

Reading Romanesque Sculpture: The Iconography and Reception of the South Portal Sculpture at Santiago de Compostela*

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Abstract

Although recent scholarship and reception theory have demonstrated the importance of audience in the actualization of meaning in images and texts, more concerted attention is necessary to understand the polyvalent iconographic readings of Romanesque sculpture. Imagery on the south portal of the cathedral of Santiago conveyed messages of ecclesiastical authority to specific audiences, namely the cathedral chapter and inhabitants of the town. The unseverable link between the cathedral of Santiago and pilgrimage, however, has caused scholars to overlook the importance of the local population as an audience for the cult of St. James and the art patronage program of the cathedral's bishop, Diego Gelmírez (1100–1140). This paper will explore the reception of the iconography of the cathedral's south portal by various audiences in the twelfth century. The cathedral canons and townspeople may have responded to the imagery in a manner diametrically opposed to the prescribed reading of this sculptural ensemble commissioned by the bishop. The audiences' multiple readings, mis-readings, and non-readings of the south portal imagery demonstrate the indeterminacy inherent in the iconography of Romanesque sculpture and highlight the importance of the dialectical relationship between production and reception to its understanding.

For centuries Santiago de Compostela has been famed for its connection to pilgrimage¹ (Fig. 1). The *Liber Sancti Iacobi* or *Codex Calixtinus*, the medieval text centered on the cult of St. James and the pilgrimage to his church, depicts the pilgrims visiting Santiago as a devout, enthusiastic, and thoroughly satisfied audience for the cult. Recent studies, however, have begun to analyze the central role played by other social groups in the orchestration of James's cult in Santiago and the benefits which these other audiences hoped to derive from the booming economic enterprise of the medieval cult of saints.²

Unlike the visiting pilgrims, the local population, particularly the townspeople and the cathedral canons, were ambivalent about the pilgrimage industry generated in Santiago by their ambitious bishop, Diego Gelmírez (1100–1140). Gelmírez combined the construction of a massive new cathedral, the acquisition of ecclesiastical honors for himself and his church, and the implementation of religious reform to increase the flow of pilgrims, to enhance the status and dig-



FIGURE 1. *Santiago de Compostela, cathedral, exterior view of west façade (photo: author).*

nity of his cathedral, and to present Santiago as a center of piety and pilgrimage equal to Rome.³ The canons and townspeople of Santiago were at best reluctant participants in this grandiose plan, and at worst Gelmírez's most trenchant opponents.⁴

This paper will address the local inhabitants' responses to the central artistic enterprise undertaken by Gelmírez in

Santiago: the new cathedral and its substantial sculptural ensemble. The cathedral's decoration consisted of three sculpted portals, of which the lavishly decorated south portal faced the town and the canons' quarters and cloister. The portal presented iconographic themes of ecclesiastical authority, the suffering and betrayal of Christ, and the omnipresence of sin and evil to this local audience. In a double act of reception, I will posit medieval responses to this sculpture through an analysis of its possible readings, mis-readings, and non-readings by canons and townspeople.

This study of the south portal sculpture and its medieval reception will be based on an analysis of two twelfth-century texts with vastly different perspectives. The *Liber Sancti Iacobi* is a compilation of five books, cataloguing masses, sermons, and miracles of St. James, narrating the fictionalized military campaigns of Charlemagne in Spain, and addressing the concerns of pilgrims traveling to Santiago.⁵ The fifth book of the *Liber Sancti Iacobi*, the *Pilgrim's Guide*, shares with the other books the aim of glorifying St. James and his cult in Santiago.⁶ It also serves as a valuable instance of medieval reception in its description of Santiago's portal sculpture. The *Historia Compostellana* is also a composite text; it served as a *registrum* of historical documents as well as a panegyric *res gestae* of Bishop Gelmírez.⁷ It was produced by canons of the cathedral of Santiago at the bishop's behest; as such it provides a plausible articulation of Gelmírez's point of view, and can be employed as another lens through which modern scholars can study the medieval perception and reception of Santiago's south portal sculpture.

The sculptural decoration of the south portal

The south door of the cathedral of Santiago was the entrance used most often by the poor, merchants, nobility, monks, and clerics. Called the *Puerta de las Platerías*, or Silversmith's Portal, it is the only door on the cathedral that retains its original sculpture, but what remains is a jumble of reliefs originally destined for the south door combined with pieces moved from the west and north portals (Fig. 2). Thus, the current state of the south portal does not preserve the twelfth-century organization of these reliefs.⁸ The *Pilgrim's Guide* in the *Liber Sancti Iacobi* describes all three portals, and scholars have employed this text to determine the twelfth-century placement of the sculpture on the south portal.⁹ When the *Guide's* author visited Santiago around 1130–1135, he saw sculptural reliefs from all three portals, though not necessarily in situ.¹⁰ The iconographic analysis undertaken below will address only sculptural decoration that was on the south portal when the author of the *Pilgrim's Guide* saw it.

The south portal has a double-arched doorway with a sculpted tympanum under each arch. Columns decorated with vegetal motifs and saints in niches surround the double doors.¹¹ Also in this lower zone of the portal are reliefs representing apostles placed in the door jambs. The tympana feature scenes

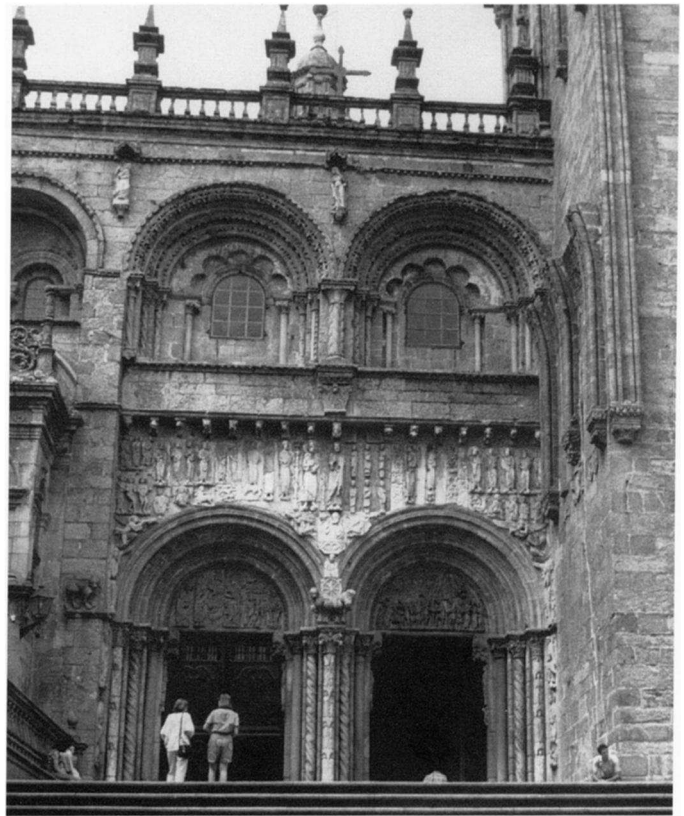


FIGURE 2. Santiago de Compostela, cathedral, south portal (photo: author).

from the life and Passion of Christ. The right one depicts the Adoration of the Magi in the upper zone¹² (Fig. 3). Below this, Christ heals a blind man and Pilate sits in judgment, appearing to watch the next episode, the Flagellation¹³ (Fig. 4). The final scene at the right represents the Betrayal of Christ (Fig. 5). The left tympanum depicts Christ's ministry, centering on the image of the Temptation (Fig. 6). Accompanied by angels and holy figures, Christ stands to the left of the Tree of Knowledge. He is tempted by two demons on the other side of the tree in the presence of more diabolical figures, including the woman with the skull. The frieze above the tympana features an array of figures (Fig. 2). Saints standing in orderly rows predominate, some filling the entire space above the doorway, others arranged in two registers. There are also some oddly shaped pieces, such as the four flying angels with trumpets placed on the sides of the two doorways, and a centaur who shoots an arrow across the frieze at a siren.

In this ensemble of sculptural reliefs are three iconographic themes: ecclesiastical authority, the suffering and betrayal of Christ, and images of sin and evil. The theme of ecclesiastical authority is articulated in the columns, the jamb figures, and the frieze, which together represent a hierarchy emphasizing the role of the apostles.¹⁴ The college of apostles, or *apostolado*, refers to the dedication of the cathedral to the



FIGURE 3. South portal, right tympanum (photo: author).

apostle St. James, and also alludes to the *vita apostolica* which the bishop and canons of the cathedral were to emulate.¹⁵ The hierarchy represented here also underlines the authority of the leading ecclesiastical figure in Santiago: the bishop and later archbishop, Diego Gelmírez. The solemn, frontal figures of apostles and saints in the frieze and on the columns of the south portal are representations which may champion religious reform, and also assert ecclesiastical authority on earth based on the power of a celestial model.¹⁶

The Passion scenes in the right tympanum all concentrate on the human suffering of Christ. The Betrayal by Judas, Judgment of Pilate, and Flagellation form just a small part of the Passion narrative, and must represent a deliberate selection of events.¹⁷ They allude to the treachery of one of the closest companions of Christ, and the cupidity, cruelty, and ignorance of the people of Jerusalem, who all were directly responsible for his death.

The authors of the *Historia Compostellana* address themes of betrayal by close associates with frequency when they characterize Gelmírez's relationship with his own religious community in Santiago. In one instance, the authors recount the bishop's difficulties in implementing the reform of the cathedral chapter and label the canons who did not cooperate as traitors, just as there was a traitor among Christ's apostles.¹⁸ Scholars such as Barbara Abou-El-Haj have noted the frequency of references to betrayal in the *Historia Compostellana*, and have associated them with the architectural sculpture

on the cathedral.¹⁹ In her discussion of a capital depicting the punishment of avarice, Abou-El-Haj argues that this image might also represent Judas, paralleling the numerous references to Gelmírez's enemies as Judases in the *Historia Compostellana*. The textual comparison of these treacherous clerics to Judas would have had a more direct pictorial equivalent in the image of the Betrayal by Judas in the right tympanum.

The scenes of the Judgment of Pilate and the Flagellation emphasize the mob's control over Christ's fate and its decision to crucify him. In Santiago, the bishop's main opponents in the urban riots were the townspeople and the cathedral chapter.²⁰ By demonstrating the terrible consequences of putting unbridled power in the hands of the people, these scenes may have justified Gelmírez's absolute control over the city of Santiago. The authors of the *Historia Compostellana* narrate that in the aftermath of the second urban rebellion of 1136, Gelmírez argued for clemency towards the townspeople of Santiago, using the very words uttered by Christ as he died on the cross, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."²¹ The *Historia Compostellana* presents the bishop as a type for Christ in accordance with the role which the prelate would have played in Easter ceremonies and in the reenactment of the Passion during Holy Week.²²

The Temptation scene on the left tympanum emphasizes the omnipresence of evil and sin²³ (Fig. 6). The Temptation is shown in a highly unusual composition in which two demons tempt Christ simultaneously.²⁴ This scene extends beyond



FIGURE 4. South portal, right tympanum, detail, Flagellation (photo: *author*).

Christ and the demons to include several other sculpted figures, the angels behind and above Christ and the diabolical figures flanking the demons²⁵ (Fig. 7). The tympanum decoration thus comprises two groups of figures, the majority of which represent diabolical images of sin, temptation, and violence. Images of evil not only outnumber those of good; they also occupy the central position on the tympanum. Pushed to the periphery of the tympanum, Christ and the forces of good are outnumbered and marginalized.

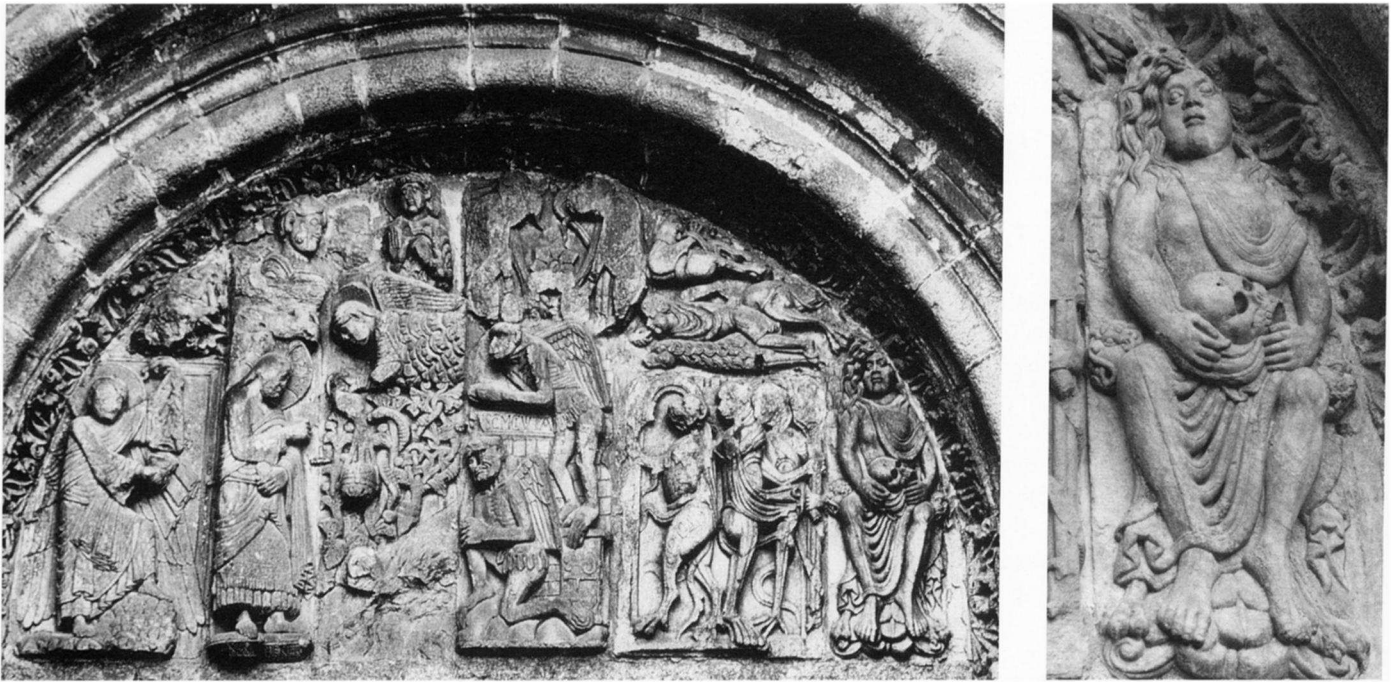
The authors of the *Historia Compostellana* interpreted the urban rebellions in Santiago as the forces of evil overwhelming the good intentions of Bishop Gelmírez for his church and city. The bishop is portrayed as an innocent victim of the cruel, hostile, and ungrateful inhabitants of Santiago, and townspeople and canons are described in the most derogatory terms, culminating in the description of them as ignominious “limbs and bait of the devil” (*membra et esca diaboli*). There may be an implied analogy with the text and the terrifying, hybrid demons and other diabolical creatures that dominate the decoration of the left tympanum.²⁶

Viewing practices and the reception of the south portal sculpture

Scholarship on Romanesque architectural decoration has emphasized the role of sculpture as advertising for a shrine.²⁷ The idea that monumental sculpture conveyed unequivocal messages to viewers considers only one side of the relationship between audience and image, what reception theorists would



FIGURE 5. South portal, right tympanum, detail, Betrayal of Christ (photo: *author*).



FIGURES 6–7. *South portal, left tympanum (photos: author).*

call the “sender code.” Reception theory, which highlights the role of the reader/viewer and problematizes the communicative content of a text or image, can provide a counterbalance to iconographic studies of medieval sculpture that privilege the producer of images and often ignore the viewer.²⁸ In employing theories of reception, most of which were constructed to analyze texts, we must first acknowledge the differences between perceiving an image and reading a text.

In recent works addressing the supposed word-image opposition, scholars from literary and art historical disciplines argue against the polarization of visual and verbal discourses. Mieke Bal characterizes images and artists as cultural texts, not to establish the primacy of textuality, but to highlight the similarities between textual and visual regimes.²⁹ Suzanne Lewis, in discussing Apocalypse illustration of the thirteenth century, elaborates on the notion that texts and images should be interpreted in a complementary way, as “the two cognitive channels of seeing and reading rarely operate independently within the historical contexts of Western European cultures as we know them, and most particularly in the Middle Ages.”³⁰ Thus, current scholarship tends to emphasize the convergences of text and image, noting the textuality of images and the visibility of texts. The possibility of a common interpretive mode seems particularly likely for narrative art, which is so prominent in medieval architectural sculpture. One caveat must be observed, however, when comparing the reading of a text to that of a public monumental image like a Romanesque sculpted portal. The reception of a text generally assumes an

interested audience, engaged in the activity of reading with a high level of concentration. The individual and private act of reading thus differs markedly from the consumption of public art. The assumptions of an engaged viewer/reader and of communication as a goal of the image/text will be discussed below and problematized with reference to twelfth-century audiences for the sculpture of the south portal of the cathedral of Santiago.

Studies of the perception of Romanesque portal sculpture often assume a captive audience, immobilized at the perfect vantage point for viewing the entire portal at once, with the time and interest to look at length.³¹ The cloistered monk could be characterized as perceiving art under these optimal conditions, fulfilling the role of “super-reader.”³² The monk in his cloister also corresponds to the theoretical construct of the ideal or imagined reader/viewer in the knowledge he brought to his viewing. His familiarity with the Biblical stories represented allowed him to delve beneath a literal understanding of sculpted imagery to reach a deeper comprehension of implied ideas and themes. For this category of “super-reader,” the recognition of the known led to the communication of the new.³³ He was able to understand imagery on various levels, literal, metaphorical, and anagogical. The monk was also implicated in the ideology expressed through cloister imagery. As the consummate “insider,” he represented the institution producing and disseminating the embodied knowledge. He was, therefore, a receptive audience for the image, a viewer who was committed to understanding the message conveyed

and to participating in the communicative process of viewing and interpreting religious imagery.³⁴ A cloistered monk can also be characterized as a “captive audience” for monastic art, as he interacted with imagery in his immediate environment. He possessed the time and the interest to look at length and to ponder the ideas presented in cloister decoration. In the case of a monk viewing cloister capitals, sender codes and receiver codes were perfectly harmonized and there was the greatest potential for effective communication.

The *Pilgrim's Guide* represents the response by a “super-reader” to the portal sculpture on the cathedral of Santiago.³⁵ The *Guide* was composed by a French cleric, and the viewing of the cathedral formed the culmination of his *ekphrasis* as well as of his visit to Santiago. The detailed text describes the portal sculpture and liturgical objects in the church, and also presents an interpretation of a pilgrim's reaction to the cathedral: “For indeed, whoever visits the naves of the gallery, if he goes up sad, after having seen the perfect beauty of this temple, he will be made happy and joyful.”³⁶ Because the author was a foreign visitor, however, his perception of the cathedral, its decoration, and pilgrimage to Santiago in general might have diverged from the perspectives of the other potential “super-readers” for the portal sculpture, the cathedral canons. The *Pilgrim's Guide* had its own ideal audience, pilgrims to Santiago, a group of people who would have been more likely to concentrate on Santiago's north portal, as the *Guide* indicates.³⁷ The *Pilgrim's Guide*, though a significant example of medieval reception, represents the perspectives of a mostly foreign audience, possessing a different horizon of expectations than the cathedral chapter and the townspeople of Santiago.

To the south portal sculpture the most likely “super-readers,” the canons, would have brought an intimate knowledge of the cathedral and of their bishop, Diego Gelmírez. They had undergone the reforms Gelmírez mandated to improve religious life within the chapter, and were involved in other projects associated with the bishop, including the *Historia Compostellana* and the recording of charters with lavish donor portraits in the cathedral cartulary *Tumbo A*.³⁸ Their education and their intimate association with the bishop and his administration would seemingly predispose the canons to a sympathetic reading of the portal sculpture. However, the personal experiences and historical circumstances that defined their interpretive community mitigated against a positive correlation between the message conveyed and the message received. The canons had numerous grievances against the bishop, most of which pertained to their lifestyle. The clerics generally resented what they considered to be Gelmírez's draconian reforms, which did not allow them to dress like knights and wear spurs into church, or to have wives or mistresses.³⁹ The canons also felt that an institution with the wealth of the cathedral should compensate them more generously for their duties. Though the cathedral canons may have had the knowledge and understanding to receive the episcopal messages Gelmírez conveyed in the south

portal sculpture, most of them probably disagreed with the ideological representations of episcopal authority and with any possible characterization of themselves as traitors and demons. In this case, there were serious discrepancies between sender and receiver codes. The cathedral clerics could be accused of “intense non-looking,” of refusing to enter into the implicit contract of making communication work in the site of the portal.⁴⁰

The townspeople of Santiago represented a different kind of audience. They could be characterized as the polar opposite of the monks and canons described above as “super-readers” or ideal viewers. As mere consumers of the south portal sculpture, the townspeople lacked both the knowledge and the interest to interpret and appreciate the thematic content of the south portal sculpture's iconography.⁴¹ They did not possess the literate frame of reference that would allow them to understand the biblical narratives in more than a rudimentary way. The citizens of Santiago may have been introduced to the iconographic themes represented on the portal by a literate interlocutor, perhaps a canon.⁴² There is no concrete evidence, however, for such an explication of architectural sculpture at any of Santiago's three sculpted portals. It is likely that any deeper metaphorical or allegorical meaning in the religious iconography would have been beyond the comprehension of Santiago's townspeople. Lack of knowledge and of literacy constructed the first of several barriers to communication; others were erected through the physical placement of the sculpture.

The act of viewing a sculpted portal involved a heterogeneous audience in a public space. Issues of accessibility and visibility of the images were also concerns. On the south portal of Santiago's cathedral, for example, sculptural elements were placed within easy viewing range. The physical proximity of the images, however, was counteracted by the confused organization of the elements, which makes it difficult for any audience, medieval or modern, to “read” the sculpture placed there. In addition, there were no orchestrated viewing opportunities, no staged ceremonies at the south portal, so that townspeople and clerics must have perceived the sculpture on this entrance in an informal and non-organized way.⁴³ Perhaps medieval audiences viewed the sculptural decoration of this doorway in much the same way as the townspeople do today. The cathedral remains the center of the old town, the focus of the city, and people walk past the south portal numerous times in the course of their daily activities. Medieval like modern townspeople may have glanced up at the portal sculpture on their way to the market or shops or in transit as they entered and exited the church. The viewing of the south portal in the middle ages may have been more occasional than intentional, with viewers noticing some aspects of the decoration in one visit, other aspects in another, and sometimes ignoring the sculptural representations altogether. The viewing experience was an accretive and eclectic process for the urban audience, whose attention to and under-

standing of the messages conveyed in the portal sculpture were not constructed or determined by ritual practice.

Since the townspeople of Santiago did not possess the insider's perspective of the ideal audience, there must have been a disjunction between this real audience and the sculpture's iconographic themes, a chasm widened by social and political turmoil. If the canons felt excluded from the pilgrimage industry in Santiago, the townspeople experienced this alienation even more acutely. Burdened with the demands of caring for pilgrims, they received none of the benefits of their presence.⁴⁴ Attempts to gain greater autonomy in commercial and social spheres were summarily dismissed, while Gelmírez perpetuated archaic and oppressive feudal obligations to underline his absolute secular and ecclesiastical authority.⁴⁵ This authoritarian attitude towards the townspeople may have been expressed in the portal sculpture, in its depictions of demons and monsters who must reform their disobedient behavior. In the political realm, the townspeople had no choice but to submit to Gelmírez's authority, as the rebellion that they staged with the help of the canons in 1116–1117 was crushed and the leading conspirators punished. In their reception of the south portal sculpture, however, the townspeople of Santiago could exercise greater autonomy and control. They could simply choose not to see, to ignore the sculpture and to refuse to engage in the negotiation between image and viewer. Or they could interpret and understand the sculpture from their own perspective entirely, and give the iconography an unforeseen reading that more accurately reflected the horizon of expectations of a dissident interpretive community. In a newly generated reading of the imagery, they had the power to subvert the authority of the text and its author, and to create a new text in its stead.⁴⁶

If the canons could be accused of intense non-looking, the townspeople may have committed a more revolutionary act of mis-seeing, or willfully misinterpreting the south portal's underlying themes in order to substitute another interpretation that corresponded to their perspective on recent events. It is often assumed that in the act of viewing/reading, communication is the goal of both sender and receiver, that a receptive, interested audience is eager to understand. In many instances, however, determined misunderstanding is central to reception, and the slippages, gaps, and disjunctions in the process are often more compelling than the resulting communication. Thus it is entirely possible that the townspeople of Santiago responded to the south portal sculpture in a manner diametrically opposed to the reading the bishop would have prescribed. For example, they might have seen themselves as the Christ-like sufferers of episcopal persecution, thwarted in their drive for some degree of economic and political autonomy. The canons of the cathedral equally might have characterized themselves as the victims of the bishop's diabolical greed and ambition. The canons who spearheaded opposition to Gelmírez during the rebellion considered themselves to be suffering under the yoke of the bishop's oppression.⁴⁷ These audiences for the

south portal sculpture, then, dissenting from the positions expressed there, may have associated themselves with the imaged forces of good, and identified Gelmírez as an instrument of the devil.

Though the south portal sculpture on Santiago's cathedral may have presented themes of ecclesiastical authority and the persecution of a Christ-like bishop by overwhelming forces of evil, there appears to have been some level of indeterminacy in the sculpture's iconography.⁴⁸ The indeterminate quality of the imagery allowed for greater viewer participation in the actualization of meaning, as the potential for polyvalence permitted multiple readings, mis-readings, and non-readings by the diverse audiences. The documented existence of differentiated and even hostile audiences for Santiago's portal sculpture demonstrates the importance of the dialectical relationship between production and reception to reconstructing the meaning of a work of art.⁴⁹ Recognizing the various audiences for the cathedral and the likelihood of divergent interpretations of its decoration ultimately highlights the social basis of this monument, constructed by a single wealthy patron, but exposed to a community of viewers who defined the range of meanings of its decoration.⁵⁰

NOTES

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1. The scholarship on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela has become a veritable industry itself, and every year numerous travel guides, pilgrims' accounts, and scholarly works from an array of disciplines are published. See M. Dunn and L. Davidson, *The Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela: A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography* (New York, 1994), for works on pilgrimage to Santiago written before 1994. The most recent works include I. Bango Torviso, "El camino jacobeo y los espacios sagrados durante la Alta Edad Media en España," in *Viajeros, peregrinos, mercaderes en el Occidente medieval, Actas de la XVIII Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella* (Estella, 1992), 121–155; Santiago, Monasterio de San Martín Pinarío, *Santiago, Camino de Europa: Culto y Cultura en la Peregrinación a Compostela*, ed. S. Moralejo Álvarez and F. López Alsina (Santiago, 1993); *Santiago: La Europa del peregrinaje*, ed. P. Caucci von Saucken (Barcelona, 1993); *The Pilgrimage to Santiago in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. M. Dunn and L. Davidson (New York, 1996); *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: Critical Edition*, ed. P. Gerson et al., 2 vols. (London, 1998). For a selected bibliography on the city and cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, see the following works: A. López Ferreiro, *Historia de la S.A.M. Iglesia de Santiago de Compostela*, 11 vols. (Santiago, 1898–1911); K. J. Conant, *The Early Architectural History of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela* (Cambridge, MA, 1926); A. K. Porter, *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture* (New York, 1928); G. Gaillard, *Les débuts de la sculpture romane espagnole: León, Jaca, Compostelle* (Paris, 1938); O. Naesgaard, *Saint-Jacques de Compostelle et les débuts de la grande sculpture vers 1100* (Aarhus, 1962); J. M. de Azcárate, "La portada de las Platerías y el programa iconográfico de la Catedral de Santiago," *Archivo español de arte*, XXXVI (1963), 1–20; M. Chamoso Lamas, *Galice romane* (La-Pierre-qui-Vire, 1973); M. Stokstad, *Santiago de Compostela: In the Age of the Great Pilgrimages* (Norman, OK, 1978);

- B. F. Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under Queen Urraca, 1109–1126* (Princeton, 1982); S. Moralejo Álvarez, *Notas para una revisión crítica de la obra de K.J. Conant. Arquitectura románica da Catedral de Santiago de Compostela* (Santiago, 1983); R. Fletcher, *Saint James's Catapult: The Life and Times of Diego Gelmírez of Santiago de Compostela* (Oxford, 1984); J. Williams, "La arquitectura del camino de Santiago," *Compostellanum*, XXIX (1984), 267–290; M. Díaz y Díaz, *El Codice Calixtino de la Catedral de Santiago: Estudio codicológico y de contenido* (Santiago, 1988); M. Durliat, *La sculpture romane de la route de Saint-Jacques* (Mont-de-Marsan, 1990); B. Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," *Gesta*, XXX (1991), 3–15; *The Codex Calixtinus and the Shrine of Saint James*, ed. J. Williams and A. Stones (Tübingen, 1992); *Santiago, Camino de Europa*; A. Shaver-Crandell and P. Gerson, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: A Gazetteer* (London, 1995).
2. Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," 3–15; K. Mathews, "'They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God': Responses to Diego Gelmírez's Cathedral Construction in Santiago de Compostela, 1100–1140" (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1995), 221–262; B. Abou-El-Haj, "Santiago de Compostela in the Time of Diego Gelmírez," *Gesta*, XXXVI (1997), 165–179.
 3. For biographies of Diego Gelmírez, see A. X. Garrigós, "La actuación del arzobispo Gelmírez a través de los documentos de la 'Historia Compostellana,'" *Hispania*, III (1943), 354–408; A. Biggs, *Diego Gelmírez. First Archbishop of Compostela* (Washington, D.C., 1949); R. Pastor de Togneri, "Diego Gelmírez: une mentalité à la page. À propos de certaines élites de pouvoir," in *Mélanges offerts à René Crozet à l'occasion de son 70e anniversaire par ses amis, ses collègues, ses élèves et les membres du C.É.S.C.M.*, ed. P. Gallais and Y. Riou, I (Poitiers, 1966), 597–608; Fletcher, *Saint James's Catapult*. A helpful synthesis of Gelmírez's life and deeds by historian Ludwig Vones appears in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (Munich, 1977), s.v. "Diego II Gelmírez." Emma Falque Rey briefly discusses Gelmírez in the preface to her critical edition and translation into Spanish of the *Historia Compostellana: Historia Compostellana*, ed. and trans. E. Falque Rey (Madrid, 1994), 8–11. For Gelmírez's ambitious program of increasing the wealth, prestige, and honor of Santiago de Compostela and its cathedral, see B. Reilly, "The Nature of Church Reform in Santiago de Compostela during the Episcopate of Don Diego Gelmírez, 1100–1140 AD" (Dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1966). L. Vones, *Die "Historia Compostellana" und die Kirchenpolitik des nordwestspanischen Raumes, 1070–1130* (Cologne, 1980) concentrates on the substantial role played by Gelmírez in Spanish ecclesiastical politics. Serafín Moralejo Álvarez has analyzed Gelmírez's art patronage: "El patronazgo artístico del arzobispo Gelmírez (1100–1140): su reflejo en la obra e imagen de Santiago," in *Pistoia e il Camino di Santiago, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi* (Perugia, 1987), 245–272. I noted the way in which art patronage, religious reform, and ecclesiastical politics were connected in my dissertation. "'They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God,'" 29–69. Most recently, Barbara Abou-El-Haj pursues the connections among these three endeavors in "Santiago de Compostela in the Time of Diego Gelmírez," 165–179.
 4. The canons' discontent stemmed in part from the small percentage of pilgrimage profits they received. The canons' wealth was based primarily on landed property, and while they received income from the cathedral's altars, their participation in the money economy of pilgrimage was limited compared to the vast amounts of cash at the disposal of Bishop Gelmírez. See Mathews, "'They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God,'" 62–64, for the cash "gifts" given by Gelmírez to the pope in order to obtain metropolitan status for the cathedral of Santiago. F. J. Pérez Rodríguez, *El Dominio del Cabildo Catedral de Santiago de Compostela en la Edad Media (siglos XII–XIV)* (Santiago, 1994) treats the various sources of the canons' wealth.
 5. The *Liber Sancti Iacobi* has been transcribed in a rare edition by W. M. Whitehill, *Liber Sancti Iacobi. Codex Calixtinus*, 3 vols. (Santiago, 1944). For a Spanish translation of the text, see *Liber Sancti Iacobi, Codex Calixtinus*, ed. A. Moralejo Laso (Santiago, 1951). M. Díaz y Díaz, *El Codice Calixtino*, cites other scholarly works pertaining to the five books of the *Liber Sancti Iacobi*.
 6. See the recent critical edition, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela*, ed. P. Gerson *et al.*, which includes an edition of the Latin text, an English translation, annotations, and bibliography.
 7. See *Historia Compostellana* (CC, LXX), ed. E. Falque Rey (Turnhout, 1988) and her translation into Spanish, *eadem, Historia Compostellana*.
 8. The reliefs may have been altered as early as the second decade of the twelfth century. During the riots of 1116–1117, the cathedral was attacked and burned by townspeople; afterwards new or additional sculptural reliefs may have been placed on the south portal. The extent of the damage is indicated in the *Historia Compostellana*, I, 116, 217: "Iubet [episcopus] ecclesiam beati Iacobi, que combusta fuerat, reedificari . . ." Durliat, *La sculpture romane*, 312, discusses the significance of this phrase.
 9. For example, Durliat, *La sculpture romane*, 327, has created a diagram which divides the sculpture currently on the south portal into three categories: original to the south portal, originating from the west portal, and originating from the north portal.
 10. Shaver-Crandell and Gerson *et al.*, *Pilgrim's Guide*, 39–40, 56, 338–343. Shaver-Crandell and Gerson argue that the author of the *Pilgrim's Guide* must have traveled to Santiago ca. 1135.
 11. Decorated columns also adorned the north portal; see *Santiago, Camino de Europa*, Nos. 90, 91, pp. 380–384; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Art of Medieval Spain, 500–1200* (New York, 1993), No. 92, pp. 212–214. The scenes represented on the marble columns of the south portal are more conventional religious images of angels and saints, while the north portal columns featured scenes of putti harvesting grapes, figures trapped in foliage, and images related to medieval epic narratives.
 12. These figures have been badly damaged and it is impossible to read facial expressions or to identify the gifts they hold in their hands.
 13. Durliat, *La sculpture romane*, 332.
 14. *Ibid.*, 341–342. Mathews, "'They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God,'" 164–168, notes a similar emphasis on the role of the apostles in the sculpture of the west portal.
 15. I. Forsyth, "The *Vita Apostolica* and Romanesque Sculpture: Some Preliminary Observations," *Gesta*, XXV (1986), 75–82, addresses the relationship between the representations of apostles and the *vita apostolica* in twelfth-century church decoration. Durliat, *La sculpture romane*, 341, cites earlier examples of the college of apostles in France. The apostles are mentioned in the *Pilgrim's Guide*: "On the jambs of this same [right-hand] entrance are two apostles, as if guarding the doors, one on the right and the other on the left. In the same way, at the other entrance, on the left, there are two more apostles on the jambs. . . ." Further, concerning the frieze: "In the upper row, there stands the Lord upright, and St. Peter on His left holding the keys in his hand, and the Blessed James on the right between two cypress trees, and his brother St. John next to him. And to the right and left are the other apostles. . . ." *The Pilgrim's Guide*, ed. Gerson *et al.*, II, 74–77.
 16. H. Toubert, *Un art dirigé: Réforme grégorienne et iconographie* (Paris, 1990), 308–309, discusses the use of apostolic imagery by twelfth-century popes to assert papal prerogatives and to encourage religious reform.
 17. W. Cahn, *Romanesque Bible Illumination* (Ithaca, 1982), 204–212; M. Jover Hernandez, "Los ciclos de Pasión y Pascua en la escultura monumental románica en Navarra," *Príncipe de Viana*, CLXXX (1987), 7–40.
 18. *Historia Compostellana*, I, 20, 46–47; Mathews, "'They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God,'" 46–57. I argue that the reform of the cathedral chapter played an integral role in Gelmírez's ambitions for Santiago

- and its cathedral, and was closely connected to the bishop's program of art patronage; see also Fletcher, *St. James's Catapult*, 163–168. *Historia Compostellana*, I, 20, 47: "Reduxit quoque in Noue Legis exordio de XII discipulis, quod unus eorum proditor extiterit. Et quia hec omnia ualde pontificis animum pungebant, qualiter radix illa proditiōnis, que antiquitus pullulauerat, extirparetur, ne presentes ueneno pestifere suasione inficeret, a maioribus ecclesie sue personis consilium petiit, quorum consilio, ne supradicta fieri possent, ab unoquoque canonicorum subiectionis obedientiam consequenti iureiurando suscepit."
19. Abou-El-Haj, "Santiago de Compostela," 174.
 20. For an analysis of the communal rebellions in Santiago, see E. de Hinojosa y Naveros, *Origin del régimen municipal en León y Castilla* (Madrid, 1896); L. Vazquez de Parga, "La revolución comunal de Compostela en los años 1116 y 1117," *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, XVI (1945), 685–703; K. J. Conant, "Municipal Politics in 1117," *JSAH*, XV (1956), 3–4; R. Pastor de Togneri, *Conflictos sociales y estancamiento económico en la España medieval* (Barcelona, 1973); C. Estepa Díez, "Sobre reueltas burguesas en el siglo XII en el reino de León," *Archivos Leoneses*, LV–LVI (1974), 291–307.
 21. *Historia Compostellana*, III, 53, 523: "Pater ignosce illis, quia nesciunt, quid faciunt." The biblical reference is to Luke 23:34.
 22. Abou-El-Haj, "Santiago de Compostela," 172.
 23. For the description of this tympanum, see *The Pilgrim's Guide*, ed. Gerson *et al.*, II, 74–75.
 24. This representation of the Temptations deviates from the Gospel narrative and from other medieval representations. See E. Kirschbaum, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (Rome, 1968–1976), IV, s.v. "Versuchung Jesu," cols. 446–450, for iconographic comparisons. The textual descriptions are in Matthew 4:1–11 and Luke 4:1–13. The two accounts do not agree on the sequence of the second and third temptations, but the depiction at Santiago does not follow either of the Gospels.
 25. There are also some badly damaged reliefs above the Temptation scene. Above the heads of the demons, an animal is entwined in its own tail. To its left, two animals, perhaps lions or monkeys, face each other, separated by a flower and vine scrolls. A censuring angel is surmounted by a haloed figure whose hand is raised in a gesture of benediction, and a bust-length figure shown in three-quarters view occupies the area above Christ. These figures may underscore the demarcation between figures of good and evil on the tympanum.
 26. *Historia Compostellana*, I, 114, 200–204; III, 47, 509: "Illi autem ignominiosi, membra et esca diaboli facti. . ." Falque Rey, *Historia Compostellana*, 580, translates this phrase as "instruments of the devil," which represents the meaning of the passage. I prefer a more literal translation, however, emphasizing that the conspirators were physically connected to the devil, an integral part of its diabolical body. For "esca" see *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v.
 27. Scholars generally have concentrated their attention on portal sculpture as the most significant conveyer of meaning in the decorative program of a Romanesque structure; see C. F. Altman, "The Medieval Marquee: Church Portal Sculpture as Publicity," *Journal of Popular Culture*, XIV/1 (1980–1981), 37–46; Y. Christe, *Les grands portails romans* (Geneva, 1969); L. Seidel, *Songs of Glory: The Romanesque Facades of Aquitaine* (Chicago, 1981); D. Denny, "The Last Judgment Tympanum at Autun: Its Sources and Meaning," *Speculum*, LVII (1982), 532–547; J. Bonne, *L'art roman de face et de profil: le tympan de Conques* (Paris, 1985); J. Feldman, "The Narthex Portal at Vézelay: Art and Monastic Self-Image" (Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1986); S. Dixon, "The Power of the Gate: The Sculptured Portal of St.-Pierre, Moissac" (Dissertation, Cornell University, 1987); P. Klein, "Programmes eschatologiques, fonction et réception historiques des portails du XIIe s.: Moissac—Beaulieu—Saint-Denis," *CCM*, XXXIII (1990), 317–349.
 28. Studies on the reception of medieval art are limited in number, though the reception of medieval literature has been a topic of scholarly discussion for several years. An early effort was made by H. Belting, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages*, trans. M. Bartusis and R. Meyer (New York, 1990). More recent publications include Klein, "Programmes eschatologiques"; Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints"; *Der Betrachter ist im Bild: Kunstwissenschaft und Rezeptionsästhetik*, ed. W. Kemp (Berlin, 1992); *The Romanesque Frieze and its Spectator: The Lincoln Symposium Papers*, ed. D. Kahn (London, 1992); *Mittelalterliches Kunsterleben nach Quellen des 11. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. G. Binding and A. Speer (Stuttgart, 1993); B. Zeitler, "Cross-Cultural Interpretations of Imagery in the Middle Ages," *AB*, LXXVI (1994), 680–694.
 29. M. Bal, *Reading Rembrandt: Beyond the Word-Image Opposition* (Cambridge, 1991), 4–11, 27–28.
 30. S. Lewis, *Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth-century Illuminated Apocalypse* (Cambridge, 1995), 2.
 31. K. Horste, *Cloister Design and Monastic Reform in Toulouse: The Romanesque Sculpture of La Daurade* (Oxford, 1992), 189.
 32. The concept of "super-reader" was defined in literary criticism by Michael Riffaterre, "Describing Poetic Structures: Two Approaches to Baudelaire's 'Les chats,'" *Yale French Studies*, XXXVII (1966), 200–242. Wolfgang Iser provides a more comprehensive understanding of this concept, which he defines as the "implied reader": *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore, 1974). For visual images, a related term of "exemplary viewer" or "imaginary viewer" has been employed by C. Harrison, "The Effects of Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago, 1994), 212, citing M. Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and the Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Berkeley, 1980) and R. Wollheim, *Painting as an Art* (Princeton, 1987).
 33. Bal, *Reading Rembrandt*, 35.
 34. Horst, *Cloister Design*, 187–190; L. Seidel, "Installation as Inspiration: The Passion Cycle from La Daurade," *Gesta*, XXV (1986), 83–92; L. Rutchick, "Sculpture Programs in the Moissac Cloister: Benedictine Culture, Memory Systems and Liturgical Performance" (Dissertation, University of Chicago), 1991, 259–263.
 35. *The Pilgrim's Guide*, ed. Gerson *et al.*, II, 74–77.
 36. *Ibid.*, 68–71.
 37. *Ibid.*, 71: "When we French people wish to enter the basilica of the apostle, we enter from the north side." See also Mathews, "They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God," 153–154, for a discussion of the pilgrimage audience for the north portal.
 38. The creation of the cartulary or *Tumbo A* was supervised by the canon and treasurer, Bernard. For the *Tumbos* of the cathedral of Santiago, see M. Díaz y Díaz, S. Moralejo Álvarez, F. López Alsina, *Los Tumbos de Compostela* (Madrid, 1985); and the critical edition of *Tumbo A*, M. Lucas Álvarez, *La documentación del Tumbo A de la Catedral de Santiago de Compostela: estudio y edición* (León, 1997).
 39. See note 18 above for Gelmírez's reforms of the cathedral chapter.
 40. Bal, *Reading Rembrandt*, 31.
 41. The distinction between the "actual consumer" and the "imaginary viewer" of an image is made by Harrison, "The Effects of Landscape," 212.
 42. Richard Brilliant has argued for such a literate interlocutor for the Bayeux Tapestry; "The Bayeux Tapestry: a Stripped Narrative for their Eyes

- and Ears," *W&I*, VII (1991), 109–119. The secular setting in which the Bayeux Tapestry was originally placed differed from the religious context of church portal sculpture, but both artworks would have had predominantly secular audiences.
43. By contrast, there may have been penitential ceremonies conducted outside the cathedral's north portal. See Mathews, "They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God," 169–191, for an analysis of the audiences for the north portal sculpture. O. K. Werckmeister, "The Lintel Fragment Representing Eve from Saint-Lazare, Autun," *JWCI*, XXXV (1972), 20–25, discusses penitential ceremonies held at the north portal of Autun Cathedral.
 44. Greater economic autonomy appears to have been the main motivation for the communal rebellions in Santiago. See Abou-El-Haj, "Santiago de Compostela," 169. At Vézelay, citizens of the town resented particularly the burden of housing and caring for pilgrims, as discussed by Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," 7. At Canterbury, the hospitality that the cathedral chapter was expected to provide for royal pilgrims and visitors depleted episcopal coffers; see E. Woodruff, "The Financial Aspect of the Cult of St. Thomas of Canterbury," *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XLIV (1932), 13–32.
 45. See *Historia Compostellana*, I, 33, 63–64 and II, 23, 265–266, where Gelmírez insists that the people of Galicia render the service of *castellaria*, that is, donated labor to build castles on their lord's land. See also *Historia Compostellana, o sea Hechos de D. Diego Gelmírez, primer arzobispo de Santiago*, ed. and trans. M. Suarez Lorenzo and J. Campelo (Santiago, 1950), 82.
 46. This assertion reflects the point of view of some reception theorists who maintain that there is no autonomous text, only an interpreted text. For this theoretical position, see G. Wienold, *Semiotik der Literatur* (Frankfurt, 1975), 159, as discussed in *Theories of Literature in the Twentieth Century*, ed. D. Fokkema and E. Ibsch (London, 1995), 151.
 47. *Historia Compostellana*, I, 114, 207: "Ille enim et ecclesie uestre dignitatem diminuit et uos domini sui iugo grauiter oppressit."
 48. For the concept of indeterminacy see W. Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Practice* (Baltimore, 1978), 170–179, who cites the work of Roman Ingarden.
 49. R. Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London, 1984), 53, 70, argues that this dialectical process is a central element of reception theory.
 50. M. Warnke, *Bau und Überbau: Soziologie der mittelalterlichen Architektur nach den Schriftquellen* (Frankfurt, 1976), analyzes the social basis of architecture, emphasizing the importance of consensus between social groups for the successful completion of a public building program.