ROGER II
AND THE CREATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SICILY

Translated and annotated by Graham A. Loud

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PREFACE

The Norman kingdom of Sicily is one of the most fascinating and unusual areas of interest within the discipline of medieval history, but until a few years ago those in the anglophone world who wished to study it in any depth were hamstrung by the lack of appropriate literature in English. For many years the only professional historian writing in English on Norman Italy was Evelyn Jamison (1877–1972), to whose pioneering researches on the royal administration and the south Italian nobility we are still indebted. She, however, ploughed a lonely furrow. That lamentable situation has begun to change thanks to the sterling efforts of a number of contemporary scholars, notably David Abulafia, Joanna Drell, John Howe, Jeremy Johns, Donald Matthew, Alex Metcalfe, Paul Oldfield, Chuck Stanton, Valerie Ramseyer and Patricia Skinner, to all of whom I am most grateful, both for their work and for their friendship and collaboration over many years.

But to understand and appreciate the topic, one also needs to read the primary sources, which are often bristling with technical difficulties (and not just linguistic ones). Until recently, none of these had appeared in English translation. In an attempt to remedy this situation I published in this series, twelve years ago, in collaboration with the late Thomas Wiedemann, *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by 'Hugo Falcandus', 1154–69*. This present book is a companion volume to *Falcandus*, covering the immediately preceding period that saw the foundation of the kingdom of Sicily. It is a substantial volume, for which I must beg the forgiveness both of my readers and of my publisher, but I hope the interest and completeness of the subject matter justifies this. I have always believed that where possible it is better to read, and try to understand, the whole of a text rather than extracts chosen at an editor's whim. One must, obviously, compromise to some extent, especially when dealing with lengthy chronicles only a little of which are about the reign of King Roger, but I make no apology for presenting the complete texts of Alexander of Telese and Falco of Benevento, the principal historians contemporary with the king's reign. It is, for example, impossible to understand the way Falco wrote his chronicle, or his concern with the well-being of his native city, if one omits his account of events before 1127.

These texts were the first two that I translated for my undergraduate special subject on the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, and I must begin by thanking all the students who have studied and discussed them at the University of Leeds since 1989. I am also most grateful to the staff of the Brotherton Library at Leeds, and especially to Neil Plummer and Jane Saunders for their careful stewardship

of the History shelves, and to my colleagues in the School of History for allowing me a semester's study leave to complete this book. In preparing it I have received help from many people, but especially Dione Clementi and Edoardo d'Angelo who presented me with copies of the modern editions of Alexander and Falco; the latter also patiently answered innumerable queries over the years, about Falco and many other matters too. My debt to the late Dr Clementi's commentary on Alexander will be apparent from the footnotes, and it was her contacts that first introduced me to the pleasures of archival work in Italy, for which, I fear, I never properly thanked her in her lifetime.

I am also grateful to Dott. Marino Zabbia for advice regarding the chronicle of Romuald, the new edition of which he is preparing. My work at Montecassino was made possible by don Faustino Avagliano, at Cava by the late don Simeone Leone, don Leone Morinelli and Signor Enzo Cioffe, and at Benevento by Prof. Elio Galasso. Prof. Vittorio de Donato allowed me to consult his unpublished thesis while I was working at the British School in Rome in 1990, during which time and on earlier visits too I was much helped by the kindness of the then Director, Richard Hodges, and the Librarian, Valerie Scott. My colleague Ian Moxon has been, as ever, invaluable in assisting me with translation problems, and has saved me from many egregious mistakes. My former research student Paul Oldfield, now a considerable scholar in his own right, and my current PhD students Isabella Bolognese and Benjamin Pohl have all been a great help and even greater encouragement – Isabella not least in meticulously proof-reading the translation of Falco's Chronicle. Hubert Houben, Alex Metcalfe and Paul Oldfield have all read and commented upon the introduction, and Alex has also checked my translation of the selections from al-Idrîsî. To all of them I am most grateful – needless to say, the faults that remain are entirely my own responsibility. And, as ever, Kate has been the prop and mainstay of this work, as well as the ever resourceful solver of computing problems.

G.A. Loud
Leeds and Lyme Regis
August 2010

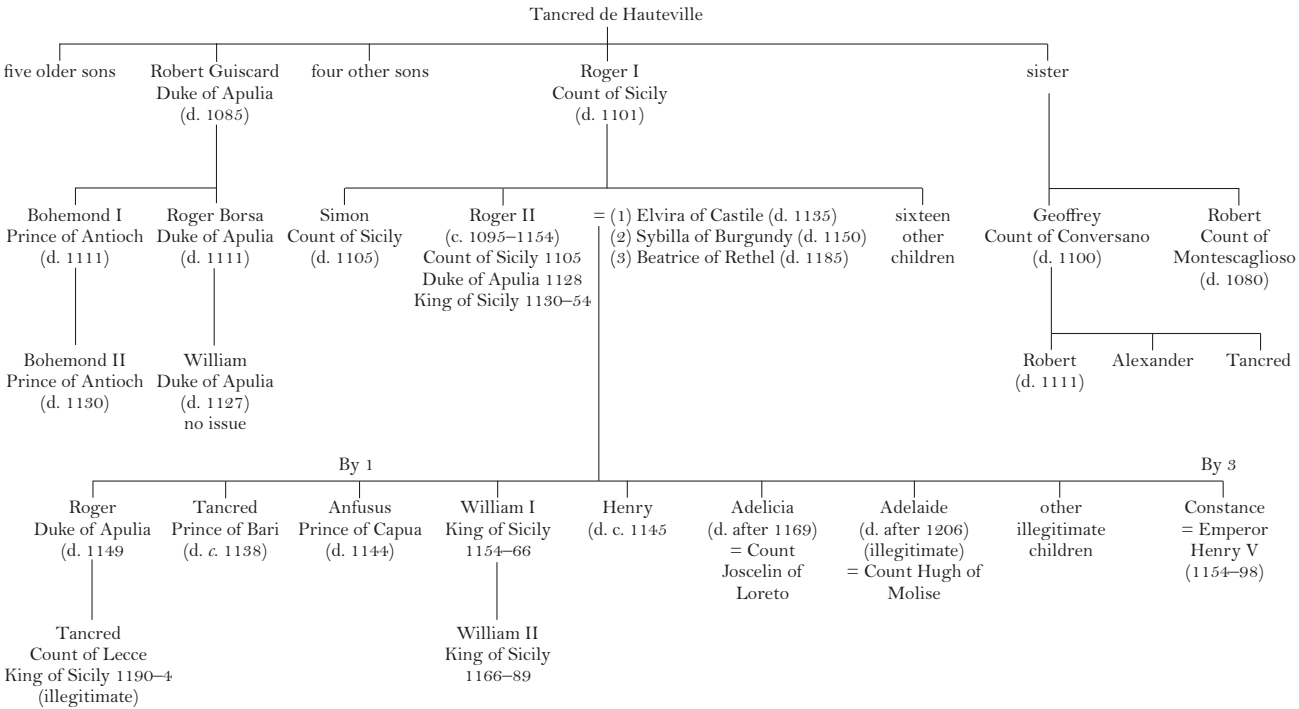
ABBREVIATIONS

Al. Tel.	*Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Siciliae atque Calabriae atque Apulie*, ed. Ludovica de Nava, commentary by Dione R. Clementi (FSI 1991)
Annalista Saxo	[*Die*] *Reichschronik des Annalista Saxo*, ed. Klaus Naß (MGH SS xxxvii, Hanover 2000)
Bertolini, 'Annales'	Ottorino Bertolini, 'Gli Annales Beneventani', *Bullettino dell'istituto storico italiano per il medio evo* 42 (1923), 1–163
Catalogus Baronum	*Catalogus Baronum*, ed. E.M. Jamison (FSI, Rome 1972)
Cava	Archivio della badia della Santissima Trinità, Cava dei Tirreni
Chartes de Troia	*Les Chartes de Troia (1024–1266)*, ed. Jean-Marie Martin (Codice diplomatico pugliese xxi, Bari 1976)
Chron. Cas.	*Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, ed. Hartmut Hoffmann (MGH SS xxxiv, Hanover 1980)
Chron. Casauriense	*Chronicon Casauriense*, ed. L.A. Muratori (RIS ii(2), Milan 1726), 775–916.
Chron. S. Sophiae	*Chronicon Sanctae Sophiae (Cod. Vat. Lat. 4939)*, ed. Jean-Marie Martin (2 vols, FSI, Rome 2000)
Cod. Dipl. Aversa	*Codice diplomatico normanno di Aversa*, ed. Alfonso Gallo (Naples 1927)
Cod. Dipl. Barese	*Codice diplomatico barese* (19 vols, Bari 1897–1950)
Cod. Dipl. Verginiano	*Codice diplomatico verginiano*, ed. P.M. Tropeano (13 vols, Montevergine 1977–2001)
Ekkehard	*Frutolfs und Ekkehards Chroniken und die anonyme Kaiserchronick*, ed. F-J. Schmale and I. Schmale-Ott (Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelaters, Freiherr von Stein Gedächtnisausgabe, 15: Darmstadt 1972)
Falcandus	*La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, ed. G.B. Siragusa (FSI, Rome 1897)

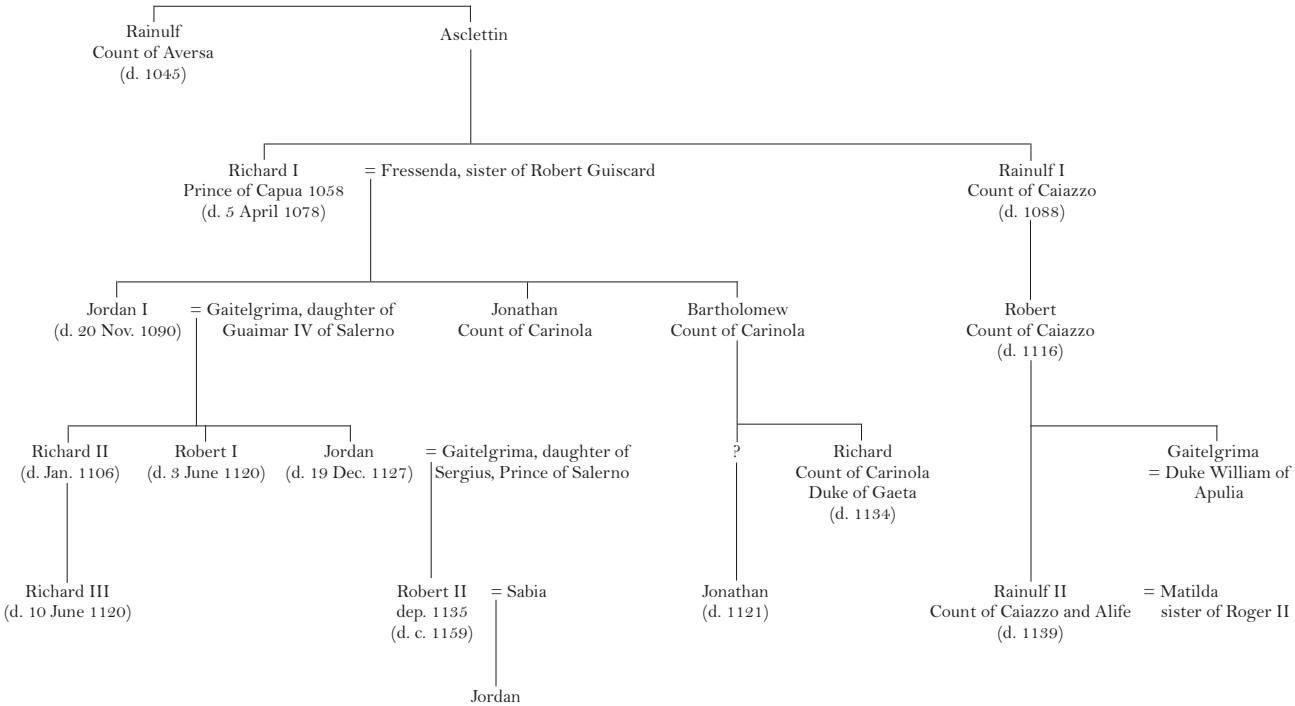
Falco	Falco of Benevento, *Chronicon Beneventanum*, ed. Edoardo d'Angelo (Florence 1998)
FSI	Fonti per la storia d'Italia
Garufi, *Documenti inediti*	*I Documenti inediti dell'epoca normanna in Sicilia*, ed. Carlo Alberto Garufi (Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia, Ser. I.18, Palermo 1899)
Gattula, *Accessiones*	Erasmo Gattula, *Accessiones ad Historiam Abbatiae Casinensis* (Venice 1734)
Italia Pontificia	*Italia Pontificia*, ed. P.F. Kehr (10 vols, Berlin 1905–74: vol. ix, ed. W. Holtzmann, 1963; vol. x, ed. D. Girgensohn, 1974)
J-L	*Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ad annum MCXCVIII*, ed. P. Jaffé, S. Loewenfeld *et alii* (2 vols, Leipzig 1885–8)
Lothar, *Diplomata*	*Lotharii Diplomata*, ed. E. von Ottenthal and S. Hirsch (MGH Diplomatum Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae, viii, Berlin 1927)
Loud, 'Calendar'	G.A. Loud, 'A calendar of the diplomas of the Norman Princes of Capua', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 49 (1981), 99–143
Malaterra	*De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis, auctore Gaufredo Malaterra*, ed. Ernesto Pontieri (RIS, 2nd edn, Bologna 1927–8)
Mansi, *Concilia*	G.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Concilium Nova et Amplissima Collectio* (31 vols, Venice 1759–98)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, following the usual conventions, e.g. SS = Scriptores; SRG = Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, etc.
MPL	J.P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 221 vols, Paris 1844–64
Necrologio del Cod. Cas. 47	*I Necrologi Cassinesi* I *Il Necrologio del Codice Cassinese 47*, ed. Mauro Inguanez (FSI, Rome 1941)
Necrologio di S. Matteo	*Necrologio del Liber Confratrum di S. Matteo di Salerno*, ed. C.A. Garufi (FSI, Rome 1922)
Orderic	*The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols, Oxford 1969–80)
Reg. Neap. Arch. Mon.	*Regii Neapolitani Archivii Monumenta* (6 vols, Naples 1854–61)

RIS	Rerum Italicarum Scriptores
Roger II Diplomata	*Rogerii II Regis Diplomata Latina*, ed. Carl-Richard Brühl (Codex Diplomaticus Regni Siciliae, Ser. I.ii(1), Cologne 1987)
Romuald	*Romualdi Salernitani Chronicon*, ed. C.A. Garufi (RIS, 2nd edn, Città di Castello 1935)
Tyrants	*The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by 'Hugo Falcandus' 1154–69*, trans. G.A. Loud and T.E.J. Wiedemann (Manchester 1998)
Ughelli, *Italia Sacra*	*Italia Sacra*, ed. F. Ughelli (2nd edn by N. Colletti, 10 vols, Venice 1717–21)
William I Diplomata	*Guillelmi I. Regis Diplomata*, ed. Horst Enzensberger (Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, Ser. I.iii, Cologne 1996)

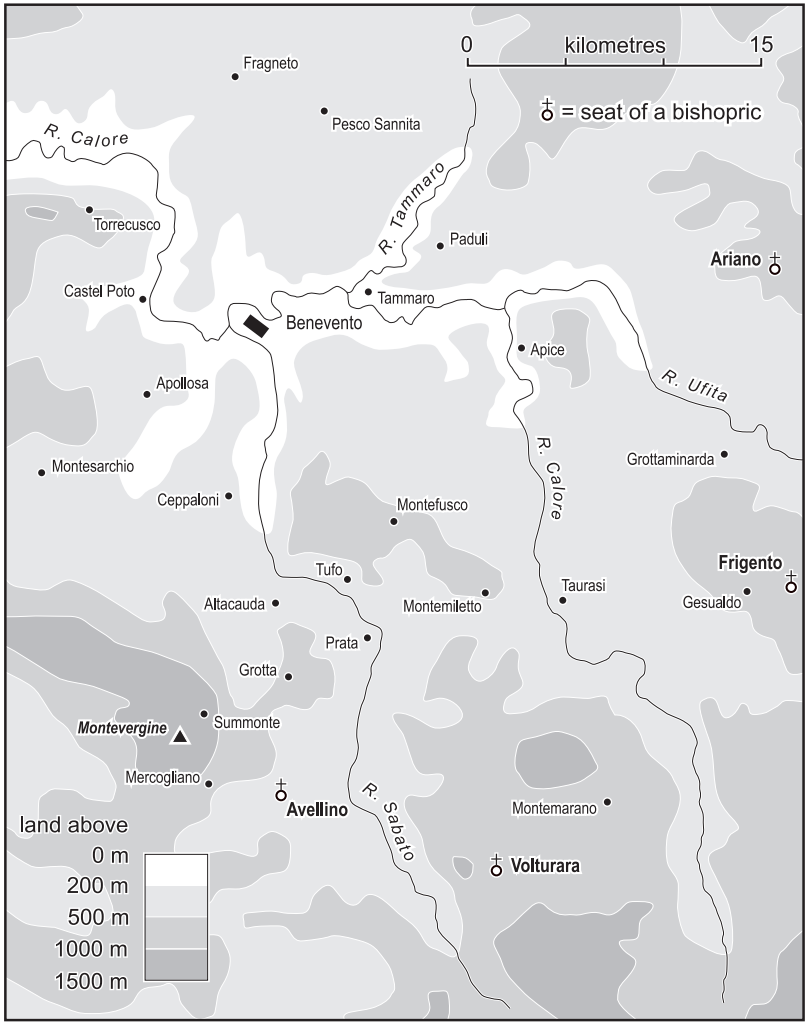
The family of King Roger



The family of the Norman princes of Capua



Map 1 Sicily and southern Italy



Map 2 The Terra Beneventana

INTRODUCTION

Count Roger II of Sicily was crowned as the first king of the new kingdom of Sicily in Palermo cathedral on Christmas Day 1130. The consequences of that action were profound. The unification of the island of Sicily with the southern Italian mainland in the years after 1127 altered the balance of power in the Mediterranean and had a major impact on the power politics of Europe in the central Middle Ages. Furthermore, the kingdom thus created lasted, despite terrible and prolonged internal conflicts in the later Middle Ages, for more than seven hundred years, until its incorporation into the *Risorgimento* kingdom of Italy by Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1860. One could therefore hardly deny that the process by which this new political entity was erected and consolidated was one of great importance and interest for the history of medieval Europe. Furthermore, the contemporary sources which describe the creation of the kingdom (here translated into English for the first time) are of unusual interest, not least in that the two principal narrative texts, the 'History of King Roger' of Abbot Alexander of Telese and the Chronicle of Falco of Benevento, reveal diametrically opposing views of King Roger and his state-building.

The reputation of King Roger

King Roger was a controversial figure, in his lifetime and afterwards. Most contemporary commentators had a high opinion of his character and abilities, but not necessarily of his rule. In part, this was a product of the circumstances in which the kingdom was created, and of the endorsement of that creation by a schismatic pope whose pontificate was deemed illegitimate. German writers were hostile because in their eyes the erection of the kingdom, in territory which they considered to be subject to their empire and without the sanction of the emperor, was illegitimate under any circumstances. Bernard of Clairvaux seized on this issue when he wrote to Emperor Lothar during the papal schism.

> It is the duty of Caesar to uphold his own crown against the machinations of that Sicilian usurper. Just as it is to the injury of Christ that a man of Jewish

> race has seized for himself the See of Peter, so it is against the interests of Caesar that anyone should make himself the king of Sicily.[1]

Others were critical of how Roger ruled. Even in an age of stern, centralising monarchs anxious to strengthen their rule and consolidate their kingdoms, his harshness seemed to many to stray beyond the bounds that were generally acceptable. Orderic Vitalis, writing in Normandy in the early 1140s, encapsulated this view.

> He [*Roger*] took possession of the duchy of Apulia against the wishes of the inhabitants. Later he fought against all who attempted to resist him and cruelly suppressed them with great forces; he spared no man, but struck down kinsmen and strangers alike and, stripping them of their wealth, crushed and humbled them. ... So with passionate violence he destroyed men near and far and, by cruelly causing much bloodshed and mourning, grew to greatness.[2]

Otto of Freising – half-brother of King Conrad III and thus virtually official spokesman of the German crown, a man of deep learning and historical sensibility – went further still, comparing his 'works of cruelty' to those of ancient Sicilian tyrants. Another contemporary German historian wrote that Emperor Lothar in 1137 refused Roger's offers to negotiate a settlement whereby he or one of his sons might hold Apulia from the emperor: 'he flatly refused to hand over that province to a semi-pagan tyrant'. (Quite what gave rise to this accusation is uncertain: was it Roger's support for the anti-pope, or his toleration of non-Christians, or his employment of Muslim soldiers?) Falco of Benevento, who saw his actions from much closer to hand than these writers north of the Alps, waxed lyrical and wrathful over the cruelties inflicted by the king and his troops, exclaiming at one point 'not even Nero, the cruellest emperor among the pagans, had inflicted such slaughter among Christians'.[3]

And yet there was another side to the coin, for shrewder and less biased commentators recognised that Roger's actions were a product of the circumstances of his time. To his credit, much as he disliked Roger and his kingdom, Otto of Freising did admit that there were divergent views about the king.

1 *The Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, trans. Bruno Scott James (London 1953), 210 no. 142. Anacletus II, the pope whom Bernard opposed, was descended from a family of Jewish converts.

2 *Orderic*, vi.432–5.

3 Below, 208, 275. For a wider examination of this theme, Wieruszowski (1963).

> There are, however, those who say that he acts rather out of a concern for justice rather than from tyranny, for they say that he loves peace more than all other princes, and it is for the preservation of this that they wish him to repress rebels with such severity. Still others say he is moved by love of money, in which indeed he exceeds all other western kings, rather than peace and justice.[4]

Yet to churchmen, such as Otto, the bringing of peace was the justification for secular government in an imperfect world. As we shall see, that was good enough reason for Alexander of Telese to support King Roger.

Perhaps most interesting was the verdict of a historian writing some years later, probably in the time of Roger's grandson William II (king 1166–89), whose moral outlook appears to have been formed less by conventional Christian ideas than by his reading of classical texts, the so-called 'Hugo Falcandus'. We do not know who this writer may have been, and while he was probably a native of southern Italy not all modern scholars concur in this opinion.[5] He was, however, a well-informed insider at the Sicilian court, and no admirer of the later Sicilian kings and their rule. However, his opinion of King Roger was notably balanced.

> Some writers categorise many of his actions as tyrannical and call him inhuman because he imposed on many men penalties that were severe, and not prescribed by the laws. It is my opinion that as a prudent man who was circumspect in all things, he intentionally behaved in this way when his monarchy was recently established so that wicked men should not be able to wheedle any impunity for their crimes; and that while those who deserved well (to whom he showed himself mild) should not be discouraged by excessive severity, there should nevertheless be no place for contempt as a result of excessive mildness. And if perhaps he acted somewhat harshly against some, I suppose that he was forced to it by some necessity. For there was no other way in which the savagery of a rebellious people could have been suppressed, or the daring of traitors restrained.[6]

4 *Otto Episcopi Frisingensis Chronica sive Historia de Duabus Civitatibus*, ed. Adolf Hofmeister (MGH SRG, Hanover 1912), VII.23, pp. 346–7.

5 There have been several attempts to identify 'Hugo Falcandus'. Franke (2008) suggests the author was the well-known Anglo-Norman scholar Peter of Blois, known to have been in Sicily in 1167–8; D'Angelo (2009) puts forward the claims of Peter's brother, William, who was for a time abbot of the monastery of S. Maria of Matina in Calabria. D'Angelo's case in particular is carefully and persuasively argued, but hardly conclusive; there remain grounds to suggest Falcandus was a native of the *regno*, not an incomer whose stay there was relatively brief.

6 *Tyrants*, 58.

Alexander of Telese suggested that Roger deliberately cultivated an image of restraint and remoteness, that he might be feared by evildoers (which in this context meant above all potential rebels and political opponents), and the chronicle attributed to Archbishop Romuald of Salerno said that he was more feared than loved by his subjects. But 'Romuald' added, echoing Alexander and Falcandus, that he was 'in private kindly, generous with honours and rewards to those faithful to him'.[7]

Therefore, insofar as we can approach the king's character and behaviour, the picture given by contemporaries is surprisingly consistent – and one should stress that there is no indication of interdependence between these various sources. That his rule was often harsh was a product of the circumstances in which the kingdom of Sicily was created, and the long struggle that King Roger waged against those who opposed him. For, though crowned in 1130, he was only securely in control of his kingdom from 1139 onwards. Even then, the external relations of the new kingdom remained difficult: the German Empire remained consistently, and the Byzantine Empire intermittently, hostile, and this hostility was kept simmering by political exiles. It was not in fact until some way into the reign of William II that the kingdom of Sicily was absolutely secure against its external enemies. While, to begin with, Roger was prepared to be flexible and to conciliate his opponents, he found, as did other contemporary rulers, that mildness could too easily be interpreted as weakness. Harsh measures, however regrettable, therefore became necessary if the new kingdom created in 1130 was to survive.[8]

The historical background

The new kingdom that emerged was a polyglot one, embodying a mixture of different peoples, cultures and even religions. Mainland southern Italy was divided between a majority who called themselves 'Lombards', thus literally descendants of the Germanic invaders of the

7 *Al. Tel.* IV.4 [below, 122]. 'Romuald' [below, 266] also agreed with Otto of Freising about the king's concern with money. Given the potential problems of the authorship of this work, which will be discussed below, I have preferred to adopt this neutral terminology to describe it, to avoid pre-judging the issue.

8 The modern historian inevitably makes a comparison with his exact contemporary King Stephen of England (ruled 1135–54): 'a mild man, and gentle and good, who did no justice', whose reign was 'nineteen long years when God and his saints slept', *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ad. an. 1137, in *English Historical Documents*, ed. D.C. Douglas and G.W. Greenaway ii *1042–1189* (London 1953), 199–200.

peninsula in the later sixth century, but who in our terms may be considered native Italians, and a minority of Greek-speakers, especially in the Salento peninsula of southern Apulia and in Calabria. The *longobardi* of southern Italy – few of whom were really derived from the Lombards of late Antiquity, since the latter, like the other 'barbarian' invaders of the Roman Empire were only a relatively small élite (and themselves an amalgam of different peoples) – had developed a strong sense of their own identity, sustained by the traditional law codes of the early medieval Lombard kings, but separate from the *lombardi* or inhabitants of northern Italy. They were, however, like the northerners Latin Christians, loyal to the Church of Rome.

On the island of Sicily, conquered by the Arabs in the ninth century, much of the population had in the next two centuries converted to Islam, but there remained a substantial Christian minority, especially in the north-east of the island, which was for the most part graecophone, who observed the rites of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople, as did their Greek compatriots on the mainland. In addition, there were a few – we do not know how many – Arabic-speaking Christians on Sicily, and indeed many of the Christian inhabitants of the island may in practice have been bilingual in Arabic and Greek.[9] At the end of the twelfth-century a poet, writing in Latin, could still celebrate the kingdom's capital, Palermo, as being 'endowed with people of three languages',[10] even if by this time the Latin element was becoming dominant. Indeed, the society of southern Italy was, if anything, even more complex than the above summary may suggest. There were on the mainland coastal cities, Amalfi, Naples and Gaeta, that had never been conquered by the Lombards, the inhabitants of which still considered themselves to be distinct from the rest of southern Italy, not least in the observance of Roman (i.e. Byzantine) law, but who were also Latin Christians and who were economically, and to a considerable extent culturally, increasingly interwoven with the general 'Latin' population of the south.[11] Politically, the region had been chronically divided, the mainland between Lombard princes, independent duchies and provinces of the Byzantine Empire, the island from the early eleventh century between rival Muslim rulers.

Into this maelstrom of contending parties a new element had begun to intrude itself from about the year 1000 onwards. Over the course of the

9 Bresc and Nef (1998); Metcalfe (2009), 247–8.

10 Peter of Eboli, *Liber ad Honorem Augusti*, ed. G.B. Siragusa (FSI, Rome 1906), 9, line 56.

11 For these, see especially Skinner (1995); Skinner (2002), and for Naples, Arthur (2002).

eleventh century almost the entire region, with the exception of a few larger towns, was step by step conquered by warriors from France, most of whom described themselves and were known to their contemporaries as 'Normans' (*normanni* in the Latin texts). Many of these were indeed from the duchy of Normandy, even though there were others, perhaps as many as a quarter or even a third of the invaders, who came from other parts of France (mainly from the north).[12] The first of these Normans had arrived in the south as pilgrims. They had soon been employed as mercenaries by the various warring princes, and even by the Byzantine governors. Their establishment in the south was undoubtedly assisted by the fragmentation of authority there and the number of rival political leaders who sought their services. From the early 1040s onwards the Normans began to take over the southern mainland.

By 1059, even though some of Apulia still remained in Byzantine hands, most of the mainland lay under Norman rule – something that was recognised by Pope Nicholas II when in August of that year he formally and publically invested the Norman leader Robert Guiscard as Duke of Apulia and Calabria, to be held as fiefs from the pope as his overlord. At the same time, or perhaps a few months earlier, the other principal Norman leader of the south, Count Richard of Aversa, had been recognised by the pope as Prince of Capua, which city and much of its dependent principality Richard had captured in the previous summer. The two Norman leaders were, it should be noted, closely linked, since Richard was married to Robert Guiscard's sister, and the later Norman princes of Capua were descended from this union. Furthermore, when Pope Nicholas invested Robert as duke at Melfi in August 1059, he not only confirmed him as ruler of the former Byzantine provinces of the mainland, but in addition as 'Duke of Sicily, when it shall be conquered'. Clearly the prospect of recovering Sicily for Christianity was a powerful reason for the pope to ally himself with the new Norman ruler, although this was only one reason among several – the need for political and military support at Rome was at this time an even more compelling one.[13] However, this wish to recover former Christian territory no doubt coincided with the intentions of the Norman leaders, Robert Guiscard and his younger brother Roger, who launched the invasion of Sicily in 1061.

Although Messina and the north-east of the island were soon captured, and Palermo fell in January 1072, the conquest of Sicily was a lengthy

12 Ménager (1975a), especially 202–7; Loud (1981a).

13 See Loud (2000b), 186–94.

process. The last few towns remaining in Muslim hands, in the south-east of the island, were taken only in 1091. While Robert Guiscard, as duke, had been nominally in charge of this conquest, in practice he could rarely spare time and resources for military operations on the island. After the capture of Palermo, he never returned to Sicily. His brother Roger was thus left in *de facto* control of the island, although the duke retained a half share of Palermo and Messina, the two principal towns, under his direct rule.[14] In the late 1080s, at which time most of the island was in Christian hands, Roger I began to enfeof his principal supporters with lands in Sicily, a process that was greatly extended after 1091.[15] Similarly, once the island had been completely conquered, Count Roger established new bishoprics, entrusted to Latin Christian prelates. He also founded, or encouraged the foundation of, monasteries; several were Latin, but the majority of these new houses were Greek, reflecting the overwhelming preponderance of those observing the Greek rite among Christians on the island. By the time of his death in 1101 Count Roger had himself founded three Latin monasteries and one nunnery, but he had also either personally founded or been involved in the foundation of over twenty Greek houses.[16]

By 1101 the balance of power within Norman Italy had been considerably altered. Robert Guiscard had progressively extended and consolidated his power within his dominions, as well as conquering the hitherto-independent Lombard principality of Salerno, the capital city of which fell to him in December 1076. In his last years he had, in addition, led two major expeditions into the Balkans against the Byzantine Empire. However, after his death in the course of the second of these expeditions in 1085, the authority of his successors as dukes of Apulia had progressively diminished. Admittedly, his son Roger Borsa ('the Purse') was by no means as ineffectual as an obituary notice, included by the compiler of the 'Romuald' chronicle, suggested.[17] However, it should be

14 *The History of the Normans by Amatus of Montecassino* [hereafter *Amatus*], trans. Prescott N. Dunbar and G.A. Loud (Woodbridge 2004), VI.21, pp. 158–9. For discussion, Loud (2000b), 165.

15 For details, Tramontana (1977), Loud (2000b), 173–80.

16 For the latter, Scaduto (1947), 80–143, who discusses the evidence in detail; Becker (2008), 206–17.

17 *Romuald*, 205–6: 'Duke Roger was of distinguished appearance and illustrious in his behaviour, restrained in matters of ostentation, polite, affable, the governor of churches, behaving humbly to the priests of Christ and greatly honouring the clergy, receiving all who came to him fittingly, pardoning those sentenced to death by him, a nurse to his people, a lover of peace, merciful to sinners, kind to his own men, peaceful to foreigners, amiable to all, and generous in providing gifts. For he was charming and pleasant to all and tried to win the love rather than the fear of both his own people and foreigners.'

remembered that his father had faced repeated revolts, largely from his own relations and his Norman vassals. While these had been successfully overcome, and towns and lands confiscated from the rebels had increased the duke's resources, Guiscard's rule in Apulia had always been problematic. In addition, Roger Borsa faced the challenge of his elder half-brother Bohemond, the son of Guiscard's first wife, whom the latter had repudiated on grounds of consanguinity.[18] Despite the support of his uncle, Count Roger of Sicily, Duke Roger was forced to make a series of territorial concessions to Bohemond in the years 1088–90, granting him a number of towns in southern and central Apulia, including the important ports of Taranto and Bari. Although Bohemond was largely an absentee after 1096, when he joined the First Crusade, the creation of his lordship began a process whereby the most important seigneurs of that region largely escaped from ducal control. While Duke Roger continued to rule effectively over the principality of Salerno and most of inland Apulia – the towns of Melfi and Troia remained as foci of ducal rule in that region – much of the rest of Apulia (the Salento peninsula in the south, the central coastal region and the northern frontier of the Capitanata) became effectively independent. When Duke Roger and Bohemond both died within a fortnight of each other early in 1111, the former leaving as his heir a boy of 13 or 14, and the latter a small child, the decline of central authority and the growth of noble independence in Apulia accelerated. Furthermore, a similar process of fragmentation had been under way in the principality of Capua since the death of Prince Jordan I in 1090. The maintenance of princely authority was here also hampered by a revolt, or perhaps series of insurrections, by the townspeople of Capua, the resistance of whom was only eventually overcome with the help of Duke Roger Borsa and Count Roger of Sicily in 1098. But, despite recovering their capital, the later princes of Capua only effectively controlled the southern part of their principality, in the plain around the city of Capua; the nobles of more peripheral regions, like their counterparts in Apulia, became more and more autonomous.[19]

What the Norman Conquest had therefore *not* done was to unite southern Italy, and whereas up to c.1085/90 the region was divided into three principal spheres of influence, each controlled by a relatively powerful local ruler, thereafter authority became more and more fragmented. Local territorial lords such as the counts of Conversano and Loritello

18 Loud (2000b), 113–14, 127–8, suggests that this was not necessarily simply an excuse.

19 Loud (1985), 86–95.

in Apulia, and the counts of Caiazzo and Carinola in the principality of Capua, even though in all these four cases they were cousins of the ruler, were to all intents and purposes independent. Conflicts emerged between regional potentates – notably Bohemond, and after his death his widow Constance – and the counts of Conversano in southern Apulia. Some of the larger towns sought to assert their independence also. Gaeta as well as Capua revolted against the prince in 1091/2, while Amalfi proved increasingly restive under ducal rule, and in 1096 withstood a full-scale siege from Roger Borsa, whose rule over that city was only restored c.1102.[20] Bari threw off the rule of Bohemond II in 1113; five to six years later, after considerable factional dispute, a local patrician named Grimoald Alfaranites emerged as 'Prince of Bari', apparently as leader of a local civic regime.[21] Furthermore, incidents such as the murder of Archbishop Riso of Bari in 1117, the capture of Constance by treachery at Giovinazzo in August 1119,[22] and the conflict between counts Rainulf of Caiazzo and Jordan of Ariano for dominance in the region around Benevento in the years 1119–21, suggest that this diminution of regional authority had led to a significant breakdown in law and order.[23]

While one should be careful not to exaggerate the extent of this, as Alexander of Telese did when describing the situation after the death of Duke William of Apulia in the first chapter of his *History* – for some parts of southern Italy, notably the principality of Salerno, seem to have remained peaceful and untroubled – the decline of authority in the southern part of the peninsula during this period was marked. One symptom of this was the proclamation by successive popes of the Truce of God at a series of councils (at Melfi in 1089, and at Troia in 1093, 1115 and 1120). The Church sought to enforce peace through spiritual sanctions, precisely because lay authority was weak; the duke was present at all four of these councils, which were held in towns that were part of his fisc, so the proclamation of the Truce was certainly not part of an attempt to undermine his authority, but rather meant to support it. The popes, as nominal overlords of southern Italy, clearly recognised

20 Skinner (2002), 78–80.

21 In June 1123, Grimoald issued a charter dated in his fifth year as prince, although in October 1122 another document called him simply *dominator* of Bari, *Codice Diplomatico Barese* v *Le Pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo normanno (1075–1194)*, ed. F. Nitti di Vito (Bari 1902), 115–17 no. 67, 121–2 no. 69. This may suggest that he had consolidated his authority by stages. Cf. Oldfield (2009), 46–9.

22 *Romuald*, 210.

23 For these, see *Falco*, below, 147, 152–4, 157, 162.

the weakness of temporal authority there. Hence Gelasius II in 1118 and Calixtus II in 1120 received fealty (and in 1120 also homage) not just from the duke and the prince of Capua but also directly from some of the other leading nobles in the region: in 1120 from counts Rainulf (II) of Caiazzo, Jordan of Ariano and Robert (II) of Loritello, as well as 'innumerable others', or so the papal biographer Pandulf claimed.[24]

The exception to this picture of fragmenting authority was in the dominions of the Count of Sicily. Admittedly, there are hints in the (for this period exiguous) sources that even here there were problems after the death of Roger I in 1101. His successors, his eldest legitimate son Simon (1101–5) and his second son Roger, both succeeded as children[25] with their mother, Adelaide, as regent, and minorities were almost inevitably problematic in the Middle Ages. A later document from 1141 mentioned 'a rebellion in Calabria and Sicily' during this regency, in which the village of Focerò in north-east Sicily was destroyed twice, or perhaps three times. Furthermore, a Greek abbot from the same part of Sicily petitioned the young Roger II in 1109 requesting that his church's land be surveyed afresh, since the document recording their boundaries had been lost in the troubles that had recently affected the island.[26] But while his minority may have had its problems, once he attained his majority and took personal control in 1112 Roger II appears to have been firmly in command of his dominions. Furthermore, both Roger I and his son were able to extend their power in return for the military assistance they rendered to the dukes of Apulia. Robert Guiscard had granted his younger brother the southern half of Calabria in 1062. A number of strongholds in Calabria were apparently held by duke and count together. In return for the count's support for his accession as duke, Roger Borsa granted these in full possession to his uncle. He subsequently added a half share in the confiscated lordship of the Falloc family around Catanzaro in 1088/9, and a half share in Cosenza in 1091, thus extending the count's territory into central Calabria.[27]

24 *Liber Pontificalis*, ii.315, 322. For discussion, Loud (2007a), 145–9.

25 The 'Romuald' chronicle claimed that Roger died at the age of 58 years, two months and five days on 27 February 1154 [below, 266]. Taken literally this suggests he was born on 22 December 1095, and that he was deemed to be of age when 16½ years old. A probably later interpolation in Malaterra's history would suggest that he was born early in 1099; *Malaterra*, IV.26, p. 106. Since his elder brother Simon appears to have been born in 1093, that Roger was born late in 1095 appears quite feasible, Becker (2008), 229.

26 S. Cusa, *I Diplomi greci ed arabi di Sicilia* (Palermo 1868–82), 403–5, 532–5. I am grateful to Alex Metcalfe for drawing my attention to the Focerò document. For other evidence, Houben (2002), 24–5.

27 *Malaterra*, II.28, III.42, IV.11, 17, pp. 39, 82, 92, 96–7.

In 1121/2 Roger II was able to make much more significant gains at Duke William's expense. He apparently sought to achieve this first by conflict – several sources refer to a war between the count and the duke that was brought to an end through the arbitration of Calixtus II, who made a lengthy visit to Calabria that winter. Later Duke William sought military aid from his cousin against Count Jordan of Ariano, who according to Falco of Benevento was openly defying his authority. In return for military and financial assistance, William transferred to the Count of Sicily rule over the northern half of Calabria, and the half shares that up until then the dukes had retained in Palermo and Messina. The 'Romuald' chronicler also claimed that William, who was childless, recognised Roger as his heir, in return for a large sum of money.[28] In the years immediately after this, Count Roger consolidated his control over Calabria and advanced his power northwards into Lucania, notably in claiming the lordship of Montescaglioso, which had been held by his widowed sister Emma.[29]

Underpinning these political advances was the wealth of the island of Sicily, which its ruler was able to exploit to his own benefit; hence the substantial sums of cash with which Count Roger could (in effect) purchase land from his cousin the duke. Some sixty years later a Muslim traveller who visited Sicily wrote that

> the prosperity of the island surpasses description. It is enough to say that it is a daughter of Spain [*his native land*] in the extent of its cultivation, the luxuriance of its harvests, and in its well-being, having an abundance of varied produce, and fruits of every kind and species.[30]

The Arab geographer al-Idrîsî, whose description of the known world, written at Roger's behest, was completed shortly before the king's death, again and again praised the fertility and prosperity of different places in Sicily. Even if there may have been an element of flattery in such descriptions, they were unlikely to be entirely fictional. The territory of Syracuse, for example, 'is vast, covered with farming estates and villages, it is fertile and its fields are perfectly cultivated. Boats loaded with wheat and other products set off [*from there*] for the rest of the world'.[31]

28 *Falco* [below, 165], and *Romuald*, 212, and below 250; *Liber Pontificalis*, ii.322–3.

29 *Roger II Diplomata*, 16–17 no. 6 (September–December 1124), in which Roger confirmed a privilege of his sister, who was referred to in the past tense, being 'of blessed memory'. She had held the lordship in right of her son Roger, as widow of its hereditary lord Rodulf Maccabeus, *Reg. Neap. Arch. Mon.* vi. 191–3 no. 23 (July 1119). Cf. Houben (2002), 38–9.

30 *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. R.J.C. Broadhurst (London 1952), 339.

31 *Idrîsî. La Première Géographie de l'Occident*, trans. H. Bresc and A. Nef (Paris 1999), 315 [see also below, 358–62]. Among the other products exported from Syracuse were hides; Goitein (1967), 111.

Sicily was a source of wheat and other foodstuffs, not least for the Muslim towns of Tunisia, and of other commodities, such as silk and cotton textiles, wood and even cheese, which were exported to Egypt. It was also a market for spices from the east.[32] The count was able to profit directly from this prosperity, not least because while Roger I had endowed his principal supporters with lordships after the conquest, he had retained a substantial part of the island, including much of the centre (the main wheat-growing area) and the west, in his own hands. Thus he profited not just through tolls and levies on trade, but as the main proprietor of the agricultural surpluses that were exported.[33] Other valuable commodities, notably the tuna fisheries around the coast, were reserved for the ruler to exploit as a monopolist, even though a few favoured churches might occasionally be granted a share in these. These fisheries were not simply a useful source of foodstuffs – they were increasingly large-scale commercial operations.[34] Sicily was also already an entrepôt and exchange point for trans-Mediterranean trade from Byzantium and the Islamic countries through to northern Italy. Jewish merchants in Egypt sent and received cargoes to and from Sicily, both before and after the Norman conquest.

Sicily was, indeed, a principal hub of Mediterranean trade routes, for Jewish, Muslim and (increasingly) Christian merchants.[35] The first reference to Genoese traders on the island comes from 1116, and since this mentions the rebuilding of a merchants' hostel at Messina it is clear that this was not by any means the first such contact. In 1127–8 Roger concluded a treaty, or more properly a series of agreements, with Savona, a Ligurian port allied to Genoa, which suggests that there was already considerable commercial contact between this town and Sicily.[36] Idrîsî noted that many men from Ifrîqiyya (Tunisia) were accustomed to come to Marsala in western Sicily, and presumably these were traders for the geographer also noted the number of markets at Marsala and the abundant tax renders from the town. Similarly, he recorded of Sciacca, on the south coast, that 'its port is frequented by numerous ships arriving without cease from Tripoli and Ifrîqiyya', while at Scicli

32 Goitein (1967), 45 (pepper), 46 (cheese), 102 (silk); Goitein (1983), 114, 144, 157, 168–9, 251–2; Abulafia (1985), 27–30.

33 Abulafia (1983), especially 4–5.

34 Bresc (1987), especially 279–80. Idrîsî noted the tuna fishery at Castellamare del Golfo, west of Palermo, *Idrîsî. La Première Géographie de l'Occident*, 320.

35 Goitein (1967), 211–17.

36 Cusa, *Diplomi greci ed arabi*, 359–60; *Roger II Diplomata*, 24–8 no. 10. Abulafia (1977), 62–9.

in the south-east people came by sea from 'Calabria, Ifrîqiyya, Malta and elsewhere'.[37]

The Count of Sicily possessed the administration to exploit this burgeoning wealth, largely staffed by Greek officials. Registers of lands and boundaries, and lists of serfs, were compiled for Sicily and in Calabria. Commercial tolls were levied on shipping at the ports.[38] To begin with, many of the officials may have come from Calabria, but after Countess Adelaide moved the centre of government from Mileto in Calabria, first to Messina and then to Palermo during Roger's minority, they were recruited both from the island and further afield. These Greek officials were clearly very close to the count, notably George of Antioch, an Arabic-speaking Greek, previously an official of the rulers of Mahdia in North Africa, who fled to Sicily c.1109.[39] When in the autumn of 1124 Roger II moved to establish his foothold in Lucania at Montescaglioso, he was accompanied by his principal minister Christodoulos (who can be attested from 1105 onwards) and by George of Antioch, who a couple of years later succeeded Christodoulos.[40] The expertise of such administrators enabled the count to build up his financial resources, and to develop a fleet and army (including Muslim soldiers from Sicily) that would enable him to extend his rule to the mainland.[41] Thus, when Duke William died childless on 28 July 1127, Roger II was the wealthiest and most powerful figure in southern Italy, and in an excellent position to claim the succession to the duchy.

The takeover of the mainland

According to Alexander of Telese, Duke William's death was unexpected, and – though he had promised formally to designate Roger as his heir, and thus as successor to the duchy, in the event of his not having a son – he had not actually done this, and thus 'he did not on his death leave any heir lawfully to succeed him'.[42] Since William was only

37 *Idrîsî. La Première Géographie de l'Occident*, 316, 318–19.

38 This is implied by the exemption granted in the 1116 charter above, and made more explicit in Cusa, *Diplomi greci ed arabi*, 554–6 (1125) for the Bishop of Catania.

39 von Falkenhausen (1977), 351–6; von Falkenhausen (1980), 147–51; Takayama (1993), 31–46.

40 See above, note 29. For George, see also *Al. Tel.* II.8 [below 00, and note 53].

41 The use of Muslim soldiers was by no means new. Roger I had employed these as far back as at the siege of Salerno in 1076, before the conquest of the island was completed: *Amatus*, VIII.14, p. 194.

42 *Al. Tel.* I.1, 4 [below, 64, 66].

30 when he died, it seems possible he had not yet despaired of having a male heir, although he had been married as far back as 1116 to a daughter of Count Robert of Caiazzo, and after eleven years of wedlock the prospect of having a son must have been unlikely.[43] 'Romuald', by contrast, claimed that William had, from the account clearly at some point after 1122, appointed Roger as his heir. The question here may well be when this latter version was written: whether it was a contemporary notice incorporated into the later chronicle, or whether, as Houben has suggested, merely an assumption by the later writer, perhaps Archbishop Romuald himself, that because Roger in the end succeeded he therefore must have been the designated heir.[44] Moreover, Fulcher of Chartres, writing in Jerusalem very soon after the events in question (probably c.1127/8) noted that the duke had made an agreement with his first cousin Bohemond II, Prince of Antioch, that whichever of them should survive the other would be his heir. This had taken place, Fulcher said, 'in the presence of the leading men on both sides, who acted as witnesses', immediately before Bohemond left southern Italy to become the ruler of Antioch in the summer of 1126.[45] On the other hand, another contemporary writer, Walter, Archdeacon of Thérouanne, who was in Rome during the summer of 1128, claimed to have heard from Pope Honorius II himself that Duke William on his deathbed had left his dominions to the papacy.[46] And in the event, Pope Honorius refused to accept Count Roger as the new duke and would not grant him investiture despite, so Falco claimed, the considerable bribes, or presents, which the count offered him. It was only a year later, after a military campaign and when his local allies had failed him, that Honorius, very reluctantly, invested the Count of Sicily as the new duke in August 1128.

How do we make sense of all this? The deathbed designation is perfectly feasible, since we know that as he lay dying Duke William made an extensive donation for the good of his soul to the abbey of Cava,

43 *Romuald*, 207.

44 Houben (2002), 42.

45 *Fulcher of Chartres, A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095–1127*, trans. F.R. Ryan and H.S. Fink (Knoxville 1969), III.57, p. 297 [Latin text: *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095–1127)*, ed. H. Hagenmayer (Heidelberg 1913), 805–9]. This was repeated in the later account of William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds done beyond the Sea, by William Archbishop of Tyre*, trans. E.A. Babcock and A.C. Krey (2 vols, New York 1941), ii.32 [Latin text: *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis 63,Turnhout 1986), i.613: lib. XIII.21]. See below, *Al. Tel.* I.12.

46 Walter, *Vita Karoli Comitis Flandriae*, cc. 1–2, MGH SS xii.539–40. Discussion of these various accounts, Deér (1972), 175–80.

although the document that attests this – which records the sworn testimony of several witnesses, including two of the duke's doctors – says nothing of any other bequest, let alone of one so momentous as that of the duchy itself.[47] On the other hand it could have been no more than papal propaganda. Certainly, if William had made such a bequest, it is odd that there was no other later mention of this, when it surely would have strengthened later papal claims over southern Italy.[48] One might suspect, however, that Duke William had at various times offered the possible succession to the duchy of Apulia, or dangled the possibility of the succession, to more than one possible claimant, while still hoping that he might himself have a son. (There are parallels to this in the careers of other childless medieval rulers, not least Edward the Confessor of England). If at the end William did leave the duchy, or the arrangement of the succession to the duchy, to his papal overlord, that does not necessarily disprove one or more earlier promises. But from the point of view of Count Roger, his claim could only ultimately be based on his alleged hereditary right, as enunciated by his partisan Alexander of Telese. And while Bohemond II arguably had a better hereditary claim, he was far away in Antioch, and in no position therefore to intervene.

However, if we leave these somewhat speculative considerations, a more significant question is why Count Roger's claim to the duchy faced such opposition. Some scholars have argued that the pope's refusal to countenance his succession was essentially based upon legal considerations: either that with the death of the childless duke his fief reverted to his overlord, the pope, to allocate as he saw fit, or that the papal investiture of the south Italian Norman leaders had always been conditional, and it was up to the pope whether or not he chose to grant the duchy as a fief to any new claimant.[49] Neither interpretation is particularly convincing. The stress on the 'legal' aspects of relations between the popes and the Norman rulers is misplaced, and misunderstands the essential dynamic of the relationship since the original investiture of 1059. The bond between the two had always been an alliance rather than a relationship between overlord and dependant, and the overriding priority for

47 Cava, *Arm. Mag.* F.40 [printed by Guillaume (1877), xxviii–ix appendix I, and L. von Heinemann, *Normannische Herzogs- und Königsurkunden aus Unteritalien und Sizilien* (Tübingen 1899), 33–7 no. 20].

48 Chalandon (1907), i.381.

49 The former was suggested by Kehr (1934), 37, and Houben (2002), 42–4; the latter by Deér (1972), 126–84. What is essentially a summary in English of Deér's arguments is presented by Robinson (1990), 367–83.

the papacy had been the military and political assistance that could be secured from the south Italian princes. There is no evidence that under normal circumstances either popes or Norman rulers had considered papal approval a necessary concomitant for the ducal succession – or that of the princes of Capua. Indeed, while rulers swore fealty to each new pope and received investiture with their lands, that investiture was often delayed for several years after the new prince succeeded. (Duke William succeeded his father in February 1111; he received investiture from the incumbent pope, Paschal II, only in October 1114).[50] Admittedly, the balance in the relationship had shifted in the years immediately before 1127, as the authority of the Norman rulers in their dominions had weakened, while with the end of the Investiture Contest, with the popes securely establishing themselves in Rome after 1120 and then consolidating control of their (until now nominal) territory around Rome, Honorius II was in a stronger position than his predecessors had been.[51]

Roger certainly had a claim to succeed his cousin, especially if some sort of promise or designation had been made – although the fact that Alexander of Telese more or less admitted that any promised designation had not been formally proclaimed is significant, given that this author sought throughout his work to bolster the legitimacy of Roger's rule. Indeed, he even said in his first chapter that William had died without an heir. One might also note that in some twelfth-century enfeoffments in the papal states, succession was limited to the direct heirs of a fief holder.[52] But had Roger been otherwise acceptable, it is unlikely that the pope would have hesitated to recognise him as duke purely because he was a collateral, and not a direct, heir. To Honorius II, however, his succession as duke must have seemed a potentially unwelcome development. First, as ruler of Sicily, Calabria and Apulia he would have had control of the majority of southern Italy – hardly something desirable at a time when the pope was taking a closer interest than hitherto in the affairs of the south of the peninsula.[53] Secondly, Roger had already on several occasions shown that he intended to exercise close control over the Church in his dominions and that he was not necessarily

50 *Falco* [below, 143]; *Chron. Cas.* IV.49, p. 516; *Annales Ceccanenses*, MGH SS xix.282 ; *Romuald*, 207.

51 The interpretation here has been developed at greater length in Loud (2007a), 135–51. For the papacy and Rome at this period, see especially Partner (1972), 158–68.

52 Loud (1985), 140.

53 Matthew (1992), 29, points out that more than 500 papal documents relating to southern Italy survive from the period 1088–1130. Cf. Kamp (1980), 107–10; Loud (2007a), 219–23.

amenable to papal instructions. In 1117 Paschal II had sternly rebuked his interference in Church affairs and his control over the bishops of his dominions, which in that pope's view clearly went well beyond any special powers that might have been granted by his predecessor Urban II to Count Roger I [see the chapter here on 'Roger II and the Papacy', document 1]; and in 1121/2 Roger had treated papal attempts to mediate between him and Duke William with scant respect. The pope and several of his entourage had fallen ill (indeed several cardinals had died while Calixtus II was in the south that winter), and according to his biographer 'with the pope half-dead, Count Roger had done as he liked'.[54] The latter cannot therefore have seemed an ideal candidate to receive papal investiture with the duchy, but the denial of his claim was a pragmatic rather than a 'legal' decision.

It is a good question, which the surviving sources do not clearly answer, what Honorius II's intentions were for the government of southern Italy in 1127. He may have envisaged a loose federation of towns and nobles under papal suzerainty – certainly Falco suggests that he sought to receive oaths of fealty not just from the Prince of Capua but also from other leading nobles,[55] perhaps extending the precedent established in 1118 and 1120. This reminds us that the pope's opposition to Roger's succession was only feasible because there was considerable opposition to the count in southern Italy – from the principality of Capua, led by the new prince, Robert II, and his cousin Count Rainulf of Caiazzo (despite Rainulf being married to Count Roger's sister), from a number of leading nobles in Apulia and from some important towns of the mainland. All three groups feared that, if Roger became duke, backed by the financial and military resources of Sicily, he would substantially limit the independence they had hitherto enjoyed or (in the case of some towns) would have liked to enjoy. Alexander's account suggests that even the citizens of Salerno, hitherto the ducal capital, were reluctant to accept Roger as their ruler, and delicate negotiations and concessions were required before they did. Pope Honorius encouraged this opposition, by repeated excommunications of the count, by playing upon the fears of those who were apprehensive that his rule would be much more forceful and effective than that to which they had been accustomed (as in the speech he made at the inauguration of Prince Robert II of Capua, as reported by Falco), and by offering remission of sins to those who fought against him, drawing here on the holy war ethos of the so-called First

54 *Liber Pontificalis*, ii.323.

55 Below, 178.

Crusade. By 1127 this had been extended to include campaigns against the Muslims in Spain, but the offer reported by Falco is the earliest known example of spiritual rewards being expressly offered for warfare against Christians. Honorius also offered tangible benefits, notably in his privilege of December 1127 confirming and extending the rights and liberties of the citizens of Troia, effectively offering the town self-government under papal overlordship.[56] The terms of this document indicate the aspirations of burgesses of one of the more important towns of the region. One notes their aversion to a citadel held by troops of an outside ruler – a key issue in earlier negotiations between Roger and the Salernitans, and later in relations between the king and the citizens of Bari in 1132 – and the dislike of military service being exacted from the town, equally unpopular in Bari and Benevento in 1132.[57]

However, the weakness of the opposition to the count was that it was a coalition of divergent interests. When Count Roger confronted the pope in the summer of 1128, the latter's army melted away. Falco's account blamed the lack of enthusiasm or staying power of the nobles, and particularly Count Rainulf and the Prince of Capua, the former making excuses, the latter 'unable to sustain hard work', even going so far as to blame 'the deceitfulness of the prince and the other barons'. It was the royal partisan Alexander of Telese who ascribed the collapse of the allied army to its arrears of wages and supply problems.[58] (This brief mention of the *stipendii* paid to troops has important implications for military organisation in the south, an issue which requires fuller investigation than there is space for here). In the end, the pope had no option but to grant Roger investiture as duke. While what the chroniclers tell us suggests that the investiture and the oath of fealty followed the pattern that was by now traditional, Falco added another element – that Roger swore to respect the integrity of Benevento and the independence of the principality of Capua. While the former detail might have been something added by the chronicler, always anxious to stress the freedom of his native city, neither of these provisos is intrinsically unlikely, as Honorius sought to maintain some sort of counterweight to Roger's power. The maintenance of Capuan independence, and the continued presence of a papal enclave within the south, were the best means of securing this.

56 *Chartes de Troia*, pp. 182–5 no. 50. See Oldfield (2009), 56–8.

57 *Al. Tel.* II.34 [below, 90]; see also the privilege issued in the king's name to Bari in June 1132, *Roger II Diplomata*, 54–6 no. 20 [= *Cod. Dipl. Barese* v.137–9 no. 80], clauses 13 and 19. For discussion, Martin (1980), especially 88–96. For Benevento, *Falco* [below, 94].

58 *Al. Tel.* I.14 [below, 71, and 181]

In the event, however, neither attempt was wholly successful. Soon after Roger's investiture, and (so Falco tells us) even before the pope had returned to Rome, the papal rector of Benevento perished in a popular uprising and a commune was formed in the city, which thereafter fell victim to renewed factional dispute. Meanwhile the new duke set about consolidating his rule on the mainland. During the course of the campaigning seasons of 1129 and 1130 he forced those nobles who were still recalcitrant to surrender – sometimes they had to buy their way back into his grace by territorial concessions, as did the Count of Ariano. One by one he reduced the towns that held out against him – Troia proving the most obstinate – and in the autumn of 1129 at Melfi he issued an edict forbidding private warfare and forced the assembled nobles to swear to maintain general peace, restrain their vassals, respect the Church and hand over criminals to ducal justice. What Roger did here was to enforce the provisions of the Truce of God through his own authority, and proclaim the superiority of that authority over local judicial rights. We have no other record of this edict than Alexander's, but its provisions were reflected in one of Roger's later laws, where he stated:

> Our royal majesty's providence refuses in any way to permit one of our barons to invade the *castrum* of another within the bounds of our kingdom, or to plunder it, to make an armed attack on it or to take anything from it by fraud.[59]

Duke Roger had thus made unequivocally clear that the government of southern Italy was to be very different from what had gone before. The assembly at Melfi in September/October 1129 was an important step in the creation of the new kingdom. Early in 1130, too, Robert II of Capua formally submitted to him. This was not the first time that a prince had become a vassal of the duke; Prince Richard II had done so in 1098 in return for Roger Borsa's assistance in recovering his rebel capital. But whereas the submission of 1098 had no lasting consequences – the stress in some of the older scholarly literature on its long-term effects is misplaced[60] – that of 1130 was to have enduring results, as almost the final piece in the jigsaw of south Italian unification.

59 Vatican Assize xxxi [below, 325]; Zecchino (1980), 153–4; Houben (2002), 48.

60 E.g. Kehr (1934), 32–3, who went so far as to suggest that this precluded any subsequent vassalic link with, or investiture by the pope, on the part of the princes, a misconception which has been followed by Hoffmann (1978), 167–72. See Loud (1985), 97–101; and Loud (2002), 160–1, for a critique of this view.

The papacy and the creation of the kingdom

The creation of the Sicilian kingship followed swiftly on from the unification of the south; indeed, if one were simply to read the account of Alexander of Telese, the former would seem to be the logical corollary of the latter. Roger's power was now such as to merit a royal title. Alexander also referred to what was a convenient piece of historical fiction: that Sicily had once 'in ancient times' had kings who ruled from Palermo, and therefore what was taking place in 1130 was the restoration of a former monarchy rather than a *de novo* creation. (None of the Greek kings on Sicily in the pre-Roman period had, in fact, ruled over the island as a whole). According to Alexander, the new kingship was also validated by election, or perhaps one should rather say by acclamation. At an assembly at Salerno in the summer of 1130 the churchmen and barons of the land had 'unanimously' agreed that Roger should become a king; 'strengthened by their sincere approval' (*veridicis assertionibus roboratus*) he set about organising his royal coronation.[61]

Alexander's account was, to say the least, disingenuous, not in the sense that such careful domestic preparations and (in modern parlance) management of public opinion among the politically powerful classes did not take place, but in what he did not say. For what Alexander entirely omitted was the role of the papacy. Some modern commentators have suggested that this reflected the king's own wish that his authority should not be beholden to an external power, or in any sense be subject to papal approval, but rather held directly from God; or as later jurists rendered this, he wished to be 'king in his own kingdom' (*rex in regno suo*).[62] One would not deny that the sense of divine empowerment was significant for the new Sicilian monarchy – as expressed, for example in the famous mosaic of Roger being crowned by Christ in the church of the Martorana in Palermo, and in his law code, if that is what the collection in Cod. Vat. Lat. 8782 is (discussed below). Thus the king described himself in the preface to this code as 'we who through His grace possess the authority of justice and law'. But while it is clear that Alexander saw Roger's kingship as divinely ordained, he did not entirely eliminate the papacy from his account. While he was critical of the refusal of Honorius II to invest Roger as duke, he was careful not to accord Roger the ducal title in his account until he

61 *Al. Tel.* II.1–3. Cilento (1983), 168–9.

62 Fuiano (1956), followed by, for example, Cilento (1983), 167–71. Brown (1992), 199, seems to suggest that this omission was almost accidental, a sign that Alexander 'did not have a coherent position' on the legitimacy of the *regno*. This is nonsense.

had received investiture. Roger may have claimed to be the legitimate heir to the duchy, and by implication Alexander accepted that, but until the ceremony of August 1128 he remained in his eyes only 'count'.[63] So Alexander did recognise the papal role. The problem he faced was rather the equivocal status of Pope Anacletus II.

The creation of the kingdom of Sicily was a product not just of the unification of southern Italy but also of the papal schism of February 1130. On the death of Honorius II, splits within the college of cardinals led to a disputed election, in which two rival popes were chosen: Cardinal Gregory of Sant'Angelo (as Innocent II) by some of the younger or more recently-appointed cardinals led by the papal chancellor Haimeric (a group which included nearly all of the non-Italian cardinals), and Cardinal Peter Pierleone (Anacletus II) by those who resented Haimeric's attempts to hijack the election, including most of the older and more experienced members of the college as well as those from Lazio and southern Italy.[64] Roger's kingship was formally recognised by a bull from Anacletus II, issued on 27 September 1130, according to Falco after king and pope had met at Avellino, and presumably there agreed on the terms of the creation [see 'Roger II and the Papacy', document no. 2]. The bull in several ways reflected what Alexander said about the creation of the kingdom, notably about the extent of Roger's authority justifying his promotion to royal status, and recognising Palermo as the capital of the new kingdom.

While harking back to the earlier investitures of Robert Guiscard and his successors as dukes of Apulia, and as in the investitures of Guiscard (for which documentary evidence survives) specifying that an annual *census* be paid in recognition of papal overlordship, now to be in Byzantine *nomisma* rather than in silver pennies of Pavia, in several other respects the alliance (for this is what this was) seems to have been more favourable to the ruler than to the pope. Admittedly, while the bull refers to homage and fealty to be sworn by the kings, no such oath

63 E.g. *Al. Tel.* I.13.

64 The literature on the 1130 schism is vast. Schmale (1961), especially 30–56, argued that the party of Innocent and Haimeric was closely connected to the new religious orders, particularly the regular canons, which were developing at this time. They were, so he claimed, part of a new reform movement to which Anacletus and his supporters were opposed. This interpretation has attracted criticism, especially with regard to the supposed links of several pro-Innocent cardinals with the regular canons. But there can be no doubt that most of the cardinals appointed by Calixtus II and Honorius II, who included several Frenchmen (one of whom was Haimeric) supported Innocent, while cardinals surviving from the pontificate of Paschal II tended to support Anacletus. See Bloch (1986), ii.944–51, and especially Robinson (1990), 69–77, for a balanced viewpoint.

to Anacletus survives – if Roger did do this, then his oath might have repeated the clauses in earlier such texts pledging the ruler to bring help to his papal lord – a key feature of the surviving oaths of Robert Guiscard from 1059 and 1080.[65] But Anacletus also said that he and his successors would not necessarily exact such an oath or homage, and that the royal status of the kingdom was not dependent on this ceremony. Indeed, he expressly recognised the hereditary nature of the new kingdom. In addition, he granted Roger authority over Naples, which up to then had been independent, and the help in time of war of the men of Benevento. (This last grant was to prove less than popular with these papal citizens). He also took steps to begin the organisation of a proper ecclesiastical structure on the island of Sicily, something which he continued in other bulls in September 1131 [for one of which, see 'Roger II and the Papacy', no. 3, below].

Since Anacletus faced the challenge of a rival pope, recognition by the ruler of southern Italy was undoubtedly in his interest, and the bull creating the kingdom was the price he paid for Roger's support. But from Roger's perspective, receiving the bull in 1130 was of great value, legitimising his royal status just as, seventy years earlier, Nicholas II had legitimised the seizure of southern Italy by Robert Guiscard. When the bull was promulgated Anacletus could fairly be seen as the legitimate pope. While neither his election nor that of his rival was strictly canonical, and the college of cardinals had been genuinely divided, arguably his election had been more proper than that of Innocent, which was the product of a surreptitious intrigue by a small group of cardinals within a few hours of the death of Honorius II (there was no precedent for the so-called electoral commission that named Innocent as pope). Although the figures given by modern historians may vary slightly, there is no doubt that Anacletus had more cardinals on his side than Innocent.[66] Above all, he was the pope who was in control of Rome and the papal lands round the city, while Innocent had fled first to Pisa and eventually to France. In previous schisms, both during the Investiture Contest and before, it had invariably been the pope who held Rome who had

65 English translation of the 1059 oath in Loud (2000b), 188–9.

66 Palumbo (1942), 209–10, suggests that 22 cardinals backed Anacletus, though only 13 were named in the bull announcing his election. Schmale (1961), 32–3, agreed with this figure, but claimed 20 cardinals eventually supported Innocent, including five cardinal bishops. Responding to Schmale's book, Palumbo (1963), 100–1, criticised his figures, suggesting that he overestimated support in the college for Innocent, who he said had initially the support of 17 cardinals, four of them cardinal bishops. The problem was that until promulgation of the bull *Licet de evitanda* at the Third Lateran Council of 1179 there was no canonical procedure for deciding when and how a pope was legally elected if the cardinals could not agree on a candidate.

won the contest. Neither was Anacletus without support elsewhere, notably in northern Italy and western and south-west France, and he expected to secure the loyalty of Spain. Although the King of France and his bishops were certainly sympathetic to Innocent, none of the north European monarchs had yet openly taken sides, and Anacletus still hoped, and was actively working, for their support.[67]

But by 1135/6, when Alexander of Telese was writing, the cause of Anacletus was clearly lost. The north European rulers and their churchmen had all recognised Innocent, who had the vociferous support of spokesmen of the new monastic orders, and benefited from a vigorous, often highly unscrupulous propaganda campaign on his behalf. Many of those who had begun by supporting the Roman pope had now changed sides, as the Milanese did in 1135. Far from ensuring his defeat, Innocent's flight to France in August 1130 had been the first step towards securing him recognition from the Church as a whole. In St Bernard's famous phrase, 'driven from the City, he has been received by the world' (*pulsus ab urbe, ab orbe suscipitur*).[68] While Anacletus lingered on in Rome, still claiming to be pope until his death in February 1138, the schism had effectively been decided several years earlier. In these circumstances, the bull of Anacletus was an embarrassment, and his role in the creation of the kingdom is best ignored. A generation later, Romuald of Salerno, or his amanuensis, did mention Roger's recognition of Anacletus as pope, but like Alexander he suggested that the creation of the kingdom was the product of an internal consensus, without external authorisation, claiming that the king, 'a wise and astute man', had refused to meet Anacletus or to do homage.[69]

67 Palumbo (1942), 310–58. Stroll (1987), 66–70, points to Anacletus's excommunication of Emperor Lothar's opponent Conrad of Staufen in May 1130 as one of the key elements in his bid for imperial support. For France, Reuter (1983), on the basis of a letter from Louis VI in response to the announcement of Innocent's election, which he published for the first time, *art.cit.* 415–16, redated the council at Etampes that recognised Innocent to late May 1130. But Louis only actually controlled part of northern France, and arguably full recognition of Innocent did not come until the Council of Rheims in October 1131. A council of some of the German bishops at Würzburg in October 1130 recognised Innocent, prompted by the arrival of his legate Archbishop Walter of Ravenna; but the emperor did not fully commit himself until he attended Innocent's council at Liège in March 1131 (which had a much larger attendance than the council six months earlier), and then was disposed to make conditions for his support. *Die Reichschronik des Annalista Saxo*, ed. Klaus Nass, MGH SS xxxvii (Hanover 2006), 593; *Annales Palidenses*, MGH SS xvi.78; Robinson (1990), 445–6.

68 *The Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, 188 no. 127, in a letter to Archbishop Hildebert of Tours, who was sympathetic to Anacletus. My translation is more literal than that of Scott James.

69 Below, 255.

The chroniclers thus ignored or down played what may in fact have been quite close links between the new king and Pope Anacletus and his family. It is notable that when the latter issued his bull formally creating the kingdom, that the witnesses included only one cardinal, but several members of the Pierleone family, including two of Anacletus's brothers [see 'Roger II and the Papacy', no. 2, below]. It is, indeed, possible that the coronation *ordo* used in December 1130, which followed the Romano-German Pontifical, was derived from Rome, perhaps sent with the cardinal who was present at the ceremony.[70] In May–June 1131 Roger despatched Prince Robert of Capua and Count Rainulf of Caiazzo to Rome with two hundred knights, something mentioned by Falco (who would appear to have misdated the episode), but not by Alexander, although the latter let slip that it was while Rainulf was at Rome that his wife left him.[71] The despatch of this force to Rome was surely intended to strengthen the position of Anacletus within the city. In the autumn of 1131 Anacletus, undoubtedly at Roger's behest, restructured the Church on the island of Sicily, promoting Messina to be an archbishopric ['Roger II and the Papacy', no. 3], and creating two new bishoprics, Cefalù and Lipari, to be its suffragans, thus dividing the island into two metropolitan provinces.[72] Roger was also allied with, or made use of, Cardinal Crescentius, whom Anacletus had appointed as his rector in Benevento. While we should be cautious in accepting all the chronicler Falco's rhetorical claims that Crescentius wanted to 'place the city of Benevento under the king's power' – the city was after all papal territory, and there is no evidence that Roger sought to annex it – the king was clearly concerned to have the military aid of Benevento, as he was entitled to by the terms of the bull of 1130. So Falco informs us, in summer 1132, that Roger sought that:

> for love of him and their obligation of fealty to Anacletus, they should bind themselves by an oath of alliance and make war against the Prince of Capua and Count Rainulf.[73]

But the clearest indication of the close links between king and pope was the former's privilege to the Pierleone family in January 1134 ['Roger

70 Houben (2002), 56. Copies of this pontifical had been made before 1100 at Montecassino, Elze (1973), 440. Loew and Brown (1980), ii.87, 128. But this does not necessarily mean that it was known in Sicily.

71 *Al. Tel.* II.14; for the date, Clementi (1991), 240–2. [See below, 82, 190].

72 *Italia Pontificia*, x.339 no. 23; 357 no. 4, 364 no. 1. Loud (2007a), 225.

73 Below, 193.