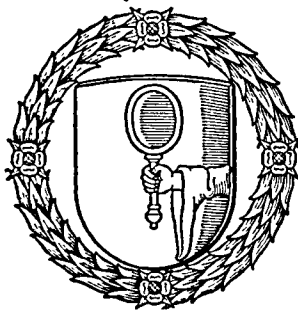


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ROGER II OF SICILY, *REX-TYRANNUS*, IN TWELFTH-CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT*

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IN 1954 historians of Italy and other European countries assembled in Palermo to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the death of King Roger II of Sicily. The papers read at this meeting and published later in two volumes¹ resulted in a new appreciation and evaluation of the personality and government of the first Sicilian king. Thus, these studies brought out the fact, among other points, that Roger deserves the credit for some of the achievements which scholars have been inclined to attribute to his more famous grandson, the Emperor Frederick II,² whose death in 1250 had been commemorated in a similar — the 700th — anniversary celebration just four years before.³ Among the many valuable contributions to the history of the founder of the Sicilian kingdom covering all possible aspects of Roger's life and government, those dealing with the impact of Roger's growing power on European politics (Walter Holtzmann)⁴ and with Roger's concepts of sovereignty, law and government (Antonio Marongiu)⁵ were especially helpful in clarifying the ideas that led to the formulation of the present subject. On the basis of these studies and others of a similar scope and content, the present paper attempts to study as its main subject the reflection of the new system of Sicilian government and politics in contemporary action and thought.

Here the question was not to unravel the thought of King Roger but to explore the reaction of the world to a political personality which did not fit any contemporary patterns of rulership nor lend itself to a judgment by time-honored standards and traditional concepts — except perhaps by comparison with some awe-

* This paper is dedicated to the memory of my friend Theodor Ernst Mommsen, with whom it was first discussed and who then as often before helped me with his interest and advice. But I would also like to discharge my debt of gratitude to Professor Walter Holtzmann, Bonn, who imparted to me his rich knowledge of recent historical literature and to Dr Thomas Goldstein who helped with the final revision of the text.

¹ *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Ruggeriani*, 2 vols. (Palermo, 1955). In addition to their topical contributions the articles provide rich bibliographical information on many problems and in this way supplement for the years 1935-1955 the bibliographical survey contained in *Italia Pontificia*, VIII: *Regnum Normannorum-Campania*, ed. P. F. Kehr (Berlin, 1935), pp. 1-6. Valuable material on Roger's reign is also found in an earlier testimonial volume published on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of Roger's coronation as king of Sicily: *Il Regno Normanno* (Messina-Milan, 1932); in a collection of essays by Ernesto Pontieri, *Tra i Normanni nell'Italia meridionale* (Naples, 1948), and in *Studi medioevali in onore di Antonino De Stefano* (Palermo, 1956).

² See among other studies A. Marongiu, "L'héritage normand de l'état de Frédéric II de Souabe," *Studi medioevali in onore di Antonino De Stefano*, pp. 341-349.

³ See note 5.

⁴ "Il Regno di Ruggero II e gli inizi di un sistema di stati europei," *Atti del Convegno*, I, 29-48.

⁵ "La concezione di sovranità di Ruggero II," *Atti del Convegno*, I, 213 ff. See also Marongiu, "Lo spirito della monarchia normanna di Sicilia nell'allocuzione di Ruggero ai suoi Grandi," *Archivio Storico della Sicilia*, Serie III, Vol. IV (1950-1951), and Marongiu, "Concezione della sovranità ed assolutismo di Giustiniano e di Federico II," *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Federiciani* (Palermo, 1952), pp. 31-46.

inspiring remote historical examples. The sources used for research on this problem are, among others, those that have been used frequently to define the character of the first Sicilian king. They have been read and analyzed here to elucidate the subjective contemporary reactions of observers who not only recorded their own views and attitudes but the opinion and judgment of others as well. However, the haphazard character of these sources provides no more than limited and incomplete answers to the questions that have been posed. The author was thus forced to present the results of her research in a series of separate "notes." The first of these will serve as an introduction to the whole; it surveys the historical process, both territorial and constitutional, that led to the establishment of the kingdom and therewith determined public opinion about Roger's novel foundation.

Although occasionally we hear of debates that centered on the interpretation of the king's actions, experiences of the kind to be described below seem to have excited only a modicum of theoretical discussion among King Roger's observers. However, their influence can be traced to some aspects of the political philosophy of John of Salisbury, who wrote his famous *Policraticus* less than a decade after King Roger's death. John fully fits the sweeping verdict of R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, i.e., that — in contrast to the political theorists of the scholastic age — political writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, while drawing heavily on writers of the past, were at the same time influenced "by the actual political movement of the time."⁶ It is because of this evident actuality that John's theories are used here not only for the broader background but also for the impact of Roger's character and reign that is reflected in his works.

1. *Promotio Siciliae ad Regnum*

In 1130, when Roger II of the house of Altavilla (Hauteville) was crowned king of Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia, the island, a well governed and economically prosperous state, was fully prepared for the leadership it was to assume over the large mainland region which Roger had just conquered and which he was now to integrate into one large territorial state. It was from very small beginnings that the island had acquired this status.⁷ When in 1059 Pope Nicholas II invested Roger Guiscard with the duchy of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, the latter region had not even been conquered.⁸ Its ascent, however, was hastened when Robert

⁶ R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West*, 6 vols. (Edinburgh and London, 1903-1936), III, 129.

⁷ On the political history of the Norman kingdom see F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907), I, II, *passim*; E. Caspar, *Roger II. (1101-1154) und die Gründung der normannisch-sizilischen Monarchie* (Innsbruck, 1904); *passim*; M. Amari, *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., revised by the author and edited by C. A. Nallino, 3 vols. (Catania, 1933-1938), III, *passim*.

⁸ The title conveyed upon Robert Guiscard is "dux Apuliae et Calabriae et utroque (Deo et S. Petro) subveniente futurus Siciliae." At the same time the pope invested the Norman prince Richard with Capua: *Italia Pontificia*, ed. P. Kehr, VIII (Berlin, 1935), nos. 14, 15 (pp. 11 f.). See P. Kehr, "Die Belehnungen der süditalischen Normannenfürsten durch die Päpste (1059-1192)," *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse* (1934), no. 1 (pp. 22-24);

and his brother Roger conquered Palermo in 1072 and the partition of the island between them gave Robert this great city.⁹ The duke of Apulia, no doubt, planned to make it the capital of his duchy and to build up the island as a strong bulwark from which to rule and to control the unruly barons and cities of the mainland.¹⁰ Even before the brothers were able to conquer the rest of the island Robert Guiscard struck coins with the Arabic inscription "Malik of Sicily" and appointed as his lieutenant in Palermo a Christian knight with the title "Emir of Sicily."¹¹ Because of Robert's engagement in Apulia and his far-flung military enterprises, it was his brother Roger who achieved the conquest and for all practical purposes became the true ruler of Sicily and Calabria. Guiscard's death in 1085 seemed to make the separation of the island from the mainland territories permanent. But the inherent weakness of the duchy of Apulia under Robert's immediate successors gave the Sicilian branch of the house the opportunity to make themselves complete masters of Sicily and Calabria and even gain footholds in Apulia.¹² When Duke William, last male heir of Robert Guiscard, died in 1127, Count Roger II entered Apulia with an army to claim what he called his heritage.¹³ His victories over barons and cities and a papal army earned him one by one, the duchy of Apulia by papal investiture, the principate of Capua,¹⁴ and finally in 1130 the royal crown and title. Thus the process whereby the mainland had conquered the island had been reversed and the island now assumed the role of leadership in the new *regnum*.

The coronation of Roger II at Palermo in 1130 by a representative of the "Antipope" Anacletus II brought the *regnum* and the island into the focus of European attention. It is true that in his privilege Anacletus granted Roger and

Chalandon, *Histoire*, I, 170 ff. See also the repetition of the investiture of both Robert Guiscard and Richard of Capua by Pope Alexander II in 1061, 1062, 1063: *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, nos. 19, 20, 21 (p. 19).

⁹ See R. S. Lopez, "The Norman Conquest of Sicily," in *A History of the Crusades*, I (Philadelphia, 1955), 65; P. Kehr, "Belehnungen," p. 22. While Robert Guiscard kept Palermo, half of Messina, and the Val Demone for himself, Roger received the larger portion of the island with the title Count of Sicily and Calabria, as Robert's liegeman.

¹⁰ See Kehr, "Belehnungen," p. 22.

¹¹ See R. S. Lopez, "The Norman Conquest," p. 65.

¹² Each time when a Sicilian army crossed the Straits of Messina to come to the help of the Apulian dukes against their rebellious barons and cities, the Sicilian counts bargained for territorial concessions. See Kehr, "Belehnungen," p. 36; Chalandon, *Histoire*, I, 288, 302, 324; Caspar, *Roger II.*, *passim* (hereinafter this work will be cited only by the author's name). On the cession of Palermo in 1122 see also L. R. Ménager, *Amiratus-Ἀμπαῦς* (Paris, 1960), pp. 23-24.

¹³ The question of Roger's claim to the duchy is an open one. The historian Romuald Guarna of Salerno reports that Duke William had made promises and had even actually instituted Roger as his heir. But Pope Honorius II considered Apulia as escheated to the Roman Curia when William died in 1127. See Caspar, pp. 58-59, 70.

¹⁴ The investiture of Count Roger II with the duchy of Apulia by Honorius II took place at Benevento on 22 August 1128. A year later Robert of Capua was compelled by fear to surrender the principate to Roger, an act which involved perjury on Roger's side, as at Benevento he had sworn to Pope Honorius II to keep his hands off the principate of Capua. See *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, nos. 131, 132 (pp. 35-36); Kehr, "Belehnungen," pp. 38-39; Chalandon, *Histoire*, I, 396; Caspar, pp. 81, 87.

his heirs the royal title for all three main territories, Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia¹⁵ and that the mainland territories were frequently referred to as "kingdom of Italy."¹⁶ But in the same privilege the pope made Sicily the center of the kingdom (*caput regni*) and ordered that, in line with Roger's own choice of Palermo as the site of the coronation, his successors should be crowned by a Sicilian archbishop of their own choice.¹⁷ Finally, when after a decade of war from which Roger emerged victorious, Pope Innocent II granted recognition to the new kingdom, it was agreed between the two partners in the peace of Mignano (1139) to change its constitution. Roger was no longer to be king of "Italy" and of Sicily but king of Sicily alone. As such he was to be the overlord over the mainland territories, Apulia and Capua, which in keeping with traditional papal policy, were to be kept in separate hands.¹⁸ This was expressed in the new title "rex Siciliae, ducatus Apuliae et principatus Capuae."¹⁹ The exclusive association of the royal title with Sicily strongly influenced the later history of the Italian kingdom. When, in 1302, the island and the mainland parts of the kingdom separated for good, each forming an independent kingdom, the Anjou kings of Naples retained the title "king of Sicily" while, as a matter of course, the Aragonese kings of the island adopted it, a duplication which heralded the coming in the fifteenth century of the "Kingdom of the Two Sicilies."

¹⁵ See the excerpt of Anacletus' bull in *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, no. 137 (p. 37): "concedit coronam regni Siciliae, Calabriae et Apuliae . . . et constituit Siciliam caput regni." In addition to the territories constituting his kingdom proper Roger was invested with the principality of Capua, the "Honor" of Naples and certain rights in Benevento, Chalandon, *Histoire*, II, 7 ff.; Caspar, pp. 93, 96, 506 (Reg. no. 65); Kehr, "Belehnungen," pp. 39 f. On the political circumstances which centered on the rejection of Anacletus II in favor of Innocent II by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux see below, pp. 53 f., 57 ff.

¹⁶ On the use of the titles "Siciliae et Italiae rex" and "Italiae rex" in royal charters from 1130-1139 see K. A. Kehr, *Die Urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen Könige* (Innsbruck, 1902), p. 248. "Italia" is sometimes used as a synonym for Apulia only, *ibid.*, note 3.

¹⁷ See *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, no. 137 (p. 37). The passage in the bull of Anacletus reads: "Et Siciliam caput regni constituimus . . . Porro . . . concedimus ut per manus archiepiscoporum terrae tuae, quos volueris, tui et tui haeredes in reges ungamini et coronemini." See Migne, *P.L.*, CLXXXIX, 716.

¹⁸ See the extract of the bull of Innocent II in *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, no. 159 (p. 42): "Innocentius II Rogerio illustri et glorioso Siciliae regi eiusque heredibus propter Roberti Guiscardi at Rogerii (I) merita concedit regimen Siciliae . . . iam ab Honorio ei concessum, ducatum quoque Apuliae ab eodem collatum et insuper principatum Capuanum, ea videlicet ratione ut ipse et successores eius ligium homagium faciant et fidelitatem et censum 600 schifatorum singulis annis persolvant." (Since Pope Innocent was looking for a precedent and the act of the "schismatic" Pope Anacletus II could not be mentioned, he referred to Pope Honorius II as the one who had granted to Roger if not the *regnum* at least the duchy of Apulia.) Whereas the wording of the privilege only vaguely suggests the papal policy of keeping the three fiefs separated, the investiture ceremony that followed the granting of the privilege made it real. Here Pope Innocent invested Roger with the kingdom of Sicily and his two sons Roger and Alfons with the duchy of Apulia and the principality of Capua, using three different banners for the act, *Italia Pontificia*, *l.c.*, no. 158 (p. 42), see Kehr, "Belehnungen," pp. 42-43; Caspar, *Roger II.*, p. 228. The arrangements at Mignano as regards the separation of the "fiefs" were of short duration, Kehr, "Belehnungen," p. 44.

¹⁹ "King of Sicily, of the Duchy of Apulia and of the Principality of Capua." See K. A. Kehr, *Urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen Könige*, pp. 248-249; P. Kehr, "Belehnungen," p. 42; Chalandon, *Histoire*, II, 169; Caspar, pp. 229-230.

Whatever inconveniences the change of title carried for the king of Sicily it tended to convey the facts correctly. By all standards the island had become the most important territory in the new kingdom. During the wars and invasions that the mainland had to undergo Sicily, with its inexhaustible resources in manpower and material, had proved to be the king's ultimate refuge and salvation. From here as the base of operations the mainland was reconquered several times and then integrated for good.²⁰ Its political and economic organization served as a model for the reorganization of the mainland. Soon the name of the island and the royal title attached to it were to represent in the eyes of the world the whole of Norman power and prestige. For better or for worse the reputation of the new kingdom and dynasty was also connected with the historical tradition of Sicily. Unlike the mainland possessions which formed a hodgepodge of lands joined together accidentally and to which the term "Italia" could only apply in the vaguest possible sense, Sicily was not only a compact geographical entity, but also had a past of its own separated in part from that of the Italian peninsula. It was in the Sicilian past that historians and politicians could look for justification of the new constitution of the Norman state. For it is a fact not to be denied that, although most unscrupulous in the choice of his means to expand and to maintain his conquests, King Roger seemed nevertheless anxious to gain recognition and to achieve at least an outward legality for his new kingdom. Each stage of war waged for the defense of his conquests was followed by negotiations aimed at extracting recognition from the defeated popes in return for the liberation from prison, cease of hostilities, or plain peace. Indeed, to consider Roger's courting of the popes and of French princes after the Peace of Mignano as mere formalities would be as wrong as to look at Roger's attempt to restore and to use the feudal laws and customs of the conquered peoples just as a screen to conceal his true attempt to rule as an absolute king and to trample on the rights and customs of the people.²¹ As H. L. Ménager recently pointed out, the absolutistic aspect of Roger's government has been greatly exaggerated; especially, too much emphasis put on the evidence of state symbolism and ceremonies which were in the main borrowed from the Byzantines.²² Although centralistic tendencies were certainly

²⁰ Kehr ("Belehnungen," p. 39) makes the point that the Italian mainland had lapsed into the inferior position of serving as a politico-military glacis to the island.

²¹ See for instance, Marongiu, "La Concezione di sovranità di Ruggero II," *loc. cit.* (in n. 5 above): "He (Roger) holds the position of an emperor who is the fountainhead of law on earth"; "he creates an absolute monarchy"; "he has a methodical program." Marongiu also stresses that Roger wanted to demonstrate "a perfect constitutional identity with the emperors of Rome and Byzantium." The same view is presented by E. Giunta, *Bizantini e Bizantinismo nella Sicilia Normanna* (Palermo, 1950).

²² "L'Institution monarchique dans les états normands d'Italie," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, iv (1959), pp. 311 ff. Ménager does not deny the imitation by the Normans of Greek ceremonies, as it clearly appears from the mosaics in the church of the Martorana in Palermo, but he stresses that this influence does not extend to political institutions, which were the result of practical adaptations of the administrative system developed in Sicily to the needs of the mainland territories rather than the imitation of a model.—On the other hand, the possibility of Byzantine influence on political ideas prevailing at the royal court should not be ruled out altogether. Marongiu pointed out convincingly that Roger's choice of the title *rex* instead of *imperator* was determined by the desire to be on a

at work in his administration, Roger had no intention of undermining the feudal structure of government and society.²³ As regards Roger's ascent to kingship, Ménager has shown that the feudal forms of Roger's enthronement and coronation — approval of his qualifications, consent by the magnates, and popular acclaim — indispensable even for the ascent to the throne of a member of a hereditary house, could establish the rights of a new dynasty to the throne.²⁴ The idea that God speaks his will through the voice of those who find the new king and house qualified to rule a people finds expression in the Coronation Ordo used at the coronation ceremony of 1130.²⁵ Feudal constitutional law was called upon to legitimize the new kingdom and its ruling house.

It seems not altogether improbable that, in line with his desire to be recognized by the kings of Europe as one of them, King Roger also tried to influence public opinion by pointing to precedents of his *regnum* in the Sicilian past. Evidence in the sources to the effect is rather meager. Yet, in the light of Roger's policy of legalizing his position, this evidence ought to be taken more seriously than it has heretofore. At the time of Roger's negotiations with Pope Innocent II at Mignano the king's diplomats seem to have come out with a theory, clad in guarded language, of a *restitutio regni Siciliae*. The formula, included in the privilege of Innocent II issued at Mignano, stated in essence that by founding his new kingdom Roger was not creating "new law" but was reviving "a kingdom that according to ancient historians had existed of old."²⁶ Another version of this somewhat

par with the Byzantine emperor, whose title *basileus* was customarily rendered by the Latin *rex*. Even Emperor Nero was given the title *rex* on a mosaic of the Capella Palatina, see Marongiu, "La concezione di sovranità di Ruggero II," *Atti del Convegno*, I, 232, and *Studi medioevali in onore di A. De Stefano*, p. 345 (above, note 2). On Roger's ambition to be recognized by the Byzantine emperor as his peer see below, p. 62.

²³ Of the many studies written on Norman institutions I mention only H. Niese, *Die Gesetzgebung der normannischen Dynastie im Regnum Siciliae* (Halle, 1910); E. Jamison, "The Norman administration of Apulia and Capua," *Papers of the British School at Rome*, VI (1913), no. 6; Claude Cahen, *Le régime féodal de l'Italie normande* (Paris, 1940).

²⁴ "L'Institution monarchique . . .," pp. 445 ff. The main source is Roger's biographer, Alexander Telesius (of Telese): *De rebus gestis Rogerii Siciliae regis libri IV*, ed. G. Del Re, *Cronisti e scrittori sincroni della dominazione normanna*, 2 vols. (Naples, 1845-1868), I, 101 f., 144 (chs. II, 1-3; III, 32).

²⁵ The Sicilian Ordo was borrowed from the Coronation Ordo of the German kings of the Saxon house and changed according to circumstances. For this information I am indebted to Dr Reinhard Elze of the University of Bonn, who copied for me the pertinent formulae from the still unpublished Sicilian Coronation Ordo used in 1130. In the following quotations from the Sicilian Ordo the passages from the tenth-century German model which were omitted in the Sicilian Ordo are put in parentheses: "Vis regnum tibi a Deo concessum (secundum iustitiam patrum tuorum) iustitia regere; Sta et retine amodo locum (quem hucusque paterna successione tenuisti, hereditario iure) tibi delegatum per auctoritatem Dei omnipotentis; Reges quoque de lumbis eius egrediantur regnum hoc regere totum." As Dr Elze tells me, the last formula, found also in the German Ordo, was not eliminated (as he believed when he published his *Ordines Coronationis Imperialis* [Hanover, 1960], p. xxix), but was inserted unchanged in the Roger Ordo.

²⁶ The passage from the bull "*Quos dispensatio*" (27 July 1139) reads: "Nos ergo eius [i.e., Honorius II] vestigiis inherentes et de potentia tua . . . spem atque fiduciam obtinentes regnum Siciliae, quod utique, prout in antiquis refertur historiis, regnum fuisse non dubium est, tibi ab eodem antecessore nostro concessum . . . concedimus, et apostolica auctoritate confirmamus" (*P.L.*, CLXXXI, 470, *Italia Pontificia*, VIII, no. 159). On the reference to Honorius II see above, n. 18.

cryptic theory is found in Alexander of Telese's official biography of King Roger written shortly before or at the time of the negotiations at Mignano. Here the theory is connected with the status of the city of Palermo. It has always been the prerogative of Sicily, so this version runs, to be ruled by kings from Palermo as its capital and metropolis.²⁷ Now, as some historians believe, it may well be that this theory was invented without any conscious connection to historical facts.²⁸ But it is not quite unlikely either that some Norman historians and court advisers, well read in ancient history, had discovered that some of the ancient tyrants of Syracuse held a king-like position in the Greek part of the island and used the royal title or similar distinguishing appellations in state symbols such as coins and in official functions.²⁹ As regards Alexander's version, wherein the theory of *restitutio regni* is bound up with the prerogative of Palermo as the seat of kings, the author himself, as well as other close observers, may really have thought that Roger had renewed what had once been the emirate of Sicily ruled by the Kalbid emirs from Palermo.³⁰ This was a concept not too far removed from reality.

²⁷ Telesius (II, 1, ed. cited in n. 24 above, p. 101) has the Sicilian barons use the *restitutio* formula as one more argument to "convince" Roger to accept the royal title and crown: "Qui etiam addebant [i.e., the barons] quod regni ipsius principium et caput Panormus Siciliae metropolis fieri deceret, quae olim sub priscis temporibus super hanc ipsam provinciam reges nonnullos habuisse traditur, quae postea, pluribus evolutis annis, occulto Dei disponente iudicio, nunc usque sine regibus mansit." A very similar version of the *restitutio* formula is found in a royal charter of 1140; see Caspar, p. 231, note 1. In Telesius II, 2 (p. 102) the barons suggest that the *regnum* be extended to Roger's mainland territories.

²⁸ E. Caspar (p. 231, n. 1) calls the *restitutio* theory a court legend while the Italian historian M. Fuiano dismisses the respective passages in Telesius' chronicle as fictitious, inserted to provide a legal and historical basis for a policy that shocked the world with its novelty and daring, see "La fondazione del 'Regnum Siciliae' nella versione di Alessandro Telese," *Papers of the British School in Rome*, xxiv (1956), pp. 65-77.

²⁹ The distinguished nineteenth-century Sicilian historian Rosario Gregorio, for one, thought that the *restitutio* theory was solidly founded on the historical knowledge of Norman politicians and historians. He therefore assembled the instances for the use of the royal or a similar title by the Greek tyrants of Sicily. These instances refer to some of the earlier tyrants such as Gelon of Acragas and Syracuse, to his brother Hiero I and, among the later ones, to Dionysius I, Agathocles, Hiero II, and his son Gelon II. See Gregorio's *Considerazioni sopra la storia di Sicilia* (Palermo, 1831), II, ch. 1, n. 37; also in his *Opere scelte*, 3rd ed. (Palermo, 1845), p. 144, n. 4. Gregorio's examples can be increased in number and more fully substantiated by consulting among other works the articles Sicily, Syracuse, Tyranny, Gelon, Dionysius, Agathocles, etc., in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie des klassischen Altertums*; also, for Dionysius I, K. F. Stroheker, *Dionysius I., Gestalt und Geschichte des Tyrannen von Syrakus* (Wiesbaden, 1958). Gregorio's assumption that Norman court historians were well informed on the history of the Greek tyrants is borne out by the fact that some popular world chronicles excerpted by such Norman historians as Romuald of Salerno, who composed a world chronicle at the time of Roger's grandson William II, used the titles "rex Syracusanus" and "Siciliae rex" and "rex Siculorum" for some of the Greek tyrants; see the *Historia miscella* by the tenth-century Italian chronicler Landulfus Sagax, also referred to as *Eutropi Breviarium cum Pauli Landulfique additamentis* in *MGH, Auctores antiquissimi*, II, ed. H. Droysen, pp. 46, 237, 238. It is from the *Historia miscella* (p. 46)—and not, as he claims, from Orosius—that Romuald of Salerno borrowed a passage on Hiero II whom he calls "potentissimus rex Siciliae." Romuald also knows that the capital of the Greek Sicilian "kingdom" was Syracuse ("Siciliae quondam caput"). See *Romualdi Guarnae Salernitani Chronicon*, ed. A. Garufi (*RiSS*, VII, N.S., 1914-1935), pp. 38, 108 (*ad a.* 1087).

³⁰ The Kalbid emirs of the house of Hasan-ben-Ali ruled Sicily in the name of the Fatimids in Africa who were their suzerains; in fact they were independent princes and kept the island fairly well

Robert Guiscard had already tried to revive this tradition.³¹ From the time he had come of age and ruled the county of Sicily in his own right Roger II had not only reestablished Palermo as a center of Sicilian administration and of his court, residing at the site if not in the actual residence of the Kalbid emirs, but had revived this tradition by taking to the ways of Moslem princes in his personal life, in his cultural activities, and in his personal and official surroundings.³² But, whatever they had in mind when referring to Sicilian precedents, Roger's court historians and diplomats had to be wary of mentioning identifiable facts and names. It would have been equally embarrassing to the new dynasty of Sicily to be "credited" with the restoration of the "kingdom" of the one-time tyrant-kings of Sicily as it would be thought of as successors of the Moslem emirs of Palermo. At any rate, before Roger's voice could be heard beyond the boundaries of his kingdom, his enemies had already formulated their own theory of *restitutio regni Siciliae*, had made efficient and — for the prestige of the king — disastrous use of it in a hostile propaganda and had condemned both ruler and kingdom on moral, religious, and historical grounds.

2. *Tyrannus Siciliae — Invasor Imperii*

The foundation of a new kingdom in the Mediterranean aroused the hostility of all powers great and small, who felt that their claims and interests in southern Italy had been violated by the upstart king. But it was King Roger himself who invited aggression when, in the incipient stage of the schism caused by the disputed papal election of 1130, he stepped forward on the European stage of politics as the protector of Pope Anacletus II. Unfortunately for him, the party of Innocent II, the opponent pope, was headed by the eminent Bernard of Clairvaux, the unquestioned leader of the church at that time. The abbot was perhaps the only one among Roger's contemporaries who was his match in political shrewdness and diplomatic skill. In fact, in the use of the weapons of political propaganda Bernard surpassed him by far. To gain the support and the collaboration of the Catholic kings and princes for the destruction of the "antipope" and the restoration of the unity of the church Bernard used all his powers of conviction in order to show that the military actions of Roger in support of Anacletus' papacy directly threatened the security and interests of the princes and cities involved in Italian politics.³³ In his propaganda campaign against the defender of a

united for nearly a century (948-ca 1050). Since they often styled themselves maliks (kings?), it would be right to speak of a Kalbid monarchy, see R. S. Lopez, "The Norman conquest of Sicily" (see n. 9 above), pp. 57-58. On Sicily under the Kalbids see M. Amari, *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, II, 269-421. It is during their reign that Palermo rose to unprecedented glory as one of the most splendid capitals of the Mediterranean.

³¹ See above, p. 48.

³² See Caspar, pp. 435-472; Amari, *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, III, 351-372. An excellent survey of the culture at the court of the Norman kings is found in A. De Stefano, *La cultura in Sicilia nel periodo normanno* (Bologna, 1954), see here especially pp. 5-28. On Arabic-Norman architecture see Amari, III, 840-875. It is Amari's opinion that the Telesius passage was really inspired by all the outward evidences of the Arabic-Norman continuity in politics as well as in culture.

³³ See Caspar, pp. 137-139.

“schismatic” pope Bernard availed himself of a slogan perhaps of his own invention: he appealed to the world to stand up in arms against the tyrant of Sicily.³⁴ This surname was extremely well chosen not only because of its political actuality, the impressive way of rejecting Roger’s self-assumed royal title by its very counterpart, but also because it suggested to those familiar with the political philosophy of the time the correlated but contrasting conceptions of *rex iustus sive rex a recte agendo* and *rex iniustus sive tyrannus*.³⁵

While the concept of a tyrant as a wicked and unjust ruler formed part and parcel of the political language of the time, the association of “tyranny” with Sicily and Sicilian history could have originated only in a more intimate knowledge of ancient history and ancient political philosophy. How much of humanistic erudition was absorbed by St Bernard, at the time he enjoyed instruction in classical authors in the typical way of contemporary French liberal arts schools, we cannot know.³⁶ All we can say is that in his propaganda campaign against King Roger the abbot of Clairvaux was not concerned with the historical content of his campaign slogan. As will be shown presently, the term was for him just a convenient label to denounce Roger in the eyes of the world as a usurper and champion of a “heretic.” But contemporary scholars found more in this associa-

³⁴ Bernard’s propaganda campaign had been anticipated to some extent by Pope Honorius II in 1127 when he called on Christians to join in a crusade against the usurper and even promised indulgences as a reward for this God-pleasing work, see Caspar, p. 76.

³⁵ It would take much more space than a footnote can provide to trace the mediaeval concept of tyranny to its classical sources. Suffice it here to state that the most important transmitter of ancient and especially Cicero’s thought on the matter was Isidore of Seville; see R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, *History of Medieval Political Theory*, I, 161 ff. Isidore distinguishes between an earlier concept of the term *tyrannus* when it was synonymous with king, and a later one when the word was used in the familiar pejorative sense; see *Etymologiae*, IX, iii, 18-20: “. . . nam apud veteres inter regem et tyrannum nulla discretio erat . . . Fortes reges tyranni vocabantur; . . . Iam postea in usum accidit tyrannos vocari pessimos atque improbos reges, luxuriosae dominationis cupiditatem et crudelissimam dominationem in populis exercentes” (*P.L.*, LXXXII, 344). Also important is Isidore’s definition of *tyrannus* by contrast, see *Etym.* IX, iii, 4: “. . . rex a regendo; non autem regit qui non corrigit. Recte igitur faciendo regis nomen tenetur, peccando amittitur” (*P.L.*, LXXXII, 342). See also among the pertinent definitions contained in Isidore’s *Sententiae*, III, 48-49, 51-52 (*P.L.*, LXXXIII, 718-721; 723-726) the one quoted in part in the text above: “Reges a recte agendo vocati sunt, ideoque recte faciendo regis nomen tenetur, peccando amittitur,” (*ibid.*, c. 48, col. 719). Later political writers found the distinction between king and tyrant, a political twin conception of greatest importance for the Middle Ages (see Carlyle, *History of Political Theory*, III, 126), either in the popular works of Isidore of Seville or in Carolingian writers such as Alcuin, Jonas of Orleans, Hincmar of Reims, and others, writers who in turn were indebted for these concepts, in addition to Isidore’s works, to an anonymous treatise, “De XII abusivis saeculi” written in Ireland in the seventh century and known under the name of Pseudo-Cyprian. The ninth chapter of this treatise contains the distinctions between the just and the unjust king. On Carolingian political thought see Carlyle, I, 222-225, and L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1959), pp. 8-10. The investiture struggle, of course, stimulated contemporary thought of kingship and government, see Carlyle, III, 129 ff. The classical restatement of these distinctions is found in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury, Books IV, I, VII, 25, VIII, *passim*, and especially VIII, 17, 18. See Carlyle, III, 143 ff. Below, pp. 67 ff.

³⁶ On Bernard’s classical training see Étienne Gilson, *La théologie mystique de Saint Bernard* (Paris, 1947), pp. 78-82. In his school at the monastery of St Vorles Bernard studied the classical authors. According to Gilson he “renounced” them later in his life “except for the art of writing well,” which they had taught him. For other reference works on Saint Bernard see below, notes 51, 52.

tion of Sicily with tyranny than a mere device of pointing a finger at one more deterring example of wicked rulership. For those well read in classical history Roger was the "worthy" successor of the Greek tyrants of old, fatally predestined to carry on a traditionally bad form of government that had left a deep imprint on the society and life of the Sicilian people and which in some way they were now forced to continue. This was the way the historian Otto of Freising looked at the Sicily of his days, and this was most likely also the historical association that occurred to John of Salisbury when he condemned tyranny on historical as well as ethical and religious grounds in his famous *Policraticus*.

Only once in his chronicle Otto of Freising comes to grips with ancient Sicilian history — that is when he surveys the Peloponnesian War: The same internecine strife, he says, that rent Greece into warring factions and led to the great war also disturbed the life of the Greek cities on the Sicilian island.³⁷ Again, in the same chapter after lengthy discussions of the virtues of the Athenians Otto reports, as an event that occurred simultaneously with the fall of Athens and the death of the Persian King Darius II, the exile of the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius I. Otto adds the following reflection: "For Sicily is said to have been the nurse first of the Cyclopes and afterwards of tyrants, even down to the present day; the former always fed upon the flesh of men, the latter on their sufferings."³⁸ With the exception of the short phrase "even down to the present day," an allusion, of course, to Roger's Sicily, the bulk of the passage is taken from Orosius' "Seven Books against the Pagans."³⁹ There follows a short anecdote to illustrate the cruel and suspicious character of Dionysius I for which Otto declares himself indebted to "Tullius."⁴⁰ In addition to Cicero, various other authors seem to have provided Otto's somewhat younger contemporary, John of Salisbury, with examples of tyranny to enliven his discussion of wicked government and the people's reactions to oppression, such as the desire for freedom that may lead to rebellion, violent assassination or cunningly prepared tyrannicide. Among his many examples John mentions several from the history of Sicilian tyranny.⁴¹

³⁷ *Ottonis Frisingensis Chronica*, II, 19; ed. Adolf Hofmeister (Hanover, 1912), pp. 88-90.

³⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 90: "Sicilia enim primo Cyclopus, post tyrannorum usque in presentem diem fuisse nutrix traditur, quorum priores carnibus hominum, posteriores cruciatibus semper pascebantur." (There follows the story taken from Cicero on how the life of the tyrant Dionysius was endangered by his own deeds.) The translation inserted in the text is taken from *The Two Cities* by Otto, bishop of Freising, translated by C. C. Mierow (New York, 1928), pp. 175-176.

³⁹ *Historiarum VII Libri aduersus Paganos*, II, 14, 1; ed. K. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889), pp. 114-115. Here the passage reads: "Sicilia ab initio patria cyclopus et post eos semper nutrix tyrannorum fuit, saepe etiam captiva servorum. Quorum primi carnibus hominum, medii cruciatibus, postremo mortibus pascebantur." The "patria—tyrannorum" phrase was borrowed by Isidore of Seville for his description of Sicily, see *Etymologiae*, XIV, 6, 33 (P.L., LXXXII, 518); Ernst Kantorowicz (*Kaiser Friedrich II, Ergänzungsband* [Berlin, 1931], p. 76) has shown that this passage became almost proverbial and was used, in addition to literary works in one of the constitutions of Emperor Frederick II. The references to Norman kings of Sicily as quoted by Kantorowicz are those quoted here in notes 38 and 45.

⁴⁰ "De hoc Dionysio refert Tullius" etc., see above, note 35. The passage is found in Cicero, *De Officiis*, II, 7, 25.

⁴¹ *Joannis Saresberiensis episcopi Carnotensis Policratici sive De nugis curiarum et vestigiis philosophorum libri VIII*, ed. C. C. J. Webb, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1909): VII, 25 (II, 222-223); VIII, 6 (II, 256);

While John of Salisbury does not refer in his *Policraticus* to the political situation of contemporary Sicily,⁴² Otto of Freising fully exploits the timeliness of his topic. There is the short allusion to Roger's reign in the passage of the chronicle just mentioned. But in a later book, the seventh of the chronicle dealing with events of his own time, Otto supplements this statement with a broader treatment of the matter. Speaking of the cruelties committed by Roger and his henchmen against the inhabitants of Apulia and Campania during the reconquest of these provinces in 1138-39 and the act of revenge on a dead enemy, Duke Rainulf of Alife, he describes them as "patterned upon the deeds of the ancient Sicilian tyrants."⁴³ Clearly Otto saw Roger in the light of Sicilian historical tradition. The new king was not just a tyrant or wicked governor but "the tyrant of Sicily" who had patterned his deeds after the model of his Sicilian predecessors of ancient disrepute. Also, since earlier in his chronicle he had endorsed Orosius' notion that the soil of Sicily "bred" monsters and tyrants to which he himself had added "to the present day," he might well have intended to suggest that in a way Roger's tyranny was, as it were, "predetermined" by his Sicilian environment.

In view of the immense popularity of Otto's chronicle — it was not only "read and reread during the Middle Ages" but also copied, excerpted, and continued in various ways⁴⁴ — it is not surprising to see its author's well-chosen phrases, bywords, and quotations copied and repeated. Thus the monk Otto of St Blaise, who continued Otto's chronicle to 1209, borrowed from his predecessor the Orosius quotation on "Sicily as the breeder of tyrants" and, on his authority, accepted the term "tyrannis" for the government or kingdom of Sicily.⁴⁵ But the terms "tyrant" and "tyrannis" were prevented from becoming mere clichés because of the political content given them earlier by St Bernard and others. Even in his chronicle, where he perpetuated the historical concept of Sicilian tyranny, Otto of Freising once referred to the tyrant Roger as the enemy of the German *regnum* and of the church.⁴⁶ In his *Gesta Friderici*, written about a decade later, Otto charged the term heavily with political overtones when speaking of tyrannical usurpation of imperial rights, a notion close to the heart of a pro-

viii, 23 (ii, 408). All three passages refer to Dionysius I of Syracuse. John borrowed the first passage from Val. Maximus (vi, 2, ext. 2); the second he claims to have taken from Trogus Pompeius (but see the editor's note to p. 256, line 8); the third passage is the story of Damocles' sword from Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* v, 21, 61. See also the proverbial reference to Sicilian tyrants *Policraticus*, vii, 24 (ii, 212).

⁴² John mentions Roger only once in the *Policraticus* and not in connection with political topics, *Policraticus*, vii, 10 (ii, 173).

⁴³ *Chronica*, vii, 23; ed. Hofmeister, p. 346. See below, p. 66, n. 84.

⁴⁴ *The Two Cities*, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁵ *Otonis de S. Blasio Chronica*, c. 37, ad a. 1191 (ed. A. Hofmeister [Hannover, 1912], p. 50): "Nam mortuo Wilhelmo rege quidem consanguineus eius de genere Rogerii, Tancredus nomine, tyrannidem in Sicilia que nutrix tyrannorum ab antiquo fuit sub regio nomine arripiens. . . ."

⁴⁶ Otto reports that on the eve of a battle against Roger in Apulia Emperor Lothaire admonished his knights to fight a just war "contra tyrannum non solum regni sed et ecclesiae hostem et excommunicatum," *Chronica*, vii, 20 (p. 338).

Swabian writer.⁴⁷ Other historians tuned in.⁴⁸ At that time and later whenever the kingdom of Sicily became involved in dynastic conflicts the epithet "tyrant of Sicily" served as battle cry against the respective king and his house.⁴⁹ It should, on the other hand, be noted, that, whatever their personal attitude toward their ruler, historians of the southern kingdom were careful not to expose the kingdom as wicked or illegal through references to its "tyrannical constitution." Rather than remind their readers "that it was in the nature of Sicily to be ruled by tyrants," they might have been anxious to demonstrate that "it had always been a prerogative of the island to be ruled by kings."⁵⁰

As pointed out before, to St Bernard historical associations mattered little if anything. He never alluded to the Sicilian past. He was rather anxious to fill old skins with new wine. A firm believer in the coming of the community of the saints, Bernard devoted all his efforts to the task of strengthening the church and, most of all, preparing the papacy for leadership in a universal Christian society.⁵¹ There was no doubt in his mind that the doctrine of the "Two Swords" allowed no other interpretation than that both were under the control of the pope. Neither did he hesitate to apply this doctrine to the situation at hand.⁵²

⁴⁷ See for instance *Gesta Friderici imperatoris*, II, 49, ad a. 1156 (ed. G. Waitz [Hanover, 1912], p. 157, lines 28-29): "limites tyrannica Rogerii rabie usurpatos," cf. I, 3 (p. 15). But the concept of a typical tyrannical ruler of Sicily that prevails in the *Chronica* also occurs in the *Gesta* alongside with that of usurpation, e.g., in II, 49 (p. 157, lines 12-16.), where Otto speaks of Roger and of his son William as oppressors of the people.

⁴⁸ When reporting Roger's attempt to stop Lothaire on his victorious campaign in Southern Italy the *Annalista Saxo* remarks: "Imperator autem paci ecclesie magis consulens quam pecunie, semipagano tiranno tradere provinciam omnino recusavit" (*MGH, SS*, VI, 774, lines 14-15, ad. a. 1137). With the term *semipaganus* the author, of course, hints at Roger's sympathetic attitude toward Islam and at his Arabic surrounding. It forms a strange contrast to the title which Roger himself adopted for the *arengae* of his charters, "christianorum adiutor et clipeus"; see K. A. Kehr, *Die Urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen Könige*, pp. 246 ff. Byzantine writers also referred to Roger of Sicily as "enemy of the Christians," see below, p. 63.

⁴⁹ Pro-Swabian sources apply the dual concept of tyranny to Prince Tancred of Lecce but especially that of usurpation since his rule, though supported by the majority of public opinion in Sicily, was illegitimate from the dynastic point of view. See the *Annales Marbacenses*, ad a. 1190: "Unde timens Tancradus tyrannus qui regnum Sycilie post mortem Wilhelmi Syculi qui sine filiis obierat, per dolos et tyrannidem sibi usurpaverat . . ." (*MGH, SS*, XVII, 164); *Hermannii Altahensis Annales*, ad a. 1190: "Tanchradus tyrannus regnum invadit" and *Chronicon Magni presbyteri*, ad a. 1190: "Tanchradus tyrannus" (*MGH, SS*, XVII, 385, 521). Italian and papal writers, on the other hand, indulging in the same name-calling, apply it to Emperor Henry VI because of the cruelty of his rule in Sicily after the conquest of this island. On these contrasting interpretations see "Enrico VI e l'Impero d'Oriente" in F. Giunta, *Medioevo Mediterraneo: Saggi storici* (Palermo, 1954), pp. 59, 56-57.

⁵⁰ See above, p. 52. An example of this attitude is provided by the historian Falco of Benevento. Being a Lombard patriot, he hated the Normans and their leader. Nevertheless, in the part of his chronicle that follows his report on Roger's coronation he consistently calls Roger "king"—never "tyrant."

⁵¹ Hayden V. White, "The Gregorian Ideal and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXI (1960), 321-349.

⁵² On Saint Bernard's role in European politics see E. Vacandard, *Vie de Saint Bernard, Abbé de Clairvaux*, 4th ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1910), I, chs. 10-12; II, chs. 18, 20; W. W. Williams, *Saint Bernard of Clairvaux* (Westminster, Md., 1952), chs. 5, 6, 7; E. Caspar, "Bernhard von Clairvaux," *Meister der Politik*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart-Berlin, 1922-23), III, 181-220; E. Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, II, 2,

Once he had decided in favor of Innocent II he threw himself body and soul into the struggle for the unity of the church trying to enlist the help of the prospective emperor, King Lothaire of Germany, for the implementation of his program. In 1132-33 Lothaire, "wielding the sword for the Church," had crossed the Alps, reconciled the warring cities Pisa and Genoa, won them over to the side of Pope Innocent II, helped this pope to enter Rome and take possession of the Lateran palace and had himself crowned by St Bernard's pope.⁵³ Still St Bernard was not satisfied. There were princes, ecclesiastics, and cities in Italy (including the old city of Rome itself) which refused to recognize Innocent II. Above all, far from being weakened by wars and defeats, Roger's position was stronger than ever before. It was then (1134-35) that Bernard tried to bring into life a new coalition against Roger, appealing first of all to the new emperor for help. The emperor, he said, was under the double obligation (*duplex necessitas*) of serving the needs of the church and of the empire. Neatly distinguishing between the emperor's two assignments, Bernard called on the *advocatus ecclesiae* to draw his sword against the enemies of the church, and on *Caesar* to defend the empire against the usurper of imperial rights. Sicily, he cries, like all of Italy belongs to the empire: the one who makes himself king of Sicily acts against Caesar.⁵⁴ Disregarding (perhaps only for the time being) the claims which he knew the church itself had often raised with regard to its control over this region,⁵⁵ Bernard told the emperor that it was his task to defend imperial rights in Italy. He also admonished the city of Genoa to fight against the enemies of the church and "to defend the crown of your kingdom invaded by the Sicilians,"⁵⁶ while he commended the citizens of

pp. 266-282; H. Bloch, "The Schism of Anacletus II and the Glanfeuil Forgeries of Peter the Deacon," *Traditio*, VIII (1952), 159-174; W. Holtzmann, "Il Regno di Ruggero," *Atti del Congresso*, I, 41-42. For a fuller bibliography see the article by H. V. White (note 51).

⁵³ See Caspar, pp. 139-145.

⁵⁴ *Bernardi Epistulae*, no. 139: *Ad Lotharium imperatorem* (1135-1137)?: "Non est meum hortari ad pugnam; est tamen—securus dico—advocati ecclesiae arcere ab ecclesiae infestatione schismaticorum rabiem; est Caesaris propriam vindicare coronam ab usurpatore Siculo. Ut enim constat Judaicam sobolem [i.e., Anacletus II] sedem Petri in Christi occupasse iniuriam sic procul dubio omnis qui in Sicilia regem se facit, contradicit Caesari," see *P.L.*, CLXXXII, 294. In an earlier letter directed to Duke William of Aquitaine, count of Poitiers, Bernard had condemned the bargain between Anacletus and Roger which resulted in the usurpation of the royal title by Roger. Anacletus, he said, had on his side one prince only and this one "usurpatae coronae mercede ridicula comparatum," *Bernardi Epistulae*, no. 127: *Ad Guillelmum comitem Pictavensem* (ca 1122); *P.L.*, CLXXXII, 281-282. See W. Bernhardt, *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Lothar von Supplinburg* (Leipzig, 1879), pp. 616, 770 ff., and *passim*. On the question of the imperial claims in Southern Italy see Caspar, p. 134; Bernhardt, pp. 616 f. The Apulian princes, deposed and dispossessed by Roger, took refuge with and asked for aid from the emperor, on the ground that both Apulia and Sicily belonged *ad ius sui Imperii*, see *Romualdi Annales* (i.e., *Chronicon*), *ad a.* 1135 (*MGH, SS.*, XIX, 421).

⁵⁵ Their conflicting claims became a practical issue between emperor and pope in 1137, during the second Italian campaign of Emperor Lothaire. After the conquest of Apulia from Roger, Lothaire and Innocent both claimed the right of investing Count Rainer of Alife with the duchy of Apulia. Finally the question was solved by an odd compromise, the pope and the emperor each holding an end of the banner with which Rainer was invested! See Caspar, p. 206.

⁵⁶ *Bernardi Epistulae*, no. 129 (ca 1134-35); *P.L.*, CLXXXII, 285. The Genoese are summoned to defend "regni vestri invasam a Siculis coronam." Here Bernard refers to the *regnum Italiae* headed by the emperor rather than to the empire itself.

Pisa for having resisted, upon his request, the attempt of the Sicilian tyrant to win them over to his side by bribes. In a letter to Emperor Lothaire Bernard praises the same city for its contribution to the common cause of fighting the tyrant, avenging the emperor and defending the imperial crown.⁵⁷

Thus the new meaning given to tyranny or rather to Sicilian tyranny is that of a usurpation of rights belonging to the emperor: Roger of Sicily is the tyrant because he "resisted Caesar" and had "invaded" the empire.⁵⁸ For obvious reasons it was wise policy on the part of Bernard to explain Sicilian tyranny in terms of a violation of the rights either of the empire or of the Italian kingdom and to define the fight against Roger of Sicily as implicit in Lothaire's obligations as a secular ruler, distinctly different from those he had to carry out as the *advocatus ecclesiae*. Yet within his larger concept of world order St Bernard could hardly allow for any distinction between the two functions of the emperor (or for that matter, of any secular ruler). The empire was subordinated to the church and simply served its ends. From this point of view Roger was a transgressor and rebel against a divinely ordained world state where the emperor acts and fights under the head of the church as the pope's secular lieutenant.⁵⁹ Bernard thus identified tyranny with usurpation of church rights and regarded a tyrant as an outlaw of both state and church.⁶⁰ In the light of this attitude it seems not surprising at all that no sooner had Pope Innocent II granted Roger recognition for his crown and lands in 1139 St Bernard too made his peace with the tyrant-usurper and also demanded of King Conrad to do the same or at least to accept the pope's decision in good faith. But the future emperor must have felt that with this switch of policy the church and indeed St Bernard had betrayed the imperial cause. He seemed to have complained in bitter words to St Bernard that on account of this defection the kingdom had been still more reduced and the empire once more "invaded" by Roger of Sicily.⁶¹

⁵⁷ *Bernardi Epistulae*, no. 130: *Ad Pisanos* (ca 1134-35); *P.L.*, CLXXXII, 285-286: "Me (Bernardo) auctore, tyranni Siculi malitiae Pisana constantia non cedit"; no. 140: *Ad Lotharium imperatorem* (ca 1135); col. 295: "Pisanos dico, qui primi et soli interim adhuc crexere vexillum adversum invasorem imperii. Quam iustius in eos regia incanduisset indignatio, qui populum strenuum et devotum quacunque occasione offendere ausi sunt, eo praecipue tempore quo accinti in multis millibus suis exierant oppugnare tyrannum, ulcisci injuriam domini sui, et imperialem defensare coronam?"

⁵⁸ Peter Rassow (*Honor imperii* [Munich-Berlin, 1940]; p. 60) remarks that rather than merely pointing to the past, the term *tyrannus Siciliae* seems to be charged heavily with political actuality. Roger is the *invasor imperii* since the *regnum Siciliae* had been contained in what was called *honor imperii*. See also below p. 64.

⁵⁹ Walter Ullmann calls St Bernard the most consistent exponent of Christian cosmology, see *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages* (London, 1955), pp. 426-437; also H. V. White, "The Gregorian Ideal," (see n. 51 above.)

⁶⁰ Once, during his struggle against Anacletus and Roger, Pope Innocent II described Roger as "tyrannus ab ecclesia separatus"; see *Italia Pontificia* (a. 1135), VIII, no. 146 (p. 39).

⁶¹ This is taken from a letter written by St Bernard to King Conrad of Germany shortly after the peace treaty of Mignano in 1139. In it St Bernard tried to reconcile the king: "Quaerimoniae regis nostrae sunt et maxime illa, quam dignanter exprimitis de invasione Imperii. Regis dedecus, regni diminutionem nunquam volui: volentes odit anima mea" (see *Bernardi Epistulae* no. 183; *P.L.* CLXXXII, 345). Bernard implores the king to accept the pope's decision out of reverence toward the Roman See. From his point of view, of course, the church had just as much right to order the *advocatus*

But the area of the world affected by the "tyranny" of Roger of Sicily was in fact considerably larger than it appeared when looked upon through the eyes of Bernard of Clairvaux. It seemed never to have occurred to the abbot that the Byzantines might raise claims to Italian lands conflicting with those of the Roman empire and church. Yet at the time St Bernard busied himself to bring about a coalition of Catholic powers to crush Roger and to end the schism, the Byzantine emperor John Comnenus decided to seek "the peace, friendship, and help" of the emperor in the West against Roger, "a certain tyrant of Sicily." His goal was to make good his own claim to lands and cities in Apulia that had been "harassed" and "invaded" by the tyrant of Sicily.⁶² Of course, if these claims had been raised after a successful military campaign in Italy, they undoubtedly would have caused a serious clash with the emperor of the West. But at the Diet of Merseburg, where the Byzantine ambassadors sent to Germany for the conclusion of an alliance with Lothaire made their appearance, the keynote was the community of interests and co-operation between the two emperors against Roger, the intruder and usurper. The political idea endorsed by both emperors was clearly that of a restoration in southern Italy of the rights of "the Roman empire."⁶³ This idea was even more strongly emphasized and extended to areas outside Italy, i.e., outside the sphere of interests of the Roman emperor in the West, by the delegates of the Venetian republic who had accompanied the Byzantine ambassadors to Germany and who had complaints of their own because of the piratical activities of the Sicilian navy in the Adriatic. At this time, both the court of Constantinople and the Venetian government were seriously alarmed at the advance of the Sicilians in the Mediterranean, their reaching out for territory in Syria, and even more important, their military and diplomatic successes in Tunisia, where they were getting ready to capture and occupy the important maritime center of Mahdia and other cities on the Tunisian coast.⁶⁴ The Byzantines could simply not allow the prince of a house traditionally hostile to their emperors and state to gain control over sea lanes and bases in this area. Neither could their allies, the Venetians. What interests us here is the Venetian analysis of the new situation in the Mediterranean. According to an annalist of Erfurt who was close to the events at Merseburg, the Venetians openly accused "a certain count Roger of Sicily" that

catus ecclesiae to put his sword back into its scabbard as it had to draw it on behalf of the church. See W. Bernhardt, *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Konrad III.* (Leipzig, 1883), p. 180 ff.; Caspar, p. 356; Vacandard, *Vie de Saint Bernard*, II, 62-64; Williams, *Saint Bernard of Clairvaux*, p. 158.

⁶² See *Annales Magdeburgenses*, ad a. 1135 (*MGH, SS*, XVI, 185 lines 39-51): "... legati Grecorum imperatoris . . . pacem ab imperatore et amicitiam ac auxilium contra Ruokerum tyrannum poscentes qui partem Romani imperii et etiam terram Grecorum nimis vexaverat"; *Annalista Sazo*, ad a. 1136 (*MGH, SS*, VI, 770, lines 36-38): the Byzantine ambassadors raised complaints "adversus Rokkerum quendam Sicilie tyrannum qui plerasque Apulie civitates invaserat et eas turribus . . . firmaverat."

⁶³ On the Diet of Merseburg see Caspar, pp. 167-169; Bernhardt, *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Lothar von Supplinburg*, pp. 573-576.

⁶⁴ On Roger's maritime policy and military enterprises see H. Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," *A History of the Crusades*, II (Philadelphia, 1962), 3-42, and especially the bibliography, p. 4.

he had conquered Africa from "the king of Greece"; that he had himself crowned with the royal diadem and "usurped" the royal title, and that he had taken from the Roman empire the provinces of Apulia and Calabria.⁶⁵ It is evident that the Venetians (or the Erfurt annalist) advocated an alliance against the tyrant-usurper of Sicily in defense of a world different from that conceived by Bernard of Clairvaux and his ecclesiastic followers. It was not only geographically larger — centered as it was, not in Italy but in the Mediterranean — but it was also secular in character: it embraced regions (Africa) inhabited by "pagans" (i.e., Moslems). This world was in fact the ancient Roman empire as suggested by the description of Africa as a "third of the world," though by now the empire was divided in a *regnum Grecie* of the East and an *imperium Romanum* of the West. To this latter, the Roman empire of the West, belonged the provinces of southern Italy. As to the "belonging" of Sicily, the Venetians seem to have hesitated to commit themselves by making any definite statement. We have seen that St Bernard claimed it for the emperor or rather for the Roman church. But, knowing that the conflicting claims to the island might prevent the understanding between the two emperors, the Venetians seem to have avoided this issue. Still, the wording of their complaints as found in the Erfurt annalist seems to suggest that they considered at least the assumption of the royal title by Roger an infringement of the sphere that belonged to the "King of the Greeks." But the influence of the Venetians on the actual negotiations between East and West at Merseburg seems to have hardly gone beyond the formulation of complaints and rights. "The Greeks" failed to commit themselves to an alliance, endorsing a policy of benevolent neutrality instead.

But the efforts made at Merseburg by the Venetians and others were not in vain. When, after the recognition of Roger at Mignano, King Conrad of Germany and Emperor John of Constantinople were again faced by dangers from the new kingdom in the south, the formula of Merseburg provided as it were the program for a solid political alliance. Sealed by a marriage between Manuel, successor to Emperor John, and King Conrad's sister-in-law, the later Empress Irene, it became a political reality in 1145. The two princes had found that Roger's "insolence"⁶⁶ obliged them to overcome all obstacles and to join forces against "the common enemy on land and on sea," whether he was "a Norman or a Sicilian."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Annales Erphesfurtenses* (Erfurt), ed. O. Holder-Egger in *Monumenta Erphesfurtensia saec. XII, XIII, XIV* (Hanover, 1899), p. 42. The Venetians raised their complaints against "Ruggerum quendam comitem Siciliae qui et regi Gretiae Affricam quae tertia pars mundi esse dinoscitur, armis expugnando cum paganis abstulit suoque dominio subdidit, ibique diadema regni sibi imponens, regium nomen usurpavit. . . . Sed et de imperio Romano totam Apuliam atque Calabriam subtraxit. . . ." The description of "Africa as the third part of the world" is taken from Orosius, *VII Libri adversus Paganos*, 1, 2.

⁶⁶ *Otonis Frisingensis Gesta Friderici*, 1, 24 (ed. cited in n. 47 above, p. 37): "Circa idem tempus Johannis regiae urbis imperatoris apocrisarii, viri clarissimi, Romanorum principem adeunt tam confederationis vinculum ob Rogeri Siculi insolentiam inter duo imperia, Hesperiae videlicet et Orientis. . . ."

⁶⁷ See King Conrad's letter to Emperor John dated 12 February 1142, inserted in Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici*, 1, 25 (p. 38): "Sint ergo res utriusque communes, utriusque amicus idem, idem inimicus sive in terra sive in mari, et cognoscat ac timeat matris (i.e., Romanae rei publicae) virtutem et valentiam qui non honoraverit filiam (i.e. Novam Romam) sive Normannus sive Siculus sive quis

The world had to be made safe for the uninhibited rule of the two emperors. There was no room for a new ruler except with the approval of both. Roger was stigmatized as the intruder into the secular world order through his *invasio utriusque imperii*.⁶⁸ It was this attitude toward his position, as well as the alliance itself, which seemed to have bothered Roger more than necessary in view of his own growing power and prestige in other parts of the world. During a stalemate in the negotiations between the Germans and the Byzantines he tried hard to win over the new emperor, Manuel, by suggesting a marriage between one of his sons and a princess of the imperial house, a suggestion which at first seemed to have appealed to Manuel, as he sent ambassadors to the Sicilian court. But the marriage project was just a pretext to force on Manuel Roger's main condition for an alliance: recognition of his royal lands and title, giving him equality in status with the *Basileus*. This condition, the Greek historian Cinnamus tells us, was the most essential point in the draft for a treaty that Roger's ambassadors carried with them to Constantinople. If this is true it goes a long way in explaining why, immediately after the arrival of Roger's and the Greek ambassadors, the negotiations came to an abrupt end and the ambassadors were thrown into prison by the enraged emperor.⁶⁹ The *Basileus* simply could not give legal sanction to the usurpation of crown and lands considered part of the imperial sphere of jurisdiction, any more than King Conrad of Germany could endorse the recognition granted by Innocent II to Roger's kingdom in 1139.

alter quicumque ubicumque. . . ." In spite of the emphasis placed on unity of intention—*utriusque amicus idem, idem inimicus*—the basic rivalry between the two empires and their respective champions is clearly expressed in the writer's attempt to show the superiority of the western "emperor," successor to the "Roman Republic" over "New Rome." All western writers claimed the superiority of the empire in the West over the one in the East. At best, writers refer to both emperors with the imperial title (see next note) or they give each one his official title (see the quotation in note 65 where *basileus* is rendered *rex Gretiae*). But this scramble for titles and ceremonial precedence was only the outward sign of an antagonism that went much deeper, preventing efficient cooperation. This, in the last analysis, saved the Sicilian kingdom from destruction. See Walter Ohnsorge, *Das Zweikaiserproblem im hohen Mittelalter* (Hildesheim, 1947), p. 92; P. Lamma, *Comneni e Staufer. Ricerche sui rapporti fra Bisanzio e l'Occidente nel secolo XII*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1955), I, 30-38 and *passim*.

⁶⁸ *Otonis Frisingensis Chronica*, VII, 28 (p. 355). Speaking of the embassy of the new Emperor Manuel to King Conrad in 1145-46, Otto of Freising remembers the alliance concluded earlier between the same King Conrad and Manuel's father John: "Et sicut frequenter inter hos duo imperatores a translato ad Francos imperio pro diversis opportunitatibus mos iste servatus est, sic et nunc inter Johannem patrem huius [Manuel] et Conradum contra Rogerium utriusque imperii invasorem, hec facta est confederatio." Otto applies the same phrase *utriusque imperii invasor* to King William I of Sicily when speaking of his double conflict with East and West (*Gesta Frederici*, II, 11, p. 112). On the second German-Byzantine alliance see Bernhardt, *Konrad III.*, pp. 265-272, 409-417; Caspar, p. 361; G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 336-339.

⁶⁹ Chalandon (*Histoire*, II, 129) believes that recognition of his royal title would have satisfied Roger's demand for equality but that Manuel "had of necessity to refuse the ratification of what he considered an outright usurpation." Caspar (p. 363), on the other hand, is not inclined to believe that the demand for equality was the essential issue in Roger's draft and the cause for Manuel's refusal of the alliance.

After this instructive interlude Manuel was ready for the alliance with Germany which was subsequently concluded and implemented in politics. It seems that this important diplomatic-military event stirred up quite a lively discussion and, in the words of F. Giunta, "precise polemical thought" among the politicians at the imperial court.⁷⁰ Roger was stigmatized as the tyrant, again not in the usual sense of the word but as a usurper of imperial rights and, in the account of the historian Cinnamus, of rights of both empires.⁷¹ This does not mean, however, that the original concept was completely absent in the writings and the charters of Byzantines at the time. The savage raids conducted against the coasts and islands of Greece during the Second Crusade, when the emperor was tied up with problems created by the presence of the Christian armies in Asia Minor and Outremer, revealed Roger's true "tyrannical" character to the world; and the enraged and indignant officials, courtiers, and writers around the Greek *Basileus* now discovered in Roger of Sicily the authentic tyrant, the insular dragon, the common enemy of Christians and, above all, the cruel ruler "who kept the Sicilian land under his tyrannical sway."⁷²

King Conrad's crusade to the East proved a severe test for the solidity of the alliance between the two "emperors," especially towards the end of the campaign, when the disasters suffered by the German army forced King Conrad to make concessions to his Eastern brother as to the future division of Roger's *regnum*, once defeat of the common enemy had given them control over it.⁷³ Still, the two princes stood firm on their mutual commitments and continued to show the world a united front against the usurper. When shortly after the return of the crusaders to their homelands, a new crusade was planned by French leaders, one of the ends of which seems to have been the conquest of Constantinople under the leadership and for the profit of Roger of Sicily,⁷⁴ King Conrad steadfastly refused to join this anti-Byzantine project. In a letter written to his sister-in-law, Empress Irene, Conrad warns the court of Constantinople of a potential attack on the empire by "the whole people of France," stirred as he put it "by the plotting and agitation

⁷⁰ *Bizantini e Bizantinismo nella Sicilia Normanna*, p. 134.

⁷¹ While he commends the virtues of King Roger as a ruler of his people, Cinnamus deals with his Italian policy including his assumption of the royal title exclusively from the viewpoint of usurpation of dual imperial rights and in this connection calls him *Σικελῶν τύραννος* or *Σικελίας τυραννῶν*, see Cinnamus, *Epitome Historiarum*, II, 4; III, 1, 2, 12 and *passim* (*Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, 16), 37, 89-92. That the term tyrant was used by Cinnamus and others as an equivalent to usurper is stressed by Giunta, pp. 134-135.

⁷² See the chrysobull *De instrumentis ecclesiarum* (1148) in C. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, *Ius Graeco-Romanum* (Leipzig, 1857), III, 443; Manuel speaks of Roger as of the common enemy of Christendom, the insular dragon etc.: "ὁ κοινὸς τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐχθρὸς, ὁ δυτικὸς δράκων, ὁ τῆς Σικελικῆς κατατυραννῶν γῆς. See also Nicetas Choniatas *Historia*, I, 4 (*CSHB*, vol. 14), p. 82.

⁷³ On this treaty concluded at Tessaionike upon King Conrad's return from the crusade see Caspar, pp. 387-388; Chalandon, *Histoire*, II, 142; P. Rassow, *Honor imperii* (Munich-Berlin, 1940), pp. 26-44; Ohnsorge, *Zweikaiserproblem*, p. 92.

⁷⁴ On this "postludium" of the Second Crusade see among other works Bernhardt, *Konrad III.*, pp. 811-823; Caspar, pp. 405-410; O. Cartellieri, *Suger von Saint Denis* (Berlin, 1898), pp. 65-67; H. Gleber, *Papst Eugen III.* (Jena, 1936), pp. 127-136; P. Lamma, *Commeni e Staufer*, I, 32-44.

of the tyrant of Sicily."⁷⁵ If Conrad had joined the Franco-Sicilian, anti-Byzantine coalition, he might not only have helped to undermine one of the twin pillars of world order as he had been impelled by circumstances to see it; he would also have sanctioned the usurpation of imperial rights in southern Italy by the "tyrant of Sicily."

It was not long, however, before this political idea of an integrated East-Western world and the rejection of changes anywhere within its boundaries was severely shaken by new political developments. Frederick I, Conrad's successor, inaugurated a new Italian anti-Byzantine policy returning as it were to Western universalism as pronounced by St Bernard and endorsed by Emperor Lothaire, though without the Bernardian implication of ecclesiastical leadership over this Western world. In the treaty concluded in 1153 with Pope Eugenius III at Constance, the *regnum Siciliae* was described by implication, as belonging to the Western empire as well as the papal sphere of interests and the pope commits himself to the protection of *honor imperii* from encroachments by all invaders of Italy and, especially, by the Byzantine emperor.⁷⁶

3. *Oppressor Populi et Ecclesiae Dei*

The concept of tyranny as it had come down from antiquity applied primarily if not exclusively to the relationship between a ruler and his subjects. As such it involved on the one hand the human and moral qualities of the ruler and, on the other, the political principles and ends that guided his actions. In the tradition of Plato and Aristotle the theory involved the description of the effect, by implication also a double one, on the moral behavior and the political life of the people ruled by a tyrant. While the first implies a deterioration of public and private morality, the second means loss of power on the part of the people and their representatives and institutions. Ancient lore has it that the tyrant is really a usurper since he deprives the people of all its constitutional powers and destroys the legal basis of government.⁷⁷ Usurpation in the sense of depriving a fellow ruler of his lands and rights seems to have played a lesser if any role in antiquity. To the mediaeval political theorist the tyrant's attitude toward the constitution of the people he ruled could hardly be important except perhaps in the most general sense of his disregard for existing laws and customs. Also, in the light of

⁷⁵ The letter is inserted in *Epistulas Wibaldi*, no. 243, in *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum* ed. P. Jaffé, 6 vols. (Berlin, 1864-1873), I, 365: "... dum contra communis hostis nostri, Siculi videlicet tyranni, temerariam insolentiam nos expedire et accingere studemus, nunciatur nobis, quod omnis Francorum populus cum ipso rege suo contra imperium precellentissimi germani nostri, tui... sponsi, conspiraret et arma movere, auctore et incentore Sicilye tyranno, cum omni virtutis sue conatu diserneret. Quam rem non facile spernendam vel omittendam ratum duximus...." On Conrad's attitude toward Roger see Bernhardt, *Konrad III.*, pp. 814 ff.

⁷⁶ The text of the treaty is inserted in *Epistulas Wibaldi*, no. 407, (I, 546-547): Pope Eugenius promises to maintain and to increase *honorem regni* and to crush anybody who endangered *iustitiam et honorem regni*. See H. Simonsfeld *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Friedrich I.* (Leipzig, 1908), I, 159-166; Rassow, *Honor Imperii*, p. 60.

⁷⁷ Plato, *Republic*, VIII, xiv-xix (562-592); Aristotle, *Politics*, V, viii-ix (1310b-1316a).

the absence of a more elaborate constitutional theory that allowed for a wide range of intermediate stages between different forms of government — harsher forms of kingship, mitigated forms of tyranny⁷⁸ — the contrast between *rex* and *tyrannus* must have appeared much greater if not irreconcilable. The burden of obligations imposed upon the ruler had been increased through the addition of Christian virtues while the ruler's status as a lieutenant and representative of God on earth involved his accountability before the throne of God and his own fate in the afterlife.⁷⁹ Still, when it came to characterizing a tyrant and distinguishing him from a good governor, the same moral categories that loom high in the classical descriptions of tyranny were applied: oppressiveness, arbitrariness, vindictiveness, and cruelty were among the most conspicuous traits of a tyrant of the Middle Ages (as of any age).

Roger's relationship to his subjects might have passed unnoticed and uncriticized had it not been for the extension of his rule to Apulia. For one thing, his new states bordered on papal territories and his ecclesiastical enemies had keen eyes and sharp words for what was going on in the kingdom. Moreover, political anarchy, a chronic ailment from which Norman Apulia had suffered from the beginning, temporary occupation of the land by a foreign army, treason, and rebellion forced upon Roger means of repression that were as inevitable from the political as they were inexcusable from the moral point of view. After 1138 Roger inaugurated in Apulia a reign of terror calculated to uproot rebellion and treason by sheer fear of the consequences. Brutality and cruelty paired with ruthless financial exploitation characterized this regime, which was made all the more intolerable as it was frequently enforced by Roger's Moslem mercenaries, who were not expected to show mercy to Christians.

To be sure, this was still an age of barbarism and Roger's contemporaries were used to cruel acts of revenge, to brutalities and extortions in public and private warfare on the local scene. But the points that really horrified observers and singled out the Sicilian king from other tyrants, great and petty, was the cold-blooded, systematic and efficient way these deeds were inflicted on the victims and the fact that their author never showed any sign of repentance or readiness to atone for his deeds before the priest of God as did even the most hard-boiled sinners of the age.⁸⁰ An act of repentance like the one performed by Roger's contemporary, King Henry II of England, for the murder of Thomas Becket would have been unthinkable in a case involving the king of Sicily. Neither was it possible for contemporaries to discover in Roger character traits that endeared a feudal prince to his peers, vassals, and dependents and established his reputation in the world of chivalry. Writers trying to assess Roger in the light of the feudal

⁷⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, III, ix-x (1285 a 2 ff.); IV, viii (1295a 1 ff.).

⁷⁹ See R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, *History of Medieval Political Theory*, III, Part II. On the Christian contribution see G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (New York, 1937), pp. 157-175; also Carlyle, I, 161 ff; III, Part II, ch. v.

⁸⁰ See the interesting remarks of J. B. Villars, *Les Normands en Méditerranée* (Paris, 1951), pp. 221-222. Religious detachment, if not absence of religious emotions, seems to be at the root of the irreverence shown by Roger to the popes of his age.

ideal did not have to look for examples far beyond the boundaries of the *regnum*. They had at least one close at hand in the person of Duke Rainer of Alife, Roger's most passionately hated enemy. The contemporary historian Falco of Benevento contrasts Roger's cruelty, failures (if not cowardice) and defeats on the battlefield, and a violent (or cruel) disposition (*furor mentis*) with Rainulf's "sweet humanity," magnanimity, bravery and successes on the battlefield, and absence of cruelty.⁸¹ Now, it is well known that Falco being a Lombard patriot was the one historian outright hostile to the Normans and their rulers: he spared no dark colors when it came to describing Roger's severities and cruelties. But other writers less biased and even friendly, commented on or at least reported his "cruelties."⁸² Some harped on the punishments inflicted on the people of Apulia after Roger's reconquest of the region as too harsh and not warranted by any law (*legibus incognitas*).⁸³ As we will see in the last part of this paper a few discovered that cruelty and lawlessness were only the reverse side of a medal that bore as a principal design Roger's achievement of peace and good government in his *regnum*. But to the average observer the nature of the means used to achieve this end determined the final verdict: Roger was the "perfect" tyrant, his deeds committed in defiance of all prevailing concepts of law and justice adding the finishing touches to such a portrait. He was comparable only to the worst specimens of this type of rulership that had left its darkest spots on the pages of the history of mankind.

As has been shown above, reports on Roger's deeds in Apulia reached lands far away from the scenes of horror and caused Otto of Freising to assign to King Roger his place in the history of the island as the "worthy" successor of the Greek tyrants of Syracuse.⁸⁴ Falco of Benevento, on the other hand, was less interested in determining Roger's place in Sicilian history than in performing the historian's traditional task of moral censorship and in comparing his tyranny with examples from the past. When elaborating on Roger's vindictiveness and the cruelties inflicted on the lands, the former subjects, and the body of his dead enemy, Rainulf of Alife, Falco cries: "Reader, had you been present you would have admitted that since the times of the Greeks and pagans destruction by fire of this dimension had never occurred among Christians."⁸⁵ Similarly, when reporting the wanton devastation of vineyards and orchards in the neighborhood of Benevento Falco in

⁸¹ *Falconis Beneventani Chronicon*, ad a. 1139 (Del Re, *Cronisti*, I, 243 f., 247 f.). See also Caspar, pp. 224-225.

⁸² See below, pp. 70f.

⁸³ Hugo Falcandus, *Liber de Regno Siciliae*, ed. G. B. Siragusa, *Fonti per la storia d'Italia, Scrittori saec. XII* (Rome, 1897), p. 6; for the quotation of the passage see note 101 below.

⁸⁴ *Ottonis Frisingensis Chronica*, VII, 23, ad a. 1139: "... Rogerius . . . multis malis incolas eius [Campaniae] afflixit, et usque hodie premit." (There follows a list of misdeeds committed against Montecassino, the city of Bari, etc.) "Haec et alia crudelitatis opera ad antiquorum Siculorum formam tyrannorum, quae indesinenter de ipso audiuntur, quia pene cunctis nota sunt, omittimus." See above, p. 56 and below, p. 70.

⁸⁵ *Chronicon*, ad a. 1138 (Del Re, *Cronisti*, I, 242): "Lector, itaque si adesses . . . firmares a Gregorum tempore et paganorum tantam in christianos ruinam at combustionem non accidisse." See the very similarly worded passages ad a. 1139 (pp. 247-248) and ad a. 1133 (p. 218).

another of his many *avis au lecteur* remarks that not even Nero, most cruel among pagan emperors, raged with as much fury against the Christians as did this Christian king against his fellow Christians.⁸⁶ In the description of Falco's destruction, exploitation, and oppression left the "people of Italy" impoverished and depressed, ready at any moment to depose and kill the king.⁸⁷ The anonymous author of the *Annals of La Cava* in southern Italy, remembering the oppression that led to the Jewish uprisings under the Maccabees — a comparison also found in Falco — describes the chilling atmosphere that reigned in Apulia after its reconquest by Roger's mercenaries with the Biblical metaphor "and the land stood in silent awe at his appearance."⁸⁸

It has been mentioned before that in his *Policraticus* John of Salisbury, whose voice one expects to hear in the chorus of contemporary or near-contemporary writers, does not allude to the "modern tyrants of Sicily" or to any contemporary rulers who may fit the current descriptions of tyranny. Though his work abounds in examples from Roman, Jewish, and (occasionally) Greek (Sicilian) history, it carries only a few illustrations from the contemporary (mediaeval) scene and these were all drawn from English history.⁸⁹ The explanation can be easily found in the book itself. As is well known, John's doctrine culminates in the defense of tyrannicide ("he who usurps the sword is worthy to die by the sword") and he makes no bones about to whom and for what type of transgressions this theory could or should be applied.⁹⁰ For the sake of clarification John introduces the distinction between petty or private tyrants, who are actually common criminals, and public tyrants. While the former are under the jurisdiction of a higher authority, the latter are not: from their deeds there is no appeal. With the help of Biblical and classical examples John tried to prove that since there existed no higher authority to pass judgment on such a ruler "it was right and proper" to kill him.⁹¹ The transgressions permitting this drastic punishment are defined by John in the most general possible terms: violation of precepts which had "the

⁸⁶ *Chronicon*, ad a. 1134 (p. 221).

⁸⁷ *Chronicon*, ad a. 1140 (p. 251). Here the complaint is about the devaluation of money.

⁸⁸ *Annales Cavenses*, ad a. 1138 (1139): *Postea rex Barum proficiens cum magna difficultate reddita est illi, ubi principem et barones interfecit; et siluit terra in conspectu eius.* (I Macc. 1.3). See *MGH*, SS, III, 192.

⁸⁹ See below, p. 69.

⁹⁰ *Policraticus*, VIII, 18–20; also III, 15 (ed. Webb, I, 232): "Porro tyrannum occidere non modum licitum est sed aequum et iustum. Qui enim gladium accipit, gladio dignus est interire." See R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, *History of Political Theory*, III, 142 ff.; J. Dickinson, *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury* (New York, 1927), Introduction, and *SPECULUM*, I, (1926), 308–337; Otto Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Age*, trans. with an introduction by F. W. Maitland (Boston, 1958), pp. 35, 143.

⁹¹ *Policraticus*, VIII, 18 (ed. Webb, II, 364): "... honestum fuit occidere si tamen aliter coherceri non poterat. Non enim de privatis tyrannis agitur, sed de his qui rem publicam premunt. Nam privati legibus publicis quae constringunt omnium vitas, facile cohercentur." — It should be noted that liberty, the concept correlated to tyranny, in the sense of resistance to oppression, was used by John in its ancient meaning as a political postulate (*De libertatis amore et favore*, *Policraticus*, VII, 25). See Herbert Grundmann, "Freiheit als religiöses, politisches und persönliches Postulat," *Historische Zeitschrift*, 183 (1957), 23–53.

force of law among all nations, and which absolutely cannot be broken with impunity."⁹²

There cannot be any doubt about John's attitude toward King Roger of Sicily. The severity of the punishments "not founded in law" which he inflicted for even the smallest transgression of his "peace" and especially the cruelty of his revenge must have appeared to John as violation of universal laws which he described in the passage just quoted as having validity among all nations. But John must have found it impossible to name Roger as one to which his theory may be applied. To be sure, at the time when he published the *Policraticus* Roger was dead. But his son William ruled in the Norman kingdom and, besides, the ties between the Norman house of Sicily and the Plantagenets in England were intimate and close. To expose the dead king of Sicily as a tyrant who had usurped the sword to be killed by it might have been taken as an insult to the ruling house of England. And there was also the danger that criticism of the Sicilian ruler on the basis of his methods of government might have been considered an indirect slur against Henry II's own absolutism. Thus it was wise for John, who lived at the English court when he was working on his *Policraticus* and published it when still in England, to ignore the contemporary political scene. But the passionate tone to which the pages on tyranny and tyrannicide were keyed suggests John's personal involvement and experience. Only under the influence of "a new type of ruler of the Norman (Italian) and Plantagenet dynasties" and only "in the homelands of the new tyrants," says the historian W. Berges, "could one have written against them with so much vigor and conviction."⁹³

But there is direct evidence in another of John of Salisbury's works that he observed the contemporary scene carefully and that these observations were worked into his theory or at least the aspects relevant to these observations. In his *Historia Pontificalis*, written a few years after the *Policraticus*, John deals with the pontificate of Pope Eugenius III and his struggle with King Roger over control of the Sicilian church. He describes Roger as a ruler who had reduced the church of his kingdom to servitude by interfering with ecclesiastical liberties "in the manner of other tyrants" (*aliorum more tyrannorum*).⁹⁴ In the context of this passage he commends the pope for having used extreme caution in his handling of problems concerning the church in Sicily so as not to give the shrewd king of Sicily a pretext for bringing discredit upon the pope. The king, he says, was forever persecuting the church.⁹⁵ Thus tyranny is not an abstract notion of a

⁹² *Policraticus*, iv, 7 (ed. Webb, I, 259): "Sunt autem praecepta quaedam perpetuam habentia necessitatem apud omnes gentes legitima et quae omnino impune solvi non possunt." See Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, p. 217.

⁹³ *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1952), p. 142.

⁹⁴ *Joannis Saresberiensis Historia Pontificalis*, ed. R. L. Poole (Oxford, 1927), c. 32 (p. 66): "Rex enim aliorum more tyrannorum ecclesiam terre suae redegerat in servitutem, nec alicubi patiebatur electionem libere celebrari sed prenominebat quem eligi oporteret, et ita de officiis ecclesiasticis sicut de palatii muneribus disponebat. Ob hanc causam taliter electos inhiuit Romana ecclesia consecrari. . . . Preterea legatos ecclesie Romane non patiebatur intrare terram suam, nisi a se vocatos aut licentia ante impetrata destinatos. . . ."

⁹⁵ "Vercebatur (papa) enim ne versutus ille rex Siculus qui ecclesie semper insidiabatur, qualem-cumque ex causa probabili haberet materiam detrahendi" (*ibid.*, p. 68). Although Pope Eugenius

wicked form of government illustrated by historical examples but refers to a very real political situation, the one created by Roger's policy to control the churches in his kingdom. While in other respects John has words of praise for the King of Sicily, in the particular sphere of ecclesiastical liberties he sees in him the tyrant who in the manner of other tyrants trampled on the rights of the church. Like Bernard of Clairvaux, John looks at Roger (and other tyrants) in the perspective of a world dominated by the church. In his eyes, too, Roger was a usurper, not of the rights of the Roman empire which for him as an Englishman had little significance, or of the church as a world state, but of such rights as constituted the sum total of ecclesiastical liberties in each particular country.⁹⁶ Incidentally, one should note that John believed that *de iure* Sicily belonged to "the Patrimony of the Roman Church."⁹⁷

To return to his *Policraticus*, John deals with this particular form of tyranny in the seventh book under the heading "Secular Laws of Princes as Preventing Curiales from Serving in Ecclesiastical Offices."⁹⁸ The main topic of the chapter is a theoretical discussion of the princes' claim to be unrestricted by law and to have the right to override even divine laws (*nullas leges credunt civilibus preferendas*) but the illustrations are all taken from the sphere of conflict between church and state, with the emphasis on the issue of ecclesiastical elections. Now it is well known that John's hierocratic theories resulted from his knowledge of English history and his own experiences with English kings like Stephen and Henry II,⁹⁹ who provided classic examples for this type of "tyranny" and were probably among the *alii tyranni* to whom John referred in the passage on Roger's ecclesiastical policy just quoted. The topic of rulership versus ecclesiastical liberties was certainly discussed between John and his friend and patron, Thomas Becket, to whom John dedicated the *Policraticus*. But from the passages of the *Historia*

had made his peace with Roger he did not allow the renewal of the oath of homage or confirm the privileges for the kingdom. Roger probably demanded from the pope that the "Apostolic Legacy" that had been granted to his father for the island be extended to his mainland territories. But negotiations failed to bring about an agreement. See Caspar, pp. 410-413, and H. Gleber, *Papst Eugen III.* (Jena, 1936), p. 133. According to John, Roger defended his claim to independence of the Sicilian church from the papacy — in 1151 he had his son crowned without papal approval — with his and his father's services to the Roman church such as the conquest of Sicily from the Moslems and the restoration of Christianity on the island (*ibid.*, c. 34; pp. 69-70).

⁹⁶ Occasionally St Bernard uses the term "tyrant" in the same sense as John of Salisbury, namely for a ruler who steps into the sphere of church jurisdiction in contrast to the one who keeps out of this sphere and is considered a "defensor ecclesiasticae libertatis." See A. Luchaire, *Histoire de France*, III, 8, who quotes from a letter of St Bernard written to Pope Innocent II in 1143.

⁹⁷ *Historia Pontificalis*, c. 34 (*l.c.* p. 69).

⁹⁸ *Policraticus*, VII, 20 (ed. Webb, II, 182): "De legibus saecularium principum quibus curiales et officiales arcentur ab honoribus ecclesiasticis . . ." John accuses the princes of punishing as slight a transgression as the doubt about the worthiness of their candidates as criminal offense against their majesty and a manifest "subversion" of their rule.

⁹⁹ See *Policraticus*, VIII, 21 (II, 394) where John speaks of the Church policy of *graves tyranni* who ruled the island and of Eustace (Eustachius), son of King Stephen, "qui in ecclesiam Dei severe deceiverat," and VI, 18 (II, 48) where William Rufus is described as "parum religiosus persecutione sanctorum et precipue s. Anselmi Cantuariensis." For obvious reasons John does not discuss the ecclesiastical policy of King Henry II.

Pontificalis it would appear that the tyranny of Roger of Sicily over the Sicilian church served not simply as one more example but had left a deep impression on John's mind. It may have contributed to his insight into the danger that threatened the church from arbitrary rulers and it may have dictated to him the passionate terms in which he rejected these claims.

4. *Rex Utilis et valde Necessarius*

There is still another aspect of Roger's tyranny, so far undiscussed, which was gradually brought into the focus of the argument about the king of Sicily by some thoughtful observers. This was the amazing and puzzling fact that, despite his "reign of terror," Roger gave his land good government. Observers closer to the scene discovered that Roger's subjects enjoyed peace and security and a great measure of economic prosperity. People must have meditated on the paradox between these successes, usually considered God's reward for a law-abiding ruler, and his "evil deeds," for which he should have been visited by disasters as tokens of God's wrath. Quite obviously tyranny could be a good and useful thing. It was logical then to analyze the character of tyranny with regard to the intentions and goals of the tyrant, in this instance, Roger of Sicily.

Otto of Freising gives us some inkling about the trends of thought stirred by this novel experience. In the often quoted passage of his chronicle where he describes Roger's cruelties as worthy of a "Sicilian tyrant" and also says that they were discussed by everybody in Germany the historian emphasized that there were people who believed that Roger committed cruelties "in the interest of justice rather than of tyranny," that he was more than all other rulers a lover of peace, and that it was "in order to preserve peace that he held rebels in restraint so severely."¹⁰⁰ This group of dissenters, as we well may call them because their interpretation ran counter to the religious and moral tenets of the age, probably advocated by Otto himself, seemed to have defended the tyrant on the ground that he worked for the implementation of an ideal, peace and justice, in his kingdom. The somewhat younger Norman historian Hugo Falcandus takes a very similar stand when he writes that some critics impute most of Roger's evil deeds to his tyrannical disposition and call him inhuman because of the overly severe and unlawful punishments he inflicted on many transgressors but that he, Hugo, disagrees with this interpretation. He believed that a man as prudent and endowed with as much foresight as Roger in all matters that concerned his new kingdom acted upon thorough deliberation.¹⁰¹ From the context of Hugo's argu-

¹⁰⁰ *Otonis Fris. Chronica*, VII, 23 (ed. Hofmeister, p. 347): "Sunt tamen qui dicant, eum haec potius intuitu iusticiae quam tyrannidis exercere, aiuntque ipsum prae omnibus principibus pacem diligere, pro qua conservanda volunt eum tanta severitate rebelles cohibere. Alii vero amore pecuniae qua etiam omnes occidentales reges excessit, plus quam iusticiae pacem eum sectari dicunt." The English renderings in the text are from *The Two Cities*, translated by Mierow, p. 432.

¹⁰¹ Hugo Falcandus, *Liber de regno Siciliae*, ed. G. B. Siragusa, p. 6.: "Porro quod quidam pleraque eius opera tyrannidi dant eumque vocant inhumanum, eo quod multis penas graviores et legibus incognitas irrogaverit, ego sic existimo, virum utique prudentem et in omnibus circumspectum in novitate regni ex industria sic egisse ut neque flagitiosi quilibet de scelerum sibi possent impunitate blandiri. . . ."

ment it would appear that he too believed Roger's motives were lofty.¹⁰² Besides, he seemed to have had some conception of the impact of necessity on the decisions of a statesman, for he adds that Roger was forced by necessity to act as he did because otherwise he might not have been able to crush "the fierce rebellion of the people nor to keep audacious traitors in check."¹⁰³ In other words, it was "virtue" for a statesman to save the state, even if only by the violation of divine and human laws, while it would have been "wicked" to permit anarchy and rebellion that would result in the ruin of all. Otto of Freising mentions still another group of dissenters, i.e., those who believed that Roger was inspired less by his love of justice than that of money, "of which he possessed more than all western kings."¹⁰⁴ These critics must have found Roger's tyranny more unbearable than the first group, unless they believed that the increase of wealth resulting from the enforcement of the king's peace benefited the people in general and not primarily the ruler and his house. At any rate these dissenters may have been right if they justified Roger's "love of money" with "necessity" as a motivating and mitigating factor, as did Hugo Falcandus with regard to Roger's cruelties. For we know that after the peace treaty of Mignano Roger's situation was by no means as rosy as the reference to his immense financial resources may suggest. In the words of Erich Caspar, "a war that had lasted twelve years had depleted Roger's apparently inexhaustible coffers."¹⁰⁵ If the state of Sicily was to survive and to expand, the treasury certainly had to be replenished.

A "tyrant" as useful and efficient in his secular government as Roger appeared to be might well be useful in ecclesiastical matters as well. This truth seemed to have loomed high in the considerations of two leading churchmen of the time, Bernard of Clairvaux, and the abbot Peter of Cluny. Whether or not Otto had them on his mind when referring to Roger's better disposed critics,¹⁰⁶ their judgment can matter for us only if borne out by that of neutral observers. For both had an axe to grind with Roger not only in the narrower sphere of their respective monastic policy but in world affairs as well. As regards the former, after Mignano both abbots not only greatly welcomed Roger's request to send monks of their respective orders to the kingdom for the establishment of monastic

¹⁰² Caspar, p. 235. Caspar seems to approve of the justification of cruelty and lawlessness with the "higher ends" they served. Throughout his book his judgment of King Roger is inspired by a deep admiration of the champion of *Machtpolitik*.

¹⁰³ Hugo Falcandus, *Liber de regno Siciliae* (see note 101). If the king at times seemed over severe, the author emphasizes that "necessity" had forced his hands: "quadam ad id necessitate compulsus intelligo; nec enim aliter rebellis populi ferocitas conteri aut proditorum poterat audacia coerceri." On the twin concept *necessitas -ratio* see below, p. 78.

¹⁰⁴ See note 100.

¹⁰⁵ *Roger II.*, p. 235.

¹⁰⁶ Otto of Freising must have been informed of Bernard's change of mind on King Roger and of his action in his favor in 1149/1150 since he was the one who delivered Bernard's letter with the passage about Roger's "usefulness" to King Conrad, see below, p. 73. He might also have known about Peter of Cluny's recommendations; see A. Hofmeister in the footnote to *Chronica*, vii, 23 (p. 347). In the note Hofmeister lists others as having passed favorable judgments about Roger. But could Otto have known about their opinion? They were all Norman historians and at least one of them, Romuald of Salerno, wrote his work after Otto's time!

houses there but, in the course of time, tried to gain ever larger concessions from the king.¹⁰⁷ This would explain sufficiently the language used by St. Bernard in his letters to Roger — amazingly sweet indeed when held against his anti-Sicilian propaganda rhetorics of the 1130's¹⁰⁸ — and the obsequious flatteries in Peter's letters, which must be read with due reservation. Nevertheless, if in one of his letters to King Roger the abbot of Cluny commends the king for having given "profound peace to the Sicilians, Apulians, Calabrians, and other peoples,"¹⁰⁹ this squares with the favorable judgments passed by some of the witnesses of Otto of Freising and those of close observers on the scene. Still, the note of a *captatio benevolentiae* is too strong to be overheard. On the other hand, when in a later letter Peter makes the surprising suggestion to King Roger to take over "unhappy Tuscany" and integrate this region into his "happy empire" we cannot altogether refuse to believe in the honesty of his intention. During his trip in Italy in 1142 and while he himself served as peacemaker in one of the innumerable local wars Peter had ample occasion to get an insight into the state of confusion and anarchy prevailing in this region. From what we know about twelfth-century Tuscany he hardly exaggerated when he described the maze of petty states "cities, castles, townships, and villages" none of which had the authority to make highways safe from robbers and murderers for "pilgrims, priests, and monks" and to prevent the complete "confusion of things divine and profane."¹¹⁰ The conviction that the king of Sicily would be able to restore and maintain law and order seems to have been shared by some of Peter's Italian contemporaries.¹¹¹ (However, the plan might not have appealed to King Roger himself.) The conclusion which Peter drew from his Italian experiences was that Roger should be accorded a position equal in rank to that of the great kings of Catholic Chris-

¹⁰⁷ On Roger's approach to France and French leaders which began immediately after the Treaty of Mignano see Caspar, *Roger II.*, pp. 366-370. They were followed by Roger's successful attempts to establish connections with the two French church leaders, Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter of Cluny. See L. T. White, *Latin Monasticism in Norman Sicily* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933) and E. Dupré-Théseider "Sugli inizi dello stanziamento Cisterciense nel regno di Sicilia," *Studi medioevali in onore di A. De Stefano*, pp. 203-218.

¹⁰⁸ See Caspar, pp. 368 f.; Vacandard, *Vie de Saint Bernard*, II, 63 ff. That Conrad deeply resented Bernard's change in attitude has been mentioned above, p. 59.

¹⁰⁹ *Epistolae Petri Venerabilis*, III, 3 (P.L. CLXXXIX, 280-282); Caspar, *Regesta* no. 125 (p. 538) and analysis pp. 369-370.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 37 (col. 369): "Utinam . . . miserabilis atque infelicis Tusciae partes felici vestro imperio . . . adiungerentur . . . , Vere non tunc sicut nunc res divinae atque humanae . . . confunderentur; non urbes, non castra, non burgi, non villae, non stratae publicae . . . homicidis . . . exponerentur. Non poenitentes, non peregrini, non clerici, non monachi . . . in manus talium traderentur. . . ." On Peter's plan as suggested to Roger and on his activities as peacemaker (between Lucca and Pisa) see Robert Davidsohn, *Geschichte von Florenz*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1896-1927), I, 430-433. Davidsohn believes that the complaint about "the confusion of things human and divine" refers to the tendency, prevailing at the time among the municipal magistrates, to take over the administration of church property.

¹¹¹ See Davidsohn, I, 433. This historian takes Peter's plan and his letter to King Roger seriously whereas E. Dupré-Théseider ("Sugli inizi . . ." [n. 107 above], p. 206, n. 7) does not believe in the honesty of Peter's purpose.

tianity — all of them friends and patrons of the Order of Cluny.¹¹² Roger's "usefulness" was beyond doubt: wielding the sword of justice (*justitiae regis gladio*) he crushed the offenders of the law of God, and the enemies of the Church.¹¹³

The same generous interpretation of tyranny was applied when it came to assigning King Roger his place on the stage of western European politics. To be sure, ever since 1140 Roger had been recognized as king of Sicily on a par with crowned heads of European kingdoms by princes of the West, notably the king of France. It is also well known that the French King Louis VII and a strong party consisting of French magnates, both secular and ecclesiastical, called and hoped for the participation of Roger of Sicily in the Second Crusade.¹¹⁴ During the hapless campaigns in the East they had ample reason to deplore the failure of these attempts. But it was really due to the initiative of three French church leaders that for a short moment Roger stepped into the forefront of European events. Of the three, Suger of Saint-Denis had always been Roger's "friend." The two others, Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter of Cluny, regardless of how they may have felt in the past, were now agreed that Roger was the man best qualified for leadership in an enterprise that was to see the supreme effort of Western Christendom to restore Latin rule in Outremer and avenge the catastrophe of the Second Crusade on the emperor of Constantinople, whom the French blamed for the defeats suffered in the East.¹¹⁵ To make this enterprise a success King Conrad of Germany, loyal ally of the Byzantine emperor, had to be won over or, at least reconciled, to the role assigned to Roger, and persuaded to remain neutral during the new war in the East.

It was at this point of the preparations of a new crusade, in 1150, that Bernard of Clairvaux wrote a letter to King Conrad in which he praised the "Lord of Sicily" as useful and indispensable in many matters concerning the Catholic church, a man who would prove even more useful in the future if not prevented by Conrad from collaborating with him. Unfortunately, this letter, which was delivered to Conrad by Bishop Otto of Freising, is lost; hence we do not know the points made in Roger's favor and the arguments chosen by St Bernard to convince Conrad that Roger was no longer the tyrant he himself had denounced as such at

¹¹² *Epistolae Petri Venerabilis*, III, 3 (col. 281): "Ista me ad vos amandum primitus impulerunt: ista ut inter magnos reges, Romanos dico, Francos, Anglos, Hispanos, maximos Cluniacensis ecclesiae amicos et benefactores, vos quoque admitterem, coegerunt." The letter is undated but belongs to the years following the peace treaty of Mignano, see Caspar, pp. 369-370.

¹¹³ *Epistolae Petri*, IV, 37 (col. 369): "Haec plane universa multaque his similia, tam nefanda tam execranda, justitiae regis gladio succisa cessarent. . . ." see note 110. In fact, in the Assizes of Ariano (Tit. II) published about the same time, Roger pledged himself to this task in the tradition of a mediæval ruler, see the passage quoted by Caspar, p. 271, n. 1.

¹¹⁴ On Roger's role in the Second Crusade see *A History of the Crusades* I, 463-512 (V. G. Berry, "The Second Crusade"). A fuller treatment is now found in my chapter, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," II, 8-16. A representative of the French pro-Sicilian party and an author most partial to Roger was the historian of the Second Crusade Odo of Deuil in his *De profectione Ludorici VII in orientem*. See the edition by V. G. Berry (New York, 1948), Introduction, and the text, *passim*.

¹¹⁵ See note 74 above.

the time of the church schism.¹¹⁶ Abbot Peter of Cluny joined in Bernard's efforts. In the letter in which he notifies Roger of the intervention in his favor with King Conrad he takes up his earlier theme of praise of Roger as a peacemaker in his kingdom. But this time his emphasis is on Roger's qualities of leadership in an anti-Byzantine crusade, and he mixes the flattering colors with this end in mind. Thus, in a rather fantastic perversion of facts, the abbot contrasts Roger's "peace" with the treasonable treatment of "pilgrims" in the late crusade at the hands of "the Greeks and their wicked king."¹¹⁷ In a similar vein he credits Roger with a "great increase of the church in the lands of the infidels," referring, of course, to Roger's conquests on the Tunisian coast.¹¹⁸ But Peter comes down to facts again when he assesses Roger's qualities of leadership in the planned new crusade comparing him with other Christian princes who might possibly take the helm. He might well have realized how impecunious, inefficient, and powerless were some of Roger's peers on the thrones of Europe. So he is on safe grounds when asserting that Roger as a ruler surpassed them all in experience, efficiency, diplomatic skills, and intelligence, while his lands were preferable to theirs as a military base because of the abundance of resources and the location closer to the scene of action.¹¹⁹ This latter argument, taken from the geography of the king-

¹¹⁶ We know of the letter and its content from a letter written by Abbot Wibald of Stablo, Conrad's "minister of foreign affairs," to a cardinal of the Roman church. In addition to Bernard's recommendation Wibald mentions another one by a Cardinal Theodwin. As regards Bernard's recommendation Wibald says that Bernard "collaudabat dominum illum Siciliae eo quod in multis utilis et necessarius fuisset catholicae ecclesiae, futurus utilior, si non prohiberetur virtute et potentia nostri principis (Conradi) . . ."; see *Wibaldi Epistolae* no. 252 (a. 1150), Jaffé, *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*, I, 377. For an analysis of this letter see Bernhardt, *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Konrad III.*, p. 813. Wibald had been an out-spoken enemy of Roger's ever since the king had expelled him from Montecassino where he had served as an abbot. One is not surprised, therefore, to find in a personal letter written to Emperor Manuel a real outpouring of hatred against the "Siciliae tyrannus" and a "Dei inimicus," etc., and, on the other hand, an enthusiastic appraisal of the empire on the Bosphorus, of its "divinae religionis cultus," its "ordo legum et iuris civilis ratio" its fortitude and military discipline (*Wibaldi Epistolae*, no. 246, p. 369). This piece of flattery is amusing indeed when compared with a similar outpour of Peter of Cluny (next note) who reverses the positive and negative signs with respect to the Sicilian king and the Byzantine emperor.

¹¹⁷ *Epistolae Petri Venerabilis*, VI, 16, (col. 424): Est et aliud quod longe magis accendit animos nostros . . . ad amandam et quaerendam pacem vestram, illa scilicet pessima, inaudita et lamentabilis Graecorum et nequam regis eorum de peregrinis nostris, hoc est exercitu Dei viventi, facta proditio."

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*: "Nam cum multa . . . augmenta Ecclesiae Dei, bellica virtute vestra de terris inimicorum Dei, hoc est Saracenorum, proveniant, longe, ut credimus, majora provenirent, si firma pax vos et regem (Conradum) supradictum unirent." On the discussion of the true nature of Roger's African campaigns see Giles Constable, "The Second Crusade as seen by Contemporaries," *Traditio*, IX (1953), 235-297. Constable mentions only three western writers who associated Roger's African campaigns with the Second Crusade (i.e., attributed religious motives to King Roger), one of whom is Peter of Cluny. But of him C. says that he had an ax to grind (in the above-mentioned sense). His main point is "that the facts can hardly bear the interpretation that the expedition was a part of the Second Crusade, or a crusade in itself." This opinion is borne out by the judgment of the Norman historian Romuald Guarna of Salerno as quoted in note 125.

¹¹⁹ See the letter quoted above (notes 117 and 118) toward the end: "Neminem . . . principum Christianorum video, per quem tam bene, tam congrue, tam efficaciter sicut per vos opus hoc tam sacrum . . . posset impleri." According to Peter, King Roger was "aliis principibus et animo sagacior, et opibus ditior et ipso insuper loco propinquior."

dom, shows the abbot as the practical strategist he probable was. In this point, at least, he could not possibly be accused of flattery!

The voices heard so far about Roger's achievements and usefulness were those of critics whose sources of information did not go far below the surface and who relied mostly on hearsay and appearances. For more and deeper views of Roger's character and government we must turn to three Norman historians whose knowledge of both was derived from their close relationship either to Roger himself or to his immediate successors.¹²⁰ All three agree on one point: the predominance of intellectual faculties in the makeup of his character and personality. Romuald Guarna of Salerno summons an unusual array of words to express his experience: the king is *sapiens, providus, discretus, subtilis ingenio, magnus consilio, magis utens ratione quam viribus; in acquirenda pecunia multum sollicitus, in expendenda non plurimum largus*. Both Alexander of Teleso and Hugo Falcandus were impressed with Roger's method of examining all pertinent factors before engaging in an enterprise and of acting only according to set purposes and plans; it is from the former's pen that we have the lively description of Roger's special fancy for details, written accounts, and other rational methods in financial matters¹²¹ while the latter suggests that the king's "prudence and discretion" actually meant a break with time-honored methods in his handling of political as well as military affairs.¹²² Indeed, both seem rather reluctant to admit that Roger was more of a diplomat than a general and that he was inclined to win his battles by strategic movements rather than by actual fighting.¹²³

None of these men could have been amazed at a paradox between his methods of establishing peace and the results he effected, as were such foreign observers who knew only of Roger's methods of punishment and oppression. For the benevolent critics at home the key to Roger's *pax* and *utilitas* was his general ability as a ruler, his energy, industry, patience, and thoroughness described by the geographer Idrisi with the proverbial encomium that Roger did more in his sleep than others while awake.¹²⁴

Neither did they commit themselves to a general verdict as to whether the traits they observed were more suggestive of a tyrant or of *rex iustus*. They did not mind mixing the colors accordingly: thus Alexander of Teleso calls Roger "amator iustitiae atque defensor," a judge who never punished without judicial trial and, on the other hand, describes him as a man anxious to keep people at a distance and not to allow them any familiarity and intimacy in the intercourse with himself so that they would never "cease fearing him." As Romuald tells us, the result was the desired one: Roger was "more feared than loved by his sub-

¹²⁰ See Caspar's chapter on Roger's personality and historical significance where all the relevant passages from the sources are quoted in the footnotes (*Roger II.*, pp. 434-447).

¹²¹ Below, note 130.

¹²² Above, note 101, and Hugo Falcandus, *Liber de regno Siciliae*, ed. Siragusa, p. 5: "Idque curabat, ut non magis viribus quam prudentia et hostes contereret et regnum suum productis finibus ampliaret." Cf. Romuald's "magis utens ratione quam viribus" quoted in the text above.

¹²³ Caspar (p. 437, note 1) remarks that Alexander Telesius made a virtue of the king's complete lack of heroism by stressing his strategic skill which often effected "victory without bloodshed" (*De rebus gestis Rogerii*, iv, 4; Del Re, Cronisti, I, 147).

¹²⁴ See Caspar, p. 443.

jects." It is also significant that Romuald Guarna, as archbishop of Salerno a high-ranking member of the Norman church, testifies clearly to the absence of all religious motives in Roger's African ventures and conquests. The only motivating factor was, so the archbishop tells us, Roger's unfettered ambition and lust for expansion.¹²⁵ It is this lust for aggrandizement of his own personal power and for the exaltation of the Norman dynasty that, together with the inevitable "love of money," must have obscured in the eyes of hostile observers his great achievements as legislator and administrator. To these critics, Lombard patriots and others, it must have looked as if his relentless efforts to increase the treasury and to balance the budget, though having all the appearances of the work of a trusted householder and administrator of a family or community,¹²⁶ served ultimately the personal interests and desires of the ruler. A man like Falco of Benevento, who made himself the mouthpiece of the impoverished and oppressed people of Campania and Apulia, may have found some good points in Roger's system of government but he may have denied that they were rooted in the ruler's unselfish and honest intention to make a substantial contribution to the welfare and happiness of the people entrusted to his care.¹²⁷ To him as to other antagonists of the Norman house Roger's government may well have appeared as a tyranny in disguise. The description of this type of tyranny, a rationally planned and effective rulership, they may have found in Aristotle's pages on the rule of a tyrant who, anxious to prolong the life-expectancy of his reign and house, attempts "to appear" before his subjects and the world "not as a tyrannical ruler but as a steward and a royal governor, and not as an appropriator of wealth but as a trustee" (i.e., of the property of the people).¹²⁸

Although the Norman historians' chief interest was in the character of the first Sicilian king, the innovations that mark his government did not escape their attention. However brief and accidental, the remarks of Romuald Guarna of Salerno and Alexander of Telesse on Roger's reforms emphasize exactly those traits as novelties which have caused modern historians to call Roger of Sicily a modern or even the first modern ruler. For these remarks refer to Roger's new legislation, to the introduction of agents of the central *Curia* for the financial and judicial administration of the districts (the *camerarii et iustitiani*)¹²⁹ and to his own active

¹²⁵ "Et quia cor magnificum et dominandi animum semper habuit dominio Sicilie et Apulie nequam contentus, maximum navalem preparavit exercitum, quem cum multis militibus in Africam mittens, ipsam cepit et tenuit." See *Romualdi Guarnae Salernitani Chronicon*, ad a. 1137-1144 (ed. Garufi [cited in n. 29 above], p. 227).

¹²⁶ See the quotation, note 130.

¹²⁷ See above, p. 66. Falco outright praises the king for his intellectual curiosity and interests as shown during his stay at Naples when he ordered the survey of the city's area (ad a. 1140, *Del Re, Cronisti*, I, 251 f.).

¹²⁸ *Politics*, v, ix (1315b). The translation used above is that of H. Rackham (Loeb Classical Library), p. 473. Also John of Salisbury has a special niche for this type of tyrants who like the *Augusti* and especially Caesar were good stewards of the people. See, e.g., *Policraticus*, viii, 19, where he admits that Caesar's very errors (*excessus*) helped the cause of justice (*ad iustitiam aspirare videbantur*).

¹²⁹ See *Romualdi Chronicon*, ad a. 1137-1139 (Garufi, p. 226): "Rex autem Rogerius in regno suo perfecte pacis tranquillitate potitus pro conservanda pace camerarios et iustitianos per totam terram instituit, leges a se noviter conditas promulgavit, malas consuetudines de medio abstulit."

participation in the administration of finances of the kingdom. As regards the latter we know that Alexander of Teles's lively picture of the king's role in this branch of government is essentially correct. Since offices for high representatives of the district administration in the *Curia* had not yet been created, the king himself supervised the three main bureaux of the "exchequer" (called *dogana* < *diwán*, after their Arabic model) and the provincial *camerarii*, and acted as judge of appeal jointly with the justiciars of the *Curia*.¹³⁰ Speaking of the "modernity" of Roger's government, which is also emphasized by Alexander's remarks that the king had everything carefully registered and kept in writing — were the Norman historians and courtiers aware that in contemporary England under the "new monarchy" of Henry II the stage was set for very similar changes and innovations? If they were, they certainly failed to let us know. It is due to the research of a modern historian, Charles H. Haskins, that attention has been drawn to the fact that in the two Norman kingdoms similar problems of government and administration were met with very similar arrangements, and to the question, still unsolved, as to the mutual influences (direct imitation not excluded) which may account for these similarities.¹³¹ But Haskins' opinion that "the Sicilian monarchy was of a far more absolute and oriental type than is found among the northern Normans or anywhere else in western Europe"¹³² would probably be challenged by scholars like Ménager, who is inclined to stress the impact of feudal concepts and traditions — both native and Norman — on the ideas and methods of the Sicilian king.¹³³

In the final analysis, it was not so much the new methods of government that surprised the world, but Roger's statecraft, his skill in maintaining himself in power in lands not originally his own and against a host of enemies within and without. Staggering difficulties, the nature and the extent of which were hardly known to outside observers, forced upon him a fierce life and death struggle for survival which implied the disregard of moral and religious teachings. Of course, it is true that all mediaeval princes (like the governments or rulers of any age) knew or experienced the exceptional "immoral" and illegal conditions of behavior and acts forced upon them by emergency and necessity. As we have seen, politicians reflected on the object lesson given them by King Roger. But apparently there was also a growing awareness of these difficulties among political

¹³⁰ Telesius, *De rebus gestis Rogerii*, iv, 3 (Del Re, *Cronisti*, 1, 147): "... si quando a ceteris utilioribus occupationibus sibi vacare contingeret, aut publicis exactionibus invigilaret, aut datorum sive oribus occupationibus sibi vacare contingeret, aut publicis exactionibus invigilaret, aut datorum sive oribus seu eorum quae accipienda erant, reminisci vel quae recensenda erant, recensere satageret, quatenus melius de suo tribuendum aerario, vel ubi adeundum esset, sub chirographorum ratiociniis semper habebatur, et ut amplius dicam, nullum quid sibi erat, quod non sub scripti ratione servaretur aut erogaretur." — Under Roger's immediate successors the gap between the central government and the district officials was filled out by the appointment of one or several officers called *magister camerarius* and *magister iustitiarum*, see Caspar, pp. 314-319.

¹³¹ C. H. Haskins, *The Normans in European History* (Boston and New York, 1915), pp. 228-230. See also Haskins, "England and Sicily in the Twelfth Century," *English Historical Review*, xxvi (1911), 433-447, 641-665. On the "New Monarchy" of Henry II see G. O. Sayles, *The Medieval Foundations of England*, 2nd ed. (London, 1950, 1959), ch. 21.

¹³² Haskins, *The Normans in European History*, p. 230.

¹³³ See above, p. 50.

philosophers. As Gaines Post has shown recently, thinkers of the twelfth century discussed problems of statecraft in terms and formulations that came close to the modern theory of *raison d'état*. Under the influence of Roman and canon law they would assert that the ruler ought to be guided by the "reason of public well-being" and that he can achieve the desired end by following the commands of "reason and necessity."¹³⁴ Still, the emphasis was on the subordination of statecraft to the higher ideal of public welfare which, if well understood by the ruler, should be in harmony with the law of God. In the thirteenth century Roger's grandson, Emperor Frederick II, pronounced a somewhat more secularized version of this theory when declaring that the state drew its origin not only from divine providence but also from "the impelling necessity of things" (*rerum necessitate cogente*) and, by implication, that the same "laws of nature" that had called it into being also determined the conditions of its life and growth.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, in the twelfth century, the world had the opportunity to watch a ruler guided by these laws not only in the emergencies of wars but also under the more normal and peaceful conditions of his later reign.

The difficulties that beset King Roger were in part those described by Machiavelli as inherent to "mixed principalities," a form of government which arises when the prince of a hereditary state conquers "a province diverse in language, customs and laws."¹³⁶ Roger had come to rule not only as a foreigner over subjects alien to the Norman ruling class but in general over a motley population just as diverse among themselves in race, religion, and political tradition. What the observer saw, however, was not the painful process of integration itself but its effect on a ruler who was seen torn between the commands of *ethos* and the exigencies of *kratos*.¹³⁷ The ensuing ambivalence of intentions and goals, and the often shocking contrast between the means applied and the effects achieved could throw doubts on the validity of conventional ethical and religious strictures. Under the impact of new ideas infiltrating the area of political thought from more realistic quarters, the dividing line between *rex iustus et tyrannus* began to fade away: one and the same ruler could, at one time, appear as the minister of God and, at another, as the attendant of Satan. Some of Roger's observers may have been tempted to admit that, once a state is founded, it is determined by its own laws, and that the liberty of a ruler to act, be it at the dictates of his desires or at those of his conscience and the code of morality prevailing at his age, is, for better or worse, conditioned by the exigencies implied in these laws.

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¹³⁴ G. Post, "Ratio publicae utilitatis, ratio status und Staatsräson," *Die Welt als Geschichte*, XXI (1961), 8-28.

¹³⁵ See E. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich II. Ergänzungsband* (Berlin, 1931), pp. 96-97.

¹³⁶ *Il Principe*, iii: "Ma quando si acquista stati in una provincia disforme di lingua, di costumi e di ordini, qui sono le difficoltà, e qui bisogna avere gran fortuna e grande industria a tenerli."

¹³⁷ See Friedrich Meinecke, *Die Idee der Staatsräson* (Munich, 1957), Introduction and ch. 1 (Machiavelli).