

of the implications of using this term. Herein, while the differences between the early modern and medieval manuscripts suggest it would be safer to not entirely discount a composition date as early as June 1146, the only, albeit limited, evidence for the use of a Norman-African title can be noted for the period which followed the conquest of al-Mahdīya in July 1148.

Concluding Thoughts: The *Cronica* within the Historiography of the Norman Kingdom

The evidence indicates that the *Cronica* was assembled in the mid-twelfth century during the reign of Sicily's first Norman king, Roger II. This is significant, not least as a broader recognition of such a dating argument would do much to refine the current parameters of Siculo-Norman historiography. In what follows, the implications of this will be elucidated with a clear focus on its relevance for a number of key historiographical debates.

Over the last two decades, a host of influential studies have shown how the challenges associated with governing a majority Muslim population, that also included Greek and Arabic speaking Christians, Latin Christians, and Jews, required the emergence of a royal administration, the royal *dīwān*, that was fundamentally different to any other “Norman” or, indeed, “western European” precedent. Highly centered in the capital city of Palermo and staffed by Greek and Arab-Muslim officials, it drew on models of rulership known from Arab-Muslim and Byzantine dynasties and made use of Arabic, Greek, and Latin. It has been held that the *dīwān*'s royal officials oversaw and tightly regulated multifaceted aspects of royal representation and rulership as part of a “cultural-engineering” project, which sought to emphasise the primacy of royal power and authority over the island and its peoples¹¹². Thus, it has been held that such dynamics bequeathed a remarkable cultural legacy.

112) Jeremy JOHNS, Cultural engineering in Norman Sicily, *Apollo* (June 2016) p. 80–85. See also William TRONZO, The Mantle of Roger II of Sicily, in: *Robes and Honor. The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. by Stewart Gordon (The New Middle Ages Series, 2001) p. 241–253; Jeremy JOHNS, The Arabic Inscriptions (as n. 90) p. 324–337; IDEM, The Bible, the Qur'an and the Royal Eunuchs in the Cappella Palatina, in: *Die Cappella Palatina in Palermo – Geschichte, Kunst, Funktionen. Forschungsergebnisse der Restaurierung*, hg. von Thomas Dittelbach