

The Normans in the Mediterranean World (1000-1200)

(HIST 31992)



A scene of the Nativity from a South Italian Exultet Roll of c.1000
[Rylands Collection, © University of Manchester Library, Latin MS 2, frame 3]

Dr Paul Oldfield
(paul.oldfield@manchester.ac.uk)

This module offers an in-depth analysis of medieval multiculturalism by exploring the movement of Norman migrants, travellers and conquerors across multicultural frontiers within the medieval Mediterranean. Better known for ruling Normandy and England after 1066, the Latin Christian Normans also spread into Iberia, southern Italy and Sicily, North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, and in doing so encountered the world of Islam and Greek Orthodoxy. The Norman migrants established powerful states throughout the Mediterranean, especially in the 'Crusading' Principality of Antioch and the Kingdom of Sicily. The latter developed into a unique, seemingly multicultural, state inhabited by Muslim, Greek Christian, Jewish, and Latin Christian communities, and governed by Norman Kings who dressed in Byzantine robes, resided in stunning Arab-Islamic palaces, promoted alleged crypto-Muslim eunuchs to positions of power, and commissioned magnificent multicultural monuments. This course then analyses the dynamics and impact of Norman movement, and problematizes the idea of multicultural encounters within the medieval Mediterranean world.

Indicative seminar topics:

- Norman identity: Mythmaking, Gender, and Othering
- Norman diaspora: southern Italy and Sicily in the eleventh century
- The Normans and the First Crusade
- Rogue State?: the International Status of the Kingdom of Sicily
- Multicultural Monarchy? (I): Muslims in the Kingdom of Sicily
- Multicultural Monarchy? (II): Greek Christians in the Kingdom of Sicily
- The Trinacria Project: Art, Architecture and Knowledge
- Intervention in North Africa
- Eastern Ambitions: The Principality of Antioch
- The Norman devotional landscape
- The End of the Normans: problems of periodization

Assessment:

1) Source Analysis	2, 000 words	40%
2) Research Essay	3, 000 words	60%

Indicative Reading:

- A. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).
- P. Oldfield, *Sanctity and Pilgrimage in Medieval Southern Italy, 1000-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014)
- E. Tounta, 'The Italo-Greek Courtiers and their Saint: Constructing the Italo-Greek Elite's Collective Identity in the Twelfth-Century Norman Kingdom of Sicily', *Mediterranean Studies* 28 (2020), 88-129.
- N. Hodgson, 'Normans and Competing Masculinities on Crusade', *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. by Kathryn Hurlock and Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), 195-213
- J. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: the royal Diwan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- J. C. Birk, *Norman Kings of Sicily and the Rise of the Anti-Islamic Critique: Baptized Sultans* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2016)
- G. A. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard: southern Italy and the Norman Conquest* (Harlow: Pearson, 2000).
- S. Davis-Secord, *Where Three Worlds Met. Sicily in the Early Medieval Mediterranean* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017).

Zoom consultation hour: Wednesday 14th June at 14.00-15.00

<https://zoom.us/j/97285828250>

Meeting ID: 972 8582 8250

Passcode: 870856