

LITURGICAL FURNISHINGS AND ICONS IN THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELL'AMMIRAGLIO IN PALERMO IN THE MIDDLE-AGES

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ABSTRACT

By studying two ancient inventories —one of which original— this contribution wishes to shed light on the relations between the precious furnishings of a medieval church and the liturgical, cultural and political events related to them. In this sense, the church of George of Antioch's Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio, built in the Norman part of Palermo, with its conspicuous collection of icons and images, reveals the cultural syncretism typical of Sicily between the 12th and the 14th centuries, where the encounter between the West, Byzantium and Islam favoured the birth of a highly refined artistic language and a culture with a Mediterranean vocation.¹

KEY WORDS

Middle Ages, Palermo, Icons, Normans, Art.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Medium Aevum, Panormus, Icones, Normanni, Ars.

1. Abbreviations used: ASP (Archivio di Stato di Palermo).

After taking power around 1112, Roger II (1095-1154)² —son of Roger the Great Count and of Adelaide margrave of the house of Aleramici— found himself having to rule over an extensive kingdom which included Sicily, Calabria and, after the death of the heir to Robert Guiscard, also Puglia. The crowning of Roger II as King of Sicily, solemnly celebrated in Palermo cathedral in 1130³ and approved by Pope Anacletus II, was followed by the unstoppable expansion of the Rogerian reign which reached the height of its glory with the sack of Athens, Thebes and Corinth, the taking of Jerba in 1135 and, subsequently, the capture of Tripoli, Mahdia, Susa and Sfax: victories which not only enabled the Norman king to control the whole of the western and eastern Mediterranean, but also to further enrich the cultural substrate of the *regnum*.

During Roger II's reign, Sicily was home to a plurality of ethnic groups and had a very differentiated social structure: *in primis* the Normans themselves (to whom, sources also refer as “ultramontanes” or “transalpines”), the Greeks (easily identifiable by language and religion), the Arabs, the Jews, and of course the Longobards (natives of southern Italy) and the Lombards, or Longobards of northern Italy, who had probably been enticed to Sicily by Adelaide and who had settled in numerous island towns (where dialects with evident northern inflections still thrive).⁴ The range of cultures gave life to a diversified scenario which saw the coexistence of Anglo-Normans and Byzantines, eastern and Arab cultures. From a more strictly political and administrative viewpoint, the organisation of the kingdom was entrusted to important personages of different cultural extraction; an element of crucial importance to understand, for example, the multilingualism of the royal chancery, which issued many deeds and official charters in Greek and Arabic, both languages known to Roger. What is more, the organisation of the kingdom's offices inherited an Arab bureaucratic structure, the *Dīwān*, recently studied by Jeremy Johns.⁵ A key figure in this pluralistic cultural world was George of Antioch, “whose international career is symptomatic of the culture that

2. Reference is made to Denis Mack Smith's classic work: Smith, Denis Mack. *Storia della Sicilia medievale e moderna*. Bari: Laterza, 1971: 35-48. For the figure of Roger II, see monographic work: Caspar, Erich. *Roger II (1101-1154) und die Gründung der normannisch-sizilischen Monarchie*. Innsbruck: verlag der Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1904 (Italian translation: *Ruggero II (1101-1154) e la fondazione della monarchia normanna di Sicilia*. Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1999); Houbert Houben *Ruggero II di Sicilia un sovrano tra Oriente e Occidente*. Rome: Laterza, 1999; Aube, Pierre. *Roger II de Sicile: un normand en Méditerranée*. Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2001.

3. For Palermo cathedral in the Norman period, refer to: Andaloro, Maria. “La Cattedrale della Memoria”, *La Cattedrale di Palermo. Studi per l'ottavo centenario della fondazione. Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi*, Leonardo Urbani, ed. Palermo: Sellerio, 1993: 55-66.

4. Von Falkenhausen, Vera. « I gruppi etnici nel regno di Ruggero II e la loro partecipazione al potere », *Società, potere e popolo nell'età di Ruggero II, atti delle terze giornate normanno – sveve*. Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1979: 133-156; for Lombard dialects see La Via, Mariano. “Le cosiddette colonie lombarde di Sicilia”. *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, 24 (1899): 1-35.

5. Johns, Jeremy. “I re normanni e i califfi fātimidi. Nuove prospettive su vecchi materiali”, *Del nuovo sulla Sicilia musulmana. Giornata di studio (Rome, 3 May 1993)*. Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1995: 9-50; Johns, Jeremy. *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: the Royal Dīwān*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.



dominated the Mediterranean in that period”.⁶ From 1133 onwards, George —an Arabized Christian, collaborator in Syria of the *basileus* of Constantinople and then of the Fatimid sovereigns, from whose court he arrived in Sicily— is mentioned like *admiratus admiratorum* in documents; his hegemonic role alongside Roger II as admiral of the kingdom and his ascent within the Norman ruling class were the result of major military enterprises which led to and fuelled Roger II’s desires for expansion in the Mediterranean.

As regards the more strictly cultural and artistic aspect, the strongly syncretistic nature of Norman art, which at all latitudes features very complex and stratified inflections, in many cases hard to interpret, has been discussed at length by the critics who, especially recently, have explained its dynamics and elements.⁷ Within the ruling class at the time of Roger, which, as we have already said was extremely composite and differentiated, if nothing else but because of the extensive mixture of different ethnic groups, religions and cultures, the figure of George of Antioch took on fast growing importance. From the very start, George helped Roger in that long and complicated project which was the foundation of Cefalù cathedral, initially designated as a royal burial place. Many of the documents relating to the building of the church, one of the high points of Roger’s reign, indicate the presence of the Syrian; the design of the cathedral incorporated international ideological references and perhaps even benefited from the French experience of Suger of Saint-Denis, with whom Roger was in contact.⁸

6. Wolf, Gerhard; Haug, Herike. “Lu mari è amaru. La Sicilia nel Medioevo”, *Sicilia. Arte e archeologia dalla preistoria all’Unità d’Italia*, Giulio Macchi, Wolf-Dieter Heilmeyer, eds. Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2008: 88. For the figure of George of Antioch, refer to Menager, Léon Robert. *Amiratus – Ἀμνράς. L’émirat et les Origines de l’Amirauté (XI-XIII siècles)*. Paris : Editorial SEVPEN, 1960: 44-54; Delle Donne, Fulvio. “Giorgio d’Antiochia”. *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960: 347-350. Unfortunately, the proceedings of the 2007 Palermo conference “*Giorgio di Antiochia. L’arte della politica in Sicilia nel XII secolo tra Bisanzio e l’Islam*” have not yet been published.

7. Refer to the proceedings of the conference Knipp, David. “Arte e forma nella Sicilia Normanna” (Rome 6/7 December 2002). *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana*, 35 (2003/2004): 34-36, and to the catalogue of the exhibition *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006.

8. Extensive documentary evidence exists of the relations between Sicily and France. This points to a constant and lasting relationship, tied to a marriage project (between the daughter of count Thibaut of Champagne and the son of duke Roger of Puglia) and above all the relationship between Roger II and the king of France, following the adventurous return to the *Regnum Siciliae* of the king and the queen of France after the Greek-Norman battle of 1149. Our narration must necessarily therefore take into consideration what is a crucial factor. A rock crystal vase, today in the Louvre, but originally part of the Treasure of Saint-Denis, is traditionally thought to be a gift from Roger II himself to Thibaut, in turn donated to Suger by the count of Champagne. If this vase really can be identified with the generic *lagenam* mentioned by Suger in his *Liber de rebus in administratione sua gestis*, then it might also just be possible that this was not the only object sent from Sicily to France, and it is nice to think that precious gifts were also sent from France to the kings of Sicily, thereby favouring the circulation of different works, techniques and materials from one end of Europe to the other. For the relationship between France and Roger, reference is made to Caspar, Erich. *Ruggiero II e la fondazione...* For the rock crystal see Blaise de Montesquiou-Fezensac; Gaborit-Chopin, Danielle. *Le trésor de Saint-Denis*. Paris: Picard, 1997: III, 44-45, planches 26-27.



In those same years, Admiral George founded and funded the building of a church of his own dedicated to the Virgin Mary; a foundation which, because of its particular *status* can be taken as a true paradigm of the attitude of the Normans, not only towards the sacred, but also towards the creation of their own and highly personal “death space”.⁹

Through the rare surviving documents, the idea is to trace the history of the furnishings of George’s church, making use of the major contributions which have shed light in recent years on Norman-Swabian sumptuary production, a real international moment of medieval gold working.

Signed in Greek by George of Antioch “archon of the archons” in May 1143, the deed of foundation of the church, in Greek and Arabic, contains the laconic notes relating to the liturgical ornaments donated to the church by its founder:

*Insuper dedicavi in ipso, et diversa vasa sacra ex aere, et argento, et supellectilia, et libros non paucos, quorum catalogus in privato brevi repositus est in loco custodiendis vasibus, et utensilibus destinato ipsius Templi, et volo omnia haec mobilia, et immobilia inalienabilia manere usque ad finem saeculorum in tali divino Templo.*¹⁰

We therefore know that George had donated copper and silver vases, liturgical books and unspecified *supellectilia* to the church. Only three years after its foundation, in 1146, the clergy of Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio purchased a house, a stable and a number of ruins close to the recently-built church.¹¹

In the Swabian period, the furnishings of many churches, including that founded by the Admiral, suffered serious mutilations due to the requisitions made by Frederick II in the churches of the island under royal patronage, probably to meet war expenses: an aspect which has still to be precisely delineated and quantified.¹² Whatever the extent of Frederick’s requisitions, we know that in 1220, Frederick annexed the house of Scopello to the Admiral’s church, probably as an act of

9. The definition is in Herklotz, Ingo. “Lo spazio della morte e lo spazio della sovranità”, *I normanni popolo d’Europa MXXX – MCC, cat. of the exhibition (Rome 1994)*, Mario D’Onofrio, ed. Venice: Marsilio, 1994: 320-326.

10. Morso, Salvatore. *Descrizione di Palermo antico ricavata sugli autori sincroni e i monumenti de’ tempi*. Palermo: Dato, 1827: 372; *L’età Normanna e Sveva in Sicilia*, ed. Rosario La Duca. Palermo: Sicilian Regional Assembly, 1994: 58 (doc. n° 13).

11. Morso, Salvatore. *Descrizione di Palermo...: 312-319; L’età Normanna e Sveva...: 66* (doc. n° 16).

12. A further example of Frederick’s requisitions is provided by the Agrigento case, when however the Cathedral’s rich treasure was partially claimed by the church; see the documents dated 1241 and 1248 in Collura, Paolo. *Le più antiche carte dell’Archivio Capitolare di Agrigento*. Palermo: U. Manfredi, 1961: (docs. n° 62, 71).



reparation, as is indicated by a parchment kept in the *tabularium* of the Palatine Chapel,¹³ and referred to by Fazello and Pirri.¹⁴

A fundamental document relating to the church's religious ornaments is the inventory kept in the *tabularium* of the Palatine Chapel and dated 1333,¹⁵ which enables us to determine the furnishings belonging to the church and used for liturgical services during what was a major historical period. It must be said straight away that by 1333, the precious ornaments which George himself had donated to the church and which belonged to it at the time of its foundation, appear no longer to be there. Of the sacred vases, all that remains is a single *calicem de argento deaurato*.¹⁶ The other ornaments are of tin (*calices de stagno duos*) and copper: a *sichitellum de ere album*, *candelabra parva duo de ere*, *candelabra duo magna de ere*, *thuribulum unum de ere albo*.¹⁷ This group of objects, tied to the memory of the deed dated 1143, might be part of George's donation. To these must be added a number of *spongias de ferro* and *alia duo candelabra magna de metallo*.¹⁸ It appears obvious that some things are missing and the church seems in an advanced state of decay: we should not forget that in the fiery summer of 1282, the sacred space of the church accommodated the supporters of Peter of Aragon, who in *Ecclesia S. Mariae de Admirato* decided to offer him the crown.¹⁹

If, on the one hand, the document describes the church as having a majority of liturgical ornaments in non-noble materials, of exceptional importance on the other hand is the presence of about 20 icons inside its holy space. A recent examination of the furnishings of the Palatine Chapel, carried out in a document a little more recent than ours and dating from 1277, showed the presence of 15 icons inside the chapel of the palace. This is very important data which ought to be compared with other major and not only Norman medieval foundations; on the other hand, the evident Greek style of the church—in 1221, the pope himself had authorised the church to practise the Greek rite—could hardly not have had strong repercussions on its furnishings.

13. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae ac imperialis cappellae collegiatae Divi Petri sacri et regii palatii Panormitani*. Palermo: Ex Regia Typographia, 1835: doc. 63: *Privilegium unum imperatoris Friderici tunc regis Sicilie de concessione casalis Scupelli S. Marie de Ammirato cum sigillo pendente de cera comuni*.

14. *Vasa vero sacra omnia Fridericus secundus Caesar ad sumptus belli sustinendos abstulit, pro quorum restitutione casale Scupellum templo dedit, ut ex illius tabulis datis Panormi die 15 Augusti anno salutis 1220*. Fazello, Tommaso. *De rebus siculis decades duo*, ed. Vito Maria Amico. Catania: ex typographia Joachim Puleji impress-Academiae Aetnaeorum, 1749-1753; Pirri, Rocco. *Sicilia Sacra*. Palermo: Panormi Coppulae, 1630-1647, edition used *Sicilia Sacra disquisitionibus et notitiis illustrate*, eds. Antonino Mongitore, Vito Maria Amico. Panormi: apud haeredes P. Coppulae, 1733: I, 306.

15. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 151-152.

16. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 151.

17. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 151.

18. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 151.

19. "Chronicon Siculum ab anno DCCCXX usque ad MCCCXXVIII", c. 40, in Rosario Gregorio. *Bibliotheca scriptorum qui res in Sicilia gesta sub Aragonum imperio retulere*. Panormi: Ex Regio typographeo, 1792: II, 148.



The presence of icons, consistent with Byzantine tradition, completed the meanings of the mosaic figures on the walls of the church;²⁰ it beat out its rhythms and liturgical customs, de-locating the images inside the temple. Such a large number of icons concretised the desire to structure the holy space, to articulate it in a complex liturgical topography: “Esse mediavo in qualche maniera la lontananza delli immagini monumentali per “avvicinare” il divino al fedeli in senso tattile”.²¹

The first icon mentioned in the inventory of the church of Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio is the “yconam unam cum quadam cruce, cum perlis munita de ere deaurato in qua sunt de ligno domini, et reliquie decem sanctorum videlicet cristophori, macarii, egyptialis, tecele virginis et martiris, clementis, georgii, silvestri, pantaleonis, gregorii mirabilis, et beate catharine virginis”.²² Still only studied to a minor degree in the Norman-Swabian context, the circulation of the relics of the True Cross is documented in Sicily until a fairly late period, and often in contexts with iconic implications.²³ For example, in the inventory of the treasure of the Rogerian cathedral of Cefalù, compiled in 1149 after the death of bishop Jocelm, a relic of the *Lignum Dominicum cum duabus tabulis aureis et gemmates* appeared, which can almost certainly be identified with the reliquary cross still today preserved as part of the Cefalù treasure, unfortunately without its precious medieval case.²⁴ What is more, the famous Reliquary Cross of Cosenza, today widely considered to date from the Rogerian period, or in any case no later than the mid-12th century, encloses a relic of the Cross.²⁵ In 1157, in the deed of donation of incomes and furnishings to the church of Santa Maria Maddalena of Messina, built and donated by John Dapifer

20. For a more complete study of the mosaics, refer to the never surpassed book by Kitzinger, Ernst. *I mosaici di Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio a Palermo*. Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1990. Another more recent publication is Hesslinger, Mark R. “Das Bild des Pantokrators im Kuppelmosaik von Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio in Palermo”, *Das Bild Gottes in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: vom Alten Testament bis zum Karikaturenstreit*, Eckhard Leuschner, Mark R. Hesslinger, eds. Petersberg: Imhof, 2009: 93-116.

21. “they somehow mediated the distance of the monumental images to bring the divine “closer” to the faithful in a tactile sense”, Wolf, Gerhard; De Giorgi, Manuela. “I tempi e lo spazio delle immagini”, *Torcello. Alle origini di Venezia tra Occidente e Oriente*, Gianmatteo Caputo, Giovanni Gentili, Michaela Agazzi, eds. Venice: Marsilio, 2009: 161.

22. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae*...: 151.

23. For the report, relics of the True Cross and images, reference is made to the recent contributions of Rapti, Ionna. “Images du Christ, reliques des saints: un triptyque géorgien inédit”, *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, Jannic Durand, Bernard Flusin, eds. Paris: Association des amis du Centre d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2004: 191-238; Bacci, Michele. “Vera Croce, vero ritratto e vera misura: sugli archetipi bizantini dei culti cristologici nel medioevo occidentale”, *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, Jannic Durand, Bernard Flusin, eds. Paris: Association des amis du Centre d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2004: 223-238.

24. For the inventory see Garufi, Carlo Alberto. *I documenti inediti dell’epoca normanna in Sicilia*. Palermo: Lo Statuto, 1899: 80-81 (doc. n° 33); Crispino Valenziano “La Basilica Cattedrale di Cefalù nel periodo normanno”. *Ho Theologos*, 19 (1978): 85-140, in particular pages 117-118; for the reliquary cross: Crispino Valenziano “Sheet III.29. Reliquary cross”, *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: I, 214-215.

25. Di Dario Guida, Maria Pia. “Sheet III.33”, *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: I, 227-230.



before 1127,²⁶ *Simonis Regis Senescalchi* gave to the church *altaris sacri scilicet parvas cruces de ligno domini quatuor ad ipsius eucaristiae gloriam ejusdemque triumphi honorem* together with a no better specified *crucem de ligno domini unam*. Among the precious gifts, ever-present in the Norman-Swabian context, were six *capsides eburneae*, one *arcam magnam eburneam*, and one *capsidem parvam eburneam* designed to contain the relics.²⁷ Again in the Palatine Chapel was the ambiguous *iconam unam parvam cum immagine S. Marie cum Ligno Domini*. Of the same type as the icon-reliquary of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio must also have been the *conecta cum certi quatri di vitro dintra intra la quali su ingastati diversi reliqui sanctorum in numero decem et octo inter alia de ligno cruces*, documented in the treasure of Monreale Cathedral in an inventory dated 1507.²⁸ On the other hand, we know that between the 12th and 13th centuries, the panel-shaped reliquary type with fragments of the True Cross was fairly common in both the East and West, as numerous documents and the odd surviving artefact testify.²⁹ The presence on the island of other reliquary crosses as well cannot however be ignored: according to tradition, there was the steatite reliquary cross with Saints Constantine and Helena originating from the Monastery

26. The church of the Maddalena in Messina was within the city walls and should not be confused with the Priory of Santa Maria Maddalena of Josaphat, a Benedictine monastery tied to Santa Maria in the Josaphat Valley in the Holy Land; White, Lynn Townsend. *Il monachesimo latino nella Sicilia Normanna*. Catania: Dafni, 1984: 328-331.

27. *Diplomi della cattedrale di Messina Raccolti da Antonino Amico Pubblicati da un codice della Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo ed illustrati da Raffaele Starabba (documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia)*. Palermo: Printers M. Amenta, 1888: 17-19 (doc. n° 13).

28. Millunzi, Gaetano. "Il tesoro, la biblioteca e il tabulario della chiesa di Santa Maria Nuova in Monreale". *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, 28/1-3 (1903): 305-309. The importance attributed to this collection of relics is enhanced by the extraordinary survival of a number of artefacts together with their precious containers: for a complete historical-artistic analysis, see: Guastella, Claudia. "Sheet 22. The reliquary of the Holy Blood of Monreale", *Federico e la Sicilia. Dalla terra alla corona. Arti figurative e arti suntuarie, catalogue of the exhibition (Palermo 1994-1995)*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Syracuse: A. Lombardi, 2000: II, 134-136; Guastella, Claudia. "Sheet 30. The rock glass showcase of the reliquary of the Holy Blood of Monreale", *Federico e la Sicilia. Dalla terra alla corona. Arti figurative e arti suntuarie, catalogue of the exhibition (Palermo 1994-1995)*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Syracuse: A. Lombardi, 2000: II, 155-156; Guastella, Claudia. "Sheet VI.23. Pair of reliquaries of the Holy Blood and of the milk and the hair of the Virgin", *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: 425-426. Not mentioned in the inventory of 1507, but part of the treasure of Monreale Cathedral is a relic of the Holy Thorn: Guastella, Claudia. "Sheet VI.22. Reliquary of the Holy Thorn", *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: 422-424.

29. See the repertoire of Frolov, Anatole. *La relique de la Vraie Croix: recherches sur le développement d'un culte*. Paris: Institut Français d'Etudes Byzantines, 1961: 203, 225, 227, 247, 326, 340, 382, 494, 504, 512.



of San Filippo di Fragalà, but today kept at Lentini.³⁰ Furthermore, Guastella has associated a silver reliquary cross now in the Louvre with Sicily.³¹

The *Yconam sancte marie cum crucifixo a tergo* of the church of the Ammiraglio, was certainly similar to the particular system of combined images, in which—as Belting puts it—the “spoken” role of Mary was explicated in the *verse* with the Christ in pain, i.e., the *Imago Pietatis*.³²

Some *Yconas s.marie cum filio* are recalled without any further iconographic details inside the church. We wonder where these icons were placed, what space or structure accommodated them. We know that the place dedicated *par excellence* to the liturgical display and the ritual ostentation of icons in the Greek world was the iconostasis. To our great surprise, despite the eminently Greek vocation of the foundation, according to the results of an investigation carried out by Ćurčić, there was never a fixed iconostasis inside the church.³³ In two cases, the inventory comes to our aid by faithfully telling us where the images were located in the 14th century. We learn that the *yconas s. marie existentis in altari s. Joachim*, while in *eodem altari yconam unam salvatoris*. Along with the mention of the altar dedicated to St. Joachim, the better specified altar might be that of St. Anna, the two *pastophoria* of the church. In the almost iconographic oneness of the icons, the altar of St. Anna could therefore well have accommodated the only icon portraying Christ kept in the church. The two *Yconas duas magnas s. marie cum pedibus* probably featured a base allowing them to be located close to the central altar.³⁴

30. As regards the reliquary cross now at Lentini, Durand confirms the fact that the work is of Sicilian origin. According to the expert, it is unconceivable that it was made in Byzantium both because of the material—steatite—and the angels of the top register. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, Ioli. *Byzantine icons in steatite*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985: I, 31–32; II, 138–139; Durand, Jannic, ed. *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises. Exposition, Paris, Musée du Louvre, 3 novembre 1992-1^{er} février 1993*. Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1992: 274; Piazza, Simone. “Sheet II. 6”, *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: 122–124; Simone Piazza. “Art byzantin en Sicile Orientale entre le XII^e et le XIII^e siècle: témoignages dans le territoire de Lentini”. *Les cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa*, 38 (2007): 151–160.

31. Guastella, Claudia. “Aspetti della cultura artistica nel Valdemone in età Normanno e Sveva: note e riflessioni”, *La Valle di Agrò. Un territorio una storia un destino, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Clara Biondi, ed. Palermo: Officina di Studi Medievali, 2005: 224–249.

32. See also Belting, Hans. *An image and its function in the liturgy: the Man of sorrows in Byzantium*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 1980–1981: 1–28; Shalina, Irina. “The icon of Christ The Man of Sorrow and the image-relic of the Constantinopolitan shroud”, *Eastern Christian relics*, Alexei Lidov, ed. Moscow: Progress-Tradicija, 2003: 305–336.

33. “The surround was made up of sheets of marble with mosaic inlays”, explains Ćurčić, “and so the actual bema was directly adjacent to the *naos* compartment, covered with a dome, and was not separated by any further space from this, as regularly occurs in the Byzantine architecture of this period, especially in Constantinople. The form of bema surround is even more unlike Byzantine practice”, Ćurčić, Slobodan. “L’Architettura”, *I mosaici di Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio a Palermo*. Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1990: 30.

34. In support of this theory, a passage is quoted here of the inventory of the Palatine Chapel of Palermo in which the term is used in the same way *albeit* in a different context: *Item candelabra magna de ere quatuor, quorum duo sunt sine pedibus*. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 102.



The inventory recalls two copper icons *pro sponsis benedicendis*, probably used to celebrate marriages, during the characteristic procession around the altar in the orthodox rite. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the subject of these two icons. The Palatine Chapel also contained two copper icons showing Christ and the Cross with a Deesis respectively.³⁵ Following the “material” track, the described icons could be retraced to the copper works made with *opus lemovicense*, i.e., with the *champlevé* enamel common in Limoges and also seen in Sicily in the specimens kept at Monreale, Palermo, Catania and above all in the well known reliquary chasses of Agrigento Cathedral. Recent studies have moreover drawn attention to the Christ Pantokrator of Palazzo Venezia, “reinterpreted” as an imposing and large icon in enamel on copper,³⁶ while in Palazzo Venezia the large icon in copper and *champlevés* enamels, originating from Amaseno, shows us the appearance of many other icons made using the same method.³⁷ Other types of metal icons are to be found in various Norman-Swabian foundations, e.g., the Palatine Chapel with the *iconam unam ad figuras sanctorum, et sanctorum argenteam deauratam*,³⁸ and the *iconam argentea rotundam in qua est imago sancti georgi*³⁹ of Santa Maria de’ Latinis in Palermo; or else shielded ones, like those common in Byzantium, in gold or silver, such as the *duo imagines perpulcras et coopertas auro* mentioned in a 12th-century document.⁴⁰

The *yconas de opere musivo subtili* brings us to the precious domain of portable mosaics. The adjective *subtili*, almost certainly referable to *subtilitas*, i.e., tininess, points to the extremely small size of the tesserae used to make these precious

35. This is the *Iconam unam de ere cum immagine jesu christi et aliam iconam cum cruce domini jesu christi ejusdem operis cum immagine s. marie, et beati joannis baptiste*. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 102.

36. Strinati, Tommaso. “Sheet IV.9. Placca con il Pantocrator”, *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: I, 278-279; Moretti, Simona. “Èrga chymeutà: icone a snalta dell’ XI e XII secolo tra Bisanzio e l’occidente”, *Medioevo Mediterraneo. L’Occidente, Bisanzio e l’Islam. Proceedings of the International Study Conference*, Carlo Arturo Quintavalle, ed. Milan: Electa, 2007: 341-350. For the Limoge enamels in Sicily, see pioneering article Accascina, Maria. “Oreficeria limosina e bizantina in Sicilia”. *Bollettino d’Arte*, 7 (1928): 551-566, to which must be added Davì, Giulia. “Sheet 54. The original cross of Butera”, *Federico e la Sicilia. Dalla terra alla corona. Arti figurative e arti suntuarie, catalogo della mostra (Palermo 1994-1995)*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Syracuse: A. Lombardi, 2000: II, 224-227; Guastella, Claudia. “Sheet 57. The plaque with the Virgin in glory of Catania”, *Federico e la Sicilia. Dalla terra alla corona. Arti figurative e arti suntuarie, catalogo della mostra (Palermo 1994-1995)*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Syracuse: A. Lombardi, 2000: II, 232-233; Guastella, Claudia. “Sheet 60. A fragment of plaque with the beardless blessing Christ”, *Federico e la Sicilia. Dalla terra alla corona. Arti figurative e arti suntuarie, catalogo della mostra (Palermo 1994-1995)*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Syracuse: A. Lombardi, 2000: II, 241-242.

37. Saporì, Francesco. “The angel of Amaseno”. *Rassegna d’arte Antica e Moderna*, 8/1 (1921): 30-31.

38. Garofalo, Luigi. *Tabularium regiae...*: 102.

39. Garufi, Carlo Alberto. *I documenti inediti...*: 135 (doc. n° 57).

40. The document is partially quoted in Pirri, Rocco. “Notitia quarta sancti Pantaleonis, olim sancti Salvatoris de presbytero Scholaro”, *Sicilia Sacra disquisitionibus et notitiis illustrata*, eds. Antonio Mongitore, Vito Maria Amico. Panormi: apud haereditas P. Coppulae, 1733: 1003-1007, and later published unabridged by Di Giovanni, Vincenzo. “Il transunto dei diplomi del monastero del presbitero Scholaro di Messina”. *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, 1897: 325-342, above all 336-337.



works.⁴¹ The Palatine Chapel contained an *iconam unam de ligno s. georgii ad musias*. And again, the *Iconam cum miesivo, que habet libram argenti unam et mediam* donated in 1171 by Mathew, William II's vice-chancellor, to the Palermo Monastery of Santa Maria de Latinis could possibly refer to a mosaic icon enhanced by a silver frame, a solution very common in Byzantium.⁴² The workshops of Sicily must have been very familiar with the portable mosaic icon. The production of these mosaic icons may well have been favoured by this artistic and artisan context: an aspect queried by numerous historians, including Demus, and evidenced unfortunately by very few surviving pieces and the odd rare documentary recollection.⁴³ In the 18th century, one of the most refined portable mosaics still in existence was documented in Palermo in the collection of Duke Ignazio Papè, i.e., the *Transfiguration*, now in the Louvre;⁴⁴ while in the early 20th century, before being purchased by the Berlin Museums, a mosaic icon representing the Crucifixion, which Orsi considered to have been imported from Constantinople was still preserved in Sicily, and more specifically in Nicosia (En).⁴⁵ What is more, according to a series of documents, many portable mosaics were to be found in Sicilian churches until the mid-16th century: for example, in 1579, the Chapel of San Giovanni in the Royal Palace of Messina still contained a *quatum cum imagine Salvatoris, cum opere musearo et greco antiquissimo*.⁴⁶ Finally, the Haghiisoritissa, today in Palermo Diocesan Museum, but originally in the Cathedral, is a work made using a method similar to that of portable mosaics, distinguished by the use of small tesserae, "molto pissole anzi

41. See: Furlan, Italo. *Le icone bizantine a mosaico*. Milan: Edizioni Stendhal, 1979, containing a complete catalogue of known specimens, to which the mosaic icon published by Andaloro must be added; see the expert's review in: Andaloro, Maria. "Le icone bizantine a mosaico". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 75/2 (1982): 375-378, while for the icon refer to Maria Andaloro, "Gli smalti dell'Icona col Cristo "Evergètes" nella Basilica romana di Santa Prassede". *Prospettiva*, 40 (1985): 57-61; Krickelberg-Pütz, Anke-Angelika. "Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus in Aachen-Burtscheid". *Aachener Kunstblätter des Museumsvereins*, 50 (1982): 9-141; Demus, Otto. "Two palaeologan mosaic icons in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 14 (1960): 89-119; Demus, Otto. *Die byzantinischen Mosaikikonen. Die grossformatigen Ikonen*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991; Morello, Giovanni, ed. *Splendori di Bisanzio. Testimonianze e riflessi d'arte e cultura bizantina nelle chiese d'Italia*. Milan: Fabbri, 1990: 40-43; Effenberger, Arne. "Images of Personal Devotion: Miniature Mosaic and Steatite Icons", *Byzantium: faith and power (1261-1557): perspectives on late Byzantine art and culture. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Series*, Sarah T. Brooks, ed. New York-New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art-Yale University Press, 2006: 209-212 (with relevant sheets).

42. See Grabar, André. *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du moyen-âge*. Venice: Stamperia di Venezia, 1975.

43. For Demus' consideration, see Demus, Otto. *The mosaics of Norman Sicily*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949: 408-409.

44. Durand, Jannic. "Sheet 279. Icône", *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises. Exposition, Paris, Musée du Louvre, 3 novembre 1992-1^{er} février 1993*, Jannic Durand, ed. Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1992: 368-369.

45. Orsi, Paolo. «Quadretto bizantino a mosaico della Sicilia», *Studie zur Kunst des Osten: Josef Strzygowski zum sechzigsten Geburtstage von seinen Freunden und Schülern*, Heinrich Glück, ed. Vienna: Avalun-Verlag, 1923: 130-135, ora in *Sicilia Bizantina*. Catania: Brancato, 2000: 99-104. The icon is kept in the Staatliche Museum of Berlin, Furlan, Italo. *Le icone...*: 63.

46. ASP. *Conservatoria del Real Patrimonio*. 1320, f. 387r.



davvero minuscule, nel viso e nelle mani”.⁴⁷ Unfortunately, there is no data to confirm that the work was imported rather than being part of the local production of portable mosaics. What is for sure is that, in view of their preciousness and rarity, such a large presence of documented works within the island shows a more than deep-rooted familiarity among the clientele with this type of images. In this sense, it would be more logical to consider the presence of specialised *workshops* within the island, perhaps set up as part of the Norman —Swabian worksites, rather than opt for imports from Constantinople.

The *yconam unam sancte marie, quam pinsit beatus lucas* was very definitely the most worshipped icon inside the church because of its prestigious fame of being a Lucan original.⁴⁸ The tradition of the portrait of the Virgin painted by St. Luke is well documented in central and northern Italy; in the context of medieval Sicily, the case of the Lucan icon of Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio would not appear to be an isolated occurrence. Gaetani recalls as a St. Luke original the icon in Palermo Cathedral (transformed into a pax in the 16th century and currently exhibited in the Cathedral Treasury), which was brought to Sicily from Alexandria by St. Angel.⁴⁹ In the Palatine Chapel, Mongitore recalls an old icon with undisputable Byzantine features, and by tradition retraceable to the Norman period.⁵⁰ Cefalù Cathedral also

47. Very small, in fact tiny indeed, on the face and hands. Andaloro, Maria. “Sheet VIII.19. La Vergine Haghiosoritissa della Cattedrale di Palermo”, *Nobiles Officinae. Perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, Maria Andaloro, ed. Catania: Giuseppe Maimone Editore, 2006: I, 558-559.

48. As regards the icons painted by St. Luke, reference should be made to the fundamental contributions of Professor Michele Bacci, who I thank for having discussed a number of aspects of this work: Bacci, Michele. “Appunti sulla nascita, moltiplicazione e decadenza delle immagini di culto attribuite a San Luca pittore”. *Bollettino d’arte*, 79 (1994): 73-92; Bacci, Michele. *Il pennello dell’Evangelista: storia delle immagini sacre attribuite a San Luca*. Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 1998; Bacci, Michele. “La tradizione di San Luca pittore da Bisanzio all’Occidente”, *Luca evangelista. Parola e immagine tra Oriente e Occidente*, Giordana Mariani Canova, Paola Vettore Ferraro, Federica Toniolo, Andrea Nante, Alberta de Nicolò Salmazo, eds. Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2000: 103-109; Bacci, Michele. “With the Paintbrush of the Evangelist Luke”, *Mother of God. Representations of the Virgin in byzantine Art*, Maria Vassilaki, ed. Milan: Skira, 2000: 79-89; Bacci, Michele. “San Luca: il pittore dei pittori”, *Artifex bonus. Il mondo dell’artista medievale*, Enrico Castelnuovo, ed. Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2004: 3-11; Bacci, Michele. “Santi artisti”, *L’artista medievale, atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Modena 1999)*, Maria Monica Donato, ed. Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2008: 11-26.

49. *Anno salutis 1219. Cum immineret Alexandriae barbarorum devastatio, erat in ea urbe in Divi Ioannis Baptistae templo Sanctissimae Deiparae Imaguncula; quam, Tecla Vergine magni apostoli Pauli discipula instante, miro devotionis affectum, S. Lucas depinxerat, ibique cum aliis Sanctorum reliquiis colebantur*. Gaetani, Ottavio. *Ragguagli della ritratti della Santissima Vergine Nostra Signora più celebri, che si riveriscono in varie chiese nell’isola di Sicilia. Aggiuntavi una breve relazione dell’origine, e miracoli di quelli*. Palermo: Andrea Colicchia, 1664: 31. Also see Andaloro, Maria. “Note sui temi iconografici della Deesis e della Haghiosoritissa”. *Rivista dell’Istituto di Archeologia e Storia dell’Arte*, 17 (1970-1971): 85-153.

50. “Della sua origine non s’ha distinta cognizione: la tradizione però ci narra, che sia dono del Re Ruggiero fondatore della Chiesa o di altro de’ Serenissimi Re di Sicilia. La pittura è in tela, divotissima, che con la sua vaghezza rapisce gli affetti de’ Spettatori. Mostra il riso in bocca: ha una Croce nel manto nella parte, che ricopre la fronte; e una stella pur nel manto dalla parte del lato destro. Stringe in braccio il celeste bambino, che tiene con ambedue le mani: ed egli con tre dita della destra mano alzate, si mostra in atto di benedire chi lo riguarda. Due angioletti sostengono una real corona, ornata di dodici stelle, sul capo della Sovrana Regina”. “No certainty exists as to its origin: by tradition, it was a gift of King Roger, founder of the Church and of other de’ Serenissimi Kings of Sicily. The painting is on canvas and is highly devout; its vagueness entices the affections of the spectator. It shows a smile:



possessed *ab antiquo* an icon painted by St. Luke.⁵¹ The icon of the *kykkotissa* in the Cathedral of Piazza Armerina, also traditionally tied to the Norman period, is recalled by Pirri as a St. Luke original.⁵² And by scrolling through the pages of *Sicilia Sacra*, we also read about a *crucis imago*, to be found in the ancient town of Noto, and always attributed to St. Luke's brush,⁵³ without mentioning the well-known Lucan images of Messina and the Messina area. Considering known and original documentation, we might wonder why, in view of this situation, the mention in the inventory is the only remaining trace of the Lucan icon present in the church of the Ammiraglio. The deed of donation dated 1143 makes no mention of icons or images donated by the founder, unless of course these are part of the generic *supellectilia*.⁵⁴ It may have been George who donated a Lucan original to his church, favoured by that international culture referred to at the start of this treatise, which witnesses such a widespread and variegated circulation of sacred images in the Mediterranean basin. Or else, Roger himself, who undoubtedly played a major role in the foundation of the church, was so generous as to donate an image of the Virgin painted by Luke—perhaps a copy of the Hodigitria—but not without first authorising his admiral to immortalise him inside the same sacred area. Without a shadow of a doubt, this would have marked the ideological, cultural and political ties (in the sense of politics of images) between his kingdom and that of the East. And to testify to the familiarity of Norman Sicily with this type of miraculous image, we can hardly fail to mention here the 20th Homily of Filagato da Cerami in which “he recalls how the portrait of the Virgin with Child in arms, the work of the Evangelist, was preserved in the ‘large city’”.⁵⁵

In the nevertheless rich compilations of Gaetani and Mongitore, there is no mention of a Lucan icon venerated in the church of the Ammiraglio. Brought into play by Cascini is rather the monastery of Martorana, historically and juridically tied to the church of the Ammiraglio, where a panel-painting representing St. Olive, St. Elias, St. Venera and St. Rosalia, now in the Diocesan Museum in Palermo,

with a Cross on the cloak, on the part covering the forehead; and a star on the cloak on the part on the right side. In its arm the heavenly child is held with both hands; and he, with three raised fingers of the right hand, blesses all those who look at him. Two angels sustain a royal crown, decorated with twelve stars, on the head of the Sovereign Queen”. Mongitore, Antonio. *Palermo divoto di Maria Vergine, e Maria Vergine protettrice di Palermo*. Palermo: nella stamperia di Gaspare Bayona, 1720: 256.

51. ASP. Conservatoria Real Patrimonio. 1308, f. 134.

52. *Maximum, et praecipuum inter alia habet templum Parrochiale, et Canonorum Collegio exornatum S. Mariae nunc Assumptae. Hic est illa Mariae imago elegantissime depincta (ut ajunt, à D. Luca) quam viridi serico vexillo, pontificia Nicolai II, benedictione sacro, gestabat Rogerius primus Siciliae Comes, ejusque felicibus auspiciis ea bella confecit.* Pirri, Rocco. *Sicilia Sacra...*: I, 585. See also the catalogue of the exhibition Guida, Maria Katja. ed. *La Madonna delle Vittorie a Piazza Armerina: dal Gran Conte Ruggero al Settecento*. Naples: Electa, 2009.

53. *Secunda Parochia S. Crucifisci, quod templum Virginis Maria à Castra dicebatur olim, unde sub Jordano Rogerii Comitis filio, qui parentis mandato Castrum illud molitus est (...) fundatum est. (...) Sacrae tamen Crucis Imago est, quam Evangelistae Lucae manibus depinctam tradunt.* Pirri, Rocco. *Sicilia Sacra...*: I, 432.

54. As instead occurred a few years later when, in 1171, Matteo Ajello donated to the Monastery of Santa Maria de Latinis in Palermo an *iconam magnam*. Francesco Garufi. *I documenti inediti...*: 129-137.

55. Michele Bacci *Il pennello...*: 125.



was venerated.⁵⁶ The identification of the four figures, represented on two different levels (in a group of three the first, while St. Olive is at half bust in the foreground), is in fact based on later *tituli*, affixed to the icon between the 17th and 18th centuries, in an attempt to create a more or less complete compilation of the Palermo saints, in which the role of Rosalia was undoubtedly the most important. As Cascini states, “another very old tablet with the image of St. Rosalia was to be found in the church of S. Maria dell’Ammirato, also called of Martorana, of the monastery of women, built alongside by Aloisia Martorano in the houses given to her by King William before the year 1194. With the passing of time, this tablet was removed, and placed in a corner of the Monastery itself, and was as if forgotten, and we shall speak of this later”,⁵⁷ an engraving of the icon being included inside his compilation. There is not the slightest memory of the tablet in the 14th-century inventory.

The last two icons described in the inventory are worthy of further mention. The *yconas s.marie similes, in quarum una est ycona domini admirati, et alia uxoris ejus* in actual fact merely confirm and enhance the idea that the church was erected as a tomb for admiral George and his wife Irene. Probably placed on the respective burial sites, the two icons recalled, along with the stones with the epitaphs, traces of which existed until the end of the 19th century in Palermo’s Archaeological Museum,⁵⁸ that the church had been built to accommodate their mortal remains: already at the time of its foundation, the faithful were being told to pray *pro salute, et prosperitate potentissimi, et sancti nostri magni Regis (...) et memoria mei in vita, et post mortem mei peccatoris*.⁵⁹ It is intriguing to think how, in an ideal chiasmus, the images of George and Irene, and of George and Roger intersected one another in the church. In one of the most famous panels, Roger, in the silent formality of a Christ-twin who crowns him, dressed in the guise —to be truthful rather antiquated for those years— of a Byzantine *basileus*. We might ask ourselves how the Admiral dressed before the Virgin in his personal icon: precisely the man who had played such an important role as regards Roger’s decision to dress up, so sources go, according to the custom of the Fatimids. The Berber historian Ibn Hamādu (1220 ca.) does in fact tell us that “no other dynasty is known to have used the parasol except the Fātimids and the king of the Europeans in Sicily. I believe that this was one of the gifts he received

56. See Di Natale, Maria Concetta. *Il Museo Diocesano di Palermo*. Palermo: Flaccovio, 2006: 34-36 (with previous bibliography); also see the last contributions of Travagliato, Giovanni. “Icona Graece, Latine Imago dicitur. Culture figurative a confronto in Sicilia (sec. XII-XIX)”, *Tracce d’Oriente. La tradizione liturgica greco-allbanese e quella latina in Sicilia*, Maria Concetta Di Natale, ed. Palermo: Edizioni Plaza Fondazione, 2007: 41-59; Giovanni Travagliato “Sheet 177”, *Sicilia. Arte e archeologia dalla preistoria all’Unità d’Italia*, Giulio Macchi, Wolf-Dieter Heilmeyer, eds. Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2008: 313-314.

57. Cascini, Gaetano. *Di S. Rosalia vergine palermitana libri tre composti da R.P. Giordano Cascini della Compagnia di Gesù. Nelli quali si spiegano l’inuentione delle Sacre Reliquie, la Vita Solitaria, e gli Honori di Lei*. Palermo: Cirilli, 1651: 11.

58. Patricolo, Giuseppe. “La chiesa di S. Maria dell’Ammiraglio in Palermo e le sue antiche adiacenze”. *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, 2/1 (1877): 167, 171; Kitzinger, Ernst. “La chiesa nei documenti storici”, *I mosaici di Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio a Palermo*. Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1990: 18-19.

59. Morso, Salvatore. *Descrizione di Palermo...*: 302-311.



from the Fatimid caliphs".⁶⁰ And again al-Maqrīzī (1364-1441) in his *Kitāb al-Muqaffa* says of Roger:

He dressed in the robes of a Muslim ruler, and never appeared on horseback or in public except on feast days and preceeded by horses bearing gold and silver saddles, saddle-cloths encrusted with precious stones and with covered litter bearers, and before him again golden banners and the parasol and on his head the crown⁶¹

Testifying to the relations and exchange of gifts between Roger and the Fatimid caliph al-Hāfiz, just one extremely precious letter remains in which, coincidentally, the two men praise and exalt the *amiratus amiratorum* George, probably the diplomatic go-between the two worlds.⁶² And if to all this we add the "hidden portrait" of Roger II dressed in oriental robes in the attic of the Palatine Chapel,⁶³ and the same subject delicately painted on the ivory casket of Würzburg Cathedral,⁶⁴ we cannot forget that behind those "image" choices, the hand of George may be concealed.

Just one century later—in 1430—an original inventory of the furnishings of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio recalls, together with a few chalices and a *crux una erea vetustissima cum certis lapidibus vitreis*", just three icons: the "*cona una lignea in qua est quadam crux de argentum deaurato cum ligno vera crucis cum quibusdam reliquis sanctorum insertiis*", the "*ymagine virginis marie*", with which was associated a yarn cloth, and the *ymaginis xpi*, complete with a cloth of more modest fabric.⁶⁵ We thus lose track of the two precious, *albeit* enigmatic portrait-icons of George and Irene.

60. Quoted in Johns, Jeremy. *I re normanni e i califfi...*: 9-50.

61. Quoted in De Simone, Adalgisa. "Il Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo visto dall'Islam africano", *Il Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo visto dall'Europa e dal mondo mediterraneo. Atti delle tredicesime giornate normanno-sveve* (Bari 1997), Giosuè Musca, ed. Bari: Edizioni Dedalo, 1999: 261-293. For the use of the parasol, refer to Elze, Reinhard. « Le insegne del potere », *Strumenti, tempi e luoghi di comunicazione nel Mezzogiorno Normanno – Svevo. Atti delle undecime giornate normanno – sveve* (Bari 1993), Giosuè Musca, ed. Bari: Edizioni Dedalo, 1995: 120.

62. Canard, Marius. "Une lettre du calife fātimite al-Hāfiz (524-544/1130-1149) à Roger II", *VIII Centenario della morte di Ruggero II. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Ruggeriani* (Palermo 21-25 April 1954). Palermo: Scuola Tipografica Boccone del Povero, 1955: I, 125-146.

63. Johns, Jeremy. *I re normanni e i califfi...*: 40-44; Andaloro, Maria. "Le effigi dei sovrani normanni e svevi. Manifeste e celate", *Storia@Arte nella scrittura. L'Archivio Storico Diocesano di Palermo a 10 anni dalla riapertura al pubblico* (1997-2007), *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Giovanni Travagliato, ed. Santa Flavia: Edizioni Ass. Centro Studi Aurora Onlus, 2008: 307-324.

64. Wilson, Ralph H. Pinder. "The Reliquary of St. Petros and the Ivories of Norman Sicily". *Archaeologia*, 104 (1973): 261-305, above all Plate LXVIII.

65. ASP. Fondo Notai, Antonio de Melina.937, unnumbered papers.

