

William II of Hauteville (1171-1189)

Subjects: Art

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William II of Hauteville King of Sicily (1171–1189). William II of Hauteville was the third king of the Norman dynasty on the throne of Sicily. He ruled independently from 1171 (from 1166 to 1171 he was under the regency of his mother) to 1189. From an iconographic point of view, he is particularly interesting because he was the first king of Sicily who made use of monumental images of himself. In particular, we have five official (namely, commissioned directly by him or his entourage) representations of him: the royal bull, the royal seal, and three images from the Cathedral of Monreale (near Palermo): two mosaic panels and one carved capital.

Keywords: royal images ; royal iconography ; kings of Sicily ; Norman dynasty ; William II of Hauteville

William II of Hauteville was crowned king of Sicily in 1166, but at the beginning of his government, he was under the regency of his mother. It was from December 1171 that he ruled independently, and his reign lasted until 18 November 1189 (the day of his death) (in general, about William II of Hauteville king of Sicily see: ^{[1][2]}). He was the third Norman king of Sicily but, from an iconographic point of view, he was the first who did not limit his representation to seals and coins but made use also of monumental images of himself (for example, the Roger II's representations in the Basilica of San Nicola in Bari and in the Church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio in Palermo were not directly commissioned by the king. About the official images of William II's Norman predecessors see: ^[3] (pp. 32–40 and pp. 51–52), with more details and previous bibliography). For this reason, he can be considered as the most representative of this royal family. Regarding him, we have five official (namely, commissioned directly by him or his entourage) representations: the royal bull and the royal seal and two mosaic panels and one carved capital at the Cathedral of Monreale (near Palermo) (about the identification of the William II's official image see: ^[2] (p. 57)).

References

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