



## Romanesque Tomb Effigies

Death and Redemption in Medieval Europe, 1000–1200

Shirin Fozi

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"This deeply researched and insightful book fills a significant lacuna in the study of medieval sculpture, portraiture, and commemoration. It makes a vital contribution to the field's 'material turn,' bringing together monuments in stone, metal, and stucco to reveal both their distinctive properties and their interconnections. At the same time, Fozi never lets us forget the real human beings these tombs honored or the communities that took pride in and comfort from these depictions."

—Jacqueline E. Jung, author of *Eloquent Bodies: Movement, Expression, and the Human Figure in Gothic Sculpture*

Framed by evocative inscriptions, tumultuous historical events, and the ambiguities of Christian death, Romanesque tomb effigies were the first large-scale figural monuments for the departed in European art. In this book, Shirin Fozi explores these provocative markers of life and death, establishing early tomb figures as a coherent genre that hinged upon histories of failure and frustrated ambition.

In sharp contrast to later recumbent funerary figures, none of the known European tomb effigies made before circa 1180 were commissioned by the people they represented, and all of the identifiable examples of these tombs were dedicated to individuals whose legacies were fraught rather than triumphant. Fozi draws on this evidence to argue that Romanesque effigies were created to address social rather than individual anxieties: they compensated for defeat by converting local losses into an expectation of eternal victory, comforting the embarrassed heirs of those whose histories were marked by misfortune and offering compensation for the disappointments of the world.

Featuring numerous examples and engaging the visual, historical, and theological contexts that inform them, this groundbreaking work adds a fresh dimension to the study of monumental sculpture and the idea of the individual in the northern European Middle Ages. It will appeal to scholars of art history and medieval studies.

**Shirin Fozi** is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Pittsburgh.

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