

"IMITATIO BASILEI"?
THE IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION
OF THE NORMAN KINGDOM OF SICILY IN THE 12TH CENTURY*

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To the memory of Andrej Komáč

THE history of Byzantine culture in the 12th-century Norman Kingdom of Sicily has attracted the attention of a number of scholars. A number of noteworthy treatises were published a few decades ago, as a result of this scholarly endeavor. These treatises referred to Byzantine presence and "Byzantinism"¹ in Norman Sicily as a whole, yet others were of a more particular nature and regarded Greek literary production and education² in the Norman state. It would be an oversight not to mention that Byzantine

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¹ F. GIUNTA, *Bizantini e bizantinismo nella Sicilia Normanna*, Palumbo ²1974; V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, La presenza dei Greci nella Sicilia normanna. L'apporto della documentazione archivistica in lingua greca, in: R. M. C. BONACASA (ed.), *Byzantino-Sicula IV*, (Atti del primo Congresso Internazionale di archeologia della Sicilia bizantina, Corleone 28 luglio-2 agosto 1998), 31-72, Palermo 2002; E. KISLINGER, Archeologia e storia: ricostruire insieme la Sicilia bizantina, in: R. M. C. BONACASA (ed.), *Byzantino-Sicula IV*, Palermo 2002, 89-104.

² C. CUPANE, Filagato da Cerami, φιλόσοφος e διδάσκαλος. Contributo alla storia della cultura bizantina in età normanna, in: *Siculorum Gymnasium XXXI* (1978) 1-28.

contribution is examined and presented on important works on the history of art³ in Sicily and Southern Italy of the 12th century. It should be noted here that Byzantine influence and other related issues have been covered by other scholars⁴. It is not, however, possible to expand to a thorough discourse of the issues regarding the whole of Byzantine influences on the Norman Kingdom of Sicily in the 12th century in the confines of this study. We will limit ourselves to the examination of one issue that in our view primarily concerns the level of ideological expression during the period of the Norman state's self-awareness⁵ construction⁶ period under

³ E. KITZINGER, *The Mosaics of Monreale, Palermo 1960; Mosaic Decoration in Sicily under Roger II and the Classical Byzantine System of Church Decoration*, in: W. TRONZO (ed.), *Italian Church Decoration of the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance: Functions, Forms and Regional Traditions*, Villa Spelman Colloquia 1, Bologna 1989, 147-193; *Idem*, *The Mosaics of St Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo*, in: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers (DOP)* 27 (1991) 189-197.

⁴ P. CANART, *Le livre grec en Italie méridionale sous les règnes Normand et Souabe: aspects matériels et sociaux*, in: *Scrittura e Civiltà* 2 (1978) 103-162; V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, *I gruppi etnici nel regno di Roger II e la loro partecipazione al potere*, in: *Società, potere e popolo nell'età di Ruggero II*, Atti delle terze giornate normanno-sveve (Bari 23-25 maggio 1977), Bari 1979; *Eadem*, *I Bizantini in Italia*, in: G. CAVALLO (ed.), *I Bizantini in Italia*, Mailand 1982, 1-136; *Eadem*, *Olympias, eine normannische Prinzessin in Konstantinopel*, in: *Bisanzio e Italia*, 56-72; *Eadem*, *Il popolamento: etnie, fedi, insediamenti*, in: G. MUSCA (ed.), *Terra e uomini nel Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo*. Atti delle setteme giornate normanno-sveve, Bari 15-17 ottobre 1985, (Centro di studi normanno-svevi, Università di Bari, Atti 7, Bari 1987), 39-73; *Eadem*, *I rapporti con Bisanzio*, in: M. D'ONOFRIO, *I Normanni popolo d'Europa 1030-1200*, (Catalogo di Mostra, Roma 1994), Venezia 1994, p. 350-355; J. HERMANN, *The Byzantine View of the Normans*, in: *Anglo-Norman Studies* 2 (1979) 78-92; G. LOUD, *Byzantine Italy and the Normans*, in: *Byzantinische Forschungen* 12 (1988) 67-118; W. B. MCQUEEN, *Relations between the Normans and Byzantium 1071-1112*, in: *Byzantion* 56 (1986) 427-476; J. IRIGOIN, *La tradition des rhéteurs grecs dans l'Italie byzantine (X^e- XII^e siècle)*, in: *Siculorum Gymnasium* 39 (1986) 73-82.

⁵ Regarding the foundation of the Norman state see in particular: E. CASPAR, *Roger II (1101-1154) und die Gründung der normannisch-sicilischen Monarchie*, Innsbruck 1902, Darmstadt ²1968, ³1999 in Italian; F. CHALANDON, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, vol. I-II, Paris 1907; E. MENAGER, *L'institution monarchique dans les Etats normands d'Italie. Contribution à l'étude du pouvoir royal dans les principautés occidentales au XI-XII siècles*, in: *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* II (1959) 303-331 et 445-468; M. CARVALE, *Il regno normanno di Sicilia*, Milano 1966; H. HOFFMANN, *Die Anfänge der Normannen in Süditalien*, in: *Quellen und Forschungen* 49 (1969) 95- 144; J. NORWICH, *The*

Roger II (1130-1154)⁷ and consequently refers to it. In particular, we will study the appearance and use of the terms *basileus*⁸ (emperor) and *basileia*⁹ in the court of Roger II and his Norman heirs¹⁰. In order to interpret their use in the complex mesh that were the political conditions of the period, we will examine it on one hand in relation to internal political necessity in the newly formed regnum of "Sicily, Apulia and Calabria"¹¹ and on the other hand in relation to political thought in the West as well as in relation to the Eastern Roman Empire.

H. Houben in his, devoted to Roger II, monograph characterizes him as "a sovereign between the West and the East". This apt characterization defines the general context of approaching and interpreting the internal and external policy of the Norman ruler in the second quarter of the 12th century.

The beginning of the construction of a form of Norman authority in Southern Italy is considered to be the treaty of Melfi¹² (1059), according to which ceded meridional Italy as a feud to the Normans ignoring the under-aged German emperor Henry IV¹³. The agreement constituted the basic legitimizing act establishing the feudal relationship between the pope and the Normans and would legitimize subsequent political developments in Southern Italy. On the legitimizing basis of this relationship, Roger II re-

Kingdom in the Sun 1130-1194, London 1970; D. J. A. MATTHEW, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, Cambridge 1992, 3-4.

⁶ H. HOUBEN, *Roger II. Von Sizilien. Herrscher zwischen Orient und Okzident*, Darmstadt 1997. More specific references in p. 3-4.

⁷ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6.

⁸ E. CHRYSOS, The Title Βασιλεύς in Early Byzantine International Relations, in: *DOP* 32 (1978) p. 31 ff.

⁹ G. RÖSCH, *Όνομα Βασιλείας*, (Byzantina Vindobonensia, Bd. X), Wien 1978.

¹⁰ William I (1155-1166), William II (1166-1189).

¹¹ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 133, fn. 59.

¹² J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Anonymi, *Chronicon breve Nortmannicum*, in: *Patrologia cursus completus, Series latinae (PL)*, vol. 149, col. 1085A, "Anno 1059. Robertus comes Apuliae factus est dux Apuliae, Calabriae et Siciliae a papa Nicolao in civitate Melphis: et fecit ei hominium de omni terra"; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 11; M. BORGOLTE, Europa entdeckt seine Vielfalt 1050-1250, (*Handbuch Europäische Geschichte*, Bd. 3) P. BLICKLE (ed.), Stuttgart 2002, p. 194.

¹³ P. KEHR, Die Belehnungen der süditalienischen Normannenfürsten durch die Päpste (1059-1192), *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil. - Hist. Klasse (1934), no. 1.

ceived the title of duke by pope Honorius¹⁴ in 1128 and in 1130 the title of rex and the crown “of Sicily, Apulia and Calabria” by the antipope Anacletus II¹⁵, a reality ratified by pope Innocent II¹⁶ in 1139. One of the first provisions of the Norman rex was to establish and consolidate his authority against local feudal aristocracy and outside powers as well. From the latter, of particular interest are the eastern and western Roman states, which considered him a “tyrant”¹⁷ and “invasor”¹⁸ in imperial territory, which considered their own and respectively claimed for themselves.

¹⁴ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 48; E. CUOZZO, La conquista normanna e la nascita del regno di Sicilia, in: *idem* (ed.), *La cavalleria nel regno normanno di Sicilia*, 2002, 21-61, esp. 38.

¹⁵ J.-P. MIGNE (ed.) *op. cit.*, fn. 12, Anacletus Papa, Epistolae e Privilegia, *PL* vol. 179, col. 715: XXXIX. Ad Rogerium Siciliae ducem - Titulum regium impertitur. (Anno 1130, Sept. 27); *Idem* (ed.), Willelmus CALCULUS, Historiae Northmannorum, vol. *PL* 149, 879: “Rogerius, cognomento Bursa. Hoc etiam Rogerio deficiente et filiis suis post ipsum, Rogerius patruelis ipsius, filius Rogerii comitis Siciliae, fratris Roberti Wiscardii, solus tam Apuliam quam Siciliam obtinuit. Hic autem procedente tempore de duce factus est rex, causa altercationis duorum Apostolicorum qui simul fuerunt Romae ordinati. Innocentius videlicet II et Petrus Leonis. Quorum ultimus concessit duci Rogerio, ut regio diademate uteretur, ideo quod idem dux parti ipsius favebat. Accidit hoc circa annum ab Incarnatione Domini 1130. Vixerunt vero ambo fere octo annis simul”; H. WIERUSZOWSKI, Roger II of Sicily, rex - tyrannus, in Twelfth-Century political Thought, in: *Speculum* 38 (1963) 46-78. For more about Roger’s coronation see p. 47-49; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 54; M. BORGOLTE, *op. cit.*, fn. 12, p. 195.

¹⁶ J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), *op. cit.*, fn. 12, Innocentius II, Epistolae e Privilegia, vol. *PL* 179, col. 478-480: CDXVI. Ad Rogerium Siciliae regem. - Regium titulum illi ab Honorio concessum confirmat. (Anno 1139, Juli 27); M. CARVALE, Alle origini di un mito: la dottrina giuridica della restaurazione e la monarchia normanna, in: *Id.* (ed.), *La monarchia meridionale. Istituzioni e dottrina giuridica dai Normanni ai Borboni*, (Collana Fonti e Studi del Centro europeo di studi normanni, 6), Roma/Bari 1998, 233-314; G. M. CANTARELLA, *La Sicilia e i Normanni. Le fonti del mito*, Bologna 1989, esp. 185; *Idem*, La fondazione della storia del regno normanno di Sicilia, in: *L’Europa dei secoli XI e XII fra novità e tradizione: sviluppi di una cultura*, Milano 1989, esp. 172; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 75; V. D’ALESSANDRO, Metodo comparativo e relativismo storiografico: il regno normanno di Sicilia, in: E. CUOZZO / J. M. MARTIN (ed.), *Cavalieri alla conquista del Sud. Studi sull’Italia normanna in memoria di Léon - Robert Ménager*, Roma 1998, 422-446; M. BORGOLTE, *op. cit.*, fn. 12, p. 195.

¹⁷ Ioannes Cinnamos, Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG, CD ROM E, University of California 1999), Epitome rerum ab Joanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum 98.15-98.16; Eustathius Thessalonicensis Archiepiscopus, TLG E, De capta

The symbolic language of regal authority, either actual or intended, was expressed in the coronation ritual¹⁹, in regal and private documents²⁰, in legislature (Assises)²¹, in the restoration and reconstruction of ecclesiastic administration²², in the foundation of a church center (foundation of the cathedral of Cephalus in the 7th of June 1131)²³, in the mosaic decoration of monuments²⁴, in purple sarcophagi²⁵, in seals and coins²⁶, in inscriptions²⁷ and in the works of the court's scholars²⁸.

Thessalonica 58.3-58.10; Nicetas Choniates, TLG E, Historia, Man. 62.7-Man. 62.8.

¹⁸ H. WIERUSZOWSKI, *op. cit.*, fn. 15, p. 53-64, esp. p. 62, fnt 58: Ottonis Frisigensis Chronica VII, 28 (p. 355), "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 uti contra Rogerium utriusque imperii invasorem, hec facta est confederatio."; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 4-5, fn. 8 and 9, p. 91.

¹⁹ R. ELZE, Tre Ordines per l'incoronazione di un re e di una regina del regno normanno di Sicilia, in: *Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi sulla Sicilia normanna* (Palermo 4-8 dicembre 1972), Palermo 1974, 438-459; *Idem*, Der Normannische Festkrönungssord aus Sizilien, in: E. CUOZZO / J. M. MARTIN (ed.), *op. cit.*, fn. 15, p. 315-327; T. DITTELBACH, *Rex imago Christi. Der Dom von Monreale, Bildsprachen und Zeremoniell in Mosaikkunst und Architektur*, Wiesbaden 2003, esp. 290- 294.

²⁰ S. CUSA (ed.), *I diplomi greci ed arabi di Sicilia*, 2 Bde, Köln/Wien ²1982; C. BRÜHL (ed.), Rogerii regis Diplomata latina, in *Codex diplomaticus regni Siciliane*, ser. 11. 11, 1, Köln/Wien 1987; *Idem* (ed.), Additamentum ad Rogerii II. Regis Diplomata latina, in: H. ENZENSBERGER (ed.), *Wilhelmi I. regis Diplomata latina*, (Codex Diplomaticus Regni Siciliae, ser. 11.11.2, Köln/Wien 1996) 133-155.

²¹ O. ZECCHINO, *Le Assise di Ruggero. I Problemi di storia delle fonti e di diritto penale*, Napoli 1980; *Idem*, Le Assise di Ariano, in: M. D'ONOFRIO (ed.), *I Normanni*, *op. cit.*, fn 4, p. 182-192.

²² H. ENZENSBERGER, Die lateinische Kirche und die Bistumsgründungen in Sizilien zu Beginn der normannischen Herrschaft, in: <http://www.medioevoitaliano.org/enzensberger.kirche.pdf>> (*Rassegna storica online*, 2, 2000).

²³ B. BRENN, La simbologia del potere, in: M. D'ONOFRIO (ed.), *op. cit.*, fn. 20, 193-197.

²⁴ V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, I rapporti, *op. cit.*, fn. 4, p. 355; *Depiction Comparison: The mosaic in Martorana, the coronation of Roger by Christ and respectively the coronation of Constantine Porphyrogenitus in ivory tablet*, Moscow. E. BORSOOK, Messages in Mosaic: The Royal Programmes of Norman Sicily (1130-1187), *Clarendon Studies in the History of Art* 3, Oxford 1990; Regarding Roger's purple sarcophagus, see J. DEER, *The Dynastic Porphyry Tombs of the Norman*

In this paper, we confine ourselves in the presentation and examination of the information relevant to our issue from Greek regal and private documents²⁹ of the period of the Norman rexes and from two speeches of Philagathus Cerameus. The importance of the two latter lies in the fact that the first speech was delivered in the presence of Roger II and his sons on Palm Sunday 1131 and the second on St Apostles' Day in 1143 on the occasion of the inauguration of Palatina, the chapel of the palace in Palermo in the absence of the rex of Sicily³⁰.

The Hautville's³¹ ideological and political conceptions and their Byzantine influence are evident in their documents in Greek³². We will study and analyze those elements that constitute, in our opinion, Byzantine influence or, in Giunta's apt expression, "*bizantinismo*"³³ as it appeared in the content of political and ideological self-awareness of both the Norman rexes of Sicily and their subjects.

Period in Sicily, (Engl. Transl.) Cambridge/Mass. 1959; P. DELOGU, Propaganda politica, in: M. D'ONOFRIO (ed.), *I Normanni*, *op. cit.*, fn. 4, p. 192; T. DITTELBAACH, *op. cit.*, fn. 19.

²⁵ J. DEER, *op. cit.*, fn. 24.

²⁶ P. GRIERSON / L. TRAVAINI, *Medieval European Coinage*, 14 Italy III (South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia). With a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 101-140; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 123-126.

²⁷ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 120.

²⁸ C. CUPANE, *op. cit.*, fn. 2; J. IRIGOIN, *op. cit.*, fn. 4.

²⁹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20; V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, I diplomi dei re normanni in lingua greca, in: G. DE GREGORIO / O. KRESTEN (ed.), *Documenti medievali greci e latini. Studi comparativi*, (Atti del seminario di Erice 23-29 ottobre 1995), Spoleto 1998, 275 f.

³⁰ G. ROSSI TAIBI (ed.), *Filagato da Cerami. Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno* vol. I, (Istituto Italiano di studi bizantini e neoellenici, Testi 11, Palermo 1969), p. 174-182; J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Theophanis Ceramei, Homilia XXVI, in: *Patrologia cursus completus, Series graecae*, vol. 132, col. 541-550; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 107-108, fnt 8; E. KITZINGER, The Date of Philagathos' Homily for the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, in: *Byzantino - Sicula* II (1975) 301-306.

³¹ More about the Hauteville see: *LexMA*, vol. 4, col. 1979.

³² It is estimated that 80% of Roger's II documents are in Greek, see H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 114. These documents have been published by Salvatore Cusa in 1868 and 1882 respectively, along with a series of Arabic documents (see footnote 16). Their already announced review remains however a desideratum. For more information see E. CASPAR, *op. cit.*, fn. 5, ³1999, p. 440.

³³ F. GIUNTA, *op. cit.*, fn. 1.

After having studied the documents in Greek published by Cusa we have discovered that three aspects of the documents are of particular significance to the matter in question: protocol, dating and signature. More specifically, regarding the matter in question, the information provided by the protocol and the signature as well as the type of date of both regal and private documents, are of particular interest.

In the protocol, we have discerned the elements relevant to the issue in question in two areas: the title (intitulation, *intitulatio*) and the foreword (*arenga*). The former refers to the official title of the Norman rexes, defines the quality of their authority and reveals the perception of their political self-awareness. It also expresses the legitimizing basis of their power. The title as an element of self-definition (*Selbstaussage*)³⁴ discloses its historical and political significance in the period it is used in. The signature on the regal documents is similarly considered an element of self-definition.

The foreword, in turn, refers to the regal idea, presents its ideological content and pertains to regal propaganda. It is interesting to explore the similarities with equivalent Byzantine expressions of the imperial idea in forewords³⁵.

The type of dating, of private documents mostly, also provides important information revealing the ideological and political perceptions of the Norman state's subjects as external definition (*Fremdaussage*).

The examples presented are typical of the Norman rexes' intitulation as it appears in Greek regal documents of the 12th-century Sicilian state.

In seven documents from the decade 1134-1144, Roger II is titled as "*Roger, in the name of Christ the lord, reverent mighty rex*"³⁶, in other four ranging from 1131 to 1151 "*Roger, in the name of Christ the lord, reverent mighty rex and sponsor of Christians*"³⁷. A compound title was only used in an 1144 document. Besides the main title, it contains an invocation (*invocatio*) and reference in the territories under Roger's power and goes

³⁴ H. WOLFRAM, *Intitulatio I. Lateinische Königs- und Fürstentitel bis zum Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts*, Graz/Wien/Köln 1967, esp. p. 9-11 and p. 22.

³⁵ H. HUNGER, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, (*Wiener Byzantinische Studien* 1), Wien 1964; H. FICHTENAU, *Arenga. Spätantike und Mittelalter im Spiegel von Urkundenformeln*, (*MIÖG*, Erg. Bd. 18), Graz/Köln 1957.

³⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 13 (1134), 20 (1144), 24 (1141), 115 (1136), 117(1140), 519 (1134), 525(1142).

³⁷ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 13 (1134), 20 (1144), 24 (1141), 115 (1136), 117(1140), 519 (1134), 525(1142).

like this: *"In the name of the father, of the son and of the holy spirit, Roger, in the name of Christ the lord reverent, mighty rex of Italy and duke of Pulia and prince of Capua"*³⁸.

The only Greek title of Roger's successor, William I, that is known is dated at 1155 and says: *"council summoned by me, william the most pious and great rex of Sicily Calabria Italy and Pulia"*³⁹. It is a compound title with a reference to William's territorial lordship.

The title of an 1171 document, from the period when the mother of William I was regent, denotes the regal quality of the power exercised by her on his behalf as well as his own: *"Margaret in the name of Christ the lord most reverent regina and mother of the mighty and holy rex"*⁴⁰.

Tancred, the last Norman ruler, also reveals the regal quality of his authority in an 1192 document by mentioning in its title: *"Tancred in name of Christ the lord reverent mighty rex"*⁴¹.

Thus we conclude that the Norman rulers of Sicily consider the quality of their authority to be regal which justifies the use of the term *ῥήξ* and all its derivatives in the title of their Greek documents. This term corresponds to the Latin *rex*⁴² that we see in the intitulation of all the Latin documents⁴³ of Norman regnum of Sicily.

The Hautvilles' perception that they were destined *"to rule and reign over all Christians of this island (Sicily) ... divine providence"*⁴⁴ was self-evident to Roger II whose court included distinguished scholars whose Greek education was not lacking in similar ideas. The origin of the Norman rex's authority was *"by God"*⁴⁵ and he practiced it as *"faithful in Christ"* or *"in the name of Christ the lord"*. Roger II himself believed to

³⁸ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 312 (1144).

³⁹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 360 (1155).

⁴⁰ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 422 (1171).

⁴¹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 338 (1192).

⁴² H. WOLFRAM, *op. cit.*, fn. 34, p. 32-56, especially p. 40.

⁴³ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 132-33.: "Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue"; C. BRÜHL, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, D Ro. II 16 (1131), 43 (1136).

⁴⁴ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 384 (1117). His father count Roger I shared the same ideas as is evident from a 1097 document in which it reads: *"ἐπειδήπερ ὡς ἔμοιγε ἄρτι ἅπαντα ἢ τῆς νήσου σικελίας (sic) διακράτησις Θεοῦ πρόνοια ὑπετάγη μοι"*.

⁴⁵ H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, 49-58.

have received his power from Christ⁴⁶. This view of authority was condensed by Roger II in a Latin document of July 1148 by declaring: "*Cum suae conditionis commemores altissimo Creatori, per quem reges regnant et imperant, et a cuius dextera munificenta liberali ea quae habent omnia, perceperunt*"⁴⁷.

The adoption and declaration of principles and values that constitute components of the Roman imperial idea, as components of regal authority, is also noteworthy. The concepts of care⁴⁸ and concern⁴⁹ for the subjects, of benefaction⁵⁰ and of charity also contributed to the formation of the perception and of the content of the quality of the Norman rex's authority, as is evident in several regal documents' foreword.

Roger II appears, in a series of forewords in documents of his, to explain actions and initiatives of his as a corollary of these constituent values and principles of his authority, as he magnanimously declared: "*because of this and motivated by divine charity from which all good things come manifested through our own grace, we decide and donate for the praise and glory of the bounteous God*"⁵¹.

⁴⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 292, (1131): "δόξαν καὶ αἶνον τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος ἡμῶν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ παρ' οὗ καὶ τό στέφος ἡλήφαμεν".

⁴⁷ C. BRÜHL, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, D Ro. IL 76, 218.1-2.

⁴⁸ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 515, (1133): "Καὶ πάντων μὲν ἐπακούειν ... τὰς ὁτίω προσεκτικῶ τῶν αἰτουμένων καὶ τὰς αἰτήσεις αὐτῶν μάλα προαιρέσει ἐκπληροῦν προσήκον ἐστὶ καὶ λίαν ἀρμόδιον. Ἐπειδὴ γάρ καθό δυνατόν ἀνθρώποις οὗτοι μιμοῦνται θεόν καὶ πολλοὺς ἐπίσπωνται καὶ ἐφείλκονται τῶν ὑπηκόων εἰς εὐνοίαν, μάλιστα δέ τοῦτο τοῦτους ποιεῖν χάριν ἔαν ὁ αἰτούμενος οὗ τῶν πολλῶν ἐστὶν εἰς τουτωνί φημί τῶν ταῖς βιωτικαῖς περισπωμένων φροντίσι καὶ τῇ πεδῇ τῶν ἀνηνύτων πραγμάτων ἑαυτοὺς περιδεσμάντων, ἀλλὰ πάντῃ τῆς κοσμικῆς τύρβης ἀποσπασθεὶς καὶ ὁδὸς τῷ θεῷ καθιερωθεὶς...".

p. 517, (1134): "Εἰ τὸ πάντων ἄλλων τὰς αἰτήσεις πρὸς τέλος ἀγειν λίαν ἐνικαλὸν ἀλλὰ γε τῶν κατὰ θεόν πεπολιτευμένον πολὺ μᾶλλον ἐστὶ καλλιώτερον, τουτῶ τοι καὶ τό κράτος ἡμῶν...κελεύει". p. 525, (1142): "τό δέ κράτος μου εἰς εὐήκοον ὑμῖν υποκλῖναι".

⁴⁹ H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 94 -100.

⁵⁰ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 536, (1143): "τό κράτος τῆς ἐμοῖς γαληνότητος τὰς εὐεργεσίας ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ὑποκόης (sic) χαρίζεται"; "ἤθει συνήθει εὐεργεσίαις ἡμῖν θεῖω δώρῳ δεδομέναις αἰεὶ πλουτίζειν ἅμα καὶ προικίζειν διηγάγωμεν".

⁵¹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. "Ἐνθεντοι καὶ τῇ θείᾳ κινούμενοι εὐσπλαχνεῖα δι' ἧς πᾶν ἀγαθὸν ἐκπορεύεται ἐκ τῆς ἡμετέρας εἰδικῆς χάριτος εἰς ἐπαινον καὶ δόξαν τοῦ μεγαλοδώρου θεοῦ.... στέργομεν καὶ δωρούμεθα".

The particular regal care for the maintenance of temples, for the clergy, the convents and the monks⁵², is apparent in a series of examples in document forewords.

Also in a document foreword, dated from 1145, Roger II appears to restore things in the spirit of justice by reestablishing and ensuring the previous status of prerogatives for church institutions as well as his subjects⁵³.

William II also appears to embrace the principles of charity in an 1155 document foreword of his. He emphasized himself his concern for the clergy and particularly the hermit monks. Furthermore, he did not omit to declare that this activity of his was a reversionary result of his authority's divine origin⁵⁴.

The Norman rex's of Sicily identification with the sun is yet another element of the eastern Roman imperial idea encountered quite early in document forewords of the former. The first relative reference in a document of Roger's II donation to the convent of St Bartholomew is dated from 1097, a time he was still the count of Sicily. The second known occasion is found in the foreword of a donation document of Roger's to the same convent in 1143. The two documents are identical, so the second is

⁵² S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 387, (1097): "Τό τῶν θείων ἐκκλησιῶν φροντίζειν καί χεῖρα βοηθείας ὠρέγειν αὐτοῖς ἀξίον ἐστί καί μᾶλλον φιλόανθρωπον". *Idem*, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, p. 24, (1141): "Ἀξίον ὄντως ἐστί καί λίαν θεῶ εὐαπόδεκτον τοῦ ἕως τῷ βίῳ τούτῳ διάγειν ἡμᾶς περὶ τῶν θείων καί ἱερῶν ναῶν ὅση δύναμις ἐξεργεῖται καί φροντίδα". *Idem*, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, p. 20, (1144): "θεῖοις ἐλευθερικοῖς δώροις περισσῶς ἡμῖν δεδομένοις, τότε μεγίστως ἀποκρινόμεθα, ὅτε τοὺς σεβάσμιους τοῦ θεοῦ δόμους ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πλουτοῦντες πλουτίζομεν, ἀξιοζήτοιοι ἀξιοζήτοιοι, σκεπτόμενοι καί ὑψοῦμενοι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τῇ ὑψηλότητι (sic) δοῦναι ἐπιτείνομεν".

⁵³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 26, (1145): "Ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ἐπιβλέψει διαφέρει πάσας τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἐπαναγαγεῖν ἐπὶ τό κρεῖττον καί τό δὴ πλεῖον τὰ τῶν θείων ναῶν διαφερόμενα μετὰ προθυμίας ἐπισφραλίσαι καί ἐπὶ τό πλεῖστον ἐνδυναμῶσαι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ εἰρηνικῇ καταστάσει, ἐνθὲν τοι καί κελεύωμεν ἵνα ταῦτα τὰ σιγίλλια τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν καί τῶν λοιπῶν πιστῶν τοῦ κράτους μου ἀνανεῶσαι καί ἐπιδεῖξαι εἰς ἐμφάνειαν καί ἵνα ἔσονται ἀσφαλισμένα ὑπὸ τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ ὑψηλωτάτου (sic) κράτους μου"; H. HUNGER, fn. 35, p. 103-122.

⁵⁴ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 360-1, (1155): "Ἐπειδὴ τό φιλόθεον καί θεώρεστον (sic) κράτος μου τὰς θεαυγεῖς ἀκτῖνας τῆς εὐποιείας φαίδρυνόμενος καί ψυχικάς φροντίδας νυκτὶ τε καί ἡμέρᾳ ἀσχολούμενος καί ἀγαζόμενος καί ἀκλινεῖ τῷ ὄμματι τὰς τῶν ἁγίων ἐκκλησιῶν ὑστερίσεις (sic) ὑποβλεπόμενος οὐ μόνον λαϊκοῖς τοῖς ἁγαν ἐπιτινομένοις τοῖς δέουσιν ἀλλὰ καί τοῖς μοναδικοῖς καί ἐν λόφοις ἐγκυρπτομένοις ἀμβρόνυσθαι".

considered a copy of the first⁵⁵. Fichtenau⁵⁶ had also detected similar expressions in document forewords of the Norman ruler in Latin. He had pointed out the increasing popularity and use of this expressive mode in the 12th century in Byzantium as well as the West and had attributed in the general popularity of the theory about the metaphysics of light in that period. It is believed that the Greek-speaking members of the Sicilian chancellorship⁵⁷ of the Norman court used this verbal motif in order to carry on Byzantine tradition on one hand and to express the new political structure it sought to establish and perpetuate, on the symbolic and pragmatic level, on the other.

We have mentioned before that Roger II uses the phrase "χριστιανῶν βοηθός"⁵⁸ (sponsor of Christians), in the title of four documents during 1131-1151. It should be noted that this addition to the regal title of Roger II is only found in those documents regarding donations to convents and clergy. The concept of *defensor ecclesiae*⁵⁹ was a common in the imperial idea of both the eastern and the western Roman states and received great attention in the West in the 12th century in the context of the crusade. It also reflects the Norman ruler's pragmatic interest on the reconstruction of ecclesiastic administration in the Norman regnum of Sicily⁶⁰.

A series of attributive definitions also belong to the self-defining characteristics of the Norman ruler of the Sicilian regnum and of his authority.

⁵⁵ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 509, (1097); 536, (1143): "Ὡσπερ αἱ τοῦ ἡλίου μαρμαρυγαί εἰς πάντα κόσμον διὰ τῶν ἀκτινῶν ὑπερχεωμέναι τό φῶς ποταμῶν ἀναβλάζουσιν, οὕτω καί τό κράτος τῆς ἐμοῦ γαληνότητος τάς εὐεργεσίας ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ὑποκόχῃς (sic) χαρίζεται".

⁵⁶ H. FICHTEAU, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 36, Nr 30. Roger II (1143): "sicut radius solis totum mundum illuminat, tamquam flumen implens locum sui cursus, ita potestas meae serenitatis gratias omnibus subditis donat"; See also: G. LADNER, in: *MIÖG* Erg. Bd. 12 (1933) p. 145; H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 78.

⁵⁷ H. ENZENSBERGER, *Cancelleria e documentazione sotto Ruggero I di Sicilia, in: Ruggero il Gran Conte et l'inizio dello stato normanno*, (Atti delle seconde giornate normanno-sveve: Bari, 19-21 maggio (1975) 45-23 Roma 1977 (ristampa, Bari 1991).

⁵⁸ See fn. 34; H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 123-130; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 132.

⁵⁹ See entry in *LexMA*, vol. 3, col. 632-634, along with the bibliography.

⁶⁰ H. ENZENSBERGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 21, p. 1.

The following are used particularly often: “τό γαλήνιον κράτος μου”⁶¹ (my serene state), “τό γαληνώτατον κράτος μου”⁶² (my most serene state), “ή ήμετέρα γαληνιώτης”⁶³ (our serenity), “μέγας ρήξ”⁶⁴ (grand rex), “κραταιός ρήξ”⁶⁵ (mighty rex), “εὐσεβής”⁶⁶ (reverent/faithful), “τό θεόστεπτο κράτος μου”⁶⁷ (my divinely crowned state), “τό θεοφρούριτον (sic) κράτος μου”⁶⁸ (my divinely protected state), “ἐνδοξος ρήξ”⁶⁹ (glorious rex), “ή ήμῶν μεγαλιώτης”⁷⁰ (sic) (our majesty), “ή ήμετέρα ἐνδοξότης”⁷¹ (our gloriousness), “ή ήμῶν ὑψηλότης”⁷² (our highness).

The city of Palermo, the seat of regal power, was called by Roger II as “μεγαλόπολις Πανόρμου”⁷³ (the grand city of Panormus). He called the public boulevard “βασιλική ὁδός”⁷⁴ (imperial street).

It is obvious from these examples that the use of specific phrases and terms in the documents of the Norman rulers directly refers to expressive means of the eastern Roman imperial idea. Their adoption and use by the Sicilian chancellorship and the Norman rex contributed decisively to the construction and the declaration of his political self-awareness and of his claims.

The propagation and acceptance of these views by the subjects of the Norman state are reflected in Greek private documents from the Norman regnum of Sicily, among other things. It can be supported through the

⁶¹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 536, 537, (1143); p. 27, (1145); p. 130, (1151). H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 71, 74, 99, 136, 158, 162. G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9, p. 51.

⁶² S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 526, (1142). G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9 p. 140, 152.

⁶³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 292, (1131). G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9 p. 51.

⁶⁴ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 536, (1143); p. 537, (1143). G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9 p. 156.

⁶⁵ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 346, (1134).

⁶⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 346, (1134); H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 30, 66, 71, 127, 153.

⁶⁷ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 525, (1142). G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9 p. 67, 140.

⁶⁸ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 526, (1142).

⁶⁹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 345, (1134). G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9 p. 44, 52, 128, 167-170.

⁷⁰ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 294, (1131).

⁷¹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 348-439, (1192).

⁷² S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 439, (1192).

⁷³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 536.

⁷⁴ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 537.

study of the relevant material that the Norman ruler is a "ρήξ"⁷⁵ (rex) to his subjects and that the quality of his authority is recognized as "ρήγικη"⁷⁶ (regal). However, a tendency to imitate Byzantium verbally can be detected in the private documents as well. The purpose was mostly to promote and project the newly founded regnum and hence to reinforce and acknowledge the prevalence of Norman authority. Roger II, as his successors, is defined as: "εὐσεβέστατος"⁷⁷ (most reverent), "ἅγιος" (holy), "κραταῖος" (mighty), "ἀθέντης" (master), "δεσπότης"⁷⁸ (ruler), "θεόστεπτος" (crowned by God), "μακαριώτατος" (most blessed), "ὑψιλότατος" (sic) (highness), "μεγάλος" (great), "μεγαλοπρεπέστατος" (most majestic), "κύριος"⁷⁹ (lord), "ὀρθόδοξος" (orthodox). The sons of Roger II were called: "πανευτυχέστατοι" (most happy), "ἀνδρειώτατοι" (most gallant), "βασιλικότατοι"⁸⁰ (most imperial). The authority of the Sicilian monarch is characterized as "θεόστεπτος ρήγικη ἐξουσία" (divinely crowned regal authority), "θεόστεπτος κραταιά ἐξουσία" (divinely crowned power), "θεοστήρικτη δεσποτία (sic) τοῦ ρήγικου κράτους" (divinely supported rule of the regal state)⁸¹. His court is named "θεοφιλέστατη, μεγάλη καὶ κραταιὰ κούρτη" (dear to God, great and mighty court), "θεοφρούρητος καὶ μεγάλη κούρτη" (great court protected by God), "θεοφύλακτος κόρτη" (divinely guarded court), "ὑψιλότατη (sic) κούρτη" (high court), "κραταιὰ κόρτη" (mighty court)⁸². The rex's palace is the "θεοστήρικτο παλάτιον" (divinely supported palace) and the "μεγάλο παλάτιον"⁸³ (great palace). The metropolitan dioceses of Palermo and Messina are referred to as "μεγάλη καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία Πανόρμου" (great catholic church of Panormus) and "μεγάλη ἐκκλησία Μεσσήνης" (great church of Messina) respectively⁸⁴. The treasury department of the regnum was mentioned repeatedly as "βασιλικὸ σακέλλιον"⁸⁵ (imperial sakelion)

⁷⁵ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, p. 422,

⁷⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 16, 17 (1141).

⁷⁷ G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9, p. 42, 94, 137-140, 145-148, 152.

⁷⁸ G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9, p. 39, 94, 104, 114, 132, 135, 144, 148, 153.

⁷⁹ G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9, p. 39, 102, 152, 114.

⁸⁰ G. RÖSCH, *op. cit.*, fn. 9, p. 44.

⁸¹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, p. 17, 19 and 16 respectively.

⁸² S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 362, 363, 424, 363, 422 respectively.

⁸³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 16 and p. 321 respectively.

⁸⁴ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 48 and p. 302 respectively.

⁸⁵ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 331, 336, 340, 350, 364, 374.

and once as “δεσποτικόν σακέλλιον” (despotic sakellion) and “αὐθεντικόν σαγκέλιον”⁸⁶ (master’s sagelion). The rex’s vestuary was called “ῥηγικόν σανδούκιον” (regal chest) and “βασιλικόν βέστιον”⁸⁷ (imperial vestuary). In a document of the period 1130-1140 the public boulevard was called “βασιλικός δρόμος”⁸⁸ (imperial road). In the same document the external definition “βασίλεια” [*basileia* (reign)] is encountered for the first time as a designation of the Norman rex’s authority quality.

The first use of the term regarded the period during which power in the county of Sicily and Calabria was exercised by Roger’s II mother, after the death of his father: “... *your holy, mistress, mother ... in the time of her reign...*”⁸⁹. The second reference of the term in the same documents regarded the period after Roger II was promoted to rex: “*if you want to punish him for his errors and the disobedience he has shown to your holy reign...*”⁹⁰. As far as the characterization of Roger’s mother Adelacia as “*regina*” is concerned Elze has provided a satisfactory explanation⁹¹. However, it is believed that this double use of the term *basileia* is not a mere attempt to express a plea to the rex for the regulation of the issue at hand in flattering manner, but mostly aimed at the acknowledgement of Roger’s absolute authority in the newly founded Sicilian state. Roger, by recourse of the quality of his regal authority to his mother had created the legitimizing basis for his own claims in that difficult period (1130-1140), during which he was struggling to establish his power.

In a document of a donation to the cathedral of the archdiocese of Palermo in 1144, Roger distinctively mentions that it was in that cathedral that he received his *imperial diadem*⁹².

The term *basileia*, encountered in the date of the documents, was used throughout the period of the Norman rulers⁹³. It should be noted here that

⁸⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 354 and p. 370 respectively.

⁸⁷ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 19 and p. 73 respectively.

⁸⁸ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 533.

⁸⁹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 534.

⁹⁰ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 535.

⁹¹ R. ELZE, Zum Königtum Rogers II. von Sizilien, (*Festschrift P. Schramm zu seinem siebzigsten Geburtstag v. Schülern u. Freunden zugeeignet*, Bd. I), Wiesbaden 1964, p. 103. Roger’s mother Adelacia was married to rex Baldwin I of Jerusalem and henceforth bore until her death (16.04.1118) the title of regina.

⁹² S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 20, (1144): “τὴν ἁγίαν οὖν ἐκκλησίαν Πανόρμου, ..., πῇ μὲν ὅτι καὶ βασιλικοῦ (sic) διαδήματος ἡμῶν τάς ἀπαρχὰς ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτῆς ἐλάβαμεν”.

this type of dating, *during the most reverent reign*, in the Greek documents is equivalent to the type *imperante Rogerio* of the Latin documents, already in use as early as October 1116, when Roger II was still a count⁹⁴. The same is true for the adjective "βασιλικός" [*basilikos* (imperial)] and its derivatives, extensively employed to describe the state treasury and other public institutions⁹⁵.

Ioannes Cinnamos, a historian and imperial secretary of emperor Manuel I Comnenus, recorded that the negotiations over the marriage of Roger's son to a Byzantine princess were interrupted in 1143-1145, because Roger sought the recognition of his authority as imperial, "*so that from now on Roger would be equal in greatness to the emperor*"⁹⁶. This stereotype report would be used by Byzantine historians of the 12th century to interpret the behavior of the Norman rulers and consequently their relations with the eastern Roman state⁹⁷. Based on the above, this claim is

⁹³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, - p. "ἦτις ἐγράφη ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβέστατης βασιλείας τοῦ κραταιοῦ ῥηγός ῥογερίου, βασιλεύοντα (sic) καὶ τόν εὐσεβῆ αὐτοῦ υἱόν ἀγουλιάλμον (sic) ῥήγα".

- p. 336, "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβοῦς βασιλείας τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ μεγάλου ῥηγός γουλιέλμου τοῦ δευτέρου".

- p. 338, "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβοῦς βασιλείας τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου μεγάλου ῥηγός γουλιέλμου καὶ αὐθεντός (sic) ἡμῶν".

- p. 49, 110, (1190), "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβέστατης βασιλείας (sic) τοῦ κραταιοῦ ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ πανμεγάλου ῥηγός" (Γουλιέλμος Β').

- p. 75, "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβέστατης βασιλείας τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν δεσπότη γουλιάλμου μεγάλου ῥηγός καὶ μαργαρίτης μητρος αὐτοῦ καὶ εὐσεβέστατης ῥηγίνης καὶ κυρίας ἡμῶν".

- p. 77, 79, 108, "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβέστατης βασιλείας τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν δεσπότη γουλιάλμου μεγάλου ῥηγός".

- p. 635 (1192), "Ἐπὶ τῆς εὐσεβοῦς βασιλείας τανκρέδου θεωσπεύτου (sic) ῥηγός καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου".

⁹⁴ C. BRÜHL, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, D Ro. IL 4, 13.4.

⁹⁵ *Βασιλικόν σακέλλιον*, see S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p.: 331, 336, 340, 350, 364, 374; C. BRÜHL, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, D Ro. II, 11, 31.25: "*regio fisco*"; H. HOUBEN, La predicazione, in: G. MUSCA / V. SIVO (ed.), *Strumenti, tempi e luoghi di comunicazione nel Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo*, (Atti delle undecime giornate normanno-sveve, Bari 26-29 ottobre 1993), Bari 1995, 253-273, esp. 266-8.

⁹⁶ Ioannes Cinnamos, *op. cit.*, fn. 17, p. 91.16-92.10; S. CARUSO, La Sicilia nelle fonti storiografiche bizantine (secc. XI-XII), in: *Bizantinistica* (2000) 281-335, esp. 309.

⁹⁷ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 91; Σ. ΛΑΜΠΙΑΚΗΣ, Ο Ευστάθιος Θεσσαλονίκης και ο "σικελός ῥήξ". Comments on the attitude of Eustathius towards the Norman

considered to be exaggerated as an interpretation of the Norman rulers' policy toward the eastern Roman state and for the major part addressed, in our view, domestic political affairs in the Norman regnum of Sicily; this view is further supported by the following facts.

It is true that the terms *basileus*, *basileia* and the adjective *basilikos* (imperial) appear quite frequently during the period in which Roger II exercised his power. The question is what constitutes their particular content and whether the Norman rex claims imperial quality of a *basileus* for himself through their use. Based on the data exhibited so far, we feel that this is not validated by the sources. The relevant references demonstrate an understanding of regal authority and quality similar to the ideas of 12th-century western European regna and their scholars, who contested the prominence and claims of the western emperor. The Norman Sicilian court had intimate contact with the Frankish⁹⁸, the Norman Anglo-Saxon⁹⁹ and the Iberian¹⁰⁰ regna and shared the relative ideas. As early as 1072 rex Francorum Philip I noted on that subject: "*Pater vero meus, videlicet rex Henricus, qui post eum (avus noster Robertus rex) Gallie rexit imperium*"¹⁰¹. The unknown author, in Chronicon S. Benigni Divionensis wrote that emperor Charles the great *rexit* (ruled) regnum Francorum and after him the imperium was exercised by Luis. His son Luis the Pious was in power (*adeptus sedem imperii*) in the regnum Francorum for twenty years¹⁰². These sources, among others, support that the term *imperium*, to

Roger II, in: *Βυζαντινός Λόγος* 2 (1988), 183-186; S. CARUSO, *op. cit.*, fn. 96, esp. 307-335

⁹⁸ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, regarding the political relationships *see* p. 91-103.

⁹⁹ C. H. HASKINS, England and Sicily in the Twelfth Century I, in: *The English Historical Review* 26.103 (1911) 433-447; *Idem*, England and Sicily in the Twelfth Century II, in: *The English Historical Review* 26.104 (1911) 641-665; E. JAMISON, Alliance of England and Sicily in the second half of the 12th Century, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943) 20-32; A. MARONGIU, I due regni normanni d'Inghilterra e d'Italia, in: *Settimane di Studio* 16 (1969) 497-552.

¹⁰⁰ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 37.

¹⁰¹ J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Philippus I Franciae, Diplomata, *PL* vol. 159, col. 841: (Anno 1072) I. Sigilli Philippi regis de Sancto Germano. - Ad augmentum foundationis cellae S. Germani in Laia nova concedit praedia.

¹⁰² J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Anonymus, Chronicon S. Benigni Divionensis, *PL* vol. 162, col. 797: "Sub hoc conditorio situm est corpus Caroli Magni atque orthodoxi imperatoris; qui regnum Francorum nobili ter ampliavit, et per annos quadraginta septem feliciter rexit. Imperium Ludovicus prudenter administrat. Dividit inter filios. - Post cujus excessum Ludovicus, cognomento Pius, adeptus sedem imperii,

which to the Greek term *basileia* is equivalent, was being used during the 11th and 12th century in the Frankish domain in the more general sense of power¹⁰³ on one hand, and as is evident in the intitulation of the Capeting kings, to declare the dominion of the Frankish rex in places outside the boundaries of regnum Franciae¹⁰⁴, on the other.

Also, Kantorowicz¹⁰⁵ argued that the inscription "*Christus vincit, Christus regant, Christus imperat*" on the coins of the 12th-century Sicilian-Norman regnum stated that Christ simultaneously exercises regal "*regnat*" and imperial "*imperat*" authority. He is rex and emperor "*imperator*" at the same time. This formulation identifying the content of these two terms coincides with Roger's II view that "*reges regnat et imperat*"¹⁰⁶. This formulation allowed the Norman rex to expand the content of his regal authority and served as well the propagation of the regal idea, as he and his chancellorship understood it, among his subjects. It should be emphasized that a significant part of his subjects were not only Greek-speaking but also bearers of Byzantine political ideas. Several of the officials in the regal chancellorship, coming from that part of the population, played a pivotal role in the propagation and adoption of Byzantine verbal modes for the declaration of the ideological and political self-

magno moderamine per annos viginti quinque Francorum regnum disposuit. Et fines regni quos pater ejus pugnando longe late que dilatavit, hic sapienter praevidendo undique ab hostibus custodivit".

¹⁰³ J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Bernardus Claraevallensis, *PL* vol. 186, col. 1347 EPISTOLA I.: ABBATIS CLARAEVALLENSIS AD PAPAM EUGENIUM. De laude domini Sugerii abbatis.: "Si quod magnae domus magni Regis vas in honorem apud nostram habetur Ecclesiam Gallicanam; si quis ut David fidelis ad Imperium Domini ingrediens et egrediens"; *Idem* (ed.), Ordericus Vitalis, Historia ecclesiastica, *PL* vol. 188, col. 88: "Constantinopolitanus imperator Romanum Imperium rexit", col. 170: "Christianissimus rex Eglippus, expleta senectute, perrexit ad Dominum, et Hyrtacus Adelphus accepit ejus Imperium", col. 301: "Susceptum itaque Imperium Guillelmus rex in adversis et prosperis strenue utiliterque rexit".

¹⁰⁴ B. SCHNEIDMÜLLER, Herrscher über Land oder Leute? Der kapetingische Herrschertitel in der Zeit Philipps II. August und seiner Nachfolger (1180-1270), in: H. WOLFRAM / A. SCHARER (ed.), *Intitulatio III. Lateinische Herrschertitel und Herrschertitulaturen vom 7. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert*, p. 131-162. K. LOHRMANN, Die Titel der Kapetinger bis zum Tod Ludwigs VII, in: H. WOLFRAM / A. SCHARER (ed.), *Intitulatio III*, p. 218-220.

¹⁰⁵ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *Laudes regiae. A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1946, p. 8-10.

¹⁰⁶ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, fn. 105, p. 47.

awareness of Norman regal power. It becomes apparent that the combination of the above ideological and political realities manifested itself in the construction of the regal idea in the 12th-century Norman-Sicilian state. These 12th-century political perceptions were to be condensed a century later by Marinus da Caramanica to the known phrase "*rex est imperator in regno suo*"¹⁰⁷.

So, we believe that the use of the terms *basileus* and *basileia* by the Norman rulers of Sicily signifies nothing more than their conviction and awareness that their authority was absolute and dominant within the boundaries of their regnum¹⁰⁸. Roger II was only once called indirectly *basileus* in an 1136 donation document: "*As the builder building a house, does not only use great corner stones to its construction, but when is necessary also uses tiny mortar. So does a benign basileus benefiting his subjects and building this or that, maxes not only great donations, but also takes care of them with small ones*"¹⁰⁹. Reading this passage clearly illustrates the figurative use of the term. Roger II was self-defined as *rex*, both in the title and the signature of same document.

The term *basileus*, as an external definition, is used by Philagathus Cerameus¹¹⁰ in a speech of his in the palace chapel on the occasion of St Apostles Day. In the relative passage, he summarizes, we could say, the idea about the origin and the content of Roger's II regal authority as is presented in the documents examined¹¹¹. In another speech on a Palm Sun-

¹⁰⁷ F. CALASSO, *I glossatori e la teoria della sovranità*, Milano 1957; R. ELZE, *Zum Königtum Rogers II. von Sizilien, (Festschrift P. Schramm zu seinem siebzigsten Geburtstag v. Schülern u. Freunden zugeeignet, Bd. I)*, Wiebaden 1964, S. 102-115, see p. 113; T. DITTELBACH, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, *Rex*, p. 299-303.

¹⁰⁸ This view had also been supported earlier by ELZE, *op. cit.*, fn. 89, p. 112; Already in the early medieval period the protocol of the eastern Roman state was imitated in the Anglo-Saxon court to the point that the Anglo-Saxon *rex* self-proclaimed himself *basileus* without of course making claims on the content of his title outside his domain. It could be argued that this imitation tendency was not confined to the early period. See F. GIUNTA, *op. cit.*, fn. 1, p. 16.

¹⁰⁹ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 115. 1136.

¹¹⁰ C. CUPANE, *op. cit.*, fn. 2, p. 4.

¹¹¹ G. ROSSI TAIBI, *op. cit.*, fn. 30, *Filagato*, p. 174: The philosopher and teacher characteristically said: "Συνήδομαί σοι, πόλις, καί σοί, θεῖε τῶν ἀνακτόρων ναέ, πάσης ἐπὶ σε σήμερον ἡλικίας χυθείσης, καί τῶν ὅσοι τήν τύχην ἐπίδοξοι, ἱερέων τε τοσούτων τήν παροῦσαν ἡμῖν ἐπικοσμούντων πανήγυριν. Τούτων δέ πάντων αἴτιος τὰ μέν πρῶτα Θεός, παρ'ὃν πᾶν ὅ,τι χρηστόν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προήλθε καί γίνεται, δεύτερον βασιλεὺς εὐσεβής, σωτήρ, εὐμενής, ὅτε τοὺς ὑπηκόους ὀρά. Τοῖς γάρ πολέμοις τὸν θυμὸν ταμιεύεται. Ὅς δὴ πολλῶν καί μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν

day¹¹², in the presence of Roger II, Philagathus characterizes the celebration as imperial, addresses Roger as *basileus* and characterizes him as the "*Christ-like serenity of your state*"¹¹³.

All these references of the term *basileus* are dated between 1136 and 1148¹¹⁴.

The Norman rex is "θεοστεφής" (crowned by God)¹¹⁵, "χριστομιμητής" (Christ-like) and "φιλόχριστος"¹¹⁶ (loves Christ) as is the Byzantine emperor. Furthermore, his identification with the sun¹¹⁷, the constant recall of his virtues as benefactor of his subjects and as sponsor of Christians, compose and complement the ideological and political instrumentarium of the newly founded regal power in the south of Italy. Its goal is, on one hand, to become embedded in a multicultural¹¹⁸ state with different local admin-

γενόμενος ἡμῖν παροχέυς, εὐσέβεια τε καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνη πάντας νικῆσας τοὺς νῦν καὶ τοὺς ἔμπροσθεν, ὅσον τὰς τῶν ἀστέρων ἀγλαΐας τὰ ἡλιακὰ σελαγίσματα, ἔν καὶ τοῦτο προσέθηκε γινώρισμα τῆς ἐκείνου βασιλικῆς ὄντως καὶ μεγάλης ψυχῆς, τὸν τερπνότατον τοῦτον τῶν κηρύκων ναόν..." and concludes p. 182: "εὐχόμενοι ἐν πολλαῖς περιόδοις τὸ κράτος διαφυλάττεσθαι τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς βασιλέως ἡμῶν. Ὅς, εὐσέβεια τῆς ἀρχῆς ἰθύνων τοὺς οἰακάς καὶ λόγοις κοσμῶν τὸ διάδημα καὶ χρηστότητι τρόπων κοσμούμενος, ἐξ ἀρετῆς γνήσιον ἔχει τὸν ἔπαινον. Τούτῳ τὰ σκήπτρα διατηρήσοι ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ γαληνότητι ὁ δούς αὐτῷ τὸ κράτος Χριστός.....".

¹¹² J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), Theophanes Cerameus, Ομιλῖαι, PG vol. 132, col. 541 καὶ 549: "λαμπρὰ τῆς πανηγύρεως ἡ συνάθροισις, οἷα τῖνα κόσμον ἄλλον συνάγουσα τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως προέλευσιν..." and describes the celebration as "θεία τε καὶ βασιλική". He justified his second characterization as follows: "Οἷς δὲ ποικίλως αὐτὴν ὁ εὐσεβὴς βασιλεὺς κατεκόσμησε τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ, τῇ τῶν ἀρχιερέων ἐνδημίᾳ, τῇ τοῦ κλήρου ὕμνωδίᾳ, τῇ παμπληθεί δημαγωγίᾳ, βασιλική ἐστὶν ἡ πανήγυρις". Addressing Roger II he said: "ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν σὰς ἀρετάς, ὦ βασιλεῦ, καὶ τὰς νίκας τὰς ἐκ Θεοῦ, καὶ τὰς ἀριστείας, καὶ τὰ τρόπαια ἄλλος καιρὸς καὶ συγγραφαὶ διηγῆσαντο καὶ διηγῆσονται. Καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα τὸ τὰ σὰ διηγῆσθαι, ταυτὸν ἐστὶ μετρεῖν κοτύλῃ τὴν θάλασσαν".

¹¹³ J.-P. MIGNE (ed.), *op. cit.*, fn. 112, Ομιλῖαι, PG vol. 132, col. 541.

¹¹⁴ On the contrary the term *basileia* encountered in the dating of the documents was used in the Greek ones throughout the whole period of the Norman rulers.

¹¹⁵ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 345, 362.

¹¹⁶ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 345.

¹¹⁷ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 509, (1097); 536, (1143).

¹¹⁸ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 149; W. TRONZO, *The Cultures of His Kingdom: Roger II and the Capella Palatina in Palermo*, Princeton N.J., 1997; J. H. DRELL, Cultural Syncretism and Ethnic Identity; The Norman Conquest of Southern Italy and Sicily, in: *Journal of Medieval History* 25 (1999) 187-202.

istrative traditions (feudal, Byzantine and Arabic from north to south) and on the other to declare its political self-awareness to the international community of the time. The unifying eastern Roman imperial idea manifested in the person of the emperor as “living law”¹¹⁹ was the best model. The Norman rex, “δίκαιος” (just), “εἰρηνικός” (peaceful), “χριστομιμητής”¹²⁰ (Christ-like) and “σκηπτροκράτωρ”¹²¹ (scepter-bearer) imitates the *basileus*. This *basileus*, however, is Christ, from whom he considered to have drawn his power. The same is also believed beyond doubt by the Roman emperor of Byzantium, who claims lordship over the Christian ecumene¹²². The difference between the two is that the Norman rex was interested in establishing his authority in a specific and finite geographical area. Roger II, by default, had set as priority his own domain, the territory in which he exercised power and not the world as a whole¹²³. His interest in it is indirect and is expressed by his support to monks and the clergy who prayed for peace on it, among other things.

It becomes evident from the above, that particularly Roger II, assisted by the Greek-speaking members of this chancellorship, used expressive elements of the Byzantine imperial idea that validated and cemented his belief that he was *rex imago Christi*¹²⁴ and master within the boundaries of his domain where he could act as a rex “in the image of Christ”. We consider precisely this to be the ideological and political imitation of the Byzantine *basileus*. Roger’s claims concern a particular political and geo-

¹¹⁹ H. FICHTENAU, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 23: “Der Herrscher war die lex animata, aber er beschränkte sich nicht darauf, das Gesetz zu verkünden und auszulegen”; H. HUNGER, *op. cit.*, fn. 35, p. 117-122.

¹²⁰ Theophanes Cerameus, *op. cit.*, fn. 112.

¹²¹ H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 130. He mentions the inscription on the depiction of Christ in the palace chapel in Palermo where Roger is described as “ῥήξ σκηπτροκράτωρ”.

¹²² T. LOUNGHS, *He ideologia tes byzantines historiographias*, Athens 1993, esp. p. 99 f; *Idem*, Die byzantinische Ideologie der “begrenzten Ökumene” und die römische Frage im ausgehenden 10. Jahrhundert, in: (Stephanos. *Studia byzantina ac slavica Vladimiro Vavrinek ad annum sexagesimum quindum dedicata Byzantinoslavica* 56 (1995) 117-128.

¹²³ S. CUSA, *op. cit.*, fn. 20, p. 24: “ἵνα διὰ τῶν θεοφίλως βιούντων ἐν τούτοις τάς εὐχάς εἰς σύστασιν καί εἰρήνιν (sic) περικρατεῖται ἢ ὑφίλιος (sic) ἅπασα καὶ τό ἡμέτερον κράτος”.

¹²⁴ T. DITTELBACH, *op. cit.*, fn. 19, Rex, p. 296-299.

graphical area, in contrast with the emperor's of the 12th-century eastern Roman state, which concern a christian Roman ecumene¹²⁵.

The fact aforementioned, that there was a complex ethnic and political reality¹²⁶ in the Norman state of Sicily, should also be taken into account. Roger II, through his Greek documents, addresses former Byzantine subjects. The authors of these texts either were Byzantines from southern Italy or had a Greek education. It was reasonable for both sides to seek their mutual legitimization in the political reality that was being formed. The establishment of ideological coherence to serve as a binding element of this reality was certainly one of the first concerns of Norman power in southern Italy. Those with a Greek education in the Sicilian Norman court served the need of approaching the Roman-bred subjects (clergy, monks, scholars) that constituted a significant factor. This is what the political terminology examined, that exhibits clear influences from the corresponding Byzantine terminology of the Comnenian period¹²⁷, testaments to.

In a transitional period, marked by the genesis and construction of a new understanding of the state, according to which the bearer of authority is increasingly based on court bureaucracy in order to achieve establishment in an area, the undertaking of Roger II and his successors, viewed in the long run, outlasted the physical existence of the three Norman rulers, as it sought those means that promoted synthesis. In the context of such a policy and as the complex political reality had to be taken into account, Byzantine contribution in the ideological and political field can be understood. It decisively contributed, through its tried expressive means, to the construction and articulation of the needed unifying ideological and political phraseology, a tool necessary for the establishment of the Norman rex's power within the confines of his, full of intricacies, domain in southern Italy.

¹²⁵ P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180)*, Cambridge, 1993, p. 23-26.

¹²⁶ V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, *I rapporti*, *op. cit.*, fn. 4, p. 354; H. HOUBEN, *op. cit.*, fn. 6, p. 133.

¹²⁷ For more on the terms "δεσπότης", "αὐθέντης": see P. MAGDALINO, *op. cit.*, fn. 125, p. 180-201, 248, 314.