

EMERGING NATURALISM CONTEXTS AND NARRATIVES IN EUROPEAN SCULPTURE 1140-1220

EDITED BY
GERARDO BOTO VARELA, MARTA SERRANO COLL, JOHN MCNEILL



BREPOLS

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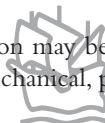
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Front cover: The apostles (Peter, Paul, James and John) in the Pórtico de la Gloria.
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Back cover: Choir enclosure, Liebfrauenkirche, Halberstadt.

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For many decades, specialists in Romanesque and early Gothic art and architecture have questioned the usefulness of traditional stylistic terminology. It is regarded as having limited relevance insofar as it fails to reflect the complexity and plurality of the period under discussion. Nor does it embrace functional, formal or iconographic specificities. Despite these deficiencies, we still have no better way of referring to the art of the period than Romanesque, late Romanesque or early Gothic, which we make yet more cumbersome by adding a geographical or political term.

Of the various media that were affected by artistic innovation in Europe during the second half of the 12th century, particular attention has been paid to stained glass, manuscript illumination, metalwork and enamel. Monumental sculpture was equally subject to profound change during the period, in addition to developing in directions that were largely independent of other media. As a result, late Romanesque sculpture extends across the period from 1140 to 1220, from Saxony to Galicia, though it is still impossible to encapsulate in a single statement what this complex network represented. However, the attainment of a compelling naturalism does seem to have been a shared aspiration among Latin European sculptors.

This volume offers a panoramic analysis of this artistic landscape, focused on a central issue in medieval European artistic production. To narrow this field of study, the book concentrates on the innovations and solutions adopted in the great church workshops of western Europe.

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