

Ars instrumentum regni:
**The Representation of Frederick II's Power
in the Art of South Italy, 1220 to 1250**

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Art's function in medieval society as a means of representing power is one of the most appealing lines of research today, as it sheds light on the interrelation of culture and politics, *artes* and *regnum*. The thirteenth century is particularly interesting for such an approach, as this is when the new European state started to take shape. This was a state with a language of its own, with its own values and ethical beliefs which, dependent as they were on Christian ideology, also acquired autonomous value.¹ In the later Middle Ages, with their more complicated political structures, the new conflicts and confrontations that invariably accompany dynamic changes in society, images instantly gained immense public importance.² In Italy, great political powers, the papacy first of all, early realized the persuasive potential of art, whether monumental or pictorial.³

In the situation of a hard confrontation between the Empire united with the Sicilian kingdom on one side and the north Italian communes and the papacy on the other side, Frederick II Hohenstaufen and his milieu well understood the propaganda role of art, especially architecture, as the weightiest of artistic genres. Architecture's connotative potential is made stronger by the fact that it is perceived by a much wider public than the products of other artistic genres. This

¹ I mean here the political reflection that in the early fourteenth century resulted in Dante's "Monarchy." On the formation of ideology of the secular state independent of the Church see Jacques Krynen, *L'empire du roi: Idées et croyances politiques en France, XIIIe – XVe siècle* (Paris, 1993).

² Vladimir P. Goss, "Art and Politics in the High Middle Ages: Heresy, Investiture Contest, Crusade," (hereafter Goss, "Art and Politics") in *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au Moyen âge*, ed. X. Barral-i-Altet (Paris, 1990) (hereafter *Artistes, artisans et production artistique*), vol. 3 (*Fabrication et consommation de l'oeuvre*), 525-545, especially 533.

³ See, e.g., H. Toubert on the Gregorian reform and its connection with art: H. Toubert, *Un art dirigé: Réforme grégorienne et iconographie* (Paris, 1990); for the later period see Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1981), and *Malerei und Stadtkultur in der Dantezeit: Die Argumentation der Bilder*, ed. H. Belting and D. Blume (Munich, 1989).

should be noted for a better understanding of the role art played as a means of power representation in the Sicilian kingdom.

No less important is the general cultural context in which I propose to examine the art of south Italy. The thirteenth century saw a crucial change in the assessment of manual labor, based, to an extent, on the twelfth-century tradition inherited from the Victorines and the school of Chartres. The new, positive and respectful stance on manual work also touched upon the *artes mechanicae*;⁴ they grew to be as prestigious as the liberal arts. One thirteenth-century chronicler testified to the special emphasis that the comprehensively educated Emperor Frederick II laid personally on art.⁵ Such an attitude endowed art with statewide importance.⁶

This statement often misleads researchers working on the “Staufen art,” as they keep searching for signs of power, for the state commission or Frederick II’s personal interest in all artistic production in south Italy. This misguided approach implies that there was no other art in the Sicilian kingdom than secular, state-commissioned art. This mistake, however, is easily avoided if one revisits the experience of one of the pioneer researchers into south Italian art. Emile Bertaux separated “provincial art” – the church architecture which continued its active development under Frederick II independently of state commissions⁷ – from “imperial art,” the new trend that evolved from several artistic traditions

⁴ Hugh of St. Victor, *Eruditio didascalica*, vol. 2, 21, in *Patrologia Latina* 176, col. 760. For more on the changing attitude to manual work see P. Sternagel, *Die Artes mechanice im Mittelalter. Begriffs- und Bedeutungsgeschichte bis zum Ende des XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1966), esp. 54-61, 67-117; J. Le Goff, *Drugoe srednevekovie: vremia, trud i kultura Zapada* (Un Autre Moyen Age: Time, Labour, and Culture of the Medieval West). Russian translation (Yekaterinburg, 2000); G. Alessio, “La filosofia e le *artes mechanicae* nel secolo XII,” *Studi medievali* 6 (1965): 71-161; M. St. Calò Mariani, “Federico II e le ‘Artes mechanicae,’” in *Federico II e l’arte del Duecento italiano*, ed. A. M. Romanini, vol. 2 (hereafter *Federico II e l’arte del Duecento italiano*) (Galatina, 1980), 259-276.

⁵ “Fuit autem Fridericus. . . super homines prudens, satis literatus, linguarum doctus, omnium artium mechanicarum, quibus omnium advertit, artifex peritus,” Riccobaldus de Ferrara, *Historia imperatorum romanogermanicorum a Carolo Magno usque ad annum MCCXLVIII producta*, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. L. Muratori, vol. 9 (Milan, 1726), col. 132.

⁶ Having regulated the operation of the royal *artifices* in his *Constitutions of Melfi* (Konst. vol. 3 (hereafter Konst. 3), 49, “Die Konstitutionen Friedrichs II. für das Königreich Sizilien,” ed. W. Stürner, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (hereafter MGH), *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum*, vol. 2 Supplementum (Hannover, 1996), 417-20), Frederick II at the same time (in 1231-1232) issued the *Edictum contra communia civium et societates artificium* (MGH, *Legum Sectio IV, Constitutiones*, vol. 2 (Hannover, 1896), 191-194).

⁷ The only church built upon Frederick II’s commission was that in Altamura. One anti-imperial chronicler lamented: “Proventus ecclesiarum vacantium, et earum, quas subtili procurabat ingenio pastorum carere praesentia, quosdam in propriis convertit abusos, alios in hedificia castrorum expendit.” *Raynaldi Annales ecclesiastici*, quoted from E. Bertaux, *L’art dans l’Italie méridionale: de la fin de l’Empire romain jusqu’à la conquête de Charles d’Anjou* (Paris, 1904), 699 (hereafter Bertaux, *L’art dans l’Italie méridionale*).

and expressed particularly strongly the notions of power typical of Frederick II and his milieu.⁸ Let us therefore bear in mind that the art of south Italy is not limited to “Staufen art,”⁹ even though this study is only interested in the latter.

A feudal castle used to be the most tangible embodiment of secular power.¹⁰ As early as in 1221, at the Capuan diet, Frederick II began to execute a large-scale program of restructuring architectural space in the Sicilian kingdom. On the one hand, royal castles had to serve for the actual protection of their residents. On the other hand, they constituted one part of an ambitious program aimed at propagandizing the omnipresent power that alone cared for the people’s security. This idea is also reflected in the *Constitutions of Melfi*, which banned individuals from building fortifications and towers “because we believe that our fortifications and, what is still more reliable, our protection are perfectly sufficient for the security of our subjects.”¹¹

The use of castles in the state government system was no novelty at all; castles had similar importance in the England of Henry II and in other countries. The originality of Frederick’s castles is in the geometric regularity of their configuration. They were shaped in a square, an octagon, a sexagon, or a circle, whereas a typical castle of this period is a rather odd-shaped edifice wed with the landscape, like the castle of Chillon on Lake Geneva. From Frederick II’s extant *castra* the most interesting are those he commissioned to be built on the eastern shore of Sicily in the late 1230s and the 1240s, in the context of an escalated conflict with the papacy supported by the marine republics:¹² Castel Maniace in Syracuse, Castel Ursino in Catania, the castle in the town of Augusta founded by the emperor. The same typological group embraces the so-called *castello dell’imperatore* in Prato (Tuscany), built in the immediate vicinity of the insurgent Florence, as well as numerous fortresses on the Apulian shore (Lucera, known mostly from eighteenth-century sketches, and Bari). All of these were to a greater or lesser extent rebuilt in post-Staufen times, which makes it difficult to reconstruct their original appearance.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 600.

⁹ Valentino Pace, “Sculptura per Federico, sculptura per monumenti pugliesi: A Foggia, a Barletta, a Troia,” in *Kunst im Reich Kaiser Friedrichs II* (Munich, 1996), 193-194 (hereafter Pace, “Sculptura per Federico”); W. Sauerländer, “Two Glances from the North: The Presence and Absence of Frederick II in the Art of the Empire: The Court Art of Frederick II and the *Opus Francigenum*,” in *Intellectual Life at the Court of Frederick II*, ed. W. Tronzo (Washington, 1994) (hereafter *Intellectual Life*), 205-206.

¹⁰ For instance, according to the Annals of Santa-Giustina (Padua), castles were built “ad ostentationem sue potentie et ad terrorem et admirationem hominum,” *MGH SS* 19, 177.

¹¹ Konst. vol. 3, 33, 400-401.

¹² In 1239 the Venetians promised Gregory IX the aid of their fleet on the condition that the territories of the Sicilian kingdom occupied by Venetians would become theirs in the right of feuds. J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia diplomatica Friderici II*, vol. 5, part 1 (Paris, 1858), 390-394 (hereafter HB). In connection with this threat Frederick II was especially concerned with building a defense line on the eastern coast of Sicily and in Apulia. *Ibid.*, 509-511.

In over a hundred years of research into Staufen architecture in south Italy, launched by Arthur Haseloff, Eduard Stahmer, and Emile Bertaux¹³ at the end of the nineteenth century, numerous suggestions have been put forth concerning the origin of this unusual configuration, normally square-shaped or derived from a square. The most common opinion is that the prototypes of Frederick II's defensive architecture should be looked for in the Muslim architecture of the Near East, in the Umayyad fortresses of the seventh through ninth centuries, in the *ribat* architecture, which echoed the Byzantine castle scheme (for instance, Thugga and Sbeitla in Tunisia),¹⁴ and in Classical buildings, such as, for instance, Diocletian's palace in Split (Dalmatia, ca. 300 A.D.).¹⁵ Emile Bertaux suggested a connection among Frederick II's castles, crusader fortresses and, through the latter, the architecture of Champagne and Burgundy, which was said to have been especially close to Frederick II's heart.¹⁶ This hypothesis is partly backed up by archeological finds of the last decades,¹⁷ but one can also seek prototypes for Frederick II's castles in Norman dungeons and square citadels which, in turn, descend – through Arabic fortresses – from the Roman *castra* built along the *limes arabicus*.¹⁸

In spite of their simultaneous construction, single commission, and a generally common layout, the three above-mentioned Sicilian castles show considerable variations. Castel Ursino is a purely military edifice with a characteristically robust utilitarian interior decoration, whereas Castel Maniace, with its large halls and fine marble decorations, was obviously not intended solely for defensive purposes and could have served as a *domus, solacium* of the emperor. This is testified to also by its remarkable Gothic gateway, in proportion perfectly comparable to Northern European cathedral portals, although in place of the

¹³ A. Haseloff, *Die Bauten der Hohenstaufen in Unteritalien*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1920). For the main corpus of documents pertaining to the history of Staufen castles in south Italy see E. Stahmer, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Kastellbauten Kaiser Friedrichs II. und Karls I. von Anjou*, vol. 2: *Apulien und Basilicata* (Leipzig, 1926).

¹⁴ V. F. Hell, "Die Bauten Friedrichs II. und islamische Architektur," in *Die Staufer. Herkunft und Leistung eines Geschlechtes*, ed. K. Albrecht, vol. 2 (Ludwigsburg, 1969), 136-137.

¹⁵ W. Krönig, "Castel del Monte. Der Bau Friedrichs II.," in *Intellectual Life at the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen*, ed. William Tronzo (Washington, 1994), 101 (hereafter Krönig, "Castel del Monte").

¹⁶ Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 741-744. Bertaux is generally inclined to regard the originality of the "Staufen art" as Classical elements combined with the influence of Champagne and Burgundy said to be "the top-most achievements of European art after antiquity" (*ibid.*, 751). This peremptory viewpoint was criticized as soon as Bertaux's book was first published, and it is completely discarded at the present.

¹⁷ A. Cadei, "Modelli e variazioni federiciane nello schema del *castrum*," in *Friedrich II. Tagung des Deutschen Historischen Institut in Rom im Gedenkjahr 1994*, ed. R. Esch and N. Kamp (Tubingen, 1996) (hereafter *Friedrich II. Tagung*), 472-475. This study is dedicated exclusively to the square-shaped castles, for which the author finds analogies in the Hospitaller castles Kaukab (Galilee), Saranda Kolones (Cyprus), and other Crusaders' edifices.

¹⁸ Götze, *Castel del Monte: Geometric Marvel of the Middle Ages* (Munich, 1998), 109 (hereafter Götze, *Castel del Monte*).

prophets or the wise and foolish virgins we see here thin alternating columns made of different sorts of marble and surmounted with Corinthian capitals; similar columns decorate the castle's interiors. The life-like floral ornament of the capitals also recurs in the decoration of the archivolt of the gateway and the vault heads and is paralleled in the decoration of Frederick II's other castles as well.

A castle was always situated to the fore, often on a hill above the town, and was thus separated from the main town space. At the same time, the castle served as a structural element of the housing and the "physical projection of power."¹⁹ A bi-polar system was thus created in which a local resident and a foreigner alike could immediately discern the presence of the sovereign. Each element became a sign of power and a structural part of the area.²⁰ Just as local officials were supposed to represent the omnipresence of the emperor's power, so did castles built on the same commission serve identical purposes.²¹ On the one hand, the use of standard geometrical models signals the beginnings of 'serialization' in the art of South Italy (the same tendency can also be observed in other European countries²²). On the other hand, it reveals Frederick II's wish to work out such a language of architecture that it could be equally well understood in all parts of his kingdom as a symbolic expression of his mightiness. Castel Maniace exemplified a new type of castle/palace. Each one of this type had its own architectural appearance and served its own practical purposes, but the fineness of their decoration and the special comfort implied the invisible presence of the sovereign.²³

In contrast to the majority of Staufan castles, Castel del Monte, built in the 1240s, generally preserved its initial appearance owing to its octagonal shape, which hindered any subsequent re-configuration (fig. 1).²⁴ The choice of location for this castle could not have been accidental. Just as an image acquires its meaning in the context of an ensemble or a series of which it is a part,²⁵ so

¹⁹ M. S. Calò Mariani, "Immagine e potere," in *Federico II: Immagine e potere*, ed. M. S. Calò Mariani (Bari, 1995), 39 (hereafter Mariani, "Immagine e potere").

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Salimbene wrote in his chronicle: "In each town he possessed, he wished to have a palace or a castle." Salimbene de Adam, *Chronica, MGH, SS 32* (Hannover, 1905-1912), 170 (hereafter Salimbene, *Chronica*).

²² See, e.g., R. Branner, *Saint Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture* (London, 1965).

²³ C. A. Willemsen, "Die Bauten Kaiser Friedrichs II. im Süditalien," in *Die Zeit der Staufer*, ed. R. Hausherr, vol. 3 (Stuttgart, 1977), 154.

²⁴ Having no possibility of dwelling on the history of this castle, I will just remark that Frederick II laid special stress on its construction, in spite of the financial difficulties caused by the conflict with papacy and the communes, as is clear from the diploma of 1240. HB V, vol. 2, p. 134. Basic information on the history of the castle can be found in Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 720-721.

²⁵ J. Baschet, "Inventivité et sérialité des images médiévales: Pour une approche iconographique élargie," in *Annales HSS* 51(1996), 110.

the castle must be considered in the context of the landscape of which it is an integral part. Castel del Monte is situated on one of the highest hills of the Murge plateau in Apulia, Frederick II's favourite place of residence, and is seen from any direction due to its domination over the surrounding landscape. Despite its relatively small size (about 50 m in diameter), from afar the castle appears as an imposing edifice. Octagonal towers surmount the eight corners of the castle and the octagon is repeated in the shape of the inner courtyard. The space of both stories is divided into eight trapeziform rooms. Only pitiful remains of the interior decoration are extant at present; the floor of the upper story used to be ornamented with light green ceramics and black enamel and the tympana of some windows exhibit the remnants of mosaics, but the polychromy of the vaults is gone.²⁶ On the walls one can see traces of the studs that used to support marble panels.²⁷ The wall surface under the vaults was decorated with the so-called *opus reticulatum* – a carved net. This originally Classical way of articulating a flat wall surface reinforced its visual effect.

One should note the number 'eight' reiterated several times in the castle's architecture; this was certainly not accidental. Philosophical speculation over number symbolism was common in the Middle Ages, although strict definitions for each 'symbolic' number were never quite worked out. 'Eight' was one of such numbers. Church fathers and subsequent medieval compilers related this number primarily to the notion of Resurrection, since the Saviour was resurrected eight days after the Passion had begun. This number reflected the spiritual cosmos, perfection, and the heavenly Jerusalem; it hinted at the Last Judgment. For Ambrose of Milan, the number eight was a *numerus mysticus* that linked the earth and heavens, man and God. Christian architecture had frequent recourse to the symbolism of the number eight, expressed, for instance, in the octagonal configuration of baptisteries, wherein a man, having been baptised, left behind everything transitory in order to join the Church and partake of God. Frederick II could have been familiar with the Lateran baptistery, 432-440 AD and the Florentine baptistery, 1060-1150 AD.²⁸ Charlemagne's Chapel in Aachen, very well known to Frederick II, also had the form of an octagon. For Frederick, this

²⁶ Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 725; M. S. Calò Mariani, "L'arte al servizio dello Stato," in *Federico II e il mondo mediterraneo*, ed. P. Toubert and A. Paravicini Bagliani (Palermo, 1994), 132.

²⁷ A Neapolitan, P. Troyli, visited Castel del Monte in 1743 and left a detailed description of it. On the upper floor he observed fireplaces, doorways and windows decorated with local red marble (*breccia corallina*). The walls up to the middle, that is, level with the columns, were paneled with white marble; the vaults had polychrome ornamentation. See P. Troyli, *Historia generale del reame di Napoli* (Naples, 1749), 129-130. In the middle of the nineteenth century (before restoration work), A. Huillard-Bréholles found traces of mosaics on the vaults: J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Recherches sur les monuments et l'histoire des normands et de la maison de Suabe dans l'Italie méridionale* (Paris, 1844), 110-111.

²⁸ On the symbolism of the early Christian baptistery see F. J. Dölge, "Zur Symbolik des altchristlichen Taufhauses: Das Oktogon und die Symbolik der Achtzahl," in *Antike und Christentum* (Münster, 1933), 153 ff.

edifice would certainly have had imperial connotations. Besides, as early as in the Utrecht Psalter (ninth century), the heavenly Jerusalem is depicted as a fortress with eight towers.²⁹ Maria Losito also points to the fact that many Palestinian churches, including the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, had octagonal configurations.³⁰

Scholars have specified all possible parallels to Castel del Monte in secular and ecclesiastical architecture. It is hard, however, to say how to interpret Frederick II's use of the octagonal shape; the emperor could well have interpreted it in his own way which escapes modern reconstruction. Researchers try to decipher the "language" of Castel del Monte on the basis of Frederick II's world outlook. One has noted strict mathematical laws governing the castle's architecture, which supposedly reflects the emperor's equally "strictly mathematical" view.³¹

Parallels to Castel del Monte have been sought in Islamic architecture and in oriental architecture in general as far as China and Japan.³² Indeed, Arabic architecture and ornamentation very often employed an octagon,³³ and Frederick II could well have known this motif from the marvelous vault of the Palatine chapel decorated with mandalas (twelfth century).

The sources for the unusual configuration of Castel del Monte are rather easy to establish. Frederick II's masons' recourse to both Christian and the Muslim artistic traditions seems rather logical and natural in the context of the active cultural dialogue that constituted the essence of the intellectual life at the emperor's court. But what meaning did the transferal of forms borrowed from ecclesiastical edifices such as baptisteries, the Aachen chapel or the Dome of the Rock and applied to the layout of Castel del Monte have for the representation of Frederick II's power? Can one agree with Maria Losito's interpretation that Castel del Monte must have been something like a 'secular baptistery' where the emperor, 'the second Christ,' 'the Sun of salvation and justice,' 'cleansed hea-

²⁹ Wolfgang Kröning also discerns the mingling of the ideas of the empire and the heavenly Jerusalem in the big chandeliers configured as a town surrounded by towers which used to decorate the vault-heads of German cathedrals, such as Charlemagne's Chapel and the Hildesheim cathedral. These, to Kröning's mind, could also in some way have influenced the layout of Castel del Monte. Kröning, "Castel del Monte," 104-105.

³⁰ M. Losito, "Architettura federiciana in Italia," in *Federico II* (Rome, 1994), 216-218 (hereafter Losito, "Architettura federiciana in Italia").

³¹ A. Thiery, "Federico II e la conoscenza scientifica," in *Intellectual Life*, 282. Measurements taken in the last years with the help of electronic devices have proved the precision of all details to be virtually millimetric.

³² M. Losito, "Architettura federiciana in Italia," 222. This scholar points to the relation of the octagon to the *mandala*, the octagram that was current in the Muslim architecture at all times. *Ibid.*, 220-21. Most of such parallels are listed by Heinz Götze, *Castel del Monte*, 113 ff.

³³ As an example, one can recall an octagonal vault made by the Byzantine masters in one of the domes of the Umayyad mosque in Cordoba (961-966), the vault in the Aljaferia palace in Saragosa (second half of the twelfth century), and the vault in the Sala de Abenserrajes in the Alhambra palace in Granada (fifteenth century).

thens, Jews, and Saracens' with a new baptism?³⁴ Unlikely so: the use of the artistic language of ecclesiastical architecture did not necessarily turn the palace of a secular ruler into a temple. Frederick II might have favoured "deification" of his power, but along with this, he stressed his role as the 'imitator of Christ,' Christ's 'servant.'³⁵ Frederick II's power, in contrast to that of Roger II, was never ascribed a 'priestly' character.³⁶ The use of Arabic architectural details should be interpreted with similar reserve; they do not testify to any of the pro-Islamic predilections his contemporaries used to charge Frederick II with.³⁷ Rather, this should be seen in the context of the spread of Arabic natural sciences in Europe, actively propagated by Frederick II's court.³⁸

Most notable among many is the hypothesis that Castel del Monte was related to the idea of the heavenly Jerusalem. The castle was situated halfway from Northern Europe to the Holy Land (in 1228, Crusaders embarked in the Apulian harbour of Brindisi). In the context of Frederick's continual calls for a Crusade against Tartars and other pagans for the deliverance of Jerusalem, which had fallen into Muslim hands not long before, Castel del Monte could well have been a reminder of both the heavenly and the earthly Jerusalem. At the same time, due to the apparent resemblance of the castle to the imperial crown, it would have accentuated the leading role of the emperor in the Crusade. One should also not forget that Frederick II, thanks to his marriage alliance with Isabelle of Brienne, was the king of Jerusalem, and this fact played an important role in developing the state ideology.³⁹ Examination of the basic measurements

³⁴ M. Losito, "Architettura federiciana in Italia," 218-219. Cf.: "The Temple built in the name of a perfect state wherein Saracens, Jews, Christians, Teutonic knights, Templars, and servants of love would live in harmony under Frederick's II sceptre." M. L. Troccoli Verardi, "Un libro di pietra," in *Castel del Monte*, ed. G. Saponaro (Bari, 1981), 71.

³⁵ See an interesting and very convincing article by Hans M. Schaller, "Die Frömmigkeit Kaiser Friedrichs II," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 51, no. 2 (1995), 493 ff..

³⁶ A. De Stefano, *L'idea imperiale di Federico II* (Florence, 1927), 128.

³⁷ It is no accident, however, that one of the most remarkable replicas of Castel del Monte, the imperial palace in Lucera (also octagonal, even though inscribed in a square on the outside), was situated in an Apulian town inhabited almost exclusively by Arabs exiled there from Sicily for riots. See details in Alexander Knaak, "Das 'Kastell' von Lucera," in *Kunst im Reich Kaiser Friedrichs II* (Munich, 1996), 76-93.

³⁸ Götze, *Castel del Monte*, 156. Regarding geometric precision, Castel del Monte, in the author's opinion, has no predecessors in Western European architecture. Arabic influence is apparent here, as is also confirmed by the study of Apulian Romanesque monuments. *Ibid.*, 152. See also D. Sack, "Einige Bemerkungen zu den Beziehungen zwischen Castel del Monte und dem Orient," in *Kunst im Reich Friedrichs II* (Munich, 1996), 44 ff. See also O. S. Voskoboïnikov, "Predstavlenie o prirode pri dvore Fridrikha II" (Notions about Nature at the Court of Frederick II), Ph.D. (candidate) dissertation, Moscow, 2002.

³⁹ F. Huber, "Jesi und Betlehem, Castel del Monte und Jerusalem: Skulptur und Symbolik der 'Krone Apuliens'," in *Kunst im Reich Friedrichs II* (Munich, 1996), 49: "Frederick II, being a king of Jerusalem, wished to make Castel del Monte a symbol of his 'overseas' kingdom, that is, to create, on the safe Apulian land, an architectural image of the Temple of Jerusalem which until then could only be conceived of as an abstract speculation."

of Castel del Monte shows that, just as in the Temple of Jerusalem, all its proportions are based on the number 100. This, according to the creator's idea, would have stressed the connection between this castle and the Holy Land.⁴⁰

I have no opportunity in this paper to dwell on the stylistic peculiarities of Castel del Monte, although their contribution to the representative function of architecture is highly intriguing. In this context, it is particularly vital to stress the importance of the visual effect⁴¹ which governs all the constituent elements of the castle's architectural composition. The castle was situated on a high hill so that the octagon walls could be seen well from every side. To reinforce the effect, the road made a circle around the walls before bringing a traveler to the main gates, made of pink marble (*breccia corallina*). The gateway combined elements of a Gothic portal and a triumphal arch⁴² (by the way, since Castel del Monte had no drawbridge, it could not serve as a fortress). The interior decoration, partly reconstructed from descriptions and fragments, was as well designed to stimulate the visual impact of the castle with the help of three-dimensional plastic forms, such as gracious columns in room corners (fig. 2), deep window openings (fig. 3), and walls decked with marble incrustation and carving. Bearing in mind that all these elements were also colourful, one has to admit that the architects went to great lengths to attract the spectator's attention and to impress him or her as strongly as possible. This is the primary source of Castel del Monte's originality compared to other Staufen edifices, which, to a certain extent, expressed the same idea but by far less perfectly.⁴³ It is in this light that I

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 47. This interpretation is also generally accepted by Heinz Götze, *Castel del Monte*, 207. However, I am disinclined to agree with Florian Houben that Castel del Monte responded primarily to the messianic expectations of the Jews, since the year 1240, when the building was begun, overlapped with the year 5000 of the Jewish calendar. Even though the court of Frederick II did have certain contacts with Jewish translators and intellectuals (see C. Sirat, "La filosofia ebraica alla corte di Federico II," in *Federico II e le scienze* (Palermo, 1994), 187 ff), they cannot be considered the exact audience addressed by the architects of Castel del Monte.

⁴¹ On the problem of the visual impact produced, in particular, by Gothic architecture, see the ground-breaking work of Roland Recht, *Le croire et le voir: L'art des cathédrales (XIIe – XVe siècle)*, (Paris, 1999), 14-15 *et passim*.

⁴² In Italy, porphyry and pink or red marble have always been seen as 'prestigious' materials. The former was used for the sarcophagi of the Sicilian kings in the Palermo cathedral; the latter decorates the walls of the Parma baptistery.

⁴³ Large gothic windows in the upper storey may also be seen as a part of the program intended to accentuate the "visual effects" of the building. All windows are biphoras, with only one exception; the window overlooking the road coming from Andria, one of the cities most devoted to Frederick II, is a triphora with a little biphora in the upper part. Could such an evident dissonance in an otherwise perfectly balanced architectural scheme of the building (perhaps with the emperor's approval?) have served to emphasize the emperor's special love of this city? Or his benevolence towards any guest at all? Lorenz Frank deems the appearance of large open windows and arcades on the façades of royal, episcopal, and princely palaces to be a peculiar sign of social and political development of the empire in the Staufen period. See L. Frank, "Beobachtungen zum Profanbau der Stauferzeit in Mittel-

think the problem of stylistic peculiarities of architecture in reference to power representation should be examined.

It was Emile Bertaux who first observed a fact that is quite remarkable for the history of art: there is doubtless a connection between the sculpture in Castel del Monte and that by Nicolo Pisano (1220-1278/1284).⁴⁴ Nicolo was born in Apulia and in his youth may have worked in the court workshops.⁴⁵ Here he could observe numerous objects of Classical art, first of all the statues brought to Castel del Monte,⁴⁶ Lucera, and other royal residences⁴⁷ from all over the kingdom. The royal court must have had a liking for collecting and copying Classical statues and cameos, which at the present time are put on show in the museums of various countries. Some of these demonstrate such a naturalism and skillful execution that experts cannot but propose a double dating: Late Antiquity or the first half of the thirteenth century. Apprenticeship under courtly masters, who held antiquity as an ideal for imitation, and Nicolo's own study of the antique objects may explain his style, which was atypical for thirteenth-century Tuscany but which gained immediate acknowledgement after he created his famous pulpit for the Pisa baptistery. Nicolo's style, with certain modifications, was also reflected in the creations of his son Giovanni, in the reliefs of the Perugia fountain and in the sculpture of Siena.

One more major monument of "Staufen" architecture also bespeaks the deliberate use of Classical artistic language for the purposes of power representation. This is the so-called Capuan triumphal gate (1234-1239; fig. 4), of which only the foundations and several fragments of the equestrian statues are now extant.⁴⁸ As in the case of Castel del Monte, the Capuan gate cannot be called a fortification proper. Even though the gate had a drawbridge, it faced the potential enemy with a façade decorated with multiple sculptures, which would have been nonsensical from a military viewpoint. Rather, this triumphal arch fortified with two towers should be considered as a kind of 'gateway' leading from the Papal state to the Sicilian kingdom. It is situated just at the crossing of the two principal roads leading from Rome to south Italy, the *Casilina* and the *Appia*.

europa vor dem Hintergrund der Entwicklung von Herrschaft und Gesellschaft," in *Kunst im Reich Kaiser Friedrichs II* (Munich, 1996), 113-126.

⁴⁴ Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 796-802.

⁴⁵ C. Gnudi, "Considerazioni sul gotico francese, l'arte imperiale e le formazione di Nicola Pisano," in *Federico II e l'arte del Duecento italiano*, vol. 1 (Galatina, 1980), 10.

⁴⁶ One equestrian statue, obviously of Classical origin, was preserved in a half-ruined state, built into the wall of the inner courtyard of Castel del Monte.

⁴⁷ On the collectorship at the Sicilian court see A. Esch, "Friedrich II. und die Antike," in *Friedrich II. Tagung*, 202-234 (hereafter Esch, "Friedrich II."); see also M. St. Calò Mariani, "Federico II collezionista e antiquario," in *Aspetti del collezionismo in Italia del Federico II al primo Novecento*, ed. V. Abate (Trapani, 1993).

⁴⁸ C. A. Willemsen reconstructed the original appearance of the gate on the basis of these remnants and two drawings from the Vienna National Library and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, C. A. Willemsen, *Kaiser Friedrich II. Triumphator zu Capua: Ein Denkmal hohenstaufischer Kunst in Süditalien* (Wiesbaden, 1953), 26-27.

Such an important strategic position explains much of the uniqueness of this construction.

Historians have called the Capuan gate “an expression – in stone – of the emperor’s world outlook, created for the aggrandizement of the ruler and the state,”⁴⁹ and a “visual commentary”⁵⁰ on the Constitutions of Melfi. The gate presented the following iconographic program: on each side of the arch were male busts set in a tondo. Researchers have interpreted them as judges, or philosophers, or even as portraits of Pietro della Vigna and Thaddeus of Suessa. These busts, apparently close in style to Classical sculpture, are now kept in the Provincial Museum of Campania in Capua.

In the middle, above the bay, also inscribed in a tondo, a monumental bust personified the emperor’s justice (fig. 5). In the upper register, between female personifications of the virtues, there used to be a seated figure of the emperor in glory. A fragment of this sculpture, a headless torso of the seated emperor, is on display in the same museum in Capua. The figure could easily have been mistaken for a Classical *togatus*, had it not been for the *paludamentum* showing beneath the coat skillfully stylized as a Classical toga. The images facing the spectator were accompanied with inscriptions speaking of the emperor’s justice and his salutary influence and calling his subjects to surrender to the ruler’s will.⁵¹

The architecture of this monument and its iconography make it clear that this was purely a secular edifice that combined elements of a feudal castle with a drawbridge and Classical triumphal arch. The artistic language of the latter shows, for example, in the use of a tondo to mark the most ideologically significant details. Frederick II’s contemporaries realized that the symbolism of this arch was far from being Christian.⁵²

⁴⁹ E. H. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite* (Berlin, 1927), 483.

⁵⁰ D. Abulafia, *Herrscher zwischen den Kulturen* (Berlin, 1991), 269. For some time it was commonly held that the report of the royal notary and chronicler Riccardo of San-Germano *manu propria consignavit* (*Riccardi de Sancto Germano notarii chronica*, in *Rerum italicarum scriptores* n.s. 7 no. 2 (Bologna, 1936-1938), 188) should be understood as evidence of the emperor having personally “drawn” the plan of this arch. Even though we cannot deny the personal involvement of the emperor in developing such an ideologically loaded project, the chronicler is probably speaking here about the signing of the first stone of the edifice or something similar.

⁵¹ An interesting description of the façade of the arch is preserved in the *Gesta Romanorum* (ed. Hermann Österley (Berlin, 1871) (hereafter *Gesta Romanorum*), chapter 54 (149), 349-350: “De regno celesti. Imperator Fredericus secundus unam portam marmoream construxit miro opere super pontem aquae fluentis prope Caponam, in qua imperator sculptus fuit in maiestate cum duobus aliis iudicibus. In semicirculo capitis dextri iudicis hic versus scriptus fuit: ‘Intrent securi, qui querunt vivere puri’. In semicirculo capitis sinistri iudicis fuit scriptus hic versus: ‘Invidus excludi timeat vel carcere trudi.’ In semicirculo capitis imperatoris scriptum fuit: *Quam miseros facias, quos variare scio*. In semicirculo super portam scriptum fuit: *Caesaris imperio regni custodia fio*.” See also Esch, “Friedrich II.,” 207-208.

⁵² Andrew, the chaplain of the Bohemian kings Bela and Istvan, who accompanied Charles of Anjou on his expedition against Manfred, speaks about the gate in a chronicle dedicated to

At the same time, the erection of such an arch on a key communication line was not as original or scandalous as Emile Bertaux imagined.⁵³ Still earlier the same method of state propaganda had been practised by Innocent III (1198-1216) who ordered several triumphal arches to be built just on the borders of the papal state.⁵⁴ One of these arches stood on the border with the Sicilian kingdom, in Terracina, on the Appian road. In this context the Capuan gate may be seen as a response to the pope's challenge. The secular state used the artistic language which, in the eyes of Frederick II and his milieu, was the most adequate expression of the idea of a sovereign yet sacralized secular state. To some scholars' minds, Late Roman art with its hieratically impersonal emperor portraits and triumphal arches served as a prototype for the 'imperial Roman art' of the thirteenth century.⁵⁵ This was one of the 'renaissances' of antiquity, but what was it like? How conscious was the selection of Classical examples of the post-Constantinian period for the elaboration of the new 'imperial art'? Or, did they rather make use of what was 'close at hand,' including multiple Classical buildings preserved in Capua itself? How 'historical' was the attitude toward antiquity at the court of Frederick II? These questions still await answers.

Orientation toward the ancient Roman legacy in the sphere of power representation also expressed itself in the issuing, from the year 1231 onwards, of new golden coins – augustals – whose name bears witness to their connection with the idea of the Classical empire of the Caesars' era. On one side of the coin

count Philip of Alançon: "ibique suam ymaginem in eternam et immortalem memoriam sculpi fecit." Quoted from Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 715. At the same time, we have a remarkable sample of reinterpretation of this secular text in the more traditional religious sense in the *Gesta Romanorum* (chap. 54, 349-350): "Carissimi, imperator iste est dominus Jhesus Christus, porta marmorea est ecclesia, per quam portam oportet intrare regnum celeste, et est situata super pontem aquae fluentis id est super mundum, qui semper currit ut aqua. In qua porta sculpta est imago domini nostri Jhesu Christi cum duobus collateralibus, id est cum Maria matre Jhesu et Johanne evangelista, qui designant nobis ejus misericordiam et justitiam. Tunc scriptus est versus: *Intrent securi*, id est, pagani, Judei, Saraceni per baptismum, qui poterunt vivere puri ab omni peccato purgati, sicut pueri innocentes. Alius versus dicit: *Invidus*, id est peccator in peccato existens excludi timeat ab ecclesia triumphante, et sic in carcere infernali retrudi sine fine. In capite imperatoris scriptum erat, quod miseri sunt, qui variant a via veritatis, et alius dicit: *Caesaris imperio* id est imperium domini nostri Jhesu Christi erit nostra custodia et domus sempiterna." Obviously, a symbol or a sign given by the ruling power and its "correct" understanding by the subordinates are not related to each other as a cause and effect. This dialogue turns out to be much more complex and dependent on the historical context in which it develops. *Gesta Romanorum*, 350.

⁵³ Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, 714-717. This French scholar read the positioning of the figures above the bay as an analogy to the Last Judgement, which could only be perceived as an open challenge to the hostilely predisposed papacy, who alone had the privilege of making analogies between Christ's power and the pontiff's right to "bind up and destroy" (Ezek. 34:16).

⁵⁴ Br. Bolton, "'Except the Lord Keep the City': Towns in the Papal States at the Turn of the Twelfth Century," in *Church and City 1000 – 1500* (Cambridge, 1992), 216.

⁵⁵ Esch, "Friedrich II.," 223-234, with related bibliography.

was an image of the emperor with a triumphal laurel wreath and an inscription *CAESAR AUG(ustus) IMP(erator) ROM(anorum)*. On the reverse was an eagle, a symbol of the empire that had been used on Classical military tokens. In the Middle Ages, an eagle had been a preferred symbol of Frederick I Barbarossa who, following in the footsteps of Charlemagne, in fact made the eagle a token of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, along with its traditional lion blazon.⁵⁶ The eagle bore an inscription: “+Fridericus.”

The role of the new coin, apart from being a monetary tender,⁵⁷ was specified by Frederick II himself in a privilege granted to the town of Tortona in 1236. This town received the right to mint coins with the emperor’s image so that the subjects of the kingdom would always have “a reminder of our name and the image of our majesty,” “so that the frequent sight of the new coin would more and more corroborate and instigate their fidelity and awe of us.”⁵⁸ Apparently, it was exactly the ‘frequent sight of’ *nostrae maiestatis imago* that also conferred value on the new coin as a token of power. According to Giovanni Villani, when the treasury ran short of money during the siege of Faenza in 1240, the emperor ordered the knights and the army providers to be given his image embossed on pieces of leather. Upon the completion of the siege every such piece was to have been reimbursed by the treasury with a golden augustal.⁵⁹ The use of portraiture in state art is also confirmed by other extant sculptural images of the emperor.⁶⁰

A little onyx medal, now kept in the Allerheiligenmuseum in Schaffhausen (Switzerland), may give us interesting evidence on the use of the emperor’s images in the courtly milieu. On one of its sides, which is silver-plated, we see a stylistically classicized image of Frederick II in a laurel wreath (like the one on the coin), feeding a falcon on his hand (Frederick’s love of falconry was

⁵⁶ For more on the image of the imperial eagle and its connections with other cultures, including those rather distant in time and space, see F. Cardini, “L’aquila imperiale,” in *Federico II: Immagine e potere* (Bari, 1995), 53-57.

⁵⁷ Contrary to the commonly held opinion that after 1231 the augustal became the only currency in the Sicilian state, the light tari, minted in Messina and Brindisi throughout the reign of Frederick II, had a greater currency. See L. Travaini, “Federico II *mutator mone-tae*: continuità e innovazione nella politica monetaria (1220-1250),” in *Friedrich II. Tagung*, 343-345.

⁵⁸ “Nostri memoriam nominis et nostre maiestatis imaginem . . . ut frequens ipsius nove monete inspectio eos in fide et devotione nostra magis ac magis corroboret et accendat,” quoted by Mariani, “Immagine e potere,” 40-42.

⁵⁹ Giovanni Villani, *Novaya khronika* (The New Chronicle), vol. 6, no. 21 (Moscow, 1996), 145.

⁶⁰ One of these is kept in the City Museum of Barletta (Apulia). In spite of its poor condition, it testifies to the great skill of the sculptor in conveying individual facial features, although it is difficult to assess its resemblance as a portrait. Rather, this bust reveals the sculptor’s orientation toward the Classical Roman portrait. Unfortunately, very little can be said about the possible use of such a portrait. One can infer that this is a bust of an emperor seated on the throne, analogous to the one that was placed on the front side of the Capuan gate. On this portrait see Pace, “Sculptura per Federico,” no. 9, 186-187.

well known throughout Europe). Around this image, standing out against the fine carpet-like background, runs the inscription *COMITIS LUDOVICI DE VHOBURG*. Count Ludwig von Vohburg was a courtier of the emperor and would have received Frederick's portrait, or, better to say, the *imago imperatoris*, as a gift. It is worth noting that the emperor's foot comes out of the frame drawn by the inscription and actually steps on the inscription, thus probably signaling the emperor's power over the subject or his special benevolence toward him.⁶¹ Medals of this kind were quite popular as early as the thirteenth century, which makes one surmise that this original – for the Middle Ages – type of image must have appeared long before the proclaimed Quattrocento medals.⁶²

The utilization of ancient artistic techniques often served polemic purposes. After the victory of the imperial army over the Second Lombardian League at Cortenuova (1237), Frederick II's state ideology entered a new phase of 'Romanization.' Beside prisoners and booty, the imperial army also seized the *carroccio* of Milan,⁶³ the symbol of the city's liberties and the headquarters of the Italian army that had been guarded with particular care. The triumphal epistle to Romans, ascribed to Pietro della Vigna, reads as follows: "The mast of the *carroccio* was scornfully bent down, the *podestà* [of Milan, the son of the Venetian doge] was tied to it in a shameful way, and, surrounded by the approving mob, the *carroccio* was dragged to Cremona by an elephant who bore

⁶¹ See on this medal C. A. Willemsen, *Die Bildnisse der Staufer: Versuch einer Bestandsaufnahme* (Göttingen, 1977), 24, pl. 75. One could compare this portrait with a typologically close relief image of a falconer with a falcon upon his hand on a little stela kept in the cathedral museum of Ravello (Campania) but, to our chagrin, we know nothing about the purpose of this strange monument and so cannot assert that this is a depiction of the emperor. One should bear in mind the emperor's images in manuscripts, e.g., the one on the first folio of the *Book on the Art of Falconry* (Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Pal. Lat. 1071.). A similar image of Frederick II can be seen in the liturgical roll *Exultet* (fol. 12) from the Salerno cathedral, commissioned by the archbishop of Salerno in the late 1220s in honour of the emperor's return from the Crusades. The appearance of the emperor's image and his commemoration in one of the Easter liturgical services would certainly have been perceived as a political manifesto. On the use of this and similar rolls in south Italy and on their artistic tradition see *Exultet, Rotoli liturgici del Medioevo meridionale: Catalogo della mostra*, edited G. Cavallo (Rome, 1994); G. Ladner, "The Portraits of Emperors in Southern Italian Rolls and the Liturgical Commemoration of the Emperor," in *Idem, Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies in History and Art* (Rome, 1983), vol. 1, p. 309-336.

⁶² M. Pastoureau, "Naissance d'une image nouvelle: la médaille du Quattrocento," in *Idem, Couleurs, images, symbols: Etudes d'histoire et d'anthropologie* (Paris, 1989), 139-168.

⁶³ A *carroccio* was a large war chariot drawn by specifically reserved oxen. Salimbene, who was well acquainted with the symbolism of the *carroccio*, wrote that the capture of the *carroccio* in a battle was an "irretrievable defeat and humiliation" for the loser and "provoked great troubles." Salimbene, *Chronica*, 60. During the battle at Parma in 1248, the Parmese captured the *carroccio* of Frederick's II allies, the Cremonese, and, after having stripped it of all decoration, including a valuable brocade, placed it in the Parma baptistery. Salimbene, *Chronica*, 203.

on its back a wooden tower with flutists and heralds of the Empire.”⁶⁴ Later, this precious booty was sent to Rome for placement on the Capitolian hill, where Roman Ghibellines erected a special monument using Classical columns of various sorts of marble, including also the *verde antico* (these columns were preserved in the wall of the inner courtyard of the Palazzo dei Senatori). The entablature of the monument bore an inscription:

Rome, accept this carroccio as a gift from Caesar August Frederick II for the eternal adornment of the City. / Glorious trophy arrived to announce the Caesar’s triumph in a battle with the Milanese. / It will be put on view here to the enemy’s disgrace, to the City’s honour, / The love of the City sent it here.⁶⁵

The symbolic meaning of this gesture was already clear for Salimbene, who wrote that Frederick II had wished “to please Romans and to draw them to his side, but the Romans burnt the *carroccio* in disdain for Frederick.”⁶⁶ After the Lombard victory, the success of which the emperor failed to further, he prepared an expedition against Rome, probably wishing to make Rome the actual capital of the empire. No such attempt had been made since Otto III (996-1002). Respectful acceptance of the emperor’s gift would have been a prelude for acceptance of the monarch himself. As we see from Salimbene’s account, things went otherwise because the Guelph party had prevailed in Rome and Gregory IX managed to draw the majority of citizens to his side.

Thus, drawing on the language of diverse artistic traditions, Staufen art served propaganda and polemical purposes. This concerned not only architecture but also wall painting, of which, unfortunately, little is now extant. We do not know how much use Frederick II made of painting because this kind of art is subject to vicissitudes of time and to changes in tastes more than architecture. The wall painting of Castel del Monte did not survive. The fresco in the palace of Pietro della Vigna, the chancellor and logothete of the Sicilian kingdom, which depicted the emperor’s justice, is gone forever.⁶⁷ Images were ascribed great power, ideologically they were heavily loaded, and therefore a change of a ruler often led to the destruction or modification of earlier images. Slightly later, in the fourteenth century, political painting in Italy became a common device for manipulating public opinion. The so-called ‘denigratory painting,’ *pittura infamante*, played a special role in political clashes. “Appraisal and detraction,” writes Hans Belting,

⁶⁴ HB, vol. 1, 162.

⁶⁵ For the text of the inscription see *Federico II e l’Italia*, ed. C. D. Fonseca (Rome, 1995), 336.

⁶⁶ Salimbene, *Chronica*, 95.

⁶⁷ We have only a description of this fresco, preserved in the composition by a fourteenth-century Bolognese chronicler, Francesco Pipino. See F. Delle Donne, “Una perduta raffigurazione federiciana descritta da Francesco Pipino e la sede della cancelleria imperiale,” *Studi medievali* series 3, vol. 38 (1997):737-749.

were the acknowledged means to orientate oneself in the world and to transmit collective values. The church and the state needed images and political pamphlets in order to inculcate ‘proper’ norms of behaviour and to blacken the opposite ones, that is, to reduce the system of values to an antithesis of sin and virtue.⁶⁸

Italian art must definitely have begun to serve this purpose earlier, first of all in papal Rome which, due to its particular geopolitical situation, had an opportunity to draw from diverse artistic traditions and could impose its cultural models upon other regions in many ways. In the constant exchange of information in political propaganda between the *sacerdotium* and the *regnum*, the dialogue of images played a considerable role.⁶⁹

A notable example of political polemic between Frederick II, Italian communes, and the papacy was expressed in painting. In Verona, in a tower of the monastery of San Zeno (fig. 6), there is a fresco commissioned by the abbot of this most important Veronese monastic community specifically for the arrival of the emperor for the diet in Verona in 1239.⁷⁰ The diet was an attempt at reconciling the emperor with the cities of Lombardy and took place in the ancient monastery that had once hosted Charlemagne, the Ottonians, and many other subsequent German emperors. The monastery traditionally enjoyed the emperor’s support, including that of Frederick II, and the abbot may have commissioned a politically important image out of gratitude. We cannot be sure, however, that Frederick’s own agents did not participate in the creation of this monument.

The fresco depicts the emperor seated on the throne. He is shown benevolently accepting gifts from various nations, including, judging by their attire, Jews and Saracens. Such an iconographic program undoubtedly stressed the universal character of the emperor’s power, as a lesson for the defiant communes. The fresco also presents hunting scenes, echoed by the reliefs on the facade of San Zeno, which can be seen from the window of the *loggiato* housing the image. Hunting as a predominantly royal occupation also played an important role in the representation of secular power.⁷¹ Viktor Elbern believes that this

⁶⁸ Hans Belting, “Langage et réalité dans la peinture monumentale publique en Italie au Trecento,” in *Artistes, artisans et production artistique*, 493 ff.

⁶⁹ The problem of exchanging models of political discourse between the empire and the papacy was pointed to by Percy E. Schramm, in “Sacerdotium und Regnum im Austausch ihrer Vorrechte,” *Studi Gregoriani* 11 (1947). Later this problem was developed in the dissertation of Alfred Hof, “Die imitatio sacerdotii bei Kaiser Friedrich II,” Inaugural diss. (Weidelbach, 1953). See also the modern view on this problem in A. Paravicini Bagliani, *Il corpo del papa* (Turin, 1994).

⁷⁰ V. H. Elbern, “Das Fresko Kaiser Friedrichs II. an der Torre di San Zeno zu Verona,” in *Archiv für Diplomatik* 51 (1995): 18 ff (hereafter Elbern, “Das Fresko Kaiser Friedrichs II.”).

⁷¹ It is in this light that Frederick’s II book *On the Art of Falconry* should be considered. On the ideological function of hunt as a distinguishing feature of the higher ranks of society see Armand Strubel and Chantal de Salunier, *La poésie de la chasse au Moyen Age. Les li-*

fresco should be perceived primarily as an anti-papal manifesto in the context of the conflict between the *sacerdotium* and the *regnum*.⁷² He maintains that the fresco's orientation east to west, with the emperor placed in the eastern part and his subjects coming from the west, correlates with the axis of the basilica. In the eastern apse of the basilica there was an image of Christ in Glory shining at the worshippers approaching him from the west.⁷³ In the fresco, an individualized image of Frederick II, who was known for his connections with foreigners and his love of hunting (which he indulged in also in northern Italy during his wars), is combined with a representation of the secular power in general, in opposition to the papal political propaganda in the wall-painting (fig. 7).

The hypothesis of the anti-papal purpose of this fresco is supported by the fact that it was in exactly the same period, the first half of the thirteenth century, that the popes commissioned the creation and re-creation in Rome of frescoes and mosaics that acquired a new, political meaning. Under Innocent III the mosaic in the apse of St. Peter's was recreated so that on the sides of the *Agnus Dei* an image of Innocent III and an allegory of the Roman Church appeared, as well as twelve lambs standing for the apostles. Every mention of the secular empire was excluded from the official Roman iconography.⁷⁴ The fresco cycle in the chapel of St. Sylvester adjacent to the church of the Santi Quattro Coronati in Rome may have been the response of the Roman curia to the emperor's manifesto in Verona. The chapel had nothing to do with the church of Santi Quattro Coronati, even though it was attached to it. The building was completed in 1244-1246, when Innocent IV fled for Lyon, fearing the intrusion of Frederick II, leaving Stephen the cardinal-bishop of the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome as 'Rome's vicar.' It was Stephen who commissioned a new fortified papal palace to be built next to the Santi Quattro Coronati. This new palace was to duplicate the Lateran palace, located two kilometers away. The courtly chapel belongs to this palace and is dedicated to the saintly pope Sylvester, founder of the papal theocracy.

The walls of the chapel display the most significant – politically – scenes from the life of St. Sylvester. The artist made use of the texts of Sylvester's *vita* and the *Constitutum Constantini*. Scholars observe, however, that the iconography reveals considerable digression from the texts. According to the *Constitutum*, the emperor invested the pope with the *frigium*, the symbol of the pope's secular power over Rome and beyond – over the Western Empire. In the Middle Ages this fact could also be interpreted as proof of the pope's dependency on the

vres de chasse du XIVe siècle (Paris, 1994), 9, 129; A. Guerreau, "Chasse," in *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'Occident médiéval*, ed. J. Le Goff, J.-Cl. Schmitt (Paris, 1999), 172.

⁷² Elbern, "Das Fresko Kaiser Friedrichs II.," 16-17.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁴ Walter, Ch., "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace," *Cahiers Archéologiques* 21 (1971): 135 (hereafter Walter, "Papal Political Imagery"). For more details see the fundamental work by G. Matthiae, *Pittura politica del Medioevo romano* (Rome, 1964).

emperor's will. In the fresco, Sylvester is shown receiving the *frigium* from the hands of Constantine, who is standing in front of and below him (fig. 8). According to the interpretation of the *Constitutum Constantini* by Innocent III (seconded later by Gregory IX, and by Innocent IV in his anti-imperial bull *Eger cui lenia* [1246]), by handing the *frigium* over to the pope Constantine acknowledged the tyrannical character of his power before the pope baptized him and merely restored to the pope the rights he had been unlawfully deprived of.⁷⁵ One of the central frescoes also depicts the so-called *officium stratoris et marscalci*, a ceremony that took place during the emperor's coronation. After receiving the crown and after the Mass the emperor led on a leash a white mount that carried the pope. This was a sign of the emperor's debt to the pope as a successor of St. Peter. This *officium*, obligatory for every new emperor including Frederick II, on the one hand must have symbolized the peaceful unity of the two powers, but on the other hand, it would have stressed the dependence of the *regnum* on the *sacerdotium* – which could not but displease the emperors. No earlier depiction of St. Sylvester's life nor the text of the *Constitutum Constantini* paid much attention to this ceremony. The chapel was consecrated in 1246, in the period of heated anti-imperial polemics that gained additional strength after Frederick II's deposition at the council of Lyon in 1245. At this point this fresco, as well as the entire cycle, was seen as a reminder of the fact that the emperor's power was lawful only as long as it was blessed by the pope. The latter, by the power of his *potestas absoluta*, has a right to dispossess any emperor of his power. Above the entrance to the chapel, in accordance with the traditional program of church decoration, is an image of the Last Judgement, which served as a warning for anyone who dared to question the genuineness of the political message expressed in the frescoes.⁷⁶

The last monument of Staufen art to be discussed here is a little bas-relief on the lectern at the Bitonto cathedral (Apulia). The lectern, carved in the 1220s by order of Abbot Nicholas of Bari, exhibits a remarkable technique of marble incrustation called *cosmati*. The bas-relief is at the back of the lectern, on the

⁷⁵ J. Mitchell, "St. Silvester and Constantine at the S. S. Quattro Coronati," in *Federico II e l'arte del Duecento*, vol. 2, 20-21 (hereafter Mitchell, "St. Silvester"); Ch. Walter, "Papal Political Imagery," 124.

⁷⁶ Concerning the artistic qualities of the frescoes in St. Sylvester chapel, J. Mitchell marks their resemblance to the technique of the mosaicists who had worked in the late twelfth century in the Monreale cathedral and in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in Grottaferrata, a Greek monastery ten kilometers away from Rome. Thus Byzantine and Sicilian skills were transferred to Roman political painting. J. Mitchell, "St. Silvester," 30-32. This fresco cycle invites consideration in the context of the problem posed by Vladimir Goss of a political text being expressed in apparently standard religious subjects. See Goss, "Art and Politics," 526-527. The erection of a chapel dedicated to St. Sylvester, an extremely influential figure in the relationship between the secular and the spiritual powers, and the revision of Sylvester's life-story, particularly the special emphasis on politically meaningful moments intended to benefit the papal ideology of the thirteenth century, leave no doubt as to the anti-imperial set of this ensemble.

side facing the side nave, and is only noticeable if looked for.⁷⁷ Four representatives of the Hohenstaufen dynasty are depicted there: Frederick I Barbarossa, seated on the throne, is handing over his scepter to his son Henry VI, who is followed by Frederick II and his son Conrad IV (fig. 9). The three latter men each keep one hand on a coat garter that in medieval art was seen as a sign of societal pride. A bird at the feet of Frederick II and his son may be interpreted as the Staufen eagle. The technique in which the figures and the ornament are executed suggests that this bas-relief was made by an adept of Apulian Romanesque art.

Hans Schaller juxtaposed this iconographic monument with the text of a sermon delivered by Abbot Nicholas in the emperor's presence in the summer of 1229, after Frederick II's return from the Crusades.⁷⁸ Both the bas-relief and the sermon served as propitiatory gifts presented by the abbot to the emperor on behalf of the citizens of Bitonto, for the city had taken an active part in the riot of several Apulian towns, joining the army of Gregory IX, who in Frederick II's absence invaded the Sicilian kingdom.

The sermon, in spite of its ecclesiastical genre, is dedicated to an utterly secular subject. Based on multiple biblical reminiscences, it extols Frederick II and the Staufen dynasty:

Great is his grandfather, the Roman emperor, great is his father, the Roman emperor and the king of Sicily, the greatest of them is himself – the Roman emperor, the king of Sicily and of Jerusalem. Indeed, these three emperors are like the three magi who came with gifts to bow unto God and Man.⁷⁹

Frederick II is compared to Aaron's rod that was placed in the Tabernacle together with many rods of other tribes [of Israel] and, *behold, the rod of Aaron . . . was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds*, while all the others remained in pristine bareness. He was given the name of the Empire that prevails over every earthly power in order that the emperor would be the one from the house of David, while all other German earls would retain their power unchanged.⁸⁰

Immediately afterwards Frederick II is called "a stem of the rod of Jesse" (Is. 11:1), "... and his righteousness endureth forever" (Ps. 112:3).⁸¹ The sermon

⁷⁷ This monument was scrupulously studied by Hans Schaller whose work is my chief source of information: H. M. Schaller, "Das Relief an der Kanzel der Kathedrale von Bitonto: ein Denkmal der Kaiseridee Friedrich II.," in *Stupor mundi*, ed. G. Wolf, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt, 1982), 299-324 (hereafter Schaller, "Das Relief an der Kanzel").

⁷⁸ Schaller, "Das Relief an der Kanzel," 332. For the text of the sermon see R. M. Kloos, "Nicolaus von Bari, eine neue Quelle zur Entwicklung der Kaiseridee unter Friedrich II.," in *Stupor mundi*, 369-381 (hereafter Kloos, "Nicolaus von Bari").

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 371.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* Cf. Num. 17.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 371. On the image of the rod of Jesse in art and the significance of this image for the political ideology see particularly Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1996), 338 ff, with the respective bibliography.

inserts the dynasty of Frederick II into Christ's genealogy, in the tree of Jesse, the father of David. The ruling emperor is approximated to God, in complete accordance with Frederick II's own manifesto after the deliverance of Jerusalem, where he confidently spoke of his power as directly related to God. To be granted forgiveness of the emperor, Nicholas had to say what the emperor expected him to, since the sermon, delivered in a large cathedral, obviously in the presence of a very wide audience, was an important device of political propaganda. It is questionable whether the emperor himself or his courtiers played any role in composing this sermon, whether the court "commissioned" it and, accordingly, whose notions of power this sermon reflected. There is so far no answer to this question. We can, nevertheless, observe a certain development of the ideas articulated in this sermon in later literature in one or another way related to the Sicilian court and its intellectual atmosphere.

The sermon by Abbot Nicholas is one of the first texts that includes Frederick II and his successors in the eschatological perspective. "*The scepter shall not depart from Frederick, nor a lawgiver from between his feet* (Gen. 49:10), that is, the empire from his successors, until The One Who Should Be Sent comes, that is, Christ for the Judgement, this kin will be ruling till the end of days, since *thou hast the dew of thy youth* (Ps. 109/110:3), Christ in all your vicars."⁸² This perspective, related to the religious expectations of the period, also incorporates Conrad IV. Rephrasing the words of *Ave Maria*, the author says: "*Blessed art thou among kings, . . . and blessed shall be the fruit of thy body*, the fruit most beautiful, King Conrad, your beloved son." Conrad, the son of Frederick II and Isabelle of Brienne, was the lawful king of Jerusalem and, in Abbot Nicholas' understanding, was to be Frederick II's successor in the kingdom which is 'closest to God,' a fact particularly emphasized by the preacher.

The text illustrated in the bas-relief of the Bitonto lectern⁸³ justifies perpetual power with a dynastic principle that in theory should have been unacceptable for an empire based on election, seen as the expression of God's will. Frederick II, as the third emperor from the same dynasty and at the same time a king of Sicily, successor of the Hauteville dynasty, had a stake in securing all his possessions for the Hohenstaufen family. That was the goal of his family politics beginning from the first decade of the thirteenth century. In the second half of the 1220s, i.e., at the same time when the image of the Hohenstaufen was created in Bitonto, Frederick commissioned images of all the kings of the Hauteville dynasty to be placed in the narthex of the Cefalù cathedral, the favourite church of Roger II. The last in this series of kings' portraits was to be Frederick himself, called there the first king of the Norman dynasty.⁸⁴

⁸² Kloos, "Nicolaus von Bari," 373.

⁸³ Hans Schaller believes that the floral ornament around the kings' figures stands for the rod or tree of Jesse, which in the Middle Ages was used as a prototype for the genealogical trees of secular rulers. See Schaller, "Das Relief an der Kanzel," 319-320.

⁸⁴ These images were destroyed in the fifteenth century. *Ibid.* 317-318.

Another important source that informs us on the development of the dynastic idea at Frederick II's court is the letter sent by Master Peter of Prezza to an anonymous correspondent on the occasion of the emperor's death:

This is something I cannot pass over in silence: you said that the eagle of the Orient had died, but if in some way he is indeed dead, as they say, nevertheless, he lives on in the multiple younglings who, flying faster than their father, will strike unruly birds still harder. We know that the great Alexander exceeded in power his actual father as well as the assumed one,⁸⁵ we also know that the glorious Julius, the first Caesar, was no lower than his father, who thanks to his own efforts gained for himself imperial power and, having overcome every impediment, subdued the entire world.⁸⁶

Ernst Kantorowicz, who studied this letter, compared it to several so-called "sibylline books" popular in Italy from the first half of the thirteenth century onwards, and with the text of Frederick II's will. He concluded that the Sicilian court gave shape to the idea that 'the king never dies,' which eventually became so vital for the ideology of European monarchies, the idea that was finalized in the treatises of the English and French lawyers and political thinkers of the sixteenth century.⁸⁷ If the physical body of a king died, his political body, *dignitas*, persisted. For the justification of one's successors' rights one made recourse to the *Codex Iustiniani* as well as to medieval mythology. It is commonly held that the image of the "eagle of the Orient"⁸⁸ approximates the image of the fabulous phoenix, which lays eggs in the fire and dies therein but is subsequently reborn in its young. This eagle-phoenix is seen on the Bitonto lectern; in his sermon, Abbot Nicholas calls the emperor "a beautiful phoenix adorned with golden feathers."⁸⁹ The doctrine of the continuity of the emperor's power, due to which Frederick II's 'political body' acquired the appearance of immortality, was, after all, articulated in his will:

⁸⁵ Aristotle is meant here. On Alexander the Macedonian and Frederick II see R. M. Kloos, "Alexander der Große und Kaiser Friedrich II," in *Stupor mundi* (Darmstadt, 1982): 395-417.

⁸⁶ R. M. Kloos, "Ein Brief des Petrus de Prece zum Tode Friedrichs II.," in *Stupor mundi* (Darmstadt, 1982): 548-549 (hereafter Kloos, "Ein Brief").

⁸⁷ E. Kantorowicz, "Zu den Rechtsgrundlagen der Kaisersage," in *Stupor mundi* (Darmstadt, 1982): 514-517 (hereafter Kantorowicz, "Zu den Rechtsgrundlagen"). See also *idem*, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1997).

⁸⁸ I have no opportunity to dwell in detail on this complex term with its various connotations. In Kloos' opinion, this term simultaneously denotes *le roy-soleil* and "the ultimate, the perfect emperor," Kloos, "Ein Brief," 529-535.

⁸⁹ R. M. Kloos, "Nikolaus von Bari. . .," 370. Pietro della Vigna, referring to prophet Ezekiel, compared the emperor to an eagle: see J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Vie et correspondance de Pierre de la Vigne* (Paris, 1865), 425, no. 107. Cf. "provençal tenzone" by Johan d'Albusson and Nicolet of Turin, *Poesie provenzali storiche relative all'Italia*, ed. V. De Bartolomaeis, *Fonti per la storia d'Italia: Scrittori, Secoli XII – XIII*, vol. 2 (Rome, 1931), 115. On the medieval symbolism of the phoenix and its connection to the imperial symbolism of the eagle see Kantorowicz, *Zu den Rechtsgrundlagen*, 517-519.

Seeing that we can no longer persist in the world in person, because this, as we believe, depends on the divine will, we take care that we shine and triumph in our successors, since you, beloved children, by the civil law will be my representatives in the world, as it is said: *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father* (John 14:9).⁹⁰

Through these characteristic examples I have tried to show how art was employed in south Italy to represent the power of Frederick II, who had worked out a kind of ‘cultural policy.’ However anachronistic this term may sound for the Middle Ages, where the notion of “culture” in the modern sense of the word certainly did not yet exist, I believe this word best reflects the complex relationship of cultural and political interests that intertwined in the life of such intellectual centers as the court of Frederick II. The foundation of a university in Naples in 1224; the political pamphlets issued by the imperial chancellery (the Great Curia) which set an example for imitation for *dictatores* throughout Europe; the stimulation of translation activity; and even the emperor’s interest in the natural phenomena expressed in his book *On the Art of Falconry*: all these facts are in one or another way related to the state interests, to its ‘self-representation,’ as noted by M. A. Boitsov. As Antonino de Stefano put it, “Frederick II’s notions of imperial power were not just a mere result of immoderate ambitions, their roots are in the juridical, political, and religious conscience of his time.”⁹¹ ‘Staufen art’ and the ‘Staufen cultural policy’ on the whole were devised to communicate the model of the state which the intellectual elite of the Sicilian state deemed to be most adequate for the cultural and political context of the first half of the thirteenth century.

While conducting this research I found myself facing two questions. Firstly, there is a question regarding the efficiency of ‘Staufen art’ as a means of political propaganda. Sometimes we are lucky enough to hear Frederick II’s contemporaries voicing their reaction to the ideological content of the works of art. Sometimes this communication system can be decoded by means of comparing various sources and thanks to our knowledge of the historical context. Propaganda goals set for all sorts of *images* were not, however, always achieved. The result could be exactly the opposite of what had been expected, as we saw in the example of the *carroccio*. It is characteristic that Gregory IX also resorted to the methods of visual propaganda when seeking Romans’ support. He organized a procession with a crucifix and the relics of the apostles Peter and Paul, which drew the citizens together in opposition to the twice-excommunicated emperor.⁹²

The second question follows from the first: what artistic language best expressed the presence of the imperial power in art? We observed remarkable rem-

⁹⁰ G. Wolf, “Ein unveröffentlichtes Testament Kaiser Friedrich II,” *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 104 (1956): 5.

⁹¹ A. De Stefano, *L’idea imperiale di Federico II* (Florence, 1927), 33. Cf. M. Bloch, *Koroli – chudotvortsy* (*Les rois – taumaturges*), Russian translation (Moscow, 1998), 85, 163.

⁹² HB, vol. 2, 776-779.

nants of antiquity along with the apparent traces of Arabic influence, along with the French gothic style, whose arrival in Italy owes much to the emperor's sympathy for the Cistercians.⁹³ The use of many typically late Classical techniques for the self-representation of the imperial power was well matched, for instance, with the cult of Ciceronian rhetoric which became an official language of the chancellery, and with an interest in the sciences whose 'antique' origins the court was well aware of. The fresco in Verona, the Bitonto lectern, and Castel del Monte do not however manifest any perceptible dependence on the Classical tradition, yet their political significance is no less important than that of the Capuan gate. Neither does the personal participation of the emperor in commissioning a piece of art answer this question, since he is known to have taken an active part in planning and creating two masterpieces as different stylistically as the Capuan gate and Castel del Monte. The choice of style may have depended on the intended audience or on the actual commissioner. It is also probable that the style was determined by as simple a factor as the availability in a given place of a group of masters working in one or another manner.

The lack of stylistic uniformity in 'Staufen art' did not, however, diminish its ideological potential in the framework of such a centralized political institute as Frederick II's monarchy. He was neither the first nor the only medieval ruler to realize the power of images and make them an *instrumentum regni*. In this study, I wished to demonstrate that the pieces of art 'before the era of art,' as Hans Belting puts it, were as good at manifesting power's self-reflection and the presence of power in the society, as they are nowadays. Going a step further, I suggest that such a 'politicized' approach to the monuments may help to gain a new perspective on some traditional problems of iconographic styles.⁹⁴

⁹³ For instance, the monastery of Santa Maria in Ripalta (Apulia). See C. Ghisalberti, "I legami culturali e stilistici tra la scultura federiciana dell'Italia meridionale e il mondo cistercense," in *Intellectual Life*, 41-58.

⁹⁴ Illuminated manuscripts that circulated at the court of Frederick II remained beyond the scope of the present study. Admittedly an important source for the reconstruction of the art's connection to the politics in the first half of the thirteenth century, they are discussed in more detail in O. S. Voskoboinikov, "U istokov renessansnoi knigi: dve rukopisnye versii traktata Fridrikha II 'Ob iskusstve sokolinoi okhoty'" (The sources of the Renaissance book: Two manuscript versions of Frederick's II treatise "On the Art of Falconry") in *Kniga v epokhu Vozrozhdeniia*, ed. L. M. Bragina (Moscow, 2002).



Fig. 1. Castel del Monte. General view.



Fig. 2. Castel del Monte. Interior.



Fig. 3. Castel del Monte. Interior.

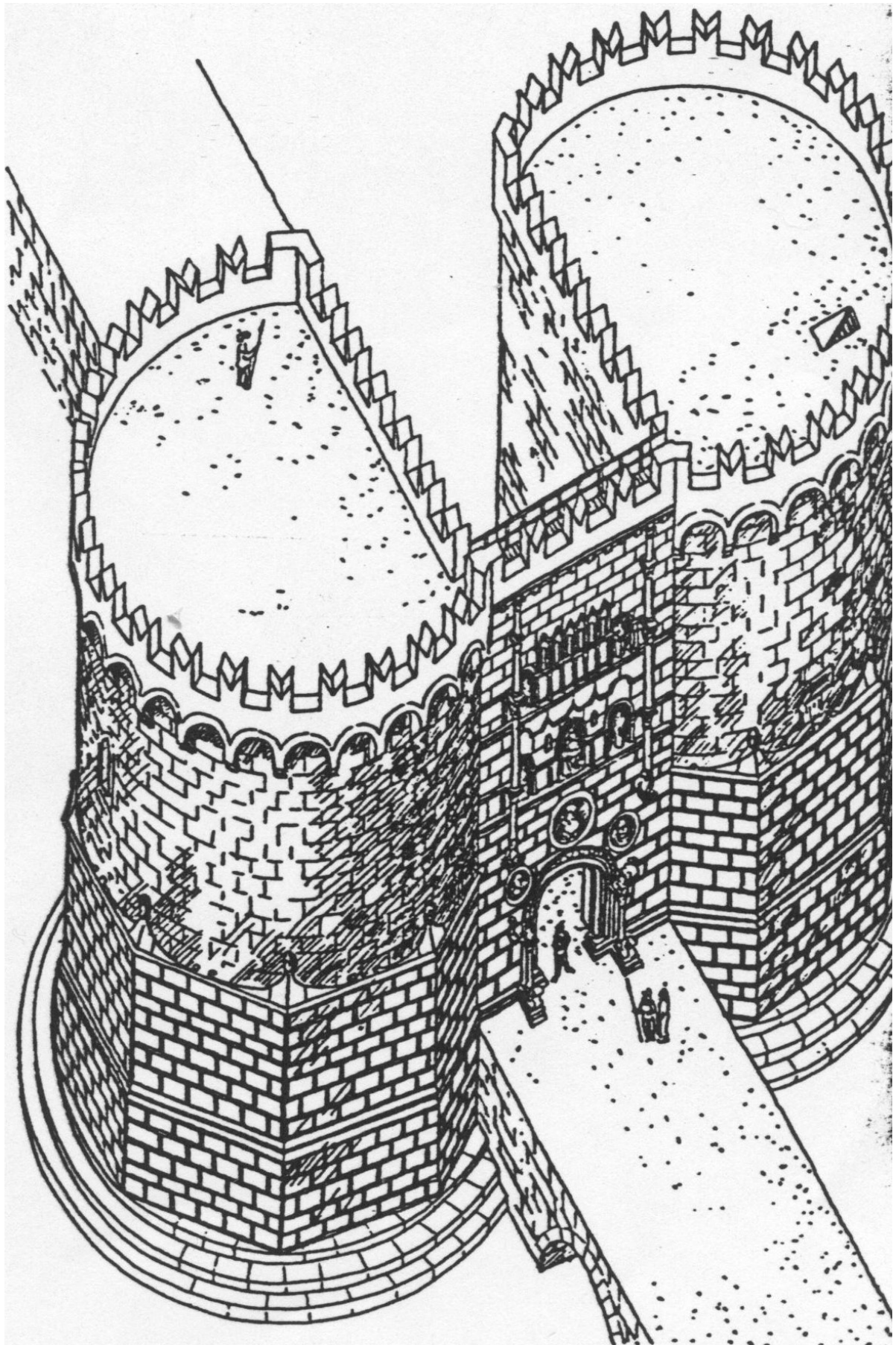


Fig. 4. The Capuan triumphal gate.



Fig. 5. Allegory of the emperor's justice. Sculpture. Capua, Museo Civico.



Fig. 6. Verona, the San Zeno monastery. General view.



Fig. 7. Wall-painting of Frederick II receiving gifts from various nations.
Verona, San Zeno monastery.



Fig. 8. Wall-painting of St. Sylvester receiving *frigium* from Emperor Constantine.
Rome, St. Sylvester Chapel.



Fig. 9. Bas-relief representing members of the Hohenstaufen dynasty.
. Apulia, the Bitonto cathedral, lectern.

Images in Medieval and Early Modern Culture

(Approaches in Russian Historical Research)

MEDIUM AEVUM QUOTIDIANUM

SONDERBAND XIII

Images in Medieval and Early Modern Culture

(Approaches in Russian Historical Research)

Edited by

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Preface

In recent years, many historians have recognized their special interest in visual sources. The ‘iconic turn’ has also become vital for the historical disciplines.¹

Images were a constitutive part of medieval and early modern daily life – with regard to their function and usage as well as their contents, ‘language’ and perception. Communication with the help of and via pictures played an important role for all strata of society. Therefore, research into the visual system and culture of these periods has become a basic constituent of (social) historical research.²

We would like to thank the authors of this volume, Svetlana I. Luchitskaya and Aron Ya. Gurevich in particular, for their interest and readiness to have their approaches towards images, which they had presented at a Moscow conference and in the 2002 special volume of the journal *Одиссей. Человек в истории*: “Слово и образ в средневековой культуре” (“Mot et image dans la culture médiévale”), translated into English and published as a ‘Sonderband’ of *Medium Aevum Quotidianum*. These investigations of the visual culture of the past by Russian historical researchers are an important contribution to the international trends and efforts to include images as parts of medieval and early modern culture and sources for today’s (social) historians. The articles offer a wide spectrum: from the history of gestures to various aspects and functions of images in *memoria*, political and religious life. The relevant roles that visual

¹ Concerning the ‘iconic’ or ‘pictorial turn’ see, e. g., W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory. Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago, 1994); *idem.*, “Der Pictorial Turn,” in *Privileg Blick. Kritik der visuellen Kultur*, ed. Christian Kravagna (Berlin, 1997), 15-40; Jan Baetens, “Reading Vision? What Contexts for the Pictorial Turn?”, *Semiotica* 126 (1999), 203-218.

² See, e. g., Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images. Art and the Representation of the Past* (New Haven and London, 1993); Jérôme Baschet and Jean-Claude Schmitt (ed.), *L’image. Fonctions et usages des images dans l’Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1996); Gerhard Jaritz (ed.), *Pictura quasi fictura. Die Rolle des Bildes in der Erforschung von Alltag und Sachkultur des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Vienna, 1996); Otto Gerhard Oexle (ed.), *Der Blick auf die Bilder. Kunstgeschichte und Geschichte im Gespräch* (Göttingen, 1997); Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, 2001); Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Le corps des images. Essais sur la culture visuelle au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2002); Andrea von Hülsen-Esch and Jean-Claude Schmitt (ed.), *Die Methodik der Bildinterpretation. Les méthodes de l’interprétation de l’image. Deutsch-französische Kolloquien 1998-2000*, 2 vols. (Göttingen, 2002); Axel Bolvig and Phillip Lindley (ed.), *History and Images. Towards a New Iconology* (Turnhout, 2003).

culture played in the Middle Ages and the early modern period are convincingly presented and underlined. Transdisciplinarity and the necessity of contextualization and dialogue are proved to be indispensable.

We do hope that this special volume of *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* will help to intensify and strengthen the international contacts and cooperation among ‘image-historians’. An increasing variety of approaches towards visual sources may, on the one hand, contribute to better understanding specific and individual matters of communication in medieval and early modern society. On the other hand, such approaches will open up possibilities for recognizing general patterns of image usage and perception – patterns of intention as well as patterns of response.³ Analyses of micro- and macro-levels will add to each other. Their structures, contexts and networks will become clearer.

Gerhard Jaritz

³ See, e. g., some contributions of leading representatives of the social history of art already in the eighties of the twentieth century, as: Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention. On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven and London, 1986); David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago and London, 1989). See also the important remarks by Keith Moxey, “Reading the ‘Reality Effect’,” in *Pictura quasi fictura. Die Rolle des Bildes in der Sachkultur des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Gerhard Jaritz (Vienna, 1996), 15-22.