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Communities, Cultures and Conflict in Southern Italy, from the Byzantines to the Angevins [1]

By Graham A. Loud

Abstract. *When the Normans conquered southern Italy and Sicily during the eleventh century a significant part of the population were Greek-rite Christians (mainly in southern Apulia, Calabria and north-east Sicily) or, on the island of Sicily, Muslims. To begin with, at least, it was very much in the interests of the new rulers to tolerate these groups, and hence the reputation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily for its diversity and multi-culturalism. But over the next two centuries this consensus slowly dissolved, the position of the Greek and Muslim communities weakened, and ultimately both disappeared. However, while with the Greeks much of the pressure for acculturation and Latinisation was unconscious and unintended, and the decline of the Greek rite and contraction of the Graecophone areas were very slow, the Muslims of Sicily were provoked into revolt at the end of the twelfth century, and had been almost entirely eliminated from the island by 1250. It has usually been assumed that most of the Muslims of Sicily were deported to Frederick II's military colony at Lucera in the Capitanata. Yet when examined closely, this thesis seems improbable, and what happened to the Sicilian Muslims remains an enigma.*

Key words: Norman Kingdom of Sicily / Frederick II / Muslims in Sicily / Greek Orthodox / Greek monasticism / religious conversion / medieval population / Lucera.

In a long, and it must be said singularly oleaginous, poem celebrating the conquest of the kingdom of Sicily by the German Emperor Henry VI in 1194, Peter of Eboli famously described the kingdom's capital, the city of Palermo, as 'endowed with people of three languages'. These three were Latin, Greek and Arabic, and in one of the illustrations that accompanied the presentation copy of his poem (and are by far the most attractive feature about it) Peter depicted the notaries of the royal court, busy writing documents in all three of

[1] A first draft of this article was given as the keynote lecture to the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean Conference at Southampton in July 2011. I am grateful to Dr Alex Metcalfe for his comments on a later draft.

these languages.[2] This image is often taken as a metaphor for the so-called 'Norman' kingdom of Sicily – a multicultural, and by medieval standards at least, tolerant society, where different ethnic groups and religions lived together in relative harmony, and where the monarchy, erected by Count Roger II of Sicily in 1130, drew on both the administrative and the artistic traditions of the different peoples of the kingdom to create an advanced, wealthy and sophisticated new state in the central Mediterranean.

Like all such succinct summaries, there are elements of truth in this picture, but at the same time it tends to be misleading, not least in that the degree of tolerance extended by the rulers, especially to the non-Christians of their kingdom, was always practical, and driven by necessity rather than principle.[3] By the time Peter of Eboli was writing in the late 1190s the demographic balance of the kingdom was already changing, and the position of both Greeks, and to a much greater extent Muslims, was weakening. After the death of King William II in 1189 most the Muslim population of western Sicily rose in revolt, and after more than thirty years of sporadic insurrection they became the victims of one of the most deliberate medieval examples of what we would call 'ethnic cleansing'. Thus the 'tolerance' of the twelfth-century rulers of Norman descent was more of a phase than an enduring phenomenon. Nor should we be misled by the rulers' employment of Greek or Arabic craftsmen in some of their (still-surviving) prestige building projects to assume that therefore this was truly symptomatic of a 'multi-cultural' society. The intention here is to examine some aspects of the policy of the rulers of southern Italy and Sicily towards their Greek and Muslim subjects, and to understand the changing cultural, and especially religious, position of these minorities from the eleventh century until the end of Staufen rule in the second half of the thirteenth century.

Let us, therefore, return to the beginning, and to the Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily. The Norman invaders who had first infiltrated and then conquered the south Italian peninsula had taken over the hitherto-independent Lombard principalities of the west coast: Capua, Salerno, and nearly all of Benevento, apart from its titular capital. But they had also acquired a substantial part of the mainland: Apulia, Lucania and Calabria (the heel,

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[2] *Liber ad Honorem Augusti di Pietro da Eboli*, ed. G.B. Siragusa (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, Rome 1906), p. 9, line 56; *Liber ad Honorem Augusti sive de Rebus Siculis, Codex 120 II der Burgerbibliothek Bern, ein Bilderchronik der Stauferzeit*, edited Theo Kolzer and Marlis Stähli (Sigmaringen 1994), pp. 45, 59.

[3] Hubert Houben, 'Religious Toleration in the South Italian Peninsula during the Norman and Staufen Periods', in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. G.A. Loud and Alex Metcalfe (Leiden 2002), pp. 319-39. See also Hiroshi Takayama, 'Religious Tolerance in Norman Sicily? The Case of Muslims', in *Puer Apuliae. Mélanges offerts a Jean-Marie Martin*, ed. E. Cuozzo, V. Déroche, A. Peters-Custot and V. Prigent (Paris 2008), pp. 623-36.

instep and toe of the Italian 'boot'), from the Byzantine Empire. Their leaders, Duke Robert Guiscard and his brother Count Roger, had then conquered the island of Sicily from a number of Islamic princes (the Arabs having previously taken over the island in the ninth century). Apulia was in Norman hands by 1071; the conquest of Sicily had by then already begun, although it was not finally completed until 1091.[4] These regions had not just been provinces subject to alien powers, but a significant part of their population spoke the language and followed the religion of their erstwhile rulers. In Apulia Greeks were only in a majority – or indeed present in any numbers at all – in the Salento peninsula in the extreme south, and almost all the population of the centre and north of this region were Latin-rite Christians, who called themselves 'Lombards', but who in our terms may be considered native Italians. However, at the time of the Norman conquest Greek-speakers had an overwhelming preponderance in Lucania and central and southern Calabria, as well as comprising anything up to a third of the population of Sicily, concentrated especially in the north-east of the island, the Val Demone, where they had indeed provided considerable assistance to the Normans in the early stages of the conquest. In the rest of Sicily there were a few Christians; some of whom were Greeks, but probably most were Arabic speakers in everyday life, even if Greek may still have been their liturgical language.[5] However, in the southern and western parts of the island the Norman conquerors faced the problem of a largely Muslim population, who remained under Christian rule. Some of the Muslim élite had emigrated during or immediately after the conquest, but many of the Muslim inhabitants of Sicilian towns and the overwhelming majority of those in the countryside remained, as is clear from the overwhelming preponderance of Arabic toponyms in these regions during the twelfth-century.[6] Furthermore, in order to secure the surrender of the Muslim towns of the island – many of which had positions of great natural strength and were strongly defended by man-made fortifications, the Normans had been forced to permit the continued operation of Islamic law and *de facto* religious toleration. Thus, at the capture of Palermo in 1072, the Muslim inhabitants, according to the contemporary chronicler Geoffrey Malaterra:

> 'refused absolutely to abandon or to act in breach of their own faith. But provided that they were sure that they would not be forced to do this, and that they would not be

[4] For this and what follows, see G.A. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard. Southern Italy and the Norman Conquest* (Harlow 2000), especially pp. 12-59 for the situation on the eve of the Norman Conquest.
[5] Alex Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Sicily. Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam* (London 2003), pp. 22-4; Alex Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh 2009), pp. 32-5. For the Arabic-speaking Christians, see especially the detailed discussion in his *Muslims and Christians*, pp. 71-98.
[6] Annliese Nef, *Conquérir et Gouverner la Sicile Islamique aux XIe et XIIe Siècles* (Rome 2011), pp. 367-92.

> oppressed with new and unjust laws, then … they would surrender the city, serve them faithfully and pay tribute. They promised to ratify this on oath in accordance with their law'.[7]

The conquerors had never been very numerous, and Duke Robert was only occasionally able to transfer his main field army from the mainland for operations on the island. Otherwise his brother, who was largely responsible for the conquest, probably never had more than a few hundred Norman or French troops under his command. Indeed, at the battle of Cerami in 1063, he had, we are told, only 136 knights – as well as an unspecified, but clearly quite small, number of infantry – who defeated a Muslim army several times their own numbers.[8] Given how few the conquerors were, a policy of accommodation was surely inevitable, and not only for military reasons, though these were compelling. At Agrigento, in the south of the island, a later history of the bishops tells us that there were very few Christians living there until after the death of King William II in 1189.[9] But, in addition, the continued prosperity of the island depended upon the labour of a peasant class that remained overwhelmingly Muslim for two to three generations after the conquest. This was a matter of particular importance for the rulers since after the conquest Roger I and his successors had retained most of central and western Sicily under their direct control, and the fabled wealth of the Sicilian kings derived ultimately from the labours of these (largely Muslim) peasants.[10]

A very similar policy of toleration was later followed when Roger II's fleet and army took advantage of the political weakness of the Zirid dynasty to conquer various coastal cities in Muslim North Africa during the 1140s. Here too there was little alternative, since despite the survival of small indigenous Christian communities these were overwhelmingly Muslim towns, and the relatively small Sicilian garrisons needed the acquiescence, and indeed the co-operation, of the civilian population if they were to survive.[11] Furthermore, since in the early years, at least, of Norman rule, almost all the Christians on the island of Sicily belonged to

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[7] *De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis, auctore Gaufredo Malaterra*, ed. Ernesto Pontieri (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 2nd ed., Bologna 1927-8) [henceforth *Malaterra*], II.45, p. 53. For the wider context, Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, pp. 102-5.

[8] *Malaterra*, II.33, pp. 42-3.

[9] *Libellus de Successione Pontificum Agrigenti*, in *Le Più antiche carte dell'archivio capitolare di Agrigento (1092-1282)*, ed. P. Collura (Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia, Ser. I.25, Palermo 1960), p. 307.

[10] David Abulafia, 'The Crown and the Economy under Roger II and his Successors', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983), 1-14.

[11] David Abulafia, 'The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 7 *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1984* (1985), 26-49, especially pp. 33-9, 47; Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, pp. 163-6.

the Greek rite, it was equally necessary for the new count not just to tolerate, but even actively to favour the Greek Christians under his rule.

This demographic situation was reflected in the government of Sicily. Since most of the Christians under his rule were Greeks, it was hardly surprising that the Norman count used Greek officials, and issued his documents in Greek. Indeed, the rulers of Sicily possessed no Latin writing office until Roger II inherited the mainland duchy of Apulia in 1127, and for much of his subsequent reign he continued to issue many, probably most, of his documents in Greek, while until the 1140s employing only a single Latin notary to write charters in that language for mainland recipients.[12] The king's laws drew heavily on the Roman law of the Byzantine empire, and the only 'semi-official' portrait of Roger II shows him in the ceremonial dress of a Byzantine emperor. Roger's chief ministers were Greeks, Christodoulos until c. 1125, and then subsequently George of Antioch, who remained as 'Emir of Emirs', effectively prime minister, until his death in 1151. George, although a Greek Christian, had previously served in the government of the Muslim rulers of Tunisia, and in the early- to mid-1140s he reorganised the administration of the island of Sicily under the influence of, and to resemble, that of the Fatimid rulers of Egypt. From this period onwards we find Arabic officials prominent in the Sicilian administration, notably in the office of land registration, the *Dīwān al-Tahqīq al-Ma'mūr* (or *Duana de Secretis* in Latin). We should note, however, that these Arabic administrators were, at least officially, Christian, a point to which we shall return later. Latin Christians only became prominent in the royal administration after the death of George of Antioch, who was succeeded as principal minister by Maio of Bari, a Latin Christian from a mercantile background on the mainland. Even during and after his predominance – he was eventually murdered in 1160 – both Arabs and Greeks continued to serve in the royal administration, although from then on the number of royal documents written in Greek significantly declined.[13]

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[12] Julia Becker, 'Die griechischen und lateinischen Urkunden Graf Rogers I. von Sizilien', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* lxxxiv (2004), 1-37; Vera von Falkenhausen, 'I Diplomi dei re normanni in lingua greca', in *Documenti medievali greci e latini. Studi comparativi* (Atti del seminario di Erice, 23-29 ottobre 1995), ed. G. de Gregorio & O. Kresten (Spoleto 1998), 253-308; G.A. Loud, 'The chancery and charters of the kings of Sicily (1130-1212)', *English Historical Review* 124 (2009), 779-810, especially pp. 792-4.

[13] Hiroshi Takayama, *The Administration of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Leiden 1993), especially pp. 52-3, 81-103; Jeremy Johns, 'The Norman Kings of Sicily and the Fatimid Caliphate', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 15 *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1992* (1993), 132-59; and especially Jeremy Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily. The Royal Dīwān* (Cambridge 2002). Nef, *Conquérir et Gouverner la Sicile Islamique*, pp. 243-69, has recently suggested modifications to the details, and to some extent the chronology, of the analysis of George's reforms put forward by Takayama.

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The distribution of the various cultural and religious groups within southern Italy had fluctuated since the early Middle Ages, as it continued to do through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. While there had been some immigration from North Africa to Sicily since the Islamic conquest of the ninth century, the majority of the Muslims on the island at the time of its conquest by the Normans were probably the descendants of indigenous Christian converts. This would explain why outside observers such as the tenth-century geographer Ibn Hawqal had considerable reservations about the standards and orthodoxy of their Islamic observance – although no doubt Shī'a prejudice also played its part in his unsympathetic view of the Sicilians.[14] This would, however, also explain why Muslims who converted to Christianity during the Norman period tended to join the Greek Church, from which in many cases their ancestors had converted to Islam.[15] But while some Christians in the tenth century either converted to Islam or adopted Arabic as their usual language, others, especially from eastern Sicily may have emigrated to the mainland. One should stress that the evidence for this is limited, being largely derived from biographies of Greek holy men, and tensions between Muslims and Greek monks may not necessarily have reflected the experience of the majority of the population. Most of the north-east of the island remained Christian. Nevertheless, eastern Sicily did see sporadic conflict, especially in the 960s, and some Christians probably did seek to escape to Byzantine-held territory. What is much more clearly established is that the Greek population in Calabria tended to move inland and to migrate northwards to escape continued Muslim pirate raids on coastal districts. By the later tenth century Greeks were moving, in some numbers, into Lucania (hitherto probably thinly-populated), which now became a partly, perhaps even a primarily, Graecophone region, and a few even into the Lombard principalities of the west. Several Greek monasteries were established within the 'Lombard' region in the later tenth century. Some of these were ephemeral, like that established by St. Nilos of Rossano at Valleluce near Montecassino c. 975. But two further Greek monasteries established in Lombard territory in the later tenth century survived until at least a generation after the Norman Conquest: St. Nicholas Gallocanta, near Salerno, and St. Peter de Foresta, near Pontecorvo in the principality of

[14] Michele Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula* (2 vols. Turin 1880), i.3-6. Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, pp. 59-60.

[15] Jeremy Johns, 'The Greek Church and the Conversion of Muslims in Norman Sicily?', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 21 (1995), 133-57.

Capua. Another, St. Nicholas de Morbano, near Venosa in southern Apulia continued until the thirteenth century. Furthermore in the principality of Salerno the emigrants included lay people as well as monks, including some from Sicily.[16]

What happened when the Normans conquered the former Byzantine provinces remains controversial. One, view, advanced by Léon-Robert Ménager more than fifty years ago, but still relatively influential, is that on the south Italian mainland, the dukes of Apulia (Robert Guiscard and his son and grandson) pursued a consciously anti-Greek policy, which differed radically from that of the counts of Sicily. While the counts encouraged the Greek Church, Ménager suggested that the dukes deliberately favoured Latin Christian churchmen, with papal encouragement, converting bishoprics from the Greek to the Latin rite, and subjecting the Greek monasteries of the region to Latin ones, especially those that they themselves had founded. The consequence of this pressure, so he argued, was to induce a considerable number of Calabrian Greeks to emigrate to Sicily – from which in some cases their ancestors had come – and to encourage the Latinisation of hitherto 'Greek' areas, certainly of those regions such as northern Calabria and Lucania that had never been exclusively Graecophone.[17]

Yet, it must be said that the evidence for such a policy is limited, and recent historians are increasingly unconvinced by this argument. The chroniclers of the conquest, especially Malaterra, may have displayed some contempt for the Greeks – 'a people who were customarily devoted to luxuries and self-indulgence rather than to warlike exercise'.[18] But there was an element of cliché here, and demonstrating the unworthiness of those inhabiting or previously ruling the land served to justify the conquest. Furthermore, Malaterra, a relatively recent immigrant to the south, cannot be assumed to represent the opinion of those who had been born there or had arrived many years previously. While the conquest was still going on, a degree of mutual hostility was clearly likely, particularly since contemporary

[16] Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, pp. 54-8. For Sicily in the 960s, Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, pp. 54-8. For detailed studies of Greek monasteries in Latin territory: Angelo Nicosia, 'La Valle della Quesa e il monastero greco di S. Pietro', *Benedictina* 24 (1977), 115-38; Giovanni Vitolo, 'La Latinizzazione dei monasterii italo-graci del Mezzogiorno medievale. L'Esempio di S. Nicola di Gallocanta presso Salerno', *Benedictina* 29 (1982), 437-60. A number of charters relating to St. Nicholas de Morbano were edited in Rocco Briscese, 'Le Pergamene della cattedrale di Venosa', *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 10 (1940), 19-40, 111-23, 235-46, 325-40.

[17] Léon-Robert Ménager, 'La Byzantinisation religieuse de l'Italie méridionale (IXe-XIIe siècles) et la politique monastique des Normands de l'Italie', *Revue d'Histoire Écclesiastique* 53 (1958), 747-74; 54 (1959), 5-40.

[18] *Malaterra*, III.13, p. 64.

military tactics often entailed the deliberate wasting of the countryside and the destruction of vines and olive trees; damage to which would take several years to make good. Hence a charter recounting the history of a Greek monastery in Lucania could record in 1071 that 'our whole country was seized and occupied by heathen hordes, and everything came to complete ruin'.[19] These 'heathen hordes' were the Norman invaders; the writer was probably referring to the seizure of the area by Count Drogo (Robert Guiscard's elder brother) c. 1048. However, we can find similar complaints about Norman depredations during the conquest from the Lombard principalities; yet this did not prevent relatively speedy acceptance of the Norman conquest, and intermarriage between Normans and Lombards – to such an extent that by the 1120s and 1130s the distinction between the two was increasingly blurred or unimportant.[20] And while the linguistic and religious differences between Normanno-French and Greeks were deeper and more obvious than those between the conquerors and their Lombard subjects, there is still little evidence for deliberate hostility among the conquerors to churches and churchmen of the Greek rite, or (insofar as we can see) the local Greek population.

We should also remember that whatever the theological problems that sometimes complicated relations between Rome and Constantinople, both Latins and Greeks still at the time of the Norman conquest considered themselves to be part of one and the same Church. Where, as in southern Italy, Greek clergy were subordinated to Latin bishops or Greek bishops recognised papal authority (which was always the sticking point in negotiations between Rome and Constantinople), then the Greek rite was still perfectly acceptable, and the prayers of Greek clergy and monks deemed just as efficacious as those of Latins – hence the patronage of Greek monasteries by the rulers and aristocracy of southern Italy, something for which there is considerable evidence right through the twelfth century. And despite occasional worries about the vagaries of Greek theology, or practices such as using leavened bread at the Eucharist, the papacy also tolerated Greek observance. It was only with the

[19] Gertrude Robinson, 'The history and cartulary of the Greek monastery of St. Elias and St. Anastasius of Carbone', *Orientalia Christiana* 15 (1929), 171-5 no. 8 (there wrongly dated to 1061).
[20] I have discussed this issue in several publications, most recently in G.A. Loud, 'Norman Traditions in Southern Italy', in *Norman Tradition and Transcultural Heritage. Exchange of Cultures in the 'Norman' Peripheries of Medieval Europe*, ed. Stefan Burkhardt and Thomas Foerster (Farnham 2013), pp. 35-56, at 41-5.

pontificate of Innocent III, and especially post-1204, that attitudes at Rome really began to harden.[21]

So, for example, when the Normans captured Palermo in 1072, they found there a Greek archbishop called Nicodemos, who by this time was probably the only Greek prelate on the island. According to Malaterra, 'although he was a Greek and a timid man, he had been celebrating the Christian religion as best he could in the poor church of St. Cyriacus'. He was duly installed as archbishop in the former cathedral, which had been converted to become the main mosque of Palermo, and was now re-consecrated as a Christian church, and which was soon rebuilt on a more substantial scale by Count Roger.[22]

Admittedly, the successor to this archbishop was a Latin, and indeed probably a Frenchman, known to have been in office by 1083. [23] He was one of a number of Latin-rite prelates installed in formerly Greek sees towards the end of the eleventh century. But one should not necessarily conclude that there was therefore a coherent plan to 'Latinise' the south Italian Church. First, where such Latinisation did take place, it was a slow, and indeed an evolutionary, process. Rather than following immediately upon the Norman takeover, the majority of cases where a Latin bishop was appointed to a formerly Greek see occurred a generation later; in Calabria, for example, Latin prelates were installed at Reggio in 1082, Cassano in 1089, Tropea in 1094 and Squillace in 1096.[24] Nor were such appointments necessarily the product of dispute, nor of Latin hostility. Thus the last Greek bishop of Squillace, Theodore, assisted the foundation in his diocese of the Latin Carthusian monastery of S. Maria della Torre, and was one of the bishops at its dedication, along with four Latin prelates, in 1094. [25] While his successor, John *de Nichifero*, was expressly described in a contemporary document as the first bishop of the Latin rite; to judge by his name he was of Greek origin, and presumably therefore bilingual. [26] Furthermore, Latin bishops were usually

[21] Peter Herde, 'The Papacy and the Greek Church in Southern Italy between the Eleventh and the Thirteenth Century', in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. G.A. Loud and Alex Metcalfe (Leiden 2002), pp.213-51, especially 225-6.
[22] *Malaterra*, III.45, p. 53. The name Nicodemos comes from a later bull of Calixtus II, *Italia Pontificia*, ed. P.F. Kehr (10 vols., Berlin 1905-74), x *Calabria-Insulae*, ed. Dieter Girgensohn (1974), 230 no. 24.
[23] *Italia Pontificia*, x.229 no. 20.
[24] G.A. Loud, *The Latin Church in Norman Italy* (Cambridge 2007), pp. 496-500.
[25] *Documenti latini e greci del conte Ruggero I di Calabria e Sicilia*, ed. Julia Becker (Rome 2013), pp. 169-71 no. 41 (although the text of this document, for which no manuscript survives, has been tampered with by a later forger).
[26] *Italia Pontificia* x.60 no. 9. Vera von Falkenhausen, 'Mileto tra Greci e Normanni', in *Chiesa e società nel Mezzogiorno. Studi in onore di Maria Mariotti* (Rubettino 1999), 121.

only installed when a Greek bishop died and the see was vacant, as presumably was the case at Palermo. Greek prelates were not, so far as we can see, expelled.

Secondly, the substitution of a Latin for a Greek bishop in some sees in Calabria and southern Apulia did not necessarily have much impact beyond the cathedral. Many, if not most of the lower clergy, remained Greek, and the Greek rite continued to be celebrated. Indeed, in northern Calabria there were Greek clergy even in sees like Cosenza where the prelates had always been Latin. The most obvious example of this situation is Messina, where a new Latin bishopric was set up in 1096. Yet despite some emigration from the mainland, encouraged by its growing significance as a port, Messina remained a largely Greek city right through the twelfth century. The so-called 'Hugo Falcandus', when describing the rebellion in the city in 1168, remarked (nastily, but characteristically) of its inhabitants: 'how shaky their loyalty was, typical of Greek perfidy'.[27] Similarly, while the Anglo-Norman chroniclers of the Third Crusade who described Richard I's sojourn in Sicily over the winter of 1190/1 did mention 'Lombard' (i.e. Latin) inhabitants of Messina, they clearly considered most of its people to be Greeks, to whom they ascribed the nickname 'Griffons'. Significantly King Richard named his castle built outside the city *Mategrifon* ('Greek Slayer').[28] And if Messina was still largely a Greek city, its hinterland, which comprised its diocese, was much more completely Graecophone, as is demonstrated by the overwhelmingly Greek documentation from the region during this period. The first surviving Latin document from Messina itself, drawn up by a city notary, comes only from 1196.[29]

Thirdly, these new Latin prelates, and the French aristocracy established during the Norman conquest, were not intrinsically hostile to the Greek churchmen under their rule. Thus, the first evidence for a Latin bishop in the see of Umbriatico in central Calabria comes in a charter of 1164, written in Greek, in which he restored a dependant cell to the Greek monastery of S. Maria di Patiron near Rossano.[30] This house was one of several Greek

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[27] *La Historia o Liber de Regno Siciliae e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium di Ugo Falcando*, ed. G.B. Siragusa (Fonti per la Storia d'Italia, Rome 1897) [henceforth *Falcandus*], p. 132 [English version from *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by 'Hugo Falcandus'*, translated by G.A. Loud and T.E.J. Wiedemann (Manchester 1998), p. 184].

[28] *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, ed. J.T. Appleby (London 1963), p. 25: for the 'Griffons' more generally, *ibid*., pp. 19-21.

[29] Vera von Falkenhausen, 'The Greek Presence in Norman Sicily: the Contribution of Archival Material in Greek', in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. G.A. Loud and Alex Metcalfe (Leiden 2002), p. 276.

[30] Walter Holtzmann, 'Die ältesten Urkunden des Klosters S. Maria del Patir', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 26 (1926), 341-2 no. 2.

abbeys founded with the encouragement and patronage of the Normans (in this case c. 1101), and it continued to profit from the benefactions of the ruling Hauteville kin group, including Count Roger II of Sicily (the future king).[31] But the most striking example of such patronage came with the latter's father, Count Roger I, under whose rule some twenty Greek monasteries were established on the island of Sicily, with the count himself founding, or assisting in the foundation of fourteen of them – as opposed to the three, or possibly four, Latin monasteries that he founded on the island before his death in 1101.[32] This, of course, reflected that the Christian population of Sicily remained overwhelmingly Greek at the end of the eleventh century, and Latin-rite immigrants were as yet very few. Nor were such benefactions by the new ruling class towards Greek monasteries confined to the island of Sicily. A number of other Greek religious houses on the mainland, in addition to S. Maria di Patiron, enjoyed the patronage of the Hauteville dynasty and other Normanno-French aristocrats, notably St. Bartholomew of Trigona in Calabria,[33] and St. Maria of Kyrozosimi and St. Anastasius of Carbone in Lucania. Carbone benefited especially from the local lords of the Chiaromonte (or Clermont) family, who granted it no less than six privileges between 1074 and 1135. In the first of these, in 1074, Hugh of Clermont and his wife confirmed the abbey's property and granted further land to it, 'knowing the monastery to be full of good and religious monks'.[34] Other benefactors of this abbey included Robert Guiscard's son Bohemond I, and *his* son Bohemond II.[35] Carbone was situated in a diocese (Anglona), where Latin bishops had replaced Greek in the early years of the twelfth century, yet this does not seem to have adversely affected its relations with its diocesan; the bishop, for example, decided a legal dispute in its favour against another monastery in 1172.[36] Furthermore, after 1130 every king of Sicily from King Roger through to Frederick II issued at least one privilege in favour of this Greek monastery.[37] The Staufen rulers were indeed just as much

[31] L-R. Ménager, 'Notes et documents sur quelques monastères de Calabre à l'époque normande', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 50 (1957), 334-5 no. 1 (September 1118).
[32] L.T. White, *Latin Monasticism in Norman Sicily* (Cambridge, MA, 1938), pp. 41-5; and the much fuller analysis in Mario Scaduto, *Il Monachesimo basiliano nella Sicilia medievale. Rinascità e decadenza. Sec. XI-XV* (Rome 1947), pp. 80-143.
[33] Vera von Falkenhausen, 'S. Bartolomeo di Trigona. Storia di un monastero greco nella Calabria normanno-sveva', *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s. 36 (1999), 94-116, especially pp. 99-103.
[34] Robinson, 'Carbone', pp. 176-8 no. 9.
[35] Walter Holtzmann, ''Papst-, Kaiser- und Normannurkunden aus Unteritalien', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 36 (1956), 55-6 no. 6 (May 1110); Robinson, 'Carbone', pp. 246-61 nos. 26-8 (September 1124, October 1125, January 1126).
[36] Holtzmann, ''Papst-, Kaiser- und Normannurkunden', pp.70-2 no. 10.
[37] Robinson, 'Carbone', pp. 273-5 no. 31 (May 1132); *Guillelmi I. Regis Diplomata*, ed. Horst Enzensberger (Codex Diplomaticus Regni Siciliae, Ser. I.iii, Cologne 1996), pp. 7-8 no. 2; *Tancredi et Willelmi III Regum Diplomata*, ed. Herbert Zielinski (Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, Ser. I.v, Cologne 1982), pp. 46-7 no. 19 (August 1191); *Constantiae Imperatricis et Reginae Siciliae Diplomata (1195-1198)*, ed. Theo Kölzer (Codex Diplomaticus Regni

supporters of this monastery as their Norman predecessors. The Empress Constance instructed the justiciars of Lucania to restore alienated property to Carbone in August 1196,[38] while Frederick II confirmed its privileges in a diploma issued at Augsburg in November 1219 – presumably in response to a delegation from the monks who had thought it worthwhile to make the long journey north of the Alps. While formulaic, the terms of this diploma are still interesting, remembering that it was issued in favour of a Greek monastery:

> 'Because we are aware of the praiseworthy reputation and the conduct of the holy way of life by which the monastery of Carbone is distinguished, and desiring also always to be helped by the prayers of those who serve [God] in this monastery'.[39]

The evidence for popular attitudes is much more limited and harder to gauge than those of rulers and higher churchmen. The largely Greek populace of Messina rose in revolt in 1168 and murdered one of the principal followers of the royal minister Stephen of Perche. But Stephen and his entourage were outsiders, newly arrived from France, and those who opposed him included Latins as well as Greeks. Indeed the leaders of the revolt were several of the king's displaced ministers. There is no suggestion that religious tensions played any part here.[40] A passage from the *bios* of Bishop Lucas of Isola Capo Rizzuto (d. 1114) suggests that some Latins, perhaps clerics, disliked the Greek Eucharist – but, we are told, the holy prelate silenced them through a miracle.[41] Some Latin monks allegedly made slanderous accusations against Bartholomew of Simeri, the founder of the Patiron monastery, to Roger II, putting the abbot's life in some danger. However, once the charges against him were disproved, again through a miracle, he was restored to favour. 'From then on', so his biographer claimed, 'the king regarded the saint as his father'.[42] It is hard to know what to make of these accounts – it is doubtful, for example, how contemporary the life of Bartholomew may be, or what significance we may ascribe to the allegedly miraculous. What

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siciliae, Ser. II, 1(2), Cologne 1983), pp. 14-19 no. 4 (October 1195), 125-7 no. 35 (September 11196). For the 1168 privilege of William II, see below note 45.

[38] *Constantiae Diplomata*, pp. 120-1 no. 33.

[39] *Die Urkunden Friedrichs II*, ed. Walter Koch (MGH Diplomata Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae XIV, 4 vols. so far, 2004-14), iii, *1217-1220*, 321-2 no. 587: *quod nos attendentes laudabilem famam et conversationis sancte propositum, quibus monasterium Carbonense claret, et optantes etiam ipsius monasterii orationibus iugiter adiuvari*.

[40] *Falcandus*, pp. 148-54 [*Tyrants*, pp. 200-7].

[41] *Vita di S. Luca, vescovo di Isola Capo Rizzuto*, ed G. Schiro (Palermo 1954), 106-8.

[42] Gaia Zaccagni, 'Il *Bios* di San Bartolomeo da Simeri (BHG 235)', *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s. 33 (1996), 224-6.

we can say is that Bartholomew's biographer thought highly of 'the pious and Christ-loving King Roger' (although the reference to him as king in the saint's lifetime is anachronistic).[43]

There was, admittedly, a tendency for Greek abbeys to become part of the expanding congregations of the more important Latin monasteries on the mainland, but this did not necessarily mean the death of Greek observance therein. There was an obvious attraction for secular lords of being associated with the prayers of important and prestigious houses, and hence to subject Greek monasteries within their dominions to these Latin congregations. But this was not necessarily because they disliked the Greek rite or saw it as inferior – they were often benefactors of these Greek monasteries, and their descendants continued to be. Another reason for making Greek houses subject to Latin ones was to safeguard their continued existence, which was threatened by poverty or lack of recruits. Many Greek monasteries were very small. Often they had a limited life-span, and sometimes the death of the founder, or the extinction of his family, led to their collapse, while at others monks might simply abandon one site and move on to another. Donating the monastery, or its site, to a larger house in the vicinity, might ensure that some form of monastic observance continued.[44]

Thus, while after c. 1080 Roger I had encouraged the foundation of Greek monasteries on the island of Sicily, many of these remained small and poor, and within a generation or two were in danger of failing. To stabilise this situation, Roger II sought to provide an organisational structure for these Greek monasteries. In 1131 he founded a new Greek abbey outside Messina, dedicated to the Saviour, which became the mother house of a congregation of subordinate abbeys. Its abbot was granted the title of archimandrite to mark his superior status. The Holy Saviour, Messina, became the model for other Greek congregations set up on the mainland: so, for example in 1168 the abbot of Carbone became archimandrite over all the Greek monasteries of Lucania and in the southern part of the principality of Salerno.[45] In the long run the foundation of these congregations did no more than slow the decline of Greek monasticism, but this was due to wider demographic and cultural changes within the kingdom, and not to any hostility from its rulers or from their officials, who continued to make grants and issue privileges to Greek churches through to the end of the twelfth century. Indeed, in 1177 the royal vice-chancellor Matthew, who was a

[43] *Ibid*., p. 216. Bartholomew died in 1130, shortly before Roger's royal coronation.
[44] Loud, *Latin Church*, pp. 505-7.
[45] Holtzmann, ''Papst-, Kaiser- und Normannurkunden', pp.67-9 no. 8. For discussion, Anick Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale post-byzantine. Une acculturation en douceur* (Rome 2009), pp. 296-306.

Latin, became a member of the confraternity of the Holy Saviour, Messina, with the king's encouragement.[46] Similarly both King Tancred and his rival and successor the Empress Constance patronised Greek churches during the 1190s. Tancred, for example, made a donation to Rossano cathedral in May 1193 to fund a lamp to burn perpetually in front of a famous icon of the Virgin.[47] Frederick II too confirmed the privileges of a large number of Greek churches in the 1220s.[48]

However, despite such signs of imperial favour, the situation of the Greek community changed significantly during thirteenth century. The use of Greek declined, and ceased entirely in the royal chancery. The core Graecophone areas contracted, and hitherto mixed Greek/Latin regions became more or less exclusively Latin. The last known Greek document from Lucania dates from 1232; the last surviving Greek document from Messina comes in 1244; and from Palermo in 1259.[49] Messina had therefore gone from issuing private documents solely in Greek to entirely in Latin in just under fifty years. The archbishops of Messina seem to have been actively encouraging Latins from the mainland to settle in their diocese during the early thirteenth century.[50] During the second half of that century, churches, even in the quintessentially 'Greek' region of southern Calabria, increasingly sought to obtain legally-authenticated translations of their older Greek documents: for these to be valid, or at least useful, they needed to be in Latin.[51] Meanwhile, the papacy intervened

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[46] Scaduto, *Monachesimo*, pp. 221-2, from Cod. Vat. Lat. 8201, fol. 335^{r}; for the confirmation of his charter of donation by William II, Rocco Pirro, *Sicula Sacra* (3rd. ed., ed. A. Mongitore, Palermo 1733), ii.980.

[47] *Tancredi et Willelmi III Regum Diplomata*, pp. 80-1 no. 33. Cf. in addition to the privileges for Carbone [above note 37], also *ibid*., pp. 66-7 no. 27 (1192) to St. Nicholas of the Greeks, Brindisi, and pp. 72-4 no. 30 (December 1192) to the monastery of St. Philip of Fragalà in the Val Demone. Cf. *Constantiae Diplomata*, pp. 69-72 no. 18 (January 1196) and 134-8 no. 38 (March 1197) to the Holy Saviour, Messina; pp. 83-8 no. 28 (April 1196), and 231-3 no. 64 (November 1198) to St. Maria della Grotta, Palermo; pp. 104-8 no. 29 (May 1196) to St. Maria del Patiron; pp. 101-3 no. 28 (May 1196), 178-80 no. 48 (February 1198), and 211-17 no. 59 (August 1198) to the archbishopric of Rossano.

[48] Vera von Falkenhausen, 'Friedrich II. und die Griechen im Königreich Sizilien', in *Friedrich II. Tagung des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom im Gedenkjahr 1994*, ed. Arnold Esch and Norbert Kamp (Tübingen 1996), pp. 254-5.

[49] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, p. 393 ; von Falkenhausen, 'Greek presence', p. 285, 'Friedrich II. und die Griechen im Königreich Sizilien', p. 247.

[50] Archbishop Berard founded a new village in his territory of Lardaria in 1220, and in April 1236 his successor Lando gave a house there to a Latin settler from Eboli in the principality of Salerno, *I Diplomi della cattedrale di Messina*, ed. Raffaele Starrabba (Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia, Ser. I.i, Palermo 1876-90), pp. 69-70 no. 52, 83-4 no. 62.

[51] For example, in 1252, Stephen, Archimandrite of S. Maria di Terreti, had three Greek charters of Counts Roger I and II (dating from 1090, 1115, and 1121) translated into Latin by three judges of Reggio 'knowing both Greek and Latin', as well as having two Latin documents of Frederick II copied, Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, ii(2),440-1; *Documenti latini e greci del conte Ruggero* [above note 24], p. 299 deperdita no. 3; while in 1257 a notary in Messina, 'knowing both Greek and the Latin language', translated a Greek charter of Roger I, dated March 1092, for the monastery of St. Nicodemus de Grutaria into Latin, *Documenti del conte Ruggero*, pp. 112-13 no. 22.

much more than hitherto in the ecclesiastical affairs of the *regno*, and papal attitudes towards the Greek rite became increasingly unsympathetic. In particular, the popes were reluctant to allow Greek clergy within dioceses headed by a Latin bishop to receive ordination from anybody other than their diocesan, which ordination would inevitably be according to the Latin rite, and on the appropriate (Latin) Ember days.[52] Gregory IX also made clear that 'since there is one faith, there should only be one form of baptism', although he requested the archbishop of Bari to send learned Greeks with their books to him, so that the issue might properly be discussed, and uniform observance obtained 'by reason rather than force', to which end he quashed various excommunications that the archbishop had earlier imposed on local Greeks.[53] The implantation of the Cistercian order in Calabria, which was fostered by successive popes, might be interpreted as deliberate colonisation by the Latin Church in a Graecophone area, particularly since the papacy also encouraged the appointment of Cistercians to the episcopate in Calabria, albeit to sees which were already Latin.[54] And, in 1254 Innocent IV appointed a Latin cleric as Archbishop of Santa Severina, the hitherto Greek metropolitan see of central Calabria, which thereafter was definitively converted to the Latin rite.[55]

Yet it is not clear that these initiatives were either encouraged by the secular rulers or nobility, or were the consequence of confessional hostility on the ground. The implantation of the Cistercians is a case in point. Thus in November 1217 the lord of Mesoraca, in the (then) still-Greek diocese of Santa Severina, made a grant to the recently founded Cistercian monastery of S. Angelo *de Frigilo*. Since he himself had no Latin notary, he had this document written by a monk of that house, but he also took care to secure the consent of the local Greek *protopapas* and notary. Two months later, this same Greek *protopapas* himself made a donation to this Cistercian monastery, as did a retired Greek judge in April 1219, who

[52] Herde, 'The Papacy and the Greek Church in Southern Italy', pp. 240-6.
[53] *Codice diplomatic barese* i *Le pergamene del duomo di Bari (952-1264)*, ed. G.B. Nitto de Rossi and F. Nitti di Vito (Bari 1897), 177 no. 95 (20th February 1232).
[54] For example, the influential Archbishop Lucas of Cosenza, 1203-27; Archbishop Gerold of Reggio 1215-16, former abbot of Casamari; Bishops Leonard of Anglona, 1269-74, Thomas of Squillace, 1255-63, and Nicholas of Mazara 1256-70, Norbert Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie im staufischen Königreich Sizilien* (4 vols., Munich 1973-84), ii.785, 833-9, 922, 993-4, iii.1178-9. All these sees, however, had had Latin prelates since c. 1100. Cf. Pietro de Leo, 'L'Insediamento dei Cistercensi nel *regnum Siciliae*. I primi monasteri cistercensi calabresi, in *I Cistercensi nel Mezzogiorno medioevale*, ed Hubert Houben and Bruno Vetere (Lecce 1994), pp. 317-52, especially 337-52.
[55] Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, ii.887.

had become a monk in another Latin monastery.[56] This group of transactions encapsulates some of the long-term acculturative forces working to the ultimate detriment of the Greeks in southern Italy, but they also show a community which in the early years of Frederick II was still at ease with itself, and where there a religious symbiosis remained between Greeks and Latins. Indeed, the spirituality of the Cistercians was by no means antipathetic to Orthodox monastic tradition.[57] And while Frederick II may not have been quite the enlightened patron of Greek culture that some have believed, he was generally sympathetic to, and popular with the Greeks of southern Italy.[58] He was also keen to conciliate the Greek rulers of Nikea and Epiros as potential allies against the papacy, and in his letters to them expressed a notably high opinion of the Greek Church. [59] Nor was the papal dismissal of several Greek bishops in the years immediately after his death in December 1250 because they were Greeks, but because they had been loyal to the emperor; and in sees other than Santa Severina the new bishops were Greeks who had proved themselves faithful to the papacy. [60]

Indeed papal action was less directed against Greek churches *per se*, but was rather intended to incorporate them under Roman ecclesiastical discipline. One might note, for example the long-running dispute between the archbishops of Messina and the archimandrites of the Holy Saviour, which continued from before 1220 through to at least 1235, and led to the annulment of the election of Archimandrite Macharios in this last year, while the latter's predecessor had died excommunicate.[61] Yet the issue here was not the continuance of Greek (Basilian) monasticism but the refusal of the archimandrite to receive blessing from, or show canonical obedience to, the archbishop; and indeed the response of the archimandrite was to claim exemption and that his monastery and congregation was directly subject to the pope, as

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[56] *Carte latine di abbazie calabresi provenienti dall'archivio aldobrandini*, ed. Alessandro Pratesi (Studi e testi 197: Città del Vaticano 1958), pp. 265-9 nos. 110-1, 279-82 no. 117.
[57] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, pp. 521-2.
[58] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, pp. 476-9. Von Falkenhausen, 'Friedrich II. und die Griechen im Königreich Sizilien', pp. 254-6 is more cautious, and sees the conditions of the Greeks deteriorating markedly under Frederick, although she admits that this may not have been what the emperor intended.
[59] Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, vi(2).685-6, 759-61, 771-5. In the second of these letters, to Michael of Epiros in February 1250, Frederick praised the Greeks for their piety and orthodoxy, while criticising the papacy for its intransigence towards them.
[60] Notably Master Nicholas of Durazzo at Crotone, who later played an important role in negotiations for the re-union of the two churches, Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, ii.958-63. Note also Elias, Archbishop-elect of Rossano 1254, and his successor Angelo IV, archbishop 1266-85. Paul of Gerace, meanwhile, seems to have lived down his loyalty to King Manfred, Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, ii.879-80, 972-3. See also Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, pp. 508-9.
[61] *Diplomi della cattedrale di Messina*, pp. 68-9 no. 51 (March 1220), 70-2 no. 53 (July 1221), 75-6 no. 55 (November 1222), 77-8 no. 57 (October 1224), 81-3 no. 61 (October 1235).

a consequence of a bull issued by Alexander III. While Honorius III upheld the claims of the archbishop, including that of visitation, this was not the product of anti-Greek bias but of a desire to maintain canonical authority.[62] Similar disputes involving Latin monasteries were hardly unusual. While keen to uphold the authority of (Latin) prelates, the popes would sometimes intervene to protect the interests of Greek monasteries. So, while in 1266 Clement IV ordered the archbishop of Messina to supervise the election of a new abbot at St. Michael, Troina, to replace the deposed Abbot Nicodemos, he made clear that the new abbot should either be one of the monks of that monastery or 'some other suitable Greek person', and the archbishop's supervision was not to curtail the future right of the monks freely to elect their own abbot.[63]

Furthermore, while the decline of the Greek community in southern Italy undoubtedly accelerated in the thirteenth century, even then it was still a slow and evolutionary process. Greek notaries continued to write charters in the Salento until 1331.[64] Some sees *were* Latinised – thus a Latin bishop was installed at Isola Capo Rizzuto in 1284.[65] But there were still five sees with Greek bishops in the *regno* in 1300 – one of these, Gerace, retained a Greek bishop until the fifteenth century, and the Greek rite in this diocese was only suppressed in 1467, while in the diocese of Gallipoli it continued to be used until 1573. In a few other isolated localities it lingered on until the seventeenth century.[66] A third of the clergy of the Messina diocese remained Greek even in the early fourteenth century.[67] There were also still some twenty-five Greek monasteries on the mainland and in Sicily during the fourteenth century. Two Greek nunneries were indeed founded, in the diocese of Gerace, during that century. If most of these monastic houses were small, and recruitment became increasingly problematic, a few lingered on for a long time. The Holy Saviour, Messina, was only dissolved in 1538, and St. Bartholomew of Trigona, near Reggio Calabria, continued until the eighteenth century.[68]

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[62] *Diplomi della cattedrale di Messina*, pp. 70-2 no. 53, the most detailed and helpful document for this dispute.
[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 94-5 no. 71.
[64] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, pp. 495-6.
[65] Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, ii.906.
[66] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, pp. 441, 578-80.
[67] Von Falkenhausen, 'Greek Presence', p. 283.
[68] Peters-Custot, *Les Grecs de l'Italie méridionale*, p. 570; Scaduto, *Monachesimo*, p. 360; von Falkenhausen, 'S. Bartolomeo', pp. 108-9.

While the decline in Greek religious observance and the eventual absorption of the Greek communities of southern Italy by the Italian / Catholic majority was relatively slow, even in the thirteenth century, and largely due to impersonal forces and unconscious tendencies rather than any deliberate policy or oppression, the position of the Sicilian Muslims was rather different. As we have seen, the circumstances of the conquest had dictated that toleration and relatively favourable treatment be accorded to the Muslim population of Sicily, which remained in a majority on the island until the second half of the twelfth century. Muslim soldiers were also employed by the Sicilian rulers on the mainland, indeed even before the conquest of the island had been completed – their use is first attested at the siege of Salerno in 1076.[69] Some Muslim landowners remained on the island, although we know about these largely from subsequent sales of their property to Christians, some of whom were themselves of Arabic descent.[70] There was also a wealthy urban bourgeoisie who continued to conduct their affairs by Islamic law.[71]

However, the situation of the Muslims began to worsen from around the middle of the twelfth century. The chronicle attributed to Archbishop Romuald of Salerno suggested that in the last years of his life King Roger may have become less tolerant, even claiming that 'he laboured in every conceivable way to convert Jews and Muslims to the faith of Christ'. While we might disregard this comment as a later attempt to depict the king as a good and conventional Christian, the trial and execution of a royal official, Philip of Mahdia, for apostasy, in the last months of the king's life, suggests that it may not have been far from the truth.[72] These developments coincided with the death in 1151 of the Greek Christian minister George of Antioch, who had close contacts with the Muslim world, and the growing influence in the royal administration of the Latin Christian from the mainland, Maio of Bari. Under William I Maio became the king's all-powerful chief minister. He was also, despite the slanders of the contemporary historian, the so-called 'Hugo Falcandus', seemingly a man of deep piety and, for a layman, considerable Christian learning, who might therefore have been

[69] *Storia de' Normanni di Amato di Montecassino*, ed. Vincenzo de Bartholomeis (FSI, Rome 1935), Bk. VIII, c. 14, p. 354.
[70] Henri Bresc, 'La propriété foncière des musulmans dans la Sicile du XIIe siècle: trois documents inédits', in his *Una stagione in Sicilia*, ed. Marcello Pacifico (2 vols., Palermo 2010), i.73-101.
[71] Nef, *Conquérir et Gouverner la Sicile Islamique*, pp. 568-75.
[72] *Romualdi Salernitani Chronicon*, ed. Carlo Alberto Garufi (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 2nd. ed., Città di Castello 1935), pp. 234-6. For this, and for much of what follows, David Abulafia, 'The End of Muslim Sicily', in *Muslims under Latin Rule 1100-1300*, ed. James M. Powell (Princeton 1990), pp. 103-33.

expected to favour his co-religionists.[73] After his murder in November 1160 Latin-rite bishops played an increasingly important role in the government of the kingdom. For most of the reign of King William II two out of the three royal *familiares* or principal ministers were Latin prelates, and after 1184 the appointment of Archbishop William of Monreale to their ranks made this three out of four.[74] Furthermore, unlike his predecessors, William II was actively involved in providing support for the Christians in the Holy Land, his fleet attacked Alexandria in 1174, and in 1182 also launched an abortive assault upon the Muslim island of Majorca, although this latter expedition may have been a response to piracy which interfered with Sicilian trade.[75] Yet the Spanish Muslim Ibn Jubayr, who visited the island in 1184, famously wrote that King William himself was 'admirable for his just conduct and the use he makes of the industry of the Muslims', and tolerant towards their religion, even when it was practised by those at the royal court who were nominally Christians.[76]

Whatever the king's personal views may have been – and later on in his account Ibn Jubayr suggests that he *was* prepared to force prominent Muslims to convert to Christianity - his testimony clearly indicates that by the 1180s the Muslim communities of Sicily felt themselves to be under threat.[77] By then, the demographic balance on the island had decisively changed, and active hostility to Muslims had increased. Christians had migrated to the island both from the southern mainland and from northern Italy. The north Italians settled especially in the south-east of the island, in the lands granted by King Roger to his maternal uncle Count Henry of Butera (who came from Liguria) and his descendants.[78] 'Falcandus' claimed that during the rebellion against Stephen of Perche in 1168, the *Lombardi* from eastern Sicily who continued to support the unpopular minister offered to raise '20,000 fighting men' to attack the rebels.[79] This figure must surely be grossly inflated, but the passage suggests that the northern immigrants were indeed numerous.

During the attempted coup against William I in March 1161 the insurgents and other Christian rioters in Palermo had murdered a number of Muslim townsmen, as well as several

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[73] D.J.A. Matthew, 'Maio of Bari's Commentary on the Lord's Prayer', in *Intellectual Life in the Middle Ages. Essays Presented to Margaret Gibson*, ed. L. Smith and B. Ward (London 1992), 19-44.
[74] Takayama, *Administration of the Norman Kingdom*, pp. 119-23.
[75] Abulafia, 'Norman kingdom of Africa' [above note 11], pp. 44-5
[76] *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. R.J.C. Broadhurst (London 1952), pp. 340-1.
[77] *Travels*, p. 357.
[78] C.A. Garufi, 'Gli Aleramici e i normanni in Sicilia e nelle Puglie', in *Centenario della nascità di Michele Amari* (2 vols., Palermo 1910), i.47-83; Abulafia, 'End of Muslim Sicily', p. 107.
[79] *Falcandus*, p. 155 [*Tyrants*, p. 208].

royal officers who were either Muslims themselves or converts suspected of being at heart loyal to their original religion.[80] The consequence was to drive most of the city's Muslims out of their homes into a separate quarter, where according to Ibn Jubayr, 'they live(d) apart from the Christians'.[81] In the troubles that followed the problems at Palermo in 1161 many of the Muslims in the southeast of the island were also massacred, and the remainder fled, a process of 'ethnic cleansing' in which the north Italian immigrants took the lead. In the words of Falcandus:

> 'They made unprovoked attacks on nearby places, and massacred both those who lived alongside the Christians in various towns as well as those who owned their own estates, forming distinct communities. They made no distinction of sex or age'.[82]

When William I moved to suppress these disturbances, trouble broke out in his army as his Christian troops attacked the Muslim soldiers, ignoring the king's orders to desist.[83] If thereafter actual violence towards the Muslims subsided, Ibn Jubayr's account suggests that in the 1180s the Sicilian Muslims still felt dangerously exposed and that they were tolerated only under sufferance. Some, he claimed, were under pressure to convert, or feared that their children might be persuaded to become Christians, while the Muslims of the island generally were cut off from the heartlands of their faith, and thus lacked intellectual and religious leadership. The situation of the Muslims may have varied from place to place: according to Ibn Jubayr one of the leading men of Messina claimed that he and his co-religionists were unable to practise their faith openly, whereas at Palermo and Trapani in the west there were still mosques, and at Trapani, although not at Palermo, Muslim prayer rituals could openly take place, for example to mark the end of Ramadan. Nonetheless, some of the leading Muslims of Trapani were still hoping to escape to Muslim lands.[84] However, valuable as Ibn Jubayr's account is, we should remember that he only visited the towns of the north coast of Sicily, and his contacts were largely among the educated bourgeoisie of these towns. He did not travel through the central and western interior where the bulk of the peasantry were Muslim, with an admixture of Arabic-speaking Christians, although had he done so he might well have found similar levels of disquiet. Most of the inhabitants of this region had been

[80] *Falcandus*, pp. 56-7 [*Tyrants*, pp. 109-10].
[81] *Travels*, p. 348.
[82] *Falcandus*, p. 70 [*Tyrant*s, p. 121].
[83] *Falcandus*, p. 73 [*Tyrants*, p. 124].
[84] *Travels*, p. 351.

made subject to the new royal church of Monreale, founded by William II as an abbey in 1174/6 and made an archbishopric in 1183. Monreale was the great prestige project of late Norman Sicily, on which William II lavished resources on an extraordinary scale; and the population of its vast lands was very largely Muslim.[85] Pope Lucius III in 1183 claimed that the establishment of this Christian church was 'an invincible fortress against the attack of the king's enemies'. [86] The pope doubtless meant this rhetorically, in that the king's primary defence was the monks' prayers, but when he referred to the king's foes, he may well have been thinking of the Muslims of Sicily, many of whom were henceforth to be directly ruled by a Christian archbishop. After the death of William II, there was a renewed attack on the Muslim community in Palermo, and those who escaped the Christian violence fled into the hills of the interior, situated within the Monreale lands.[87] King Tancred persuaded or forced some of their leaders to return to Palermo, but any subsequent peace was fragile and temporary.[88] It certainly did not last beyond 1198, when the death of the Empress Constance led to a renewed breakdown in political unity among the Christians. What may in 1189/90 have begun as flight from Christian violence turned into an insurrection, which lasted, with occasional intermissions, for more than a quarter of a century. [89] Ultimately it was to spell the death-knell of the Sicilian Muslims, at least as an organised community.

The relative tolerance accorded to non-Christians in the twelfth-century kingdom of Sicily had always been a matter of pragmatism rather than principle, and ─ despite the slanders made about them by their political enemies ─ the rulers appear all to have been conventionally pious Christians. Prominent Muslims may always have been under some pressure to convert, and those Arabic officials who worked for the royal administration were expected to be Christian. Despite this, their position remained precarious, at the mercy of the often vicious factional disputes at the royal court, and subject to widespread suspicion, not least from 'Falcandus', that their Christian faith was only a veneer. Hence his view of Caid Peter, the most prominent of these officials during the reign of William I: 'like all the palace eunuchs, this man was a Christian only in name and appearance, but a Muslim by conviction

[85] The place-names of this region are overwhelmingly Arabic, Nef, *Conquérir et Gouverner la Sicile Islamique*, pp. 387-91.
[86] Loud, *Latin Church* [note 24 above], pp. 338-9.
[87] *Annales Casinenses*, MGH SS xix.314.
[88] *Ryccardi de Sancto Germano Notarii Chronica*, ed. Carlo Alberto Garufi (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 2nd ed., Bologna 1938), p. 9.
[89] For a modern account of the rebellion, Ferdinando Meurici, 'Uno stato musulmano nell'Europea Cristiana del XIII secolo: l'emirato siciliano di Mohammed ibn Abbad', *Acta Historica et Archaeologia Medievale* 18 (1997), 257-80.

(*animo saracenus*)', a view that was only confirmed by Peter's flight to Almohad north Africa in 1167, fearful of assassination by his enemies at court.[90] As Jeremy Johns has suggested, the religious loyalties of these Arabic officials may have been complex, but the evidence of both Ibn Jubayr and the signature mottos on their documents, which drew on the Qurān, support the insinuations of the admittedly prejudiced 'Falcandus' that these conversions were out of necessity rather than from conviction.[91] Both Arabic Christian officials and those still Muslim were dangerously dependent on royal favour, which might be withdrawn at any time, as, according to Ibn Jubayr, it had recently been from Abu'l Qasim, whom he considered to be the leader of the Muslim community on the island.[92] But without the ruler, they were even more vulnerable. 'Falcandus', if indeed it was he who wrote the tract known as the 'Letter to Peter', in (probably) 1194 considered that:

> 'it would be difficult for the Christian population *not* to oppress the Muslims in a crisis as great as this, with fear of the king removed'.[93]

The *intifada* after 1189, or perhaps 1198 if Tancred did indeed succeed in restoring some measure of temporary stability, is poorly documented, and the course of the insurrection cannot be traced in any detail, although a letter of Innocent III to the caids of various named localities in western Sicily in September 1206, requesting them to make a truce with King Frederick and resume their fealty to him, suggests that this region was by then effectively independent.[94] This intervention certainly had little effect. In January 1211 the king complained that the Saracens on the Monreale lands were traitors and rebels who had disregarded his authority, while in a privilege issued to the archbishop three months later he noted that the Christian inhabitants of the Monreale estates had taken refuge in Palermo and other fortified centres.[95] But Frederick's determination to secure the imperial title that his father had held meant that he spent the next eight years in Germany, and in the intervening period the situation in western Sicily grew steadily worse. Archbishop Carus of Monreale was lamenting the 'great poverty' of his once rich see in 1215.[96] In March 1221, shortly

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[90] *Falcandus*, pp. 25, 98-9 [*Tyrants*, pp. 78, 147].
[91] Johns, *Arabic Administration*, pp. 234, 247-52.
[92] *Travels*, p. 358.
[93] *Falcandus*, p. 173 [*Tyrants*, p. 255]. Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, p. 276.
[94] *Die Register Innocenz' III. 9 Pontifikatsjahr 1206/1207*, ed. Andrea Sommerlechner *et alii* (Vienna 2004), pp. 283-5 no. 158.
[95] *Die Urkunden Friedrichs II*, i *1198-1212*, 273-4 no. 141, 278-80 no. 144.
[96] Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, iii.1194.

before his return to Sicily and in response to repeated archiepiscopal complaints, the emperor ordered his officials to return to the archbishop's jurisdiction the many Monreale peasants who had fled from their villages to seek other lords.[97] By this time, too, much of the Agrigento region was in the hands of the rebels, who kept the bishop a prisoner for some fourteen months before ransoming him for 5000 *tarì*. A much later witness recalled that at this time the Christian inhabitants of the Agrigento region did not dare to leave the places where they lived to cultivate their fields or vines, while (presumably after his release) the bishop and his officials were afraid to travel through the diocese.[98] The prior of St. Maria of Adriano recorded in 1219 that his community had been forced to abandon their monastery 'because of fear of our enemies', and take refuge at a church just outside the walls of Agrigento, given to them by the bishop.[99] It was only on Frederick's return to the island in 1221 that he could set about suppressing the insurrection. That it then took him three years' campaigning to do so shows how serious it was.[100]

Before the last resistance was over, Frederick began to deport the rebels to northern Apulia, where they were re-settled at and around Lucera in the Capitanata. There would seem to have been two phases of deportations, c. 1223-6, and then, after a renewed Muslim rebellion in Sicily, in which the Muslims once again took refuge in the hills, in 1246.[101] Even before this second rebellion, the emperor was taking steps to repopulate western Sicily, for example by encouraging people from Lombardy 'threatened by war' there (presumably therefore imperial supporters at risk from the resurgent Lombard League) to settle at Corleone in 1237.[102] Even in the late Middle Ages the local dialect there was notable for north Italian loan words and usages.[103]

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[97] *Die Urkunden Friedrichs II*, iv *1220-1222*, pp. 375-6 no. 809.
[98] *Più antiche carte dell'archivio capitolare di Agrigento* [above, note 9], pp. 155-71 no. 78, at pp. 159, 165 (testimony in a court case of 1260); and the *Libellus de Successione Pontificum Agrigenti*, in *ibid*. p. 309. Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, iii.1153, suggests that the bishop's capture was c. 1220/1, but this dating is pure supposition, and it seems more probable that it was some years earlier.
[99] *Più antiche carte dell'archivio capitolare di Agrigento*, pp. 100-2 no. 48.
[100] *Annales Siculi*, in *Malaterra*, p. 117. Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, pp. 281-3.
[101] This second rebellion, in particular, is poorly documented, but see *Annales Siculi,* p. 119, and J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* (6 vols. in 12 parts, Paris 1852-61), vi(1).436-7, 471-2. Frederick announced the surrender of the Muslim rebels in a letter to the Infante Alfonso of Castile in July 1246, *Acta Imperii inedita saeculi XIII et XIV*, ed. E. Winkelmann (2 vols., Innsbruck 1880-5), i.339 no. 387.
[102] Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, v(1).128-31; cf. also *ibid*., vi(2).695-7 (February 1249), which attests to the success of these colonisation activities: *et insimul cum non paucis hominibus de Lombardia ad nostrum Sicilie regnum transfretaverunt*.
[103] Henri Bresc, 'L'inventaire d'un éleveur Sicilien à Corleone en 1445', in his *Una stagione in Sicilia*, ii.703.

It has usually been assumed that the successive deportations to Lucera resulted in the more or less complete elimination of the Muslim population of Sicily, as was suggested, for example, by the contemporary chronicle of pseudo-Jamsilla.[104] Yet the more we think about this argument, the more problematic it becomes. Abulafia has suggested that there may have been 250,000 Muslims on the island at the time of the Norman conquest, a plausible enough estimate, although impossible to substantiate.[105] For what it is worth, Roger of Howden, a contemporary witness who had been to Sicily, claimed that 'more than 100,000 pagans, [both] men and women' took refuge in the mountains after the death of William II.[106] The Muslim exile al-Rummānī alleged in 1230 that 170,000 Muslims had been transported to the mainland.[107] Yet there can surely be no question of the colony at Lucera, even if it included some satellite settlements, which it did, having anything like such a population.[108] Admittedly, Richard of S. Germano alleged that in 1237 the emperor sent 10,000 Muslims from Lucera to join his siege of Ravenna.[109] Similarly Saba Malaspina claimed that there were 10,000 Muslim bowmen in King Manfred's army in 1266.[110] But if we were assume that in either case this suspiciously round figure was anywhere near accurate (and also assuming that the entire military manpower of Lucera at this time was mobilised), this would imply a total population of at least 40,000.[111] This would have been as large as, if not larger than, contemporary Naples, and almost as large as Palermo, which seems improbable, and even more so when one remembers that in 1237 the second wave of deportations had yet to take place. The contemporary Ferraria chronicle, meanwhile, said that 15,000 Muslims were

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[104] Niccolo Jamsilla, *De Rebus Gestis Frederici II Imperatoris eiusque filiorum Conradi et Manfredi Apulie et Sicilie Regum*, in *Cronisti e scrittori sincroni napoletani*, ed. Giuseppe Del Re (2 vols., Naples 1845-68), ii.105: *omnes penitus Saracenos ipsos in Apuliam ad habitandum sub debita servitute in locum qui dicitur Luceria misit*.

[105] Abulafia, 'End of Muslim Sicily', p. 104.

[106] *Gesta Regis Ricardi*, in *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols., Rolls Series, London 1867), ii.141.

[107] Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, p. 284.

[108] Thus Gregory IX was complaining about damage done by the Muslims to a church at Foiano, some 35 km. from Lucera, in December 1232, Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, iv(1).405-7; and a village in the neighbouring diocese of Fiorentino had been occupied by the Muslims by August 1236, Cod. Vat. Lat. 13491 [a file of charters (from the monastery of St. Sophia, Benevento), rather than a manuscript], document no. 28.

[109] *Ryccardi de Sancto Germano* [see note 88], p. 195.

[110] *Die Chronik von Saba Malaspina*, ed. Walter Koller and August Nitschke (MGH SS 35, Hanover 1999), p. 170.

[111] According to Malaspina, Manfred had earlier stationed some 2000 Muslim troops at S. Germano to resist the initial Angevin invasion, many of whom had been killed, *Chronik*, pp. 160, 164. If these were separate from the 10,000 in his army later, then taken literally these figures might imply a total population of about 50,000 at Lucera, which seems even more unlikely.

transported to Lucera, which appears more realistic.[112] Other references to contingents of Muslim troops also suggest much smaller numbers than those hitherto quoted.[113] Furthermore, when many years later Charles II of Anjou had the Muslim colony at Lucera suppressed, and its inhabitants dispersed, the numbers involved appear relatively few. Thus on 13th January 1302 King Charles issued orders for the transfer and sale of various enslaved Saracens from Lucera to other towns in coastal Apulia. These various contingents amounted to some 620 persons. Clearly this was nowhere near the entire population of Lucera, but the relatively modest numbers listed in this administrative document are nonetheless suggestive.[114] It may be that recent archaeological investigations in this region will alter our perspective, but preliminary results do not seem to show the impact of Muslim settlement in the Capitanata to have been numerically that significant.[115]

Of course the numbers given by medieval chroniclers are notoriously unrealistic, and ought always be treated with caution. We need, however, to ask ourselves whether it was within the capacity of any medieval kingdom, even one so relatively well administered as that of Sicily, to organise the more or less complete transportation of a very large number of people. But if the forcible removal of all the Muslims of Sicily to Lucera, as opposed to several thousand overt rebels, seems unlikely – what did happen to the Muslims of the island? Some may have found their way to other areas of the south Italian mainland –they certainly had by the end of the thirteenth-century.[116] Others probably emigrated to Muslim north Africa, but these would usually have been from the prosperous minority who had the financial resources to obtain a passage, perhaps especially among townsmen. Still more

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[112] *Chronicon Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis Sanctae Mariae de Ferrariae*, ed. A. Gaudenzi (Naples 1888), p. 38. Julie Ann Taylor, *Muslims in Medieval Italy. The Colony at Lucera* (Lanham, MD, 2003), pp. 40-1, suggests that Lucera had a population of 15/20,000.

[113] John the Moor led an army of 1000 Muslim *armigeri* and 300 German knights to seize the castle at Lucera in 1254, Jamsilla, *De Rebus Gestis*, p. 140. Charles I had 800 Saracen archers with him in the army that besieged Messina in the autumn of 1282, Malaspina, *Chronik*, p. 324.

[114] *Codice diplomatico dei Saraceni di Lucera*, ed. P. Egidi (Naples 1917), p. 336 no. 659. The numbers despatched to each of the various towns was as follows: Barletta 390, Bitonto 51, Canne 10, Canosa 1, Giovenazzo 42, Molfetta 22, Ruvo 59, Terlizzi 23, and Trani 22.

[115] See Lukas Clemens and Michael Matheus, 'Christen und Muslime in der Capitanata im 13. Jahrhundert. Eine Projectskizze', *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven un Bibliotheken* 88 (2008), 82-118. Prof Clemens discussed some of the results in a paper at the Leeds International Medieval Congress in July 2015, 'Tertiveri in Northern Apulia: from a Bishop's See to a Muslim Knightly Residence', in which he reported on the results of excavations in a small town granted in 1296 as a fief by Charles II to a Muslim noble, Abd al'Aziz, who later converted to Christianity and survived the disaster of 1301. For him, see *Codice diplomatico dei Saraceni di Lucera*, p. 78 no. 206, and pp. 207-9 nos. 443-4, 446.

[116] Thus in December 1300 Charles II ordered that 'all the Muslims, both men and women, who are living at Melfi, Venosa and other places in the Basilicata', were to be arrested and sold as slaves, *Codice diplomatico dei Saraceni di Lucera*, pp. 196-7 no. 417. But it is not clear whether these were long-time residents or recent refugees.

probably converted, back to the faith of their ancestors, and may well have remained on the island, absorbed within the Christian population. Presumably those Arabic-speakers who were already Christians, such as the considerable community that existed at Corleone in the twelfth-century, would have found it relatively easy to merge into the general Christian population.[117] This would especially have been the case given that many Arabic Sicilians would seem already to have been bi-lingual, or at least had a hybrid *lingua franca* in common with their Christian neighbours.[118] Some of those who were transferred, or perhaps voluntarily emigrated, to the mainland may also have converted, and blended into the Christian majority in a variety of locations – although these converts are unlikely to have been as numerous as Frederick himself claimed when alleging (disingenuously?) that the establishment of Lucera would facilitate conversion.[119] Some Muslims, perhaps, quite a few, died during the bitter fighting in the years before 1224, but again, how many? Unless we assume that there were Sbrenitsa-style massacres, undocumented apart from in the implausible claims of al-Rummānī, it seems unlikely that tens of thousands of Muslims perished.

The problem is more intractable because we know that there *were* significant structural changes in western Sicily during the thirteenth century. Many existing settlements were abandoned. Of some eighteen population sites attested by archaeology in the Segesta region (between Alcamo and Trapani) during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, only one, Calatafimi, was still inhabited in the late thirteenth.[120] In 1239, during the lull between the first and second Muslim revolts, Frederick II was encouraging Muslims to go to Palermo, whether as the first step towards their relocation to Apulia, or to repopulate the city and gather craftsmen there, we do not know.[121] In 1255 the bishop of Agrigento complained that his lands were difficult to cultivate because of the loss of the villeins whom Frederick II had sent to Apulia.[122] At least 17 villages documented in this diocese during the twelfth century

[117] For these, Johns, 'The Greek Church and the Conversion of Muslims in Norman Sicily' [above, note 14], 150-1; Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians*, pp. 93-6.
[118] Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians*, pp. 82-3, 168-71; Nef, *Conquérir et Gouverner la Sicile Islamique*, pp. 80-91, 546-9. Gregory IX, in a letter to the emperor in August 1233, claimed many of the Muslims transported to the mainland spoke or understood Italian, although since he was hoping that this would encourage conversion there was clearly an element of wishful thinking here, *Historia Diplomatica*, iv(1).452.
[119] Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, iv(2).831 (April 1236).
[120] Alessandra Molinari and Ilaria Neri, 'Dall'età tardo-imperiale al XIII secolo: i risultati delle ricognizioni di superficie nel territorio di Calatafimi / Segesta (1995-1999)', *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome. Moyen Âge* 116 (2004), 124-7.
[121] Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica*, v(1).427.
[122] *Più antiche carte dell'archivio capitolare di Agrigento*, pp. 154-5 no. 77.

no longer appear in the considerably more abundant records of the thirteenth, while of more than a hundred villages and hamlets attested on the Monreale lands during the twelfth century, only seven are listed in the surviving late thirteenth-century tax records.[123] Monreale increasingly leased out its lands to middlemen, many of them absentees living in Palermo, and the villages of the earlier period were replaced by *masserie* – farmsteads. The diversified agrarian economy of the twelfth century gave way to a wheat-growing monoculture. [124] Furthermore, the development of pastoral transhumance also attests to the relative emptiness of rural Sicily in the later Middle Ages.[125]

It is possible that this flight from the countryside had already begun pre-1200,[126] and the problems after the revolt of 1282 may have intensified the process, although this last phase probably had more impact in eastern Sicily than in the west of the island. [127] There was certainly a concentration of the remaining population in fewer and larger settlements, and a handful of agro-towns like Corleone, Salemi, Alcamo and Caltavuturo may well have increased substantially in size. Malaspina estimated the population of Corleone to be c. 3000 in 1282, while modern historians suggest that the true figure might have been considerably higher.[128] However, most historians have also argued that the overall population of the island declined substantially: a total of perhaps 640,000 in the late twelfth century (according to Illuminato Peri), and just over 400,000 (Henri Bresc's estimate) a century later.[129] Even Stephan Epstein, who has argued for a much higher population figure for the late thirteenth

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[123] Ferdinando Meurici, 'L'insediamento nella Sicilia di Federico II. Eredità normanna e innovazioni: abbandano di centri abitati, nuove fondazioni urbane, costruzione di castelli', in *Un regno nell'impero. I caratteri originari del regno normanno nell'età sveva: persistenze e differenze (1994-1250)*, ed. Pasquale Cordasco and Francesco Violante (Atti delle diciottesime giornate normanno-sveve, Bari-Barletta-Dubrovnik 14-17 ottobre 2008: Bari 2010), pp. 403-92, at pp. 420, 424-5.

[124] H. Bercher, A. Courteaux & J. Mouton, 'Une Abbaye latine dans la société musulmane: Monreale au XII^{e} siècle', *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 34 (1979), 525-47.

[125] Henri Bresc, *Un Monde Méditerranéen. Économie et Société en Sicile 1300-1450* (2 vols., Rome 1986), i.139-54.

[126] A charter of January 1186 refers to the flight of villeins from a village on the lands of the Bishop of Patti, White, *Latin Monasticism* [above, note 31], pp. 278-9 no. 36. Molinari [above, note 120], p. 127, suggests that the open settlements in the Segesta region were abandoned in the late twelfth-century when the Muslim population moved to defensible hill-top sites – one might suggest that this was at the time of the original Muslim revolt c. 1190. More generally, Illuminato Peri, *Uomini, città e campagne in Sicilia dall' XI al XIII secolo* (Rome 1978), pp. 51-5.

[127] Meurici, 'L'insediamento nella Sicilia', pp. 438-9, 442.

[128] Malaspina, *Chronik*, p. 290. Henri Bresc, 'Le marchand de Corleone', in his *Una stagione in Sicilia*, i.433, suggests a population of 5,000 / 5,700 in the late fourteenth-century. This is unlikely to have been much larger than that of a century earlier. For the wider context, Peri, *Uomini, città e campagne in Sicilia*, pp. 235-42.

[129] Peri, *Uomini, città e campagne in Sicilia*, p. 112; Bresc, *Un Monde Méditerranéen*, i. 60 (for the detailed calculations underlying this estimate, *ibid*., pp. 59-68.

century, admits that western Sicily was in decline.[130] Strikingly, when during this period it was necessary to translate older documents from Arabic into Latin the only people who knew enough Arabic to do this were members of the Jewish community on the island.[131] The Muslims had therefore disappeared from Sicily – but since it seems most unlikely that they can all have been settled in one community at Lucera, and none of the other explanations for their dispersal tentatively advanced above are entirely convincing, this still leaves us with the very pertinent question – where did they go?

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[130] Stephan R. Epstein, *An Island for Itself. Economic Development and Social Change in Late Medieval Sicily* (Cambridge 1992), pp. 50, 72-3.
[131] Abulafia, 'End of Muslim Sicily', pp. 117-19, 132.