Sandro Carocci

Lordships of Southern Italy

Rural Societies, Aristocratic Powers and Monarchy in the 12th and 13th Centuries

What was the real nature of medieval lordship in southern Italy? What can this region and its history bring to the great European debates on feudalism and aristocratic powers, their structures and evolution, and their social and economic impact? What contribution can the Kingdom of Sicily make to studies of the relationships between sovereigns, nobilities and peasant societies? And can the study of seigneuriat powers and rural societies reshape the old arguments regarding the economic backwardness of the Mezzogiorno (the South of Italy) and the central role of its monarchy?

This book offers the first systematic analysis of lordship in southern Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, under the Norman, Staufen and early Angevin kings. It offers new interpretations of the powers of the nobility, and of rural societies and royal policy. It reveals the complexity of interactions between the king, nobles and peasants, and how they occurred and were expressed through laws and violence, feudal relations and economic investments, debates on freedom and serfdom, and the exploitation of people and natural resources. In these interactions a leading role is played by peasant societies – with previously unsuspected levels of dynamism – to set against that of the kings, who were determined to curb aristocratic powers, and of the nobles who were obliged to adapt their lordship in response to powerful rural societies and crown policies. What emerges is a hitherto unseen Mezzogiorno, vital and complex, whose study allows a deeper understanding not only of the affairs of the South but of many other regions of Europe.

Sandro Carocci is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. He has published, among other works, Baroni di Roma. Dominanze signorili e lignaggi aristocratici nel Duecen to e nel primo Trecento (ISIME, 1993), Il nepotismo nel medioevo. Papi, cardinali e famiglie nobili (Viella, 1996). With Isabella Lazzarini he has co-edited Social Mobility in Medieval Italy (1100-1500) (Viella, 2018).

June 2018

pp. 622, 15,5x23 cm, hardback

ISBN: 9788867287734 | € 95,00

SERIES

Viella History, Art and Humanities Collection, 5

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Before the Normans
3. The Normans: Change and Continuity
4. Monarchy and Feudalism
5. King and Lords
6. Clientele and Submission
7. Knights and nobles in the thirteenth century.
8. Villeins and Serfs
9. Seigneurial Justices
10. Worlds of Exaction
11. Economy, Lordship, the Rural World
12. Rural Societies and Aristocratic Lordship
13. Conclusions

Foreword to the English Edition
1. The paradox of the southern Italian lordship.
2. The myth of the monarchy.
3. Negati ve imagery: baronage and villeinage.
4. The obsession with backwardness.
5. Dualism.
7. Studies of southern Italy: monasteries, villeins, recent developments.
8. Problems of method and chronology.

2. Before the Normans
1. Political geography.
2. Lombard uncertainties.
3. Montecassino.
4. Vincenzo al Voltur no and insinatellamento studies.

3. The Normans: Change and Continuity
1. The age of Robert Guiscard.
2. Plunder and lordship.
3. Dominatore castri.
4. Uncertain evidence.
5. The fears of subordinates.
6. Rights of conquest and the costs of protection.
7. Continuity and change.
8. Continuity through change.
9. Regional and chronological differences.
10. Regional and chronological differences: the main land regions.
11. Settlement questions.
12. The marginality of the ecclesiastical lordship.
13. The extent of change

4. Monarchy and Feudalism
1. The royal administration.
2. The monarchical revolution.
3. Feudal and non-feudal relations.
4. Feudal revisions.
5. Was Roger II a feudal king?
6. A few clarifications.
7. The Catalogus baronum.
8. A feudal project.
9. Selection and registration.
10. Regalia and demesne.

5. King and Lords
1. Seigneurial acts and languages of legitimation.
2. Mores, usus and consuetudines.
3. Royal controls during the Norman era: aristocratic marriages.
4. Royal orders in the Norman era: successions.
5. Hereditary practices.
6. Royal controls under the Normans: alienations, confiscations, assignments.
7. Lordship under control: legislation.
10. Collapse and recovery of royal power.
11. Staufen power.
12. From the Staufen to the Angevins.
15. Comparisons.

6. Nobility and Pre-eminence
1. The militarization of pre-eminence and ethnic distinctions.
2. Corrections.
3. The vocabulary of pre-eminence during the Norman period (royal and notarial document).
5. Counts, barons and knights in the Norman period.
6. The material bases for knightly pre-eminence in the twelfth century.
7. Knights and nobles in the thirteenth century.

7. Clientele and Submission
1. Pontecorvo.
2. Montecalvo.
3. Milites and lords.
4. Domini of Sorrento.
5. The lordships of local notables.
7. The ius affidandi in Apulia.
8. Foreigners and recommendati.
9. The obligations of affidati and recommendati.
10. Kings and clients.

11. Questions of detail.
12. For whom the bell tolls.
13. In search of the origins of dependence.
14. Other causes.
15. How exceptional and representative was the Mezzogiorno?

8. Villeins and Serfs
1. The topic.
2. Problems of approach.
3. Slaves?
4. Servile burdens.
5. Hereditary dependencies.
6. Liberty as a (partial) exemption: liberi and frances.
7. Terms and classifications.
8. The revocati.
10. The angaranii.

9. Seigneurial Justices
1. The lords who lose.
2. The justices.
3. A plurality of courts: churches and monasteries.
5. The localism of curie and judges.
7. Local societies, seigneurial justice, royal power.
8. Before the monarchy.

10. Worlds of Exaction
1. Parameters.
2. An unknown reality.
3. Common land (domania) in the early modern period.
4. Ius labordini.
5. Male and seminardini.
6. Medieval classes:
7. Establishing the origins of common lands.
8. Aspects of an agrarian system.
10. Unification and differentiation: privileged groups and others.
11. The multiple facets of exaction.
14. Other jurisdictional revenues.

11. Economy, Lordship, the Rural World
1. Labour service and symbolic representations.
2. The number of convéses.
3. The geography and chronology of forced labour.
5. Regional differences.
7. Was exaction territorial?
8. Types of lordship and forms of exaction.
9. Lordship and production.
10. Forms of management.
11. Lordships with limited pervasiveness.
12. Resources for the local elite.

12. Rural Societies and Aristocratic Lordship
1. The context.
2. Seigneurial classifications and the peasant world.
3. Factors of social stratification.
4. Notables and local societies.
5. Knights and notables.
6. Rural autonomy and patrimonialism.
7. Polarizations and contrasts.
8. Eboli.
9. Political action and community in the pre-monarchical age.
10. Institutional weakness.
11. Political action, rural communities and royal power in the Norman-Staufen period.
12. Political action, rural communities and royal power in the Angevin period.
13. Eboli as an example.

13. Conclusions
1. Otherness and representativeness.
2. Seigneurial peculiarities.
3. King and lords.
4. Barons and notables.
5. L’Apulia.
6. Cities and the countryside.
7. The lordships of the Mezzogiorno: becoming “normal”