

## Summary

Thesis title: Visual Culture in Norman Puglia c.1030-1130

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This thesis explores the visual culture of the region of Puglia in southeast Italy from the Norman conquest, which took place in the early eleventh century, until the absorption of Puglia into the Kingdom of Sicily, in 1130. It is structured around a series of case studies; the bronze doors of Monte Sant'Angelo, the unfinished abbey church of the SS Trinità at Venosa, the basilica of San Nicola at Bari, the mausoleum of the crusader Bohemond I of Antioch at Canosa di Puglia and the cathedrals of Bari, Canosa and Taranto. The material encompasses all media, including architecture, sculpture, bronze doors and marble floors as well as issues of patronage and cultic practice. Puglia has been neglected in art historical discourse and these churches have previously been mainly the subject of local history. Since Puglia sits at the junction between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Latin West, there has been a tendency for both Byzantine and Romanesque art historians to overlook this rich material. It has been further neglected due to the complex and enigmatic nature of the material which has been fragmented by later losses, obscured by a lack of documentary evidence and overshadowed by the more famous twelfth-century monuments. The primary aim of this dissertation is to examine each church holistically and to place them in their social, political, ecclesiastical and international context. This is important in illuminating the period of transition between the Byzantine era, when Puglia was governed from Constantinople, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and as such it greatly adds to our understanding of the later art of the Kingdom. It will be argued that although the Norman conquest did not result in much 'French' artistic influence, the political upheaval of the conquest created the conditions for many of the developments that took place, most significantly the reinvigorated relationship with the papacy and with southwest Italy. However, there was also a great deal of artistic continuity through Byzantine and Norman rule. In particular, Puglia in this period is characterised by the very strong sense of civic identity that the cities possessed and which shaped the

construction of new churches. Continuity can also be seen in the way in which patrons and artists took inspiration from Byzantine and Islamic sources and used and re-used them to suit their local circumstances.