OFFPRINT FROM

Image and Belief

STUDIES IN CELEBRATION OF
THE EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE INDEX OF CHRISTIAN ART

EDITED BY
Colum Hourihane

INDEX OF CHRISTIAN ART
DEPARTMENT OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
Contents

Introduction
COLUM HOURIHANE

PART 1. ICONOGRAPHY
JAROSLAV FOLDA

The Iconography of Rejection: Jews and Other Monstrous Races
DEBRA HASSIG

Nipples, Entrails, Severed Heads, and Skin: Devotional Images for Madame Marie
ALISON STONES

Moral Structure in the Ashburnham Pentateuch
DOROTHY HOOGLAND VERKERK

A Woman’s Power of Prayer versus the Devil in a Book of Hours of ca. 1300
ADELAIDE BENNETT

Interpictoriality in the Limoges Chasses of Stephen, Martial, and Valerie
CYNTHIA HAHN

"Of the Significance of Colours": The Iconography of Colour in Romanesque and Early Gothic Book Illumination
ANDREAS PETZOLD

Looking Eastward: The Story of Noc at Monreale Cathedral
JAMES D’EMILIO

The Architecture and Sculpture of the Portal of the South Side of Arezzo Cathedral
GIANNI FREN I

Daring Conflation? A Difficult Image in the Genesis Sequence of the Eton Roundels (Eton College, Ms. 177, f. 2r)
AVRIL HENRY

The Personal Appropriation of Iconographic Forms: Two Franciscan Signatures
JOHN V. FLEMING

PART 2. METHODOLOGY
How to Improve Art-Historical Services
LUTZ HEUSINGER

The Persistence of Mythological, Religious, and Literary Narratives as Subjects of Works of Art
HELENE E. ROBERTS

The Iconography of The Ship of State by Peter Paul Rubens: A Variant on the Theme "Hercules am Scheidewege"
PETER VAN HUISSTEDE

ICONCLASS and Its Application to Primary Documents
CAROL TOGNERI

Ulasas Athenas: Owls to Athens
HANS BRANDHORST

Translating ICONCLASS and the Connectivity Concept of the Iconclass2000 Browser
JÖRGEN VAN DEN BERG AND GERDA G. J. DUIJFJES-VELEKoop
Looking Eastward: The Story of Noe at Monreale Cathedral

JAMES D'EMILIO

FROM the late eleventh through the thirteenth century, Old Testament narrative cycles formed an important part of church decoration in central and southern Italy as well as in Sicily. These cycles have been linked to the fifth-century paintings in the naves of St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s in Rome, and their popularity explained by the artistic influence of Rome and Montecassino, and the authority and prestige of the early Roman churches in the age of the reform papacy.¹ Studies of their iconography have explored their relationship to the early Roman cycles and used them to complete our knowledge of those lost works.²

That these cycles preserve iconographic features of the fifth-century decoration of the Roman churches has drawn them into the broader discussion of Old Testament illustration and the supposed sources for monumental works in early manuscript illumination. Of course, at the head of this recension of scholarly studies lay Tikkanen’s discovery of the relationship between the Cotton Genesis and the mosaics of the narthex of San Marco in Venice.³ Time was to prove that an exceptional case in monumental art, but the study of Old Testament illustration has been driven by efforts to reconstruct such extensively illustrated early manuscripts and trace their recensions


through later works thought to be dependent upon them. For a generation, Kurt Weitzmann set the scholarly agenda in this area, as he developed a method based upon text criticism for studying illuminations, establishing family relationships among them, and reconstructing the extensively illustrated archetypes that he imagined at the head of the recensions.

Such efforts emphasized the development of the iconography of individual scenes over time and gave less attention to the principles behind their selection and arrangement within single cycles. Admittedly, the study of whole fresco cycles is often frustrated by their fragmentary state and the difficulty of appreciating their overall layout from photographs. By contrast, photographic archives like the Index of Christian Art encourage the analysis of individual scenes and create a context for them that their makers could never have imagined. As scholars sought to fit these Old Testament cycles into large families of related illustrations, they highlighted their similarities, explaining differences in terms of mechanical processes, like contamination or conflation, within an essentially conservative tradition of copying. The novice who stumbles across lists of allegedly related cycles in scholarly footnotes on this or that iconographic peculiarity might be quite surprised to see how many of these cycles appear; in fact, someone not already seduced by the power of their lost models might hardly recognize their similarities at all.

After all, these frescoes and mosaics decorate churches ranging in scale and importance from the abbey of Montecassino and the royal foundations of Norman Sicily to modest chapels and convents hidden in the hills of Latium and the Abruzzo. The placement and arrangement of the Old Testament cycle, its physical and thematic relationship to New Testament cycles, the selection of scenes and the density of the narrative all vary considerably from site to site, even while the iconography of particular scenes may retain remarkable similarities. Consider, for a moment, the placement of some cycles commonly considered together: Old Testament scenes once decorated the atrium at Montecassino; on the aisle walls at Sant’Angelo in Formis, they envelop the christologi-

---


7 John Lowden draws attention to how the working methods of modern scholars shape views of manuscript illuminators’ uses of sources: Octateuchs (as in note 4), 91. Cf. Willibald Sauerlander’s observations on how Porter’s photography of Romanesque monuments, aided by the automobile, created a "motorized representation of Romanesque monumental art": "La cultura figurativa emiliana in età romanica," in Nicholas e il’arte del suo tempo, ed. A. M. Romanini, vol. 1 (Ferrara, 1985), 53–55.

8 Cf. the lists in Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 205–6, 250–51; Bergman, Salerno Ivories (as in note 1), 7–8; or Kessler, “Old St. Peter’s” (as in note 1), 126–27.
cal cycle of the nave; they appear on the north wall and—as a prelude to a christological cycle—on the upper register of the south wall at San Pietro in Valle, in the upper register of a three-tiered arrangement on both walls of the nave at San Giovanni a Porta Latina in Rome, and in two registers in the naves of the Palatine Chapel in Palermo and Monreale Cathedral.

Without denying the remarkable persistence of iconographic features of individual scenes, the quotation of prominent elements of prestigious models, or the family relationships among these Old Testament cycles, we might give more attention to how artists responded creatively—and critically—to their models as they adapted them to architectural contexts, integrated them into overall schemes of decoration, and enriched them with new meanings. Recent studies illustrate the possibilities of such an approach. For the late twelfth-century frescoes in the Becket Chapel at Anagni, Herbert Kessler described "the manipulation of...the narratives to focus on the altar" and analyzed how the borrowed imagery served as a "means for integrating a new saint into the established church hierarchy." In the mid-thirteenth-century decoration at the Basilian monastery of Grottaferrata, he showed how the Old Testament narratives were integrated into an overall program shaped by the writings of Basil the Great and thirteenth-century debates over the Trinity.

Potentially more far-reaching are the remarks of William Tronzo in his study of one of the distinguishing features of the New Testament cycles linked with St. Peter's: the monumental crucifixion whose size and format disrupt the regular arrangement of tiered scenes. In recovering the original liturgical setting for this image, Tronzo distanced it from its copies and recognized the originality of the later artists' efforts "to create an artistically and conceptually unified whole out of what was a pastiche: the two chronologically disparate and unrelated decorations in the nave of Saint Peter's."

The work of Marilyn Lavin and others affords new insights into the overall disposition of cycles of frescoes and the strategies that artists and viewers relied upon to make them communicate their meaning. In fact, studies of visual narratives in diverse media and settings—stained glass windows, bronze doors, cloister capitals, carved portals and painted altarpieces—encourage investigation of the narrative strategies and disposition of fresco cycles that have too long been viewed in the shadow of their more prestigious models or mined for their contribution to the understanding of the iconography of individual scenes.

Comparison of the Old Testament cycles in the naves of the Palatine Chapel at Palermo and of Monreale Cathedral offers an opportunity to watch artists responding critically and creatively to

9 For the study of Old Testament illustration in manuscripts, one can cite the exemplary work of John Lowden, Osteruachs (as in note 4), in shifting our attention from the reconstruction of recensions and imagined archetypes to an intimate look at the working practices and choices of scribes and illuminators.
10 Kessler, "Old St. Peter's" (as in note 1), 132-34.
11 Ibid., 135-44.
12 Tronzo, "Prestige of St. Peter's" (as in note 1).
14 Lavin, Place of Narrative (as in note 6); M. Kupfer, Romanesque Wall Painting in Central France (New Haven, 1993), 59-147.
a nearly contemporary work as they sought to reproduce it in a new setting. The artists at Monreale adapted the cycle to the huge scale of the cathedral, altered the relationship of the scenes to the nave arcade, and, most interesting of all, adjusted it to prevent the westward movement of the narrative on the south wall from competing with the progression toward the apse, the focal point of the cathedral’s decoration. Viewing these scenes in their architectural setting—and not under their subject headings—suggests new explanations for the choice, arrangement, and composition of individual scenes.

The mosaic decoration of the Palatine Chapel of Roger II was underway by 1143—the date that appears in the mosaic inscription around the base of the crossing dome, but was only completed under his son and successor, William I (1154–66). The building is an architectural hybrid, combining a Western basilica with the characteristic forms of the centrally planned Middle Byzantine church. To the west, a nave of five bays is flanked by aisles and, to the east, the domed choir and lateral bays of the raised sanctuary each terminate in an eastern apse. The royal functions of the two-storied chapel complicated its design and shaped the layout of its lavish decoration. A raised throne platform against the west wall of the nave and a hypothetical royal balcony in the north bay of the crossing created focal points and privileged viewpoints of the decoration of the chapel.

The mosaic decoration falls into two groups which match the architectural divisions of the building. The eastern choir offers a variant of the Middle Byzantine system centered on the dome, where the bust of the Pantocrator is ringed by angels, prophets, and evangelists in a hierarchy of descending orders, and completed by a christological feast cycle in the lateral bays. As Kitzinger demonstrated long ago, that feast cycle has been arranged in deference to the view from a royal balcony, once set in the north wall of the crossing. To the west, narratives of Genesis from the

---

16 Cf. the remarks of Ernst Kitzinger on the unusual degree of correspondences between the two monumental cycles: The Mosaics of Monreale (Palermo, 1960), 33–43, 50–63.


18 This commonplace view of the design has recently been modified by Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 19, 104. Precedents for the design have also been cited in the plans of Basilian monastic churches in eastern Sicily: B. Brenk, “Il concetto progettuale degli edifici reali in epoca normanna in Sicilia,” Quaderni dell’Accademia delle arti del disegno 2 (1990), 8.


20 William Tronzo has recently argued for the existence of a balcony at the east end of the north wall of the nave for viewing the king and hearing the liturgy: Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 49–54, 98–99, 122–23. For the western throne platform, the uses of the nave as a royal ceremonial hall, and the decoration of the west wall: Ćurčić, “Some Palatine Aspects” (as in note 19), 140–43; Borsook, Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 20–22; B. Brenk, “Zur Bedeutung des Mosaiks an der Westwand der Cappella Palatina in Palermo,” in Studien zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte: Festschrift für Horst Hallensleben zum 65. Geburtstag (Amsterdam, 1995), 185–94; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 68–78, 95, 99–104, 122–24, 130–33.


22 Kitzinger, “Mosaics of the Cappella Palatina” (as in note 21), 279–88.
THE STORY OF NOE AT MONREALE

Creation to the story of Jacob wrap around the nave in two tiers (Figs. 1–5), while stories of Sts. Peter and Paul decorate the aisle walls.

The relationship of the nave mosaics to the overall program of the Palatine Chapel remains a matter of debate. There is widespread agreement that they represent the last phases of the decorative program, and their execution has commonly been attributed to local craftsmen.23 Whether they were planned from the start is another matter.24 Whatever its place in the initial program, the use of an Old Testament cycle has been explained by reference to Italian traditions, based upon the cycles at Rome and Montecassino.25

Although Demus acknowledged that the choice of an Old Testament cycle reflected Italian practices, he attributed the iconographic links among these cycles to common models in the Greek tradition of Old Testament illustration.26 He so stressed the importance of these models that he flatly rejected the idea of any programmatic intent in the Sicilian cycles. “The illustrative cycle,” he wrote, “has no deeper meaning; both the choice and the manner in which the narrative was treated were conditioned only by influences from outside . . . .”27 Recent scholarship has been less friendly to such passive notions of artistic influence, and scholars have looked for meaning in distinctive features of the Genesis cycle at Palermo: the representation of the seven days of Creation, the prominence of the stories of Noe and Jacob, and the closing of the narrative with Jacob’s wrestling with the angel.28

These features were retained at Monreale Cathedral, where the Genesis cycle follows the same path around the nave, begins and ends with the same episodes, and repeats nearly all the scenes from Palermo, often with similar iconography and tituli. In fact, the close relationship between these two cycles represents but one of the links between the Palatine Chapel and William II’s foundation at Monreale, where many features of the decoration and architecture of the small chapel were reproduced and brought into harmony on an immensely larger scale.29

The relationship between the two Genesis cycles often extends to minor details of the iconography and composition of individual scenes. Consider, for example, the two versions of the Judgment of Adam and Eve (Figs. 4, 10). Beyond their overall similarities, they share minor details: Eve’s X-shaped hair net; her right hand pointing at the serpent; Adam’s right hand placed over his breast; the pattern of trilobate leaves, fruit, and branches in the round crown of the tree; the form of the bushes; and the separation of the two types of foliage by the serpent.

23 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 55–57; Kitzinger, “Mosaic Decoration in Sicily” (as in note 21), 153–54; Borsook, Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 39–40.
24 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 46–58; Kitzinger, “Mosaic Decoration in Sicily” (as in note 21), 153–54. For two recent, contrasting views with ample references to older literature: Borsook, Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 17–50; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 62–68, 94–96.
25 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 205–9, 223–25; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 65.
26 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 250–57.
27 Ibid., 245.
28 Nersessian, “The Cappella Palatina of Roger II” (as in note 17), 48–93; Borsook, Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 31–33.
Style and scale account for the most obvious differences. At Monreale, for example, God strides swiftly forward; his robe is broken into stylized forms by swirling lines, and the flurrying folds of the hem are repeated three times, all accenting his motion. This stock figure of the new dynamic style reappears in whole or in part throughout the church. In the Old Testament cycle, the new workshop at Monreale energized the scenes at Palermo with the nervous idiom of late twelfth-century Byzantine painting.\textsuperscript{30}

Other changes respond to the greater scale of the decoration at Monreale. In the Judgment of Adam and Eve, the artist added a second tree and widened the scene. Now, God’s hand is completely to the left of the tree, and the figures of Adam and Eve no longer overlap. Similar changes appear throughout the cycle as the artists exploited the vast expanse of wall space: individual scenes spread over a larger area; secondary figures and props multiply; episodes combined at Palermo earn separate panels at Monreale; new scenes complete the cycle.

Besides the changes attributable to style and scale, Demus noted several new features of significance at Monreale: the Creator seated on a globe, the voice of Abel’s blood, and Noe pressing grapes in the vineyard.\textsuperscript{31} He argued that the artists in the two churches relied on different model books for monumental decoration composed at Constantinople.\textsuperscript{32} For Kitzinger, the artists at Monreale responded flexibly to the cycle in the Palatine Chapel, using it as a compositional skeleton which they enlarged by drawing freely upon other sources.\textsuperscript{33} In effect, Demus reduced the iconographic changes at Monreale to the mechanical reproduction of new models and removed the problem of interpreting them to Constantinople. Kitzinger’s approach focuses on the two surviving monuments, and, by inviting us to turn from sources to choices, he offers a starting point for an inquiry into the concerns which guided the responses of the artists at Monreale to the cycle at Palermo.

In the Palatine Chapel, the tall stilted arches of the nave left small, awkwardly shaped spaces for the lower scenes.\textsuperscript{34} The artists treated these like rectangular panels cut by the arcade. As a result, figures are partly cut off and the odd effect of the cropped scenes is heightened by the thinness of the border lining the arcade. As the artists crowded figures into the cramped scenes, those in successive episodes overlapped, while their orientation and the direction of their movement changed from one scene to another (Figs. 3, 5).\textsuperscript{35} In addition, the narrative was interrupted by the medallions crowning each arch and the prominent void of the arcades, which threatened to swallow up the moving figures.

This arrangement seems unsatisfactory when compared with the registers of panels laid out on the ample walls of other Italian basilicas, but the lack of a clear orientation in the narrative might have been less jarring in the Palatine Chapel. After all, the west-east axis was but one—and not the most important—of those along which the mosaicists organized their decoration. The dome of the crossing, the royal view from the north balcony toward the south wall of the crossing,

\textsuperscript{30} Kitzinger, \textit{Mosaics of Monreale} (as in note 16), 69–84.

\textsuperscript{31} Though cited by Demus as a difference between the two cycles, the absence of the figure of Abel’s blood at Palermo could be a result of the almost complete restoration of that section of the cycle.

\textsuperscript{32} Demus, \textit{Mosaics of Norman Sicily} (as in note 1), 246–61, 331–34.

\textsuperscript{33} Kitzinger, \textit{Mosaics of Monreale} (as in note 16), 54–63.

\textsuperscript{34} Various authors have commented on the awkward fit of the scenes in the lower register at Palermo: Demus, \textit{Mosaics of Norman Sicily} (as in note 1), 204–5, 261–62; Tronzo, \textit{Cultures of His Kingdom} (as in note 17), 65–67.

\textsuperscript{35} On the combining of scenes in single panels at Palermo: Demus, \textit{Mosaics of Norman Sicily} (as in note 1), 247–48.
the mosaic above the throne platform of the west wall, and the mosaic of the Nativity at the east end of the south aisle—visible to those entering from the principal doorway in the south aisle—offered competing focal points which diminished the importance of the modest apse of the chapel. The western throne platform and the marked divisions between the nave and choir made it appropriate for the mosaics of the small five-bay nave to turn inward without asserting a strong longitudinal thrust.

At Monreale, the artists fit the rectangular scenes comfortably above the nave arcade. Demus, characteristically, suggested that the change might have been "brought about by the influence of South Italian prototypes." It is better understood as part of the careful rethinking of the relationship between the architecture and mosaics at Monreale, as these were planned and carried out together in one swift campaign. Not only did this unity of design set Monreale apart from the Palatine Chapel, but the architecture and decoration at Monreale were powerfully focused on one point: the Pantocrator of the eastern apse.

On the north wall of the nave, the artists exploited the rhythms of the arcade, as the rolling landscapes and moving figures accelerate the rightward progress of the narrative toward the sanctuary (Figs. 10, 11). There is little respite from this motion. The two panels with Rebecca and the servant draw us rapidly forward, and the contrast with the Palatine Chapel could not be greater. There, the camels face in different directions, and Rebecca and the servant ride off into the void (Fig. 5). In the story of Isaac, Jacob, and Esau, the artists added new scenes and placed two in each panel to quicken the pace (Fig. 11). No leftward movement is allowed: as Isaac speaks to him, Esau faces the viewer as a bridge to the next figure of him striding up the curve of the arch (Fig. 11).

The artists' success at speeding the narrative on the north wall of the nave has been noted by Kitzinger and others, but it has overshadowed the clever handling of the opposite problem on the south wall: how to arrest the rightward movement of the narrative away from the sanctuary (Figs. 6–8). In three of the seven full panels, the ark provides a central focus, while in two others the

68 Cf. notes 20–22. The redundant image of the Pantocrator in the central apse has been widely regarded as evidence of a change of plan in which it may have replaced an earlier image of the Virgin: Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 53–55; Kitzinger, "Mosaics of the Cappella Palatina" (as in note 21), 272–73, 288; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 92–94. Borsook, however, views it in relationship to the mosaics of the west wall: Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 20–22. Tronzo discusses the importance of the view of the mosaic of the Nativity from the entrance in the south aisle: Cultures of His Kingdom, 56, 112–19.

37 Tronzo describes the decoration of the nave as turned in upon itself: Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 67.

38 Kitzinger, Mosaics of Monreale (as in note 16), 92; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 66–67.

39 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 204–5, 237.

40 The unity of the architecture and decoration at Monreale and the effort there to bring into harmony diverse elements of the Palatine Chapel have been stressed by several authors, e.g., Kitzinger, Mosaics of Monreale (as in note 16), 19, 67–68, 95–103; Tronzo, Cultures of His Kingdom (as in note 17), 66–67.

41 Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 103–4, 227; Kitzinger, Mosaics of Monreale (as in note 16), 26, 105–10; Krönig, Cathedral of Monreale (as in note 29), 44–45.

42 O. Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium (London, 1948), 68; Kitzinger, Mosaics of Monreale (as in note 16), 92.

43 Demus explains the expanded cycle at Monreale as a more faithful rendering of a model that was awkwardly compressed at Palermo, rather than conceding the possibility of an ad hoc expansion of the cycle at Monreale: Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 248.

44 This posed less of a problem in the upper register where the windows broke the flow of the narrative and the Creation cycle may have been conceived of as, appro-
Tower of Babel or Noe's family weight the center of the composition. In the scene of the animals entering the ark, four poles even anchor the ark to the nave arcades (Fig. 6). This scene, like that of Isaac and Esau on the north wall, represented an addition to the Palatine cycle. On the south wall, however, such additions increased the number of centralized compositions.

The designers of the scenes on the south wall were not content to slow the narrative with static compositions. They altered the rightward movement that marked some of these scenes at Palermo and weighted the left side of several compositions. In the new scene of the animals entering the ark, the two principal figures of Noe and one of his sons face left, forcing Noe to pull the animals awkwardly into the left side of the ark. In fact, Noe faces left from the left side of the ark in three successive scenes (Fig. 6). By contrast, in both corresponding scenes at Palermo, Noe peers from the right door of the ark, and, behind him, nearly all of the figures look to the right through the windows in the ark (Fig. 1). Even the placement of the inscriptions orient the narrative to the left at Monreale. In the three easternmost scenes of the Noe story, the inscriptions occupy two or three lines at the left, an arrangement that is unparalleled on the north wall (Fig. 6).

More important iconographic changes take place in the scenes of Noe's offering, his drunkenness, and the building of the Tower of Babel; these, too, represent efforts to slow the rightward movement of the narrative. In the new scene of Noe's offering—not shown at Palermo—the artists centered the composition on the compact group of Noe and his family (Fig. 7). The inscription fills five lines at the left, while, to the right, the figure of God is reduced to a bust, in contrast to the standing figure beneath the rainbow in the conflated scene of Noe leaving the ark at Palermo (Fig. 1). In the larger setting at Monreale, the smaller figure of God is exceptional, but its use is consistent with other efforts to draw attention away from the right side of the panels.

In the scene of Noe's drunkenness, two crucial changes occur at Monreale (Fig. 7). First, a seated figure of Noe pressing grapes replaces the two youths gathering grapes, lending more importance to the left side (Fig. 2). Secondly, Ham now stands over Noe, pointing down at him, instead of standing at the left and looking rightward at his father and brothers. In his new position, Ham looks leftward and solidly frames the right side of the scene. More interestingly, Shem and Japheth look toward their father pressing grapes. In this clever composition, their backward gaze—no longer interrupted by Ham—seems to create a scene oriented from right to left, though two separate episodes are represented.

In the scene of the Tower of Babel, the artists removed the episode of the confusion of tongues, although it is still mentioned in the inscription (Figs. 8, 2). A stonecutter bending toward the left has replaced the group of men on the right in Palermo. Formally, his placement recalls that of Noe's son in the entry of the animals into the ark (Fig. 6). It is the only episode that is richer in detail in the Palatine Chapel, and the only omission at Monreale of an episode from the Palatine Genesis cycle.\(^\text{45}\) While the artist doubled episodes in single panels on the north wall to accel-

---

\(^{45}\) Marilyn Lavin provides examples of the use of compositions oriented from right to left as "braking mechanisms" to bring the rightward flow of a narrative to a halt at the end of registers in the Florentine Baptistry and the Scrovegni Chapel: Place of Narrative (as in note 6), 41, 45.

\(^{46}\) Demus attributes the differences to the use of different models, Mosaiics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 250; Kitzinger, Mosaiics of Monreale (as in note 16), 62, 86–87.
erate the narrative, he sacrificed this episode to create a centralized composition with key figures facing the left.

The tiny figure of God sending the rainbow to Noe, the addition of Noe in the vineyard, and the elimination of the confusion of tongues represent substantive iconographic changes motivated by the same effort to arrest the westward progress of the narrative that shaped lesser details of compositions all along the south arcade. This effort to slow the movement and create static compositions is all the more remarkable and, evidently, purposeful, as it runs counter to these artists’ stylistic tendency to infuse their scenes with agitated movement. Nor is it likely to be explained by Italian traditions of nave decoration. After all, several early churches presented parallel streams of scenes moving toward the entrance along both walls. In such cases, the leftward progress of the narrative on the north wall may have prompted the leftward orientation of individual scenes to support the flow of the narrative. By the twelfth century, the “wrap-around” arrangement of the cycle at Monreale had become a common form of nave decoration, and its popularity might well be due, in part, to the easy harmony between the left-to-right progress of the narrative on each wall and a left-to-right reading of the individual scenes.

The formal adjustments at Monreale suggest the concerns of Byzantine artists, accustomed to a hierarchy of images rather than to long, continuous narratives. Through these changes, they expressed their critique of the multiple viewpoints and diffused focus of the Palatine Chapel. Instead, at Monreale the figures were used to direct the spectator’s attention toward the dominating image of the Pantocrator in the eastern apse. Indeed, the Old Testament figures themselves seem oriented toward the Pantocrator, as if to emphasize their typological role as prefigurations of the New Testament. That the artists were concerned not just with the viewer, but with presenting the figures themselves as populating an illusionistic space oriented toward the sanctuary, is underscored by the extraordinary skill they displayed throughout the church in relating figures across space around corners and curving surfaces.

This discussion of the Genesis cycles at Palermo and Monreale began with Demus’s remark on their total dependency upon their models and the lack of meaning in the choice of scenes or handling of individual episodes. At Monreale, at least, the thoughtful adaptation of the cycle in different ways to the north and south arcades belies that view of passive reception. In fact, the handling of the cycle not only reveals formal concerns with the layout of the narrative, but, as one last example suggests, it combines a sensitivity to that architectural setting with an effort to draw new meaning from the model in the Palatine Chapel.

The west wall at Monreale includes four scenes of the Genesis cycle in two superposed registers flanking the large window (Fig. 9). The upper register presents the Creation of Eve and the Introduction of Eve to Adam. The latter is one of three scenes in this section of the cycle that the artist has added to those at Palermo. The addition of Adam in Paradise at the end of the south wall

47 Lavin, *Place of Narrative* (as in note 6), 15–27.
48 Cf. Herbert Kessler’s comments on the reversal of the composition of the Crossing of the Red Sea at Grottaferrata, “Old St. Peter’s” (as in note 1), 136. Marilyn Lavin offers examples of sixteenth-century cycles in which the leftward orientation of individual scenes supports the leftward or counterclockwise movement of the narrative: *Place of Narrative* (as in note 6), 241.
49 Lavin, *Place of Narrative* (as in note 6), 27–28; Demus, *Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (as in note 1), 201.
50 The relationship between the two testaments was also stressed by the placement of the scenes of the Presentation in the Temple and Christ among the Doctors above the western arch of the crossing; Kirzinger, *Mosaics of Monreale* (as in note 16), 31.
advanced the Creation of Eve to the west wall. At the west end of the north wall, the artist further expanded Eve’s role with the scene of Eve and the serpent. Her prominence suggests the traditional typological contrast with Mary, titular of the church and subject of the mosaic cycle once represented on the exterior face of the west wall and the side walls of the western porch.52

The second register of the west wall displays the Visit of the Angels to Lot and the Destruction of Sodom. The latter scene initiated the series above the north arcade at the west end of the nave at Palermo (Fig. 4). At Monreale, it is dominated by the figure of Lot’s wife turned into a pillar of salt, and its displacement to the west wall, a traditional site for the Last Judgment, alludes to typological interpretations of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as the Last Judgment, developed from Luke’s Gospel (Lk. 17:28–32). Together, Eve, the destruction of Sodom, and Lot’s wife create a constellation of images on the interior of the west wall that represent the antithesis of the progress from the Old Testament toward the New that is expressed by the sequence of cycles culminating in the sanctuary. Like Jesus’ admonitions in the Gospel of Luke (Lk. 9:62, 17:32), they provide, as it were, a warning for those who would, like Lot’s wife, look backward.

52 Borsook, Messages in Mosaic (as in note 17), 62; for the destroyed mosaics of the porch, Demus, Mosaics of Norman Sicily (as in note 1), 122–23; Krönig, Cathedral of Monreale (as in note 29), 35.
3. Palermo, Palatine Chapel, south wall of nave, west end

4. Palermo, Palatine Chapel, north wall of nave, west end
5. Palermo, Palatine Chapel, north wall of nave, central section

6. Monreale, Cathedral, south wall of nave, eastern section
7. Monreale, Cathedral, south wall of nave, central section

8. Monreale, Cathedral, south wall of nave, west end
9. Monreale, Cathedral, west wall of nave
10. Monreale, Cathedral, north wall of nave, west end

11. Monreale, Cathedral, north wall of nave, central section