized according to a unifying concept, almost always have a “theological basis,” Boerner, “Sculptural Programs,” 557. In another essay, Boerner himself reads a number of thirteenth-century sculptural programs through the lens of scholasticism, see Boerner, “Réflexions sur les rapports entre la scolastique naissante et les programmes sculptés du XIIIe siècle.” Other interpretative frameworks—politics, patronage, reception, etc.—have gained ascendancy, but theology remains an important tool in the medievalist’s repertoire; for a critical discussion of its role in the study of medieval art and architecture, see Hamburger, “The Place of Theology in Medieval Art History: Problems, Positions, Possibilities,” especially 17–21, which specifically address the cathedral.
original architectural framework largely destroyed, the image’s role within the encyclopedia of the cathedral or the conceptual system of the program cannot be definitively established. More problematic still for those scholars who view gothic art and architecture as the embodiment of the stable doctrine of a unified Church, the sensuous beauty of the Parisian Adam is stylistically and theologically inconsistent with our understanding of medieval beliefs. 8 Indeed, in its scale and sensuality, the decontextualized Parisian Adam seems to have more in common with the heroic male nudes of the Renaissance, challenging the prevailing notion that freestanding sculpture was reborn in the Quattrocento. 9 Little wonder then that Mâle should comment on the nineteenth-century figures of Adam and Eve on the west façade—“Le lamentable couple … qui semble frissonner sous la plouie et le brouillard”—while ignoring the thirteenth-century figure formerly installed in the south transept. 10 His is an art history that cannot account for anomalies, and the Parisian Adam is undeniably anomalous.

---

8 That medieval thinkers and theologians held the body in contempt as a source of sin and shame has been an unshakeable belief held by a majority of medievalists for many decades. Scholars like Caroline Walker Bynum have done a great deal to challenge this reductive notion of a singular medieval “concept of the body,” offering abundant evidence in support of the idea that concepts of bodies and bodily activity differed across and within “discourse communities,” see Bynum, “Why All the Fuss about the Body?” Nevertheless, this construction of “the medieval body” as suffering, shameful, and singular, has yet to be totally dismantled, and in the nineteenth-century it was virtually uncontested.

9 The belief that the freestanding heroic male figure was a development of Renaissance sculpture is commonly held to this day; see, for example, Janson, “The Revival of Antiquity in Early Renaissance Sculpture”; Nagel, The Controversy of Renaissance Art, 109–130. Of course, while it is undeniably sculpted in the round, the Parisian Adam was not originally a freestanding image; rather, it was installed in a niche, integrated into the architectural and institutional framework of the cathedral. This is a key distinction according to Nagel, who argues that throughout the Middle Ages, the freestanding image was associated with idolatry, and it was only through insertion into “a larger syntactic structure governed by church ideology and the protocols of institutional ritual” that images sculpted in the round could be dissociated from the demonic statues of paganism, see Ibid., 113. Displayed, as it now is, as a freestanding image, however, the Parisian Adam appears strangely anachronistic, which has no doubt deterred scholarly engagement.

10 Mâle, L’art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France, 87. The sculpture’s original location is discussed at greater length below.
The Parisian Adam was equally problematic for scholars whose approach to the study of gothic sculpture focused not on theology but on questions of style, chronology, and the role of individual artists in the production of large-scale sculptural ensembles. For Wilhelm Vöge, for instance, the cathedral remained the focal point in his investigation into the origins of gothic sculpture even as his work diverged conceptually and methodologically from that of contemporaries such as Mâle, and the Parisian Adam remained a confounding aberration.¹¹ Vöge was concerned with questions of human agency and the role of individual creativity in the genesis and development of French gothic sculpture. His method of “scientific” stylistic analysis had genealogical, Darwinian underpinnings, and he sought to trace the evolution of a quintessentially “French” sculptural mode from a supposed point of origin at Chartres.¹² Seen from his perspective, the stylistically irregular Parisian Adam would seem to be an evolutionary dead end, or perhaps a dormant limb of the evolutionary tree—one which would only bear fruit with the advent of the Italian renaissance.

For scholars interested in tracing a trajectory of stylistic development across geographical regions, in investigating workshop culture and identifying the hands of individual masons, and in establishing chronologies and genealogies both for individual cathedrals and for national schools, the Parisian Adam was not a particularly enlightening object of study. His smoothly beautiful face may have the anonymity and universality called for in a representation of the First Man, but it did not support narratives about the rise of

¹¹ Vöge’s most important and influential work, Die Anfänge des monumentalen Stiles im Mittelalter was published a few years before Mâle’s magnum opus in 1894. His methodology, and its tremendous importance in the development of gothic sculpture as a field of research is the subject of an excellent study by Kathryn Brush, The Shaping of Art History. For her discussion of Vöge see especially p. 57-111.

¹² Ibid., 13–14; 62–65.
individuality and physiognomic idiosyncrasy in the sculpture of the thirteenth century. Nor does the Parisian Adam fit easily into more recent scholarly discourses on patronage, reception, and the political, social and liturgical contexts of gothic sculpture, for such discourses are predicated upon a more-than-speculative knowledge of a given figure’s location within a larger program and ritual practice. Even subfields where interest in such an object would seem most natural, and its study most instructive—the intense historical research and theoretical investigation centered on the body in the Middle Ages, and discussions of medieval “classicism”—have not produced any significant scholarly treatments of the Parisian Adam. The sensuous male nude does not fit easily within the conceptual frameworks that have typically structured scholarly discourse on medieval bodies: in keeping with ongoing interest in the abject, the ugly and the contingent, with regard to the religious art of the Middle Ages, the focus has been almost exclusively on either the idealized female body, particularly that of Mary, or alternatively, the suffering male body, above all that of Christ in his Passion. Moreover, treatments of the nude and nakedness in the

---

13 On physiognomy in thirteenth-century sculpture see Sauerländer, “Phisionomia est doctrina salutis: Über Physiognomik und Porträt im Jahrhundert Ludwigs des Heiligen.”

14 These are broad, intersecting trends, encompassing a tremendous range of scholarship; discussions of the historical contingency of meaning in medieval art, for instance, arise in explorations of materiality, function, etc.—see, for example, the special issue of Gesta devoted to medieval conceptions of significationes rerum, especially the introductory essay by Kumler and Lakey, “Res et Significatio.” Examinations of artistic patronage in the Middle Ages necessarily intersect with investigations into social, political and economic history and occur in all subfields of medieval art history, as a recent conference hosted by Princeton’s Index of Christian Art makes clear—see Hourihane, Patronage: Power & Agency in Medieval Art. Moreover, the study of liturgical practices is intimately connected, even entwined, with questions of embodied reception, especially in the case of religious architecture and architectural sculpture—on medieval art and architecture and the liturgy, see Hourihane, Objects, Images, and the Word: Art in the Service of the Liturgy; Piva, Art médiéval: les voies de l’espace liturgique.

15 Other areas that have received substantial attention over the past thirty years include the Eucharistic body, the female body, the mystical body, the resurrected body, the fragmented body, the political body, the body of Christ, and the body in pain; on the Eucharistic body, see for example Seifert, Panis angelorum - das Brot der Engel; Rubin, Corpus Christi. On the female body see for example Bynum, Holy Feast and Holy Fast. On women, mysticism and the body, see also Petroff, Body and Soul. On the resurrected body see Bynum, The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336. On the fragmented body see Bynum, Fragmentation and Redemption. See also the significant bibliography on the cult of relics, an overview of which can be found in Boehm, “Body-Part
Middle Ages have focused almost exclusively on nakedness as a sign of vulnerability and shame, for instance in representations of the resurrected and particularly of the damned in scenes of the Last Judgment. The Parisian Adam is clearly at odds with this general understanding of medieval attitudes towards the corporeal as fraught with anxiety.

Nor does the Parisian Adam support common perceptions of medieval attitudes towards antiquity, as they have been discussed by such scholars as Wilhelm Vöge, Erwin Panofsky, and Peter Cornelius Claussen.16 Medieval “classicism” has generally been understood as a series of stylistic borrowings and iconographic quotations, and framed in relationship to a perceived trajectory of increasing naturalism in the Gothic period—whether in opposition to it or as a vehicle towards it, depending on the author.17 The Parisian Adam, however, points to more than a passing knowledge of classical models on the part of the Paris workshop; it suggests that these medieval artisans possessed both a sophisticated understanding of classical forms and types, and the technical mastery necessary to recreate them. More importantly, it suggests that our understanding of medieval “classicism” as the appropriation of forms devoid of meaning, or as evidence of a particular mason or workshop’s rediscovery of ancient techniques is far too limited. As we shall see, the coopting of the Venus pudica pose invoked a complex structure of cultural associations in order to communicate particular ideas about beauty, skill, divine and artistic creation, lifelikeness and

Reliquaries”; Bynum and Gerson, “Body-Part Reliquaries and Body Parts in the Middle Ages.” On the political body see, for example, Kantorowicz, The King’s Two Bodies; Camille, “The King’s New Bodies: An Illustrated Mirror for Princes in the Morgan Library”; Le Goff, “Head or Heart? The Political Use of Body Metaphors in the Middle Ages.”

16 Vöge, Die Anfänge des monumentalen Stiles im Mittelalter. Eine Untersuchung über die erste Blütezeit französischer Plastik; Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art; Claussen, “Antike und gotische Skulptur in Frankreich um 1200.”

17 On medieval borrowings from antiquity, see Adhémar, Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français; Settis, Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana.
enlivenment. “Classicism” in the Middle Ages, the Parisian Adam suggests, represented a set of expressive possibilities, to be used selectively and in concert with a range of other representational modes in order to communicate a particular message about the represented subject.

As the preceding paragraphs have made clear, the reasons for scholarly neglect of the Parisian Adam are many and manifest. It need not follow, however, that productive study of the sculpture is impossible. In the absence of new archaeological or documentary evidence, we may not be able to reach firm conclusions about the Parisian Adam’s role in the sculptural program of the south transept, or to frame it, with confidence, in terms of patronage, narrative, embodied reception, or social and liturgical practice. Even decontextualized images, however, are capable of communicating meaning: when style and stylistic difference are understood not as indicators of formal evolution over time, nor as the result of an individual mason’s relative skill and creativity, but as representational idioms that encode culturally contingent meaning, images like the Parisian Adam can become legible.\(^{18}\)

With its immediate architectural and sculptural framework missing, the Parisian Adam may pose a methodological challenge, but it is not, I would argue, an insurmountable one. I propose to offer a reading of the Parisian Adam as a discrete object, focusing on the cultural structures and associations that gave meaning to his form. In so doing, I aim to challenge our vision of the medieval body as a suffering (or sublimated) body, reconfigure the discourse on antiquity and the gothic, and suggest a productive methodology for dealing

\(^{18}\) The notion that medieval classicism might best be understood as the deliberate use of a visual language rather than the rediscovery of a superior style and technique, mobilized either in opposition to, or as a vehicle towards “naturalism,” is largely absent from the vast literature on classical influences in medieval art. Work by Jacqueline Jung addresses the possibility that a variety of stylistic modes may have been employed in conjunction with one another in order to communicate a range of meanings to a pluralistic audience, but her research is mainly focused on sculpted choir screens in Germany, and she does not specifically address the connotative meanings of classicizing styles. See Jung, “Beyond the Barrier”; Jung, The Gothic Screen.
with anomalous and dislocated objects. Before these challenges to existing conceptual frameworks can be addressed, however, we must first attempt to reconstruct the figure’s original appearance and function, identifying those elements that have been lost or restored, and situating it within the sculptural program of the cathedral.

***

In an invoice dated 24 January 1888, the sculptor Geoffroy-Dechaume requests payment of 950 francs for “les morceaux de jambes, bras, nez, branche et divers raccords, modelé, moulage, ajustable et exécution en pierre.”19 The museum inventory affirms that “le bras droit, les jambes et les orteils du pied gauche ont été refaits” and that “[il] ne reste qu’un fragment de l’avant bras et de la jambe gauche.”20 Careful observation confirms that both of Adam’s legs are modern from below the knee to the feet, as are the two branches between the trunk and the vine leaf. The left toe, the nose and the left arm were also restored by Geoffroy-Dechaume; in these cases, however, the original medieval elements were reattached.21

In the course of restoring the Parisian Adam, Geoffroy-Dechaume made a series of mistakes which significantly altered the sculpture’s appearance. The most dramatic of these nineteenth-century fabrications is the blessing gesture of the right hand. The forearm, the hand, and the stone support attaching the hand to the chest are all the work of Geoffroy-Dechaume (traces of the original support are still visible below the left breast), and a drawing (Fig. 2.3) in the first volume of the “Album Lenoir”—a collection of plans and views of the Musée des Monuments français, which housed the Parisian Adam between 1793 and 1816—

---

19 The invoice is quoted in Erlande-Brandenburg, Les sculptures de Notre-Dame de Paris au musée de Cluny, 117.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.
suggests that the original gesture would have been very different indeed.\(^2^2\) This image—a view of the museum’s north gallery—appears to show the figure holding an apple in its right hand, with the palm turned inward towards the torso. An engraving by Jean-Etienne Biet (Fig. 2.4), published in Jean-Pierre Brès’s *Souvenirs du musée des Monuments français* of 1821, and a painting by Charles-Marie Bouton (Fig. 2.5), also show the figure holding an apple, and a few surviving images of Adam from the medieval period, including a mid-fourteenth-century sculpture from the church of St. Laurence at Nuremberg (Fig. 2.6) and an illustration from an English manuscript dated c. 1300 (Fig. 2.7), would suggest that this iconography was not an uncommon one.\(^2^3\) According to Erlande-Brandenburg, Geoffroy-Dechaume also shortened the legs by two or three centimeters, and thickened the calves considerably.\(^2^4\)

Sculpted out of high-quality, locally quarried stone which would originally have been completely painted, the Parisian Adam shows no sign of major weathering, suggesting an original installation inside the cathedral.\(^2^5\) This suggestion is supported by a passage from

\(^{22}\) Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Réserve des grands albums, Album Lenoir v. 1, RF 5279, fol. 34. The drawing bears the signature of one Adèle le Breton, although according to Erlande-Brandenburg it is after Jean Lubin Vauzelle, who executed a number of views of the Musée des Monuments français in the Album Lenoir. For more on Alexandre Lenoir and his museum, see Carter, “Recreating Time, History, and the Poetic Imaginary”; Greene, “Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments français During the French Revolution.”

\(^{23}\) For the Biet engraving see Brès, *Souvenirs du Musée des Monuments français*, Plate 20. Dieter Kimpel compares the Parisian Adam to the Walters manuscript illumination (W.102.28v), noting similarities in the poses of the figures, the vine leaf, the curling hair and the position of the arms, see Kimpel, “Die Querhausarme von Notre-Dame,” 121. In addition to these examples, Erlande-Brandenburg suggests that the mid-thirteenth-century figure of Adam from Bamberg, whose hand is now missing, very likely held an apple as well. This is, however, impossible to confirm; see Erlande-Brandenburg, “L’Adam du Musée de Cluny,” 85.


\(^{25}\) Traces of surviving pigment in shades of pink and green suggest the original polychromy was vividly mimetic, a point I will return to later in the chapter. I have not come across any petrographic studies of the Parisian Adam itself, but studies of the cathedral’s exterior, including some of the sculpture, were carried out during the cleanings that took place in 1969 (exterior) and 1984 (interior). The stone was found to be a type of limestone known as *liais de Paris*, and analysis of samples taken from the sculpture of the west façade are consistent, compositionally, with an origin in the quarries at Charenton, southeast of Paris, see Blanc and Lorenz, “Observations Sur La Nature Des Matériaux de La Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris”; Blanc and Lorenz, “Pierres de Paris. Identification d’une pierre”; Holmes, Little, and Sayre, “Elemental Characterization
Antoine Gilbert’s *Description historique de la basilique métropolitaine de Paris*, wherein he states that the sculpture was originally located in a niche on the interior façade of the south transept:

Le fond de la croisée à droite est décoré de quatre grands pignons découpés très-délicatement dans le plein mur, et surmonté de petites figures gothiques. Dans les deux niches pratiquées entre ces pignons, au-dessus des pieds droits de la porte méridionale, on voyoit autrefois les statues d’Adam et d’Eve, exécutées en pierre de liais; elles furent ôtées de cet endroit lorsqu’on y plaça des tableaux.

Of course, by the time Gilbert came to write his *Description historique*, the sculpture of Adam had been relocated, first to the Musée des Monuments français in 1797, and subsequently to Saint-Denis in 1816, while that of Eve had been mutilated beyond repair. Even before the sculpture was acquired by Alexandre Lenoir for his museum, it had apparently been removed from its original location, presumably to make way for the “tableaux” mentioned by Gilbert: in an annotation of the *État des monuments* drawn up in 1816, Lenoir notes that the statue, which came from Notre-Dame, “avait été déposée dans l’une des tours.” Later in the nineteenth century, some confusion arose over the sculpture’s original location. In his *Itinéraire archéologique de Paris*, Ferdinand de Guilhermy describes a nineteenth-century sculpture of Adam, one of five large stone statues executed by Geoffroy-Dechaume,
Chenillon and Fromanger, which was installed in the Virgin’s Gallery on the cathedral’s façade, above the Gallery of Kings, at the base of the north tower, in 1854.²⁹ Guilhermy himself does not explicitly state that the nineteenth-century Adam’s location corresponds with that of the original medieval work; nevertheless, subsequent publications, for example a catalogue by Haraucourt and Montremy, state unequivocally that the medieval work “Provient de Notre-Dame de Paris, (balustrade de la galerie de la Vierge, au pied de la tour du nord.)”³⁰ Gilbert’s assertion is supported, however, by visual evidence in the form of an elevation of the interior of the south arm of the transept after a design by Robert de Cotte, in which the figures of Adam and Eve are shown in their original placement (Fig. 2.8).³¹ Further evidence exists in the form of a hole between the shoulders indicating the point of insertion of a brace, which would have fixed the sculpture to a wall, and which corresponds to a hole at the same height in the wall of the south transept niche.³²

The sculpture’s original location may be generally agreed upon, but there has been little discussion, let alone consensus, regarding its role in the larger sculptural program of the south transept interior. This is hardly surprising given the difficulties attendant upon any reconstruction of the program.³³ With the renovation of the cathedral’s east end, begun in

---

²⁹ Guilhermy, *Itinéraire archéologique de Paris*, 35. The nineteenth-century sculpture, still to be seen on the façade of the cathedral along with its pendant image of Eve at the base of the south tower, bears no resemblance to the medieval original and cannot have been intended as a replica.


³¹ The drawing, executed by one Germain Boffrand, was apparently intended as a study for Robert de Cotte’s new rose; it is held in the Cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque nationale de France, where it is n. 34 in the collection “Différents plans relatifs à l'intérieur de la cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris.” The drawing does not accurately reproduce the sculptures’ appearance, but it does corroborate their original location.

³² The hole in the sculpture’s back is clearly visible today, while that in the wall of the niche is noted by Guilhermy, *Itinéraire archéologique de Paris*, 35.

³³ On the ‘program’ and its place in the study of medieval art, see Guillouët and Rabel, *Le programme*. Note especially Michel Pastoureau’s essay, “Programme: Histoire d'un mot, histoire d'un concept,” which traces the
the seventeenth century, and the eighteenth-century demolition of the monumental *clôture* that once enclosed the choir, the transept’s spatial dynamic and visual effect were totally transformed.\(^{34}\) These alterations were compounded by the ravages of the revolution and by subsequent nineteenth-century restoration efforts, and today the medieval aspect of the interior has been irretrievably lost.\(^{35}\) Moreover, the medieval cathedral itself was not, conceptually speaking, a static, unified whole—the history of its construction spanned several centuries and multiple redesigns, further complicating efforts to reconstruct and parse its sculptural programs.\(^{36}\) Nevertheless, surviving fragments, along with historical descriptions and diagrams, can give us some sense of the transept’s appearance circa 1260, when the Parisian Adam is believed to have been sculpted. In fact, Erlande-Brandenburg

---

\(^{34}\) The renovation of the cathedral’s east end was begun by Mansart and Robert de Cotte under the sponsorship of Louis XIV, and involved the cladding of columns and walls in colored marbles, the installation of a polychrome pavement in the sanctuary, and the replacement of the east and west sections of the *clôture* with iron grilles and carved stalls. The demolition was initiated in 1699, and the project was completed in 1723, see Gillerman, “The Clôture of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame.”

\(^{35}\) The removal of all monarchical imagery from the cathedral, including the twenty-eight figures from the Gallery of Kings, took place in 1793. The jamb statues were removed between 1793 and 1794, as were most of the full-length figures on the cathedral exterior and many from the interior, several of which found their way into Lenoir’s museum. The nineteenth-century restoration of the sculptural program, begun in 1847, aimed to accurately reconstruct lost statues through careful study of engravings, drawings and surviving fragments; it was presided over by Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and his colleague Jean-Baptiste Lassus, and involved a large team of skilled craftsmen whose working arrangements were meant to mimic the workshops of the thirteenth century. For a timeline of the revolutionary destruction and the nineteenth-century restoration project, see Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 226–232. For a more extensive discussion of revolutionary vandalism at Notre-Dame see Erlande-Brandenburg and Kimpel, “La Statuaire de Notre-Dame de Paris avant les destructions révolutionnaires.” On the destruction and rediscovery of the Gallery of Kings in particular, see Giscard d’Estaing, Fleury, and Erlande-Brandenburg, *Les Rois retrouvés*. For a more comprehensive discussion of the destruction of art in revolutionary France, see Réau, *Histoire du vandalisme*, 231–551; Sauerländer, “La Cathédrale et la révolution.” On the nineteenth-century restoration of the cathedral and its sculpture, see Auzas, “Viollet-le-Duc et la restauration de Notre-Dame de Paris”; Erlande-Brandenburg, “La restauration de Notre-Dame de Paris au XIXe siècle”; Reiff, “Viollet Le Duc and Historic Restoration.” See also the original proposal by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration de Notre-Dame de Paris par MM. Lassus et Viollet-Leduc*.

\(^{36}\) The ancient history of the cathedral site, and the chronology of the Gothic building which was begun under Bishop Maurice de Sully in the 1160s, have been the subject of considerable study and will not be recapitulated here. A general history of the building from its fourth-century origins through its nineteenth-century restoration under Viollet-le-Duc can be found in Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*. 
argues that, despite its protracted construction history spanning many years, the transept's sculptural program was conceived by the master mason Jean de Chelles as an iconographically unified whole.  

Begun shortly before Jean de Chelles's death in 1258 and completed under the direction of Pierre de Montreuil, the extension of the transept arms involved a dramatic transformation of the cathedral interior with the construction of a new jubé and the beginning of a new choir enclosure. The sculptural program extended across these surfaces, as well as the interior façades of the transept portals, and told the story of Christ's descent to earth, the redemption of mankind, and the new covenant. The jubé (Fig. 2.9), which ran between the eastern piers of the crossing, was divided into five bays and was part of a conceptually unified program encompassing the sculpture and rose window of the southern transept arm. A walkway, three meters wide and accessible by stairs on both sides, ran across the top of the jubé and accommodated the three lecterns used for the reading of the epistle and the Gospel, and the delivering of sermons and public announcements. The jubé's blind arcades and the spaces between the crowning gables housed narrative reliefs depicting scenes from the Passion including the Resurrection of Christ, the Resurrection of the Dead, a number of groups of the Elect, and the Descent into

37 Ibid., 163.

38 Ibid., 159–162; Wright, Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500-1550, 7–13. Wright suggests that the choir enclosure was constructed as a gesture of devotion to the Holy Sacrament: the clôture preserved and regulated contemplation of the Sacrament, functioning as a reliquary for the Sanctissimum much as Louis IX’s Sainte Chapelle enshrined the relics of the Passion he had acquired from the Holy Land.


40 Throughout I rely on reconstructions of the transept’s architectural and sculptural program by Erlande-Brandenburg and Wright. These reconstructions are based on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century drawings and engravings of the cathedral interior, and on surviving fragments of sculpted reliefs. See Erlande-Brandenburg, Notre-Dame de Paris, 167–176; Wright, Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500-1550, 7–13.

41 Wright, Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500-1550, 9.
Limbo, a fragment of which survives in the Louvre (Fig. 2.10). A Crucifixion group, a twenty-eight foot cross flanked by figures of the Virgin and Saint John, topped the screen. Perpendicular to the jubé, the interior façade of the transept’s southern arm featured a Last Judgment group which survives to this day (Fig. 2.11). Christ, clothed in full-length robes, his right hand raised in blessing, stands atop the finial of the central gable on the southern wall of the transept extension. To either side, perched upon the adjacent lower gables, are angels holding the instruments of the Passion. Another pair of trumpeting angels face each other across the transept arm, one atop a pillar on the eastern wall of the original transept and the other at the pinnacle of another gable on the southern extension’s western wall. It is to this ensemble that the Parisian Adam originally belonged: on either side of the southern wall’s central gable are tall, narrow niches, topped by equally tall and narrow pinnacles, the edges and ribs of which are embellished by vegetal finials; scholars generally agree that these niches once housed the figures of the first couple—Adam on Christ’s right and Eve to his left.

In those rare examinations of the Parisian Adam that move beyond description and stylistic analysis into the realm of interpretation, discussion of the figure’s meaning generally begins and ends with its role within this Judgment group. Dieter Kimpel, for instance, argues that in this particular program, Christ should be seen not as the Judge but as the Erlöser or Redeemer. Adam and Eve, it follows, appear as representatives of the human race in need of redemption; Adam’s gesture of modesty and the apple he once held reveal his

42 Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 175. According to Wright, several chapels were also built into the jubé, including one dedicated to St. Martin and one to St. Sebastian, see Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500-1550*, 9.

43 Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 175.

44 Kimpel, “Die Querhausarme von Notre-Dame,” 121.
postlapsarian state, and as symbols of fallen humanity, he and Eve await the salvation promised by the figure of the redemptive Christ. This interpretation is supported by the presence of a Descent into Limbo on that portion of the jubé closest to the southern arm of the transept: only a tiny fragment of the scene survives, but the two nude figures—one smooth-chested and identifiably male, despite the lack of genitalia, the other breasted and obviously female—almost certainly represent Adam and Eve at the moment that the promise of salvation is fulfilled.

The relationship between interior and exterior façades added another layer to this narrative of redemption. The exterior portal of the southern transept faced the bishop’s palace and recalled the cathedral’s original dedication to St. Stephen (Fig. 2.12). The protomartyr appeared on the trumeau dressed as a deacon and holding a book, while the tympanum above told the story of his life: Stephen is depicted on the lower lintel instructing the Jews, preaching, and brought before the Sanhedrin, while the upper lintel represents his stoning and entombment. A half-length figure of Christ in heaven, flanked by angels, presides in the uppermost section of the tympanum. The scenes from the life of the saint and his placement on the trumeau in his deacon’s robes emphasized the crucial role the clergy played in the process of redemption: as the first of the ministers anointed by the apostles, Stephen “did great wonders and signs among the people,” spreading the Word

---


46 By the nineteenth century, the bishop’s palace had fallen into ruin, and in 1831 it was finally demolished. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc proposed several designs for its replacement as part of their ambitious restoration project, but they were never realized, Erlande-Brandenburg, Notre-Dame de Paris, 234.

47 The trumeau figure of St. Stephen and the adjacent jamb figures were removed and destroyed during the revolution; the sculptures currently in place are nineteenth-century reconstructions based on descriptions and fragments, see Aubert, La Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris, 51.
through preaching and disputation before his martyrdom. While thirteenth-century Parisian clerics were not often called upon to die for their faith, instructing and sermonizing were still among their priestly responsibilities, and the narrative reliefs above the portal reminded the viewer of the clergy’s lineage. The trumeau figure, meanwhile, positioned St. Stephen—and, by extension, the priesthood he represented—as gatekeeper to the cathedral and the promise of salvation therein: redemption was due to Christ, of course, but it could only be achieved through the mechanism of the Church and its clergy. Reserved for the exclusive use of the bishop, whose palace it faced, the portal, with its dedication to the protocleric Stephen, reflected the bishop’s understanding of the importance of his office. The figures of Adam and Eve on the façade’s obverse faced the choir enclosure in which high mass was celebrated, and from which sermons were delivered: they, and the laity for whom they stood, were the blessed beneficiaries of Christ’s mercy, to be meted out by his representatives on earth.

Interpretations in this vein are common to discussions of gothic sculpture, and when developed more fully, taking into account the particular political and social contexts of the sites in question, they can tell us a great deal about sculptural programs and the ways in which they communicated meaning to their various audiences. In this particular instance, however, such an interpretation reveals very little about the Parisian Adam itself, and why it


49 It was not unusual for bishops to have elaborate entrances built for their exclusive use; these entrances were used on feast days and other ceremonial occasions, see Erlande-Brandenburg, Notre-Dame de Paris, 158.

50 A crosier from Hildesheim, once belonging to Abbot Erkanbald, gives a similarly pastoral inflection to the story of Adam and Eve: in the volute, which depicts God’s admonishment of Adam, God holds a book, emphasizing the crucial role of the Scriptures in man’s redemption. The inclusion of this scene on a crosier, the insignia of ecclesiastical authority, emphasized the importance not only of the Scriptures, but of the clergy who relayed their truth to the laity and mediated between man and God. On the crosier, see the catalogue entry in Barnet, Brandt, and Lutz, Medieval Treasures from Hildesheim, 52–53.
looks the way it does. In the remainder of this chapter, I would like to set aside the question of program, to focus instead on the Parisian Adam as a bearer of encoded meaning, independent of the ensemble in which it would originally have been seen.

***

“And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him…”

To the modern viewer, the representational strategy adopted by the mason who sculpted the Parisian Adam suggests a great leap forward in technical skill and artistic knowledge, a previously unseen sensitivity to the sensuous potential of the naked male body, and the appropriation of a specific, gendered gesture. If we are to unravel the complex knot of meanings it held for medieval viewers, however, we must first understand what distinguished the figure of Adam as a subject—the unique demands such a subject entailed and the unique opportunities it afforded the artist.

Nakedness is inherent to the figure of Adam. In Paradise, Adam and Eve existed in a state of perfect and unabashed nudity, while the Fall marked the origins of bodily awareness and shame—of nakedness in the Kenneth Clarkian sense.\(^5\) Pictorial programs featuring depictions of Adam—whether as the principle actor in narrative cycles based on the opening chapters of Genesis, or as a freestanding figure as in the south transept at Notre-Dame de Paris—thus offered the medieval sculptor a rare occasion to grapple with the problem of nakedness and the nude on a monumental scale. Created “to the image of God” and yet responsible for man’s ultimate loss, Adam embodied and exemplified the deep-seated ambivalence inherent in medieval treatments of the body—a body which was simultaneously the pinnacle of God’s creation and the locus of shame and suffering. All of the sculptor’s

---

\(^5\) This distinction is made in the first chapter of Clark’s study of the nude in art, “The Naked and the Nude, see Clark, *The Nude*, 3–29.
skills were brought to bear in depictions of Adam, as the subject called both for great beauty, befitting the apogee of divine creation, and for great subtlety, allowing for the communication of its inherent ambiguity.

One could argue that whatever their peculiar characteristics, all of the images that made up the ambitious decorative programs of major urban cathedrals like Notre-Dame were executed with the utmost care by the most accomplished craftsmen available. Indeed, the notion that stylistic differences across programs can be attributed to varying skill levels among artisans is, as has already been noted, an oversimplification which fails to account for the ways in which style functioned as a communicative tool. I would argue, however, that the act of representing Adam gave the question of skill—what it meant to be skillful, and what the results of skilled craftsmanship looked like—greater weight, foregrounding as it did the parallels between artistic and divine creation.

In the first chapter of Genesis, the creation of Adam seems to occur in the manner of God’s other creations, ex nihilo: “And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness … And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them.”52 The Hebrew word bara’ (to create) used in this verse, however, also suggests an action of cutting or cutting out, while the word for image (tselem) refers to “something cut out,” connecting Adam’s creation conceptually to the work of the sculptor in stone.53 Later in Genesis, moreover, and elsewhere in the Old Testament, God’s fashioning

---

52 Genesis 1:26-27.

53 This meaning of tselem is noted in Brown, The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, 855. The entry for bara’ in Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary includes “to cut down” as a qualified meaning, see Strong, The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, entry no. 1254. The word’s Arabic cognate, moreover, means to “form, fashion by cutting, shape out, pare a reed for writing, a stick for an arrow,” and some scholars have argued that “to cut” or “to cut out” may in fact be the original meaning of the Hebrew bara’. For the definition of bārā in Arabic, see Brown, The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, 135. On the idea that bara’ originally meant “to cut,” see Van der Ploeg, “Les sens du verbe hébreu בָּרָא bara’, étude sémasiologique”; Hanson, “Num. XVI 30 and the Meaning of Bārā’.”
of Adam is described in highly material terms—man is “formed … of the slime of the earth,” and God is thus cast in the role of divine artisan, molding man out of extant earthly matter. Indeed, Isidore of Seville argued that the word *homo* derived from *humo*—man was named for the earth out of which he was made. It is evident from the many Genesis cycles in which God appears to form Adam with his hands, or in which Adam’s earthly substance is emphasized, that medieval artists embraced this conceptualization of divine creation as a tactile, material process. In a three-tiered Genesis frontispiece in the Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura (Fig. 2.13), for example, the divine creator—who appears as the haloed, robed Christ—bends over a recumbent Adam, his right hand resting on the first man’s shoulder while his left grasps his arm. The pinkish hue of Adam’s bare skin is identical in color to the mountain face against which he appears, suggesting his material origins in the stuff of the earth.

Similar images of a hands-on Creator appear in other Carolingian bibles, including the Moûtier-Grandval Bible (Fig. 2.14), in which a stiff-limbed Adam lies on a grassy surface streaked with rivulets of reddish-brown, echoing the color in which his flesh is modeled.

---

54 Genesis 2:7. Adam’s creation out of earthly material is also described in Tobias 8:8 (“Thou madest Adam of the slime of the earth, and gavest him Eve for a helper.”) and Ecclesiasticus 33:10 (“And all men are from the ground, and out of the earth, from whence Adam was created.”). These two descriptions of Adam’s creation from Genesis 1:26-27 and Genesis 2:7 represent divergent textual and cultural traditions, the first being the younger, Priestly version and the second being the more archaic Yahwist version. Medieval theologians were unaware of this difference in origin, but it is the subject of a huge body of modern scholarship. On the different strands of the Pentateuch, see for example Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, 158–182; Thompson, “The Yahwist Creation Story”; Weiser, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 74–81.

55 “*Homo dictus,quia ex humo factus est, sic ut dictius in Genesi: Et creavit Deus hominem de humo terrae.*” Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum* XII, PL 82, col. 397C.

56 The Bible of San Paolo, also known as the Bible of San Callisto, was made for Charles the Bald c. 870 C.E. A dedicatory poem establishes the scribe as one Ingobertus. It was likely given to Pope John VIII on the occasion of Charles’s imperial coronation in Rome in 875, see Gaehde, “The Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura in Rome”; Cardinali, *La Bibbia carolingia dell’Abbazia di San Paolo fuori le Mura*.


73
His maker stands over him, bent nearly double, his hands resting on Adam’s head and arm. There is some debate as to whether these scenes represent the forming of Adam, as described in Genesis 2:7, or the moment of his Enlivenment, when God breathed life into him. What is clear, however, is that divine creation was understood to involve manual manipulation of some kind—a molding, or a laying on of hands.  

In a late twelfth-century Genesis frontispiece, the illuminator of the Canterbury Psalter depicted God as a half-length figure, hovering above his creations in a gold-rimmed oculus, against a background of celestial blue (Fig. 2.15). His right hand is raised in blessing while his left holds a book aloft: here, Creation is no mechanical affair, God simply wills his creatures into existence. And yet, Adam is not created ex nihilo; rather, he is shown emerging from the ground, embedded up to his thighs in the “slime of the earth,” his face and hands upraised. This may not be a mechanical vision of creation, but it is still a material one—rising from the soil like a seedling or a resurrected corpse, Adam is formed in the manner of a clay figurine, “from the ground, and out of the earth.”

Adam’s earthy materiality is given greater emphasis, and the analogy between divine and artistic creation is more explicitly suggested, in the mosaic depicting the Forming of Adam in the narthex of San Marco in Venice (Fig. 2.16). Here, he stands upright on an undulating, grassy plane; behind him a heavenly host of five angels appears to float just above the ground while a sixth angel stands parallel to Adam at the image’s rightmost edge. Adam appears before God who occupies the front left corner of the scene—enthroned, clad

---

58 I tend to agree with the latter identification—for more on this debate, and on Carolingian Genesis frontispieces more broadly, see Kessler, “Hic Homo Formatur.”

59 Ecclesiasticus 33:10.

60 On the San Marco mosaics see Demus, The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice; Jolly, Made in God’s Image; Kessler and Büchsel, The Atrium of San Marco in Venice.
in white and gold robes, his head encircled by a cruciform halo, the Creator twists towards Adam and grips his right arm with both hands. Herbert Kessler argues that the scene’s position between the Creation of the Animals and the Sanctification of the Seventh Day identifies it as the Creation of Man described in the first chapter of Genesis, as opposed to the forming described in Genesis 2:7.61 Adam’s remarkable color, however, and the way in which God grips his arm draw attention to his material origins, and the tactile, sculptural character of his creation.

The Forming of Adam is explicitly likened to the molding of a clay figurine in a roundel from the first page of Genesis in the Lambeth Bible (Fig. 2.17).62 Running along the left side of the page, adjacent to the first column of text, eight roundels form an articulated initial I—the first character of the first chapter of Genesis—terminating at either end in interlace serifs embellished with vegetal flourishes and masks. The roundels represent the six days of Creation in descending order, bookended by two frontal busts of Christ. The first five days are depicted in highly abstracted, schematized terms. The creation of heaven and earth, the separating of light from darkness and water from land, and the forming of plant life, the heavenly bodies, and the creatures of sea, air and earth are presided over by the hieratic figure of the Creator in the topmost roundel, and appear to occur as a result of his spoken commands. The making of Adam in the seventh roundel, however, suggests an entirely different conceptualization of the creative act. This image envisions divine creation as manual labor: Adam, an inchoate homunculus, his brown flesh clearly evocative of the earthy stuff out of which he was formed, is molded by God, who clasps his faceless skull


62 For an introduction to the Lambeth Bible, including extensive bibliography, see Dodwell, The Great Lambeth Bible; Shepard, Introducing the Lambeth Bible.
with one hand and his slight, elegant torso with the other; here, the parallel between divine creation and the manual art of sculpture is explicitly invoked.

An image of Adam’s creation from the doors of the cathedral of Monreale (Fig. 2.18) represents this parallel more literally. In the bronze panel by the Pisan sculptor Bonanus, God appears as a bearded, robed figure at the left of the scene. He stands in profile, and his left knee is bent, his left foot raised higher than his right, creating a sense of rightward motion. His head is also inclined towards the right as he bends over the still, naked body of Adam, who reclines at a forty-five degree angle on a hillock of earth. God grasps Adam’s right arm in his hands, molding the clay out of which he is formed; indeed, as in the Lambeth roundel, the figure of Adam appears unfinished, the smooth curves of his delicate form suggest the malleable softness of unfired clay. The inscription at the top of the panel emphasizes the tactile nature of this process—it reads D(OMI)N(V)S PLASMAVI(T) ADA(M) DE LIMO TERE, a variation on the phrasing of Genesis 2:7 which, in the Vulgate, reads “Formavit igitur Dominus Deus hominem de limo terrae.”

As we have already seen, this vision of Adam’s creation differs from the more abstracted version chronicled in Genesis 1:27: while the verbs facio and creo used to describe God’s actions in the first chapter of Genesis imply that Adam and his fellow creatures were brought into being out of nothing and without physical intervention, both formo and plasmo refer to manual molding or modeling. This inscription, coupled with the image of God manipulating the limo tere into human form, clearly emphasizes the connection between the process of

---

63 On the Monreale doors, see Melczer, La porta di Bonanno a Monreale. On the career of the sculptor Bonanus, see Banti, La porta di Bonanno nel Duomo di Pisa e le porte bronze medievali europee; White, “The Bronze Doors of Bonanus and the Development of Dramatic Narrative.” On medieval bronze doors more generally, see Mende, Die Bronzetüren des Mittelalters, 800-1200.

64 For the deciphering of the rather heavily abbreviated inscription, I have relied on Melczer, La porta di Bonanno a Monreale, 89–90.
divine creation and human craftsmanship, but what distinguishes this image from the
manuscript illuminations described above is the literal resemblance between the process it
describes and the process by which it was created. Not only does the final product—a figure
in high relief—have the volume and molded surfaces of a real body, the process of bronze
casting began with the modeling of a plastic figure in warm, pliant wax.65 Here, the artist
does not merely hint at a parallel between divine creation and the mechanical arts, rather he
has crafted an image that evokes and emphasizes its own materiality and its history as a
crafted object.

If God’s creation of Adam was understood as a sculptural process, then the sculpting
of Adam, by extrapolation, elevated the artist to godlikeness. The conceptualization of the
artist as divine, and of artistic output as the result of divinely inspired genius is, of course, a
common trope of the Renaissance.66 To name just two examples, Vasari famously
rhapsodized about the great genius Michelangelo, whose work appeared “piuttosto cosa divina
che umana,” while Filippo Brunelleschi’s epitaph in Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence refers to
the architect’s divino ingenio.67 The motif of the divine artist may not have been as explicitly
articulated in the Middle Ages—individual artists were not singled out for veneration in the
Vasarian manner—but as the images discussed above demonstrate, the continuities between
God’s creative act and that of the artist or craftsman did not go unnoticed. Textual sources
from the church fathers to the masters of scholasticism support the idea that these images
reflect a broader cultural concern with the process of divine creation, and that the process

65 For a technical description of the lost-wax method of bronze casting, see Rich, The Materials and Methods of
Sculpture, 146–156.

66 For a nuanced examination of the phenomenon of the “divine” artist, see Emison, Creating the “Divine” Artist.

67 Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti, 12:179. The Latin text of the epitaph is recorded in full in
Ibid., 3:240.
was often explicated by means of comparisons with its earthly parallel. In his first *Tractate on the Gospel According to St. John*, Augustine, whose commentaries on Creation were widely known and highly influential throughout the medieval period, likens God’s creation of the universe to a carpenter’s crafting of a box; while Macrobius, whose work was quoted in twelfth-century commentaries on the Aeneid, wrote that “if you look closely into the nature of the universe, you will find a striking resemblance between the handiwork of the divine craftsman and that of our poet.”^68^ In fact, R. W. Hanning suggests that these continuities between divine and artistic creation were of particular and increasing interest during the gothic period; the twelfth century saw a rise in the production of treatises on the Creation, many of which analogized the work of the divine creator to that of the craftsman or artist.^69^

The famous prefatory illustrations from two *Bibles moralisées* (Figs. 2.19-2.20)—the first now housed in Vienna’s Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, the second in the Bodleian—depicting God as the “architect of the universe” circumscribing the globe with an immense pair of compasses, are another interesting iteration of this phenomenon.^70^ Obviously, the differences between these two images are manifold. In the first, God is in motion, stepping into the frame, his body and face in three-quarter view. Bent nearly double,

^68^ Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John 1*-10, 1:56–57; Macrobius, *The Saturnalia*, 285. In his *Confessions*, Augustine explicitly refutes any suggestion of similarity between God’s perfect creation, which occurs *ex nihilo*, and the craftsman’s making of something from something; but while the analogy here was clearly not intended as a glorification of craft, the very fact that Augustine found it necessary to refute any similarity between craft and Creation suggests that they may often have been conflated, see Book 11, Chapter 5 in Augustine, *Confessions, Volume II: Books 9*-13, 218–221.

^69^ Hanning, “*Ut enim faber ... sic creator*: Divine Creation as Context for Human Creativity in the Twelfth Century.” See also the classic study by Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle*.

^70^ Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex 2554, fol. 1; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 1v. There is, of course, a vast literature on the *Bibles moralisées* in general and this frontispiece in particular, which has so captured the imaginations of historians of art and science alike. For the image of God with the compasses as it relates to scientific inquiry in the Middle Ages, see Tachau, “God’s Compass and Vana Curiositas.” For an introduction to the *Bibles moralisées* see Lowden, *The Making of the Bibles Moralisées*; Hellemans, *La Bible moralisée*. 

78
he holds the globe with his left hand at the level of his shin and wields the compasses in his
right, fixing his eyes on its outer arm as it traces the globe’s circumference. In the second,
executed more than a century later, God appears as a rigidly frontal, static figure, seated on
an ornate throne enclosed in a quatrefoil rainbow mandorla supported by a quartet of
angels. He holds the globe in his lap, cradling it with his left hand and grasping the
compasses with his right. His face is perfectly symmetrical, his gaze directly engages the
viewer. And yet, differences aside, this pair of images offers further evidence of a medieval
belief in the correlation between God’s shaping and ordering of the universe and the
endeavors of the skilled artisan.  

This phenomenon diverges, of course, from the Renaissance discourse on divino
ingenio. In the frontispieces of the Bibles moralisées, as in the writings of Augustine, Macrobius,
and their twelfth-century interpolators, the likening of Creation to craftsmanship occurs in
the context of ruminations on the nature of God and his doings, whereas Renaissance
rhapsodies on the divine artist were part of a more explicit effort to elevate the status of
individuals and their crafts. As Panofsky points out, the aim of these medieval analogies
between divine and artistic creation was not to honor the latter, but to provide a kind of
parable by which the mechanism of the former could be better understood. Nevertheless, I
would argue that for the makers of these images, the likening of divine creation to the liberal
arts of architecture and geometry, and to the mechanical art of sculpture of which they

---

71 Elizabeth Marer-Banasik argues that the standard interpretation of these images as representing God as
architect of the universe is a mistaken one, and that they should instead be understood as the first in a series of
images depicting God as the creator of the mechanism of salvation, see Marer-Banasik, “The Creator with the
Cosmos and a Compass.” What matters for my argument, however, is that the act of creation, whether it be of
the cosmos or the history and future promise of salvation, is envisioned as a mechanical action, to be carried
out using the tools of a practitioner of architecture: as Tachau points out, the Creative God is here depicted “as
actively engaged in shaping a material universe from chaos, using a material tool,” see Tachau, “God’s Compass
and Vana Curiositas,” 27.

themselves were practitioners, must necessarily have informed their understanding of their own artistic endeavor and its meaning. Indeed, in his signature inscription on the western door of the cathedral at Monreale, Bonanus of Pisa writes: ANNO D(OMI)NI MCLXXXVI I(N)DICTIO(N)E III BONANUS CIVI(S) PISANUS ME FECIT; here, the artist’s crafting of the bronze doors is likened to God’s act of creation *ex nihilo* through the use of the verb *fecit*, even as God’s creation of Adam is represented in image and text as an act of craftsmanship. 73 My primary interest is not, however, in whether or not artists and their *ingenio* were seen as divine, but in how their awareness of the analogy between craft and Creation—an analogy that, as we have seen, was at its most literal when sculpting an image of Adam—informd their stylistic choices, and how their representational strategies were shaped by a self-conscious awareness of the parallels between their work and that of the prime *artifex*.

I have already suggested that the sculpting of Adam, the most perfect creature of God’s creation, made to his image and likeness, required the crafting of a figure of exceptional skill and beauty. Of course, the descriptor *imago dei* was understood by medieval thinkers to refer to a spiritual rather than physical likeness between Adam and his creator—Augustine, for example, insists upon this, writing that “The image of God is placed in the rationality of the soul … it is defined … as a capacity to understand and behold God.” 74 Indeed, this interpretation—established as early as the third century and propounded by all of the best-known commentators on Genesis of the late fourth-century—remained current through the gothic period and was expounded by twelfth-century thinkers like Peter

73 For the text of the inscription, see Melczer, *La porta di Bonanno a Monreale*, 34–35. On the history of such inscriptions in Italian sculpture of the Middle Ages, see the exhaustive study by Dietl, *Die Sprache der Signatur*.

Comestor.\textsuperscript{75} In an era in which spiritual virtue was understood to find expression in physical grace, however, the two were representationally indistinguishable. Just as moral corruption manifested itself in corporeal ugliness and deformity, for example in images of demons, Adam’s “capacity to understand and behold God” was visualized in physical terms, his beauty functioning as an incarnation of redemptive potential: images of Adam, who had been molded by God with his own hands to his own (spiritual) image and likeness, provided medieval craftsmen with the opportunity to flex their artistic muscles.\textsuperscript{76} Stylistic choices made when representing Adam can therefore be understood to reflect contemporary attitudes about artistic accomplishment—the style chosen would need to function as a cultural signifier connoting extraordinary skill and beauty in order to reflect Adam’s perfection and to underline the parallel between divine and artistic creation. As we shall see, antique sculpture was admired for the skill with which it was executed as well as its exquisite beauty—to employ a classicizing style when representing Adam, as in the case of the Parisian sculpture, was to marshal these cultural associations in order to telegraph a message to the viewer about the artist as well as his subject.

To the demonstration of artistic skillfulness and the achievement of physical beauty we can add a third goal which, perhaps more than any other, shaped the representational

\textsuperscript{75} Ellen Konowitz establishes that this view was accepted by virtually all commentators on Genesis by the third century, see Konowitz, “The Program of the Carrand Diptych.” In his Historia Scholastica, Peter Comestor writes: “Sed imago Dei est anima in essentia, et ratione ejus, quia spiritus factus est rationalis ut Deus. Similitudo in virtutibus, quia bona, justa, sapiens,” see Chapter 9: De creatione hominis, in Peter Comestor, Historia Libri Genesis, PL 198, col. 1063C.

\textsuperscript{76} The theory that physical appearance mirrored the state of one’s soul was articulated by Ambrose (“Imago quaedam animi loquitur in vultu,” Hexaemeron VI:58, PL 14, col. 266B), Isidore (“Vultus autem animorum qualitatem significat,” Etymologiae XI, 1:34, PL 82, col. 401C), and Rabanus Maurus (“facies autem duobus modis intelligitur, hoc est, corporea et spiritualis,” De universo VI: 1, PL 111, col. 147B), see Ziolkowski, “Avatars of Ugliness in Medieval Literature,” 7. For more on medieval understandings of beauty and ugliness, see Carruthers, The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages; Eco, Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages; Assunto, Die Theorie des Schönen im Mittelalter; Bruyne, “Esthétique païenne, esthétique chrétienne. A propos de quelques textes patristiques”; Baker, Plain Ugly, 11–40; Ziolkowski, “Avatars of Ugliness in Medieval Literature.”
strategy adopted by the sculptor of the Parisian Adam and its ilk—the evocation of lifelikeness and enlivenment. According to the second Genesis narrative, after forming Adam out of the earth, God “breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul.”

This breathing of life into the inert clay figure of Adam distinguished the divine act of creation from all subsequent, earthly efforts. In the Creation cycle from San Marco in Venice, for example, the mosaicists drew a clear visual distinction between the figure of Adam before and after his animation: at the moment of his forming, as we have seen, Adam appears as a small, inert, clay-colored figure, and it is only after God has given him life and a rational soul that he comes to physically resemble his creator (Fig. 2.19).

The crafting of a deceptively lifelike figure therefore elevated the maker to godlike status, endowing him with the power of enlivenment that set divine creation apart from mundane craftsmanship. This is a familiar notion in writing from and about antiquity and the Renaissance, when artists were lauded for making “una cosa morta parer viva.” In the Middle Ages, however, individual artists were not revered in the same way, and with fewer recorded responses to art objects, medieval attitudes towards the arts must often be pieced together, or inferred from objects themselves. I will argue that the particular representational strategies adopted by the sculptor of the Parisian Adam served to make the figure especially lifelike according to the visual conventions of the period, resulting in a more Adam-like image and a more god-like sculptor.

***

77 Genesis 2:7.
78 Jolly, Made in God’s Image, 24.
79 Lancellotti, Trattato di pittura, 18.
I have argued that in order to craft an image of exceptional skill and beauty, the sculptor of the Parisian Adam chose to make use of a specific antique type, that of the Venus pudica. We can begin to understand the reasoning behind this choice if we consider contemporary attitudes towards the art of antiquity. Antique sculpture, in general, was admired by medieval viewers for its perceived beauty and the technical mastery of its makers. Evidence for this can be found in twelfth- and thirteenth-century descriptions of antique art—the poet Hildebert de Lavardin, for instance, in a description of some images of pagan gods, writes “Nature could not create such gods as these. Only Man could create such wonderful images of gods. Their appearance is numinous. They are venerated rather for the skill of their artificers (artificum studio) than for their status as gods.” In his famous twelfth-century account of the Marvels of Rome, Magister Gregorius describes an image of Venus—possibly the Capitoline Venus herself—whose “exceptional beauty” drew him back three times “despite the fact that it was two stades distant from my inn.” He also writes of the “great skill” of the ancient maker of the bronze Colossus, marveling at “how the fluid

80 The Latin text reads “Non potuit natura deos ore creare/Quo miranda deum signa creavit homo./Vultus adest his numinibus, potiusque coluntur/Artificum studio, quam deitate sua.” See LXIII De Roma in Hildebert de Lavardin, Carmina Miscellanea, PL 171 col. 1409C; translated by Barrett, “Medieval Art Criticism,” 32.

81 Gregorius and Osborne, The Marvels of Rome, 26. Rushforth’s suggestion that Gregorius is describing the Capitoline Venus is persuasive, and supported by geographical evidence: “Its locality is fairly accurately fixed for us by the words which immediately follow: ‘Not far from this are the marble horses,’ viz. the famous Horse-Tamers or Dioscuri of the Quirinal, which have never travelled far from their original position in or about the Baths of Constantine, and approximately stand to-day where Gregory saw them. If we suppose that his lodging was in the Borgo or the neighbourhood of St. Peter’s, the regular pilgrim quarter, the distance to the Quirinal would be quite two miles. Nor would it be much less if we suppose him to have lodged in the foreign quarter just across the river, where the oldest inns we know of, the Orso and the Luna, were situated. Now it was just in this Quirinal district that the Venus of the Capitoline Museum, the type, material, and condition of which are consistent with Gregory’s description, was discovered in the seventeenth century in a garden nearly opposite to San Vitale.” Rushforth, “Magister Gregorius de Mirabilibus Urbis Romae,” 25. The Capitoline Venus was acquired from the Stazi family, in whose gardens it stood, by Benedict XIV in 1752, see Osborne’s commentary, Gregorius and Osborne, The Marvels of Rome, 56.
craftsmanship can simulate soft hairs in solid bronze,” and remarking that “nothing of the perfect beauty of the human head or hand is lacking in any part.”

The collecting of antique art during the Middle Ages and its reuse by artisans and architects provides further proof of the great value such objects held for medieval viewers. I have already discussed how the incorporation of spoliate antique objects into medieval buildings and *ars sacra* can be understood both as a commentary on the status and meaning of antique art in the Middle Ages, and as a mechanism for the legitimation and historicization, as well as the enrichment, of medieval objects and structures. Medieval collecting practices only underline the importance of antique images to the medieval elite—to name just two examples, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester from 1129 to 1170, supposedly had a ship full of ancient statues—“idols”—transported from Rome to England, while Frederick II Hohenstaufen famously collected antique sculpture, gemstones and coinage, made use of antique spolia in architectural projects, and commissioned classicizing images and objects as part of his project of imperial legitimation. In quoting a well-known antique model, the sculptor of the Parisian Adam was aligning himself with the much-admired artists of antiquity, and tapping into a system of cultural associations—antique art as

---

82 Gregorius and Osborne, *The Marvels of Rome*, 22–23. This passage also points to the identification of skillfulness with naturalism or “reality effects,” a development which will be discussed at greater length later in this chapter.

83 This account of Henry’s collecting, which appears in John of Salisbury’s *Historia Pontificialis*, should be taken with a grain of salt: as secretary to Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose authority Henry of Winchester sought to circumvent, John of Salisbury is perhaps not the most reliable source when it comes to Henry’s actions; nevertheless, his description of Henry’s collecting suggests that such objects were a source both of antiquarian interest and theological anxiety in the twelfth century, see John of Salisbury, *The Historia Pontificialis of John of Salisbury*, 79–80. On the court and collecting of Frederick II Hohenstaufen, see Giuliano, “Motivi classici nella scultura e nella glittica di età normanna e federicana”; Giuliano, “…principes gentium sunt creati,”; Giuliano, “Sulle gemme e sugli ovali di età federicana”; Tronzo, *Intellectual Life at the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen*; Fengler and Stephany, “The Capuan Gate and Pier Della Vigna”; *Kunst im Reich Kaiser Friedricts II. von Hohenstaufen*. 

84
ideally beautiful, antique artists as supremely skillful—in order to build a complex structure of connotative meaning around his image.

It is not surprising that a medieval sculptor should look to antique sources when faced with the challenge of depicting a large-scale nude—not only did it send the appropriate cultural signals, few other prototypes for such figures existed. Antique sculpture was highly visible in gothic France: inscriptions and reliefs were embedded in the walls of churches, capitals were reused in cloisters and colonnades, sarcophagi served as altars, tombs and baptismal fonts, and small-scale bronzes, engraved gems and cameos were collected and repurposed in treasuries throughout Europe. The thirteenth century, moreover, was marked by the diffusion of a style, first developed in metalwork around 1200, in which the influence of antique techniques is clearly evident. In Nicholas of Verdun’s Shrine of the Three Kings (Fig. 2.21), for example, or the Reims Visitation (Fig. 2.22), the drapery is characterized by its fluid, tight folds recalling classical wet-drapery, and the physiognomies and postures of the figures point to contact with, and interest in, antique statuary. Medieval sculptors often turned to antique sources when grappling with the problem of representing certain kinds of bodies—bodies in motion, bodies in narrative scenes, secular bodies, naked bodies. The use of this particular antique model, however, raises certain questions: why


might the artist have employed such a well-known figure, immediately identifiable by its highly gendered gesture of modesty, in a depiction of the first man? To understand this, we must consider the particular texture of the cultural associations carried by the Venus pudica type.

In a footnote in the third chapter of Renaissance and Renascences, Erwin Panofsky asserts that “it was particularly—in fact, exclusively—on Venus statues that the medieval fear of nudity and paganism seems to have been focused.”87 This is, to a certain extent, true—Saint Porphyry, for instance, supposedly caused a statue of Aphrodite to break when the demon dwelling therein was “unable to suffer the sight of the sign [of the cross] which was being carried,” and “came forth out of the marble with great confusion and cast down the statue itself.”88 Images of Venus were also the frequent targets of Christian vandalism.89 In the twelfth century, Bernardus Silvestris wrote “The shameless Venus … the goddess of lust, is carnal concupiscence which is the mother of all fornication,” and medieval representations of Venus often cast her as a symbol of vice, or transformed her into that other sexualized transgressor, Eve.90 As we have seen, however, antique images of Venus could also inspire admiration in medieval viewers, not to mention erotic desire.91 Indeed, Jane Long argues that throughout the Middle Ages, Venus functioned as an “erotic sign,”

---

87 Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, 151–152, n. 3.
89 For example, Anthony Cutler describes the destruction of an image of Venus, the fragments of which were subsequently buried beneath the nave of a church in Carthage, Cutler, “Reuse or Use? Theoretical and Practical Attitudes Toward Objects in the Early Middle Ages,” 1057–1058.
91 I refer here to Magister Gregorius’s account of his fascination with the statue of Venus he encountered on his visit to Rome mentioned above, see Gregorius and Osborne, The Marvels of Rome, 26.
one whose meaning was not necessarily wholly negative. Medieval viewers, she suggests, would likely have been familiar with images of the goddess from small precious objects—jewelry, gems, coins and statuettes—which often constituted part of the dowry exchange in Roman marriage contracts, and which frequently found their way into court and church treasuries. Wholly negative or not, it is clear that images of Venus were understood as explicitly sensuous and potentially dangerous.

The Venus pudica in particular, with her coy, self-conscious gesture of pseudo-modesty, functioned simultaneously as an erotic symbol and a sign of sexual shame. In an essay on “Pudenda and the Pudica Gesture,” Patricia Simons writes that the “multivalent gesture is inherently erotic, for it both covers and draws attention to the female genitals, an area frequently referred to as women’s ‘secrets.’” The pudica gesture also evokes shame and perversion—indeed, the name derives from the noun pudendum (privy parts, in a shameful sense) and the verb pudeo (to be ashamed). This dialectic of desire and shame occurs through the construction of an erotically charged, voyeuristic relationship between subject and object: the gesture of self-concealment casts the viewer in the role of voyeuristic subject, the impulse to shield breasts and genitals from view identifies them as the source of shame, and the (ineffectual) action of covering the pudenda makes these parts the focal point of the image, creating a sense of alluring eroticism.


93 Ibid., 50–54.

94 The most important study of the idol and its imagery in the Middle Ages is Michael Camille’s transformative work on The Gothic Idol, which has been crucial my understanding of this material. I will return to his arguments later in this chapter.


96 Ibid., 306.
Following their eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve “perceived themselves to be naked,” sewing together fig leaves to cover themselves and hiding themselves from God.⁹⁷ According to Tertullian, Eve in particular was “plunged in penance, trying to expiate by her contrite appearance the disgrace of that first crime and the shame of having brought ruin to humanity.”⁹⁸ It was Adam and Eve’s newfound knowledge of their own nakedness and the accompanying sense of shame that marked the moment of their fall, and it was their effort to conceal their nakedness from God’s eyes that made their transgression known.

When called upon to depict Adam and Eve in the act of concealing their shameful, naked bodies, it is hardly surprising that medieval artisans should have looked to the Venus pudica for inspiration: here was a well-known figure whose defining characteristic was mortified nakedness, and whose distinctive pose perfectly expressed the sexual shame and desire for concealment that defined Adam and Eve’s postlapsarian state.

The appropriation of the pudica pose in representations of Adam and Eve makes sense, conceptually, and was not uncommon in France during the thirteenth century. At Bourges, for instance, it occurs in two instances—in a capital from the south porch depicting the Expulsion from Paradise (Fig. 2.23), and in a spandrel from the right embrasure of the west façade’s central portal representing Adam and Eve as they are admonished by God following the Fall (Fig. 2.24). The two images differ rather dramatically in style, separated as they are by more than fifty years, but both feature the familiar gesture: Adam and Eve shield

---

⁹⁷ Genesis 3:7-10. In the Vulgate, the passage reads “Et aperti sunt oculi amborum; cumque cognovissent se esse nudos, consuerunt folia ficus, et fecerunt sibi perizomata.” The more common English translation of cognovissent se esse nudos is “they knew themselves to be naked,” but the Douay-Rheims Bible translates cognovissent as “they perceived.”

⁹⁸ Tertullian, De Cultu Foeminarum, PL 1, col. 1305A; translated in O’Faolain and Martines, Not in God’s Image: Women in History, 145.
their genitals with one hand while the raising the other in front of their chests.\textsuperscript{99} In the earlier of the two—the Expulsion capital—shame clearly has the upper hand over sensuality. Eve cowers behind Adam, and both lower their heads and avert their eyes from the fearsome angel before them. The spandrel from the west façade, however, is more ambiguous; Adam and Eve cover themselves, and turn away from God, but they stand upright and hold their heads high. Their faces are too damaged for their expressions to be legible, but the smooth, soft contours of thighs, arms and torsos—quite different from the angular, attenuated limbs of the figures in the earlier Expulsion capital—suggest an interest in the naked body’s potential for sensuous beauty. This is borne out by consideration of the portal’s sculptural program, which features some of the most elegant, the most expressive, the most classicizing nudes of the gothic period in France.\textsuperscript{100} In the lintel (Fig. 2.25), below the Last Judgment tympanum, the naked bodies of the resurrected emerge from their tombs to assume a series of remarkably active poses—poses in which muscles bunch and strain as limbs bend and stretch. Several of these dynamic, twisting postures evoke the vigorous, muscular nudes of ancient battle sarcophagi (Fig. 2.26), and all suggest a fascination with the formal qualities and kinetic possibilities of the human form. Even the naked figures of the damned in the frieze above (Fig. 2.27), whose faces are distorted with suffering, appear graceful and unbent as they are herded by their demonic guardians towards the fiery pit of hell. The figures of Adam and Eve from the spandrel may lack the anatomical specificity and taut musculature of these naked figures, but the fluid modeling of their forms suggests a certain sensuousness even as their postures speak, outwardly, of shame.

\textsuperscript{99} The capital from the south porch is dated c. 1200, while the west façade relief dates from the second half of the thirteenth century, see New-Smith, “Twelfth-Century Sculpture at the Cathedral of Bourges”; Brugger, Christie, and Sauvageot, Bourges, la cathédrale.

\textsuperscript{100} Erlande-Brandenburg, “L’Adam du Musée de Cluny,” 89–90; Boinet, Les sculptures de la cathédrale de Bourges (façade occidentale).
Another iteration of this interest in the Creation narrative as a site for the exploration of the nude body and its expressive possibilities occurs at Chartres (Figs. 2.28-2.32). In a Genesis cycle from the archivolts of the north porch’s central portal, the focus is less on movement and musculature (as in the Resurrection lintel at Bourges), and more on the body’s subtle communicative power. Here, the naked bodies of Adam and Eve are defined by delicate lines and softly molded volumes, not straining, flexing muscles. The creation of Adam, the uppermost scene on the left side of the arch, emphasizes tactility: Adam kneels beside the seated figure of God, his body obscured from the waist down by God’s robe. His head rests in the lap of his creator, who cradles his skull in his hands. In subsequent scenes—Adam standing before God, Adam asleep, Adam standing among plants, the Fall, God’s calling to and admonishment of Adam and Eve, and the Expulsion from Paradise—the first man appears as a graceful, delicately proportioned nude. Sculpted in very high relief—practically in the round—his limbs have an elegant plasticity and his postures are, for lack of a better term, “naturalistic.” Standing, his body sways in subtle contrapposto; sleeping, he twists his torso delicately to the left and bends one knee; even when crouching on one knee among the bushes while hiding from God, his stance suggests a supple poise. In all but one of the scenes up to and including the Fall, Adam’s nudity is fully displayed, his genitals visible, emphasizing his lack of shame and adding to the sense of easy grace. Following the Fall, however, in the voussoirs depicting the first couple’s interrogation by God and their expulsion by a sword-bearing angel, Adam and Eve both adopt the familiar pudica pose. In the first of these scenes, Adam’s right hand clasps the fig leaf to his genitals while his left arm bends at the elbow, the hand covering his chest; his right knee is bent in contrapposto and his head turns to look over his left shoulder towards God on the outer archivolt, his gaze lowered in shame. Eve, standing with bowed head to his right, covers her
genitals with her left hand and appears to hold the remains of the forbidden fruit in her right while the serpent slithers at her feet. In the subsequent Expulsion, their upper bodies are similarly arranged, but here they appear in fluid motion: both stride forward with their right legs, their hands and arms shielding chests and genitals. Eve looks straight ahead but Adam twists at the waist and neck to peer back at the angel, creating a sense of spiraling movement, his legs and arms crisscrossing to counter-balance one another. Despite the shame their efforts to cover their nakedness imply, their movements are smooth and their faces serene. Like the Parisian Adam, the Chartrain figures maintain a sensuous beauty and grace even in their postlapsarian state.

Another example from the later thirteenth century can be found on the Portail des Libraires at Notre-Dame de Rouen (Fig. 2.33). In this quatrefoil medallion depicting the Expulsion from Paradise, Eve clasps a fig leaf to her genitals with her left hand and covers her breasts with her right. Her head appears in three-quarter view as she turns to look over her shoulder at the sword-bearing angel to her right. Her torso faces the viewer while her legs are in profile, her left foot planted in front of her right as she walks towards the image’s rightmost edge. To her left is Adam, who also appears in a modified *pudica* pose: his right arm perfectly mirrors Eve’s left as he presses a fig leaf over his genitals while his left arm bends at the elbow to cross his chest, his left hand raised, palm up, towards the angel. He too looks over his right shoulder and turns his torso outwards to face the viewer. His legs are splayed in an awkward *contrapposto*: his left leg and foot are in profile, knee bent and toes turned towards the medallion’s right edge; his right knee is also bent and drops lower than the left while the top of his right foot peeks out from behind Eve’s left calf, indicating that the heel is raised off the ground, his weight and momentum shifting rightward towards the edge of the frame. Here, as at Chartres, the first couple’s faces are not distorted in suffering
but tranquil and even beautiful, and their naked bodies, while more stylized and less graceful than those of the Chartrain Adam and Eve, suggest a similar interest in the sculptural nude as a collection of carefully balanced volumes.

In the absence of written or visual records, we cannot know whether the destroyed pendant image of Eve would have mirrored the Parisian Adam’s gesture of modesty, or shared his sleek sensuality. As the examples from Bourges, Chartres and Rouen demonstrate, however, the *pudica* pose seems to have lost its gender specificity during the Middle Ages: it was frequently employed by gothic sculptors to express the sexualized shame of Adam and Eve alike following the Fall.\(^\text{101}\) It even surfaces occasionally in scenes involving presumably shameless nudity, for example in images of the Baptism of Christ like the one on a leaf from a thirteenth-century Bavarian psalter now in Harvard’s Houghton Library (Fig. 2.34).\(^\text{102}\)

In this miniature, the nude Christ stands immersed in the river Jordan—pictured as a translucent, ochre-green mantle draped over his shoulders—with his right leg crossed elegantly in front his left, and his arms arranged in a modified *pudica* gesture. The left arm is held across Christ’s body, with the hand resting on the right hip, while the right is bent at the elbow, the hand raised in front of the chest in a gesture of benediction much like the one given to the Parisian Adam by his nineteenth-century conservator. Like the Parisian and Chartrain Adams, Christ is graceful and well-proportioned, his lithe, lightly muscled figure characterized by fluid contours and subtly rounded volumes. The *pudica* gesture, this image suggests, was not always intended to evoke ignominy and disgrace: it could, on occasion,

---

\(^{101}\) Symmetrical gestures of modesty were used for Adam and Eve alike even in the Early Christian period, for example on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus now in the Vatican’s Museo del Tesoro della Basilica di San Pietro. In the case of the Junius Bassus sarcophagus, however, the figures do not cover their chests but use both hands to press fig leaves over their genitals.

function more like the gesture of sensuous modesty familiar from ancient sculpture, drawing
attention to the body’s beauty even as it shielded its most private parts from view.

Indeed, the appropriation of the pudica pose appears, in some instances at least, to
occur as part of a broader interest in antique sculpture and specifically in the nude. The
pudica gesture served as a kind of visual shorthand, communicating “shameful nakedness”
with force and immediacy. At the same time, as I have suggested above, it functioned as a
symbol or sign for the antique, evoking and encoding a whole network of cultural
associations about beauty, skill, and enlivenment. It is this notion of enlivenment—what it
meant to the sculptor of the Parisian Adam and how it was achieved through the use of a
classicizing style—that I will consider in the remainder of this chapter.

The concept of enlivenment has inflected literary descriptions and art historical
discussions of sculpture for millennia—tales of living, breathing, speaking images can be
traced from the ancient world through the Middle Ages and beyond; the critical vocabulary
developed and codified by sixteenth-century writers to describe works of art included many
variations on the term vivo, intended as highest praise; and a large body of literature attests to
the concept’s continued relevance in present-day art historical discourse. I have already

---

103 A Byzantine parallel can be found in images of emperors and military saints; in depicting such figures, artists
often made use of a specific antique pose—a standing figure holding an imperial baton—to connote power and
authority. While Cyril Mango suggests this appropriation reflects an inability to understand or render classical
sculpture, Myrto Hatzaki argues that this pose codified the notion of power into a symbolic pose, see Mango,

104 The ways in which gestures and poses encode culturally contingent meaning has received considerable
scholarly attention, particularly in the 1970s and 80s. Studies of gesture during this period occurred at the
intersection of art history, anthropology, and semiotics; for an overview, see the special issue of History and

105 An overview of the concept and its place in the history of art can be found in Jacobs, The Living Image in
Renaissance Art, 1–15. Other key works include the classic study by Stoichita, The Pygmalion Effect From Ovid to
Hitchcock; Gross, The Dream of the Moving Statue; Gell, Art and Agency. See also Bredekamp, Theorie des Bildakts;
Freedberg, The Power of Images, 283–316; Van Eck, “Living Statues.” A recent article by Ittai Weinryb illustrates
continued interest in—and new directions for—the discourse around ideas of enlivenment, examining
discussed why the achieving of lifelikeness was important to the representational strategy adopted by the sculptor of the Parisian Adam: it was the “enlivenment effect” that most explicitly aligned his efforts as a craftsman with those of the divine creator, elevating his work and underlining the “Adamness” of his image. How this idea of enlivenment was communicated to the viewer is more complex, however, than it might initially appear. Much like the concepts of beauty and skill, the idea of lifelikeness or enlivenment is culturally contingent; while the equivalence of “naturalism” and “lifelikeness” seems obvious to a modern viewer, the visual characteristics that made an image “lifelike” in the thirteenth century were in a state of flux. If we are to understand how the classicizing style of the Parisian Adam functioned to create an “enlivenment effect,” we must first consider what kinds of images were understood to be lifelike and what strategies of enlivenment were employed by image makers in different historical and cultural contexts leading up to the gothic period in Paris.

The ancient Greeks and Romans famously valued illusionism in their art, and tales of skillful artists whose work successfully replicated or exceeded the beauty of nature are well known. Pliny, for instance, recounts the story of the painter Zeuxis who, in a competition against another painter Parrhasios\(^{106}\)

[exhibited] a picture of some grapes so true to nature that the birds flew up to the wall of the stage. Parrhasios then displayed a picture of a linen curtain, realistic to such a degree that Zeuxis, elated by the verdict of the birds, cried out that now at last his rival must draw the curtain and show his picture. On discovering his mistake he surrendered the prize to Parrhasios, admitting candidly that he had deceived the birds, while Parrhasios had deluded himself, a painter.

-------------------

Philostratus describes a painting so lifelike, he cannot tell whether “a real bee has been deceived by the painted flowers or whether we are to be deceived into thinking that a painted bee is real.”

Elsewhere, when writing about a painting of huntsmen, he recounts how he was tricked by the illusionism of the image: “How I have been deceived! I was deluded by the painting into thinking that the figures were not painted but were real beings, moving and loving—at any rate I shout at them as though they could hear and I imagine I hear some response.”

Verism was, as these stories make clear, a key strategy for creating a lifelike image in ancient art. As Jas Elsner points out, however, Greek and Roman visual culture encompassed multiple modes of representation and viewing, and naturalism was only one of the artistic strategies employed by ancient artists. Images of the gods, for example, were not necessarily required to be lifelike in the sense of naturalistic verisimilitude. While cult images could be naturalistic, as in the case of the Aphrodite of Knidos, many were deliberately archaizing; and yet their archaism in no way diminished their effectiveness as...

---

107 See Book 1, Chapter 23 (on “Narcissus”) in the Imagines, Philostratus the Elder, Philostratus the Younger, and Callistratus, Philostratus the Elder, Imagines. Philostratus the Younger, Imagines. Callistratus, Descriptions, 89–91.

108 See Book 1, Chapter 28 (“Hunters”) in the Imagines, Ibid., 108.

109 For an overview of the concept of verism or mimesis in ancient art and culture, see Halliwell, The Aesthetics of Mimesis; Sörbom, Mimesis and Art; Studies in the Origin and Early Development of an Aesthetic Vocabulary. Also relevant is the scholarship on the concept of enargeia. A technical term current in Hellenistic literary criticism, enargeia was defined by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as a stylistic effect of rhetoric, in which the listener’s senses are appealed to in order to create a vivid visual picture. In this sense, enargeia was closely related to the concept of mimesis, but was used to refer to pictorialism in literature as opposed to pictorial representation in art. On the concept of enargeia, the work of Graham Zanker is foundational, see Zanker, “Enargeia in the Ancient Criticism of Poetry”; Zanker, Realism in Alexandrian Poetry.

110 Elsner approaches the question of style and the place of naturalism in Greek and Roman visual culture in a number of engaging studies, see Elsner, “Between Mimesis and Divine Power: Visuality in the Greco-Roman World”; Elsner, Art and the Roman Viewer: The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity; Elsner, Roman Eyes.
vessels for divine presence. In fact, Elsner suggests that Greek and Roman viewers came to associate “sacred visuality” with archaism—in cult images, as opposed to mythological scenes, enlivenment was the result of the deity’s presence in the image, and that presence was evoked not by lifelikeness, but through direct, frontal engagement with the viewer. In his *De Dea Syria*, for example, Lucian described the statue of Hera, noting “There is yet another marvel connected with the statue: if you stand opposite and look at it, it stares back at you and follows your gaze as you move. If someone else regards it from the other side, then it does the same with him too.” Such images were “enlivened” even when they did not resemble actual bodies: in these kinds of images, it was ritual, not naturalism, that brought the image to life.

In the early Christian period, encounters with antique sculpture continued to be characterized by the idea of presence, but the narrative took on a more threatening cast. As the case of Bishop Porphyry and the statue of Venus illustrates, antique sculptures were often believed to house maleficent demons. Further evidence of this widespread belief is to be found in the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, a medieval guide to the city of Rome, the earliest extant copy of which is dated to the late twelfth century. In an account of the “Making of the Pantheon,” the author describes how Agrippa built a temple in honor of Cybele after experiencing a vision of the goddess in a dream. The temple was topped by a gilded image

---


112 Ibid, p. 60.


dedicated to the goddess before which, in later years, “Christian men were oft times stricken of devils.”

A tale in an eighth- or ninth-century Byzantine document, the \textit{Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai}, suggests that, in addition to housing demons, antique sculptures were understood to have power and agency and to be capable of action.\footnote{Nichols, \textit{Mirabilia Urbis Romae. The Marvels of Rome}, 48–49.} In one first-person account, the narrator and his friend are examining an ancient image of a man named Maximian when it falls from its pedestal and crushes the friend. The narrator is accused of murder, but acquitted after a philosopher by the name of John discovers a text by Demosthenes in which the statue is said to be fated to kill a prominent man.\footnote{For the text itself, including a translation, introduction and commentary, see Cameron and Herrin, \textit{Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai}. For an analytical treatment of the text as a source of insight into Byzantine attitudes towards classical art, see James, “Pray Not to Fall into Temptation and Be on Your Guard.”} Other Byzantine legends tell of a bronze ox which, once a year, would bellow to warn the populace of a day of disasters, and an Alexandrian calligrapher who was informed of the assassination of the Emperor Maurice by the statues from the temple of Tyche nine days before news of the event arrived from Constantinople.\footnote{Cameron and Herrin, \textit{Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai}, 88–91.}

In the West, medieval viewers told similar tales of animated antique images taking action to forward their own agendas. In the eighth chapter of his guide to Rome, for example, Magister Gregorius describes the “Salvation of the Citizens,” a magical group of statues, each labeled and representing a subject race, which would move if one of these races rebelled. This in turn would cause a bell to ring, and a mounted soldier in bronze to turn and

\footnote{James, “Pray Not to Fall into Temptation and Be on Your Guard,” 17; Mango, “Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder,” 59.}
point his lance at the moving image of the rebel race.\textsuperscript{120} Another legend, variants of which surface again and again throughout the Middle Ages, tells of a young man who places his ring on the finger of a statue of Venus. The sentient statue takes this as a sign of their betrothal and proceeds to jealously prevent the youth from embracing his real, fleshly wife.\textsuperscript{121} Antique statues, it would seem, were understood by medieval viewers to be capable of acting independently, for good or evil, to further their own designs. In coopting the gesture of the Venus \textit{pudica}, the sculptor of the Parisian Adam activated his image by assimilating it, stylistically, to a corpus of objects known for their capacity for animation.

In the case of the “Salvation of the Citizens,” or the tale of the young man betrothed to the statue of Venus, the images’ capacity for animation had more to do with their pagan origins than with their verism, which goes unremarked. We have seen, however, that in their descriptions of antique statues, twelfth- and thirteenth-century viewers often praised ancient sculptors for their skillfulness and found evidence of that skillfulness in their ability to mimic the appearance of living flesh in marble and bronze. In his account of the Fourth Crusade and the capture of Constantinople, for example, Robert de Clari describes the images that adorned the wall of the hippodrome, “statues of men, women, horses, oxen, camels, bears and lions as well as many kinds of beast, cast in copper, which were so well made and so naturally shaped that there was no master craftsman in Christian or pagan lands who knew how to sculpt or shape statues so skillfully as these statues were crafted. And in the past they

\textsuperscript{120} Gregorius and Osborne, \textit{The Marvels of Rome}, 24. According to Osborne, this legend can be found in a variety of medieval sources and the earliest recorded appearance is in Cosmas of Jerusalem’s commentary on Gregory of Nazianzus. Magister Gregorius’s version of the story clearly draws on the pseudo-Bede’s \textit{De septeni Miraculis numai}, see Osborne’s commentary, \textit{Ibid.}, 54.

\textsuperscript{121} Baum, “The Young Man Betrothed to a Statue.” This story, along with other tales of betrothal to statues, is discussed by Freedberg, \textit{The Power of Images}, 333–338.
used to play by magic.” Here, antique sculpture is celebrated for its lifelikeness and understood to possess, or to have once possessed, supernatural powers of movement.

The description of the marble statue of Venus by Magister Gregorius makes the connection between the antique image’s naturalism and its apparent enlivenment more explicit. In his account of an artistic illusionism so masterful that he finds himself drawn to the image again and again as if by magic, Gregorius equates skillful execution with lifelikeness. He writes that the image “is made from Parian marble with such wonderful and intricate skill, that she seems more like a living creature than a statue; indeed she seems to blush in her nakedness, a reddish tinge coloring her face, and it appears to those who take a close look that blood flows in her snowy complexion.” The statue is so well made, so deceptively true-to-life, that it appears to Gregorius to exhibit the telltale signs of a functioning circulatory system.

The trope of the blushing statue is not unique to Gregorius’s work. In fact, his description of the Venus bears a striking resemblance to that most famous tale of a living statue, the legend of Pygmalion. In Ovid’s account, a throbbing pulse and the visible reddening of the statue’s snow-white cheeks, along with the warming and wax-like softening of her ivory body, provide the first indication that Venus has granted the sculptor’s wish and brought his “girl of ivory” to life. Moreover, Pygmalion’s erotic fascination with his


124 While he does not refer directly to Pygmalion, Gregorius does quote part of a line from Ovid’s Ars amatoria, demonstrating his familiarity with the ancient poet’s work. Ovid’s original line in the Judgment of Paris reads “Cum dixit Veneri vinis utramque, Venus.” In the Marvels, Gregorius writes “This statue, dedicated by the Romans to Venus, stems from the myth which relates that in a rash competition she, along with Juno and Pallas, displayed herself naked to Paris. Contemplating her, the thoughtless judge said: ‘In our judgment Venus conquers both.’” See Ovid, Art of Love, 30, line 1.248; Gregorius and Osborne, The Marvels of Rome, 26 & commentary, 59. On the Pygmalion story and its place in the history of art, see Elsner, Roman Eyes, 113–131; Gross, The Dream of the Moving Statue, 72–84; Stoichita, The Pygmalion Effect From Ovid to Hitchcock.
inanimate creation is due to the ivory image’s verism, which is in turn the result of the sculptor’s skill: “he sculpted with marvelous skill a figure in snow-white ivory … The features are those of a real girl, who, you might think, lived, and wished to move, if modesty did not forbid it. Indeed, art hides his art.”\textsuperscript{125} The Pygmalion story was taken up again in the thirteenth century by Jean de Meun in his chivalric epic the \textit{Roman de la Rose}, suggesting a continued (or resurgent) fascination with the intersection of artistic skill, illusory lifelikeness and erotic desire.\textsuperscript{126} In fact, Jean de Meun places greater emphasis than Ovid on Pygmalion’s status as a skilled craftsman: in his version, the sculptor is motivated by his wish to prove his skill, “\textit{Por son grant engin esprover.}”\textsuperscript{127} The resulting image appears to live—“\textit{el sembloit estre autresi vive/Cum la plus bele riens qui vive}”—and when the ivory girl is actually brought to life by the accommodating goddess of love, her rippling blond hair and the pulsing blood in her veins provide evidence of her enlivenment.\textsuperscript{128}

Jean de Meun’s text postdates the Parisian Adam by about fifteen years, but it points to a cultural awareness of Ovid’s tale and suggests a wider interest in questions of craftsmanship, mimesis and enlivenment. The story may have been understood in the Middle Ages as a warning against the dangers of sexual perversion, but Pygmalion could also

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{125} The Latin passage reads: “\textit{interea niveum mira feliciter arte/sculpsit ebur formamque dedit, qua femina nasci/nulla potest, operisque sui concepit amorem./virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas,/et, si non obstet reverentia, velle moveri:/ars adeo latet arte sua…}” The Pygmalion story occurs in Ovid, \textit{Metamorphoses} X: 243-297. For the English text, I have relied on translations by Lombardo and Kline, see Ovid, \textit{The Essential Metamorphoses}, 133–135; Kline, “Ovid’s Metamorphoses.”

\textsuperscript{126} I have relied on Pierre Marteau’s edition of the \textit{Roman de la Rose}, which includes historical notes, a glossary, and an \textit{en face} translation of the poem into modern French; the Pygmalion story can be found in verses 21591-22048, see Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, \textit{Le Roman de la Rose}, 4:310–339. The bibliography on the \textit{Roman de la Rose} is vast; for a useful introduction, see Coilly and Tesnière, \textit{Le Roman de la rose: l’art d’aimer au Moyen Âge}; Huot, \textit{The Romance of the Rose and Its Medieval Readers}. On the Pygmalion story in particular, see Leushuis, “Pygmalion’s Folly and the Author’s Craft in Jean de Meun’s \textit{Roman de La Rose}”; Modersohn, \textit{Natura Als Göttin Im Mittelalter}, 151–158.

\textsuperscript{127} See verse 21596, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, \textit{Le Roman de la Rose}, 4:310.

\textsuperscript{128} See verses 21605-21606, Ibid.
be seen as a type of the ideal artist: thanks to divine intervention, he is able not only to
imitate life but to create it.\textsuperscript{129} Moreover the descriptions of the “signs of life,” both tactile
and visual, that alert Pygmalion to the fulfillment of his heart’s desire provide further insight
into the strategies of enlivenment adopted by the sculptor of the Parisian Adam. In both
poems, a sculptor of exceptional skill carves a deceptively lifelike nude figure out of ivory,
which, when it is brought to life, begins to soften like wax, to color, and to thrum with the
pulsing of blood in its veins. We have seen how, in crafting a figure of Adam, the Parisian
sculptor was aligning himself with the divine Creator; in sculpting a sensuous nude figure, in
a posture made famous by images of Venus, he also activated another complex of
associations surrounding the classical legend of Pygmalion.

Softness and color are key to both the impression of lifelikeness and the realization
of enlivenment. The wax-like softening of ivory into flesh signals to Pygmalion that his
image has been given life, while the pulse of blood in her veins, and the concomitant
reddening of her cheeks provide further evidence. Ovid describes how “The ivory grew soft
to his touch, its hardness vanishing, gave and yielded beneath his fingers, as Hymettian wax
grows soft under the sun.”\textsuperscript{130} In the Roman de la Rose, the sculptor realizes his ivory girl has

\textsuperscript{129} The reception of Ovid in the Middle Ages was fraught—an important resource for thinkers interested in
classical mythology, his writing was considered by many to be sexually, politically and theologically
transgressive. The Pygmalion story in particular was taken as a warning against concupiscence and even
idolatry. As early as the second century C.E., Clement of Alexandria conflated Pygmalion’s ivory image with an
image of the nude Aphrodite, framing the tale as one of sexualized idol worship. This was repeated by
Arnobius in the fourth century, and in the twelfth century, the grammarian Arnulf of Orléans, who wrote
encyclopedic commentaries on Ovid and Lucan, saw Pygmalion as “an emblem of sterile and perverted
concupiscence.” On the general topic of Ovid’s reception in the Middle Ages, see Clark et al., Ovid in the Middle
Ages; Dimmick, “Ovid in the Middle Ages.” For Clement of Alexandria, see Clement of Alexandria, The
Writings of Clement of Alexandria, 1:61. For Arnobius see Arnobius of Sicca, The Case against the Pagans, 475. On
Arnulf of Orléans, see Hill, “Narcissus, Pygmalion, and the Castration of Saturn,” 410.

\textsuperscript{130} “temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore/subsidit digitis ceditque, ut Hymettia sole/cera remollescit,”
Ovid, Metamorphoses, X:283-285. The English translation is by Leushuis, “Pygmalion’s Folly and the Author’s
Craft in Jean de Meun’s Roman de La Rose,” 525.
come to life when he sees the rippling blond waves of her hair and feels her bones and veins full of blood, and her moving, beating pulse:\textsuperscript{131}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
Lors voit qu’ele est vive et charnuë,
Si li debaille la char nuë,
Et voit ses biais crins blondoians,
Comme undes ensemble ondoians;
Et sent les os, et sent les vaines
Qui de sanc ierent toutes plaines,
Et le pouz debatre et movoir.
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

This focus on blood as a sign of enlivenment recalls ekphrastic treatments of enlivened images like Gregorius’s description of the statue of Venus, which emphasizes the importance of flushed skin in creating the illusion of animation: it is the “reddish tinge” that appears to color the statue’s face that suggests this is a living image. It seems possible that Gregorius’s account was not mere fancy, that he may in fact have been describing the lingering effects of fading polychromy.\textsuperscript{132} In any event, we know that the Parisian Adam would have been completely painted: surviving traces of pink highlights on the face and green on the vine suggest a vivid, mimetic effect.\textsuperscript{133} Paint would have given the image the flush of life; it would also have further softened its already fluid contours, giving stone the pliable quality of flesh. Along with the \textit{pudica} pose, these “reality effects” evoked the topos of the ancient sculpture that seems to move and breathe, endowing the image with the appearance of life, confirming

\textsuperscript{131} See verses 21923-21929, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, \textit{Le Roman de la Rose}, 4:330. For an English translation see the edition by Dahlberg, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, \textit{The Romance of the Rose}, 345. In English the verses read: “Then he saw that she was a living body; he uncovered her naked flesh and saw her beautiful shining blond locks, rippling together like waves, he felt the bones and the veins all filled with blood, and he felt the pulse move and beat.”

\textsuperscript{132} For more on the polychromy of ancient sculpture, see Brinkmann, Primavesi, and Hollein, \textit{Circumlitio: The Polychromy of Antique and Medieval Sculpture}; Ebbinghaus and Brinkmann, \textit{Gods in Color}; Brinkmann, Wünsche, and Wurnig, \textit{Bunte Götter}.

\textsuperscript{133} Erlande-Brandenburg, \textit{Les sculptures de Notre-Dame de Paris au musée de Cluny}, 118.
the sculptor’s mimetic ability (and hence his skill), and highlighting continuities between artistic and divine creation.

Another crucial aspect of the Pygmalion myth, and of countless accounts of encounters with antique sculpture, is the viewer’s desiring of the image. This eroticism went hand in hand with issues of mimesis and enlivenment: the beauty of the image, often the result of its incredible lifelikeness, kindled and inflamed sexual longing in its beholder, who responded to the inanimate object as if it were alive. In the case of Pygmalion, this longing finds expression in the ritualized dressing and undressing, caressing and bedding of the image. Ultimately, Pygmalion’s desire is fulfilled when its object is brought to life and becomes his wife. In other tales of lust-fueled encounters with antique images, however, the viewers’ passions only move them to fantasize about and occasionally to commit lewd acts against defenseless objects—sexual desire does not enliven the image, it only gives it the deceitful appearance of animation. Tales of agalmatophilia abound in ancient literature: who could forget the story told by Pseudo-Lucian in his Amores of the young man whose desire for the statue of Aphrodite at Knidos was so great that he secreted himself in the temple overnight and sexually assaulted it, staining it with a black mark and bringing such shame upon himself that he later threw himself into the sea and vanished. This story was repeated throughout the Middle Ages and infused medieval encounters with images of

---

134 In Ovid’s version, Pygmalion dresses the statue in robes and adorns it with rings, a necklace and pearl earrings, before undressing her again and lying with her on a bed spread with bedclothes dyed Tyrian blue, *Metamorphoses*, Book X: 263-269; In the Roman de la Rose, Pygmalion dresses his ivory girl in “Robes faites par grans maistrises” in a variety of luxurious fabrics and materials including ermine, richly dyed wool, silk and linen, striped satin, velvet, and “oriental fabrics” in blue and vermilion with gold fringe, adorning her with ribbons, sumptuous headdresses, and expensive jewelry. The description of this vast and luxurious wardrobe extends to almost one hundred verses, and culminates in Pygmalion’s self-solemnized marriage to his inanimate beloved, see Verses 21719–21802, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, *Le Roman de la Rose*, 4:318–323.

135 Pseudo-Lucian, “Affairs of the Heart (Amores),” 172–177. There is an extensive body of ancient literature on agalmatophilia, including accounts by Euripides, Pliny, Lucian, Philostratus, Athenaeus, Hyginus, Aristaenetus and Pseudo-Libanius; for references, see Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 1, n. 3. For a critical discussion of images as the object of sexual desire, see Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, 317–344.
Venus—and medieval attitudes towards antique sculpture more broadly—with a “sinister and semi-magical sexuality.” The famous Spinario (Fig. 2.35) offers another example of the eroticization of antique sculpture by medieval viewers, although it did not provoke erotic desire in the manner of images of Venus. This bronze figure of a seated boy pulling a thorn from the bottom of his left foot was widely known and frequently copied throughout the Middle Ages, both in the west and in Byzantium. Gregorius’s description of the image exemplifies its reception by medieval viewers:

There is another bronze statue, a rather laughable one, which they call Priapus. He looks as though he is in severe pain, with his head bent down as if to remove from his foot a thorn that he had stepped on. If you lean forward and look up to see what he’s doing, you discover genitals of extraordinary size.

The Spinario was understood to be perversely sexual, and when medieval artists copied the figure, they cast it in the role of pagan idol, for example in an image of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple from an eleventh-century lectionary now in the Pierpont Morgan Library (Fig. 2.36), or as a personification of vice and folly.

The dissemination of the story of the Aphrodite of Knidos and the appropriation of the image of the Spinario in the Middle Ages suggest that sexual anxiety was a prominent component of the conceptual framework that structured medieval encounters with antique sculpture. Michael Camille has pointed out that gothic depictions of idols often took on the forms of classical statuary, and he suggests that, to medieval thinkers, there was a close

---

137 Fossi, “La Representation de l’antiquité dans la sculpture romane et une figuration classique: le tireur d’épine.”
139 Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, 89; Camille, The Gothic Idol, 86.
140 Camille, The Gothic Idol, 87.
link in the postlapsarian world between sexual desire and idolatry, both of which involve “absorption in a false object.”141 In fact, the Fall itself, which marked the origin of fallen sexual desire, was closely connected to idolatry—in the Bodleian Bible moralisée, for example, the image of the Fall is paired with a moralizing roundel depicting a scene of idolatry (Fig. 2.37).142 Simultaneously, classical forms were neutralized and made accessible through acts of aesthetic appreciation and allegorical reclassification.143 In the case of the Parisian Adam, the coopting of the pudica posture served, as we have seen, to signify “shameful nakedness” even as it aligned its maker with the sculptors of antiquity, renowned for their mimetic skill and the beauty and animation (perceived or actual) of their images. It also activated the complex associations surrounding antique nudes, a dense web of ideas about sexual desire, idolatry and sin, beauty and magic. Moreover, the likening of Adam to the pagan idols of antiquity, and his juxtaposition with the figure of the New Adam, invoked the idea of Christ as the conqueror of paganism, the new image who took the place of the old idols.144 Finally, it drew the viewer into a sexually charged and deeply ambivalent relationship with the image, endowing the object with the potential for enlivenment through the mechanism of emotional engagement and desire, even as it was brought under the control of the church.

The Parisian Adam’s elevated installation, in a niche high up on the south transept’s interior façade, would have recalled the positional relationship between worshipper and idol—as the

141 Ibid., 66–67, 90. Camille argues that the Fall was often conceptualized as seduction by an image, linking the devil with idol worship, see Ibid., 59–60, 88.

142 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 7V. The adjacent text suggests that idolaters, like Adam and Eve, commit sin through the eyes. This connection between seeing and sin can be traced back to Augustine who, in his analysis of the Fall, writes that it was only after the “raiment of grace was removed” that Adam and Eve’s eyes were opened to their nakedness and the “evil into which they had fallen,” see Book XIV, Chapter 17 in Augustine, The City of God, Books VIII-XVI, 389–391. Whereas before the Fall,

143 Camille, The Gothic Idol, 75.

144 Ibid., 198.
image of the *Spinarii* from the Salzburg lectionary suggests, medieval representations of idols often pictured them atop columns, requiring the viewer to look upwards from a low vantage point.\textsuperscript{145} Indeed, certain thirteenth-century images of the Nativity or Christ Disputing with the Doctors picture Christ atop a column (Figs. 2.38–2.40), emphasizing his role as the “new image,” the conqueror of paganism.\textsuperscript{146} The Parisian Adam’s elongated limbs, the outward thrust of its pelvis, and the forward incline of its head all indicate that the Parisian Adam was designed to be seen from below; any threat of idolatry occasioned by this view-from-below of a nude male figure sculpted in the round was counteracted, however, by its physical containment in a niche. As Nagel notes, the incorporation of statues into a church’s architectural fabric precluded the possibility of circumambulation (often associated with idol worship) and neutralized the danger inherent in sculpture by bringing it under institutional control.\textsuperscript{147} Installed in a niche, the sculpted figure “was set into a larger syntactic structure governed by church ideology and the protocols of institutional ritual.”\textsuperscript{148} Thus, the Parisian Adam’s elevated position on the south transept’s interior façade, in conjunction with its nudity and classicism, conjured associations with the enlivened and sexually compelling images of idolatry, while its framing in an architectural niche as part of a larger sculptural program lessened the attendant danger, emphasizing its subjugation to the authority of the church.

\textsuperscript{145} The image of a statue on a column was often used to represent idolatry in images of the Ten Commandments; Nagel discusses this medieval formula (statue + column = idol) and its “magical character,” first noted by William Heckscher, see Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, 109–112; Heckscher, *Sixtus III Aeneas insignes statuas romano populo restitendas censuit*, 22. On the importance of positional relationships between viewer and object in our understanding of medieval architectural sculpture, see the forthcoming book by Lakey, *Sculptural Seeing: Relief and the Rise of Perspective in Medieval Italy*.

\textsuperscript{146} Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 197–203.

\textsuperscript{147} Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, 113–115.

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 113.
The construction of an emotionally and sexually charged viewer/object relationship, and the use of “reality effects”—often drawn from antique sources—to connote enlivenment, represented a new development in the gothic period, a shift away from the various strategies employed by earlier artists. The famous cult image of St. Foy of Conques (Fig. 2.41), for instance, is not lifelike in the sense of being naturalistic, but it was understood by its medieval viewers to be enlivened in that the saint was present in it. Not only did the image contain the relics of the saint, it represented St. Foy “as she is: a living person, glorified through martyrdom, and now dwelling in heaven.” Clad in gold and encrusted with gems and precious stones—materials that feature prominently in the description of the Heavenly Jerusalem in Revelation—the image of St. Foy evoked her celestial appearance. Like the cult statues of antiquity that Elsner describes, the St. Foy sculpture and images of its ilk were activated and animated through interaction with the worshipper and the worshipper’s gaze. When the eleventh-century writer Bernard of

---

149 This might appear to be an endorsement of that popular narrative in the history of medieval art which holds “increasing naturalism” to be a defining characteristic of the gothic period, and frames thirteenth-century sculpture in terms of a trajectory of technical and stylistic advancement leading inexorably towards the Renaissance. As I have hopefully made clear, however, medieval artists made use of “naturalistic” styles selectively, as a kind of rhetorical device, to construct frameworks of meaning around a given object. In the case of the Parisian Adam, those qualities that our modern eye reads as “naturalism” were evocative of antique sculpture, and to the medieval viewer would have suggested ideas about beauty, skill and animation appropriate to its subject.


Angers saw the statue of St. Gerald at Aurillac, “gloriously fashioned out of the purest gold and the most precious stones,” he was particularly struck by its eyes, writing that “it was an image made with such precision to the face of the human form that it seemed to see with its attentive, observant gaze the great many peasants seeing it and to gently grant with its reflecting eyes the prayers of those praying before it.”\textsuperscript{154} Despite being made entirely out of gold and gems, this image is perceived as lifelike to the point of animation.

As Camille writes, the sense of animation evoked by cult images like the statue of St. Foy or the Essen Madonna (Fig. 2.42) “stemmed from their articulation of a whole set of hieratic conventions associated with power and magic—such as the glaring eyes, potent and penetrating the beholder—that go back to imperial portraiture.”\textsuperscript{155} Like the images of antiquity, these cult statues were also capable, indirectly at least, of taking action to protect their interests. Bernard’s account of the miracles of St. Foy includes several examples of unfortunate individuals who are punished by the saint for disrespecting her image. A cleric named Odalric, for instance, after “greatly dishonoring the holy martyr and spreading some silly foolishness or other about her image,” is visited by a “lady of terrifying authority” in a dream:\textsuperscript{156}

> “And you, worst of criminals,” she said, “why have you dared to disparage my image?” After she said this, she applied the rod that she seemed to carry in her right hand and she left behind a beaten enemy. He only survived long enough afterward to be able to tell the story the next day.

A man who chanced to see the image as it was being carried in a procession “was blinded by a cloud of greed and said, ‘Oh, if only that image would slip from the shoulders of the

---

\textsuperscript{154} Sheingorn, \textit{The Book of Sainte Foy}, 77.

\textsuperscript{155} Camille, \textit{The Gothic Idol}, 223. On the Essen Madonna, see also Fehrenbach, \textit{Die Goldene Madonna im Essener Münster}.

\textsuperscript{156} Sheingorn, \textit{The Book of Sainte Foy}, 78–79.
bearers and fall to the ground! No one would gather up a greater portion of the shattered stone and broken gold than I."  

Immediately after uttering these words, Bernard writes, the man was bucked from his mule and crushed in the mud under its “heavy hindquarters … Some people ran quickly to keep him from suffocating and freed him from the calamitous weight. Then all gave thanks to God, Who protects His own saints even from silly chatter.”

As such accounts make clear, the cult image of St. Foy was understood to represent the saint—to offer a likeness of her celestial appearance and to stand as her proxy on earth—in spite, or indeed because of what modern viewers might term its “anti-realist” appearance. Similarly, Byzantine religious images, which appear to modern eyes to reject “naturalism,” were understood by their makers and interpreters to be “life-like” in the literal sense. In a description of a half-length figure of Christ in the dome of the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, Nikolaos Mesarites writes:

This dome, shows in pictured form the God-Man Christ, leaning and gazing out as through from the rim of heaven, at the point where the dome begins, toward the floor of the Church and everything in it, but not with His whole body or in His whole form. … His eyes, to those who have achieved a clean understanding, are gentle and friendly and instill the joy of contrition in the souls of the pure in heart and of the poor in spirit.

As Robert Nelson notes, what to the modern viewer appears flat and two-dimensional was, to Byzantine eyes, immediate and present, leaning down from heaven to enter our world and turning his powerful gaze on the viewer.

157 Ibid., 79.
158 Ibid., 80.
160 Ibid., 156.
161 Ibid.; Ouspensky, La théologie de l’icône dans l’Église orthodoxe, 469–472.
Even in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when as we have seen, medieval writers often equated enlivenment with “reality effects,” particularly in descriptions of antique sculpture, this brand of classicizing “naturalism” was not the only means by which an image could achieve the effect of “presence.” Marian images were understood to be surrogates for the Virgin herself, and much like Pygmalion’s ivory statue, they were ritually dressed in sumptuous robes and kitted out with jewels, crowns, and veils.¹⁶² Tales of the miraculous enlivenment of holy images, which proliferated throughout Europe in the thirteenth century, provide an obvious counterpoint to accounts of the demonic possession and magical (or illusory) animation of antique statuary.¹⁶³ In these stories, however, images are dependent on their prototypes for their power and agency.¹⁶⁴ The images may be described in general terms as beautiful, as in the tale of the monk whose fervent devotion to a “beautiful image” of the Virgin that he kept in his cell caused her to produce a rose for each Ave Maria he recited, but their particular visual characteristics are rarely elaborated upon, and their makers are, almost without exception, effaced altogether.¹⁶⁵ Katherine Allen Smith argues that Romanesque sculptures of the Virgin of the sedes sapientiae type would have appeared lifelike,


¹⁶³ Stories about miraculous images, most frequently images of the Virgin, abound in the works of twelfth-century writers such as Sigebert of Gembloux, Guibert of Nogent, Gautier of Cluny, Honorius Augustodeunensis, and Peter the Venerable. By the middle of the thirteenth century, the great collections of miracles, which included accounts of miraculous images, had spread throughout Europe. The most important of these were by Gautier de Coinci (1177-1236) and Caesarius of Heisterbach (1180-1240); for more on this phenomenon see Caesarius of Heisterbach, Dialogue on Miracles; Gautier de Coinci, Cinq miracles de Notre-Dame; Beitz, Caesarius von Heisterbach und die bildende Kunst; Freedberg, The Power of Images, 299–316; Krause and Stones, Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music and Manuscripts; Russakoff, “Imaging the Miraculous: Les Miracles de Notre Dame, Paris, BnF, N.acq.fr. 24541.” Russakoff’s particular focus is on a fourteenth century manuscript of Gautier de Coinci’s text, but her dissertation includes a great deal of useful information on the broader tradition of illustrated miracles of the Virgin.

¹⁶⁴ Camille, The Gothic Idol, 132–133.

¹⁶⁵ This story of the monk and his beautiful image of the Virgin appears in almost all of the miracle collections, from Gautier de Coinci to Heinrich Suso and Johannes Herolt, see Freedberg, The Power of Images, 308.
graceful and alluring to contemporary viewers, and that gothic images of the Virgin and Child rendered form and gesture in “naturalistic” terms. That such images resonated with viewers and elicited emotional responses from them is indisputable. I would argue, however, that the “naturalism” of such images is of a different type than the “verism” of the Parisian Adam and similarly classicizing images, and was activated by ritual engagement with the object, while the Parisian Adam achieved enlivenment through the activation of culturally contingent structures of meaning surrounding antique art. Like the statue of St. Foy, the images in these stories do not achieve the appearance of enlivenment through “reality effects” that reflect the artist’s skill. Rather, they are activated by encounters with viewers, appearing to move or speak in response to prayers, bleeding, lactating, secreting oil, and striking transgressors.

A passage from Caesarius of Heisterbach’s miracle collection explicitly contradicts the notion that enlivenment and skillful craftsmanship necessarily went hand-in-hand: in this story, an image of the Virgin in the chapel of the fort of Veldenz, which Caesarius describes as “endowed with much virtue” despite being badly formed, punishes a woman after she calls the statue “old rubbish.” This unprepossessing image, “not indeed fashioned with any skill,” is the antithesis of those skillfully wrought antique statues that appear to move,

---

168 Following this insult, the image of the Blessed Mary speaks to another woman also present in the church, predicting a future punishment for the foolish matron who maligned her, announcing that: “Because that lady … has called me old rubbish, she will be an unhappy woman all her life.” Lo and behold, “A few days afterwards she was despoiled of all her property and lands by her own son and even to this day begs her bread miserably, paying the penalty for her folly.” The story is recounted in Chapter 24 of Book VII: Of The Blessed Virgin Mary, see Caesarius of Heisterbach, Dialogue on Miracles, 1:525–526. It is briefly discussed by Freedberg, The Power of Images, 312–314.
breathe and blush. Its jarring appearance draws attention to its status as a poorly executed work of art, and yet, its relationship to its prototype endows it with the capacity for animation. The image is animated in spite—or even, in an indirect sense, because—of its inability to transcend its materiality. Rigidly frontal, hieratically wide-eyed, clad in gold and bedecked with jewels, cult images achieved “lifelikeness” in the eyes of their viewers through a very different system of signification from the one that made the Parisian Adam seem alive. Their status as vessels for relics, as objects of meditation and devotion, as conduits to and surrogates for their holy prototypes, and as vehicles of miraculous automation, conditioned their viewers to see them as enlivened despite their lack of “verism.”

That other stylistic modes could also evoke “presence” confirms and underscores that it was the peculiar character of Adam as representational subject that led, in the case of the Parisian sculpture, to the use of a classicizing style and the quotation of an antique type. The *pudica* pose, the soft, plastic modeling, the use of polychromy—all evoked a particular category of enlivened image, one in which animation, or the impression thereof, is due not to ritual engagement or the intervention of the Virgin or saints, but to artistic skill and the activation of cultural associations in the mind of the viewer. Through his use of a classicizing idiom, the sculptor of the Parisian Adam articulated a set of ideas about craftsmanship and Creation, beauty and skill, eroticism and shame, lifelikeness and enlivenment. Freighted with connotative meanings and juxtaposed with other visual modes, the form and style of the Parisian Adam made the image appear “alive,” according to the conventions of the time, aligning the sculptor with his divine counterpart and providing us with an invaluable exegesis of medieval ideas about the art of antiquity.

---

With its hipshot, contrapposto stance, its fluid contours and rounded volumes, and the sensuous grace of its pseudo-modest gesture—a gesture that pays lip service to postlapsarian shame while accentuating the nude body’s beauty—the Parisian Adam represents a purposeful appropriation of a specific classical model, and of the dense web of meaning by which it was surrounded. This is more than an act of formal citation: along with the coy posture, the Parisian Adam coopts the erotic allure of the Venus pudica type in service of a program focused on elaborating a theology of redemption. In this context, not only does Adam’s beautiful naked body speak to his role as the masterpiece of divine creation, it reflects his redemptive potential. Even as the figure’s pudica gesture reminds the viewer of the need for absolution occasioned by his actions, his physical beauty is evidence of his capacity to receive it, while his position within the program of the transept establishes the means by which absolution is made possible—through Christ’s sacrifice, and the institution and rituals of the Church. Despite its anomalous status in the history of art, the Parisian Adam is not wholly unprecedented, stylistically speaking: like its brethren at Chartres, Bourges, or Rouen, the image of Adam from Notre-Dame de Paris exemplifies concomitant interest in the ideal nude and the artistic heritage of antiquity on the part of medieval sculptors. In its scale and setting, however, and especially in its somatic resonance, the Parisian Adam is unique: unlike the small-scale figures of Adam at Chartres and elsewhere, which are carved in relief and contained by the narrative sequences they inhabit, this larger than life-sized figure invokes a living, bodily presence, inviting a somatic response from the viewer. Sculpted in the round, painted in vibrant, mimetic color, and installed at a considerable distance above the cathedral floor—a placement which would have lessened the apparent difference in height between the image and the average viewer, making him appear life-sized—the Parisian Adam exists in a one-to-one relationship with the beholding
body. Moreover, its formal evocation of a well-known antique type would have heightened this sense of autonomy and vitality, identifying it more completely with the real bodies below. Thus, the Parisian Adam functioned as an avatar of mankind and an incarnation of his spiritual potential, aligning his maker with both the supremely skillful sculptors of antiquity and with the divine *artifex*, and alluding to an ongoing medieval discourse on the parallels between craft and Creation, and the peculiar capacity of sculpture to achieve effects of enlivenment.
III. AUXERRE
The Redemption of Antiquity

“...il s’est trouvé à Auxerre, à la fin du XIIIe siècle un artiste épris d’humanisme et qui, résistant à la vague de réalisme qui a envahi tout l’art français, persiste à chercher son inspiration dans l’Art Antique.”
Jean Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen Âge français*

Situated one hundred and fifty kilometers southeast of Paris in the former Duchy of Burgundy, the cathedral of Saint-Étienne at Auxerre has long been considered a locus classicus of borrowings from the antique.¹ A few key figures from the narrative reliefs that span the lower embrasures of the west façade—a nude Hercules holding the skin of the Nemean lion, a dancing satyr, a sleeping cupid, Bathsheba at her bath—have been identified as direct quotations from some indeterminate antique source and lauded as an astonishing but isolated foreshadowing of the great Italian Renaissance to come.² These discussions have generally sidestepped the question of “the program,” treating the façade’s classicizing elements as discrete iconographic ciphers whose meaning (when meaning is even considered) is accessible by way of iconographic analysis, with each image considered in isolation or in relationship only to the immediately surrounding narrative.³ Conversely,

---


² As many scholars have pointed out, Gallo-Roman artifacts, including bas-reliefs, steles, and other sculpted objects, were ubiquitous throughout medieval Europe, see Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen Âge français*, 103–104; Greenhalgh, “Spolia: A Definition in Ruins,” 80–81. Some of the specific antique models identified as possible sources for the Auxerre reliefs include a silver service given to the cathedral treasury by the bishop Saint Didier and a pilaster carved with an image of a satyr at Arlon, see Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen Âge français*, 285; Adhémar, “Le Trésor d’argenterie donné par Saint Didier aux églises d’Auxerre (VIIe siècle)”; Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 11 & 69; Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, 93.

³ In his discussion of the images of Hercules and the dancing satyr, for example, Panofsky’s argument that these figures serve as regional personifications is based on their position within the Joseph narrative; his analysis of the significance of the sleeping cupid as a representation of carnal love also hinges on the figure’s position at the base of a doorpost, directly beneath a relief depicting the Wise Virgins, see Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, 93–94. Panofsky’s approach is adopted by Nordström, who also echoes most of his arguments, see Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 60–70 & 76–79. Sauerländer does not offer much in the way
scholarship on the program of Auxerre’s west façade tends to give short shrift to these classicizing images, focusing a wider lens on the themes that underpin and unify certain of the narrative cycles and locating meaning in the nexus between narrative themes, politics and patronage. Adherents of both approaches have largely ignored the Genesis cycle that adorns the basements of the north portal dedicated to the Virgin (Fig. 3.1-3.4), given that it fails to bolster arguments about patronage or to provide obvious examples of appropriations from antiquity. This narrative, however, which begins with the Creation and ends with an image of Noah’s Ark upon the waters, is crucial to the thrust of the program as a whole—a program that is characterized in the broadest sense by concern with the theology and mechanics of redemption, and in which narratives of penance, absolution and resurrection go hand in glove with an effort to reclaim antiquity and incorporate it into Christian salvation history.

Having set the problem of the program aside in my discussion of the Parisian Adam, I would now like to return to it as it relates to the ensemble of the west façade. With this integrated reading of the reliefs that span the west front of the cathedral at Auxerre, I aim to reconstruct the theory of redemption that undergirds them, and to explore the way in which they function as a vindication—or even a conversion—of antiquity.

***

The concept of the “program” as a thematically unified whole whose various sculpted components—narrative reliefs, allegorical figures, images of prophets, apostles and saints—work together to articulate a coherent argument, forms the foundation of much of analysis of these classicizing figures but cites Panofsky, and argues that the images must have some meaning in relationship to the Joseph narrative, see Sauerländ, *Gothic Sculpture in France 1140-1270*, 500–501.

Denny, “Some Narrative Subjects in the Portal Sculpture of Auxerre Cathedral”; Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral.” One exception to this rule is Nordström, who frames the reliefs’ classicizing elements as a kind of “proto-renaissance” which he connects to the Auxerre bishops’ efforts to support the French king Philip IV’s imperial aspirations, see Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 11–16.
the existing scholarship on architectural sculpture in the Middle Ages. As I have discussed, scholarly belief in the conceptually consistent medieval sculptural program can be traced back to Emile Mâle and his theory of the Gothic cathedral as a microcosm of the known universe, within which each sculpted image functioned as a didactic unit, its meaning derived from the iconographic relationship among images and the thematic harmony of the whole. In the century since Mâle’s *L’Art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France* was first published, his vision of the cathedral as a unified, encyclopedic visualization of world knowledge has been superseded as scholars have embraced contingency and multivalence; and yet, the fundamental soundness of the idea of the “sculptural program” as a system of signification—the place wherein meaning resides—has gone largely unquestioned. In a recent volume on the idea of the program and its relevance to the study of medieval art, Michel Pastoureau explores the etymology of the word and the history of its usage as an art-historical concept. He is critical of the broad, often anachronistic ways in which the term has been applied since the mid-twentieth century, arguing that excessive, ahistorical use has resulted in the false notion that medieval programs conformed to the same logic that defines the modern program when in fact, they were always internally contradictory, shifting, and

---

5 For a historiography of the medieval sculptural program as a field of study, see Boerner, “Sculptural Programs.”

6 See Chapter Two.

7 See Chapter Two. Scholars like Margot Fassler and Jacqueline Jung, for example, have addressed the way in which medieval architectural sculpture was activated by liturgical rites and sermons, discussing the importance of contingent, embodied reception by pluralistic audiences in the production of meaning, even as the program remains, for both, the basic unit of measure and the site of signification, see Fassler, “Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres”; Jung, “Dynamic Bodies and the Beholders Share: The Wise and Foolish Virgins of Magdeburg Cathedral”; Jung, “Beyond the Barrier.”

8 Pastoureau, “Programme: Histoire d’un mot, histoire d’un concept.”
above all incomplete. Nevertheless, he concludes that, despite the risk of anachronism and reductiveness it carries, the concept of the program continues to be relevant and useful, allowing us to better understand medieval art. With this in mind, I aim to offer a reading of the program at Auxerre not as a closed, univocal system, but as a coherent, if polysemous, collection of figures and narratives. Situating these sculpted images in the theological, cultural and liturgical contexts of their making and reception, I will trace the theme of reconciliation and reintegration that runs, lode-like, through the portals of the façade, exploring the role of the Creation cycle and of certain explicitly classicizing figures in the articulation and amplification of this theme.

Before approaching the west façade’s sculptural program as a conceptually coherent whole I should first enumerate its constituent parts, and outline the ways in which its forms and narratives have been parsed both by scholars concerned with classicism in the Middle Ages and by those more interested in patronage and politics at Auxerre in particular. From left to right, the three portals of the cathedral’s west façade are dedicated to the Virgin, the Last Judgment, and John the Baptist. Above the Genesis cycle that spans the embrasures, the archivolts of the north portal are sculpted with scenes from the life of the Virgin, while the lintel above the doorway depicts her Coronation (Fig. 3.5). The tympanum itself is blank. Folke Nordström suggests that, like the tympana at Reims, it was meant to accommodate a stained-glass window, a theory for which he does not offer supporting evidence.

---

9 “il n’es jamais univoque; il comporte des contradictions, se modifie souvent se transgresse lui-même; surtout, il n’est jamais conduit à son terme.” Ibid., 24. In his essay on the Stanza della Segnatura, Gombrich made a similar critique of the concept in a modern context, albeit for slightly different reasons, see Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 2:85–101.


11 Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 82. I have not encountered this theory anywhere else in the literature.
The sculpted tympanum of the central portal depicts the Last Judgment (Fig. 3.6), with a bare-chested Christ enthroned atop a sphere supported by angels and flanked by two badly damaged kneeling figures (presumably the Virgin and John the Evangelist) and two standing figures of angels. The tympanum, along with the lintel, which shows the Resurrection and the Division of Souls, and the archivolts, which are carved with scenes from the lives of the apostles, have generally been dated to the second half of the fourteenth century, perhaps as late as 1380. The doorposts depict the Wise and Foolish Virgins, while the now-empty jamb niches would once have been occupied by images of the apostles whose lives are represented in the archivolts above. Below the jambs, six arched niches, each divided into two smaller blind niches, contain the seated figures of the eleven prophets of Judah (two now destroyed) and the Erythrean Sibyl (Figs. 3.7-3.8); angels project outwards from quatrefoil openings between the blind niches, and fill the spandrels between the large niches of the right-hand basement.

Two lengthy and richly detailed narrative cycles occupy the portal’s lower embrasures. To the left of the doorway, the story of Joseph unfolds across two rows of medallions separated vertically by decorative borders and niches containing single figures (Fig. 3.9). To the right, the parable of the Prodigal Son appears in a series of badly abraded quatrefoils and octagons whose shape and intricate, interlocking arrangement recall depictions of the same narrative in stained glass, for example, at Bourges or Sens (Figs. 3.10-...
Both cycles famously include figures that clearly evoke antique sources: in the Joseph cycle, Hercules and the dancing Satyr occupy vertically adjacent border niches (Figs. 3.13-3.14), while Joseph’s nude torso as he is thrown into the well by his brothers (Fig. 3.15), and the arrangement of the heads of the Midianite merchants on two planes of differing depth (Fig. 3.16) also suggest an awareness of Gallo-Roman prototypes. In the Prodigal Son cycle, scholars have pointed to the feast scene (Fig. 3.17) and the figure of the kneeling servant (Fig. 3.18) as evidence that the sculptors looked to antique models as they grappled with the problem of depicting profane scenes of bodies in motion, while the figure of Luxuria (Fig. 3.19) who appears as a beautiful woman suckling a pair of dragons derives, indirectly, from classical images of the goddess Terra.

The south portal too contains a number of forms and passages that seem to reference ancient models. In the tympanum, dedicated to scenes from the life of John the Baptist, the figures of Mary and Elizabeth in the Visitation (Fig. 3.20) are swathed in drapery, the folds and pleats of which resemble those of the classicizing Visitation pair at

---


18 Adhémar notes that the Prodigal Son cycle exhibits a certain “gout profane” which he connects to a collection of antique silver vessels in the cathedral treasury, a point I will return to later, see Ibid., 283–284. Nordström, meanwhile, writes that in the Prodigal Son cycle, the sculptors “learned from classical art whilst working on motifs quite different from the antique ones … they were able to use what they had learned about the human body, its proportions, its anatomy and logical movement, when they had to depict the kneeling servant in the scene with the Prodigal son at his father’s table and so on.” Finally, Adhémar discusses the metamorphosis of Terra into Luxuria, although he does not specifically mention Auxerre, and Raguin notes that the figure of Luxury from the Prodigal Son cycle derives directly from this tradition. From an iconographic standpoint this is not, strictly speaking, true—Roman images of the goddess do show her suckling various animals, but the convention of depicting her with serpents, specifically, is a later development. I will return to this point later in the chapter. See Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 131; Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français*, 197–200; Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral,” 141; Leclercq-Kadaner, “De la Terre-Mère à la luxure.”
Reims, albeit less refined. In the spandrels between the six gabled niches of the socle, personifications of Philosophy and the Seven Liberal Arts stand on slim colonnettes topped with vegetal capitals (Figs. 3.21-3.22). Several of the figures stand in contrapposto, and a few, like the Visitation pair, are draped in tightly pleated fabric that outlines the shape of the body beneath. The large socle niches represent episodes from the story of King David; these are, from left to right, David spying on Bathsheba; the seated Bathsheba, nude from the waist up, being bathed by a servant; and Uriah riding into battle on the right embrasure; and, on the left, the death of Uriah; the marriage of David and Bathsheba; and the royal couple enthroned (Figs. 3.23-3.24). In this cycle, the remarkable form of the bathing Bathsheba has been lifted from antique images of seated nereids like the one in the Capitoline Museum’s Nereid Sarcophagus (Figs. 3.25-3.26). The bent right knee and elegantly extended left leg, the clinging, wet folds of drapery that hug the contours of the left hip and thigh, the sensuous, naked chest are all characteristic of the seated nereid type. The standing servant, too, wears a simple, cinched robe that emphasizes the shape of her breasts and recalls classical clothing types (Fig. 3.27).

As one would expect, many of the figures from the narrative reliefs of the south and central portals are discussed in landmark studies of medieval classicism, including Jean Adhémar’s *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français* and Erwin Panofsky’s *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*. In both works, these figures are treated as anomalies, albeit for different reasons. To Adhémar, the Auxerre reliefs, along with the famous Visitation figures

---

19 On the famous Reims Visitation pair, see Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français*, 275–283; Sauerländer, “‘Antiqui et Moderni’ at Reims.”

20 In much of the literature, the figure of Bathsheba is likened to classical images of river goddesses, or water nymphs, see for example Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 109. I owe the specific comparison to the Capitoline Museum’s Nereid Sarcophagus to Ruth Bielfeldt, for whose assistance I am most grateful. On this sarcophagus, see Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 399–402.
from the façade of Reims cathedral, represent two valiant but ultimately futile efforts by individual artists to ignite a Renaissance of Gallo-Roman style in the midst of the Gothic period. Working in isolation and against the current of artistic evolution in thirteenth-century France, which according to Adhémar was characterized by a disengagement from Gallo-Roman models and an increasing interest in “naturalism” in depictions of movement, drapery and physiognomy, the sculptors responsible for the Reims Visitation group and the narrative reliefs from the central and south portals at Auxerre turned to locally available antique sources for inspiration. These sources, Adhémar suggests, included bas-reliefs and steles, which were still to be found in large numbers scattered about the landscape; the most important font of antique forms, however, was the collection of silver vessels, some of it possibly of Alexandrian origin, donated to the cathedral treasury by Saint Didier who served as bishop of Auxerre in the seventh century.

The collection comprised two formal table services. The surviving inventory lists more than fifty basins, bowls, platters, wine vases and spoons, all of which were destroyed following the Huguenot capture of the city in 1567. The vessels were embellished with images of putti playing with griffins and fish, scenes of combat, and depictions of mythological figures including Mercury and Apollo, Dionysius and Aphrodite, and Neptune and other sea divinities. Citing Adhémar, many scholars have pointed to this treasure of


22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 283; Adhémar, “Le Trésor d’argenterie donné par Saint Didier aux églises d’Auxerre (VII e siècle).” The silver collection is also discussed by Molard, “Histoire de l’ancien trésor de la Cathédrale d’Auxerre.” Adhémar’s speculation about the vessels’ origin is due to certain imagery—a crocodile, an Ethiopian figure—as well as a Greek inscription.

24 Adhémar’s article on the silver treasure includes the Latin inventory of the vessels with a French translation, see Adhémar, “Le Trésor d’argenterie donné par Saint Didier aux églises d’Auxerre (VII e siècle),” 47–53.

25 Ibid., 46.
ancient silver as a likely catalyst for the Auxerre sculptors’ interest in and use of classical forms, and like Adhémar, most have contented themselves simply with identifying this probable source: few have offered any interpretation of these classicizing figures and their possible function in the larger program.26

Among those who have attempted to offer some explanation for their presence beyond the general notion that they reflect a local survival or resurgence of interest in antiquity, Panofsky is certainly the most prominent. In his famous study of the many “revivals” or returns to classical antiquity in the arts that occurred between the tenth and fifteenth centuries, Panofsky devotes several pages to the Auxerre reliefs, which he includes among a few examples of his “principle of disjunction.”27 This principle, Panofsky argues, holds true for nearly all art of the high and later Middle Ages, and describes the decoupling of classical forms from classical content:28

wherever in the high and later Middle Ages a work of art borrows its form from a classical model, this form is almost invariably invested with a non-classical, normally Christian significance; wherever in the high and later Middle Ages a work of art borrows its theme from classical poetry, legend, history or mythology, this theme is quite invariably presented in a non-classical, normally contemporary form.

According to Panofsky, the images of Hercules and the satyr from the Joseph cycle, along with that of Cupid asleep on his torch from the doorpost depicting the Wise Virgins (Fig. 3.28), are examples of classicizing forms that have been endowed with a Christian significance, an interpretation which, he writes, runs counter to the general consensus that

26 See, for example, Nordström, The Auxerre Reliefs, 128–129; Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral,” 143.

27 Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, 91–93.

28 Ibid., 84.
these figures were included solely for their beauty.\textsuperscript{29} Hercules and the satyr, Panofsky argues, functioned as regional personifications: long associated with Egypt and the wilderness, they were inserted into the Joseph narrative as frontispieces to episodes connected with that part of the world.\textsuperscript{30} The figure of Hercules prefaces the scene in which Joseph is cast into the pit in the wilderness and then sold into Egypt, while the satyr is adjacent to the image of Pharaoh’s dream and the magicians’ vain attempts at interpretation (Fig. 3.29).\textsuperscript{31} The sleeping Cupid, meanwhile, he describes as an instance of \textit{interpretatio Christiana}; a symbol of \textit{Amor carnalis} and the vice of luxury, he dozes at the base of the doorpost depicting the Wise Virgins who, as brides of Christ, have triumphed over such weaknesses.\textsuperscript{32}

Panofsky’s primary interest, of course, is the decoding of individual iconographic motifs in service of a broader argument about classicism in the thirteenth century. These three figures from Auxerre’s central portal are discussed as discrete cryptograms whose symbolic significance derives (and can be deduced) from the cultural associations attached to their specific classicizing forms and from their positions within particular narratives. Adhémar too is preoccupied with tracing the survival and revival of antique influences in the Middle Ages, and his interest in the classicizing figures of the Auxerre socle reliefs is due in large part to their outlier status. For art historians more concerned with questions of

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 90–91 & 93. Aubert writes that these figures were “placées ici au milieu des scènes bibliques, sans autre motif sans doute que leur beauté”—a passage that is then quoted by Adhémar, see Aubert, \textit{La Bourgogne}, 26–27; Adhémar, \textit{Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen-Age français}, 284.

\textsuperscript{30} Cicero and Pomponius Mela, whose work was known to medieval scholars, mention a \textit{Hercules Aegyptius}, and medieval writers emphasized Hercules’s elimination of the murderous Egyptian king Busiris; the satyr, meanwhile, was associated with the “spirit of the wilderness and, quite particularly, of the Egyptian desert.” Evidence of this association can be found in the Stuttgart Psalter, where a satyr appears as the \textit{genius loci} of the Egyptian desert in an illustration of Psalm 77:51-53. Panofsky, \textit{Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art}, 93.

\textsuperscript{31} Genesis 37: 24-28; Genesis 41: 18-24.

\textsuperscript{32} Panofsky, \textit{Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art}, 94.
patronage and politics at Auxerre, these instances of classicism, when they are considered at all, are important not as examples or counter-examples in the exposition of sweeping theories about engagements with antiquity in medieval art, but as evidence of the particular political, social, historical and personal concerns that shaped the conceptualization of the program of the west façade.

Two scholars whose work on Auxerre focuses on the relationship between patronage and program are Virginia Raguin and Don Denny, both of whom see the west façade as a conceptually coherent whole, the themes of which were dictated by the personal interests, political ambitions and family history of a single influential patron.\(^{33}\) Denny identifies this commanding individual as Jean de Chalons-Rochefort, the younger son of Jean “l’Antique” de Chalons and the husband of Alix, Countess of Auxerre, through whom he became Count.\(^{34}\) According to Denny, the three narrative cycles of the central and south portals—the stories of Joseph, the Prodigal Son, and David and Bathsheba—take on new meaning when viewed in light of the personal histories of the Count and his Countess. Jean, like Joseph and the Prodigal Son, had known conflict with his elder sibling: when Hugh, oldest son of Jean l’Antique and count of the Franche-Compté, became embroiled in a political dispute with Hugh IV of Burgundy, Jean and his father sided with Burgundy against his brother.\(^{35}\) In the aftermath of the short-lived armed conflict, Jean was made heir to the bulk of his father’s property and was married to Hugh IV’s granddaughter.\(^{36}\) The parallels to the Prodigal Son and Joseph stories are clear: the hostile relationship with one or more older

\(^{33}\) Denny, “Some Narrative Subjects in the Portal Sculpture of Auxerre Cathedral”; Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral.”


\(^{35}\) Ibid.

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 25.
brothers, the bestowal of the father’s favor, and the eventual attainment of tremendous wealth at the brother’s expense are all key elements of these two moralizing Biblical tales.\(^{37}\)

The story of David and Bathsheba, Denny suggests, can be connected to Jean’s marriage and his political and dynastic aspirations as ruler of Auxerre.\(^{38}\) Not only was David seen as an exemplar for French rulers throughout the Middle Ages, he was also, with his wife Bathsheba, the founder of a royal line that culminated in the birth of Christ, and his life was understood to prefigure that of his divine descendant.\(^{39}\) Denny proposes that the reliefs depicting the history of David’s union with Bathsheba reflect Jean de Chalons’s ambitions for his newly founded dynasty and his wish to be associated with divinely anointed rulership.\(^{40}\)

Raguin also sees the subjects and forms of the west façade’s sculptural program as a reflection of an individual patron’s interests and ambitions, but unlike Denny, she identifies that patron as Guy de Mello, who served as bishop of Auxerre from 1247 to 1269.\(^{41}\) Her study of the program is more comprehensive than Denny’s. In addition to the narrative reliefs from the south and central portals, she considers the importance and meaning of the

---

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 31–34.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 25–30.


\(^{41}\) Raguin notes that the beginning of the west façade’s sculptural campaign, which Craven dates to around 1260, coincides with de Mello’s inheritance of his father’s fortune. This, along with the thematic connections between the program’s narrative subjects and the bishop’s biography, makes him a more likely candidate in her eyes, see Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral,” 137; Craven, “The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre,” 226.
personifications of the Liberal Arts and certain of the classicizing figures, and she refers to other elements of the cathedral’s decoration, specifically the glazing.\textsuperscript{42} Like Denny, however, she does not discuss the north portal, which she believes to be of a later date, and like Denny, she focuses almost exclusively on iconography, which she frames in relationship to local politics and her presumed patron’s biography.\textsuperscript{43}

Guy de Mello was also a younger son—his father was Guillaume de Mello, lord of Saint-Bris—and Raguin suggests the Joseph and Prodigal Son narratives were chosen for their personal relevance.\textsuperscript{44} The bishop enjoyed a close personal relationship with Louis IX, which Raguin argues is repeatedly referenced in the cathedral’s decorative program: images of biblical kingship, specifically the David narrative and a relief showing Solomon as judge adorn the south portal; royal emblems belonging to Louis IX and his mother Blanche de Castile are used in the borders of the central portal’s socle reliefs; and the glazing program’s Passion iconography echoed that of the newly finished Sainte-Chapelle.\textsuperscript{45} Before beginning his theological training, de Mello had received a classical education in law and the liberal arts, which Raguin sees reflected in the façade’s many classicizing elements: the figure of the Erythrean sibyl, the images of Hercules, the satyr, the sleeping cupid and Laxuria, and the personifications of the Liberal Arts.\textsuperscript{46} Allegorical figures of the Liberal Arts were rare in the later thirteenth century, and Raguin suggests that their inclusion here was also meant to

\textsuperscript{42} Auxerre’s stained glass program was also the subject of Raguin’s doctoral dissertation, Raguin, “Thirteenth-Century Choir Glass of Auxerre Cathedral.”

\textsuperscript{43} The north portal is dismissed in a footnote, Raguin, “Mid-Thirteenth Century Patronage at Auxerre and the Sculptural Program of the Cathedral,” 146, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{44} De Mello was not favored by his father, but upon his death he did inherit his fortune, Ibid., 137–138.

\textsuperscript{45} These royal emblems are the fleur-de-lis, and an image of a castle in a diamond-shaped frame, Ibid., 136, 138–139.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 140–143.
invoke the socle images of the Liberal Arts from the west façade at Sens, thereby reminding viewers of the close relationship between the two bishoprics.\footnote{Ibid., 143.}

“Seen as a whole,” Raguin writes, “the Auxerre program achieves a coherence of purpose and design” attributable to the governing influence of a single powerful patron.\footnote{Ibid., 144.} I too would argue that the program of Saint Étienne’s west façade demonstrates remarkable conceptual coherence, but it is a mistake, I think, to view its component parts through the lens of personality, mapping some elements of the program onto the biography of one individual and ignoring those that appear not to fit, particularly when it is by no means certain that portals were ever personalized in this manner. Instead, I propose a reading of the whole that begins with the neglected Genesis cycle of the north portal and traces the intertwining themes of redemption and classicism across the façade’s three portals, offering a broader and more robust interpretation of the purpose and meaning of the many references to antique art to be found at Auxerre.

***

The opening verses of Genesis are represented in a quadripartite panel located around the corner from the portal’s left embrasure (Fig. 3.2), in which the creation of the earth and the elements appear in the lower register and that of the celestial bodies and the animals above. Most scholars have dated this panel to the second half of the fourteenth century, nearly one hundred years after the other socle reliefs were completed.\footnote{Nordström, \textit{The Auxerre Reliefs}, 84.} The thirteenth-century cycle (Figs. 3.3-3.4) begins at the outer edge of the left basement and reads from left to right and top to bottom across the portal’s breadth. The narrative is
divided among twelve quatrefoil frames which are organized into two sets of six, one to the left and one to the right of the doorway. Each set of six quatrefoils is divided horizontally into two bands of three, and vertically into three columns of two; the horizontal division is marked by a string course, while the vertical sections are framed on either side by narrow pilasters topped with tall, spindly finials. Above the quatrefoils in the upper register are gables with trefoil tympana containing half-length figures of angels, each holding crowns in both outstretched hands. The narrative runs continuously across the central divide of the entrance and features eleven episodes drawn from Genesis 1-4 and 6-8, beginning with the Creation of Adam in the upper-leftmost quatrefoil and ending with Noah’s Ark, which spans the two rightmost quatrefoils of the right embrasure’s lower register. In between are depicted the Creation of Eve, God’s Prohibition to Adam and Eve, the Fall, God Admonishing Adam and Eve, and the Expulsion in the upper register, and the Sacrifices of Cain and Abel, the Murder of Abel by Cain, God Admonishing Cain, and Cain Killed by Lamech below.

Most discussions of the north portal reliefs focus on their stylistic divergence from the relief sculpture of the central and south portals. The figures—described as “delicate,” “extremely attenuated,” and even “free from all kinds of sensuality”—are categorized as highly “Gothic,” the work of a mason whose stylistic sensibility could not be more different from that on display in the sensual, classicizing nudes to be found elsewhere on the façade. Such characterizations are not wholly inaccurate. The figures certainly are elegantly elongated, bordering on ethereal; drapery does not cling to their contours in tight folds but falls to the ground in straight, crisp lines; and the fine, delicate bodies lack the sense of

---

earthbound weightiness associated with medieval classicism. Studies, however, which frame these images as a counterpoint to the obviously classicizing figures of the central and south portals, disregard key points of resemblance to antique sources, and in so doing, they not only mischaracterize the reliefs themselves, they fail to grasp their significance as an integral part of the façade's conceptual program.

Attenuated though they may be, the naked bodies of Adam and Eve suggest an awareness of classical forms. Consider, for example, Adam’s torso (Figs. 3.30-31): while it lacks the mass and solidity of the central portal’s Hercules, the delicately defined musculature of the abdomen, the clearly delineated pelvic cut, and the slight swell of the lower belly, especially visible in seated poses, are reminiscent of the physiques one might find on a mythological sarcophagus. The arrangement of Adam’s nude body at the moment of his enlivenment (Fig. 3.30), with the torso turned outward towards the viewer and the legs, with knees bent at differing angles, in profile, recalls a posture common to a range of seated figures from ancient relief sculpture, for example the image of Agamemnon from a Roman sarcophagus depicting the legend of Achilles now in the Louvre (Fig. 3.32), or the seated sea nymphs from the Tombeau des Néréides (Fig. 3.33), also in the Louvre. In the quatrefoil depicting God’s Prohibition (Fig. 3.34), Adam and Eve both stand in subtle but unmistakable contrapposto. Adam is depicted in three-quarter view, his right foot in profile while his left is shown frontally. This is not the hipshot sway of the Parisian Adam, but it does suggest an uneven distribution of weight, with the right foot bearing the greater burden. In Eve’s case, the contrapposto is more pronounced: the upward tilt of the left hip, the bend in the right knee and the slight lift of the right heel unequivocally evoke the familiar

---

51 This last comparison to the seated nereids is particularly interesting given that, as mentioned previously, the figure of Bathsheba bathing from the south portal is generally believed to have been modeled on an antique image of a sea nymph. I will return to this point later in the chapter.
classicizing stance. Finally, the placement of Adam’s hands in the Expulsion, with the left covering his genitals and the right held across his chest, calls to mind the pudica pose so often appropriated by medieval artists to indicate post-lapserian shame.\(^{52}\)

It should come as no surprise that these subtle invocations of antique sculpture occur in the naked figures of Adam and Eve. As discussed in previous chapters, medieval sculptors often turned to antique sources in their search for a “better” nude; indeed, I have argued that the nude was inextricably associated with antiquity in medieval visual culture.\(^{53}\) The Auxerre Adam may be less conspicuously classicizing than his Parisian counterpart, but he and his companion are, nevertheless, characterized by visual markers associated with antiquity, markers, moreover, which, as in the case of the Parisian Adam, invoke a whole structure of cultural associations and ideas about beauty, skillfulness, and creation. Like the illuminator of the Lambeth Bible or the Pisan sculptor Bonnanus, maker of the bronze doors of Monreale, the sculptor of the Auxerre Genesis cycle envisioned the formation of the first man as a tactile, material act.\(^{54}\)

In the quatrefoil depicting the Creation of Adam (Fig. 3.29), God, in the form of a barefoot, berobed Christ, lays his right hand on Adam’s delicately modeled torso while cradling his head with his left, emphasizing the manual quality of his making. Adam, meanwhile, is seated on, and practically enveloped by, a lumpy hillock of earth; the way his body, carved in shallow relief, seems almost to merge with his surroundings evokes his material origins in the “slime of the earth,” suggesting continuities between craftsmanship and divine creation. That the product of this material act of divine creation bears a subtle but significant resemblance to antique prototypes supports what I

---

\(^{52}\) On the *pudica* pose, see Chapter Two.

\(^{53}\) See Chapter Two.

\(^{54}\) For more on the Lambeth Bible and the doors from the cathedral of Monreale, see Chapter Two.
have already argued: antique sculpture was understood to be particularly beautiful and particularly lifelike, and the appropriation of recognizably classicizing forms invoked a kind of enlivenment associated with the uncannily skillful sculpture of antiquity.

Contrary to general scholarly opinion, then, the nude figures of Adam and Eve from the Auxerre Creation cycle are subtly but deliberately classicizing, and as in the case of the Parisian Adam, their classicism serves to activate a framework of culturally contingent meaning. Unlike the Parisian Adam, however, which for reasons already discussed, particularly its dislocation from a largely destroyed architectural and sculptural context, must be treated to some extent as a self-contained anomaly, the images of Adam and Eve from the north portal of Auxerre cathedral can and must be considered as part of a conceptually coherent program.

The program’s core theme of redemption plays out in the relationship between the imagery of the socle reliefs and that of the lintel and archivolts, and it hinges on the typological connection between Adam and Eve, on the one hand, and Christ and Mary on the other. In thirteenth-century Gothic architecture, it was common to conceive of the ensemble of narrative socle reliefs, trumeau figure, tympanum and archivolts as a didactic unit. For example, at Paris and Amiens (Figs. 3.35-3.36), and on the west façade at Reims (Fig. 3.37), Virgin and Child trumeau figures stand atop reliefs depicting scenes from the life of Adam and Eve, a juxtaposition whose meaning would have been clear to medieval audiences familiar with typological systems of signification. In these trumeaux, the typological analogy encapsulated in the palindrome EVA-AVE is given physical form; Mary,

---

55 There is no shortage of literature on typology in medieval art; a few key works are Bloch, “Typologische Kunst”; Guldan, Eva und Maria. Eine Antithese als Bildmotiv; Hoefer, Typologie im Mittelalter; zur Übertragbarkeit typologischer Interpretation auf weltliche Dichtung; Cohen and Derbes, “Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim”; De Mahuet, “Le Thème de Marie Nouvelle Eve Dans L'iconographie Chrétienne”; Hughes, “Visual Typology in Early Gothic Art, 1140–1240.”
conceptualized as the “New Eve,” the holy vessel whose purity opened the Gates of Paradise closed by her Old Testament counterpart, stands in queenly glory atop the naked bodies of Adam and Eve.\(^{56}\) Her body functions literally and metaphorically as the conduit between the Fall of Man and his new hope for redemption and celestial glory; even as the narrative of man’s fall from grace plays out below her feet, her regal, upright figure points to the crowning moment of her own heavenly coronation by her divine son, the New Adam, in the tympanum above.

At Bourges, key episodes from Genesis 1–4 in the spandrels of the central portal’s embrasures—the creations of Adam and Eve, the Fall, Admonishment and Expulsion, Adam and Eve tilling and spinning, the offerings of Cain and Abel, and Abel’s murder by Cain—are juxtaposed with an elaborate Last Judgment that spans the lintel, tympanum and archivolts and includes images of the Resurrection, the Weighing of Souls, the Separation of the Blessed and the Damned, Christ Enthroned surrounded by angels and intercessors, and a heavenly host of angels, seraphim, martyrs and confessors (Figs. 3.38-3.39). Here, Christ appears as Judge and Redeemer: adamantly frontal and hieratic, he presides over the weighing of the souls, but he is also bare-chested, his hands raised palm-out to display his wounds, a gesture that highlights his redemptive sacrifice. The pairing of the beginning and the end of salvation history (the Fall and Expulsion below with the Last Judgment above) emphasizes Christ’s role as the New Adam. His crucifixion is the mechanism by which the sin depicted in the spandrels was expiated: thus were Adam and Eve redeemed and hope for salvation restored to their descendants.\(^{57}\)

---

\(^{56}\) On the EVA-AVE palindrome and Mary as the new Eve, see Guldan, *Eva und Maria. Eine Antithese als Bildmotiv.*

\(^{57}\) According to an early Christian legend, the site of the crucifixion—known as Golgotha in Aramaic or, in Latin, *Calvaria,* and referred to in the Gospels as the “place of a skull”—was also the site of Adam’s burial, and Adam’s skull is often shown at the base of the cross. This juxtaposition of Adam’s remains and Christ’s death
Auxerre’s narrow north portal lacks a trumeau figure, and as at Bourges, the Genesis scenes span the embrasures to either side of the doorway. Like the portals at Paris, Amiens and Reims, however, the program of the north portal at Auxerre is structured as a redemptive arc in which the life of the Virgin appears as the typological antitype to the story of Eve and Adam. Here, the Genesis cycle with its subtly classicizing depictions of Adam and Eve unfurls in a horizontal band at eye level, while the life of the Virgin forms a canopy in the archivolts above, culminating in the lintel image of her Coronation. The original sin which occurs in the socle reliefs is undone by the miraculous events depicted above; with the Virgin’s own immaculate birth, the incarnation, and the birth, life and death of Christ, the cosmic books were balanced, and Adam and Eve (and, by extension, the rest of humanity) were saved.

***

The north portal’s typological structure makes explicit the leitmotif of redemption that runs like a thread through the three portals. Moreover, the use of understated but unmistakably classicizing elements in the depictions of Adam and Eve points to another recurring theme in the façade’s sculptural program: the reclamation of antiquity. In a sense, Adam and Eve are the ultimate emblems of redemption, and their nude bodies were a common site for references to antiquity in thirteenth-century visual culture. Their readmission into the kingdom of heaven thereby served, indirectly, to reintegrate the classical reified Christ’s role as the “New Adam” and the crucifixion as expiatory sacrifice: the blood of the second Adam literally runs over the body of the first Adam, thus is his sin undone. This legend is cited by Origen, Basil of Caesarea, and Ambrose, see Origen, In Matthaeum, PG 13, col. 1777; Basil of Caesarea, Commentarius in Isaian prophetam, PG 30, col. 348; Ambrose, Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam, PL 15, col. 1832C; Ambrose, Epistolas, PL 16, col. 1243B. Jerome mentions the legend but rejects it as false and argues that the site was named Calvary because it was the location where criminals were beheaded, see Jerome, Commentaria in Evangelium S. Matthaei, PL 26, col. 209C. For a discussion of the legend and its origins, and for English translations of the Patristic passages cited above, see Wilson, Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre, 2–7 and Appendix III.
and Christian worlds. This theory is borne out by the socle reliefs of the central and south portals, in which unambiguous appropriations of antique motifs occur in the context of narratives of redemption and reconciliation that, when viewed through the lens of contemporary religious thought and culture, can be understood as a deliberate effort to incorporate the pagan past into Christian salvation history.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the parable of the Prodigal Son, which as we have seen, appears on the right embrasure of the central portal, was commonly interpreted as a historical allegory in which the elder son represented the Jews while his errant younger brother stood for the sinful and idolatrous gentiles. This allegorical tradition, which can be traced back to Tertullian, was most famously developed in two late fourth-century texts—Jerome’s Epistolae and Augustine’s Questionum evangeliorum—and was recapitulated in the Glossa ordinaria. Tertullian based his interpretation on the parable’s context in the gospel, where it functions as a didactic tale told by Jesus for the benefit of the Pharisees and scribes who are appalled at his warm reception of the publicans and sinners. Thus the older brother represents the indignant Jew who “immediately groaned at the first calling of the Christian,” while the younger son represents the newly converted gentiles. This reading was expanded upon by Jerome in a letter to Pope Damasus I, in which he explains that the

58 Wailes, Medieval Allegories of Jesus’ Parables, 236–245.

59 For the original texts, see Tertullian, De Pudicitia, Chapter 8–9, PL 2, cols. 994C-999B; Jerome, Epistolae, letter 21, PL 22, cols. 379-394; Augustine, Questionum evangeliorum libri duo, PL 35, cols. 1344-1348. For the Glossa ordinaria exegesis on the Prodigal Son parable, see PL 114, cols. 311-314. An alternative allegorical tradition, mentioned by Jerome and Ambrose and taken up in the thirteenth century by Bonaventure and Albert the Great, sees the Prodigal Son as the penitent sinner and his brother as the just man, see Ambrose, Traité sur l’Évangile de S. Luc, II: 88–98; Wailes, Medieval Allegories of Jesus’ Parables, 243–244.

60 The parable is framed as follows: “Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him./And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them./And he spoke to them this parable, saying…” Luke 15:1-3.

61 “Et utique Judaeus ad primam statim vocationem Christiani gemit…” Tertullian, De Pudicitia, 9, PL 2, col. 998C, translated in Wailes, Medieval Allegories of Jesus’ Parables, 239.
prodigal’s journey represents the gentiles’ estrangement from—and eventual reconciliation with—God. The son, Jerome writes, “had sinned against heaven, since he had forsaken the heavenly Jerusalem, his mother; he had sinned before his father, in that deserting his Creator he had worshipped idols of wood; he was not worthy to be called a son of God, since he had preferred to be the servant of idols. For everyone that commits sin is born of his father the devil.” Here, Jerome associates sin specifically with idolatry, aligning the prodigal son with the gentiles and their pagan practices. The pigs the prodigal tends are idols and their owner is the devil; the father running to meet his wayward son represents the incarnation while the robe he bestows upon him is the garment of the holy spirit. The fatted calf stands for the Savior, its sacrifice is, of course, the Passion, and the feast is the sacrament of the Eucharist, while the resentful older brother who refuses to join in the festivities stands for the Jews whose dogged, self-interested adherence to the Law was not enough to bring them to Grace. Augustine also saw the parable as an allegory of the Jews and the gentiles; despite never having strayed from the one true God, the Jews, like the elder brother, are not to be found in the Father’s house. Augustine’s discussion remained an important source for later exegetes, including Bede.

The strategic inclusion of classicizing figures in the Auxerre socle reliefs, in particular, the use of *Terra* for the image of *Luxuria* (3.19), strengthens the association of the prodigal son with the idolatrous gentiles who eventually found their way to God’s favor. The merging of these two personifications took place over hundreds of years, and at Auxerre the specific iconography used for *Luxuria*, the woman suckling a pair of serpents or

---


64 Ibid., 238 & 241.
dragons, does not derive directly from ancient depictions of the earth goddess.\textsuperscript{65}

Traditionally shown surrounded by a range of animals that only rarely included snakes, \textit{Terra} (Fig. 3.40) came to be associated specifically with serpents during the Carolingian period, and subsequently evolved into a personification of adultery and wantonness thanks in large part to the negative associations surrounding snakes.\textsuperscript{66} It is possible that this iconography of \textit{Luxuria} also owed something to antique images of Hygieia, daughter of Aesculapius, who was generally depicted holding a serpent (Figs. 3.41-3.42).\textsuperscript{67} Despite this circuitous process of transformation, however, I would argue that the figure of \textit{Luxuria} at Auxerre was clearly meant to evoke antique forms: the clinging drapery, the sinuous, hipshot stance, and the position of the feet bear more than a passing resemblance, for example, to Roman images of dancing maenads (Figs. 3.43-3.45). It is hardly surprising that the personification of the prodigal son’s sin is represented using a recognizably classicizing visual idiom, given the nature of that sin: the appropriation of antique forms often occurred in the context of depictions of subject matter characterized by heightened sexual anxiety. Antique prototypes that carried a strong sexual charge in medieval visual culture were also co-opted to serve as synecdoches for idolatry, as in the case of the \textit{Spinario}.\textsuperscript{68} At Auxerre, the use of a classicizing figure to embody licentiousness and profligacy is not only consistent with thirteenth-century conventions of associating sexually charged themes with antique forms, it hints at the

\textsuperscript{65} On the evolution of \textit{Terra} and her transformation into the personification of \textit{Luxuria}, see Leclercq-Kadaner, “De la Terre-Mère à la luxure.”

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 38; Brodman, “‘Terra Mater-Luxuria’ Iconography and the ‘Caradoc’ Serpent Episode,” 39. Brodman suggests this Carolingian iconographic convention grew out of a literal interpretation of God’s edict in Genesis 3:14 that the serpent must eat earth (\textit{Terra}) as punishment for its role in man’s Fall.

\textsuperscript{67} Hygieia is referred to as the “supreme nurse of dragons,” and is associated with \textit{Terra Mater} in medieval collections of medical writings that included incantations to the goddess Terra, the \textit{Precatio Terrae Matris}, see Dronke, “Bernard Silvestris, Natura, and Personification,” 20–21.

\textsuperscript{68} See my discussion of \textit{agalmatophilia} and images of Venus, and of the \textit{Spinario} in Chapter Two.
exegetical tradition that identified the prodigal son as a type of the gentiles and his
adventures in dissipation as an allegory of pagan idolatry. *Luxuria* is a personification of the
sins that lured the prodigal from his father’s house, which are in turn a parable for the
worship of false gods; the prodigal son is under the spell of idolatry, but finds his way back
to his father and is admitted to grace; thus are the pagan gentiles redeemed.

One could, of course, see this conflation of *Luxuria* with *Terra* as a rejection—as opposed to a redemption—of antiquity. After all, it is only following his repudiation of
*Luxuria*/idolatry that the prodigal/gentile is reconciled with his Father, and the coopting of
the classical type in service of a moralizing Christian allegory seems to accord with
Panofsky’s principal of disjunction. Elsewhere in the central portal’s program, however, the
use of a classicizing sculptural vocabulary coincides with an incontrovertible example of the
incorporation of an explicitly pagan figure into Christian salvation history. I refer to the
image of the Erythrean Sibyl, which appears in the upper band of the right embrasure,
directly above the first panel in the Prodigal Son cycle (Fig. 3.46).

Throughout the Middle Ages, the Erythrean Sibyl, who made her first literary
appearance in the sixth century B.C.E., and who is mentioned by Plato, Heraclitus and
Aristophanes, was included in the ranks of messianic visionaries.89 Eight books of Greek
hexameters attributed to the Sibyl survive—produced between the second century B.C.E.
and the fourth century C.E., and collected together in the sixth century C.E. to form the
*Oracula Sibyllina*, these texts were actually compiled by Jewish and Christian authors to serve
their own religious ends, and included imitation pagan oracles alongside real sibylline

---

89 On the Sibyl in the Middle Ages, see Cutler, “Octavian and the Sibyl in Christian Hands”; Mâlé, *The Gothic Image*, 336–337; McGinn, “Sibyls”; McGinn, “Teste David Cum Sibylla: The Significance of the Sibylline Tradition in the Middle Ages”; Waegeman, “The Medieval Sibyl.” According to Mâlé, there are ten sibyls named by Vincent of Beauvais, but the Erythrean Sibyl was the most prominent throughout the medieval period.
sayings.⁷⁰ The most widely cited of these sibylline prophecies was an acrostic poem from Book VIII of the *Oracula Sibyllina*, which appears in numerous medieval texts, including Augustine’s *City of God*.⁷¹ The opening lines of the text, which Augustine translated into Latin, refer to an eternal monarch who will descend “in His flesh” from the heavens at the time of judgment; in the original Greek, the initial letters of the first twenty-seven lines spell out “Ἰησοῦς Χριστός θεός γιός Σωτήρ,” or “Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Savior.”⁷²

Beginning in the second century C.E., Christian theologians treated the Sibyl as a prophet of Christ and many early Christian writers, among them Clement of Alexandria and Theophilus of Antioch, incorporated Sibylline materials into their work.⁷³ Lactantius, who spent many years in the court of the emperor Constantine and was employed as tutor to his son Crispin, was so invested in proving that the oracles of the ancient world were consistent with Christianity that he quoted more extensively from the Sibyl in his *Divine Institutes* than he did from the Old Testament.⁷⁴ Along with her Cumaean sister, who appears in Virgil’s fourth *Eclogue* as the source of a prophecy that came to be seen as a prediction of Christ’s birth, the Erythrean Sibyl was cited by Augustine as evidence that Christ’s coming had been revealed to the gentiles as well as to the Jews, and he even went so far as to accept her as a

---


⁷² The opening lines in Latin read “Iudicii signum tellus sudore madescet./E caelo rex adveniet per saecla futures;/Sic ille ut carmen praeens, ut iudicet orbem.” In English, this translates to: “Judgment shall come, and the sweat of the earth be its signal./Even the monarch eternal shall come from the heavens./Suddenly come, in His flesh, to the dreaded tribunal.” Jolly, “More on the Van Eyck Question,” 240; Augustine, *The City of God, Books XVII-XXII*, 114. As Augustine points out, the first letters of these five Greek words form another mystical reference to Christ—they spell out the Greek word ἰχθύς meaning “fish.” In his Latin translation, Augustine sought to preserve this acrostic form, and the opening letters of each line spell out “Iesus Christus Dei Filius Salvator,” see Terry, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 274–277.


⁷⁴ Ibid. For a comprehensive biography of Lactantius and a discussion of the content and the historical and religious context of his *Divine Institutes*, which draws so heavily on the Sibylline oracles, see Bowen and Gansey’s introduction in Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 1–54.
member of the City of God. In a famous sermon falsely attributed to Augustine, *Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos*, the parallel between, or indeed the equivalence of the Jewish prophets of the Old Testament and the pagan Sibyl is clearly established:

But because in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word standeth, even as our Lord himself, confuting your stubbornness, saith: ‘It is written in your Law that the testimony of two men is true,’ so again from among the Gentiles let a third witness be brought in, that the testimony to the truth may be confirmed in every point. Let us set before you what the SIBYL uttered, likewise prophesying concerning Christ, that with one stone the foreheads of both may be stricken, to wit: those of the Jews and of the Pagans, and that with their own sword, like unto Goliath, all the enemies of Christ may be smitten.

Along with the sibyl, the sermon named Virgil and Nebuchadnezzar as three pagan witnesses who foretold the coming of Christ. Regularly included in the Christmas office, this sermon was widely diffused during the Middle Ages; it points to the pervasiveness of this view of the Sibyl in the medieval world. She was praised by many prominent twelfth-century writers, including Abelard, John of Salisbury and Peter of Blois, and by the thirteenth century, the Sibyl was well established in medieval visual culture and popular devotion as *the* gentile witness to Christ, appearing frequently in the company of the Old Testament prophets and serving as a kind of representative of classical antiquity. A famous thirteenth-century hymn, the *Dies Irae*, names the Sibyl as a witness to the end of the world:

---


“Dies irae, dies illa/Solvet Speculum in favilla/Teste David cum Sibylla.”\textsuperscript{80} This eschatological poem, which was used in the liturgy of the dead, pairs the gentile seer with David, who in addition to his role as ancestor and prefiguration of Christ, was understood to have foretold the Passion; thus is the Sibyl likened to and endowed with the authority of a biblical visionary.\textsuperscript{81}

Throughout the thirteenth century, the Sibyl appears in theological treatises and popular religious tradition alike as a gentile visionary. Thomas Aquinas wrote that “it is likely that the mystery of our redemption was revealed to many Gentiles before Christ’s coming, as is clear from the Sibylline prophecies,” while the \textit{Legenda Aurea} and the \textit{Mirabilia Urbis Romae} disseminated the legend that the Tiburtine Sibyl foretold Christ’s birth to the emperor Augustus.\textsuperscript{82} This image of the Sibyl as seer also permeated the visual culture of the Middle Ages: painted and sculpted images abound in which the gentile prophetess is represented

\textsuperscript{80} In English, the lines read “The day of wrath, that day/Will dissolve the world in ashes/As foretold by David and the Sibyl,” see Waegeman, “The Medieval Sibyl,” 86. The \textit{Dies Irae} is generally attributed to Thomas of Celano and dated to the first half of the thirteenth century, although some scholars have suggested it may in fact be significantly older, see Stock, “\textit{Dies irae}. Zu einer mittelalterlichen Sequenz.”

\textsuperscript{81} In a hymn composed by the sixth-century poet Venantius Fortunatus, for instance, David is said to have prophesied the crucifixion or God’s “reigning” from the wood of a tree: “Impleta sunt quae concinit/David fideli carmine/Dicendo nationibus:/Regnavit a ligno Deus.” This hymn, the \textit{Vexilla regis prodeunt}, was composed on the occasion of a procession in which a fragment of the True Cross—a gift from Justin II to Queen Radegunda—was brought to Poitiers from Tours in 569 C.E. The hymn was subsequently incorporated into the Office of Holy Week, when it was sung at Vespers, but my research suggests that the verse concerning David was omitted when the hymn was used liturgically. See Burkitt, “Christian Hymns,” 22; Jurkowlaniec, “A Typological Confrontation of the Man of Sorrows and David at the Turn of the Thirteenth Century,” 93–95; Szövérffy, “‘Crux Fidelis...’ Prolegomena to a History of the Holy Cross Hymns,” 11.

alongside the prophets of the Old Testament. What is more, as is the case at Auxerre, representations of the Sibyl throughout Italy and France are often found in architectural and cultural contexts characterized by a demonstrable interest in the art and culture of antiquity.

In Campania, for example, the famous eleventh-century cycle of wall paintings at the Benedictine abbey church of Sant’Angelo in Formis includes an image of the Sibyl in one of the spandrels of the nave arcade (Fig. 3.47), the rest of which are occupied by fourteen Old Testament figures, all of whom were recognized as prophets. Stilistically speaking, the wall paintings at Sant’Angelo in Formis are not conspicuously classicizing; in the literature they are generally characterized as “Byzantinizing,” with additional influence deriving from Norman and local Italian traditions. The wall paintings, however, were executed under the patronage of Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino, who received the church as a gift from Richard I of Capua in 1072 and who oversaw its extensive refurbishment. As we have seen, Desiderius was an avid collector of ancient Roman and Early Christian treasures and architectural spolia, and the incorporation of spoliate materials into his newly rebuilt Benedictine mother church at Montecassino was part of a conscious program of appropriation, the ultimate goal of which was to associate the eleventh-century church

---

83 These Old Testament figures are David, Solomon, Hosea, Zephaniah, Daniel and Amos on the nave’s north wall, and Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Micah, Balaam, Malachi, Zechariah and Moses on the south; the frescos of the two easternmost spandrels are destroyed. The bibliography on Sant’Angelo in Formis is extensive; for an introduction see Morisani, Gli affreschi di S. Angelo in Formis. See also the dissertation by Gunhouse, “The Fresco Decoration of Sant’Angelo in Formis.” On the church’s historiography, see Wettstein, Sant’Angelo in Formis et la peinture médiévale en Campanie, 20–25. On the relationship between the fresco cycle and the Pseudo-Augustinian sermon Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos, see Glass, “Pseudo-Augustine, Prophets, and Pulpits in Campania,” 218. I have relied on Glass for the identification of the fourteen Old Testament prophets, see p. 218, n. 31.

84 Gunhouse, “The Fresco Decoration of Sant’Angelo in Formis,” 107–139; Glass, “Pseudo-Augustine, Prophets, and Pulpits in Campania,” 218. Hélène Toubert has argued that the program’s decorative borders derive from ancient Roman sources, a suggestion that Gunhouse refutes, see Toubert, Un art dirigé, 133; Gunhouse, “The Fresco Decoration of Sant’Angelo in Formis,” 198–200.

85 Gunhouse, “The Fresco Decoration of Sant’Angelo in Formis,” 8–16.
visually, politically and theologically with the empire and the early church.\textsuperscript{86} The inclusion of the pagan Sibyl among the Jewish prophets of the Old Testament at Sant’Angelo in Formis is in keeping with Desiderius’s established interest in antiquity.

Elsewhere in Campania, at the cathedral of San Pietro in Sessa Aurunca, the Sibyl appears in a spandrel of the thirteenth-century pulpit along with Daniel, Zechariah, and a third, unidentified prophet (Fig. 3.48).\textsuperscript{87} Identifiable by her scroll, which is inscribed with the opening words of the famous sibylline acrostic “Iudicii si(g)n(u)m,” the Sessa Aurunca Sibyl lacks the strong stylistic ties to antiquity that characterize her counterpart at Auxerre; she is positioned rather awkwardly within the spatial confines of the spandrel and clad in drapery that falls in straight, linear folds, revealing little of the shape and volume of the blocky body beneath.\textsuperscript{88} The bearded male figure to her left, however, with his bare, muscled torso and his left arm raised above his head, could be compared to ancient images of Atlas or the hanging Marsyas (Figs. 3.49-3.50), while the two female caryatid figures that occupy the pulpit’s corners (Fig. 3.51) are characterized by diaphanous drapery that clings to the contours of the

\textsuperscript{86} See my discussion of Desiderius’s antiquarianism as an expression of his political ambitions in Chapter One. Glass has pointed to the pseudo-Augustinian sermon \textit{Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos}, which was very much in fashion at Montecassino, as a likely source for the program at Sant’Angelo in Formis. The parallels between the wall paintings’ iconography and the content of the sermon are obvious; I would only add that the widespread popularity of a sermon that names both the Sibyl and Virgil as gentle prophets of Christ suggests broad support for the reclamation of pagan antiquity; see Glass, “Pseudo-Augustine, Prophets, and Pulpits in Campania,” 218.

\textsuperscript{87} On the pulpit in particular see Glass, “Pseudo-Augustine, Prophets, and Pulpits in Campania.” Glass bases her dating of the pulpit on an inscription, which mentions two thirteenth-century bishops, Pandolfo and Iohannes, see p. 215. According to Sheppard, the inscription states that Pandolfo “finished a project which had already been started”; he argues that the spandrel figures of the Sibyl and the prophets on the pulpit’s west side were executed as part of this earlier phase and should be dated to the twelfth century, see Sheppard, “A Chronology of Romanesque Sculpture in Campania,” 324. The identification of the prophets is based on the inscriptions on their scrolls, see Glass, “Pseudo-Augustine, Prophets, and Pulpits in Campania,” 215–216. On the cathedral of Sessa Aurunca more generally, and on other aspects of its sculpture see Diamare, \textit{Memorie critico-storiche della Chiesa di Sessa Aurunca}; Gandolfo, “Il Duomo di Sessa Aurunco”; Glass, “The Archivolt Sculpture at Sessa Aurunca”; Villucci, \textit{La Cattedrale di Sessa Aurunca}.

\textsuperscript{88} As noted above, the opening lines of the acrostic are, in full, “Iudicii signum tellus sudore madescent/e caelo rex adveniet per saecula futurus/scilicet ut carmen praesens, ut iudicet orbem.” See Cutler, “Octavian and the Sibyl in Christian Hands,” 23; Jolly, “More on the Van Eyck Question,” 240.
body in tight folds and evokes antique sources. Glass has also compared the caryatids’ positions in the pulpit’s recessed corners to certain ancient sarcophagi (Fig. 3.52). 89 The spandrel-type pulpit, moreover, can be linked to the well-known form of the Roman triumphal arch, which often included relief figures in the arch spandrels. 90 The Arch of Trajan at nearby Benevento, for instance, which was built in 114 C.E. to celebrate the emperor’s military exploits and commemorate the opening of the Via Traiana, features relief figures in the four spandrels, including a pair of winged victories on the city-facing side (Fig. 3.53), whose symmetrical arrangement within the spandrel—frontal, diagonally positioned bodies, with faces turned and arms outstretched towards the center of the arch—echoes faintly in the position of the Sessa Aurunca Sibyl. 91 Furthermore, the cathedral at Sessa Aurunca was clearly a locus of engagement with and appropriation of the artistic artifacts of ancient Rome. For example, the cathedral’s columns and capitals are all Roman spolia, and a large section of an antique architrave, most likely taken from the local Roman theater, is integrated into the façade, where it serves as the lintel to the central portal. 92 In addition to this conspicuous reuse of antique architectural spolia, the center archivolt of the portico includes an example of what Settis has termed spolia in re, an image of the Spinario who serves here as a personification of the month of March (Fig. 3.54). 93 This figure does not conform

---


91 On the Arch of Trajan at Benevento see Hassel, Der Trajansbogen in Benevent; Rotili, L’Arco di Traiano a Benevento; Sobocinski, “Porta Triumphalis et Fortuna Redux”; Torelli, “Ex his castra, ex his tribus replebuntur.”


to all of the iconographic conventions associated with the famous ancient sculpture; he is shown standing instead of seated, and is accompanied by a second smaller, clothed figure who kneels at his feet to remove the thorn. Nevertheless, this is unmistakably the Spinario. The nudity, the distinctive pose, with the injured foot crossed over the opposite thigh to form a four-shaped figure, and the comically oversized genitals are all clearly in keeping with medieval representational conventions. As we have seen, the Spinario often served as an emblem of idolatry in medieval art, and like the Sibyl, he was closely associated with pagan antiquity throughout the Middle Ages. The Sibyl would appear, then, to function as one of many iconographic, stylistic and material evocations and appropriations of antiquity at Sessa Aurunca; as at Auxerre, her appearance here coincides with a marked interest in the classical world and its artistic remains.

Several hundred kilometers farther north, in the Tuscan towns of Siena and Pistoia, sculpted Sibyls feature prominently on a pair of pulpits attributed, respectively, to Nicola Pisano and his son Giovanni (Figs. 3.55-3.56). On the Siena pulpit, a single Sibyl appears in one of the fourteen spandrels (Fig. 3.57), the rest of which house images of prophets and evangelists. The pulpit at Pistoia is home to six Sibyls (Figs. 3.58-3.59); carved in such high relief they are almost freestanding, these figures are located at the pulpit’s corners, atop the supporting columns where they serve to separate the spandrels of adjacent arches and the reliefs of prophets they contain. Like the Auxerre Sibyl, Nicola and Giovanni’s images of the pagan prophetess are classicizing in form as well as content.

94 See my discussion of the Spinario in Chapter Two.
95 The contract for Nicola’s Siena pulpit was drawn up in 1265, and the pulpit was completed in 1268; the Pistoia pulpit was begun c. 1298 and completed in 1301. On the pulpits see Carli, Giovanni Pisano; Carli, Il pulpito di Siena; Mellini, Il pulpito di Giovanni Pisano a Pistoia; Moskowitz, Nicola & Giovanni Pisano: The Pulpits, 61–91; Poeschke, Die Siener Domkanzel des Nicola Pisano; Seidel, Giovanni Pisano: il pulpito di Pistoia. On the Sibyls in particular, see Antognozzi, “Le Sibille di Nicola e Giovanni Pisano”; Seidel, Father and Son, 1: 213–235.
Nicola Pisano had an abiding interest in the art of antiquity and made regular use of antique models in his work, facts which were well established as early as the sixteenth century. In his *Vite*, Vasari describes how Nicola, while working on the duomo in Pisa, was captivated by a number of ancient sarcophagi that had recently been brought back as spoils by the Pisan fleet, and “put so much study and diligence into imitating this manner and some other good sculptures that were in these other ancient sarcophagi, that he was judged, after no long time, the best sculptor of his day.” Less widely recognized are the many references to antique sources in Giovanni’s work; indeed, the younger Pisano is often understood to have rejected his father’s classicism and launched a “Gothic counter-revolution.” As Max Seidel points out, however, and as I have discussed previously, the reception and appropriation of antique art in the thirteenth century had as much to do with achieving effects of enlivenment and tactility—effects Giovanni clearly strove for in his animated, fleshly figures—as it did with the direct quotation of specific sources. Moreover, both pulpits are the site of explicit borrowing from antiquity: the distinctive poses and physiognomies of the lions and lionesses that support the pulpit columns, for instance, are clearly drawn from the many images of hunting scenes that were to be found among the ancient sarcophagi that filled Pisa’s Camposanto during the medieval period (Figs. 3.60-96.

96 Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, 71. For a general discussion of Nicola’s classicism, including a historiographical overview, see Seidel, “Studien zur Antikenrezeption Nicola Pisanos.”

97 This commonly accepted view of Giovanni’s work is articulated by Panofsky who writes that “Giovanni, while keenly responding to the expressive value of classical art and even daring to employ a *Venus pudica* type for the representation of Prudence in his Pisa pulpit, repudiated the formal classicism of his father and started what may be called a Gothic counterrevolution which, in spite of certain fluctuations, was to win out in the second half of the fourteenth century;” see Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, 101. For a critical discussion of this notion of a Gothic counterrevolution, see Seidel, *Father and Son*, 1: 363–375.

98 Seidel, *Father and Son*, 1: 375–388. Seidel refers to Master Gregorius’s *Marvels of Rome* in his discussion of lifelikeness, enlivenment and tactility as sculptural effects associated with antiquity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and frames Giovanni’s works in these terms. For more on this, see Chapter 2 and Gregorius and Osborne, *The Marvels of Rome.*
3.63); the relief panel of the Last Judgment from Nicola’s Siena pulpit famously features a pair of nude female figures, seen from behind, whose postures, physiognomies, and puckered fleshiness are strikingly similar to the gallivanting nereids that adorn another sarcophagus from the Camposanto, and one now in the Museo dell’Opera del Duomo in Siena (Figs. 3.64-3.66); the image of Spes from the Siena pulpit, with her upturned face and expression of wide-eyed wonder, appears to derive from a similarly awestruck handmaiden who stands behind the figure of Phaedra on the famous Hippolytus sarcophagus appropriated to serve as the tomb of Beatrice of Tuscany (Figs. 3.67-3.68), while the face of an angel from the Pistoia pulpit—characterized by curling hair, parted lips and eyes turned skyward—shares that same handmaiden’s expression, and has also been likened to an ancient Roman sculpture in bronze with similarly curling locks, wide eyes and slightly opened mouth (Figs. 3.69-3.70).99

The inclusion of the Sibyls in the ranks of prophets and evangelists at Siena and Pistoia coincides, as at Auxerre, with a thoughtful exploration of the formal and expressive possibilities afforded by antique sculpture; the pagan prophetesses are embedded in sculptural ensembles studded with references, some oblique, some explicit, to antique prototypes. The Pisani were certainly not solely responsible for determining the content of the pulpits’ programs, but both father and son would have been known for their classicizing aesthetic; the choice of sculptors, along with the choice of sibylline imagery, suggests a self-conscious effort to invoke the art of antiquity similar to that which we have seen at Auxerre.

99 These comparisons between ancient prototypes and individual figures, both human and animal, on the Siena and Pistoia pulpits, are discussed in Seidel, Father and Son, 1:376–383. For further examples of animal imagery clearly modeled on antique sources in the work of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, see Ibid., 2:426–477, plates 409–460. For more on the medieval afterlife of the Hippolytus sarcophagus, see Chapter One. The comparative example of the bronze image of Dioscurus, formerly in the collection of the dealer Nicolas Koutoulakis, is offered by Seidel in Father and Son, 2:493, plate 476. I have been unable to discover the sculpture’s current location or determine its provenance.
Across the Alps at the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Laon, three hundred kilometers north of Auxerre, the innovative sculptural program of the west façade’s left portal includes an image of the Erythrean Sibyl that is striking in its classicism (Fig. 3.71). The portal is dedicated to the Virgin, and the Sibyl (the second figure from the right on the outermost archivolt) is surrounded by an eclectic ensemble of allegorical figures, Old Testament scenes, and gentile visionaries, all of which were understood as prefigurations of Mary’s virginity. The Laon congregation would have known the Sibyl as an important gentile witness to Christ’s birth thanks to her prominent role in a local iteration of the Ordo Prophetarum, a liturgical drama based on the pseudo-Augustinian Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos that was performed by the canons during Advent. In this play, known from a codex compiled by members of the cathedral chapter in the last quarter of the twelfth century, the crazed Sibyl (“insanienti simillima”) appears alongside Elizabeth, John the Baptist, the pagans Virgil and Nebuchadnezzar, and eight Old Testament prophets to proclaim the coming of Christ.

---

100 Mâle, The Gothic Image, 337; Sauerländer, Gothic Sculpture in France 1140-1270, 51. On Laon’s sculptural program, see Kasarska, La sculpture de la façade de la cathédrale de Laon. For the Sibyl in particular see p. 60-61. For a general bibliography, see Saint-Denis, Laon, 285–290.

101 These prefigurations of Mary’s virginity are, on the third archivolt, the New Eve, Daniel in the Lions’ Den, Habakuk carrying his Basket, Gideon’s Fleece, Moses and the Burning Bush, the Ark of the Covenant, the Temple with the Closed Gate, and the Prophet Isaiah. On the outermost archivolt are: a girl with a unicorn, Virgil, Isaac blessing Jacob, Balaam, Simeon, the Dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the Coronation of David, the Sibyl, and the three Jews Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Furnace, see Rickard, “The Iconography of the Virgin Portal at Amiens,” 154; Sauerländer, Gothic Sculpture in France 1140-1270, 426–427. According to Rickard, these archivolts are the earliest examples of Marian typology on a portal.

102 On the Laon Ordo, see Lagueux, “Sermons, Exegesis, and Performance”; Young, “Ordo Prophetarum,” 39–49; Young, The Drama of the Medieval Church, 2:125–171. The full text of the play, including the highly descriptive dramatis personae, is transcribed in both works by Young.

103 The codex is Laon, Bibliothèque municipal, MS 263; the Ordo appears on folios 147v-149r, see Lagueux, “Sermons, Exegesis, and Performance,” 198–199. The Old Testament prophets included in the play are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Moses, David, Habakkuk, Simeon and Balaam, see Young, “Ordo Prophetarum,” 40.
Along with six of the Old Testament prophets, the play’s three pagan visionaries also appear on the two outer archivolts of the left portal, where they are accompanied by identifying inscriptions.\textsuperscript{104} Their incorporation into the fabric and ritual of the cathedral, in positions of visual and liturgical prominence, indicates a desire to claim them for the Church, while the classicizing sculptural mode in which they are represented suggests a broader interest in the revival and reclamation of the ancient, pagan culture they stood for.

Executed around the turn of the thirteenth century, the sculpture of Laon’s west façade has been connected to the so-called “1200 style” exemplified by the work of the goldsmith Nicholas of Verdun and the illustrations of the Ingeborg Psalter, and lauded as the site where this classicizing vocabulary was first translated from painting and metalwork into stone.\textsuperscript{105} The Sibyl in particular, with her “unclasped mantle, the long robe concealing yet revealing the form beneath, the hand gripping and lifting the material of the garment,” has been singled out as an example of this innovative classicism, with, in this case, classicism being understood as a kind of “naturalism” that finds expression in the relationship between bodies and drapery.\textsuperscript{106}

Like her counterpart at Laon, the Auxerre Sibyl is sculpted in a classicizing style characterized by drapery that reveals the mass and volume of the body beneath (Fig. 3.46).

\textsuperscript{104} For the inscriptions, see Kasarska, \textit{La sculpture de la façade de la cathédrale de Laon}, 60–61. The Sibyl’s inscription, ET : P[ER] : SEC[U]LA : FUTURUS, is taken from the second line of the famous acrostic: “Iudicii signum: tellus sudore madescet/E coelo rex adveniet per saecla futurus/Scilicet in carne praesens ut judicet orbem.”


\textsuperscript{106} Sauerländer, \textit{Gothic Sculpture in France 1140-1270}, 51.
Executed almost a century later, however, the seated Auxerre Sibyl is not only larger in scale, she is more three-dimensionally corporeal, and more explicitly and directly indebted to antique sources; her mantle and gown, cinched at the waist like that of the Laon figure, mold to the full volumes of her monumental body, bunching and gathering in thick, heavy folds, dipping between the knees to outline the shape of her thighs, and falling to the ground in natural-looking lines. Several of her prophet companions are also clad in garments that evoke classical Roman drapery, and thirteenth-century imitations thereof; the prophet who shares the Sibyl's niche, for instance, wears a robe that wraps around his torso in parallel, horizontal folds comparable to the fold pattern to be seen at Reims, in the robe worn by Elizabeth in the Visitation group on the west façade (Fig. 2.22). The simultaneous weightiness and animation of these figures—the way they turn and gesture towards one another, giving an impression of lightness and vitality even as they remain firmly seated and visibly bound by gravity—also suggests a conscious effort to invoke the art of antiquity. As he turns towards his companion, for example, the prophet seated on the right in the second niche of the central portal’s south basement leans his torso back and lifts his right knee in a rather jaunty stance reminiscent of the seated nude in a pointed cap from Villard de Honnecourt’s famous portfolio, a figure most scholars agree was likely drawn from an antique source (Fig. 3.72-3.73).

107 Nordström has also noted the similarity between the two, see Nordström, *The Auxerre Reliefs*, 31–33.

108 For an introduction to the portfolio, including an extensive bibliography and a complete color reproduction of the entire codex, see Barnes, *The Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Fr 19093)*. The pointed cap, or *pileus cornutus*, worn by the seated nude in Villard’s drawing was a traditional article of medieval Jewish dress which appeared in France in the eleventh century; by the time it was made compulsory for Jews in many parts of Germanic Europe in the thirteenth century, it had apparently gone out of fashion, see Piponnier, *Dress in the Middle Ages*, 138; Straus, “The ‘Jewish Hat’ as an Aspect of Social History.” It continued to be very common as an emblem of Jewishness in Christian iconography particularly in France, for example in the Psalter of Saint Louis and the *Bibles moralisées*, see Schwartz, “The Ultimate Other,” 228. Danièle Sansy has argued that the pointed hat was not a particular marker of Jewishness but rather carried a general pejorative meaning, see Sansy, “Chapeau juif ou chapeau pointu?” There is no reason to believe there was any
In the case of the Parisian Adam, the use of a classicizing visual idiom—the *pudica* gesture, the *contrapposto* stance—created a sense of enlivenment through the activation of a structure of cultural associations surrounding the sculpture of antiquity. Here, too, the Auxerre Sibyl, along with several of her fellow prophets, is sculpted using the visual vocabulary of thirteenth-century classicism—monumental bodies in subtly dynamic motion, draped in heavy folds of fabric that reveal the body’s contours—in what appears to be a deliberate evocation of her native, pagan culture, drawing attention to Christianity’s ancient past. Rather than absorb her into Christian salvation history through an act of visual assimilation, the sculptural mode in which the Sibyl is represented emphasizes her origins even as she is integrated, physically and figuratively, into the Church.

Around the corner from the Sibyl, on the lower embrasures of the south portal, the story of David and Bathsheba unfurls as a narrative of conversion in which the modeling of a key figure, the bathing Bathsheba, on a recognizably antique sculptural source once more suggests an effort to visually incorporate the classical world into the Christian. As we have seen, the figure of Bathsheba at her bath was clearly based on an ancient image of a nereid, perhaps known to the sculptor from a sarcophagus, or from the silver vessels in the treasury, at least one of which appears to have been embellished with a marine theme. This is not especially surprising given the nature of the scene; in the case of Adam and Eve, it was not unusual for artists to refer to antique sources when faced with the challenge of depicting a nude body, particularly when the narrative demanded that the nude body in question be both beautiful and sexually charged. And while representations of the David and

---

109 According to the inventory, among the figures represented were fish (plural) and Neptune with his trident, see Adhémar, “Le Trésor d’argenterie donné par Saint Didier aux églises d’Auxerre (VII e siècle),” 46. As sea nymphs, nereids often appeared as attendants of Neptune.
Bathsheba story were common in twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts—examples can be seen in the Psalter of Saint Louis, the Morgan Crusader Bible, and the Bodleian and Bible moralisée (Figs. 3.74-3.76)—the Auxerre reliefs are the earliest example of a sculpted version of the narrative to appear in monumental form on the façade of a church in the Middle Ages. Little wonder, then, that the Auxerre sculptor should have turned to antiquity in his search for a nude female figure that could serve as a model for the beautiful Bathsheba, the object of David’s illicit desire whose naked body, furtively glimpsed, drove the king to commit adultery and murder. The popularity of the Pygmalion myth and the legend of the Aphrodite of Cnidos, and the survival of commentaries on ancient images like Magister Gregorius’s description of a statue of Venus, demonstrate that sexual anxiety and erotic desire were an ever-present undercurrent in medieval encounters with the sculpted nudes of antiquity. In modeling his depiction of Bathsheba on an ancient image of a naked nereid, the sculptor of the south portal reliefs marshaled these cultural associations in service of an Old Testament narrative of lust and adultery prompted by an act of spectatorship, emphasizing Bathsheba’s beauty and erotic appeal by assimilating her to an antique

---

110 Craven, “The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre,” 226. As Craven points out, scenes from the David and Bathsheba narrative had been represented in relief before—a capital in the upper narthex of the Abbaye Sainte-Marie-Madeleine at Vézelay is generally assumed to depict the pair—but the Auxerre reliefs are the earliest example from a church façade. On the Vézelay capital, see Diemer, “Stil und Ikonographie der Kapitelle von Ste.-Madeleine, Vézelay,” 425–426; Saulnier and Stratford, La sculpture oubliée de Vézelay, 93–94. On the Psalter of Saint Louis (Paris, BNF, MS Lat. 10525), see Stahl, “Bathsheba and the Kings”; Jordan, “The Psalter of Saint-Louis (BN MS. Lat. 10525)”; Stahl, Picturing Kingship. History and Painting in the Psalter of Saint Louis. On the Crusader Bible, also known as the Morgan Picture Bible (Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.638), see Weiss et al., Der Kreuzzügervöbel = The Morgan Crusader Bible = Le Bible des Crusades. The catalogue includes a full facsimile and a volume of commentary. See also Noel, Weiss, and Pierpont Morgan Library, The Book of Kings. On the Bibles moralisées (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 270b; Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex 2554), see Lowden, The Making of the Bibles Moralisées.

111 The saga of David’s adultery with Bathsheba, her ensuing pregnancy, his plot to cause the death of her husband Uriah, and their subsequent marriage is narrated in 2 Kings (Samuel) 11. The second part of the story (2 Kings (Samuel) 12), in which David confesses his sin to the prophet Nathan, repents, and is punished with the death of his first child, is not represented at Auxerre.

112 For more on Pygmalion, the Cnidos Aphrodite, and the eroticization of antique sculpture, see Chapter Two.
prototype associated with those very qualities. This formal evocation of the eroticized sculpture of antiquity imbued the image of Bathsheba with the kind of sexual charisma that compelled the youth in Pseudo-Lucian’s Amores to assault a helpless statue, forging a conceptual connection between David’s act of voyeurism and the overwhelming lust it inspired, and the many accounts of sexually charged encounters with antique statuary in circulation during this period.\textsuperscript{113}

Nereids in particular seem to be connected in classical literature not only with nudity but with voyeurism. For example, Catullus mentions naked nereids whom “mortals saw with their eyes,” while Callistratus describes a marble relief of nereids who “were dainty and bright to look upon, distilling love’s desire from their eyes.”\textsuperscript{114} Nereids were also, of course, associated with water, and were generally shown seated or partially reclining, making them a natural choice of model for the seated, semi-nude, bathing Bathsheba.\textsuperscript{115} When considered in the physical context of the Auxerre program, and in relationship to the typological interpretations of the David and Bathsheba narrative that were prevalent throughout the Middle Ages, however, this deliberate quotation of an antique source can be seen as part of the broader effort, discussed above, to integrate the world of pagan antiquity into the sphere of the Christian church.

\textsuperscript{113} On the Amores and other tales of agalmatophilia, see Chapter Two.

\textsuperscript{114} This association of nereids with the act of viewing from a distance in classical literature is discussed by Luba Freedman, “A Nereid from the Back. On a Motif in the Italian Renaissance Art.” Freedman cites Catullus and Callistratus, along with a passage from Lucian’s Dialogues of the Sea Gods, see p. 324. For the Catullus passage, see Catullus, Catullus. Tibullus. Pervigilium Veneris, 98–99. For the Callistratus passage, see Philostratus the Elder, Philostratus the Younger, a and Callistratus, Philostratus the Elder; Imagines. Philostratus the Younger, Imagines. Callistratus, Descriptions, 422–423.

\textsuperscript{115} For examples of nereids in ancient Roman relief sculpture, see Rumpf, Die Meerwesen auf den antiken Sarkophagreliefs. On the afterlife of the nereid, see Clark, “Transformations of Nereids in the Renaissance”; Freedman, “A Nereid from the Back. On a Motif in the Italian Renaissance Art.” For a brief mention of the nereid motif and its possible meaning in the context of the famous Mildenhall Dish in the British Museum, see Painter, “The Mildenhall Treasure,” 157–166.
Beginning with Augustine, medieval exegetes framed this narrative as an allegory of the relationship between Christ, the Church, and the Old Law or the Jews: David was understood as a prefiguration of Christ, while Bathsheba stood for his beloved Ecclesia; Uriah represented the Old Law or, in one passage from Augustine’s *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, the devil himself, from whom the Church had to be freed; Bathsheba’s bath embodied the cleansing of the Church, and her marriage to David, the culminating scene of the Auxerre cycle, prefigured Christ’s union with Ecclesia. Isidore of Seville equated Uriah with the Jewish people, framing his death as an allegory of the damnation faced by the Jews as a result of their rejection of Christ. This interpretation was also put forward by Saint Bruno of Cologne, the founder of the Carthusian order, by Adam of Saint-Victor, and by Hildebert of Lavardin, whose explanation of the story’s meaning takes the form of an epigram:

Bersabee is the law; King David, Christ; Uriah the Jews. The naked girl pleases the king.

---

116 Augustine writes that Bathsheba, whom he calls Bersabee, should be interpreted as the “well of abundance” ("Puteus satietatis"), connecting her to the “well of living water” in Canticles, which is the Church ("Nam et in Canticis canticorum sponsa illa Ecclesia est, quae vocatur 'puteus aquae vivae'"). Uriah, he continues, can only be the devil ("Urias vero qui fuerat maritus ejus, quid aliud quam diabolum nominis sui interpretatione significat?"); the rooftop bath represents the cleansing of the Church from the filth of the world ("Ecclesiam super tectum se lavantem, id est, mundantem se a sordibus saeculi"); and David’s killing of the devil/Uriah allowed him to join himself to the Church, see *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, PL 42, cols. 458-459. These passages are translated in Craven, “The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre,” 236.

117 He writes: “Whom indeed but the Jewish people does Uriah signify?” ("Quem vero Urias, nisi Judaicum populum, significat?"); continuing “Hence is Uriah sent with letters to Joab, according to which he should be killed, because the same Jewish people carry the law by which they are condemned to die. For while he tries to satisfy the mandates of the law, without doubt he brings down the judgment by which he is condemned.” ("Unde et Urias cum epistolis ad Joab, ex quibus occidit debet, mittitur, quia idem ipse Judaicus populos legem portat, qua convincente moritur. Dum enim mandata legis retinens implere nititur, ipse nimirum debitum judicium unde damnetur."). Isidore of Seville, *Appendix ad Libros Regum*, PL 83, cols. 430-431.

118 Hildebert of Lavardin, *Diversorum sacrae scripturae locorum applicatio moralis*, PL 171, col. 1269. Bruno’s exegesis can be found in his *Carthusianorum Institutioris*, PL 152, col. 860. On Uriah’s murder, Adam of Saint-Victor writes “Thus is Synagoga, recognized in Uriah, abolished and has died off. But Ecclesia, designated by Bersabee, is joined by the compact of marriage to Christ, the eternal king.” ("Ita Synagoga per Uriam intellecta, aboluta est et emortua. Ecclesia vero per Bersabee signata, Christo regi aeterno, foedere nuptiali est conjuncta."). *Sequentiae*, PL 196, col. 1467.
The naked law, not clothed in [figurid], pleases Christ; He takes her from the Jews, uniting her to himself. Her husband does not want to enter the house, nor does the people of Israel enter into spiritual understanding. Uriah, deceived, carries the letter, perishes by the letter; So the Jew perishes following the letter.

In the Vienna Bible moralisée, a roundel depicting David spying on Bathsheba through an opening in a brick wall as she bathes naked in a wooden tub is paired with one containing an image of Christ and Ecclesia (Fig. 3.77). In this second, “moralizing” roundel, Christ watches through a doorway as a fully-clothed Ecclesia is cleansed of “all filth.” Filth here takes the form of two Jewish men, identifiable by their pointed hats, who tumble to the ground behind her. The equation of her bath with the ritual purification of the Church obviously invokes the sacrament of baptism, and Bruno of Cologne explicitly connects the two when he compares David spying on Bathsheba to Christ “contemplating the holy and innocent beauty of the Church as she came forth from the bath of baptism.” This connection would have been especially apparent at Auxerre, where the image of Bathsheba being washed finds a visual and conceptual parallel in the image of Christ’s baptism in the tympanum above (Fig. 3.78). Christ may be shown standing, and rigidly frontal, while

---

119 The exegetical text that accompanies the moralizing image reads: “That David saw Bathsheba who was bathing and washing and loved her signifies that Jesus Christ saw the Holy Church as she washed and cleaned herself of all filth and saw her beauty and purity, and He loved her and held her dear,” see Guest, Bible Moralisée: Codex Vindobonensis 2554, 123.


121 This pairing of images of John the Baptist with images of David and Bathsheba, while not widespread in architectural sculpture, was not unique. In an essay on the Saint John portal of Sens cathedral, for instance, Annabelle Martin speculates that images of David and Bathsheba may have been among the jamb sculptures. These jamb figures were destroyed during the revolution, but thanks to a seventeenth-century description, we know they included a royal couple, as well as images of Elijah, Jeremiah, Saint John, and the widow of Zarepath or Sarepta; Martin argues that all of these figures were associated with baptism, and suggests that an identification of David and Bathsheba for the king and queen is in keeping with this theme, see Martin, “The St John Portal and Baptistry at St Stephen’s Cathedral, Sens,” 40–41.
Bathsheba is seated in a dynamic, twisting pose, but in both scenes, an attendant—in Bathsheba’s case, an anonymous servant, in the case of Christ, his cousin John the Baptist—pours water over a semi-nude figure from a jug in an act of symbolic cleansing.

Indeed, the crucial importance of baptism as the sacrament through which membership in the Church, and hence salvation, could be achieved, is an underlying theme of the David and Bathsheba cycle at Auxerre, shaping the episodic structure of the narrative and giving emphasis to its typological significance. As Wayne Craven points out, the Auxerre cycle includes only six scenes from among the sixteen major episodes that make up the David and Bathsheba narrative in 2 Kings 11, and while it would have been very unusual for all sixteen scenes to be included, this particular selection emphasizes the importance of baptism as the rite that gives humanity access to the Church.\textsuperscript{122} When David commanded Uriah to “Go into thy house and wash thy feet,” he was in fact offering him access to salvation through the rite of baptism, and Uriah’s refusal to lie with his wife was understood to represent the Jewish people’s rejection of Christ and his Church.\textsuperscript{123} The episodes selected for inclusion in the cycle of reliefs place narrative emphasis not on David’s sin—the actual act of adultery is omitted altogether, as is Nathan’s rebuke and David’s penance—but on

\textsuperscript{122} Craven, “The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre,” 226 & 237.

\textsuperscript{123} 2 Kings 11:8. This interpretation of David’s command to Uriah, and of Uriah’s refusal, was a common one in exegetical treatments of 2 Kings 11; Isidore of Seville, for example, writes: “David urged Uriah to go home to wash his feet, because the Lord incarnate, coming to the Jewish people, enjoins them to return to conscience, and to cleanse the filth from their deeds so that they might understand the spiritual commands of the law, and after the great strictness of the commandments, discovering the fountain of baptism, they might return, after labor, to the water. But Uriah, who remembered the ark of God is under animal hides [tents], replied that he could not enter his house. It is as if the Jewish people were to say: I see the mandate of God in sacrifices of the flesh, and I do not seek to attain knowledge through spiritual understanding.” (“Uriam tamen ad domum ire David admonet pedes lavare, quia incarnatus Dominus veniens Judaico populo praecipit ut ad conscientiam redeat, et sordes operum tergat, ut spiritualiter mandata legis intelligat, et post tantam duritiam praeceptorum fontem baptismatis inveniens, ad aquam post laborem recurrat. Sed Urias, qui arcam Dei esse sub pellibus meminit, respondit quod domum suum intrare non possit. Ac si Judaicus populus dicit: Ego mandata Dei in sacrificiis carnalibus video, et redire ad conscientiam per spiritualem intelligentiam non requiro.”) Isidore of Seville, Appendix ad Libros Regum, PL 83, col. 430C.
David’s longing for Bathsheba and their eventual union, following her liberation from her unworthy spouse.

Dressed in the long robe and mantle that commonly denoted elevated social rank in the art of the thirteenth century, the Auxerre David appears as an exemplar of kingship and a figure of Christ, and his marriage to Bathsheba is presented as a prefiguration of Christ’s Coronation of the Virgin, another figure of Ecclesia. Seen in this light, the modeling of Bathsheba on the recognizable antique type of the nereid takes on new significance. Not only does it evoke the trope of the sexually charismatic statue of antiquity, emphasizing her beauty and desirability, it also gives greater dimension to the cycle’s underlying narrative of conversion. The conversion of Bathsheba/Ecclesia from the Old Law to the New is also a conversion of antiquity: theologically, Bathsheba stands as a figure of the Church, but visually, she invokes the art and culture of the ancient, pagan past, which, following the ritual purification of baptism, has been incorporated into the Christian world.

***

At Auxerre, the story of David and Bathsheba is represented as a narrative of unification made possible by purification, its allegorical meaning given greater emphasis by its juxtaposition with the image of Christ’s baptism. In a sense, then, it serves as a counterpoint to the Genesis narrative of the north portal, which is fundamentally a narrative of separation from God, the Church, and the promise of salvation. Indeed, the theme of

---

124 David’s role as the exemplar of Christian kingship is explicitly enshrined in the French coronation Ordines (“The basis of the French regnum Davidicum (reign of David) was the ruler’s elevation as a novus David”), and his unction by Samuel was the basis for the consecration rite in which French kings were anointed with holy oil by the archbishop of Reims, see Sadler, Reading the Reverse Façade of Reims Cathedral, 121. Craven points out that full-length gowns and mantles were reserved for persons of high social rank in art of this period, and were “distinguished from the short skirt and blouse worn by members of the other portion of lay society, the serfs, and from the ecclesiastical garments worn by the clergy,” see Craven, “The Iconography of the David and Bathsheba Cycle at the Cathedral of Auxerre,” 228. For more on conventions of dress in the thirteenth century and the history of medieval French fashion, see Heller, Fashion in Medieval France; Scott, Medieval Dress & Fashion, 35–77.
physical separation and reconciliation, of expulsion and reintegration, is crucial to the program of the cathedral’s west façade, recurring again and again in the narrative reliefs of the embrasures. To speak of any given theme as the “key” that unlocks a program’s meaning is, of course, a mistake; I have discussed how scholarly fixation on the idea of the program as a conceptually unified totality has directed and constrained our understanding of the sculptural ensembles of the Middle Ages, even the most thematically consistent of which are inevitably polysemous. Nonetheless, when read as a series of articulations of the theme of redemption—with redemption conceptualized in physical terms of alienation and reconciliation—the narrative reliefs of the west façade basements achieve a certain coherence, especially when liturgical practices are also taken into account.

The Genesis reliefs of the north portal embrasures introduce the theme of alienation as the starting point not only of the program, but of Christian salvation history: the Expulsion marks humanity’s exile from the Kingdom of Heaven, and the stories of Cain and Abel and the Flood are also, at heart, tales of man’s estrangement from God. Cain’s murder of his brother following God’s rejection of his sacrifice made him a “vagabond and a fugitive on the earth,” while the story of Noah is also the story of mankind’s annihilation—the “end of all flesh”—at the hand of an angry God.\textsuperscript{125} The formal organization of the narratives gives further emphasis to this theme, visualizing humanity’s separation from God as a physical movement outward and away from the church itself. The narrative of Adam and Eve which unfolds in the upper register reads from left to right, with the pre-lapsarian scenes occurring on the left embrasure and the Fall, Admonition and Expulsion on the right; following the narrative visually draws the viewer in towards the portal before repelling them outward. This is especially clear in the final image of the upper register, in which Adam and

\textsuperscript{125} Genesis 4:14; Genesis 6:13.
Eve are driven out of Paradise: in the medallion depicting the Expulsion, the exiled couple are shown in mid-stride, moving rightwards to the edge of the frame, clutching themselves in shame and turning to look over their shoulders towards the church as they walk away. The Ark, too, which appears in the two rightmost medallions of the lower register, seems to be sailing away from the church and into the world, with the figures of Noah and his family positioned in the prow in the right half of the image.

The story of the Prodigal Son depicted on the right embrasure of the central portal is also, in essence, about physical and spiritual estrangement, but unlike the Genesis cycle in which the promise of redemption is sublimated to the portal’s upper reaches, this narrative culminates in a scene of reconciliation. The physical reunion of the prodigal with his father doubles as a spiritual resurrection, with the father, a figure of God, declaring “this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found.”126 The Joseph narrative too, located on the left embrasure, can be seen as a story of alienation and redemption: Joseph, unlike the prodigal son, does not leave home voluntarily but is sold into Egypt by his brothers, nor does he fall from God’s grace through sin. He is, nevertheless, separated from his father and his patrimony when he is made a slave in a strange land, and in Genesis, his story culminates in reunion with his father who believed him to be dead, and in reconciliation with his brothers. This happy scene is not pictured in the Auxerre relief cycle, which ends with Joseph’s appointment to the position of vizier, but the reliefs’ final episode could also be seen as a kind of redemption, or even resurrection. Lifted out of prison and elevated to a high political rank, Joseph has been restored to his rightful place.

The doorposts of the central portal are carved with images of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, yet another articulation of the theme of exclusion/inclusion, and both of the

---

narrative cycles of the central portal basements begin at the innermost point of the embrasure, unspooling from the portal outward. In the David and Bathsheba cycle, by contrast, the narrative begins on the inner right embrasure and reads from left to right across both socles, reaching its conclusion in the innermost niche of the left embrasure, adjacent to the portal. This final scene of David and Bathsheba enthroned would have been understood, as we have seen, as a prefiguration of Christ’s coronation of the Virgin. The cycle thus represents a conceptual and visual closing of the circle that opened with the Genesis narrative of the north portal: through the cleansing rite of baptism, Adam and Eve’s original sin is washed away and mankind is reintegrated into the Church, and through the David and Bathsheba narrative, the viewer is conducted back to the cathedral entrance.

The particular selection of narrative subjects at Auxerre, and the visualization of the rift and reconciliation between man and God in literal terms as an expulsion from and reintroduction to the physical space of the church, can be connected to the liturgy surrounding Lent, and to penitential rituals practiced throughout medieval Europe during the Lenten season. The Adam and Eve narrative was rarely included in the liturgy, but it featured prominently in the lead-up to Lent, when an account of the Creation, the Fall and Expulsion was read at matins on Septuagesima Sunday. The stories of Noah and Joseph were also incorporated into the liturgy of the succeeding weeks, forming the readings for matins on Sexagesima Sunday and the third Sunday in Quadragesima (Lent) respectively.

---

127 On the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins as it appeared in medieval art, see Lehnmann, “Die Parabel von den klugen und törichten Jungfrauen”; Sachs, “Jungfrauen, Kluge und Törichte.” The pairing of the Prodigal Son cycle with the Foolish Virgins on the right embrasure and the story of Joseph with the Wise Virgins on the left highlights the differences between the narratives and their protagonists. Unlike the Foolish Virgins, however, the prodigal son achieves grace through penance.

128 Jolly, Made in God’s Image, 81; Hardison, Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages, 88. Septuagesima Sunday marked the beginning of the pre-Lenten season, and according to a tradition dating back to Jerome and Augustine, the readings and chants of the canonical hours throughout Septuagesima and Lent/Quadragesima, recapitulate the seven ages of the world, beginning with the story of Adam and Eve and culminating in the “Easter octave, which symbolized the eighth age of the New Jerusalem,” see Ibid., 88, n. 6.
while the parable of the Prodigal Son was read during mass on the third Saturday in Quadragesima.\textsuperscript{129}

The story of Adam and Eve’s expulsion was also the basis of a Lenten ritual of public penance, widely practiced throughout medieval Europe, in which penitents were expelled from the church on Ash Wednesday “as Adam was driven from Paradise.”\textsuperscript{130} In this ritual, barefoot penitents dressed in sackcloth recited the seven penitential psalms (believed to have been composed by David) before being sprinkled with holy water by the bishop and led out of the church, which they were forbidden to re-enter until Maundy Thursday.\textsuperscript{131} As they exited the church, they were followed by a cleric who sang a line from Genesis, \textit{In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo}, “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” the words of God’s admonition to Adam before he was expelled from paradise.\textsuperscript{132} The readmission of the penitents on Maundy Thursday also involved the recitation of the penitential psalms—a reminder of David’s transgression against and reconciliation with

\textsuperscript{129} Hardison, \textit{Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages}, 88; Jolly, \textit{Made in God’s Image}, 82; Guest, “The Prodigal’s Journey,” 62.

\textsuperscript{130} “\textit{quod sicut Adam projectus est de Paradiso, ita et ipsi ab ecclesia pro peccatis abjiciuntur}.” Hugo Menardus, \textit{Notae et observationes in librum Sacramentorum}, PL 78, col. 439B. The earliest description of the ritual appears in the \textit{De synodalibus causis} written by Regino of Prüm around 906 and is repeated in eleventh-century treatises by Burchard of Worms and Ivo of Chartres, see Werckmeister, “The Lintel Fragment Representing Eve from Saint-Lazare, Autun,” 17–20. The liturgical formulary can be found in the tenth-century Roman \textit{Ordo L}, see Andrieu, \textit{Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge}, 5:108ff. For a description of the ritual, which was apparently practiced until the fourteenth century, see Hardison, \textit{Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages}, 98–99 & 118–119; Weiser, \textit{Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs}, 175. It was certainly practiced in the thirteenth century, for archbishop Eudes Rigaud of Rouen (d. 1274) describes performing the ritual on more than one occasion, see Mansfield, \textit{The Humiliation of Sinners}, 97.

\textsuperscript{131} Hardison, \textit{Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages}, 98; Weiser, \textit{Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs}, 175.

\textsuperscript{132} God’s admonition to Adam occurs in Genesis 3:19. The directions for the ritual are as follows: “After this let him order the ministers to drive the sinners from the church doors. But let a cleric follow them singing the responsory \textit{In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo}.” Hugo Menardus, \textit{Notae et observationes in librum Sacramentorum}, PL 78, col. 439B, translated in Hardison, \textit{Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages}, 99.
God—after which the repentant sinners were reintegrated into the congregation and into the body of the church.\footnote{133 Ibid., 118; Guest, “The Prodigal’s Journey,” 64; Mansfield, The Humiliation of Sinners, 174.}

Seen in light of these Lenten liturgies and rituals of penance, the ensemble of biblical narratives depicted in the relief cycles of Auxerre’s west façade acquires a certain thematic coherence, a coherence which only becomes apparent when the Genesis cycle of the north portal is acknowledged as the program’s point of departure. When the story of Adam and Eve is reintegrated into the program, the selection of narrative subjects, iconographies, and stylistic modes can be read, not as a reflection of an individual patron’s personal history, or as an isolated resurgence of interest in classical antiquity, but as series of reflections on the theme of alienation and reconciliation grounded in a typologically informed vision of the trajectory of Christian salvation history, the episodes connected and activated by specific liturgical and penitential practices. In this context, the remarkable, classicizing figures discussed by Adhémar and Panofsky as discrete images, divorced from their surroundings—both the sculptural program and the liturgical, theological and cultural landscape of thirteenth-century Auxerre—become something more; their inclusion, like a subtle but distinct subtext to the narrative of redemption, functions as a kind of symbolic conversion, their physical incorporation into the fabric of the Church a reflection of the wish to reintegrate the Christian present with the classical world so apparent in medieval religious thought.
CONCLUSION

“How pleasure in the human body once more became a permissible subject of art is the unexplained miracle of the Italian Renaissance.”
Kenneth Clark, The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form

Across the Alps in Central Italy, three hundred kilometers south of Modena, another apparently singular Creation cycle adorns the first pier of the façade of the Duomo at Orvieto (Figs. 4.1-4.3). Delicately carved in relatively low relief, these sculpted panels have been dated to the first decades of the fourteenth century, specifically the years between 1310 and 1330 during which time the cathedral works were under the direction of a Sienese caput magister, an architect and sculptor by the name of Lorenzo Maitani. Characterized by an extraordinary plasticity, and a remarkable sensitivity to the lines and volumes of the naked body, the Orvieto reliefs recall the classicizing figures at Auxerre or Bourges, and they have often been discussed as an example of a so-called proto-Renaissance style. The sensuous, “naturalistic” treatment of the naked figures of Adam and Eve has been framed as an exceptional and isolated instance of awareness of the body’s potential for grace and beauty; studies of the reliefs, moreover, sometimes take on a breathless quality reminiscent of the heroizing biographies associated with the earliest scholarship on the Renaissance. Consider, for example, Clark’s assessment of the Orvieto Genesis cycle: not only does he attribute the reliefs to an individual and ingenious sculptor—Lorenzo Maitani, “that lonely exponent of


2 On the dating of the reliefs, see White, “The Reliefs on the Façade of the Duomo at Orvieto,” 255–269.
bodily grace in the fourteenth century”—he emphasizes their divergence from what he sees as the aesthetic norms of the time. In his description of the Orvieto reliefs, Clark writes that here, “we feel, almost for the first time, that a Christian artist has recognized the body as something which might contain and express the soul.”

The figure of Adam is singled out for particular praise:

His limbs flow into one another with a sweetness which only an artist who loved the human body could perceive; and yet, as with Raphael, the body seems to reflect a state of spiritual grace.

Furthermore, the figure of Eve at the moment of her creation is identified as an inspired transformation of a specific antique prototype: like the bathing Bathsheba at Auxerre, Eve’s posture and physique are based on ancient images of the seated Nereid.

In my introduction to this dissertation, I discussed the way in which Clark’s agenda—the valorizing of a specific “ideal form,” i.e. the classical nude as it appeared in antiquity and as it was “rediscovered” in and after the Renaissance—leaves him particularly prone to hyperbolic (and myopic) assertions of singularity when it comes to instances of medieval interest in classicism and bodily beauty. There are, of course, scholarly treatments of the Orvieto reliefs that offer a more clear-sighted view of their historical importance and meaning—studies that situate them within the artistic, political and cultural context of their production, rather than framing them as isolated, visionary works of consummate artistry.

Discussions of these sculptures tend, however, to view them in relationship to future movements: not as evidence of a long and uninterrupted tradition of strategic classicism and

---

3 Clark, “Transformations of Nereids in the Renaissance,” 217; Clark, The Nude, 308.
4 Clark, The Nude, 308.
6 See, for example, the studies by Gardner, “The Façade of the Duomo at Orvieto”; Moskowitz, The Façade Reliefs of Orvieto Cathedral; White, “The Reliefs on the Façade of the Duomo at Orvieto.”
sustained interest in beautiful bodies in the Middle Ages, but as a prefiguration of the work of sculptors like Donatello and the first Renaissance nudes. The Orvieto reliefs, these studies suggest, are either unique, or a harbinger of the Trecento revolution, characteristic of a century that scholars from Vasari to Panofsky have termed the period of “i primi lumi,” the dawn of the Renaissance era. How differently might we understand these reliefs, not to mention the Renaissance sculptures they purportedly prefigure, were we to view them in the context not of a great leap forward but of a longue durée of medieval classicism?

The Orvieto reliefs themselves, and the limitations of the scholarship they have generated, confirm what I have argued throughout this dissertation, namely that in the Middle Ages, beautiful naked bodies frequently were represented using self-consciously classicizing forms and styles. If we are ever to understand these images as more than extraordinary anomalies they must be viewed as part of a tradition of purposeful appropriations of the motifs and materials of antique art. Beyond offering a re-examination of three crucial examples of medieval classicism, my dissertation suggests a means of tracing the meaning and function of classicism in the Middle Ages. Chronologically and geographically far-reaching studies of images of Adam, Eve and the Genesis story, this project demonstrates, allow us to reconstruct a history of medieval attitudes towards the classical past, its artistic legacy and its physical remains.

From late antiquity to the fifteenth century, images of Adam provided sculptors with an opportunity to imagine perfection and explore questions of craft and Creation. These images offer examples of craft reflecting on itself. That these reflections on the nature and

---

7 According to Vasari, it was Cimabue whose birth gave “i primi lumi all’arte della pittura,” Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti, 1:219. The real dawn of the pre-Renaissance age occurred, however, at the turn of the fourteenth century, with the work of Giotto, see Ibid., 1:309–342. Panofsky takes his inspiration from Vasari, titling his chapter on Italian Trecento painting “I Primi Lumi,” see Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, 114–161.
meaning of making are often realized using a visual vocabulary drawn from the art and artifacts of antiquity allows us to map and to parse medieval makers’ interpretations of their classical cultural heritage as it intersected with their own artistic production. With this dissertation, I have proposed a fresh approach to the discourse on antiquity and the Middle Ages, prying it loose from teleology to suggest a more productive way of looking at apparently anomalous medieval nudes. What new meanings might we find in the Hildesheim doors, the Bamberg Adam and Eve (the earliest life-sized nudes in medieval art), or the Orvieto Genesis cycle were we to view them through this lens? Could we perhaps see the pairing of a Genesis cycle with personifications of the liberal arts in the hexagonal reliefs of the Florentine Campanile as a rumination on artistic and divine artifice, and what significance might their classicism then take on? In the round or in relief, as stand-alone figures or as part of extensive narrative cycles, the sculpting of images of Adam involved deep questions about the possibility of physical perfection, the role of the artist, and the nature and meaning of making itself. Focusing on the figure of Adam, this wide-ranging study explores culturally contingent processes of visual signification, arriving at a new, more nuanced understanding of the role of the classicizing nude in the medieval artistic imagination.

---


Fig. 1.1 View of west façade, Cathedral of San Geminiano, Modena (author)

Fig. 1.2 First Genesis panel: Creation of Adam and Eve, Fall of Man (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 1.3 Second Genesis Panel: God Admonishes Adam and Eve, Expulsion of Adam and Eve, Labors of Adam and Eve (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 1.4 Third Genesis Panel: Sacrifices of Cain and Abel, Abel Murdered by Cain, God Admonishes Cain (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 1.5 Fourth Genesis Panel: Cain Killed by Lamech, Noah’s Ark, Noah and his Sons Disembark on Dry Land (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 1.6 Relief of the Prophet Isaiah, Sainte-Marie de Souillac (VIA)
Fig. 1.7 Detail of Putto (Armandi et. al. 1984)

Fig. 1.8 Detail of Putto with Ibis (Armandi et. al. 1984)
Fig. 1.9 Orestes and Iphigenia Sarcophagus, Schlossmuseum, Weimar (Bielfeldt 2001)

Fig. 1.10 Orestes and Iphigenia Sarcophagus, Glyptothek, Munich (Wikimedia Commons)

Fig. 1.11 Atlas Farnese, Museo archeologico nazionale, Naples (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)
Fig. 1.12 Detail of Seated Figure, Revenge of Orestes Sarcophagus, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid (M.A.N. Madrid)

Fig. 1.13 Ara Pacis Augustae, north face, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome (ArtStor)
Fig. 1.14 Ara Pacis Augustae, north face, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 1.15 Third Genesis panel, detail of cornice and jamb (Fernie 1969)
Fig. 1.16 *Imago clipeata*, spoliate insertion, Cathedral of San Giorgio, Ferrara (Uggeri 1982)

Fig. 1.17 Central portal, San Zeno Maggiore, Verona (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 1.18 Porphyry vase with gold additions (Suger’s Eagle Vase), Musée du Louvre, Paris (VIA)

Fig. 1.19 Herimann Cross (recto and verso), Kolumba Museum, Cologne (VIA)
Fig. 1.20 Arch of Constantine, south face, Rome (ArtStor/Canyonlights)

Fig. 1.21 Tomb of Beatrice of Tuscany, Hippolytus and Phaedra Sarcophagus, Camposanto, Pisa (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 1.22 Tomb of Buscheto with strigilated sarcophagus, Cathedral of Pisa (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 1.23 Tomb of Abbot Elia with philosophers sarcophagus, San Nicola, Bari (Belli D'Elia 1985)
Fig. 1.24 Architrave with Boar Hunt, Pieve di San Giovanni, Campiglia Marittima (LepoRello/Wikimedia Commons)

Fig. 1.25 Calydonian Boar Hunt Sarcophagus, National Archaeological Museum, Athens (Dell'Orto/Wikimedia Commons)
Fig. 1.26 Sarcophagus of Bruttia Aureliana, Museo Lapidario Estense, Modena (Giordani & Paolozzi Strozzi 2005)

Fig. 1.27 Funerary Stele of the Salvii, Museo Lapidario Estense, Modena (Giordani & Paolozzi Strozzi 2005)
Fig. 1.28 Central Portal with Inhabited Scroll, San Geminiano, Modena (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 1.29 Details of Inhabited Scroll, Central Portal, San Geminiano, Modena (author)
Fig. 1.30 Velletri Sarcophagus, Museo Civico Archeologico Oreste Nardini, Velletri (ArtStor)

Fig. 1.31 Sarcophagus with Putti, Museo Archeologico Oliveriano, Pesaro (Armandi et al 1984)
Fig. 1.32 Prothyrium with Acanthus Scrolls (antique spolia & twelfth-century), San Giorgio, Ferrara (Peroni 1993)

Fig. 1.33 Pilasters with Inhabited Vine motif, Grotte Vaticane, Rome (VIA)
Fig. 1.34 Enoch and Elijah with inscription, San Geminiano, Modena (author/VIA)

Fig. 1.35 Sator Arepo inscription, Pieve di San Giovanni, Campiglia Marittima (Stiles/Maremma Guide)
Fig. 2.1 Adam, Musée de Cluny, Paris (Harmonia Amanda/Wikimedia Commons)
Fig. 2.2 Venus pudica (Capitoline Venus), Musei Capitolini, Rome (VIA)
Fig. 2.3 View of the north gallery of the Musée des Monuments français, Album Lenoir v. 1, RF 5279, fol. 34, Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Louvre)
Fig. 2.4 J.E. Biet, “IVe vue de la salle du XIVe siècle, Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens français (Muzéo)

Fig. 2.5 Charles Marie Bouton, La Folie de Charles VI: Vue de la salle du XIVe siècle au musée des Monumants Français, Musée de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse (Joconde)
Fig. 2.6 Adam holding an apple, St. Lorenz, Nuremberg (W. Glücker)

Fig. 2.7 Adam holding an apple, Book of Hours, MS W.102, fol. 28v, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (Walters)
Fig. 2.8 Germain Boffrand after Robert de Cotte, Elevation of interior façade of south transept, Notre-Dame de Paris, “Differents plans…” no. 34, Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (BnF)
Fig. 2.9 Hypothetical reconstruction of medieval choir of Notre-Dame de Paris after Viollet-le-Duc (Wright 1989)

Fig. 2.10 Descent into Limbo, Musée du Louvre, Paris (author)
Fig. 2.11 Interior façade of south transept, Notre-Dame de Paris (Erlande-Brandenburg 1999)
Fig. 2.12 Portal of St. Stephen, south transept, Notre-Dame de Paris (ArtStor/Image of the Black in Western Art Research Project & Photo Archive)
Fig. 2.13 Genesis frontispiece, Bible of Charles the Bald, fol. 7v, San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 2.14 Genesis frontispiece, Moutier-Grandval Bible, MS Add. 10546, fol. 5v, British Library, London (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 2.15 Genesis frontispiece, Canterbury Psalter, MS Lat. 8846, fol. 1, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (ArtStor)
Fig. 2.16 Creation and Animation of Adam, Genesis cupola, San Marco, Venice (VIA)
Fig. 2.17 Genesis *incipit* with detail of roundel showing Creation of Adam, Lambeth Bible, MS 3, fol. 6v, Lambeth Palace Library, London (VIA)

Fig. 2.18 Bonanus of Pisa, Creation of Adam, Cathedral of Monreale, Sicily (ArtStor)
Fig. 2.19 God as Architect of the Universe, *Bible moralisée*, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, fol. 1
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (ArtStor)
Fig. 2.20 Creation of Heaven and Earth, *Bible moralisée*, MS BOdl. 270b, fol. 1v, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Bodleian)
Fig. 2.21 Nicholas of Verdun, Shrine of the Three Kings, Cathedral of Cologne (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)

Fig. 2.22 Visitation, Notre-Dame de Reims (ArtStor/Hartill Art Associates Inc.)
Fig. 2.23 Expulsion (leftmost capital), south porch, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (VIA)

Fig. 2.24 Adam and Eve Admonished, detail of right embrasure of central portal, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (Stuart Whatling)
Fig. 2.25 Last Judgment tympanum, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (ArtStor/Scala Archives)

Fig. 2.26 Amazonomachie Sarcophagus, Musée du Louvre, Paris (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)
Fig. 2.27 Resurrection and the Damned, Judgment tympanum, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 2.28 Creation cycle, archivolts of central portal, north transept porch, Notre-Dame de Chartres (VIA)
Fig. 2.29 Creation of Paradise, Creation of Adam, Creation of the Four-Legged Beasts, north transept porch, Notre-Dame de Chartres (VIA)
Fig. 2.30 Adam Asleep, Adam Among Plants, The Fall, Notre-Dame de Chartres (VIA)

Fig. 2.31 God Calls Adam, Admonishment, Expulsion, Labors of Adam and Eve, Notre-Dame de Chartres (VIA)
Fig. 2.32 God Calls Adam, Admonishment of Adam and Eve, Notre-Dame de Chartres (VIA)

Fig. 2.33 Expulsion, Portail des Libraires, Notre-Dame de Rouen (Stuart Whatling)
Fig. 2.34 Baptism of Christ, Psalter leaf MS Typ 997, Houghton Library, Harvard University (Houghton)
Fig. 2.35 Spinario, Musei Capitolini, Rome (Musei Capitolini)
Fig. 2.36 Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, Gospel Lectionary, MS G.44, fol. 2, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (Pierpont Morgan Library)
Fig. 2.37 Fall of Man and the Sins of Idolatry and Lust, *Bible Moralisée*, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 7v, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Bodleian)
Fig. 2.38 Nativity with Christ Atop a Column, Blackburn Psalter, MS Hart 21001, fol. 1r, Blackburn Museum, Blackburn (Blackburn Museum)
Fig. 2.39 Christ Disputing with the Doctors with Christ atop a column, Psalter and Hours of the Virgin, MS M.440, fol. 9v, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (Pierpont Morgan Library)

Fig. 2.40 Christ Disputing with the Doctors with Christ atop a column, The Queen Mary Psalter, Royal MS 2 B VII, fol. 151r, British Library, London (British Library)
Fig. 2.41 Reliquary of Sainte-Foy, Abbatiale Sainte-Foy, Conques (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)
Fig. 2.42 Golden Madonna of Essen, Cathedral of Essen (VIA)
Fig. 3.1 North portal, west façade, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.2 Creation of the World, left embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.3 Left embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.4 Right embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.5 Scenes from the Life of the Virgin, archivolts and lintel of north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (ArtStor/NGA)

Fig. 3.6 Last Judgment tympanum, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.7 Left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)

Fig. 3.8 Right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)
Fig. 3.9 Joseph cycle, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (ArtStor/NGA)
Fig. 3.10 Prodigal Son cycle, right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)
Fig. 3.11 Prodigal Son Window, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (Stuart Whatling)
Fig. 3.12 Prodigal Son Window, Saint-Étienne, Sens (Stuart Whatling)
Fig. 3.13 Hercules, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.14 Dancing Satyr, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.15 Joseph Thrown into the Well, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.16 Detail of the Midianite Merchants, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.17 Prodigal Feasts in the Brothel, right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.18 Detail of kneeling servant, right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.19 *Luxuria*, right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.20 Visitation (lower left), tympanum with scenes from the Life of John the Baptist, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.21 Personifications, left embrasure, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)

Fig. 3.22 Personifications, right embrasure, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (ArtStor/NGA)
Fig. 3.23 Right embrasure, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (Nordström 1974)

Fig. 3.24 Left embrasure, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)
Fig. 3.25 Bathsheba at her Bath, right embrasure, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.26 Sea Creature Sarcophagus, Musei Capitolini, Rome (Zanker & Ewald 2012)

Fig. 3.27 Fragment of pediment, Musei Capitolini, Rome (Musei Capitolini)
Fig. 3.28 Sleeping Cupid, left doorpost, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)

Fig. 3.29 Hercules, Dancing Satyr, Scenes from the Life of Joseph, left embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)
Fig. 3.30 Creation of Adam, left embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.31 Creation of Eve, left embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.32 Achilles Sarcophagus, Musée du Louvre, Paris (VIA)

Fig. 3.33 Tombeau des Néréides, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Wikimedia Commons)
Fig. 3.34 God’s Prohibition to Adam and Eve, left embrasure, north portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.35 Virgin and Child Trumeau, north portal, west façade, Notre-Dame de Paris (ArtStor/Hartill Art Associates Inc.)
Fig. 3.36 Virgin and Child Trumeau, south portal, west façade, Notre-Dame d'Amiens (author)
Fig. 3.37 Virgin and Child Trumeau, central portal, west façade, Notre-Dame de Reims (ArtStor/Abou-El-Haj)
Fig. 3.38 Spandrels with Scenes from Genesis, central portal embrasures, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (ArtStor/Clarence Ward Archive NGA)

Fig. 3.39 Last Judgment tympanum, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Bourges (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 3.40 *Terra Mater*, detail of east front, Ara Pacis Augustae, Museo Ara Pacis, Rome (ArtStor)
3.41 *Hygieia*, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen, Berlin (Staatliche Museen Berlin)

Fig. 3.42 *Asclepius-Hygieia Diptych*, World Museum, Liverpool (National Museums Liverpool)
Fig. 3.43 Dancing Maenad, copy after a work by Kallimachos, Musei Capitolini, Rome (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 3.44 Dancing Maenad, mosaic from Antioch, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore (BMA)
Fig. 3.45 Great Dish from the Mildenhall Treasure with dancing maenads, British Museum, London (British Museum)
Fig. 3.46 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)
Fig. 3.47 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of spandrel from nave arcade, Sant’Angelo in Formis, Capua

Fig. 3.48 Erythrean Sibyl, ambo, San Pietro, Sessa Aurunca (Glass 1970)
Fig. 3.49 Hanging Marsyas, Glyptothek, Munich (Wikimedia Commons)

Fig. 3.50 Vignacce Marsyas, Musei Capitolini, Rome (Carole Raddato)
Fig. 3.51 Caryatid Figures, *ambus*, San Pietro, Sessa Aurunca (Sheppard 1950)

Fig. 3.52 Sarcophagus with standing figures in recessed corners, Museu Nacional Arqueològic, Tarragona (MNAT)
Fig. 3.53 Arch of Trajan, Benevento (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)

Fig. 3.54 Detail of central archivolt with the month of March as the *Spinario* (third figure from the right) San Pietro, Sessa Aurunca (Glass 1970)
Fig. 3.55 Nicola Pisano, Pulpit, Cathedral of Siena (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 3.56 Giovanni Pisano, Pulpit, Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (ArtStor/Scala Archives)
Fig. 3.57 Nicola Pisano, detail of spandrel with Sibyl, pulpit, Cathedral of Siena (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.58 Giovanni Pisano, Sibyl, Pulpit, Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (VIA)

Fig. 3.59 Giovanni Pisano, Sibyl, Pulpit, Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (VIA)
Fig. 3.60 Nicola Pisano, Lion, Pulpit, Cathedral of Siena (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.61 Lion Sarcophagus, Camposanto, Pisa (Seidel 2012)
Fig. 3.62 Giovanni Pisano, Lion, Pulpit, Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.63 Lion Sarcophagus, Camposanto, Pisa (Seidel 2012)
Fig. 3.64 Nicola Pisano, Seated Nudes, Last Judgment panel, Pulpit, Cathedral of Siena (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.65 Seated Nereid, Sea Creature Sarcophagus, Camposanto, Pisa (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.66 Seated Nereid, Sea Creature Sarcophagus, Museo dell’Opera della Metropolitana, Siena (Seidel 2012)
Fig. 3.67 Nicola Pisano, *Spes*, Pulpit, Cathedral of Siena (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.68 Phaedra’s Handmaiden, Hippolytus Sarcophagus, Camposanto, Pisa (Seidel 2012)
Fig. 3.69 Giovanni Pisano, Angel, Pulpit, Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (Seidel 2012)

Fig. 3.70 Dioscurus, formerly in the Nicolas Koutoulakis collection (Seidel 2012)
Fig. 3.71 Erythrean Sibyl, detail of first archivolt, north portal, Notre-Dame de Laon
(Sauerländer 1972)
Fig. 3.72 Prophet of Judah, right embrasure, central portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (author)

Fig. 3.73 Villard de Honnecourt, leaf with seated male nude in a pointed cap, Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt, MS Fr 19093, fol. 22r, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (VIA)
Fig. 3.74 David spying on Bathsheba, David kneels before Christ, Psalter of Saint Louis, MS Lat. 10525, fol. 85v, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (VIA)

Fig. 3.75 David spying on Bathsheba, Morgan Crusader Bible, MS M. 638, fol. 41v, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (ArtStor)
Fig. 3.76 Scenes from the life of David with moralizing lessons, *Bible moralisée*, MS Bodl. 270b, fol. 152r, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Bodleian)
Fig. 3.77 Scenes from the life of David with moralizing lessons, *Bible moralisée*, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, fol. 45r, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (VIA)
Fig. 3.78 Baptism of Christ, tympanum, south portal, Saint-Étienne, Auxerre (VIA)
Fig. 4.1 Scenes from Genesis, first pier of west façade, Cathedral of Orvieto (ArtStor/Art Resource NY)
Fig. 4.2 Scenes from Genesis, first pier of west façade, Cathedral of Orvieto (author)

Fig. 4.3 Scenes from Genesis, first pier of west façade, Cathedral of Orvieto (author)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


———. *Contra Faustum Manichaeum.* Patrologia Latina 42. cols. 207-518.

———. *Questionum evangeliorum libri duo.* Patrologia Latina 35, cols. 1321-1364.


Brenk, Beat. “Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology.”


Bruno of Cologne. _Carthusianorum Institutoris._ Patrologia Latina 152, cols. 9-1422.


———. “From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late Antique Forms.” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 68 (January 1, 2000): 149–84.


Glossa ordinaria. PL 113-114.


Hoffmann, Godehard. *Das Gabelkreuz in St. Maria im Kapitol zu Köln und das Phänomen der*


———. *Etymoligiarum.* Patrologia Latina 82, cols. 9-728.


Snyder, Janet Ellen. Early Gothic Column-Figure Sculpture in France: Appearance, Materials, and Significance. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011.


———. “The Inhabited Scroll in Romanesque Sculpture: The Morphology from Decoration to Meaning.” In *The Metamorphosis of Marginal Images: From Antiquity to Present Time*, edited by Nurith Kenaan-Kedar and Asher Ovadiah. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, the Yolanda and David Katz Faculty of the Arts, Department of Art History, 2001.


