

Visual Culture and Artistic Exchange

Rebecca Müller

In the eyes of modern visitors versed in art history, the cathedral of Genoa must appear remarkable in that many of its structural elements and furnishings point to a foreign context. Standing before the cathedral, such visitors behold a double-towered façade (fig. 24) inspired by the French prototypes of Gothic architecture, albeit in an unexpected polychromatic execution and reminiscent in its portal decoration of Romanesque churches in southern France and Spain.¹ A massive ancient cornice stone probably imported from Rome² serves as the lintel of a side portal. Moving inside, viewers come upon Byzantine murals and learn from older descriptions that a bronze chandelier from Almoravid Spain and iron pieces of Pisan catapults once hung here. In the cathedral's treasury, they can marvel at a glass bowl from Caesarea and at cross-shaped reliquaries of Byzantine manufacture. The architectural decoration is attributed to stonemasons from Lombardy, the largest sepulchral chapel to Pisan masters. The rich sculptural decoration and the murals in the chapel of the Baptist were produced by Ticinese, Lucchese, and Brescian masters. Other buildings in Genoa could also be cited in order to illustrate why imports and cultural transfer, adaptation and assimilation are regarded as the chief characteristics of Genoa's visual culture and why some authors even consider Genoa to be "unique in the medieval world [in its] extraordinary capacity for assimilation."³ This view of the cathedral also makes clear why it is difficult to speak of "Genoese art," in the sense of a locally produced art that is genuinely rooted in a particular location and identifiable as such on account of a common stylistic idiom.

We do not know what reactions the cathedral's heterogeneous aesthetics might have elicited around the year 1300. A church façade that dominated

¹ On the cathedral façade see also chaps. 9, pp. 224–26, and 12, p. 345. For their advice on this chapter, I am very grateful to Ralf Behrwald and Lorenz Korn.

² This theory (Müller, *Sic hostes*, 34–46) is now supported by the fact that another cornice reused in Genoa was originally part of the architectural decoration of the Baths of Caracalla in Rome; see Jenewein, *Architekturdekoration*, 2, pl. 130–1; also 175–6. It is plausible that all four cornices reused in Genoese portals came from Rome.

³ "Unico nel medioevo ... [nella sua] straordinaria capacità di assimilazione"; Naser Eslami, *Genova*, 21.

the townscape probably ceased to appear “foreign” after two generations, while the treasures already possessed a special aesthetic status on account of their materials and their presentation as precious objects. The question of how the imported Islamic objects were perceived is just as interesting as it is difficult to answer. In a seaport in which many Muslims lived as slaves and whose merchants traveled in thousands to the coasts of North Africa as well as to the Levant and the Black Sea, clear distinctions must be drawn according to the experiences of various social groups.⁴ One should also be aware that in the period after 1284, a community of thousands of imprisoned Pisans lived in Genoa—and was even involved, as it seems, in the production of illuminated books.⁵ Medieval Genoa was a multiethnic and multicultural city, so any reflection on the “public” must always take the large number and diversity of foreigners as well as their different social statuses into account.⁶

Only a rough idea of the complex relationship between perception and identity can be gained from these reflections. Having said this, the transcultural diversity of the visual artifacts still holds out the prospect that the study of the processes of transfer and transformation, of adaptation and assimilation, will yield a valuable perspective on Genoa. A history of art based solely on artists’ biographies and the mere recording of “influences” will be much less profitable in this environment.

The following pages will focus on the artists who came to Genoa, and on the objects and materials that reached the city by many different paths. To that end, we must first ask who was responsible for commissioning particular artists from outside the city, for importing certain goods, and what their motivation was. How was the “foreign” adapted, remodeled to fit the circumstances, or even rejected? How should we assess the agency of imported objects and wandering artists—did they change their status or meaning by crossing cultural borders? How may we ascertain their impact on the urban public sphere? How is the role of Genoa in the movement of people and artifacts to be assessed? Did it function as a kind of melting pot that was mainly concerned with absorbing, blending, and creating something new or does the evidence point to various dynamics of interchange?

The structure of this chapter is primarily chronological, as the processes of artistic transfer must be understood against the background of Genoa’s political, economic, and cultural history—the connotations attached to imports

4 Van Doosselaere notes that “several thousand Genoese” became engaged in long-distance trade (*CASD*, 79n36).

5 Fabbri, “Romanzi.”

6 Petti Balbi, “Presenze straniere”; Naser Eslami, *Genova*, 73–134 (esp. 91–2).

from areas under Islamic rule in the twelfth century, for instance, might be quite different from those of the fifteenth century. Given its synthetic character, this overview of the processes pertaining to adaptation, the constitution of meaning, and perception can afford no more than partial insights, and it should be pointed out that this method only addresses the "local" in relation to the "foreign." The spectrum of issues discussed ranges from the *magistri antelami* and imports from the Islamic world to the works of Byzantine artists and the fascination with early Netherlandish painting.

This analysis combines various methodological approaches. As a study of Genoa's visual culture, it forms part of a history of seeing that will emphasize the historical contingency of the production of meaning by examining how perception was shaped by non-local artists and artifacts. At the same time, and in keeping with recent studies of material culture, this contribution considers as cultural mediators not only "high art" and artists in the modern sense, but also objects that are not labelled as art.⁷ A comparative perspective in which Genoese art history is seen as a part of Mediterranean culture will also prove particularly fruitful. As a cultural sphere, the Mediterranean should not be viewed as a homogeneous and static whole but as a composite of multiple landscapes that were in turn subject to historical dynamics with regard to their borders and overlaps.⁸ As a sphere of trade, politics, and warfare, the Mediterranean is of fundamental importance for understanding Genoa's visual culture. But as the Mediterranean is not a closed system either, the network of artistic relations that encompassed Genoa was far more extended. The Persian pottery reused in the cathedral tympanum and the Genoese patrons who patronized Byzantine artists in the Black Sea colonies are just two cases in point. Thus this chapter may be situated in the framework of a geohistory of art, in dealing not only with Genoa as a place of artworks, but with the spatial references created by objects pointing to distant places.⁹ It calls attention to artifacts as the results of processes of transformation and negotiation in dynamic, not necessarily territorially fixed, contexts.

Material evidence mainly from the period of Byzantine rule (AD 538–643) and from the eleventh century onward includes not only imported pottery that attests to Genoa's trade relations with North Africa and the Near East, but

7 Miller, *Cultural Histories*; Saurma-Jeltsch, "Agency"; Grossman/Walker, *Mechanisms of Exchange*, 14–15.

8 Naser Eslami, *Genova*, esp. 33–42; for stimulating views on this topic, see the introduction to Grossman/Walker, *Mechanisms of Exchange*; Baader and Wolf, "Sea-to-Shore Perspective."

9 See the introduction to DaCosta Kaufmann, *Time and Place*.

also the remnants of sculptural decorations that were either imported from Constantinople or manufactured on the spot by traveling Greek workshops.¹⁰ The eleventh century witnessed the immigration of corporately-organized stonemasons from the Valle d'Intelvi, near Como. These took up residence in Genoa as *magistri antelami* (after "Antelamus", a toponym of the aforementioned valley), and, while they maintained ties to their homeland, they established a long-standing monopoly on stone-cutting and building construction. As a subsequently "local" phenomenon, their occupation formed the basis of ecclesiastical and private building activities.¹¹ Di Fabio has shown that this process cannot be construed as "Lombard influence," but rather that the local materials used, the stone work, and the building techniques attest to the existence of distinctive workshops. In spite of their origins, the *magistri antelami* shaped an architecture that can be characterized as "Genoese", whereas the nature of Genoa's sculptural legacy remains heterogeneous.¹² In fact, the *magistri antelami* are not documented as sculptors, and Gandolfo has even argued that sculpture as a genuine, local phenomenon "was choked by the resounding presence of the corporation [the *magistri*] in the realm of architecture."¹³

The evidence from the twelfth century documents the importation of objects that can be classified as ancient *spolia* and Islamic treasures. Only the latter can be addressed here. This was the century in which the young city-state developed institutions of self-rule, received the right of coinage (1138), tripled the urban area through the erection of new city walls, became the seat of an archbishopric (1133), consolidated its rule over the Ligurian coast, and successfully participated in crusades to the Holy Land as well as in the Spanish *Reconquista*.

Islamic Artifacts as Trophies?

The chronicler William of Tyre records that, following the conquest of Caesarea in the year 1101, the Genoese removed a dish deep green in color from a mosque and brought it to Genoa, where it was presented to the cathedral.¹⁴ The

10 Frondoni, "Bisanzio e l'Occidente," 15.

11 Recently, Zoni, "Magistri antelami."

12 Di Fabio, "La cattedrale, il romanico," esp. 114.

13 Gandolfo, "Antelami, Magistri," underlines the "percorso disorganico, privo di una connotazione locale, che ebbe la scultura a Genova, tra il sec. 12° e il 14°, soffocata dalla preponderante presenza della corporazione in campo edilizio" (69).

14 William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, 471; see most recently Ameri, "Naturalia."

object in question is the so-called *Sacro Catino*, a glass bowl roughly 40 cm wide (fig. 46) that is still kept in the cathedral treasury; it is so unique that scholars are still uncertain whether it was manufactured in antiquity or—more probably—during the early Islamic period.¹⁵ William also mentions that the bowl was shown as a marvel (*quasi pro miraculo*) to high-ranking travelers, who were told that it was made of emerald.

A bronze chandelier—probably a damascened mosque lamp decorated with Arabic script—and a pair of bronze doors were among the spoils brought home by the Genoese following the capture of Almoravid Almería in 1147. Even though both objects are only mentioned in later sources and were lost during the modern period, their existence in Genoa must be regarded as credible.¹⁶ From the time of its arrival, the chandelier may have hung near the altar of John the Baptist, which became one of the focal points of religious and urban identity following the *furtum sacrum* (“holy theft”) of the saint’s ashes from Myra in 1099.¹⁷ The bronze doors were incorporated into San Giorgio, the church of the city’s patron Saint George, in which the Genoese army’s banner was also stored.¹⁸ Although unmentioned in the extant sources, two marble plaques inscribed with Kufic letters survive in the nave of Santa Maria di Castello, near which several noble families that were deeply involved in the crusades (such as the Embriaci) once resided. While one of the plaques is now illegible, the other (fig. 17) carries verses from the third sura of the Koran. Another Arabic inscription, now lost, is mentioned in the eighteenth century as located near the portal of San Sisto, a church notably founded to commemorate the conquest of the North African city of Mahdia.¹⁹

The aforementioned objects were ripped out of their original religious and cultural contexts.²⁰ Their unusual form and workmanship as well as their Arabic inscriptions, which some were undoubtedly able to read, must have identified them as “Saracen” artifacts. Once in Genoa, they were given a religiously determined, Christian context—it may not be by accident that no such object is connected to the city gates—and therefore an observer could perceive them as trophies in a religious conflict.²¹ Whether they were perceived as

¹⁵ *CSL*, 392–3 (Ameri).

¹⁶ Müller, *Sic hostes*, 204–7.

¹⁷ Polonio, “L’arrivo delle ceneri.”

¹⁸ Müller, *Sic hostes*, 63–4.

¹⁹ Haug, *Annales*, 233–6.

²⁰ See also Müller, “Genova vittoriosa,” 96.

²¹ Haug, *Annales*, 244n706, rightly points out that the sources do not speak of signs of victory over an inimical religion.

actual incarnation of the “infidels,” however, is open to debate.²² The fact that the *Sacro Catino* was exhibited “as a kind of marvel” points to an aesthetic appreciation going beyond its symbolic value as a trophy. Only because of their presentation in a new visual context were these objects able to appear special or even unique—which they had not been in their original Islamic context. Shalem describes this altered perspective as an “‘aesthetisation’ by way of exhibition.”²³

In this respect, the Islamic artifacts in Genoa are comparable to numerous objects of similar provenance that found their way into Western churches along many different paths. One can only assume that some of these were the “trophies of a victorious religion,” as were the bells which Muslims captured in Christian Spain.²⁴ The specificity and longevity of collective memory on this topic in Genoa is singular enough to be noteworthy, as the association of specific non-military artifacts with victorious wars in early modern sources and even in a text dating as early as the twelfth century is very rare.

Once in Genoa, these objects became part of a multimedia promotion of the victorious city-state that was mediated through texts and images. A political and ideological rhetoric that expressed itself in the pithy inscriptions of the Porta Soprana (figs. 4–5)²⁵, in an idealizing historiography, and in depictions of the crusades inside the cathedral all helped shape the collective *memoria* in favor of the legitimization of the ruling class.

The way that perception of an object changes when that which the beholder wishes to see in it changes—and thus the extent to which ‘meaning’ is constructed and inscribed—is made abundantly clear by the rich tradition that arose around the *Sacro Catino*, which is quite unique for such an object. Its status of trophy receded into the background. Probably used initially in the Ash Wednesday liturgy (although apparently only for a short time)²⁶, the thirteenth-century Genoese subsequently believed it to be the dish which Jesus used at the Last Supper, until Jacopo da Varagine’s chronicle of Genoa eventually identified it as the Holy Grail.²⁷ The *Catino* thus acquired a new meaning in Genoa. In Jacopo’s eyes, however, it also gave the city a new meaning, that of a community willed by God.

22 Müller, “Percezione.”

23 Shalem, *Islam Christianized*, 131.

24 Dodds, “Great Mosque,” 18.

25 Cf. chaps. 8, pp. 195–6, and 12, pp. 347–8.

26 Müller, “Sacro catino.”

27 Ameri, “*Naturalia*”; Haug, *Annales*, 241–6.

The objects that could count as trophies remained isolated, whereas the numerous ceramics (or so-called *bacini*) that were used not only in the decoration of Genoese churches but also elsewhere in Italy have not so far been shown to carry such a connotation. Genoese trade links with Islamic countries—as for example in the silk trade—fluctuated but were never entirely severed. Furthermore, pottery from the Islamic world used as tableware by the Genoese elite attests to the continued presence of Islamic culture in Genoa.²⁸

When considering the role of Islamic objects in the visual culture of Genoa, it is remarkable—especially compared to Pisa, Venice, or even Florence—that the Genoese preferred as mementoes of past victories not formally more generic antiquities but rather objects that were clearly attributable on account of specific outward characteristics (e.g., Arabic writing). This also applies to the objects which Genoa captured from the Pisans and Venetians in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Of these trophies, only the harbor chains of Porto Pisano can be addressed here.²⁹

The Omnipresence of Victory and Defeat

As early as 1287, or so the Genoese annals claim, the Genoese robbed pieces of chains and catapults from the Pisan harbor *in signum victoriae* (“as a sign of victory”) and hung them up in San Lorenzo.³⁰ In the year 1290, the Genoese fleet then succeeded in destroying the harbor facilities. The broken harbor chain was brought back to Genoa as a token of victory. As a trophy, the chain was somewhat special in that it could be displayed in more than one location. Sections of it were hung up at the municipal palace (the Palazzo San Giorgio), on two city gates, and at no less than eleven churches in Genoa, Murta, and Moneglia (fig. 55). Every piece was accompanied by other media (inscriptions and images) that helped shape the memory of a victory that had in reality been of little strategic importance. One exceptional monument is a marble relief, now in the Museo di Sant’Agostino, with a depiction of Porto Pisano, which shows the port with the chains still intact (fig. 56). The victory is documented

28 Di Fabio, “Capselle eburnee”; Mannoni and Gardini, “Laggioni,” 53–5; on Genoa as the “main transit station” of the silk trade: Jacoby, “Silk Economics,” 218; for the pottery: Benete, “La cucina.”

29 Müller, *Sic hostes*, 72–83.

30 *Ferra de trabucis et chatena: AGC* for 1287–8, 5.77–88; Müller, *Sic hostes*, 100 and 219. On the following, Müller, “Genova vittoriosa,” 103. On their significance for the 1284 Battle of Meloria, see chap. 16, pp. 465–6.

by an inscription on the relief itself and by the chain links that originally hung alongside the relief. Due to their omnipresence, the Pisan harbor chains are mentioned in numerous descriptions of the city. The manner in which they were meant to be perceived was clearly recognized by the Florentine diplomat and scholar Giannozzo Manetti. Writing in 1435–6, he described how “they (i.e., the Genoese) hung the chains up at the city’s most busy places, thus for instance at the entrance of their own harbor und quite high up on the city gates; they suspended them [there] in memory of the vanquished enemies, so that all those who entered the city by sea or by land should see them, even against their will.”³¹ The Pisans who were held captive in Genoa most certainly saw the chains against their will. All in all, this serves as a particularly eloquent example of how perception and social condition affect one another.

The Façade of San Lorenzo

In its choice of exemplars, the execution of the work, and the materials employed, the cathedral of Genoa (figs. 22–39) remains one of the most impressive architectural examples of the processes of artistic transfer and adaptation.³² At least a brief outline of the problems related to its façade should be given here. For unknown reasons, the Romanesque building remained unfinished. Those responsible for the project—primarily the representatives of the commune that financed the building, and to a lesser extent the canons and the bishop—opted for a radically different solution with a new façade (figs. 24–9), which was erected around 1220 and incorporated into the Romanesque building. It has long been understood that the architectural complex could not have been realized without knowledge of the west façade of Chartres (1145/1150; fig. 23).³³ The two cathedrals share the same structural shape with three stepped lancet-arched portals, where the central one is broader and higher. The columns set into the jambs are continued between the portals. Even the typology of the two-towered façade is borrowed from Chartres. However, the Genoese portal is more restrained in its sculptural decoration. The archivolts and jambs contain no figures; rather, the main portal is decorated with doorjamb reliefs. Only the tympanum of the main portal exhibits sculptures, which again follow the French prototype in their depiction of the *Maiestas Domini* (Christ in Majesty; fig. 27). The rendering of the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence, on the other hand,

31 Manetti, *Elogi*, 110.

32 For the most recent assessment, see *CSL*.

33 Claussen, “Portale,” 90–92.

would have been unimaginable in northern France. The entirely naked figure of the tortured saint is set directly above the lintel, almost in resistance to an intellectual model.³⁴ Comparable in turn are the figure holding a sundial at Chartres and a single column figure in Genoa, the so-called *Arrotino*³⁵, both of which stand outside the jambs.

Slightly later northern French exemplars have also been debated by scholars. Chiefly, the cathedral of Rouen (ca. 1170/1180) has been cited, especially with regard to the socle (plinth) reliefs and the architectural decoration, along with the cathedrals of Mantes (1180) and Lisieux and Noyon (both around 1200).³⁶ In addition to the models provided by northern French architecture, it is important to note that other features of San Lorenzo find parallels in Romanesque churches, as for instance the decoration of the archivolt, the use of different-colored stone types, and the twisted columns. Parallels include the northern Spanish cathedrals of Lérida (Catalonia) and Orense (Castile), as well as the collegiate church of Avallon (Burgundy) and the cathedral of Le Puy (Auvergne).³⁷ What is most relevant, however, is not whether these latter examples constitute specific prototypes, but the fact that the phenomenon of the façade of San Lorenzo cannot be explained on the basis of a monocausal model. The building materials alone make this abundantly clear. In employing the local gray *pietra di Promontorio* only in the socle, the construction broke with local tradition. Instead, the façade is dominated by a polychromy that combines white Carrara marble, "Rosso di Levante" (a pink limestone from La Spezia), and green serpentinite from the Ligurian Apennines.³⁸ These materials are woven into a carpet-like pattern made up of alternating stone courses and small inlaid work (fig. 29). We cannot be certain whether this represented a conscious borrowing from the decorative traditions of Islamic cultures or was meant to demonstrate total mastery without any reference to its origins. The sculpture of the tympanum was partly polychromed and decorated with mosaics, of which only remnants have been preserved. The crown of Saint Lawrence contains fragments of Byzantine blue glass, pottery from Egypt, and figuratively painted Minai ware from Persia (fig. 28).³⁹ The fact that a fragment decorated with a human face was put right in the center makes it clear that this was not an arbitrary recycling of materials, but a conscious consideration

34 In another context, see Castelnuovo and Ginzburg, "Centro," 340.

35 Possibly John the Evangelist; see *CSL*, 199–200 (Di Fabio).

36 Di Fabio, "Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230," 63–5; Cervini, *Portali*; Claussen, "Zentrum," 675–6.

37 Di Fabio, "Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230," 63–5, and "Porfidi."

38 Mannoni, "Marmi"; Di Fabio, "Architettura" and "Porfidi."

39 Gardini, "Tessere."

of imagery. The materials represent a kaleidoscope of Genoese trade routes and of the exploitation of local quarries. They represent both the local and the Mediterranean dimensions of the building, which in this form is only imaginable in Genoa.⁴⁰

The French impact has attracted different explanations. Di Fabio has identified two dominant masters. One of these, who supervised the construction process with the expertise of a master builder and sculptor, is said to have been active in Chartres and Rouen and then to have carried out the work on the tympanum and the *Arrotino*.⁴¹ The other master, who was responsible for the reliefs in the upper part of the socle and in the doorjambs, is characterized by experiences gathered in Mantes and Senlis and by his knowledge of metalworking.⁴² The notion that foreigners should have made the decision to employ local materials that were often difficult to work with is certainly intriguing.⁴³ Claussen agrees that the person in charge of the construction project was French, but rules out such an origin for the sculptures, with the exception of those on the doorjamb and socle reliefs. He proposes a competitive situation in which the Italian workshop strove to outdo the one that had been brought in from France by its handling of exquisite materials. The contracting authorities would have given preference to the Italians, which would also explain the small number of sculptural elements.⁴⁴ In my own opinion, there is no compelling reason to assume that the Christ in Majesty relief was the work of sculptors from France, although that is clearly true for a large number of the socle reliefs.⁴⁵ In my view, the issue of "nationalities" is less interesting than the compilatory and informed approach⁴⁶, which, in spite of an obvious predominance of French prototypes, was nevertheless able to produce a distinctive synthesis that could be termed "Genoese."

The question of why the contracting authorities looked to France cannot be answered with certainty due to the paucity of the sources. Scholars have pointed to the historical circumstances in which this orientation corresponded to political interests, notably Genoa's rivalry with Venice.⁴⁷ San Marco was richly adorned with spoils from Constantinople (looted in 1204)

40 Di Fabio, "Porfidi," 154–5, and "Opus francigenum," 267.

41 *CSL*, 204–6 (Di Fabio).

42 Di Fabio, "Porfidi," 160–61, and "Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230."

43 Di Fabio, "Porfidi," 156–8.

44 Claussen, "Portale," 89–94; Claussen, "Zentrum," 673–5.

45 *CSL*, 176–80 (Di Fabio).

46 I would like to thank Martin Büchsel for a stimulating discussion of this point.

47 Di Fabio, "Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230," 64–5.

probably around the same time as the façade of San Lorenzo was built. The competitive situation alone—rather than any specific occasion—could explain why Genoa's newly adopted architectural design strove to surpass (and not to imitate) its rival through the richness of its own building materials and with a "new" architecture—the likes of which could only be found in France, and which would achieve the greatest possible effect in a relatively confined space.⁴⁸ With regard to the aesthetics of the materials, the building's point of reference is San Marco and not the French Gothic style.

The façade of San Lorenzo thus should not be understood as the outcome of a simple bilateral transfer. Irrespective of the actual origin of the artists, it can be characterized as the result of a process of negotiation. The imagery that conveys the main theological message, the sculptures in the tympanum, can be described as artistically hybrid if we understand hybridity as a mixture where the single elements of different cultural contexts are not completely absorbed by the new, but remain perceivable in the new whole. Of course the question remains—perceivable to whom and for how long? After how many generations is the power of an artifact to refer to places, objects and events distant in both time and space lost or overlaid by new references? The question of how the orientation to northern France was initiated in the first place cannot be answered with certainty. Di Fabio was able to prove that a *magister Ianuensis* ("Genoese master") worked in the royal palace of Paris in 1239, albeit in an unknown field.⁴⁹

While the effects of the French presence are recognizable in the architectural decoration and in the works of goldsmiths, matters become more complex in art commissions where the patrons apparently explicitly voted against this model.⁵⁰ Such is the case with San Salvatore dei Fieschi (fig. 70), a church located near Cogorno that was commissioned by cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi (later Pope Hadrian V) in the years before 1276.⁵¹ The cardinal, who had been a canon at the cathedrals of Reims and Paris, an ambassador in London, and an archdeacon in Parma, chose local construction workshops and did not commission specialized sculptors. The architectonic decoration both outside and inside the church does not feature the French idiom. Di Fabio attributed this "anti-modern artistic option" to the peripheral, non-urban situation of the site, which might result in a different level of ambition or a "linguistic register"

48 Claussen, "Zentrum," 672–3. Of course, "new" here is geographically relative, as the west façade of Chartres (fig. 23) was two generations old at this point.

49 Di Fabio, "Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230," 66–7, and "L'art gotique," 33.

50 Di Fabio, "L'art gotique," 35.

51 Dagnino, "San Salvatore dei Fieschi."

targeted to a local audience. The faster progress made by stonemasons who were already available on site could also have played a role.⁵² In our context it is important to realize that even for an important project—the Fieschi church played an eminent role as a place of family identity—patrons resist neat adherence to models, however prominent and compelling these may seem to us.

Byzantium in Genoa

Di Fabio has discussed the cultural and artistic relations between Genoa and Byzantium, which must be viewed within the larger framework of intensive economic exchange and the political circumstances that are closely associated with it.⁵³ Two objects testifying to these relations, but with different significances, will be addressed here.

The earliest inventory of the cathedral treasury, which dates from the year 1386, already mentions a red *pallium* (cloth; Italian *pallio*) with the lives of the saints Lawrence, Hippolytus, and Sixtus, which still exists today (fig. 47). It consists of a rectangular piece of red silk of impressive size (1.32 × 3.77 m), embroidered with silk and precious metal thread. It not only depicts scenes from the lives of the saints, but also a prominently centered representation of the Byzantine emperor Michael (whom a caption identifies by name) being led into the Genoese church by Saint Lawrence. In 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259–82) concluded an agreement with Genoa that granted the city wide-ranging trade privileges. In return, the latter pledged to assist Michael in his bid to reconquer Constantinople. Following the recapture of the city, a eulogy of the emperor delivered on Christmas Day in 1261 or 1265 by Manuel Holobolos contains a detailed description of two *peploi* (cloths) which the monarch allegedly presented to the Genoese emissaries: one with a representation of the emperor and the one that still exists. It is thus highly probable that the cloth was manufactured in Nicaea sometime between the arrival of the emissaries in autumn 1260 and their departure in March 1261.⁵⁴ When the emperor commissioned the *pallio* during the negotiations, he must have felt quite confident, as the representations only make sense if the cloth was

52 "Opzione artistica ... marcatamente anti-moderna," "registro linguistico"; Di Fabio, "Scultura del Duecento," 292–3.

53 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio e Genova"; Schreiner, "Bisanzio e Genova"; Origone, "Realtà."

54 *CSL*, 410–13 (Wolf); Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 27–87 (p. 43; 1265). See also discussion in chap. 12, p. 350, as well as the related discussion of the Palazzo San Giorgio in chap. 9, pp. 230–1. On the 1261 Treaty of Nymphaeum, see chaps. 17, p. 490, and 18, p. 507.

destined for Genoa. The *pallio* is dedicated to the cathedral's tutelary saint. The underlying *vita* is a Greek one, but the accompanying captions are in Latin.⁵⁵ The emperor's titlature in the caption refers to the Byzantines as "Greeks" and not as "Romaioi".⁵⁶ The Byzantine characteristics should also be emphasized, as for instance the domed structure that is meant to represent the cathedral. By showing how Lawrence leads the emperor into the *ecclesia Ianuensium* ("the church of the Genoese", as the caption says), the close relationship between emperor and city appears to constitute the primary focus of interest—but only at first glance. On the Genoese side, only the saint himself is at eye level with the emperor. As Hilsdale was able to show, the scene must be viewed in the narrative context of the saints' lives depicted, from which it is not formally distinguished. Scenes depicting acts of munificence and the handing over of objects are particularly numerous in the pictorial hagiographies on the *pallio*. In this "plot of largesse," a parallel is drawn between the saint and the monarch, who both act magnanimously.⁵⁷ Michael's piety and goodness stand in contrast to that of the "bad" emperor Decius. From the perspective of the Byzantines, the fact that Lawrence personally conducts the emperor into the church—by implication, handing it over to him—is an expression of their own superior position, from which the donation is being made. The *pallio* can thus be inserted into the Byzantine policy of largesse and "silken diplomacy."⁵⁸ In spite of its Latin captions, it is not an amalgam of Eastern and Western traditions, but a Byzantine artifact that was meant to convey, in a politically ambiguous situation, the message of Byzantine supremacy to its intended recipient: "it does not blur boundaries but rather inscribes difference."⁵⁹

Kalavrezou has recently made a further point by assessing the *pallio* as the object of a "shared cultural imagination." By emphasizing, for example, the rarity of the episodes from Saint Lawrence's life in Byzantium and the absence of an official portrait of the emperor, she underlined that it was "intended for a non-Byzantine viewer with a different aesthetic and cultural appreciation, and made with attention to that viewer ... at the same time it displays the features most desired and sought after by Westerners that are specifically Byzantine in

55 Toth, "Narrative Fabric."

56 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 83–6.

57 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 79.

58 Toth, "Narrative Fabric."

59 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 87. With regard to perception, this argument is more convincing than Kalavrezou's conclusion ("The Byzantine *Peplos*," 242), which seem to exclude ambivalence ("This peplos is thus an example of the kind of cross-cultural imagery of buildings and sites that with their symbolism are able to bridge cultural boundaries").

all their innate forms and materials."⁶⁰ Thus the agency of this object indispensably depended on its mobility and circulation.

Unfortunately, the Genoese reaction to this gift is not recorded. Di Fabio's reflections regarding their understanding of the Byzantines' intent are probably accurate: "At Genoa ... no one made a show of recognizing it. With its 'political content' subverted and preset norms of communication overturned, the *pallio* was interpreted as a mere sign of recognition by a sovereign, as a friendly *xenion* [gift of hospitality]."⁶¹ It is perhaps no coincidence that the cloth on which only the emperor was depicted—and which probably bore far more explicit connotations of imperial dominion—was already missing in 1386, at least in the sacristy. Quite possibly, the preservation of the *pallio* as a unique testimony of Byzantine/Genoese relations is due to a willingness to forget its message.

Roughly half a century after the *pallio* had reached Genoa and apparently lost its political significance, another type of artistic transfer manifested itself—again in the cathedral. Around 1312, the cathedral was refurnished after a disastrous fire. Inside, it was painted with murals, of which four of fairly large-scale dimensions can still be seen (figs. 36–9). The western wall of the endonarthex (fig. 36) depicts *Christ in Majesty (Deesis)*, in which Christ flanked by two angels is shown in the portal's recessed lunette, and thereby highlighted. The northern wall depicts Saint George battling the dragon (fig. 37); he is accompanied by the saints Peter and John the Baptist, while from above an angel hands him a shield painted with a cross and the arms of Genoa. Below this, the lunette of the Porta San Giovanni contains an *imago pietatis* ("image of piety"), in which Christ as the Man of Sorrows is flanked by Mary and John the Baptist (fig. 38).⁶² On the opposite side wall, the lunette of the Porta San Gottardo (fig. 39) contains a depiction of Mary *Eleousa* (i.e., caressing the infant Christ), accompanied by Saint Nicholas of Myra and Saint Lawrence. Scholars agree that these paintings are the work of a Byzantine master: the proportions of the figures, the effort to create dynamic poses and to infuse movement into the clothing, the use of vivid colors, numerous elements of Byzantine iconography, and the Greek captions for the apostles all support an attribution to a Byzantine painter trained in a major center of artistic production.⁶³ Further,

60 Kalavrezou, "The Byzantine *Peplos*," 213–4.

61 "A Genova ... nessuno fece mostra di rendersene conto. Sovvertitone il 'contenuto politico', ribaltati i codici di comunicazione predeterminati, il *pallio* fu interpretato come un mero segno di riconoscenza del sovrano, come un amichevole *xenion*"; Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 65.

62 *CSL*, 253 (Bacci).

63 Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 79 and "Byzantine Painter"; *CSL*, 527–8 (Bacci).

a "master Marcus the Greek, painter from Constantinople" is indeed attested in Genoa in the year 1313.⁶⁴ The iconography of the paintings is essentially Byzantine, but modified to accommodate Western pictorial traditions and local requirements.⁶⁵ This becomes particularly evident in the mural of Saint George (fig. 37). The Dragon Rider is in keeping with Byzantine pictorial tradition, but the handing over of the city's coat of arms by an angel is unusual and seems to stem from an ad-hoc invention. The city's patron saint receives his protection directly from heaven, thereby implying that the city itself stands under divine protection.⁶⁶ Further, unthinkable for Byzantium is the rendering of Saint Peter, who was venerated as the legendary founder of the diocese of Genoa. His prominent positioning conveyed the message of an autonomous Genoese Church, while its subjection to the archbishop of Milan until 1133 was disregarded.⁶⁷ In a singular manner, the saint is shown carrying the model of a church in the form of a donor portrait, thereby modifying the traditional iconography of Saint Peter. To this specific arrangement belongs the saint opposite Peter, John the Baptist, whose veneration became a focal point of local civic identity. The image thus can be interpreted in the context of the efforts of archbishop Jacopo da Varagine and his confidants, who, following civil unrest in the city in 1294–5, strove to propagate a conception of Genoa as a community legitimized by divine support and to emphasize its common roots.⁶⁸

The adjustments to Latin theological concepts are also significant. The depiction of the instruments of the Passion, which actually stem from the pictorial context of the *Hetoimasia* (the Eastern pictorial convention of the Throne of the Second Coming), accentuates Christ's suffering.⁶⁹ The fact that Mary is shown alongside a second figure of Christ is owed to Western Marian devotion.⁷⁰ The patrons may have been thinking of a representation of the Coronation of the Virgin where Mary would sit on a throne together with her son. But as John the Baptist is depicted on the other side of Christ, the iconography of the *Deesis* (*Christ in Majesty*) is taken up, and this leads to surprising numerical asymmetry among the apostles. The frescoes thus attest to the Greek painter's ability to adapt his pictorial forms to Western circumstances,

64 Nelson, "Byzantine Painter," 555.

65 Nelson, "Byzantine Painter."

66 *CSL*, 256 (Bacci).

67 Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 86–7.

68 Di Fabio, "Scultura bronzea" and "Chiesa senza 'palazzo,'" 311–15. On the crisis of the 1290s: chap. 5, pp. 115–16.

69 Nelson, "Byzantine Painter," 558–9.

70 *Ibid.*, 561–3.

locations, and theological concepts. To use Nelson's formulation, the Greek artist "made Byzantine art Genoese."⁷¹ Moreover, the frescoes also document how much potential the commissioning authorities saw in Greek painting. According to Bacci, the artist represented "an example of the most recent and refined classicizing tendencies of painting in the Palaeologan age."⁷² Those who commissioned the paintings must have been aware of this, particularly since parts of the Genoese elite had some knowledge of current developments in Constantinople, notably through the colony in Pera. Genoese patrons here—like in the colonies on the Black Sea—commissioned Byzantine artists for their Latin churches.⁷³ It is thus conceivable that the aforementioned Marcus as well as a certain Demetrios—a painter from Pera whose presence in Genoa is documented for 1371—were not the only mediators of Byzantine art.⁷⁴

The murals in San Lorenzo can be characterized as a targeted and apparently one-sided transfer. It is not possible to determine in how much effect this commission with its sojourn in Genoa had on the Greek painter himself. The transformations noted above were most likely required by the patrons. Evidently, misunderstandings happened and were accepted. Regarding the question of why a Greek painter was chosen, the answer in my opinion lies not in the appropriation of a "foreign" idiom in the sense of "exoticism," as some of the beholders—the well-travelled mercantile elite of Genoese society—were acquainted with this pictorial language. The Greek icons that according to the sources could be found in the city, and whose schemata and aesthetics were partly adopted for the larger formats, must have been vested with a religious authority that was partially responsible for this decision.⁷⁵ It can only be guessed that the presence of the Byzantine murals also connoted the far-reaching relations that made possible the employment of such a painter. The murals could thus have been meant to shape civic identity not only by their iconography, but also by their allusion to the power to overcome spatial distance. Other works of art could also contribute to the discussion at this point, including those that have been lost and those belonging to categories such as sculpture, mosaic, and especially manuscript illumination. We can only mention here the *Sacro Volto* (the *Holy Face of Christ* or *Mandylion*, fig. 13), a Byzantine icon that reached Genoa sometime before 1388—a literally multi-layered object, the

71 Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 80.

72 "Una delle piu recenti e raffinate tendenze classicheggianti della pittura di età paleologa"; Bacci, in *CSL*, 357.

73 Westphalen, "Pittori greci"; also Quirini-Popławski, "Échanges artistiques."

74 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 42–3.

75 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 58; Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 87.

arrival of which was an event of major cultural and religious importance⁷⁶—and the arrival of a ship from endangered Pera in 1461, which brought with it a large number of reliquaries, textiles, and books. In summary, one can fully concur with Di Fabio, who emphasizes the profound difference between Genoese/Byzantine and Venetian/Byzantine relations in the field of art, the latter being much more characterized by imitation and competition. For Di Fabio, the frescoes in the cathedral represent a unique example of “Genoese Byzantinism”, in direct contrast to the *Pallio di San Lorenzo*, which was commissioned by the emperor to convey Byzantine superiority.⁷⁷

If we pass over the sculpture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this should not suggest that the importance of artistic transfer declined. Rather, the contrary is true: with Giovanni Pisano’s funerary monument for Margaret of Brabant (fig. 43; ca. 1313), Genoa acquired the work of one of Italy’s leading sculptors. In the fifteenth century, important commissions were given to members of the Gagini and Riccomanni families of sculptors, Lombard in origin, who affiliated themselves with the forms and designs of the early Florentine Renaissance. Non-Genoese artists thus continued to dominate important projects, and striving for high quality still implied looking beyond Genoa. However, the final part of this study will examine Genoa’s artistic ties to Flanders in the field of painting. This will afford the possibility of reassessing issues of cultural transfer and visual culture in combination with Genoa’s status as a trade power, which allowed it to play a pioneering role in the introduction of early Netherlandish painting to Italy. An analysis of a few key examples will reveal not only art as the bearer of prestige and taste, but also artists as cultural mediators and artworks as agents—along with the issue of pictorial understanding in different visual cultures.

Flanders in Genoa

From the late fourteenth century onward, the centuries-old trade relations between the Genoese and northern France and Flanders intensified.⁷⁸ They followed the Atlantic route that connected Genoa with the north via its colonies

76 Dufour Bozzo, “Sacro Volto”; Calderoni Masetti, *Sacro Volto*. See also discussion in chap. 12, p. 350.

77 Di Fabio, “Bisanzio a Genova,” 41 and 65.

78 Petti Balbi, “Rapporti”; Di Fabio, “Mercato santuario.” The trade with Flanders had extensive social and cultural repercussions; see chap. 11, p. 338; chap. 13, p. 389, and chap. 18, pp. 515–16.

in Spain and on Majorca—most notably with Bruges, which was accessible through a canal and which granted the Genoese wide-ranging trade privileges. Formally organized as a *natio*, members of the Genoese elite were active in trade, finance, and insurance in Bruges for many years (see figs. 77–8). This circle of laymen commissioned the leading Burgundian painters of the day to produce portable triptychs, portraits, and elaborate retables for their Ligurian home churches. Like the Flemish elite, these merchants emulated the forms of representation which they had observed at the Burgundian court and invested in objects that both in Bruges and Genoa held out the prospect not only of heavenly reward but also of worldly prestige. This included of course a wide range of media and genres, especially illuminated books, textiles, and metalwork.⁷⁹

The Genoese Lomellini and Giustiniani families were among the earliest Italians to commission works of art from Jan van Eyck, as witnessed for example by his Marian triptych in Dresden, which bears the arms of the *albergo* Giustiniani (fig. 75).⁸⁰ The court painter, who proclaims his authorship by applying his signature, has created a miniature-like object that conveys an impression of utmost preciousness through its use of intense colors as well as through its exquisite and highly detailed rendering of objects such as brocade fabrics, fur trim, and works of gold. Both Michele and Raffaele Giustiniani, members of the family resident in Bruges, have been proposed as donors.⁸¹

An indication that this work was seen at an early date in Genoa is provided by its possible reception.⁸² The panels are bordered by inscriptions with liturgical texts, which seem to be engraved or, for the middle panel, superimposed in letters of bronze; in fact, both sets of inscriptions are painted onto the frame in trompe l'oeil. A similar faux frame, with a circumferential inscription unusual in Italy, also appears on Donato de' Bardi's *Crucifixion* of about 1440 (fig. 40).⁸³ Van Eyck arranged his inscriptions as if they were intended for the painted saints, so that the letters on the lower border are put upside down for the viewer, whereas the signature directly above can be read correctly by us. Exactly the same visual strategies to present text within the image are adopted by de' Bardi. While his painting has an entirely different function and dimensions (its height alone is 2.38 m), it also exhibits a plateau-like foreground and

79 See the contributions in Boccardo and Di Fabio, *Genova e l'Europa atlantica*.

80 Parma, *Rapporti artistici*, 23–30; Ketelsen, *Geheimnis*.

81 Streeton, "Dresden Triptych."

82 Parma, "Genua," 97ff.; Algeri, "Testimonianze."

83 Pinacoteca Civica, Savona.

an atmospheric landscape that both suggest more than just a sketchy knowledge of early Netherlandish painting.

The early presence of Giustiniani's triptych in Genoa is also suggested by the Marian altar in the church of Santissima Annunziata in Pontremoli, a small city about forty-five miles from Genoa.⁸⁴ The altarpiece (fig. 76) depicts the inside of a church that is reminiscent of van Eyck in its structure, notably through its arcades of circular arches with multi-colored columns and sculptures of saints with Gothic canopies above them. Along with the black and white striation typical of local architecture, other differences in the conception of images are apparent. While Van Eyck develops a continuous representation of space with realistic details, the Italian painter not only follows a more ornamental conception of space but also broadly positions the throne of Mary *before* the church. The honorific attributes shown in Van Eyck's Mary are enriched by heavy haloes. Mary and the Christ Child thus acquire a higher degree of presence in the eyes of the beholder (and even more so through their direct gaze) and appear more dazzling in their magnificence and splendor. The church in general is the attribute that explains Mary *as* the Church. The realistic mode of representation in Van Eyck can be understood as means to intensify the meditation of the beholder, who is guided to look carefully. It goes along with a painstaking attention to detail that is not adopted in the polyptych. This is less indicative of a misunderstanding than of a reinterpretation, reflecting not only the paintings' very different functions but also the different visual cultures in which they were created.

The importation of Netherlandish paintings adds a new facet to the transfer processes already discussed. It occurred in the context of an intense interchange of ideas and goods, but as far as is traceable for Genoa, the imported artifacts were not adjusted to local needs. As something distinctively new, they apparently offered the possibility of gaining prestige by reference to commercial relations, financial power and, in the case of Jan van Eyck, access even to the Burgundian court painter. Thus the paintings' status changed due to their mobility. At least some viewers were well aware of the different characteristics shown by Netherlandish painters in comparison to Italian artists. This is proven by the fact that in his *De viris illustris* (1456), the Ligurian-born Bartolomeo Fazio clearly distinguishes between *italici* and *gallici* and their respective qualities, thus implying a connection between geography and artistic identity.⁸⁵

84 Parma, "Genua," 99.

85 Baxandall, "Facijs," 101, 103, 105.

Early Netherlandish painting seems to have reached Genoa primarily via imports, since only a few transalpine painters are documented in the city.⁸⁶ The most important known evidence for employment in Genoa itself—in fact that of a Southern German—is the *Annunciation* in the Dominican monastery of Santa Maria di Castello by the painter Jost Amman of Ravensburg (fig. 19).⁸⁷ Signed and dated to the year 1451, the mural, executed partly in oil, is located in a loggia (fig. 20) where it forms part of a pictorial program illustrating the incarnation of Christ. The threshold to the pictorial space is marked by a fictive meticulously sculpted ogival architecture that is meant to create the illusion of an exterior façade. The painted frame opens onto an inner room filled with domestic objects, which in turn affords a view of a hilly landscape and, further in the distance, an open sea with ships.

The mighty angel and the architectural motif find parallels in the *Annunciation* (1443–5) in the cathedral of Aix-en-Provence attributed to Barthélemy d'Eyck, later court painter to René of Anjou (1409–80); its pronounced shadows evoke Konrad Witz (German-Swiss, active 1435–45); and the clear bright light and objects laid out in the manner of a still life are reminiscent of early Netherlandish painters. Probably Amman came into direct contact with early Netherlandish painting, and it is possible that he saw an *Annunciation* by Jan van Eyck in Genoa. But he is documented only in Genoa—where he also was involved in commercial activity and the loaning of money—and Ravensburg, so the question remains whether his broad knowledge of different pictorial traditions justifies calling him an itinerant artist. For our purposes, Amman's deviations from transalpine prototypes are noteworthy. He adopted, for example, the local black and white striation and alluded to the seaside position of the painting in Genoa by introducing a prospect of the sea, which is rather unusual for an *Annunciation*. Most remarkably, the depicted floor exhibits a blue-white spiral band, suggesting floor tiles that do not appear with this sort of decoration in Netherlandish painting, but existed as real objects in the environment of the painting. The ceramic tiles evoked in the painting were specifically found in Santa Maria di Castello (dated about 1400, fig. 18) among the luxury commodities that were imported initially from Al-Andalus, and later from Valencia.⁸⁸ Amman thus not only localized the event precisely but also

86 Cavelli Traverso, "Viaggi," 21; Petti Balbi, "Rapporti," 18.

87 Algeri, "Testimonianze," 44–5; Parma, "Genua," 98; Cavelli Traverso, *Primitivi fiamminghi*, 105–8 (Rotondi Terminiello); Romano, "Giusto di Ravensburg"; Meißner and Kaster, "Amman, Jost."

88 Pessa and Ramagli, *Azulejos e laggioni*, 71–3, 120. Tiles of this type are still *in situ* in the Cartuja de Vall de Cristo near Valencia (founded 1385).

reflected the painting's transcultural context as an artifact. In this form, the *Annunciation* is only conceivable in Genoa. Amman was commissioned for the painting by wool merchants who had made their fortune in Bruges and demonstrated their social rise in the *albergo* Grimaldi by making sure that its coat of arms was included in the painting—as well as by employing a painter who was visibly familiar with the Netherlandish idiom. If from the very beginning, the patrons planned to donate a rather large wall painting instead of (for example) a transportable but simultaneously much more expensive altarpiece, then they had to employ a mobile artist. Only his presence on the spot made possible the references to this place.

It is well known that the earliest reactions of art theorists to the works of early Netherlandish painters stem from Italy. The *ekphrases* written by Cyriacus of Ancona (around 1450) and by the aforementioned Bartolomeo Fazio attest to the appreciation shown especially towards Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden. Fazio praises the former's paintings for their mimetic qualities in their depiction of the visible world (including ingenious mirror effects), the perspective conferred on objects and landscapes, and for their lighting effects.⁸⁹ These artistic qualities essentially determined the perception of the visible in the *Annunciation*, and were decisive for conveying to the viewer a convincing reference to the place and thus to the patrons. With the importation of works by artists such as van Eyck, van der Weyden, Petrus Christus, Gerard David, Jan Provoost, Adriaen Isenbrant, and Joos van Cleve, a remarkably wide cross-section of Netherlandish painting was present in Genoa and Liguria.⁹⁰ Their example remained one of the most important points of reference for painters in Genoa until well into the sixteenth century.

This essay has only been able to address a small selection of works, artists, and processes. The selection is representative inasmuch as the (art)works of foreign origin that can be found in Genoa are actually more numerous than those produced by Genoese artists. But it is important to recognize that the (artistic) orientations discussed above reflect possible options, as other orientations can also be reconstructed. I have attempted to outline this phenomenon in its geographical and historical contexts, namely by considering factors such as location, political and economic developments, and—not least—perception by a heterogeneous public.

89 Christiansen, "View," 39–40.

90 Parma, "Genua," 100–03.

The question as to why local production was unable to satisfy the demand for art has caused Di Fabio to hypothesize that late medieval Genoa's combination of enormous economic strength with political and institutional weakness could only give the market an exceptional role: "Genoa was an effective *relais* for art because it was a great marketplace." He then concludes:

... that its mercantile dimension, first, and its financial dimension, second, informed not only the city's manner of economic existence, but also the mentalities of its governing classes and their rapport with art, which one may characterize as an act of collection (or, alternatively, "accumulation") and exchange ("reinvestment") rather than one of production.⁹¹

Di Fabio's explanation, which considers the phenomenon's *longue durée* against its economic and sociohistorical background, has the advantage of being able to shed particular light on one aspect of the process, namely that of purchasing incentive and commissioning. Further studies on local workshops and their organization, the artists' living and working conditions, guild requirements, the price of materials, and so forth could further illuminate another aspect, namely the conditions of production and the artisans' own perspectives. To do justice to Genoa's role in the realm of artistic transfer and interchange would require a discussion of the conceptual models that describe Genoa as a "*centro-relais* where diverse experiences are collected, and from which they are transmitted and amplified"⁹² or as a "border center."⁹³ However, I would like to conclude this essay by returning to Claussen's concept of "transperiphery", with which this author, while addressing the Genoese reception of Gothic style, reshaped an earlier model of center and periphery that was in many ways reductionistic. This concept "does not define itself in relation to growing geographical distance but in relation to the growing orientation to other superordinate paradigms or traditions ... When an idea is carried into such regions from another center, it triggers a discourse that can prove ... highly

91 "Genova fu un efficace relais artistico perché era un gran mercato ... che la dimensione mercantile, prima, e quella finanziaria, poi, informino non solo il modo di essere economico della città, ma, oltre che la mentalità delle classi di governo, anche il loro rapporto con l'arte, che si caratterizza piuttosto come un fatto di raccolta (vien fatto di dire 'di accumulazione') e di scambio (ma si potrebbe dire 'di reinvestimento') che di produzione"; Di Fabio, "Genova, un capitolo," 12–13.

92 "... Centro-relais dove si raccolgono e da cui vengono trasmesse e amplificate esperienze diverse"; Castelnovo and Ginzburg, "Centro," 344.

93 "Centro di confine": Di Fabio, "Geografia," 95.

productive.”⁹⁴ In my opinion, the notion that artists from one center “are influenced by the different conditions of the trans-periphery the moment they work under them” is just as applicable to Genoa as the idea of trans-periphery as a “spaces of resistance and reflection.” Seen from this perspective, Genoese art is one of discourse and reflective processes.

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94 Claussen, “Zentrum,” 670 and 677.

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FIGURE 24 *Cathedral church of San Lorenzo, façade, eleventh to sixteenth centuries.* Photo: Jensens, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cattedrale_di_San_Lorenzo_Genoa.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 45 *Platter of Saint John the Baptist, late Roman stonework in chalcedony with added metalwork, Paris, ca. 1400, San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo: G. Gorse.*

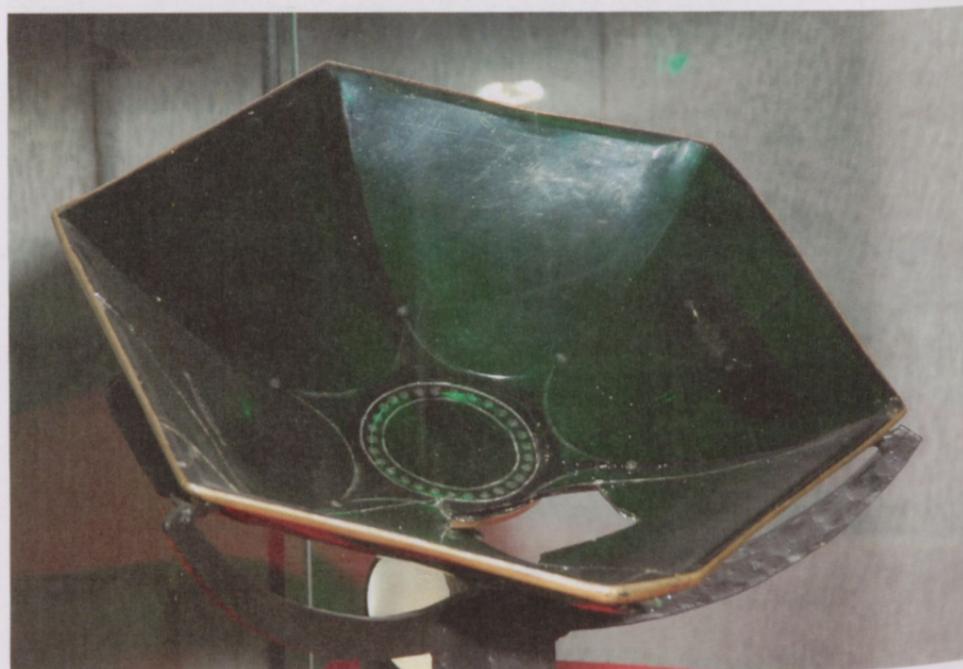


FIGURE 46 *The Sacro Catino (Holy Chalice), San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo (before 2017 restoration): C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 16 *Santa Maria di Castello, nave.* Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova-chiesa_di_santa_maria_di_castello-interno_navata.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 17 *Spoliated blocks containing Kufic inscriptions with verses from the Koran, nave arcade, Santa Maria di Castello, date unknown.* Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 4 *Porta Soprana, 1150–58.* Photo: Flavio Ferrari, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_torri_di_Porta_Soprana,_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 4 *Porta Soprana, 1150–58.* Photo: Flavio Ferrari, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_torri_di_Porta_Soprana,_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.

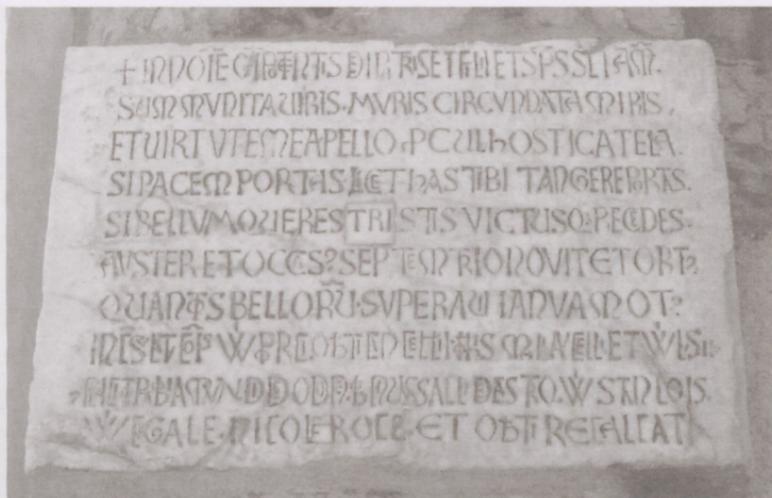


FIGURE 5 *Porta Soprana, 1155 inscription on north portal. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 6 *Remains of the monastery of Sant'Andrea, early twelfth century. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 54

Portal with lion's head, beasts, and a 1260 inscription commemorating the construction of the Palazzo San Giorgio. Photo: Twice25, Wikimedia Commons: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/file:dscf8103.jpg>, accessed 25 August 2017.

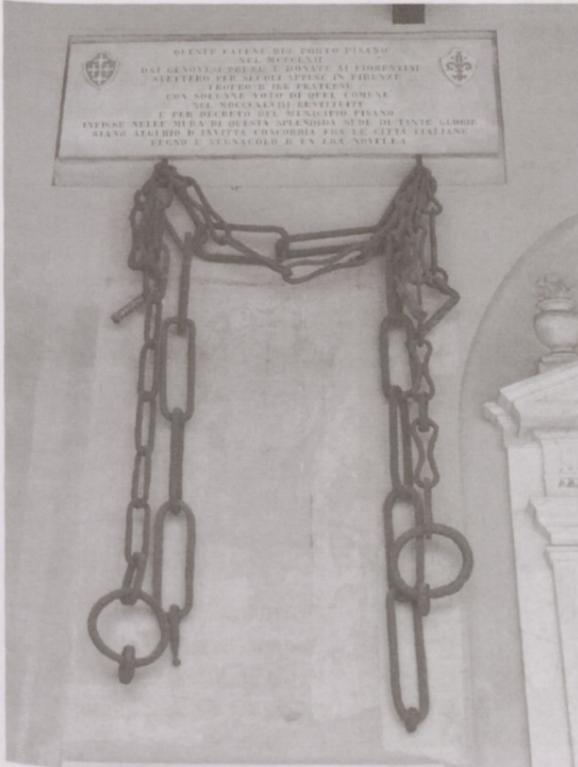


FIGURE 55

Pisan harbor chains, formerly hung as trophies on the Palazzo San Giorgio, the churches of San Matteo and Santa Maria di Castello, and elsewhere, but returned in 1860 and now hanging in the Camposanto, Pisa. Photo: Hispalois, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CamposantoPisa_cadena_puerto_pisano.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 56 *Marble relief showing Porto Pisano with intact harbor chains, 1290, formerly in the cloister of San Matteo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 57 *Palazzo Ducale, rusticated loggia and Torre Grimaldina, thirteenth century. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 22 *Construction of the cathedral of San Lorenzo, illustrated in the Cocharelli Codex, parchment, Italy, late fourteenth century. London, British Library, Add. MS 27965, fol. 7. Photo © The British Library Board.*

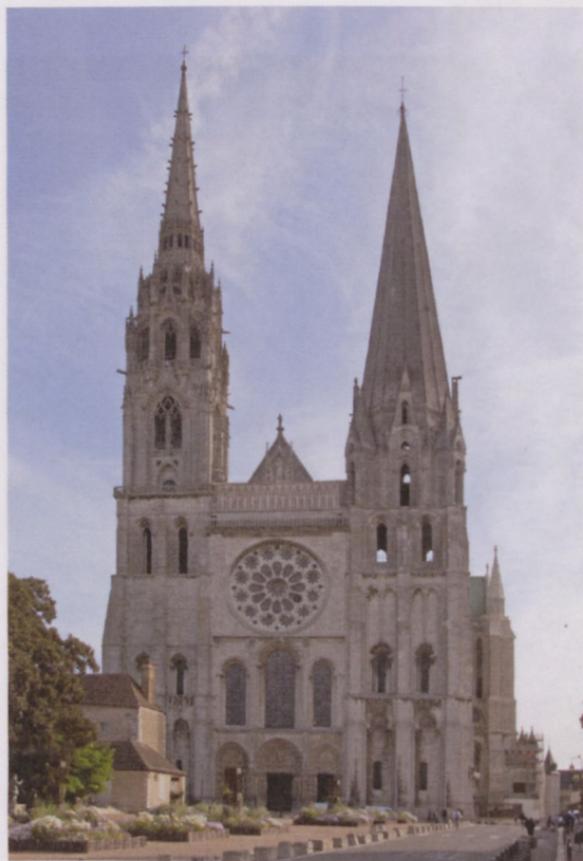


FIGURE 23 *Chartres Cathedral, façade with Portail royal, mid-twelfth century. Photo: Tony Hisgett, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_Cathedral.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 24 *Cathedral church of San Lorenzo, façade, eleventh to sixteenth centuries.* Photo: Jensens, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cattedrale_di_San_Lorenzo_Genoa.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.

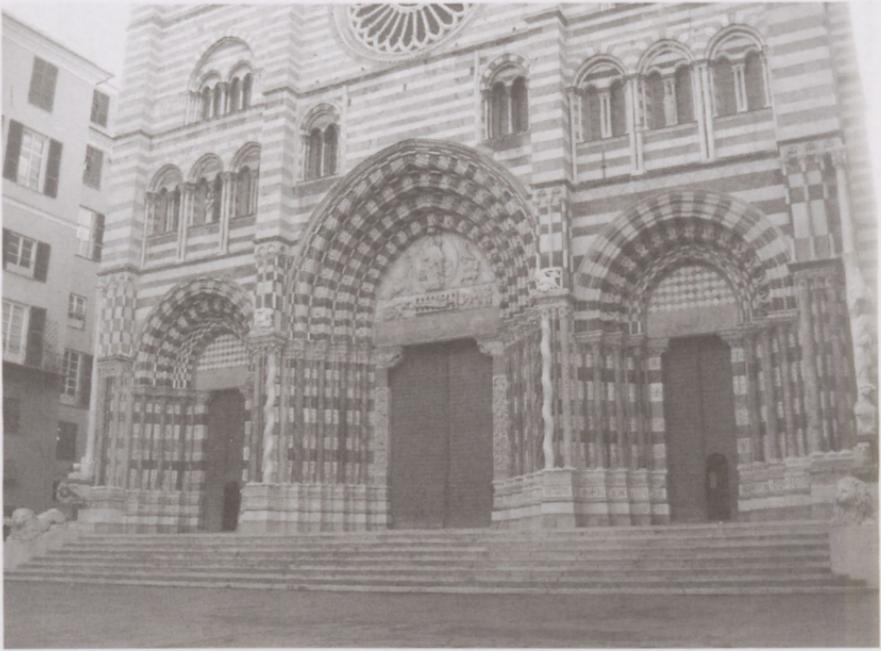


FIGURE 25 *San Lorenzo, triple-bayed west portal, ca. 1215–25.* Photo: Alessio Sbarbaro, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San_Lorenzo_Genova_01.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 26
San Lorenzo, central portal, ca. 1215–25. Photo: Alessio Sbarbaro, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San_Lorenzo_Genova_facciata_03.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 27 *San Lorenzo, central portal tympanum, Christ in Majesty, ca. 1215–25. Photo: C.E. Beněš.*



FIGURE 28 *San Lorenzo, central portal tympanum, crown of Saint Lawrence, ca. 1225. Photo: CSL.*



FIGURE 29 *San Lorenzo, central portal, detail of polychrome decoration. Photo: R. Müller.*



FIGURE 30
*San Lorenzo, north façade and
John the Baptist portal. Photo:
CGM, 66, fig. 17.*

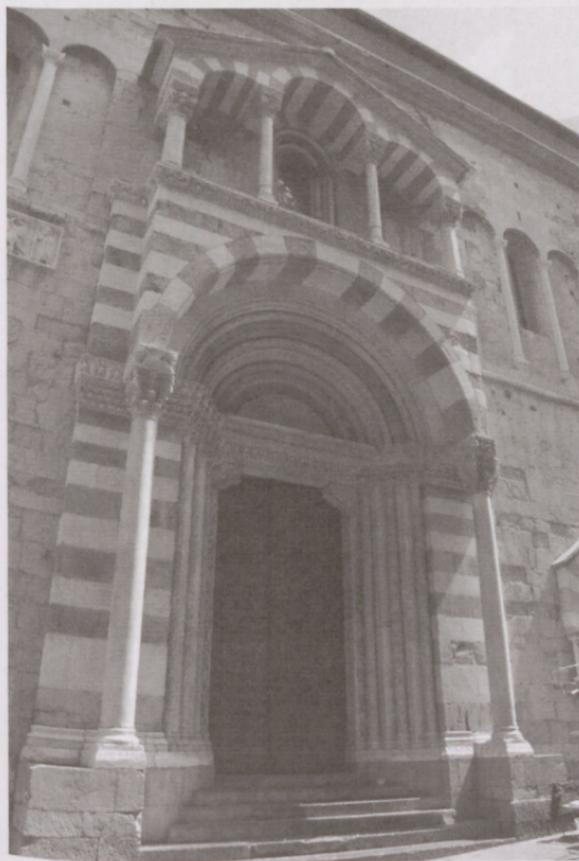


FIGURE 31
*San Lorenzo, south façade and
Saint Gotthard portal. Photo:
G. Gorse.*

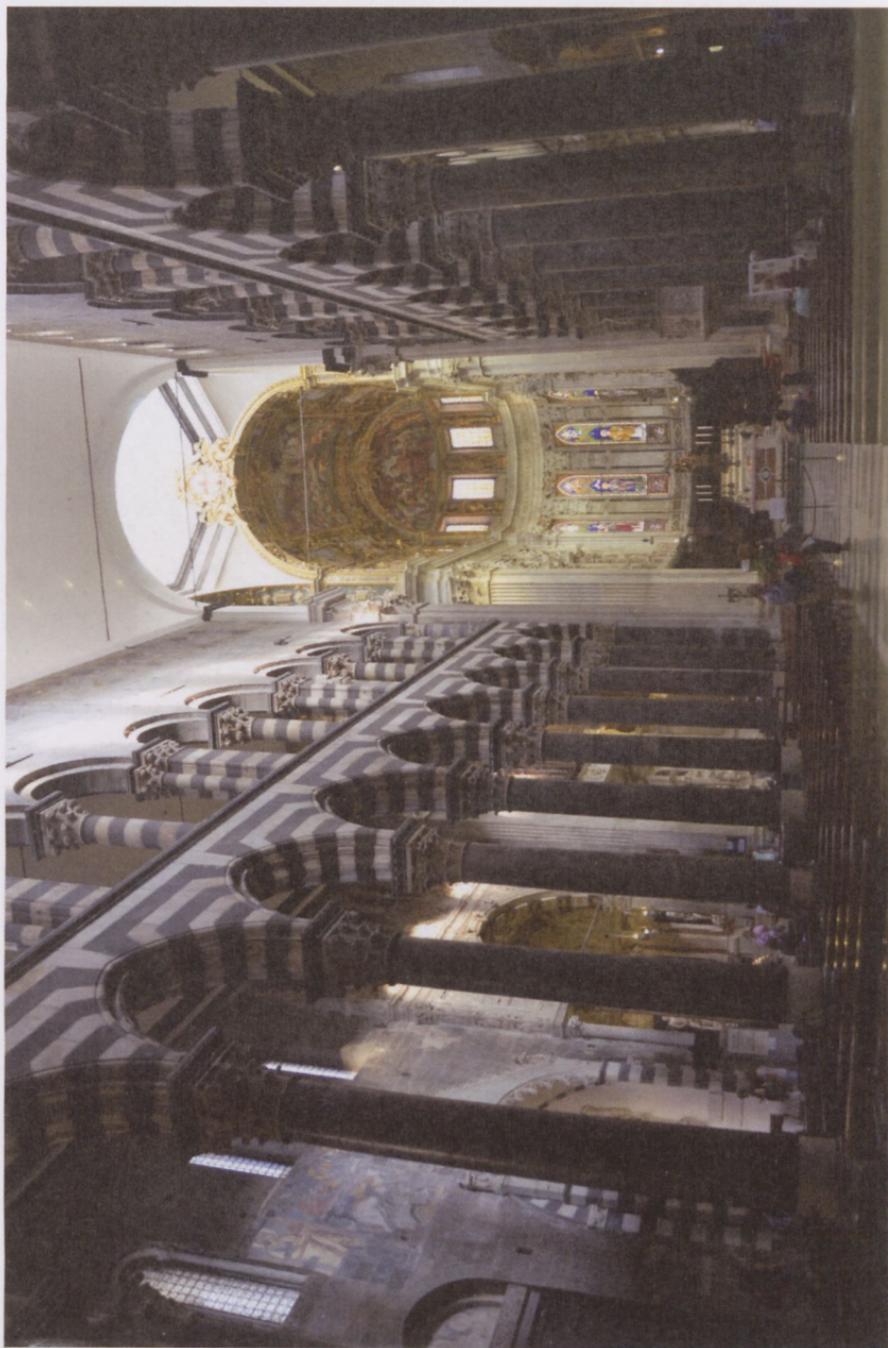


FIGURE 32 *San Lorenzo, central nave.* Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 33 *San Lorenzo, north nave arcade, Janus head and inscription, ca. 1307–12. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 34
San Lorenzo, north aisle, view into the chapel of Saint John the Baptist by Domenico Gagini, 1450–65. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 35 *Domenico Gagini, chapel of Saint John the Baptist, 1450–65, San Lorenzo, north aisle. Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duomo_di_genova,_cappella_di_s._giovanni_battista,_1451-65,_01.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 36 *Greek master, Christ in Majesty (Deesis), fresco, ca. 1312, San Lorenzo, endonarthex (west portal interior). Photo: Daderot, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ_and_the_Apostles_fresco_-_San_Lorenzo_\(Genoa\)-_DSC01938.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ_and_the_Apostles_fresco_-_San_Lorenzo_(Genoa)-_DSC01938.JPG), accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 37 *Saint George flanked by Saints Peter and John the Baptist, fresco fragment, ca. 1312, San Lorenzo, north wall. Photo: CSL.*



FIGURE 38 Christ as the Man of Sorrows flanked by the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist, *fresco*, ca. 1312, *San Lorenzo, north portal interior*. Photo: C. Di Fabio, *CGM*, 270, fig. 54.



FIGURE 39 Mary Eleousa with Saints Nicholas and Lawrence, *fresco*, ca. 1312, *San Lorenzo, south portal interior*. Photo: C. Di Fabio, *CGM*, 269, fig. 53.



FIGURE 9 *San Matteo, façade, ca. 1278.* Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova_san_matteo_facciata_01.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 10 *San Matteo, façade inscriptions, thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.* Photo: C.E. Beneš.



FIGURE 70

Cogorno, San Salvatore dei Fieschi, thirteenth century. Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cogorno-basilica_dei_Fieschi-strutturale.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 71 *Cogorno, Palazzo Fieschi, thirteenth century.* Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cogorno-IMG_0006.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 47 *The Pallio di San Lorenzo, metallic thread on silk, Museo di Sant'Agostino, Photo (before 2017 restoration): Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa.*

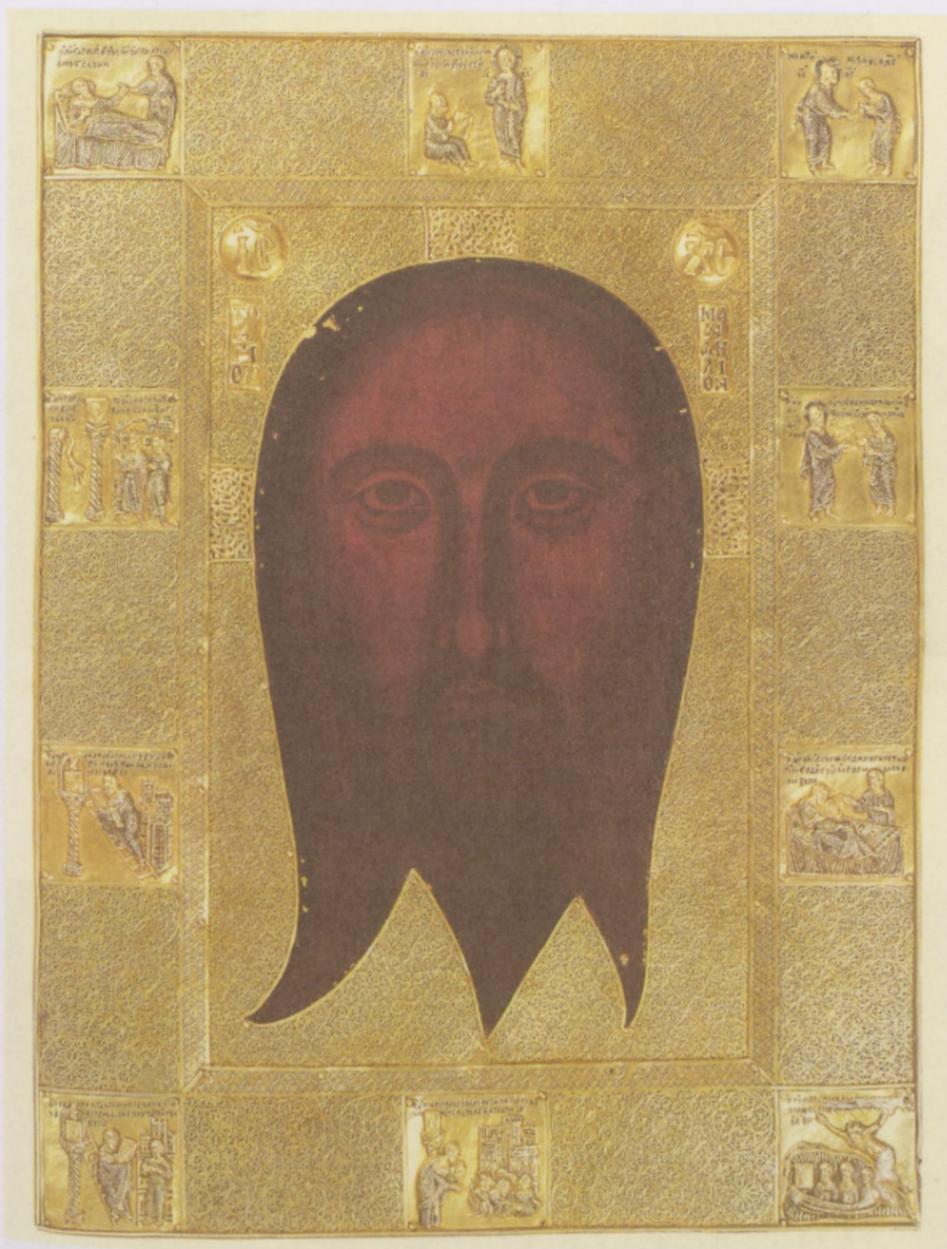


FIGURE 13 *Sacro Volto or Mandylion, a gift from the Byzantine emperor presented by the doge of Genoa to San Bartolomeo degli Armeni in 1384. Photo: G. Rosser.*



FIGURE 43 *Giovanni Pisano, figures of Queen Margaret and angels from the tomb of Queen Margaret of Brabant, 1313, formerly in San Lorenzo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 44 *Marble griffin, ca. 1300, formerly in San Lorenzo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 77

Bruges, Saaihalle (Genoese loggia, now the Frietmuseum), built 1399–1441. Photo: Ludvig14, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bruges_Saaihalle_9277_CH29895.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 78 *Bruges, Saaihalle, soprapporta relief of Saint George and the dragon, early fifteenth century. Photo: Reiner Halama, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brügge-Genuese_Lodge-29895-58219.jpg?uselang=nl, accessed 25 August 2017.*

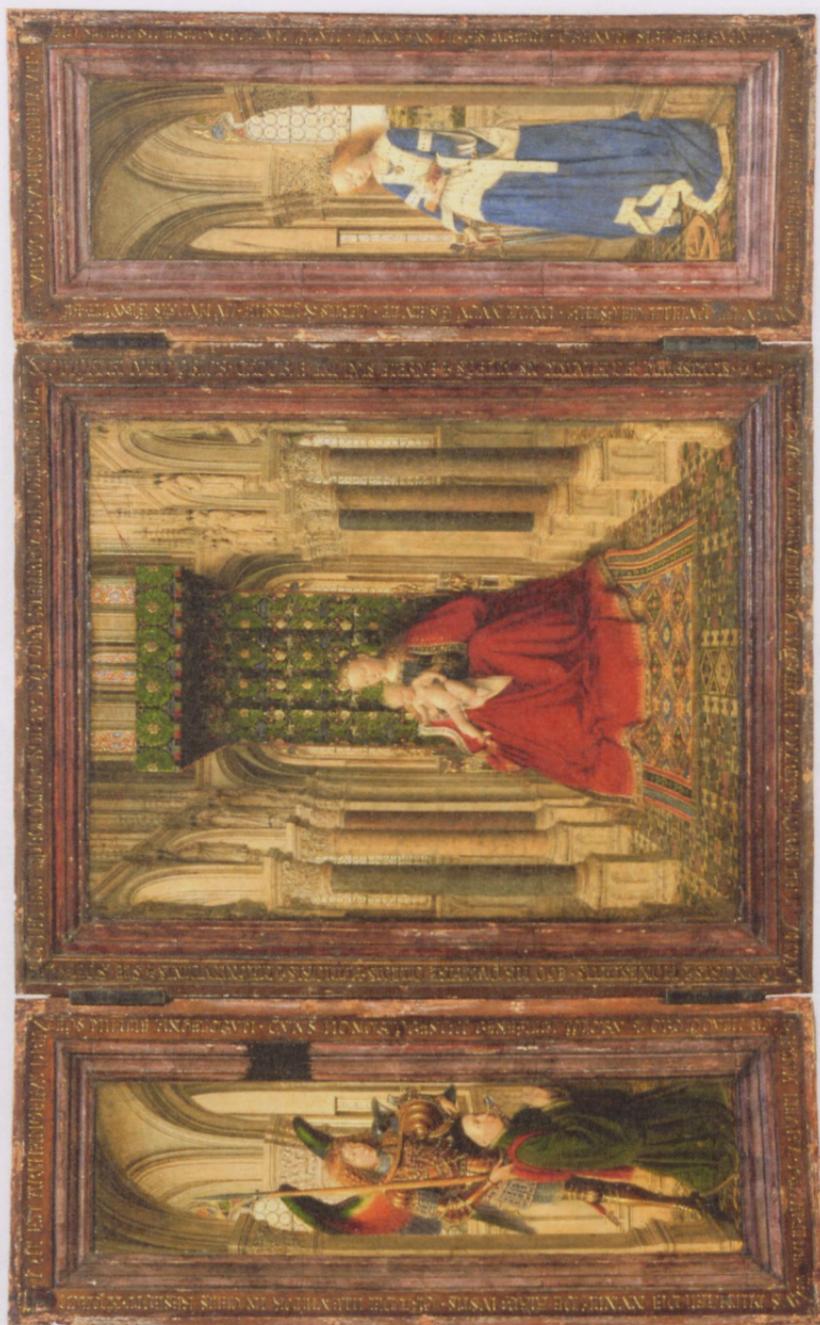


FIGURE 75 *Jan van Eyck, Dresden Triptych: Madonna and Child with the Archangel Michael and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, 1437, inner wings, probably commissioned for the Giustiniani family of Genoa, who maintained an active commercial presence in Bruges. Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Hans-Peter Klut, courtesy Art Resource.*



FIGURE 45 *Platter of Saint John the Baptist, late Roman stonework in chalcedony with added metalwork, Paris, ca. 1400, San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo: G. Gorse.*

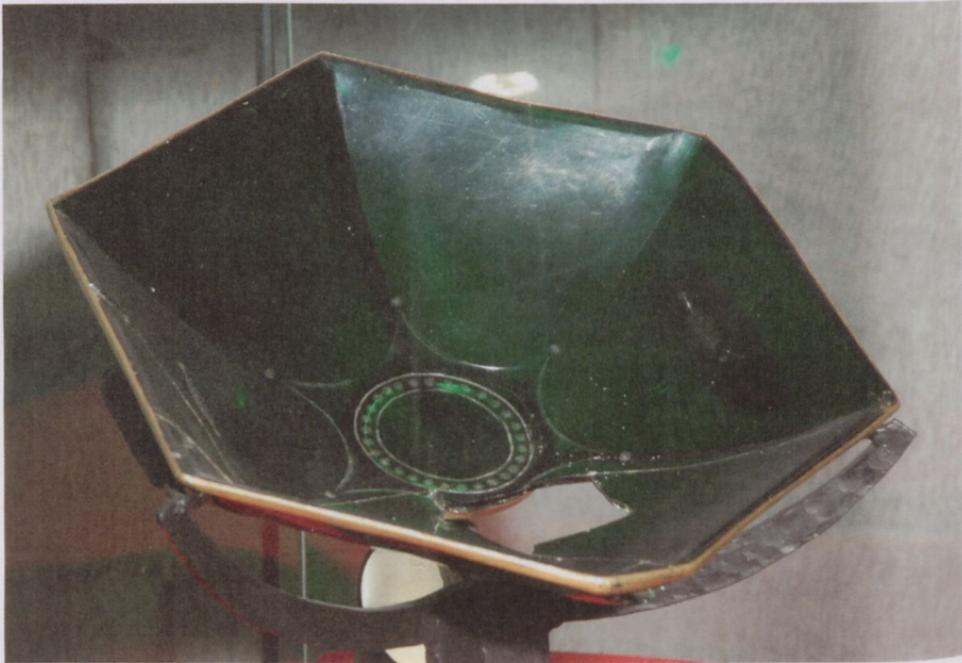


FIGURE 46 *The Sacro Catino (Holy Chalice), San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo (before 2017 restoration): C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 76 Pontremoli, *Santissima Annunziata*, altarpiece of the Virgin and Child with the four evangelists, ca. 1470. Photo: Algeri and De Floriani, *La pittura in Liguria: Il Quattrocento* (Genoa, 1992).



FIGURE 18 *Ceramic tiles with monochrome decoration in blue, Santa Maria di Castello, ca. 1400. Photo: Pessa and Ramagli, Azulejos e Iaggioni.*



FIGURE 19 *Jost Amman (also known as Jos Amann of Ravensburg), Annunciation, fresco, 1451, Santa Maria di Castello, cloister loggia. Photo: Larissa Veronesi, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jos_Amann_Annunciazione_1451_Santa_Maria_di_Castello_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 20

Anonymous artist, prophets and sibyls, with Amman Annunciation (fig. 19) fresco, ca. 1450, Santa Maria di Castello, cloister loggia. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 21

Pier Francesco Sacchi, Altarpiece with Saint Antoninus with the Baptist and Thomas Aquinas, ca. 1526, Santa Maria di Castello, south aisle, Botto Chapel. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 18 *Ceramic tiles with monochrome decoration in blue, Santa Maria di Castello, ca. 1400. Photo: Pessa and Ramagli, Azulejos e laggioni.*



FIGURE 19 *Jost Amman (also known as Jos Amann of Ravensburg), Annunciation, fresco, 1451, Santa Maria di Castello, cloister loggia. Photo: Larissa Veronesi, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jos_Amann_-_Annunciazione_1451_Santa_Maria_di_Castello_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*