Authenticity and Representation:

Profiling the Capital with Four Heads at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

by

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A thesis accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in Art History

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Spring, 2026

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Scholarship on the *Capital with Four Heads* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art has remained stagnant, largely given the presence of a second, highly similar capital found in Troia, Italy. Because the Troia capital was discovered at its presumed site of origin, its purpose and iconography are easier to trace. The capitals' similarities led scholars to either project the context of the Troia capital onto the *Capital With Four Heads*, treating them as one and the same object, or dismiss the *Capital With Four Heads* as a forgery of the Troia version. This thesis offers the first explicit distinction between the capitals via visual analysis. Subsequently, a comparative analysis indicates that the *Capital with Four Heads* represents a later revival of the imagery found on the Troia capital. Finally, a cultural-historical framework and iconographic analysis narrow the period of origin for the *Capital with Four Heads* to the 15th-17th centuries.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I express my sincere appreciation to my advisor, Dr. Maile S. Hutterer, who helped me develop this thesis from a single idea. I also thank Dr. Victoria Ehrlich and Dr. Kris Seaman for their assistance, time, and support as members of my thesis committee. Special thanks to Dr. Maggie Williams for introducing me to the application of decolonial art history to the Middle Ages. Additional thanks to Christine E. Brennan, Provenance Researcher and Collections Manager at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for welcoming me to the museum and assisting with my research, and to Charles Ragland of the Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project for providing and explaining the petrographic study memoranda to me, as well as to Dr. Jacqueline Lombard for her advice and information. I also thank my peers in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture for their feedback and support: Alexa Davidson, Aidyn Dervaes, Jessie Johnson, Rina Kita, Annie Lynch, and Trish McCall. Finally, I thank my wonderful chosen family, Jamie Smith, Taylor Steel, and Avery Vogel, who supported me every step of the way.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Inside the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the *Capital with Four Heads* (object no 55.66) (ca. 1250) is easy to miss, tucked away in gallery 304 (as of September 2025). This spacious gallery is densely filled with medieval artifacts. *Capital with Four Heads* is mounted on a wall beside the main entrance to the gallery from the Great Hall [Figure 1] (See Appendix A for all figures). This work is remarkable for its representation of four distinct figures, especially its depiction of a Black African in the most prominent position, which has attracted significant scholarly attention. The placement of the work against the wall positions the capital with the Black African facing the viewer. Unfortunately, the wall mounting prevents visitors from walking around it completely to thoroughly view the faces on its opposite side.

The unusual iconography of the capital has stimulated rigorous debate over its authenticity. It appeared on the Paris art market in 1928, where it was exhibited by its first known owner, Arthur Sambon, in the *Exposition de Sculpture: Sculpture compare de l'Antiquité, du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance.*[1] From there, it was purchased by James Hazen Hyde, who was famously interested in collecting allegorical representations of the four continents (America, Asia, Africa, and Europe).[2] The capital was gifted by Hyde to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1955 where it has remained since.[3] Questions surrounding the authenticity and origin of the *Capital with Four Heads* arose after Hans Wentzel discovered a remarkably similar second capital in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Troia, Italy, in the spring of 1952. He

[1] Curatorial file note "CTL-C71.R67R," in *Capital with Four Head's* file, by Charles T. Little, 8 March1996. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY (hereafter cited as Curatorial file note, Charles T. Little).

[2] See Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, *The Four Continents: From the Collection of James Hazen Hyde* (Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, 1961): https://doi.org/10.5479/sil.91845.39088002241636.

[3] Vera K. Ostoia, "'To Represent What Is as It Is,'" *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 23, no. 10 (1965): 368, https://doi.org/10.2307/3258174.

published an article on this capital in the same year.[4] Since the discovery of this second capital (hereafter referred to as the Troia Capital), questions about the authenticity and provenance of the *Capital with Four Heads* have been at the forefront of scholarly discussions on these works. These debates reveal that while the capitals share many similarities in design, structure, and subject matter, their differences are particularly striking. The variations between capitals were highlighted when they were exhibited together for the first time in the 1977 exhibition *Austellung zur Kultur der Staufezeut* at the Wurttembergisches Landesmuseum in Stuttgart, Germany. Their side-by-side display made it increasingly clear just how many differences there were between them [Figure 2]. Charles T. Little, former curator of Medieval Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, noted some of these key issues at the time. Not only do these variations suggest a different origin than the Troia Capital, but they also contradict dating the *Capital with Four Heads* to the Middle Ages. Differences included the type of limestone used, inconsistent moldings, the absence of claw marks from medieval tools, and irregular damage. Instead, he posed an underexplored theory that the *Capital with Four Heads* is a later, likely early modern or modern copy of the Troia version.[5]

In this thesis, I examine the state of scholarship on the *Capital with Four Heads*, its authenticity, and avenues for further insight. Scholarship on this work, with the exception of the studies on authenticity, often treats it as one and the same as the Troia Capital. My thesis strictly separates the two capitals into their own distinct analyses. I propose that an in-depth visual and contextual comparison between these capitals reveals new information about both works and deepens our understanding of them. My analysis demonstrates that the Troia Capital predated the

[4] Hans Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches Kapitell in Troia," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 17, no. 2 (1954): 185-88, https://doi.org/10.2307/1481326.

[5] Curatorial file note, Charles T. Little.

Met's version, potentially by several decades or even centuries, highlighting its influence on the positive representation of Black Africans. While many scholars refer to the *Capital with Four Heads* as a copy, I suggest that the concept of revival is more fitting, as the later example deviates from the earlier one in several key respects. The fact that these are two separate works is essential to understanding them in greater detail. My in-depth visual analysis in Chapter III clarifies the details of each individual capital. Chapter IV presents a comparative study that reveals similarities and differences among the capitals, many of which have not been examined in depth by other scholars, and builds on the points raised by Little against a medieval dating of the *Capital with Four Heads*. Chapter V provides political, cultural, and historical contextualization, as well as a study of iconographic representations of race, gender, and status, building on the work done in Chapter IV. This intrinsic information explores the possible origins of the *Capital with Four Heads*, suggesting either an early modern or a modern revival of the Troia imagery, with an early modern date most likely. Though a conclusive origin cannot be identified at this time, this thesis expands on the current state of scholarship on the capital and creates avenues for further research, as many questions remain about this curious object.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholars have written about these capitals. At times, they discuss the *Capital with Four Heads* and the Troia Capital as essentially interchangeable objects, and at other times the capitals are discussed in their own right. Sources from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for example, discuss the *Capital with Four Heads* (also referred to as the Met Capital hereafter) as a singular object while still acknowledging the existence of the Troia Capital.[6] Hans Wentzel was the first to publish an article about the Troia Capital after his discovery, before learning of the Met Capital's existence.[7] Outside of these examples, the capitals are most often discussed separately with respect to provenance and authenticity. Otherwise, scholars tend to use them interchangeably to contextualize and examine them as representative of artistic patronage within the reign of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250), as case studies of a regional style, or iconographic examinations of the represented physiognomies, with a particular interest in the heads of the Black African males.

Concerning Frederick II

Many scholars who have written about either or both capitals have contextualized them in relation to Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, who ruled Italy from 1220 until his death in 1250.[8] They generally agree that the capitals were both created during

[6] For key sources on the *Capital with Four Heads* from the Metropolitan Museum of art see Ostoia, "To Represent," 367-72; Konrad Hoffmann and Florens Deuchler, *The Year 1200: A Centennial Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art February 12 through May 10, 1970,* vol I (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1970) 41-42; Christine Verzar and Charles T. Little, "Gothic Italy: Reflections of Antiquity," in *Set in Stone: The Face in Medieval Sculpture*, ed. Charles T. Little and Willbald Sauerländer (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006) 156-157.

[7] Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches Kapitell," 185-88.

[8] For information on Frederick II's rule see David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (The Penguin Press, 1988).

Frederick's reign. This consensus comes particularly from the fact that the Troia Capital was discovered by Han Wentzel in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, which, as Metropolitan curator, Vera Ostoia identified, was completed under Frederick II.[9] The two Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogs connect the capitals to Frederick II's interest in a classical revival.[10] Frederick's political policies, driven by this revival and the precedent set by other Hohenstaufen leaders, highlight his interest in being seen as a universal authority as the Holy Roman Emperor. The contextual information helps to situate these objects within broader discussions of their style and iconography. However, when scholars invoke Frederick II, they largely discuss the capitals as one example of artistic patronage under his rule rather than explicitly treating them as separate objects.[11] This oversight ignores the evidence, which suggests they were created at different times, requiring separate research on the origin of the *Capital with Four Heads* in order to fully capture the greater influence that this imagery had, as observable in the two examples studied in this thesis.

Concerning Style

Another scholarly thread centers on the unique styles of these capitals, which, scholars generally agree, are a hybrid of French and Italian influences, as is especially apparent in the foliage. In his article about the Troia Capital, Wentzel suggests that most of the work, including

[9] Ostoia, "To Represent," 367–72.

[10] Konrad and Deuchler, *Year 1200*, 41-42; Verzar and Little, "Gothic Italy," 147-57.

[11] See Jean Devisse, "The Black and his Color: From Symbols to Realities," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art,* vol II, pt 1, ed. David Bindman, Henery L. Gates, and Karen C. C. Dalton, New edition (The Belknap Press of Harvard Louis Gates, 2010), 104-5; Konrad and Deuchler, *The Year 1200,* 41-42; Paul H. D. Kaplan, "Introduction to the New Edition," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol II, pt 1, ed. David Bindman, Henry Louis Gates, and Karen C. C. Dalton. New edition (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 14; Paul H. D. Kaplan, "Black Africans in Hohenstaufen Iconography," *Gesta* 26, no. 1 (1987): 30-2. doi:10.2307/767077; Ostoia, "To Represent," 370-1.

the heads, resembles French styles, so much so that it could be a French capital, if not for the leaves, which he believed must be Italian.[12] Ostoia offers a similar analysis of the Met Capital. She noted that the leaves surrounding the capital's base are a modified version of acanthus leaves, with similar examples in Apulia suggesting Hellenistic inspiration. However, the unusual symmetry of the foliage on both capitals leans toward French styles.[13] Christina Verzar and Charles T. Little discuss a solution for this hybrid style found on both capitals: the presence of Northern artists in the Southern Italian court of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II could account for the French and Rhenish Gothic elements.[14] The emperor himself spent a lot of time in these regions. Overall, these scholarly analyses reveal influences that align with regional style, combining French and Italian inspirations.

Concerning Iconography:

While examining the capitals together reveals similar stylistic influences, they also have key differences, especially in their iconographic features. Each of the four heads on both capitals displays distinct facial characteristics, raising questions about their identity, origin, and symbolism. When discussing these capitals, scholars might point out differences between them, but typically still analyze and contextualize them together. For example, most scholarly interest focuses on the heads, which are believed to represent a Black African male on each capital. On the Met Capital, this head is referred to as M1, and on the Troia Capital as T1.[15] Scholars have

[12] Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches Kapitell," 185-88.

[13] Ostoia, "To Represent," 368-71.

[14] Verzar and Little, "Gothic Italy," 157.

[15] For sources which focus on the representation of the Black African male see Devisse, "The Black and his Color," 104-5; Kim M. Philips, "Race and Ethnicity: Hair and Medieval Ethnic Identities," in *A Cultural History of Hair in*

noted the unique presence of facial hair on T1 compared to M1, yet they still discuss both as a single medieval Italian example depicting a Black African.

The next two heads are of less interest to scholars but are still discussed, particularly regarding their head coverings. Wentzel describes this head as that of an older man and as the most successfully realistic one on the Troia version.[16] So detailed is this head that he proposed the theory that it might represent the object's maker. Scholars generally presume that the figures on both are Muslim men because of their head coverings, which evoke the Muslim colony founded by Frederick II in Lucera.[17] However, as Ostoia describes, the head covering on the Troia Capital (T3) is more like a hood. Whereas the Met's version (M2) is a turban. Scholars have not yet explored or explained the head coverings.

Scholars rarely address the final four heads between the capitals. Those who do mention these heads share uncertainty about their gender and identity. Some, like Wentzel and Ostoia, have described the two more inconspicuous figures, T4 on the Troia Capital and M4 on the Met Capital, as representing two women. Ostoia, in particular, describes M4 as having a 'Junoesque quality.'[18] Aside from this observation, little attention is paid to the details of these representations, and their features are not fully noted. Indeed, most scholars fail to mention M3 on the Metropolitan capital and T2 on the Troia Capital.

Overall, while there is significant scholarship on the representation of the Black African male, there is less focus on the portrayal of the older males with head coverings, and almost none

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the Middle Ages, ed. Roberta Milliken (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 132; Kaplan, "Black Africans," 30-2; Ostoia, "To Represent," 370-1; Verzar and Little, "Gothic Italy," 156-7.

[16] Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches Kapitell," 185.

[17] Ostoia, "To Represent," 370-371.

[18] Ibid., 370.

on the other head types. Moreover, although the visually obvious differences are noted, scholars have not thoroughly examined the reasons behind them or tried to catalog all of these variations. Therefore, there is substantial opportunity to study the iconography of all four heads, especially in relation to each other.

Concerning Function, Provenance, and Authenticity

The conversation about provenance and authenticity is perhaps the most complex and pertinent to this thesis, as it requires that the capitals be studied in their own right, particularly given their differences. As mentioned above, these discrepancies were first noted by Little after the 1977 exhibition in Stuttgart. Ostoia similarly highlighted the 'puzzle' of the provenance of the Met Capital, especially considering the discovery of the Troia Capital, which was found in its presumed place of origin, at the cathedral in Troia. The origin of the Met Capital, on the other hand, is unclear prior to its appearance on the Paris art market.[19] The differences in style and limestone between the two capitals raise questions of authenticity for some scholars. Little has stated reasons to believe that the Met Capital is a later copy, making the Troia Capital the original work. He lists several features that would contradict dating the object to the Middle Ages, including different moldings, the absence of claw marks from medieval tools, and irregular damage.[20] Writing the Met Capital off as a forgery of the Troia one (which it could still be) means that scholars have given it little attention as its own artwork with its own contexts. Given that there is no evidence at this time of forgery, this thesis moves forward with Little's

[19] Ostoia, "To Represent," 368.

[20] Curatorial file note, Charles T. Little.

suggestion that it is a later version of the Troia Capital but argues that it is best classified as a revival of its imagery from a later, non-medieval date.

Conclusion

Scholars have analyzed these capitals extensively, shedding light on many aspects crucial for understanding their broader significance. The reign of Frederick II offers a valuable historical and political framework that enhances the analysis of the stylistic and iconographic features of these complex objects. Researchers have connected Frederick II's familial background and political ambitions to the capitals, which aids in estimating the origin of the Troia Capital. However, this work tends to overlook that these are separate objects. While individual studies provide important insights into stylistic influences consistent with larger trends in Apulian art, notable variations in the iconography of the heads prompt further questions about the influence this imagery had on representation. This influence is particularly observable through the heads of the Black African males, which have generated considerably more scholarly attention than the other figures. As a result, the capitals themselves remain underexplored as individual artistic expressions, highlighting the need for detailed visual comparisons and a reassessment of existing interpretations, especially concerning how iconography might be understood within its Mediterranean context. The nature of these capitals in their unattached state, and of the *Capital with Four Heads* being removed from its place of origin, has created more mysteries than it has solved. Ongoing research is needed, with particular attention to issues of authenticity and representation.

III. THE CAPITAL WITH FOUR HEADS AND ITS COUNTERPART

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Capital

The *Capital with Four Heads* is a figured limestone capital that measures 14 1/8 x 13 x 13 inches, with a 7 3/4-inch base. The abacus is cubic, while the center is rounded, curving outward at the top. Around the base, a band of foliage resembling acanthus leaves encircles the capital. The leaves rise vertically from the base at a 'V' shape and extend outward on either side of each head's neck. Each leaf has a thick central vein that carries a pattern of horizontally curling smaller veins, creating swirls that radiate from the leafy tips. These lush leaf tops frame the heads on either side, but neither extend beneath their necks nor reach the upper edge of the capital. Instead, their full heights reach just below each figure's ears. There is also a vine-like horizontal feature that runs around the rounded central part of the capital. It sits directly above the leaf tops, leaving negative space before the circular ring directly below the abacus. Several leaf tips are now missing due to damage, and there are chips throughout the leaves.

On the abacus of the capital is a right-angled notch at one corner [Figure 3]. The circular underside has a central hole instead [Figure 4]. Both of these features were likely for mounting, suggesting that the capital was once attached to a structure or was intended to be. The central hole would have supported the base, while the notch in the upper corner suggests it was attached to something else above. The placement of this notch reveals that the capital would have been positioned similarly to how it is currently on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with M1 being the most outward facing, and M3 in the back-most position underneath the notch.

The focus of this capital is on the four human heads that emerge, one at each corner, their necks passing directly behind the central vein of the leaf below them. Each head is approximately the same size and shares similar features. For example, on all four figures, the hair

covers the top half of the ears and trails in a perfect line towards the back of the heads into the base of the capital. Yet, each also has distinct characteristics that set it apart. The frontmost head, based on both the object's current display position and the mounting notch above the capital, is M1 [Figure 5]. This figure has a square face shape. Its squared jaw, fuller lips, broader nose, and rounded cheekbones are more prominent than those of the other figures on the capital. The hair is carved in tight coils, distinguishing this head further. All of these features together aid in identifying the head as a Black African male.

Clockwise, the next head to the left of M1, is an older figure, M2 [Figure 6]. This elder's age is indicated by the wrinkles across the forehead, around the mouth and cheeks, and beneath the eyes. The hollowed cheeks, which emphasize its cheekbones, further highlight its age. M2 has the most expressive face of the group, as its wrinkles create a sense of movement. Its face is square in shape like M1. The jaw is more angular than that of the other figures, evident especially in the side profile, and its lips are thinner and slightly more downturned. Rather than hair, this figure has a head covering that otherwise follows the pattern of covering only the top half of the ears.

The last two figures share similar features. The first, positioned in the back-most corner, is M3 [Figure 7]. This head has a plumper, rounder face and jaw than M1 and M2, suggesting youth. The mouth has extensive damage but faintly retains its shape. Each curved side of the upper lip meets in a dipped center with distinct philtral columns, resembling the shape of a recurve bow, contemporarily referred to as a cupid's bow. This figure's nose is almost entirely missing. The hair falls in vertical strands of rounded curls. Its bangs are straight across the forehead and at the same length as the rest of the hair, forming what is contemporarily referred to as a bowl-cut shape that ends at the top of the forehead and mid-ear. The final figure on the Met

Capital sits to the right of the central head, M4 [Figure 8]. It closely resembles M3 in face and jaw shape, but has a smaller nose and mouth. Its hair is also curled but in a looser pattern. Rather than a bowl-cut, this figure's hair appears to be twisted into an updo at the back, creating a loose bun at the base of the head that is visible from the side profile [Figures 5 & 7]. This hairstyle suggests that the figure represents a woman, an interpretation that might explain why it has more delicate facial features than the others.[21]

The Troia Cathedral Capital

The counterpart to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's *Capital with Four Heads*, here referred to as the Troia Capital, was discovered in 1952 by Wentzel during restoration work on the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Troia. In his 1954 article, Wentzel discusses the discovery, provides a detailed visual analysis, and considers the work's stylistic influences, which lead him to date it to the early thirteenth century.[22] The capital is currently housed in the Museo Diocesano in Troia as part of its collection of artifacts from the surrounding area. The Museo Diocesano conveniently sits across the street from the Cathedral of Maria Assunta, connecting the capital back to its presumed context.[23]

The foliage on the Troia Capital is essentially the same as that of the Met example. There is a central leaf under each head, and the leaves intersect to create a 'V' shape on either side of

[21] For more information and resources on medieval hairstyles see "V. Historical Context," p. 35-48.

[22] Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches," 185-188.

[23] Since the *Capital with Four Heads* lacks any known original context, its function remains uncertain. However, because the Troia capital is associated with the Cathedral of Maria Assunta, scholars have suggested it likely served a mortuary purpose. This is supported by the mounting notch at the top, which would allow insertion into a ciborium or a tomb wall. (Ostoia extended this mortuary function to the Met Capital, but she did so based on an incorrect identification of the Troia Capital's context as that of the Met's). See Wentzel, "Ein Gotisches," 188; Ostoia, "To Represent," 372.

the heads. The leaf tops on this capital fan out around the heads almost as if they are part of the figures. The Troia capital also features a vine-like horizontal decoration that runs around the rounded central part. On this capital, it fills the negative space between the leaves and the top of the capital more centrally.

The squared abacus of the Troia Capital has another right-angled mounting notch at one corner [Figure 9]. This notch is deep and rigid. There is also a central mounting hole which is fully visible from both the top and bottom [Figure 10]. Once again, these features suggest the capital would have been attached to a structure. Based on the placement of the upper notch, when mounted T1 would have been the most outward facing head with T3 in the back most position underneath the notch.

The frontmost figure, T1, has a rounded face shape, almost creating a perfect circle, disrupted only by its pointed jaw [T1, Figure 11]. The lips are wide and curve slightly upward; the upper lip makes a cupid's bow where it meets in the center. The cheekbones are round and pronounced. This head is the only one on the Troia Capital that has completely exposed ears, unobstructed by a head covering or hairstyle. These ears protrude from the side of the head and are easily visible from the front. The hair is carved in tight curls. Like the outward head on the Met Capital, this head has been identified by its features as a Black African male. Perhaps the most intriguing feature of this head is the facial hair. T1 has a full, curly mustache on the upper lip and a short curly beard on the chin. This is the only head on either capital to have facial hair of any kind.

The heads to either side of T1 are particularly similar to one another. They both share youthful features and wavy hair that falls just below the ears and flows toward their backs. In both cases, their hair completely covers their ears. To the center's right, T4 has a rounded face

shape with an angular jaw [Figure 12]. Though the nose and mouth are quite damaged, their smaller size than T1 is visible. Its lips appear to be slightly pursed and may also be in a cupid's bow at the top. To the left of the center, T2 also has a rounded face shape but is slightly more ovular, with an angled jaw [Figure 13]. There is extensive damage to T2's nose and mouth, making it difficult to discern details about these features. However, there is one clear and unique feature to this head, its hair has a distinct V-shaped point in the hairline, which is contemporarily referred to as a widow's peak. The hair is also slightly curlier in the back than T4's.

The backmost figure, is T3 [Figure 14]. This face is generally more square in shape than the others on the Troia Capital. Its chin, mouth, and nose, minus the bridge, are now gone due to significant damage. The most distinctive feature of this head is its hood-like covering. This headdress covers the ears and drapes over the top of the neck. T3 also has wrinkles on the cheeks and forehead, indicating its age and identifying it as the only aged figure of the Troia Capital, much like on the Met version. The wrinkles are subtler in this case and do not affect the expression, or at least not enough to be noticeable, given its current state.

Conclusion

This chapter has separated the Met Capital and the Troia Capital into their own distinct visual analyses. These analyses have highlighted many similarities between the capitals, but have also extracted their differences for comparison in the next chapter. Scholars have found the identities of the Black African and the older males with head coverings to be the easiest to pinpoint, while paying little attention to the other heads, often giving them only a passing mention. Here, they are given their own descriptive attention to each of their individual features

for further examination. In particular, this chapter showcased just how different the heads of the capitals are, cataloging the features of each head for future reference.

IV. COMPARING CAPITALS

The *Capital with Four Heads* and the Troia Capital share many notable similarities. They are exact in size and share the same structural design: a squared abacus, a rounded center, a band of foliage surrounding the base, four heads at each corner, a vine running above the leaves and behind each head, a notch at the top corner, and a central hole for mounting. However, while these and other similarities are significant, the differences between the two capitals are more intriguing because they reveal just how distinct they are. Examining these distinctions and exploring their implications can reveal information about both, but most importantly, they shed light on the context of the Met Capital. Key differences include those mentioned by Little: the type of limestone, the arrangement of the foliage, the specific damage sustained by each capital, and the absence of marks from medieval tools. There is also variation in the iconography and style among the heads, as well as in their sequence. This chapter examines Little's arguments for why the Met Capital cannot be medieval and expands on them with additional observations to reveal new insights. The next chapter will further develop these observations by considering cultural, political, and historical contexts, and by analyzing iconographic representations of ethnicity, race, gender, and status in the Middle Ages and beyond in order to explore avenues for dating the *Capital with Four Heads.*

Limestone:

One of the first differences between these works that raised questions about authenticity and origin is that the capitals are made from different types of limestone. After seeing them next to each other for the first time, Little described the Met Capital's stone as a "creamier yellow,"

while the Troia Capital was more "greyish" in tone.[24] The color contrast suggests compositions varied enough to assume the stones came from different quarries.

When an object, such as the *Capital with Four Heads,* has an unknown origin, that origin can, in some cases, be determined by testing the object for elemental compositions similar to those of the stone from a given monument. In 1996, the Metropolitan Museum of Art commissioned a petrographic study of a thin section of the *Capital with Four Heads.*[25] This is one of many studies cataloged in the Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project, a database housing compositional data "which contains samples from sculptures in museum collections, from quarries in the Ile-de-France, Normandy, Burgundy, Périgord, and the Nile Valley, as well as from French monuments and British cathedrals."[26] To conduct a study, neutron activation analysis is used to determine the chemical elements that comprise a given limestone sample. This composition, referred to as the compositional profile, can reveal the "fingerprint" of a quarry source. The elements comprising an object of unknown origin can then be compared to the compositional profile of a quarry site to see if it is a match. This is how the Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project helped determine the origin of several objects from Notre-Dame of Paris.[27]

The study of the sample from the *Capital with Four Heads* concluded that, when compared to the established limestone database, the sample most closely resembled French

[24] Curatorial file note, Charles T. Little.

[25] Memorandum about the compositional profile of *Capital with Four Head's* sample to Charles T. Little by Lore L Holmes, 24 July 2996. Limestone Provenance Project.

[26] The Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project, "Applying Science to Art History," International Center of Medieval Art, Accessed January 21, 2026, https://www.limestonesculptureanalysis.com/dynamic.php?id=about.

[27] Georgia Write and Lore L. Holmes, "The Limestone Project: A Scientific Detective Story," in *Set In Stone: The Face in Medieval Sculpture,* ed. Charles T. Little and Willbald Sauerländer (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006), 46-73.

limestone.[28] Of the two Italian limestone specimens in the database at the time, the sample did not share a composition with either. However, similar formations can be found in Northeastern Italy, and the Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project database contains mostly samples from French quarries. It is also important to note that two samples from the same stone might vary in composition themselves, so they must first be compared with one another to discover if their standard deviation is small enough before being compared with those from different objects. Therefore, there is room for error in this process. Furthermore, only two samples from a single source, (as is often the case in the following reports), do not constitute a uniform compositional group. The sample of the *Capital with Four Heads* was tested against samples of Apulian limestone related to Frederick II's patronage, including those from the Cupa bridge gate, the 'Barletta bust' (commonly presumed to be a portrait of Frederick), a portrait of the god Jupiter, stone from the Duomo at Trani, and even two samples from the Troia cathedral apse. The sample from the *Capital with Four Heads* did not sufficiently match any of the listed Apulian samples, including those from the Troia apse.[29] The closest match was to the Trani Duomo stone; however, a definite shared source could not be determined in this case either. Essentially, the limestone analysis currently lacks sufficient data to definitively determine or rule out the origin of the *Capital with four Heads'* limestone, although it does provide some useful information.

The color difference in the limestone suggests a different quarry source for each object. It was most common for a given monument and its objects to be created from limestone of the same quarry, especially if they were created around the same time and for the same purpose. In

[28] Memorandum about the comparison of the *Capital with Four Head's* sample with other Apulian sculptural samples to Charles T. Little by Lore L. Holmes, 11 February 1998, Limestone Provenance Project, 1-7.

[29] It is worth nothing that the two samples collected from apse, varied considerably in composition and were possibly contaminated.

this case, the Troia Capital would likely have been created with the same stone used on the rest of the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. Given the difference in color and a lack of chemical similarity to samples from the area, the Met Capital was likely not created for this structure at this time and place. Based on the limestone analysis, the limestone for the Met Capital was more likely sourced from France. An Italian origin cannot be ruled out, however, especially given the lack of Italian sources in the database. Furthermore, the Met and Troia versions stylistically align with both French and Italian trends. This thesis, therefore, moves forward with the assumption that the limestone of the Met Capital is either of French or Italian stone, and, based on its official debut in Paris and its stylistic connections to Italy, it was most likely also carved in Italy or France.

Leaves and Vines:

The leaves on both capitals surround the base and feature a horizontal vine that runs along the top of the heads. These features are stylistically similar. However, their placement and spacing differ, suggesting that the capitals were created by different artists. On the Troia Capital, the leaves diverge at a 'V' shape between the heads from the base of the capital, with the leafy tops intersecting beneath each head. The leaves almost merge with the heads as the necks emerge from their central point of connection. The horizontal vine runs behind the midpoint of each head, appearing to enter the back of one side and exit the other. The placement of the vine provides a central filler of negative space between the top of the leaves and the upper edge of the capital.

On the Met Capital, the leaves also diverge in a 'V' shape between the heads, but the tops of the leaves do not quite meet beneath each head as they do on the Troia Capital. Additionally, the leaf tops do not become one with the heads in the same way, as the viewer can see where the

neck emerges, separating human from foliage. The horizontal vine runs so closely to the tops of the leaves that it is easily overlooked without closer inspection. It is difficult to identify without comparison to the Troia Capital. Instead of filling the space between the leaves and the top of the capital, the vine leaves a larger area of negative space above it. Rather than intersecting with the back of each head at the center, the vine reaches the base of each skull, where the hair ends. Altering how the leaf tops encircle each head on the Met Capital, along with the vine placement, results in an awkward design choice. Consequently, the foliage is not woven as intricately with the rest of the capital, and the increased negative space fails to direct the viewer's gaze upward. This awkward choice indicates that the capitals had different creators, either in different places or at different times of origin.

Damages Sustained

The disparities in the damage sustained to each capital suggests two key details: the Troia Capital is likely older due to greater overall damage, and the inconsistency in the location of damage suggests that the capitals experienced differences in use and movement since their creation. What remains consistent across both capitals is that the noses of all four heads have suffered partial or complete damage. Otherwise, areas of damage range in severity and location. On the Troia Capital, T1, in the most outward position, has sustained the least amount of damage. T4 follows closely, then T2, which is missing its nose, lips, and a portion of its left cheek. The head with the most considerable damage on this capital is T3, which is missing the lower half of its head and the entire corner above it. This is, to be sure, the head positioned beneath the mounting notch at the top. The damage to this corner is thought-provoking as it would have been the most connected to and sustained by a supporting structure had it, in fact, ever been mounted. The amount of damage taken by each corner of the abacus remains

consistent in severity to that accrued by the heads. The corner of T1 has the least amount of damage, then T4, T2, and finally the corner of T3 with the most severe damage.

The Met Capital also has damage across the figures. M2 appears to be the most intact, with minor damage to the nose, mouth, and one chunk missing from the right cheek. Next is M1 with a sizable portion of its chin missing and similar damage to the right side of the jaw. Finally, M3 and M4, which both have more severe damage to their nose and mouth. The damage sustained to the corners is again similar, with the corner of M2 being the most intact, followed closely by the corner above M1, then M3, and finally, the corner of M4 has sustained the most damage. The Troia Capital has more overall damage than the Met Capital, with one exception: there is more damage to the leaves of the Met Capital. The Troia Capital reveals minimal damage to the leaves, while on the Met Capital, there is an entire section of leaves missing between heads M1 and M2. This is a significant amount of damage, considering the heads stick out further than the leaves, leaving them more vulnerable. It might have been the result of a specific incident in transportation, mounting, or removal. Otherwise, the damages suggest that the Troia Capital is older.

The mounting notch and central hole of the Met Capital both appear to have been filled at some point, and there is evidence of plaster on both the top and bottom. The plaster suggests that the Met Capital was moved around more than the Troia version. This seems consistent with the assumption that the Troia Capital was discovered in or around its place of creation and the fact that the Met Capital had at least two previous owners prior to its acquisition by the museum and has been featured in multiple exhibitions since. While it is possible that the differences in the chemical composition of the capital's stone also altered the deterioration process, the Troia

Capital still has significantly more damage, suggesting that the Troia Capital is older and has experienced different usage and transport over its lifetime.

Medieval Tools

Another key reason that Little stated the *Capital with Four Heads* could not be dated to the Middle Ages was the lack of marks from medieval tools to the upper part of the capital. Medieval stonecutting technologies and techniques can be observed in the marks left on stone. Stone masons had specific tools and techniques that developed from centuries of practice.[30] Stone masons used various materials and methods for cutting, processing, and carving stone blocks, as well as specialized tools to create fine decorative features. Marks from wide toothed baffles, flat mason's hammers, comb cleavers, ax-hammers, chisels, and skarpels commonly appear on walls from techniques such as hewing, cutting, and chipping to create the stone blocks from which they are made. Smooth surfaces were commonly created using grinding techniques, surface treatment with chisels, or scraping using wide flat chisels and skarpels. More complex sculptural forms such as acanthus leaves, used chisels, skarpels, and drills. The stone for a decorative capital was carefully polished and then delicately carved.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact tool marks on these capitals given the inexperience of this author and having not seen the Troia Capital in person. The part of these capitals that demonstrate the most tool marks in photographs is the mounting notch. The top of the Met Capital certainly does not share the same rough marks in the mounting notch as the Troia version [Figures 3 & 9]. The marks of the Troia notch resemble those made from tools like a Crandall

[30] Mykola Bevz, Lucjan Gazda, and Stanislaw Golub, "The Technology of Masonry and Processing of Stone Materials in the Buildings of the 13th-Century Castle of King Danylo Romanovych in Kholm," *Architectural Studies 10*, no. 2 (2024): 37-54, https://doi.org/10.56318/as/2.2024.37.

hammer and tooth ax hammer which both feature teeth, or from a masons pick. The notch on the Met Capital is comparatively smooth. It is missing the same rough marks, indicating it was not made with medieval tools.[31]

Iconographic Differences Between Heads:

Aside from the difference in limestone color, the most noticeable distinctions between these capitals are the stylistic and iconographic variation among the heads. A close comparison of each head's features reveals deliberate choices in their depiction that highlights two main points. First, the heads on the Met Capital are more uniform in design than those on the Troia Capital. Each head is similar in size and features hair or a head covering of consistent shape, regardless of hair texture, so that only the earlobe is visible. Second, each head on either capital possesses distinct features that were intentionally chosen to convey specific messages to viewers (messages explored further in the next chapter). The detailed intentionality observed in the differences between the heads suggests that the Met Capital was not meant to be a direct copy or forgery of the Troia Capital. Instead, it indicates that the imagery was revived for a later audience, with purposeful modifications.

T1 & M1 (Head of a Black African Male)

The most outward-facing heads on each capital have been resoundingly identified by scholars as a representation of a Black African male. Both share similar stereotypical features observed in western art such as coiled hair styles and pronounced, round cheekbones, and large

[31] It is possible that the groove was smoothed at a later time by Hyde, Sambon, or perhaps an early owner of this capital. However, since there is no evidence to support this, we proceed with the assumption that the smoothness resulted from the use of different tools.

lips (especially compared to the other heads). However, they have more significant differences than similarities. On the Troia Capital, T1 has a round face with a pointed chin, while on the Met Capital, M1 is square in both the face and the chin. While both of these heads have relatively thick lips, T1 has a thicker upper lip than the bottom one and it is slightly upturned. In contrast, both the upper and lower lip on M1 are equally thick, creating a plump, rounded shape that appears exaggerated, especially in comparison to the other heads on either capital. Here, they form an oval shape, while on M1, they are more bowed in a cupid's bow. The nose on M1 is also broader across the bridge and nostrils. While both heads have tightly coiled hairstyles, T1 wears tighter curls with three visible rows from the front, compared to two rows on M1. Finally, T1 has two distinct features: its large, fully exposed ears and facial hair, which are absent on M1. Overall, the major differences between M1 and T1 include the shape of their faces, the size of their ears, nose, and lips, and the absence of unique facial hair. From these differences, it can be concluded that the Troia version, with its unique features and careful attention to detail, has more personality. Meanwhile, the Metropolitan version minimizes distractions from its depiction of a Black man and emphasizes exaggerated features, especially in the lips, to highlight this representation.

T3 & M2 (Head of an Older Male with a Head Covering)

Both M2 and T3 have been identified as older males, and likely Muslims. On the Troia Capital, T3 is missing its entire lower half, making a comparison difficult but not impossible. The remaining top half is squared in shape like its Met counterpart. M2 also has a thin nose bridge, pronounced cheekbones, and facial wrinkles. The more complete preservation of M2 reveals its animated expression. Although half of the face of T3 is missing, the remaining

forehead wrinkles are less prominent and arched than those on M2. Furthermore, the slight parting in the mouth of M2 reveals a grimace or expression of anger, emphasized by arched brows and pronounced wrinkles. Similar to the distinctions of M1, M2's features are more exaggerated than its counterparts while still conforming to the prescribed overall pattern for the Met Capital heads. Perhaps the most pronounced distinction between the two heads is in the head covering each figure wears. T3 features a head covering that completely covers its ears and extends just past where they would end. In contrast, the covering M2 wears follows the same shape as the hair on the other heads, exposing only the earlobe while leaving the rest of the hair covered. These differences again reveal an exaggeration in the Met version. Furthermore, its more elaborate head covering may have been intended to read more clearly as religious to a later audience. Meanwhile, the Troia version, while still finely detailed, has a less identifiable covering. This covering might have been more recognizable to its thirteenth-century audience, particularly given their familiarity with the Muslim population in the area.

T4 & M4: (Head of a Youth/Possible Female)

The last four heads have presented scholars with difficulty in identifying their intended representation. T4 and M4 have most commonly been identified by scholars as 'youths.' M4 has visual indicators of femininity, evident in its twisted updo visible from the side of the head. T4 does not appear to have a similar hairstyle that hints at femininity; instead, its loose waves fall past the ears. Both heads share small, slightly upturned lips. Based on the delicate features of either, they could be women or young boys, not yet of age.

While T1 and M1, as well as T3 and M2, represent similar identities and a distinct reflection of iconographic inspiration, the last two pairings are less obvious. Perhaps this is

because T4 and T3 did not have as widespread of a visual impact. Or perhaps the representations on the Met Capital simply fit the unknown purpose to be received by its later audience. M4 has the most potential of any head on either capital to be female, while the social identity of T4 is difficult to determine despite its similarly small features and rounded head.

T2 & M3 (Head with a Cupid's Bow/Widow's Peak)

The final two heads are T2 and M3, which have both been identified as 'youths' as well. Both head shapes are round, though T2 has a pointed jaw, making it more oval than the squared chin of M3. The damage sustained to the nose and mouth of T2 makes it difficult to observe these features. Both T2 and M3 have distinct hairstyles unique to them. T2 has a widow's peak from which the waves of its hair flow down past its ears, covering them completely. In contrast, the hair on M3 falls in vertical strands forming a bowl-cut shape. Much like the other heads on the Met Capital, the length of the hair exposes only the earlobes. M3's nose is relatively small, and its lips, which meet in that distinct cupid's bow, are slightly upturned at the corners. Much like M3's more accessible gender, M4 can be clearly identified as male with its cropped, bowl-cut hairstyle, whereas T2's social identity is more challenging to pronounce.

Order of the Heads:

Another under-observed difference between the capitals is the order of the heads. The placement of the mounting notch at the top of the capitals reveals that, in both cases, the frontmost facing head on each was intended to be a Black African male. In clockwise order, the heads on the Troia Capital are T1, T2, T3, and T4. In this order, the iconographic representations are: a head of a Black African male, then a head with a widow's peak, a head of an older male

with a head covering, and finally a head of a youth. On the Met Capital, the order is M1, M2, M3, and M4. Their iconographic representations start with the head of a Black African male again, then the head of an older male with a head covering, the head with a cupid's bow, and finally the head of a youth, which is possibly a female. In clearer terms, instead of the older man (M2) being under the mounting notch as it is on the Troia Capital (T3), it is the head with a cupid's bow (M3) under the mounting notch of the Met Capital.

The decision to position the head of the Black African male as the most outward-facing remains consistent, revealing its significance to each creator. The head of the older male with a head covering was in the back most position on the Troia Capital (T3), but moved to the immediate left of the frontmost position on the Met version (M2). This decision either made M2 more or less immediately visible to viewers. If the change in M2's position made it more visible, this increased importance could explain why this head is so detailed and expressive. However, without knowing what this structure was, it is hard to determine the exact visibility of each head, especially if viewers could have observed the capital from an aisle or doorway.

Conclusion:

This chapter used a comparative analysis of both capitals to build on Little's reasoning against the idea that the *Capital with Four Heads* is from the Middle Ages. This process not only uncovered new information but also explained why this thesis favors the idea of a revival over a copy for the Met Capital. Mainly, there are too many differences between them. A difference in the color of the limestone, even without definitive results from analysis, suggests a different origin for the Met Capital, with the two most plausible sources of origin being Italian or French. The use of identical decorative foliage with varied placement suggests a different creator for

each capital. The damages sustained to each capital support the idea that the Troia Capital is older and that both works have different origins. The absence of medieval tool marks on the Met Capital, though under-analyzed, suggests it was not made with medieval masonry tools and techniques. The differences in the features used to portray the same types of people show the intentional influence of the Troia Capital's iconography, which might better align with a later period than the thirteenth century. Lastly, the difference in the order of the heads reveals that the representation of a Black African was central to each capital. Furthermore, moving the representation of the older Muslim man from the backmost position to directly next to the Black African emphasized the importance of this imagery to the *Capital with Four Heads.* All of the observations made in this section lead to the interpretation that the Met Capital is either French or Italian in origin, is more contemporary than the thirteenth-century Troia Capital, had a different creator, and found particular inspiration in reviving the imagery of the Black African and Muslim men.

V. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In this final chapter, I expand on my observations from Chapter IV by situating the discussion within broader cultural, historical, and political contexts, as well as examining iconographic representations of race, ethnicity, gender, and status in the Middle Ages. Scholars have already conducted extensive research and commonly agree that the Troia Capital fits within the broader scheme of Frederick II's artistic patronage and political pursuits. However, if the Met Capital is indeed a later revival, as suggested by evidence in Chapters III and IV, it cannot have been created under Frederick II. Instead, it revives this earlier imagery for another purpose. This assumption raises questions about the date and purpose of this presumed revival. Chapter V aims to map out possible timeframes for the creation of the *Capital with Four Heads*. To do so, it is important to first understand why associating the Troia Capital with Frederick II offers the most plausible interpretation of its original purpose. While a revival would necessarily imply a shift in context and intent, analyzing these differences may reveal the motivations behind a later author's decision to revisit this work. Additionally, incorporating perspectives on iconographic representations of race, ethnicity, gender, and status in the Middle Ages contextualizes the differences in iconographic features among capitals, revealing possibilities in the purpose of the *Capital with Four Heads*. To do so, context will be placed onto each 'type' of head in turn.

Frederick II

Scholars have extensively contextualized these capitals in relation to Frederick II. This work suggests that the intended purpose of the Troia Capital was political propaganda in support of the emperor.[32] Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor from 1220-50, ruled over Germany, Sicily,

[32] For key sources of Frederick II and his reign in Italy see David Abulafia, "Ethnic variety and its implications: Frederick II's relations with Jews and Muslims," in *Intellectual Life at the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen*, ed.

and eventually Jerusalem.[33] He inherited his authority over Sicily through the marriage of his father, Henry VI, and his mother, Constance I, the daughter of Roger II of Sicily. His Normand predecessors from his mother's side conquered the land from previous Lombard, Byzantine, and Arab rulers. Medieval Sicily was a rich and culturally diverse land due to these changes in power. It remains a strong time and place to examine notions of cross-cultural interaction and transculturalism due to the combination of artistic elements. Frederick II grew up in this environment in Sicily and the kingdom he cultivated was thereby built on a variety of traditions.

The precedent for images of Black Africans in the visual culture produced by his family places this capital at a turning point for medieval depictions of Blackness without implications of sin or immorality.[34] On his father's side, Frederick II became one of the final and most well-known rulers under the Hohenstaufen dynasty of Germany. The artistic patronage of the Hohenstaufen dynasty produced several images of Black Africans, particularly showcasing servants of their court. One such example is the three miniatures in the *Liber ad honorem Augusti sive de rebus Siculis,* a manuscript that tells the story of Henry VI's conquest of Sicily. Each of the three miniatures depicts a Black African musician.[35] One of these fragments showcases Henry VI's triumphant victory with a procession of trumpeters, including a Black man [Figure 15].

William Tronzo (National Gallery of Art, 1994), 213-244; David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1988); Ferdinando Bologna, *I Pittori Alla Corte Angioina Di Napali, 1266-1414: E Un Riesame Dell'arte Nell'ata Fridericiana,* Vol. 2 (U. Bozzi, 1969); James M. Powell, translator, *The Liber Augustalis or Constitutions of Malfi promulgated by the Emperor Frederick II for his Kingdom of Sicily in 1231* (New York, 1971).

[33] For information on medieval Sicily and Southern Italy leading up to Frederick II's reign see Abulafia, *Frederick II,* 11-86.

[34] Kaplan, "Black Africans," 29.

[35] Pietro da Eboli, *Liber ad honorem Augusti sive de rebus Siculis*, manuscript (Berne Municipal Library, c. 1197). https://warfare.ueuo.com/12/Liber_ad_honorem_Augusti_th.htm

Frederick promoted a range of scholarly pursuits, including science, mathematics, and poetry, as part of his effort to revive the Roman Empire culturally and politically. As part of this classical revival, he had a strong interest in viewing himself as the universal authority of the Holy Roman Emperor. The structures he built combined classical elements with Arab, Norman, French, and German influences; two notable examples are the Cupa bridge and Castel del Monte.[36] Frederick II's focus on a classical revival highlights the capital's role as political propaganda, aligning with the political goals of his reign and those of his predecessors. His policies and actions during his rule were influenced by his predecessors, past Roman laws, and his desire to claim universal authority. Roger II started the process of creating royal legislation in Sicily.[37] This was difficult for a kingdom that had not had a singular ruler since Emperor Justinian in the sixth-century. Frederick took these foundations and created royal legislation that was profoundly influenced by Justinian's code and Roman laws. These institutions can be read in the *Liber Auguatalis*, also known as the Constitutions of Malfi, the collection of Frederick II's laws.[38] Among many other things, these laws provide insight into his treatment of the two main bodies of people targeted throughout his reign, the Jewish and the Muslim.

Roger I began the process of driving Muslims from Sicily, which was continued by Roger the II and completed by Frederick II. The eradication of Sicily's Muslim population was a decisive move to rid any residual Islamic power stemming from the time it was ruled by Islamic caliphates. David Abulafia, a prominent scholar of Frederick II, lays out three factors to this 'Muslim extinction.'[39] First, the relocation of Muslim leaders. Second, extermination. Third, the

[36] Verzar and Little, "Gothic Italy," 146-157.

[37] James M. Powell, "Introduction," in *The Liber Augustalis or Constitutions of Malfi promulgated by the Emperor Frederick II for his Kingdom of Sicily in 1231* (Syracuse University Press, 1971), XIII-XXXVII.

[38] Ibid.

conversion of the remaining Muslim population, which is seen in the gradual transformation of Islamic names to Greek ones. To complete the process, in 1224-5, Frederick forced some 16,000 Muslims to relocate from Sicily to a colony in Lucera.[40] Once in the colony, they were given cattle, and they were granted freedom from tolls in Southern Italy, both measures to tie them to their new land and keep them out of Sicily. They were allowed to practice their religion but were also Frederick's personal servants.

As David Abulafia has put it, it is often best to view Frederick's political policies about members of his kingdom, like the Jewish and Muslim, as "toleration rather than tolerance."[41] Religious freedoms for the Jewish members under Frederick's rule were similarly conditional. The Christian view of the Jewish community in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is a complicated one. The Christian perspective viewed the existence of the Jewish people as evidence supporting the truth of Christianity. However, since their beliefs were considered incorrect, persecution against the Jewish community continued and grew more severe. Frederick II is known for having a generally tolerant attitude towards the Jewish people. In Germany, for example, he protected them from accusations of violence against Christians by humanizing them, describing the "common bond of the human species."[42] Furthermore, their presence in Sicily, unlike the Muslim population, was welcomed. These motivations were always double-sided, however. Due to the deportation of Muslims in Sicily, Islamic agricultural technology was lost, and Frederick began to attract North African Jewish settlers to Sicily for economic gain.[43] In

[39] Abulafia, "Ethnic Variety," 216.

[40] Kaplan, "Black Africans," 32.

[41] David Abulafia. "Ethnic Variety," 213.

[42] Ibid., 219-221.

[43] Ibid., 216.

1236, Frederick declared the Jewish population under his supervision, which required their subservience to (his) Christian authority and allowed Frederick to profit from them. Two of his laws declared protections for "Jews and Saracens" from being persecuted purely for their existence.[44] Again, this so-called protection was given so that Frederick could continue to profit from them and exert his authority over them.

Frederick II's connection to the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, where the Troia Capital was discovered, is the final clue. The Troia Cathedral was founded in 1093 and was not completed until the time of Frederick II, with additions to the upper façade and the apse.[45] The completion of the cathedral under Frederick II on top of his interest in a classical revival, aspirations of universal authority, and political motivation towards Jewish and Muslim members of the court all suggest that the Troia Capital was not only completed under his patronage but likely designed as a work of political propaganda. This propaganda showcases the diverse peoples of his court to represent his universal authority over all people. Since the evidence presented suggested a later origin for the Met Capital than the thirteenth century, questions about the work cannot be answered by looking towards Frederick II. However, it is possible that whoever sponsored this revival was aware of the original object and intended to use it for similar purposes. Or perhaps this imagery was familiar to this later artist and patron through its wider dissemination elsewhere. Either way, the similarities allow the influential imagery to be traced through both capitals.

[44] Powell, "Title XVII," in *The Liber Augustalis,* 22; Ibid., "Title XCII," 29.

[45] Ostoia, "To Represent," 368

Iconographic Representations: Race, Gender, Hair, and Power in the Face

Visual indicators of race, gender, and status are typically symbolic ones. When the entirety of an individual is visible, these symbols include the clothing, headgear, and hairstyles they wear, as well as the activities and rituals they engage in, and the things they hold. All of these indicators can communicate something about their identity to the viewer. These capitals, however, only showcase heads detached from either a monument or a body. Therefore, to better understand who, what, or where they are meant to represent, we must turn to other clues. There may be no indication of the costumes of these heads, but they have facial features, expressions, hairstyles, and, in the case of M2 and T3, headgear.

T1 & M1 (Examining race & ethnicity)

As discussed in the literature review, one of the central reasons for interest in these capitals, besides their authenticity, is their depiction of a Black African male.[46] This discussion centers on its placement in the broader scheme of depictions of Black Africans in Western Art. In particular, scholars discuss these works as representative of the late twelfth to early thirteenth-century turning point towards more positive depictions of Black individuals in European medieval art. Race and ethnicity are modern-day constructions. The contemporary terms understood today did not exist in the Middle Ages. However, it was a common practice in the European Middle Ages, and before then, to use visual indicators to identify foreign peoples or those of different cultural or religious backgrounds.[47] Oftentimes, these outsiders were depicted

[46] See, "II. Literature Review," p, 11.

[47] See Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) 181-91; William C. Jordan. "Why 'Race?," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2001): 165–173. https://www.academia.edu/36070688/William_C_Jordan_Why_Race_Journal_of_Medieval_and_Early_Modern_Studies_vol_31_no_1_Winter_2001_165_173; William C. Jordan and Helmut Reimitz, "Anti-Race? The Danger of

using traits that the culture creating the representation found distasteful. In the medieval volume of *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, Jean Devisse and Paul H. D. Kaplan lay the foundation for situating the two capitals in context with other, primarily Christian, medieval depictions of Blackness in art.[48] For much of the Middle Ages, depictions of Blackness were associated with sin or lesser social status. One example of this type of imagery is an Episcopal throne from the Church of St. Nicholas in Bari, Italy from 1098, in which a Black man with an expression of agony and tightly curled hair is holding up the throne with his back [Figure 16]. This pejorative association remained dominant until the late twelfth and early thirteenth-century shift, when portrayals of Black figures became more realistic and less frequently associated with moral failure. A key example is the first depiction of St. Maurice as a Black man in the Cathedral of Magdeburg around 1240 [Figure 17].[49] This depiction is often attributed to Frederick II by scholars because of his connection to the cathedral and the Hohenstaufen precedent for imagery of Black Africans.[50] St. Maurice has been celebrated as a saint since the tenth century, so in this case, features used to indicate Blackness were applied to a holy person and associated with

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Binaries," in *A Cultural History of Race in the Middle Ages,* edited by Thomas Hahn (Bloomsbury Academic, 2023) 171-95.

[48] Devisse, "Christians and Black," 31-72; Devisse, "The Black and His Color," 73-138; Kaplan, "Introduction," 1-30.

[49] See Jean Devisse, "A Sanctified Black: Maurice," translated by William G. Ryan. In *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol II, pt 1, ed. by David Bindman, Henry Louis Gates, and Karen C. C. Dalton. New edition (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Kaplan, "Introduction," 15; Kaplan, "Black Africans," 33; Paul, H D. Kaplan, "Redeploying a Saint: The Black Maurice and the Shifting Iconography of Blackness in Post-Reformation Germany and the Baltics," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 86, no. 3 (2023): 340–67. doi:10.1515/zkg-2023-3004; Effrosyni Zacharopoulou, "The black St Maurice of Magdeburg and the African Christian kingdoms in Nubia in Ethiopia in the thirteenth century." *Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25 (2015): 77-110. https://www.academia.edu/39981659/The_Black_St_Maurice_of_Magdeburg_and_the_African_Christian_Kingdoms_in_Nubia_and_Ethiopia_in_the_Thirteenth_Century.

[50] For information on Fredick's connection to Magdeburg see Kaplan, "Black Africans," 33; Virginia R. Kaufmann, "The Magdeburg Rider: an aspect of the reception of Frederick II's Roman revival north of the Alps," in *Intellectual Life at the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen,* edited by William Tronzo (National Gallery of Art, 1994) 63-82.

martyrdom and salvation. Soon after, representations of the Adoration of the Magi began to depict more frequently one of the three Magi as a Black man, using similar features such as plump lips, a broad nose, and tightly curled hair [Figure 18].[51] Images of the Black St. Maurice continued to appear in Western art but declined after 1530 due to the Reformation [Figure 19].[52] During the colonial era, the depiction of Black St. Maurice shifted from a holy knight to a more exoticized figure, aligning with the colonial imagery that became prevalent from the late seventeenth century through the eighteenth and at least into the nineteenth century.

The features of T1 do not appear to be intentionally hostile or exaggerated. There is no morality assigned to any of the heads. Not only is there no contextual connection to suggest this is a depiction of sin or lesser value, but this figure also has unique features that give it a sense of personality, including a curly mustache and beard. Facial hair in the Middle Ages, particularly beards, is highly circumstantial.[53] Most often, they were used as a signifier of gender because women were thought to be incapable of growing facial hair. Beards were often used to distinguish types of people. The Normans, for instance, were known for having short hair and clean-shaven faces. This might also be a signifier of religion, as western clergy members were

[51] See Jean Devisse and Michel Mollat, "The African Transposed," translated by William G. Ryan, in *The Image of the Black in Western Art,* vol II, pt 2, ed. David Bindman, Henery L. Gates, and Karen C. C. Dalton, New edition (The Belknap Press of Harvard Louis Gates, 2010), 184-211; Kaplan, "Black Africans," 33-4.

[52] Kaplan, "Redeploying a Saint," 340–67.

[53] For information on facial hair in the Middle Ages see: Martha Easton, "Gender and Sexuality," in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Middle Ages,* ed. Roberta Milliken (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 108, 119; Penny H. Jolly, "Cultural Representations: Head and Body Hair on Medieval Art," in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Middle Ages,* 154-169; Philips, "Race and Ethnicity," 123-136; Walter Pohl, "Telling the difference: signs of ethnic identity," in *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*., ed. Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (Brill, 1998), 51-61; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Beards, braids and moustachios: exploring the social meaning of hair in the mediaeval Muslim world," *Al-Masāq* 30, no. 1 (2018): 4-8. Doi: 10.1080/09503110.2018.1435390; Pauline A. Stafford, "The meanings of hair in the Anglo-Norman world: masculinity, reform, and national identity," in *Saints, Scholars, and Politicians: Gender as a Tool in Medieval Studies,* ed. Mathilde van Dijk and Renée Nip (Brepols, 2005): 153-171, Doi: 10.1484/M.MCS-EB.3.1888; Ian Wood, "Hair and beards in the early medieval West," *Al-Masāq* 30, no. 1 (2018): 107-116, Doi: 10.1080/09503110.2018.1426581.

more likely to have clean-shaven faces and short hair, while Greek priests might carry beards. Enslaved, Jewish, and Muslim individuals were among those who might be depicted with a beard to signify their difference. This was a particular method of distinguishing between groups during the Crusades.

Since the meanings of hair are so circumstantial, it is often more helpful to turn to the fashion worn by the ruling body to understand where there is a deviation and what it might mean. The portraits of Frederick II available, namely from manuscripts, coins, and busts, show him with a clean-shaven face and wavy hair that falls either to his ear or just past it to his chin [Figures 20-22]. It can be assumed that this was the fashion standard for his court. Even if these are not accurate representations of how he actually looked, they are how he wanted to be presented to the public. So, besides being a unique personality trait, perhaps T1 has a beard and moustache to signify that he is different. In general, it seems the use of different physical features was more about communicating Frederick's authority over different types of people. This does not necessarily mean it was intended negatively, especially when comparing imagery such as the agonized figure holding up the Bari throne to the heroic St. Maurice. It was more likely that these were intended as positive depictions of difference, demonstrating to a viewer the harmony he created among the previously heterogeneous inhabitants of his kingdom, brought together under his laws and authority.

The Black African on the Met Capital, M1, is signified similarly to T1. However, this head has less distinctiveness in facial hair, face shape, and exposed ears. Instead, it shares key features with T1, such as its coiled hairstyle, broad nose, and plump lips indicating direct visual inspiration from the Troia Capital. Since the Met Capital, in particular, exists without a known context and because the heads each lack a body, the only indication of hostility or caricature can

be observed in its facial features. M1 has no slight curvature in its lips or facial hair that gives this head a sense of personality. Instead, it is particularly obvious in its use of features like the lips to indicate its representation of Blackness. While T1's lips are still plump, they have a cupid's bow shape as opposed to M1's completely rounded lips. Both the 1240 Magdeburg St. Maurice and an example of a 1522 St. Maurice relief on the Riga, House of the Black Heads share the cupid's bow shape of T1 [Figures 17 & 19].[54] Still, M1 seems to align more closely with these Maurice sculptures and depictions of the Adoration of the Magi in the late fifteenth to sixteenth century than the more exoticized representations that followed into the colonial era [Figure 18].[55] This suggests a date for the Met Capital prior to the seventeenth century.

T3 & M2 (Examining head coverings)

When it comes to T3 and M2, the most pertinent features to analyze are their ages and, of course, the head coverings they wear. T3 on the Troia head has a more general head covering that is not wrapped in an intricate style, though it does have two main creases to it, suggesting that it is wrapped. This might be a choice of generalization however, because there were Muslims actively living and working near Troia, it is hard to believe the creator of this object would not know what kind of head covering they wore. This probably was intended to be a representation of the Muslims in Frederick's court, especially those living in the Lucera compound he created for those he deported from Sicily. Their access to religious freedom and protection was a product of their servitude to him. Therefore, it is likely an accurate depiction.

[54] Devisse, "A Sanctified Black," 166; Kaplan, "Redeploying a Saint," 356-61.

[55] Devisse and Mollat, "The African Transposed," 184-211.

On the Met Capital, M2's head covering is more intricately wrapped, likely a style of turban. This is a clue to a potential revival in or around the fifteenth century, given the increased interest in and depictions of turbans in western art of this period.[56] Turbans were used ubiquitously to refer to Central Asian, North African, and Middle Eastern peoples prior to the fifteenth century.[57] It is in fifteenth-century French manuscript illuminations that the western repository of Eastern dress was expanded.[58] While these images often feature foreigners in exaggerated or inaccurate costumes, cross-references with Islamic texts have shown that they provide accurate depictions of different types of turbans.[59] Overall, there was increased interest in imagery of Muslim attire from the fifteenth century onward, suggesting the earliest date of creation for the Met Capital to be the fifteenth century.

T2, T4 & M3, M4 (Examining Gender)

Visual indicators of gender, like other forms of social identity, typically take the form of the clothing and hairstyles an individual wears, or the activities and rituals they engage in. Because the heads of these capitals have no bodies to study, the key remaining indicator of gender is the hair each figure wears. Based on the other information already studied, the genders on T1, M1 & T3, M2 are most likely male. However, the main question surrounding the

[56] For information on turbans in western art starting in the fifteenth century see: Joyce Kubiski, "Orientalizing Costume in Early Fifteenth-Century French Manuscript Painting (Cité Des Dames Master, Limbourg Brothers, Boucicaut Master, and Bedford Master)," *Gesta* 40, no. 2 (2001): 161–80, https://doi.org/10.2307/767244; John B. Friedman, "The Art of the Exotic: Robinet Testard's Turbans and Turban-like Coiffure," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol 4., ed. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (The Boydell Press, 2008), 173-192.

[57] Philips "Race and Ethnicity," 123-136.

[58] For information on how turbans entered western iconography see: Chris Filstrup and Jane Merrill, *The Turban: A History from East to West* (Reaktion Books, 2026), 18-38.

[59] Kubiski, "Orientalizing Costume," 161–80.

remaining four heads is their gender. Throughout the Middle Ages, hair and its meaning were extremely contextual to the time, place, and culture that people belonged to.[60] Where hair is worn, in what fashion, and in what length often signified things like gender and class. While absolutisms cannot be made, general trends can be examined. For men, the length of the hair on their heads often reflects the ruling body they lived under as well as their class. For instance, the Merovingian elites were notorious for their long hair, typically shoulder-length. An enslaved individual, lower-class individual, or an outsider might then be distinguished, particularly in visual representations, by shorter hair. Women were most commonly identified for their long hair. Again, exceptions always existed; however, by the late Middle Ages, it was customary for unmarried western women to wear long, flowing hair to signify their youth, virginity, and availability. Married and widowed women wore their hair up and concealed it in various ways, depending on current fashion.

In turning again to the fashion of the ruling body for clues, Frederick II was depicted clean-shaven and with shorter hair, sometimes cropped into a bowl cut and at other times flowing down his neck to his chin. One indicator of what the women of his court might have worn is in their representation in the *Liber ad honorem Augusti sive de rebus Siculis*. The women featured here are typically veiled. Such is the case in a depiction of Frederick's mother, Constance I of Sicily, handing what is likely a swaddled baby Frederick to a nurse [Figure 23]. Overall, there seem to have been few unmarried women presented in this manuscript.

Starting with T2 and M3, T2 has the unique feature of a widow's peak, but its curls flowing down the back of its neck are not necessarily a useful indicator of gender. It is not easy

[60] For information on hair and hair styles in the Middle Ages see: Easton, "Gender and Sexuality," 102-122; Jolly, "Cultural Representations," 154-169; Stafford, "The meanings of hair," 15, 153-171; Wood, "Hair and beards," 107-116.

to tell if the hair flows long past the neck or stops at the base, like some of the portraits of Frederick II [Figures 20 & 21]. If this figure's hair is long and flowing, then it would be either an unmarried woman or a young boy who has yet to receive a shorter cut. M3 is notable for its bowl-cut hairstyle, probably meant to indicate that this figure is male, similar to other representations of Frederick II [Figure 22].

T4 and M4 were the most likely, based on a visual analysis, to be women, particularly because of the updo hairstyle that M4 wears. This is, however, once again not in the medieval style. Braids would have been more likely than a twist, and it is strange to see hair put up and then not covered by a veil of some sort. This is a potential indication of a modern revival, as western women did not begin to wear their hair unveiled and up in a casual hairstyle like this until at least the late early modern period, and even then, women continued to wear hats in public into the twentieth century.[61] However, the hair and head coverings on all the Met heads follow the pattern of exposing half the ears and maintaining even length, so perhaps this was simply the clearest way to indicate female gender while adhering to this pattern. T4 is like T2 in that it is difficult to tell where its long curls stop flowing. On both capitals, these heads appear to be the youngest. They both have rounder head shapes, the plumpest cheeks, and overall, the smallest facial features, which might also suggest femininity.

[61] See Sarah Heaton, "Gender and Sexuality: Tresses Adorned and Adored, Locks Coiled and Cut," in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Age of Empire,* ed. Sarah Heaton (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 101-116; Chelsea Johnson and Kristen Barber, "Gender and Sexuality," in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Modern Age,* ed. Geraldine Biddle-Perry (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 111-128; Mark A. Johnston, "Gender and Sexuality," in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Renaissance,* ed. Edith Snook (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 99-114; Jayne Lewis, "Gender and Sexuality: 'Hairs Less in Sight,'" in *A Cultural History of Hair in the Age of Enlightenment,* ed. Margaret K. Powell and Joseph Roach (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 109-134.

Conclusion

Previous scholarship has nicely situated the Troia Capital as a product of Frederick II's artistic patronage, which likely served a propaganda function aimed at reinforcing his universal authority as Holy Roman Emperor. Frederick II's political policies provide reasons for the representation of these particular four figures in a specific manner, such as the non-hostile depictions of Black African and Muslim men. However, scholars have applied this contextualization to both capitals without further consideration of the evidence, which suggests that the *Capital with Four Heads* was created later and therefore cannot be another product of Frederick II's reign. Furthermore, the lack of observed details and context for the other heads (M3, M4, T2, and T4) has left their possible greater influence unknown, an influence evidenced by the existence of the *Capital with Four Heads* as a later revival of this imagery. This final chapter filled some of these contextual gaps and highlighted under-examined iconographic representations, particularly in identifying M4 as a woman and M3 as a man. Furthermore, it suggests avenues for narrowing a time period, such as the alignment of *The Capital with Four Head's* imagery to representations of Black Africans prior to the seventeenth century and increased interest in portraying turbans in western art after the fifteenth century. All this has laid the groundwork for further research.

VI. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The medieval Mediterranean is a perfect case study for exploring themes of cross-cultural interactions and transculturalism, given the extensive cultural exchange that occurred across the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages through trade and conflict alike. Sicily and Southern Italy are particularly compelling examples of these themes because of their culturally diverse landscape, shaped by shifts in power among Lombard, Byzantine, Arab, and Norman rulers in the Middle Ages. The artistic production that emerged from this cosmopolitan place offers rich examples of transculturalism, reflecting a blending of cultural styles to create something new.

The Troia Capital is an example of this rich cosmopolitanism, which was particularly strong in the thirteenth century, evident in both the artwork's subject matter and its style. The representation of four distinct people creates a legacy for its imagery, particularly traceable through the depiction of a Black individual at a turning point in western art. The greater influence of this work is traceable in the eventual revival of its imagery on the *Capital with Four Heads.*

Questions of origin and authenticity have been central to discussions about *The Capital with Four Heads* ever since the discovery of the Troia Capital in 1952. Scholars have either sought to situate both works within the broader context of medieval Mediterranean art or separated them, only to critique issues of provenance and authenticity that remain largely unresolved. Rather than continuing to make these errors, this thesis advanced the discussion of the *Capital with Four Heads* by separating these two capitals into their own in-depth visual analysis before employing a comparative analysis and contextualization. Through these means, not only does the evidence clearly suggest that the *Capital with Four Heads* cannot be medieval,

but the important impact of the Troia Capital can be properly studied in the eventual revival of its imagery.

Through its comparative analysis, this thesis builds on Little's underexplored theory that the Met Capital may be an early modern or modern copy of the original. Rather than labeling it a mere copy, this study refers to it as a revival, given that the creator intentionally retained specific details such as dimensions, mounting notch, foliage, and subject matter, while also introducing deliberate deviations, including differences in how individual features are represented. This thesis offered avenues for further research into the exact time and place of this revival and provided evidence that it is, in fact, a revival rather than a medieval work or forgery. Though a conclusive date cannot be given at this time and a modern date for the capital remains possible, the evidence presented in this thesis suggests that the most likely origin of *Capital with Four Heads* is French or Italian, dating to sometime between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Regarding how an artist from this time might have encountered and subsequently revived the Troia Capital, previous scholarship has examined the possible diffusion of its imagery and broader influence, particularly with respect to the depiction of the Black African male figure. In *The Image of the Black in Western Art,* Jean Devisse suggests two possible examples of diffusion.[62] The first is an early fourteenth-century keystone in the Abbey of Saint Wandrille, featuring four figures: a bearded man, a Black man wearing a turban, a woman, and a satyr [Figure 24].[63] The second example consists of three heads under the abacus of a pillar in the Rouen Cathedral of Notre Dame, representing a Delilah, a bearded Sampson, and a Black man [Figure 25].[64] This sculpture is thought to have been placed by a Norman sculptor around 1250.

[62] Devisse, "Image of the Black," 105.

[63] Ibid., 109.

Two additional examples of this capital's influence are those previously mentioned: the depiction of St. Maurice as a Black man at the Magdeburg Cathedral and the appearance of a Black Magi [Figures 17 & 18]. It is reasonable to consider the widespread influence of this capital, especially in Italy, France, and Germany, all of which were under Frederick's reign during his lifetime. Italy and France, in particular, are frequently suggested as possible places of origin for the *Capital with Four Heads,* based on stylistic characteristics and limestone composition.

I propose that this revival may have conveyed a comparable sense of authority over diverse populations that was conveyed by the Troia version, albeit within an early modern ruling body. Alternatively, it may have been inspired by such notions and subsequently transformed into an allegory of the four continents, a tradition that began in the Renaissance and continued to gain popularity into the twentieth century. This similarity to other images of the four continents is why James Hazen Hayes acquired the capital before eventually bestowing it on the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[65] Many questions about this unusual object remain unanswered, leaving room for future research.

[64] Ibid., 110.

[65] See The Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, *The Four Continents: From the Collection of James Hazen Hyde;* Louise Arizzoli, "Collecting the Four Continents: James Hazen Hyde (1876–1959), an American in Paris," in *Bodies and Maps: Early Modern Personifications of the Continents,* ed. Maryanne C. Horowitz and Louise Arizzoli (Brill, 2021), 343-375, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004438033_015.

APPENDIX A

IMAGES



Figure 1. View of the *Capital with Four Heads* in gallery 304, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, taken September 4, 2025 (photo: author).



Figure 2. View of the *Capital with Four Heads* and the Troia Capital displayed next to each other at the *Austellung zur Kultur der Staufezeu*t exhibition, Wurttembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart, Germany. 1977 (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, curatorial file).



Figure 3. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of top. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 4. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of bottom. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 5. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of front corner (M1), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 6. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of left corner (M2). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 7. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of back corner (M3). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 8. *Capital with Four Heads* (The Met Capital), view of right corner (M4). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Figure 9. Troia Capital, view of top. Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 10. Troia Capital, view of bottom with a visible mounting pole. Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 11. Troia Capital, view of front corner (T1). Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 12. Troia Capital, view of right corner (T4). Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 13. Troia Capital, view of left corner (T2). Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 14. Troia Capital, view of back corner (T3). Curatorial file, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 15. Entry of Henry VI into Palermo, featuring a Black African trumpeter wearing a turban. Pietro da Eboli, *Liber ad honorem Augusti,* 1195-1197. Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 120, fol. 134 (photo: Manuscript Miniatures. https://manuscriptminiatures.com/3966/11586#image).

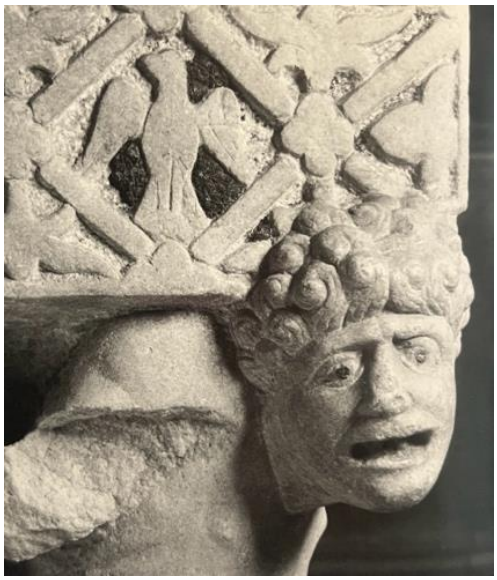


Figure 16. Detail of Episcopal throne, 1098, Church of St. Nicholas, Bari. (photo: Bindman, David, Henry L. Gates Jr, Karen C. C. Dalton. *The Image of the Black in Western Art.* Vol II, Part 1. New Edition. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 104).



Figure 17. Saint Maurice, c. 1240, Cathedral of Magdeburg, Magdeburg. (photo: NCR, https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/black-saints-maurice).



Figure 18. Covarrubias, *Adoration of the Magi.* Detail of a carved altarpiece, late 15th century, Museo Diocesano (photo: *The Image of the Black in Western Art*. Volume II, Part 2. New Edition. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 202).



Figure 19. Reynsken of Lübeck (attributed to), *Virgin Mary and Child, and St. Maurice,* 1522 (pre-World-War II photo), House of the Black Heads, Riga, polychrome stone relief, about 350×200 cm. Cathedral Museum, Riga (photo: *The Image of the Black in Western Art.* Vol II, Part 1. New Edition. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 168).



Figure 20. *Bust of Frederick II*, ca. 1237, Museo Civico, Barletta.



Figure 21. Frederick II and his falcon. Frederick II, *De arte venandi cum avibus* (The art of hunting with birds), Late 13th century. Biblioteca Vaticana, Pal. lat 1071, fol. 1.



Figure 22. *"Augustalis" of Frederick II Hohenstaufen (r. 1215-50),* 1230-50, Messina, Sicily, Italy, Gold Coin, 2x 0.1 cm, Object no. 67.265.26, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure 23. Constance I and her son Frederick II. Pietro da Eboli, *Liber ad honorem Augusti*, 1195-1197. Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 120, fol. 134 (photo: Manuscript Miniatures, https://manuscriptminiatures.com/3966/11586#image).



Figure 24. Keystone representing an unidentified subject. Early XIV century. Saint-Wandrille Abbey, Normandy, cloister, first eastern bay in the South gallery (photo: *The Image of the Black in Western Art.* Vol II, Part 1. New Edition. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 109).



Figure 25. Heads of Delilah, Samson, and a Black man carved under the abacus of a pillar, ca. 1250, Cathedral of Notre Dame, Rouen, nave, second pillar from the west, south side. (photo: *The Image of the Black in Western Art*. Vol II, Part 1. New Edition. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 110).

APPENDIX B

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