THE ARABIC INSCRIPTIONS OF THE NORMAN KINGS OF SICILY.
A REINTERPRETATION

Of all the products of the royal workshops of the Norman kings of Sicily, the Arabic inscriptions are amongst the most extraordinary and historically important, and yet, precisely because they are Arabic, they continue to be ignored except by specialists, and their significance is generally undervalued and often misunderstood. Although relatively few in number, and strictly limited in content, the Norman Arabic inscriptions are a coherent body of evidence that illuminates the nature of the Norman monarchy from a particular and revealing angle. No other Latin rulers made such extensive use of Arabic epigraphy, and none used Arabic so effectively as a medium of royal propaganda, while few contemporary Muslim rulers were more innovative in their use of Arabic inscriptions.

The basic data for the corpus of Norman Arabic inscriptions is set out in Table I. Excluding the coinage, which forms a particular and self-contained field, they may be numbered at sixteen, twelve composed in Arabic only, three trilingual (Latin, Greek, and Arabic) (fig. 3), and one “quadringulinal” (Judaeo-Arabic, Latin, Greek, and Arabic). Eleven are in the names of the Norman kings Roger II and William II; in addition, at least three – and more probably five – supplicative inscriptions were addressed to king Roger, but do not bear his name. Two inscriptions are funerary memorials, erected by king Roger’s priest Gisandus, in memory of his mother and father; three are inscriptions embroidered into the royal vestments; and eleven are monumental inscriptions. The last category may be subdivided according to content: five inscriptions contain panegyric verses, to Roger II from the royal palaces in Palermo and Messina, and to William II, one from the palace of the Cuba and two from the Zisa; four lists of supplications comparable to that on king Roger’s mantle, two from the painted ceiling of the Cappella Palatina (fig. 1, 8), one from the “campanile” of the lost church of San Giacomo la Màzara, and one from Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio; and two inscriptions commemorating an act of construction, of Roger’s clepsydra in the Palazzo Reale (fig. 2), and of a charitable foundation in Termini Imerese by king Roger’s eunuch, Peter-Barrin. Five of the inscriptions are written in the traditional angular script, generally known as kufic, but eleven are written in the cursive script, commonly called nastābi – a script that, in the mid-12th century, was still a relative newcomer in the monumental epigraphy of the Islamic Mediterranean.

That none of the Norman Arabic inscriptions appears to date from before the foundation of the kingdom in 1130 underlines the fact that their roots do not grow out of the period of Islamic rule. The Muslim rulers of the island, of course, had proclaimed their authority in epigraphic texts: there survive fragments of an inscription in the name of the Kalbid emir Abî I-Husayn Ahmad ibn al-Hasan (953-970) commemorating the foundation of a building in Termini Imerese and part of the inscription on the Torre di Baych, one of the pair of towers flanking the Bīb al-Bahr (Sea Gate) of Palermo, survived until its demolition in 1564. Although some pre-conquest inscriptions, such as that of the Torre di Baych, presumably remained visible throughout the Norman period, and possibly played some part in persuading king Roger and his ministers that the new monarchy needed to display its own public texts in Arabic, there is no evidence that their style or content influenced Norman Arabic epigraphy: before the Norman conquest only kufic script was used, while most of the Norman Arabic inscriptions employ cursive script; as to content, the Norman Arabic inscriptions contain no Qur’anic formulae; and, as we shall see, they employ royal protocols that were not used by the Kalbid emirs but are characteristic of the Norman kings.

Before proceeding further, one initial obstacle to this interpretation must first be overcome. It is the inscription from what seems to have been the campanile of the church of San Giacomo la Màzara, which lay within the present Caserma della Legione dei Carabinieri, previously known as the Quarriere militare di San Giacomo, on the north of Via Vittorio Emanuele just inside the Porta Nuova. The church of San Giacomo was demolished in the seventeenth century, but its campanile survived until at least the 1830s: its subsequent fate is unknown, and the inscription now seems to be lost. Michele Amari saw it as a careless young man, before his interest in Arabic and Islam was awakened, but it had disappeared by the time that he came to study the Arabic inscriptions of Sicily, and his reading was based upon the rubbings of it made by the architect Saverio Cavallari in 1837 that Domenico Lo Esso Pietrasanta, Duke of Serradifalco had sent to Amari in Paris in 1834. These rubbings were made upon twenty-four separate sheets, on which Cavallari had written Latin letters indicating their original order, and had also noted breaks and lacunae. Giuseppe Caruso, who read and translated the inscription for Serradifalco, seems to have arranged the sheets in the order that he thought best, not in the sequence indicated by Cavallari. Amari attempted to reconstruct Cavallari’s sequence; the reassembled inscription stretched for some 12 m and would originally have run around all four sides of the tower of San Giacomo, missing only the first 3 m, with smaller lacunae elsewhere.

The plate published by Amari is a photograph of the copies of the rubbings that he had made by a Parisian artist, but for the following reasons it cannot be a satisfactory reproduction of the original: neither Cavallari nor the Parisian copyist knew Arabic; one sheet was missing from the sequence that Amari received from Serradifalco; the order of the two sheets had to be reversed; one sheet was mistakenly transposed by the Parisian copyist; and the existence of a missing sheet had to be deduced. On this precarious basis, Amari gave a reading that he described as “certa in molti luoghi, probabile in altri ... e possibile negli ultimi tre vocaboli,” but it is precisely those last three words that are crucial. The bulk of the text consists of a list of suplications (ad’iyya), similar to those found on king Roger’s mantle and on the ceiling of the Cappella Palatina. However, the final three words, which Amari tentatively read as the date – sanatafi mi’aini wa-al-fín (“in the year 1100 [A.D.]”) – are extremely uncertain, and are based upon the sheet that was transposed by the Parisian copyist: “so non ne son punto sicuro,” Amari punctiliously admitted. Several alternative readings, all drawn from the lexicon of Norman Arabic ad’iyya (see Table III) might be suggested, but one – ad’tumal wa-l-iqbal wa-l-birr wa-l-fín (“summation and [...]” – most comfortably fits the shape of the words. I therefore propose the following reading of the whole inscription: [...] wa-l-drīṭiya wa-l-yumni wa-l-dhukr al-kil/mil wa-ʃ/t ma [...w-t] l-ktihya wa-l-ṣīr/[w-t] l-bīr wa-l-nar al [...] wa-l [...] wa-l-ṣīr/ʃd/l wa-l-ṣīr [...] [...w-t] l-nagl wa-tumal/milʃ/t w...l-fin [...] (“[...] and declaration and bliss and perfect gratitude and favour [and] sufficiency and power[?]” and victory [...] and [...] and good fortune and auspicious fate [...] and victory and summation[?] and [...]”). Given that the uncertainties surrounding the reading of the last three words will not now be definitively resolved, unless the inscription itself miraculously reappears, other considerations must come to the fore: that the list of ad’iyya that it contains is extremely close to similar lists employed by king Roger in the 1130s (Table III) alone constitutes sufficient grounds for mistrusting Amari’s reading of the year, and for tentatively assigning this inscription to the reign of king Roger, 1130-1154.

A few words must next be devoted to Arabic inscriptions on coins, in order to clarify the assertion that the Norman Arabic inscriptions do not grow out of a continuous tradition of epigraphy stretching back to the period of Muslim rule. The tari issued by Robert Guiscard and Roger I immediately after the conquest did use legends based
Fourth, the sequence of nisabīt is typically followed by one or more personal title (laqab). Thus, Roger II appears in the Arabic text of Anna’s memorial (see infra, no. VIII.7b) as al-mu’taz bi-l-lāh (“the powerful through God”), while William II is al-muṣṣet izz bi-l-lāh (“the desirous of power through God”) on the palaces of the Zisa14 and the Cuba,15 and on his alba (fig. 4) and leggings (see infra, no. I.3, I.4): each ruler also used his personal laqab on his coins and documents. The laqab is a compound of two parts: the first is an active participle (al-mu’taz, al-muṣṣet izz), which emphasizes that the king’s authority and power came from God; the second is the complement bi-l-lāh (“by” or “through God”), which makes the theocratic principle explicit. Two pairs of supplementary alqabı, one used by Roger II in Anna’s memorial (see infra, no. VIII.7b) – al-muṣṭādīr bi-qūwatihi l-manṣūruh bi-qiwātihī (“the potent through His omnipotence, the victorious through His strength”) – and the other by William II in the Cuba and the Zisa, on his alba and leggings, and in his dhōwāt documents (al-mu’lāṣid bi-qiwārēthī l-manṣūruh bi-qiwārēthī (“the assisted by His omnipotence, the desirous of victory through His strength”), both have the same form. Just as the lists of nisabīt were modelled upon the titles of the Fātimid viziers, not of their caliphal masters, so do these personal alqabı stress the dependence of the Norman kings upon God, and not, like the titles of the Fātimid caliphs, their active rôle as the agents of God’s will.14

Fifth, the list of royal possessions that typically forms part of the Arabic title is particularly interesting in the inscriptions of Roger II. The evolution of the possessions of the Hauteville over time can be traced in their Arabic titles. The earliest styles – malik Siqilliyā (“ruler of Sicily”) and malik Siqilliyā wa-Qalānıyāt (“ruler of Sicily and Calabria”) – were used by Robert Guiscard, Roger I, the regent Adelaide, and Roger II. But in 1137–1138, a letter from the Fātimid caliph al-Hāfiz li-din Allāh to Roger II addressed the Sicilian ruler al-muṣṭādīr bi-qiwārēthī l-ṣiqilliyāt wa-Qalānıyāt (read Anakabdakata) wa-makābarata (read ḫuṣṣyanata) wa-Qalānıyāt wa-S. Sī. (read Salīnīn) wa-Maṣfī wa-mun idinā sih dhiklika, “the king of the island of Sicily, Lombardy, Italy, Calabria, Salerno, Amalfi, and whatever is attached to them”.15 It is unlikely to be pure coincidence that, thereafter, the Norman kings in their Arabic titles claimed for themselves similarly extensive possessions. Thus in both the Judaeo-Arabic and the Arabic texts of Anna’s memorial (see infra, no. VII.7b), Roger appears as king of “Italy, Lombardy, Calabria, Sicily, and Africa (دولة)”.” The addition of Africa on this
single occasion may be explained by the capture of the Zirid capital, al-Mahdiya, by George of Antioch in June 1148; thereafter, the Norman ruler is king of “Italy, Lombardy, Calabria and Sicily”, but never again of “Africa”.18

Sixth, Roger II in Anna’s memorial (see infra, no. VIII.7b) and William II on his alba (see infra, no. I.3) both appear with two explicitly Christian titles – muʾ‘azza imāmī Rūmīyata l-nāṣirī li-imālīti l-maṣūmīti (“the defender of the pope of Rome, the protector of the Christian community”). The latter formula was used on coins struck in the mint of Salerno by Roger II and his successors, and both styles were also used by Roger II and William II in their documents. There are strong reasons for believing that these formulae were awarded to the Norman king by an Islamic chancery, presumably that of Fātimid Cairo.19

Seventh, and finally, the Norman Arabic inscriptions employ the same supplicatory formulae (adʿeya) as are used by the royal dhwān on Roger II’s clepsydra (see infra, no. VIII.4), ḥabbāda ḥikāt arīyāmātī wa-ayyadā dīkhamā (“may God perpetuate [Roger’s] days and support [his] standards!”); and on Anna’s memorial (see infra, no. VII.7b), sammalā ḥikāt muḥamadāshī (“may God preserve [his] rule!”). The use of adʿeya as part of the royal protocol was long-established in the Islamic world, but it may be significant that the earliest known instance of an invocatory formula addressed to a Sicilian ruler comes in the letter of the Fātimids to their Latin vassal, the count of Sicily (see infra, no. VIII.7b), which begins most of the Arabic decrees. This constitutes the year may be given according to any of the Islamic calendars woven into the verse – wa-li-l-ṣawūdat l-ṣawā’id uwa-maʿrūdū wa-maṣūrūdū, “may God grant him success in his plans, and guide him to act in obedience to Him from his every going out to his every coming in!”20 this Norman-Sicilian usage, too, seems to be inspired by the Fātimid chancery.

Turning, next, to the two inscriptions which commemorate an act of construction, both again reveal the ties that link the Norman Arabic inscriptions to the royal dhwān. The Arabic text of the inscription from Roger’s clepsydra (see infra, no. VIII.4) is essentially a royal decree, and could have been written on vellum and issued by the dhwān without any significant change – note in particular the opening formula khalrajus ṣṣurura ... etc. (“there went forth the order of ...etc.”), the precise phrase which begins most of the Arabic decrees. This contrasts strongly with the Latin text in the royal chancery protocol, and also with the Greek, which employs the correct royal titles and has the right date, but adopts a verse form that does not belong to the chancery. The other inscription to commemorate an act of construction is that of king Roger’s eunuch, Peter Barrim, from Termini Imerese (see infra, no. VIII.3). The Arabic text is based upon the standard Islamic model for inscriptions commemorating the construction of pious foundations – note, in particular, the supplicatory prayer with which it ends – but also incorporates formulae, such as the king’s titles, that are clearly drawn from the royal dhwān. That Peter himself was one of the leading officers of the dhwān, from at least 1141 until 1166, suggests one way in which the relationship between the dhwān and the workshops may have functioned in practice.

It has been worth dwelling at such length upon the connection between the royal dhwān and royal epigraphy in order to demonstrate how close and how carefully co-ordinated was the working relationship between the royal dhwān and the royal workshops – including the royal mint and the wardrobe – and how this extended and developed through-out the history of the kingdom, from the early 1130s until the mid 1180s. Like the dhwān and the mint, the royal workshops were entrusted with the proclamation of royal propaganda, and nowhere does this appear more explicitly than in the Arabic titles of the Norman kings. This discussion has also highlighted the extent to which the Arabic facet of the Norman monarchy was a new departure, not a continuation of the Kalbid emirate of Sicily, and was founded upon imports from the contemporary Islamic Mediterranean, especially from Fātimid Egypt. Elsewhere in this volume, it is argued that the panegyric verses from the palace of Roger II in Palermo also illustrate the dependence of the Norman monarchy upon the Abbasid caliphate: in a series of images borrowed from Fātimid panegyric, and referring to the ceremonies of the Fātimid court, these verses call upon the visitor to accord to the royal palace the reverence due from the pilgrim to the Ka’ba in Mecca, and they figure his acts of homage and submission to the king in terms belonging to the sacred ceremonies of the ḥajj (see infra, no. VIII.1). But Fātimid panegyric was only one of the sources drawn upon by the Arab poets who composed the verses for Norman Arabic epigraphy. The verses from Roger’s palace in Messina, discussed in full by Annliese Nef (see infra, no. VIII.2), describe the royal palace with more orthodox imagery, comparing it to the legendary palace of al-Khawwarmaq, built by the pre-Islamic Lakhmid kings of Hira for the Sasanian shah-in-shah, and venturing no further than to refer to Roger’s palace as the ḏur al-khudi (“Paradise”), literally “the abode of the states of perpetual existence”: cf. ḏur al-khudi, Qu’ān 41: 28). The verse inscriptions of William II from the Zisa and the Cuba are in a similar vein: William is the malik al-ṣawā’id (“the king of the age”), the ḥayr mulūk al-orūf (“the best king in the world”), and his palace is a ḥanūn al-ṣawā’id (“paradise on earth”). But the influence of the dhwān is apparent even in these verse inscriptions. We have already seen that the ruler’s personal laqab from the official protocol is employed in panegyric epigraphy: thus, in the stucco inscription frieze from the entrance hall (qas’al) of the Zisa, William is al-Mustanṣir izz (“the desirous of power [through God]”), and the Zisa is al-ʿAzīz (“the mighty”).21 The manner in which the inscriptions that crowned the façade of the Zisa22 and the Cuba23 both begin with the obligatory Islamic opening – bi raḥmah bi-ḏibr allāh r al-ṣawā’id (“in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate”) – even though the formula would not normally be expected to open the public text of a Christian ruler – may well reflect the occasional use of the formula on dhwān documents.24 In the inscription from the Cuba, it is particularly striking to find a dating formula using the Christian calendar woven into the verse – wa-li-l-ṣawūdat l-ṣawā’id uwa-maʿrūdū uwa-maṣūdū (“1180 of the Lord Messiah”) – another indication, perhaps, of the influence of the dhwān, in whose documents the year may be given according to any of the Byzantine, Latin, or Islamic calendars. This formula, together with what may conceivably be a reference to “Christians” in the fragmentary and much damaged inscription from the parapet of the façade of the Zisa,25 raises the possibility that a school of Christian Arabic panegyricasts may have been active at the court of William II. If so, their works have not been preserved by later Muslim anthologists, who were reluctant to transmit more than occasional samples of verse composed in honour of a Christian chancery.

A few words must here be said about the third category of Norman Arabic inscriptions – the two epitaphs commissioned by king Roger’s priest, Grisandus, for his parents, Anna and Drogo (see infra, no. VIII.7b-c). These are the only Christian Arabic epitaphs that are known from Norman Sicily, and the lack of all comparanda makes it impossible to judge whether they really were as unique as they now appear to be. The abrupt opening of all three texts – the Judaeo-Arabic and the Arabic of Anna’s memorial, and the Arabic of Drogo’s – with no basmāla and none of the familiar Qu’ānic passages is startlingly un-Islamic. But the verb tuwaṭṭifaṭ (“he / she died”) harks back to an early Islamic usage that had almost disappeared by the mid-twelfth century, by which time the deceased
was almost always introduced by the phrase bi-ilwa-l-
wa-l-/ (“May God have mercy upon …”). The body of the
text was clearly composed ad locum, except for the
royal titles which were based upon the official
Arabic protocols of the royal dwell. However, the
concluding formulae of the two Arabic texts of
Anna’s epitaph – fa-raḥuma ilāha man qara’a wa-da’ā
lada bi-l-raḥmati amīn (“May God have mercy upon
who reads [this epitaph] and prays for mercy for
[the deceased]. Amen.”) – are modelled upon the
Islamic formula standard at this point in the epitaph
(see infra, no. VIII.5, lines 16-17).

In length alone, the fourth and final category of
Norman Arabic epigraphy – the five supplicatory
inscriptions – exceeds by several metres the sum
of the rest of the surviving inscriptions. This
group includes three that were certainly addressed to king
Roger – the inscriptions from king Roger’s mantle
(see infra, no. I.1), from the ceiling of the nave of
the Cappella Palatina, and from the ceiling of the
south aisle of the Cappella Palatina – and a further
two inscriptions that were probably also
addressed to him – from the “campanile” of
the lost church of San Giacomo la Mazzara, and from
a column in Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio.

The principal content of all five inscriptions (see Table
III) is a list of nouns, some with qualifying adjective-
tives, that are both supplications (ad lwa) invoking
specific divine blessings upon the king, and, by
extension, royal attributes (adqib) constituting
almost unofficial elements of the royal title. Such
supplications are an extremely common theme of
Islamic inscriptions, where precisely the same
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templetary formulas in Islamic epigraphy has yet been
made, but a few general remarks may here serve to
place the Sicilian examples in their wider context.”

Amongst the earliest surviving examples of
inscribed Islamic metalwork are objects invoking
God’s blessing upon the owner by means of such
formulas as farakatован man tilabi lī-sahibīhī (“a
blessing of God upon its owner”). By the eleventh
century, such simple prayers had developed in two
directions. First, the request for general farakat
(“blessing”) was often amplified into a list of as
many as thirty specific blessings. Second, although
many inscriptions still state explicitly that such
blessings are being invoked mina tilabi ... lī-sahibīhī
(“from God .. upon its owner”), and although a
few inscriptions refer to the owner by name, the
majority take this as understood and merely list the
blessings, without mentioning God or the owner.”

Both developments may be seen in the inscriptions
from the Cappella Palatina, San Giacomo la
Mazzara, and S. Maria dell’Ammiraglio, all of
which are lists of ad lwa with no mention of either
God or the recipient. The inscription from king
Roger’s mantle, however, does contain a reference
to its owner, albeit in the oblique manner that we
have already discussed above. Because it stands out
in this way, I shall analyse it in some detail.

The inscription from king Roger’s mantle (fig. 7) is
composed in elegant and skilful adq or rhymed
prose, and reads as follows (I have inserted oblique
slashes to indicate the rhythm of the adq):

mimmā ’amīla bi-l-khāzānit l-malakāyati l-mu’āmarati bi-l-
sa’i di wa-l-işfālī / wa-l-muqjadi wa-l-kamāši / wa-l-tawāl
wa-l-fa-Iālī / wa-l-qābūlī wa-l-īqābāli / wa-l-samāḥati
wa-l-jālīlī / wa-l-fajhīrī wa-l-fa’dalī / wa-bulūghi l-
annūl wa-l-ṭamālī l-wa-mī l-ayāmī wa-l-layāfif[1] / bi-
la-tawālī wa-l-nīqālī / bi-l-’īzz wa-l-dī iyātī / wa-l-
hīfjī wa-l-himāyāti / wa-l-ṣu’ʿī di wa-l-salāmātī / wa-l-
naṣrī wa-l-kīfāyātī / bi-madnātī Shībīl yus / sunatā
thumānish l-wa-l-‘ishrāna wa-khammīsin a’tīn (“This
was made in the most royal, flourishing wardrobe, with
good fortune, reverence, splendour, perfection,
might, superiority, approbation, prosperity, mag-
nanimity, dignity, glory, beauty, attainment of
desires and hopes; pleasure of days and nights
without end or removal”.)

To return from this diversion to the rest of the
inscription, the preposition bi (“with”) introduces a
list of ad lwa, which should be understood as
requests that God may grant “good fortune, reverence,
Splendour, etc.” to the mantle’s royal owner.

After twelve definite nouns, the list is interrupted
for which there is no evidence in Norman Sicily.

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Palatina, the reading of these inscriptions by Amari\textsuperscript{29} is unsatisfactory and, while the revision undertaken by Stealle Sinding-Larsen (1989) is substantially correct, it does contain some mistradings and does not reconstruct the inscriptions as texts but merely as disconnected words. Neither Amari nor Sinding-Larsen attempt to read all the Arabic inscriptions painted on the other elements of the ceiling, but confine themselves to the borders of the star-shaped coffers. A comprehensive study of the inscriptions from the ceiling of the Cappella Palatina lies far beyond the scope of this brief study, and yet they are far too important to be ignored: I have therefore transcribed below the inscriptions painted on metal objects published on metal objects published.

At the beginning of each transcription, I have indicated with a compass direction the point of the star at which my reading begins. The divisions of each inscription into eight “lines”, corresponding to the intervals between the points of each star, are indicated by oblique strokes. For the translation of these terms, see Table III.

1. (east) wa-l-

2. (north) al-mamlak al-

3. (south) wa-l-

4. (south) wa-l-

5. (east) wa-l-

6. (east) wa-l-

7. (north) wa-l-

8. (north-east) wa-l-

9. (east) wa-l-

10. (east) wa-l-

11. (north) wa-l-


13. (east) wa-l-

14. (south) wa-l-

15. (north-east) wa-l-

16. (north) al-mamlak al-

17. (east) wa-l-

18. (east) wa-l-

19. No inscriptions.

20. No inscriptions.

21. (north) wa-l-

22. (north) al-mamlak al-

23. (south) wa-l-

24. (north) wa-l-

25. (south) wa-l-

26. (east) wa-l-

27. (north) wa-l-

28. (north) al-mamlak al-

29. (south) wa-l-

30. (north) wa-l-

31. (north) al-mamlak al-

32. (north) al-mamlak al-

33. (east) wa-l-

34. (north) wa-l-

35. (south) wa-l-

36. (south) wa-l-

37. (east) wa-l-

38. (east) wa-l-

39. (north) wa-l-

40. (north) wa-l-

41. (east) wa-l-

42. (north) al-mamlak al-

43. (south) wa-l-

44. (south) wa-l-

45. (south) wa-l-

46. (north) wa-l-

47. (east) wa-l-

48. (south) wa-l-

49. (north) wa-l-

50. (north) wa-l-

51. (south) wa-l-

52. (north) wa-l-

53. (south) wa-l-

54. (south) wa-l-

55. (north) wa-l-

56. (north) wa-l-

57. (south) wa-l-

Di certo tutte le qualità replicate nelle nostre iscrizioni si riferivano al re o meglio al suo sog- giorno” – there would be little to add to Amari’s\textsuperscript{32} summary of the significance of these inscriptions from the ceilings of the Cappella Palatina, were it not for the extraordinary claim by Sinding-Larsen that they contain “no typical Islamic, no typical personally monarchical, no typical diplomatic vocabulary”, and that they are, on the contrary, carefully selected to describe the favourable conditions that were to be enjoyed by converts from Islam to Christianity.\textsuperscript{33} This assertion betrays its author’s unfamiliarity with Islamic epigraphy: as Amari was well aware, all the ad\textsuperscript{i}ya used in the Cappella Palatina appear ubiquitously throughout the medieval Islamic world in supplicatory inscriptions on portable objects, especially metalwork. This cannot be fully documented in this limited study, but I have illustrated the point to the extent that is here possible in Table III by devoting two columns to the ad\textsuperscript{i}ya on metal objects published by Sarre\textsuperscript{34} and Melikian-Chirvani\textsuperscript{35}, sixteen of the twenty-five nouns and four of the five adjectives used in the ad\textsuperscript{i}ya from the Cappella Palatina, appear on metal objects published in those two works alone, which comprise but a tiny fraction of the full range of medieval Islamic metalwork. Contrary to the claims of Sinding-Larsen, the ad\textsuperscript{i}ya used in Norman Arabic epigraphy are entirely drawn from the standard Islamic lexicon, they all refer to the ruler, and they supplement his official protocols: in no way were they adapted to the particular socio-political circumstances of Norman Sicily, nor to the Christian environment of the Cappella Palatina.

Few ceilings from domestic and palatial structures survive from the Islamic world before the fourteenth century, but similar ad\textsuperscript{i}ya are attested on carved wooden architectural friezes with sufficient frequency to suggest that the use of such inscriptions on the ceiling of the Cappella Palatina was not unique. The earliest examples are all carved wooden friezes from Cairo, dated to the ninth and tenth century; four fragments in the Islamic Museum, Cairo, reading baraka wa-yum\textsuperscript{a} wa-

sa\textsuperscript{’}a da\textsuperscript{-}li\textsuperscript{t}ib\textsuperscript{t}i and baraka wa-mi\textsuperscript{a} wa-g\textsuperscript{h}ub,\textsuperscript{36} and one in the Louvre, reading baraka wa-yum\textsuperscript{a} wa-

sa\textsuperscript{’}a da\textsuperscript{-}li\textsuperscript{t}ib\textsuperscript{t}i li\textsuperscript{-}s\textsuperscript{h}ib\textsuperscript{t}i.\textsuperscript{37} Examples contemporary with the Cappella Palatina include: two panels belonging to a floreate kufic decora-
The decorated group include the opus sectile inscriptions (fig. 5-6) from Palermo (see infra, no. VIII.1) and Messina (see infra, no. VIII.2), the curvilinear sīna铭刻 painted on the ceiling of the south aisle of the Cappella Palatina, the carved stucco frieze from the alqū'a of the Zisa
dos et al. and the carved frieze from the tomb of Sayyida Nafsi, Cairo, probably 1146; two fragments of mid twelfth-century friezes re-used in the mosque of Mu'ayyad, Cairo; and a screen from the mosque of al-Sālih Ta'āl
duced such ornament back to its origins in Zīrīd Ifr
ly reinforced the importance of the Zīrīd líwā'
the decorated group include the opus sectile inscriptions (fig. 5-6) from Palermo (see infra, no. VIII.1) and Messina (see infra, no. VIII.2), the curvilinear sīna铭刻 painted on the ceiling of the south aisle of the Cappella Palatina, the carved stucco frieze from the alqū'a of the Zisa
the decorated group include the opus sectile inscriptions (fig. 5-6) from Palermo (see infra, no. VIII.1) and Messina (see infra, no. VIII.2), the curvilinear sīna铭刻 painted on the ceiling of the south aisle of the Cappella Palatina, the carved stucco frieze from the alqū'a of the Zisa and the carved frieze from the tomb of Sayyida Nafsi, Cairo, probably 1146; two fragments of mid twelfth-century friezes re-used in the mosque of Mu'ayyad, Cairo; and a screen from the mosque of al-Sālih Ta'āl
limestone frieze from the façade of the Cuba. The opus sectile inscriptions from Palermo are written in a cursive script that does not conform closely to any canon of Arabic epigraphy: the alif and lām are wedge-shaped and sharply tapered. The characters have not been permitted to project below the line, so that the lower parts of bā, lām and mīn are awkwardly flat, while dāl, rāʾ, sīn and wāw seem almost stunted. The characters of the Messina inscriptions are cruder, even less well proportioned, and still further away from the epigraphic canon. Both sets of inscriptions have some vowels and diacritic signs: the Palermo inscription points the qaf in the Maghribi fashion, the Messina inscriptions use the standard pointing. As to decoration, in the Palermo inscriptions, the spaces between the elongated hastae are filled by vegetal arabesque derived from the oriental style; in the Messina inscriptions, the decoration is similar, but incompetently executed. In both cases, one has the impression that the craftsmen have struggled with varying success, to follow their model in the unfamiliar medium of opus sectile. The carved stucco frieze from the qaʾa of the Zisa is an altogether less eccentric piece of work: the script is fluid, well-proportioned, and well-planned, with tall, tapering hastae, and is set upon a bed of rich, deeply-cut vegetal ornament. In comparison, the characters in the limestone frieze from the façade of the Cuba are heavy, short and thick, but they are carved with a vigorous fluidity and bold rhythm: Amari’s photographs of the inscription in situ suggests that it must have been not just prominent but also legible. There is some light vegetal decoration of the voids between the hastae, and the inscription seems to have had a decorated border, but the emphasis is upon the characters themselves and the decoration is deliberately restrained. The very fragmentary inscriptions from the leggins of William II are executed in fluid, well-proportioned script, with tall, tapering hastae set upon vegetal scrolling. Unlike the other members of this group, the inscription on the hem of the alba of William II is not set against a background of vegetal ornament, but is so richly adorned with gold and bordered with pearls that it cannot be said to be plain and undecorated. The script is well-proportioned, with tall, tapering hastae, and is skillfully planned: some words are written above others, in the spaces between groups of hastae, so that the most economic use is made of the limited space available.

In the lining of the two armbands and of the right cuff of William’s alba were found three embroidered notes written by and for the craftsmen in the royal workshop. These notes were not intended to be seen and do not contribute to the decoration of the alba but are nevertheless of the greatest importance for what they tell us of the organization and activities of the royal workshop. They are also of particular interest for the present discussion of the cursive script. They were first published by Tarif Al Samman (1982) in an important article that examined all the inscriptions on the Sicilian royal vestments. The three notes are all written in the same rather careless hand, which bears close comparison to the scripts used in the royal dwr in, in black ink upon linen cloth. The concision of the notes, the extent to which the language in which they are written approaches the colloquial register, and the fact that their writer shared common knowledge, which is lost to us, with their intended readers, makes them extremely difficult to interpret. I give my readings below and note, in angular brackets, where I differ from Al Samman.

Note A (from the lining of the right cuff): bādhab anwaalu 1-thuluth-cul-thulutho allađahih ‘amilalu Mukhriz[?…] / ‘Abd… or Ma…, yap—a mīn dhaliikha ‘inda fathiqi wa-takhlkhî bi thn̄̄’ karra bi-ta’rikhi 12 Māy. l-‘ribb ‘al-yadi l-fat-fatt cal-fann– Tūmās ti ‘khuri <kbaru> (“This third, which Marqiz made, he covered at the order of the qaʾiḍ Damyān with a mann [approx. 900 grams] of pearls, of which ninety dirhams [approx. 281 grams] were returned – nine [dirhams] broken – on its [sc. the alba] being taken apart and adorned for the second time, on the date of 12 May of the Fourth [Indiction], at the order of the eunuch Tūmās.”)


The main point of difference regards the meaning of the word al-thuluth (literally ‘the third’) that appears in all three notes. Al Samman believed it to refer to the script called al-thuluth, one of the six styles (al-qalam al-satta) of classical calligraphy, which are said to have been perfected at the ‘Abbāsid court of Baghdad by Yaqūt al-Mustā‘īsim († 1298). Were Al Samman to be right, then this would be a fascinating and intriguingly early reference to a cursive script as al-thuluth. The calligraphic style al-thuluth generally said to be so-called because it is based upon the principle that one third of each letter should be sloping. That this is patently not the case for either the script in which the three notes are written or the inscription on the hem does not necessarily mean that the script is not – or was not considered to be – thuluth like nakd, the name of another of the six styles, the term tends to be used loosely – monumental and decorative cursive scripts are often called thuluth in order to distinguish them from the work-a-day bookhand or nakd. Thus, although it would be surprising to find a cursive script called thuluth in this casual way as early as 1156, the morphology of the script does not necessarily rule out such a description. There are, however, other compelling reasons not to accept Al Samman’s reading. First and foremost, each of the three notes refers to a separate thuluth, each made by a different artisan, at least two of which were covered with pearls. It follows that they can refer neither to the script of notes themselves, which were written by a single hand and were not covered with pearls, nor to the ductus of the single inscription on the hem, which is embroidered in
gold and not adorned with pearls. Second, were the word al-thulth intended to mean the script, even in the colloquial register, we might expect some phrase such as hādhu` l-kītāb l-thulūth (“this thulūth inscription”) or hādhu` qalāmumu thulāh (“this thulāh script”). Third, the obvious and most immediate reading of the phrase that opens Notes B and C, is “This third…”. In Note A, I am inclined to understand hādhu` azwālah l-thulūth as a collocation, well-attested in non-Classical Arabic,79 meaning “This is the first third…” precisely what the three thirds were to which these notes refer is not clear, but the fact that there are three notes—presumably one for each third—must somehow be significant. Given where these three notes were found, it is possible that the two armbands and the pair of cuffs was each regarded as one third, that the application of pearls to each was entrusted to a different craftsman, and that it is to these three bands that the notes refer.

Given the importance of these notes to the history and organization of the royal workshops, a few words must be said in the context of this exhibitation about other points arising from the new reading of these notes. As to the individuals named, they are apparently all “palace Saracens” (saraceni palatii), slaves or freedmen employed in the royal court.80 Al-qāʼid Damiyān and al-fātī (literally “youth” but here almost certainly meaning eunuch) Tūmās both have titles typically borne by the palace Saracens. Like most of their fellows, they appear with the Christian names that they were given at baptism, Arabised from Damian and Thomas. Damiyān, not otherwise known, but Tūmās is probably so identified with the Gaytus Thomas, qui regne [d/anu] de secretis cameraratum teneval, who had left office or died before 1183.81

The Māliūt (“the Maltese”) and Marziq, on the other hand, seem to bear no title and, in common with a few of their fellows, use Muslim names: it is possible that they were craftsmen employed in the royal wardrobe, and not servile or semi-servile Saracens of the palace.

As to the details concerning the application of pearls in note C, I am strongly inclined to accept Al Samman’s conclusion—that the preposition min is repeated in error—and to prefer the reading given in Note C (i). In which case, it probably means that 90 dirhams (approximately 28 grams) of pearls were issued to Marziq by the qāʼid Damiyān, of which 9 dirhams (approximately 28 grams) were broken and returned when the alba was disassembled and remade at the order of the fātī Tūmās. Alternatively, it could be understood to mean that of the unspecified quantity of pearls issued to Marziq, 90 dirhams were returned and 9 dirhams were broken. (It remains just possible, however, that the phrase in question should be read as dāj-ulahu min manni, in which case Damiyān issued Marziq with a mana in [approximately 900 grams] of pearls, of which 90 dirhams [281 grams] were returned, including 9 dirhams [28 grams] broken, when the alba was disassembled and remade at the order of the fātī Tūmās. However, Note B would seem to argue against this reading.)

As to the date of this inscription—12 May, Indiction IV—I cannot improve upon the suggestion made by Al Samman that it may correspond to the investiture of the William I by Pope Hadrian IV at Benevento in July 1156, Indiction IV, in which case the alba must originally have been made for Roger II. If al-fātī Tūmās were indeed to be identical with Gaytus Thomas, who had left office or died before 1183, then the year 1171, Indiction IV, remains the only possible alternative, but no royal ceremony for which the alba might have been remade is known to have taken place that year.

Whether we classify it as naskh or thulāh, the appearance of cursive epigraphy in Sicily in or before 1142 poses questions such as whence it came and why it was adopted by the Norman kings. Until the late twelfth century, all monumental inscriptions in the Fatimid Mediterranean employed the angular script known as kufic.82 Cursive script was used for monumental inscriptions in Afghanistan and Iran by the second half of the eleventh century:83 it occurs sporadically further west, within the sphere of Saljuq influence, but only becomes common in Syria under Nūr al-Dīn, the Zanjjud ruler of Damascus and Aleppo,84 1146-1174. In Fatimid Egypt, the cursive script seems not to have been used in monumental inscriptions until circa 1155, when it was employed, alongside kufic, on the superb tābūr of Husayn ibn ‘Ali ibn Abī Tālib, now in the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo;85 a little later, in circa 1160, cursive was also used for the supplicatory inscriptions of a carved wooden door of a cupboard from the mosque of al-Sāhib Tālib ibn Ruzzik.86 It has been strongly asserted that the Fatimids resisted the use of the cursive script for Qur’ānic and Qur’ānic texts on ideological grounds:87 be that as it may, cursive was used for ʼīsā’ī texts in Fatimid Egypt, as is demonstrated by the tābūr of al-Husayn, and by an ʾīsā’ī commemorative inscription in the Islamic Museum, Cairo, dated circa 550/1155-1156.88 That tombstones in Egypt use cursive from the early twelfth century, may indeed indicate that the Fatimids were more conservative in this respect than their subjects.89 However, the Fatimids did not avoid the use of the cursive scripts in all contexts: in their dhu`ain, cursive was always employed for official letters and documents, and the caliph’s ‘alāma or signature was always written in the cursive script.90 In their tirīz, cursive was first used under al-Mustansir in 478/1085-1086, and continued under al-Hāfir.91 Given that the only Fatimid texts to reach Sicily, apart from coins, would have been letters and documents written in the cursive script, and portable objects such as metalwork and tirīz, it is highly unlikely that the Norman court would have made the association between the Fatimids and kufic script that has seemed self-evident to art historians since it was first pointed out by van Berchem. The Maghrib adopted cursive script earlier than the Fatimid provinces of the Mediterranean: it seems probable, therefore, that the cursive style jumped to the far west from eastern Islam, without passing through the Fatimid lands. Cursive first appears in Tunisian epitaphs in 490/1096, when the fine, well-proportioned naskh, with tall, thickened hastae, set against a rich floral background, seems to attest to direct influence from the east, and grows in popularity throughout the twelfth century: it is perhaps significant that most of these early cursive inscriptions come from the cemetery of the Banī Khuṣairān, whose strong eastern links may have led to the early adoption of oriental styles of epigraphy and ornament.92 By the early twelfth century, cursive had been adopted for monumental inscriptions by the Almoravids in the far Maghreb. The earliest attested is the frieze around the base of the Qubbat al-Baridūyin in Marrakesh (Morocco), datable to 1117: the script is without vowels or diacritic points and rests on a bed of vegetal arabesque in the oriental style; the kufic inscriptions in the same monument carry supplications comparable to those in the Cappella Palatina.93 The script and decoration of the cursive inscription in the filigree dome of the Great Mosque of Tlemcen (Algeria), dated 1135, are extremely close to the Qubbat al-Baridūyin.94 In 1137, when the axial nave of the mosque of al-Qarawiyn at Fez was rebuilt by the Almoravids, cursive was used extensively: in a medallion above the miḥrāb, in the alveoli of the muqarnas vault closest to the miḥrāb, in the great muqarnas vault, and on the bronze handles of the Bab Shitryin.95 The earliest examples of cursive in al-Andalus—fragments of a carved succo frieze with a cursive inscription decorated with vegetal arabesque, found in el Mauror (Granada), at the foot of the Torres Bermejas—are plausibly assumed to be contemporary with the Almoravid examples from North Africa.96 Cursive also occurs at about the same time on...
portable objects from North Africa: for example, the fragmentary bronze lamp-stand from the Qal'at Bani Hammād with supplicatory inscriptions in both kufic and naskh.87 The latter object bears close comparison to the important and almost complete, but still virtually unpublished, lamp-stand in the Chiesa Matrice, Petrallia Sottana (PA), which also bears supplicatory inscriptions in both scripts:88 the heavy, rounded characters of both are particularly close to the style of cursive employed in the Cappella Palatina aisle ceiling and the façade of the Cuba. Portable objects attributed to Egypt and North Africa, datable to the eleventh-twelfth centuries, and bearing inscriptions in cursive, are in several church treasures in Sicily and South Italy: for example, the little-known bronze cylindrical chest in the Tesoro del Duomo, Barletta (BA), and the unpublished lid from a similar chest in the Tesoro del Duomo, Caiazzo (CE), both with supplicatory inscriptions in kufic and cursive.89 Several representatives of a distinctive group of bronze mortars, based on an Islamic prototype, some of which bear supplicatory inscriptions in cursive, are attested in several collections in Sicily and South Italy, including the Galleria Nazionale, Palermo;90 similar examples to those in Palermo belonged to the cargo of a ship wrecked off Oran (Algeria), a clear indication that this group was produced in the far Maghreb or Spain, and thence exported.91

In Sicily, outside the royal court, cursive was occasioned on tombstones: most of the cursive epitaphs published by Amari seem to be imports from North Africa,92 but the rasul of Ibn 'Abd al-Ghaflār al-Siqilli, whose tombstone comes from Termini Imerese, suggests that it was made on the island: the date is missing, but the elegant, fluid script, on a background of vegetal arabesque, bears close comparison with the North African inscriptions discussed above.93 The tombstone of al-Sitt bint Abī l-Qāsim ibn Husayn (‘Lady, the daughter of Abī l-Qāsim, son of Husayn’), dated December 1238, which came to the Galleria Regionale from San Martino delle Scale, is more problematic:94 there is no compelling reason to identify it as Sicilian, but it is tempting – and would probably be mistaken! – to link the deceased to the family of Abī l-Qāsim Muhammad ibn Hammād, the hereditary leader of the Muslim community of Sicily.95 It is not difficult to imagine that the crammed, ill-proportioned, cursive script of this epitaph, with its minimal vegetal decoration, might reflect the level to which stone-carving had sunk in Palermo as a result of the Muslim revolts and their suppression by Frederick II. If so, it is worth recalling the pimatic tombstone excavated at the Muslim rebel refuge on Monte Lato, with its crude, incised curvive inscription - which may be seen as a moving testimony to the determination of a rebel family to respect the niceties of civilised practice despite their desperate circumstances.96 To sum up this discussion of the style of the Norman Arabic inscriptions, it is certainly the case that the kufic letter forms, the style of the more epigraphic cursive script, and some of the ornamen in Norman Arabic inscriptions, all ultimately derive from eastern models. However, these oriental influences had already begun to influence Fātimid, Zirid and Almoravid epigraphy before they appear in Sicily, and may well have reached the island from such Mediterranean sources rather than directly from the east. In either case, epigraphic styles and ornament could easily have been transmitted on portable objects, such as metalwork or textiles, so that it is not necessary to hypothesize the migration of the craftsmen themselves. Much work remains to be done upon the stylistic aspects of Norman Arabic epigraphy: in particular, detailed catalogues of letter forms and styles of ornament not just from Norman Sicily but also from Fātimid Egypt, North Africa and Spain are urgently required in order to make systematic comparison possible.

In conclusion, the manner in which the Norman kings used Arabic epigraphy was not inherited from their predecessors, the Kalbid emirs of Palermo, but rather imported to the island from the contemporary Islamic world, in particular from Fātimid Egypt and Zirid and Almoravid North Africa. In other words, the use of Arabic epigraphy by the Norman kings was a deliberate and creative act, not a chance survival from the past. For the most part, Norman Arabic epigraphy follows the pattern well-established in Islamic courts: foundation inscriptions, decrees, panegyric verse on palaces, supplicatory inscriptions (adʿīya) on royal buildings and vestments. Although it is striking to find the cursive script used so extensively at such an early date, this seems to be the fortuitous consequence of the renaissance of the duarte and the close geographical and cultural links between Sicily and North Africa: it would probably be wrong to read any ideological significance into the use of cursive script in Norman Sicily. In contrast, ideology alone inspired the development of trilingual epigraphy, of texts written in the three administrative languages of the kingdom – Latin, Greek, and Arabic – which proclaimed the policy of populus trilinguus, that the unifying power of the king had forged the three communities of the island into a single Sicilian people. Elsewhere in this volume, I have argued that Anna’s “quadrilingual” epitaph (see infra, no. VIII.7b), which adds Judaeo-Arabic, the everyday language of the Jewish community, contributes to the evidence that Roger aimed to convert the Jews and Muslims of the island and to bring them, with the Greek and Latin Christians, into a trilingual Sicilian church. But who read, and who was intended to read these inscriptions? There is very little evidence from Norman Sicily that members of any one of the three communities were literate in the languages of the others. Only a small circle of administrators and scholars in and around the royal court would have been able to read two or more of the texts in the trilingual inscriptions. With a handful of exceptions, only educated Muslims would have been able to read the Arabic inscriptions: the leaders of the Muslim community of Sicily, the poets and scholars maintained in the royal court, ambassadors from the Muslim world, the administrators and scribes in the duarte, and a few pilgrims and travellers who reached the outer precincts of the palaces. The vast majority of those contemporaries who saw the Arabic inscriptions of the Norman kings were unable to read them. To a lesser extent, of course, this was also true of the Greek and Latin inscriptions: literacy was not widespread, even amongst the nobility, and king Roger himself seems to have been functionally illiterate, for he never wrote his own signature, not even in Greek, the language in which he had been educated.97 What is more, many of these inscriptions – the inscriptions on the royal vestments, the adʿīya on the ceiling of the nave of the Cappella Palatina, the kufic frieze on the façade of the Zisa – could not be read because they could not be seen. All this suggests two conclusions: that the content of the texts was important primarily to the king and to the small group of royal advisers responsible for commissioning the craftsmen; and that the message directed to the wider audience was that the Norman king resembled an Islamic ruler in his use of Arabic. That was certainly the impression that the Arabic documents and inscriptions of the Norman kings made upon Muslim contemporaries: Ibn Jauzay reports that “amongst the extraordinary things told about [William II] is that he reads and writes Arabic,” one of the Arabic facets of the Norman monarchy that persuaded him that William II “imitates the rulers of the Muslims”.98 It is remarkable, therefore, that no contemporary source comments on the Arabic inscriptions of the Norman kings. The Arabic original of the passage in al-Idrisi’s account of Palermo, which is frequently quoted in the translations of Amari, Jaubert or Rizzitano as referring to the epigraphic ornament of Roger’s palace, makes no mention of inscriptions.99
(queat) and halls (mażālīz), al-Idrīsī writes only that they are adorned "with most wonderful curiosities (ba‘r-‘ātā m-‘aṣīhātā) and filled with "things of extraordinary character" (ba‘dā’ī) al-sifāt); but earlier, when praising the cathedral, he does remark upon the "varieties of ornaments and inscriptions (ajnātā al-tazzāwq wa-l-‘aṣābāh) with which it is decorated. In the context of this exhibition, one final point should be stressed. The Norman Arabic inscriptions attest both to the coherence of the programme that dictated the production of all the royal workshops, and to the close collaboration between the different crafts: here we see clearly that the engravers in the mint, the scribes in the dīrātān, the embroiders in the wardrobe, the painters of the ceiling of the Cappella Palatina, the carvers of stone and stucco, and the craftsmen who inlaid the cipres sectile inscriptions, all worked together in a single and carefully articulated programme that aimed first to create and then to enhance the Arabic facet of the Norman monarchy.

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FIGURES

Fig. 1. Carved and painted wooden ceiling (detail), Palermo, Cappella Palatina

Fig. 2. Slab with trilingual inscription from the cloister of Roger II, Palermo, Palazzo dei Normanni

Fig. 3. Tombstone with quadrilingual inscription, Palermo, Museo della Zisa

Fig. 4. Inscription on the alab of William II, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wettische Schatzkammer

Fig. 5. Fragmentary block with inscription in praise of Roger II from the Palace in Palermo (detail), Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia

Fig. 6. Fragmentary block with Arabic inscription in praise of Roger II from the Palace in Messina, Museo Regionale

Fig. 7. Inscription on the mantle of Roger II (detail), Palermo, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wettische Schatzkammer

Fig. 8. Carved and painted wooden ceiling (detail), Palermo, Cappella Palatina

NOTES

1 Amari 1875, pp. 11-17, pl. I, fig. 1-2, 1971 ed., pp. 21-29.
2 Moros 1827, pp. 46-72.
5 Lo Faso Pietrasanta 1838, pp. 40-41.
6 Amari 1875, pl. V, fig. 1.
91 Golvin 1962.
92 Amari 1879, no. XXXV, pp. 124-125, pl. VIII, fig. 3; no. XLIII, pp. 134-138, pl. XI, fig. 1; no. XLIV, pp. 138-141, pl. XII, fig. 1; no. XLV, pp. 142-144, pl. XII, fig. 2; no. LI, pp. 150-156, pl. XIII, fig. 1-4, 1971 ed., pp. 234-235, 242-251, 235-239.
93 Amari 1879, no. XXXVI, pp. 125-126, pl. VIII, fig. 2 a-b, 1971 ed., no. XXXVI, pp. 235-236.
96 Isler 1992, pp. 113-114, fig. 7.
### TABLE I. Data inferred from the Arabic inscriptions in Norman Sicily

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<td>monumental, supplicatory</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>1130-1154</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Cappella Palatina (opus sectile),</td>
<td>monumental, verse</td>
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<td>monumental, supplicatory</td>
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<td>cassettone in ceiling of nave</td>
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<td>1130-1154</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Cappella Palatina, epigraphic</td>
<td>monumental, supplicatory</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>bands in ceiling of south aisle</td>
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<td>1133-1134</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Mantle (Vienna), cf. infra, no. I.1</td>
<td>tīrāz</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>1142</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Palazzo Reale, clepsydra,</td>
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<td>Latin, Greek</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>cf. infra, no. VII.4</td>
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<td>circa 1143</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio</td>
<td>monumental, supplicatory</td>
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<td>1142/3 o 1152/3</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Termini Imerese, Barrün-Peter,</td>
<td>monumental, construction</td>
<td>Latin, Greek</td>
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<td>cf. infra, no. VII.3</td>
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<td>1149</td>
<td>Roger II</td>
<td>Memorial to Anna, mother</td>
<td>funerary</td>
<td>Judaico-Arabic,</td>
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<td>of Grisandus, cf. infra, no. VII.7b</td>
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<td>Latin, Greek, Arabic</td>
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<td>funerary</td>
<td>Latin, Greek, Arabic</td>
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<td>1181</td>
<td>William II</td>
<td>Alba (Vienna), cf. infra, no. I.3</td>
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<td>William II</td>
<td>Leggings (Vienna), cf. infra, no. I.4</td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
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<tr>
<td>1166-1189</td>
<td>William II</td>
<td>Palazzo della Zisa (parapet)</td>
<td>monumental, verse</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>William II</td>
<td>Palazzo della Zisa (stucco frieze)</td>
<td>monumental, verse</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>William II</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>monumental, verse</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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### TOTALS

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<td>Monumental, verse</td>
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### TABLE II. Data inferred from the Arabic inscriptions in Norman Sicily

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<th>ROGER II CLEPSYDRA</th>
<th>ROGER II GRISANDUS</th>
<th>Dîwânî DOCUMENTS</th>
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<td>al-mu‘azzama / al-mu‘azzamiya</td>
<td>“the glorified / the most glorified”</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>al-malika / al-malikīya</td>
<td>“the ruling / the most ruling”</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-malakīya</td>
<td>“the most royal”</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-rajarīya</td>
<td>“the Rogerian”</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-ghalīlimiyya</td>
<td>“the Williamian”</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-‘alīya</td>
<td>“the high”</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-‘adīya</td>
<td>“the most high”</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>al-sanīya</td>
<td>“the splendid”</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-qiddīsiyya</td>
<td>“the most holy”</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-bahīya</td>
<td>“the magnificent”</td>
<td>•</td>
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### Table III. Data inferred from the Arabic inscriptions in Norman Sicily

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<th>CAP. PAL. NAZE</th>
<th>CAP. PAL. SOUTH AISLE</th>
<th>KING ROGER’S MANTLE</th>
<th>SAN GIACOMO LA MAZARA</th>
<th>SANTA MARIA DELL’AMMIRAGLIO</th>
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