

JOSHUA C. BIRK

NORMAN KINGS
OF SICILY
AND THE RISE OF
THE ANTI-ISLAMIC
CRITIQUE

Baptized Sultans



Norman Kings of Sicily and the Rise of the Anti-Islamic Critique

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ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY

<i>ANS</i>	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i>
<i>ASSO</i>	<i>Archivio storico per la Sicilia orientale</i>
<i>BAS</i> ²	<i>Biblioteca arabo-sicula, ossia Raccolta di testi arabi che toccano la geografia, la storia, la biografia e la bibliografia della Sicilia</i>
<i>BISIME</i>	<i>Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>The English Historical Review</i>
<i>FSI</i>	<i>Fonti per La Storia D'Italia</i>
<i>HSJ</i>	<i>The Haskins Society Journal: Studies in Medieval History</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>MGH Ldl</i>	<i>MGH. Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum (Ldl)</i>
<i>MGH SS</i>	<i>MGH. Scriptores (in Folio)</i>
<i>MGH SS rer. Germ.</i>	<i>MGH. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi</i>
<i>MGH SS rer. Germ. N.S</i>	<i>MGH. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova series</i>
<i>RIS</i>	<i>Rerum italicarum scriptores</i>

MAPS

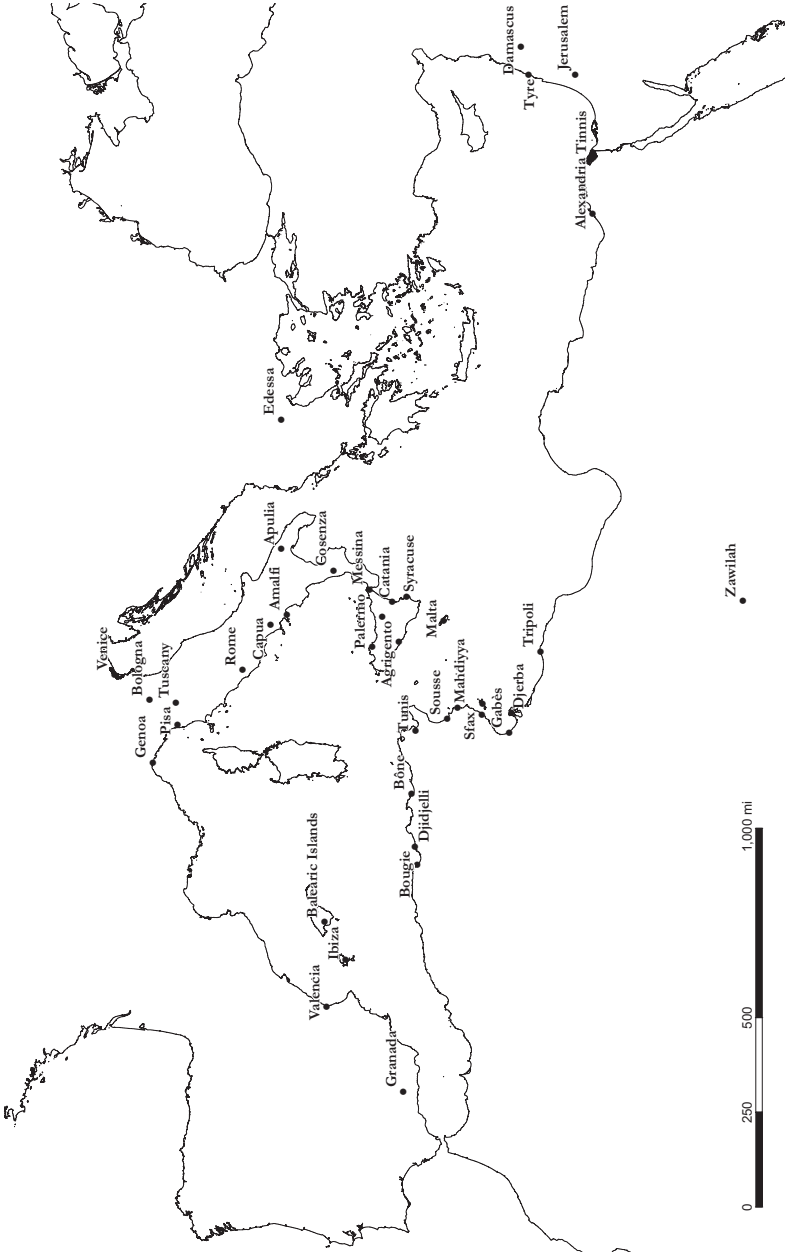


Fig. 1 Map of the Mediterranean in the twelfth century



Fig. 2 Map of the Kingdom of Sicily in the twelfth century

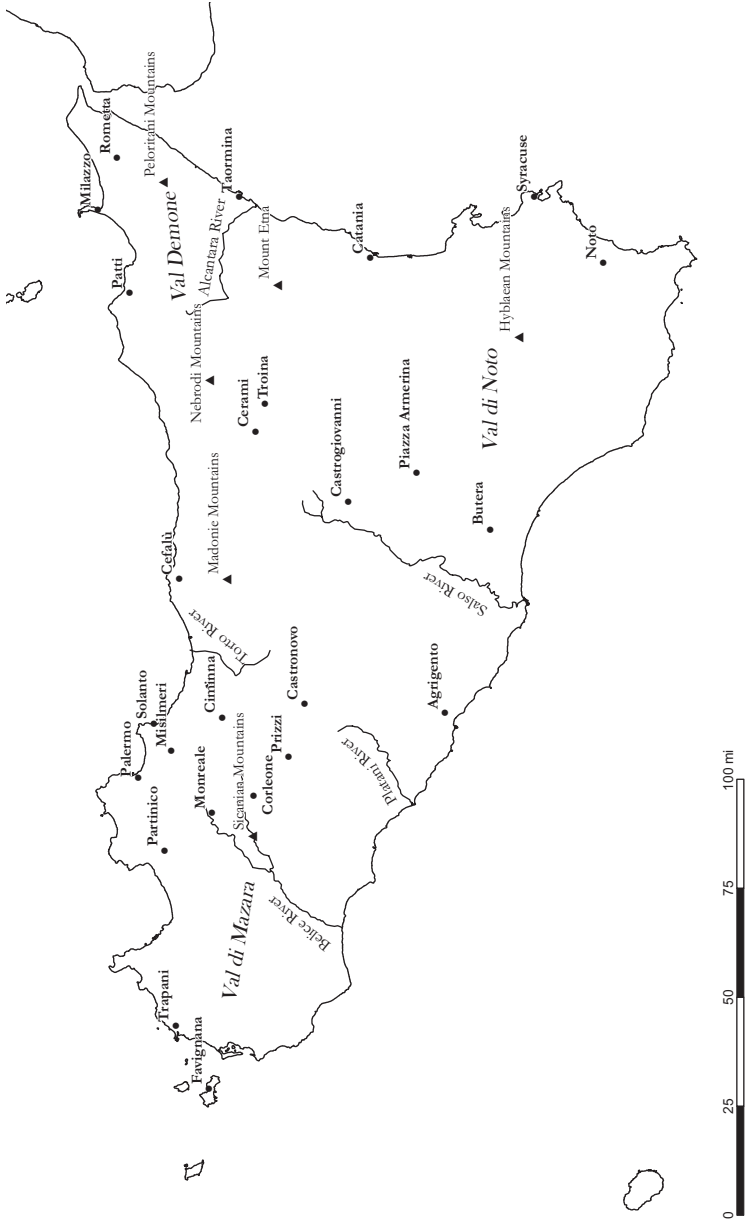


Fig. 3 Map of the Island of Sicily in the twelfth century

Introduction

Pope Innocent IV called together the First Council of Lyon, an ecumenical council attended by almost 150 bishops, on June 28, 1245, with the intention of deposing Frederick II as both Holy Roman Emperor and King of the Kingdom of Sicily. On July 17, Innocent issued a papal bull to formally accomplish this task. The bull contained a vast litany of charges, including accusations of Frederick's many associations with Muslims.

[Frederick II] is joined together with Saracens by detestable friendship; he often sends envoys and gifts to them and he accepts [envoys and gifts] from them with acts of honor and hospitality. He cherishes their religious rites. Remarkably, he keeps [Saracens] with him during his daily routine. In addition, according to their customs, he is not ashamed to assign eunuchs. . . whom he has castrated, as guards for his wives, who are descended from royal lineage. And what is more detestable is that when he traveled to lands across the sea, having forged a pact with [Saracens], or more correctly having forged a collusion with the sultan, he permitted the name Muḥammad to be publicly proclaimed day and night in the temple of the Lord. Not long ago, envoys of the Sultan of Babylon were received with honor and sumptuously attended to throughout the Kingdom of Sicily with praise heaped upon the sultan, after this same sultan had inflicted grave financial loss and inestimable injury to the Holy Land and its Christian inhabitants.¹

These charges built upon an anti-Islamic rhetoric that the papacy deployed against the Emperor for over a decade, asserting that Frederick had not only “joined in league with Saracens and was more a friend to

them than to Christians” but also was “more in agreement with the law of Muḥammad than those of Jesus Christ” and he had even “made Saracen whores his concubines.”² These charges were not limited to the attempt to depose Frederick at the Council of Lyons but were also employed throughout the thirteenth century in an attempt to rally further support against him and his illegitimate son Manfred, after Manfred claimed the throne of the Kingdom of Sicily and continued to oppose papal policy in the region.

While Innocent IV may have embellished some of the charges against Frederick, he grounded the anti-Islamic denunciation in incontrovertible truths. Frederick *had* engaged in extensive diplomacy with Muslim princes, most notably the Ayyubid Sultan of Egypt, al-Kāmil. Frederick maintained a subject population of tens of thousands of Sicilian Muslims, which he relocated to the city of Lucera on the Southern Italian mainland. Frederick included Muslims, both those from Lucera and slaves purchased from across the Mediterranean, in his personal retinue. When Frederick went into battle, he deployed units of thousands of Muslim soldiers, even against armies of the papacy. Frederick maintained a harem and eunuchs, becoming famous for his love of the luxuries and cultural trappings of the Islamic world, leading the nineteenth-century Italian historian Michele Amari to dub Frederick and his grandfather Roger II “the two baptized sultans of Sicily.”³

The condemnation of Frederick II conforms to the contemporary popular imagination of the Middle Ages, which envisions a medieval Christian “West” engaged in what Samuel Huntington termed a “clash of civilizations” with the Islamic world, a conflict made manifest through the religious violence of crusade and *jihād*.⁴ It does not seem surprising that a Christian ruler who made political alliances that violated religious boundaries and adopted cultural trappings of the Islamic world would earn the ire of his coreligionists and raise questions about the orthodoxy of his own faith. However, these views ultimately presuppose a world in which vast cultural constructs are locked in an eternal struggle and separated by well-defined boundaries that are both immutable and impermeable. As Edward Said has shown, Huntington constructs civilizations as “monolithic and homogenous” entities, which “assume the unchanging character of the duality between ‘us’ and ‘them.’”⁵

In reality, an examination of representations of Muslims within Sicily and anti-Islamic rhetoric against Sicilian rulers reveals a remarkable amount

of fluidity. The use of Muslims as a polemical tool against Frederick was a novelty and one that had not been deployed against any previous Sicilian king. Comparing Frederick II to his grandfather, Roger II, Amari's other "baptized sultan" who ruled a hundred years earlier, reveals a ruler who engaged in extensive diplomacy with Muslim polities in Egypt and North Africa, ruled over a vast Muslim population in Sicily, deployed armies of Muslim soldiers against his foes, sponsored Muslim artists and intellectuals within his court, created an Arabic-language royal fiscal administration, perhaps knew the Arabic language himself, and reigned in a court steeped with the luxuries of the Islamic world even more so than Frederick II. And yet, Roger's mid-twelfth-century contemporaries never engaged in the religious polemics so frequently directed at Frederick. Even when Roger II deployed an army of Muslims to wage war against papal supporters in the 1130s, Roger's critics never invoked his Muslim soldiers to disparage the Sicilian king. The anti-Islamic invectives levied against Frederick were not born of an immutable hostility between Muslims and Christians. Nor were they directed against anyone who adopted elements of a rival civilization. Rather, these invectives were products of specific historical circumstances that played out in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. We have no indication that mid-twelfth-century Latin observers found anything problematic or controversial in Roger's appropriation of Islamic cultural elements or his use of Muslim soldiers and administrators.

This monograph establishes ways in which the Latin Christian rulers of Sicily incorporated Muslim soldiers, farmers, scholars and bureaucrats into the formation of their own royal identities and came to depend on their Muslim subjects to project and enforce their political power. It illustrates that the Islamic influence within the Sicilian court drew little scrutiny, and even less criticism, from other Latin intellectuals in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. At the same time, the court's adoption of Islamic cultural elements, its employment of Muslim administrators and its granting of protections to Sicilian Muslims inexorably linked Sicilian rulers to their Muslim subjects and created circumstances in which resistance to royal governance was articulated through acts of violence against the Muslim subjects of the crown. My intention is to contextualize and explain the subsequent emergence of popular violence against Muslims in Sicily and the construction of an anti-Islamic polemic that highlights the Muslim population of Sicily in order to undermine the religious faith and political legitimacy of Sicilian rulers.

ON TOLERANCE, PRAGMATISM AND SYMBOLIC VALUE

The vibrant mix of cultures at play across Sicily has tempted generations of historians to heap praise on the Sicilian court, to describe it as Charles Homer Haskins did, as “the first modern state” or as a locus of religious tolerance and cultural exchange, a vision of *convivencia* in the central Mediterranean.⁶ More recent work stresses that cultural exchanges were limited almost exclusively to the court and that while Sicilian rulers co-opted administrative techniques and cultural elements from Islamic courts, they did so within the framework of explicit Christian domination. This comes through most clearly in the work of Jeremy Johns, who shows that while “a thin Islamic veneer” permeated the court, it concealed “anti-Muslim brutality” beneath it.⁷ “Frederick was no ‘baptized sultan,’”⁸ writes David Abulafia. His research on the Kingdom of Sicily and Frederick II undermines the fantasy of Frederick as a paragon of modern notions of religious tolerance.⁹ The continued existence of a Muslim population in Sicily stemmed not from an ethical commitment to tolerance or multiculturalism, but from a calculated pragmatism.¹⁰

The Norman rulers of Sicily procured a variety of practical benefits from maintaining a subject population of Muslims. Starting in the late eleventh century, the Norman overlords forced Sicily’s non-Christian population to pay a tax. The Norman rulers either retained this valuable source of revenue for themselves or doled out the right to collect taxes from certain non-Christian communities to favored subjects. In addition, the terms of surrender for Sicilian Muslim communities obligated them to provide soldiers for the armies of Sicily. These soldiers supplied needed manpower, but they also offered additional advantages over their Christian counterparts. In light of the history of tempestuous relations between the Norman warlords of the *Mezzogiorno* (the regions of Southern Italy and Sicily) and the Papacy, a devoted, loyal, non-Christian army proved to be a valuable tool for a ruler who knew he might come into conflict with the Apostolic See. A fighting force composed of Muslim troops would not waver in the face of religious sanctions from the papacy.

Aside from the economic benefits, the principal advantage of Muslim subjects was unswerving loyalty, particularly as Sicilian Muslims became isolated from their coreligionists throughout the Mediterranean. Sicilian Muslims became increasingly dependent upon the counts and later kings of Sicily to serve as their champion and to protect their communities. They possessed far fewer competing loyalties in the Christian world than

their Latin Christian counterparts. The kings of Sicily began to elevate Muslims to high-ranking administrative positions in the mid-twelfth century because they were wholly dependent on the good will of the monarch and seen as far more trustworthy than the family members of ambitious Southern Italian barons, who could potentially subvert administrative offices to advance their own familial agenda. The creation of a caste of crypto-Muslim eunuchs, explored in greater detail in Chap. 5, is perhaps the strongest example of the practical advantages offered by Muslim administrators.

A discussion of the practical benefits of Muslim subjects should not obscure the tremendous symbolic importance of co-opting Islamic culture or employing Muslim soldiers, administrators and members of court. The Norman rulers of Sicily could not claim descent from the upper echelons of Latin European nobility, nor could they paint themselves as the continuation of any contemporary tradition of kingship on the island. They had to construct their own dynastic and royal image, and to do so they aggressively co-opted Byzantine and Islamic traditions, integrating them with Germanic notions of kingship.¹¹ The rulers of Sicily came to the *Mezzogiorno* along with numerous other Norman mercenaries, and deploying the Muslims of Sicily allowed them to distinguish themselves from their peers and rivals. Only the counts, and later, kings, of Sicily could field throngs of Muslim soldiers or bureaucrats well versed in the Arabic language.

This diversity of cultural appropriations allowed Norman rulers to stress different aspects of their rule, depending on their audience¹²: to represent the king using Arabic titlature as a “defender of the *imam* of Rome”¹³ to an Arabic-language audience or as dressed in the robes of a Byzantine emperor while receiving his crown from Christ to a Greek audience.¹⁴ The bulk of cultural production was monolingual, following the established parameters of one of the cultural traditions within the Kingdom of Sicily, or the *regno*; however, Sicilian rulers sponsored the production of hybrid cultural artifacts to stress the scope of their power. As Karla Mallette describes in her study of the literature of the Sicilian court, hybrid text “functioned as a kind of showcase cultural production, demonstrating in cultural terms the economic and military reach of the Norman state.”¹⁵ The mere existence of an Islamic subject population and their integration into a Norman administration fulfilled a similar role. The Norman kings styled themselves as imperial rulers governing a multiplicity of peoples.¹⁶ Sicilian rulers envisioned their administration as a trilingual entity, writing

in Greek, Latin and Arabic. Their ability to maintain the peace between these distinct groups within their kingdom and within their court was an illustration of the scope of their power. Even after Latin had come to dominate the administration in the late twelfth century, royal propaganda continued to stress the idea of a trilingual bureaucracy.¹⁷

PRAGMATIC VIOLENCE: THE POLITICS OF SAVAGERY AND RISING ANTI-ISLAMIC POLEMICS

The emergence of vitriolic anti-Islamic polemics leveled against Sicilian rulers stems from a confluence of trends in the twelfth century. This rising anti-Islamic sentiment was an unintended consequence of the crown's incorporation of Muslims as agents of the crown and symbols of the breadth of its royal power. The most significant of these trends is the rise of popular violence against Sicilian Muslims. It first emerged in the wars of the 1130s as a direct response to the use of Muslims as soldiers in Sicilian armies and their growing prominence as symbols of royal authority. Muslims were *servi camerae*, the servants of the royal chamber, and violence against the king's Muslims served as a way to object to the authority of the crown.

A rejection of that peace, made visible through acts of extreme violence and cruelty upon Muslim soldiers, administrators or the general Muslim populace, signaled a rejection of the authority of the monarch. In his discussion of the Shepherds' Crusade in 1320, in which a group of shepherds assaulted Jewish communities within France, David Nirenberg analyzes the ways in which dissatisfaction with the crown could be expressed by physical attacks against minority groups that were in its employ or under its protection.¹⁸ Though violence against minorities is often depicted as irrational or hysterical, Nirenberg demonstrates that violence against minorities who were particularly associated with royal power, such as the Jews, could be a calculated and strategic way in which people could voice their displeasure with the monarchy when they could not strike out directly at the king. A similar pattern of violence existed in Sicily in the twelfth century, during which Sicilian monarchs demonstrated the scope of their authority through their ability to maintain peace between the different communities of their kingdom.

There was nothing intrinsic or inevitable about the conflicts between these immigrants from mainland Italy and Sicilian Muslims. These conflicts materialized 50 years after the conquest of the island as a specific reaction

to the way Sicilian rulers used Muslims to project their power and fashion their dynastic identity. A transformation in the demographics of the island also contributed to the upsurge in popular violence over the course of the twelfth century. When invaders began their campaign to conquer Sicily in the 1060s, the island had no significant Latin Christian population. The Norman rulers encouraged large-scale emigration of Latin Christian settlers from mainland Italy and, by the end of the twelfth century, this Latin Christian population far exceeded that of the island's Muslims. Twelfth-century authors described a Latin populace that chafed against the rights, territories and privileges granted to the Muslim population and looked for opportunities to seize assets they felt rightfully belonged to them. Such violence was seen as a natural tendency by contemporary authors, suppressed only by the power of a strong ruler. When royal power wavered, as it did in the 1150s, 1160s and 1190s, the results were devastating for the Muslim populations. Mobs of Christians attacked Muslims, drove them from their homes and murdered them in the streets. Observers of the period viewed this behavior as natural, even as they bemoaned its existence. As a letter from an anonymous author complained, anti-Muslim rioting in the 1190s shows, "It is difficult for Christians in such a great a tumult as this, with the fear of the king removed, not to oppress the Muslims."¹⁹ When royal power waned no authority existed to suppress these violent tensions.

In the final years of the twelfth century, an innovative papacy looked for new tools to deploy in the renewed conflict against the lords of Sicily. Innocent III hoped to use crusade as a vehicle to marshal resources and to oust Markward of Sicily, the would-be regent of the infant Frederick II. Crusade was, however, a weapon to be used against the infidels, the non-Christian enemies of God, not a tool that popes could deploy against Christian lords who were opposed to the political papacy. Innocent broke with tradition and began to use Muslims as a rhetorical weapon to rally support against the rulers of Sicily.

The past two decades have seen a resurgence in scholarly work devoted to Muslims of medieval Sicily. This book builds on the work of a series of monographs on Sicilian Muslims²⁰ and texts that attempt to integrate the experience of Sicilian Muslims into a wider European context.²¹ However, these works only sporadically address Latin perceptions of Sicilian Muslims and do not present a sustained picture of the development of the discourse surrounding these Muslims from the mid-eleventh to the early thirteenth century. This book is intended to bring the shifts in this discourse to light.

LATIN CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM INTERACTIONS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

From the eleventh through thirteenth centuries, the anti-Islamic polemic used against Sicilian kings and their Muslim subjects emerges as a part of a much wider set of interactions between Muslims and Christians across the Mediterranean and a newly emerging discourse about the nature of Islam that captivated Latin Christian intellectuals during this same period.

Before the Eleventh Century

Latin Christian authors did not use the word “Muslim,” “Islam” or any equivalent until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²² Instead, they commonly identified them as “Saracens” (*Saraceni*). The term dates back to at least the second century, when Ptolemy referenced the region of “Sarakēnē” in the Northern Sinai and the barbarian tribes of the “Sarakēnoi” who resided in North West Arabia. It was possibly derived from *sharqiyyīn* (easterner) or *sāriqīn* (marauder).²³ The term “Saracen” had taken on a genealogical meaning in the Latin West, drawing from the story of Abraham, Ishmael, Hagar and Sarah. According to Christian scripture, Ishmael was the firstborn son of Abraham and Hagar, the slave of Abraham’s wife Sarah.²⁴ At Sarah’s urging, Abraham banished both Ishmael and Hagar, prophesizing that Ishmael would father 12 sons who would found their own nations but also that Ishmael would be “a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.”²⁵ As early as the first century, the historians Josephus and Polyhistor identified the Arabs as the sons of Ishmael.²⁶ By the fifth century, Jerome claimed that the descendants of Ishmael identified themselves as “Saracens” in an effort to claim descent from Sarah and conceal their true heritage.²⁷ In *Etymologies*, Isidore of Seville, a chronological contemporary of Muḥammad, drew on Jerome’s writings and stated that the children of Ishmael were identified with the corrupt term “Saracens” or as “Hagarenes” (*Agareni*), the children of Hagar. *Etymologies* was among the most popular texts of the Middle Ages and helped ensure that “Saracen” conveyed Latin Christian prejudices against Muslims.²⁸ The term conveyed not just the genealogical descent from the illegitimate son of a slave but also the stereotype of a warlike nature and an innate predisposition for deceit. The propensity for violence, which God had predicted and which set these Saracens into

conflict with all other peoples, loomed large in the imaginations of Latin Christians.

Most contemporary Latin authors, particularly those from north of the Alps, paid little heed to the creation of Islamic political power in the Arabian Peninsula or its rapid expansion throughout the Middle East and Mediterranean regions in the seventh through ninth centuries. When authors did discuss Saracens, they tended to focus on raids along the Mediterranean coasts, especially when the raiders threatened to loot or enslave their communities, but they never saw Muslims as an existential threat.²⁹ Writers like Bede portrayed Saracens as instruments of divine punishment, a scourge God used to punish Christian leaders for their immoral sins.³⁰ Saracens were seen primarily as a military danger, rather than a religious one. Latin authors saw these Saracens as *paganus*, pagans, but rarely addressed them in religious terms.³¹ The Saracens posed a military, not a spiritual, threat, and Latin sources remain largely silent on the religious beliefs and practices of these people. In fact, Saracens were frequently conflated with other “pagan” terrors like the Vikings, Magyars or Saxons.

Muslim raiding and territorial conquest in Southern Italy and Sicily during the ninth century reinforce the notion that Latin Christian leaders did not view “Saracens” as an existential religious threat. The Muslim conquest of the island of Sicily began when Euphemios, the disaffected Byzantine governor of Sicily, allied himself with the Muslim Aghlabid rulers of Ifrīqiya in an effort to retain power. The Aghlabids invaded western Sicily in 827, launching a slow-going conquest of the island that would take 75 years to complete.³² A decade later, another Christian-Muslim collaboration would invite Muslims onto the Italian mainland, when the city of Naples hired Muslim raiders to serve as mercenaries to stave off the attacks of Sicard, the Lombard prince of Benevento.³³ In addition to raiding and mercenary activities, Muslim forces launched large-scale attacks against Rome in 846 and 849, and they established short-lived mainland emirates on the Southern Italian mainland in Bari and Taranto during this same period.³⁴ Despite these conflicts, it would be a mistake to view Muslims and Christians in Southern Italy in binary opposition. Christian Southern Italian rulers frequently chose to align themselves with Muslims rather than their coreligionists. Charter evidence attests to Muslims living within Christian communities in Salerno,³⁵ and chronicle evidence recounts a narrative in which an African Muslim warned his Christian friend in Salerno and saved the city from attack.³⁶ When Pope John VIII attempted to unite Latin Christians in Southern Italy against

the Muslims on the peninsula, he conflated the threat of Saracens with what he saw as their Christian collaborators, frequently rebuking the alliance between “the pagans and the wicked Christians.”³⁷ Despite papal condemnation, cities like Amalfi refrained from joining John VIII’s military coalition against the Muslims of Sicily and Southern Italy and continued to maintain mercantile relationships with them.³⁸

Eleventh-Century Shift

Iberia

The eleventh century saw Latin Christians become increasingly engaged with the Muslim world in a host of ways, from military conflict, to commerce, to intellectual exchange. In the Iberian Peninsula, a civil war splintered the Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba in the early eleventh century, dividing political authority among a host of *ṭāʾifa* (party) kings. This division allowed the Christian rulers of the northern Iberian polities Castile, Barcelona, Aragon and León to assert political dominance. These polities had been tributaries of the Umayyad Caliphate, but starting with King Fernando I of León and Castile (1037–1065), they began to extract tribute from the *ṭāʾifa* states, which needed to secure patrons who could offer military support against both their Christian and Muslim rivals.³⁹ Many of the *ṭāʾifa* kings became clients of these Christian rulers. This dependency ultimately allowed Christian rulers to assume direct control of some of these *ṭāʾifa* polities. For instance, when the citizens of Toledo rose up in revolt against the taxes imposed to pay these tariffs in 1085, Fernando’s son, Alfonso VI, conquered the city and brought a large Muslim and Jewish population under his rule. In response to the conquest of Toledo, the other *ṭāʾifa* kings solicited aid from the North African Berber Almoravids and checked Alfonso’s advances by defeating him at Zallāqa in 1086. The Almoravids deposed almost all of the *ṭāʾifa* kings over the next decade, creating a semi-stable frontier with the Christian polities to the North that lasted well into the twelfth century.⁴⁰

Sicily

In mid-eleventh-century Sicily, competing Muslim amirs vied for political dominion over the island, resulting in a fractious political order much like the *ṭāʾifa* states in Iberia. Muslims constituted a slight majority of Sicily’s population, though the island had a sizeable Greek Christian population

and a small Jewish minority. The political rivalries that emerged between Muslim rulers in Sicily led Ibn al-Thumna, the Amir of Catania, to recruit Norman warlords from the Southern Italian mainland in hopes of ousting his Muslim rivals. Norman mercenaries had streamed into Southern Italy in the early eleventh century, finding ample employment amidst the factious disputes between various Lombard princes, Byzantine authorities and autonomous city-states across the peninsula.⁴¹ The Norman mercenaries enjoyed tremendous success, eventually carving out their own competing polities in the peninsula. By 1059, Robert Guiscard of the Hauteville family emerged as the most powerful of these Norman warlords, eventually compelling Pope Nicholas II to acknowledge him as Duke of Apulia and Calabria and to recognize his ambitions as future duke of Sicily. Robert Guiscard shared his rule over Calabria with his brother, Roger, who served as his military ally and occasional adversary. Roger would later be known as Roger Bosso, the Great Count, or Roger I. Robert and Roger joined forces to conquer Sicily, with Roger commanding the bulk of the invasion and Guiscard occasionally supplementing his forces at crucial military junctures. In 1061, with Robert and Roger plotting raids into Sicily, Ibn al-Thumna approached the Norman warlords and offered to ally with them to capture the island.⁴²

Roger and Ibn al-Thumna launched their first attacks in Sicily in 1061. The conquest of Sicily was a piecemeal affair that took 30 years to complete, with Roger's military fortunes vacillating from year to year. Ibn al-Thumna was murdered in 1062. Roger himself possessed a relatively small core of soldiers in the initial dozen years of the campaign and was extraordinarily reliant on Guiscard's forces to supplement his own. After Robert's conquest of Bari in 1071, a campaign in which Roger had returned to the mainland to assist his brother, the two brothers were able to combine their forces in order to lay siege to the city of Palermo. Palermo fell into Norman hands in 1072, and the entirety of the northern coast of Sicily soon followed. The Normans gradually extended their dominion into the southern portion of the island over 20 years of sporadic warfare between Norman and Muslim forces. This process was slowed by Muslim counterattacks, hostilities with Byzantine forces and revolts on the Italian mainland. In 1091, Roger captured Noto, the last city in Sicily still ruled by Muslims, and was able to claim control over the whole of Sicily. With the death of Robert Guiscard in 1085, Roger was the most powerful of all of the Norman leaders in the *Mezzogiorno*. His control over Sicily and its Muslim population gave him tremendous economic and military

resources, enabling him to expand his authority onto the Southern Italian mainland and extend his dominance over his kin.

The Crusader States

At the council of Claremont in 1095, Pope Urban appealed to Latin Christian warriors to put aside their internal conflict and rivalries and take part in an armed pilgrimage to conquer Jerusalem. The expedition would eventually become known as the First Crusade. This pilgrimage proved widely appealing, attracting influential warriors from the Kingdoms of France, England, Flanders, Iberia, the Holy Roman Empire and Southern Italy, with Bohemond of Taranto, the son of Robert Guiscard, leading the Southern Italian Norman contingent. But the allure of this expedition extended far beyond the military aristocracy of Latin Europe. It recruited large swaths of the general populace to take part in this pilgrimage. These “crusading” armies marched across Eastern Europe, crossing the Bosphorus in 1097, capturing cities across the Eastern Mediterranean, finally culminating in the Sacking of Jerusalem in 1099 and the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Principality of Antioch, the County of Edessa and the County of Tripoli. Unlike the conquests in Iberia and Southern Italy, Latin Christians frequently massacred subject populations that they encountered out of religious zeal, beginning with Jewish communities across the Rhineland at the start of the expedition, and eventually general populations, including Muslims, Jews and local Christians, in cities like Jerusalem, Caesarea and Tripoli. However, within a decade of the sack of Jerusalem, these Latin polities all adopted more conciliatory policies toward the Muslim populations in their rural hinterlands as they became enmeshed in political competition with various Crusader States who allied themselves with neighboring Muslim principalities, often against their coreligionists.

Maritime Republics

The expansion of Latin maritime power across the Mediterranean created contacts that proved as significant as the territorial conquests. The eleventh century saw the emergence of the Italian cities of Pisa and Genoa, both of which had been the target of Muslim raiders, as maritime powers. Both cities became involved in the expansion of Latin polities across the Mediterranean. The two rival cities collaborated to repulse an invasion from the island of Sardinia by the *tāʾifā* of Dénia, in Eastern Spain, and in so doing, secured the island for themselves. Pisan fleets conquered

Corsica and successfully raided Sicily and the North African coast in the mid-eleventh century. They collaborated with Amalfi to sack the city of Mahdiyya in 1087 to 1088, though they failed to complete their goal of capturing the city. They went on to aid Alfonso VI of León and Castile in his campaign against the *tā'ifa* of Valencia in 1092. Genoese and Pisan fleets played seminal roles in supporting the First Crusade and securing territory in the immediate aftermath of the expedition, which allowed them to establish *fondaci*, trading outposts, in economically and strategically important cities. The Italian maritime republics employed a kind of gun-boat diplomacy, often forming trading relationships with cities that they had previously raided, thus leveraging their military might into mercantile power in Christian as well as Muslim ports across the Mediterranean.

Imagining the Outsider

Rise of the Polemic

As Latin Christians conquered Southern Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, large parts of Al-Andalus and the eastern Mediterranean, a clerical elite developed an increasingly polemical anti-Islamic tradition that became central to the Christian vision of violence and war. As David Nirenberg observed in his synthesis of Christian and Muslim relations, “ideas about Islam played an important role in the creation of a muscular version of European Christianity, one that increasingly saw itself as united by a common destiny to conquer a wider world imagined as Muslim.”⁴³ This polemical tradition took shape at the very same time large numbers of Muslims became subject to the political authority of Latin Christian lords.

Narratives produced by Latin clerics in the early twelfth century, in the wake of the First Crusade, emphasized the pagan religiosity of the “Saracens.”⁴⁴ “Saracens” were not simply a polytheistic non-Christian tradition. They worshipped Muḥammad alongside Apollo, Jupiter and other Greco-Roman gods. They continued a religious tradition that had persecuted and murdered Christians since the inception of the religion.⁴⁵ These authors crafted an image of “Saracens” gleefully performing an anti-sacrament in which Christians suffered hideous tortures while pagans ritually defiled Christian holy spaces. One such account relates how the pagans desecrated churches: “overturn[ing] the altars, having defiled them with their own filth, they circumcise Christians, and take the resulting blood and gore and either pour it upon the altars or submerge it into

baptismal vessels.”⁴⁶ Another describes ceremonies in which “Saracens” recreated the torment and crucifixion of Christ, assaulting Jesus in effigy, a timeless continuation of their earlier sin.⁴⁷

Instead of presenting “Saracens” as a divine scourge which God used to punish sinful Christians, early twelfth-century authors increasingly portrayed “Saracens” as a demonic evil.⁴⁸ Several authors depicted Muḥammad as the anti-Christ and envisioned warfare against Muslims in eschatological terms, with battles that would usher in the Second Coming of Christ.⁴⁹ These authors increasingly framed Muslims as the enemies of God, evil mirrors of Christianity that stood against all things holy and who presided over bloody defilement of Christian sacred space.

As Latin Christians expanded their political domain across the Mediterranean world in the twelfth century, Latin intellectuals accrued additional information about Islam that should have allowed them to challenge this polemical image.⁵⁰ By the latter half of the twelfth century, under Peter the Venerable, the Cluniac monks translated the Qur’ān into Latin for the first time.⁵¹ Despite that knowledge, tropes of the pagan Muslim and his anti-sacramental violence persisted in both clerical writings and emergent literary traditions. Long after the Latin intellectual elite acquired a more accurate understanding of the Islamic religion,⁵² authors continued to deploy timeworn anti-Muslim stereotypes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries for a variety of rhetorical and polemical purposes.⁵³

Social and Legal Status

At the same time, the military successes of Latin Christian warriors put them into direct contact with a substantial Muslim population. The experience of those in regular contact with Muslims diverged substantially from the polemical presentation found in clerical writings, particularly those from north of the Alps. Contrary to the vitriolic depiction of Muslims in the northern clerical sources, Latin Christians throughout the Mediterranean frequently negotiated and worked with Muslims across religious boundaries. Even the warriors who settled in the Kingdom of Jerusalem and other Crusader States rejected a monochromatic approach to Islam and embraced a realpolitik in their dealings with Muslims.⁵⁴ The former crusaders did not perceive Muslims with an inflexible hatred; they were willing to negotiate with Muslims just as they would with a rival Christian polity.⁵⁵

Islamic jurists around the Mediterranean overwhelmingly agreed that Muslims had an obligation to relocate from territory under infidel (i.e.

Christian) rule, and a great many Muslims fled from the newly founded Latin Christian polities. However, many Muslims remained, either unable or unwilling to abandon their homes. The rulers in Iberia, Sicily and the Crusader States showed little interest in either encouraging broad-based conversion or relocation of the subject Muslim population.⁵⁶ These Muslims became a legitimate and protected minority, though clearly subordinate to their Christian overlords.

These Muslims were extended a social and legal status roughly equivalent to that of the *dhimmi*, people of the Book, status granted to Jews and Christians who lived under Muslim rule. Muslims could form semi-autonomous communities in which they could practice their religion and govern themselves under their own laws, as long as these laws did not contradict the dominant edicts of Christian society. In return for this protection, these Muslims became subject to special taxes paid to their lord. These revenues made Muslim subjects a valuable resource; in Iberia, they were explicitly identified as a “royal treasure.”⁵⁷ Muslims were frequently depicted as *servie regis*, slaves of the crown, possessions of the ruler which he protected precisely because of the wealth they generated.

Sicilian Divergence

Despite the broad similarities in the social and legal status of Muslims in the new Christian polities across the Mediterranean, the Sicilian rulers made use of Muslim personnel and adopted the trappings of Islamic culture in ways that have no direct parallel in the Crusader States or Iberian polities. By the end of the twelfth century, Sicilian armies regularly included thousands of Muslim soldiers within their ranks, and this military force became a crucial tool for elevating these rulers above their Norman kin on the Southern Italian mainland. In both Iberia and the Crusader States, rulers shied away from mass levies of Muslim soldiers, fearing such troops could potentially betray their lords and side with rival Muslim polities. Having secured the whole of the island, and without fear of an invasion from North Africa, Sicilian rulers relied on Muslim soldiers as a useful tool to protect their power. The frequent conflict between Sicilian rulers and the papacy only increased the value of soldiers who were unfazed by ecclesiastical sanction, and the dependence of Sicilian Muslims on royal power for their own protection made these levies the most dependable in the *regno*.

Sicilian rulers faced an immense challenge in both constructing and legitimating their royal identity that was absent from the other new

Christian polities throughout the Mediterranean. Roger I and his successors could claim descent from neither the rulers of France nor its high nobility. Rather than drawing on long-standing claims of lineage, they crafted the image of their regency, as well as their administration, from a combination of Germanic, Byzantine and Islamic models and deliberately created a new monarchy that borrowed heavily from various sources across the Mediterranean. Instead of following a single dominant tradition, the Sicilian monarchy became a hybrid that drew together various, and often opposing, traditions of rulership. The Sicilian monarchs used Byzantine, Latin and Arabic titles on official documents, coins and other forms of public writings. Their royal buildings integrated artistic and architectural techniques from all three of these cultures, as well as from the island's classical past. Roger II sponsored numerous Arabic authors and poets within his court. The monarchy deployed symbols and iconography of rulership that drew heavily from these disparate traditions.

The royal administration of the kingdom was equally heterogeneous. The Sicilian monarch made extensive use of the administrative records of the previous Islamic and Byzantine rulers of the region. He also continued to employ Greek Christians and Muslims in the administration. Court officials occasionally used Latin when composing official documents but wrote the vast majority in Greek or Arabic. Many Muslim clerks were employed within royal offices, and former Muslims, often only nominally converted to Christianity, dominated many royal offices in the *regno* in the mid-twelfth century. As administrators whose previous religious identity set them apart from the rest of Christian society, they served as tools to express and maintain the bureaucratic power of the state. The monarch employed these bureaucrats to handle royal affairs and also to serve as a counterbalance to the powerful Latin nobility within the kingdom. It was this construction of a royal identity that crosses traditional cultural divisions, combined with the reliance on a small cadre of outsiders, that made the Sicilian kingdom a true Mediterranean monarchy.

The growth of the Kingdom of Sicily parallels the ascendance of an Arabic-language bureaucracy which came to dominate the fiscal administration of this new kingdom. Around 1130, probably shortly after Roger received his crown, we see evidence of the creation of the royal *dīwān*, or fiscal administration, in Sicily, modeled after the practices of contemporary Arabic-language chanceries in Islamic polities throughout the Mediterranean.⁵⁸ Documents from the *dīwān* in the 1130s were primarily in Greek, which had been the primary language of the Sicilian chancery,

but for the first time in over 20 years, the *dīwān* started to issue some fiscal documents in Arabic. Over the next decade, the use of Arabic would become increasingly prominent, and by 1145, it became the dominant language of the *dīwān* and remained in use even after Latin supplanted Greek for the Sicilian chancery as a whole.

The presence of other Islamic cultural elements waxed in this same period. Roger surrounded himself with eunuchs, a harem, and Muslim cooks and entertainers. Muslim scholars and poets, most famously the geographer al-Idrīsī, found patronage within the court. The king ordered the construction of a series of hunting preserves and Islamic gardens, complete with royal pavilions modeled after Fāṭimid designs, around Palermo. The textile fashions of Islamic courts were also adopted in the Sicilian capital; a center for the production of silks, a *ṭirāz*, was built in the royal palace, and Roger himself was said to have traveled with a parasol. All of these cultural appropriations were part of an effort to craft the idea of Sicilian kingship that separated him from other Latin Christian rulers and gave rise to the image of Sicilian kings as “baptized sultans.”

SOURCES AND SILENCE

I have focused this monograph on the Muslims of Sicily: how they were used by Sicilian rulers, and the ways in which those Muslims are represented in Latin texts. In so doing, I shy away from using a wealth of available source material for addressing the co-option and redeployment of culture and elements of rule within the Sicilian court: the creation of gardens and royal palaces modeled after Fāṭimid architecture,⁵⁹ the adoption of fashion from Islamic courts from clothing to parasols,⁶⁰ the patronage of Muslim scholars and poets,⁶¹ the imitation of Islamic artistic techniques, the use of the Arabic language, titlature on coins and administrative documents,⁶² and numerous other examples. Despite the existence of this wide range of source material, we have limited evidence of response to these Islamic cultural elements from Latin authors, and what reactions do survive tend to be isolated snapshots that are of limited value in assessing the shifts and changes in the ways in which these cultural appropriations were understood. Analyzing textual representations of people, especially the soldiers and administrators who were the most visible Muslims within the *regno*, provides the best evidence for charting the shift in attitudes toward Sicilian Muslims from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries.

Sources

Latin authors from Sicily and Southern Italy produced a series of chronicles, rich narrative sources that allow me to document the shifting understandings of Muslims from the mid-eleventh century to the beginning of the thirteenth. The writings of Amatus of Montecassino, Geoffrey of Malaterra and William of Apulia document the Norman conquest of Sicily and Southern Italy over the course of the eleventh century, illustrating the role Muslims played as both allies and opponents in the creation of the country of Sicily.⁶³ Alexander of Teleso and Falco of Benevento document Roger II's struggle to create the Sicilian *regno* in the 1120s and 1130s and portray the increasingly important role of Muslim soldiers as instruments of Sicilian royal power.⁶⁴ The chronicles of Romuald of Salerno and "Hugo Falcandus" describe Sicilian court politics in the mid-twelfth century, demonstrating both the rise of an Arabic-language administrative class within the court and growing popular resentment toward both these Muslim administrators and the Muslim population of the island as a whole.⁶⁵ Peter of Eboli documents the dynastic collapse of the Sicilian monarchy in the 1190s, which led to Henry VI's invasion of Sicily and the displacement of Sicily's Muslim population.⁶⁶ A variety of regional chronicles produced within the *regno* complement these principal narrative sources. In addition to the vivid descriptions of Muslims in narrative, charter evidence from within Sicily documents the legal, social and economic conditions of Sicilian Muslims. The extant charters consist of chancery documents granted by Sicilian rulers to ecclesiastical institutions which often included grants of authority over specifically detailed members of the Muslim community.

I supplement the depictions of Muslims from these internal sources with external narratives, text produced by authors from outside the *regno*. This monograph makes use of a variety of Arabic-language texts which address Sicily in this period, chiefly the universal history of Ibn al-Athīr and the travel journal of Ibn Jubayr.⁶⁷ Periods of political conflict between Sicily and other Latin polities allow contemporary readers to see how Latin intellectuals beyond Southern Italy understood and depicted the rulers of Sicily. German imperial incursions into Italy in the 1080s, 1130s and 1190s, as well as the English adventures into Sicily at the onset of the Third Crusade, produced a series of narrative accounts that demonstrate how outsiders saw Sicilian Muslims and their relationship to the Sicilian crown.

Silence

Chronicles are narrative creations, not statements of absolute truth. Hayden White has argued that “historical discourse should not be regarded as a mirror image of events,” but “as a sign system which points [both] . . . toward the set of events it purports to describe and toward the generic story form to which it likens.”⁶⁸ I have done my best to contextualize their production, identify their larger narrative forms, and stress that they tell us as much about the time in which they were composed as the time they purport to describe. Historians cannot simply study either these narrative or administrative sources in what Dominick LaCapra identifies as a documentary model, in which the historian reads to derive “factual or deferential propositions,” but must also devote attention to “the way ‘documents’ are themselves texts that ‘process’ or rework ‘reality’ and require a critical reading.”⁶⁹

Much of Hayden White’s work on “metahistory” focuses on the ways in which historians compile carefully selected data and use it to compose a coherent story which advances a specific ideology.⁷⁰ This monograph, particularly Chaps. 2, 3 and 4, pays as much heed to the information that medieval authors chose to ignore as to what they chose to record. It focuses on the issue of silence, documenting the absence of an anti-Islamic critique against either the lords of Sicily or their Muslim subjects in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. For over a century, historians, myself included, have been drawn to study the Sicilian *regno* because it marks a point of intersection between Greek, Latin and Islamic cultures. The linguistic, religious and cultural diversity of the populace and the ways in which the court forged a royal identity through aggressively co-opting a range of Mediterranean cultures and customs have become defining features of the Sicilian monarchy for many modern scholars of medieval Sicily. It is tempting to assume that medieval intellectuals would share a fascination with, or perhaps a revulsion toward, these same issues. But the majority of our narrative sources from this late eleventh- to early twelfth-century period make at most passing reference to Sicilian Muslims or issues of cultural hybridity. How do we explain this silence?

Much of the recent academic scholarship on silence approaches the topic with a psychoanalytic framework, framing narrative absence in terms of trauma and repression. That theoretical lens does not explain the silence we see in the late eleventh- and early twelfth-century narrative sources that address medieval Sicily. Instead, this monograph catalogs two very

different sorts of silences: the first, a silence of disinterest and, the second, a strategic silence. For most of these authors—particularly those from outside the territories that would comprise the *regno*—the Muslim subjects of Sicily, its farmers, soldiers, and even its administrators, were beneath notice. They had no interest in documenting the religious composition of Sicilian armies or in the growth of Greek or Arabic administration within the workings of the Sicilian court. These writers frequently failed to either notice or attribute any import to the issues that would become central to the way historians in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries characterized the Kingdom of Sicily. This silence, whether it stemmed from ignorance or indifference, reveals the lack of import that these medieval authors ascribed to Muslims and the false assumptions that modern historians have made about the perpetual use of anti-Muslim rhetoric against the rulers of Sicily.

The carefully selected strategic silence from authors who were both interested in and informed about Muslims within the Sicilian court is potentially even more revealing. Geoffrey of Malaterra provides our most extensive evidence for the presence of Muslim soldiers within Norman armies in the late eleventh century, yet he assiduously avoids any mention of these soldiers in religiously charged battles like the 1084 Sack of Rome or the 1097 siege of Amalfi, which marked the beginning of the Southern Italian participation in the First Crusade.⁷¹ Otto of Freising demonstrates remarkable knowledge about Islam in general and about diplomatic relationships between Muslim and Christian polities in the Eastern Mediterranean, yet he avoids any mention of Muslims within Sicilian armies, and he rewrites the history of the Norman conquest of Sicily to remove any mention of a Muslim presence on the island.⁷² Romuald of Salerno displays an intimate familiarity with the inner workings of the mid-twelfth-century Sicilian court, yet he remains noticeably silent concerning the power struggles of high-ranking Muslim administrators within the court, only to have the author of a later recension of his text insert highly polemical accounts of these conflicts into his narratives.⁷³ Each author had particular reasons for these deliberate and strategic silences, but all of them reveal an anxiety in discussing Muslims.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 2 traces the integration of Muslims into the armies of Roger I, from his personal alliance with the Muslim Amir Ibn al-Thumna in 1061 to the use of mass levees of thousands of Muslims in the final decades of

the twelfth century. The increasing integration of Muslim soldiers into the Norman armies of Southern Italy provides numerous examples of how Latin authors depicted Muslim soldiers under the command of Christian leaders. The chapter illustrates that few eleventh-century authors viewed the presence of such Muslims as controversial and that they never made use of these soldiers in polemical attacks against Sicilian leaders. The Latin sources display no hint of thirteenth-century notions that political alliances with Muslim leaders or employing Muslim soldiers were controversial acts that brought into question the orthodoxy of Sicilian leaders.

Chapter 3 explores the ways in which Sicily's new ruling class envisioned the Muslim population in the immediate aftermath of the conquest of the island. Sicily's Muslims were the exclusive dominion of the authority of its Norman rulers and a valuable financial resource and tradable commodity which Count Roger could retain for himself or bestow upon his allies to reward their loyalty or demonstrate his largess. The re-envisioning of Muslims as a financial asset required the development of an administrative bureaucracy capable of cataloging and apportioning this new resource. This chapter demonstrates the ways in which Muslim soldiers continued to serve this military purpose, while also gaining additional symbolic import. Muslim warriors became a demonstration of the wealth and power of Sicilian rulers, illustrating the scope of royal authority. Though the expanded function of these Muslim soldiers garnered little attention from authors north of the *regno*, contemporary Latin sources demonstrate that their importance was understood by both Roger's allies and enemies in the newly formed *regno*.

Chapter 4 examines the mid-twelfth-century trial of Philip of Mahdiyya in detail, both because of the availability of unusually detailed narrative sources for the trial and because of the importance of Philip's execution in the historiography of violence against the Muslim communities in Sicily. On the surface, our two sources, one Arabic, the other Latin, offer remarkably similar accounts of the end of Philip's life, which historians have used to illustrate a growing hostility toward Islam within the Sicilian court. The chapter demonstrates that both texts were probably composed in the early thirteenth century: not in a period when Muslim positions in the Sicilian court were deteriorating, but after they had already collapsed. Historians have read these texts as windows into a mid- to late twelfth-century experience, but they reveal far more about attitudes toward Muslims in Sicily in the early thirteenth century. The trial of Philip of Mahdiyya reveals precisely how swiftly these attitudes shifted, as early

thirteenth-century writers wrestled with the potential anxiety caused by what they perceived as the culturally and religiously ambiguous past of mid-twelfth-century Muslims. They used the trial and execution of Philip to resolve the dilemma posed by the cultural and institutional hybridity of the Sicilian court. In so doing, they projected the binary religious polarization that had come to dominate Sicily after the death of William II on to a much more complex mid-twelfth-century past.

Chapter 5 examines the liminal figure of the eunuch and how these men serve as a nexus for examining the religious tensions and cultural intersections that make medieval Sicily so fascinating for contemporary historians. The phenomenon of the eunuchs illustrates the ways in which Sicilian monarchs adopted the semiotic vocabulary of other Eastern Mediterranean rulers but molded the tradition, particularly with respect to the origin of the eunuch, to suit their specific needs. The eunuch tradition serves as an individual case study of a wide array of cultural adaptations in the Normans' quest to create a Sicilian royal identity.

Chapter 6 seeks to explain the emergence of popular anti-Muslim massacres that took place in the wake of 1161 and explore the way that these attacks illustrate a shift in the way the Christian population envisioned Sicilian Muslims. By the mid-twelfth century, the fate of Sicily's Muslim population had become inextricably linked to the fate of Sicilian kingship. The crown had protected these Muslims and deployed them as both a valuable resource and a clear symbol of royal power. The ability to protect Sicilian Muslims from Christian aggression demonstrated a king's power, and when that power faltered, the Muslim population became subject to bitter reprisals. Yet the emergence of popular Latin Christian hostility toward Sicilian Muslims did not cause Sicilian rulers to dissolve their relationship with their Muslim subjects. In the short term, the Sicilian monarchy elevated Muslim administrators to the highest levels of the royal administration, and it ultimately reaffirmed the status of the Sicilian king as the protector of Sicilian Muslims and the role of those Muslims in the gift economy of the regency. Sicilian Muslims became increasingly dependent on the monarchy for protection, and that association only deepened the conflation of anti-Muslim and anti-royal sentiments, which made Sicilian Muslims more vulnerable to progressively widespread violence in the moments when royal authority abated in the latter half of the twelfth century.

Chapter 7 focuses on how the last decade of the twelfth century saw major disjunctions in the lives of Sicilian Muslims, as well as

a transformation of their portrayal in Latin sources. A series of dynastic crises sparked tumult throughout the *regno*, leading to the reemergence of Christian mob violence against Muslims and displacement of Muslims from urban centers, as well as attempts to reject the central authority of various rulers in Palermo. Would-be Sicilian rulers attempted to lure Sicilian Muslims back under their control through a series of threats, negotiations and promises, all with the underlying assumption that a strong ruler could restore order across the island and that Muslims could still serve as a symbol of the power and splendor of the Sicilian monarchy. Only at the end of the decade did Pope Innocent III attempt to radically transform the Latin discourse surrounding the subject Muslim population of the island. Innocent argued that Markward of Anweiler's command over Muslim subjects contaminated the German leader and made him an enemy of God and the church. Innocent sought to use Muslim service as a rhetorical weapon to marshal support against a Sicilian ruler. This was the first time a writer presented Muslim service as a potential vulnerability rather than a symbol of splendor and power.

The epilogue illustrates the ways in which the charges Innocent III used against Markward were revived and expounded upon in an effort to delegitimize Frederick II and his successors. This work charts the shift in representation of Sicily's Muslim population, the creation of the anti-Islamic critique of the Sicilian rulers and the fate of the Muslims of Sicily. The thirteenth century brings closure to these narratives; the core of the anti-Islamic polemic had taken shape, and the Muslims of Sicily were subdued and forcibly deported to the Southern Italian mainland and were eventually enslaved and scattered throughout Latin Europe.

NOTES

1. Tanner (1990), p. 282.
2. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 147.
3. Amari (2002) vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 246.
4. The framework and terminology come from Samuel P. Huntington (1997), pp. 40–50. Though Huntington focuses on the post-Cold War period, he anchors his conception of civilization on “Western” European Christian civilization that coalesces in the eighth and ninth centuries and finds itself in opposition to and conflict with a more sophisticated Islamic civilization. Huntington borrowed the phrase “clash of civilizations” from Bernard Lewis (1990), who

- also stressed a long-standing conflict arguing that that the Islamic world was “an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage.”
5. Said (2003), p. 71.
 6. Haskins (1915), p. 233. For other examples see: Amari (2002), Norwich (1967), Norwich (1970), Van Cleve (1972), Rizzitano and Giunta (1991).
 7. Johns (2002), p. 255.
 8. Abulafia (1997), p. 23.
 9. Abulafia (1988).
 10. Stanton (2010), pp. 123–25; Nef (2011), pp. 359–63.
 11. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily* (2002), pp. 112–35.
 12. Britt (2007), pp. 21–45.
 13. A title taken from the hem of the alb of William II. Al-Samman (1982), p. 21.
 14. Roger II is depicted in this regalia in a mosaic in the S. Maria dell’Ammiraglio, a church founded by his chief minister George of Antioch. Tramontana (1993), pp. 86–88; Ernst Kitzinger (1990).
 15. Mallette (2005), p. 19.
 16. Houben (2013a), pp. 19–33; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 247–50; Johns (2006), pp. 324–37; Houben, *Roger II of Sicily* (2002), pp. 113–32.
 17. See Chap. 7.
 18. Nirenberg (1996).
 19. Falcandus (1897), p. 173.
 20. Most notably Johns (2002), Metcalfe (2003, 2009), Taylor (2003), and Nef (2011).
 21. Abulafia (1990), pp. 103–33; Catlos (2014).
 22. Tolan et al. (2013), p. 3.
 23. Retsö (2003), pp. 505–6. For a full etymology of the “Saracen” in the ancient world, see Shahid (1984), pp. 123–41.
 24. Tolan et al. (2013), pp. 12–13.
 25. Genesis 16:12, New International Version.
 26. Shahid (1984), p. 100.
 27. Tolan (2002), pp. 10–14.
 28. Barney et al. (2006), pp. 24–26.
 29. Catlos (2014), pp. 4–5.
 30. Tolan (2002), pp. 74–79.

31. In contrast, Greek Christian authors and Latin authors in the Iberian Peninsula, areas where Christians and Muslims sustained contact for centuries, were more likely to identify Muslims as heretics, envisioning Islam as a deviant branch of Christianity rather than a pagan religion. Wolf (1996), pp. 85–108; Tolan (2002), pp. 40–104.
32. Metcalfe (2007), pp. 10–15, 25–32.
33. Kreutz (1991), pp. 19–23.
34. Musca (1964).
35. Kreutz (1991), pp. 51–53.
36. *Chronicon Salernitanum*, ed. Pertz, p. 528.
37. John VIII's rhetoric toward the Muslims in the Italian south stands in exception to the general trends in Latin Christians rhetoric toward Muslims in the period before the eleventh century. See Engreen (1945), pp. 318–30.
38. Skinner (2013), pp. 107–9; Kreutz (1991), pp. 57–62.
39. Fernando I also enslaved or expelled Muslims from cities he conquered in the 1050s and 1060s. O'Callaghan (1990), pp. 13–14.
40. For a description of political interactions across this frontier, see Fletcher (1989), pp. 144–86.
41. On the arrival and rise to power of Norman warlords in Southern Italy, see Loud (2000). For a comprehensive history of Southern Italy before Norman rule, see Kreutz (1991).
42. For a full explanation of the motivations of all parties involved in this alliance, see Chap. 2.
43. Nirenberg (2014), p. 20.
44. These clerical narratives display radically different attitudes toward models than the earliest accounts written by participants in the First Crusade. See Birk (2011), pp. 91–106 and (2012), pp. 463–85.
45. Tolan (2002), pp. 105–69.
46. Robert the Monk (1844), pp. 727–28.
47. d'Aguilers (1969), p. 145.
48. Strickland (2003), pp. 165–73.
49. Tudebode (1977), p. 137; Ralph of Caen (1866), p. 695; Guibert of Nogent (1996), pp. 113–17.
50. Kedar (1984), pp. 3–41; Hamilton (1999), p. 317.
51. Burman (2007), pp. 36–59.
52. Akbari (2009), pp. 245–47.

53. Jubb (2005), pp. 225–44.
54. Asbridge (2007), p. 19.
55. Asbridge (2007), p. 25.
56. In the Crusader States, Muslims were forced out of Jerusalem and several other major cities, but even in these cases, there were never attempts to force Muslims out of the rural villages in the eastern Mediterranean hinterlands.
57. Boswell (1977).
58. See Johns (2002), pp. 193–211, and Takayama (1993), pp. 12–22, 81–85.
59. Mallette (2005), pp. 17–46; Bellafiore (1990); Johns (1993), pp. 133–59.
60. Nef (2011), pp. 122–24; Snyder (2004), pp. 157–58; Tronzo (2001); Bauer (1994), pp. 279–87; Tramontana (1993), Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen (1986), al-Samman (1982).
61. Nef (2011), pp. 191–210.
62. Nef (2011), pp. 104–16; Johns (2004), pp. 243–5; Johns (1986), pp. 11–54; Grierson (1992), pp. 117–32; Spahr (1976), pp. 137–71.
63. Amatus (1935), Malaterra (1928), Guillaume de Pouille (1961). For English translations, see Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans by Amatus of Montecassino*, trans. Prescott N. Dunbar, rev. G. A. Loud (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004); Goffredo Malaterra. *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of His Brother Duke Robert Guiscard*, trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005); William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, trans. G. A. Loud, accessed June 25, 2016, http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/downloads/file/1049/the_deeds_of_robert_guiscard_by_william_of_apulia. For a detailed analysis of these texts, see Chap. 2.
64. Alexandre de Telese (1991), Falco of Benevento (1998). For English translations, see Alexander of Telese, “Abbot Alexander of Telese, ‘The History of the Most Serene Roger, First King of Sicily,’” in *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, ed. Graham Loud (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), pp. 63–129; Falco of Benevento, “The ‘Chronicle’ of Falco of Benevento,” in *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, pp. 130–249. For a detailed analysis of these texts, see Chap. 3.

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66. Peter of Eboli (1994). For a detailed analysis of this text, see Chap. 7.
67. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*²; Ibn Jubayr (1992). For an English translation of Ibn al-Athīr, see Ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn Al-Athir for the Crusading Period from Al-Kamil Fi'l-Ta'rikh. Part 1: The Years 491–541/1097–1146: The Coming of the Franks and the Muslim Response*, ed. D. S. Richards (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Routledge, 2010); Ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn Al-Athir for the Crusading Period from Al-Kamil Fi'l-Ta'rikh. Part 2: The Years 541–589/1146–1193: The Age of Nur Al-Din and Saladin*, ed. D. S. Richards (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Routledge, 2010). Some of the important initial description of the Norman rulers of Sicily preceded the sections of Ibn al-Athīr’s work that are excerpted in this translation. For an English translation of Ibn Jubayr, see Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, Being the Chronicle of a Mediaeval Spanish Moor Concerning His Journey to the Egypt of Saladin, the Holy Cities of Arabia, Baghdad the City of the Caliphs, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, trans. Ronald J. C. Broadhurst (London: J. Cape, 1952). This text could benefit from an updated and revised English edition. The inaccuracies of Broadhurst’s translation make it unreliable for scholarly work. For a detailed analysis of these texts, see Chaps. 4 and 6.
68. White (1978), p. 106.
69. LaCapra (1985), pp. 18–19.
70. White (2014), pp. 1–80. For the formation of story and plot and medieval chronicles, see White (1987), pp. 14–24.
71. See Chap. 2.
72. See Chap. 3.
73. See Chap. 4.

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Saracen Soldiers: Muslim Participation in Norman Military Expeditions

In the summer of 1098, the young Prince Richard II of Capua launched a campaign against the city of Capua, which had rebelled against his rule after the death of his father, Prince Jordan, seven years earlier. Prince Richard appealed to two of his relatives for aid in reclaiming his patrimony: his cousin Roger Borsa, Duke of Apulia, and his great uncle Roger, Count of Sicily.¹ Count Roger came to the aid of his kinsman, as he had time and again throughout the previous decade. He mustered a massive army composed primarily of Muslims from Sicily to lay siege on Capua and force the city's leaders to capitulate to Prince Richard's rule.

The presence of thousands of Muslim soldiers taking part in the campaign against Capua was documented in large part because of the presence of Pope Urban II, accompanied by Anselm, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose attempts to convert the Sicilian Muslim soldiers in Count Roger's army were recorded by the Benedictine monk Eadmer.²

There were indeed some pagans [Muslims], for [Roger] the Count of Sicily ... had brought many thousands of them with him on the expedition. Some of them, I say, were stirred by the report of [Anselm's] goodness. ... They gratefully accepted offerings of food from Anselm and returned to their own people knowing the wonderful kindness which they experienced at his hands. ... Many of them even, as we discovered, would willingly have submitted to his instruction and would have allowed the yoke of the Christian faith to be placed by him upon their shoulders, if they had not feared that

the cruelty of their count would have been let loose against them on this account. For in truth [Roger] was unwilling to allow any of them to become Christian with impunity. With what policy-if one can use the word-he did this is no concern of mine: that is between God and himself.³

Eadmer's depiction of the siege of Capua in 1098 highlights both the important role of Muslims within the armies of the Count of Sicily and the eleventh-century Latin Christian ambivalence towards the use of these "pagan" soldiers within the armies of Christian commanders in Sicily and Southern Italy.

The siege of Capua took place in the summer of 1098 at roughly the same time that the Latin warriors of the First Crusade were under siege in Antioch, before their victory over the armies of Kerbogha the Atabeg of Masul. However, Eadmer's depiction of Muslim soldiers displays none of the animosity present in so many Latin accounts of the Crusades.⁴ As the armies of the three Norman warlords descended on Capua, Pope Urban II had traveled south in hopes of both resolving a conflict with Count Roger over the appointment of the bishop of Messina and conducting a church council in Bari later that year.⁵ As the quotation above shows, instead of launching vitriolic attacks against Muslims, the monk focuses on explaining Anselm's inability to win converts from their ranks. Eadmer depicts the "pagans" as receptive to Anselm's ministry, eager to accept conversion, but ultimately prevented by Count Roger, whose threats of violence undermined Anselm's mission.⁶ For Eadmer, Roger's moral failing lies not in associating with Muslims or making use of them in his armies but in his prevention of Anselm's missionary work. Eadmer offers a tacit acceptance of the use of "pagan" soldiers within Christian armies, a pattern which repeats in almost all of the Latin accounts of Muslim participation in the armies of Sicily in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries.

Alex Metcalfe's masterful survey of the Muslim population of medieval Sicily and Italy maintains that Muslim contingents within the Sicilian army were "often described in terms of the horror and fear that they instilled," and that "their use by Christian rulers of Sicily was always controversial."⁷ While the animosity Metcalfe describes eventually appears in texts of the latter half of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is absent from the writings of the eleventh century. Eleventh-century authors rarely exhibited a strong interest in the presence of Muslim soldiers within a Christian army. Their deployment sparked little controversy, even among the most ardent foes of the Count of Sicily. Latin sources display no hint of thirteenth-

century notions that forgoing political alliances with Muslim leaders or employing Muslim soldiers were controversial acts which brought into question the orthodoxy of Sicilian leaders. This chapter charts the development of the use of Muslim soldiers within Norman armies, the willingness of Norman leaders to enter into agreements with Muslim allies and subjects and the way eleventh-century Latin intellectuals discussed the existence of these Muslims.

What led a Norman count to field an army of Muslim soldiers? The Muslim forces Roger brought to Capua did not spring forth fully formed after Sicily's subjugation in 1091 but were gradually developed over the course of the 30-year span of the conquest. Though Norman forces under the command of Count Roger invaded Sicily in 1061, it was not until 30 years later that sources confirm that the count fielded an army comprised of primarily Muslim soldiers. Muslims first become part of the Norman military effort in 1060 as a result of a cooperative venture between Count Roger and the down-on-his-luck Amir of Catania Ibn al-Thumna. The amir sided with the Normans during their initial invasion and brought a relatively small group of steadfast personnel to aid the Norman armies. This participation was based solely on bonds of personal loyalty between Ibn al-Thumna and Roger; and while Ibn al-Thumna directed his men to aid Roger, we have little evidence of any Muslim soldiers being under the direct command of the count. The alliance between the count and the amir was brought to a crashing halt with Ibn al-Thumna's assassination in 1062, which ended the period of Norman cooperation with Muslims loyal to the amir.

Ibn al-Thumna's death marked the beginning of the second phase of the incorporation of Muslim troops within the Norman forces. Without Ibn al-Thumna, Norman leaders scrambled to forge new alliances with local Muslim leaders and to secure the personal loyalty of Muslim troops and commanders, with varying degrees of success. As the conquest of Sicily progressed, we see a marked shift towards the use of massed forces of Muslim military units in battle under Norman commanders. The first evidence of this deployment was the siege of Salerno in 1076; however, the Muslim troops did not form the bulk of the army until after Sicily was finally conquered in 1091. When Count Roger brought his forces to the mainland of Southern Italy throughout the 1090s, his Muslim troops numbered in the thousands and comprised the majority of his forces. These troops allowed the Sicilian ruler to project his power over the region. The religious faith of his Muslim soldiers made them an invaluable resource

for a leader who could find himself at odds with the papacy. An army of non-Christians could not be swayed by the ecclesiastical sanctions that the papacy deployed against other nobles in the latter half of the eleventh century. By the twelfth century, the Muslim troops were closely associated with the Sicilian counts and became symbolic representations of the Sicilian monarchy, both for the supporters of rulers of Sicily and for their opponents. We have no evidence that Latin contemporaries found the use of these “Saracen” soldiers to be particularly startling or controversial.

THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN SOURCES

Before examining the role Muslim soldiers played in the armies of Southern Italy, we must first discuss the sources that provide evidence of this military participation and how the authors of these sources understood and depicted Muslims. The bulk of the testimony comes not from Arabic or Greek writing but from Latin Christian accounts from Southern Italy; particularly the works of Amatus of Montecassino, Geoffrey of Malaterra and William of Apulia.⁸

Of the three authors’ texts, this chapter makes the most use of Geoffrey of Malaterra’s *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis et Roberti Guiscardi Ducis fratris eius* because of its detailed accounts both of campaigns taking place on the island of Sicily itself and of the involvement of Muslims in Norman military operations in the eleventh century.⁹ Geoffrey, a monk from north of the Alps, had traveled to Sicily and settled in the Latin monastery of Sant’Agata in Catania, which Roger I founded in 1091.¹⁰ This chronicle covers the events through 1098, requiring Malaterra to record the full scope of the Sicilian campaign and the eventual integration of vast numbers of Muslim soldiers into Norman armies. Malaterra records the departure of Bohemond, Count Roger’s nephew, on crusade¹¹ but includes neither the capture of Antioch in June of 1098 nor the conquest of Jerusalem in July of 1099, indicating that he probably completed the text before news of those victories reached Southern Italy.¹² Malaterra composed his history at the request of Count Roger himself and intended to record the glory of his patron’s accomplishments in Sicily and Southern Italy.¹³ The action in these texts occasionally diverges to cover the exploits of Count Roger’s brother and frequent comrade in arms, Robert Guiscard, but the bulk of the narrative focuses on Roger himself, making it the only source for many events of his campaigns across Sicily and the most detailed record of Muslim participation in Norman armies.

Amatus of Montecassino, a monk and former bishop,¹⁴ composed the second of these chronicles, *Historia Normannorum*,¹⁵ ostensibly to commemorate the death of Richard, Count of Aversa and Prince of Capua, in 1078. Amatus discusses the excommunication of Robert Guiscard, one of the primary heroes of his text, in March of that same year but does not mention his reconciliation with Gregory VII in July of 1080, indicating that he probably completed the work between these two dates.¹⁶ The text itself attempts to trace the whole history of the Normans in Southern Italy. It serves primarily as a panegyric for Richard of Capua and Robert Guiscard, and as a result, it frequently ignores events in Sicily in which Robert Guiscard did not directly participate.¹⁷

The third work, William of Apulia's *Gesta Robertu Wiscardi*, focuses almost entirely on Duke Robert Guiscard, concluding with the duke's funeral in 1085.¹⁸ William composed this epic poem between 1097 and 1099 and dedicated it to Robert's son, Roger Borsa.¹⁹ William probably composed the poem with the intent to legitimize Roger Borsa as his father's rightful successor and to defend his legitimacy from the ambitious would-be usurpers, most notably his rapacious half-brother, Bohemond.²⁰ We know next to nothing about the identity of William of Apulia, though he was certainly a member of Borsa's court, and probably of either Norman or Lombard descent.²¹ The *Gesta Robertu Wiscardi* provides detailed accounts of events in Apulia but offers inconsistently detailed information about events taking place in other areas of Southern Italy and Sicily, generally presenting only compressed narratives when Guiscard directly participated in campaigns on the island. In sum, reading these three chronicles against each other, as well as additional sources, allows for a reconstruction of the military campaigns across Sicily in the late eleventh century and offers remarkable insight on the ways in which a Latin literary class constructed an image of Sicilian Muslims at the end of the eleventh century.

In addition, another text, the *Historia Sicula a Normannis ad Petrum Aragonensem* by "Anonymus Vaticanus," records the eleventh-century conquest of Sicily.²² Most contemporary historians have either ignored this text entirely or dismissed it as a crude and derivative summary of Malaterra's work. However, recent scholarship by Charles Stanton demonstrates that, though Anonymus Vaticanus uses Malaterra's history as a template for his own work, the text is "no mere slavish summary of Geoffrey Malaterra" and adds information not contained within Malaterra's chronicle.²³ However, Anonymus Vaticanus composed the

Historia around 1147. Consequently, the text reflects the views of a mid-twelfth-century author, rather than the more contemporary views of the texts produced during the late eleventh century.²⁴ Though the text offers only scant detail concerning Muslims serving within the Norman armies, it substantiates Malaterra's account and confirms a narrative account that continued to circulate within the Sicilian court in the mid-twelfth century.

Pagans and Saracens: Depictions of Muslims

Before tracing the narrative of the conquest of Sicily and the integration of Muslims into Norman armies, we must talk in broad terms about the ways in which these three sources discuss both Muslims and the role of divine providence in facilitating the occupation of Sicily. The three authors differed markedly in the language they used to describe Muslims and in the way they explained Norman military success in Sicily. Amatus of Montecassino structured his chronicle to explain Norman domination as divine will made manifest. He stressed that the pious behavior of Norman leaders in Southern Italy made them worthy of receiving God's blessings.²⁵ Divine favor enabled Norman victories on the Italian peninsula, and this divine purpose becomes even clearer when they reach Sicily. Amatus extends this same language of religious domination in accordance with divine will to the conquest of the non-Christian population of the island. Unlike Amatus, William of Apulia does not stress the importance of divine will in explaining Norman campaigns on the Southern Italian mainland but shifts his tone to emphasize the importance of divine will in the conquest of the island of Sicily itself.²⁶ Through his depiction of the Sicilian campaign, William asserts that the Normans acted at the behest of God and the church fighting His enemies, and, as a result, God granted them victory against the Saracens of Sicily.²⁷ Malaterra shows distinct differences from the other two authors both in his attitude towards Muslims and his observations of the role of sectarian belief in the conquest of Sicily.

Malaterra invokes divine explanation for the military successes of his Norman patrons far less frequently than either of his contemporaries. In specific instances, he deploys the language of holy war, depicting Muslims as enemies of God and crediting divine favor in strengthening the Norman cause, most notably in his account of the battle of Cerami in 1063 and the capture of Syracuse in 1085.²⁸ While some historians have used Malaterra's account of Cerami to argue that Malaterra conceives the entire Norman

war effort as a holy war, it is important to recognize that the polemics that Malaterra deploys in his description of Cerami are almost entirely absent from the rest of his text.²⁹ Kenneth Baxter Wolf argues that Malaterra subordinates the religious elements of the text in favor of praising the Norman *aviditas dominationis* or “desire for domination.”³⁰ Religious rationalizations for their conquests supplement but rarely replace explanations based on their inborn qualities. The Normans battle everyone in their vicinity in an effort to extend their dominion; they are holy warriors only by happenstance. When they happen to fight against Muslims, Malaterra deploys the language of holy war because in this case they are expanding the boundaries of Christendom.

All three authors use a shared vocabulary of genealogical (“Saracen,” “Hagarenes”), religious (“pagan,” “Saracen,” “infidel”) and geographic (“Sicilian,” “Arab,” “African,” “Persian,” etc.) descriptors to label Muslims, but each author portrays Muslims in a radically different manner, with both William and Amatus exhibiting a tendency to obfuscate and ignore Muslim participation in Count Roger’s armies. William of Apulia’s focus on the Southern Italian mainland and the chronological end point of his narrative in the mid-1080s allow him to avoid a discussion of the large levies of Muslim soldiers which would play a central role in maintaining the territories of his patron, Roger Borsa, in the 1090s. William paints Saracens in diabolic terms and, even when using religiously neutral geographic terms like “Sicilian” or “Saracen,” erects an impenetrable boundary between Christian and non-Christian, erasing the possibility of movement across the religious divide. William asserts that “[Roger] always fought against the Sicilians (*Siculos*), enemies of the Divine Name.”³¹ He remains silent on the subject of alliances between Norman and Saracen leaders, never acknowledges the existence of Saracen soldiers within the ranks of Norman armies nor even attempts to identify individual Saracens by name. Saracens may be capable warriors, but they are an “evil people” (*perversae gentis*) with an explicitly diabolic character.³² He describes a mosque in Palermo that “had been the home of Muḥammad along with the devil” (*Machamati fuerat cum daemone sedes*)³³ and recounts an alleged speech by Guiscard in which he claims that “[Palermo] is hostile to God, ignorant of divine worship, and ruled by demons” (*Urbs inimica Deo, divini nescia cultus, subdita daemonibus*).³⁴ William ignores the complexity of Muslim troops serving under Christian commanders and instead offers a world of binary contrasts in which Saracens are the diabolic enemies of valiant Christian warriors.

While Amatus does not label Saracens as demons, he invokes polemically charged language when describing Saracens, particularly when he describes their conflicts with Christians.³⁵ He uses the terms “pagan” and “infidel” far more frequently than Malaterra or William, in keeping with his focus on divine will as the reason for Norman military success. While Amatus depicts Saracens as sinful, unlike William, he never explicitly associates them with diabolic forces and restricts his fiercest critiques to moments of conflict.³⁶ Amatus’ emphasis on the actions of Robert rather than those of Roger results in only a handful of instances depicting alliances between Christians and Muslims. On those occasions, however, he uses vastly different terms to describe Saracens within Norman armies. He never uses pejorative language to describe Ibn al-Thumna or other Muslims allied with the Norman warlords, even distinguishing in one instance between the “Saracens” of Reggio who joined Robert “against the pagans of Sicily.”³⁷ This precise distinction between the negative “pagan” and the neutral “Saracen” does not run through the whole of the text, and on other occasions Amatus seems more interested in varying his vocabulary to avoid repetition than adhering to a specific usage, deploying terms like “pagan” and “Saracen” interchangeably.³⁸

Malaterra offers the most complex and nuanced of the three portrayals of Saracens out of necessity. He centers his narrative on his patron, Roger, including Roger’s numerous alliances with Saracens, his partnership with Ibn al-Thumna, the service of Saracen soldiers in his armies and his treaties with Zīrid ruler Tamīm. This focus made consistent use of polemical attacks inappropriate. Malaterra was the only one of these three authors who resided within Sicily, and his monastery claimed dominion over almost 1000 Muslim villeins.³⁹ This contact may have influenced his portrayal of Saracens in the *Historia Normannorum*. Some recent scholarship overemphasizes Malaterra’s hostility towards Muslims. Nick Webber writes that “Geoffrey ... portrays the Lombard Greek and Muslims in the most derogatory way, in contrast to William’s [of Apulia] subtle superiority.”⁴⁰ However, a close examination of the text reveals that Malaterra rarely uses the pejorative religious language that dominates the other two texts.⁴¹ For instance, Malaterra uses the term *paganus* both sparingly and deliberately, deploying the term on only three occasions; he uses it to describe Roger’s opponents at the Battle of Cerami in 1063,⁴² to describe Benthumen in his account of the betrayal of Catania⁴³ and to describe the foes that Bohemond and the other Southern Italians will face when they depart for the First Crusade.⁴⁴ He also uses a handful of other reli-

gious invectives, describing Muslims as a “*gens Deo ingrata*”⁴⁵ or a “*gens Deo Rebellis*.”⁴⁶ More neutral terms like “Saracen” or regional identifications such as “African,” “Arab,” “Sicilian” or “Messinenses” populate the bulk of Malaterra’s text.⁴⁷ Malaterra frequently ascribes positive traits to Saracens, particularly those in Roger’s circle. He offers numerous examples of Saracens taking and honoring oaths in accordance with their own law. Once Saracens entered into political agreement with Roger, Malaterra’s religious animosity recedes, though it never entirely disappears. He relates an episode in 1092 when Roger’s son Jordan, who served as governor of Syracuse, died: “The whole city was wracked with so great a tearful wailing that it brought even the Saracens, enemies to our race, to tears, not out of love, but from sympathy when they witness the suffering of our people.”⁴⁸ Even after the Normans had conquered all of Sicily, Malaterra never saw the Muslims as a fully integrated population. The “Saracens” remained enemies of the Norman race, and despite the appearance of grief, were ultimately incapable of real “love” for Norman leaders. But, despite their alienation, Malaterra ultimately depicts Muslims as potentially loyal subjects and soldiers of the Norman count.

IBN AL-THUMNA – ALLIANCE WITH THE AMIR

Sicily in the Mid-Eleventh Century

The integration of Muslim soldiers into Norman-led armies of Southern Italy developed as a result of a formal alliance between Roger Hauteville, the man who would become Count Roger I, and the deposed Amir of Catania, Ibn al-Thumna.⁴⁹ Understanding the emergence of the relationship between these two men requires some explanation of political events in the two decades that preceded their invasion of the island. By the 1040s, political unity in Sicily had shattered in the wake of war and internal dissent; the Byzantine Emperor, Michael IV, ordered his commander, George Maniákēs, to retake the island in 1038. Maniákēs assembled a vast army of both Greeks and Lombards as well as smaller contingents of Scandinavian and Norman warriors, including William “Iron Arm,” Drago, and Humphrey Hauteville, the half-brothers of Robert Guiscard and Roger.⁵⁰ Maniákēs succeeded in conquering both Messina and Syracuse, as well as roughly a dozen other towns in eastern Sicily, and defeated a relief army from Zīrid Ifrīqiya under the command of ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Muzz ibn Bādīs. However, by 1041, the Byzantine campaign had stalled.

After squabbles over the division of booty, Norman and Scandinavian forces abandoned the army. An internal dispute between Maniákes and Stephen Pediadites, commander of the Byzantine fleet and brother-in-law to Emperor Michael IV, resulted in imperial orders that relieved Maniákes of his command and sent the general back to Constantinople in chains. The Byzantine forces, hard pressed by revolt and Norman attacks in mainland Southern Italy, quickly lost control of all of the territory Maniákes had gained.

The political narrative within Sicily becomes exceptionally murky in the 1040s and 1050s, and Arabic chronicles detail a fragmentation of political authority across the island that mirrored that of the *ṭāʿifa* amirates that emerged in eleventh-century Iberia.⁵¹ Infighting also broke out between the Zīrid army of ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Muzz ibn Bādīs and the civic leaders in Palermo, possibly over concerns that the Zīrids planned to take control of the island. Ibn al-Athīr reports that the battle killed some 300 Zīrid soldiers, which caused ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Muzz ibn Bādīs to return to Ifrīqiya.⁵² Without any centralized leadership, various local military commanders assumed direct control of portions of the island.⁵³ Abū al-Futūḥ ibn al-Maklāṭī governed the eastern portion of the island from his power base in Catania. Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Thumna governed Syracuse. Abū Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Mankūd controlled Trapani, Marsala, Mazara, and the west. ‘Alī ibn Ni’ma ibn al-Ḥawwās,⁵⁴ the strongest of these rulers, controlled the island’s center, including Agrigento, Enna, Castronovo and Castrogiovanni. The island’s great city, Palermo, remained under the guidance of an independent civic council.⁵⁵

The political situation further destabilized in 1053 when Ibn al-Thumna sought to extend his dominion over all of the island, sparking the outbreak of an active civil war between these military commanders. Initially, Ibn al-Thumna led forces from Syracuse into Catania, conquering and killing Ibn al-Maklāṭī. In an effort to consolidate his control over the region, Ibn al-Thumna married Ibn al-Maklāṭī’s widow, Maymūna, who was also the sister of Ibn al-Ḥawwās. Ibn al-Thumna extended his domain westward, defeating Ibn Mankūd and extending control over his rival’s territories. Ibn al-Thumna may have hoped that his marriage to Maymūna would help cement an alliance with Ibn al-Ḥawwās, but the two amirs soon found themselves in open conflict as they both tried to extend their control over the island.⁵⁶ At Castrogiovanni, Ibn al-Ḥawwās routed Ibn al-Thumna, vanquishing his armies and seizing control of all of his rival’s possessions in Sicily. Ibn al-Thumna, soundly defeated and desper-

ate for military support, fled Sicily and crossed over to Reggio in February of 1061 in hopes of enlisting the aid of Norman warriors to reestablish his position in Sicily.⁵⁷ Ibn al-Thumna met with Roger and, according to the Latin sources, promised to serve him faithfully and to help deliver the island, if Roger would place him back in power in Catania.⁵⁸ The Arabic sources suggest that this meeting served as the impetus for the Norman invasion of the island, though they deny that Roger made any agreements to restore Ibn al-Thumna to power.⁵⁹

The “Norman” Invasion

Roger, together with his brother Robert, had clearly contemplated invading Sicily before his partnership with Ibn al-Thumna. In 1059, Robert Guiscard had sworn an oath of vassalage to the papacy as “Robert, by the Grace of God and St. Peter Duke of Apulia and Calabria, and, in the future, with the help of both of them, Duke of Sicily,” anticipating his conquest of the isle.⁶⁰ At the end of 1060, Roger traveled across the straits, along with 60 knights, and raided the area around Messina.⁶¹ Roger emerged triumphant from a skirmish with the local garrison and returned home rich with booty as well as information vital for conducting future military operations. Malaterra stresses that in the winter of 1060, Robert bestowed gifts to warlords in Apulia so that they would prepare to campaign in Sicily in the summer of 1061. Amatus reports that “both Christians and Saracens who lived [in Reggio] armed themselves against the pagans of Sicily.”⁶² Amatus suggests that Norman commanders may have already begun to integrate Muslim soldiers into their forces before Ibn al-Thumna’s arrival but provides no other information on these soldiers, nor do any other chronicles corroborate his account.⁶³ He makes a clear choice to invoke a genealogical term, “Saracen,” to define the Muslims who aided the Normans and to use a religious term, “pagan,” to describe the Muslims who opposed them.

Ibn al-Thumna arrived in Calabria in early 1061, just as Robert and Roger were planning a more elaborate expedition into Sicily for the coming year. Malaterra shows no signs of religious hostility towards Ibn al-Thumna, stressing that Roger treated him honorably and that Ibn al-Thumna quickly became a valuable military asset, serving as a guide because of his intimate familiarity with the geography of Sicily.⁶⁴ In March of 1061, Roger and 160 of his knights set out, led by his new ally, Ibn al-Thumna.⁶⁵ They plundered the areas near Milazzo and Rometta and

inflicted yet another defeat on the garrison of Messina, which had taken to the field to stop the Norman invaders. Laden with plunder, Roger's forces fled back to the mainland before Ibn al-Ḥawwās could muster an army to challenge them in the field.

In May of 1061, Roger again set off to Sicily, this time with the help of his brother, Duke Robert. Their plan was not simply to raid but to occupy the island. The brothers marshaled a larger force than that of either earlier raid. Amatus states they marched with 1000 cavalry and another 1000 footmen from their territories in Southern Italy. Transporting these men and horses across the Strait of Messina became an immediate problem.⁶⁶ In response to the raid earlier in the year, Ibn al-Ḥawwās had assembled a fleet to prevent the crossing, and the Norman warriors, who had smaller ships and little experience in naval warfare, shied away from such an engagement.⁶⁷ Roger launched a nighttime sortie in which a small number of boats carried 300 knights and navigated the strait. They evaded Ibn al-Ḥawwās' fleet and then overwhelmed the garrison at Messina. Deprived of its port, the fleet of Ibn al-Ḥawwās fell back to Palermo, allowing the Norman army to launch attacks throughout the Val Demone, the northeastern section of Sicily. The Norman army moved west along Sicily's north coast, accepting the surrender of communities in Rometta, Tripi and Frazzano before cutting south and marching along the western edge of Mount Etna and into the plains of Catania. Robert and Roger followed a path similar to that which their half-brothers had taken 20 years before in Maniākes' campaign in Sicily. Amatus stresses that at this stage of the campaign Ibn al-Thumna served as "guide for the Duke and the whole army."⁶⁸ The Norman army then headed west, perhaps at the behest of Ibn al-Thumna, to challenge Ibn al-Ḥawwās, who had mustered a force to take the field against the Normans east of his base in Castrogiovanni, on the banks of the Dittaino. The results were disastrous; the Normans routed his troops and forced the amir to fall back to Castrogiovanni. Norman forces lacked the military resources to capture the fortified mountain town, so they spent the next month raiding the surrounding area, venturing as far west as Agrigento, before falling back to consolidate their holdings in the Val Demone.⁶⁹

What was the nature of Ibn al-Thumna's participation and what role did Muslims play in the Norman armies in the 1061 campaign? Malaterra refers to "the Saracen [Ibn al-Thumna]" who "previously had fled to the Count at Reggio and now accompanied them as their faithful companion and guide" (*fidus comes et doctor*).⁷⁰ Amatus also confirms that Ibn

al-Thumna was granted a position of leadership under the Normans. By this point in the campaign, Ibn al-Thumna was not operating alone but directed a number of scouts. Their knowledge of the land and the position of the enemy made these scouts an invaluable asset, particularly when the Norman soldiers reached the limits of the ground that the campaign of Maniákēs covered two decades earlier. While Malaterra never specifies the religious identity of Ibn al-Thumna's scouts, their ability to report safely on the position of Muslim military units and their loyalty to the former amir suggest that these troops were also Muslims.⁷¹ Our Latin sources say nothing about whether or not Ibn al-Thumna or his men actually fought in battle, but it seems likely that they offered direct military aid. Certainly, Malaterra's use of the term *comes* suggests a martial role for Ibn al-Thumna, but he provides no evidence of the large contingents of Muslim soldiers that would become a central part of the Norman war machines over the next three decades. Ibn al-Thumna does not seem to have provided any large-scale reinforcements from the Sicilian population; Malaterra reports that Guiscard had only 700 men with him at Castrogiovanni, which, accounting for attrition and garrisoning captured towns, seems roughly to be the number of soldiers in Guiscard's initial army.⁷²

While Greek Christians, who initially supported Norman efforts to capture the region, made up the majority of the population of the Val Demone, the 1061 campaign placed a substantial number of Muslim communities under Roger's rule. When the army approached Rometta, Malaterra tells us that the inhabitants "sent envoys who asked for peace, surrendering themselves, handing over the city to [Robert and Roger's] dominion, taking oaths of fidelity on their books of superstitious laws."⁷³ Amatus confirms the surrender, stressing that the *Qā'id* of Rometta prostrated himself before Roger out of fear of Guiscard.⁷⁴ The Norman armies made no effort to either convert or annihilate the non-Christian population of the city; the small number of soldiers would have made such actions logistically infeasible. Instead, he sought to bind Muslim civic leaders, and through them the committee as a whole, to them through oaths of service. The Norman commanders may not have understood Islam, but, perhaps at the advice of their Muslim allies, they recognized the value of using the Qur'ān to help secure the loyalty of the newly conquered population. Malaterra provides no details on the nature of the oath of fealty, but this and other similar oaths may have led Muslim soldiers to join the ranks of Norman armies in the decades to come.

At the conclusion of the 1061 campaign, Robert and Roger reinstalled Ibn al-Thumna as ruler of Catania, for “this was rightfully his,”⁷⁵ according to Malaterra. The chronicle accounts make no mention of any attempts to garrison Catania with Norman forces, and defensive measures seem to have been left in the hands of Ibn al-Thumna, who presumably could still marshal supporters from the native population of the city. Ibn al-Thumna’s strategic alliance with the Normans successfully restored him to power in Catania and allowed him to renew aggression against his brother-in-law, Ibn al-Ḥawwās.

The partnership with Ibn al-Thumna did not simply facilitate the conquest but was essential to Norman efforts to enter into negotiations with Muslim leaders of Sicilian cities. According to Malaterra, the importance of Ibn al-Thumna was reinforced when Count Roger returned to Sicily in early 1062. He sent messengers to Catania to summon Ibn al-Thumna to join him in a campaign against the city of Petralia.⁷⁶ Roger did not attack the city but negotiated its surrender after a series of discussions with its Muslim and Christian inhabitants. Given Malaterra’s report of the specific summons issued to Ibn al-Thumna, it seems likely that either the Muslim amir or those in his service acted as negotiators for the count, reaching a settlement with the city. Again, there is no suggestion that Roger made use of the local personnel for his military operations; he garrisoned Petralia with his own soldiers, moving on to occupy Troina, before returning to the mainland. When he departed Sicily, Malaterra tells us that Roger charged Ibn al-Thumna to “harass the Sicilians and to act to [the count’s] advantage.”⁷⁷ Ibn al-Thumna was an ambitious political leader who pursued his own agenda while cooperating with Roger because it advanced his own interests, not as an extension of Norman polity. However, Malaterra describes Ibn al-Thumna as a trusted lieutenant of Roger’s, who had been advisor, scout, spy, governor and diplomat for the count, and, having earned the count’s trust, served as military commander pursuing Roger’s interests in Sicily in the count’s absence.

Ibn al-Thumna’s Death

Ibn al-Thumna’s murder by leaders of Entella in 1062 underscores the central role he played in the Norman war effort.⁷⁸ Without him, Norman dominance over their newly conquered territories began to unravel. After Roger’s departure from Sicily, Ibn al-Thumna attempted to recruit other Sicilian Muslims to join the Norman cause.

Ibn al-Thumna went through Sicily, just as he had been asked by the Count, he sought whomever he could to bring into alliance with our people. He did not cease raiding those he was unable to persuade. While he battled towards the fortress of Entella, which was once his, a certain Nichel,⁷⁹ a mighty lord who had once been Ibn al-Thumna's knight in this castle, deceitfully sent him peaceful words, speaking as if the people of Entella wanted to reconcile with him, in order that, with a few of his men, he would come to a distant place having been determined. He did not suspect deceit, because, back when their relations with him had been good, they had received many benefits from him, so he did not hesitate to go to the place in the manner that he had been asked. And so, the people of Entella acted in accord with a plan formed in the venomous heart of their leader Nichel. They pierced Ibn al-Thumna's horse with a javelin, since, if Ibn al-Thumna were given the first wound, with the scheme having been interrupted, a healthy horse might flee with the wounded rider. Thus, thrown off by the horse, they ran him through on the ground, they made him breathe the last breath of his life with blood.⁸⁰

Ibn al-Thumna's death meant not only the loss of Roger's surrogate on the island but an end to any assistance from the Islamic population of Sicily. Only "the protection of [Ibn al-Thumna's] name" (*eius enim nomine praesidia*) provided safety to the newly formed garrisons in Troina and Petralia. Without the reputation of the amir to ensure their safety, these holdings in the interior of the island became vulnerable, and the troops abandoned their posts, falling back to the more secure Norman position in Messina. This withdrawal strengthens the argument that it was Ibn al-Thumna who negotiated the diplomatic settlement at Petralia in the previous year and that those agreements collapsed in the wake of his death.

Ibn al-Thumna's death was not the only factor that stalled the Norman war effort. In 1062, a fierce disagreement between Robert Guiscard and Roger over the division of territories in Calabria led to military conflict between the two brothers. Even after they reconciled, Guiscard focused his military assets on campaigns in Apulia through most of the 1060s.⁸¹ Without his brother's aid, Roger could only sustain a force of 250–300 knights on the island.⁸² Limited military assets forced Roger to focus on consolidating the territory he had conquered in his first year of campaigning rather than expanding his holdings. However, the Greek Christian population that had supported Roger in his initial campaign proved less tractable upon his return. When Roger attempted to reestablish a military base at Troina in 1063, the Greek Christian population rebelled against

his rule and allied with local Muslims, forcing Roger to battle for months to reclaim the city.⁸³

In addition, Zīrid forces from Ifrīqiya began to arrive on the island to contest Norman territorial gains and frequently came into conflict with the Muslim population of Sicily. The Zīrid ruler, Tamīm bin al-Mu‘izz bin Bādīs, sent armies under the command of two of his sons in an attempt to stem the Norman advances and seize control of Western Sicily.⁸⁴ One son, Ayyūb, commanded an army that took control of the city of Palermo in 1063, while another, Alī, gained possession of Agrigento and the surrounding areas. Alī’s conquest of Agrigento put him in conflict with local amirs in Sicily. Sometime before 1068, Ibn al-Ḥawwas attempted to drive Alī’s forces out of Agrigento but died from Zīrid arrows during the battle. The combination of the death of Ibn al-Thumna, Roger’s most valuable ally on the island, and the arrival of Zīrid forces threatened to reverse the gains Roger had made in Sicily in the previous two years.

Cerami and the Ecumenical Framework

As the campaign season of 1063 began, the loss of Muslim aid and Greek support, coupled with the arrival of Zīrid relief forces, threatened to unravel all of the gains that the Norman forces had made on the island. Roger continued to raid near Castrogiovanni and later as far south as Butera before a joint army of Sicilian and African forces moved to engage the Norman troops. The two armies eventually fought at the Cerami River near Troina, with the Norman forces emerging triumphant and securing the gains that the Norman coalition had made in the Val Demone two years earlier.⁸⁵

Malaterra’s description of the battle is noteworthy in its wholehearted embrace of the language of religious warfare, in stark contrast to the more measured tone of the rest of the text.⁸⁶ Malaterra emphasizes the religious preparations of the army before the battle: “with great devotion and in the presence of priests, they confessed to God and accepted penance. Entrusting themselves to God’s pity and assured of His aid, they rushed forth to bring war to the enemy.” He does not explain the victory as being a result of Norman military prowess but rather as being from the presence of divine aid made manifest by the direct intervention of St. George, whose apparent manifestation led the Norman army into battle, an image that prefigures similar divine aid which participants in the First Crusade would famously report receiving in their clash with the forces of Kerbogha outside the walls of Antioch in 1097.⁸⁷ After the battle, Malaterra stresses

that Roger credits both God and St. Peter for the victory, sending back four camels to Pope Alexander in thanks for the victory. Malaterra also invokes the language of religious position in describing the count's opponents. The battle of Cerami is one of three occasions where he describes Saracens as "pagans" and the only instance when he uses that term to describe a group of Saracens within Sicily.

Despite the rhetoric of religious war that Malaterra deploys in describing the victory at Cerami, the events of the next year serve as a caution against conceiving the conquest of Sicily in terms of binary religious opposition. Pisan sailors, eager to capitalize on the victory at Cerami, sent a missive to Count Roger asking for Norman forces to join them in an attack on Palermo.⁸⁸ Malaterra insists that too many other matters occupied Roger and that he refused to accompany the Pisans and asked them to delay their attack. Despite the lack of support from Norman ground forces, the Pisans launched a naval attack; they failed to capture the city but cut the chain that secured the harbor and captured several ships before returning to the mainland.⁸⁹ Though Malaterra maintains that the Pisans wanted vengeance and asked for nothing in return for their aid, the two Christian armies never consummated their alliance because of a disagreement about the division of spoils.⁹⁰ Roger had another reason to delay. Even with the help of Guiscard, he lacked sufficient manpower to claim the city. Roger hoped to divide a conquered Palermo with his brother and had no desire to acquiesce to Pisan demands for economic concessions and territorial holdings within the city. In 1064, only a few months after spurning the Pisans, Guiscard returned to Sicily with 500 knights. The two brothers sought to take Palermo without Pisan support. They laid siege to the city for three months but lacked the naval resources to close off the ports and abandoned the siege because Palermo was continually resupplied from the sea.⁹¹ The inability of the two predatory Christian war bands to enter into an alliance ensured that Palermo remained in Muslim hands for another eight years.

REPLACING IBN AL-THUMNA: THE SEARCH FOR NEW ALLIES

The Conquest of Palermo

We have little evidence for specifics of the Sicilian campaign in the mid-1060s.⁹² Norman forces exerted a firm control over the Val Demone and launched regular raids throughout the rest of the island, but they lacked

the manpower to conquer heavily fortified positions during this period. However, the stalemate shifted in 1068, during a raid near Palermo, when forces from the city attempted a counterattack and engaged Roger's army at Misilmeri, about nine miles southeast of Palermo. The results were disastrous for the defenders of Palermo. Malaterra reports that Roger massacred the army and famously released its carrier pigeons holding parchments soaked in the blood of slain Muslims to proclaim his victory to the inhabitants of Palermo.⁹³ Ibn al-Athīr claims that fighting broke out between the Muslim population of Palermo and the Zīrid forces that had occupied the city five years previously, causing Ayyūb and Alī to gather their armies and return to North Africa.⁹⁴ We do not know whether the news of the battle at Misilmeri sparked this unrest or if Ibn al-Athīr used the excuse of civic strife to explain a Zīrid retreat in the wake of the defeat. But, with the staunchest opponents either dead or having fled the island, Palermo lay vulnerable to attack by a concentrated effort from Norman forces.

After completing the conquest of Byzantine Apulia with the capture of Bari and Brindisi in 1071, Roger and Robert turned their attention back towards Sicily and the conquest of Palermo. First, Roger's forces moved to recapture Catania, a city whose loyalty had been lost after Ibn al-Thumna's death.⁹⁵ The need to reestablish control of Catania reinforces the notion that the Muslim subjects of Ibn al-Thumna had been bound by personal loyalty to their commander, and this fealty was not transferred to his Norman allies. When assassins struck down Ibn al-Thumna, they also severed all Norman control over the city. After a siege of four days, the city surrendered. With Catania under his control, Robert prepared to move on to Palermo.

The conquest of Palermo illustrates the formal treaties which the Norman rulers negotiated with the Muslim subjects that led to both the incorporation of Sicilian Muslims into Norman armies and the emergence of Sicilian Muslims as a valuable source of tax revenue. The second siege of Palermo began with fierce naval battles in August of 1071. Norman forces carried the day and, this time, blockaded the city from the sea while Norman armies encircled the walls. After five months, the combined forces of Count Roger and Duke Robert stormed the walls of the city.⁹⁶ The inhabitants of the city withdrew into the al-Qaṣr, the ancient walled city, but they surrendered to the Norman invaders on the following day. Malaterra details the terms of their surrender, noting that "by no means would their laws be violated or relinquished. Of course, provided they

were certain that they would not be compelled, and that they would not be impaired by unjust or new laws, since present fortune urged them, they would bring about the surrender of the city, and be faithful servants to [Robert and Roger], paying back tribute. They promised to declare this by an oath in accordance with their own law.”⁹⁷ William of Apulia also notes the creation of a formal relationship between the Norman warlords and their Muslim subjects: “[Guiscard] promised [the Palermitans] his goodwill along with their lives. No one was made an exception to this, and heeding his promise of loyalty, he offended no one, even though they were heathens (*gentiles*). He evaluated all his subjects impartially.”⁹⁸ As with the surrender of Rometta a decade earlier, the exact details of the service that these oaths required of the inhabitants are unknown but probably included some level of military participation in addition to the tax payments discussed in detail in Chap. 3. If that is the case, it was the conquest of Palermo and the surrounding townships that laid the groundwork for the participation of Muslim soldiers in Guiscard’s military units at the siege of Salerno in 1076, the first time we have records of Norman forces deploying mass levies of Muslim soldiers.

Malaterra provides additional hints of oaths of service throughout his narrative. In 1078 Roger faced a revolt from the inhabitants of Jato, 15 miles south west of Palermo. The community of some 13,000 Muslim families was unhappy with the taxes levied upon them and the service they were forced to render to Roger.⁹⁹ Malaterra never specifies the nature of this service, but given the Muslim presence at the siege of Salerno two years earlier it almost certainly involved a military component, and discontent over this service probably exacerbated hostility towards Norman rule and helped fuel the 1078 revolt. The specific circumstances of each of these agreements differed from community to community, but a general pattern emerges from Malaterra’s text in which Muslims entered into formal agreements that provided regular tribute and service in exchange for protection and guarantees of specific rights and privileges.¹⁰⁰

Conversion and Betrayal

Shortly after the fall of Palermo, Roger’s subordinates attempted to forge a new alliance with a nearby Muslim warlord, Ibrahim, perhaps hoping for the kind of information and logistical support that the Normans had received from Ibn al-Thumna.¹⁰¹ Roger divided half of his holdings on the island¹⁰² between his two chief lieutenants, his nephew Serlo and Arisgot

of Pucheil. Both commanders strove to outpace one another in expanding their own holdings.¹⁰³ In an effort to hasten his conquests, Serlo allied with a Muslim named Ibrahim and the two men adopted each other as brothers. Ibrahim established his loyalty to Serlo both by granting him numerous gifts and by providing intelligence concerning several Muslim raiders making incursions into his territory. Serlo, too quick to trust the information that Ibrahim offered, marched his forces out in an attempt to intercept and eliminate this small party, only to be ambushed and eventually killed by a far larger force under Ibrahim's direction. Clearly, after Ibn al-Thumna's death, the Norman forces were eager to form fresh alliances with Muslim commanders, particularly younger commanders like Serlo who saw such alliances as opportunities to surpass the deeds of his peers. For their part, Muslim commanders like Ibrahim were well aware of the Norman desire to enter into partnerships with Muslims commanders and were able to exploit this for their own military advantage.

Roger remained more cautious in forming his alliances with Muslim leaders than his nephew, seeking out divisions within Muslim communities which he could turn to his advantage. In 1078, Roger was able to seize Castronovo through exploiting internal tensions and recruiting a disaffected member of the community. A baker who had suffered beatings and insults at the hands of the Muslim governor of Castronovo took revenge against the governor by seizing a strategic location within the *castrum* and then handing it over to Count Roger. Malaterra leaves the religious identity of the baker unspecified. He was either a Greek Christian or a Muslim. Roger "granted the miller his freedom and furnished him with all sorts of rewards, to provide a good example for others who might attempt similar schemes."¹⁰⁴ Certainly, the Normans were eager to enter into alliances with individuals of strategic import and to exploit divisions within Muslim communities for their own military advantage.

The siege of Jato in 1079 provides some of our clearest evidence of Muslim military participation in Norman armies operating within Sicily itself, and Roger's success in cultivating Muslim lieutenants within his forces. Jato was well fortified, and Roger, facing yet another revolt in Calabria, was forced to return to the mainland before he could bring the rebellious community to heel. He left command of the siege to a group of unnamed Sicilian knights in his service: "Sending around *Sicilienses milites* (Sicilian Knights) from Partinico and Corleone, to whom he had previously given possession of areas of the island which he had subjugated, he ordered them to make raids against the people of Jato."¹⁰⁵

These “*Sicilienses milites*” were Muslim soldiers, not simply Christians invested with Sicilian lands. In the introduction to his text, Malaterra identifies himself as “more recently *Siculum*” (a Sicilian),¹⁰⁶ suggesting that a Sicilian could refer to Christian immigrants on the island. Similarly, Malaterra repeatedly describes Roger as “*Siculorum comitis*” (Count of the Sicilians).¹⁰⁷ However, in both cases, Malaterra uses the classical term *Siculos* to express the idea of Sicilian, a word which Malaterra uses to describe both Christians and Muslims throughout his text. The soldiers at Jato are described not as *Siculi* but as *Sicilienses*, a word that Malaterra uses exclusively and unambiguously to refer to Muslim inhabitants of Sicily throughout his text.¹⁰⁸ This is the only occasion where Malaterra uses the word to apply to any of Roger’s allies, and it demonstrates that by the end of the 1070s, Roger had not just Muslim forces in his army but Muslim military commanders to whom he could entrust leadership when he returned to the Southern Italian mainland.

Elias and the Betrayal of Catania

The struggle for control of Catania in the early 1080s resulted in the murder of several of Roger’s prominent Muslim allies, demonstrating the potential pitfalls of crossing the permeable boundaries of allegiance in late twelfth-century Sicily. Having lost the city after Ibn al-Thumna’s death, Roger reestablished control of it in 1071. The Count placed Catania in the hands of his son-in-law, Hugh de Gercé. Hugh died four years later as a result of a Muslim ambush in 1075 and Roger appointed a man named Benthumen in his place.¹⁰⁹ Although he is known only by the Latin transliteration of his name, the name suggests that he was a Muslim and part of the family of Ibn al-Thumna.¹¹⁰ However, Benthumen betrayed Roger, handing Catania over to his Muslim opponent Ibn al-Werd.¹¹¹

This shift in allegiance proved a disaster for Benthumen. Norman armies under the command of Roger’s illegitimate son, Jordan, reclaimed Catania and routed the Muslims who had occupied the city. Benthumen fled with the defeated Muslims and returned to the city of Syracuse, where he sought remuneration for the aid he had given to Ibn al-Werd. However, the amir saw no reason to reward Benthumen. Not only had he failed to maintain control of the city but he was also a traitor; his loyalties had proven suspect. The Amir of Syracuse had Benthumen beheaded, lest he betray Syracuse as he did Catania. Although shifting political allegiances could be exploited for personal gain, vacillating from one side to the other was an inherently risky venture. Men who had worked against those who

shared their religious conviction, as Benthumen had done in taking up service as Roger's governor in Catania, seldom found their way back into the good graces of their former coreligionists.

Roger, however, was able to retain the loyalty of at least some of his Muslim military leaders. Serving at Jordan's side in the campaign against Ibn al-Werd was Elias Cartomensis, a former Muslim who had converted to Christianity. Malaterra first identified him in poetic verse,¹¹² claiming that he was involved in advanced scouting for Roger's forces. Elias is introduced as taking part in a scouting mission for Roger's forces, along with Roger's son Jordan, and his nephew, Arisgot. The fact that Malaterra parallels Elias with two of Roger's kinsmen indicates the high stature that Elias held within the Norman ranks.

We know little else about Elias, save for the fact that he played an important command role in the battles against Ibn al-Werd. The Muslims of Castrogiovanni later captured Elias, who was offered the choice of renouncing Christianity and returning to Islam, or death. He refused to apostatize, and the Muslims of Castrogiovanni executed him for his adherence to Christianity. Malaterra notes the case of Elias precisely because of its exceptional nature; we have no evidence of widespread conversion among Muslim soldiers during this period, and the fate of Elias suggests why.

The only converted Sicilian amir known to have survived alliance with Count Roger was Ḥammūd, the Amir of Castrogiovanni in the 1080s. He was one of the final obstacles to Roger's domination over the whole island.¹¹³ Castrogiovanni stood as a powerful bulwark against the Norman forces since their first serious forays into the island. Rather than attack the fortified town directly, in 1087, Roger attempted to gain leverage over Ḥammūd by capturing his wife and children who were in the city of Agrigento.¹¹⁴ Malaterra reports that Roger's forces captured the city after several months and that the count gave specific orders to ensure that his men did not rape Ḥammūd's wife since he hoped to persuade the amir to join his cause.¹¹⁵ Roger and Ḥammūd met to negotiate the return of the amir's family and Roger demanded that Ḥammūd surrender the city and convert to Christianity. Ḥammūd, surely aware of the seemingly inexorable push of the Norman forces across Sicily, agreed to betray Castrogiovanni, but he kept the agreement secret from his own soldiers for fear they would turn on him if they knew his plan.¹¹⁶ Ḥammūd later took his possessions, abandoned the city, entered into Roger's service and also converted to Christianity. The city surrendered to the count soon after Ḥammūd's

departure. Malaterra stresses that Ḥammūd requested that Roger grant him lands not in Sicily but near Mileto in Calabria because he feared living among Muslims after his betrayal and conversion. Ḥammūd clearly hoped to avoid the fate of other Muslim elite men like Ibn al-Thumna and Elias.

A comparison of Ḥammūd, the last of the Sicilian amirs to ally with Roger, with the first, Ibn al-Thumna, reveals important shifts in the strategic concerns of the Normans and the relative power of Latin Christian and Muslim elite over the nearly 30 years of the campaign. We have no indication Ibn al-Thumna ever considered conversion to Christianity, and he used his alliance with Norman warlords to reassert a position of leadership on the island and regain his former territory in Catania. In 1061, Ibn al-Thumna operated as a partner or perhaps chief lieutenant of Roger because he provided the intelligence that the Norman army desperately needed to conduct diplomacy across religious boundaries. Ibn al-Thumna allied with Roger from a position of strength, allowing the Normans to gain their first foothold on the island. In contrast, Ḥammūd began his negotiations with a losing hand. Roger already controlled most of the island and, after 20 years of campaigning across Sicily, no longer needed assistance navigating the social milieu or geography of the island. While Roger recognized the value of deploying an army of Muslims and made no attempts to convert his foot soldiers, his demand that Ḥammūd convert illustrates that Roger no longer saw value in forging alliances with Sicilian Muslim military commanders who retained their faith. Forcing Ḥammūd's conversion bound him inextricably to his new lord. Ḥammūd became completely dependent on the count for his own protection; he was forced to convert to enter Roger's service and to abandon his home to ensure his safety. Roger found Ḥammūd valuable because he could conduct a single act of tactically significant betrayal. Ḥammūd was able to gain some concessions from Roger, notably the grant of territory in Mileto and assurances that he could continue to stay married to his wife after his conversion, despite the fact that the couple was within a prohibited degree of consanguinity. In 1087, the service of a Muslim amir was still an asset that Roger valued, but the usefulness of Muslim military leaders had diminished drastically over the preceding two and a half decades.

Jordan's Rebellion

We have no evidence of Christian commanders enlisting with Muslim amirs during the course of Roger's conquest of the island. However, the idea of such a coalition was conceivable to eleventh-century Latin observ-

ers, as Malaterra discusses the possibility of such an alliance. In 1083, Jordan, the illegitimate adult son of Count Roger, was frustrated by the fact that his father had not named him as a successor or endowed him with extensive territorial holdings.¹¹⁷ In 1084, when his father departed for the mainland to join Guiscard as he mustered his soldiers to march against imperial forces at Rome, Jordan launched a rebellion.¹¹⁸ Jordan seized several fortifications before Roger returned to the island to suppress his revolt. Malaterra insists that Roger feared that an outward display of anger would frighten Jordan and cause his son to enter into alliance with one of his Muslim opponents. Consequently, Roger feigned forgiveness towards his prodigal son.¹¹⁹ There is no indication that Jordan ever contemplated such an agreement, but Malaterra's discussion of the possibility of the alliances shows an awareness that the fluid nature of military alliances within Sicily was more than capable of cutting in both directions. A disgruntled son like Jordan could cross the religious divide in order to secure personal power, just as Ibn al-Thumna had done in 1061.

Alliance with Muslim Rulers from Afar

Over the course of the Sicilian Campaign, Count Roger proved more than willing to negotiate and enter into alliances with Muslim leaders, even leaders who had staunchly opposed him like the Zīrid amirs of Ifrīqiya. When the Normans conquered Palermo, the Zīrid ruler Tamīm bin al-Mu'izz bin Bādīs shifted his strategy from defending Sicily to launching raids on Norman holdings in the Mediterranean. In 1074, Zīrid raiders sacked Nicotera, near Mileto, destroying fortifications and taking captives whom they either ransomed or enslaved.¹²⁰ The next year, another raiding party, which included Tamīm's nephew, attacked Mazara, sacking the city and laying siege to the castle there.¹²¹ Roger rushed to relieve the forces at Mazara, rescuing the garrison, defeating the Zīrid raiders and capturing Tamīm's nephew, an event that set the stage for Roger to ally with the Zīrids and led to the Sicilian rulers becoming deeply enmeshed in the politics of North Africa.¹²²

The capture of one of Tamīm's kinsmen may have provided an opportunity to establish diplomatic relationships between the Sicilian Normans and the North African Zīrids. Roger and Tamīm negotiated some sort of truce after the 1075 campaign, which fostered trade routes between Sicily and Tunis.¹²³ The rich farmlands of Sicily sent wheat to North Africa in exchange for gold and textiles and Roger had no interest in disrupting

those profitable economic conduits. An encounter in 1079 attests to the existence of a probable agreement between the two leaders. While laying siege to the city of Taormina, Robert's forces spotted 14 unfamiliar vessels off the coast, "patrolling the sea like pirates."¹²⁴ Malaterra reports that Roger sent a *latronem* (a bandit or mercenary) to ascertain the identity of the ship. Malaterra's choice of the word *latronem* suggests that this emissary was not formally associated with either the count or his enemies but was probably an armed man who sought to take advantage of the fractious political authority on the island. These discussions were carried out, presumably in Arabic, though we have no knowledge of whether this *latronem* was a Muslim or an Arabic-speaking Greek Christian. The use of a *latronem* hints that Roger still had a limited supply of trustworthy Arabic speakers and that the potential dangers of such a mission forced him to rely on unsavory characters to conduct negotiations.

The sailors swore that they had not plotted to attack Roger's holdings but instead had been sent by Tamīm to "chase pirates from the sea" and to enter into Roger's service, if necessary. Roger promised them food and supplies, but Malaterra reports that the winds carried the fleet far away from the island before any of these deals could be consummated. The original intention of these 14 ships, given the swift departure of the sailors and dubious explanation of their presence off the coast of Taormina, remains uncertain. However, the episode suggests that Roger and Tamīm had reached some tentative alliance, or at least truce, by 1079 and the activities of these would-be pirates reinforces the idea that military units could cross permeable political and religious divides in the Mediterranean region.

A joint Pisan and Genoese attack against the Zīrid capital of Mahdiyya in 1087 illustrates the formal nature of the alliance between the Zīrid amir and the Sicilian count. In response to repeated raids, Pope Victor III assembled a joint fleet from Pisa and Genoa to attack the Zīrids, end their maritime threat and liberate Christian captives which the Zīrids held.¹²⁵ The Pisan and Genoese fleet sacked the city but failed to capture its citadel. Malaterra explains that the fleet of the Italian maritime republics sent messengers to Sicily asking Roger to join the campaign and promising him control of the city if he could secure its capture.¹²⁶ Malaterra writes that Roger refused "because he had pledged an alliance to King Tamīm," while Ibn al-Athīr argues more convincingly that Roger acted not out of loyalty but for financial interests. He knew that joining the attack would put an end to the wealth generated by shipping Sicilian grain to North Africa.¹²⁷

Roger's refusal to involve Sicily in the campaign pushed both parties to negotiate a settlement in which the Italian forces withdrew from Zīrid territory and Tamīm released captured Christians and paid tribute to the maritime republics.

Roger's refusal to join an attack by his coreligionists against a neighboring Muslim principality illustrates the dangers of framing the conquest of Sicily primarily as a religious conflict. In circumstances similar to his refusal to join the Pisan attack against Palermo twenty-five years earlier, Roger pursued his own interests rather than advancing some larger Christian mission. Ibn al-Athīr would use this economic alliance to explain the First Crusade; he imagines a conversation in which Frankish lords assemble to plot an attack against North Africa, but are redirected towards Jerusalem because of Roger's desire to preserve his Tunisian grain markets.¹²⁸

MUSLIM TROOPS AND THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN MAINLAND

The oaths of service Roger demanded of the newly subjugated Muslim population led to the creation of Muslim units serving in the armies of their Norman overlords. Amatus first reports the use of Saracen troops in 1076, during the siege of Salerno.¹²⁹ Robert Guiscard mobilized the full extent of his army to lay siege to the city: "He assembled their troops of three manners: that is of Latins, of Greeks, and of Saracens."¹³⁰ Though some Muslims had been deployed earlier in the Sicilian campaigns, the capture of Salerno almost certainly represents the first use of these forces on the mainland. Amatus acknowledges the presence of substantial numbers of Saracen troops on the mainland, but other regional chronicles did not find the presence of Saracen soldiers worth mentioning.¹³¹ Their absence from these regional chroniclers reemphasizes the fact that far from being controversial, the presence of Muslim soldiers within Norman armies in the late eleventh century was not particularly noteworthy to Latin authors on the southern Italian mainland.

Despite the existence of a large number of Muslim soldiers within Roger's forces in 1076, if not earlier, the chronicle sources remain silent on the presence of such soldiers again for almost a decade, not until the siege of Rome in 1084. This campaign, detailed in a vast number of Latin texts, provides a unique opportunity to examine the depiction of the Norman armies of Southern Italy, not just from the prospective of a handful of sympathetic chroniclers, but from a wide range of Latin authors allied with the papal or imperial causes.

Saracens in the Holy City: The Sack of Rome

In 1082, while campaigning against Byzantine holdings in the Balkans, Robert Guiscard received an urgent plea from Pope Gregory VII calling on the duke to come to the aid of the papacy against Emperor Henry IV and the forces loyal to him within Italy.¹³² In addition, Guiscard learned of a revolt against him in Apulia, which required him to abandon his campaign and put down these rebels, after which he mustered a large army to relieve the besieged Pope Gregory.¹³³

Robert Guiscard assembled a vast force, probably one of the largest of his career. William of Apulia claims Guiscard's army included some 6000 knights and 30,000 infantry, a grossly exaggerated number.¹³⁴ Malaterra gives a far smaller number, around 4000, which is probably a more accurate count.¹³⁵ In order to assemble an army of this size, Guiscard called on his most powerful ally, his brother Count Roger, to marshal warriors from his territories and join Guiscard on this campaign. By the time Guiscard marched to the city in May of 1084, Henry IV had occupied much of Rome and forced Gregory to take refuge in his citadel, the Castle Sant'Angelo.¹³⁶ Henry's forces withdrew from the city rather than face Guiscard, who erected a camp on the east side of the city and prepared to assault Rome. Within several days, Guiscard's forces broke through the walls, rescued the besieged Pope Gregory and in the process, looted and burned a portion of the city of Rome.¹³⁷

Examining the role that Muslim soldiers may have played in the sack of Rome forces modern historians to confront the specter of textual silence. None of the Southern Italian chroniclers explicitly mention the presence of Muslims in this battle. Malaterra relates that Robert summoned Roger from Sicily but deploys a strategic silence which avoids conveying any information on the troops that the count brought with him, as does Anonymus Vaticanus. Amatus concluded his work well before these events, and William of Apulia, ever eager to credit Guiscard, avoids entirely mentioning his brother, much less the composition of Roger's forces. William's silence on the presence of Muslims within the Norman armies of Rome follows the larger pattern of his work, in which Muslims are seen only as enemies and the Muslims within Roger's armies are never acknowledged.

Landulf the Senior's *Historia Mediolanensis* is the only account that acknowledges the presence of Muslims within Guiscard's armies.¹³⁸ Despite the paucity of textual evidence, scholars accept the presence of

Muslims within Guiscard's armies at Rome.¹³⁹ But could Landulf have fabricated the inclusion of Muslim soldiers within the Norman forces? Answering that question requires us to examine Landulf's agenda in describing the siege and the specifics of how he discusses the Sicilian Muslims. Landulf, a fierce opponent of the Gregorian reform, used the siege of Rome and the behavior of Guiscard's forces to criticize the papacy. He stressed that Guiscard assembled a motley assortment of troops which combined "Saracen" soldiers with those from Apulia, Calabria and various cities under Norman control. These soldiers committed murders, crimes and, most notably for Landulf, rapes against the virgins of Rome, before retreating from the city. Landulf mentions the presence of Muslims only once and never specifies the behavior of Muslims over the course of the siege, instead focusing on atrocities committed by Guiscard's army in general. Landulf uses the crimes themselves to make his rhetorical attacks against Gregory and his supporters, rather than focusing on the presence of non-Christians among the Norman army. The fact that Landulf refrains from using "Saracens" to make an explicitly polemical attack against Gregory lends credibility to his account of the presence of Muslims at Rome. If Landulf had deliberately inserted "Saracens" into the battle they would have almost certainly played a more prominent role in his critique.

No text better illustrates the silence and absence of condemnation of Robert for using Muslim soldiers than Guido of Ferrara's *De Scismate Hildebrandi* (On the Schismatic Hildebrand), which uses the siege of Rome as an opportunity to condemn Gregory and his Norman allies. He focuses his criticism on the behavior of Guiscard's army, who burned most of the city, dragged women and non-combatants out of holy sanctuaries, killed many people and destroyed churches.¹⁴⁰ Guiscard and his army later attempt to do penance for their crimes, but their show of piety fails to convince the Romans, forcing Guiscard and Gregory to flee the city. Guido uses the incident to contrast the gross violence and violation of the Peace of God of the Normans with the piety of the imperial Pope Guibert of Ravenna.¹⁴¹ One would expect Guido to invoke the presence of these Saracen soldiers to demonstrate his point. The claim that Gregory had brought infidels to defile the holy city of Rome would seem a natural critique, and yet it never appears in Guido's text. He displays the silence of disinterest, failing to notice Robert's Muslim soldiers, and like Landulf, is concerned with the behavior of Robert's armies, not the religious beliefs or characteristics of his soldiers.

Pope Gregory's supporters did not necessarily shy away from recounting the horrors of the campaign but exhibited the same disinterested silence on the role of Muslim soldiers. Hugh of Flavigny, who was himself forced to flee from his monastery at St. Vanne because of threats from a bishop aligned with the emperor's cause,¹⁴² paints a critical picture of Guiscard's forces, accusing them of engaging "in rape, cruelty and plunder," against both the innocent and guilty of Rome. Hugh cites the sexual subjugation of the city, stressing that in the wake of their victory the Normans raped the daughters of the Roman aristocrats.¹⁴³ However, Hugh of Flavigny makes no mention of Muslims within Guiscard's armies. Several other contemporary authors, most of whom sympathized with Gregory, provide less detail of the sack and also make no mention of Muslim forces. They focus on Apulia and Calabria, rather than Sicily, as the sources of Robert's army.¹⁴⁴

Why, then, did other chroniclers, particularly the well-informed Malaterra, who must have known about the presence of such troops since he would document their presence in Roger's armies time and again in the decade that followed this siege, choose to remain silent on the presence of Muslim soldiers within the Norman armies at Rome? Malaterra uses the episode to contrast the *strenuitas* of the Normans with the greed and luxury of the Romans. He depicts the Normans as agents of God carrying out divine retribution in response to Roman sinfulness.¹⁴⁵ Accordingly, explicitly recognizing the presence of non-Christians among Guiscard's forces would have done nothing to further that narrative and may well have undermined it. Malaterra's silence reflects an unease that the Sicilian chronicler felt with the presence of such soldiers, which manifests in his erasure of Muslims from Norman armies at key points in his narrative.

The lack of emphasis on Muslims in other sources, particularly those sympathetic to the imperial position, is more noteworthy. Landulf the Senior identifies Saracen soldiers among Guiscard's host but focuses his critique on the rapacious behavior of the soldiers in general, rather than their impiety. He gives no indication that the Saracens behave any worse than the other soldiers, nor does he suggest that the presence of pagans contaminates the sanctity of the army as a whole. Landulf's silence on these issues stands in stark contrast with the critiques that emerge in the final years of the twelfth century or those levied against Frederick II. We can only conclude that our other sources fail to note the presence of Muslims at the 1084 siege because they did not consider the presence of such soldiers controversial or even noteworthy. Muslim soldiers serv-

ing under a Christian commander posed no special threat to the city nor did they call into question the religious orthodoxy of the Christians who commanded them. Authors in this period were far more interested in the violation of sacred space and sexual boundaries than the religious faith of a component of Guiscard's forces.

Cosenza, Amalfi and the First Crusade

While only scant textual references indicate participation of Muslims at Rome in 1084, the Muslim component of Roger's forces would become larger and more visible in the following decade. With the passing of Robert Guiscard in 1085 and the whole of Sicily coming under Count Roger's control in 1091, the count began to consolidate his control over the military resources of the island of Sicily and to use his military might to dominate Southern Italian conflicts. Throughout the last 15 years of the century, Roger increasingly deployed his Muslim soldiers to project his own power. The count launched five military incursions into the peninsula in this period: attacking Cosenza in 1088 and 1091, battling William of Grandmesnil in 1094, laying siege to Amalfi in 1096 and attacking a rebellious Capua in 1098, in addition to campaigns to conquer Malta in 1091 and to suppress rebels within Sicily at Pantalica in 1092.

Conflict between Guiscard's sons, the half-brothers Roger Borsa and Bohemond, erupted soon after their father's death. Borsa needed military support from his uncle to make good on his title of Duke of Apulia in 1085. He was forced to call on Count Roger's aid again and again in the subsequent decade.¹⁴⁶ Count Roger used his military might not simply out of a sense of generosity or familial obligation but to buttress the authority of his nephew, in exchange for an ever increasing control of fortifications and cities throughout Sicily and Southern Italy.¹⁴⁷ When Bohemond incited a rebellion in Cosenza against Roger Borsa's rule in 1088, Borsa appealed to his uncle, Roger of Sicily, to assemble an army to help him suppress the ambitious Bohemond.¹⁴⁸ Malaterra insists that Borsa "used [Count Roger] like a scourge against all those opposing him in order to terrify them," but Roger seems to have acted as the family patriarch, using his armies to bring Bohemond to heel and forcing the two men to reach a peace settlement. Malaterra makes no note of the origin of Count Roger's forces, nor does he detail their religious background. Muslim forces may have been unable to participate in this campaign, since Roger had yet to complete his conquest of Sicily.

After the fall of the last Muslim stronghold on the island, Malaterra becomes more definite about the participation of Muslim soldiers in Roger's armies, either explicitly stating their presence or implicitly recognizing them when describing armies assembled from the whole of Sicily. In the summer of 1091, immediately after conquering Sicily, Roger made plans to invade the island of Malta and "brought together a vast army from all of Sicily and Calabria," which forced the surrender of the island in a matter of days.¹⁴⁹

Malaterra is even clearer about the involvement of Muslim soldiers in a series of battles on the Italian mainland in the 1090s. When Roger Borsa again requested the aid of Count Roger in subduing the rebellious city Cosenza in 1091, Roger assembled his Sicilian hosts, which included "many thousands of Saracens from all of Sicily."¹⁵⁰ Roger's forces laid siege to the city and quickly forced its surrender, at which point the count and his hosts returned to Sicily.

In the following year, Roger's son, Jordan, died. The city of Pantalica, where Prince Jordan had ruled, attempted to use this opportunity to assert its independence and rose up in revolt. Roger's response was both swift and violent. Malaterra's account of the battle of Pantalica is quite terse. Roger set out to Pantalica and "ordered an army from the whole of Sicily to follow him there."¹⁵¹ The mobilization of such an army from across the whole of the island surely indicates Muslim military participation in the military expedition, where Roger's forces quickly subdued the rebels and hanged their ringleaders.

In 1094, Roger Borsa called on his uncle's aid for a third time, this time to subdue rebels in Castrovillari. Again, Count Roger answered the call to service with an army of his Sicilian forces, which included a large number of Muslim soldiers: "The Count brought many thousand Saracens from Sicily, together with an abundance of Christian cavalry and infantry from Calabria."¹⁵² This description is noteworthy in that the Saracen troops are not simply a visible component of the army, but, by sheer numbers, seem to comprise the bulk of Roger's forces.

It is a 1096 expedition, however, that reveals the clearest picture of what Count Roger hoped to gain through the deployment of his Muslim soldiers and also illustrates the ambivalence Latin authors felt for such troops. The beleaguered Roger Borsa faced yet another rebellion in 1096, this time from the city of Amalfi. Desperate to regain the city, Borsa appealed to both his half-brother and his uncle for military support, promising Count Roger half of Amalfi if he helped him retake it.¹⁵³ The 1096 siege

of Amalfi is most remembered for its intersection with the First Crusade. One of the earliest Crusade narratives, the *Gesta Francorum*, describes warriors who had begun to travel through the region bearing the sign of the cross, a signal that they had pledged to make the armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem.¹⁵⁴ Upon hearing of the mission, Bohemond abandoned the siege and pledged to join the expedition. He cut up his own cloak to make crosses for himself and his followers, which they would sew on to their garments to display their commitment to the crusade. Malaterra claims that Bohemond's absence crippled the siege and that Count Roger and Roger Borsa, upon "seeing the largest part of their army cease to be available," abandoned the campaign.

Were Muslims present during the preaching of the Crusade at Amalfi? In light of the pattern of military activity over the preceding decade, it would be unusual if Count Roger had not mustered Muslim soldiers to aid his nephew in reclaiming the city. One of the military functions associated with the Muslim soldiers was the operation of siege engines, which would have made them particularly valuable in the campaign against Amalfi.¹⁵⁵ However, the *Gesta Francorum* gives no indication that Muslim soldiers were camped in the vicinity of the Southern Italians who took up the cross. Malaterra is similarly silent on the presence of Muslims within the army and, in contrast to expeditions from the previous decade, states that Roger assembled his armies "from all of Apulia and Calabria," deliberately avoiding any mention of Sicilian troops.

However, monastic annalistic chronicles do attest to the presence of Muslims within the forces at Amalfi. The *Annales Cavenses*, a list of events considered important to the monks at La Trinità della Cava, states that Roger assembled "a powerful army of Christians and Saracens" (*exercitu valido Christianorum et Sarracenorum*) for his attack against Amalfi.¹⁵⁶ Lupus Protospartarius, a chronicler from Bari, confirms the presence of Muslims at the siege: "Roger, with twenty thousand Saracens and an innumerable multitude of others, and all of the counts of Apulia, laid siege to Amalfi."¹⁵⁷

Understanding the deployment of Muslim soldiers during this period is crucial not only for understanding developments in and around Sicily but also for analyzing Muslim and Christian relations in the course of the First Crusade. Muslim participation in the military campaigns of the 1090s and their presence at Amalfi guarantee that the Southern Italian warriors who agreed to embark on the First Crusade had fought alongside Muslim sol-

diers as allies.¹⁵⁸ This experience helps explain why the Southern Italian component of the First Crusade interacted with Muslims in a far different manner from other crusading factions.¹⁵⁹

Malaterra's reluctance to acknowledge the presence of Muslims at Amalfi and his depiction of the crusade deserve further examination.¹⁶⁰ He describes the crusade as an "*expeditio* toward Jerusalem" that was created from the edict of Pope Urban. He deemphasizes Bohemond's religious motivations for joining the crusade and stresses his opportunism. Bohemond "always wanted to conquer Romania for himself and, seeing a vast multitude hastening through Apulia without a leader, he wanted to make himself head of the army." The soldiers follow Bohemond and abandon the siege of Amalfi not out of devotion, but because "the warlike youths of the whole army have an appetite for novel things, as is the want at that stage of life." The departure of the would-be crusaders had disrupted the military operations of Malaterra's patron, and as a consequence, he critiques their motives for desertion.

Despite minimizing the religious conviction of these soldiers, Malaterra does stress that they took oaths not to attack the lands of fellow Christians until they "penetrate the lands of the pagans."¹⁶¹ Malaterra's rare use of the word "pagan" invokes the idea of holy war and the binary opposition of Christian against Muslim that characterized his depiction of the battle of Cerami but is otherwise absent throughout his text. Malaterra understood the sacred component of the expedition and chose not to mention the presence of Muslims alongside warriors vowing to invade pagan lands. As we saw with the 1084 sack of Rome, Malaterra embraces strategic silence and erases the presence of Muslims in his depiction of the siege. Not only does he fail to explicitly acknowledge their presence but he also actively sought to conceal their role, discussing troops mustered from Apulia and Calabria, but not Sicily.

In expeditions after the siege of Amalfi, Malaterra confirms the numerical superiority of the Muslim contingent of Roger's forces, suggested in the account of 1094, when Roger returned to the mainland to subdue Lombard forces rebelling against Prince Richard II of Capua, Roger's grandnephew, after the death of his father, Prince Jordan I. Roger assembled an army from all over Sicily and Calabria, creating a force that exceeded any that he had previously mustered, and marched on Apulia. There were major concerns about provisioning "the Saracens who formed the largest part of the army."¹⁶² It was during this campaign that Roger's

Muslim troops encountered Anselm in the anecdote given in the opening of this chapter. Eadmer confirmed the size of the Saracen contingent of Roger's forces, observing the many thousands of Saracen troops.¹⁶³

CONCLUSION

The relatively small numbers of troops available to Roger dictated the slow pace of the conquest of Sicily during the first two decades of the campaign. Roger was forced to rely on blockade, siege, fortification and treachery, rather than open assault.¹⁶⁴ This changed as the small Muslim component of the armies of the 1070s and 1080s grew to enormous size in the 1090s. Muslims came to be the largest force within the Sicilian military. With the increase in manpower, the sheer size of his army shaped his military successes. The growth of Muslim military units coincides with the conclusion of the conquest of Sicily in 1091. The completion of the conquest certainly abetted efforts to levy mass numbers of troops. The removal of any threat of attack from an immediate Muslim neighbor reduced the risk that Muslim military forces would turn against the Sicilian count. The massive growth of the military that came along with the incorporation of the Sicilian Muslim units allowed Roger to project his power over both the island of Sicily and the entire Southern Italian mainland. He was able to use his military might to effectively protect his familial interests, buttressing the position of both Roger Borsa and Prince Richard of Capua, as well as cementing his own position as the leading noble in the region after the 1085 death of his brother, Robert.

The increasing integration of Muslim soldiers into the Norman armies of Southern Italy also provides numerous examples of how Latin authors depicted Muslim soldiers under the command of Christian leaders. Few eleventh-century authors viewed the presence of such Muslims as controversial, and no author made use of these soldiers in polemical attacks against Sicilian leaders. Some authors, like William of Apulia, chose to ignore them entirely. Only Malaterra, the author most informed about these Muslim soldiers, shows an anxiety about depicting Muslim soldiers working in concert with Christian warlords, and in his case this anxiety manifests in the subtle removal of them from specific scenes when their presence does not serve his larger narrative goals. Our sources display no hint of thirteenth-century notions that forging political alliances with Muslim leaders or employing Muslim soldiers were divisive or scandalous acts which brought into question the orthodoxy of Sicilian leaders.

NOTES

1. Chalandon (1907), pp. 303–8.
2. Eadmer (1962), pp. 110–12. For more on Eadmer and his goals and practices in writing Anselm’s biography, see Antonia Gransden (1974), pp. 129–135. Also see Rubenstein (2005), pp. 32–34.
3. Eadmer and Southern (1962), pp. 111–12.
4. Tolan (2002), pp. 109–20; Jubb (2005), pp. 225–44; Kedar (1984), pp. 3–41; Southern (1962), pp. 1–33.
5. Pope Urban II appointed Bishop Robert of Troina and Massina without seeking the approval of Count Roger at the end of 1097 or early in 1098. Roger subsequently arrested the Bishop and some of his staff. Loud (2000), pp. 230–31. For relations between Roger and Urban II, see Becker (2008), pp. 132–41. For an account of the settlement and particularly the meeting between Urban II and the Norman forces, see Malaterra (1928), pp. 27–29. For the council at Bari, see Loud (2000), p. 214.
6. Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 128–29.
7. Metcalfe (2009), p. 95.
8. Varvaro (1987), pp. 79–81.
9. My work relies on the Pontieri edition of Malaterra’s work, but Malaterra’s text would benefit from a modern critical edition, see Avenel (2008), pp. 31–49. A new edition of *De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae* from Marie-Agnès Avenel is forthcoming.
10. Pontieri, in Malaterra (1928), p. iv, claims that Geoffrey came from Normandy; Wolf (1995), p. 144, casts doubt on the specifics of his origin. See also Taviani-Carozzi (1996), p. 18. For more information on the monastery of St. Agatha at Catania and its relation to the rulers of Sicily, see Chap. 3.
11. Malaterra (1928), p. 106.
12. Wolf (1995), pp. 143–46.
13. Malaterra (1928), p. 4; Wolf (1995), p. 147; Johnson (2005), pp. 95–96.
14. Loud (2004), pp. 1–38; Wolf (1995), p. 88; Leo Marsicanus and Peter the Deacon (1980), p. 411.
15. Amatus (1935).
16. Smidt (1948), pp. 223–27; de Bartholomaeis in Amatus (1935), p. lxxvii. Some scholars have posited a date of completion as late as 1086; Webber (2005), pp. 55–56.

17. Unfortunately, the original Latin version of the text has not survived; it is preserved instead in a fourteenth-century French translation. *L'Estoire de li Normant* is not simply a loose translation of the *Historia Normannorum*, but it also contains numerous redactions and commentaries by the translator, de Bartholomaeis, in Amatus (1935), pp. civ-civii. Later redactors of the *Chronicon Monasterii Casinensis* used the Latin *Historia Normannorum* as a source for this text and included several verbatim passages from Amatus' work. Those passages establish that the French text of the *L'Estoire* maintained a fairly faithful adherence to the original Latin text; Loud (2004), pp. 1–2. At times, however, the author of the *L'Estoire* offers more of an adaption than a translation, and the numerous omissions, alterations and errors make it impossible to read the *L'Estoire* as a reflection of eleventh-century sentiment; Albu (2001), pp. 108–9. Despite these difficulties, the information in *L'Estoire de li Normant* tends to corroborate evidence found in other chronicles and remains a valuable source for analyzing the events of Southern Italy in the eleventh century.
18. Guillaume de Pouille (1961).
19. William is aware of the conquest of Anatolia in 1097 but not the fall of Jerusalem in the summer of 1099. Urban II is mentioned in the prologue, which suggests the book was begun while he was still alive, but absent from the epilogue, which was probably written after Urban's death in July of 1099. Guillaume de Pouille (1961), pp. 11–13.
20. Johnson (2005), pp. 87–88; Tounta (2013), p. 130.
21. Wolf (1995), pp. 26–27, concluded that William was probably a Lombard. Taviani-Carozzi (1996), pp. 20–22, argues for William's Norman heritage. Albu (2001), p. 110, suggests that he was either a Norman or a Lombard, while Brown (2011), p. 163, argues that William's ethnic identity is uncertain and he may have come from a mix of Lombard, Greek and Norman ethnic groups.
22. Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), pp. 745–80.
23. Stanton (2013), p. 92.
24. Stanton (2013), p. 84.
25. Loud (2004), pp. 24–25.
26. Wolf (1995), p. 125.

27. Albu (2001), pp. 131–32.
28. Malaterra (1928), pp. 32–33, 41–45, 85–56. For more on Malaterra’s uses of the motifs of holy war, see Ernesto Pontieri (1964), p. 264.
29. Chevedden (2010), pp. 208–212, and Lucas-Avenel (2012), pp. 178–79, 185–90. For a discussion of the limits of applying traditional models of holy war to the Sicilian conquest, see Nef (2011), p. 63.
30. Wolf (1995), pp. 17–33. In contrast, Marie-Agnès Lucas-Avenel (2012), pp. 169–92, asserts that Malaterra emphasizes religious elements of the conquest because the central purpose of the text is to legitimate Roger’s conquest of Sicily by depicting him as an agent of divine will, restoring Christian domination of lands once lost to “pagans.”
31. Guillaume de Pouille (1961), line 199, p. 176
32. Guillaume de Pouille (1963), line 270, p. 178.
33. Guillaume de Pouille (1963), line 335, p. 182.
34. Guillaume de Pouille (1963), line 285–286, p. 178.
35. Smit (2009), pp. 74–75.
36. In contrast, Amatus does, on occasions, cite diabolic associations between Lombard princes and the devil. Hysell (2012), pp. 145–46.
37. Amatus (1935), p. 234.
38. Amatus (1935), pp. 240–43.
39. See Chap. 3.
40. Webber (2005), p. 82. Additionally, Tounta (2013), pp. 138–141, sees no differences between the ways in which William of Apulia and Geoffrey of Malaterra portray Muslims. Chevedden (2010), pp. 208–12, relies primarily on rhetoric he deploys at the events surrounding the battle of Cerami to make the claim that Malaterra sees the whole of the conquest of Sicily as a crusade.
41. Wolf (1995), p. 160.
42. Malaterra (1928), pp. 41–45.
43. Malaterra (1928), pp. 75–76.
44. Malaterra (1928), p. 102.
45. Malaterra (1928), p. 29.
46. Malaterra (1928), pp. 45–46.
47. Hysell (2012), pp. 148–49.
48. Malaterra (1928), p. 98.

49. Also as Betumen of Bithumen in the Latin sources and Vultimine in old French.
50. For the details of the campaign of Maniákēs, see Chalandon (1907), pp. 92–94; Shepard (1977), pp. 14–16, 145–59; Shepard (1993), pp. 282–85; Sturluson (1968), pp. 162–64; Scylitzes (2010), pp. 375–83; Amatus (1935), pp. 8–9, pp. 66–67; Malaterra (1928), pp. 7–8, pp. 10–12; Guillaume de Pouille (1961), p. 110.
51. Johns (2002), p. 32; Nef (2011), pp. 26–27. For this period, see Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 316–320, Ibn Khaldūn in *BAS*², pp. 532–38, al-Nuwayrī in *BAS*², pp. 496–99, Abū al-Fidā in *BAS*², pp. 473–75.
52. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 317–18.
53. Chiarelli (2011), p. 127.
54. Alternatively known as Belcamedus in Latin sources.
55. The last of the Kalbite rulers, Ḥasan Ṣamṣam al-Dāwlah, lost power in Palermo sometime between 1044 and 1052–153. Chiarelli (2011), p. 126; Metcalfe (2009), p. 84.
56. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 316–17. Ibn al-Athīr blames the hostilities that erupted between the two leaders on a domestic dispute between Ibn al-Thumna and his wife, but Metcalfe (2009), p. 85, expresses skepticism on the reliability of this account.
57. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 318–19, dates Ibn al-Thumna’s use of Frankish troops to 1052, well before Roger had entered into Italy, pp. 193–195. Gil and Strassler (2004), p. 555 and Gil (1995), p. 121, claim that Ibn al-Thumna’s alliance with the Normans and the subsequent invasion occurred in 1056. Chiarelli (2011), p. 31, disputes this claim and makes the argument for the 1061 date, consistent with the Latin chronicles.
58. Malaterra (1928), p. 30; Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 755; Amatus (1935), pp. 229–30, has the meeting take place between Ibn al-Thumna and Robert Guiscard. Both Metcalfe (2009), p. 85, and Johns (2002), p. 33, assert that the Normans initially came to Sicily as Ibn al-Thumna’s mercenaries but offer no clear evidence, other than cooperation between the two parties, to support this claim.
59. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 318–19, claims this meeting took place in Mileto. This claim is repeated by al-Nuwayrī in *BAS*², p. 499.

60. Duchesne et al. (1889), vol. I, p. 422; Loud (2000), pp. 129–30. The use of the title of Duke of Sicily in 1059 is also confirmed in Leo Marsicanus and Peter the Deacon (1980), p. 377. For more on this oath, and the relationship between the papacy and the Normans in this period, see Deér (1972), p. 66.
61. Bennett (1993), pp. 41–58; Loud (2000), p. 149.
62. Amatus (1935), p. 234.
63. The presence of Muslims in Reggio is confirmed in charter evidence from the bishopric of Oppide in which roughly 13 percent of the personal names are of Arabic origin. Guillou (1974), pp. 29–30.
64. Malaterra (1928), p. 30, also in Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 755.
65. Amatus (1935), p. 233.
66. Amatus (1935), p. 238.
67. Theotokis (2010), pp. 289–393; Stanton (2011), pp. 36–38.
68. Amatus (1935), p. 240.
69. Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 756.
70. Malaterra (1928), p. 34.
71. One cannot discount the possibility that these scouts were, in fact, Greek Christians, who were also familiar with the local geography, and may have been able to pass as Muslims.
72. Malaterra (1928), p. 34, gives a figure of 2000 men at the beginning of the expedition. Malaterra does not give precise numbers, but he states that Roger took 300 men with him to Messina and left the bulk of the forces with Robert, which suggests a rough equivalence between the two chronicle accounts.
73. Malaterra (1928), p. 33.
74. Amatus (1935), p. 238.
75. Malaterra (1928), p. 35.
76. Malaterra (1928), p. 35.
77. Malaterra (1928), p. 35.
78. The date of his death is confirmed by a letter from a Jewish merchant. Simonsohn (1997), vol. 1, pp. 305, 319.
79. Probably a Latinization of the Arabic name Nikhal or Nikl. Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 61–63.
80. Malaterra (1928), p. 36. The death is also recorded in Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 757.
81. Loud (2000), p. 132.

82. Chalandon (1907), p. 186; Loud (2000), p. 153–55; Theotokis (2010), pp. 396–97.
83. Malaterra (1928), pp. 39–41.
84. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 319; Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 63–67.
85. Malaterra (1928), pp. 42–45; Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), pp. 760–62.
86. Malaterra (1928), pp. 42–45.
87. Chevedden (2010), pp. 208–10; Loud (2000), p. 164. For an exhaustive treatment of the historiographical question of whether or not the conquest of Sicily qualifies as a crusade, see Nef (2011), pp. 46–60.
88. Malaterra (1928), p. 45.
89. Bernardo Maragone, *Annales Pisani* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1936), pp. 5–6.
90. Heywood (1921), p. 28.
91. Malaterra (1928), pp. 46–47; Amatus (1935), pp. 246–48.
92. Nef (2011), p. 34, blames the paucity of Norman military advancement in the period from 1064–1068 on Fāṭimid assistance to Sicilian Muslims, challenging the narratives drawn from the Latin sources which paint the Fāṭimids as disinterested in Sicilian affairs.
93. Malaterra (1928), pp. 49–50.
94. For leadership in Palermo during this period, see Gil (1995), pp. 125–30.
95. Amatus (1935), pp. 276–77; Malaterra (1928), p. 52. Metcalfe (2009), p. 95, suggests that Catania maintained its alliance with the Normans after Ibn al-Thumna’s death, as evidenced by the appointment of one of Ibn al-Thumna’s relatives to governorship of the city in 1075. But the four-day siege of the city that Amatus reports indicates that the city was not formally allied with the Norman forces in 1071.
96. Amatus (1935), p. 280; Malaterra (1928), p. 53; Guillaume de Pouille (1961), line 332–336, p. 182.
97. Malaterra (1928), p. 53.
98. Guillaume de Pouille (1961), lines 327–31, p. 182.
99. Malaterra (1928), p. 69.
100. Johns (2002), pp. 34–39, uses twelfth-century evidence to reconstruct the best available picture of these agreements.
101. Malaterra (1928), p. 54.

102. Guiscard had retained rights to the cities of Messina and Palermo as well as the rest of the Val Demone.
103. Ménager (1975), pp. 340–41; Loud (2000), pp. 165–66.
104. Malaterra (1928), pp. 63–64.
105. Malaterra (1928), p. 69.
106. Malaterra (1928), p. 3
107. Malaterra (1928), pp. 70, 82, 102.
108. *Sicilienses* are differentiated from the Greeks during the Byzantine invasion of Sicily (1038–104). Malaterra (1928), p. 11. The term is used to identify both Ibn al-Ḥawwās’ Palermitan fleet and his armies, Malaterra (1928), p. 32, 34. Africans and Arabs come to aid the *Sicilienses* of Castrogiovanni against Roger. Malaterra (1928), pp. 41–42. And it is the *Sicilienses* of the Muslim strongholds that marshal to lead an attack against Roger’s forces in 1067. Malaterra (1928), p. 49.
109. Malaterra (1928), pp. 75–76.
110. Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 111–13.
111. Benarvert, in the Latin. Amir of Syracuse.
112. Malaterra (1928), p. 67.
113. Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 773. On the identity of Ḥammūd and attempts to link him to the twelfth-century landholder Roger Hamutus or the Muslim director of the royal *dīwān* Abū l-Qāsim ibn Ḥammūd, see Johns (2002), pp. 236–39.
114. Malaterra (1928), pp. 87–88, incorrectly dates the capture of Castrogiovanni to 1086. Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 118–19; Loud (2000), p. 172.
115. Malaterra (1928), p. 87. The Norman forces had a reputation for rape in the course of conquest, as the narratives of the sack of Rome illustrate. Malaterra also reports an account from the capture of Messina in which a Muslim kills his own sister in order to prevent her from being raped by Norman troops. Malaterra (1928), pp. 32–33.
116. Malaterra (1928), p. 88.
117. Loud (2000), p. 171.
118. Malaterra (1928), p. 78.
119. Roger would later blind a dozen men who were the chief accomplices of Jordan and stage an incident in which he attempted to blind his son before his vassals physically restrained him from executing this punishment.

120. Malaterra (1928), p. 61.
121. Malaterra (1928), p. 61.
122. Lupus Protospatarius (1844), p. 60.
123. Abulafia (1985), p. 27.
124. Malaterra (1928), p. 66.
125. For the 1087 campaign, see Stanton (2011), pp. 176–78; Cowdrey (1977), pp. 1–29; Dalli (2008), pp. 80–84.
126. Malaterra (1928), pp. 86–87.
127. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 320–21.
128. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 320–21.
129. For the capture of Salerno, see Loud (2000), pp. 137–42.
130. Amatus (1935), pp. 354–55.
131. Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), pp. 1420–21; Guillaume de Pouille (1961), pp. 186–88; *Annales Beneventani* (1839), p. 181.
132. For the Balkan campaign, see Theotokis (2014), especially pp. 137–64.
133. For the history of the campaign, see Cowdrey (1983), pp. 170–71; Robinson (1999), pp. 235–39; Cowdrey (1998), pp. 229–31; Loud (2000), pp. 218–22.
134. Guillaume de Pouille (1961), p. 234. Hamilton (2003), p. 387, points out an army this size would be roughly the equivalent of the entire eleventh-century population of Rome.
135. Malaterra (1928), p. 80; Hamilton (2003), pp. 385–89.
136. Robinson (1999), pp. 225–34.
137. Gregorovius (1905), pp. 242–48; Krautheimer (2000), pp. 149–50.
138. Landulf the Senior and Cutolo (1942), pp. 127–28.
139. Loud (2000), p. 221; Amari (2002), vol. 3, p. 100; Gregorovius (1905), pp. 242–48.
140. Guido of Ferrara (1891), p. 549.
141. Hamilton (2003), pp. 388–89.
142. Healy (2006), pp. 66–69.
143. Hugh of Flavigny (1848), p. 462.
144. Duchesne and Vogel (1955), vol. 2, p. 280, 366–68; Bonizo of Sutri (1891), p. 614; Leo Marsicanus and Peter the Deacon (1980), pp. 434–35; Bernold (1844), pp. 439–41.
145. Albu (2001), pp. 106–44, Hamilton (2003), pp. 387–91, Wolf (1995), pp. 161–68.

146. Malaterra (1928), p. 82.
147. Stanton (2011), pp. 62–63.
148. Malaterra (1928), p. 91.
149. Malaterra (1928), pp. 94–95.
150. Malaterra (1928), p. 96.
151. Malaterra (1928), p. 98.
152. Malaterra (1928), p. 100.
153. Malaterra (1928), p. 102.
154. Hill (1962), p. 7.
155. Rogers (1992), pp. 110–13.
156. Delle Donne (2011), p. 39.
157. Lupus Protospatarius (1844), p. 62; Churchill and Protospatarius (1979), p. 338.
158. For the composition of the Southern Italian contingent of the First Crusade, see Riley-Smith (1997), pp. 100–1.
159. Birk (2011), pp. 91–106 and (2012), pp. 463–85.
160. Malaterra (1928), p. 102.
161. Malaterra (1928), p. 102.
162. Malaterra (1928), p. 104.
163. Eadmer and Southern (1962), pp. 110–12.
164. Rogers (1992), pp. 97–99.

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A “Semi-Pagan Tyrant?”

In the first half of the twelfth century, Muslim soldiers, associated exclusively with the lords of Sicily, increasingly demonstrated the power and influence of these rulers while simultaneously serving as on-the-ground agents and enforcers of Sicilian hegemony over Southern Italy. These soldiers presented a potent visible testament to the military prowess of the lords of Sicily, including the ability of Roger II and of his father to both extend Christian dominion over non-Christian peoples and to incorporate violent and warlike “Saracens” into Norman military retinues.

The decade that followed the conclusion of the conquest of Sicily cemented the social, legal and economic status of the Muslims of Sicily. Not only did Muslim soldiers comprise a strategically important component of the Sicilian war machine but Muslim agrarian workers also became a vital financial resource for the county of Sicily. These Muslims owed allegiance, service and taxes to the Sicilian leaders, and in return they could continue to practice their own religion and arbitrate internal matters within their communities. These Muslims and the taxes they paid became a valuable economic resource for the count of Sicily, one which he could retain to enrich himself or parcel out to his followers as a token of his esteem. Modern historians of medieval Sicily have argued that in the 1140s, Roger II crafted an Arabic-language fiscal administration that both differentiated him from and elevated him above other Latin Christian leaders in the region, while simultaneously extending the economic authority of the lords of Sicily.¹

While Muslim soldiers continued to serve a military purpose in the early twelfth century, they also gained an additional symbolic import. Of all the Norman lords of the South, only the counts of Sicily could claim to have conquered the “Saracens.” The exclusive service of these Muslim soldiers differentiated the rulers of Sicily from their contemporaries, and these warriors served as testament to the wealth and power of Sicilian rulers. Later, as Roger II made a bid to become a monarch, his deployment of Muslim soldiers illustrated the scope of his royal authority.

Modern historians have misread the mid-twelfth-century reaction to these soldiers, claiming that the use of Muslim soldiers played a role in the manufacture of a critique which envisioned Roger as a “semi-pagan tyrant,” an Islamicized despot inflicting horrors on the occupied population of the Southern Italian mainland.² These critiques would emerge as criticisms of Sicilian rulers in the early thirteenth century. I argue that they are absent from this mid-twelfth-century period. Latin sources from without the newly formed *regno* demonstrate that both Roger’s allies and enemies understood the emergence of Muslim soldiers not only as a military asset and a financial resource but also as an exclusive symbol of royal authority. However, deploying these soldiers garnered little attention from authors north of the *regno*. Latin authors from beyond Southern Italy advanced a damning appraisal of Roger II’s tyrannical proclivities, but neither his Muslim soldiers nor his adoption of Islamic culture played a role in their denunciation of this “semi-pagan tyrant.”

DONATION, EXEMPTION AND THE MUSLIMS OF CATANIA

Managing the economic resources provided by the conquered Muslim population proved a complicated task, one which forced Sicilian rulers in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries to develop an administrative bureaucracy capable of recording the donations and tracking the tax obligations of Muslim communities, as well as recording which Muslim villeins belonged to the Count directly and which he had bestowed to wealthy landholders. In the thirteenth century, the practice of maintaining a subject population of Muslim villeins would come under criticism, with Sicilian rulers cast as avaricious despots corrupted by the tax revenues they could accrue from their “Saracens,” but we see no hint of this notion in the eleventh or twelfth centuries.³

In December of 1092, Count Roger granted an extraordinary list of donations and privileges to Ansgerius, who held the dual positions of

Bishop of Catania and abbot of the newly created monastery of Sant'Agata in Catania.⁴

I [Count Roger], my wife Adelaide, and my sons Geoffrey and Jordan, give to this Abbot [Ansgarius of Catania] the whole of the city of Catania, with all of its extended holdings and all of its possessions ... and the abbot and the monks of his monastery shall hold the aforementioned city with all of its extended holdings just as it was when the Saracens possessed the same city and the Normans first crossed over to Sicily ... I, Count Roger, concede to the Abbot that he shall receive all Saracens throughout the whole of Sicily, who were in the city of Catania and Aci Castello at the time when the Normans first crossed over to Sicily and then fled to other parts of the island out of fear of the Normans ... I gave to the aforementioned monastery all Saracens who were born in whatever place in Sicily from the Saracens who were in the city of Catania and Aci Castello at the time when the Normans first crossed over to Sicily.⁵

The donation gave the monastery control over the cities of Catania and Aci Castello, as well as dominion over all Muslims in those regions. Roger granted Sant'Agata's authority over all the descendants of the Muslims of Catania throughout all of the territories of Sicily, extending the monastery's authority in the region well beyond those established previously, to cover Muslims who had lived in Catania when the Normans first invaded in 1061. This donation, so unusual in 1091, would establish a template that twelfth-century Norman rulers would use to create influential ecclesiastical foundations, similarly endowed with broad privileges, vast territorial holdings and extensive rights to both govern over and extract taxes from a subject Muslim population.⁶ It also established that lords of Sicily saw the Muslim population as not just a military asset but also as a financial resource that could provide an invaluable tax base either for counts of Sicily or for the powerful ecclesiastical foundation that they created in an effort to counterbalance the influence of other Norman nobles in the region.

Count Roger gave the monastery not only extensive material holdings but also vast legal privileges, including the right to adjudicate all crimes and disputes across its extensive holdings.⁷ The extent of the court's reach was probably similar to that of a baron, allowing Roger to preside only over high criminal matters involving monastic lands.⁸ Despite the substantial holdings and broad powers given to the monastery, Roger asked for almost nothing in the way of direct recompense. The charter obligated the

monastery to provide food and drink to him when he visited Sant'Agata's.⁹ The gift of "one serving of bread and one of wine and no more" served a symbolic purpose, recognizing Roger's position as founder, benefactor and lord.

This donation to Sant'Agata's illustrates the way in which Sicily's new ruling class envisioned the Muslim population in the immediate aftermath of the conquest of the island. The "Saracens" of Sicily were the spoils of war, a currency Roger could hoard or bequeath as a sign of his favor. They were not simply a military asset, as demonstrated in the first chapter, but also a valuable financial asset which Count Roger could retain for himself or bestow upon his allies to reward their loyalty or demonstrate his largess. The re-envisioning of Muslims as a financial commodity required the development of an administrative bureaucracy capable of cataloging and apportioning this new resource. Though modern scholars are left with a paucity of extant documents from the eleventh century that detail either the shift in status of Sicilian Muslims or the emergence of this new bureaucracy, surviving documents like the donation to Sant'Agata's illuminate complex and active comital authority dedicated to managing Roger's Muslim subjects and offer depictions of the status of Muslims under Norman rule.¹⁰ The Sicilian count's dominance of the Muslim population of Sicily would buttress his power in the eleventh century and eventually lead to Muslims becoming a visible symbol of Sicilian royal authority in the twelfth century. Ultimately, it would also lead to the emergence of mob violence against Sicilian Muslims as a way to voice discontent with royal rule.

Why Catania? Why 1091?

Sant'Agata di Catania was erected, not by a ruler desperately scrounging for resources to control his vast territory, but by one at the apex of his power.¹¹ Roger's ability to dominate the Sicilian nobility, to execute comital justice and to demand both payment and military service from all of Sicily's landholders allowed him to endow Catania with the vast exemptions detailed above. The creation of the monastery was a very public demonstration not only of Roger's piety but also of his general authority over the whole of the island and his specific dominion over the whole of Sicily's Muslim population. Giving away this territory and the rights to rule this region, including dominion over the Muslims who resided or had resided therein, illustrated the scope of Roger's comital authority.

The foundation of Sant'Agata demonstrated both Roger's need and ability to exert dynastic control over his own family. The donation to the monastery at Catania that opens this chapter mentions three of Roger's immediate family members; his sons Jordan and Geoffrey and his new wife, Adelaide del Vasto. The creation of the monastery and the extensive privileges he bestowed upon it played a role in Roger's attempts to balance power between his adult children and his new wife. Jordan had been one of his father's most successful military lieutenants in the 1080s. Despite the fact that Jordan was an illegitimate child and had rebelled against his father in 1083/1084, he was Roger's presumed successor in the later 1080s, in large part because Geoffrey was afflicted with leprosy (*morbus elephantinus*).¹² When Roger married Adelaide in 1089/1090, and also arranged for Jordan and Geoffrey to marry Adelaide's sisters, the prospect that Roger could sire a legitimate son with his new wife must have cast doubt on Jordan's assumed position.¹³

As the conquest of the island came to a close and the Count arranged his own marriage and that of his sons, Roger moved to secure Jordan's loyalty by placing him in command of two of the most crucial cities in the Val di Noto, Syracuse and Noto, and by permitting him to build fortifications and "manage [the region] as he pleased in fealty (*fidelitate*) to his father."¹⁴ At the same time, Roger remained wary of Jordan's ambitions. When Roger launched his campaign against Malta in 1090 he ordered Jordan to defend Sicily, but declared that he should "not enter any town or fortification (*castrum*)" in Roger's absence and instead reside in military camps, living "in tents" until the count's return.¹⁵ Jordan's service and lineage required Roger to reward him, but granting him broad authority in the Val di Noto invited the potential of rebellion, both against Roger and any children that he might bear with Adelaide. In creating Sant'Agata and investing the monastery with vast resources and privileges, Roger helped to circumscribe Jordan's authority in the region.¹⁶ The mid-eleventh-century Muslim rulers of Syracuse also governed Catania, but Roger created a rival institution which prevented Jordan from extending his domain to the north, which was held by an ecclesiastical figure whose appointment the count of Sicily could control and who would serve as a counterbalance to the authority of the count's potentially rebellious kin. Without minimizing the religious component of the creation of Sant'Agata, the monastery's foundation was a political action that created an ecclesiastical lord who could not establish a dynasty of his own and would prove more tractable to comital commands than a secular counterpart. Investing the

abbot of this monastery with broad authority over the Muslims in and around Catania was a central component in the creation of this ecclesiastical lordship.

The timing of the founding of Sant'Agata's coincides not only with Roger's triumph over his Muslim opponents and the reassertion of his authority over his children but also with his ascendance within his extended family. Roger had conquered the island with the aid of his brother, Robert Guiscard, who lent Roger troops and took a share of the spoils, especially in the early stages of the invasion. With Guiscard's death in 1085, Roger became the most powerful of the Norman warlords in the region and quickly extended his political dominance over the entire island. Bohemond was Robert Guiscard's eldest son. He challenged the claim of his half-brother, Roger Borsa, to their father's title and holdings. Borsa needed the help of his uncle, Count Roger, in order to win his duchy. Roger demanded that Borsa grant him full control of the castles and cities that the two shared in return for his aid.¹⁷ Through the frequent repetition of this pattern of exchange over the next decade, Count Roger pursued a stratagem of accumulation of resources and centralization of power in which he would rescue Roger Borsa in return for pieces of Guiscard's former holdings.¹⁸ Sant'Agata's founding was predicated, in large part, upon Count Roger's rise to the dominant position among his kinsmen and rivals after Guiscard's death in 1085.

Roger's endowment of Sant'Agata di Catania, as well as the other ecclesiastical lordships he created in the late eleventh century, suppressed the possibility of rebellion among his nobles. Granting extensive Sicilian domains to the barons who assisted him in the conquest of the island would have invited rebellion, because it would have created powerful potential rivals who might try to usurp his own power or, even more likely, that of his heirs. Instead, Roger eschewed large land grants to his nobility, outside of the members of his own family, preferring instead to grant lands to the monasteries and bishoprics which he created.¹⁹ Roger may have intended these ecclesiastical foundations to staff his burgeoning bureaucracy. Certainly Troina, the first of these ecclesiastical foundations, produced the protonotary John of Troina, who charted the territories and subject populations for comital donations, including Roger's grants to Catania.²⁰ These ecclesiastical foundations helped Roger foster an administrative caste for his burgeoning polity, without empowering his rapacious barons who frequently rebelled against the rulers of Sicily in times of dynastic crisis. The foundation of Catania and, particularly, Roger's donation of Muslims liv-

ing in that region illustrate Roger's ability to supervise and regulate activities in the region and demonstrate that it was never fully alienated from comital power.

The Jarā'id of Aci Castello and Catania

Our best evidence for the status of Muslims in Sicily at the end of the eleventh century comes from a series of name lists called *jarā'id*, or *jarīda* in the singular, in Arabic and *plateiai* in Greek, which Roger's officials produced in order to chart the Muslim population bound to specific estates. Roger's administration likely produced a larger number of these *jarā'id*. We know he issued a number of these name lists for his own personal estates and those of his barons in 1093, but only a few of the lists produced in the late eleventh century survive, and those that do were granted exclusively to ecclesiastical institutions.²¹ The *jarā'id* illustrate both the active involvement of comital agents in and around Catania and the high level of control Roger and his courtiers exerted over both the region of Catania and the newly conquered population of the entire island.²²

These *jarā'id* were parchments that recorded the names of all Muslim heads of household in the monastic territories. The only extant eleventh-century *jarīda* from the region of Catania came from Aci Castello,²³ a community just over five miles north of Catania, which Roger bestowed to Sant'Agata's in his initial donation. The document opens with three lines of Greek explaining that the document is a *plateia* of the "Hagarenes of Aci," which Count Roger bestowed upon the Bishop of Catania.²⁴ In the fourth line, the document shifts to Arabic and presents a section heading entitled "The names of the people of Aci."²⁵ Lines 5 through 73 contain the names of 337 male heads of household on the lands at Aci Castello. The list ends mid-line, and then a second section heading marks the divide for a subsequent list, "The names of the widows."²⁶ Lines 73 through 84 contain the names of 53 female heads of household. The *jarīda* then closes with seven lines of Greek text, addressed later in this chapter.

Though no copy of the original eleventh-century *jarīda* of Catania itself survives, Roger II ordered a renewal of these *jarā'id* in 1145. Roger's scribes issued renewals for both the Aci Castello *jarīda* and the Catania *jarīda* of Sant'Agata's.²⁷ A comparison of the two *jarā'id* of Aci Castello allows scholars to reconstruct the presumed contents of the lost 1095 *jarīda* of Catania. The 1145 *jarīda* of Aci Castello suffered damage and the beginning of the document is lost. The surviving portions of

the text show remarkable similarities to its counterpart from 1095. Aside from a few minor changes in orthography, all of the names of the “People of Aci” list are repeated, with the term “the children of”²⁸ appended to the beginning of each household. The names of the widows are repeated exactly as listed in the 1095 *jarīda*. A Greek transliteration of the Arabic name, inserted above the Arabic, has been added to the 1145 *jarīda*. After the name list follows a numeric total of the lists, first in Arabic followed by Greek. The text concludes with several lines of Arabic. The administration that produced the Catania *jarā'id* was not a fully formed bureaucracy that deployed Arabic texts as a symbol of the power of the Sicilian rulers, as were developed in the 1130s and 1140s, but an ad hoc entity formed with the primary focus of composing land registrars and name lists.²⁹ The Normans laid claim not just to the land and peoples of Sicily but also to a pre-existing, but non-extant system of records which they used to administer the division of the spoils of war.³⁰ Though the *jarā'id* is often discussed as a bilingual document, the relationship between Greek and Arabic is uneven.³¹ The Greek text frames the whole of the document, explaining its purpose and function, while Arabic serves a technical role, repeating an established pre-Norman formula for recording data on the agrarian populace. The Norman conquerors lacked the linguistic skills to make use of the Arabic-language records but were reluctant to elevate Muslims into the administrative ranks, preferring instead to rely on Arabic-speaking Greek Christians from Sicily and Calabria to staff these new offices and produce these bilingual documents in Greek and Arabic.³² The effectiveness of this early administration in producing documents that relied upon the Arabic language for technical elements proved short-lived, lasting only for a single generation. After 1111, we have no examples of extant Arabic-language documents from comital administrators for two decades, suggesting that the rulers of Sicily had little interest in continuing to produce parchments that relied on Arabic lists or train successive generations of bureaucrats to continue to produce such documents. It was not until the 1130s, when Muslim administrators and the use of the Arabic language became prominent symbols of the monarchy, that Sicilian rulers would revive the Arabic-language chancery using non-pre-Norman Sicilian administrative practices. They chose to model the chancery after the Fāṭimid *dīwān*, ultimately embracing a much wider use of Arabic across the fiscal offices of the crown.³³

The 1095 *jarīda* of Aci was not authored by the monks of Catania, but drafted and presented to them by John of Troina, a notary in the service of

Roger I, probably of Greek origin, capable of working in both the Greek and Arabic languages.³⁴ The other surviving documents on which John's name is preserved are comital donations and a list of his primary duties revolving around charting the Muslims of the registrar and boundaries of various properties that the count was donating. The very existence of these *jarā'id* attest to an active presence of comital administrators in constructing these documents.

But the Aci Castello *jarīda* hints at a far greater role for comital authority in the region. It alludes to another series of name lists which Roger I's administrators drafted two years earlier, but which have not survived. The Greek conclusion of the Aci Castello name list states that the *jarīda* was "based upon the *plateiai* of my own lands and of my barons, which were written at Mazarra in the year 6601 in Indiction I [January–August 1093]. And, therefore, we command that any of the Hagarenes inscribed in this *plateiai*, who is found in my *plateiai* or in the *plateiai* of my barons, shall be returned there."³⁵ This conclusion intimates the way in which the Norman warlords understood the Muslim populace in Sicily in the post-conquest period. The Muslims of Sicily were seen as a valuable financial asset, one that needed to be cataloged in detail before it could be parceled out as a sign of Count Roger's favor. Roger clearly held council with his vassals at Mazarra in 1093, in which he sought to delineate the ownership of the spoils of his conquest in Sicily. Roger's officials must have drafted a series of *jarā'id* which have not survived. The priority in issuing these non-extant *jarā'id* was explicitly recording the names and numbers those Muslims held on comital lands, and that of his barons, and returning the Muslim population that had been displaced by the war which had enveloped the island for a generation. Only after producing these records did he move to catalog the population of monastic institutions, and the record of Muslims in these Mazarra *jarā'id* superseded those granted to institutions like Sant'Agata's.

The Catania and Aci *jarā'id* provide evidence of the high degree of penetration of comital authority across the whole of the island in the post-conquest period. Far from being a hotbed of rebellion that Count Roger was unable to control, comital agents operated freely in Catania. Through John of Troina, Roger was able to compose detailed registers of the local Muslim population, which allowed the crown to circumscribe the authority of ecclesiastical lordship over Muslims and probably to assist with the collection of taxes.³⁶ Further, the 1091 grant of privileges to Catania hardly ceded all jurisdictional matters concerning the Muslims over to the abbot

of Sant'Agata. The 1095 *jarā'id* served as a check against Muslims fleeing from the land of the count and taking refuge in these monastic holdings. By meticulously documenting the Muslims that resided in Catania and Aci, John of Troina established a legal record that would allow the Count to reassert control of any of his Muslims who had escaped his domains. Comital officials still operated freely in the region in 1095 and were able to carefully delineate the limits of the abbot's authority.

A letter to Roger II recounts the active involvement of comital officials in policing these holdings at the end of the eleventh century.³⁷ The document attests to a council held at Troina in which Count Roger demanded that local land owners relinquish Muslim families that they held without legal charter. Roger's agents rounded up some five hundred illegally held families from the surrounding area. He exempted these families from taxation or service for five years, and then relocated them around a newly constructed fortification at Focerò.³⁸ Roger's agents policed landholders to ensure that they retained rights only over subject populations carefully delineated in the *jarā'id*.

The breadth of the control that Sant'Agata's exerted over Muslims from Catania, including the rights over any descendant of a Muslim who had inhabited Catania when the Normans first set foot in Sicily, appears enormous. In reality, they were far less expansive. Though the monastery certainly exerted control over its Muslim population, the specific households over which they had such power were precisely defined by the *jarā'id*, as listed by comital, rather than monastic, officials. Moreover, far from being anomalous, the conclusion of the 1095 *jarā'ida* suggests that this level of control over the Muslim population was normative for many baronial landholders as well as for Count Roger himself. One of the purposes of drafting the *jarā'id* of the territories of Sant'Agata was to determine whether the monastery was improperly retaining control of Muslims who rightly belonged to the nobility. These documents were intended not only to circumscribe the authority of monastic institutions but also to assert the privileges of the nobility, as defined in the initial name lists of 1093. Ultimately, the privileges regarding the Muslims of Catania functioned much like the other privileges the count issued to Sant'Agata's. Roger was not ceding privileges to the monastery that he, as count, had been unable to exercise. Instead, the privileges Roger issued show the strength of his position vis-à-vis the island's Muslims: his ability to control, catalog and parcel out his Muslims as a kind of currency among his subjects.

Taxation and the Legal Status of Muslims

The Norman elite valued the ability to control the Muslim population of Sicily in large part because of the tax revenue these communities generated. Sicilian Muslims paid a series of taxes based on their legal status as a subjected religious group, a status which mirrored that assigned to Christians and Jews in Islamic polities. When Muslim rulers controlled Sicily in the ninth through eleventh centuries, the Greek Christian and Jewish population of the island were recognized as *dhimmi*, protected people who were allowed to maintain their own religious practices and operate autonomous communities under Muslim rule. *Dhimmi* were obligated to pay the *jizya*, a form of regular tribute given to Muslim overlords as a sign of their submission. The tax burden placed on Sicilian *dhimmi* was not uniform; it changed over time and varied from place to place, but it could take the form of additional capitation taxes, tithes or taxes on conquered lands and could also include restrictions on the ability to sell or alienate such lands.³⁹ A central fiscal office in Palermo oversaw the taxation of the *dhimmi*, as well as taxation of the island's Muslim inhabitants, with local communities maintaining their own tax rolls and registers. Thus, when Norman warlords conquered the island at the end of the eleventh century, they inherited a complex, heterogeneous schema for taxation and detailed fiscal records, as well as a legal model for the status of a subjugated population which held different religious beliefs.

As Roger I slowly exerted dominance over the island, he negotiated a series of treaties which established Muslims as a protected group, similar to the status given to *dhimmi* in Islamic polities. Muslims throughout the island retained the right to maintain their religious and legal customs in exchange for rendering tribute and service. Malaterra details a number of surrender agreements between Roger I and individual Muslim communities in which he repeatedly stresses that these communities should be allowed to retain their own legal traditions. Roger negotiated these surrender agreements with the *qā'id*s (leaders) of each community. For the most part, these local Muslim *qā'id*s were in power before the conquest and retained their position under Roger's rule.⁴⁰ At the surrender of Palermo in 1072, Malaterra explains that Roger agreed that "by no means would their laws (*legem*) be violated or relinquished. . . and that they would not be impaired by unjust or new laws." In return, the "Saracen" leaders promised to be "faithful servants to [Robert and Roger], paying back tribute. They promised to declare this by an oath in accordance with

their own law.”⁴¹ Malaterra expressed a broad notion of “law,” encompassing what we would think of as both religious and legal functions. When Muslim leaders surrendered the city of Rometta, they swore on the Qur’ān to serve their new Norman overlords. Malaterra wrote that these Saracens were “taking oaths of fidelity on their books of superstitious laws.”⁴² When Roger conquered the island of Malta in 1090, he negotiated a surrender of the island in which “[Muslim leaders] determined the amount of annual payment they would render, and they promised that the town would serve the count. Thus, according to their law, having given an oath of allegiance, they joined in league (*confoederati*) with the count.”⁴³ Roger used these surrender agreements to create a *dhimmi*-like status for Sicilian Muslims, guaranteeing them the right to preserve their religious customs and operate autonomous communities in exchange for regular service and tribute.

As the Normans extended their dominance over the whole of the island, the large parts of the Muslim population of Sicily which had previously been freestanding subjects of an Islamic polity were reduced to the status of villeins (*villani*),⁴⁴ in which they became bound to the land that they inhabited and were obligated to pay both a *jizya* (poll tax) and a *qānūn* (land tax) to their new Norman overlords.⁴⁵ At the same time, the imposition of this legal status was not uniform, and significant numbers of Muslims were not villeins, particularly those in certain urban communities, who, by dint of the piecemeal nature of the conquest, had negotiated specific terms of surrender that protected them from at least some of the obligations placed upon Muslim villeins. However, the history and social status of urban communities within Sicily, and the status of urban Muslims, in particular, is largely unknown. Historian Annliese Nef labels the field “a black hole,”⁴⁶ in that the particulars of the taxes and service required of these urban populations remain unknown. In addition, as the *jarā'id* of Catania illustrates, the status of villeins and the requisite conditions it entailed were established at the time of the conquest of the island. The Norman rulers, in the hopes of enticing migrants to come to Sicily, remitted at least some of the obligations for Muslim immigrants to the island.⁴⁷ Similarly, certain households of villeins, such as newly formed families, the blind and widows, were exempted from some or all of these as well.

Norman rulers commissioned the *jarā'id* to identify and record households of Muslim villeins and facilitate the payment of the *jizya* and the *qānūn*.⁴⁸ The Catania *jarā'id* never explicitly identify their role in tax

collection, but a contemporary document, the *jarīda* which Roger I issued to the cathedral church of Palermo in 1095, illustrates how the *jizya* was imposed on Muslim villeins.⁴⁹ The donation contains a *jarīda* of 75 names of "Hagaren" households in Jato, Lomonos and Corleone, who collectively owed the church a yearly *jizya* of 1500 *tari*, a *qānūn* of 150 bushels of wheat and an addition 150 bushels of barley. The payment of 4 bushels of grain and 20 *tari* probably represents the typical payments expected from the households of each Muslim villein.⁵⁰ The jurisdiction of Muslim villeins and the right to collect their taxes belong to the count of Sicily and could only be bestowed to another institution by an explicit comital grant. The donations, which included rights to Muslim villeins, and the *jarā'id*, which carefully charted which Muslims were transferred in those donations, allowed religious institutions to keep these funds for themselves, with no obligation to collect them at the behest of the count of Sicily.⁵¹

While contemporary Latin sources often used the term *villein* (*vil-lani*) to describe the status of the Muslims listed on these *jarā'id*, such terminology suggests simple agrarian laborers and obscures the existence of a diverse Muslim community which includes a wide degree of social positions and professions.⁵² Many economically privileged Muslims fled the island in the wake of Norman aggression, but the Catania *jarā'id* illustrates that a political and cultural elite still remained in the region.⁵³ The list identifies *qā'id*, civic leaders, as well as experts in *fiqh*, religious law, and scribes. The *jarā'id* lists various Muslim artisans, stonemasons, smiths and tailors, as well as butchers, millers and bakers. A few individuals were identified as traders, flour merchants, spice traders and porters. Even among Muslims involved in agrarian labor, some claimed more specialized professions and were involved in sugar cultivation and processing, silk production or managing gardens.

Muslim villeins could not move freely; they were bound to the land and compelled to provide regular service to their lords, most frequently in the form of a tax on the non-Christian population of Sicily, the *jizya*.⁵⁴ Although these communities could regulate their own internal affairs, Muslim villeins were required to pay tribute to Roger and were obligated to provide direct payment to their lord. Muslim communities were also subject to service in the armies, in the form of conscription, as discussed in Chap. 2. In Sicily, the whole of the Muslim community fell under the control of the count, while individual Muslims could only become the

subjects of other landholders if they were received as a specific donation from Roger, like the *jarā'id* issued to Sant'Agata's. They were only rarely required to offer their agrarian labor service to their lords, which would have been a common condition imposed on Christian farmers.⁵⁵

The *jizya* underscores the importance of these grants of control over the subject Muslim population of Sicily. While the Palermo *jarāida* is unusual in that it outlines the specific sums which the subject Muslim population was obligated to produce, all Muslim villeins would have had to pay the *jizya* to either the count or to a person whom he had appointed over them. Many *jarā'id*, like those from Catania, contain no such information about the sum of money that monasteries could exact from its Muslims, but the document itself was a guarantor not only of judicial control but also of the ability to demand regular tribute from a specifically delineated population.

ADELAIDE'S REGENCY

Regency and Revolt

The Mediterranean focus of Sicilian rulers and the changes in the symbolic import of Muslims stems from an unlikely source: the ascent of a woman, Adelaide, as regent over the country of Sicily. Pauline Stafford opens her discussion of early medieval queenship with the cogent observation that "Women have usually stood half hidden in the wings of historical pageant,"⁵⁶ and her observation holds true for Adelaide, wife of Roger I and queen regent of Sicily. It also holds true later for Margaret, Roger II's daughter-in-law and future queen regent, and Constance, another daughter of Roger II and wife of Henry VI. Though each played seminal roles in the development of Norman rule in Sicily during the twelfth century, medieval contemporaries devoted far less attention to the female leaders than their male counterparts, resulting in a relative dearth of contemporary source material limiting historical studies of these women.⁵⁷ However, Adelaide del Vasto, wife of Roger I and mother of Roger II, played just as formative a role as that of her husband or her son in reorienting the Sicilian political focus toward the Mediterranean world.

Adelaide's decision to physically relocate the court and move from the Southern Italian mainland to Northeast Sicily and then later to Palermo, a city in which Muslims constituted the majority of the population, enabled the Islamic influences on the royal court to flourish during her son's reign.

Similarly, her elevation of Greek administrators from Sicily and from North African courts transformed the administrative structure of the realm and elevated non-Latins to the highest echelons of government.

In 1089/1090 Adelaide del Vasto married Roger I, who was almost 60, becoming his third wife when she was still a teenager.⁵⁸ She was the niece of an ambitious and politically ascendant Northern Italian noble, Boniface del Vasto, Margrave of Western Liguria, with whom Roger sought to align himself.⁵⁹ The marriage between Adelaide and Roger served as the cornerstone of a network of relationships involving both families: Adelaide married the Great Count, two of her sisters were promised in marriage to Roger's sons and one of her brothers was promised to Roger's daughter. The couple produced two sons, Simon and Roger, and at least one daughter, Maximilla, before Roger I died in 1101. Adelaide seems to have been a fixture in her husband's retinue, serving as a witness and giving consent to several comital charters that Roger issued after their marriage, but we have little evidence that young Adelaide exerted much influence or political authority during the life of her influential husband.⁶⁰

In the period after Roger I's death, Adelaide becomes far more visible in the extant sources, as she assumed the role of regent for her underage sons, first Simon and later Roger II. Roger I's choice of Adelaide, a female regent, rather than the customary practice of placing a male relative into that role, stands as a testament both to his power and his ambition.⁶¹ In selecting his wife, Roger reduced the likelihood of a regent permanently usurping the authority of his son.⁶² But, as a consequence, it all but ensured that Adelaide would face vigorous challenges from her own subjects.⁶³ Count Roger trusted both that the power he had been able to centralize in the last decade of his life would be sufficient to protect Adelaide from various rivals among the Sicilian and Southern Italian landholders and that she possessed enough political acumen to hold the fledgling polity together.

Adelaide's appointment to the regency proved controversial, as demonstrated both by the rebellion that took place during her regency, and the ways in which early twelfth-century contemporaries narrated her life. The English monk Orderic Vitalis reported that Adelaide realized the precarious nature of her position and that, on account of her gender, she doubted that her own capacity could protect her holdings.⁶⁴ While Orderic fabricated details of Adelaide's life to make a polemical argument about the weakness and untrustworthiness of female regents, his writings reflect contemporary twelfth-century attitudes about the inherent instability of

a female regency. Orderic claimed that she entered into an alliance with Robert, the son of the duke of Burgundy and grandson of the king of France, to help secure her fragile authority. She gave her daughter in marriage to him and granted him control over Sicily in hopes that he could secure her position. Orderic's account of this alliance must be viewed with a great deal of skepticism; no independent evidence corroborates any of its details. His tale that Adelaide subsequently poisoned the Burgundian noble in order to restore Sicily to her children is similarly specious, but they reflect the anxiety that Adelaide's regency provoked in some observers. From all other sources, Adelaide appears to have functioned as regent without the need to remarry or to abdicate her authority to male relatives of her children.

While Adelaide was a viable regent, she nevertheless experienced challenges to her rule. Despite Orderic's unreliable assertions of Adelaide's acquiescence to and subsequent poisoning of the Duke of Burgundy, his account of the uncertainty about Adelaide's ability to control her territories seems to be accurate. A revolt against Adelaide appears only in scattered references made in passing in later sources. Anonymus Vaticanus reports that the Apulians revolted against her son, Simon.⁶⁵ Late charter evidence referred to widespread rebellion from barons across Calabria and Sicily.⁶⁶ A charter from 1123 also refers to a "revolt of the barons" which led to a loss of control over Ciminna during Adelaide's regency for her son Simon.⁶⁷ Charters of Patti refer to a revolt which persisted for at least the first two decades of the twelfth century.⁶⁸ Simon had died by 1105,⁶⁹ after which Adelaide served as regent for her younger son Roger. The challenge to Adelaide's rule appears to have begun early in her reign; within four years after she had assumed the regency. Though the revolts appear widespread, we have little information about specific participants in these uprisings or evidence about the role that Sicilian Muslims played in these revolts.⁷⁰

The revolts themselves are not the only evidence that Adelaide operated from a precarious position; as regent she lacked the full authority of her husband. Charter evidence suggests that Adelaide's authority in north-eastern Sicily, particularly around the area of Focerò, was intensely and violently contested.⁷¹ The charters that Adelaide issued throughout her regency, which lasted until 1112, were clustered around southern Calabria and northeastern Sicily, suggesting that the scope of her power was limited to those regions and did not extend over all of the lands that her husband once ruled, and she focused on retaining her authority in that region.⁷²

Like many female regents, Adelaide faced a constant threat of rebellion from her landholders and needed to find ways to effectively administer the county of Sicily without empowering magnates who might strip power from her or her young sons.

Adelaide's Ministers

The vulnerabilities inherent to a female regency forced Adelaide to search for allies to combat these external challenges to her authority. Adelaide began the tradition of enlisting Sicilian high administrators who would go on to dominate the Sicilian court for most of the twelfth century with her appointment of the Greek Christian Amir Christodoulos.⁷³ The appointment of Greek officials to serve as officers of the comital court was nothing new.⁷⁴ Roger I employed several high-ranking Greek administrators during the latter portion of his regency.⁷⁵ However, Roger's cadre of administrators came predominantly from the Greek speaking areas of the Southern Italian mainland. While Christodoulos made donations in Calabria, he almost certainly originated from the eastern half of Sicily, probably from the city of Messina, where he owned familial property.⁷⁶ His place of origin is important because it surely contributed to the movement of the comital center from the mainland to the island, which took place during his service. Christodoulos first appears, with the honorific title *amiratus*, a Latinization of the Arabic title *amir* and antecedent to the tile admiral.⁷⁷ Christodoulos receiving an Arabic honorific from a Latin ruler neatly highlights the flexibility of and permeability between the different cultural and religious groups in Sicily in the opening decade of the twelfth century.

Christodoulos established the template for the powerful first ministers who would control the Sicilian court for the bulk of the twelfth century. He appears in at least nine extant documents from 1107 to the end of Adelaide's regency in 1112.⁷⁸ Christodoulos exercised tremendous authority over the comital court and seems to have been responsible for all of the charters and diplomas issued under Adelaide's regency.⁷⁹ Adelaide charged Christodoulos with the duty of educating young Roger in addition to his role as an administrator.⁸⁰ The appearance of such a dominant figure in the comital court, whose authority exceeded that of any of his predecessors in the court of Roger I, undercuts Ménager's claim that it was Count Roger who elevated Christodoulos to this lofty position. The evidence suggests that, in order to secure her rule from rebellious vassals, Adelaide elevated

a Greek Christian administrator, not from the mainland, but from the area of Sicily over which she exerted the greatest control. She then invested him with a great deal of personal power, both in executing administrative functions and training her young son, in an effort to counterbalance the threat from the local nobility. The Sicilian regent who followed her, the far more extensively documented Queen Margaret, took similar steps to secure her position 50 years later.⁸¹ Arabic narrative accounts of the Sicilian court confirm the scope of Christodoulos' influence during his continued service to Roger II.⁸² These sources also attest to the scope of his authority, claiming that, even when "King Roger became an adult, he shared unlimited authority with the 'Abd al-Raḥmān [Christodoulos] the vizier."⁸³ Christodoulos seems to have dominated the administration of the county of Sicily for both Adelaide and young Roger II.

Christodoulos also played a central role in bringing George of Antioch, the man who would become Roger II's chief minister and shape the Mediterranean character of the Sicilian regency, to the island. The chief biographical sources for George's life come from the Arabic-language accounts of al-Maqrīzī and al-Tijānī, though other Latin and Arabic texts confirm the details found in these accounts.⁸⁴ George was a Greek Christian whose family had fallen out of favor with the Byzantine emperor. He and his family were captured by Zīrid raiders and brought to the ruler Tamīm, where George entered into administrative service in the Zīrid court, ascending to become the governor of Sousee. However, George's younger brother, Simon, raised the ire of Tamīm's son Yaḥyā, who had Simon killed. In 1108, George's position within the Zīrid court became untenable; Tamīm died and Yaḥyā succeeded him as Zīrid ruler.

Fearing that he might suffer the fate that befell his brother, he wrote to Christodoulos and asked the Sicilian administrator to help facilitate his escape from Ifrīqiya. Christodoulos sent a galleon to bring George to Sicily. There, he became Christodoulos' right hand, managing fiscal administration and tax collections, in addition to serving as the chief ambassador to the court of Fāṭimid Egypt.⁸⁵ Al-Maqrīzī maintains that George eventually conspired to slander Christodoulos and manipulated the young King Roger into executing his former teacher. Roger elevated George to chief minister in 1127. He dominated the Sicilian court from that point until his death circa 1152 and ushered in the creation of the Arabic administration of Sicily and the importation of various Islamic trappings of kingship into Roger's court. Adelaide's creation of a chief ministerial position and her elevation of the Greek Christodoulos to fill that office ultimately

enabled George's meteoric rise to power and the transformations that he would bring to the Sicilian court.

Move to Palermo

Adelaide's drift away from the Southern Italian mainland was apparent not only in her choice of administrators but also in the physical location of the capital of the county under her rule. The primary fixed residence and capital of her husband's holdings had been at Mileto, on the Calabrian mainland, though, in the 1090s, Roger I continually traveled throughout his holdings to ensure the loyalty of his subjects.⁸⁶ Beginning in 1109, Adelaide and her young son began to issue comital documents primarily from eastern Sicily, in and around Messina and San Marco. They took up permanent residence there during the end of the regency.⁸⁷ Relocating the center of her court to Sicily fulfilled the same strategic goals as the appointment of Christodoulos. It placed her and her son in a region that she had successfully contested and secured from rebellious Sicilian landholders.

Adelaide also relied on her natal kin to support her regency, a tendency that would ultimately exacerbate tensions between Sicilian Muslims and Christians. Her brother Henry received lands in Sicily around Paternò and Butera, and these grants may have been an effort to quell rebellion and guarantee support for the regency.⁸⁸ Henry encouraged other Northern Italians to settle in these areas of Sicily, hastening the pace of Lombard migration onto the island and providing a further bulwark against potentially recalcitrant barons.⁸⁹

The move to Messina, in retrospect, appears more of a temporary stopping point for the court than an attempt at resettlement. In the latter half of her reign, Adelaide endowed numerous areas around the city of Palermo to selected members of the nobility.⁹⁰ In creating a secure group of trusted vassals in the areas of Sicily with predominantly Muslim populations, she paved the way for the permanent relocation of the country's capital to Palermo, which took place between March and June of 1112. The move to Palermo immersed Roger II and his successors even deeper into the politics of the Mediterranean world. While it by no means signaled the end of Sicilian comital interests in the Italian peninsula, it divided these territorial ambitions. As a result of this move, the Sicilian rulers became increasingly interested in the territories of their Mediterranean neighbors.⁹¹ This Mediterranean focus also set the stage for the increased adoption of eastern Mediterranean and Muslim administrative techniques and personnel.

ROGER'S MEDITERRANEAN AMBITIONS

Adelaide in Jerusalem: A Dowry of Muslims

In the summer of 1112, just after the move to Palermo, Roger II, now sixteen years old, assumed sole possession of his comital title.⁹² Roger was ambitious, eager to elevate himself to the position of king and to expand the territory he controlled. Perhaps because of the influence of Christodoulos and George of Antioch, he turned his attention to the wider Mediterranean world, to Iberia, Jerusalem, and Ifrīqiya, in his pursuit of a royal crown.

Under Roger II, Muslim soldiers continued to dominate the Sicilian military, but they also became increasingly symbolic of the power and aspirations of Sicilian rulers. In 1112, shortly after reaching his majority, Roger II arranged a marriage between his mother, still in her late-thirties, and King Baldwin of Jerusalem. Baldwin, desperate for resources to help sustain the kingdom,⁹³ promised Roger that he would inherit the kingdom should the marriage fail to produce an heir, a possibility made more likely given Adelaide's relatively advanced age. In 1113, Roger sent his mother to Jerusalem adorned with jewels on ships laden with riches. Along with the vast material treasure, Sicily also loaded the ships with the troops and arms which Baldwin so desperately needed to defend his kingdom. In the quotation from the *Historia Ierosolimitana* which began this chapter, Albert of Aachen describes Adelaide's retinue in sumptuous detail, detailing the wealth and extravagance of the gifts that accompanied the queen which included "five hundred men skilled at arms, seven ships laden with gold, silver, purple dye, precious stones and a great number of valuable garments, in addition to weapons, coats of mail, swords, helmets, and shields."⁹⁴ For Albert of Aachen, the capstone to the already extraordinary gifts sent to accompany Adelaide was a unit of Muslim archers, who impressed not only with the splendor of their dress and equipment but also with their martial ability. Albert of Aachen reported that "in one of the seven ships were Saracen men and strong archers, resplendent with the brightness of their precious clothing, having been brought as a present to the king, whose skill at shooting arrows was considered beneath no one in the area of Jerusalem."⁹⁵

When Roger needed to make a gift that showed the wealth and power of his realm, he chose to include these highly trained and well-equipped Muslim soldiers to symbolize his comital power in the wider Mediterranean

world. For Roger II, these Muslim soldiers comprised but a component of a multifaceted gift meant to display his wealth. We have no indication that Roger intended that they serve as a cornerstone, as only one of the seven ships that accompanied Adelaide included Muslim archers, and they did not travel in the same vessel as the queen herself. But for Albert of Aachen, the Muslim soldiers became a centerpiece of the queen's retinue, the final item he records in his litany of the treasures that accompanied Adelaide on her journey. The deployment of these archers highlights the dynamic innovations in the ways in which Sicilian rulers deployed Muslim soldiers in the early twelfth century and how their function evolved from the late eleventh century. The gift illustrated the disjunction between Sicily and the Crusader States of the eastern Mediterranean. While Muslim troops had become a central component of the armies of Sicily, very few Muslims served in the armies of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and other crusader states, and they never served as symbols of power for the lords of regions as they did in Sicily.⁹⁶ Ultimately, the marriage between Adelaide and Baldwin failed to produce an heir and ended in 1117, when the King of Jerusalem repudiated Adelaide from his deathbed and sent her back to Sicily.⁹⁷ She died within a year, and Roger's claim to the throne of Jerusalem was declared void when the marriage was annulled. The rejection of Adelaide, along with the denial of Roger's claim, created a permanent gulf between the counts of Sicily and the kings of Jerusalem and was a primary factor in Sicily's refusal to lend aid to the Crusader States throughout the twelfth century.⁹⁸

North African Expeditions

After reaching the age of majority, Roger II quickly enmeshed himself in the politics of Muslim Ifrīqiya, calling upon the diplomatic connections that his father had forged with Zīrids. The *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis* records that in 1114, Roger intervened on behalf of monks from Monte Cassino who had been captured by Muslim pirates loyal to the Hammadid Amir, al-'Azīz, at that time an ally of the Zīrids.⁹⁹ Roger prevented the monks of Monte Cassino from ransoming their brothers, instead leveraging his political connections in the region in an effort to free the monks. Roger II's successful intervention may have resulted from appealing to the treaties his father had negotiated with the Zīrids or may suggest an independent treaty that the young count had established with the Hammadids, possibly facilitated by George of Antioch or his familiarity with the Zīrid court.

In the first decade of his rule, Roger moved to expand his territory across the Mediterranean and conquer large portions of Ifrīqiya. This conquest would allow Roger II to emulate the accomplishments of his father, expanding his power by extending his dominion over a Muslim populace. However, Latin sources are remarkably silent on Roger's campaign. While it is tempting to blame this lack of evidence on the ultimate failure of these expeditions, the successful campaigns of the 1140s garnered only slightly more attention in the Latin sources. However, several Arabic-language chronicles deal with Roger's attempts to gain control of the North African coast.¹⁰⁰ While medieval Arabic sources detail the invasions, they provide no detail about the composition of Roger's armies and are silent about the presence of Muslim soldiers within the Sicilian forces. These Arabic accounts were composed primarily in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, after the destruction of the Muslim population of Sicily, and they present the Sicilian forces as Christians invading Muslim lands, creating polarizing narratives that obscure the presence of the Muslim soldiers who fought under the Christian lords of Sicily.¹⁰¹ Ibn al-Athīr, an author discussed in more detail in Chap. 4, offers a description of the parties involved in the North African campaign that typifies Arabic-language accounts of this invasion. He identifies this conflict as "the war between the Muslims and the Franks (*al-faranj*) in Ifrīqiya."¹⁰² Ibn al-Athīr erases the presence of Muslim soldiers in Roger's armies. He consistently refers to the Sicilian forces as "the Franks," and their North African opponents as "the Muslims."¹⁰³ Based on the military campaigns of his father and those Roger II himself would launch later in the decade, the Sicilian armies almost certainly included a significant number of Muslim soldiers. However, an accidental conspiracy among extant sources effectively erases any explicit mention of these Muslims in the service of the Sicilian count. Arabic-language authors frame the conflict as a battle between Muslims and Christian Franks, while Latin authors ignore the disastrous campaign in its entirety.

In 1118, Roger II intervened in a dispute between the two North African Muslim leaders, the governor of Gabès and the Zīrid ruler 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Tamīm.¹⁰⁴ 'Alī's ships blockaded the port of Gabès and the governor of the city requested aid from the Sicilian count. Roger sent a Sicilian fleet to relieve the city, but the Zīrid navy engaged the Sicilian fleet, driving them back to Sicily. This skirmish marked the beginning of the unraveling of the alliance that Roger I had established with Tamīm at the end of the eleventh century. 'Alī had seized Sicilian merchants operat-

ing in Mahdiyya, and Roger II cajoled 'Alī through a series of threats and appeals to past alliances in order to gain the release of his agents. Shortly thereafter, 'Alī pursued an alliance with the Almoravids in an effort to garner allies against Sicily. In the early 1120s, two events occurred which spurred Roger into direct actions against Mahdiyya. 'Alī ibn Yahyā ibn Tamīm died in 1121, leaving his twelve-year-old son al-Ḥasan as heir and prompting revolts across North Africa. Then, in 1122, Roger II held the Zīrid responsible for an Almoravid raid that sacked Nicotera in Calabria. In 1123, Roger sent the Sicilian navy, under the command of Christodoulos and George of Antioch, to attack Mahdiyya. The result was a disaster. As they crossed the Mediterranean, storms wreaked havoc on the Sicilian fleet. The Sicilian forces managed to bribe a Bedouin garrison to gain control of the fortifications of al-Dīmās, but a Zīrid counterattack soundly routed Roger's armies, inflicting heavy losses and driving them out of Ifrīqiya.

The disastrous campaign of 1123 did not end Roger's involvement in North Africa. In 1127, he launched a small raid along the North African coast. In response, Muslim pirates sacked Syracuse and Patti shortly thereafter.¹⁰⁵ Roger attempted to capture the bases of operations for these pirates to reassert his control over the island of Malta later that year.¹⁰⁶ Roger then entered into treaty with Raymond III, count of Barcelona, to launch a joint expedition against Muslims in the Balearics.¹⁰⁷ However, the death of the Duke of Apulia created an opportunity for Roger II to extend his authority over mainland Italy, which drew his attention, for the time being, away from further Mediterranean adventures.

Marriage to Elvira

In 1117 or 1118, at roughly the same time Roger became increasingly active in North African politics, he also arranged his marriage to Elvira, the daughter of the King of Castile and León, Alfonso VI.¹⁰⁸ The marriage between the count of Sicily and the Spanish princess, who may have been the daughter of a Muslim convert to Christianity, highlights not only Roger's focus on the politics of the wider Mediterranean during this period of his rule but also the ambiguous nature of religious affiliation during this period and a lack of concern on the part of Latin authors of the early twelfth century in erecting and policing religious boundaries. Roger's decision to marry Elvira signals his aspirations as a ruler to adopt

policies regarding the Muslim population parallel to those of her father, Alfonso VI, as well as the ways in which he sought to shape representations of Sicilian dynastic power.

Elvira leaves behind only a scant presence in the historical record, with occasional remarks recorded in chronicles and charters in which she is mentioned only in regard to either her husband, father or children. The couple married when Elvira was approximately 18 years old and produced an heir, also named Roger, within a year.¹⁰⁹ This Roger was the first of the 6 children, 5 of them sons, whom Elvira bore over the 18-year span of her marriage to Roger II.¹¹⁰ While Elvira's paternal lineage is certain, the identity of her mother remains ambiguous. Alfonso's fourth wife was a woman named Isabella whom he married around 1100, at roughly the same time as Elvira's birth. Contemporary sources pay little heed to Isabella, but a historiographical tradition dating back to the thirteenth century identifies her as the daughter of Louis VI. However, no French sources acknowledge such a daughter. In addition, Louis' own date of birth in 1081 precludes the possibility that he fathered this Isabella. More recent historical inquiries have posited the possibility that Isabella might have been the daughter of a Burgundian noble house, with which Alfonso sought an alliance.¹¹¹

The other possible mother of Elvira was the Muslim princess, Zaida.¹¹² She was the daughter-in-law of the *tā'ifa* king of Seville, Muḥammad ibn 'Abbād al-Mu'tamid and the widow of his son Faṭḥ al-Ma'mūn of Córdoba.¹¹³ Her father-in-law had a long association with Alfonso VI, dating back to 1078, when Mu'tamid agreed to pay tribute to the King of León-Castile in order to avert a military campaign against Seville. Sometime after the death of her husband and the fall of Córdoba in 1091, Zaida became the concubine of Alfonso VI. This relationship was politically advantageous for Alfonso, who hoped his concubinage of Zaida would help secure the loyalty of Spanish Muslim lords against the North African Almoravids. Despite the lack of legitimacy of their liaison, Zaida bore Alfonso's only son, Sancho, who was probably Alfonso VI's heir until his untimely death in 1108. Zaida eventually converted to Christianity, which may, in part, explain the uncertainty surrounding Elvira's parentage. Upon her conversion, she adopted the name Isabella, creating confusion and a possible conflation with Isabella of France in the historical record.¹¹⁴ To further complicate matters, in 1106, Alfonso married Zaida, now Isabella, in an effort to legitimize their son, Sancho.¹¹⁵ However, whether this marriage was an affirmation of the marriage to the same Isabella he married in 1098/1099, the mother of Elvira, or a marriage to

his concubine that occurred after the death of the aforementioned French noble remains in dispute. These already murky genealogical waters are further muddied by the existence of Alfonso VI's illegitimate daughter, also named Elvira, who should not be confused with her half-sister who married the count of Sicily.

Twelfth-century accounts display little interest in the religious faith of Elvira's mother; no Southern Italian source mentions Zaida or her conversion to Christianity. Alexander of Telese's *Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, a panegyric to Roger II, provides the most detailed narrative account of Elvira, but much of it centers on her death in 1135, around the age of 35.¹¹⁶ Alexander reports that Roger was quite ill as well but recovered from the disease that claimed the life of his wife. With her passing, Roger closeted himself away from the world, refusing to see any but his closest servants. His withdrawal was so complete that rumors began to circulate that the King himself had died.¹¹⁷

Alexander of Telese described Elvira upon her death only as a woman who, "while she was alive, shone forth by the grace of religion and by the largess of her almsgiving."¹¹⁸ Despite Alexander's claims that she was distinguished by her generosity, we have no extant charters that record gifts or foundations to the religious orders made by the queen. Further, Elvira does not appear either as a witness or a named party in any of the charters produced by her husband during her lifetime. Though several spurious documents mention Elvira after her death,¹¹⁹ Roger only invoked her memory in two extant charters, a donation to the Church of St. George in Palermo in 1140¹²⁰ and a donation to the abbey of Montevergine in 1142.¹²¹ In both cases, Roger places her among the list of his family for whose souls he makes the donation; she is listed after his father and mother, and before his children. Aside from these few appearances in her husband's charters after her death and the brief description of her marriage and death in various chronicles, there is no other direct textual data concerning Elvira's life on the island. The scant amount of information about Elvira has relegated her to a historical footnote, a person known primarily by name, who, other than her role in giving birth to Roger's children, is often seen as a figure with little to offer scholars of medieval Sicily.

I believe that Roger sought to marry Elvira because his political ambitions and the way he envisioned his relationship with his subject Muslim population mirrored those of her father, Alfonso VI, the second son of Fernando I, King of León-Castile. Upon his death in 1065, Fernando had divided his territory between his three sons, who almost immedi-

ately went to war with each other in an effort to consolidate their portion of their father's holdings. Alfonso was defeated by Sancho, his elder brother, and forced to seek refuge in the Muslim *tā'ifa* of Toledo in 1072.¹²² Alfonso resided in that Islamic court for almost a year until assassins killed Sancho, allowing Alfonso to regain control of all of his father's territories.

Living in the Islamic court did nothing to reduce Alfonso's ambitions for Toledo, or his ambitions for the *tā'ifa* states which he conquered in 1085 and reduced to tributary status. Alfonso displayed some generosity to the former ruler of Toledo, Al-Qādir, whom he allowed to rule Valencia, another of the king's *tā'ifa* tributaries.¹²³ Alfonso also worked to forge closer ties to Christendom across the Pyrenees. He invited Cluny into his kingdom, cooperated with Gregory VII to use a standardized Roman liturgy across his domain, rather than a mozarabic one, and married Aquitanian, Burgundian and Lombard wives to cement political alliances.¹²⁴

If Elvira was, in fact, Zaida's daughter, it indicates a pattern of cultural association between the Sicilian queens and the Islamic world. As the daughter of a Muslim princess, she would likely have been knowledgeable about Islamic court culture.¹²⁵ Though her absence from documentary evidence precludes any definitive statements, her mother's background would almost certainly have influenced her attitudes toward court culture. It may very well have been her own influence, channeled through her husband, which contributed to the appreciation and cultivation of Islamic arts under the reign of Roger II.¹²⁶ However, even if Elvira's mother was a French noblewoman, faint echoes of this pattern of association still remain. In marrying Elvira, Roger united himself with the daughter of a man who, in many ways, was a model of the political behavior he hoped to emulate. When he came to power, Alfonso's familial holdings were divided between himself and his brothers. Alfonso VI secured all of these familial territories and brought them under his own domain, as Roger would do in the 1120s.¹²⁷ Alfonso VI had reshaped the political landscape of medieval Iberia through the conquest of Toledo, but, much as Roger I had done in Palermo, he preserved the local traditions and religious rights of the resident Muslim population.¹²⁸ Alfonso VI proudly spoke of his dominance over both his Christian and Muslim subjects, dubbing himself the "Emperor of two religions," a title which would certainly have appealed to Roger's own ambitions.¹²⁹

MUSLIM SOLDIERS AND THE CREATION OF THE SICILIAN
REGNO

The Conquest of Southern Italy

The circumstances that led to Roger's active deployment of Muslim soldiers to project his power across the Southern Italian mainland requires an exploration of the politics of dynastic succession among the Norman rulers in the region and Roger II's continued efforts to secure a kingship for himself. In July of 1127, Roger II's nephew, William, the Duke of Apulia and Calabria, died without a direct heir. This death created an opportunity for Roger, who claimed that William had made verbal promises that he should inherit William's lands and title. Roger gathered Sicilian forces and made haste for Salerno, which had served as the capital for the Duchy of Apulia. After a series of tense negotiations over ten days, Roger's show of force and willingness to grant crucial concessions swayed the leaders of Salerno to recognize his overlordship, and Roger moved to extend his rule over the rest of the region.¹³⁰

Pope Honorius II disputed Roger's ascension to the Duchy of Apulia, claiming that the papacy retained the right to invest the title.¹³¹ Honorius excommunicated Roger and, according to Falco of Benevento, promised remission of sins for those who fought and died against the Sicilian count.¹³² Honorius II rallied a coalition of nobles from Southern Italy, most notably Prince Robert II of Capua and Roger's brother-in-law Rainulf, Count of Alife and Caiazzo, who did not want to submit to Roger's rule. In 1128, Roger II's armies crossed into Apulia, capturing Taranto, Otranto, and Brindisi before Honorius II's coalition could assemble and confront the Sicilian army. Neither army engaged the other, but Roger outlasted his opponents, keeping his forces in the field far longer than that of Honorius and his allies.¹³³ By August, Honorius recognized the weakness of his position and invested Roger with the title of Duke of Apulia and Calabria, effectively dissolving the coalition that had opposed Roger. The count of Sicily spent the next two years subjugating those nobles who still resisted his rule and consolidating his hold on his newly acquired mainland territories.

In 1130, the death of Honorius II and subsequent division within the papal curia about who should succeed him provided Roger II with an additional opportunity to both expand his authority in Southern Italy and

finally fulfill his long-standing desire to claim royal title. One faction of cardinals elevated Anacletus II to succeed Honorius and the other selected Innocent II.¹³⁴ While Anacletus controlled Rome, Innocent II had the support of Bernard of Clairvaux, the most prominent Latin Christian religious leader of the day, and of most of the sovereigns of Latin Europe. Desperate for allies, Anacletus needed Roger's support. Roger agreed to aid the would-be pope, but only if Anacletus were to recognize Roger as king of Sicily, Calabria and Apulia and grant Roger a number of concessions to help him control ecclesiastical holdings throughout Southern Italy. Anacletus had little choice but to agree; in December of 1130, Roger II was crowned king of Sicily.¹³⁵ Roger's newly acquired crown and his alliance with Anacletus ensured that warfare would continue throughout Southern Italy. In 1132, nobles throughout Southern Italy, including Count Rainulf and Prince Robert, rebelled against Roger's rule. By 1137, German Emperor Lothair II rallied to Innocent II's cause and invaded Roger's kingdom. Roger's involvement in the papal schism allowed him to claim the title of king but also thrust Southern Italy into a decade of near-constant conflict.

Soldiers of the Crown

Roger's efforts to seize and maintain control of the Southern Italian mainland necessitated frequent mobilization of soldiers from his holdings in Sicily, including a large number of Muslim soldiers. Unlike the Arabic sources reporting on the North African campaigns of the 1120s, who had eliminated the presence of Muslim soldiers to highlight the Christian identity of the Sicilian forces, the Latin sources from this period make frequent reference to the use of Muslim soldiers and never suggest that the presence of non-Christians within Roger's army makes either the king or his cause in any way less Christian. However, only Latin authors from within the newly formed *regno* recognized the increased symbolic importance of these soldiers, an import absent from our eleventh-century sources, equating the presence of Muslim soldiers with Roger's newly proclaimed royal authority. Latin authors from beyond the newly formed *regno*, much like their eleventh-century predecessors, tended to either ignore the presence of these non-Christian soldiers or merely note it in passing, rather than ascribing them with any symbolic or particular significance.

Sources from the mid-twelfth century illustrate the way in which Muslim soldiers served as representations of royal authority but contain

sparse information about their tactical or strategic function. These sources offer little data concerning the number of Muslims who served in Roger II's armies. One can make rough estimates about the size of these forces by examining sources from outside this period. Malaterra insisted that Roger had mustered several thousand Muslim soldiers into his armies at the end of the eleventh century, and Hohenstaufen records from the mid-thirteenth century indicate Frederick II and his son Manfred regularly fielded armies which contained between five thousand and ten thousand Muslim soldiers.¹³⁶ In all likelihood the number of Muslim soldiers equaled, if not exceeded, these eleventh- and thirteenth-century totals, since Roger II ruled over a far larger subject population of Muslims than Frederick and Manfred. Twelfth-century sources give some indication of the function of these Muslim soldiers within the larger Norman armies. Roger's gift of Muslims to the kingdom of Jerusalem suggests that Muslim soldiers frequently served as archers, while Alexander of Telesse emphasizes the role of Muslims in operating Roger's siege engines at the campaign against Montepeloso.¹³⁷ Thirteenth-century sources confirm that Sicilian Muslim soldiers were highly specialized in the production and operation of both bows and siege engines,¹³⁸ suggesting that Muslims played similar roles in Roger's attempts to solidify his control over the Southern Italian mainland.¹³⁹

Alexander of Telesse and Falco of Benevento provide the most detailed Southern Italian narrative accounts of Roger's attempts to secure control over the mainland during this period. Both men not only attest to the presence of Muslim soldiers within Roger's armies but also detail specific instances in which these soldiers increasingly symbolized Roger's aspirations for royal control over the region. However, the two authors only explicitly identify "Saracen" soldiers in a small handful of instances throughout their texts. Both authors are far more likely to describe Roger's soldiers in geographic terms, as Sicilian, rather than evoke their religious faith.

Falco of Benevento

The author who includes the most detailed accounts of the role of Roger's Muslim soldiers in the Southern Italian campaigns is Falco of Benevento, the Southern Italian author most critical of Roger's attempt to extend royal authority into the region. Falco served as a notary and judge in the town of Benevento.¹⁴⁰ He composed the *Chronicon Beneventanum*, an annalistic history written in multiple stages¹⁴¹ which covered the history

of Benevento from roughly 1101 to 1144, shortly before his death.¹⁴² The early years of the *Chronicon Beneventanum* tend to be shorter entries narrowly focused on the city of Benevento. In 1127, with Roger's arrival to the mainland, Falco offers more detail and covers a wider geographic region. Because Falco composed his annalistic entries on multiple occasions, the *Chronicon Beneventanum* does not offer a single, monolithic representation of Roger. Falco, whose principal interests lay in ensuring the security and independence of the city of Benevento, grew more hostile toward Roger over the course of the text. Falco represented the Sicilian ruler in increasingly negative terms, and, particularly after the events of 1133, he depicted Roger as a tyrant bent on usurping the liberties of his home city. Falco ascribes both function and symbol to Roger's use of Muslim soldiers, while never invoking the Sicilian ruler's use of non-Christian soldiers as evidence to support his claims of Roger's tyranny.

Though Falco makes note of Roger's Southern Italian campaigns beginning in 1127, he never makes explicit reference to Muslims within the Sicilian army until Roger's war with the city of Benevento in 1132.¹⁴³ Roger traveled to Benevento in the summer of 1132,¹⁴⁴ hoping to enlist aid for his campaigns against Count Rainulf of Alife and Prince Robert of Capua. According to Falco, Roger met with Benevento's civic leaders, led by Cardinal Crescentiu and Archbishop Landulf. The king promised to make peace with the Benevento and to exempt the Beneventans from a series of taxes imposed upon them by previous Norman leaders.¹⁴⁵ In return, the civic leaders took oaths that they would not harm the king and "would make active and unremitting war against Prince [Robert] and Count [Rainulf]."¹⁴⁶ However, rumor spread through the city that Roger II had bribed these civic leaders to gain their assent to this treaty and secretly planned to seize Benevento and take direct control over the city. A riot ensued, which forced Cardinal Crescentiu to flee the city and Archbishop Landulf to retreat to his palace. Falco claims that the citizens of Benevento rejected the oaths to Roger and he gives specific voice to the terms that offended them. The Beneventans insist that

We refuse to be fettered to the king and to be obliged by oaths of allegiance to tire, to pant in the blazing sun on his military campaigns alongside the Sicilians and the Calabrians and the Apulians and to exhaust ourselves with hard labor. Having been accustomed to an easy life and never having been familiar with the perils of an army, we will not at all honor the partnership with such a king.¹⁴⁷

Here, Falco lays out the composition of Roger's armies, but does so in geographic, rather than religious, terms. The Beneventans rejected wholesale the notion of participating in Roger's military adventure. While they objected to fighting side by side with Sicilians, a group that would have included Muslims, they do not voice those objections on religious grounds. They voiced an equal reluctance to fighting alongside Southern Italians who would have been primarily Latin Christians. They simply claimed to be averse to fighting at all, no matter who enlisted them to do so. The religious faith of Roger's soldiers played no role in the deterioration of Benevento's relationship with Roger, but violence against those same Muslim soldiers would become a symbol of resistance to Roger's authority later in Falco's chronicle.

The citizens of Benevento entered into an alliance with Roger II's enemies, Count Rainulf and Prince Robert, forcing the king to withdraw south to Salerno. As he retreated, Rao of Fragento,¹⁴⁸ an ally of Prince Robert, launched an attack against Roger's retreating armies, leading to the first explicit mention of Roger's Saracen soldiers. Falco reports that "Rao attacked certain Saracens of the king, who escorted [Roger II], and, having captured them, led them off as prisoners of war. He ordered that one of them should be beheaded and the head transferred to Prince [Robert] as an account of the victory. The prince delivered the head to Capua in order exalt his reputation and renown."¹⁴⁹ Falco switches from the geographic terms used earlier in the text to the genealogical term "Saracen," highlighting the symbolic importance of these Saracen soldiers and the violence against the bodies of these soldiers which served as a visible rejection of Roger's royal authority. Roger's "Saracen" soldiers were a symbol of his ambitions to elevate himself above the rest of the Southern Italian nobility and exert control over the region. Violence against his "Saracens" demonstrated a rejection of both Roger's attempts to elevate himself and to politically dominate the region. The severed head commemorated their act of defiance and was visually distinct enough that Rao and Robert both recognized and displayed it as a marker of their ability to physically resist the extension of Roger's power.

Falco also suggests that Roger recognized the power claims that Rao and Robert articulated in this attack, which he saw as a direct assault on his royal majesty: "The king, hearing of the massacre and the captivity of his Saracens, grieved exceedingly. Driven by his anguish, he threatened that when the right time for revenge emerged, he would render repayment."¹⁵⁰ This loss proved a sufficient humiliation for Roger to reverse his military

stratagem. He turned from his retreat to Salerno to reengage his enemies, laying siege to Robert's *castrum* at Nocera with disastrous results. Prince Robert relieved the besieged *castrum* and routed Roger's forces, driving him back to Salerno. Despite the central role of the attacks against Roger's Saracen soldiers in provoking this engagement, Falco construes the conflict between the armies of Prince Robert and King Roger as a war between coreligionists, stating, "No one alive at this time remembered a battle so great and a massacre of such size occurring between Christians."¹⁵¹ The Saracen soldiers may have symbolized Roger's power and authority, but their presence in Roger's army did not raise questions about his religious faith. Regardless of the presence of non-Christian participants, Falco constructed this war as a battle between two Christian parties.

Falco becomes increasingly hostile toward Roger as the chronicle shifts to 1133. He sharpens his critique against the king, calling attention to the fact that Saracens fill the ranks of his armies. He states, "King Roger of the Sicilians, having assembled an army of Saracens, crossed the Straits of Messina without warning."¹⁵² However, for Falco, Roger's 1133 campaign in Apulia was most noteworthy not because of the religious faith of its soldiers but because of the immense cruelty of its commander. Falco reported that Roger "was inflamed with such great cruelty to fellow Christians, as has never been heard in the present age,"¹⁵³ and that "the king behaved to Christians in a manner that had never been heard in the present age."¹⁵⁴ While Falco calls attention to the fact that a Christian king inflicted these horrors on other Christians, he draws no explicit connections between Roger's atrocities and his use of Muslim soldiers. If Falco had thought that the use of Muslim soldiers highlighted Roger's lack of Christian faith or exposed the king's negative qualities as a ruler, he would have made explicit reference to the role of Saracen soldiers in carrying out these atrocities. His silence suggests that no such stigma was attached to the use of Muslim soldiers in the mid-twelfth century.

Falco repeatedly criticizes Roger, describing him as "an evil king," "a great tyrant," "a cruel tyrant" and a "robber."¹⁵⁵ Roger's sins are those of a cruel, avaricious and rapacious overlord. Falco frames his critique in religious terms, casting Roger II as "heedless of the Catholic faith" (*catholicae fidei immemor*) and "a subjugator of the Christian religion" (*christianae religionis expugnator*),¹⁵⁶ for his bloodlust and cruelty. He compares Roger II to past Roman tyrants to illustrate the depths of his inhumanity: "Not even Nero, most cruel emperor of the pagans, administered such a great massacre upon the Christians."¹⁵⁷ After his sack of Alife, Falco writes

that "not since days of the Greeks and the Pagans had such a great catastrophe and burning happened to Christians."¹⁵⁸ Falco ties Roger II to a non-Christian past, not because of the use of the Muslim troops but for his capricious use of violence. Falco's critique of Roger's tyranny would be repeated by many of the Sicilian king's opponents, but Roger's use of non-Christian troops played no role in these rhetorical attacks.

Alexander of Telese

Falco's contemporary, Alexander of Telese, painted a far more laudatory picture of Roger II's character and also confirms both the basic symbolic and practical functions of Muslim soldiers offered by Falco, as well as corroborating the link between the resistance to royal authority and the violence against the king's Muslim soldiers. Alexander served as the abbot of the monastery of San Salvatore near Telese in the Duchy of Benevento.¹⁵⁹ He composed his *Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie* in late 1135 or early 1136 at the behest of Countess Matilda of Alife, Roger's half-sister and the wife of Rainulf II, one of Roger's most steadfast opponents in the region.¹⁶⁰ Alexander begins the *Ystoria* in earnest with his description of the chaos that consumed the mainland after the death of Duke William in 1127.¹⁶¹ The text serves as a panegyric to the king, depicting Roger as a divinely ordained agent chosen by God to rule over Southern Italy and restore order to the region.

The only sustained discussion of Muslims in Alexander of Telese's text occurs in 1132, shortly after Rao's beheading of Sicilian soldiers.¹⁶² Roger II had taken possession of Bari earlier in the year and stationed Muslim soldiers in Bari in an effort to erect fortifications. Alexander reports that hostilities erupted between these Muslim soldiers and the nobility of the city: "The citizens of Bari were about to turn away from [Roger II], since they, having been provoked by rage, had killed some Saracens who [Roger] had assigned to Bari to construct fortifications. This happened because the sons of certain noblemen had been killed by these same Saracens."¹⁶³

This outbreak of violence forced Roger to return to Bari in an attempt to pacify the situation. Having just suffered his defeat at Nocera, Roger could not tolerate an uprising at Bari and acted to appease its citizens, abandoning his plans for a new fortress and refraining from placing his troops in the city. Alexander provides no details or motivations to explain the eruption of violence between the royal soldiers and the local magnate, but the demand that Roger remove his occupying troops by the citizenry of Bari suggests that the source of this discontent was the stationing of

Muslim soldiers in the region and the claims of royal authority that they embodied.

These chronicles offer our first records of violence targeting Muslims in the service of the rulers of Sicily, a trend which would become increasingly prominent in the latter half of the twelfth century. Alexander of Teleso's description of the murder at Bari and Falco of Benevento's account of the ambush, decapitation and grisly display of Roger's Muslim soldiers both illustrate the ways in which objections to royal policy played out in violence against the Muslim soldiers. These attacks had little to do with the religious faith of these soldiers, but served as proclamations rejecting royal authority. The Muslim soldier, found exclusively within the armies of the king, was, by 1132, a powerful and visible symbol of the power of the Sicilian monarch, and anti-royal sentiment became physically manifest in attacks against Sicilian Muslims.

For Robert of Capua and his allies, who viewed Roger as unfairly abusing his royal privileges in forcing Robert to support Anacletus II and refusing to restore property that he had stripped from one of Robert's vassals,¹⁶⁴ the Saracen soldier was the embodiment of Roger's exploitation of his newly declared royal privileges. No other lord in the region employed Muslim soldiers, and the exclusive association of "Saracens" with the crown invested them with a symbolic import absent from other soldiers. Taking the head of not just one of Roger's soldiers, but specifically of one of his Muslim infantrymen, was a direct attack on the authority of the Sicilian monarchy. Similarly, when a city like Bari chafed at royal edicts and wanted to preserve its independence, the desire for local autonomy was realized in violent actions against the Muslim soldiers who were increasingly seen as the embodiment of royal rule. This symbolism was understood not only by the rebels and the disgruntled citizenry of Bari but also by Roger II, who capitulated to the citizens of Bari rather than risk further rebellion. He was moved to action against the rebels by the decapitation of his soldiers.¹⁶⁵

This association between violence against the Muslims of Sicily and hostility toward the crown prefigures another symbolic relationship explored in Chap. 6: the connection between the Sicilian monarchy and its Muslim eunuchs. The decapitation of Roger's Muslim soldiers in 1132 presaged how dissatisfaction with the crown manifested in violent attacks against the palace eunuchs 30 years later.

Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon*, examined in detail in Chap. 4, provides the best illustration of the disjunction between mid-twelfth-century

sources like Falco and Alexander of Telese and the religious polemic present in early thirteenth-century texts. The *Chronicon* includes a detailed description of the role of Roger's Muslims at the Nardò in 1129, probably composed around the year 1200.¹⁶⁶ They reflect a much later and radically different understanding of Roger's Muslim soldiers than the near-contemporaneous mid-twelfth-century sources.

In 1129 . . . Duke Roger crossed the straits from Sicily, came to Apulia and proceeded to Taranto. Next he went to Nardò with a great army, for it is said that he had three thousand knights and up to six thousand foot soldiers, archers, and Saracens. He captured Nardò, which had been abandoned . . . Moreover, he ordered the blood of Christians to be savagely shed by Saracens. For instance, they killed old men. They dashed and cleaved with swords children snatched from the bosom of their mothers. They destroyed priests next to crosses and altars. They scattered the Sacraments of the church, the holy chrism, under their boots to be mocked. They defiled wives before the eyes of their husbands. [Duke Roger] ordered the remaining survivors fettered and carried off to Sicily. After that he attacked Brindisi with the ill-natured army and in the month of June erected a siege of the city by both land and sea.¹⁶⁷

The *Chronicon* provides a litany of atrocities committed not just by Roger's armies but specifically by his Saracen soldiers. The text explicitly frames this violence in religious terms, with Roger deploying an army of non-Christians to desecrate holy churches, murder priests and rape Christian women. The text deploys polemical tropes of religious warfare to undermine Roger's military campaign and stands in sharp contrast to the neutral discussion of Saracen soldiers from authors like Falco of Benevento and Alexander of Telese. Mid-twelfth-century authors did not see Saracen soldiers as a polemically charged category, but the perception of these soldiers shifted radically by the early thirteenth century, in the wake of vitriolic anti-Islamic invectives that invoked the use Muslim soldiers to demonize Sicilian rulers.

Semipagano Tiranno: *The View from Beyond the Peninsula*

Roger's political actions in the 1130s, his interference in papal politics, his battles to control Southern Italy and his conflict with the German emperor made the Sicilian *regno* a noteworthy topic for numerous authors across Latin Christendom, most of whom portrayed the Sicilian king in a

negative light. In her seminal article, “Roger II of Sicily, Rex-Tyrannus, In Twelfth-Century Political Thought,” Helene Wieruszowski argues that Bernard of Clairvaux categorized Roger II as a tyrant of Sicily for his usurpation of authority that rightly belonged to the emperor, who served as secular lieutenant of the papacy.¹⁶⁸ In an 1135 letter to Emperor Lothar, Bernard decried Roger as a false king and champion of a schismatic pope, pleading with the Emperor to support Innocent’s claim to the papacy and urging him to march to Southern Italy and defeat the secular ally of the illegitimate Anacletus. Wieruszowski illustrates how this charge of tyranny became the dominant critique of Roger among his mid-twelfth-century Latin critics.

Though Bernard himself makes no references to Muslims in Roger’s service, Wieruszowski argues that these Muslims play a role in the construction of the charge of tyranny leveled against the Sicilian king. Seizing on the *Annalista Saxo*’s description of Roger as a “semi-pagan tyrant” (*semipagano tiranno*),¹⁶⁹ Wieruszowski argues that the phrase *Semipagano*, “of course, hints at Roger’s sympathetic attitude toward Islam and his Arabic surroundings,”¹⁷⁰ and he later adds that Roger’s governance in Apulia after 1138 “[was characterized by] brutality and cruelty with ruthless financial exploitation . . . which was made all the more intolerable as it was frequently enforced by Roger’s Moslem mercenaries who were not expected to show mercy to Christians.”¹⁷¹ Wieruszowski uses the *Chronicon*’s thirteenth-century description of the atrocities at Nardò to support this assertion, without realizing that this passage stands in sharp contrast to the accounts produced in the mid-twelfth century.

What did the author of the *Annalista Saxo* mean when he described Roger II as “*Semipagano*,” literally “half-pagan”? Latin authors routinely described southern Italian Muslims as pagans,¹⁷² but the term “semi-pagan” does not appear in any of the extant twelfth-century texts dealing with Sicily. If we look throughout the wider twelfth-century Latin corpus, the word *Semipagano*, half-pagan, held a multiplicity of meanings that extended far beyond descriptions of Muslims. The term could have an overt religious meaning, as seen when Cosmas of Prague used “*Semipagano*” in reference to Bohemian villages that had converted to Christianity but still continued to make sacrifices to demons on feast days.¹⁷³ Some authors simply used the term to mean uncultured or unskilled, like John of Salisbury, who makes a self-deprecating reference to himself and his “semi-pagan” attempts to praise his prince, in comparison to the more cultured words of his English contemporaries.¹⁷⁴ A

closer examination of the charge that Roger was semi-pagan reveals that the accusation had nothing to do with his use of Muslim soldiers or his adoption of the trappings of Islamic culture. Much like Bernard, other mid-twelfth-century authors outside of the Italian peninsula rarely took note of the Muslims of the *regno*. These writers generally remained silent on the subject of Muslim soldiers, who never took on the same symbolic importance seen in the works of Southern Italian writers like Falco of Benevento or Alexander of Telese. Writers from outside Sicily developed an elaborate critique of the tyrannical behavior of King Roger, but his Muslim soldiers played no role in their denunciations.

Unpacking the charge that Roger II was a "semi-pagan tyrant" involves understanding the *Annalista Saxo* and exploring the context for this particular accusation. The *Annalista Saxo* is an annalistic history that spans from 741 to 1139, much of which is derived from other sources. We know very little about the anonymous author of the text, but he was certainly a partisan of Lothar and probably composed the *Annalista Saxo* around 1150, making the text roughly contemporaneous with the events it records. The *Annalista Saxo* addresses Roger and the Southern Italian *regno*, in the context of Lothar's march into Southern Italy and his numerous military victories in the region, before his eventual withdrawal to Northern Italy in 1137 and his death shortly thereafter.

The anonymous author of the *Annalista Saxo* makes the colorful accusation that Roger is a "semi-pagan tyrant" in the context of a settlement offer that the Sicilian king attempts to broker with Lothar after the emperor's string of military victories in Southern Italy. The specifics of the charge stem not, as Wieruszowski asserted, from Roger's use of Muslim soldiers but from his abuse of the church.¹⁷⁵ In detailing Emperor Lothar's campaigns in Southern Italy, the *Annalista Saxo* makes no mention of Muslim soldiers opposing German forces. Other sources identify Muslim participation in specific engagements in the campaign, but even when the author of the *Annalista Saxo* addresses these same battles, he takes no note of the religious composition of Roger's army.¹⁷⁶

The author questions Roger's orthodoxy in response to an armistice that the Sicilian king offers to the German emperor. Roger offers a vast sum of money to Lothar, in addition to one of his sons as a hostage, if the emperor recognizes another of Roger's sons as the Lord of Apulia. The author tells us that the emperor rejected this claim, since "the emperor paid more attention to the harmony of the church than wealth, and he entirely refused to surrender the province to the semi-pagan tyrant." Earlier in

the text, the author accuses Roger of being a tyrant, though not a semi-pagan, in the discussion of his usurpation of territory in Apulia.¹⁷⁷ In the absence of any explicit mention to Saracen soldiers in the text, we have no reason to assume that the intended audience for the *Annalista Saxo* would have been aware of, or particularly concerned with, Roger's use of Muslim troops in Southern Italy. This silence of disinterest undermines Wieruszowski's argument that the author intended to use the term *semi-pagano* to allude to either Roger's Muslim soldiers or any of the Islamic cultural elements which he had adopted in his court. In all likelihood, the author used *semipagano* in much the same way that Falco of Benevento deployed comparisons to Roman rulers, conjuring up images of a leader who unjustly oppressed the church.

The writings of Otto, Bishop of Freising, demonstrate a strategic silence on the topic of Sicilian Muslims. Otto's writings feature critiques of Roger's tyranny, but again relate it to his abuse of the church and never connect the accusation to his use of Muslim soldiers. Otto discussed the Sicilian *regno* and its rulers in both his *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*, a universal history, and *Gesta Friderici Imperatori*, a history of the reign of Frederick Barbarossa. Otto occupied the highest echelon of both the German church and nobility; he was the grandson of Henry IV, related to most of the German rulers of the twelfth century, and an advisor to both Conrad III and Frederick Barbarossa. As such, he was a fierce partisan of imperial claims of dominion over the Italian South and sought to undermine the legitimacy of the Sicilian rulers in his writings. He composed his sections of the *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus* during the 1140s, concluding in 1146, making it an account composed during Roger's lifetime. Otto wrote the initial books of *Gesta Friderici Imperatori* covering Barbarossa's life through 1156, but Otto's death in 1158 forced one of his pupils to continue the work.

Otto mirrors Falco's critique of the Sicilian as tyrant and uses the invective *tyrannus* almost every time he mentions either Roger or his successors.¹⁷⁸ For Otto, the apex of Roger's cruelty is displayed after he regains control of Southern Italy in 1139.

[Roger] crushed the inhabitants [of Campania] with many punishments and continues to oppress them even to today. Also, he savagely plundered many ecclesiastical treasures of the monastery of blessed Benedict erected on Monte Cassino, venerated by the whole region. . . storming the city of Bari he carried out a cruel and inhuman crime. After he occupied the city,

not only did he afflict the living with various tortures, but he also raged against the dead. Having exhumed Duke Reginald, he ordered him dragged through the streets. This and other works of cruelty, on the pattern of ancient tyrants of Sicily. . . we omit because they are known to everyone.¹⁷⁹

Otto argues that Roger's behavior marks him not as just a cruel lord but also as a foe of the church whose abuses of authority mirror those of tyrants from antiquity. According to Otto, Lothar encourages his soldiers into battle by assuring them that they "will have taken up arms against a tyrant, an enemy not only of the kingdom, but also an enemy of the church and an excommunicate."¹⁸⁰ Otto concludes his discussion of Roger by reminding the audience that he only secured his crown through unholy violence against the pope. In 1139, after Lothar had traveled north across the Alps, "Roger, seized the Pope with a treacherous attack. . . shamefully casting his hands on the anointed of the Lord. He extorted from [the pope] the legal right of the title king of Sicily as well as acquittal from anathematization."¹⁸¹ Otto saw Roger as an enemy of God and the papacy, but he never made any attempt to link that status to his use of Muslim soldiers.

In fact, Otto's writings not only ignore but actively erase the presence of Muslims in Sicily. When discussing *Sarraceni ex Affrica* raiding Benevento and surrounding areas in the Southern Italian mainland in the ninth century, he obscures the Muslim conquest of the island of Sicily and Sicily's role as a staging area for these subsequent attacks.¹⁸² His account of Robert Guiscard and of Roger's conquest of Sicily and Southern Italy is in the most general of terms and makes no mention of the Muslims whom they conquered.¹⁸³ The silence probably resulted from Otto's desire to both accentuate his depiction of Sicily as the home for classical tyrants and to minimize the role of Roger I, the father of his political adversary, in spreading Christian domination over the island. Otto may have thought detailing the history of Muslim occupation and Norman conquest diluted the associations that he hoped to draw between the actions of twelfth-century kings of Sicily and the Sicilian tyrants of antiquity.¹⁸⁴ This silence did not stem from ignorance about Muslims or a lack of interest in Islam, which he discusses extensively in the context of the First Crusade and subsequent expeditions in the years immediately following the conquest of Jerusalem. By twelfth-century Latin standards, Otto was incredibly well informed about Islam. He disputes Ekkehard of Aura's account that the bishop destroyed Islamic idols, stating that "Everyone knows that the Saracens worship one god and they accept both the books of laws and

circumcision. Likewise, they do not condemn Christ or the apostles or the apostolic men. They are distant from salvation in only this: they deny that Jesus Christ to be God or the son of God.”¹⁸⁵

Otto’s only mention of Muslim troops in Roger’s service appears in his account of Lothar’s 1137 campaign in Southern Italy; after Lothar’s defeat of several strongholds loyal to Roger, Otto relates that “[In Bari], [Lothar] was received by the citizens with great joy, having skillfully and vigorously stormed a certain castle, where Roger had a garrison. In that place, it is reported that [Lothar] hanged from a gibbet the soldiers, especially the Saracens.”¹⁸⁶ Otto makes no mention of why the emperor emphasized the execution of Muslim soldiers, but the gruesome display probably served as a reward to the citizens of Bari, who, as Alexander of Teles demonstrated, had seen these soldiers as a visible sign of royal infringement on their traditional rights. Otto clearly knew that Muslim soldiers served in Roger’s armies but never attempted to establish any connection between these Muslim soldiers and Roger’s opposition to the church, his tyrannical nature or his various atrocities throughout Southern Italy, and generally sought to ignore them in his narrative.

The continuation of the *Annales Erphesfordenses Lothari* criticizes Roger not for his abuses of the church but for his usurpation of property, while simultaneously illustrating the lack of religious polemics from mid-twelfth-century sources. The text is annalistic history produced in the monastery of St. Peter of Erfurt covering 1125–1138; while it provides sparse information about Lothar’s campaign in Southern Italy, it does detail the alliance that enabled the campaign. The text describes an August 1135 meeting between Lothar and envoys from the Venetians and the Byzantine emperor, both of whom wished to form an alliance against the newly crowned Sicilian king.¹⁸⁷ The text repeats the now familiar claims that Roger II had unjustly appropriated both his title and the possessions of his neighbors. The *Annales* recounts that Roger had “usurped the name of king,” he “seized various merchandise worth 40,000 talents” from the Venetians, and “From the empire of Romans, he took away the whole of Apulia and Calabria and carried out many deeds in opposition to both law and divine will.” When detailing the violations against the Byzantine emperor, the text reports “a certain Roger, Count of the Sicilians, having stormed Africa, which is known to be the third part of the world, and snatched it away from the King of the Greeks by force of arms and with pagans.” The text was probably composed after Roger’s North African campaigns in the 1140s and mistakenly transposes Roger’s

expansion across the Mediterranean to this earlier decade. The *Annales* provides one of the only Latin accounts that acknowledge Roger's use of "pagan" soldiers in his North African campaigns. Again, the author offers no criticism of the use of these pagan troops and focuses on Roger's usurpation of territory to which he has no right, rather than stressing a transgression of religious boundaries.

John of Salisbury repeats the basic charges, that Roger's actions toward the church mark him as tyrant, in his *Historia Pontificalis*. John probably composed the text in 1164,¹⁸⁸ slightly later than the other sources in this chapter, and records a meeting between Roger II and Eugenius III that occurred in the summer of 1150. John remarks, "For the king [Roger II], in the manner of other tyrants, reduced the church in his country to servitude."¹⁸⁹ John goes on to detail Roger's crimes against the church: Roger prevented ecclesiastical elections, appointed his own men to church office, prevented papal legates from entering the *regno* and welcomed those under papal censure into his kingdom. Even after Eugenius III and Roger II reconciled, Roger's propensity for undermining the church kept the pope on edge. Salisbury explained that "[Eugenius] was afraid of giving the crafty king of Sicily, who perpetually tried to catch the church in some kind of fault, any plausible grounds for accusation."¹⁹⁰ Again, Roger's Muslim subjects played no role in these accusations of tyranny or usurpation of ecclesiastical rights. John's only mention of Sicilian Muslims comes when Roger defends his actions by pointing to the fact that the church had lost Sicily to Saracens for centuries and that only through the actions of his forefathers was the island restored to Christian faith.¹⁹¹

Outside of Falco of Benevento, mid-twelfth-century authors who were adversaries of the Sicilian monarchy demonstrated little interest in the role of Muslims in the armies or the administration of the kingdom of Sicily; we have no indication that the critique of Saracens serving a Christian king resonated with twelfth-century authors or their audience. Instead, Roger's critics focused on his assumption of royal title, his aggressive expansion into Southern Italy, the ruthless oppression of his enemies on the mainland and his alliance with an unpopular claimant to the apostolic see, but not his associations with Saracens. Unlike Southern Italian sources, mid-twelfth-century Latin texts from beyond the peninsula show no awareness of the increasingly important symbolic role of Muslim soldiers in extension of Roger's authority on the Italian mainland or concern for the confessional faith of the soldiers that enabled Roger to maintain his kingdom in the face of fierce opposition.

CONCLUSION

By 1139, Roger had once again outlasted his opponents. Lothar III died in the winter of 1137, ending the imminent threat of German invasion. Rainulf of Alife, who had proven to be Roger's most dogged opponent of the Southern Italian nobles, died in 1139. The absence of powerful military allies in the region forced Innocent to make amends with Roger,¹⁹² and the two men entered into an agreement in 1139 in which Innocent recognized the kingdom of Sicily and enfeoffed the island and mainland holdings in Southern Italy to Roger and his sons.¹⁹³ In 1140 and 1141, Roger would campaign aggressively to consolidate his kingdom, conquering the remaining nobles who did not recognize his dominion. After a dozen years of war, Roger II had finally gained secure control over the whole of Sicily and Southern Italy. Muslim soldiers had played a prominent role in winning the kingdom and served as a visible symbol of royal authority on the peninsula. As we will see in the following chapter, a caste of Arabic-language administrators became increasingly prominent in the royal court in the wake of these conquests. Like the Muslims in Roger's armies, these administrators embodied the wealth and majesty of the Sicilian monarchy. The same patterns of resistance to royal authority, in which defiance to royal rule was expressed in terrible violence inflicted on the bodies of Muslims in the service of the crown, would also become increasingly prominent.

NOTES

1. Nef (2011), pp. 256–269; Johns (2002), pp. 91–114; Takayama (1993), pp. 73–94.
2. This argument was put forth in Wieruszowski (1963), p. 57. Almost all subsequent English language scholarship on the reign of Roger II has cited Wieruszowski's argument approvingly. For a recent example, see the exceptional survey of pilgrimage and religiosity in the Italian South, Oldfield (2014), p. 222.
3. See Chap. 8.
4. The charter itself is a problematic source, and scholars have frequently questioned its authenticity; see Johns (2002), pp. 40–42; Loud (2000), p. 162; Collura (1958–1959), pp. 131–39; and Ménager (1957–1956), pp. 149–54, 164–65. The donation purports to be a twelfth-century copy of the original charter, but it

contains several errors that cast doubt on that claim. The donation is dated December Indiction XV, or December of 1091, rather than 1092, when the donation should have occurred. This chronological error is compounded by the inclusion of Roger’s son, Jordan, who had died in September of 1092 in the witness list for the donation. While the document is likely a twelfth-century forgery, the corroboration of the central claims of the donation by other sources suggests it was modeled after a genuine original donation. Both Malaterra’s narrative source (Malaterra 1928, p. 89) and the papal confirmation of the Catania donation of these privileges (Archivio Capitolare della Cattedrale di Catania, Latin 1) confirm the broad scope of powers granted to the bishop over both the monastery and the surrounding city. The *jarāʿid*, or name lists, from Catania which I discuss in this chapter also confirm the authenticity of St. Agatha’s authority over the local Muslim population.

5. Archivio Capitolare della Cattedrale di Catania, Pergamene Latin 4, lines 5–12; Scalia (1961), pp. 50–52. The specific holdings of the city of Catania are enumerated in Archivio Capitolare della Cattedrale di Catania, Latin 2 lines 11–14; Scalia (1961), pp. 49–50.
6. Nef (2011), p. 456.
7. Loud (2007), pp. 306–39, details the types of exemptions and donations which Norman rulers made to ecclesiastical institutions in Southern Italy and Sicily.
8. White (1938), p. 65.
9. Archivio Capitolare della Cattedrale di Catania, Pergamene Latin 4, line 15; Scalia (1961), p. 51.
10. This absence stems, at least in part, from the use of paper rather than parchment for some of these administrative documents. Becker (2013), p. 91.
11. White (1938), p. 105, argues that Roger created the monastery because of the difficulty in controlling a potentially violent Muslim population. Nef (2011), pp. 456–58, 474, reasserts this argument.
12. Malaterra (1927), p. 97; Takayama (1993), pp. 26–27. Mead (2015), pp. 55–59, challenges Malaterra’s assertion of Jordan’s presumed position and asserts that Geoffrey was Roger’s intended heir.

13. Malaterra (1927), p. 93.
14. Malaterra (1927), p. 93.
15. Malaterra (1927), pp. 94–95.
16. Nef (2011), p. 453.
17. Malaterra (1927), p. 82. Mead (2015), pp. 29–51, suggests that Malaterra avoids complexities and oversimplifies Duke Roger Borsa's loss of territorial authority to Count Roger I.
18. See Chap. 2.
19. Takayama (1993), p. 38. Roger did make at least some smaller land grants to prominent nobles. We know he granted Roger Forestal *jarā'id* for Muslims in Corleone and Jālišū. These original grants do not survive, but Roger II issued a renewal of the *jarīda* of Jālišū in 1145, which contained a list of 35 families. Cusa (1868), pp. 127–29.
20. Johns (2002), p. 65. Troina was also likely the notary Eugenio, another high-ranking member of the nascent comital administration. von Falkenhausen (1977), p. 354; Johns (2002), p. 69.
21. The creation of the 1093 *jarā'id*, see below p. 89. The other prominent late eleventh-century *jarīda* is the grant to the newly created cathedral of Palermo in 1095, Cusa (1868), pp. 1–3.
22. For the best general discussion of the *jarā'id*, see Johns (2002), pp. 51–58; Metcalfé (2003), pp. 151–59.
23. Archivio Capitolare della Cattedrale di Catania, Pergamene arabo-greco no. 1. Cusa (1868), pp. 541–49. For a summary of the debates about the authenticity of this *jarīda*, see Johns (2002), pp. 40–42.
24. The term *Hagarenes* is reference to biblical genealogy. It was a medieval Greek term for Muslims, the descendants of Hagar, the handmaiden of Sarah, who bore Abraham's firstborn son, Ishmael. Tolan (2002), pp. 10–11, 52.
25. Archivio Diocesano di Catania, Pergamene arabo-greco no. 1. Line 4. "Jarī'id asmā' ahl Liāj."
26. Archivio Diocesano di Catania, Pergamene arabo-greco no. 1. Line 73. "asmā' al-arāmil."
27. Archivio Diocesano di Catania, Pergamene arabo-greco no. 7. Cusa, *I Diplomi Greci ed Arabi*, pp. 586–95 and Archivio Diocesano di Catania, Pergamene arabo-greco no. 6. Cusa (1868), pp. 563–85.

28. “Awāld.”
29. For more on the post-conquest administration, see Johns (2002), pp. 63–74; Takayama (1993), pp. 25–46; von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 87–115.
30. Johns, pp. 57–58.
31. Nef (2011), pp. 80–81.
32. von Falkenhausen (2013), pp. 59–61.
33. Johns (2002), pp. 280–83.
34. von Falkenhausen (1977), p. 352; (1979), p. 147; Takayama (1993), pp. 32, 34; Johns (2002), pp. 53, 65.
35. Cusa (1868), pp. 548–49; Takayama (1993), p. 39; Johns (2002), p. 54.
36. Though these records may have been based on early Arabic land registers that have not survived. Johns (2002), pp. 60–62.
37. Cusa (1868), pp. 532–35.
38. The fortress of Focerò was destroyed several times in the baronial revolts that followed Roger’s death, and the precise site of the fort remains unknown. For speculation on its likely location, see Metcalfe (2009), p. 120.
39. De Simone (2004), pp. 471–80; Johns (2002), pp. 23–30.
40. Johns (2002), pp. 106–107.
41. Malaterra (1927), p. 53.
42. Malaterra (1927), p. 33.
43. Malaterra (1927), p. 95.
44. The exact meaning of this term, and how it differs from conventional uses in other parts of Latin Europe, has been the subject of much debate; see Catlos (2014), p. 146; Nef (2011), pp. 488–91; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 268–72; De Simone (2004), pp. 472–500; Johns (2002), pp. 145–67; Metcalfe (2003), pp. 34–39; D’Alessandro (1989), pp. 293–317.
45. Johns (2002), pp. 34–39.
46. Nef (2011), p. 567.
47. Johns (2002), pp. 145–51; Nef (2011), p. 312.
48. No extant Sicilian documents use the term *jizya* before 1148, but the system of taxation which the Norman rulers established is clearly patterned after the *jizya*, and mid-twelfth-century documents identify it as such. Johns (2002), pp. 36–37.

49. Palermo, Archivio Storico Diocesano, diploma no. 5. Cusa (1868), pp. 1–3.
50. A private document from almost 80 years later confirms that 3 Muslim brothers owed roughly equivalent amounts to their overlord: a *jizya* of 30 *tari* and a *qānīn* of 20 bushels of wheat and 10 bushels of barley. See Johns (2002), pp. 145–47.
51. Nef (2011), pp. 444–47.
52. For an example of the use of the term *villein* “Hugo Falcandus,” p. 144. For the professional diversity in professions among those listed in the *jarā'id*, see Smit (2009), pp. 132–156; Nef (2011), pp. 578–79, 730–33.
53. For the flight of Sicilian elite, see Metcalfe (2003), pp. 28–29.
54. For a comparison of the obligations of Muslims of Sicily with their Southern Italian counterparts, see Loré (2008), pp. 207–37, and Petralia (2006), pp. 233–70. While the *jizya* was widely imposed on Sicilian Muslims, they rarely owed direct agricultural service.
55. Johns (2002), pp. 61–62.
56. Stafford (1983), p. 1.
57. The most comprehensive study of Adelaide’s regency is Mead (2015). For additional studies on Adelaide’s regency, see Pontieri (1964), pp. 409–509; Houben (1991), pp. 9–40; Hamel (1997); von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 87–115; Urso, “Adelaide ‘del Vasto,’ callida mater e malikah di Sicilia e Calabria,” in *Con animo virile’donne e potere nel mezzogiorno medievale* (secoli XI–XV), ed. Patrizia Maioni (Rome, 2010), pp. 53–84.
58. On the uncertainty of the precise date of the marriage, see Mead (2015), p. 53. Malaterra (1927), p. 93.
59. Renato Bordone, “Affermazione personale e sviluppi dinastico del gruppo parentale aleramico: il marchese Bonifacio ‘del Vasto,’” in *Formazione e strutture dei ceti dominanti nel Medioevo: marchesi, conti e visconti nel Regno italico, secc. IX–XII.*, ed. Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1988), pp. 29–36.
60. For the charter evidence, see Mead (2015), pp. 63–69, 65, 79. Mead argues that Adelaide had “considerable authority” but concedes that some of this authority may have been “theoretical.”
61. Stafford (1983), p. 156.
62. Though female regents were more likely to relinquish power to their children than their male counterparts, such transfers were far from assured. McNamara (2003), p. 26.

63. Hamel (1997), p. 23; Urso (2010), p. 64. For general examples of these tendencies in regencies in France and Hungary, see Crawford (2004), p. 19; Bak (1997), p. 233.
64. Ordericus Vitalis (1969), pp. 428–32. For an analysis of Orderic's portrayal of Adelaide, see De Soustre de Condat-Rabourdin (2009), pp. 39–51.
65. Anonymus Vaticanus (1726), p. 777.
66. Houben (1991), p. 25; Cusa (1868), pp. 471–72, 532–35.
67. Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario della Chiesa di Cefalù, Pergamene, no. 1. Cusa (1868), pp. 471–72; Caracausi (1990).
68. Cusa (1868), pp. 525–27 and 532–35; Johns (2002), p. 6.
69. Winkelmann (1878), pp. 469–92.
70. Johns (2007), p. 347, claims that anti-Muslim pogroms which prefigure the massacres of the later twelfth century took place during Roger II's minority but offers little evidence of these attacks.
71. Mead (2015), pp. 199–211.
72. von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 98–105.
73. Also known in Latin sources as Chritofurus, but these are the same individual. In his magisterial study of *amirati* of Sicily, Léon-Robert Ménager asserts that Roger must have granted the title of emir to Christodoulos before his death in 1101, but his only explanation for this is his supposition that Adelaide was adamantly set against relinquishing her own power. Ménager (1960), pp. 29–31. Christodoulos was a Greek Christian, but he may have converted from Islam; see Metcalfe (2009), p. 125.
74. For a brief history of Greek speaking officials in the Norman kingdom, see von Falkenhausen (2009), pp. 165–202.
75. von Falkenhausen (1977), pp. 349–61; Johns (2002), pp. 65–69; Takayama (1993), pp. 32–40.
76. von Falkenhausen (1985), pp. 49–51. Some historians have argued that Christodoulos, though a Greek Christian, was culturally Arabo-Muslim; see Nef (2011), pp. 310–11.
77. For an analysis of the meaning of this title and a history of its use in Sicily and Christodoulos, see Ménager (1960).
78. Johns (2002), pp. 70–71, updates a list taken from Ménager (1960), pp. 31–32.
79. von Falkenhausen (1997), pp. 283–84.
80. Houben (1991), p. 25.

81. See Chap. 5.
82. Arabic accounts describe an administrator identified as ‘Abd al-Raḥmān or ‘Abd al-Raḥmān a-Naṣrānī, literally “Slave of the Merciful” [i.e. God] or “Slave of the Merciful, the Christian.” For establishing that this individual was the same as Christodoulos, see Johns (2002), pp. 69–70; al-Maqrīzī (1991), vol. 3, pp. 18–20; al-Tijani in *BAS*². It’s the introduction, but let’s just cite the whole text, rather than that individual chapter pp. 448–49, 333; De Simone (1999), pp. 261–93; Soudan (1990), pp. 155–56.
83. Al-Maqrīzī (1991), p. 19.
84. al-Tijani in *BAS*² in pp. 448–49; Johns (2002), pp. 80–90.
85. Johns (2002), pp. 258–67. On diplomatic exchanges between the two courts, Marius Canard, “Un vizir chrétien à l’époque Fāṭimite, l’arménien Baḥrām,” *Annales de l’Institut d’études orientales. Faculte des lettres de l’Universite d’Alger*. 12 (1954): pp. 84–113; Canard (1955), pp. 125–46.
86. Chalandon (1907), pp. 358–60; Mead (2015), pp. 142–46.
87. von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 90–91. Brühl (1987), doc. 3, pp. 6–8.
88. The precise dates for these grants are unknown. They may have come from the final years of the reign of Roger I.
89. Meads (2015), pp. 55–60.
90. von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 90–91.
91. Roger II’s initial territorial expansion was directed not northward up into the Italian peninsula but southward into North Africa. Houben (2002b), pp. 33–34.
92. Houben (2002b), p. 30.
93. Mayer (1988), pp. 71–72.
94. Albert of Aachen (2007), pp. 842–44.
95. Albert of Aachen (2007), pp. 842–44.
96. For the status of Muslims in the Crusader States, see Catlos (2014), pp. 144–53; Kedar (1990), pp. 135–174.
97. Wieruszowski (1969), pp. 7–9.
98. William of Tyre (1986), pp. 541–42.
99. *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, p. 516; Houben (2002b), pp. 32–33.
100. The most detailed account of the escalation of tensions and eventual war between the rulers of Sicily and Ifrīqiya in 1118–1123 comes from al-Tijani, in *BAS*², pp. 436–40 and 449–56, but the

- conflict is also detailed in Ibn Khaldūn in *BAS*², pp. 538–40; Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 322–25; al-Nuwayrī in *BAS*², pp. 496–98; Ibn Ḥamdīs in *BAS*², pp. 664–67; Ibn ‘Iḍārī in *BAS*², pp. 425–26.
101. Ibn Abī Dīnār in *BAS*², pp. 602–5, acknowledges that the Sicilian army was composed of both Muslims and Christians, but he writes in the seventeenth century.
 102. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², p. 323.
 103. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 324–25.
 104. Abulafia (1985), pp. 30–32; Stanton (2011), pp. 70–75.
 105. William of Tyre (1986), p. 615.
 106. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 8.
 107. Brühl (1987), pp. 22–24.
 108. Alberia or Geloira in the Latin texts.
 109. Pelayo of Oviedo (1924), p. 86; Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 222.
 110. Peter of Eboli (1994), p. 109.
 111. Reilly (1988), pp. 296–97.
 112. Barton (2015), pp. 123–128; Martínez Díez (2003), pp. 121–22.
 113. Pelayo of Oviedo (1924), p. 87; Reilly (1988), pp. 234–35.
 114. Pelayo of Oviedo (1924), p. 87.
 115. Reilly (1988), pp. 338–39.
 116. Alexandre de Telese (1991), pp. 59–60.
 117. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 59. On the rebellion that occurred as a result of these rumors.
 118. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 59.
 119. 1137, Mercogliano, Archivio abbaziale di Montevergine (Loreto), Palazzo Loreto, pergamene n. 237, facsimile: Brühl (1987), pp. 125–28; Mercogliano, Archivio abbaziale di Montevergine (Loreto), Palazzo Loreto, pergamene n. 261, Brühl (1987); Nef (2011), pp. 145–47.
 120. Palermo, Cappella Palatina, Tabulario della Real Cappella Palatina, pergamene n. 7; Brühl (1987), pp. 133–38.
 121. Lecce, Archivio di Stato pergamene di S. Giovanni Evangelista (Fondo de Simone), n. 2; Brühl (1987), pp. 148–49.
 122. Fernández (2000), pp. 31–34.
 123. Fletcher (1989), pp. 142–44.
 124. Reilly (1988), pp. 136–60.
 125. Houben (2002b), pp. 35–36; Oldfield (2008), pp. 316–317.

126. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 235–53.
127. It is worth noting that Alfonso’s court lacked the Greek or Arabic structures that are so noteworthy in the Sicilian administration, bearing far more resemblance to Western European courts. Procter (1980), pp. 7–43.
128. González (1975), pp. 77–79.
129. Houben (2002b), p. 35.
130. Oldfield (2009), pp. 55–58.
131. Loud (2007), pp. 148–50.
132. Those who fought and lived were promised a half remission of sins. Falco, p. 80.
133. Houben (2002b), pp. 46–47.
134. Robinson (1990), pp. 69–78.
135. On the controversy surrounding the coronation, see Houben (2002b), pp. 55–56.
136. For Malaterra, see Chap. 2. On Muslim soldiers serving in the armies of Sicilian rulers in the thirteenth century, see Amatuuccio and Alvarez (2001), pp. 1–2.
137. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 43.
138. Amatuuccio (2001), pp. 3–6.
139. Amatuuccio (2001), pp. 3–6.
140. Loud (1993), pp. 177–91.
141. For the dates of composition for specific years, see Loud (1993), pp. 180–91 and Falco (1998), pp. xxi–xxv.
142. The beginning and ending of Falco’s work do not survive in any extant copies of the texts. However, Falco’s work served as the basis for the *Chronicon Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis Sanctae Mariae de Ferraria*, allowing for a reconstruction of the beginning and end of the *Chronicon Beneventanum*. Loud (2012), p. 55.
143. Oldfield (2009), pp. 59–67.
144. Falco dates the meeting as taking place shortly after July 13. Falco (1998), p. 104.
145. Falco (1998), p. 108.
146. Falco (1998), p. 108.
147. Falco (1998), p. 110.
148. Rao had been a long time enemy of Benevento, who allied with the city in the wake of their resistance to Roger. Falco (1998), pp. 74–76.

149. Falco (1998), p. 112.
150. Falco (1998), p. 112.
151. Falco (1998), p. 118.
152. Falco (1998), p. 126.
153. Falco (1998), p. 126.
154. Falco (1998), p. 128.
155. Falco (1998), pp. 126–30.
156. Falco (1998), p. 134.
157. Falco (1998), p. 134.
158. Falco (1998), p. 180.
159. Clementi (1967), pp. 193–95.
160. Emperor Lothar’s 1136 invasion of Southern Italy receives no mention from Alexander. He must have completed his production of *Ystoria* before that event. Loud (2012), p. 52.
161. Loud (2009), pp. 30–36.
162. In addition to the account detailed above, Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 43, makes reference to Saracen soldiers operating siege engines during Roger’s campaign against Montepeloso.
163. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 39.
164. Alexandre de Telese (1991), pp. 33–34.
165. Falco (1998), p. 112.
166. See Chap. 4.
167. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 218–219.
168. Wieruszowski (1963), pp. 53–59; Bernard of Clairvaux (1974), pp. 335–36. Bernard does not use the word *Tyrannus* in this letter, but Wieruszowski argues he sets forth a template picked up by subsequent authors.
169. Annalista Saxo (2006), p. 608.
170. Wieruszowski (1963), p. 57.
171. Wieruszowski (1963), p. 65.
172. See Chaps. 1 and 2.
173. Cosmas (1923), p. 161.
174. John of Salisbury (1909), vol. 2, p. 2.
175. Annalista Saxo (2006), p. 608.
176. For instance, the capture of the citadel of Bari described in Otto of Freising, *Ottonis episcopi frisingensis Chronica; sive, Historia de duabus civitatibus*, ed. Adolfus Hofmeister, in *MGH*, vol. 45 (Hannoverae; Lipsiae: impensis bibliopolii Hahniani, 1912a), p. 338. Annalista Saxo (2006), pp. 607–8.

177. Annalista Saxo (2006), p. 602.
178. For instance, Otto of Freising (1912b), p. 157, makes frequent reference to William I as a tyrant and reminds the reader that he follows in the footsteps of his despotic father.
179. Otto of Freising (1912a), pp. 346–47.
180. Otto of Freising (1912a), p. 338.
181. Otto of Freising (1912a), pp. 348–49.
182. Otto of Freising (1912a), p. 265.
183. Otto of Freising (1912b), pp. 14–15. Otto of Freising (1912a), pp. 301–302, focuses primarily on Guiscard and makes no mention of Sicily or Muslims in the region.
184. Wieruszowski (1963), pp. 55–57.
185. Otto of Freising (1912a), p. 317.
186. Otto of Freising (1912a), p. 338. Böhmer (1956), vol. 4, pt. 1, no. 567, describes this same capture but makes no note of the presence of Muslim soldiers.
187. *S. Petri Erpbesfurdenses Continuatio Ekkehardi*, ed. Holder-Egger (1899), p. 42.
188. Chibnall (2002), p. xxx.
189. John of Salisbury (2002), p. 65.
190. John of Salisbury (2002), p. 67.
191. John of Salisbury (2002), p. 69.
192. The death of Anacletus in 1138 effectively ended the papal schism and allowed Innocent II to make a rapprochement with Roger II.
193. Houben (2002b), p. 71.

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The Case of Philip of Mahdiyya: A Medieval Murder Mystery

The eunuch Philip of Mahdiyya and his trial in 1153 at the end of the reign of Roger II deserves special attention because of both the unusually detailed narrative sources for the trial and the importance of Philip's execution for the historiography of Muslim communities in Sicily. Ibn al-Athīr provides an Arabic-language account of the trial, while Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon* offers an extensive Latin account of the proceedings. The independent textual traditions of the two offer a tantalizing opportunity for confirmation, which is often absent from narrative sources of the Middle Ages. On the surface, both sources offer remarkably similar accounts of the end of Philip's life.

Starting with Ibn al-Athīr himself, who described the trial as “the beginning of the enfeeblement that befell Muslims of Sicily,”¹ historians have viewed Philip's trial as a watershed moment in the treatment of Muslims within the island. Modern historians generally use the two versions of Philip's trial to illustrate a growing hostility toward Islam within the Sicilian court and to serve as a harbinger of the Latinization of the royal bureaucracy that took place in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century.²

Both texts, as I will discuss, were probably composed in the early thirteenth century, not in a period when Muslim positions in the Sicilian court were deteriorating, but after they had already collapsed. Historians have read these texts as windows into a mid-twelfth-century experience, but they reveal far more about attitudes toward Muslims in Sicily in the early thirteenth century.³ Latin narratives from the mid-twelfth century

do not use this execution to highlight the piety of the king, they use silence to obfuscate the event and erase the memory of Philip's presence in the court. Unlike the violence against Muslim soldiers in the 1130s and against Muslim eunuchs in the 1160s, which was loaded with heavy symbolic meaning, there was no discernible symbolic import attached to Philip's execution in the mid-twelfth century, and it was only imbued with polemical symbolism in a later period.⁴

The trial of Philip of Mahdiyya demonstrates precisely how swiftly these attitudes shifted, as early thirteenth-century writers wrestled with the potential anxiety caused by what they perceived as the culturally and religiously ambiguous past of mid-twelfth-century Muslims. They used the trial and execution of Philip to resolve the dilemma posed by the cultural and institutional hybridity of the Sicilian court. In so doing, they projected the binary religious polarization that had come to dominate Sicily after the death of William II onto a much more complicated mid-twelfth-century past. Philip of Mahdiyya was executed in 1153, but the reasons for his execution are not as simple as the clear case of religious animus presented in both the Arabic and Latin accounts of his trial.

Ibn al-Athīr includes account of Philip's trial in his *al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh*

This year [1153/1154], the fleet of Roger, the King of the Franks in Sicily, sailed to the city Bône. Its commander was his eunuch, Philip of Mahdiyya. He laid siege to it, enlisted Arabs against it, and seized it in the month of Rajab [September 22–October 21, 1153]. He enslaved the population and plundered everything in the city; however, he showed forbearance to a group of erudite scholars and pious men, who were able to flee with their families and possessions into the rural community. He stayed there for ten days, then returned to Mahdiyya, taking some of the prisoners with him, and came back to Sicily. But then, Roger arrested him on account of his kind treatment of the Muslims of Bône. Philip was said to be a Muslim, along with all of his eunuchs, and having concealed it. Witnesses testified against him that he did not fast with the King and that he was a Muslim. Therefore, Roger convened the bishops, priests, and knights and sentenced him to be burned. He was burnt in Ramaḍān (November 20–December 19, 1153). This was the beginning of the enfeeblement that befell Muslims of Sicily.⁵

Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon* offers a more extensive account of both Philip's career and the events surrounding his execution.

In order that all men clearly acknowledge it, the evidence of the following works will prove how King Roger was completely Catholic in intention and

how he was set a fire with zeal and passion for the Christian faith. King Roger had a certain eunuch named Philip, who was exceedingly dear to him on account of [Philip's] honest service to [Roger]. He had discovered him to be faithful and capable of accomplishing [Roger's] business, so he placed this man in charge of the whole palace and appointed him master of [Roger's] household. As time passed, [Philip] grew in Roger's love and esteem, so much so that [Roger] appointed him admiral of his fleet and sent him with the fleet to Bône, which he occupied by the sword and plundered, and he handed it over to Sicily with triumph and glory.

However, because [Philip] proved to be thankless to his creator for the blessings that had been bestowed upon him, and because he compensated evil for good to the Celestial King, he incurred the wrath and fury of the earthly king.⁶

A MYSTERY?

On the surface, identifying Philip's trial as a murder mystery would seem a misnomer. The two independent narratives confirm the basic details of the trial and execution. Both accounts present Roger as the man responsible for Philip's death, and though the two accounts differ on the initial charge levied against Philip, both sources confirm that apostasy serves as the motive for Philip's killing. Romuald of Salerno echoes Ibn al-Athīr's claim that Philip's failure to observe Christian dietary restrictions played a prominent part in accusations against him but adds a litany of additional charges.

Under the mantle of a Christian name he conducted himself as a soldier of the devil. He displayed himself by appearance to be a Christian, but he was by both mind and deed entirely a Saracen. He hated Christians and greatly esteemed pagans. He reluctantly entered churches of God, but he frequently visited synagogues of the wicked and he furnished them with oil to make ready their lights and other things that were vital. Having thoroughly spurned Christian traditions, he did not cease eating meat on Fridays or during Lent; he sent his messengers with offerings to the tomb of Muḥammad (*Magumeth*) and entrusted himself to the prayers of the priests of that place.⁷

The multiple cultural traditions at play within the court created the risk of blurring the division between Christian and Muslim, and both the Latin and Arabic accounts of Philip's trial are concerned with eradicating this risk by clearly delineating the boundary between Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean world.

[Philip's] crimes, which he cloaked under the shadow of a Christian name, reached the ears of King Roger, who was filled with zeal for God, but acted with great wisdom, taking legal action against [Philip] for his aforementioned crimes at [Roger's] court. [Philip], having confidence in the favor and love of the king, answered his accusers with vigor, thoroughly denying the falsehoods in the charges made against him. His accusers proved with the testimony of reliable men that their accusations were true, through the labor of divine Justice.

Philip, having comprehended that he was proved wrong, dreading the king's justice, begged for a pardon and asked for the mercy of the king. He gave his word that he would be a Catholic Christian for the rest of time. The king, set a fire with that flame of faith, broke out in tears and said "My faithful, recognize that my spirit is punctured with the greatest grief and stung by powerful wrath that my agent, who I nurtured from boyhood as catholic, having examined his sins, was found to be a Saracen. And as a Saracen he practiced works of the infidel under the name of faith."⁸

However, a closer examination of the charges brought against Philip, the production of the two narrative accounts of the trial and the political circumstances surrounding the execution illustrates the complexities and ambiguities surrounding Philip's trial and subsequent execution.

Then, the counts, justiciars, barons, and judges in attendance there, having paid close attention to the just spirit of the king, withdrew and joined in deliberation for a long time and then dictated a sentence, saying, "We judge Philip, deceiver of the Christian name, who committed acts of unfaithfulness under the name of faith, will be consumed by the avenging flame. He who would not hold the flame of charity shall incur the burning flame. Let not relics of this most wicked of men remain, but having been reduced to ashes by earthly fire, he shall proceed to perpetual burning by the eternal fire."

Then, on the commands of the justiciars, with [Philip] having been bound to the feet of an untamed horse, he was violently dragged to a lime quarry which was in front of the palace. Next he was untied from the feet of the horse and driven into the middle of the flames and suddenly consumed with fire. All his accomplices and partners in inequity were placed under capital sentences. Therefore, it is clearly evident by this action that King Roger was a most Christian and Catholic prince, who did not spare his own Chamberlain who he had raised as his own child in order to punish an injury to the faith, but on behalf of his honor and glory, delivered him to the flames.⁹

North African Policy

Ibn al-Athīr's claim that Philip was charged for his leniency toward the pious Muslim scholars in Bône requires analysis of Sicilian policy toward North Africa in the mid-twelfth century.¹⁰ The Sicilian commanders had a history of relative leniency in their North African conquests. An examination of the Sicilian occupation of Ifrīqiya reveals that Philip displayed no more leniency in his campaigns than did his predecessor, George of Antioch. Consequently, it is hard to believe that his orders at Bône could possibly have motivated the charges against Philip.

In the wake of Roger's unsuccessful attempts to conquer Ifrīqiya in 1123, Sicily renewed its alliance with the Zīrid ruler al-Ḥasan, resuming large-scale grain shipments to the region. Our evidence for this alliance comes from Ibn al-Athīr's account of events in Mahdiyya in 1134/1135.¹¹ Ibn al-Athīr reports that the citizens of the region were discontent with the alliance with al-Ḥasan and beseeched Yahyā, the Hammadid ruler of nearby Bougie, to launch a campaign to overthrow their Zīrid rulers.¹² Faced with this threat, al-Ḥasan appealed to Roger, and the timely arrival of the Sicilian fleet, led by George of Antioch, ensured the continuation of Zīrid rule over the region. By 1135, al-Ḥasan was not only economically dependent on Sicilian grain but also reliant on Sicilian military aid to protect himself from rapacious neighbors.

Later, in 1135, Roger's fleet captured Djerba, an independent island nominally under Zīrid control that had long been a center for pirate activity and enslaved large portions of the population.¹³ Letters from the Fāṭimid's chancery in Egypt reveal that Djerba had a long history of raiding North African, Egyptian and Sicilian vessels and that the Fāṭimid rulers approved of the Sicilian conquest.¹⁴ In 1135, Roger clearly had ambitions of extending his influence across the Mediterranean and into Ifrīqiya, but events on the Southern Italian mainland temporarily stalled this expansion.

After Roger II secured his kingdom through his agreement with the papacy in 1139 and his consolidation of the last of the rebellious Southern Italian barons in 1140 and 1141, the Sicilian king turned his attention back to North Africa. By this point, famines wracked Ifrīqiya, and the destitute conditions caused many inhabitants of the region seek refuge in Sicily. Al-Ḥasan's control over his own territory had badly degraded, and he lacked the funds to buy Sicilian grain.¹⁵ In response to these crises, George of Antioch led a Sicilian fleet which sailed to Mahdiyya and seized Zīrid ships, forcing al-Ḥasan to renew his treaties with Roger and per-

haps even going so far as to make himself Roger's vassal (*'amīl*).¹⁶ Sicilian forces launched a series of raids in Ifrīqiya, ostensibly to reassert al-Ḥasan's authority over the region. After a failed attack on Tripoli in 1143, Norman forces successfully raided Djidjelli, Bresk and the island of Kerkenna, looting the cities and enslaving the defeated population.

In the summer of 1146, George of Antioch led the Sicilian fleet back to Tripoli, conquering the city and signaling a major shift in Sicilian policy in the region.¹⁷ After conquering Tripoli, George remained in Tripoli for six months, rebuilding the city's fortifications and appointing a governor from among the local Banū Maṭrūḥ before returning to Sicily with hostages meant to ensure the governor's cooperation. George left a small garrison behind, but the governor was able to effectively administer as long as he paid taxes to his new Sicilian overlord. These taxes mirrored the *jizya* paid by Sicilian Muslims.¹⁸ Roger encouraged Sicilians to resettle in his newly occupied North African territories.¹⁹

Extending favorable terms to the Muslim population of Ifrīqiya was a cornerstone of Sicilian policy in the region. The following year, the death of Rushayd, the amir of Gabès, sparked a succession crisis in the city.²⁰ A man named Yūsuf seized control of the city, forcing Rushayd's eldest son, Mu'ammār, to flee from Gabès. Yūsuf wrote to Roger, asking to become his governor and rule over Gabès in his name, effectively mirroring the system George of Antioch established in Tripoli. Roger agreed, bringing another prominent North African city under his sway. Meanwhile, Mu'ammār appealed to the Zīrid leader al-Ḥasan to reinstate him in Gabès. Al-Ḥasan, eager to reestablish his independence from Sicily, laid siege to the city; the populace of Gabès which, according to Ibn al-Athīr, resented being placed under infidel rule, revolted. Yūsuf was tortured, castrated and killed, causing his son and brother to flee to the Court in Palermo and ask King Roger to take revenge on their behalf.

The incident at Gabès provided a rationale for Roger to assert direct control of the entire region. In the summer of 1148, he dispatched George of Antioch to lead the Sicilian fleet against Mahdiyya.²¹ George demanded that al-Ḥasan appoint a governor loyal to Sicily in Gabès and send soldiers with the Sicilian fleet to install the governor. According to Ibn al-Athīr, al-Ḥasan had no desire to aid an infidel seeking to establish dominion over Muslims but knew he could not defeat the Sicilian forces. He and his family fled the city, shortly before Sicilian forces captured Mahdiyya.

Again, George exercised a policy of leniency. He limited looting to a brief two-hour period and then issued an *amān*,²² a guarantee of safe conduct and protection, which allowed the population of the city to return to their homes with their possessions. When the inhabitants of the city returned, he handed out money and supplies as a sign of his largess. Soon after, Sicilian forces took control of Sfax and Sousse, giving them effective control of the entire coastal region between Tripoli and Sousse. After securing the area, Roger issued a decree to his North African subjects guaranteeing their life, justice and fair treatment.²³

The background of Sicily's North African conquest provides necessary context to understand Philip's naval expedition in 1153. After George of Antioch died in 1151/1152 Philip assumed many of George's duties, including that of naval commander, and conducted his campaigns in the same manner as his predecessor.²⁴ Without even a garrison to oversee the city, the Sicilian crown relied on relatively generous treatment of the conquered population to secure its loyalty. Philip's treatment of the subject population in Bône represents the continuation of seven years of royal policy in the region.

With Almohad power rapidly expanding in Western Ifrīqiya, Philip sailed to Bône in hope to establish a Western bulwark that could protect Sicily's North African possessions. Before reaching Bône, Philip also reasserted Sicilian control over the rebellious islands of Djerba and Kerkenna. During his ten days in Bône, he elevated a local to govern the city, just as George of Antioch had done in Tripoli in 1146.²⁵ Philip's occupation of Bône was an extension of the policy of occupation. His leniency toward the leading men of Bône was meant to ensure that the newly occupied city remained loyal to its new Sicilian overlords. The clemency which Philip offered did not exceed that of his predecessor George; in fact, his terms were far less generous than what George had offered at Tripoli and Mahdiyya. Ibn al-Athīr's assertion that Philip's actions on campaign provoked his arrest makes little sense in light of this continuing policy.

Legal Precedent

While both accounts appear to offer an insight into the motivations for the mid-twelfth-century trial, the explanations for the punitive measures taken against Philip in both trials differ substantially from the normative legal practice within Sicily. Romauld of Salerno depicts Roger II condemning Philip for violating laws concerning apostasy.

“Even if [Philip] gave offense to our sovereignty in other ways, if he carried off the greater part of our treasure, recalling the memory of his service he would certainly have merited pardon and obtained grace. But since by his actions he primarily offended God and having sinned he provided material and an example to others, I could not forgive my own son for an injury to the faith and an offense against the Christian religion, nor shall I pardon those closest to me. In this act, the whole world shall learn that I am bound fast with love for the whole of the Christian faith; I will not refrain from punishing my agent for his injury [to the faith]. Consequently, the laws shall take action, our code shall be armed with the sword of equity, and they shall slay the enemy of faith with the sword of justice and through this [act] they will introduce a snare of panic for the infidels.”²⁶

However, according to the “Assizes of Ariano,”²⁷ laws that Roger promulgated in the 1140s, apostasy, though a serious crime treated with great hostility, was not punishable by death: “We curse thoroughly those who apostatize from the Catholic faith, we attack them with vengeance. We deprive them of all of their goods. We restrict the protection of laws from those who break a declaration or vow. We destroy their right of successions and abolish their every legal right.”²⁸ According to a strict interpretation of Roger’s laws, Philip’s apostasy did not merit execution.

Nor was the more general offense of sacrilege a capital crime, save in cases of desecrating holy space or stealing sacred objects: “Many laws punished sacrilege most strictly, but the penalty must be checked by the choice of the one giving judgment, unless, perchance, the temples of God are violently shattered, or the gifts and sacred vessels stolen away by night, for in this case it is capital.”²⁹ These laws explicitly grant flexibility in assigning punishment to the presiding magistrate, flexibility that the *Chronicon* insists Roger does not possess. The “Assizes of Ariano” assigned capital penalties for leading others into apostasy or committing treason against the king or leading men of the kingdom, but the *Chronicon* account never makes either of these charges. In fact, the *Chronicon* reverses the severity of these punishments, stating that Roger would forgive Philip if he were merely guilty of crimes against the kingdom: “Even if [Philip] gave offense to our sovereignty in other ways, if he carried off the greater part of our treasure, recalling the memory of his service he would certainly have merited pardon and obtained grace.”³⁰ While both sources depict Roger as a judge applying the appropriate legal penalty for apostasy, Philip’s sentence far exceeds the appropriate legal punishment for such a crime, raising questions about the motivation for this execution.

The discrepancy between these legal statutes, the maritime policy of the kingdom of Sicily and Philip's punishment calls into question the explanations offered by both Ibn al-Athīr and the anonymous author of the *Chronicon*. Could Philip's execution signal a shift in Sicilian royal policy toward non-Christians? Philip was executed during Ramaḍān, November 20–December 19, 1153.³¹ Roger II met his death shortly thereafter, on February 27, 1154.³² Romuald recounts that “Near the end of [Roger's] life, with worldly troubles set aside a fair amount, he worked by every method to convert Jews and Muslims to the faith of Christ and bestowed great gifts and necessities to the converts.”³³ Could Philip's punishment simply be another manifestation of the obsession with piety that Romuald observes late in Roger's life? The *Annales Palidenses*, a Saxon Chronicle, expands on this notion of Roger's late-life piety, asserting the fictive notion that the king became a monk before his death.³⁴ We have no independent confirmation of this sudden interest in piety before Roger's death or records of the crown bestowing riches on converts in the mid-twelfth century. Nor do we have any evidence of a new policy toward non-Christians under subsequent rulers. This suggests these depictions may simply be literary tropes that chroniclers appended to the lives of rulers whom they wished to depict in a positive light. It offers no evidence of a shift that could explain the accusations against Philip.³⁵

THE SOURCES: ROMUALD OF SALERNO

The circumstances surrounding production of the Latin account of Philip's execution further complicate our picture of the trial. Historians have commonly attributed authorship of the *Chronicon* to Romuald of Guarna, who served as archbishop of Salerno from 1153 to 1181.³⁶ The *Chronicon* spans all of human history starting with the creation of the world and concluding with the 1177 peace conference at Venice, at which peace was made between Pope Alexander III, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and William II. Romuald of Guarna represented William II at the conference, and historians based their attribution of authorship of the whole of the text on a statement at the conclusion of the chronicle, “Archbishop Romuald II of Salerno, saw that it was present, wrote this account and you should know it to be true testimony.”³⁷ Donald Matthew, who composed the premier analysis of *Chronicon*, casts doubt on Romuald's authorship of the whole of the chronicle, suggesting that he may have only written either the account of the Venice negotiations, which occupies almost a tenth of

the whole text, or the events that took place during Romuald's own life. He further asserts the text had a multiplicity of authors who continued to amend the *Chronicon* even after its "completion" in 1178.

The early portion of the text is a compilation of quotes and paraphrases from a vast number of different sources, starting with Bede's *Chronica Minora*, with additions from Jerome, biblical accounts and other commentaries. After the emergence of Christianity, the text makes use of Osius and Paul the Deacon, supplementing them with information on the papacy drawn from papal catalogs, the *Liber Pontificalis*, and Bonzio of Sutri. It also draws on Aimoin of Fleury's *Historia Francorum* to discuss the rise of Frankish kingship.³⁸ Starting in 839 and continuing till 1127,³⁹ the text becomes strictly annalistic and focuses more narrowly on Apulia, drawing on a lost set of chronicles possibly originating from Troia, as well as other regional chronicles like the *Chronicon Amalfitanum* and the works of Lupus Protospartarius. After 1127, the chronicle shifts again; the text is comprised of new material rather than a compilation of other sources. It abandons the annalistic structure and becomes more narrative. When discussing affairs within the kingdom of Sicily its focus moves from Apulia to Salerno. This includes a great deal of information about the external events concerning the *regno*, especially after 1140.⁴⁰ The text is a panegyric to the Sicilian kings and an account of the rectification of their fractious relationship with the papacy, culminating in the recognition of William II as the preeminent ally of the Apostolic See at Venice in 1177. Matthew hypothesizes that the text was intended as a present for William II to commemorate his wedding or as reference work on past rulers intended for an expected heir.⁴¹

What date was the story of Philip of Mahdiyya composed? The earliest extant manuscript, Vatican Latin 3973,⁴² reflects that state of the text in 1178 and does not contain the account of Philip's trial.⁴³ The trial appears in two later recensions of the manuscript, the thirteenth-century Paris manuscript BN MS Lat. 493 and the fourteenth-century Roman manuscript San Pietro E 22. Carlo Alberto Garufi, the editor of the first published edition of the *Chronicon*, concluded that a late thirteenth-century author inserted the entire episode into the text composed in advance of the papal grants of the kingdom of Sicily to Charles of Anjou.⁴⁴ Matthew placed the insertion of the account of the trial slightly earlier, claiming that it emerged in the mid-thirteenth century as an attempt to defend the orthodoxy of Sicilian rulers. Matthew argues that the trope of monarchical power in defense against heresy emerged in the thirteenth

century and that the author of the account projected it back onto Roger II.⁴⁵ Rather than offering an accurate depiction of the events of the trial or mid- to late twelfth-century concerns within Sicily, the author inserted the trial into the *Chronicon* in an effort to stress the importance of the religious orthodoxy of either Frederick II or his son Manfred. Jeremy Johns concluded that the text was written after 1177, but, because of its close correspondence with the Arabic narrative, it must have been based on a source written within a generation of the trial and “reflects an authentic, mid to late twelfth-century, version of Philip’s life and death.”⁴⁶ Léon-Robert Ménager argued that scholars could use titles that the author of the Latin account ascribes to Philip to date the manuscript. The *Chronicon* account of the trial identifies Philip by the title *ammiratus stolii*,⁴⁷ admiral of the fleet. The title was only used within Sicily from 1178 to the first decade of the thirteenth century.⁴⁸ Another possible linguistic clue for dating the *Chronicon* account of Philip’s trial can be found in the author’s use “Magumeth,” a rare Latinization of Muḥammad. Latin authors used the name “Magumeth” primarily in the mid-thirteenth century, most famously in the medieval bestseller, the *Legenda Aurea*.⁴⁹ While most of the uses of “Magumeth” occur in texts from the 1260s,⁵⁰ the term appears in texts from as early as 1220.⁵¹ The use of this name suggests that the account of Philip’s trial was probably produced in the early to mid-thirteenth century, though that does not preclude the possibility that the author had access to a non-extant account of the trial which may have made use of administrative titles used in an earlier period.

Attitudes toward Sicilian Muslims shifted markedly between 1178 and the thirteenth century, and an analysis of the representations of Muslims within different recensions of the *Chronicon* helps to place the text and to better understand Philip’s trial. Matthew holds that “Given the nature of the Sicilian kingdom it is important to notice that from Salerno, at least, the Muslims appear only as enemies to be defeated and evicted from the lands that they had improperly expropriated.”⁵² However, the depictions of Muslims within the *Chronicon* shows far more range than Matthew’s suggests. While Matthew’s depiction holds true for the bulk of the section of the text that covers the pre-1127 period, there are crucial exceptions. This section of the text presents the presence of Muslim soldiers within the armies of the count of Sicily in neutral terms. For instance, the *Chronicon* makes use of a word-for-word quotation from Lupus Protospartarius, depicting the presence of Muslims at the 1096 siege of Amalfi, the beginnings of Southern Italian participation of the First Crusade: “Roger, with

twenty thousand Saracens and an innumerable multitude of others, and all of the counts of Apulia, laid siege to Amalfi.”⁵³

Historians of Muslim Sicily have ignored the issue of Romuald’s silence about Philip’s trial. Why did he not include the execution in his recension of the manuscript? Romuald was not alone in omitting Philip’s trial; the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*, the other detailed narrative source on the politics of the Sicilian court in the mid-twelfth century which is discussed in full in Chap. 5, also ignores Philip and the court intrigue that surrounded him.⁵⁴ The authors detail the workings of the Sicilian court during this period and demonstrate a level of knowledge and familiarity with the court politics which indicate that they must have known about the trial. Why did both authors choose to ignore what must have been one of the most tumultuous accounts of the decade? Speculating on reasons for textual silence is an inherently precarious task, but we can safely conclude that if these authors knew about this important trial and chose not to include it, the accounts of the trial would not have advanced the cause of their writing. Neither Romuald, in his attempts to produce a panegyric praising the piety of the Sicilian kings, nor the anonymous author of the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*, who offers a scathing critique of the inner workings of the Sicilian court, felt that Philip’s trial advanced their narrative. This strategic silence testifies to the fact that mid-twelfth-century authors did not invest the trial with the symbolic significance it would later acquire.

The decision to omit Philip’s trial from the *Chronicon* follows well-established patterns within the text. In the section of the text that covers the reign of Roger II, the Vatican recension of the *Chronicon* does not exhibit hostility toward Muslims so much as disinterest. Not only does this section of the Vatican manuscript ignore the case of Philip but the authors also erase any trace of Muslims in service to Roger. The post-1127 text offers no mention of Muslim soldiers in the Sicilian armies and similarly erases the activities of Muslims within the royal court and its administrative offices, despite detailing the specific role of court ministers like George of Antioch, Maio of Bari and the chancellors Guarin and Robert.⁵⁵ The lone reference to Muslims within Sicily comes in a summary of Roger II’s final days in which he attempts to convert non-Christians: “Near the end of [Roger’s] life, with worldly troubles set aside a fair amount, he worked by every method to convert Jews and Muslims to the faith of Christ and bestowed great gifts and necessities to the converts.”⁵⁶ And the *Chronicon*’s final words on Roger establish a firm dichotomy between Muslims and his subjects, separating them into distinct categories which

preclude the possibility of overlap between the two groups: “He was more feared than loved by his subjects, and [viewed] with awe and dread by the Greeks and Saracens.”⁵⁷ For the author of the *Chronicon*, chapters devoted to Roger II Muslims within the service of the Sicilian king were beneath his notice and he chose not to invest them with any symbolic significance.

The section of the Vatican manuscript all but ignores Muslims outside of Sicily as well, even as enemies of the crown. It makes the briefest of references to Roger’s Conquest of North Africa, forcing historians to rely almost exclusively on Arabic-language accounts of those campaigns: “He prepared a great swarm of ships with many soldiers and sent it to Africa, which he occupied and held. He conquered Sousse, Bône, Gabès, Sfax, and Tripoli, and they rendered tribute to him.”⁵⁸ It also briefly references his diplomatic alliance with the Fāṭimid caliph: “[Roger] made peace with the king of Babylon, for his honor and advantage.” The text devotes vastly greater attention to the Turks as enemies of the Second Crusade than to any of Roger’s campaigns against Muslim opponents.⁵⁹

However, after the section of the Vatican text that follows Roger’s death, the chronicle devotes far more attention to Muslims within Sicily.⁶⁰ The text details the 1159 Almohad invasion, the Sicilian possession in North Africa, the unsuccessful attempts of the eunuch Peter to command a relief fleet to break the Almohad siege of Mahdiyya, and the negotiations with the Almohads that allowed the Christian population to return to Sicily.⁶¹ During the account of the conspiracy and rebellion against William I in 1161, discussed in detail in Chap. 6, the *Chronicon* paints a picture of Sicily’s Muslim population as victims of barbaric violence that appeared in the wake of rebellion. The text details how rioting led to massacres and looting of Palermo’s Muslim population: “Meanwhile, a huge battle began between the Saracens and the Christians of the city and many of the Saracens were killed and plundered (*expoliati*).”⁶² Outside of the capital, other conspirators stormed royal holdings and killed large numbers of Muslims, who the text depicts as victims of anti-royal savagery: “Roger Sclavus, along with [many] Lombards, incited rebellion in Sicily, invading royal lands and butchered the Saracens where they found them.”⁶³ During the regency of Queen Margaret, the text describes the escape of the eunuch Peter, though it offers far fewer details of his departure than “Falcandus” provides: “At the same time, the *Qā’id* Peter, the eunuch and master Chamberlain of the palace, along with certain others, desired to escape. They went to the King of Morocco, taking a great deal of money with them.”⁶⁴ The *Chronicon* offers several glimpses of Muslims under the

Sicilian crown after the reign of Roger I and presents them using a neutral register absent polemical attacks, particularly in cases where they come under assault from enemies of the Sicilian monarch. Even in the case of the Almohads, Muslim adversaries of the Sicilian crown, the text contains no anti-Islamic invectives.

In contrast to the neutral register that the Vatican manuscript of the *Chronicon* uses to discuss Muslims, the San Pietro and Paris manuscripts introduce new passages which depict Sicilian Muslims in a dogmatic register. They insert three new narratives into the text which include Muslims within Sicily, including the account of Philip of Mahdiyya and his trial, all of which frame non-Christians in highly polemical terms and invest Sicilian Muslims with symbolic importance that speaks to the piety of the Sicilian king. The most jarring of these insertions is an account of the atrocities committed by Roger's Muslim soldiers during the siege of Nardò in 1129. After the death of William II, the son of Roger Borsa and grandson of Robert Guiscard, Count Roger laid claim to the title of Duke of Apulia. Several nobles in Apulia refused to acknowledge Roger's claim, and over the next two years, he campaigned throughout Apulia to bring the whole of the region to heel.

In 1129, eighth of the indiction, Duke Roger crossed the straits from Sicily, came to Apulia and proceeded to Taranto. Next he went to Nardò with a great army, for it is said that he had three thousand knights and up to six thousand foot soldiers, archers, and Saracens. He captured Nardò, which had been abandoned. . . Moreover, he ordered the blood of Christians to be savagely shed by Saracens. For instance, they killed old men. They dashed and cleaved with swords children snatched from the bosom of their mothers. They destroyed priests next to crosses and altars. They scattered the Sacraments of the church, the holy chrism, under their boots to be mocked. They defiled wives before the eyes of their husbands. [Duke Roger] ordered the remaining survivors fettered and carried off to Sicily. After that he attacked Brindisi with the ill-natured army and in the month of June erected a siege of the city by both land and sea.⁶⁵

The actions of Roger's Muslim soldiers fail to appear in the Vatican manuscript of the *Chronicon* but are also absent from all of our contemporary sources for the early twelfth century. Alexander of Telesse recalls the march on Brindisi that followed the sack of Nardò but makes no mention of the massacre at Nardò, only vaguely alluding to Roger's harsh repression of the region by noting that "his army began to occupy all these lands by

brute force.”⁶⁶ The specific details of the atrocities at Nardò—the murder of priests, the desecration of the sacraments, the rape of the female population and the bondage and possible enslavement of the defeated population—evoke the description of Saracen massacres in crusade polemics. Count Roger had just made peace with Pope Honorius II and received papal investiture as Duke of Apulia in the previous year. In addition, he used the Peace of God to justify his rule over the region and would not have ordered his non-Christian troops to systematically desecrate the sacred spaces of Nardò.⁶⁷ These accusations against Roger’s Saracen soldiers have no parallel in the southern Italian source material of the twelfth century. Such rhetoric only emerges against Muslims within the *regno* after Innocent III’s use of crusader polemics against Markward von Anweiler in 1199.⁶⁸

The San Pietro and Paris manuscripts also contain an earlier episode from 1127 in which Calabrian nobles allied with Count Roger II and laid siege to the castle of Oggiano, held by vassals of Bohemond II, who had just departed to take possession of the crusader-state of Antioch. Roger sent Muslim soldiers to Oggiano to support the siege.

There arrived a vast multitude of knights and Saracens foot soldiers sent by same count Roger. Roger, the husband of Judith, was besieged and made a stand [against Count Roger’s forces] from within accompanied by a group of most able (*strenuissime*) knights. Suddenly, at daybreak, Roger Terlizzi and Robert Ricinnus charged [Count Roger’s forces] with a hand-picked group of knights, and so crushed them that there was not a man who was not routed, captured to be sold for ransom, or killed by the sword of the conqueror. Truly, the number of slain Saracens and other foot soldiers was not counted and it is said that the whole camp was drenched with blood like it was water.⁶⁹

The description of the Muslims at the siege of Oggiano contains none of the anti-Christian elements of the sack of Nardò but still stands in stark contrast to the depiction of Muslims in the Vatican manuscript. Much like in Falco of Benevento’s text, Muslim soldiers represent the authority of the Sicilian count, and their slaughter serves as a marker of independence from Sicilian rule. In a text that scholars have described as a panegyric to Roger II, the San Pietro and Paris manuscripts insert a celebratory account of the defeat of Roger’s army which clashes with the praise heaped upon the Sicilian ruler in the Vatican manuscript.

Looking at these two additional insertions helps to better contextualize the Latin account of Philip's trial. We have no assurance that a single author composed all of the additions to the San Pietro and Paris manuscripts, nor can we conclude that all of these insertions were composed at the same historical moment. However, taken as a whole, the additions deploy a dogmatic register to describe Muslims within the *regno* that differs starkly from that of the Vatican manuscript. The depiction of the sack of Nardò was almost certainly composed after 1199 and neatly illustrates how rapidly, even within the manuscript tradition of a single text, attitudes toward Muslims within Sicily could shift over the course of a 20- to 30-year period.

The Latin account of the trial itself obsesses over defending Roger II's Catholic faith and does so by erecting and maintaining religious boundaries within its description of the Sicilian Court. Two explicit appeals to Roger's orthodoxy, that "King Roger was a most Christian and Catholic prince"⁷⁰ and that he "set a fire with zeal and passion for the Christian faith,"⁷¹ frame Philip's narrative, and the text of Roger's speech provides yet further evidence of the devout character that the author seeks to ascribe to the monarch. The entire narrative serves to defend the Sicilian king from charges that his close association with his Muslim subjects had polluted his Christian faith. As Chap. 3 illustrates, Roger's mid-twelfth-century critics never leveled such accusations; the narrative offers a defense of the Sicilian crown from accusations like those leveled against Roger in the *Chronicon's* account of the desecration of Nardò.

The Latin text of the trial uses a polemical register not found in the descriptions of Muslims within the Vatican manuscript. Philip functions as a mirror of Roger's orthodoxy, the anti-Christian who represents the dark inverse of Christian piety. As a Saracen, Philip becomes the Christian other, despising the practices of the faithful and entering into an alliance with "synagogues of the wicked."⁷² The author conflates anti-Christian powers: Saracen, Jew and possibly even the devil himself, all of whom are embodied in Philip.⁷³ Indeed, Philip is even described as acting like the "soldier of the devil."⁷⁴ Even more threatening than his associations, however, was Philip's ability to pass as a devoted Christian. The narrator tells us that Philip "displayed himself by appearance to be a Christian,"⁷⁵ and, more nefariously, that he operated "under the mantle of a Christian name."⁷⁶ When the court executed Philip, the council that put him to death decreed that Philip "committed acts of unfaithfulness under the name of faith."⁷⁷ At issue was not simply the fact that Philip was a Saracen,

but that his ability to pass as a Christian allowed him access to the powers and freedoms that he used to facilitate his wicked plans. Muslim converts able to freely operate within a Christian kingdom served as a nexus for all manner of anxieties within the Sicilian court. The presence of Muslims was not inherently threatening, but it was the ambiguous religious identity of the palace eunuchs, of former Muslims who pass as Christians, which was problematic. The ability to pass necessitated a reestablishment of clear religious boundaries within the chronicle.

The text depicts Roger as a devout servant of God, moved by piety and a sense of justice, who placed his faith above any personal desires or bounds of loyalty. He zealously pursued the dictates of faith and violently eliminated the non-Christians who resided within his territory, regardless of the personal cost. Philip resided at the other extreme. He was an amalgam of Christian “otherness,” seeking to undermine the religion from within. He secretly detested all Christians and believed that his worldly influence would protect him from divine justice and allow him to work toward undermining the Christian religion.

This depiction completely eliminates the possibility of a middle ground. In this account, one cannot exist in an intermediate state between the two extremes. The character of Philip does, in fact, seek to establish an intermediate position for himself over the course of the story, but Roger rejects this attempt. Neither Roger’s dialogue nor any of the subsequent narrative addresses the possibility that Philip might even attempt a sincere conversion. When the council proclaims his sentence, it is clear that they envision it as punitive, rather than serving any redemptive function. This narrative clearly draws the battle lines in the religious conflict. One can either side with the Christian God or one can work against Him. The narrative erases the possibility of any intermediate position.

THE SOURCES: IBN AL-ATHĪR

Ibn al-AthĪr ‘Izz al-Din abu ‘L-Hasan ‘Ali’s al-Kamil fi’l-Ta’rikh contains the earliest extant Arabic account of Philip’s trial. Ibn al-AthĪr was born in 1160 and came from a politically active family in Mosul: his father and elder brother both served as high officials in the Zangid government of Mosul, while his younger brother became the vizier of Damascus under al-Afdal. He himself, however, spent the majority of his life working in Mosul as a private scholar. *Al-Kamil fi’l-Ta’rikh* is an annalistic history that attempts to detail the whole of Islamic history. Scholars do not know when Ibn al-AthĪr

began to compose the text, but an initial version of the chronicle, originally titled *al-Mustaqsā fi'l-ta'rīkh*, covers events up until 595/1198–1199, so the text was completed no earlier than that year.⁷⁸

For information on events concerning Ifrīqiya, including Philip's trial, Ibn al-Athīr used as his source the now-lost *Kitab al-jam'wa 'l-bayan fi akhbar al-Qayrawan*, a text composed by 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Shaddād, a Zīrid prince who traveled to Palermo in the late 1150s before heading east to Damascus.⁷⁹ Ibn al-Athīr uses Ibn Shaddād's work as a source for events as late as the Almoravid attacks on Majorca in 581/1185–1186,⁸⁰ so Ibn Shaddād must have composed his text after this date. The date of composition for the Arabic account of Philip's trial is roughly contemporaneous with the Latin account of the *Chronicon*, probably composed in roughly the first decade of the thirteenth century and based on a source probably composed in the last decade of the twelfth. A comparison between *al-Kamīl fi'l-Ta'rīkh* and quotations of Ibn Shaddād's work extant other sources reveal that though Ibn al-Athīr uses the details and basic structure Ibn Shaddād's work, he does not simply replicate the words of his sources.⁸¹ In all likelihood, Ibn al-Athīr wrote his own account of Philip's trial, the motives behind it and its implications, relying on the factual details from the *Kitab al-jam'wa 'l-bayan fi akhbar al-Qayrawan*.

Ibn al-Athīr's *al-Kamīl fi'l-Ta'rīkh* highlights the chronological dilemma posed by Arabic-language historical sources on twelfth-century Sicily. Ibn al-Athīr most likely composed his account after the events described in Chap. 7, after massacres forced the Sicilian Muslim population to flee from the island's urban centers and rebel against the state. Most other Arabic-language historians wrote after Frederick II expunged all of the Muslims from the island, or even after the last Muslims in Italy had been forced into slavery. This historical distance does not immediately condemn these sources as inaccurate, but it colors their perceptions of the trajectory of the history of Islamic Sicily. With the benefit of hindsight, these authors cannot help but see the events in Sicily in teleological terms that culminate with the destruction of the island's Muslim population. A range of twelfth-century Latin histories allow us to track a shift in the way that Latin authors depicted Sicilian Muslims, but the Arabic-language histories provide no such opportunity.

Though Ibn al-Athīr's account of the story does not contain the vitriolic religious attacks found in the *Chronicon* version of the trial, it fulfills a similarly polarizing role for its Muslim audience. At first glance, Ibn al-Athīr's account of Philip's condemnation may seem unremarkable, as Muslim

authors frequently depict Christian rulers in an unflattering or even hostile light. However, throughout the *al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh*, Ibn al-Athīr distinguishes Roger II from other Christian rulers, presenting him as a monarch who seems closer to his Muslim counterparts than other Christian kings. His initial description of Roger focuses exclusively on Roger's adoption of Muslim court practices: "[Roger] adopted the customs of Muslims kings, like aide de camps, chamberlains, sword-bearers, bodyguards and the like. He was not in keeping with the customs of the Franks, because they knew nothing of this manner."⁸² Ibn al-Athīr makes it clear that Roger not only adopted Muslim administrative practices but also regarded Muslims with a certain degree of respect, if not reverence, and was beloved by his Muslim subjects in return: "[Roger] treated Muslims with honor; he took them as associates and guarded them from the Franks, that they would love him."⁸³

Ibn al-Athīr differentiates Roger II's adoptions of Muslim culture from the behavior of other Sicilian rulers. He depicts Roger I as a vulgar barbarian focused on conquest and the accumulation of wealth.⁸⁴ While Ibn al-Athīr stressed Roger II's protection of Sicily's Muslim population, he emphasized the willingness of his son, William I, to massacre Sicily's Muslims. After Sicilian soldiers surrendered the garrison in Mahdiyya to the Almohad caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min in 1159, William I threatened that "If 'Abd al-Mu'min kills our men in Mahdiyya, we shall kill the Muslims who are on the island of Sicily and then seize their women in property."⁸⁵ Roger's adoption of Islamic culture and his guardianship of his Muslim subjects distinguished him from all other Frankish rulers.

Ibn al-Athīr proceeds to detail specific instances of this affection, describing the relationship between Roger and a Muslim intellectual in his court⁸⁶: "At this time there lived in Sicily a learned Muslim, a virtuous man who was held in great honor and reverence by the prince of Sicily, who harkened to his words and favored him above the priests and brothers to his court." The king held this scholar in such esteem that Roger's own religious conviction came into question: "a rumor arose among the people [of Sicily] that the king himself was a Muslim."⁸⁷ The *Chronicon* account of the trial focuses on the uncertainty of Philip's religious identity, depicting him as a former Muslim, converted to Christianity, who secretly adhered to the Muslim faith. Ibn al-Athīr reverses this picture. Roger's public embrace of Islamic scholars and Muslim institutions led his own subjects to believe that the king himself had adopted Islam.

Ibn al-Athīr uses the same unnamed Muslim scholar to frame his discussion of the Sicilian attacks against Tripoli in the mid-1140s. When news of a successful raid reached the Sicilian Court, Roger II asked the scholar to explain the religious implications of his victory. He questioned whether or not the conquest of the region by a Christian monarch indicated Muḥammad had forgotten his people: “‘Where was Muḥammad, abandoning those lands and their people?’ [The Muslim scholar] said to [the king], ‘He was already defeating them, and he watched the conquest of Edessa, which had been captured already by the Muslims.’ Some among the Franks there scoffed at him, but the king said, ‘Don’t laugh! By God, this man always speaks the truth.’”⁸⁸ A few days after this discussion, news arrived from Syria of the conquest of Edessa. Ibn al-Athīr stresses that Roger not only maintained Muslim scholars within his court but also acknowledged the accuracy of their divinations. While the other Franks mocked this scholar and held him in contempt, Roger recognized his veracity and assiduously defended the truthfulness of the scholar’s claims against his fellows. Ibn al-Athīr deliberately manipulates chronology to juxtapose the conquest of Edessa and Tripoli. Zengi captured Edessa in the winter of 1144, two years before George of Antioch led the Sicilian conquest of Tripoli.

Roger’s appearance in *al-Kamil fi’l-Ta’rikh* primarily deals with Sicily’s ambitions in North Africa and the Mediterranean. He was not simply a conqueror but heavily involved in the web of Mediterranean politics, frequently allying with one Muslim leader against another and almost succeeding in dominating the entire central Mediterranean. Only his struggle against the emperor of Constantinople, a Christian rival, prevented the Sicilian crown, in the eyes of Ibn al-Athīr, from controlling the entire North African coast.⁸⁹ Roger’s diplomatic relations reinforced his ambiguous stance toward Islam. He frequently fought both Muslim and Christian opponents and was equally willing to forge alliances with any partner who proved useful, regardless of religious affiliation.

Ibn al-Athīr depicts Roger II as a king who structured his court according to Muslim cultural practices and surrounded himself with Muslims, whom he regards with great affection. Even his own people speculated that he was a Muslim. He was involved in the Muslim political world and willingly allied himself with individual Muslim rulers when it was to his advantage. Like the figure of Philip in the *Chronicon* account, there was danger that readers would see Roger as a religiously ambiguous figure, existing in

some nebulous intermediate space between the two religious identities. In Ibn al-Athīr's account, it was Roger who, at least on surface levels, could pass as a Muslim. Like the *Chronicon*, Ibn al-Athīr uses the story of Philip to erase this intermediary space and reestablish a strict boundary between Christian and Muslim. In Chap. 3, I highlight Ibn al-Athīr's propensity for describing conflicts between Sicily and North Africa using binaries of religious faith. Even though Sicilian forces undoubtedly contained significant numbers of Muslim soldiers, Ibn al-Athīr framed these conflicts in religious terms, as armies of Christians invading Muslim land. Ibn al-Athīr uses the account of Philip's trial to similarly polarize the religiously ambiguous Sicilian court.

Philip's conduct during the siege of Bône, in which he allowed the pious and learned men of the city to depart with their belongings, accords with contemporary Islamic notions of proper conduct during combat. In a discussion of the proper damage that one could inflict upon one's enemies during war, Ibn Rushd, the prominent Muslim Malakite jurist and rough contemporary of Ibn al-Athīr, wrote, "Only with regard to religious men do the opinions vary; for some take it that they must be left in peace and that they must not be captured, but allowed to go unscathed and that they may not be enslaved. In support of their opinion they bring forward the words of the Prophet: 'Leave them in peace and also that to which they have dedicated themselves.'"⁹⁰ Muslims could expect, if not require, an honorable Islamic commander to exhibit mercy toward the holy men in the cities and territories that he conquered.

Philip's leniency, though not required by Islamic law, positioned him well within normative battlefield practices for Muslim commanders. As Ibn Rushd recounts, many Islamic jurists would have encouraged Philip to show mercy and respect to such men. However, upon his return to Sicily, Philip is tried and executed for this practice, indicating that clearly, Roger II neither shares nor condones Islamic conventions of battlefield behavior. This trial, then, marks in this text a point of clear separation between Muslim and Christian values. Despite Roger's infatuation with Muslim advisors and adoption of the visual trappings of Muslim culture, he ultimately rejects Islamic notions of proper conduct and prefers the violent and barbarous traditions of Christianity. While Roger II does not share the gross barbarism that characterized his father, he is still a Frankish king. As such, no matter the Muslim trappings with which he surrounds himself, his rule ultimately stands in opposition to proper Muslim conduct. Muslims under his rule who attempted to show mercy and generos-

ity toward their fellow Muslims would be burned to death, a punishment that ultimately reinforces Roger's impious and barbarous nature. Like the *Chronicon* account of this story, Ibn al-Athīr's account of the trial ultimately polarizes relations between Muslims and Christians within the kingdom of Sicily, prefiguring the breakdown in Christian and Muslim relations within Sicily at the time in which Ibn al-Athīr composed his text.

THE HISTORICAL PHILIP

In analyzing the textual functions of the early thirteenth-century accounts of Philip's trial, we must not forget the actual historical incident that served as their basis: the mid-twelfth-century trial of Philip. If the picture of the rising anti-Islamic sentiment within the Sicilian court is a construct of this later period, how do we explain Philip's trial and execution? Who pushed to have Philip executed and what was their motivation for killing Roger's eunuchs?

I argue that Philip's execution resulted from a struggle for power within the Sicilian court.⁹¹ A high-ranking position within a medieval court was intrinsically precarious, and Annliese Nef is surely correct in her assessment that the fate of Roger's first chief minister Christodoulos provides necessary context for Philip's execution.⁹² According to Al-Maqrīzī's biography of George of Antioch, Roger imprisoned and later executed Christodoulos.⁹³ The man responsible for this trial and execution was Christodoulos' successor, George of Antioch. We have far less information about the specifics of the accusations George leveled against Christodoulos, but there is little reason to believe religious faith played a significant role in those proceedings. Turning a king against a political rival and arranging for their execution offered the possibility for advancement in the high-stakes game of Sicilian court politics in the twelfth century.

The fact that Philip was a eunuch exacerbated the inherent vulnerability of serving in a high-ranking position in a medieval court. While historians have analyzed Philip primarily as a Muslim or crypto-Muslim, they have not paid sufficient attention to his identity as a eunuch. Philip was a slave, an outsider who owed his lofty but precarious position solely to the royal favor that he enjoyed. As the subsequent chapter illustrates, rulers have typically employed eunuchs precisely because they could be removed if they lost royal protection. Eunuchs were frequently the subject of court intrigue and violent attacks. In the absence of further action against the Muslim community of Sicily in the wake of the trial, one cannot assume

a simple religious animus as the primary cause of Philip's death. The religious indeterminacy of the court eunuchs of Sicily made them perpetually vulnerable to charges of apostasy. What is important about the nature of Philip's case is not the charge itself but the political circumstances in 1153 that allowed the charge to lay low one of the most prominent figures of the royal administration.

Philip's vulnerability stemmed not from displeasing the king but from the waning influence of Roger II within his own court. "Falcandus" writes of the king's sickness and that after Roger II crowned his son William I as a co-ruler in 1151, he succumbed to senility before his death: "[Roger] having been worn down by immense labor, and having grown accustomed to sexual activities more than good health, and having been exhausted by untimely senility, he submitted to death."⁹⁴ The enfeebled king in the last months of his life was not the most influential figure within his own court, and various factions within the court vied to assert their own power. He died on February 26, just two to three months after Philip's execution.

Neither account identifies the rivals that leveled accusations against Philip, but the trial itself took place in the midst of a tumultuous shift within the court, with the death of both George of Antioch, the amir of the amirs (*amiratus amiratorum*), in 1151/1152⁹⁵ and the Royal Chamberlain, Robert of Selby, in 1152. The man who replaced Robert was Maio of Bari, a Latin Christian from Apulia, possibly the son of Leo de Reiza, one of Roger's judges who operated in the region.⁹⁶ He first appears in royal charters as an archivist (*scrinaiarius*) in 1144, which Maio formally dated in Robert of Selby's absence.⁹⁷ While Robert of Selby held the position of chancellor, his primary duty was administering royal territories on the mainland, and the day-to-day leadership of the chancery probably fell to Maio.⁹⁸ By 1149, Maio's role in the chancery was formally recognized, and he was appointed to the newly created position of vice-chancellor.⁹⁹ He quickly assumed the position of royal chancellor after Robert of Selby's death in 1052.¹⁰⁰ After his promotion to chancellor, Maio aggressively expanded the authority of his office. He began to directly issue administrative documents that had previously required royal approval,¹⁰¹ either taking advantage of an opportunity offered by the king's illness or simply satisfying a duty which the king no longer wished to fulfill.

No direct evidence implicates Maio in Philip's trial, but he was the principal beneficiary of Philip's ouster which makes him the most likely suspect to have arranged the execution. In one of his first acts as King, only a few

short months after Philip's execution, William I appointed Maio as *amiratus amiratorum* (amir of the amirs),¹⁰² making him the most powerful administrator in the *regno*. Philip's trial appears to have been the result of a struggle over who would succeed George of Antioch. Maio, the favorite of the ascendant co-ruler William I, who had usurped administrative privileges that previously required the king's approval, used Philip's time away from court campaigning against Bône to solidify support against George's protégé and deployed the charges of apostasy as a tool to eliminate his rival.¹⁰³

Philip did not die alone. Both trial accounts insist that he was executed along with his co-conspirators. The Latin account only informs us that Philip's "accomplices and sharers in his iniquity" shared in his fate, while the Arabic account adds that Philip burned along with "his eunuchs." If Philip's accusers sought to cleanse the court of crypto-Muslim apostates, they failed miserably; indeed, the influence of eunuch administrators would only grow over the coming decade.¹⁰⁴ The purpose of the trial was to destroy Philip and his allies, in all likelihood to make way for Maio's ascension to the rank of *amiratus amiratorum* and grant him control over the kingdom, not to purge crypto-Muslims from their prominent position in court.

The *Liber de Regno Sicilie*, as covered in Chap. 6, also identifies a purge within the court during this period.¹⁰⁵ While the text makes no mention of Philip or his eunuchs, it says that William presided over an overhaul of his father's court, either exiling or imprisoning Roger II's *familiars* and clearing the way for Maio of Bari's ascent. Philip's trial and execution seem to have been the first move in a series of internal struggles within the court in which Maio, with the support of the new king, expunged potential rivals and cleared the way for William's chosen administrators to govern the kingdom.

Philip's execution took place in a time when the use of Arabic as the language for the royal fiscal administration was in the ascent. The royal administration utilized Arabic as the language of record for its Sicilian tax records and boundary registrars precisely because it differed from the language of Latin used by the administration of the nobles throughout the *regno*, creating a purposeful divide between the finances of the crown and its noble subjects.¹⁰⁶ While the role of Latin within the court had steadily grown over the last decade of Roger's rule as he exerted increased control over his mainland possession, this Latinization did not occur at the expense of the use of the Arabic language, and the growth of the use of

Latin preceded the trial.¹⁰⁷ The Greek language dominated the fiscal documents of the counts of Sicily and those of the royal *dīwān* (fiscal offices) from its creation in approximately 1130,¹⁰⁸ but Arabic became the primary language of the *dīwān* starting in the 1140s¹⁰⁹ and remained the dominant language of the royal fiscal offices long after Latin had dominated the rest of the court.¹¹⁰ Maio should not be seen solely as an agent of Latinization. He was intimately involved in the restructuring of the *dīwān* in the period in which Arabic language came to dominate the royal fiscal office¹¹¹ and also became the target of a coup that targeted Muslims as agents of the crown and symbols of royal power.¹¹²

The trial of Philip of Mahdiyya represents a struggle for control over the highest administrative positions in the Sicilian court at a time of massive upheaval. Philip's adversaries, most probably Maio, attacked the eunuch at a moment of particular vulnerability, when neither his mentor, George of Antioch, nor his master, Roger II, could protect him from legal charges. The accusations made at the trial centered on Philip's religious ambiguity; his refusal to honor Christian dietary customs and possible connections to Muslim communities in Sicily demonstrated his apostasy. However, palace eunuchs, by their very nature, were always vulnerable to such claims, and nothing in the aftermath of the trial suggests any significant changes in royal policy toward Muslims, the presence of Muslim administrators within the Sicilian court or the use of crypto-Muslim eunuchs at the highest levels of governance in the *regno*. In the mid-twelfth century, the charge of apostasy served as a political tool that allowed one courtier to usurp the authority of a potential rival. The charge of apostasy provided the means to oust a rival and ascend to the heights of the administration, but apostasy itself did not motivate the accusations against Philip. It would not be until the early thirteenth century that the trial would take on additional symbolic weight and become a polemical narrative used to explain the Christianization of the Sicilian court and eventually the whole of the island.

NOTES

1. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 338.
2. Abulafia (1990), pp. 111, 121; Houben (2002b), pp. 110–13; Metcalfe (2003), pp. 48–50; Johns (2002), pp. 215–19. Feniello (2011), p. 212, considers Philip's trial as a litmus test for the imbalance of power between Muslims and the Christian king.

- Metcalfé (2009), pp. 167–71, offers the most nuanced analysis of the text and the trial.
3. Johns (2002), p. 218.
 4. The silence surrounding this execution and the lack of symbolic import evoke many elements of the model of “Roger Tolerance,” posited by Christopher MacEvitt, in his discussion of interactions between Latin and Eastern Christians in the twelfth century. MacEvitt (2008), pp. 21–26.
 5. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 338.
 6. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 234–36.
 7. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 234–36.
 8. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 234–36.
 9. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 234–36.
 10. For summaries of the North African campaign in this period, see Abulafia (1985), pp. 30–35; Brett (1999), pp. 1–25; Houben (2002b), pp. 78–83; Metcalfé (2009), pp. 160–166; Stanton (2011), pp. 102–10.
 11. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 325–26; al-Tijani, in *BAS*², p. 456.
 12. Ibn Abī Dīnār in *BAS*², p. 604, insists that al-Ḥasan’s alliance with Roger motivated the original revolt.
 13. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 325–26, p. 547; al-Nuwayrī, in *BAS*², p. 507.
 14. Johns (2002), pp. 259–62.
 15. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 332.
 16. Ibn Abī Dīnār in *BAS*², pp. 604–5.
 17. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 239–330; Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), p. 310; Gaudenzi (1888), p. 28.
 18. For taxation of Sicilian Muslims, see Chap. 3. Ibn Abī Dīnār in *BAS*², p. 607.
 19. This may have been an effort to return immigrants from Ifrīqiya who had migrated to Sicily as a result of the famine to their homeland. Metcalfé (2009), p. 163.
 20. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 330–32; Ibn Abī Dīnār in *BAS*², pp. 605–7.
 21. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 332–36.
 22. al-Tijani, in *BAS*², pp. 457–58.
 23. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 335–36.
 24. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², p. 336.
 25. Al-Idrisi (1999), pp. 204–6.

26. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 234–36.
27. The “Assizes of Ariano” are a collection of laws issued by Roger II. They survive in the form of two manuscripts, one from the late twelfth century, and one from the early thirteenth. However, other sources confirm that laws from the Assizes were enforced in the mid-twelfth century, and the *Chronicon* suggests that the laws were part of numerous legal changes in Sicily that occurred around 1140. The name is a bit of a misnomer, as there is little evidence that these laws were promulgated from Ariano. For a complete discussion of these laws, consult Houben (2002b), pp. 136–47, and Trombetti Budriesi (1994), pp. 245–305.
28. Monti (1946), p. 125; Powell, *The Liber Augustalis* (1971), pp. 10–11.
29. Monti (1946), p. 128; Powell, *The Liber Augustalis* (1971), p. 11.
30. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 235.
31. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 338.
32. Garufi (1922), p. 30.
33. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 236. This section of the text appears in the earliest known manuscript of the *Chronicon* and is therefore composed by an entirely different author from the account of Philip’s trial.
34. Pertz, *Annales Palidenses* (1859), p. 88.
35. Metcalfe (2009), p. 167, points to the abductions of Jews in 1147 raids against Thebes and Corfù, speculating that those Jews may have been taken back to Sicily for conversion, but there is an absence of evidence to support that claim.
36. On the authorship of the chronicle, Matthew (1981), pp. 239–41.
37. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 293–94.
38. Matthew (1981), pp. 243–46.
39. Matthew makes the division at 1127, but marginal notations in the Paris (BN, MS lat. 493 folio 153) manuscript place this division at 1125.
40. Loud (2012), pp. 58–59.
41. Matthew (1981), p. 272.
42. For a description of the manuscript, see Hoffmann (1967), pp. 117–170, though Matthew’s analysis of the authorship and compilation of the text supersedes that of Hoffmann.

43. While the medieval text does not contain Philip's trial account found in BN MS Lat. 493 and San Pietro E 22, it was inserted into Vatican Latin 3973, along with the other additions, as marginal notes in the seventeenth century.
44. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 234.
45. Matthew (1981), p. 242.
46. Johns (2002), p. 218.
47. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 234.
48. Ménager (1960), pp. 66–67.
49. Jacobus de Voragine (1850), pp. 827–31, 867.
50. In addition to *Legenda Aurea*, see Holder-Egger (1899a), pp. 595–98, and Martinus Polonus (1872), pp. 458–61.
51. Gilbertus Romanus (1879), p. 128.
52. Matthew (1981), p. 273.
53. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 200; Lupus Protospatrius (1844), p. 60; Churchill and Lupus Protospatrius (1979), p. 338.
54. Falcandus (1897).
55. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 233–25.
56. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 236.
57. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 237.
58. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 227.
59. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 233–25.
60. For more detail on these events, see Chap. 6.
61. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 242.
62. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 246–47.
63. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 248.
64. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 254.
65. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 218–19.
66. Alexandre de Telese (1991), p. 15.
67. Alexandre de Telese (1991), pp. 276–79.
68. See Chap. 7.
69. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 215.
70. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 236.
71. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 234.
72. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 235.
73. The prohibition against donations of lamp oil to Jewish synagogues dates to as early as the fourth century. *Cannons of the Apostles*, p. 563.

74. Romuald of Salerno, p. 235.
75. Romuald of Salerno, p. 235.
76. Romuald of Salerno, p. 235.
77. Romuald of Salerno, p. 236.
78. Richards (1982), pp. 76–83.
79. Brett (1999), pp. 6–7.
80. Richards (2010), pp. 1–5.
81. An excerpt of Ibn Shaddād’s work is quoted in al-Tijānī (1988), pp. 346–48.
82. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 320.
83. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 320.
84. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 320–21.
85. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 344–45.
86. This unnamed learned man is most likely al-Idrīsī, a Muslim scholar in Sicily who wrote the geographic treatise *The Book of Roger*. Houben (2002b), p. 106.
87. Houben (2002b), pp. 82–83.
88. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², pp. 320–21.
89. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², p. 336.
90. Ibn Rushd (1996), p. 31. Ibn Rushd wrote the bulk of this treatise in 1167 and completed it in its entirety in 1188. Though the legal opinions were written after the actual trial of Philip, they were completed well before Ibn al-Athīr’s account of the trial.
91. Metcalfe (2009), p. 168, sees the trial as a factional battle within the court, which reflected the alienation of the Latin aristocracy of Sicily, a precursor to the events of 1160. Jamison (1957), pp. 39–44, claims that the trial was factional battle between Latin and Greek administrators and argues that the Philip put on trial was Philip the Logothete, the son of Leo the Logothete. Jamison’s argument discounts the status of Philip as eunuch.
92. Nef (2001), pp. 586–589.
93. Al-Maqrīzī (1991), vol. 3, p. 19.
94. Falcandus (1897), p. 7; Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 23; Johns (2002), p. 198, no. 25.
95. Ibn al-Athīr in *BAS*², p. 336.
96. Gabrieli (1895), pp. 248–52.
97. Brühl (1987), pp. 183–97.
98. Loud (2009b), p. 794.

99. Brühl (1987), pp. 224–28. This document is a forgery but one that seems to have been modeled after an accurate original and probably reflects Maio’s title in 1149. Loud (2009b), p. 793. Again as vice-chancellor in 1151 in Brühl (1987), pp. 228–33.
100. Johns (2002), p. 309. The narrative sources from the period also attest to Roger’s ascension to the rank of chancellor before Roger II’s death. Romuald of Salerno, pp. 234–35; Falcandus (1897), pp. 7–8.
101. Johns and Metcalfe (1999), p. 235.
102. Johns (2002), pp. 309–10, confirmed by the use of title of *magnus ammiratus* in Romuald, p. 237.
103. Johns (2002), p. 215, hypothesizes that Philip was George’s slave and fled with him from North Africa to Sicily in 1108.
104. See Chap. 5.
105. Falcandus (1897), p. 7.
106. Nef (2011), p. 85; Takayama (1993), pp. 115–215.
107. Nef (2011), p. 78; Loud (2009b), pp. 793–94.
108. von Falkenhausen (2013), pp. 72–73; von Falkenhausen (2002), pp. 262–65 and 272–74; Falkenhausen (1997), pp. 264–67.
109. Johns (2002), pp. 209–10; Nef (2011), pp. 256–63.
110. On the function of the *dīwān* in this period, see Takayama (1993), pp. 73–93.
111. Johns (2002), pp. 195–98.
112. See Chap. 6.

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Liminality as Centrality: The Sicilian Eunuch Tradition

On his travels through Sicily in 1184 and 1185, the eunuchs of Sicily made a striking impression on the Andalusian administrator Ibn Jubayr, who credited the eunuchs with fostering an Islamic character within both the Sicilian court and the monarch himself.

The quality of their king [William II] is astonishing on account of his good conduct, his employment of Muslims, and his use of completely castrated eunuchs, almost all of whom conceal their faith, and cling to Islamic law. He has great faith in Muslims, trusting them with his affairs and important matters... His ministers and chamberlains are eunuchs, of whom he has a huge troop. They are the inhabitants of his state and described as his elite. From them shines the splendor of his kingdom because of their magnificent clothing and swift horses and there is none among them who does not have his own retinue and slaves and attendants... Around him, he has many eunuchs and slave girls, and no Christian king is more given to luxury nor greater comfort. In immersing himself in the pleasures of the land, in the formation of laws, the establishment of procedures, the assignment of the duties of his agents, the enlargement of the majesty of his realm, and display of his majesty, he resembles the rulers of Muslims.¹

The eunuchs were the most visible and prominent “Saracens” within the court, despite the fact that they had publicly converted to Christianity. The liminal figure of the eunuch serves as a nexus for examining the religious tensions and cultural intersections that make medieval Sicily so fascinating for contemporary historians. The phenomenon of the eunuchs shows how

the Sicilian monarchs adopted the semiotic vocabulary of other eastern Mediterranean rulers but molded the tradition, particularly with respect to the origin of the eunuch, to suit their specific needs. The eunuch tradition serves as an individual case study of a wide array of cultural adaptations in the Norman's quest to create a Sicilian royal identity.

Though modern scholars frequently mentioned the palace eunuchs, they received little in the way of systematic academic attention until Jeremy Johns' *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, which remains the most detailed and exhaustive study of Sicilian eunuchs.² Johns' invaluable work situates these eunuchs both within the royal administration and in the Sicilian Muslim community at large. Particularly when it comes to issues of violence, Johns views the eunuchs in primarily religious terms, as "crypto-Muslims" persecuted by a Christian majority. The Sicilian court is "a façade, a thin Islamic veneer that covered a Christian core and when that veneer is cracked we catch sight of Roger burning Philip for being a Muslim or William beating Jawhar."³ These cracks in the veneer reveal, perhaps intentionally, an "anti-Muslim brutality" that was part of the royal image. Without denying Johns' observations, figures like Jawhar and Philip must be understood not just as crypto-Muslims but also as slaves and eunuchs. My hope is to contextualize the broader functions of the eunuch tradition, detailing their use within Sicily by comparing the Sicilian eunuch to his Mediterranean counterparts. In so doing, we can gain a clearer picture of these liminal figures to better understand the emergence of anti-Muslim violence across Sicily in the latter half of the twelfth century.

The *Liber de Regno Sicilie*, a chronicle written in the late twelfth century by an anonymous author, relates a curious event in the city of Palermo in March of 1162. William I, ruler of the kingdom of Sicily, led a campaign against the cities of Taverna and Taranto in an effort to suppress nobles who were in rebellion against him. While on campaign, the king left behind one of his advisors, Martin, to administer royal affairs in the palace at Palermo in his absence.⁴ Martin was a eunuch slave who had been converted from Islam to Christianity in his youth. However, the chronicle tells us that this conversion was insincere and current events at the time had roused in him an intense hatred for Christians. Christian nobles had slain his brother during a palace revolt in the previous year, and, though he did not know exactly who was responsible, he was eager to enact some measure of revenge.⁵

During William's absence, Martin was charged with administrating the trials of citizens accused of looting the palace during the recent revolt. As

a covert means of exacting revenge, Martin encouraged the accusers of the suspected looters to press their claims via *monomachia*, trial by combat. Martin's decision to rely on trial by combat is particularly striking since Muslims typically saw trial by combat as a vicious and barbaric mockery of justice. They lacked a firm understanding of exactly how the process worked and saw it as an alien procedure that, in many ways, epitomized the savagery of Catholic Christendom, as was most famously expressed in the writings of Usamah ibn Munqidh, who used trial by combat as one of his chief examples of Frankish barbarity.⁶

The number of accusers willing to come to trial did not satisfy Martin. He began to offer enormous praise and favors to any litigant willing to press legal claims in this fashion. The eunuch's efforts provoked a rash of legal activity in which anyone who had faith in his martial ability became willing to do combat in hopes of achieving a sizable reward. Martin had little concern over who won these duels, since he achieved his revenge upon the Christian population of the city regardless of the outcome. Defeated participants were beaten, tortured, strung-up and subjected to the ridicule of the Muslim inhabitants of the city who, in the eyes of the anonymous chronicler reporting these events, seemed to support the revenge that Martin was taking on their behalf against the general Christian population.

Eventually, because of the harsh punishments inflicted by Martin, the citizens grew reluctant to press claims, so the eunuch went to even greater lengths to encourage these trials. He began accepting accusations from slaves, maidservants and other women of low social status. Martin continued to encourage these legal challenges until the return of the king, at which point, rather than being punished, he was simply allowed to return to his administrative duties at the palace.

This account illuminates cross-cultural relations in twelfth-century Sicily. The story of a converted Muslim eunuch serving a Christian king and simultaneously exploiting his knowledge of Christian legal traditions for the benefit of the local Muslim community, and quite possibly on behalf of the crown itself, highlights a nexus of religious and political currents at play in Sicily in the mid-twelfth century.⁷ Though Martin and other eunuchs like him still had strong ties to the Muslims on the island and their conversion to Christianity was dubious at best, the Sicilian kings clearly placed a great deal of trust in these officials.⁸ The Sicilian kings continued to employ eunuchs, despite their affiliations with the local Muslim community, because they were seen as loyal to the crown

and were an element of a strategy on the part of the Norman rulers to establish the power and authority of the monarchy and demonstrate their imperial power.

THE EUNUCH: AN OVERVIEW

Understanding the Sicilian eunuch requires an examination of the wider tradition of court eunuchs in order to contextualize the Sicilian conception of the eunuch servitor.⁹ The tradition of the eunuch servant is both ancient and geographically diffuse. Eunuchs served Babylonian kings in the twentieth century BC,¹⁰ Chinese emperors perhaps as early as the eighteenth century BC¹¹ and Egyptian pharaohs in the thirteenth century.¹² Castration can provide a certain spiritual power, which we see in the eunuch priests of Cybele and Attis in ancient Greece,¹³ in the myths of the Castration of Osiris,¹⁴ in the self-mutilation of Origen,¹⁵ in the Muslim eunuch guardians of tombs in Mecca and Medina,¹⁶ the Russian Skopzi¹⁷ or the *hijra* in India.¹⁸ However, the sacred power of the eunuch himself seems to have been absent from the Sicilian institution, so this discussion focuses on the eunuch as royal servant and administrator.

In all cultures, eunuchs serve a semiotic function in which they both delineate and transgress cultural boundaries, most clearly in gender categories, where emasculation has left the eunuchs in an indeterminate state. Neither masculine nor feminine, the eunuchs are seen as a “third gender.”¹⁹ In Islamic societies, it is the eunuch who is used to mark the dividing line between masculine and feminine space. The eunuch separates the two gendered worlds from each other, and, since he belongs to neither sphere, can operate in both worlds.²⁰ Similarly, in cultures that deploy eunuchs to reinforce notions of sacred kingship, among emperors from the Chinese to the Romans, it is the eunuch who restricts access to the ruler, who marks the dividing line between the sacred world of the king and the profane world that surrounds him. The eunuch also crosses this divide, serving as both the personal attendant to his master and the representative of his master’s will in the outside world.²¹

Eunuchs are traditionally employed in duties that reinforce their semiotic function. They serve as prison wardens, palace sentinels and bodyguards, policing physical boundaries which complement these abstract cultural barriers. In addition, eunuchs serve as negotiators, diplomats and other sorts of go-betweens. Their ability to simultaneously erect and transgress societal boundaries gives the institution of the eunuch its power.

Why was the eunuch servant so prevalent? When modern readers conceive of eunuchs at court, we often associate them with political intrigue and palace coups. Despite these stereotypes, the loyalty of such slaves proved to be the principal attraction of the eunuch. After his description of the chief eunuch of Xerxes, Herodotus writes, "Among the barbarians, eunuchs fetch a much higher price than whole men, because they are trustworthy in every respect."²²

The loyalty of the eunuch stemmed, in large part, from his precarious position. Eunuchs came primarily from one of two sources: they were either foreign children, captured or sold into slavery, castrated and then transported to and raised within the abode of their new master; or adults who had committed a crime for which castration and reduction to servile status was the punishment. In either case, the eunuch owed not only his position but also his very life to his master, and this life could be ended at a whim. Xenophon, commenting on the Persian court, describes the connection between the precarious position of eunuchs and their reputation for loyalty: "Eunuchs are deemed disreputable by other human beings, they therefore need a master as a protector, for there is no man who would not think he deserved to have more than a eunuch in everything, unless something stronger should prevent it. But if he is trustworthy to a master, this is nothing to prevent even a eunuch from having the first position."²³ The Greek, Latin and Arabic sources continually reinforce the steadfast loyalty of the eunuch. Even in cultures in which historical narratives are dominated by images of the treacherous and deceitful eunuch, and Chinese history is chief among these, a closer examination of the historical record shows that rulers continually entrust their eunuch servants with the most sensitive elements of their rule.²⁴

Many of the general trends regarding eunuchs find their source in the eunuchs of the eastern Roman Empire, which serve as the historical antecedent for the Byzantine, Islamic and Sicilian eunuch traditions. Beginning in the fourth century, the eastern Roman Empire made extensive use of eunuchs in the imperial court.²⁵ These eunuchs were barbarian slaves, most often from the eastern coast of the Black Sea,²⁶ raised from childhood within the palace. A professional bureaucratic class was gaining influence, and the diminishing role of the Roman warrior class meant that the emperor would no longer be able to use these two groups to check each other. To remedy this imbalance, the emperor increasingly bestowed authority on the eunuchs, who ascended in status because they could serve as a counterbalance to other bureaucrats. There was no possibility that

eunuchs could pass on their privileges to children, and their barbarian background made it difficult for them to integrate into this class of aristocratic bureaucrats. The eunuchs also served as ideal scapegoats, despised figures that one could blame for any unpopular policy, deflecting criticism that might otherwise be pointed at the ruler.²⁷

Individual influential eunuchs could rise to positions of political power, but it was the persistent presence of the eunuchs—the fact that if one eunuch was deposed another would take his place—that gave the institution its power. Despite the success enjoyed by the eunuchs as a class, individual eunuchs remained dependent upon imperial favor for their continued survival. They served numerous bureaucratic functions within the court, often controlling access to the emperor himself. They were able to provide information and a point of contact for a divine emperor who was supposed to remain aloof from society as a whole, fulfilling the need for both a professional group of administrators to rival the aristocrats and the creation of sacred space around the emperor. The Roman eunuchs guarded the peripheries of the sacred world of the court and served as political and cultural intermediaries between the revered emperor and the world at large.²⁸

EUNUCHS IN THE NORMAN COURT

Though eunuch servants were ubiquitous in many eastern Mediterranean and Asian courts of antiquity, they did not exist in Germanic cultures, which helps to explain why court eunuchs were absent from Western European kingdoms in the Middle Ages.²⁹ When one examines the kingdom of Sicily, an island that had belonged to the Byzantine Empire and was subsequently ruled by clients of first the Abbasid and then the Fāṭimid Caliphate before it was occupied by Norman adventurers in the late eleventh century, the natural assumption is that the Normans simply adopted the eunuch tradition wholesale, along with a number of other administrative traditions.³⁰

Recent scholarship has shown that the royal traditions of the Norman rulers of Sicily and their bureaucracy were not lifted from local practices.³¹ Instead, many of the bureaucratic changes which came into being between the 1120s and 1140s occurred when Roger II became not just Count of Sicily but king of the region.³² To build the tools of this new Sicilian monarchy, Roger often turned for inspiration to the Byzantine emperors and Fāṭimid caliphs, rather than the rulers of the medieval west. The Sicilian

eunuch tradition must be examined in the context of the general trend of Roger's cultural borrowing from his Mediterranean neighbors.

Understanding the general advantages of a eunuch servant helps explain why the Sicilian monarchs adopted the custom. The Norman monarchs stressed the sacred nature of their monarchy, which is clearly seen in the court-sponsored art and architecture of the period.³³ They fashioned themselves with religious authority akin to the Byzantine emperor, rather than that of other Western European monarchs. The eunuchs created a sacred space around the Sicilian monarch, segregating him from, as well as elevating him above, the world around him. The Sicilian monarchs also faced potential challenges from their powerful and rebellious vassals on the Southern Italian mainland. Annliese Nef argues that after establishing the monarchy itself, the king created a bureaucratic apparatus that produced documents related to royal fiscal prerogatives such as tax records and boundaries of royal territory in Arabic, in large part because it differed from the language of the Latin nobility.³⁴ Production of these Arabic technical documents was the sole prerogative of the crown and differentiated the king from his nobles. The adoption of Arabic as the language of the royal fiscal administration required the creation of a bureaucratic staff capable of producing such documents, and these eunuch administrators, like the Arabic-language documents, further differentiated the Sicilian rulers from and elevated them above the powerful nobles of their realm.

Not only did the presence of the eunuchs symbolically differentiate the monarch from these rival nobles, they also formed a powerful bureaucratic caste which could serve as a counterbalance to these barons. In her observations on the function of eunuchs in tenth-century Baghdad, Nadia Maria el-Cheikh observes that "eunuchs' power depended on and fueled the tensions between the caliph and the other power elements of the state."³⁵ This same dynamic occurred within the Sicilian court, while the creation of the Sicilian eunuch tradition simultaneously undermined and antagonized the Sicilian nobility, and the growing hostility toward the crown for employing eunuchs only encouraged monarchs to grant additional authority to their castrated slaves. As eunuchs, they were a powerful force utterly dependent on the whims of the monarch. In addition, alienation from the homeland and the inability to physically produce offspring, theoretically, left the eunuchs unable to create a legacy that would allow them to pass power to their successors.

Two sources from the tail end of the twelfth century illustrate the ubiquitous presence of eunuchs at the Muslim court. As the quote at

the beginning of this chapter illustrates, Ibn Jubayr makes frequent reference to eunuchs in court, and they play a central role in establishing the cultural Islamic veneer surrounding the Sicilian king. The anonymous author of the *Epistotola ad Petrum* describes the physical layout of the royal palace in Sicily shortly after the death of William II, attesting to the ubiquitous presence of the eunuchs.³⁶ After describing the most distinctive structures in the palace, the author writes, “throughout the rest of the area there are arranged various abodes on every side for the matrons, the slave girls and the eunuchs, who are assigned to serve the king and queen.”³⁷ This letter not only describes the presence of a large number of eunuchs; it also illustrates the specific association of the eunuchs with the Sicilian monarchy. Their duties did not include sequestering the women in the harem, watching over the women of the court or serving as go-betweens that would allow the women of the harem and the men of state to communicate, as one would expect of eunuchs in Islamic culture. Their duties were directly related to serving the king and queen.³⁸

Our first narrative source for the Sicilian eunuch tradition comes from the trial of Philip of Mahdiyya, discussed in Chap. 4. This episode illustrates that by 1153, the eunuch tradition had been well established. A generation of eunuchs had been created, trained and promoted through the ranks before we see eunuchs identified as such in the documentary evidence. While eunuchs served in the court during Roger’s reign, they became highly visible in the administrative documents of the kingdom as a result of political developments during the reign of Roger’s son, William I, who ruled the Kingdom of Sicily from 1155 to 1166. At the beginning of William’s reign, Maio of Bari,³⁹ who was given the title of amir of the amirs,⁴⁰ served as the kingdom’s chief administrator and handled the day-to-day affairs of the *regno*.⁴¹ Maio’s policies earned the resentment of the Sicilian nobility at large,⁴² eventually resulting in his assassination at their hands. In the wake of the rebellion by William’s barons, the eunuchs filled the role of administrator and advisor left vacant by Maio’s death, to balance the increasingly assertive nobility. The eunuchs had previously served as part of Maio’s administrative system, but his dominant role in court seems to have overshadowed that of the eunuchs in the documents and chronicles of the period. As the eunuchs took on the role of royal advisor, *familiaris regis*,⁴³ the highest-level council that replaces the role of the amir of the amirs after Maio’s death, sources offer a fuller description of their character and actions. The size and exact makeup of the *familiares regis*

remained in constant flux throughout the decade, but from 1161 to 1169, eunuchs served continuously in this the highest office of government.

EUNUCHS OF THE SICILIAN COURT

Examining accounts of individual eunuchs illustrates both the function of the institution of the eunuch within the Sicilian court and the inherently precarious position of these powerful slaves. Our best estimate of the size of the eunuch contingent within court comes from “Hugo Falcandus,” who estimates that there were “about forty” of the “palace slaves” (*palacii servientes*).⁴⁴ However, extant records make it impossible to identify more than a handful of these eunuchs at any given moment, and the vast majority of eunuchs that we can identify appear in the documentary record as little more than a name, without any biographical data.⁴⁵ However, narrative sources provide insight into the lives of several individual eunuchs, which, in addition to the account of Philip of Mahdiyya discussed in Chap. 4, allows for a reconstruction of the role of the Sicilian eunuch.

Iohar/Theodore

The eunuch Iohar/Theodore held the title of Master Chamberlain of the palace, a title that emerged in the wake of Maio’s assassination. The precise role of the Master Chamberlain of the Royal Palace shifted throughout the 1160s, but it remained one of the most senior administrative positions in the kingdom throughout the decade.⁴⁶ Like other eunuchs, Iohar/Theodore had multiple names. “Falcandus” identifies Iohar by a Latinized version of the Arabic name *Jawhar*, or “jewel.”⁴⁷ Contemporary historians have established that this Iohar as the same individual as Theodore,⁴⁸ who appears in several administrative documents as Master Chamberlain of the king and died in February of 1163, roughly the same time that “Falcandus” reports of the death of Iohar.

Iohar/Theodore accompanied King William I on a campaign in 1162 to subdue a rebellion led by Robert of Bassonville, the Count of Conversano and Loritello.⁴⁹ Falcandus writes, “*Qā'id* Johar, the eunuch, Master Chamberlain of the royal palace, had endured many beatings and floggings from the king during the campaign, which he asserted that he did not deserve. While deserting with the royal seals to the Count of Loritello, he was captured and led to the king. The king set him on a boat and commanded that he be escorted into the open sea and drowned.”⁵⁰

William's behavior in this incident reinforces the traditional advantages of the eunuch servant. The eunuchs, even the most powerful among them, were utterly dependent upon the favor of the king and served at his pleasure. They could be subjected to physical assaults, or even execution, at the whim of their master and this connection to the royal court could place them in a highly precarious position. These eunuchs were not simply associated with the court; they were slaves—the physical possessions of the king. Violence against court eunuchs is normative behavior, an expression of a ruler's power and control over the institution. Falcandus takes a neutral tone in his decision concerning Iohar's execution. He does not try to justify or even attempt to explain the king's attacks against the eunuch but gives voice to Iohar's protestations against the attacks.

Peter/Aḥmad and the Loss of North Africa

The best documented of these eunuchs is Peter/Aḥmad, a man who illustrates both the power of the Sicilian eunuchs and their religious liminality. Falcandus describes Peter as such: "Like all the palace eunuchs, [Peter] was Christian in name and appearance, but Muslim in spirit."⁵¹ Ibn Khaldūn, who identifies Peter by the Arabic name Aḥmad of Sicily,⁵² provides basic biographical data on Peter/Aḥmad that helps historians reconstruct the probable origins of Sicilian eunuchs.⁵³ Like other eunuchs, Peter was a Muslim from birth, but did not come from the Muslim population of Sicily. He was born on the island of Djerba off the North African coast and then captured by Christians, possibly when Sicily captured Djerba in 1135, and taken to the Sicilian court.

Like other eunuchs, Peter/Aḥmad was baptized and given a Christian name, and he was trained within the court to serve as an officer of the royal *dīwān*. Peter first appears in the extant documents from the *regno* in 1141 as an official of the royal *dīwān* working to re-chart boundaries of lands that Roger I had donated to the monastery of S. Salvatore of Messina and appears in a fragmentary inscription in Latin, Greek and Arabic from roughly the same period.⁵⁴ Peter/Aḥmad also issues a document from 1151, a copy of a donation of land Roger II granted to S. Nicholo of Chùrchuro, which confirms his role in the bureaucracy of the kingdom.⁵⁵

Peter/Aḥmad rose through the administrative ranks and ultimately succeeded Philip as the commander of the Sicilian fleet by the late 1150s, when he appears as commander of a Sicilian expedition sent on an ill-

fated mission to relieve a besieged Sicilian garrison in Mahdiyya.⁵⁶ Peter/Aḥmad's armada was driven back from the North African coast, a defeat Arabic sources blamed on a terrible storm which ravaged the Sicilian fleet. However, the Latin author claimed that Peter/Aḥmad's flight was a deliberate act of treachery that the eunuch perpetrated at the behest of his superior, Maio of Bari. Falcandus' criticism of Peter/Aḥmad illustrates the way in which Sicilian eunuchs fulfilled a universal function of palace eunuchs: serving as scapegoats for failed policies of the crown.⁵⁷ Rather than leveling direct criticism at the sovereign, the faulty advice or action of the eunuch would be blamed for causing a mishap.

William does not seem to have held Peter/Aḥmad responsible for the failure to relieve Mahdiyya; the eunuch retained the king's trust and continued his ascent through the administration. After the death of Iohar, Peter/Aḥmad gained the rank of Master Chamberlain of the Palace.⁵⁸ William elevated *Qā'id* Peter to the *familiaries regis*, one of three individuals who served on this council at the time.⁵⁹ On his deathbed, William I gave regency of the kingdom to his wife Margaret of Navarre until his son William II reached the age of majority. William I ensured that Peter/Aḥmad would continue to serve as a member of the advisory council to the queen and his young son. After the death of William I, Queen Margaret promoted Peter/Aḥmad to head minister, subordinated the other members of the *familiaries regis* to him and entrusted the eunuch with the administration of the whole kingdom.⁶⁰ She also manumitted Peter/Aḥmad, making him the only eunuch we can identify who escaped the status of enslavement. The queen's elevation of Peter/Aḥmad caused a great deal of discontent among the Christian nobles, and these nobles within the court threatened both Peter/Aḥmad's position and his safety. Keenly aware of the execution of predecessors like Philip and eager to avoid a similar fate, Peter/Aḥmad fled the *regno* with as much moveable wealth as he could assemble.⁶¹

Peter/Aḥmad traveled to Tunis, where he entered into the service of the Almohads. He abandoned his Christian faith and name, re-proclaiming his Muslim faith as he became Aḥmad of Sicily. Eventually, he made his way to Morocco and became the naval commander of the Almohad Caliph Yūsuf. Ibn Khaldūn writes that "[Yūsuf] gave gifts to [Aḥmad] and assigned him command of his fleet, where he shone brilliantly in *jihād* against the Christian peoples."⁶² He continued to serve as a naval commander until as late as 1185, in which he commanded part of the Almohad naval fleet that broke an Almoravid naval blockade.⁶³

The twice-apostatized Peter/Aḥmad illustrates the religious fluidity of Sicilian eunuchs and their ability to publicly adopt the religious convictions of their patrons. At the same time, Peter/Aḥmad challenges many of the conventional assumptions about the functions of eunuchs. Their isolation of eunuchs was supposed to force them to rely on the ruler for their sole source of support and thus guarantee the loyalty of the eunuchs to their master. However, Peter/Aḥmad's ability to reinvent himself as an Almohad naval commander suggests a man well connected in North African courts. Peter/Aḥmad also challenges the assumption that eunuchs could not establish a dynastic presence. Peter/Aḥmad passed on at least some of his possessions to a successor. In 1176, Nicholas, a royal secretary, identified as the son of the eunuch *Qā'id* Peter, sold land to offices of the crown.⁶⁴ This does not necessarily imply that Nicholas was Peter's biological kin, as eunuchs frequently used adoption and manumission to establish possible successors. Theoretically, the eunuch was completely unable to pass on his property, position or power, although actual eunuchs frequently found a way to establish these lineal legacies.⁶⁵

Richard

Qā'id Richard, who became the head of the leaders of the royal fiscal office the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr* after Maio's death,⁶⁶ also plays a prominent part in Falcandus' narrative. The *dīwān* produced grants of land and villeins from the royal demesne and also supervised the creation of the *dafātir al-ḥudūd*, registers which charted royal land boundaries, either to settle disputes or prepare for land grants.⁶⁷ After Peter's flight from court, Richard assumed the position of Master Chamberlain of the Royal Palace.⁶⁸ He also became one of the most influential royal advisors, becoming a *familiaris regis* in 1166, retaining that rank until the Latinization of the position in 1169.⁶⁹ Despite his demotion from the ranks of the *familiares regis*, Richard retained his control of the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr* and appears to have been actively involved in charting the boundaries of royal estates. In 1170, he traveled to Messina to adjudicate claims of usurpation of royal territory.⁷⁰ In 1183, royal justiciars acting in the name of *Qā'id* Richard investigated a similar case in Calabria.⁷¹ Richard served as the head of the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr* until at least 1187, when he appears as the superior of *Qā'id* Ioannes, another Chamberlain of the royal palace, and approved Ioannes' rental of monastic property just on the inside of Palermo's walls.⁷²

Richard's duties were primarily administrative, but Falcandus reports that the eunuch also maintained a sizable force of soldiers loyal to him. In addition to his own knights, Richard used copious bribes to secure the services of many of the royal knights as well as Muslim archers stationed in Palermo.⁷³ While Falcandus strongly implied that Richard was a eunuch,⁷⁴ he never explicitly described Richard as a *eunuchus*. However, the poet Ibn Qalāqīs confirmed Richard's identity as a eunuch.⁷⁵ In the summer of 1168, a certain Abū l-Sayyid, which may have been Richard's Arabic name,⁷⁶ introduced Ibn Qalāqīs to Queen Margaret and the young William II. Ibn Qalāqīs wrote two poems dedicated to the queen-mother and the king, and a final poem to vizier *Qā'id* Richard, the eunuch, whom he credits with bringing the poet into the royal presence. In addition to confirming Richard as a eunuch, this encounter also illustrates a fundamental difference between the ideal eunuch and the Sicilian reality. Ideally, eunuchs were outsiders, foreigners who were unable to form alliances with the local population. In addition to his patronage of Ibn Qalāqīs, Richard formed an alliance with Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd,⁷⁷ a hereditary leader of the Sicilian Muslims and also a high-ranking official in the royal court, against the chancellor Stephen.⁷⁸ As these encounters illustrate, the Sicilian eunuch tradition deviated far from the ideal notion of the isolation of eunuchs. Instead, they served as vital conduits between the court and the Muslim population of Sicily, developing close alliances with the Muslim leaders of the island.

Andrew

Falcandus specifically mentions five eunuchs over the course of the text, all of whom, save one, serve in the position of Master Chamberlain of the palace.⁷⁹ The exception, and the eunuch who receives the briefest reference from Falcandus, is Andrew, a close associate of Maio of Bari. After Maio's assassination in 1160, agents of William I detained and interrogated Maio's allies, including his son and brother, in an effort to locate treasures belonging to the royal crown which the king believed that Maio had embezzled and secreted away. Falcandus writes that "After Andrew the eunuch and others were handed over to the torturers, they were forced to confess whatever they knew about Maio's holdings, whether they were secretly hidden away or placed in the care of allies."⁸⁰ All that we can surmise about Andrew was that he was a eunuch and was a trusted servant or close ally of Maio.

Martin

In addition to his role at the trials described at the opening of the chapter, Falcandus also reports that *Qā'id* Martin played an instrumental role in stopping yet another palace coup that occurred after William returned to Palermo.⁸¹ A group of prisoners in the royal prison bribed their jailers and attempted to capture either William or his sons. Martin's men stalled the would-be kidnappers, allowing the eunuch to seal the palace and thwart the rebels.

Martin's primary duties were as an administrator for the crown. Like Richard, Martin served as one of the leading officials of the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr*. In 1161, a year before Martin held court in Palermo, he oversaw the sale of land west of Palermo owned by "the lords of the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr*" to a Jew named Ya'qūb ibn Faḍlū ibn Šālih.⁸² A second piece of evidence confirms Martin's activities for the *dīwān* in 1166. Under orders from Margaret and William II, Martin, as head of the *dīwān al-tahqīq al-ma'mūr*, transferred the archdeaconry of Messina to the archbishop Nicholas of Messina.⁸³

In addition to his work in the *dīwān*, Martin ascended to the rank of master chamberlain of the palace, *magister camerarii regii palatii*, in 1167.⁸⁴ However, this promotion appears to have been temporary, as he is subsequently identified simply as *camerarii regii palatii* or chamberlain of the royal palace.⁸⁵ After Peter's flight in 1166, Martin, like Richard, rose in rank to become one of the *familiars regis* during the regency of Queen Margaret. He remained a *familiaris regis* until 1169,⁸⁶ though he retained his position in the *dīwān* until his death. Martin and Richard appear to have been the only two high-ranking eunuchs to survive the political turmoil of the 1160s. The date of his death is uncertain, but in 1176, William gave Martin's house in Kemonia⁸⁷ to Monreale in his initial donation to the monastery.⁸⁸

THE SICILIAN EUNUCH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT

These case studies allow us to reconstruct the parameters of the Sicilian eunuch tradition. The eunuchs came from Muslim communities, but they originated with the Islamic populations of North Africa, rather than from Muslim communities within Sicily.⁸⁹ Probably starting in the 1130s, the kingdom of Sicily obtained children by capturing them during raids or purchasing them from slave traders. Because castration was

a dangerous medical procedure with low survival rates when performed by non-specialists, the children were transported to castration centers and emasculated.⁹⁰ Ninth-century Islamic geographic texts identify the island of Favignana, off Sicily's western coast, as a center for this operation,⁹¹ but we have no evidence that the castration centers continued operation into the twelfth century or references to the place of castration of any of the Sicilian eunuchs. In 1239, Frederick II instructed royal officials to thank the *Qā'id* of Palermo for his role in procuring Frederick's eunuchs.⁹² We have no indication when this practice began, but Muslim leaders within the court, and possibly the eunuchs themselves, may have played an instrumental role in supplying the court with future generations of eunuchs.

After the survivors of the operation were well enough to travel, the newly created eunuchs would have been brought to the court of Sicily, where they were raised, converted to Christianity and trained in courtly duties. The eunuchs staffed the bureaucracy of the court and were typically associated with managing the finances of the crown. The most powerful among these eunuchs rose to the rank of chamberlain of the royal palace and served as advisors to the monarch. These leading administrators maintained a close proximity to the royal person; Peter, Martin and Richard all owned land in Kemonia, the city district south of the palace.⁹³

Eunuchs and Religious Faith

Sicilian eunuchs existed at an intersection of religious identity, publicly proclaiming themselves as converts to Christianity while retaining connections to the local Muslim community and in all likelihood privately practicing their religious faith. Evaluating the sincerity of religious belief and conversions is difficult, but both the Latin and Arabic chroniclers continually stated that the eunuchs only adopted an outward semblance of Christian faith and retained their previous Islamic convictions, what Jeremy Johns dubbed as "crypto-Muslims."⁹⁴ In addition to these narrative sources, we have the biography of Aḥmad/Peter fleeing from Sicily to a North African emirate, where he publicly converted back to Islam and served as a vizier.

Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Jubayr, an Iberian Muslim who traveled through Sicily in 1184/1185, provides the most detailed Arabic account of William II and his eunuchs.⁹⁵ He attests that "the eunuchs, who are the leaders of his court and the managers of his estates, are Muslims... They fast during holy months and give alms to become

closer to God. They redeem prisoners, bring up children, arrange marriages, give charity to them, and do all the good deeds that they are able. All of this is arranged by God, the great and mighty for the Muslims of this island.”⁹⁶ Ibn Jubayr goes on to relate a conversation he had in Messina with the otherwise unknown eunuch ‘Abd al-Masīḥ, who bemoans the fact that Sicilian eunuchs must conceal their faith: “You publicly declare Islam and prosper in your endeavors and flourish in your business transactions, God willing. But we must conceal our faith and fear for our lives, clutching the adoration of God and carrying out His duties in secret, detained in the ownership of an infidel of God.”⁹⁷ These eunuchs may have been following the practice of *taqīya*, an Islamic legal concept that allowed Muslims to conceal their true religious convictions in times of duress.⁹⁸

Ibn Jubayr’s report that eunuchs concealed their Muslim faith on pain of death is complicated by several accounts when eunuchs reveal their faith without consequence. Ibn Jubayr reports on a natural disaster in 1169 which revealed the true religious convictions of the eunuchs to even the king himself: “there was an earthquake which shook the island and which terrified this polytheist [William II]. He emerged from his palace and heard nothing but praise of God and his prophet from his women and his eunuchs. Shock overwhelmed them when they saw [William II]. So he said, ‘Let each person invoke the one who he worships, and those who have faith will be comforted’ to calm them.”⁹⁹ The king’s permissive attitude was not simply borne of a momentary crisis but of a pattern of tacit toleration. Though Ibn Jubayr credits divine intervention, he makes it clear that William turned a blind eye to regular exercise of Islamic prayer among his eunuchs: “When they attend to [William II] and the time for prayer approaches, they leave one by one to make their prayers. They sometimes pray in a place where the eye of their king might fall upon them, but mighty and sublime God veils them.”¹⁰⁰

The strongest evidence of the religious conviction of the palace eunuchs comes from their own *‘alāmāt*,¹⁰¹ the pious signatures court officials used on official documents. Peter, Martin and Richard all devised *‘alāmāt* in careful ciphers which, as Jeremy Johns and Nadia Jamil have argued, were religiously ambiguous phrases, encrypted to conceal their meaning from their Christian masters but meant to evoke clear Qur’ānic allusions to a Muslim audience.¹⁰² One eunuch, the otherwise unknown Ammar went further, encrypting “God and the Muslims are sufficient for me,” as his *‘alāma*.¹⁰³ Ammar made a clear profession of his Islamic faith in a form

that could only have been read by a small circle of individuals, most of whom were coreligionists.

One should not overstate the presence of “toleration” within the royal court. The court eunuchs were compelled to publicly abandon Islam and profess Christian faith. Yet both Arabic and Latin sources suggest that many of these eunuchs continued to practice their Islamic faith and that their religious conviction was an open secret within the court. Aside from the anomalous case of Philip discussed in Chap. 4, we have no evidence of legal punishment against crypto-Muslim eunuchs accused of apostasy. When ‘Abd al-Maṣīḥ discussed his plight with Ibn Jubayr, he lamented his inability to publicly proclaim his faith, yet an accommodating attitude toward the private exercise of Islamic faith prevailed in the Sicilian court.

THE MEDITERRANEAN EUNUCH: A COMPARATIVE VIEW

George of Antioch, the man most often credited with the creation of the Arabic administration of Sicily, is the most likely originator of the Sicilian eunuch tradition.¹⁰⁴ As discussed in Chap. 3, George’s family had long served the Byzantine Emperor but exiled from Constantinople and entered into the service of Tamīm, the Zīrid ruler of Ifrīqiya. After Tamīm’s death, George fled from North Africa and sought refuge in the Sicilian court in 1108.¹⁰⁵ Among his other duties, George was an emissary to the Fāṭimid court.¹⁰⁶ In 1127, he became the head minister of the king and took the lead in shaping both the image and the administration of the newly founded monarchy. Al-Maqrīzī, the fifteenth-century Islamic historian, describes George’s transformation of Roger’s image: “[George of Antioch] secluded Roger from his subjects and induced him to dress in the style of Muslim clothing, and to not ride out or come into view of his subjects except for during festivals, when he proceeds with horses bearing saddles of gold and silver and barding inlaid with precious stones, on a litter with a dome-shaped edifice, gilded banners, a parasol above him and with a crown on his head.”¹⁰⁷ While al-Maqrīzī never explicitly states that George brought eunuchs to the Sicilian court, he does credit the amir with the Islamification of Roger’s public image and the isolation of the monarch from the general populace. We have seen the central role that eunuchs played in isolating a ruler, serving as his emissaries to the outside world. George of Antioch, who grew up in Constantinople, labored in the Zīrid court and traveled as a diplomat to the Fāṭimids, possessed a

personal familiarity with a variety of eastern Mediterranean court cultures which could serve as possible antecedents for the Sicilian eunuch.

In the construction of their royal image, Norman monarchs frequently turned to the Byzantine emperor as a model for inspiration.¹⁰⁸ Though the Byzantine eunuch may seem a natural source for the Norman counterpart, there are significant differences between the two institutions. The eunuch serving the Byzantine emperor in the twelfth century fulfilled some of the same broad functions of his Sicilian counterpart, specifically related to the creation of sacred space around the emperor and the administrative functions of the eunuch.¹⁰⁹ However, by the twelfth century, the Byzantine eunuch had deviated in significant ways from his late Roman counterpart. The Byzantine eunuch of this period was not an outsider, a barbarian slave captured from outside the borders of the empire, but was, more often than not, a freeborn citizen from a successful family that had made the decision to voluntarily castrate its son to improve his prospects for his political advancement.¹¹⁰ By mutilating their children, these families made them eligible for a variety of vital positions as servants and emissaries of the emperor and other Byzantine elites, and for families out of political favor, castration proved the only avenue through which they could access the halls of power.

The shift away from eunuchs as outsiders in Byzantium parallels a semi-otic emphasis on the sacred nature of the eunuch. In this same period, we see attempts to conflate eunuchs with the monastic ascetic and frame their castration in terms of the bodily mortification which monks endured, most famously in Theophylaktos of Ohrid's *In Defense of Eunuchs*, a treatise which he wrote to defend his eunuch brother.¹¹¹ As early as the tenth century, Byzantine writers commonly understood the story of the prophet Daniel as a court eunuch.¹¹² Though superficial similarities between the high offices held by the eunuch in the kingdom of Sicily and the Byzantine Empire existed, the specifics of the administrative structures of the two governments differed enormously, and the presence of Muslim eunuchs, which is so striking in the Sicilian court, is absent from the eunuchs that surrounded the Byzantine emperor in the twelfth century. The Sicilian eunuch, defined by his servile status and previous religious affiliation, had little in common with his Greek counterpart, and the Sicilian eunuch tradition could not have been a simple emulation of Byzantine court practice.

The Islamic courts of North Africa, most notably that of the Fāṭimids, provide the other possible antecedent for the Sicilian eunuch.¹¹³ However,

Sicilian eunuchs did not fulfill the functions most associated with Islamic eunuchs in this period. During the Middle Ages, eunuchs in Islamic courts played a central role in the seclusion of women and the creation of gendered spaces within the palace.¹¹⁴ The large number of secluded women necessitated an even greater number of eunuchs. David Ayalon estimates that eunuchs outnumbered wives, concubines and slave girls within the court by a ratio of roughly three to one.¹¹⁵ Even if the chronicle accounts that assert the Fāṭimid Caliph had ten thousand eunuchs and slave girls¹¹⁶ are wild exaggerations, the Fāṭimid court had at least hundreds, probably thousands of eunuchs, and the available evidence suggests that the Sicilian rulers maintained a far smaller number of eunuchs.

Despite the existence of a royal harem, we have no evidence to conclude that the Sicilian eunuch had any role in secluding women of the court. A late twelfth-century description of the Sicilian royal palace mentions both eunuchs and the harem specifically but draws no connection between the two institutions: “Over the rest of the site, there are spread various mansions placed all around for the married ladies, the women of the harem, and the eunuchs assigned to serve the king and queen.”¹¹⁷ The Sicilian eunuchs were associated exclusively with the royal person and, as such, were present in far smaller numbers. Falcandus reports that “all of the palace slaves, of whom there were approximately forty,” entered into a conspiracy against Stephen of Perche.¹¹⁸ We cannot know whether all of those slaves were eunuchs, but the estimate provides the best information on the size of the eunuch presence within court.

The castration techniques that Muslim courts required of their eunuchs may provide the best evidence for Sicilian adoption of the Islamic eunuch tradition. The Byzantine eunuch, who was not associated with the harem, was typically castrated by either the crushing of the testicles or by an operation in which a surgeon cut an incision in the scrotum and removed the testicles.¹¹⁹ In either case, the Byzantine eunuch rarely had his penis removed, save for a few occasions where such eunuchs were given to the emperor as gifts.¹²⁰ The Islamic eunuch was, by contrast, almost always completely castrated, with both his penis and testicles removed.¹²¹ For the Byzantines, the less dangerous operation to crush or remove the testicles accomplished the desired task: ensuring that the administrative servant could not generate kin nor impregnate women he might be charged with guarding.¹²² However, as Muslim scholars were well aware, the removal of the testicles did not prevent erection,¹²³ making the continued presence of

the phallus a threat to the integrity of the harem. The duties of the Muslim eunuch required the eunuch's complete castration. The Sicilian eunuch, like his counterparts throughout the Islamic world, was completely castrated, according to Ibn Jubayr.¹²⁴ The Sicilian eunuch, castrated like his Muslim counterpart rather than in the Byzantine fashion, played no role in the seclusion of women. This imitation of the technique of castration in the absence of any functional necessity suggests an Islamic model for the Sicilian eunuch.

Aside from his duties in the harem, the Fāṭimid eunuch also served to educate young slaves, often Christians, to serve as Mamluk slave soldiers of the caliphate.¹²⁵ Again, we see no corresponding function in the Sicilian eunuch. Aside from these day-to-day functions, high-ranking Fāṭimid eunuchs served as military commanders and governors, as well as overseeing the markets and the policing of Cairo.¹²⁶ By and large, these tend to be executive duties in service to the caliphate, rather than the administrative functions that typified the Sicilian eunuchs.

The diffuse points of origin for the Fāṭimid eunuchs distinguish them from the Sicilian eunuchs, who seem to have been Muslims taken from North Africa. Ibn Jubayr mentions the presence of black slaves within the Sicilian court but differentiates them from the palace eunuchs.¹²⁷ The Fāṭimids drew their eunuchs primarily from the area around the Black Sea, the Byzantine Empire and sub-Saharan Africa.¹²⁸ The Fāṭimid eunuchs came from diverse backgrounds; they were both black and white, taken from both Christians and polytheists, with an inclination toward sub-Saharan eunuchs in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹²⁹

The relationship between the Fāṭimid Caliphate and his Christian subjects was not analogous to the Norman kings and the Sicilian Muslims. The most powerful Christians within the Fāṭimid court were not the eunuchs who had converted to Islam but free Christians.¹³⁰ Several Christians served as vizier to the Fāṭimids, the highest position in the government save for the caliph, while only one eunuch, Barjawan, a man of uncertain origin, ascended to that position.¹³¹ Free Muslims certainly served within the bureaucracy of the Norman court and, in some cases, at high ranks,¹³² but the palace eunuchs dominated the other Muslim officials in the upper echelons of the court. The Sicilian kings exerted a tight control not only of the geographic and religious background of their eunuchs but also with an eye to how that background might determine the positions they might hold within the court.

CONCLUSION

The Sicilian eunuch tradition of the twelfth century was not created by continuing the policies the Norman rulers found on the island, nor was it the result of emulating the practices of neighboring Mediterranean courts. The Norman rulers altered the eunuch tradition, deploying it in specific ways to advance the creation of their royal identity. The Sicilian eunuch was distinguished from other contemporary eunuchs by his exclusive association with the monarchy. He did not serve other elite families, maintain the harem or train slave soldiers. He served multiple functions: secluding the ruler, fulfilling administrative functions for the crown, offering a counterbalance to other elites, functioning as a mediator between the crown and Muslims both in Sicily and abroad. The homogeneity of the backgrounds of the Sicilian eunuchs also marked a departure from other Mediterranean traditions. Rather than recruiting from several sources, the ruler used Muslims exclusively as a very public illustration of his domination over his Muslim subjects and by extension over the Muslim world. He subjugated them both physically, through emasculation, and religiously, by forcing at least surface conversions. These transformations illustrated the breadth and scale of his royal power.

Though the eunuchs symbolized the royal domination over the Muslims as a whole, one must be careful of conflating the eunuchs with the Muslim population at large. When these figures are examined simply as Muslims, stories like the trial of Philip of Mahdiyya clearly show the nascent hostility of the court to the Muslims within it. However, by looking at the eunuchs in a broader sense and seeing the precariousness of their position due to their complete dependence on the king, we can understand such incidents in a very different, though not contradictory, light. Of the six eunuchs we can specifically identify from narrative sources, two were put to death by the crown, another was arrested and tortured for information, and a fourth fled from the island, fearing a similar fate. Only in the case of Philip do we see religious motives behind the royal violence against these eunuchs.

After the execution of his chief eunuch Barjawan, the Fāṭimid Caliph al-Ḥākīm issued the following statement: “Barjawan was my slave, and I employed him. He acted in good faith, and I treated him favorably. Then he misbehaved, so I killed him.”¹³³ Eunuchs were, by their very nature, disposable; they could be punished or killed by the ruler on a whim. In fact, such actions illustrated the extent of the monarch’s power. Indeed,

the ability of all rulers to take such actions against their eunuchs had a part in making the eunuch, as an institution, appealing. As the next chapter illustrates, the court eunuchs became targets of a confluence of anti-royal and anti-Islamic sentiment in the 1160s, but historians must temper the impulse to focus exclusively on the religious affiliation of the court eunuchs without a critical examination of the function of the castrated servants, both within Sicily and abroad.

NOTES

1. In addition to eunuchs and royal advisers, Muslim cooks, hand-maidens, concubines and tailors are present within the court. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 413–14.
2. Johns (2002), pp. 212–55. For other quality examinations of Sicilians eunuchs, see Corsi and Musca (1991), pp. 251–77; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 193–208.
3. Johns (2002), p. 255.
4. This narrative is drawn from Falcandus (1897), pp. 79–81. The text itself is discussed in detail in Chap. 6.
5. Falcandus (1897), pp. 55–57. The attack itself is discussed in detail in Chap. 6. Martin himself was probably conducting business in the countryside outside of Palermo at the time of this attack. Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario del Monastero di S. Maria della Grotta, Pergemene, no. 2; Cusa (1868), pp. 622–26.
6. Ibn Munqidh and Hitti (1964), p. 168.
7. Allowing Martin to administer harsh justice in the king's absence may have served a Machiavellian function of directing displeasure away from the ruler and toward the overzealous eunuch who carried out the actual trials.
8. The sincerity of the conversion to Christianity of these eunuchs is not only questioned by Falcandus but also by Muslim observers of Sicily.
9. For brief, general survey of the eunuch, see Tougher (2008), pp. 7–13; Ringrose (2003b), p. 8–13.
10. Asher-Greve (1998), p. 14.
11. Tsai (1996), p. 11.
12. Kadish (1969).
13. Roller (1998), pp. 118–34; Burkert (1979), pp. 102–14.
14. Scholz (2001), pp. 31–36, 49–55.

15. Kuefler (1996), pp. 279–306.
16. Marmon (1995).
17. Volkov (1995).
18. Nanda (1990).
19. Ringrose (1994), pp. 85–110; Kuefler (2001).
20. Ayalon (1979), pp. 67–124.
21. Scholz (2001), pp. 63–92.
22. Herodotus (1964), p. 529.
23. Xenophon (2001), p. 228.
24. Anderson (1990).
25. Tougher and Boustan (2002), p. 144; Hopkins (1978), pp. 172–96.
26. Ringrose (2003b), p. 10; Scholten (1995), pp. 28–33.
27. Hopkins (1978), pp. 174–80.
28. Ringrose (1966), pp. 75–93.
29. For broad histories of eunuchs and castration in Western Europe, see Browe (1936); Taylor (2000). A general history of the medieval eunuch in Western Europe can be found in Kuefler (1996), pp. 279–306.
30. On the adaptation of administrative techniques, Douglas (1969), pp. 185–91.
31. Johns (2002); Johns (1993), pp. 133–59.
32. Takayama (1993), pp. 47–72.
33. Nef (2011), p. 342.
34. Nef (2011), p. 85.
35. El-Cheikh (2005), p. 248.
36. For debates about the authorship of the letter, see D’Angelo (2013), pp. 141–61; Hood (1999), pp. 1–39; Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 28–50; Jamison (1957); Hoffmann (1967), pp. 130–42.
37. Falcandus (1897), p. 178.
38. Though the palace provided a residence for royal eunuchs, many of the most prominent eunuchs maintained private residences outside of the palace grounds in the Kemonia district.
39. Maio was originally a notary who served in the Latin chancery in the 1140s. He was a bureaucrat who had steadily advanced through the ranks and was promoted to *amiratus amiratorum* in 1154. It is unclear whether Maio was of Greek or Latin descent. Takayama (1993), p. 96.

40. Takayama (1993), p. 96; Ménager (1960). This title is often translated as grand admiral, which is somewhat misleading. The actual Latin title is *amiratus amiratorum*, which clearly points to the Muslim origins of this title, as well as dispelling the naval connotations which spring into the mind of the modern reader.
41. Takayama (1993), p. 97.
42. Falcandus accuses Maio of all manner of moral failings. He is power hungry, greedy, lustful and wants to usurp the throne for himself. Falcandus (1897), pp. 7–8.
43. Though the term *familiaris regis* appears before the death of Maio, it is in the wake of Maio's death that it becomes an official position. William formed a council of three *familiares regis* in 1161 and an advisory council of three *familiares*. The *familiares* were the closest advisors to the king, forming an inner council to help administer his realm. Takayama (1993), pp. 99–102.
44. Falcandus (1897), pp. 155–56. The phrase *palacii servientes* is ill defined. Falcandus uses it in only one chapter of his texts, and it may include additional palace slaves beyond the eunuchs themselves.
45. For a compressive list, see Johns (2002), pp. 243–44.
46. Takayama (1993), pp. 102–3.
47. Johns (2002), p. 224.
48. Jamison (1957), p. 44.
49. Pertz, *Annales Ceccanenses* (1866), p. 285.
50. Falcandus (1897), p. 77.
51. Falcandus (1897), p. 25.
52. Because these eunuchs were originally Muslims, identifying the same individuals in the Muslim and Christian texts can be problematic. While we cannot be certain that Aḥmad, the eunuch identified by Ibn Khaldūn, is the same as Falcandus' Peter, there are numerous similarities between the two individuals. Aḥmad is identified as serving as a chief minister to the Sicilian king and as fleeing from Sicily to Tunis. After several years in Tunis, he fled to Morocco. These events parallel the life of Peter so closely that Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 325–28, concluded they were the same figure, and there have been no substantive challenges to that conclusion.
53. Ibn Khaldūn, in *BAS*², p. 559.
54. Maria Andaloro, *Nobiles officinae: perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, vol. 1 (Catania: G. Maimone,

- 2006), pp. 771–72; Noth (1983), p. 199; Messina (1994), pp. 160–62. These land registers use the name Barrūn, an Arabic transliteration of the French diminutive of Pierre. Bilingual epigraphy from a royal building in Termini Imerse confirms that Barrūn and Peter are the same individual; they identify the overseer of the royal construction as both “the eunuch Barrūn” in Arabic and “Peter, slave of [Roger’s] palace in Latin.” Johns (2002), pp. 222–23; Amari (1971), pp. 63–66. Nef (2011), pp. 335–37, disputes John’s argument that these identify the same person.
55. Palermo, Archivio del Storico Dicesano Palermo, no. 14; Cusa (1868), pp. 28–30; Noth (1983), pp. 196–98; Johns and Metcalfe (1999), pp. 242–48.
 56. al-Tijani, in *BAS*², pp. 459–61; Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 344–45; Falcandus (1897), pp. 24–28; Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 242. For more details on Peter’s career, see Chap. 6.
 57. Ringrose (1994), pp. 85–110.
 58. Falcandus (1897), p. 83.
 59. There were three *familiares regis* during the reign of William I, though that number fluctuated during the regency of Margaret; see Takayama (1993), pp. 908–12.
 60. Falcandus (1897), p. 90.
 61. Falcandus (1897), p. 99; Romuald (1935), p. 254.
 62. Ibn Khaldūn, in *BAS*², p. 515.
 63. Ibn Khaldūn, in *BAS*², p. 559.
 64. Garufi (1902), pp. 163–65. Johns (2002), p. 228.
 65. Ayalon (1999), pp. 290–93.
 66. Johns (2002), pp. 201–3.
 67. Johns (2002), pp. 16, 200–1.
 68. Falcandus (1897), p. 109.
 69. For details on political developments during Margaret’s reign, see Chap. 4.
 70. Haskins (1911), p. 650.
 71. Haskins (1911), p. 654, n. 191.
 72. Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Archivio della Capella Palatina, pergamena no. 19; Cusa (1868), p. 83.
 73. Falcandus (1897), pp. 128–29.
 74. Falcandus (1897), p. 119.
 75. Ibn Qalāqis (1984), pp. 80–81.

76. De Simone (1991), pp. 336–37; De Simone (1996), pp. 22–24, 69–80.
77. Amari (2002), vol. 3, pp. 332–33; De Simone (1996), pp. 14–108; Amara and Nef (2001), pp. 121–27, 122–25; Johns (2002), pp. 234–42.
78. Falcandus (1897), p. 119.
79. There are four individuals who are specifically mentioned as *eunuchem* throughout the text. A fifth fits the pattern of the other four. He serves in a position typically associated with eunuchs, and he is a former Muslim converted to Christianity serving within the palace. However, Falcandus never explicitly identifies him as a eunuch.
80. Falcandus (1897), p. 45.
81. Falcandus (1897), p. 85.
82. Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario del Monastero di S. Maria della Grotta, Pergemene, no. 2, Cusa (1868), pp. 622–26; Simonsohn (1997), vol. 1, pp. 418–21.
83. Cusa (1868), p. 321.
84. Takayama (1993), pp. 123–25.
85. In February of 1169, Alessandro Pratesi (1958), pp. 60–62, lists Martin as *magister camerarii regii palatii*, while two documents from February and May of that same year list him as only *camerarii regii palatii*, Carlo Alberto Garufi (1899), pp. 107–12. Johns (2002), pp. 221–22, suggests that Martin and Richard were rivals, which may account for their titular shifts.
86. This is confirmed by his appearance as a witness in two charters of 1169. Garufi (1902), p. 111; Pratesi (1958), pp. 60–62.
87. For a map of medieval Palermo, see Columba (1910), pp. 423–26; Pezzini (2013), pp. 228–29; or D’Angelo (2009), pp. 174–75. *Qā’id* Richard would later rent a house in the same area from the Archbishop of Palermo. Cusa (1868), pp. 214–16.
88. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Tabulario di S. Maria Nuova di Monreale, Pergamene no. 15, line 27; Garufi (899), pp. 10–11.
89. Ibn Jubayr identifies Black African slaves who were present within the Sicilian court but never identifies these figures as eunuchs. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 413.
90. On the location and economics of castration centers in eunuch trade, see Hogendorn (2000), pp. 41–68.

91. Ayalon (1979), p. 76.
92. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes (1852), vol. 5, pt. 1, pp. 440–42.
93. For a map of medieval Palermo, see Pezzini (2013), pp. 228–29; D’Angelo (2009) pp. 174–75; or Columba (1910), pp. 423–26.
94. Johns (2002), pp. 211, 212–56.
95. For a more detailed description of Ibn Jubayr, see Chap. 6.
96. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 415.
97. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 415.
98. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 195–86; Johns (2002), pp. 250–54.
99. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 414–15.
100. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 416.
101. The *‘alāmā* was frequently used as a mark of ratification or initial-ization, equivalent to a signature, on Chancery documents throughout the Muslim West. It was a motto, frequently a refer-ence to the Qur’ān. For a discussion of the *‘alāmāt* and its use in Fāṭimid decrees, see Stern (1960), pp. 123–65.
102. Jamil and Johns (2004), pp. 189–90.
103. Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Archivio della Capella Palatina, perga-mentina no. 19; Cusa (1868), p. 83.
104. Johns (2002), p. 215.
105. De Simone (1999), pp. 261–93.
106. Johns (2002), pp. 258–59. On diplomatic exchanges between the two courts, Canard (1954): pp. 84–113; Canard (1955), pp. 125–46.
107. Al-Maqrīzī (1991), vol. 3, pp. 19–20; De Simone (1999), pp. 261–93.
108. Houben (2002), pp. 113–24.
109. Tougher (2008), pp. 42–53.
110. Ringrose (2003b), pp. 184–86.
111. D’Achrida (1980), vol. 1, pp. 291–331.
112. Ringrose (2003a), pp. 73–106.
113. For Sicilian emulation of Fāṭimid court practice, see Johns (1993b), pp. 133–59. On why the Normans would model them-selves after the Fāṭimids, rather than the Zirid rulers in North Africa, see Johns (2002), pp. 282–83.
114. Kentaro (2000), pp. 34–38; Peirce (1993) shows the way in which the function of the harem and the role of those within it shifts dramatically under the Ottomans in the fifteenth and six-teenth centuries.

115. Ayalon (1999), pp. 16–17.
116. The tenth-century caliph al-‘Azīz bi’llāh was said to have had ten thousand slave girls and eunuchs in his court. Lev (1991), p. 75.
117. Falcandus (1897), p. 259.
118. Falcandus (1897), p. 156.
119. Paulus Ægineta (1844–1847), pp. 379–80.
120. Ringrose (2003b), pp. 60–61.
121. Ayalon (1999), pp. 305–13.
122. Tougher (1997), pp. 168–84.
123. Ninth-century writer Abu Uthman ‘Amr ibn Bahr al-Jāhiz criticized the Byzantines for such practices. Abu Uthman ‘Amr ibn Bahr al-Jāhiz (1964), p. 124.
124. Ibn Jubayr initially identifies Sicilian eunuchs first as *al-fityān al-majābīb*, “Completely castrated slaves,” Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 413, and later as *al-fityān* throughout the remainder of his text. *Fityān* means slaves, but in the west, particularly for Muslims from Al-Andalus, like Ibn Jubayr, the term meant eunuch. “On the eunuch in Islam,” in David Ayalon (1979), p. 91. *Majābīb* refers to total castration, rather than *yasullūna*, which would have meant simply removal of the testicles.
125. Ayalon (1999), pp. 139–44.
126. Lev (1991), pp. 74–78.
127. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 413–14.
128. Hogendorn (2000), pp. pp. 41–68.
129. Ayalon (1999), p. 139.
130. On Christian elites in Egypt during the early twelfth century, see Canard (1954), pp. 84–113; Canard (1955), pp. 125–46.
131. Al-Imad (1990); Lev (1991), pp. 25–26.
132. Most notably, Abū l-Qāsim ibn Ḥammūd. Johns (2002), pp. 234–42.
133. Lev (1991), p. 78.

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Community as Collateral

In 1161, in the wake of a rebellion against King William I, Latin Christian mobs massacred Muslim communities across the island of Sicily. These massacres illustrate a seismic shift in the way the Christian population of the *regno* viewed their Muslim counterparts. In the 1130s, Latin Christians had used violence against Muslim soldiers to signal their resistance to royal authority, and in the 1150s, a faction within the court used the charge of apostasy to outmaneuver, and ultimately execute, a small group of their crypto-Muslim rivals. But the riots of 1161 reveal, for the first time, widespread popular resentment among the Latin Christians toward the Sicilian Muslims, fueled in large part by the influx of Northern Italian “Lombard” immigrants to the island. This violence was only loosely connected to the political aims of the conspirators, and from 1161 onward, it became clear that only a strong and powerful king could guarantee the security of the Muslim population of the island. When the authority of the monarch deteriorated, popular violence against Muslims would reemerge. Only a robust and assertive monarchy could protect the Muslim population of Sicily, and, conversely, the ability of a monarch to maintain peace between Christians and Muslims within the *regno* became a symbol of power of the crown.

The vast scale of the 1161 massacres, the popular participation in this carnage and the permanent displacement of the Muslim community differentiate this violence from any previous incidents. These attacks illustrate a transformation in the way that the Christian population envisioned Sicilian Muslims. As discussed in the previous chapters, Muslim soldiers and administrators served as visible symbols of the crown and violence against those

individuals signaled a defiance of royal authority. In turn, by 1161, that understanding extended beyond individual Muslims in the service of the monarchy to the Muslim population of the island as a whole. By the mid-twelfth century, the fate of Sicily's Muslim population had become inextricably linked to the fate of Sicilian kingship. The crown had protected these Muslims and deployed them as both a valuable resource and a clear symbol of royal power. The ability to protect Sicilian Muslims from Christian aggression demonstrated a king's power, and when that power faltered, the Muslim population became subject to bitter reprisals. One cannot discuss the emergence of popular violence against Sicilian Muslims without contextualizing such violence within the larger scope of ferocious challenges to royal authority in the *regno* that consumed the reign of William I.

The 1161 riots did not signal a permanent and irreconcilable antagonism between the Latin Christians and the Muslim populations of Sicily. The emergence of popular Latin Christian hostility toward Sicilian Muslims in 1161 did not cause Sicilian rulers to dissolve their relationship with their Muslim subjects. In fact, the Sicilian monarchy elevated Muslim administrators to even higher levels of the royal administration in the wake of this violence, particularly during the regency of Margaret of Navarre, who relied on court eunuchs to preserve her power from potential challenges from both the island's nobility and her own kinsmen. Subsequent riots in 1168, in which Christians and Muslims collaborated to drive out a French chancellor, confirm that Muslims could attack in concert with their Christian neighbors as perpetrators, not just victims, of mob violence, and that Muslims in the service of the crown continued to be understood as symbols of authority.

Sicilian rulers in the 1160s through 1180s ultimately reaffirmed the status of the Sicilian monarchy as the protector of the island's Muslims and the role of those Muslims in the gift economy of the regency. Sicilian Muslims became increasingly dependent on the monarchy for protection, but ironically this royal protection only heightened Latin Christian resentment, leading to a conflation of anti-Muslim and anti-royal sentiments, which made Sicilian Muslims more vulnerable to violence in the moments when royal authority collapsed in the latter half of the twelfth century.

THE 'LIBER DE REGNO SICILIE'

Our two most detailed narrative sources for the massacres of 1161 are Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon*, a text discussed in detail in Chap. 4, and the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*. The *Liber de Regno Sicilie* offers an insider's

view of the Sicilian court and its politics from 1154 to 1169, but the text's author, mistakenly identified as Hugo Falcandus remains unknown, as does the exact date of its composition.¹ The unknown author displayed an exceptional knowledge of the inner workings of the Sicilian court, possessed a solid background in Roman law and was well schooled in classical literature. When we check the events narrated by Falcandus against other chroniclers like that of Romuald of Salerno and against royal documents, his information mirrors that of contemporary sources. However, Falcandus draws heavily on classical literary tropes, especially those of Sallust, in his representations of the character and the motivations of the individuals he describes.² In addition, the author was clearly involved with the politics of the court, which weighs heavily on the way he describes the struggles he observes. These loyalties and his use of classical literary tropes make it problematic to ascribe too much authority to some of the more salacious descriptions of the villains within the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*. Despite these problems, the text gives an account of unparalleled detail about the operation of the Sicilian court under William I and the beginning of the reign of William II.

The *Liber de Regno Sicilie* offers a complex depiction of Sicilian Muslims but one that ultimately reinforces the notion of an irreconcilable hatred between Muslims and Christians and the need for a powerful monarch to maintain peace between the two religious communities. Like other eleventh- and twelfth-century Latin sources, Falcandus uses the term "Saracen," a false biblical etymology, to identify Muslims.³ The text avoids the use of religious polemical terms like "enemies of God" or "infidels" but operates under the assumption that "Saracens" are an innately flawed *gens*, or people. The text focuses on actions within the court itself, so the palace eunuchs and their allies are the only Muslims that receive anything more than passing reference. In describing the crypto-Muslim eunuch Peter/Aḥmad, the author writes, "If the defect of [Peter/Aḥmad's] people (*gentile*) had not obstructed his inborn gentleness or allowed him to abandon his deep-seated hatred for the Christian name, the kingdom of Sicily would have taken pleasure in great tranquility under him."⁴ This habitual hatred for Christians is, for Falcandus, the defining characteristic of "Saracens." Aside from this core flaw, Falcandus ascribes a wide range of moral characteristics to individual Muslims. On the one hand, he presents Muslims like Peter/Aḥmad as virtuous and generous, model courtiers, save for their fatal flaw of being a Saracen. On the other, he depicts figures like Robert of Calatabiano, the convert to Christianity

who managed the royal jail, as monsters who torture Christian prisoners, allow the rape of Christian women and children, erect “a temple of the Saracens” and embody the grossest of Latin Christian stereotypes of Saracen behavior.⁵ More than any other source of the period, the *Liber de Regno Sicilie* demonstrates the existence of an enormous discontent within the ranks of the Latin administrators of the court in the latter half of the twelfth century toward their Muslim contemporaries and justifies the need for an authoritarian ruler who could maintain a fractious peace between Christians and Muslims. The *Liber de Regno Sicilie* does not depict Muslims as the source of all troubles within the Sicilian court, or even its principal villains, but it reinforces the notion of an innate animosity between the Muslims and Christians of Sicily, an animosity that would always result in one side oppressing or killing the other if not carefully restrained by the actions of an assertive and judicious king.

THE EMERGENCE OF POPULAR ANTI-MUSLIM VIOLENCE

The Revolt on the Mainland and Loss of North Africa

The near-total collapse of royal power created the circumstances in which the anti-Muslim massacres of 1161 could occur. Animosity toward Sicilian Muslims was inseparable from hostility toward the crown; any attempt to understand the emergence of this new form of violence requires an examination of the political turmoil that enveloped the kingdom in the 1150s.⁶ After ascending to the throne in 1154, William I faced the threat of external invasion from both the German and Byzantine emperors and, more pressing still, a series of challenges from an increasingly assertive nobility. William’s father, Roger II, had dispossessed many existing noble families when he established the *regno* and conquered the Southern Italian mainland.⁷ These families were eager to push back at what they saw as the abuses of the crown. According to Falcandus, they blamed these abuses on royal administrative officers, primarily William’s amir Maio and later the eunuchs of William’s court. Early in his reign, William moved to aggressively undercut the authority of his potential rivals in the mainland nobility. In 1155, a year after he ascended the throne, William charged his cousin, Count Robert of Loritello, who had administered Apulia under Roger II, with treason.⁸ Robert escaped from the king, and when a near-fatal illness incapacitated William I, Robert, supported by men and resources from the Byzantine Empire, led a revolt in cities throughout Apulia.⁹ These events

brought the enemies of the kingdom of Sicily out of the woodwork. The exiled prince of Capua, Robert of Sorrento, seized control of his former patrimony. Pope Adrian IV supported this venture and excommunicated William.¹⁰ Even on Sicily itself, ever the bulwark of power for the Norman kings, Bartholomew of Garsiliato seized the castle of Butera and recruited other powerful elites to join the revolt.

This litany of rebellions sparked an insurrection among the Muslims in Norman holdings across Ifrīqiya, who had chafed under the rule of the Christian King of Sicily for almost a decade. According to Ibn al-Athīr, the forces of Roger II appointed ‘Umar ibn Abū’ al-Ḥasan al-Furrayānī as governor in Sfax and took his father Abū’ al-Ḥasan as a hostage to guarantee the proper conduct of his son.¹¹ Before leaving for Sicily, Abū’ al-Ḥasan urged his son to look for an opportunity to rebel against Norman rule, even though he knew that such a revolt would lead to his own execution. Early in 1156, Abū’ al-Ḥasan took advantage of the chaos across the *regno* and urged his son to kill all of the Normans and Christians in the city. Sfax rose up in revolt in February of 1156, and Tripoli and Gabès joined the insurrection shortly thereafter. To complicate matters further, Almohad armies advanced from the West, seizing Bône. Only in Sousse and Mahdiyya did Norman garrisons, aided by a relief fleet from Sicily, successfully stave off these attacks.

William I was swift to respond to the challenge from his nobility in Sicily and the Southern Italian mainland, violently suppressing the various revolts in 1156. But even after these victories, he took no immediate actions to reclaim the lost Norman holdings in Ifrīqiya. North African rebels, driven back by Norman troops at Mahdiyya, fled to Marrakesh to plead for aid from the Almohads. By 1159, a vast Almohad army threatened to crush the last of the Norman holdings in North Africa. Sicilian forces fell back to the well-fortified city of Mahdiyya, which the Almohads then besieged.

The Almohad invasion spurred Sicilian forces into action. A fleet of some 150 ships commanded by the eunuch Peter/Aḥmad, who was returning from a successful raiding expedition against the Balearics in which he had enslaved numerous Muslims from Ibiza, was sent to break the siege and relieve the garrison at Mahdiyya.¹² Arabic-language accounts of the battle tell of a fierce storm which scattered the Sicilian fleet as it attempted to enter Mahdiyya’s harbor, resulting in the capture of several Sicilian vessels, forcing Peter/Aḥmad to abandon Mahdiyya and retreat to Sicily.¹³ Romuald of Salerno confirms the rough details of

that account, claiming that Peter/Aḥmad's forces were driven back from Mahdiyya and lost several ships.¹⁴ Falcandus, however, blames the defeat on an act of treachery by eunuch Peter/Aḥmad, perpetrated on behalf of his superior, Maio of Bari, in an effort to undermine the authority of King William: "The barbarian army would have been defeated and destroyed that day, but that destruction was never accomplished ... *Qā'id* Peter, who commanded the fleet and planned the whole affair, inexplicably turned to flee ... The other galleys followed him, unaware of the traitor's treachery."¹⁵ In the wake of the defeat, Ibn al-Athīr claims that King William attempted to use the Muslim population of Sicily as a tool against the Almohads.¹⁶ King William attempted to preserve the lives of Norman soldiers trapped within Mahdiyya by threatening to kill Muslims in Sicily if his troops were harmed. Latin sources do not confirm the existence of the king's ultimatum, making it difficult to assess whether this hostage-taking marks a new development in the way the Sicilian crown sought to exploit its Muslim population, or was a polemical creation of Ibn al-Athīr, who sought to use such threats against Sicilian Muslims to undermine the Islamic cultural veneer of the Sicilian court and further delegitimize the Norman monarchy. In either case, with supplies running low and no prospect of relief, the Sicilian garrisons surrendered shortly thereafter, ending the roughly decade-long Norman occupation in Ifrīqiya.

How did the loss of Norman holdings in North Africa affect the understanding of Muslims in the kingdom of Sicily? None of our Latin narrative sources use the loss of Ifrīqiya to castigate the Muslim population of Sicily. Even Falcandus deflects blame of the failures from Peter/Aḥmad, insisting that the king's chief minister, amir of amirs, Maio of Bari, bore ultimate responsibility for the loss of Ifrīqiya by instructing Peter/Aḥmad to abandon the Sicilian soldiers in the region. Falcandus claims Maio deliberately sabotaged the garrison in Mahdiyya in an effort to weaken William's power while preparing to launch a coup against the king. The crypto-Muslim eunuchs were agents of the true villain, Maio himself. We have no indication that King William shared these sentiments, as he kept both Maio and Peter/Aḥmad in their respective positions. The defeat of the Sicilian fleet did nothing to slow the rapid ascent of Peter/Aḥmad through the ranks of the administration. Alex Metcalfe is almost certainly correct in his assessment that the loss of North Africa heightened tensions between the royal administration and the nobility of the kingdom who blamed royal administrators for this disastrous defeat.¹⁷ This antagonism

set the stage for the coup of 1161 and the emergence of popular anti-Islamic violence in Sicily in the wake of that revolt.

The Coup of 1161 and the Palermo Massacre

Muslim administrators within the court came under direct threat in the wake of Maio's death soon after this defeat. Members of the disaffected nobility successfully recruited Matthew Bonellus, a protégé and would-be son-in-law of Maio of Bari, to assassinate the amir of amirs in 1160. Falcandus reports that news of Maio's assassination caused celebration on the streets of Palermo wherein his corpse was dragged through the streets and publicly desecrated, while Matthew Bonellus was lauded as a hero.¹⁸ Romuald of Salerno asserts that King William recognized that Matthew had the support of the Palermitan mob and arrested Maio's relatives and associates to placate Matthew's many supporters until he could find an opportunity to seek revenge upon Matthew.¹⁹ William launched an investigation into rumors that Maio had embezzled funds from the crown; he arrested and interrogated Maio's brother and son, both of whom served as amirs, and tortured the eunuch Matthew, who had served as Maio's primary aide. The palace eunuchs, who had served under Maio, feared that they would be killed as well.²⁰ These concerns almost certainly stemmed from the events that took place in the wake of the execution of Philip of Mahdiyya just seven years earlier, when eunuchs who served Philip were put to death along with him.²¹ This violence lacked an explicitly religious character; it was directed principally against Maio, a man viewed as an abusive administrator who was held responsible for objectionable royal policy. All of those who served under him, both Christian and Muslim, became potential targets for subsequent reprisal. The eunuchs were particularly vulnerable to this violence largely because of their station as slaves to the king rather than their religious beliefs.²²

Maio's assassination did not end the fractious political violence within the Sicilian court. Instead, it triggered a series of events which sparked a massacre of Sicilian Muslims. Muslims were not the initial targets for this violence, but because of their association with the crown, they became swept up in the escalating hostility against King William I. Maio's killer, Matthew Bonellus, must have hoped that King William would see Maio's lack of popularity within the nobility of Sicily and reward him for removing the hated amir. However, William took no steps to either reward or protect Matthew and, soon after the assassination, demanded that Matthew

repay an enormous debt of 60,000 *tari* to the crown.²³ Enforcing this debt sent a clear signal of William's displeasure with Matthew. Members of the civic administration, including the court eunuchs, understood that William's discontent made Matthew vulnerable to reprisal. Fearful for his own life, Matthew fled Palermo and entered into a conspiracy to overthrow the king.

Metcalfe's recent study of Sicilian Muslims argues that the 1161 massacre was a carefully arranged, "top-down" affair, planned and executed by the leaders of this coup.²⁴ However, the chaotic nature of the rebellion makes it very difficult to determine if any of these conspirators intended to orchestrate a wholesale massacre of Palermitan Muslims, or if the mob violence emerged as an unintended confluence of the collapse of royal authority, anti-royal sentiment and long-held resentment toward Muslim officials. Matthew conspired with two of William's own relatives, Simon of Taranto and Tancred of Lecce. Both men had reason to despise King William, although no particular reason to oppose the Muslim population of Sicily. Simon, the illegitimate son of Roger II and William's half-brother, had been prince of Taranto, but William stripped him of his holdings when he became king. Tancred, who would eventually become king of Sicily in 1190 and, as ruler, an ally of the Sicilian Muslim population against papal armies, was William's nephew, the illegitimate son of William's deceased brother Roger III. He had been imprisoned in the palace for unknown reasons following the rebellions of 1155–1156. These three men, Matthew, Simon and Tancred, plotted to unseat the king and place his pliable nine-year-old son upon the throne. Their coup attempt would unleash unprecedented violence on the Muslim population of Sicily, as decades of smoldering resentment against Muslims and their role as symbols of royal power gave way to a frenzied massacre in which the Christian population of Palermo displayed its discontent with the monarchy by slaughtering the king's "Saracens."

The conspirators entered the palace through the dungeon, freeing a host of nobles who William had imprisoned, then arming and recruiting these former prisoners to join the coup attempt.²⁵ They quickly seized the king, but William's capture revealed the fractious nature of this rebellion. A fight immediately broke out among the rebels between those who wished to take William prisoner and those who wanted to kill the king as an immediate revenge for his abuses. After securing the king, any semblance of order and discipline among the conspirators collapsed, as the former prisoners swiftly turned to looting, seizing or destroying both

objects and people that belonged to William. They abducted and raped the women of William's harem, destroyed the landholding and taxation records of the royal *dīwān*, pillaged the king's treasury, stole his clothes and demolished precious possessions like the silver planisphere created by al-Idrīsī.²⁶ Anything or anyone belonging to the king became a target for violent attack, and that lust to annihilate all royal possessions would come to encompass the whole of the Muslim population of Palermo.

It was in this frenzy of violence against William and his possessions that the conspirators began to kill the palace eunuchs, who were both slaves who controlled the royal fiscal administrations and representation of the power of the monarchy.

None of the eunuchs which [the conspirators] managed to get escaped. However, when the massacre began, many [eunuchs] took refuge in the houses of friends. But many of them were discovered in the street and killed by knights who marched from the Sea Castle or seized by others who roamed the city. Many Saracens who were either in charge of selling merchandise from their storehouses or collecting fiscal payments in accordance with the *dīwān*, wandered outside their home unwarily and were killed by these same knights. The Saracens became aware of the commotion but could not resist through force, since in the previous year [Maio] had compelled them to hand over all of their arms to the court. The Saracens left their homes, the majority of which they held in the middle of the city, and they fell back to the outskirts of the city across the Papyrus Lake. The Christians attacked them in that place, and there was fighting with no clear winner for some time.²⁷

What started out as a massacre of royal eunuchs enveloped all of the Muslims of Palermo, who shared the association of being a population subject to royal protection and patronage and a symbol of the power of the Sicilian kings. Falcandus describes a widening swathe of carnage that swallowed first the palace eunuchs, then Muslim officials in service to the crown and finally the Muslim population of Palermo as a whole. Even in the midst of describing the slaughter, Falcandus avoids using religious polemic to describe the motivations of the Christian mob. The slaughter of the eunuchs is an extension of the violence against William's possessions, and the massacre of Sicilian Muslims began not as an organized anti-Islamic program but as an attempt to purge the crypto-Muslim eunuchs from the court. Only when the eunuchs seek refuge among the Muslim community of Palermo does the attempt to assassinate crypto-

Muslim administrators within the court transform into a general slaughter of the Muslim population of the city.

The geography of the account of Falcandus further muddies the participants in and goals of the mob violence, and it highlights the uncertainty in identifying the knights who sparked the riots that transformed the attack against royal eunuchs into a wholesale massacre of the Muslims of Palermo. The revolt began in the royal palace, located on the western side of the Galka, the walled, interior portion of medieval Palermo located on the west side of the city and dominated by royal buildings, ecclesiastical structures and dwellings of functionaries who served in this palace district.²⁸ After the conspirators secured the palace, they poured into the streets of the Galka and almost certainly moved north to attack other eunuchs in their residence at the palace of the slaves. According to Falcandus, the eunuchs sought refuge among Muslims in the markets, which indicates that they fled east from the Galka into the Cassaro, the walled center of Palermo and hub of the city's commercial activity. Here, the account of the massacre becomes even more confusing, as Falcandus insists that the eunuchs were pursued not by conspirators from the palace but by knights coming out of the Sea Castle, the fortress on the far northeast side of the city and the furthest point inside of Palermo from the origin of the coup, the royal palace, and ultimately pushed the Muslims into the area of Papyrus Lake, in the northwest corner of the city.²⁹ Falcandus gives no information on the identity of the knights of the palace or their level of involvement in the conspiracy to unseat the king. After the coup, William I would place the Sea Castle under the command of the notorious Robert of Calatabellota, a lieutenant of Peter/Aḥmad, but we do not know who commanded this fortification or the knights therein during the coup itself. The knights from the Sea Castle transformed the violence of the coup of 1161 from a culling of palace slaves and royal administrators to an expansive popular riot that sought to eradicate the whole of the Muslim population of the city. Without knowing the identity of these knights or their level of involvement in the conspiracy, we cannot be certain whether these massacres were an intended part of the conspiracy or the actions of opportunistic warriors who sought to use the chaos of the coup to lash out at a vulnerable Muslim population who had long enjoyed royal protection.

Romuald of Salerno's account of the revolt suggests that the conspirators had not planned on massacring the general population of Palermitan

Muslims and that they may have even attempted to suppress this mob violence in the midst of the coup. The day after the coup, they paraded William's young son, Duke Roger, through the city in hopes that the presence of their would-be monarch would quell rioting and disorder in the city. Romuald reports that these attempts to restore order were unsuccessful, relaying that "Meanwhile a huge battle began between the Saracens and the Christians of the city, and many of the Saracens were killed and plundered (*expoliati*)."³⁰ For Romuald, the Archbishop of Salerno, the anti-Muslim massacres were a sign of general disorder that only the restitution of the king could curtail, rather than an orchestrated massacre by the conspirators.

These massacres left permanent scars on the population of Palermo. The Muslims were pushed out of the Cassaro, the walled interior section of the city, and into the suburb of the Seralqadi (Street of the Qāḍi) and Idiesin, located on the north side of the city across the Papierto River.³¹ Twenty-four years after these riots, the Muslim pilgrim Ibn Jubayr described Palermo as a deeply divided city in which the Muslims "live in their suburbs, apart from the Christians."³² Ibn Jubayr stressed that Palermitan Muslims lacked the protection of their coreligionists on the rest of the island and that "These Muslims separate themselves from their brethren under the protection of the infidel ... they enjoyed no security for their money, their wives, or their children."³³ At the same time, the riots did not completely displace all Muslims from the rest of the city. Property transactions from the end of the century show that Muslim landowners still retained holdings in the civic center of Palermo at least as late as the 1190s.³⁴

The events that followed the coup should make us skeptical of the conspirators' ability to direct the Palermitan mob and orchestrate the anti-Muslim massacres, because they were unable to protect even themselves from the populace of the city. Over the next three days, stirred at least in part by the agitations of Romuald of Salerno and other ecclesiastical leaders, the mob turned against the conspirators and shifted from supporting the coup to demanding King William's release.³⁵ The mob assaulted the palace, killing, presumably incidentally, William's son, Duke Roger, who was struck in the eye with an arrow.³⁶ Placed under siege by the populace of Palermo, the conspirators bargained with King William, ultimately agreeing to free the king in exchange for guarantees of safe passage out of the palace and then the city.

The Lombards of Butera, Roger Sclavus and the Rise of the Anti-Islamic Polemic

William's return to power did not put an end to the anti-Muslim violence in Sicily and only highlighted the animosity between northern Italian immigrants and the Muslim population of the island. The riots at Palermo had revealed that anti-Muslim sentiment among Latin Christians was a powerful bias, one that leaders could potentially exploit to rally support to their cause. With the collapse of the coup, the conspirators splintered; some, like Matthew Bonellus, agreed to reconcile with William and remain in Sicily. Most of the conspirators, including Simon of Taranto, chose to accept William's offer to allow them to leave the *regno*. A few, most notably Roger Sclavus, the illegitimate son of Count Simon of Policastro, and Tancred of Lecce, one of the original architects of the coup, chose to actively resist William and continue in rebellion.³⁷ Roger Sclavus and Tancred retreated to the Piazza Armerina and Butera, settlements in southeastern Italy that Roger Sclavus' father had held and which contained extensive populations of "Lombards," northern Italians who had settled in Sicily after Roger I's marriage to Adelaide del Vasto of the Aleramici family.³⁸

Roger Sclavus embraced anti-Islamic rhetoric to help galvanize support among this Lombard population which held a deep-seated resentment of the rights that Norman rulers had extended to the Muslim population of the island. Unlike Palermo, where we cannot be certain that rebels initially intended to massacre the Muslim population, Roger Sclavus clearly planned and executed these new massacres, exploiting existing hostilities to animate his Lombard allies and galvanize support for his rebellion against the crown.

First, [Roger Sclavus] ordered the arms of [the Lombard] to be tested against the Saracens. Truly, there was nothing the Lombards would ever hear with more pleasure ... They launched sudden attacks on neighboring regions and slaughtered [Saracens] who lived in various towns mixed together with Christians just the same as those who held their own estates living separately, with no distinction of sex or age. The great number of people slain was not readily possible to count. A small number of them were lucky and took refuge in the protected towns of the Saracens in the southern part of the island, either by stealthily slipping away or by assuming the appearance of Christians.³⁹

These massacres, which started in the south and ranged east into the territory of Syracuse and Catania, permanently displaced the Muslim populations from those portions of the island, forcing them to seek refuge in the west, primarily in the Val di Mazara.⁴⁰

We have no record of the specific grievances that informed the animosity of the Lombards, nor of the rhetoric that Roger Sclavus deployed to incite these massacres, but these attacks were certainly carried out as a form of resistance against the monarchy and in all likelihood capitalized on resentment toward the rights that the crown extended to its Muslim subjects. Romuald relates that Sclavus and his Lombard followers targeted “Saracens” inhabiting “the lands of the king’s demesne.”⁴¹ William I understood these massacres of the Muslims under his protection as a direct challenge to his authority and immediately mobilized forces to defeat Roger Sclavus, prioritizing this threat over other potential challenges to his rule. William’s forces routed the Lombards and destroyed Piazza Armerina, forcing Sclavus to retreat to the stronghold of Butera.

Even in victory, William struggled to suppress the interreligious strife that consumed the island. In the wake of the unprecedented outbreak of violence in Palermo, tensions had risen between the Muslim and Christian soldiers within the King’s army, and the Christian soldiers attacked their Muslim counterparts in the wake of the conquest of Piazza Armerina.⁴² The account by Falcandus of this internal dispute provides one of the only explicit references to the active role of Muslim soldiers within the Sicilian army in this period and reminds us that Muslim soldiers must have been unnoted participants in most, if not all, campaigns launched by Sicilian kings in the latter half of the twelfth century. A large number of Muslim soldiers were killed in these internal battles, despite the king’s best efforts to deploy his officers to defend the Muslims. In the wake of the coup against the king and the anti-Muslim massacres that accompanied it, tensions between Christians and Muslims escalated to the point where even soldiers supporting the crown had started to attack royal Muslims. The king, in the early stages of attempting to reassert his authority, lacked the power to restrain this anti-Muslim animosity and control violent attacks by Christians against Muslims. William’s army, weakened by this internal fracture, proved unable to capture Butera. Disputes between the Lombard knights and the populace of Butera over division of grain stocks eventually compelled Roger Sclavus to negotiate a surrender, but even then, William was forced to offer Roger Sclavus generous terms. He allowed him to

leave Butera unharmed and escorted him away from the kingdom, despite the attacks he had launched against William and his Muslim subjects.

Roger Sclavus' strategy of deploying anti-Islamic rhetoric to rally Latin Christian immigrants against the crown seems to have had no immediate imitators. Latin Christians' resentment toward the Muslim population did not disappear after the surrender of Butera, but the reassertion of royal authority suppressed it. Even Roger Sclavus' comrade in arms, Tancred of Lecce, would fully reject this strategy when he became king in the 1190s.⁴³ Tancred, facing a Muslim population in revolt, unquestionably felt that Muslim soldiers and subjects were invaluable to the crown. He chose to reassert royal domination over and protection of Sicilian Muslims and used them as an asset of the crown, rather than deploying anti-Muslim rhetoric to rally support among the Latin Christian population.

The emergence of popular anti-Muslim violence does not seem to have altered William's policy toward Muslims or his willingness to empower them to serve in the highest levels of his administration. Despite the massacres of palace eunuchs that had sparked the attacks against Sicilian Muslims, William empowered the crypto-Muslim eunuch Martin to govern the city of Palermo when he marched against Roger Sclavus and his Lombard allies, and even went so far as to empower Martin to adjudicate trials of those who had attacked the palace during the coup.⁴⁴ Upon his return, William took the unprecedented action of elevating one of his crypto-Muslim eunuchs, his Master Chamberlain eunuch Peter/Aḥmad, to serve as one of his *familiares regis*, a three-person royal inner council that advised the king.⁴⁵ Revolts against the king and the violence against Sicilian Muslims only deepened William's reliance on his high-ranking Muslim administrators, whom he empowered until his death in 1166. Palermitan Muslims seemed to recognize William's role as a bulwark against subsequent attacks. After William's death, Falcandus stresses that it was the female Muslims of Palermo that expressed the deepest sorrow for the departed king: "During every hour of three days, women and noble matrons, chiefly Saracens, whose anguish over the death of the king was counterfeit, marched in troops, wearing sack cloths with their hair spread out, preceded by a mob of slave girls, filling the whole city with wailing."⁴⁶ The massacres of 1161 were the first unambiguous example of the rising popular resentment among Latin Christians against Sicilian Muslims and their status as *servi camerae*, servants of the crown. However, they did little to shake the view of the monarch that these Muslims had been and remained an invaluable financial, military and administrative asset that

demonstrated the power of the Sicilian monarchy and only reinforced the emerging concept that the Sicilian monarch ultimately offered protection to the island's Muslims against acts of cataclysmic violence.

ALL THE QUEEN'S MEN: THE REGENCY OF MARGARET
OF NAVARRE

Queenship and Eunuchs

The influence of high-ranking crypto-Muslim eunuchs reached its apex after William's death, during the regency of William's wife, Queen Margaret of Navarre. Like Adelaide, the widow of Roger I who ruled Sicily almost 60 years earlier, Margaret faced potentially rebellious nobility with the inherent disadvantage of being a woman, a regent and a relative outsider to the Sicilian court.⁴⁷ In order to secure her own position and that of her son, Margaret needed to empower allies within the court that would undermine her adversaries but would not threaten to supplant the rise of her son. Like women in the courts of imperial Rome and China, Margaret found strategic advantage in allying with the eunuchs of her court.⁴⁸ Margaret elevated eunuchs to a position of unprecedented prominence within her administration and supported them against all challengers, even privileging them over her own natal kin. The relationship between Margaret and her eunuchs provides the clearest example of the advantages that the institution of the eunuch offered to the Sicilian crown.

In the Middle Ages, the wife of a king was almost always a foreigner in her new court.⁴⁹ A king who married the daughter of one of his own nobles ran the risk of transforming his new wife's family into powerful rivals to his own power while depriving himself of a useful way to form an alliance with a foreign noble family.⁵⁰ As a result, these women functioned at a double political disadvantage in being both women and foreigners. As János M. Bak observes in his study of Hungarian queenship, foreigners were particularly vulnerable to charges of harming the interests of a kingdom and "even without an explicit implication of gender, queens, as highly visible and powerful 'foreigners' were logical choices for the role of scapegoat."⁵¹ Choosing the queen, rather than an adult male relative, to serve as a regent reduced the likelihood of a regent's usurping, and never relinquishing, power.⁵² It also all but ensured that the regent would face formidable challenges from her own subjects. In her examination of French queen regents in the early modern period, Katherine Crawford

observes that “a foreign queen with young children, lacking personal ties and patronage links, was vulnerable when her husband died. Vulnerability invited rebellion.”⁵³ This general trend played out in medieval Sicily as well, as Margaret faced insurrection shortly after she assumed the regency, just as Adelaide had faced roughly half a century earlier.

Also like Adelaide before her, political necessity motivated Margaret. The *Liber Regno Sicilie* includes a meticulously constructed picture of the machinations within the Sicilian royal court during the reign of William I, William II, and the role of the Queen Regent Margaret of Navarre in political events during this period. Margaret was the daughter of King Garcia IV Ramirez of Navarre. She married William I, the son of Roger II, at an unknown date after Roger made him prince of Capua in 1144.⁵⁴ The couple married before William was designated as his father’s heir and raised to the position of co-ruler in 1151,⁵⁵ probably before he was named Prince of Apulia in 1149.⁵⁶

During her husband’s reign, Margaret showed two inclinations that would later characterize her regency: first, the incorporation of elements of her natal family into the Sicilian nobility, and second, the powerful alliance she forged with the eunuch administrators who served within the royal court. The initial appearance of Queen Margaret in the *Liber Regno Sicilie* occurs in November 1160, after Matthew Bonellus’ assassination of Maio of Bari. The queen was incensed by Maio’s assassination and plotted revenge against his killer.⁵⁷ Though Matthew earned popular acclaim for his actions, the queen was far from being the only enemy Matthew made through the murder. The palace eunuchs, in particular, felt threatened by Matthew’s ascension and conspired with the queen to devise a plan to turn King William against him.⁵⁸ This incident suggests a close bond between Margaret and the eunuchs, who preferred to work through Margaret rather than speaking with William directly. The alliance between the queen and the eunuchs succeeded in rousing the king’s ire, leading to Matthew’s eventual demise.⁵⁹ However, Falcandus’ reliance on classical tropes and his political biases against the queen and the royal eunuchs necessitate using this source with some caution.

During her husband’s reign, at least one of Margaret’s kinsmen rose to power in Southern Italy: her cousin,⁶⁰ Gilbert of Gravina. The exact date when Gilbert was granted land and title remains unclear, but he was well established in the region by 1160. During the revolts that followed Maio’s assassination, in which nobles across Apulia, Calabria, Salerno, Capua and even Sicily turned against William I, the Count of Gravina was one of

the only counts to come to the king's aid.⁶¹ Gilbert's support of King William during the revolt and William I richly rewarded him for this aid. By 1163, he had earned the title of "Master Constable of all of Apulia and the Principality of Capua."⁶² Gilbert served as William's viceroy on the mainland from the end of the rebellion until the end of the king's reign. Despite narrative evidence of Margaret's level of political activity during her husband's reign, the queen remains next to invisible in the extant charters from the period of her husband's rule.⁶³ The narrative provided by Falcandus and the record of advancement by her natal kin within the Sicilian administration indicates that the queen exercised a high degree of political influence. The fact that a Sicilian queen does not appear in the few extant royal charters, however, does not mean that she was not politically active.

In May of 1166, after a dozen often-tumultuous years of rule, William I was afflicted with a fatal illness and made plans for his own succession.⁶⁴ He appointed his eldest son, William, only 12 at the time, as his heir. The age of the child required a regent to shepherd over his rule, and, as had been the case with young Roger II, his royal mother served as regent: "[William I] ordered the queen to manage the command and responsibility of the whole realm, which by the general public is called *balium*, until [William II] should attain such discretion as would be believed to be sufficient to be appointed to the work."⁶⁵ As the case of Roger II and Adelaide illustrated, a female regent minimized the chance that a male relative could usurp the patrimony of the young lord.⁶⁶ In order to aid Margaret in the preservation of the realm, William ordered the notary Matthew, Richard the Bishop-elect of Syracuse and the eunuch *Qā'id* Peter/Aḥmad, all of whom were his royal advisors, to continue to serve as the core administrative advisors for Queen Margaret.⁶⁷

A weakened royal power under a queen regent allowed the Sicilian nobility, who chafed at the reins of central authority, to challenge it, just as the barons had challenged comital authority when Adelaide assumed power on behalf of young Roger II. Margaret's actions immediately upon ascending to the throne reveal her precarious position. She sought to placate the many enemies of her deceased husband by releasing imprisoned enemies from jail, restoring their lands, forgiving debts and welcoming back those individuals whom her husband had exiled. In these initial reforms, Margaret also directly reduced the powers of her eunuch administrators, forbidding the master chamberlains from exacting redemption fees from her subjects.⁶⁸ These initial gifts appear to have enjoyed limited per-

manent success, since she had to bestow a second round of these bequests within a year: “Aside from the multitude of prisoners freed, the slaves granted freedom, the immunities conceded to the citizens, the rejection of customs which were seen as pernicious, the villas and towns given to many noblemen, she created eight counts that same year and called back from exile Count Roger of Accera and Count Roger of Avellini, restoring them to their former position.”⁶⁹ It was evident to contemporaries that these concessions were granted with the fragility of the regency in mind: “Having put to test the generosity of the queen with these and many other kindnesses, they tried to repress their spirit from their innate rebellious nature.”⁷⁰

Foreign queen regents in the Middle Ages typically relied on kin from their natal family to strengthen their potentially precarious position, and Margaret was no exception, but she used royal eunuchs to ensure her natal kin could not seize control of the regency. What makes Margaret unusual is her deployment of royal administrators, frequently crypto-Muslim eunuchs, in order to preserve her political capital. Despite her initial placatory move to restrict the ability of the palace eunuchs to collect fees, Margaret repeatedly strove to elevate and defend the palace eunuchs throughout her regency. Not only did she shrewdly rely on these personnel, but when these administrators frequently came into conflict with the queen’s kinsmen, perhaps even at her behest, the queen seems to have favored them over her own blood relations. Margaret’s deft handling of her eunuchs and her ability to mollify popular resentment of them, combined with acumen in deploying them to subvert her potential rivals ensured the survival of her regency.

Margaret’s strategy of empowering the eunuchs to help her maintain control of the *regno* became clear in the immediate aftermath of her husband’s death. The advisory structure William I established for his wife shortly before his death survived him by only a few days. He had placed her three *familiaries regis* on an equal level, but Margaret subordinated the notary Matthew and the bishop-elect Richard to the eunuch *Qā’id* Peter/Aḥmad, whom she elevated to the rank of chamberlain of the royal palace.⁷¹ The converted Muslim became the preeminent administrator in the realm, with the other former *familiaries* in assistant positions: “[Margaret] granted the highest power over all things to *Qā’id* Peter/Aḥmad, placing him in a position above all of the advisors, and told the bishop-elect of Syracuse and the aforementioned Matthew the notary, that, as his assistants, they should indeed be present at meetings

and be called *familiars*, but they were to serve under Peter's authority in all things."⁷² The advantages of the eunuchs—their loyalty, their reliance on the monarch for basic protection, their inability to establish the dynastic relationships that would allow them to monopolize and pass down their authority—all made them ideal royal administrators. In elevating Peter/Aḥmad to effectively run the whole of the royal administration, Margaret created a powerful executive who could stave off potential challenges to her regency. He was both completely dependent on her favor and unable to take power himself.

Visitors to the royal court noticed the close association between the queen and her Muslim advisor, as well as rivalries among members of the royal curia, and sought to exploit them. Cardinal John of Naples wanted to turn Margaret's opinion against the bishop-elect Richard. John sought to convince Peter/Aḥmad that he should be entrusted with the church of Palermo, thinking the eunuch was the gateway to the queen. He believed that convincing Peter/Aḥmad to support his cause would immediately sway the queen to agree with his proposal.⁷³

Qā'id Peter/Aḥmad's elevation to the position of chamberlain raised the ire of Margaret's kinsman Count Gilbert of Gravina. Gilbert believed that he should serve as Margaret's chief advisor and sought to meet with his cousin to destabilize her relation with the eunuch. According to the chronicle, "[Gilbert] talked privately with the queen, but with Peter/Aḥmad present,"⁷⁴ illustrating the tight bond between eunuch and queen. The account reinforces the omnipresence of the eunuchs around the royal person, suggesting that the eunuch was present at many, if not all, of the meetings between the queen and noble visitors, even the most private of them. Gilbert claimed, "all the nobles deemed it unworthy that she disregarded the counts and other skilled men by whose counsel the court ought to be ruled, and put emasculated slaves in command of the whole realm. For the king's advice on this had not been wise, and his order in this matter should not be carried out, since he believed contemptible men, indeed unmanly men, to be sufficient to control the kingdom."⁷⁵

Margaret refused to accede to Gilbert's demands, though she did attempt to placate him. While she would not eliminate Peter's role in the administration, she offered to elevate Gilbert into the *familiars regis*. However, this offer only further inflamed Gilbert, who railed against her policies, saying, "You confer the honor owed to me as your kinsman, holding a place of high dignity back, you make me equal to your slave."⁷⁶ But Gilbert's heated reaction did little to change Margaret's mind and moti-

vated *Qā'id* Peter/Aḥmad to move to secure his own position. He elevated a constable who was loyal to him, Richard of Mandra,⁷⁷ to the office of Count of Molise in an effort to counterbalance Gilbert's influence. When Peter went to the queen to confirm this advancement, Margaret yet again staunchly supported her eunuch, ceding to his request by raising Richard into the ranks of the nobility.⁷⁸ The specific complaints that Falcandus places in the mouth of Gilbert also deserve attention. He objects to Peter's role not because of his religious faith but because of his servile status and effeminate nature.

Nevertheless, *Qā'id* Peter/Aḥmad still felt his position was insecure and feared for his life. By the summer of 1166, he fled Sicily, seeking refuge at the Islamic court in Tunis.⁷⁹ Even after Peter's flight, Queen Margaret remained one of his most ardent defenders, refuting Gilbert's claim that Peter had stolen the crown jewels when he fled the kingdom. These accusations inspired Richard of Molise to come to Peter/Aḥmad's defense and challenge Gilbert to single combat; only the physical intervention of others at court kept the two men from coming to blows. In this conflict, the queen sided with Richard against her own cousin. Instead of replacing *Qā'id* Peter with Count Gilbert, as the count had hoped, she made Peter's former ally, Richard of Molise, her chief advisor.⁸⁰ Finally, Margaret sent Gilbert away from the court in a further effort to diminish his importance.⁸¹ But Peter/Aḥmad's flight did not mark the end of former Muslim eunuchs in Margaret's inner circle, as she promoted two more of the eunuchs, *Qā'id* Richard and *Qā'id* Martin, to the *familiares regis*.⁸²

Queenship and Kinship: The Chancellorship of Stephen of Perche

Peter/Aḥmad's betrayal forced Margaret to alter how she invested power in the kingdom. While she continued to rely upon and empower court eunuchs, she increasingly elevated her own natal kin to the upper echelons of her administration. Margaret likely hoped that creating a balance of power between the two groups would help preserve her position, and she continued to support both her natal kin and her eunuch advisors during her regency. However, the eunuchs frequently came into conflict with Margaret's kinsmen. When this occurred, Margaret ultimately backed her eunuchs and their followers against the interests of her natal family. In fact, these conflicts were possibly encouraged by the queen, who may have

deployed and supported her advisors in order to check the efforts of her kinsmen to claim royal power for themselves.

Margaret's reliance on her natal kin began from the beginnings of her regency. Of the eight nobles Margaret appointed during the first year of her rule,⁸³ two were her own kinsmen: Bertram, the son of Count Gilbert of Gravina, and Hugh of Rochefort,⁸⁴ recently arrived from France. Margaret's ascension to the regency prompted at least two additional members of her natal family to journey to Sicily in hopes that she would advance their position. By October of 1166, Margaret's brother Henry⁸⁵ and her cousin Stephen of Perche⁸⁶ had arrived in court.⁸⁷ Henry initially struggled to garner influence with the court.⁸⁸ Stephen fared far better in the kingdom's administrative hierarchy. The Queen turned to him to fill the void left by Peter/Aḥmad. Shortly after his arrival, the queen had him appointed Chancellor and, in the following year, Archbishop of Palermo.⁸⁹ Almost overnight, the queen had elevated her cousin Stephen to be the most prominent administrator of the regency.

Though both her natal kin and the converted Muslim eunuch administrators advanced in station at the pleasure of Queen Margaret, relations between the two groups became increasingly strained under Stephen's chancellorship. In his capacity as Chancellor, Stephen quickly moved to exert his power by holding trials against potential rivals. Stephen never moved directly against the palace eunuchs, presumably because they still held the queen's favor, but began to attack their clients and allies. He brought charges against a number of individuals whom he accused of secretly converting from Christianity to Islam and who had long remained under the protection of the palace eunuchs.⁹⁰ The most notable of these was Robert of Calatabiano, a Christian who had worked for the eunuch Peter before his flight.⁹¹ Robert seems to have administered several properties, including a jail, on Peter's behalf, and was accused of all manner of theft, rapine and sexual perversions, in addition to building "Saracen Shrines" and providing Muslims with Christian women and boys to sate their perverse lusts.⁹² In 1167, Stephen wrote to Pope Alexander III, telling him that King William had charged him with prosecuting the legal cases of "Saracens" who raped and killed Christian women and children and asking him what penalties he should apply.⁹³

At first glance, the charges against Robert of Calatabiano sound shockingly similar to those leveled against Philip of Mahdiyya almost 15 years earlier.⁹⁴ Stephen's letter to Pope Alexander confirms that Stephen viewed Muslims in antagonistic terms and believed the stereotypes that portrayed

Saracens perpetrating horrific acts of sexual violence against innocent Christians.⁹⁵ However, Stephen was an outsider from Norman France, a man who pledged to take part in crusade before Margaret had summoned him to Sicily. Stephen does not reflect Sicilian attitudes toward Muslims but instead serves as a reminder of the disconnect from the polemical construction of Muslims imagined by Northern French Crusaders, and the pragmatic tolerance of Muslims which Latin Christians generally exhibited toward Muslims in the mid-twelfth century. Unlike the case against Philip of Mahdiyya, Stephen had to settle with prosecuting the agents of the court eunuchs and was unable to bring charges of apostasy against the most prominent crypto-Muslim in the court. Even in the case of Robert of Calatabiano, the court eunuchs were able to lobby the queen to circumscribe her cousin Stephen's authority. When faced with these accusations, Robert "placed himself under the legal protection of the eunuchs,"⁹⁶ who, in turn, "Prostrated themselves at the feet of the king and queen, and, with tears, they pleaded that they not allow the condemnation of a man who was very necessary to the realm and always strove to serve the court faithfully."⁹⁷ Robert attempted to deflect the blame for his actions onto the queen's former ally, the now departed *Qā'id* Peter/Aḥmad, claiming that he had acted at Peter's behest, rather than of his own volition. Despite the seriousness of the accusations against him and his attempt to deflect blame onto Margaret's former confidant, both the queen and the eunuchs defended Robert. Stephen charged Robert in an ecclesiastical, rather than a royal court, and convicted him only of adultery, incest and perjury, rather than the more severe accusations that had been leveled against him. At the queen's behest, Stephen also never pursued the charges that directly implicated Peter, or any of the remaining palace eunuchs. In the end, Stephen still succeeded in convicting Robert of crimes sufficient to put him in prison, where he perished. The loss of Robert was a blow to the court eunuchs, and it was clear that Stephen's star was ascendant. Though the eunuchs, through their connections to the queen, could stave off some of the most damaging charges against them, Stephen's rise most certainly came at their expense. The trial of Robert of Calatabiano created a rift between Stephen and the palace eunuchs which would haunt the chancellor for the remainder of his time in Sicily.⁹⁸

Stephen was not the only one of the queen's kinsmen to undermine the allies of the court eunuchs. Henry, the queen's brother, was striking out against another of the eunuchs' trusted agents, Richard of Mandra, whom Peter/Aḥmad had promoted, with Queen Margaret's assent, to

become the Count of Molise.⁹⁹ Henry, together with a number of Apulian nobles, plotted against Richard, despite his religious allegiance, for much the same reasons that Count Gilbert of Gravina had moved against Peter/Aḥmad. Richard was a man of humble background with limited experience, who seemed to have more access to the queen than all her other advisors, a position that, in Henry's mind, ought to belong to one of the queen's natal kin, preferably to himself.¹⁰⁰ Henry planned to use his support among the Sicilian nobility, along with a band of armed thugs who had accompanied him from Navarre, to kill Richard, or, at the very least, drive him from court.

Though Margaret's kinsmen were united in their antagonism toward this branch of the queen regent's administration, their moves against Peter's former allies did not indicate an alliance between Henry and Stephen. In fact, Richard of Mandra appealed to the chancellor, Stephen, to protect him from the queen's brother.¹⁰¹ Again, the queen seems to have protected the Count of Molise, and, at her behest, Stephen negotiated a peace between Richard and Henry. Margaret's kinsmen seem to have been primarily interested in advancing their own individual power within Sicily; Henry would later launch an unsuccessful coup to overthrow Stephen, rather than forming an alliance to oust the eunuchs and their allies.

Sicilian Identity and the Riots of 1168

While the function of the Sicilian court eunuchs in Margaret's regency often put them at odds with the Latin elite, it is the events surrounding the popular riots that led to the ouster of Stephen of Perche from his position of chancellor that illustrate the ways in which alliances with the Sicilian court often formed across religious boundaries. The eunuch Richard successfully rallied a broad cross-section of Latin, Greek and Muslim supporters to oppose Stephen, appealing to a shared sense of Sicilian independence and fears that the foreign Stephen would impose Gallic traditions on the island. Ultimately, a broad cross-section of the population of Palermo, both Muslim and Christian, mobbed his residence in 1168 and forced him to abandon the island. The fact that a mob of Muslims and Christians acted in concert against a common foe less than a decade after the massacres of 1161 illustrates the impermanence of religious antagonism in the mid-twelfth century. Violence between Muslims and Christians, even in times of political strife, was not inevitable during this period.

The critiques of Stephen centered on his foreignness. While many courtiers loathed Stephen because his rapid ascent had come at their expense,¹⁰² the perception that Stephen wanted to impose foreign customs that would infringe on the traditional liberties of the Sicilian populace created a fierce antipathy toward the chancellor and his agents. In 1168, according to Falcandus, the eunuch Richard entered into a conspiracy with the notary Matthew of Ajello and Bishop Gentile of Agrigento, along with an unnamed assortment of knights, to assassinate the chancellor.¹⁰³ The conspirators gained allies among the citizens of Palermo and other urban centers in the island who resented the actions of Stephen's agents. One of Stephen's knights, John of Lavardin, attempted to assert what was seen as the imposition of a French tax upon the residents of Caccamo and Prizzi, claiming half of their moveable property.¹⁰⁴ John's subjects objected to this imposition, "Asserting [that] the liberties of the citizens (*civium*) and townspeople of Sicily maintained that they owed no payment or exaction," and that "Only those Saracens and Greeks who were called villeins (*villani*) had to pay a tax and annual rents."¹⁰⁵ Sicilian urban leaders feared that the foreign Stephen would impose similar polices across the island, obligating them to submit to "annual payments and exactions, as was the customary practice in Gaul, where free citizens (*cives liberos*) did not exist."¹⁰⁶ Similarly, the Latin inhabitants of Messina objected to the imposition of maritime exactions on ships traveling into the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁰⁷ These objections remind us that the urban population of Sicily, both Christian and Muslim, along with recent Latin agricultural laborers, had vastly different legal rights from the Muslim and Greek villeins and sought to forcefully protect those rights from what they perceived as an overly aggressive chancellery.

The criticisms against Stephen's foreignness highlight another danger that Queen Regent Margaret faced in empowering her natal kin to administer the *regno*. Stephen's foreignness reminded the Sicilian population that Margaret herself was an outsider and gave rise to rumors that she was engaged in an illicit affair with her chancellor in which she sought to subvert the realm from her son. Her critics charged that "The queen, who was from Spain, called this Frank kinsman [Stephen], speaking with him far too familiarly and staring at him with rapacious eyes. It was feared that under the name of kinship an illicit love might be hidden," and conspirators sought to mobilize their allies with the charge that Stephen planned "to imprison all of the leaders of Sicily who did not agree with him, then to remove the king by poison and to transfer the realm to himself by

marrying the queen.”¹⁰⁸ Elevating a kinsman to administer the *regno* presented Margaret with a double danger never posed by Peter/Aḥmad: both the threat that Stephen could seize power from himself and the threat that the perception of her intimacy with her kinsman could undermine her own legitimacy.

Margaret’s awareness of these dangers may explain why she gave only tepid support to her cousin in the midst of the attempted coup and tempered his ability to punish her eunuch, Richard. Stephen uncovered the coup and had both Matthew of Ajello and Bishop Gentile imprisoned.¹⁰⁹ The queen personally protected the eunuch Richard: “The queen would in no way consent that the *Qā’id*, who was the head and beginning of the conspiracy, might be seized.”¹¹⁰ Instead, Richard was placed under house arrest, confined to the palace and restricted from talking to the royal knights who were loyal to him, but on the word of the queen, was spared more severe punishment. Stephen’s inability to oust Richard would contribute to his own defeat. Margaret was far more assertive in protecting her eunuch from persecution than she had been in the cases of either her Latin administrators or even that of her brother, whom Stephen had imprisoned earlier in the year. Once again, she defended the interests of her crypto-Muslim servants in the face of direct challenge from her natal relations.

Even with the conspirators detained, Stephen’s hold on Sicily quickly unraveled. A revolt broke out in Messina in which the Latin population of the city, perturbed by maritime exactions, joined forces with a discontent Greek populace who felt they had been verbally and physically abused by Odo of Quarelle, a cleric from Chartres whom Stephen had placed in charge of Messina.¹¹¹ Odo fell into the clutches of the mob, who hung him off the back of a donkey and ignominiously paraded him through the city; he was eventually stabbed in the head with a knife and then torn limb from limb by the bloodthirsty mob. The revolt soon spread to Reggio, Rometta and Taormina, and it threatened to envelop the entire *regno*. Stephen moved to rally an army to defeat these rebels, but appears to have relied primarily on the so-called Lombard territories, the areas in southeastern Sicily settled by Northern Italians, to provide the military force he would have needed to subdue Messina.¹¹² However, the urban population of Palermo, both Christian and Muslim, took action against Stephen before he could muster his forces. Partisans of the eunuch Richard attacked Stephen’s allies in the street, and the palace archers, Muslim soldiers loyal to Richard, surrounded Stephen’s house, effectively placing it

under siege.¹¹³ Matthew of Ajello subverted the loyalty of his jailor and rallied the Muslim “palace slaves” (*palacii servientes*) to take to the streets, to inflame the citizens of Palermo, to seize weapons and to mob Stephen’s residence. Soon, both Matthew and Richard escaped their imprisonment and further inflamed the mobs:

Summoning their slave trumpeters, they ordered them to make loud music with trumpets and drums in front of the chancellor’s house. Then the entire city, both Saracens and Christians, heard the well-known signal for war and believed that the signal occurred on the king’s orders. And soon, they charged into battle with a mighty war-cry and great din and launched a vigorous attack.¹¹⁴

Seven years after Christian mobs had massacred Palermitan Muslims and forced them into the northern suburbs of the city, Muslim and Christian residents of the city rose up together, in larger part at the urging of the palace Muslims who were the initial targets of the 1161 massacre, to overthrow the foreign chancellor of Sicily. The riots forced Stephen to surrender and accept both his own exile and that of his prominent supporters. Loyalty to the young king and hatred for the imposition of French customs superseded religious animosity between Christians and Muslims, even in a time of crisis.

The riots of 1168 illustrate three main points about the way the Latin population of Sicily understood their Muslim neighbors. First, it reiterates that alliances between Christians and Muslims did not cast doubt on the loyalty and religious conviction of Christians. We have no evidence that Stephen condemned men like Matthew of Ajello for conspiring with the eunuch Richard, or Bishop Gentile for attempting to provoke the Muslim population of Agrigento. Stephen arrested those men for attempting to overthrow him as chancellor, but we have no indication that he brought charges against them for associating with Muslims or that conspiring with non-Christians contaminated them in any way. Romuald of Salerno’s brief summary of these events completely erases the role of Muslims in the entire affair and claims that opposition to Stephen arose solely because of his unjust imprisonment of Matthew.¹¹⁵ Given Romuald’s role as the chief propagandist for young William II, we can assume that the crown wanted to avoid casting any aspersions on the conspirators and to erase the role of Muslims in the revolt from historical memory. The charge that association with Muslims contaminated Christian elites would emerge 30 years later, but we have no indication of its presence in the 1160s.

Second, the riots remind us that Muslims, particularly Muslim soldiers and administrators, remained potent symbols of the royal authority. When Richard deployed slave musicians to muster a mob against Stephen, the populace responded because they “believed that the signal occurred on the king’s order.”¹¹⁶ Muslim military musicians marching through the street conveyed royal authority, and the citizens of Palermo, Muslims and Christians alike, responded to their summons as if they came from the king. It is worth noting that while Falcandus portrays the young William II, age 13 at the time, as a primarily passive figure in the coup against Stephen, Matthew and Richard may well have actually been acting at the king’s behest, removing a powerful administrator who threatened to consolidate power before the king reached the age of majority. The fact that the eunuch Richard remained one of the *familiares regis* after these attacks, that Matthew was elevated to the position of vice-chancellor and that Romuald of Salerno levels no criticism against the conspirators suggests that the king offered at least post-facto support for the coup. Though Falcandus blames Richard and Matthew for the coup, it may be that he uses Richard to fulfill what we have seen is the traditional role of eunuch-as-scapegoat for potentially controversial royal policy.

Finally, the 1168 riots illustrate that there was no permanent antagonism between Muslims and Christians in Sicily, or at least no antagonism that could not be suppressed by the active power of the monarchy. The massacres of 1161 had taken place because of a confluence of hostility toward the crown and collapse of royal authority that protected Sicilian Muslims. Despite the political turmoil of 1168, royal authority never receded and Sicilian Muslims never became the target of mob violence.¹¹⁷ In fact, they were active participants in popular attacks against the Chancellor. It was only when royal power vanished, as would happen 20 years later following the death of William II, that Sicilian Muslims would become vulnerable to attacks from their Christian neighbors.¹¹⁸

Throughout her regency, Margaret turned to both her eunuch slaves and her natal kin to preserve her authority during her reign as regent, but as a foreign queen far from home she could never fully trust her own kinsmen for fear they might assume power for themselves and do away with her and her son entirely. She experimented with empowering her natal kin, especially after Peter/Aḥmad’s betrayal. However, she ultimately empowered her eunuchs as a counterbalance to her natal kin, in large part because they posed no threat of usurpation and would never have been able to supplant her on the throne. Falcandus recounts that the queen was

furious with the exile of her kinsmen, but he reports no active response from the queen against those who ousted her relatives.¹¹⁹ Indeed, the key conspirators, including the eunuch Richard, seemed to have suffered no punishment as a result of these actions and remained part of the *familiares regis*.¹²⁰ Even more telling are the consistent attempts by the queen to limit the power of her own natal kin network. She frequently moved to circumscribe their authority, particularly in the face of her advisors. For Margaret, the eunuchs were useful because the precarious nature of their position made them dependent on royal power. Consequently, Margaret consistently defended these administrators, even in the face of direct conflicts with her kin, to the point that these administrators were able to oust them completely from the island when her kin threatened to assume too much power.

The end of Margaret's reign as regent also ended the presence of eunuch administrators in the *familiares regis*. When William II assumed majority in 1170, the *familiares regis* shrank to only three men: William's former teacher, Walter, now Archbishop of Palermo; the notary Matthew who now held the rank of vice-chancellor; and Bishop Gentile of Agrigento.¹²¹ William felt no need for a grand administrator like George of Antioch, Maio, Peter or Stephen. Though Margaret may have found them necessary for the preservation of her power as regent, William did not require them to hold the keys of the kingdom. Eunuchs like Richard continued to serve under King William II, but they were excluded from the realm's highest council and never regained the preeminent position they held during his mother's regency.

REIGN OF WILLIAM II

From the time William II reached the age of majority in 1171, he devoted his kingship to the twofold goal of gaining recognition as the preeminent ally of the Latin Church and demonstrating that the Sicilian kings belonged among the highest ranks of European monarchs.¹²² Muslims played a prominent role in these variant aspirations. William pursued a strategy of regular naval raids against his Muslim and Byzantine neighbors in the Mediterranean, as well as several ultimately unsuccessful attempts at large-scale conquests. Waging war against Muslims outside of Sicily served as a way for William to demonstrate his commitment to guaranteeing the security of all Latin Christians. At the same time, William created the monastery of Santa Maria Nuova at Monreale, a lavish cathedral filled with

resplendent mosaics. The Sicilian king endowed the monastery with a vast swath of territory in Western Sicily, territories that included the highest population density of Muslims on the island. The king presented himself as a defender of Christianity through military campaigns against Muslims abroad. Simultaneously, at home, Muslims remained a central part of the economy of royal gifting. All of these actions transpired while William maintained a culturally Islamized court and an active Arabic-language chancery.

Contemporary scholarship has frequently stressed the ways in which William departed from the traditions of Sicilian kingship, particularly with respect to Muslims, both those within the Kingdom of Sicily and in the wider Mediterranean world. Starting in the mid-thirteenth century, chroniclers began to idealize the reign of William II as a golden age eventually giving rise to his sobriquet William “the good.”¹²³ Recent scholarship stresses the way in which William’s departure from the policies of his predecessors paved the way for the chaos that followed his reign. Charles Stanton places much of the blame for the decline of Sicilian military power on the shoulders of William II. He states that William abandoned “a strategy that focused on the dominance of the central Mediterranean” in favor of “ill-advised adventurism in distant lands” of the Eastern Mediterranean, which “irreparably weakened the financial solvency of the Kingdom.”¹²⁴ Alex Metcalfé argues that William’s creation of a monastic foundation and the rights he granted over Muslims in Western Sicily caused some Muslims to see him as a “betrayor” who “dissolved the arrangement of royal protection for the Muslims of western Sicily,” while simultaneously causing “a huge drain in royal resources.”¹²⁵

I argue that William’s treatment of his subject Muslim population does not depart substantially from that of his predecessors, nor can we detect a significant shift in the way in which the Latin population viewed the Muslims of the island. Though William sought to advance an image of himself as the champion of Latin Christianity on both a European and Mediterranean stage, he made no visible effort to purge his armies, court or kingdom of Muslims. Ibn Jubayr’s accounts of Palermo described a royal court steeped in the cultural elements of the Islamic world at least as much, if not more so, than either William II’s father or grandfather.¹²⁶ Muslims continued to serve in their traditional capacities in both the military and the administration of the Sicilian *regno*. And William’s use of Muslim *villeins* as gifts to royal monastic foundations was in line with practices of Norman rulers going back to William’s great-grandfather, Roger I.

The Crusader King

The idea that William II's relationship with the Muslim world differed from his predecessors stems, at least in part, from William's own propaganda, which strove to represent the king as a champion of Christianity and used his conflict with Muslim principalities to stress his righteousness and his position as a prominent ally of the papacy. At the Treaty of Venice in 1177, Romuald of Salerno, the Sicilian envoy and William's chief polemicist, claimed that only William II, of all Latin leaders, refrained from attacking his fellow Christians and directed his violence against Muslims. He pressed this claim further, insisting that while other princes were content "to make peace with the enemies of the faith," William alone had proven himself a defender of Christ's sepulcher by "assailing the Saracens."¹²⁷

Given the long history of diplomatic relations between Sicilian kings and their Muslim counterparts, Romuald's claim was incredibly audacious, particularly because William continued to foster diplomatic relationships with a variety of Muslim leaders. However, Romuald's praise of William as a champion of Christianity was not simply a rhetorical ploy and did reveal a change in the policies of Sicilian Kings. William II plunged the Kingdom of Sicily into active participation with military ventures in the eastern Mediterranean, many of them in cooperation with the Crusader States. These were expeditions that his predecessors had avoided, in large part due to their animosity toward the Kingdom of Jerusalem stemming from the annulment of the marriage between King Baldwin I of Jerusalem and Roger II's mother, Adelaide del Vasto.¹²⁸ William spurred his armies into action across the Eastern Mediterranean after he reached the age of majority in 1171 as part of a larger strategy. He hoped to revive his grandfather's expansionist foreign policy while simultaneously pursuing a rapprochement with the papacy by demonstrating his willingness to defend Latin holdings in the East.¹²⁹ Unlike previous Norman rulers of Sicily, William II never sent armies into battles on the mainland of the Italian peninsula, nor did he ever personally command troops in battle.

Romuald's propaganda may have portrayed William as a champion of Christianity who rejected diplomatic exchange with Muslim rulers, but the realities of William's diplomatic campaigns defied simple religious binaries. In 1174, William II prepared to attack the Egyptian port of Alexandria, governed by Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn (Saladin), who had displaced the ruling Fāṭimid caliphs in 1171. The Norman rulers of Sicily had long-standing diplomatic contacts with the Fāṭimid court, so it should have come as little surprise

that Egyptian officials, alienated by Saladin's conquest of the Fāṭimids, entered into a conspiracy with William II of Sicily and King Amalric of Jerusalem to overthrow Saladin's rule.¹³⁰ William assembled a huge fleet of over two hundred ships and tens of thousands of soldiers.¹³¹ Neither the Latin, the Arabic nor later the Greek sources explicitly mention the presence of Muslim soldiers within the Sicilian armies, but given the presence of those soldiers in the armies of William II's predecessor, William I, and his successor, Tancred of Lecce, it is hard to imagine a force of this size that would not make use of Muslim soldiers.¹³² Eustathios of Thessalonica, writing about the Sicilian capture of Thessalonica in 1185, confirms that eunuch commanders still led Sicilian troops into battle in the final years of William's reign. He describes "A eunuch in the service of [William II], with the rank of amir, keen and fiery in action and capable of inspiring great fear in anyone who he might savagely attack," who prevented the looting of the shrine of St. Demetrios.¹³³ The presence of eunuchs commanding Sicilian forces against Thessalonica suggests that, though often unmentioned in chronicle sources of the latter half of the twelfth century, they continued to serve in the armies of the *regno*.

The campaign itself swiftly collapsed; Saladin discovered and executed the Egyptian conspirators before the Sicilian fleet arrived, King Amalric died of dysentery and as a result the expected aid from Jerusalem never materialized, and the Sicilian army suffered heavy casualties and had to abandon the campaign after landing in Alexandria. The Sicilian campaign against Alexandria was not simply a religious campaign to defend Christendom against Saracens but the result of an alliance between disaffected Muslim administrators and Christian rulers that sought to displace the growing threat of Saladin's Ayyubid dynasty by reestablishing a Fāṭimid client state in Egypt.

Latin sources from within the *regno* provide little information about this campaign. In all likelihood they had no wish to recount its disastrous failure. William ordered smaller raids against Tinnis in 1175, Alexandria again in 1177 and the Balearics in 1181 and 1182.¹³⁴ These campaigns were successful in raiding and gathering booty, but William never achieved the grand success he had hoped for when he first deployed his fleets against Alexandria. Romuald of Salerno and other Southern Italian histories either ignored these campaigns entirely, just as they had with the disastrous North African campaigns of the 1120s, or gave them only the briefest of mention, addressing them only in general terms. Despite never

detailing these adventures, Romuald of Salerno proudly boasts that these expeditions were an annual occurrence, insisting that his lord “Took vengeance with a bloodthirsty hatred towards the enemies of Christ’s cross ... each year preparing his ships and dispatching his well-armed soldiers in order to conquer the enemies of Christian faith, allowing passage to the holy sepulcher of the lord.”¹³⁵ William used these raids not simply to acquire wealth and weaken his political adversaries but also to establish his reputation as a defender of Christian pilgrims.

William’s attempts to position himself as a champion of the Christian faith through regular raids against Muslim polities in the Mediterranean did not preclude diplomatic contacts with those same powers. Sicily cemented an economic alliance with Almohad North Africa, which had been stricken with famine and desperately needed Sicilian grain.¹³⁶ Purportedly, this alliance took shape when Sicilian forces seized a ship carrying the daughter of the Almohad leader, Abū Ya`qub Yusuf. William II returned Yusuf’s daughter and used the exchange to reestablish the diplomatic contacts with North Africa that had collapsed under William I.¹³⁷ In 1181, the Almohads agreed to send regular tribute to Sicily in order to guarantee the protection of North African merchants operating in Sicily and also secured the rights to establish *fondaco* in Mahdiyya and Zawilah.¹³⁸ Both parties agreed to a temporary economic alliance that would last for ten years, but the agreement was regularly extended, and Sicilian leaders would invoke these rights into the fifteenth century. This alliance with Muslim North Africa marked a return to the economic exchange that had taken place under Roger I and Roger II, and William II pursued this diplomatic strategy while simultaneously advancing his claims as a champion of Christianity.

Ultimately, it was neither William’s military ventures against nor his diplomatic and economic exchanges with Muslim principalities that would have the most impact on the lives of Sicilian Muslims, but the unintended consequences of his campaign against the Byzantine emperor in 1185. Eager to devote the full resources of his kingdom to supporting his campaign to unseat emperor Andronikos Komnenos, William entered into an alliance with Frederick Barbarossa to help ensure that the German emperor would not press his long-standing claim over southern Italy. To secure this peace, William married his aunt Constance, the daughter of Roger II, to Frederick Barbarossa’s son, Henry. William also agreed that if he failed to produce an heir, the *regno* would pass into the hands of Constance and Henry, and made his nobles take oaths recognizing Constance as

his legitimate successor.¹³⁹ The campaign itself was yet another failure, but Constance's marriage would reshape the dynastic politics in Sicily. William's death in 1189 would throw the monarchy into chaos, expose the Sicilian Muslims to violent attacks from Christian communities, as Chap. 7 demonstrates, and lead to the massacre and displacement of Muslims across the whole of the island.

Monastic Overlordship and the Creation of Monreale

Despite the rise in popular violence against Sicilian Muslims in the 1150s and 1160s, Muslims remained an invaluable asset for the Sicilian crown. William's displays of piety did not move him to attempt to convert the Muslim population of the island, who remained a crucial component in strategies of royal gifting precisely because of the tax burdens placed upon non-Christian villeins. Nowhere is this importance more apparent than in William II's creation of and donations to the Benedictine Abbey S. Maria Nuova in Monreale. This monastery, best known for its extensive and elaborate program of glittering mosaic, also became the largest landholder in Sicily aside from the king himself. William sought to both emulate and surpass the actions of his great-grandfather, who founded the monastery of Sant'Agata and granted it unprecedented exemptions and rights over the Muslim population of Catania.¹⁴⁰ By the early 1180s, William had placed thousands of Muslims under the direct authority of the newly created monastery of Monreale.

Recent scholarship underscores the antagonism from the Sicilian population over the creation of Monreale, as it "dissolved the arrangement of royal protection for the Muslims of western Sicily."¹⁴¹ This claim rests primarily on the fact that after William's death in 1189 and the massacres of Muslims that followed, the Muslim communities in and around territories ceded to Monreale became centers of resistance against both popular violence and Christian overlordship.¹⁴² However, the lands granted to Monreale had the densest population of Muslims on the island.¹⁴³ The fact that Muslims across the island flocked to the territory controlled by Monreale, the naturally defensible mountainous terrain in Western Sicily, and established independent polities there in the wake of widespread massacres does not necessarily indicate that Muslims in Monreale in the 1180s had been dissatisfied with monastic control. We have no evidence that suggests that Muslims placed under the governance of this new monastery suffered from a lack of protection in the period preceding William's

death. As with the donations of Muslims to Sant'Agata in Catania almost a century earlier, the donation of Muslims was not a complete abdication of royal oversight and may not have ever been fully completed before William's death disrupted the functions of governance across Sicily.¹⁴⁴

Any discussion of how Monreale affected Sicilian Muslims requires examining how the monastery fit into William II's larger agenda to project his own image as a champion of Christianity. The location of Monreale was chosen to evoke the history of the Norman role in resuscitating Christianity on the island. The monastery was located on Conca d'Oro, the mountain that overlooks Palermo, just five miles from the city. The 1174 papal confirmation of the abbey said that it would be founded "above Saint Cyriacus."¹⁴⁵ The church of Saint Cyriacus served as a reminder of the role that William's ancestors had played in the conquest of Palermo itself and the revitalization of Latin Christianity across the island. When the Normans conquered Palermo one hundred years earlier, Robert Guiscard and his brother Roger encountered the Greek archbishop Nicodemus. Having been driven out of Palermo, Nicodemus had taken refuge in the humble church of Saint Cyriacus. The foundation of Santa Maria Nuova above Saint Cyriacus not only celebrated the Christian conquest of Muslim Sicily but may have been intended as a symbol of the triumph of the Latin rite over its Greek counterpart.¹⁴⁶

William intended this monastery at Monreale to serve as a showpiece for his religious devotion. Santa Maria Nuova quickly amassed an unprecedented series of rights, privileges and holdings. However, William II's initial 1176 charter for S. Maria Nuova in Monreale, modeled after the charter that his grandfather Roger II bestowed upon San Giovanni degli Eremiti, provided extensive rights and territories to the new monastery.¹⁴⁷ The charter makes only a brief mention of Muslims, noting the gift of a house in the Kemonia district of Palermo that belonged to the eunuch Martin and the donation of a sugar mill in southeast Palermo "that the Saracens called Masara," but made no explicit mention of the Muslim villains that were so central to the holdings of the monastery.¹⁴⁸

Despite the lack of explicit identification, thousands and thousands of Muslims came under the control of Monreale as a result of this initial donation, because William placed the towns of Jato, Corleone and Calatrasi, along with all surrounding territory, under the jurisdiction of the monastery, along with a multitude of churches and smaller holdings.¹⁴⁹ The monastery received a wealth of donations from William in a series of follow-up donations over subsequent years.¹⁵⁰ By the mid-1180s, Santa

Maria Nuova controlled almost five hundred square miles of contiguous holdings in the Val di Mazara of Western Sicily, in addition to its scattered smaller holdings across the rest of the island and on the Italian mainland, making it the second largest landholder in Sicily outside of the king himself and the third largest landholder in all of the *regno* next to William and the abbey of Monte Cassino.¹⁵¹ Santa Maria Nuova received a litany of rights and exemptions that proved as important as the territory itself. The monks held these lands freely, without any taxes, fees or obligations of service, aside from the duty to feed the king and his heir when they visited the monastery. In addition, the abbot served as the king's justiciar over all of the monastery's lands and retained all revenue generated from operating these courts.

The donation of the vast holdings in Western Sicily placed thousands of Muslims under the dominion of Monreale. They were obligated to pay the *jizya* to the archbishop rather than the king, and they were now subject to the archbishop's justice. Three extant registers pertaining to donations to Monreale also highlight the continued productivity of Arabic-language scribes within the royal *diwān*. A bilingual Greek and Arabic *jarīda*, name list, composed in 1178 details the names of heads of households from the towns of Corleone and Calatrasi. A second Greek and Arabic *jarīda* composed in 1183 details the inhabitants of the roughly 50 smaller estates which came under the authority of Monreale. In addition, an 1182 register delineates the boundaries of Monreale's holdings in Jato, Corleone, Battellari and Calatrasi, and translates these boundary descriptions from Arabic into Latin.¹⁵²

The 1183 *jarīda* best illustrates that these vast donations of Muslims to S. Maria Nuova in Monreale cannot be seen as an abdication of royal authority over the Muslims in the region or as a novel policy on the part of William. Much like the *jarā'id* that Roger I issued to Sant'Agata's in Catania almost 80 years earlier, this name list testifies to the interpenetration of royal agents within the territories bestowed upon the new monastery at Monreale and the continued assertion of royal rights long after the 1176 donation to the incipient monastery. The Arabic introduction to the 1183 *jarīda* begins not with a donation, but an edict that affirms the authority of the crown and orders the "return of all men of the royal *diwān* ... who are dwelling on the lands of the churches and of the barons throughout Sicily (may God protect her) and to transfer them from these places to the lands of the royal *diwān*."¹⁵³ This assertion of royal authority neatly parallels the Greek conclusion of the 1095 Aci Castello names

examined in Chap. 3. This list states that the *jarīda* was “based upon the *plateiai* of my own lands and of my barons ... we command that any of the Hagarenes inscribed in this *plateiai*, who is found in my *plateiai* or in the *plateiai* of my barons, shall be returned there.” William II mirrored the actions of his predecessors and used these name lists to carefully circumscribe the limits of his donation and reassert his authority over the Muslim population of Sicily writ large.

The Monreale *jarā'id* draw sharp distinctions between various categories of Muslim listed within the document, which helps us understand the origins of the Muslims within these communities and hints at variations of legal status within the Muslim community. These texts identify Muslims as “men of the register” (*rijāl al-jarā'id*), “men of the settlement” (*rijāl al-maḥallāt*) and “smooth men” (*rijāl al-muls*).¹⁵⁴ The “smooth men” were immigrants, newly registered Muslims who did not owe heritable fees. They were unregistered Muslims who agreed to pay taxes, probably at a reduced rate, in exchange for land, an offer extended to encourage them to settle on this territory. The *jarā'id* established that, even in the late twelfth century, Muslims from Africa continued to immigrate into Sicily and that the estates of Monreale had become a refuge for Muslims displaced from other parts of Sicily.¹⁵⁵ The distinction between the “men of the settlement” and “men of the register” remains murkier. Jeremy Johns has argued that “men of the settlement” were the descendants of Muslims who resided in these territories at the time of the Norman conquest of Sicily and paid the *jizya*, or poll tax, collectively, while “men of the register” were villeins who had been registered as belonging to a certain piece of land and paid the *jizya* as an individual household. These categories are unique to the Sicilian administration; they have no exact parallel to similar terms in the Arabic-speaking world and seem to have been derived from legal categories of the East Roman Empire.¹⁵⁶

The 1183 *jarīda* attempts to make a further distinction between these categories: “[William II] grants to the holy church of Santa Maria ... that all those dwelling on his lands on the estates of the churches and landholders within his boundaries, specifically the men of the settlements and the smooth men, but excluding the men of the registers, should remain as they are now and should be handed over [to the church].”¹⁵⁷ The existence of these distinct categories of Muslims within the *jarīda* illustrates that even within the territories granted to S. Maria Nuova, the crown did not abdicate all of its rights over Sicilian

Muslims. The crown continued supervising the division between the different categories of Muslim, which would have required royal agents to continue to operate in the region.

The details provided in the three *jarā'id* from the royal *dīwān*, which included the names of almost 2000 heads of households and exhaustive boundary descriptions of roughly 50 estates, create the illusion that the crown generated a comprehensive survey of its donations to Monreale. However, the records of the lands and peoples granted to the monastery were far from complete. We have no registers for the inhabitants of roughly two-fifths of the estates described in the 1182 *jarīda* and lack boundary descriptions for half of the communities mentioned in the 1183 *jarīda*.¹⁵⁸ The absence of large portions of data suggests two possibilities: either that there exist significant gaps in the non-extant registers of the crown which served as the basis for the Monreale *jarā'id* or that the process of completing the remaining registers and land divisions of the monastery was never completed. The five-year gap between the completions of the 1178 *jarīda* and the 1183 *jarīda* illustrates the slow pace of the production of these documents, and it is possible that the royal *dīwān* may have begun a subsequent *jarīda* and that it was never completed as a result of the political disjunction caused by William's death in 1189. In either case, the incomplete nature of data would have necessitated that royal officials play some role in arbitrating the status of Muslims in the territories of Monreale in the 1180s.

The Sicilian Crucible: Fitna and the Riḥlat of Ibn Jubayr

Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Jubayr's *Riḥlat* offers our most detailed narrative source of the Sicilian Muslim community at the end of the twelfth century.¹⁵⁹ Historians have often read Ibn Jubayr's descriptions of the tribulations of Sicilian Muslims in the 1180s as a harbinger of the calamities that would befall the community in the next decade. Ibn Jubayr vividly describes the social pressure placed upon the island's Muslim populations by the kings of Sicily and emphasizes the allure offered by a wealthy and generous Christian monarch who adorned himself with the trappings of Islamic culture. The long-standing relationship of patronage, protection and exploitation between the kings of Sicily and their Muslim subjects was, for Ibn Jubayr, the greatest threat to Sicilian Muslims, and he expresses grave concerns that Islamic faith of this community would erode in the face of this pressure. But in focusing on the temptations offered by the

Sicilian king, Ibn Jubayr ignored the emerging threat that would overtake Sicilian Muslims at the end of the twelfth century, that of popular Latin Christian resentment and mass violence. The gravest danger facing Sicilian Muslims was their reliance on the monarchy for physical protection and their vulnerability in the wake of royal weakness, not the lure of patronage from a powerful Christian monarch.

Ibn Jubayr, a Muslim administrator from the court of Granada, wrote an account of the various lands through which he traveled on his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. On his return journey across the Mediterranean, his boat shipwrecked off the coast of Messina in December of 1184, and he remained in Sicily until March of 1185. Ibn Jubayr's account of the island juxtaposes fascination and disgust over infidel rule. He expresses a sense of curiosity over a Christian court that adopted the cultural trappings of the Islamic world while expressing horror at Sicilian kings' potential for generosity and benevolence in tempting their Muslim subjects into rejecting their faith.

Ibn Jubayr returns again and again to the concept of *fitna* to depict the plight of Sicilian Muslims, using the term to describe at least six separate incidents over the course of roughly 20 pages of text.¹⁶⁰ In modern standard Arabic, *fitna* has a double meaning of seduction or temptation on the one hand, and sedition, discord, and civic strife on the other, while simultaneously making a historical allusion to periods of sectarian conflicts that caused civil war within the Muslim community.¹⁶¹ The original root of the word refers to the process of purifying gold or silver through smelting. In classical Arabic, *fitna* came to describe the trials and tribulations which tested the faith of Muslims and separated the devout believers from wavering hypocrites. While Broadhurst's oft-cited English translation of *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr* consistently translates *fitna* simply as "seduction" or "temptation," Ibn Jubayr uses the term *fitna* to depict Sicily as a crucible for the faith of Sicilian Muslims. Ibn Jubayr does not depict the Sicilian Muslims in the 1180s as a community teetering on the brink of eradication, but references the extraordinary trials they endure as a way to elevate the faith of Muslims who hold firm to their faith in the face of these tribulations.

In analyzing Ibn Jubayr's descriptions, we must remember Ibn that he was not simply a traveling Muslim, but a Muslim undertaking a holy journey to achieve expiations for his failings, chiefly his consumption of wine; he was both tourist and pilgrim. His anger at and disillusionment toward the sectarian divides and internal conflicts between Muslims, particularly those

in the east, permeate the whole of his text.¹⁶² Ibn Jubayr devotes a great deal of attention to the construction of boundaries between Christian and Muslim spaces and becomes obsessed with the problem of Muslims living under Christian rule. In his discussion of the city of Tyre, he writes a blanket condemnation of Muslims who reside in Christian polities: “There is no forgiveness in the eyes of God for any Muslim to remain in communities within the country of the infidel ... they will suffer hardships and horrors in [the infidel’s] country.”¹⁶³ But as the text develops, it becomes clear that the greatest danger posed by Christian rule is not abuse, not the infliction of “hardship and horrors,” but the danger of *fitna*, in which the generosity of Christian lords would test the faith of devout Muslims to tempt them to embrace Christian rule.¹⁶⁴ In all of Ibn Jubayr’s travels, nowhere was the danger of *fitna* as grave or as prevalent as in Sicily, where a fabulously wealthy Christian king surrounded himself with Muslims, draped himself with the trappings of Islamic luxury and most importantly positioned himself as the protector and patron of Muslims within his kingdom.

Ibn Jubayr’s ambivalence toward William II stems from the format of this text. He composed his *Rihlat* as a travel log, jotting down notes periodically when he reached rest stops as he traveled.¹⁶⁵ As a consequence, his views shift and evolve over the course of the journey.

The context for his initial encounter with the Sicilian king is a positive one, with William appearing to grant him deliverance from a shipwreck in the straits of Messina. Sailors from Messina attempted to gouge the stranded travelers, charging them exorbitant rates for their rescue, but when William “saw the destitute Muslims looking from the boat ... he ordered that they be given 100 *tari*¹⁶⁶ in order that they could come ashore.”¹⁶⁷ Not only did William finance Ibn Jubayr’s rescue but Ibn Jubayr stresses that the Christians of Sicily would have enslaved the stranded passengers if not for William’s presence and portrays the intervention of the Sicilian king as a manifestation of divine grace: “A beautiful act and a kindness of God almighty towards us during this incident was the presence of this Rumi King, without which everyone in the boat might have been robbed of all their possessions, or all of the Muslims enslaved, because they [Sicilian Christians] customarily did such things.”¹⁶⁸ Ibn Jubayr initially describes William II as a savior, elevated above other Christians because of his treatment of Muslims, and reaffirms the role of the Sicilian monarchy in guaranteeing the safety of the Muslim commu-

nity. Ibn Jubayr reminds us once again that only a strong Christian king held back the tide of popular Christian violence against Sicilian Muslims.

Ibn Jubayr goes on to describe a just king who takes the consul of his Muslim advisor and surrounds himself with the luxuries.¹⁶⁹ He lauds the beautiful gardens and palaces of Palermo, writing that “In [William’s] immersion in the amenities of the kingdom, in the arrangement of his laws, in the development of his procedures, in the division of the ranks of his men, in the magnificent pageantry of the sovereign, in showing his finery, he resembles Muslim kings.”¹⁷⁰ It is in Ibn Jubayr’s description of the brilliance of the Sicilian court that he shifts from praise to criticism, depicting William’s vast resources and cultural sophistication as *fitna* that tests the convictions of highly educated Muslims: “He has doctors and astrologers, who he vehemently covets and takes great care of, to such an extent that when he becomes aware of a doctor or astrologer traveling through his land, he orders their detention and grants him such a lavish livelihood that he forgets his home. May God by his grace protect Muslims from *fitna*.”¹⁷¹

The negative aspects of William’s rule come to the fore the longer Ibn Jubayr resides on the island and the more he talks with the local Muslim population. Elite Muslims in governmental service faced temptation to convert for career advancement. Ibn Jubayr describes the conversion of Ibn Zur’ah, a Sicilian *qāḍī* who William coerced into converting to Christianity.¹⁷² After his conversion, Ibn Zur’ah’s knowledge of *sharia* and newly embraced study of canon law allowed Ibn Zur’ah to preside over the legal cases of both Muslims and Jews. However, Ibn Jubayr argues that, much like the palace eunuchs discussed in Chap. 5, Ibn Zur’ah secretly maintained his Muslim faith, only feigning his conversion to Christianity. The account of Ibn Zur’ah is not meant to convey the tenuous survival of Islam on the island but to show that the Christian ruler of Sicily attacks the true faith. However, the Sicilian Muslims overcome these ordeals and maintain their devotion even in the face of the seductions of power offered by court service.

Ibn Jubayr testifies to the existence of numerous Muslim communities throughout the island. In Messina, the first city he encounters on the island, Ibn Jubayr notes the lack of Muslims, describing their absence like a blight upon the city: “No Muslims established settlements in there, loaded with slaves of the crucifix, overcrowding its residents, almost squeezing the capability for tranquility from them.”¹⁷³ But as Ibn Jubayr travels toward Palermo, he provides evidence of a series of Muslim com-

munities along the northern coast of the island. He mentions a “congregation of Muslims” dwelling in the coastal town of Cefalù.¹⁷⁴ In Termini, he observes a “large suburb” of Muslims with “their own mosques.”¹⁷⁵ He describes praying with a community of pious Muslims and Muslim ascetics at the Castello di Solanto, just 11 miles from Palermo, which he says maintained one of the most exquisite mosques in the whole world.¹⁷⁶

Ibn Jubayr’s description of Palermo confirms the persistence of a large Muslim population in the city a generation after the massacres of the 1150s and 1160s but also subtly points out the uniquely precarious position of Palermitan Muslims. He stresses the countless mosques of the city and Muslim domination of Palermo’s markets but highlights the isolation of these Muslim communities. Palermitan Muslims “live in their suburbs, apart from the Christians.”¹⁷⁷ They lack close connections with Muslims on rural estates who pay the *jizya* and have protection from the crown: “These Muslims separate themselves from their brethren under the protection of the infidel,” and “they enjoyed no security for their money, their wives, or their children.”¹⁷⁸ The Muslims of Palermo are restricted from Friday prayers, because the sermon, which would normally include an acknowledgment of the authority of the caliph, has been banned, save for its allowance at a few specific festivals. Despite the isolation of Palermitan Muslims, their cultural influence spreads throughout the city: “The apparel of Christian women in this city is the dress of Muslim women. They speak Arabic fluently and cover themselves and are veiled ... They appear at their churches ... bearing all the finery of Muslim women.”¹⁷⁹

The cohabitation Ibn Jubayr observed in other parts of Sicily could not be found in the capital, in all likelihood as a result of earlier violence against these Muslims communities. When he left Palermo to travel further west, he came to the town of Trapani, where “Muslims and Christians both have their own mosques and churches.”¹⁸⁰ Ibn Jubayr took part in a feast celebrating the end of Ramadan at the *musalla* of Trapani and was amazed at Christian toleration of the feast, reinforcing the notion that the compartmentalization of the Muslim population in Palermo was an anomaly when compared to the other urban communities on Sicily’s northern coast.¹⁸¹ When Ibn Jubayr receives acts of kindness from Sicilian Christians, he frames them not as generosity or displays of tolerance, but, much like the actions of William II, as a *fitna* that tests the religious conviction of Muslims. He mentions that his party was regularly greeted and treated with kindness, but he frames these greetings as having a “pliant intent towards Muslims which could cause *fitna* to bring low an ignorant

soul,” and calls on Allah to “safeguard the people of Muḥammad ... from *fitna*.”¹⁸² Ibn Jubayr stresses that Muslims and Christians often live side by side, with Muslims being allowed to own property and estates, and Christians “employ[ing] them well and giv[ing] them good status.”¹⁸³

In both Trapani and Palermo, Ibn Jubayr met with Muslim elites who painted a picture of the pressures that a Christian kingdom places upon its Muslim subjects. Chief among these was the fear of conversion. Though we have evidence that conversion from Islam to Latin Christianity occurred relatively infrequently, Ibn Jubayr stresses that the specter of conversion haunted the Muslim population.¹⁸⁴ Any child could undergo baptism to escape the authority of their parents. Anxiety over the possibility of conversion made it difficult for any parent to exercise effective discipline over their children.¹⁸⁵ Many Muslims feared that the fate of Crete, where the Muslim population of the island was forcibly converted, would befall them. Ibn Jubayr reports that one Sicilian family attempted to marry one of their daughters to a pilgrim traveling with Ibn Jubayr, simply in hope of removing the possibility of her forced conversion.¹⁸⁶

In addition to the threat of conversion undercutting parental authority, Ibn Jubayr also uses the account of the *Qa'id* Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd, a high-ranking Muslim and leader of the community in Trapani, to illustrate the abuses that elite Muslims could suffer at the hands of a Christian king.¹⁸⁷ Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd served as a director of the royal *dīwān* and appears in charters delineating the boundaries of royal properties as early as 1168. He also served as the patron of the poet Ibn Qalāqis in 1167–1168. William II suspected Abū 'l-Qāsim of being in league with Almohads and levied huge fines against him and stripped him of much of his property. When Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd spoke to Ibn Jubayr, he had recently returned to the king's service but remained impoverished and under suspicion. He expressed a yearning to be sold as a slave, because he would have more freedom as a slave in the lands of Muslims than he did as a prominent Muslim serving under the Christian king of Sicily.¹⁸⁸ Ibn Jubayr uses Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd's lament to illustrate the arbitrary rule and fundamental injustice of the Christian ruler of Sicily, despite the trappings of Islamic culture in William's court and the appearance of toleration extended to Sicilian Muslims.

Ibn Jubayr's statement that “They [the Christians] claim that if he [Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd] converted to Christianity, he would influence every Muslim on the island and they would copy his act,” should not be read as

an illustration of the precarious nature of the Sicilian Muslim population of Sicily.¹⁸⁹ Ibn Jubayr attributes this hypothetical assessment not to the Muslims of Sicily but to the Christian inhabitants. He reports this claim to demonstrate the remarkable status Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd had among Christians, and the way in which Christian leaders in Sicily saw him as the lynchpin for Muslim society. Neither Abū 'l-Qāsim ibn Hammūd nor any other Muslim elite repeat this claim, nor does Ibn Jubayr endorse it as an accurate depiction of the fragility of Muslim faith on the island.

However, it is worth noting that Ibn Jubayr says nothing of the creation of the monastery at Monreale or the thousands and thousands of Muslims placed under monastic control. While Ibn Jubayr traveled along the northern coast of the island, avoiding most of the territory under the control of S. Maria Nuova, his visit came in the wake of William II's donations which granted the abbot of Monreale judicial authority over the Muslim population. In his description of Palermo, Ibn Jubayr makes reference to royal monasteries created by King William in general terms, asking the rhetorical question, "How many monasteries does he have, whose monks he makes comfortable with extensive estates?"¹⁹⁰ Given the close proximity of Monreale to the city of Palermo, this passage probably references Monreale, but it makes no mention of its command of Muslim villeins. The accounts of the king of Sicily placing large swathes of Muslims under the rule of Christian priest would certainly have served Ibn Jubayr's polemical purposes in highlighting the precarious position of Sicily's Muslim population, and it is hard to imagine that any reason save ignorance explains the absence of a discussion of the donations of Monreale from this text. Ibn Jubayr based his discussions of the fears of Sicilian Muslims on his discussions with Muslim elites in Palermo and Trapani.¹⁹¹ These men expressed a discontent with royal policy toward Muslims, but displayed little concern with the creation of Monreale or the rights given to the monastery over the Muslims in its territory. This lack of interest in Monreale reflects the views of an urban, Muslim elite, and may not reflect the attitudes of Muslim listed on the registrars living within Jato or Corleone, but this silence should make us all the more cautious in making assumptions that the donations to S. Maria Nuova drove Muslim discontent on the island or fostered the rebellion that would take place a decade later.

Ibn Jubayr's *Rihlat* describes a community facing a religious trial and should not be read as a harbinger of the violence and displacement that Sicilian Muslims suffered in the 1190s and 1200s. For Ibn Jubayr, a Christian ruler steeped in the cultural trappings of Islamic rulers and

appearing to act magnanimously toward his Muslim subjects presented the gravest danger to the faith of the Muslims of Sicily. The allure of conversion to Christianity and the practical benefits that accompanied a conversion threatened to erode the Muslim community over the long term. But Ibn Jubayr's text remains almost entirely silent on the short-term crisis that would erupt in the wake of William's death in 1189, less than five years after Ibn Jubayr's visit. The immediate threat facing the Muslims of Sicily was not the seduction of a semi-benevolent Christian king, but popular riots and massacres that would permanently displace Sicilian Muslims when the protection of royal power collapsed.

NOTES

1. For debates about the authorship of the letter, see D'Angelo (2013), pp. 141–61; Hood (1999), pp. 1–39; Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 28–50; Jamison (1957); Hoffmann (1967), pp. 130–42. Our earliest extant copy of the *Liber*, Vatican Latin 10690, dates from 1230, but the original text was probably composed in the 1170s or 1180s, before the death of William II. A printed edition of the text from the sixteenth century attributes the text to “Hugo Falcandus,” but this name appears to have originated as a result of a combination of damage to the text and scribal error. The name “Hugo Falcandus” came from the misreading of a damaged spine by a sixteenth-century copyist. Jamison (1957), pp. 195–97 theorizes that the spine of the text had some sort of inscription that was misread and led to the copyist's misattribution of the authorship of the text.
2. Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 15–19. In his description of Maio, the chief royal advisor for William I, Falcandus borrows heavily from classical images of how a tyrannical ruler is supposed to act.
3. For more on “Saracen,” see the Introduction (Chap. 1).
4. Falcandus (1897), pp. 90–91.
5. Johns (2002) pp. 246–48; Metcalfé (2009), pp. 203–4; Tolan (2002), pp. 105–34.
6. Nef (2011), p. 241, argues that the anti-Muslim massacres of 1061 should be seen as the extension of revolts William faced shortly after becoming King.
7. Loud (1996), pp. 104–8.

8. Falcandus, pp. 13–14.
9. For details of the revolt in Apulia and William's campaign to suppress it, see Kinnamos (1976), pp. 106–34.
10. Duchesne and Vogel (1955), vol. 2, p. 393.
11. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 338–41; al-Tijānī, in *BAS*², pp. 456–59; Ibn Khaldūn in *BAS*², pp. 553–55.
12. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², p. 344.
13. al-Tijani, in *BAS*², pp. 459–61; Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 344–45.
14. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 242.
15. Falcandus (1897), p. 26.
16. Ibn al-Athīr, in *BAS*², pp. 344–45.
17. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 81–82.
18. Falcandus (1897), pp. 42–43.
19. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 245–46.
20. Falcandus (1897). p. 47.
21. See Chap. 4.
22. See Chap. 5.
23. Matthew had promised to pay the sum to the crown in order to receive his familial inheritance, but Maio, his father-in-law, had previously intervened to allow him to defer payment of this fee. Falcandus (1897), p. 48.
24. Metcalfe (2009), p. 189.
25. Falcandus (1897), pp. 55–56.
26. Houben (2002b), pp. 102–4; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 183–85.
27. Falcandus (1897), p. 57.
28. For a geography of twelfth-century Palermo, see Pezzini (2013), pp. 195–232; D'Angelo (2009), pp. 153–76.
29. For Falcandus' description of the Sea Castle, see D'Angelo (2009), p. 158.
30. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 246–47.
31. Pezzini (2013), pp. 211–19, 229–30. This area of Palermo had long housed religious minorities in the city. During the Muslim rule of Palermo, this same region was known as the Ḥārat al-Saqāliba and housed the bulk of the Christian population of the city.
32. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 423.
33. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 424.
34. Constable (1997), pp. 67–84. Also, see Chap. 7.

35. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 246–47. Falcandus (1897), p. 57, argues that a few unnamed individuals were able to stir up the crowds against looters who had seized the royal treasure intended for the defense of the realm.
36. Falcandus (1897), pp. 61–62, claims that a minor palace official, Darius, fired the arrow that struck Duke William but repeats a rumor that the wound itself was not fatal, and that Duke Roger was killed by William, his own father, who flew into a rage when he was released because his own son had served as a figurehead for the conspirators.
37. The activities of Tancred of Lecce during this period are a matter of dispute. Falcandus (1897), pp. 69–70, offers a detailed description of Tancred’s partnership with Roger Sclavus. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 246–47, insists that Tancred departed with Simon and the other conspirators. Romuald may have conflated Tancred’s actions at this moment with his eventual decision to leave the island after the surrender of Butera.
38. Bresc (1992), pp. 147–63.
39. Falcandus (1897), p. 70.
40. Houben (2002a), p. 328.
41. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 246–47.
42. Falcandus (1897), p. 73.
43. See Chap. 7
44. See Chap. 5.
45. Takayama (1993), pp. 100–1.
46. Falcandus (1897), p. 89.
47. See Chap. 3.
48. Dettenhofer (2009), pp. 90–94.
49. Bak (1997), p. 223.
50. Poulet (1993), p. 99.
51. Bak (1997), p. 233.
52. Though female regents were more likely to relinquish power to their children than their male counterparts, such transfers were far from assured. McNamara (2003), p. 26.
53. Crawford (2004).
54. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 242.
55. Loud and Wiedemann (1998), p. 225, note 23.
56. Houben (2002a, 2002b), p. 96.
57. Falcandus (1897), p. 43.

58. Falcandus (1897), p. 47.
59. Falcandus (1897), pp. 48–50.
60. Though Falcandus identifies Gilbert as Margaret’s kinsman, his exact identity remains uncertain. It is possible that Gilbert was not her cousin, but, in fact, her brother. Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 159–60.
61. Jamison (1913), pp. 262–63; Takayama (1993), p. 97.
62. Jamison (1913), p. 282, note 3.
63. For William I’s charters, see Enzensberger (1996).
64. Falcandus (1897), pp. 87–90. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 253–54.
65. Falcandus (1897), p. 88.
66. See Chap. 3.
67. Falcandus (1897), p. 88.
68. Falcandus (1897), p. 90. These extensive grants are confirmed by Romuald of Salerno, p. 254.
69. Falcandus (1897), p. 108.
70. Falcandus (1897), p. 108.
71. Takayama (1993), p. 115.
72. Falcandus (1897), p. 90.
73. Falcandus (1897), p. 95.
74. Falcandus (1897), p. 96.
75. Falcandus (1897), pp. 96–97.
76. Falcandus (1897), p. 97.
77. Richard had been a former constable of Robert Loritello and had risen in rank at the behest of William I, whom he had saved from death when the barons stormed the royal palace in Palermo in the rebellion of 1160–1161. He became William’s constable, in charge of the military and of the palace itself, shortly after Maio’s death in November of 1160.
78. Falcandus (1897), pp. 97–98.
79. Falcandus (1897), pp. 98–99.
80. Falcandus (1897), pp. 101–2.
81. Falcandus (1897), p. 101.
82. Falcandus (1897), pp. 108–9.
83. Falcandus (1897), p. 108.
84. For speculation on the identity of Hugh, see Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 157–58, no. 165.

85. Henry was known as Rodrigo in Spain but adopted a name more suitable for the Sicilian court when he ventured to serve his sister. On his genealogy, see Loud and Wiedemann (1998), p. 143.
86. On the genealogy of Stephen and the Counts of Perche, see Thompson (1995), p. 24.
87. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 256–57.
88. These struggles may have resulted in his linguistic limitation. Henry came from Iberia and could not speak the French language that was spoken by most Latin Christian courtiers. Falcandus (1897), pp. 127–29. The initial extent of Henry’s ambitions seemingly was to drink and gamble away as much royal money as he could, though these accusations may reflect Falcandus’ bias against Henry. Falcandus (1897), p. 107.
89. Chalandon (1907), vol. 2, p. 322. Takayama (1993), p. 117, dates the investiture of Stephen at Palermo to 1168.
90. Falcandus (1897), p. 115. Amari (2002), vol. 3, p. 330, suggests that, like at least some of the eunuchs, these individuals had been Muslims who converted to Christianity, then converted back to Islam.
91. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 203–4.
92. Falcandus (1897), pp. 115–17.
93. Kehr (1906), vol. 10, p. 232; Johns (2002), pp. 229–30.
94. See Chap. 3.
95. See Introduction (Chap. 1).
96. Falcandus (1897), p. 116.
97. Falcandus (1897), p. 116.
98. Falcandus (1897), p. 119.
99. Falcandus (1897), pp. 124–29.
100. Falcandus (1897), p. 125.
101. Falcandus (1897), pp. 126–27.
102. Falcandus (1897), p. 118–19.
103. Falcandus (1897), pp. 143–45.
104. A French knight who came with Stephen and had been granted the lands that once belonged to Matthew Bonellus. Barthélemy (1993), pp. 770–72; Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 86, 197.
105. Falcandus (1897), p. 144.
106. Falcandus (1897), p. 145.
107. Falcandus (1897), pp. 147–48.

108. Falcandus (1897), pp. 118, 148. Such accusations were commonly leveled against foreign queens throughout medieval Europe. Stafford (1983), pp. 92–96; Bak (1997), p. 225.
109. Falcandus (1897), pp. 145–46.
110. Falcandus (1897), p. 145.
111. Falcandus (1897), pp. 147–53.
112. Falcandus (1897), p. 155, gives an estimate that these Lombard regions could supply Stephen with some 20,000 soldiers, but based on the size of other Sicilian armies, those numbers are wild exaggerations.
113. D’Angelo (2009), p. 159; Falcandus (1897), pp. 155–58. For Richard’s command of these archers, see Falcandus (1897), pp. 128–29. On the role of Muslim soldiers, see Chap. 2.
114. Falcandus (1897), p. 158.
115. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 256–58.
116. Falcandus (1897), p. 158.
117. Rumors that the king was dead contributed to the revolts in Messina. But Messina had no significant Muslim population. We have no indication that revolts in Messina targeted Muslims, and those rumors never gained traction in Palermo.
118. See Chap. 7.
119. Falcandus (1897), p. 163.
120. Takayama (1993), pp. 116–20. According to Falcandus, the *familiars regis* included ten individuals in 1168 after Stephen’s ouster and included several of the conspirators against Stephen: Bishop-elect Richard of Syracuse, Bishop Gentile of Agrigento, Archbishop Romuald of Salerno, Bishop John of Malta, Roger of Gerace, Count Richard of Molise, Count Henry of Montescaglioso, Matthew the notary, the eunuch Richard and the king’s tutor, Walter. Falcandus (1897), pp. 161–62. Charters in the following add Martin back into the ranks of the *familiars regis* but remove Romuald of Salerno, John of Malta, Roger of Gerace, Henry of Montescaglioso and Richard of Syracuse. Garufi (1899), pp. 111–12; Pratesi, 1958, doc 23.
121. Takayama (1993), p. 120; Garufi (1899), p. 126.
122. Loud (2007), pp. 337–38.
123. Loud (1996), p. 100.
124. Stanton (2011), pp. 128, 152.
125. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 210–12.

126. Nef (2011), pp. 353–56.
127. Romuald of Salerno (1935), pp. 290–91.
128. For a history of Sicilian involvement with the crusades, see Wieruszowski (1969), pp. 3–44.
129. Amari (2002), vol. 3, p. 515, insists that Sicilian forces took part in the siege of Damietta in 1169, before William II reached adulthood. More recent scholarship reveals that while word of the siege may have been sent to Sicily, no Sicilian forces ever attempted to join the battle at Damietta. Stanton (2011), pp. 145–46.
130. Ibn al-Athīr, *BAS*,² pp. 346–47.
131. Ibn al-Athīr, *BAS*,² pp. 347–48. Latin sources confirm the scale of the fleet Ibn al-Athīr describes, attesting to a fleet of 200 ships, but do not detail the number of soldiers. Maragone (1936), p. 61; William of Tyre (1986), p. 963.
132. Ibn al-Athīr, *BAS*,² p. 348, mentions the presence of 500 “Turcoples” among Sicilian forces, a term late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars thought referenced Turkish or Eastern Mediterranean light cavalry in the service of Byzantine or Crusader armies, Savvides (1993), pp. 122–36, and which some contemporary historians have claimed is the term Ibn al-Athīr uses for Sicilian Muslim archers, Stanton (2011), p. 146. But as discussed in Chap. 3, Ibn al-Athīr consistently avoids any description of Muslim soldiers fighting for the kings of Sicily, in an effort to present battles against the forces of Sicily as battles against an unequivocally Christian enemy. He uses Turcoples not to describe the religious conviction or ethnic background of these soldiers but their military role, that of a mounted archer, which he juxtaposes with infantry and heavy cavalry. Harari (1997), p. 108, note 174. Muslim soldiers would have been equally, if not more, likely to serve as non-mounted archers, which Ibn al-Athīr lumps into the broad category of infantry. Historians are left with frustratingly little evidence on the extent of the participation of Muslim soldiers in the Sicilian military ventures of the 1170s and 1180s.
133. Eustathius of Thessaloniki (1988), pp. 116–17.
134. Stanton (2011), pp. 147–1450.
135. Romuald of Salerno (1935), p. 290.
136. Wieruszowski (1969), pp. 32–33.
137. Abulafia (1979), pp. 141–43; Louis Comte de Mas Latrie (1866), pp. 51–52.

138. On the history of the *fondaco*, see Constable (2004), pp. 201–9.
139. Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), pp. 313–14; Pertz, *Annales Ceccanenses* (1866), pp. 287–88; Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 2, pp. 101–2; Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 6; Waitz, *Chronica regia coloniensis* (1880), p. 147.
140. On the broad privileges given to Sant’Agata as a model for subsequent donations by Roger II and William II, see Nef (2011), pp. 455–56. On the creation of S. Maria Nuova at Monreale and the full extent of the donations given to it, see White (1938), pp. 132–39; Loud (2007), pp. 329–36.
141. Metcalfe (2009), p. 210.
142. See Chap. 7.
143. Nef (2011), pp. 385–87.
144. See Chap. 3.
145. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale no. 9; Pirri (1733), p. 451.
146. Kitzinger (1960).
147. White (1938), p. 136.
148. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale no. 15; Enzensberger (2010); Pirri (1733), pp. 453–55.
149. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale no. 15; Enzensberger (2010); Pirri (1733), pp. 453–55. The Corleone register also contained the names of 51 individuals identified as Christian; see Metcalfe (2003), pp. 93–97.
150. Monreale’s ascension in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Sicily paralleled its territorial growth. From its creation, the abbot of the monastery was subject to the papacy directly, rather than to a local bishop. In 1183, Pope Lucius III worked with William II to recognize the bishoprics of Sicily. The abbot of Monreale was elevated to the rank of archbishop, and other bishoprics on the island, including the bishop of Catania, were made suffragans of the newly ascendant bishopric of Monreale. White (1938), pp. 133–134; Loud (2007), p. 235. The creation of Monreale so close to the cathedral at Palermo may have resulted from, or perhaps created, the animosity between two of the *familiars*, the Vice-Chancellor Matthew, who urged the creation of the new foundation, and his rival Walter, the Archbishop of Palermo. Ricardus de Sancto Germano and Garufi (1938), pp. 5–6.
151. Johns (2002), p. 152; Loud (2007), p. 329.

152. Respectively these documents are, Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale nos. 22, 45 and 31; Cusa (1868) pp. 134–79, 245–86, and 179–244 offers a published edition of these texts, though it is rife with inaccuracies. A new edition of these texts is forthcoming in Alex Metcalfe (2017), *The Arabic Documents of Norman Sicily: The Monreale ‘Registers of Men.’* For an analysis of these documents see Johns (2002), pp. 153–69, 186–92, and Metcalfe (2003), pp. 90–98, 114–26.
153. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale no. 45; Cusa (1868), p. 245; Johns (2002), p. 166.
154. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 268–72; Johns (2002), pp. 145–51; Nef (2011), pp. 492–509.
155. Nef (2011), p. 557.
156. Johns (2002), pp. 149–150.
157. Palermo, Biblioteca Centrale della Regione Siciliana, Monreale no. 45; Cusa (1868), p. 245, Johns (2002), p. 166.
158. Johns (2002), p. 192.
159. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 408–38.
160. For example, Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 414, 415, 419, 420, 424, 435–36, 437–38.
161. Gardet (1991), pp. 930–31.
162. Netton (1991), pp. 29–31. For his elevation of the Islamic “West,” see Lázaro (2013), pp. 260–69.
163. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 390.
164. Chism (2012), pp. 35–40; Netton (1991), p. 36.
165. Weber (2000), p. 2; Netton (1991), p. 25.
166. A golden Sicilian coin equivalent to the quarter-dinar or *ruba‘i*.
167. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 410.
168. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 410.
169. For an analysis of Ibn Jubayr’s depiction of the eunuchs and the royal court, see Chap. 5.
170. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 414.
171. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 414.
172. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 434–35.
173. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 411. Ibn Jubayr later acknowledges the presence of a small number of Muslim craftsmen in the city of Messina. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 413.
174. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 418.
175. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 418.

176. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 420–21.
177. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 423.
178. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 424.
179. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 425.
180. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 427.
181. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 427.
182. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 419.
183. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 413.
184. Johns (1995), pp. 133–156; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 221–27.
185. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 437.
186. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 438.
187. Abū 'l-Qāsim had served as a high-ranking administrator within the royal *dīwān* and was a longtime ally of Richard and other palace eunuchs. Falcandus (1897), p. 119; Johns (2002), pp. 234–42; De Simone (1996), pp. 19–23.
188. Ibn Jubayr (1992), pp. 435–37.
189. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 437.
190. Ibn Jubayr (1992), p. 423.
191. On Ibn Jubayr's lack of interest in agrarian Muslim populations, see Nef (2011), p. 422.

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The End of Muslim Sicily

The final decade of the twelfth century saw incredible tumult in the lives of Sicilian Muslims, as well as a transformation of their portrayal in Latin sources. A series of dynastic crises sparked chaos throughout the *regno* which led to the reemergence of Christian mob violence against Muslims and the displacement of Muslims from urban centers, as well as attempts to reject the central authority of various rulers in Palermo. Would-be Sicilian sovereigns attempted to lure Sicilian Muslims back under their control through a series of threats, negations and promises, all with the underlying assumption that a strong ruler could restore order across the island, stem Christian mob violence against Muslims, and that Muslims could reemerge as a symbol of the power and splendor of the Sicilian monarchy. Only at the end of the decade did Pope Innocent III attempt to radically transform the Latin discourse surrounding the subject Muslim population of the island. Innocent argued that Markward of Anweiler's command over Muslim subjects contaminated the German leader and made him an enemy of God and the church. Innocent sought to use Muslim service as a rhetorical weapon to marshal support against a Sicilian ruler. This was the first time a Latin writer presented Muslim service as a potential vulnerability rather than a symbol of the authority of Sicilian rulers.

By the early thirteenth century, divorced from the central government of the island, Sicilian Muslims sought to protect themselves by establishing autonomous communities in the mountainous regions of western Sicily. From the point of view of Sicilian rulers, these were rebellious enclaves

which demonstrated the limits of central authority. These rebellious populations were eventually crushed by Frederick II in his attempts to exert dominion over the whole of his territory. Frederick would eventually wipe out the entire Muslim population of Sicily, relocating them to the colony of Lucera in mainland Italy, in an effort to reestablish a subordinate Muslim population which he could both control and protect. Frederick saw these Muslims as potentially valuable military and financial assets. However, Latin perception of this Muslim population had changed radically from the twelfth century; the critique first offered by Innocent III would resurface as an attack against Frederick and his successors.

TANCRED'S ASCENSION

Popular Violence and Muslim Displacement

William II's untimely death on November 18, 1189, plunged the Kingdom of Sicily into turmoil. William had no male heir; in 1186, he arranged a marriage between his aunt, Constance, daughter of Roger II, and Henry of Hohenstaufen, son of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, with the promise that Constance and Henry would rule Sicily if he died without a direct heir.¹ However, a faction of the Sicilian nobility led by William II's vice-chancellor, Matthew of Ajello, had no desire to serve under a German king and looked to elevate one of their own to succeed William.² They elected Count Tancred of Lecce, the grandson of Roger II, and one of the leaders of the 1161 coup against William I, to become the king of Sicily. Pope Clement III, eager to avoid the ascent of a Holy Roman Emperor who would encircle papal holdings in Italy but reticent to antagonize Henry, gave his tacit and covert approval to Tancred's selection. Tancred was crowned king of Sicily on January 18, 1190.³

Tancred's rise to the Sicilian throne proved a double problem for the Muslim population of Sicily. The absence of a strong monarch was a clear sign to the Muslims of Sicily that they had no royal protection, making them vulnerable to the same types of popular violence that had been prevalent in the 1160s. The Monte Cassino Chronicle, the *Annales Casinenses*, reports that mob violence erupted immediately after William II's death: "1189. William, King of Sicily, died without children or a testament. Conflict, originating from Palermo, began between Christians and Muslims. After the slaughter of many of the Saracens, the Saracens fled and inhabited the mountains."⁴ This violence forced Muslims from the

suburbs of Palermo and similar urban spaces and moved them toward rugged and remote terrains to escape the prevalent violence.

Tancred himself had been an active participant in the 1161 rebellion that led to the massacre of Palermo's Muslims. Consequently, his coronation did not guarantee a monarch who would follow the pattern of previous Sicilian kings in restraining extensive Christian violence against Muslims. The Chronicle of Richard of San Germano considered the Muslims in the mountainous Sicilian hinterland to be rebels, claiming that Tancred immediately used the threat of military forces to bring these autonomous Muslim enclaves under the auspices of royal authority. The chronicle states, "After assuming the kingship, he worked with power to allot the kingdom's boundaries in peace and to subjugate rebels and enemies. First, he forced (*coegit*) five Saracen petty-kings, who had taken refuge in the mountains because of fear of the Christians, to return to Palermo against their will from these same mountains."⁵ In contrast to his aggressive attacks against the island's Muslims, Tancred preferred to bribe Sicilian nobles to ensure their loyalty. Richard of San Germano describes how "In order to sway the remaining counts and barons to fealty to him, he allowed the drain of the royal wealth and for a long time dared to weaken the treasury."⁶ Later legal evidence seems to confirm the picture painted in these narrative sources. An inquest on the bishopric of Agrigento held in 1260 attests to widespread violence throughout western Sicily which drove the bishop of Agrigento from his see on multiple occasions and led to the destruction of crucial royal documents.⁷

La Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane

The most detailed discussion of the motivations behind the eruption of interreligious strife comes from an anonymous letter to Peter, the Treasurer of the Church of Palermo.⁸ The letter, probably composed by the same author who wrote the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*,⁹ was written in response to the death of William II in November of 1189 and before Tancred's coronation in January of 1190.¹⁰ The author simultaneously bemoans the fate of Sicily as it faces the prospect of an invasion by rapacious German hordes and offers a panegyric to the beauty and splendor of the island. The letter holds out hope that the people of Sicily have a chance to resist Henry's invasion if they band together against a common cause, highlighting the need for cooperation between Muslims and Christians to save the *regno*: "If [the Sicilians] select for themselves a king of indubitable virtue, and if

the Muslims did not dissent from the Christians, the appointed king could rescue the desperate and nearly hopeless situation and ward off the invasion of the foreign enemy, if he acted sensibly.”¹¹ Only the emergence of a strong king could hope to quell the religious strife across the island.

However, the letter expresses little optimism about the possibility of such an agreement, anticipating the unremitting popular violence that would displace the Muslims of Sicily:

It is difficult for Christians in such great a tumult as this, with the fear of the king removed, not to oppress the Muslims. The Muslims weary of the many injuries against them would break with the Christians and seize coastal strongholds or mountainous fortifications. From one side battling against the Germans with utmost power and on the other meeting with constant attacks from the Saracens... [The Muslims] will act as they can in their miserable situation to yield to foreigners and to unite themselves with [German] power. Would that the prayers of common people and leading men of the Christians and the Saracens come together so that they could amicably chose a king for themselves.¹²

The anonymous author explicitly highlights the links between violence against Muslims and royal weakness, implicitly acknowledging the patterns of mass violence that occurred during the reign of William I. He either displays remarkable prescience in his predictions of anti-Islamic religious violence and Muslim displacement or, more likely, composes the letter after these attacks and expulsions have already begun. Local violence between Muslims and Christians is depicted as a normative condition, rather than the result of dogmatic discourse, and the author asserts that such violence could only be suppressed through the presence of strong monarchical power. The security of the island’s Muslim population was linked to the stability of Sicily’s ruling monarchy. The author envisions a Muslim community that is well aware of this tie and seeks to reestablish a powerful monarchy, even to the point of allying with a German king, in order to reestablish that protection.

Despite this interreligious strife, the internal displacement of Muslim communities on the island, and the decline in power of Arabic-language administrators within the kingdom, some high-ranking Muslims continued to serve in ranking posts in the *regno* during this period. In July of 1191, Tancred ordered Abdeserdus to grant tithes from Oria to the Archbishop of Brindisi. We know little about Abdeserdus save for his name and title, “Palace Chamberlain and master of the *duane baronum*.”¹³ We cannot be

certain of Abdeserudus' religious faith, but the use of the Arabic-language name suggests that he was a Muslim who worked in the royal office carrying out administrative duties on the Southern Italian mainland.¹⁴ The role of Arabic-language administration had dwindled in the last decade of the twelfth century, but it had not vanished.

Revolt of the Griffons: Roger of Howden and the Third Crusade

William II's commitment to the Third Crusade further complicated Tancred's already unstable political position. Richard I of England and Philip II of France planned to meet in Sicily at the city of Messina in the late summer of 1190.¹⁵ The arrival of these crusading armies offers another opportunity to examine the way that Latin sources from outside of Sicily depicted the Muslim population of the island. William II had been married to Joan of England, and her brother, Richard I, demanded that Tancred return the widow Joan along with the whole of her dowry.¹⁶ Upon arriving in Sicily, hostilities erupted between the English forces and the inhabitants of Messina, which provided Richard with an excuse to sack the city, destroy the Sicilian fleet and extract concessions from Tancred.¹⁷ Tancred not only returned Joan's dowry but also had to pay compensation to Richard for the attacks against his forces in Messina and a dowry for his daughter, whom he promised to marry to Richard's nephew, Arthur of Brittany.¹⁸

In their attempt to document the offenses of the citizens of Messina, English authors divided the citizens of Messina into two groups, the Griffons and the Lombards.¹⁹ The exact meaning of the term Griffon remains unclear. While many historians have often translated the term Griffon as "Greek,"²⁰ Helen Nicholson argues that the term generally refers to Muslims and that both Ambroise and the author of the *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* use the term in unusual ways to refer to someone of Greek origin.²¹ The *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* uses the term in a way that seems to conflate both Greeks and Muslims, stating that "the vile citizens [of Messina], generally called Griffons, many of them having been born from Saracen fathers, established themselves as hostile opponents to us."²² Ambroise proceeds in a similar vein, stating, "a mob of townsfolk, scoundrels and Griffons of the town, descendants of the Saracens, oppressed our pilgrims."²³ These authors either established a series of religious categories, using the term Lombard to describe the population of Sicily that followed the Latin rite and the term Griffon to describe Greek

Christians, or linguistic ones, in which the term Griffon applied to anyone who spoke the Greek language.²⁴

The *Itinerarium* reports that the Griffons initially publicly insulted and privately attacked the English forces but were cowed into submission by the appearance of Richard and his entourage. In contrast, the Lombards continued their hostilities against the English, eventually provoking Richard's conquest of the whole of Messina. The text continually stresses the antagonism between Richard and the Lombards of Messina, who continued to refuse to provision Richard's army even after he entered into negotiations with Tancred. Richard built a new fortification to secure his position, and, despite the blame that the text heaps upon the Lombards, names this castle Mategriffon (death to the Griffons), "which infuriated the Griffons beyond measure, because the building was intended to cause their ruin."²⁵ The English accounts of the Third Crusade were not particularly appalled by the presence of Saracens, or perhaps their descendants, among the population of Sicily. Though they criticized these "Griffons," they found them no more offensive than the Latin Christian population of the island. The presence of Saracens provoked no specific ire in 1190–1191, even from the crusading forces.

The English administrator Roger of Howden does not associate Griffons with Muslims in his *Chronica* but does attest to the continued conflict between Tancred and Sicily's Muslims during Richard's time in Sicily:

In [1190] more than one hundred thousand pagans, who were in the kingdom of Sicily and servants (*servi*) of King William [II], after his death scorned to serve King Tancred; not only because Henry king of the Germans was wrongly denied the kingdom of Sicily, but also because Richard King of England had entered the kingdom of Sicily and seized great parts of it. They went away into the mountains with their wives, sons and daughters, and their cattle, and lived there, oppressing Christians and causing them many ills.²⁶

Roger, a participant in the Third Crusade who composed a history of the English monarchy from 732 up until its abrupt end in 1201, not only corroborates the information from Richard of San Germano and the *Annales Casinenses* but also adds considerably more detail. Roger places the number of displaced Muslims at one hundred thousand, and, though we should not trust the accuracy of this figure, it suggests a large-scale

displacement which would have included the majority of the island's Muslims. Unlike the Southern Italian sources, he stresses that the Muslim population did not simply retreat from urban space but engaged in raiding Christian communities. Unlike Richard of San Germano's account of this insurrection, Roger of Howden suggests that Tancred was not able to immediately quell the Muslim enclave, which operated throughout Richard's stay. That is, at least until after Tancred and Richard signed a peace treaty in November of 1090: "Hearing the peace and harmony that existed between the King of England and King Tancred, [the pagans] went back to the servitude of King Tancred and handed over to him hostages to preserve peace, returned to their homes, cultivated their lands just as they had cultivated them in the time of King William and they became servants (*servi*) under King Tancred."²⁷

Roger of Howden suggests that the displacement of Sicily's Muslims was a temporary affair and that Tancred's settlement with Richard precipitated a reversal of the previous migration. Roger also provides the only source that reports on Tancred taking hostages from the Muslim population of Sicily, a practice that has no parallel on the island for the Sicilian rulers of the twelfth century. The Sicilian kings had taken hostages from their North African subjects in the 1140s and 1150s, and Tancred may have modeled his policy upon this previous practice.

Roger expresses no discontent with the prospect of Muslim subjects serving under a Christian king. In fact, he stresses the normative nature of this condition, which had been disrupted by the fractious nature of Tancred's rule. Later in the text, Roger offers a historical summary of the conquest of Sicily that seems to deny the presence of Muslims in Sicily, which is in stark contrast with the details he provides of Richard's stay on the island in 1190–1191. In his description of the eastern Adriatic coast, Roger discusses a sea port named after Robert Guiscard, which serves as a point of departure for an extensive summary of not just the life of Robert Guiscard but the whole history of Norman involvement in Southern Italy. Roger details how Sicily came under both Norman and Christian dominion: "Sicily is a huge island and before Roger I subdued it, the island was occupied by pagans and under the dominion of the ruler of Africa. But with the pagans having been driven out (*explusis*) from that place, Roger established the law of Christ."²⁸ From his time in Sicily, Roger of Howden certainly knew that no literal expulsion of Sicily's Muslims took place. Roger I expelled not the Muslims themselves, but Muslim rule, replacing it with Christian law and subjecting Muslims to his rule. Roger

of Howden envisioned the Sicilian kingship as a continuation of this tradition, which William's death ruptured, allowing the establishment of independent Muslim enclaves which preyed upon their Christian neighbors.

Roger of Howden reaffirms the proper position of Sicily's Muslims in his depiction of the ascension of Henry VI to the Sicilian throne. He stresses that the Muslims of Sicily saw Henry VI as the hope for a restoration of the Sicilian monarchical traditions which had governed the island for over a century. He remarks, "Also, all of the pagans and Jews who were in the Kingdom of Sicily came to [Henry VI] the emperor of the Romans and, having made compensation (*satisficientes*), they remained in the kingdom, each one according to his rank, under the very same terms which had existed previously."²⁹ Muslims and Jews paid Henry a tax, signaling their submission, and resumed traditional duties, without any of the violence and displacement that had characterized Tancred's coronation. Roger of Howden, probably writing as late as 1201, provides little detail about the struggle for Sicily that followed the deaths of Henry VI and Constance, never discussing the role of Sicily's Muslims in these conflicts or adopting Innocent's attempts to reframe those Muslims. Roger casts the 1190s not as the end of Muslim Sicily but as the renewal of a centuries-old service.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR IN SICILY

In June of 1190, while marching his army to attempt to reclaim Jerusalem as part of the Third Crusade, Frederick Barbarossa drowned while attempting to ford the Selph River in Anatolia.³⁰ In April of the following year, the imperial electors elected his son, Henry of Hohenstaufen, now Henry VI, as Holy Roman Emperor. Henry VI, eager to prosecute his claim to the Sicilian crown, launched an invasion of the Sicilian Kingdom later that year. Many of the northern cities of the kingdom opened their gates to Henry as he marched through the *regno*, but Tancred's forces put up a stiff resistance at Naples. With Henry VI facing a Welf revolt in Germany, and his army worn down from malaria, he was forced to withdraw from Southern Italy and return across the Alps. Worse yet for Henry, citizens of Salerno captured his wife, Empress Constance, and handed her over to Tancred, where she remained as his prisoner in Palermo for almost two years. Pope Celestine III intervened to gain Constance's release, but Tancred demanded a formal papal recognition of his kingship before he returned the empress.³¹

In 1192 and 1193, Tancred moved to secure the loyalty of his mainland holdings and campaigned for the support of Apulian nobles who resisted his rule. However, a series of deaths in the winter of 1193/1194 threw the Sicilian court into chaos. Tancred's foremost administrator, Chancellor Matthew of Ajello, died sometime in 1193. Tancred's son and co-ruler Roger III died in February of 1194, and Tancred himself passed away a few days later. Tancred's wife, Sibylla of Acerra, moved quickly in an attempt to restore order and ensured that Pope Celestine III crowned her young son William III, only eight years old at the time, as king. She served as his regent. The dynastic collapse offered Henry VI another opportunity to make good on his claim to the Sicilian throne. Henry VI's men had captured the English king Richard I on his return from the crusade and ransomed him for a vast sum which Henry used to help bolster his imperial army with Pisan and Genoese forces.³² With the palace of Palermo in disarray, Henry's armies met little resistance as he marched through the kingdom, and the citizens of Palermo opened the gates of the city for the emperor in November of 1194. Sibylla and her son surrendered with the promise that if he served Henry VI, he would retain lordship over Lecce and Taranto.³³ Henry VI was crowned king of Sicily on December 25 of that year while his wife Constance gave birth to their son, Frederick, the following day. Before the end of the year, Henry's men conveniently uncovered a conspiracy against the new king led by the nobles and administrators who had opposed Henry's ascension to the throne.³⁴ This allowed him to retract the generous terms he had offered Constance. Henry VI imprisoned his former foes, including the former regent Sibylla and her son William III, and later executed a great many of them, including William III.³⁵ Having both produced a male heir and laid low his potential rivals, the Sicilian monarchy seemed secure in the hands of a ruler who could protect the Muslim population of the island and curtail the endemic violence that had erupted in the wake of William's death.

Peter of Eboli

Peter of Eboli's *Liber ad honorem Augusti sive de rebus Siculis* (Book in Honor of Augustus or The Affairs of Sicily) is the primary narrative source for the events surrounding Henry VI's ascension to the Sicilian throne. Peter composed the *Liber ad honorem* as a panegyric poem for Henry VI, praising the new ruler and pairing his poetic verses with over 50 images that further illuminated Henry's rise to power. What little we know of the

author comes primarily from this work³⁶, Peter himself appears in the text with the title “poeta” and bears what appears to be a clerical tonsure in one illumination.³⁷ In the final page of the manuscript, he identifies himself both by title and point of origin as “*Magister Pietro de Eboli*.”³⁸ Peter also claims the town of Eboli, some 15 miles east of Salerno, as his place of origin in his other extant text, *De balneis Puteolanis* (on the Baths of Puteoli).³⁹

The *Liber ad honorem* depicts Frederick’s birth and his presentation at the Easter court of 1195. Peter of Eboli must have completed the text in the immediate wake of Henry’s triumph, sometime between the summer of 1195 and the end of 1196. The Berne codex, the only extant manuscript copy of the text, shows the work of at least three different scribes: a trained scribe who wrote the first two books of the *Liber ad honorem*, a more expert scribe who composed the third book, and a less skilled third hand, thought to be Peter himself, who composed the incipits, explicits, revisions, captions to the illustrations, and the poet’s colophon.⁴⁰ Thus, Peter not only composed the text of *Liber ad honorem* but also worked directly with the artists creating the miniatures within the extant manuscript, so both the verse and images reflect the attitude of the author. The combination of both poetic verse and illustrations, complete with captions, provides the reader with a large number of instances to identify Muslims within the *Liber ad honorem*. Many of the references come not from the text but from the images in which artists make use of turbans and slightly darker skin tones to signal Islamic religious faith. The use of captions confirms that these darker figures are “Saracens” and that the turban signifies more than the local customary dress of Sicily.

Peter’s depiction of the Muslims of Sicily within the *Liber ad honorem* is noteworthy on several levels. First, he refrains from making any polemical attacks against Muslims or evoking negative stereotypes of Islam. Peter delights in recounting Tancred’s failings in vivid detail, but even though Sicily’s Muslims attended Tancred’s court and served in his armies, Peter never criticizes him for his associations with Muslims. At the same time, the *Liber ad honorem* suppresses any mention of sectarian conflict between Christians and Muslims within Sicily. Peter constructs an image of Muslims in which their service reflects the glory and majesty of the Sicilian crown and hints at nothing problematic with the notion of Muslims in service to a Christian ruler. Peter’s depiction of Muslims was surely tied to the policies of his patron Henry VI and the way Henry envisioned his Muslim servitors. Roger of Howden’s writings confirm that Henry VI saw him-

self as restoring the previous status Muslims had held as royal servants, returning to the policies held by Sicilian rulers throughout the twelfth century, and Peter's depiction of Muslims within *Liber ad honorem* flows from those policies.

When Peter depicts Tancred's coronation procession into the city of Palermo, the miniature of Tancred's retinue includes a long sequence of turban-wearing spearmen and musicians playing drums, pipes and symbols.⁴¹ Peter offers no critique of Tancred for deploying these Muslims soldiers or of the Muslims for their service to the illegitimate king Tancred. Instead, Peter uses the Muslims to symbolize the wealth and splendor of the Sicilian court at Palermo, treasures that Tancred had unjustly usurped. Genoese chronicles attest to the use of Muslim soldiers under Queen Sibylla in an effort to make a last stand against Henry's encroachment onto the island. The notary Ottobuono, who participated in the Sicilian campaign, writes, "The Genoese army turned towards Catania, which had delivered itself to them, and they were assailed by Saracens and the army of the queen, the wife of the former king Tancred. [The Genoese] held and they drove the army of Saracens from the field and put them to flight."⁴² As late as 1194, even with Sibylla's queenship on the verge of collapse, she was still capable of fielding Muslim units comprised primarily of Saracens. Indeed, Sibylla's ability to deploy an army of Saracens as the rest of her holdings collapsed proves once again that Muslims remain among the most dependable of assets of Sicilian rulers in the late twelfth century and that the use of non-Christian units provoked no critical response from Henry or his allies.

The *Liber ad honorem* depicts Muslim musicians now in the service of Henry, after his victory over Sibylla. The text illustrates Henry VI's triumphant march into Palermo in 1194; the Muslim musicians, similar to those that followed Tancred, led his procession. Above the musicians, Peter writes, "With noble pomp and glorious triumph, Augustus steps into Palermo."⁴³ Peter depicts Muslims as the ornament of Sicilian kingship, and they adorn the kingship of whomever controls the throne.

Sicilian Muslims in the 1190s did not hold the high administrative offices that made them central characters in the political narrative of *Liber de Regno Sicilie*. Peter's text does attest to a Muslim presence within the court. As William lies upon his death bed, a Muslim doctor wearing a turban identified as "Achim the physician" attends to him, while a Muslim astrologer utilizes an astrolabe to cast the fortune of either the king or the kingdom. The *Liber ad Honorem* also provides evidence of the continu-

ing role of eunuchs in the Sicilian court into the mid-1190s. Peter attests to the ties between court eunuchs and the queen, noting the presence of *femineis vires* who attended to Sibylla and restored the queen to health when she became ill after hearing of the death of her husband Tancred and her eldest son.⁴⁴ The eunuchs continued to serve as chief officers of royal finances, even after Tancred's death. When Henry took control of the royal palace in Sicily, he encountered the court eunuchs who turned the finances of the Sicilian crown over to the emperor: "The first of the eunuchs (*neutororum*) turns every key, another explains the receipt boxes, another the treasures. They have a complete reckoning of these things, however much Calabria might owe, or Africa, or Apulia, or Sicily."⁴⁵ Much like the musicians in the processions of Tancred and Henry, Muslim court attendees served whoever occupied the Sicilian throne, and Peter never frames their service to an illegitimate monarch in polemical or moral terms.

Peter defines Sicily, and particularly the city of Palermo, through the presence of its three linguistic groups: Latin, Greek and Arabic. He begins the third *particula* of the *Liber* with "Lamentation and grieving of Palermo," a lament in response to the death of William II which praises the linguistic diversity of the city:

Hitherto blessed city, her people richly endowed with three tongues (*trilingui*)

She is ruined in her heart, she wavers in the breasts, she topples in her mind.⁴⁶

Peter references classical literary tropes concerning Sicily. Apuleius described Sicilians as people who speak three tongues, Latin, Greek and Punic, and Ovid made reference to the three tongues of Sicily.⁴⁷ For Peter, the range of languages, now Greek, Latin and Arabic, defines the populace of Palermo. When he depicts Tancred's notaries, he returns to the idea of a trilingual Sicily, this time specifying the languages of the island. He depicts three pairs of notaries working side by side: the first are two bearded men identified as *Notarii Greci*, the second two turbaned scribes called *Notarii Saraceni* and the third pair are clean-shaven men, *Notarii Latini*.⁴⁸ Peter chooses to define the chancery by its trilingual operation despite the fact that the once ubiquitous role of Greek and Muslim notaries had greatly dwindled by the 1190s.

On several occasions, Peter uses Muslims when he wants to depict a popular response to tragedy throughout the kingdom. After William dies, Peter shows scenes of lamentation for the deceased king in specific and recognizable locations throughout the city and provides multiple miniatures

of mourners with swarthy skin and turbans, including a group of Muslims in Seralqadi (Street of the Qāḍi), the district of the city that Muslims were forced into in the wake of the 1161 massacre.⁴⁹ Peter's illustration counters contemporary narratives that stress the dislocation of the Muslim population from Palermo by firmly locating them within the urban milieu and stressing their sorrow at the king's death. Land sales by Muslims in Palermo in 1190 and 1196 attest to the presence of a significant Muslim population remaining in Palermo despite the claim of massive displacement in chronicle sources.⁵⁰ Olivia Remie Constable uses contracts from these sales to argue that "The Muslim community of the city survived with most of the outward trappings of normal Islamic life, but the underlying circumstances of this existence were tenuous."⁵¹

In sharp contrast to the other narrative sources that cover this period, Peter chooses to ignore the discord within the Muslim community after William's death. He makes no mention of interreligious violence, the displacement of Sicily's Muslims, the formation of independent Muslim communities or Tancred's efforts to bring the Muslim population to heel. The only hint of Christian violence against Muslims comes from Peter's invective against Chancellor Matthew. Peter condemns a long litany of imagined sins committed by Matthew: bigamy, motivation by pecuniary desire, deceit of the pope, and thrusting Sicily into chaos, before culminating in the accusation that Matthew uses human blood to treat his gout:

Frequently, Matthew was sick and nothing was able to help,
Human blood warmed his gouty foot.⁵²

The accompanying miniature portrays two of Matthew's most pernicious sins. Above, the miniature depicts Matthew with two wives, while below Matthew is pictured holding the severed head of a turbaned youth. Matthew drains the blood from the murdered youth's body into a tub in which he bathes his feet. Above the image, Peter includes the caption: "Every time the bigamist [Matthew] suffered the pain derived from gout, he would kill young boys and thrust his feet into their blood."⁵³ While the text never explicitly identifies the religious faith of Matthew's victim, the illustration depicts the boy with dark skin as a visual clue that the murdered child is a Muslim.⁵⁴ Peter never ascribes a religious animus to Matthew's murders, but when Peter wanted to illustrate the evils that predatory chancellor had inflicted on the Sicilian populace, he chose the body of a dark-skinned Muslim youth to embody the suffering of the community.

Peter details a letter from Celestine III to Tancred in hopes of freeing the imprisoned empress Constance in which the Pope compares Tancred to Saladin, just as Innocent III would compare Markward to Saladin later in the decade. But while Innocent branded Markward “another Saladin” for his alliance with Muslim communities of Sicily,⁵⁵ Peter’s construction of Celestine’s allusions functions in a radically different manner:

What will befall to you is what once befell Saladin,
Whose spear conquered the land.
When he had captured the cross, through which our redemption is assured,
The plunder provoked the world into action against him.
Thus your plunder will direct all hands against you,
Freeing the plunder will offset your plight.⁵⁶

Celestine recounts Saladin’s capture of the true cross and how his seizure of that relic prompted the great rulers of Christendom to join forces against him. Celestine casts Tancred’s capture of empress Constance in a similar light, warning the King of Sicily that he too may face unified opposition from across Christendom unless he safely returns the empress. Peter invokes Saladin as a warlord who captured a precious and sacred relic which he refused to relinquish rather than launching a polemical attack against his Islamic faith.

Constance and Henry VI

Henry only remained in Sicily for a few weeks before returning to mainland Italy, and he headed north and left the kingdom entirely by April of 1195.⁵⁷ While Henry attended to other matters, notably mustering and directing German soldiers to the Levant ensuring that his newly born son would be elected king of the Germans,⁵⁸ Queen Constance remained in Sicily and governed the *regno*. In the emperor’s absence, disquiet with Henry’s rule bubbled to the surface in the Sicilian kingdom. He returned to Southern Italy in November of 1196 and Sicily in March of 1197. In May of that year, conspirators, who may have included Empress Constance among their number, attempted to foment rebellion and assassinate Henry while he took part in a hunting expedition.⁵⁹ The conspirators rallied a vast army and forced Henry to flee for his own survival, desperately seeking the aid of his Seneschal Markward of Anweiler in mustering imperial troops and hiring mercenaries to stave off the revolt. Henry defeated

the conspirators, burning the town of Catania in the process before finally cornering them at Castrogiovanni. After defeating the rebels, Henry had them publicly tortured, mutilated and executed, forcing Constance to witness the gruesome suffering of her former allies.⁶⁰ Henry's savagery in repressing the revolt further alienated him from the Sicilian nobility. He fell ill shortly thereafter and died in September of 1197. While Sicilian and Southern Italian chronicles saw Henry's death as a natural occurrence, German chronicles gave voice to rumors that Constance had Henry poisoned.

While Henry's death sparked chaos in Germany and a scramble to control young Frederick, it also brought to the fore the antagonism between Sicilians and Germans within the *regno*. Markward of Anweiler claimed that a deathly ill Henry had charged him with carrying out his testament, which included serving as regent for his son.⁶¹ However, Constance, with the support of most of the Sicilian nobility, claimed the title of regent and retook full control over the kingdom. By spring of 1198, the Germans had elected a new king, Henry VI's brother, Philip of Swabia, and Constance had her son crowned King of Sicily. Constance, eager for support against another German claimant to the Sicilian throne, forged an alliance with the newly ascendant Pope Innocent III. She acknowledged the status of the Sicilian king as a vassal of the papacy and renounced the ecclesiastical controls held by previous Sicilian kings.⁶² In addition, Constance, claiming that a German presence within the kingdom could spark violence, forced her deceased husband's German officials, including Markward, out of the kingdom.⁶³ She drew up a testament which named Innocent the guardian of her child Frederick. Her death in November of 1198 made Frederick a ward of the papacy,⁶⁴ setting off a conflict between Innocent and Markward which would lead to the permanent displacement of the Muslims of Sicily and a fundamental realignment of the way in which Christians conceived of those Muslim populations.

INNOCENT'S NEW PARADIGM

Innocent III and Markward of Sicily

The elderly Pope Celestine III died in January of 1198, leading to the election of the dynamic and energetic 37-year-old Lotario dei Conti di Segni, the man who became Innocent III, to the Apostolic See.⁶⁵ Innocent, who had been trained in theology at Paris and law at Bologna,⁶⁶ would articu-

late a vision of a robust and influential papacy that would assert its privileges across Western Europe, elevating the medieval papacy to the apex of its authority.⁶⁷ Even before his coronation, Innocent promised to muster forces to retake Jerusalem, and he moved to rally support for a crusade in the first year of his papacy.⁶⁸ He urged Christian princes in Spain and Hungary to put aside conflicts between Christians in preparation for such an expedition,⁶⁹ commissioning prelates to preach crusade in the *regno*.⁷⁰ He also made appeals to the kings of England and France to make peace and join the crusade⁷¹ in an effort to support his general call for crusade throughout Christendom in August of 1198.⁷² Innocent failed to suppress these various conflicts throughout the Latin Christian world and to gather the support necessary to launch this expedition, but this initial impulse to stress Christian unity against a non-Christian adversary proved a defining characteristic of Innocent's papacy. At the same time, Innocent engaged in diplomatic correspondence with the Muslim world early in his papacy, writing to the Almohad caliph Muḥammad al-Nāṣir on March of 1199 in an effort to establish a system for ransoming Christian captives.⁷³

Innocent III also worked early in his papacy to keep the Papal States free from imperial control and labored to ensure that the German imperial crown and the Sicilian crown did not rest on a single head. With Constance's death in November of 1198, Markward moved to secure control over imperial possessions throughout the Italian peninsula. Perhaps in order to seize control of these territories for himself, Markward presented himself as Henry's appointed regent.⁷⁴ Our primary sources for this conflict are letters from Innocent's chancery and the *Gesta Innocentii*, an anonymous chronicle written by a highly ranked member of the papal curia which covers the events of Innocent's pontificate up until 1208.⁷⁵ The text, probably composed between 1204 and 1209, while sympathetic toward Innocent, is hardly panegyric and seems to have been intended for use within the papal curia.⁷⁶ It contains a record of many of the most important actions and letters of his papacy and a record of Innocent's policies.⁷⁷ The portion of the text focusing on Sicily is highly biased against Innocent's German enemies in general, particularly Markward, who it depicts as warlike, greedy, untrustworthy, and, at times, even demonic.⁷⁸ In contrast, the text takes a more reserved tone in addressing Sicilian Muslims, refraining from deploying explicit polemical attacks against them even when they fought in support the German cause. We have little to no evidence from texts sympathetic to

Markward and often have to surmise his motives and actions based on material from texts composed by Innocent's supporters.

Markward, who had received numerous Italian holdings from Henry VI, mustered an army and marched south into the *regno* in December of 1198. In January of 1199, he routed the papal forces that Innocent III had sent to defend Monte Cassino at the village of San Germano near the great monastery.⁷⁹ Innocent III sent a series of letters to nobles across the kingdom of Sicily in hopes of rallying support against Markward.⁸⁰ He reminded them of Markward's excommunication, of his break not just with the church but with God himself. Innocent also stressed Markward's culpability in the brutal repression of Henry VI's military campaigns and enumerated a vast number of atrocities that Markward's forces would commit if they were not opposed.⁸¹ In addition, Innocent detailed the support and aid he would lend to all those who opposed Markward. In a letter to nobles in Capua, Innocent III extended crusading privileges to those who fought against Markward. He claimed that Markward's violence against Christians in the *regno* inhibited their ability to aid the Holy Land, so that anyone who fought against Markward should enjoy privileges similar to those who battled Saracens in the Levant.⁸² Despite this extraordinary offer, these missives produced little substantive aid for Innocent's cause. Few nobles were willing to commit to join a larger offensive against Markward. Without serious opposition to Markward's forces, Innocent was forced into negotiations with the German commander, which produced a short-lived settlement in the summer of 1199 but no permanent peace.⁸³ By October of 1199, Markward made his advance on the island of Sicily itself.

The Muslim population in Sicily had once again retreated to the mountainous areas in western Sicily. Our sources do not detail how this displacement took place, but we can surmise that it followed the pattern laid down after William II's death: the presence of a strong autocrat had suppressed violence against Sicilian Muslims. But, after the death of Henry VI and Constance, that mob violence would have likely resumed, forcing Muslims to abandon urban centers and form independent enclaves from which they could defend themselves. Markward recognized that the Sicilian Muslims were potentially valuable allies and made their recruitment a cornerstone of his strategy for controlling the island. Markward landed near Trapani in October of 1199 and immediately dispatched a messenger to meet with Amir Maghded, who commanded Muslim forces in the mountains southwest of Palermo.⁸⁴ No record survives of the details of the alliance

between Maghded and Markward, but we can surmise that Markward stressed the protection that Henry VI had afforded the Muslims and offered, at the very least, a similar restoration of their status.

This alliance threatened to expunge Innocent's already tenuous influence on the island but also presented the pope with a rhetorical opportunity. Innocent had already experimented with extending crusading privileges to those who fought against Markward. However, he could only justify these privileges through the relatively weak argument that Markward's campaigns in Southern Italy inhibited those who had taken up the cross from joining the crusade. Innocent composed a letter to the nobles and general populace of Sicily in November in which he made a rhetorical pivot by discussing how Markward's alliance with Muslims had contaminated the German commander.⁸⁵ Innocent begins the letter by comparing Markward to the Muslim commander who conquered Jerusalem: "Markward conspired not only against the king of Sicily but against almost all Christian people; he had acted against you like another Saladin,"⁸⁶ before enumerating a long list of his atrocities. In the second half of the letter he evokes Markward's alliance with Sicily's Muslims:

After approaching [Sicily], [Markward] joined in league with certain Saracens, he mustered their support against the king and Christians; and in order to stir their hearts to the massacre of our people and to arouse their thirst, now he spatters their jaws with Christian blood, and he puts forth captive Christian women to their violent desires. Who, even if not moved by the cause of the boy king [Frederick II], is not moved by the cause of the king of kings and not struck by the injuries of the Crucified? Who would not rise up against the person who rises up against all and unites with the enemies of the cross, so that having purged the faith of the cross, he acts as a more degenerate infidel than the infidels and strives to conquer the faithful.⁸⁷

Innocent goes on to extend full crusading privileges to all those who join the campaign against Markward. Historians of the crusades have seen this letter as a watershed moment in the conception of crusade; Elizabeth Kennan dubs this the "first political crusade," the first time the papacy had extended these full privileges against a Latin Christian rival.⁸⁸ Innocent's letter is equally innovative in how it reconfigures the place of Sicilian Muslims. He ignores the previous 130 years of discourse concerning Muslims under the Sicilian crown and uses this alliance with Muslim subjects to cast doubt on the orthodoxy of a Sicilian ruler. Charging that

Markward was associating with Saracens allows Innocent to deploy the full scope of the register of crusader rhetoric. Markward is no longer simply a tyrant, a brigand or a usurper, but “an enemy of God and the church.” Innocent was probably aware of the numerous acts of mob violence by Latin Christians against Sicilian Muslims and sought to exploit that hostility in an effort to gain allies against Markward.

Despite the fervor of Innocent’s attack on the alliance between Markward and Amir Maghded, Innocent wanted to focus his campaign against his German rival. Anti-Muslim rhetoric was a means to an end, a way to demonize Markward through his associations with the infidel. Even within his November 24 letter, Innocent explicitly states that he has no hostility to Muslims who would remain loyal to the Sicilian crown and that he intends to recognize the traditional privileges that they had enjoyed under the monarchy: “We are willing to support and have special regard for the Saracens if they remain faithful to the aforementioned king and to honor their good customs (*bonas consuetudines*).”⁸⁹

Innocent’s subsequent letters reveal an awareness of the complexities of Muslim involvement in Sicilian politics and a desire to draw these same Muslims to his cause. He composed a general letter to Sicily’s Muslim population in which he attempts to sway them to aid the papacy against the Germans.⁹⁰ He initially praises the Saracens for their loyalty to the Sicilian crown and emphasizes the fact that Markward “was not able to seduce you with promises or frighten you with violent threats.” As he continues, Innocent warns of Markward’s previous perfidy in his dealing with other Christians and of his habit of “rewarding the good with the bad and compensating good will with hostility.” He encourages Muslims to observe the vicious treatment of his subjects: “Listen and observe his savage barbarity, in the way he threw priests and others into the sea, in the way he destroyed many people with fire, in the way he scourged one and all.”

After opening the letter with adulation and self-serving warnings, Innocent III reveals a threat to the Muslim community. He warns them of the coming crusade against Markward, in which a vast multitude of peoples and princes of the west will descend on Sicily. In the face of these forces, Innocent warns, Markward’s might will collapse and he will betray the Muslims of Sicily to the crusaders; “he will purchase his life with your deaths.” Innocent then promised that if the Muslims refrained from supporting Markward, the Apostolic See would restore their previous customary rights (*bonis consuetudinibus*). He details allies on the island who could lend their support to the Muslim population.

Innocent's revolutionary use of Sicily's Muslims in his polemics against Markward does not appear to have prompted immediate action. We have no evidence that the crusade which Innocent envisioned materialized nor is Innocent's rhetoric of crusade echoed in other sources from this period, or even his own extant letters from later in his papacy.⁹¹ The legacy of this anti-Islamic critique comes not in its success in short-term military mobilization but in the way these attacks against the associations of Sicilian rulers resurfaced throughout the thirteenth century when critics wished to undermine their religious orthodoxy. They make possible the attacks against Frederick at the council of Lyon and the otherwise anonymous passages inserted into Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon*.

Innocent III could not muster and deploy an army to Sicily before March of 1200,⁹² which allowed Markward and his Muslim armies to consolidate control over the castles and towns of western Sicily. He appears to have centered his forces at Monreale, which he hoped to use as a staging point to conquer the capital of Palermo. Palermo remained in the hands of the *familiaries*, led by Chancellor Walter of Palear, the man who held the young king Frederick. The chancellor supported Innocent at this stage of the conflict, but that relationship frayed when the pope recognized the marriage between King Tancred's daughter and Walter of Brienne. Walter of Palear, a longtime foe of Tancred, was infuriated that the pope had legitimated Walter of Brienne's claims to Lecce, Taranto, and Apulia and spoke openly against the pope.⁹³ Despite this dispute, the chancellor held Palermo against Markward when he marched on the city.⁹⁴ Our main source for what follows is a letter for Anselm of Naples to Innocent, recorded within the *Gesta Innocentii*.⁹⁵ In describing the siege, Anselm describes the Sicilian Muslims accompanying Markward as "a vile tribe of Saracens" (*saracenorum gente nefaria*), offering a broad condemnation of the Muslim rebels that Innocent generally sought to avoid. Anselm describes how Markward, together with Pisan and Saracen allies, placed Palermo under siege in late June. Innocent's relief army arrived in mid-July, and Markward attempted to negotiate a settlement. Walter of Palear and the *familiaries* wanted to accept that settlement, but Innocent had prohibited his commanders from accepting any agreement with Markward. On July 21, papal forces attacked Markward's army, which had entrenched at Monreale. Some Muslim soldiers joined Markward's German soldiers guarding the steep ascent up Monreale, while a small contingent of Pisan soldiers, along with the rest of Markward's Muslim allies, including Amir Maghded, were stationed at the top of the moun-

tain. The battle of Monreale proved a setback for Markward but a disaster for Amir Maghded and his Muslim soldiers. Innocent's army stormed the hill, forcing Markward to flee. Amir Maghded was killed, as were the Muslims who had accompanied him. Innocent warnings had proved prophetic; Markward had "purchased his own life" with the death of his Muslim allies.

In the wake of this victory, Innocent III issued a letter preserved only in the *Gesta Innocentii III* advising inhabitants of Sicily on how to interact with Muslims.⁹⁶ Innocent almost certainly knew Christian attacks had driven Muslims into the Sicilian hinterland, which only served to further align them with Markward, so he instructed his allies on the island to seek peaceful settlement in their disputes with Muslims. Innocent explains that he not only wants to recognize the rights of Saracens who have rejected Markward but also is willing to offer full amnesty to the Saracens who have fled the cities to establish autonomous settlements and who even joined the German armies, providing that they now reject Markward's leadership. After explicitly forbidding any settlement with Markward himself, he writes that "Because peace and tranquility is proven to be valuable for king and kingdom above all else, we desire and command that if Saracens provide sufficient security that they will no longer ally themselves with the king's enemies and that they will persevere firmly and surely in supporting him, you shall recall them to royal favor in a fully developed peace." Innocent pairs this offer of rapprochement with the threat of violence for any Muslims who refuse. He invokes the threat of impending crusade to attempt to bring rebellious Muslims back under the yoke of the government of Palermo. He states, "You shall make it known without hesitation to the same Saracens and other traitors of the kingdom that if they should contravene [this offer] and our other commands... we shall with greater constancy undertake to tame their rebellion and pride and we shall order the Christian princes who are hastening to the Holy Land to rise up powerfully."

However, Markward's defeat did not put an end to his campaign or signal the end of the independent Muslim enclaves in western Sicily or even solidify Innocent's influence over the island. Innocent's commanders could not afford to pay the many mercenaries who made up the army, and they received little help from the *familiaries* in Palermo. The papal army left the island in the fall of 1200, and the *familiaries*, led by Walter of Palear, immediately resumed their negotiations with Markward. The *familiaries* broke with the papacy and allied with Markward, making him

one of the *familiares* and granting him control over the entire island save for Palermo.⁹⁷ A mid-thirteenth-century chronicle by an anonymous author would claim that Markward retained the support of most of the Christians and Muslims on the island “and besides the city of Palermo, [Markward] held nothing less than all of the places of Sicily.”⁹⁸ Though some cities like Messina continued to resist his rule, Markward controlled the vast majority of the island until his death in 1202. Over the next four years, Innocent combined negotiations to forge alliances with former enemies like Walter of Palear and military campaigns in Southern Italy against William Capparone, a German commander who emerged to succeed Markward, in an effort to assert papal influence over the *regno* and establish his authority over Frederick. We have little evidence of Muslim participation in these conflicts.

In 1206, Innocent made another attempt to bring the autonomous Muslims of Sicily under the rule of royal authority and issued a correspondence to Muslim leaders across Sicily. Innocent composed a letter that reflected his inability to exert any sort of direct control over the various Muslim populations of the island; instead, he sought to persuade Sicilian Muslims to voluntarily abandon their autonomous enclaves. He addressed his letter to the “*Qāḍī* (*archadius*) and *qāʿids* (*gaieti*) of Entella, Platani, Jato, and Celso and all *qāʿids* (*gaieti*) and Saracens settled throughout Sicily.” Though he makes a general appeal to all of the island’s Muslims, he specifies a series of communities south of Palermo which had historically been centers of the island’s Muslim population. Recent archaeological work has confirmed the presence of Muslim settlements in these regions during these periods.⁹⁹ Innocent begins his text praising the loyalty of these Muslims, writing that “we rejoice greatly and we commend your loyalty, because of the multiplicity of ways it has been tested thus far,” and reminds them of “the difficulties and labors which you have endured for the sake of the king.”¹⁰⁰ He alludes to a series of troubles, but never specifies if he means the recent political tumult that has enveloped the island or attacks from Christians which Muslims endured. In either case, he makes no mention of the alliance between Markward and Amir Maghded, the threat of crusade, the recent violence around Corleone, or any of the anti-Islamic attacks he deployed against Markward. Instead he writes to assure these Muslims that the young king will remember their loyalty in these difficult times and will richly reward them.

Innocent’s letter seems to have done little to sway Sicilian Muslims to his cause. In 1208, the *Gesta Innocentii* testifies to the increased inde-

pendence of Muslim communities, who were no longer operating at the behest of various Christian factions on the island and were looking to take advantage of the political tumult across the island:

While a protracted controversy arose with Capparone and his partisans in one faction and the chancellor and his partisans in the other, the Saracens who had retreated into the mountains, having seen these things, not only thoroughly renounced their loyalty to the king, but also descended from the mountains for a certain time and assailed Christians. They seized the castle of Corleone and pondered how to commit more evils.¹⁰¹

The generous rhetoric which Innocent III extended in his 1206 letter cannot mask the fact that when Frederick, now 14, began to rule independently in 1208, the Muslims of Sicily presented an aggressive challenge to his authority. His inability to control a community who had symbolized the power of his predecessors only highlighted Frederick's weakness in the initial years of his rule. In January of 1211, Frederick complained to the archbishop of Monreale about the disobedience of Muslims in his territory.¹⁰² In 1220, he would refer back to this period as a "time of tumult" (*turbationis tempore*) in which Christians and Muslims seized territory that rightfully belongs to Monreale,¹⁰³ and in 1238 would defend his orthodoxy by claiming to have put an end to devastation that Muslim raids caused throughout this region.¹⁰⁴ A mid-thirteenth-century chronicle, the *Annales Colonienses*, reports that as late as 1211, Sicilian Muslims continued to challenge Frederick's rule and to seek alliances in hopes of gaining a German imperial protector. Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV, excommunicated by Innocent III in 1210, launched an invasion of Southern Italy in 1211 hoping to depose Frederick: "Certain leaders of Sicily with the Saracens, who held powerful fortresses in the mountains, having invited [Otto IV], promised to place all of Sicily under his rule."¹⁰⁵

In 1212, Frederick traveled north into Germany to challenge Otto IV and lay claim to the title of Holy Roman Emperor. After claiming the imperial title, Frederick II spent the next eight years consolidating support throughout Germany, eventually defeating Otto IV and gaining the support of the German magnates. However, Frederick's absence from Sicily prevented him from consolidating power throughout the island. Muslims across western Sicily maintained their independence for central authority for over 20 years. While Innocent III had attempted to transform Sicily's Muslims into rhetorical vulnerability, the activities of these enclaves repre-

sented a potentially devastating political weakness for Frederick. Muslim raiders in western Sicily captured churches throughout Agrigento in 1216, even abducting and ransoming the Bishop, Urso.¹⁰⁶

In late 1120, Frederick II returned to the *regno* eager to establish himself as a powerful ruler in the mold of kings like his grandfather Roger II. Immediately after he entered the *regno*, he issued the Assizes of Capua, a series of laws, to reorganize his kingdom. Citing the precedent of Roger II, he ordered that all grants made in the name of Constance and Henry had to be resubmitted to him for verification and approval. He also demanded control over all cities, fortifications and castles under his rule, and that all magnates should have the holdings and offer the same services that they had done under the reign of his uncle William II.¹⁰⁷ Frederick's actions toward the Muslims of Sicily can only be understood in the context of Frederick's desire to reassert what he proclaimed as traditional models of Sicilian kingship and his desire to return to the system of governance in the time of his forefathers. The Muslim enclaves in western Sicily would offer the most resistance to Frederick's attempts to reestablish the social order of a time now 30 years past.

The Assizes of Capua make no direct mention of Sicily's Muslim population. When Frederick crossed over to Messina in spring of 1221, he issued a further series of laws which included sumptuary regulations requiring Jews within the kingdom to wear gray-blue garments, mimicking some of the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council.¹⁰⁸ However, unlike the edicts of Fourth Lateran, he did not extend those same laws to Muslims throughout his realm. The first hint of Frederick's policy toward these Muslims comes in a grant to Monreale in which he confirmed the monasteries right to rule over extensive territories through the Val di Mazara, which would have included several of the autonomous Muslim enclaves that had persisted over the previous 20 years,¹⁰⁹ perhaps hoping that the monastery would be able to bring these communities back under Christian rule. Shortly thereafter, Frederick forced two prominent Genoese admirals, Henry Malta and William Porcus, who may have been allies of the Sicilian Muslims, to leave their administrative positions.¹¹⁰

By the time of Frederick's return to Sicily, a man named Ibn 'Abbad had risen to become the most prominent Muslim leader on the island. *At-Ta'rikh al-Mansūri*, composed by the Ayyubid administrator Ibn al-Ḥamawī in the thirteenth century, provides the most detailed account of Ibn 'Abbad's life.¹¹¹ He was not a native of the island, but immigrated from Ifrīqiya as an adolescent, attesting to the continuity of Muslim

migration into Sicily in the latter half of the twelfth century. He became a favorite of the leader Ibn Fakhir, eventually marrying Ibn Fakhir's daughter and succeeding to his position of leadership. He seems to have consolidated territories ruled by multiple Muslim leaders and at the very least ruled over the territories of Entella and Jato.¹¹² Ibn 'Abbad developed mints and issued coinage on which he adopted the Almoravid title "commander of the Muslims of Sicily," a direct challenge to Frederick's legal monopoly on currency.¹¹³ In addition, The Chronicle of Alberic of Three Fountains, written shortly after 1241,¹¹⁴ connects Ibn 'Abbad and the Genoese leaders, asserting that William Porcus was allied with "a prince of the Saracens of Sicily."¹¹⁵ James Powell has suggested that this alliance between Genoese merchants and Muslims leaders was aimed at restoring the rights of merchants, reversing the confirmation of privileges that Frederick granted to Monreale.¹¹⁶

Frederick moved aggressively to consolidate his control over the whole island, particularly the rebellious west. In July of 1122 he marshaled his forces against the mountain strongholds of Ibn 'Abbad, laying siege to Jato for two months.¹¹⁷ Frederick eventually defeated and executed Ibn 'Abbad,¹¹⁸ though Ibn 'Abbad's followers retreated into the rugged terrain of the surrounding mountains and continued to fight against Frederick. To uproot Muslims from the rugged mountainous areas of Sicily, Frederick continued his campaign throughout the next three years.¹¹⁹ The *Chronicon Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis Sanctae Mariae de Ferraria* reports that the key to Frederick's success lay in his ability to cut off the food supplies of the Muslims, which compelled many of them to surrender in 1224.¹²⁰ The Sicilian Muslims may have been receiving aid from Muslims on the island of Djerba, which Frederick invaded in 1123.¹²¹ The campaign had concluded by 1225, with Frederick reasserting his control over Muslim communities that had maintained their independence for over a generation.

As Alex Metcalfe notes, though Frederick portrayed his policy toward Muslims in conservative terms as a restoration of tradition, he adopted an innovative and disruptive strategy following his defeat of the rebels.¹²² Frederick forcibly dislocated his defeated Muslim opponents and seems to have relocated some of these Muslim communities to arable land within Sicily. Others he removed from the island entirely, resettling them in the plains of Lucera in mainland Italy.¹²³ Frederick gradually expanded the policy of deportations over the next two decades, effectively eradicating the Muslim population of Sicily by 1246. Some 30,000 Muslims were displaced to this new Muslim colony in the highland of Southern Italy.¹²⁴

Frederick was able to promise the Muslim population not only security, but increased prosperity, as the lands upon which he would settle them were far more prosperous than the mountainous terrain of the Sicilian hinterland. The physical security and economic benefits Frederick offers help explain why the Muslim population acquiesced and allowed the relocation and why they subsequently remained staunchly loyal to Frederick and successors. Despite a generation of rebellion, the Muslims of Sicily had long placed their fate in the hands of powerful Christian kings who promised to guarantee their security.

Beginning with Count Roger I, Sicilian rulers had gifted Muslims to ecclesiastical intuitions as demonstrations of their largess and power. Now, Frederick consolidated his authority over the Muslims of Sicily, rendering them as exclusive servants of the Sicilian crown. Frederick saw the relocation to Lucera as an opportunity to recreate the practices of previous Sicilian rulers and to recast his subject Muslim population in the model of the Sicilian Muslims of the mid-twelfth century. In Lucera, Frederick could protect his Muslims from the sectarian violence that had plagued the community at the end of the twelfth century and pushed them into rebellion. Frederick believed that he could compel the Muslims to render faithful service to him if he could ensure their protection, and he reiterated his legal authority to protect Muslims from indiscriminate persecution in 1231. These Muslims were *servi camerae*: financial and military assets that served to demonstrate his imperial power.¹²⁵ In 1240, Frederick explicitly appealed to this long-standing tradition, granting one thousand cattle to the Muslims of Lucera in an attempt to bind them to the land, “as had been done in the time of King William.”¹²⁶ Frederick strove to return to a time when Muslims demonstrated the might of a Sicilian ruler and not a challenge to his authority or a demonstration of his deviation from Christian orthodoxy.

NOTES

1. Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), pp. 313–14; Pertz, *Annales Ceccanenses* (1866), pp. 287–88; Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 2, pp. 101–2; Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 6; Waitz, *Chronica regia coloniensis* (1880), p. 147.
2. Tancred would elevate Matthew to the long-vacant position of Chancellor.
3. Clementi (1967), pp. 58–64.

4. Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), p. 314.
5. Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 6.
6. Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 6. Metcalfe (2009), p. 294, reads this passage as supporting the notion that Muslims had ceased paying the *jizya* and received royal funds for the duration of Tancred's rule and suggests that this period would have been a time of celebration for the Muslim community. However, Richard of San Germano never mentions any monetary payments to Muslims and explicitly contrasts Tancred's forceful compulsion of Muslim rebels with the bribes he paid to reconcile with elites Christians who did not recognize his rule.
7. Collura, *Le più antiche carte dell'Archivio capitolare di Agrigento* (1961), pp. 155–71; Loud (2009), pp. 800–2.
8. This Peter appears as a witness in an 1188 donation in Garufi (1899), p. 221.
9. For debates about the authorship of the letter and its relationship with the chronicle of “Falcandus,” see Chap. 6.
10. For the argument in dating the letter, see Loud and Wiedemann (1998), pp. 36–37; Matthew (1992b), p. 290, believes the letter is written in response to the death of Tancred, rather than William, and thus dates it to 1194.
11. Falcandus (1897), p. 172.
12. Falcandus (1897), p. 173.
13. Annibale de Leo and Monti (1940), p. 51.
14. Takayama (1993), p. 155.
15. Stubbs, *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi* (1864).
16. Gillingham (1999), p. 133.
17. Stanton (2011), pp. 164–65; Gillingham (1999), pp. 134–35.
18. Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 3, pp. 65–66; Stubbs, *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* (1864), p. 170; Ambrose (1897), pp. 16–17; Gillingham (1999), pp. 136–37.
19. The Norman poet Ambrose (1897), pp. 15–16, uses this division, as well as the Latin prose narrative of the Stubbs, *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* (1864), pp. 154–68.
20. For instance, Gillingham (1999), p. 131, n. 28; Flori (2006), p. 95.
21. Nicholson (1997), p. 155, n. 45.
22. Stubbs, *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* (1864), p. 154.
23. Ambrose (1897), pp. 15–16.

24. The *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* (Stubbs, 1864) also uses the term “Griffons” to describe the population of Cyprus.
25. Stubbs, *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* (1864), p. 168.
26. Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 3, p. 69.
27. Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 3, p. 69.
28. Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 3, p. 163.
29. Roger of Howden (1868), vol. 3, pp. 269–70.
30. Now called the Göksu.
31. Loud (2002), pp. 179–80; Jamison (1957), p. 94; Chalandon (1907), vol. 2, pp. 465–67.
32. Jordan (1986), pp. 196–97; Gillingham (1973), p. 188.
33. Jamison (1957), pp. 199–20.
34. Peter of Eboli (2012), pp. 294–301.
35. Jamison (1957), pp. 121–45.
36. For the debates on the author’s identity, see Siragusa (1906), pp. xiv–xvii; Peter of Eboli (1994), pp. 11–13; Peter of Eboli (2012), pp. 6–9.
37. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 324.
38. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 360.
39. Peter of Eboli (2003), pp. 21–22.
40. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 17; Peter of Eboli (1994), p. 12; Siragusa (1906), p. viii; Stähli (1994), pp. 261–66.
41. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 110.
42. Belgrano and Cesare Imperiale di Sant’Ange (1902), pp. 50–51.
43. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 280.
44. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 282.
45. Peter of Eboli (2012), pp. 288–9.
46. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 90.
47. Mallette (2005), p. 115. Ovid plays with this linguistic reference, using the term “tongue” to refer to the three outcroppings of land which make up the geography of the island.
48. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 106.
49. Peter of Eboli (1994), p. 46; Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 92.
50. Cusa (1868), pp. 44–46, 499–501.
51. Constable (1997), p. 84. Metcalfe (2009), p. 276, disagrees with Constable’s reading of the sources and sees the contracts in which Muslims sell to Christians as a sign of Muslim displacement from Palermo. See also Pezzini (2013), pp. 221–25.
52. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 240.

53. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 240.
54. Peter of Eboli (1994), p. 160, identifies the child as a Moor or a Saracen.
55. Innocent III (1964), vol. 2, p. 411.
56. Peter of Eboli (2012), p. 246.
57. Matthew (1992), pp. 291–97.
58. Van Cleve (1972), pp. 21–23.
59. Arnold (1868), pp. 196–97.
60. Van Cleve (1937), pp. 65–66.
61. Van Cleve (1972), pp. 38–42.
62. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 16–17.
63. Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 20.
64. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 19–20.
65. On Innocent’s ascension, see Peters (1999), pp. 3–24.
66. Sayers (1994), p. 10–22.
67. For a detailed historiography of evolution of Innocent III’s pre-eminent status see Powell (2003).
68. Moore (2003), pp. 44–47.
69. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1, pp. 132–34.
70. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1, pp. 430–33.
71. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1, pp. 530–32.
72. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1, pp. 498–505.
73. Innocent III (1964), vol. 2, pp. 16–17. This letter follows on a previous letter to Trinitarians hoping to ransom Christian hostages. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1: 481, pp. 703–8. On both these letters, Cipollone (1999), pp. 371–74.
74. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 19–21. The *Gesta Innocentii* claims that Markward attempted to usurp Frederick’s position and claim these territories for himself.
75. Powell (1999b), pp. 51–62, suggests that the author was Petrus Beneventanus.
76. Bolton (1991), pp. 87–99.
77. Powell (2003), p. 1364.
78. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 52–53, refers to assassins who strike against one of Innocent’s allies in Southern Italy as “sons of Belial.”
79. Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 20; Smidt, *Annales Casinenses* (1934), p. 318; Pertz, *Annales Ceccanenses* (1866), p. 294; Gress-Wright (1981), p. 201. For Innocent’s letter to the Sicilian

- familiares* in response to the defeat see Innocent III (1964), vol. 1: 554, pp. 802–6.
80. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1: 554–60, pp. 802–17.
 81. Van Cleve (1937), pp. 104–6.
 82. Innocent III (1964), vol. 1: 555, pp. 806–9.
 83. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 22–25; Kennan (1971), pp. 239–42; Van Cleve (1937), pp. 108–23.
 84. Gress-Wright (1981), p. 34; Van Cleve (1937), p. 133.
 85. Innocent III (1964), II: 212, pp. 411–14.
 86. Innocent III (1964), II: 212, p. 411.
 87. Innocent III (1964), II: 212, pp. 413–14.
 88. Kennan (1971), pp. 231–49; Housley (1982), pp. 1–2; Abulafia (1994), pp. 65–79.
 89. Innocent III (1964), vol. 2: 212, pp. 413–14.
 90. Innocent III (1964), vol. 2: 217, pp. 421–23.
 91. Abulafia (1994), pp. 69–71.
 92. Attested to, in part, by a February 3 letter in which he urged Sicilians to hold out for a short while longer before his forces arrived. Innocent III (1964), vol. 2: 268, pp. 520–22.
 93. Gress-Wright (1981), p. 30.
 94. Our sources provide little to no detail about Markward's activities during the period from his landing to the battle of Monreale. Van Cleve (1937), pp. 133–35.
 95. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 31–34.
 96. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 38–40.
 97. Gress-Wright (1981), pp. 40–41.
 98. Stürner, *Breve chronicon de rebus Siculis* (2004), p. 66.
 99. For example, Maurici (1987); Maurici (1997), pp. 257–80; Guglielmino (1992), pp. 371–78; Isler (1992), pp. 105–25.
 100. Innocent III (1964), vol. 9: 158, pp. 284–85.
 101. Gress-Wright (1981), p. 58.
 102. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, eds. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes (1852), vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 185.
 103. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 800–1.
 104. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 5, pt. 1, pp. 250–51.
 105. Pertz, *Annales Colonienses Maximi* (1861), p. 825.

106. Collura, *Le più antiche carte dell'Archivio capitolare di Agrigento* (1961), p. 166. The precise dates of these attacks are unclear. Metcalfe (2009, p. 284) dates these events to 1216; Maurici (1987), p. 38, dates the attacks to 1220–1221, while Johns (1983), p. 34, dates them to circa 1230.
107. Richard of San Germano (1937), pp. 83–93.
108. Simonsohn (2011), pp. 61–62; Richard of San Germano (1937), p. 96.
109. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 800–1.
110. Ménager (1960), pp. 112–13; Belgrano, and Cesare Imperiale di Sant'Angelo (1902) vol. 2, pp. 171–72; Powell (1999a), pp. 18–19; (1975), pp. 104–25.
111. al-Ḥamawī in *BAS*², pp. 361–62; Johns (1993), pp. 89–90; Metcalfe (2009), pp. 281–83.
112. al-Ḥamawī in *BAS*², p. 361 reports that Entella was Ibn 'Abbad's base of operations, but his coinage was found at Jato, D'Angelo (1975), pp. 150–51, and Latin sources record Frederick laying siege to Ibn 'Abbad at Jato.
113. D'Angelo (1975), pp. 149–53; D'Angelo (1995), p. 66. Grierson and Travaini (1998), vol. 14, pp. 183–183.
114. For the date of composition and authorship, see Schmidt-Chazan (1984), pp. 163–92.
115. Alberic of Three Fountains (1874), p. 894.
116. Powell (1999a), p. 20.
117. Brühl (1994), p. 44; *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 255–57; *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 265.
118. Richard of San Germano (1937), pp. 102–3; Pontieri, *Annales Siculi* (1928), p. 117.
119. Richard of San Germano (1937), pp. 109–10.
120. Gaudenzi, *Chronicon Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis Sanctae Mariae de Ferraria*, p. 38.
121. The invasion is documented in *Annales Siculi* (Pontieri, 1928), p. 117; Van Cleve (1972), pp. 152–53 suggests that the purpose of this invasion was to cut off lines of support for Muslim rebels in Sicily.
122. Metcalfe (2009), pp. 283–84.

123. Taylor (2003), pp. 12–13. For a detailed history of the creation of the Colony of Lucera, see Taylor (2003), pp. 33–65, and Staccioli and Cassar (2012), pp. 22–43.
124. Contemporary medieval estimates ranged from 15,000 to 170,000, but modern scholars have used more conservative numbers between 15,000 and 30,000. Abulafia (1996), p. 235; Taylor (2003), p. 41.
125. D’Alessandro (1989), pp. 293–317.
126. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 149–52.

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Epilogue

At first glance, Innocent III's employment of anti-Islamic rhetoric to demonize Markward of Anweiler seems little more than an historical footnote. Innocent's attempts to use the fear of Muslims to incite Sicilian magnates to oppose Markward failed. His crusade against the German warlord never materialized. For over a generation, no subsequent writers imitated Innocent's use of Muslims to critique Sicilian rulers. For the first three decades of the thirteenth century, the historical circumstances in Sicily made Innocent's critique irrelevant. As long as Sicily's Muslim population remained estranged from the leadership in Palermo, the negative consequence of association with Muslim subjects was immaterial. But the anti-Islamic critique did not fade into oblivion; it simply laid dormant until another strong ruler reemerged and extended his dominance over the island's Muslims. The papacy continued to fear the idea of a single ruler who could lay claim to the territory of the Holy Roman Empire in Northern Italy and the Southern Italian holdings of the King of Sicily. Such a ruler would encircle the Papal States, threatening the very independence of the church, and the anti-Islamic polemics that Innocent deployed against Markward would reemerge in the mid-thirteenth century as the papacy sought to undermine the power of Frederick II.

Frederick's creation of the Muslim colony at Lucera revitalized the relevance of the anti-Islamic critique, making it a prominent component of the wider propaganda campaign against the emperor starting in the 1230s. This epilogue makes no attempt to offer a comprehensive survey of

either the Muslims of Lucera in the thirteenth century or the interactions between the lords of Sicily and their Muslim subjects in that time period. Instead, it charts both the persistence and intensification of the anti-Islamic critique first deployed at the end of the twelfth century and offers examples of the increasing vitriol it took on in the thirteenth century, culminating in the destruction of the Muslims of Lucera in 1300.

The first three decades of the thirteenth century produced a seismic shift in the general nature of the concept of crusade. In 1198, Innocent III made an experimental innovation. He employed the tools of crusade in an attempt to unseat not an “infidel” but a Christian lord, using the charge of association with Muslims as a *casus belli* for that campaign. During the so-called Albigensian Crusades, a decade of warfare against Christian lords in Occitan made the extension of crusading privileges for campaigns against fellow Christians’ common practice. The polemical rhetoric used against the nobility in Occitan centered on alliances with enemies of the church as a *casus belli* for such wars.¹ Innocent’s bull *Quia Maior* in 1213 and the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 regularized the institution of the crusade.² The innovative tools that Innocent III had haltingly developed in his conflict with Markward had become standardized, reliable weapons that mid-thirteenth-century popes deployed with regularity.

By relocating the Muslims of Sicily to Lucera, they became a valuable resource for Frederick and his successors. Muslims within the *regno* were serfs of the royal chamber (*servi camerae*) and a source of valuable tax revenue and service, both for building projects and for military campaigns.³ Lucera also served as a center of leisure for Sicilian rulers. Frederick used Lucera as the residence for many of his wild animals, particularly for his hunting leopards.⁴ Lucera itself became strategically important as it served as a stronghold to assert dominion over the region of Capitanata, modern-day Foggia. Frederick built a palace and fortifications at Lucera in the late 1230s or early 1240s, which served as the defensible focal point for Manfred’s campaigns against the papacy in the 1250s.⁵ During this time, Sicilian rulers could regularly draw upon 5000 to 10,000 troops from Lucera.⁶

Frederick’s creation of a fortified Muslim community in Southern Italy resolved the twin problems of Muslim rebellion and popular Christian violence against Muslims. However, his approach to the Muslim population was fundamentally conservative. In relocating Sicily’s Muslim population to Lucera, he sought not to innovate but to revive the practical and

symbolic benefits that a subject population of Muslims had provided to Sicilian kings in the twelfth century. Frederick took little heed of the growing resentment toward Muslims among the Christian population of Sicily or of the way in which Innocent had sought to use Muslim subjects as a political weapon against Markward. Nothing in Frederick's actions indicated that the emperor had any indication that the papacy would attempt to use this new community of Lucera as a principle justification for undermining the authority of the emperor.

“FRATERNIZING WITH PAGANS”: FREDERICK'S CRUSADE DIPLOMACY

The criticism of Frederick's behavior toward “Saracens” initially stemmed not from his toleration of a Muslim subject population but from his diplomatic contacts with Muslim potentates and his behavior while on crusade. Like Sicilian kings of the twelfth century, Frederick engaged in extensive diplomatic exchanges with Muslim leaders, but Frederick received criticism never leveled against his Sicilian predecessors. The diplomatic contacts Frederick forged with various Muslim leaders during his crusading venture provided ammunition for critics who questioned his religious convictions and sought to undermine his political legitimacy.

Frederick first vowed to go on crusade when he became king of the Germans in 1215, well before he created the Muslim enclave at Lucera. However, Frederick long delayed his participation in the crusading endeavor. He made subsequent pledges to launch a crusading venture when he became emperor in 1220, again in 1223 after his arranged marriage to Queen Isabella Brienne of Jerusalem, and finally in a meeting with Pope Honorius in 1225. But each time, he found reasons to delay his departure.⁷ Frederick's eventual decision to embark on crusade was prompted, in part, by a series of diplomatic envoys between the emperor and al-Kāmil, the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt between 1226 and 1228.⁸ Al-Kāmil, who had heard word of Frederick's purposed expedition, promised to hand over Jerusalem to the emperor in exchange for military aid against his brother al-Mu'azzam, the ruler of Damascus.⁹

Frederick planned to depart for crusade in the late summer of 1227, but an illness prevented his departure. Pope Gregory IX refused to tolerate yet another postponement of Frederick's crusade and excommunicated the emperor for breaking his vow and endangering soldiers who had already departed for crusade.¹⁰ It was not until summer of 1228 that Frederick

departed for the Holy Land.¹¹ When he finally reached the Levant, he entered into a series of negotiations with al-Kāmil. In February of 1229, the sultan and the emperor agreed to a ten-year truce. Frederick took possession of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas but refrained from fortifying the city and allowed Muslims to come and go into the city freely and retain possession of key holy sites on the Temple Mount.¹² Frederick took possession of Jerusalem without ever fighting against a Muslim foe.

While Frederick succeeded in temporarily reclaiming Jerusalem, he did so through treaty and negotiation rather than military action. Furthermore, his diplomatic and intellectual exchanges with the Muslim world did not end when he left the Levant. He continued to correspond with al-Kāmil after he returned to Italy, as well as one of his successors, al-Ṣalīh, the Almohad Caliph Abu Muḥammad al-Rashid, and other Islamic intellectuals.¹³ Latin intellectuals in the eleventh and twelfth century paid little heed to the active diplomacy that Frederick's forefathers, Roger I and Roger II, had with Muslim leaders in Ifrīqiya and Egypt. In contrast, thirteenth-century churchmen castigated Frederick for these associations.

Critics of Frederick's treaty with al-Kāmil charged that he had failed to secure a long-term occupation of Jerusalem that would protect Christianity, accusing him of both negotiating with and fraternizing with pagans.¹⁴ In a letter to Pope Gregory, Gerold, patriarch of Jerusalem, objected not only to the deal itself but also voiced what would become a common rebuke of Frederick. He complained that "The sultan, hearing that [Frederick] conducted himself following the customs of the Saracens, sent female singers and jugglers, characters not only notorious, but who ought not even be mentioned among Christians."¹⁵ Master Stephen, Pope Gregory's envoy to the English king, expressed similar dismay with what he deemed a secret treaty in 1229 in which the emperor had pledged to aid al-Kāmil against Christian rulers bemoaning the terms of the agreement.¹⁶

In Frederick's absence, Pope Gregory IX fomented rebellion against the emperor in Southern Italy, hoping to separate the kingdom of Sicily from the German crown, and the Pope invoked both Frederick's negotiations with al-Kāmil and his use of Muslim soldiers to call Christians to battle against Frederick. Roger of Windover reported that Gregory made the case against the emperor based almost entirely upon his association with Muslims. In a letter to a French legate in 1228, before Frederick had concluded his negotiations with al-Kāmil, he wrote that "[Frederick] assails the inheritance of the Apostolic See with Saracens... He enters into alliance with the sultan and other wicked Saracens, showing favor to them

and hostility to Christians.”¹⁷ Gregory stressed that Frederick’s negotiations emboldened the Saracens, legitimized their raiding and stripped Christians of the prizes they had won in battle. This led him to conclude that Frederick “Preferred the servants of Muḥammad (*Machometi*) to those of Christ.”¹⁸ Gregory claimed that Frederick took only a small force on crusade, and that while he was away, he deployed “a great army of Christians and a multitude of Saracens” against the church. Gregory concluded the letter by calling upon all Christians to take up arms against “this agent of Muḥammad.” Gregory’s attempts to leverage this anti-Islamic critique to rally support against Frederick proved unsuccessful. Frederick returned unexpectedly from crusade in June of 1229. He stormed through Southern Italy, scattering papal forces and suppressing his rebellious vassals by fall of that year. However, the polemical invectives which Gregory deployed against Frederick in this conflict would be used regularly against Frederick and his successors for the next four decades. Frederick’s diplomatic contacts with Muslim leaders would be used to savage his reputation throughout the remainder of the thirteenth century.

GREGORY IX AND THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF FREDERICK II

The Muslims of Lucera became a point of contention in the simmering tensions between Frederick II and Pope Gregory IX in the 1230s. In 1232, Gregory began to voice complaints about the behavior of the Muslims of Lucera, chastising Frederick for tolerating these depredations.¹⁹ Gregory charged the Saracens of Lucera, who he alternatively labeled “infidels,” “sons of perdition,” and “sons of Belial,” with tearing down the church of St. Peter in Foiano and using the stones and wood from the church to build their own dwellings.²⁰ He chided Frederick for allowing such behavior and demanded that Frederick rebuild St. Peter in Foiano and any other church damaged by “the sacrilegious hands of the infidel.” Gregory did not revive the rhetoric of Innocent III, nor did he suggest that Frederick was tainted by the presence of Saracens, but he did insinuate that Frederick had been overly lenient in his management of this “pagan” community.

Gregory shifted tactics in 1233 when he wrote to Frederick and called upon him to allow two Dominican missionaries to attempt to convert the Luceran Muslims to Christianity.²¹ Gregory softened his tone toward Frederick, imploring him to act as a defender of the Christian faith, and encouraging him not just to allow this mission, but to directly abet it—by

force if necessary. He entreated the emperor to fulfill his duty as “the material sword” of Christendom, to “drag” Saracens to these Dominicans and compel them to convert “by means of terror.” Frederick responded approvingly to Gregory’s letter, probably hoping to repair his damaged relationship with the papacy by endorsing the missionary efforts and promising to be there in person to assist the Dominicans.²² However, we have no indication Frederick intended to proffer extensive support to the Dominican mission or, in turn, that he committed to a sustained effort to convert the bulk of the Muslim population at Lucera. While conversion to Christianity occurred on a semi-regular basis in Lucera, we have no evidence that this mission increased the rate of conversion or caused any significant demographic shift in the city. The Dominican evangelical campaign in Lucera proved short-lived, and the lack of interest in sustaining the campaign is the best evidence of its limited success.

The issue of Lucera lay dormant for over two years until hostilities between the pope and the emperor rekindled in the wake of Frederick’s campaign to assert control over the city-states that comprised the Lombard League in Northern Italy in 1236. Gregory, allying with the League, threatened Frederick with excommunication, chastised him for lack of success with the Dominican mission and revived the accusations of church destruction. He charged that “the fortifications of Babylon are constructed from the ruins of Jerusalem and the schools of the Hagarenes (*Argarenoum*) are constructed from the heap of stones of Zion. Buildings in which the sacred name is extolled are forced to become buildings in which the degenerate name of Muḥammad (*Macometh*) is worshiped.”²³ Gregory insisted that the Saracens of Lucera threatened not just the physical structure of the church but its spiritual cohesiveness as well by stating that “the flocks of the faithful are stolen from the sheepfold of the Lord by cohabitation with pagans.” Gregory threatened to excommunicate Frederick for permitting these transgressions, reviving accusations that he had made four years previously.

Frederick vigorously refuted Gregory’s charges, continuing to present himself publicly as a leader bent on converting Muslims while simultaneously enjoying the benefits of maintaining a non-Christian subject population.²⁴ He scolded the pope for rumor-mongering and repeating the baseless “fable” that he allowed the Saracens of Lucera to destroy Christian churches. Moreover, he contended that he relocated these Saracens from Sicily into the Italian mainland precisely because he wanted them surrounded by model Christians. He maintained that a third of Lucera

had already converted to Christianity, a claim that was almost certainly exaggerated, and expressed the hope that the rest would soon follow.²⁵ Gregory remained unconvinced by Frederick's defense and issued a list of charges against Frederick which repeated the claim that "the schools of the Hagarenes (*Argarenoum*) are constructed from the stones of churches" and added that Frederick inverted the celestial order and created a world in which "Christians are made subject to the dominion of pagans."²⁶ Gregory later made reference to this same charge, allowing destruction of churches in his realm, in his bull of excommunication against Frederick II in 1239. There he stated that "we excommunicate and anathematize [Frederick II], because in his kingdom, churches consecrated to the Lord are torn down and desecrated."²⁷ While Gregory alluded to the actions of the Muslims of Lucera, he never explicitly invoked them as a tool to demonize Frederick and kept the focus of his bull squarely on the excommunication of the emperor. The anti-Islamic rhetoric was a minor component of Gregory's much broader condemnation in 1239, but it would become increasingly prominent over the next decade.

At the same time as Gregory used these accusations of destruction of Christian churches as a component of his second excommunication of Frederick, a more virulent wave of rumors emerged about Frederick's kinship with Muslims and his hostility toward Christianity. Matthew of Paris reports that Frederick's enemies began to overtly question his Christianity in 1238, in the wake of his conflict with the papacy and the Lombard League. Matthew relates a series of irreligious statements that Frederick's enemies attribute to him, most notably the idea that Frederic rejected religion as artifice, claiming that "three tricksters (*prestigiatores*), Jesus, Moses, and Muḥammad, seduced all of their contemporaries so artfully and adroitly, that they ruled the world,"²⁸ and that he had made blasphemous statements about the nature of the Eucharist.²⁹ An almost identical account of the rumor of Frederick's denunciation of Jesus, Moses and Muḥammad appears in the work of Matthew's contemporary, Alberic of Three Fountains. In his account of 1239, he suggested that this allegation enjoyed wide circulation.³⁰ Frederick's decision to issue a vigorous denial that he ever stated these words, coupled with his insistence that he believed that demons swept Muḥammad away to hell, also suggests that he was concerned about the damage these widely circulating allegations could cause.³¹

Matthew of Paris juxtaposes the accusation that Frederick rejects all religion with the contradictory allegation that Frederick preferred the

religion of the Saracens to Christianity.³² He claims that rumors spread that Frederick was “more in agreement with the law of Muḥammad than those of Jesus Christ” and that in the past he had “joined in league with Saracens and was more a friend to them than to Christians.” Frederick’s creation of the Muslim colony in Lucera and his diplomatic relationship with the Muslim world surely serve as the fuel that inflamed these allegations. In addition to these charges of belief, Matthew also reports of Frederick’s sexual transgressions with Muslims, repeating the charge that Frederick “made Saracen whores his concubines.” Matthew repeated the existence of these charges again in 1244, stating that Frederick’s reputation was damaged by rumors that “[Frederick] did not march in lockstep with the law of the lord. He joined in alliance with Saracens, and he held Saracen whores as concubines.” These repeated accusations that Frederick had slept with Saracens and that these sexual liaisons jeopardized his relationship with the church became stock charges levied against the lords of Sicily. This charge of sexual impropriety illustrates the breadth of the rhetorical shift from the mid-twelfth to mid-thirteenth century. Despite the fact that twelfth-century Sicilian kings maintained harems within the royal palace, and that authors like “Hugo Falcandus” explicitly criticized Roger II for overindulging in sex, twelfth-century authors never conceived of condemning Roger II for his use of Muslim concubines.

THE FIRST COUNCIL OF LYON

The death of Gregory IX in 1241 did little to stifle the hostilities between Frederick and the Apostolic See or diminish the papacy’s use of anti-Islamic polemic to condemn the emperor. Celestine IV succeeded Gregory, but the aged Celestine served for less than three weeks before his death and was replaced by Innocent IV, a man who proved to be as intractable a foe of Frederick as had been Gregory IX. Pope Innocent IV called the Council of Lyon in large part to renew his attacks against Frederick. Once again, the papacy used Frederick’s relationship with Muslims to attack the emperor. Matthew of Paris relates that on the fourth day of the council, after giving an emotional sermon, Innocent railed against Frederick for his embrace of Saracens and his rejection of Christians. Innocent claimed that “[Frederick] had built a great and powerful new city in Christendom, and, having fortified the city, he populated it with Saracens, making use of, or rather abusing, Saracen rites and superstitions while despising the council and religion of Christians,”³³ and denounced Frederick’s use of

Muslim soldiers. Innocent also revived the critique of Frederick's diplomatic efforts with the Muslim world, assailing his friendship with "the Sultan of Babylon" and other Saracen princes, as well as reminding the council that Frederick "Shamelessly and indifferently sexually degraded himself with prostitutes, preferably Saracen whores." Innocent used these accusations to open his rhetorical attack. He followed with a more general condemnation of Frederick's heresies and sacrilege. Innocent IV's followers continued to press the claim that the Muslims of Lucera had destroyed sacred properties of the church and renewed another claim that Innocent III had first deployed against Markward, that the Saracens in Frederick's service raped and defiled innocent Christian women.³⁴

Innocent IV formally excommunicated Frederick at the council. The excommunication contained statements that echo Innocent's own earlier attacks, stating that

[Frederick II] is joined together with Saracens by detestable friendship, he often sends envoys and gifts to them and he accepts [envoys and gifts] from them with acts of honor and hospitality. He cherishes their religious rites. Remarkably, he keeps [Saracens] with him during his daily routine. In addition, according to their customs, he is not ashamed to assign eunuchs... whom he has castrated as guards for his wives, descended from royal lineage. And what is more detestable is that when he traveled to lands across the sea, having forged a pact with them, or, more correctly, having forged a collusion with the sultan, he permitted the name Muḥammad (*Machometi*) to be publicly proclaimed day and night in the temple of the Lord. Not long ago, envoys of the Sultan of Babylon were received with honor and sumptuously attended to throughout the Kingdom of Sicily with praise heaped upon the sultan, after this same sultan had inflicted grave financial loss and inestimable injury to the Holy Land and its Christian inhabitants.³⁵

The activities of the Muslims of Lucera during this military campaign served as a rallying call for the opponents of Frederick. The excommunication at the Council of Lyon sharpened the hostilities between Frederick and the papacy and led to a series of military conflicts in the final years of the emperor's life. Reiner of Viterbo's accounts of Frederick's execution of Marcellinus, the bishop of Arrezzo, highlight the conflation of Frederick's blasphemy with the atrocities committed by his Saracen soldiers. Marcellinus served as Innocent IV's chief advocate in Tuscany, rallying support for a crusade against Frederick in 1248. Frederick detained and executed Marcellinus, prompting Cardinal Reiner of Viterbo

to label Frederick as “the crier of the devil, Satan’s vicar, the harbinger of the Antichrist, the mastermind and minister of all cruelties.”³⁶ Frederick’s Muslims intended not only to execute the bishop, but also to torture him and defile his body: “The Saracens bound [Marcellinus’] holy hands and feet, covered his eyes and placed his head next to the ass (*caudam*) of the [horse], so that should flowing shit burst forth, it would pollute his holy head.” After binding the bishop, “the Saracens dragged him to the gallows as if he were a man of low birth or a plebian or the vilest of all refuse, or a faithless traitor, a murder, a kidnapper, or a nocturnal pillager of the fields,” and hanged him.

Reiner segues from the violence of Marcellinus’ martyrdom to invoke anti-Islamic polemic to condemn the emperor, stating: “Behold how the mad extravagance of this most cruel enemy [Frederick]... profaned churches, demolished altars, scattered relics, and raped Christian virgins, widows, and married women in holy places, with his Saracens.” Frederick was responsible not only for the existence of Muslims within Christendom, but also for inciting them to carry out anti-Christian violence and desecration of Christian holy spaces. Like many pieces of crusader propaganda, Reiner describes the way these Saracen soldiers at Narni inverted and defamed Christian ritual, when “the Saracens... dragged an image of the crucifix, the blessed Mary, and other saints at the ass of a beast of burden. Then, having cut down the legs and arms from the crucifix, they attached it and other images to shields so that, in battle, Christians would be compelled to assail them with javelins and arrows.”³⁷ The letter concludes by asking why crusaders would travel to the Holy Land to fight Saracens, instead of facing the menace in Italy, since “pagan persecution has been introduced into the heart of the Church, into the cloisters of the faithful,” and calls upon Christians to take up arms against Frederick and his Muslims, so that “The Saracen filthiness should be banished first, along with their leaders and patrons.”³⁸ The anti-Islamic invectives that Innocent III developed and deployed against Markward 50 years previously echo in Reiner’s attacks against Frederick, attacks that persisted even after the emperor’s death in 1250.

LUCERA AND THE ASCENSION OF MANFRED

Despite the myriad rhetorical attacks against the Muslims of Lucera, Frederick and his successors maintained the Muslim colony precisely because it remained one of the most dependable and valuable holdings

in the *regno*, as the rise to power of Manfred, Frederick II's illegitimate son, illustrates. The conflict between emperor and Apostolic See continued long after Frederick's death, as the papacy struggled to divest the titles of king of the Germans and king of Sicily from a single individual.³⁹ Frederick's death in 1250 and the death of his legitimate son Conrad in 1254 left Conrad's two-year-old son Conradin as monarch of the *regno*. Innocent moved to take advantage of Conrad's death, planning to expand papal holdings into Southern Italy to buy Hohenstaufen loyalists, like Frederick's illegitimate son Manfred, with prominent positions and land grants. He also aimed to place the crown of Sicily on the head of Edmund Crouchback, the nine-year-old son of King Henry III of England.⁴⁰ While Manfred seems to have been willing to acquiesce to this papal victory, Innocent IV overplayed his hand when he attempted to have Borello of Angolona usurp Manfred's lands. When Manfred returned to his holdings and found Borello occupying them, the two fell into a dispute in which Manfred slew Borello.⁴¹ In the fall of 1254, Innocent charged Manfred with the murder, prompting Manfred to rise up in rebellion.⁴² Manfred declared himself regent for his nephew, the infant Conradin, and ruler over all of the Sicilian *regno* in his name.

Manfred, desperate both for reliable allies to support him against the papal coalition and a defensible strategic location from which he could reassert control over Southern Italy, turned to his father's most steadfast subjects, the Muslims of Lucera. Lucera opened its gates to Manfred, who took control of the Hohenstaufen treasury and fortifications located there, using the Muslim soldiers as the cornerstone of his military resistance to the papacy.⁴³ Manfred's attempts to consolidate his resources at Lucera encouraged his enemies to stress the connection between the would-be ruler and his subjects. Alexander IV, who succeeded to the papacy after Innocent IV, made the Luceran Muslims central to his call to crusade against Manfred in 1255.⁴⁴ Alexander called for crusade not just against Manfred, an enemy of the church, but also against the Saracens of Lucera, "enemies of the cross and of the Christian faith" who sheltered and aided him.⁴⁵ For the first time, the Muslims of Lucera were not simply a justification for military action against the Sicilian king but the explicit target of that action.⁴⁶ Despite Alexander's success in rallying troops to march on Lucera to depose Manfred and his Muslim allies, the crusade itself failed spectacularly. Manfred and his allies harried and outlasted the papal armies, forcing them to negotiate a peace in which they acknowledged Conradin's kingship with Manfred as his regent.⁴⁷

Manfred used the latter half of the 1250s to consolidate his power over the *regno*, abandoning the pretext of regency and claiming the Sicilian crown for himself in 1258. Lucera's early support for Manfred seems to have been rewarded. In 1261, an envoy from Baybars, the sultan of Egypt, traveled to Lucera to meet with the Sicilian king, a sign that Manfred was eager to resume diplomatic relations with the Muslim world that his father had fostered.⁴⁸ The diplomat was impressed by the condition of Muslims within the city. He commented on the regular public performance of Islamic rites and on the prominent role of Muslims within Manfred's personal entourage.⁴⁹ Luceran support for Manfred and the king's need for reliable soldiers to stave off papal adversaries ensured the survival of the community.

Popes Urban IV and Clement IV renewed the effort to oust Manfred, and, like Alexander IV, linked the crusade against Manfred with a crusade against the Luceran Saracens who served him.⁵⁰ By 1262, Urban IV recruited Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of the French King Louis IX, in an attempt to oust Manfred and seize the crown of the kingdom of Sicily.⁵¹ The papacy dispatched preachers into France and Northern Italy to call for crusade against Manfred and his Muslim allies.⁵² In 1262, Urban IV molded his official call for crusade against Manfred after Alexander's 1255 appeal, jointly naming both Manfred and his Luceran allies as the target of the crusade.⁵³ Clement IV, Urban's successor, continued to stress the alliance between Manfred and Lucera as joint targets for the campaign.

ANGEVIN RULE AND THE FATE OF MUSLIM LUCERA

The armies of Charles of Anjou and Manfred of Sicily clashed head on in February of 1266, with Manfred deploying his redoubtable Luceran soldiers, perhaps as great as 10,000 in number, at the fore of his army.⁵⁴ Manfred lost both the battle and his life, leaving the Muslims of Lucera without a protector. There seems to have been some confusion as to what to do with the Muslims after the victory; Pope Clement IV wrote to his cardinals to ask them for counsel on what to do with the defeated Muslims, though we have no record of the replies of the cardinals.⁵⁵ Charles, rather than the papacy, made the decision to destroy the fortifications of the city and to extract a greater *jizya* from the populace while still allowing them to practice their religion.⁵⁶

Charles of Anjou's defeat of Manfred in 1266 gave Charles dominion over Lucera; however, more strident polemics against Lucera emerged in

the wake of their revolt against their Angevin rulers two years later. In 1268, most of the cities of the *regno* rose up in rebellion against Charles and threw their support to Conradin, Frederick II's 16-year-old grandson.⁵⁷ The citizens of Lucera killed the Angevin garrisons of the city and joined Conradin's cause. The pope, Clement VI, used the uprising of the Muslims of Lucera as a justification for a call to crusade to support Charles' cause.⁵⁸ Clement VI charged Cardinal Eudes of Châteauroux and Rodolfo of Grosparmi with devising a propaganda campaign against the Luceran Muslims. The extant sermons of Eudes of Châteauroux provide our best evidence of their rhetorical strategy.

Eudes opened up a new front in the rhetorical campaign against Luceran Muslims, demonizing the tribute that they had long paid to their Christian masters, marking a systemic and seismic shift in sentiments toward the Muslim community in Southern Italy.⁵⁹ Eudes attacked the *jizya*, the poll tax that was the cornerstone of the contract between the lords of Sicily and their Muslim subjects and had long served as the primary benefit for retaining Muslims. In launching this critique, Eudes not only vilified his political foe Conradin but also implicitly criticized Charles of Anjou who had allowed the Muslim community of Lucera to persist because of his greed. Eudes asserted that the Muslims of Sicily had long been allowed to "proclaim law of Muḥammad in the land of the church," because of the pecuniary rewards that they had given to their masters. He reports that, "having given vast sums of money as tribute, [the Saracens] blinded many peoples, the lords of their lands, and others." Eudes makes a series of polemical charges based on thirteenth-century Latin tropes about the perfidy of Muslims, warning that the Saracens of Lucera were not content to remain in their city but hoped to extend their dominion over surrounding Christian communities and that they planned on "gain[ing] the goodwill of their princes with money," trusting that the tribute paid would prove sufficient to allow their lords to ignore such attacks.⁶⁰ Eudes also makes more familiar rhetorical attacks against Muslims, such as the claim that they rape Christian virgins and force them to become concubines.⁶¹ For Eudes, these Saracens were ultimately foreign, and their true loyalty lay not with the king of Sicily but to distant Saracen masters. He warned that after establishing control over Lucera, these Muslims would call on their coreligionists to join them and threaten to overthrow all of Christendom.⁶² Eudes breaks from the thirteenth-century practice of using Muslim subjects to demonize their Christian lord and, instead, stands in stark opposition to the entire concept that a Christian lord could even retain Saracen

subjects. The Luceran Muslims were no longer joint targets of a crusade, stigmatized for the alliance to a ruler opposed to the political aims of the papacy, but the primary focus of Eudes' call for crusade.

The rebellion of Lucera and other Christian allies who rejected Angevin rule persisted even after Conradin's defeat, capture and execution at the end of 1268. Luceran Muslims raided neighboring communities loyal to Charles, and the Angevin count was forced to launch a long and costly siege to subdue Lucera. It finally surrendered in August 1269, after its food supply had been exhausted. Again, Charles ignored the opinion of the cardinals in how to handle the subject population of Lucera. He disarmed its citizens, stationed a large garrison in the city, and yet again increased the *jizya*. He also declared, in imitation of Frederick II, that the Muslims were his *servi* and that the community should practice its own religion and laws.⁶³ Charles, desperate for funds to assist his brother's planned crusade against Baybars, could not afford to destroy the Muslims of Lucera and subjected them to roughly the same punishments of other rebellious Christian communities in the region.⁶⁴

Despite his pragmatic leniency, Luceran Muslims suffered under Charles. Numerous families proved unable to meet the high payments of his onerous *jizya* and many Muslims fled from the city in hopes of evading taxation.⁶⁵ Under financial pressure, the military contribution of Lucera also diminished.⁶⁶ Just like their Hohenstaufen predecessors, Angevin rulers continued to deploy Muslim soldiers from Lucera, but these units tended to be in the hundreds, rather than the thousands. As the Muslim population of the city suffered, Charles encouraged Christians to immigrate into Lucera.⁶⁷

The situation for non-Christians within the Angevin domain worsened considerably with the ascension of Charles I's successor, Charles II in 1288,⁶⁸ who moved aggressively against the Muslim and Jewish populations within his domain. Starting in 1289, Charles expelled the Jewish populations from Anjou and Maine and enabled Dominican inquisitors to persecute and forcibly convert Jewish populations in Southern Italy.⁶⁹ By the mid-1290s, Dominican inquisitors and preachers returned to Lucera to convert the Muslims there, and Charles II offered a renewed commitment to restore the Luceran church, using money from the Luceran *jizya* to fund the local bishop.⁷⁰ At the same time, the Muslims of Lucera found themselves subject to popular violence because of their unwillingness to accede to conversion. Christian populations attacked Luceran merchants while they traveled abroad and Charles did little to protect them. The

status of Luceran Muslims as specially protected *servi* of the Sicilian crown deteriorated rapidly. In 1300, Charles sent troops to destroy the Muslim population of the city. Charles enslaved the Muslim population of Lucera, transforming them from *servi camerae* to *sclavi*, privately owned slaves.⁷¹ The Luceran Muslims were taken prisoner and sold as slaves throughout Southern Italy, giving Charles an immediate source of short-term funds. Charles repopulated the city with Christians, eradicating the last vestige of the Sicilian Muslim population.

Long after the eradication of the colony of Lucera and the enslavement of its inhabitants, the memory of the colony continued to be invoked as an attack against religious faith of Sicilian lords. In the mid-fourteenth century, Boccaccio discussed the Luceran Muslims as a way to illustrate Frederick's hostility to the church. He states, "As an affront to the Church, Frederick sent to Tunis for a great number of Saracens to whom he gave a city... which is called Lucera... Because the land was fertile, the Saracens were happy to live there and multiplied so much that they were able to carry out raids throughout all of Apulia whenever they felt like it."⁷² Here, Boccaccio erases the Sicilian origins of the Luceran Muslims, stressing only their raids across Apulia and the impiety of their master. In her study of the way in which fourteenth- and fifteenth-century commentators on Dante evoke Lucera, Karla Mallette argues that these authors "perceived all the men of the Sicilian ruling family, Frederick and Manfredi in particular, as crypto-Muslims and identified them closely with their Muslim residents."⁷³ L'Antonio Fiorentino used Lucera to Islamify Manfred, identifying him as "The sultan of Lucera," while Giuniforto Bargigi identified Lucera as "a city in Puglia which King Manfredi made; and caused to be inhabited by his Saracen soldiers in order to put the knife to the throat of those Pugliesi who did not want to live under his rule."⁷⁴

CONCLUSION

When Roger I and his Norman allies conquered the island of Sicily in the late eleventh century, they found themselves ruling over a vast non-Christian population. Rather than trying to either eradicate or religiously transform their Muslim subjects, Sicilian rulers integrated Muslims into their army and subjected them to a series of laws and taxes which made them an invaluable military and economic asset. As Roger II attempted to forge both a kingdom and a royal identity, he created an administration and court culture which borrowed numerous elements from the wider

Islamic world. Muslims became both highly visible agents of royal policy and a subject population protected by the king himself. Both of these roles stirred the hatred and resentment of the Latin Christian population, especially that of the Northern Italian immigrants who had settled on the island. The power of the monarchy generally suppressed this animosity, but anti-Muslim violence periodically emerged in moments of royal weakness throughout the twelfth century, and the ability of the monarch to quell these internal disputes became a hallmark of the strength of a Sicilian king.

At the end of the twelfth century, a dynastic collapse left the Sicilian Muslim bereft of royal protection and exposed the Muslim population to a series of violent attacks which displaced communities across the island and forced Muslims to establish independent political enclaves to protect themselves. During this crisis, the papacy of Innocent III began experimenting with using anti-Islamic rhetoric to undermine the authority of their political enemies in Sicily. Over the course of the thirteenth century, the enemies of the Sicilian crown developed increasingly charged polemical attacks that used Sicilian Muslims to demonize the lords of Sicily. Behaviors that had been non-controversial for over a hundred years—the use of Muslim soldiers, the adoption of Islamic cultural practices, diplomatic relations with Muslim leaders, and even the collection of taxes from Muslim subjects—became evidence of the perfidious treachery of Sicilian kings. A Christian king must rule over Christian subjects.

By the end of the thirteenth century, the idea that the Muslims of Sicily served as a testament to the ruler's ability to create harmony between disparate religious groups was long forgotten. These attacks led to the destruction of both the Sicilian monarchy and the Muslim population of the island itself, which was subjected to mob violence, subjugated by Imperial authority, and displaced to Southern Italy, only to see their community gradually eroded and eventually scattered and enslaved when the damage caused by anti-Islamic rhetoric exceeded their political usefulness. All that remained was the anti-Islamic critique of using Muslims to undermine the religious convictions of their lords. This original rhetorical attack was first put forward by Innocent III and developed by others over a hundred-year period. By the beginning of the fourteenth century, the carefully crafted image of the Muslims of Sicily as symbols of royal authority had been destroyed as completely as the Muslim community itself.

NOTES

1. Marvin (2008).
2. Tyerman (1998), pp. 35–36; Maier (1994), pp. 4–8.
3. Taylor (2003), pp. 68–70.
4. Taylor (2003), pp. 100–1.
5. Radke (1994), pp. 183–84.
6. Muslim forces from Lucera shrank to around one thousand during the period of Angevin domination at the end of the thirteenth century. Pieri (1953), pp. 94–101; Taylor (2003), pp. 102–11; Amatuccio and Alvarez (2001), pp. 1–8.
7. Takayama (2010), p. 170.
8. Humphreys (1977), pp. 183–84, 193–94, 202–3; Takayama (1993), pp. 1771–74; Amari (2002, vol. 3, p. 417) posits that Frederick may have sent an earlier diplomatic mission in 1218 to either al-Kāmil or his brother al-‘Ādil. Based on a seventeenth-century record of a now-lost mosaic from the cathedral of Cefalù.
9. Frederick also sent envoys to negotiate with al-Mu’azzam, but they proved less successful. Abulafia (1988), p. 172.
10. Roger of Wendover (1841), vol. 4, pp. 156–65.
11. Houben (2013), pp. 35–37; Abulafia (1988), pp. 164–68; Van Cleve (1972), pp. 194–99.
12. Takayama (2010), pp. 174–75; Abulafia (1988), pp. 180–83.
13. Taylor (2003), p. 74–76.
14. Van Cleve (1972), pp. 222–24.
15. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes, *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 3, p. 104.
16. Roger of Wendover (1841), vol. 4, p. 199.
17. Roger of Wendover (1841), vol. 4, p. 167.
18. Roger of Wendover (1841), vol. 4, p. 168.
19. For the interactions between Gregory and Frederick, see Lomax (1996), pp. 175–97.
20. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes, *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 405–6; von Rodenberg, *Epistolae saeculi XIII* (1883) vol. 1, pp. 398–99.
21. von Rodenberg, *Epistolae saeculi XIII* (1883), vol. 1, pp. 447–48.
22. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes, *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (1852), vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 457–58.
23. *Epistolae saeculi XIII* (1883), vol. 1, pp. 573–76.

24. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes, *Historia diplomatica Frederici secundi* (1852), vol. 3, pp. 828–32.
25. Taylor (2003), pp. 51–52.
26. *Epistolae saeculi XIII* (1883), I, pp. 596–98.
27. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 149, records the bull of excommunication.
28. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 244. Gregory himself would relate a similar story in a 1239 letter, von Rodenberg, *Epistolae saeculi XIII* (1883), vol. 1, pp. 645–54, though he would add the charge of the denial of virgin birth rather than denial of the Eucharist. Powell (1995, p. 264) suggests that neither account derives from the other but that they both come from a common circle of Frederick's critics, possibly the Dominican missionaries themselves.
29. Frederick vigorously denied uttering these words and insisted that Muḥammad was swept away to hell by demons.
30. Alberic of Three Fountains, p. 944.
31. Huillard-Bréholles and Luynes, *Historia diplomatica Frederici secundi* (1852), vol. 5, p. 950.
32. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 147. Matthew later reports that the English populace sided with the emperor against the pope precisely because of the incongruity between these charges.
33. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 259.
34. Winkelmann (1880), pp. 712–15.
35. Tanner (1990), p. 282.
36. Reiner made this accusation in a letter recorded in Matthew of Paris' *Chronica Majora*, Matthew of Paris (1888), pp. 304–307. For this quote, Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 304. Thumser (2009, pp. 27–29) gives a full account of the letter and the breadth of its dispersal.
37. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 306.
38. Matthew of Paris (1888), p. 306.
39. For a full history of the conflicts between Conrad, Manfred, the papacy and their allies, see Pispisa (1991), Housley (1982), Matthew (1992b, pp. 363–80).
40. Runciman (1958), pp. 56–60.
41. Pispisa (1991), pp. 22–23.
42. Alternatively, Manfred may have killed Borello to signify his rejection of Innocent IV's terms. Pertz, *Annales Placentini Gibellini* (1863), p. 507.

43. Manfred seized control of Lucera from Giovanni Moro, who had been placed in charge of the city after Frederick's death. Giovanni was taken from Sicily or brought to Lucera through the slave trade and worked as servant and confidant of Frederick. He was probably a Muslim who converted to Christianity at Lucera, though one source, the *Annales Placentini Gibellini*, identifies him as a Saracen. Giovanni Moro sought to collaborate with the papacy, and shortly after Manfred's return to Lucera, his Muslim attendants murdered him and sent his severed head to be mounted on the gates of Lucera as a warning to others who might cooperate with the Apostolic See. Jamsilla (2007), pp. 200–202; Taylor (2003), pp. 127–30; Kaplan (1987), pp. 32–33. For Manfred's entrance into Lucera, see Pertz, *Annales Placentini Gibellini* (1863), p. 507.
44. Pispisa (1991), pp. 282–86.
45. Luard (1864), pp. 352–53.
46. Maier (1995), pp. 348–49.
47. Matthew (1992b), p. 366; Runciman (1958), pp. 34–35.
48. Gabrieli (1956), pp. 219–25.
49. Abū 'l-Fidā' in *BAS²*, vol. 2, pp. 464–79.
50. Taylor (2003), pp. 133–135; Maier (1995), pp. 348–352.
51. Dunbabin (1998), pp. 130–32.
52. Urban IV (1901), vol. 2, pp. 125–26; Maier (1994), pp. 85–87.
53. Pope Urban IV (1901), vol. 2, pp. 306–7.
54. Malaspina (1999), pp. 169–73.
55. Clement IV (1893), vol. 1, pp. 375–76.
56. Taylor (2003), pp. 140–42.
57. Dunbabin (1998), pp. 56–58.
58. Maier (1995), pp. 350–52.
59. For a comprehensive discussion of these sermons, see Maier (1995), pp. 343–85.
60. Maier (1995), p. 378.
61. Maier (1995), p. 380.
62. Maier (1995), p. 379.
63. Dunbabin (1998), pp. 74–76, 173–74.
64. Taylor (2003), p. 148.
65. Taylor (2003), p. 148.
66. Amatuccio and Alvarez (2001), pp. 2–3.
67. There had always been a small Christian populace in the city, but it became Angevin policy to expand the Christian populace starting

- in the 1270s. However, Muslims still constituted a majority of the city's population until the destruction of Muslim Lucera in 1300.
68. Charles I died in 1285 in the midst of a conflict with the kingdom Aragon, the war of the Sicilian Vespers. His son, Charles II, had been captured in a naval battle at Naples against Roger Lauria in 1284 and languished in an Aragonese prison until 1288. Runciman (1958), pp. 263–65.
 69. Jordan (1989), pp. 181–83.
 70. Taylor (2003), pp. 174–77.
 71. Taylor (2003), pp. 180–88.
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