

Sites of Encounter

Lesson #1: Sicily

Why was Norman Sicily a Site of Encounter?

Major Topics:

- Introduction to the Medieval World
- Encounters in 12th-century Norman Sicily
- Merchants and Trade in the Medieval Mediterranean
- Exchanges in Sicily and the Mediterranean
- Why was Norman Sicily a site of encounter?



Source: Husayn Ibn Ishaq, *Ten Treatises on the Eye*, MS Tibb Taymur 100, National Library, Cairo, Egypt.
 Photo: Zereschk, Wikipedia Commons,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Cheshm_manuscript.jpg.

Because of its geographical location, multicultural population and tolerant rulers, the Norman kingdom of Sicily was a major site of exchange between Muslims, Jews, Latin Christians and Greek Christians in the 12th century. Although Muslims and Latin Christians fought each other, they, along with Greek Christians and Jews, also traded, exchanged ideas, and coexisted in Norman Sicily with the help of shared norms. Since the Muslim world had more scholarship, more advanced technology, and extensive trade networks, certain Latin Christians were eager to trade with Muslims and acquire knowledge and technology from them. This transfer of knowledge from the Muslim world greatly benefited the Latin Christian world as it was expanding from 1000 to 1450.

This lesson introduces students to the concepts of the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World unit and the complex interactions in 12th-century Norman Sicily through analysis of material objects, maps, and primary sources.

Procedures

Step 1: Sites of Encounter Pre-Test (Class Time: 50 minutes)



Distribute copies of SE 1.1 **Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Pre-Test**, or have students take the pre-test online. The pre-test assesses what students remember from earlier units about the Silk Road, India, Islam (7.2), China (7.3), Ghana and Mali (7.4), and Europe (7.6). It also tests students on the historical thinking skills which are taught in this unit, including their ability to differentiate between primary and secondary sources, analyze maps and visuals, make an interpretation, and use evidence. Using the attached **Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Pre-Test Key (SE1.1-K)**, review student answers to determine what content and/or disciplinary skills need reviewing.

Step 2: Introducing the Unit Concepts (Class Time: 50 minutes)

The handout **SE1.2 Introducing the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Unit** outlines the key concepts of the unit and gives directions for teaching those concepts. The handout is designed for teachers, not for student reading. We recommend that you present these concepts to students directly and allow ample time for class discussion and checking for understanding.



After you define the term “medieval world,” student groups should look at the **SE1.4 World Trade Circles Map**, and complete **SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the World Trade Circles Map Activity**. If there are not enough computers for all the student groups, do the activity as a whole class. Project the World Trade Circles map(s) on an overhead or LCD projector, switching map tabs or individual maps as students progress through the questions. In either case, guide the students through the first three questions on SE1.3 before having them complete the activity in groups. After students are finished, debrief the activity. SE1.2 has suggestions for debriefing.

To conclude, restate the historical investigation question and tell students that they will begin by looking at Sicily in the 12th century (the 1100s).

Step 3: Norman Sicily as a Site of Encounter (Class Time: 90 minutes)

Norman Sicily was a site of encounter because of its location in the central Mediterranean and its multicultural population of Arab and Berber Muslims, Byzantine Greeks, Normans and other Latin Christians, and Jews. As a hook, students compare a T/O map, a common representation in contemporary western Europe, with the first analysis object of this lesson, the Al-Idrisi’s world map from the *Book of Roger*, in the handout **SE1.5 Maps of the Mediterranean**. Have students discuss the question in a Think-Pair-Share activity. Briefly discuss their theories as a whole class.

Procedures (continued)

Distribute **SE1.6 Blank Mediterranean Area Map** and pieces of string (if desired). Project the **SE1.8 Mediterranean Area in 1100 Map**. Have the students mark and label these key mainland trading towns of the region in the 11th and 12th centuries—Constantinople, Venice, Genoa, Barcelona, Palma de Majorca, Ceuta,



Tunis, Tripoli, Alexandria, Cairo, Tyre, Acre, and Marseilles. They should then use string or lightly draw lines to connect distant towns and then choose a location that would be favorable as a central trading location. Most lines will intersect in or near Sicily because of its central position. Point out that its location had long made Sicily a magnet for traders from throughout the region. Have the students label the island on their maps.

Distribute colored pencils and **SE1.7 Instructions for Labeling the Mediterranean Area in 1100 Map**. Have students complete labeling their maps. You might also use sticky notes to label a classroom wall map and keep it throughout the unit for reference.



Follow this with having students read **SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background**, and complete the literacy activity. Guide the students as a whole class through the first two paragraphs and charts before having them complete the rest individually or in pairs. This secondary summary covers the historical content of the lesson. Alternatively, this reading could be split into two parts. Students could read and do the activities for the first four paragraphs at this point, and read and do the activities for the last three paragraphs at the end of step 4.

Step 4: Probing Norman Motives (Class Time: 50 minutes)



*Norman Castle, Erice, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*, Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe, http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Erice/Erice_castle.jpg.*

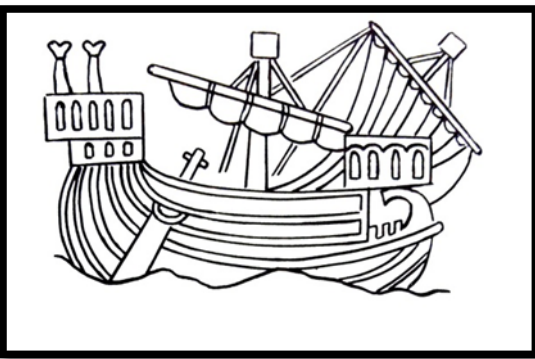
The Norman Count Roger of Calabria conquered Sicily between 1072 and 1091. **SE1.10 Close Reading: Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily*** has students analyze Roger's reasons for taking over the island. It contains a short primary source text and close reading activities. Have students read the entire text individually first. Next guide them through the first two text-dependent questions and then have students work individually. At the end, have students discuss Roger's motives in pairs and then as a whole class. Emphasize to students that rulers often have more than one reason for their decisions.

Procedures (continued)

After students discuss Roger I's motives, divide students into groups and distribute **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Map**, and **SE1.11 Evidence of Conflict Chart**. The groups have to discuss the evidence, make an interpretation (or claim) to answer the guiding question, and support it with evidence. They should also draw lines in red between the enemies' locations on the map. Tell students that they will use the maps again in the next step. At the end, have groups share their answers, and model good examples of specific evidence by recording them on the board. Make sure that the students understand the point that wars between religious groups, such as the Crusades between Christians and Muslims, were not as common as wars between groups following the same religion.



Step 5: Introducing Merchants and Trade in Sicily and the Mediterranean Area (Class Time: 90 minutes)



Drawing of a Pisan Round Ship of the 13th century, by John H. Pryor, from an engraving on the Leaning Tower of Pisa, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 7, p. 31. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

This step helps students think about the motives and concerns of medieval merchants, as well as to learn about ships, commercial partnerships, pirates, and taxes. It begins by showing students how few sources historians have about merchants in the 12th century and invites students to piece together primary source references with historians' conclusions. Divide students into 7 groups and distribute **SE1.13.1 Information about Primary Sources from the Cairo Geniza and the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants**. After going over the information, give each group one of the primary source handouts numbered **SE1.13.2** through **SE1.13.7** and **SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions on Medieval Mediterranean Trade**. Each group will read their primary source, summarize the evidence, match the evidence to a conclusion, and report to the class. As each group reports, have the students draw blue lines between the petition or letter's place of origin and its

destination on the **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Map**. Discuss the hazards of shipping and the types of ships with students as time permits. This will prepare students for the development of ship technology in the following lessons.

Distribute or project **SE1.15 Locations of Trade Goods** and have students follow the directions to mark their maps. Then project **SE1.16 Late Medieval Trade Routes** and explain to students that after the 12th century,

Procedures (continued)

Sicily lost some of its importance as a trade center. The most important trade cities in the Mediterranean in the 13th-15th centuries were Cairo, Venice and Genoa. Have students circle each of these cities on their maps.



Finally, have students look at their **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Maps** (now criss-crossed by red and blue lines) and think about the question, “Was there more trade (with peace and tolerance) or conflict (especially conflict between religious groups)?” Discuss their answers and point out that trade and conflict were going on at the same time. There were incidents of harsh language, persecution, riots, street violence, and wars between people of different religions, but there was also a lot of trade and in some places – like Norman Sicily - living peacefully in separate communities. There was continuous trade between Latin Christians and Muslims at the same time as the Crusades and other wars between people from these two religious groups.

Step 6: Exchanges and New Creations in Norman Sicily (Class Time: 40 minutes)

Sicily (and also Iberia and Crusader Kingdoms/Palestine) were contact points between the Muslim and Latin Christian worlds. In the 1100s, the Muslim world possessed technologies and knowledge that Latin Christians did not have. As Latin Christendom was expanding, Latin Christians eagerly adopted ideas, technologies, and knowledge from the Muslim world. This transfer of knowledge greatly helped the Latin Christian world as it was expanding geographically, economically, and intellectually. The purpose of the gallery walk in this step is to introduce student to some of the tangible objects that remain as evidence of this transfer of knowledge. Post the **SE1.17**



Transfer and Creation Visuals around the walls of the classroom. Distribute the **SE1.18 Transfer and Creation Data Sheet** to students and have them circulate around the visuals. Alternatively, distribute the SE1.17 visuals to students seated in groups. Have each group pass the visual to another group when they finish. At the end of the activity, have students record the main ideas (from the first 4 sentences of this step) in their notes. The Library of Congress has an interactive version of the Al-Idrisi composite map. At the end of SE1.17, there is a scavenger hunt activity for students to do at the Library of Congress site if time and technology are favorable.

Step 7: A Muslim Traveller, Ibn Jubayr, Comments on Sicily (Class Time: 60 minutes)



Ibn Jubayr, a Muslim author from al-Andalus, visited Sicily in 1184. His complex and often contradictory comments on the Norman government, Sicilian markets, and the relations between religious communities offer students evidence of both religious conflict and

Procedures (continued)

cooperation in trade and administration. **SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, “Comments on Sicily, 1184”** guides students through four readings of this primary source text, with different activities for each of the readings.

Have students attempt the first and third readings alone. For the second and fourth readings, you might put students in groups or guide the whole class through the reading and activities. After the fourth reading, discuss the text with students, using the questions as a guide. At the end, remind students of Roger I’s multiple motives for conquering Sicily and ask them to compare those motives with Ibn Jubayr’s comments. There are additional notes for questions about shared norms to use if time permits.

Step 8: Conclusion: Causes and Effects of Norman Sicily as a Site of Encounter (Class Time: 20 minutes)



SE1.20 Causes and Effects of Norman Sicily as a Site of Encounter has students summarize the main ideas of the lesson in a cause-and-effect chart. Pass out the chart and remind students that a site of encounter is a place where people of different cultures come into contact. At the site of encounter products, technologies, and ideas are exchanged and new products, technologies and ideas are created. Explain that the Causes (as in the first box) were the reasons why Sicily was a site of encounter. In the second box, students will summarize the exchanges and creations. In the last box, they will summarize the results of the exchanges, or the Effects. Go over the chart with students to be sure that they understand the points. For homework, have them draw a symbol for each of the statements on the chart.



Citation: Apse in Norman church, Santa Maria Nuova, Monreale, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200), <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Monreale/apse.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

SE1.2 Introducing the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Unit – Directions for Teachers (Page 1 of 4)



Citation: Roger II, S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo, photo by Alex Metcalfe, The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200),

<http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/martorana-2.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

Introduce this unit to students through direct instruction. Have them take notes on the definitions and/or post the definitions in the classroom.

Step 1: Tell students: This unit is organized differently from the units we have studied before. The previous units were about one region of the world, like China or Europe. The new unit is about the connections among many regions of the world. It is called Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World. The historical investigation question is: How did sites of encounter change the medieval world?

First we need to look at what these words mean. A “site of encounter” is a place (site) where people from different cultures meet and mix together. [Have students record that definition in their notes.] In the time period we’re studying, “different cultures” means groups of people that came from different places, or groups that had different languages, customs, or religions. There were thousands of different cultures in the medieval world. At sites of encounter, people do 2 things: 1) they exchange trade products, technologies, and ideas, and 2) by combining their knowledge, they create new products, technologies, and ideas and spread those to their home cultures. Sites of encounter are important because they are places where new ideas are born and shared.

Before we talk about what “the medieval world” means, let’s look at 2 dictionary definitions of the word “medieval.”

Medieval, definition #1

1. Of, relating to, or characteristic of the Middle Ages (500-1500)
2. Having a quality (such as cruelty) associated with the Middle Ages
3. Extremely outmoded or antiquated

Medieval, definition #2

1. Relating or belonging to the Middle Ages (500-1500)
2. Old-fashioned; unenlightened (Example: Her parents had a medieval attitude toward dating.)

Citations: Definition #1: Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/medieval>.

Definition #2: The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed., <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/medieval>.

SE1.2 Introducing the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Unit – Directions for Teachers (Page 2 of 4)

Ask students: What are the different meanings of the word “medieval”? Is there a negative meaning to the word?

Tell students: These two meanings (the time between 500-1500 and a cruel, backward, uncivilized world) came from an old idea about history: that Europe was the center of the world and the only place where important historical events occurred. European writers in the 1400s made up the words “medieval” and “Middle Ages” to mean the period between classical Rome and their own time, the “Renaissance.” These writers thought that Rome was glorious, but that the medieval period was backward and totally violent. The Renaissance writers believed that in their own time (the 15th and 16th centuries) civilization was reborn and people were making great progress. Without questioning this judgment, later historians borrowed the word “medieval” to mean the period in European history between end of the Roman Empire in the west (476) and the beginning of the early modern period (around 1500).

Today historians have a new idea of world history. They don’t believe that Europe was the center of the world. They analyze what was going on all over the world. In other parts of the world, especially China, Southeast Asia, India and the Muslim world, the word “medieval” doesn’t really fit. From 500 to 1500, these regions had powerful states, advanced technology, and creative arts.

But we are still stuck with the word “medieval” because people recognize it. So we need to question it and define it carefully. To us, “medieval world” means the chronological (or time) period between 1000 and 1500 in the Euro-Asian-African world where the encounters took place.

Next we need to look at the word “world.” We actually won’t be studying the whole world, but only the eastern hemisphere. But even just the eastern hemisphere – Asia, Africa, Europe and all the oceans, seas and islands around them – was a huge area with millions of people living in it. We will be shifting the scale from individual regions – like Europe, China, or the Islamic world – to all of those regions put together.

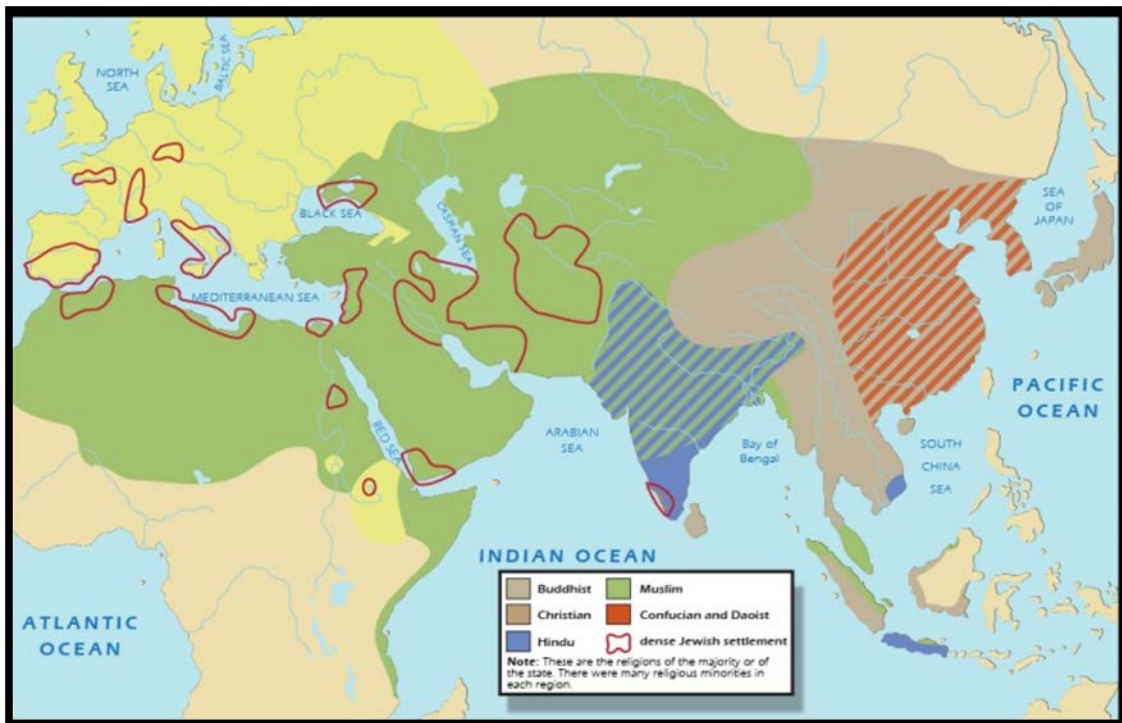
Step 2: Students should complete **SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the World Trade Circuits Map.**

After students are finished, debrief the activity. Make sure that they understand that most medieval people identified themselves by their local place and did not feel patriotic towards a country. Project the **States in 1279 map** and point out to students that, unlike today, there are big areas where there were no states (or countries). In some of those areas, there were so many little states or city-states that we can’t show them on the map. Point out, for example, that in India, there was an empire in the north, the Sultanate of Delhi, and 2 big states in the south, Chola and Pandya. However in the rest of India, there were hundreds of small

SE1.2 Introducing the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Unit – Directions for Teachers (Page 3 of 4)

kingdoms and city-states, identified as “minor states.” We use the word “India” to mean a geographic place, not a country. Most of the medieval world was divided into little local states. This is a big difference between the medieval world and our world.

Sometimes we will identify different cultures by the geographical name of the place where they lived (such as Korea, Italy, or the Philippines) even though these were not unified states in the Middle Ages.



Project the Religions map and ask students what the word “dominant” means. Tell them that in each of the areas, there were people who followed other religions. There were Christians and Muslims living in the Chola state, for example. When we speak of Christians, Muslims and Hindus, remember that there were hundreds of different cultures (who spoke different languages and lived in different places) who followed these religions. They did not all think alike just because they followed the same religion.

SE1.2 Introducing the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World Unit – Directions for Teachers (Page 4 of 4)

Step 3: Introduce the unit's emphasis on cultural exchange through a brief discussion:

In this unit on Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World we will study how people from different cultures interacted with each other. When people from different cultures meet for the first time, what kinds of reactions can they have? What are the possible forms of contact? [Solicit war, trade, coexistence, conquest.]

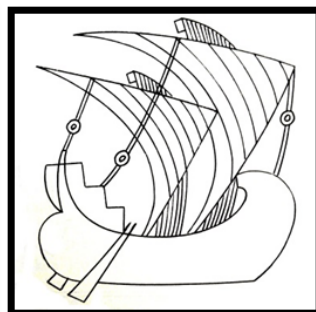
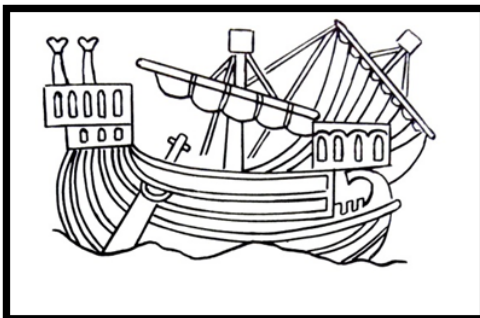
There was a lot of war and conquest in the Medieval World. Sometimes the wars were between people of different religions, such as the Crusades. But just as often knights and warriors fought against people of their own religion, Christians against Christians, or Muslims against Muslims. At the same time, Christian and Muslim merchants brought and sold goods from each other. In fact, the amount of trade grew tremendously as the Crusades continued.

Conclude by telling students that they will be investigating how exchanges (of products, technologies, and ideas) at sites of encounter changed the Medieval World. Discuss the meaning of products (silk, pepper, pots, etc.), technologies (a type of sail, a compass, a windmill) and ideas (scientific, religious, or intellectual information, books, artwork). The first site will be Sicily in the 12th century (1100s). The others are Quanzhou, Cairo, Mali, Majorca and Calicut.

SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles Map

Directions: Look at the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles maps to answer these questions.

1. Which of the seven continents are shown on the **Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles map**? [From now on, we will refer to this area as Afro-Eurasia.]
2. Look at the **Religions Map** or select the "religions" tab on the World Trade Circles map. Between 1000 and 1500, the most important identity people had was with their local place – their village or their town. The second most important identity was their religion. Although they felt connected to others who spoke their language, most people did not think of themselves as part of a country as we do today. What color shows where Buddhism was the dominant religion? "Dominant" means that there were more Buddhists in this area than followers of any other religion. It does not mean that everyone was a Buddhist.
3. List the sites of encounter where Buddhism was the dominant religion. Use the **Sites of Encounter map**.
4. What color shows where Hinduism was the majority religion? _____ List the sites of encounter where Hinduism was the dominant religion.
5. What color shows where Islam was the dominant religion? Using the **States in 1279 map**, list 4 states in which Islam was the dominant religion.
6. What are the two colors that show the two divisions of Christianity? What are the names of those divisions?
7. List the state(s) in which Greek Christianity was the dominant religion.
8. List the sites of encounter where Latin Christianity was the dominant religion.
9. Judaism did not dominate in any region of Afro-Eurasia. Jews lived all over Afro-Eurasia. What symbol is used to show some of the places where Jews lived?



Citations: Drawing of a Pisan Round Ship of the 13th century and Drawing of a sailing ship (maybe Byzantine), 13th century, drawn by John H. Pryor, based on a plate found at Corinth, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 6, p. 30, and fig. 7, p. 31. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles Map (Page 2 of 5)

Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles



SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles Map (Page 3 of 5)

Sites of Encounter



SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles Map (Page 4 of 5)

Religions, ca. 1400



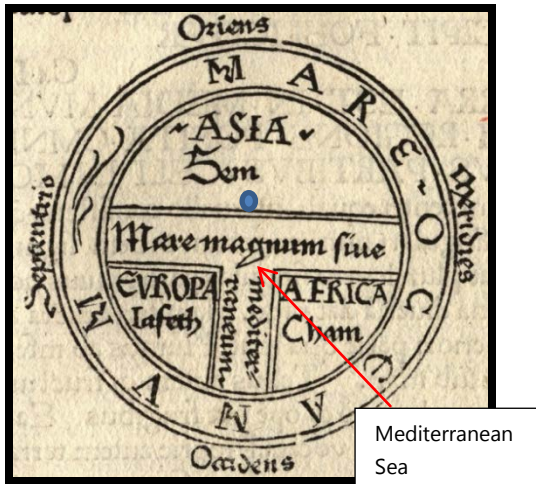
SE1.3 Finding the Medieval World on the Afro-Eurasian Trade Circles Map (page 5 of 5)

States in 1279



SE1.5 Maps of the Mediterranean

Instructions: Imagine that you lived in 1135 and you wanted to learn more about the Mediterranean Sea. Which of the two maps below would be most useful to you? Give two pieces of specific evidence to support your answer.



T-O map from the *Etymologiae* of Isidorus, 1472 (Kraus 13), (http://libraries.uta.edu/speccoll/exhibits/weuromaps/text_tms1-T-O-map.htm) Used by permission of the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.



"Map of the world created by traveller and writer, al-Idrisi in 1154 for Roger II, King of Sicily (oriented with South at the top)," *The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, MS. Pococke 375, fols. 3v-4r.* Courtesy of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

Map 1 is called a T/O Map, because it looks like a T inside a circle. T/O maps were made in western Europe to represent the world symbolically. Because the western Europeans were Latin Christians, they imagined the city of Jerusalem as the center of the earth. The city of Jerusalem would be on the blue dot above the center of the T. East is at the top of this map, and the words are in Latin. This T/O map was made in 1472 as an illustration for a book.

Map 2 follows the tradition of mapmaking in the Muslim world. Al-Idrisi, a Muslim scholar from Al-Andalus, created this map and 70 smaller regional maps for the Latin Christian King Roger II of Sicily. Mecca is at the center of the map, shown above as a red dot. South is at the top, and the words are in Arabic. This map was made in 1154.

SE1.6 Blank Mediterranean Area Map



Courtesy of Daniel Dalet at d-maps.com; <http://d-maps.com/m/mediterranean/meditmax/meditmax03.gif>

SE1.7 Instructions for Labeling the Blank Mediterranean Area Map (Page 1 of 3)

Instructions: Fill in **SE1.6 Blank Mediterranean Area Map** following these directions:

1. Draw dots for and label the following trade cities: Constantinople, Tyre, Acre, Alexandria, Cairo, Tripoli, Tunis, Ceuta, Palma de Majorca, Barcelona, Marseilles, Genoa, Venice.
2. Connect distant trading cities with string or light lines. Select a good spot for a central trading location. Write the name of that location here:

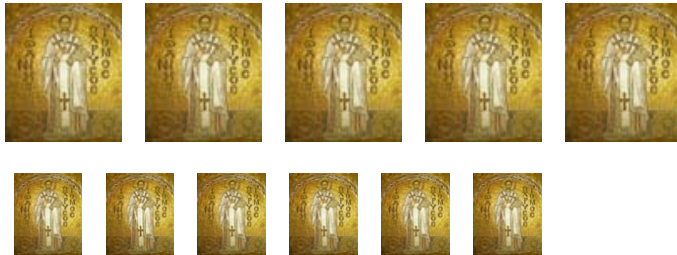
3. Label and color in the following important states:
 Byzantine Empire (Greek Christians)
 Seljuk Sultanate of Rum (Muslims with large Christian population)
 Crusader Kingdoms (Latin Christians with large Muslim, Jewish and Greek Christian populations)
 Fatimid Caliphate (Muslims with Coptic Christian and Jewish minorities)* Use the Greek Christian icon for Coptic Christians
 Almoravid Kingdom (Muslims with Latin Christian and Jewish minorities)
 Léon (Latin Christians, with Muslim and Jewish minorities)
 Castile (Latin Christians, with Muslim and Jewish minorities)
 Aragon (Latin Christians, with Muslim and Jewish minorities)
 Norman Kingdoms of Italy and Sicily (Latin Christians with large Greek Christian, Muslim and Jewish populations)
 France (Franks, Latin Christians with Jewish minority)
4. In each of the states you labeled, paste the correct large religion icon for the religion of the rulers and the small religion icon(s) for the other religions of people in that state. In the parentheses, the first religion is the religion of the ruler.



Citation: Mosaic decoration in Norman palace at Zisa, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200), <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/zisa-4.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

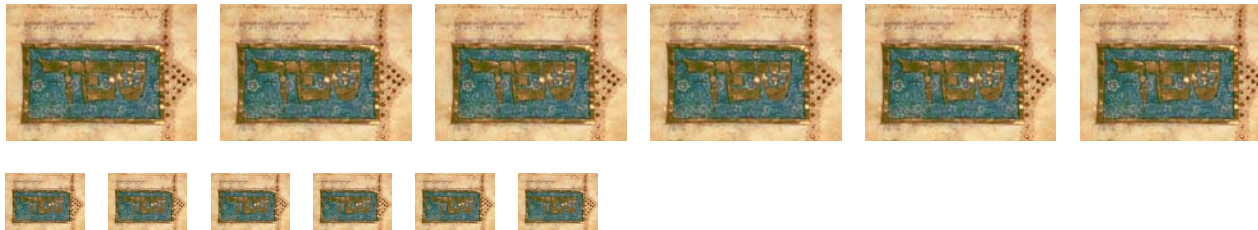
SE1.7 Instructions for Labeling the Blank Mediterranean Area Map (Page 2 of 3)

Greek Christian Icon



Mosaic of St. John Chrysostom of Antioch, Church of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, (Constantinople). Photo taken by Valentinian, Wikipedia Commons, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Johnchrysostom.jpg>.

Jewish Icon



Washington Haggadah by Joel ben Simeon, 1478, From the collections of the Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., <http://www.loc.gov/rr/amed/guide/images/h32s.jpg>.

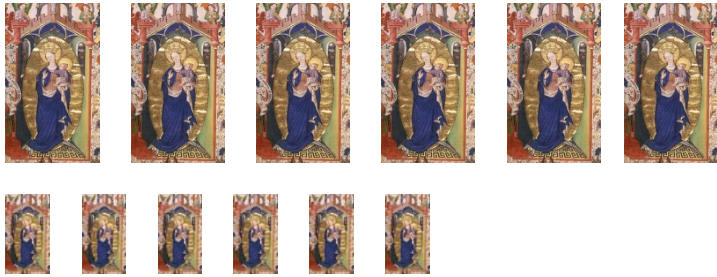
Muslim Icon



Qu'ran of Ibrahim Sultan, 1427, Timurid Iran, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913 (13.228.2), courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, www.metmuseum.org.

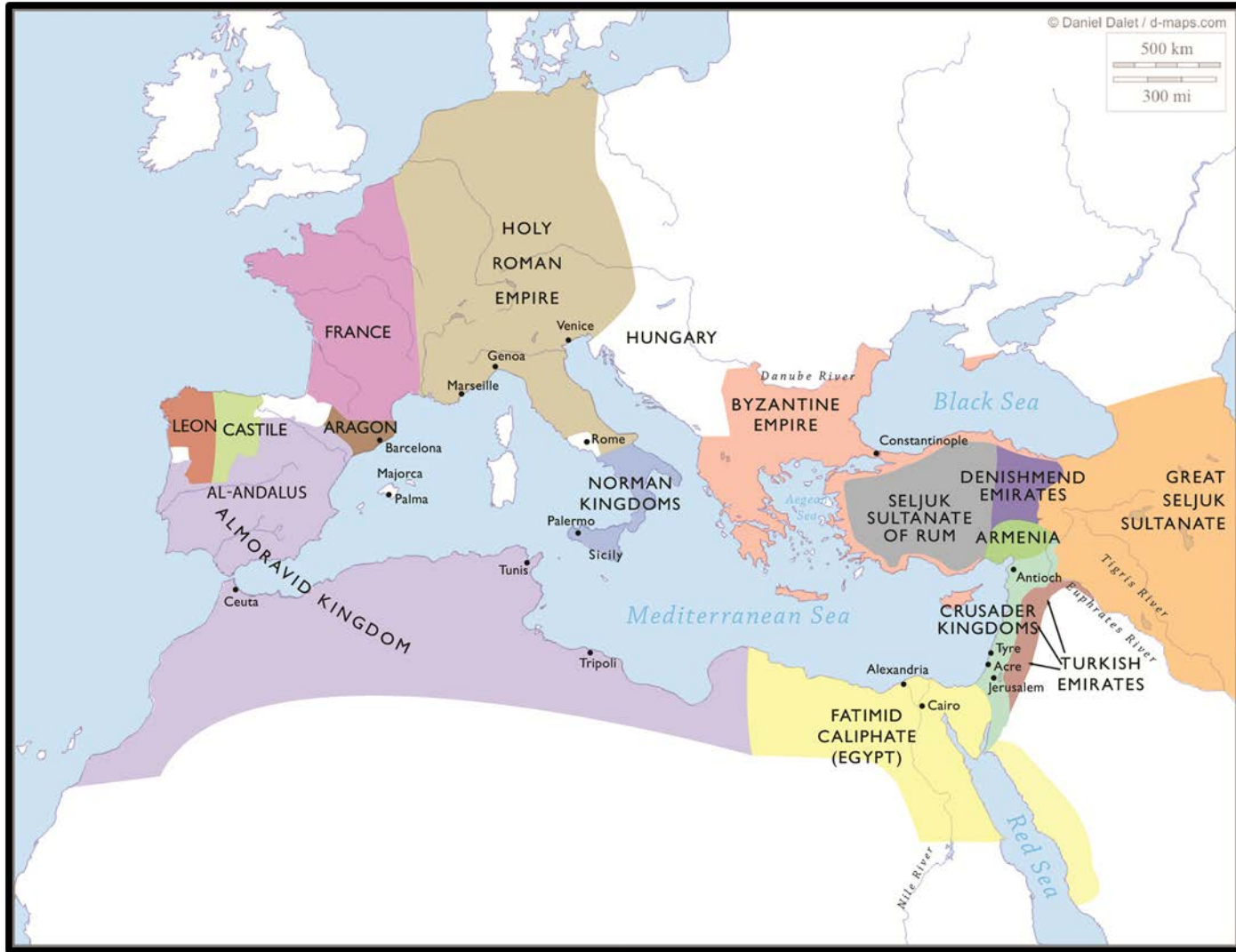
SE1.7 Instructions for Labeling the Blank Mediterranean Area Map (Page 3 of 3)

Latin Christian Icon



*Book of Hours of Catherine of Clèves, ca.
1440, f. 1, Courtesy of the Morgan
Library and Museum,
[http://www.themorgan.org/collections/w
orks/cleves/manuscript.asp](http://www.themorgan.org/collections/works/cleves/manuscript.asp)*

SE1.8 Mediterranean Area in 1100 Map



SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 1 of 6)

Instructions: Read each section of the text and answer the questions and follow the directions below each section.

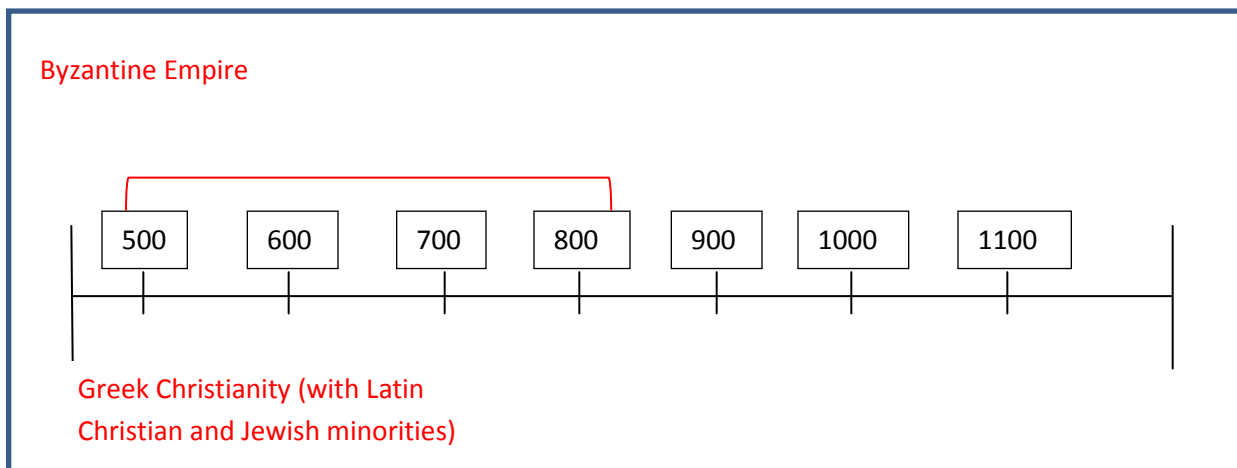


Satellite Map of Sicily, Tunisia and Southern Italy, NASA Earth Observatory, cropped by DrFO.Jr.Tn, 2004, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tunisia_-_Sicily_-_South_Italy.jpg.

In western European history, historians use the Middle Ages or the medieval period to identify the time between the end of the western Roman Empire (476) and the beginning of the early modern period in 1500. In 500, the Byzantine Empire ruled over Sicily and southern Italy. Most Sicilians spoke Greek and practiced Greek Christianity (also known as Orthodox Christianity.) In 831, the Aghlabids, Muslims from North Africa, conquered Sicily. The Aghlabids allowed the Greek Christians and

Jews who lived in Sicily to practice their religions as long as they paid a special tax. Over the next two centuries, some Sicilians converted to Islam, while others remained Greek Christian or Jewish.

1. Write a title on the timeline below: "Timeline of Sicilian History"
2. Write in the name of the rulers of Sicily and make a bracket of the dates that they ruled. Do this above the line. The first ruler (the Byzantine Empire) is done for you.
3. Under the line, write the name of the religion introduced by each ruler. The first one is done for you.



4. By 1000, how many religions did Sicilian people practice? List those religions.

SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 2 of 6)



Citation: Roger II, *S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo*, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*,

<http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/martorana-2.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

The next conquerors of Sicily were the Normans, who came from northwestern Europe. They were the descendants of the Vikings, groups of Norse or "Northman" warriors who raided across Europe in the 800s. One famous Viking leader, Rollo, settled his people in what is today northern France. To buy his cooperation, in 911 the French king offered him a small territory that grew later to become the duchy of Normandy. Rollo and his followers converted to Latin Christianity. His descendants, known as Normans, learned French and became powerful knights. Norman knights conquered the kingdom of England in 1066 and took part in the Crusades in Palestine and Iberia. By 1059, a Norman noble, Robert Guiscard, took over southern Italy from the Byzantine Empire. Then, Robert Guiscard's younger brother, Roger, conquered Sicily from the Muslims from 1061-1080.

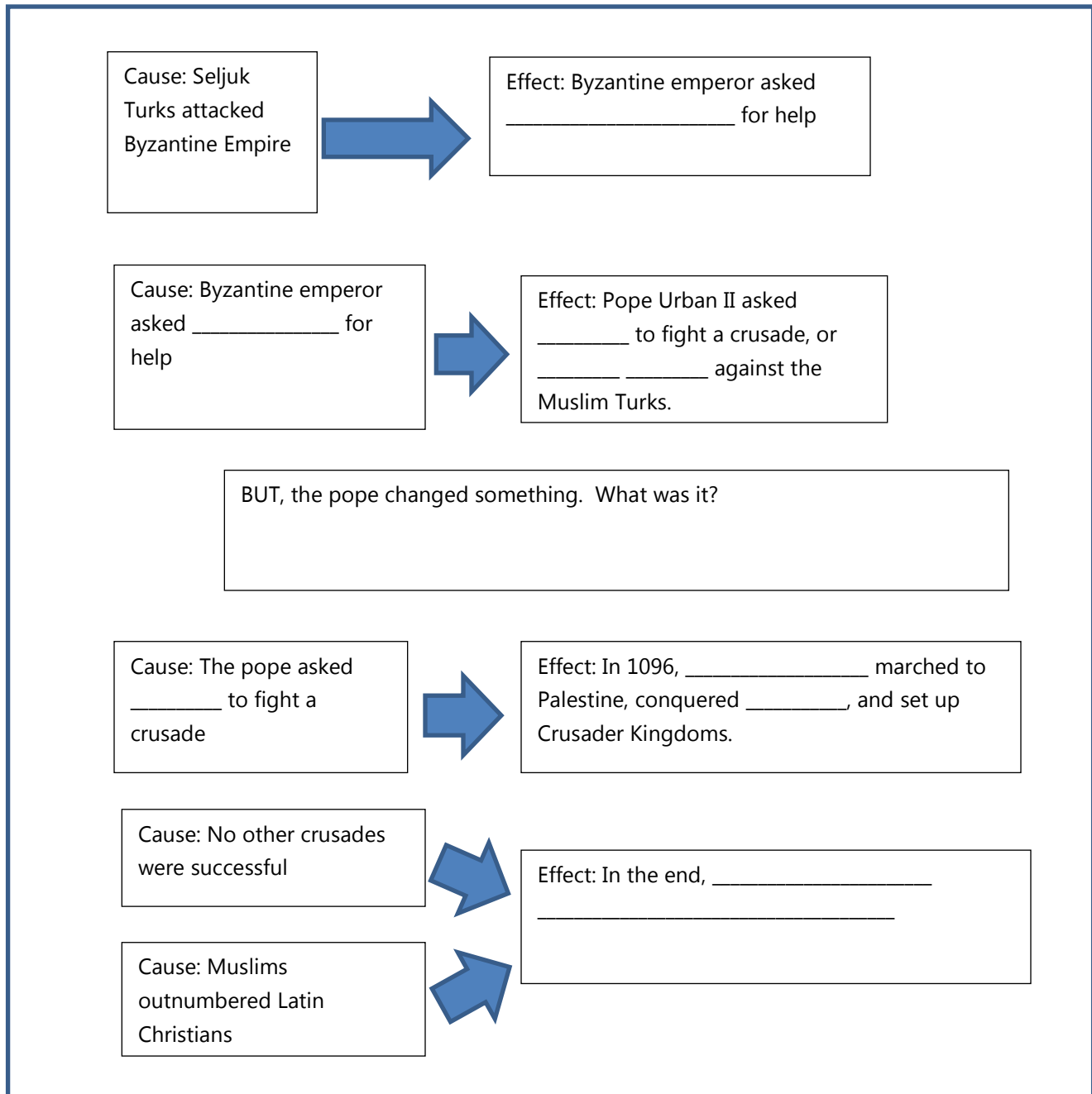
In the late 11th century, Latin Christians were beginning to expand their lands and trade activities. One war of expansion is called the Crusades. The Crusades began when the Seljuk Turks attacked the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine emperor asked the Latin pope, his fellow Christian, for help. In response, Pope Urban II asked knights to fight a crusade, or holy war, against the Muslim Turks. But instead of asking the knights to fight for the Byzantine emperor, the pope asked them to free Jerusalem, which had been under Muslim rule for more than 400 years. In 1096, armies of Crusaders (Latin Christians who were called "Franks" by the Muslims) marched to Palestine, conquered Jerusalem, and set up small Crusader Kingdoms in the middle of the Islamic world. There were many crusades over the next two centuries, but only the first one was a military success. The Muslims (called "Saracens" by the Franks) outnumbered the Latin Christians and gradually won back all the territory that they had lost. By 1291 the Crusader Kingdoms had disappeared.

5. *Where did the Normans come from?*

6. *Add the Normans to the timeline above.*

SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 3 of 6)

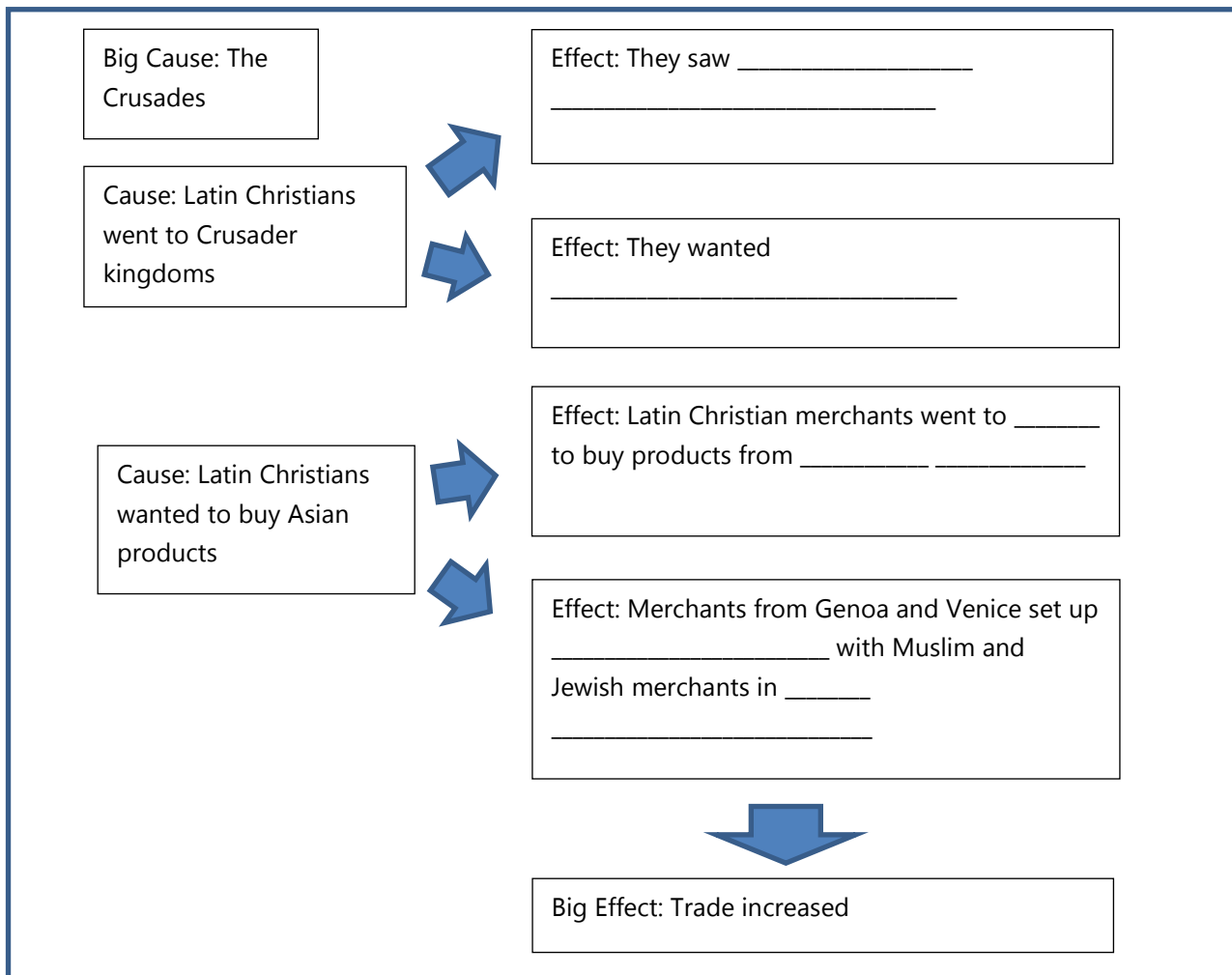
7. The paragraph above contains a series of cause-and-effect relationships to explain why the Crusades happened, what they achieved, and why the Crusaders were defeated in the end. Fill in the missing text in the boxes below to show the causes and effects.



SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 4 of 6)

One effect of the Crusades was that trade greatly increased. Before 1100 there was not much long-distance trade to Europe. The biggest trade city was Constantinople. When Latin Christians went to the Crusader Kingdoms, they saw the products and cultural advances of the wealthy and sophisticated Islamic world. Latin Christians developed a taste for Asian products, such as spices and cotton cloth from India and silk from China. Latin Christian merchants went to Sicily and other great trade cities and bought more and more Asian products from Muslim and Jewish merchants. Sicily was connected to the Islamic trade routes to the south and east. Merchants from the Italian city-states of Genoa and Venice set up trade networks with Muslim and Jewish merchants in the eastern Mediterranean trade cities, such as Acre, Tyre, and Cairo. Venice and Genoa dominated Mediterranean trade by 1200.

8. Analyze the cause-and-effect relationship between the Crusades and the growth of trade.



SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 5 of 6)

In the Middle Ages, many Latin Christians, Muslims and Jews were not fighting against each other, but cooperating in trade and daily life in sites of encounter such as Sicily. Even though some of Roger II's relatives fought in the Crusades, Roger II of Sicily did not fight against Muslims in his kingdom. He ruled over a multicultural population that included Latin and Greek Christians, Muslims, and Jews, who spoke Greek, Arabic, French, and Italian. He provided fair treatment and protection to all of his subjects regardless of their faith. In fact, Roger and the Normans adopted Muslim cultural and



Citation: Grizandus Inscription, Zisa Palace, Palermo, photo courtesy of the Soprintendenza dei beni culturali in Palermo and Alex Metcalfe, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/zisa-2.jpg>.

ruling practices, along with Byzantine practices. Roger hired Byzantine, Jewish, and Muslim officials for his administration. He hired artists who wrote in Arabic on Norman palaces, churches, coins, and even Roger's coronation mantle. Roger's policies made Muslim and Jewish merchants feel comfortable trading in Sicily.

9. *What products from the East did the Crusaders find they liked?*
10. *What Italian city-states created trade networks with Muslim and Jewish merchants?*
11. *What were the different religions of Sicily's people?*
12. *What languages did they speak?*
13. *How did Roger II treat Sicily's people?*
14. *What evidence is there in the above passage that Roger valued other cultures? Remember that evidence is specific, so include specific names and details.*

SE1.9 Sicily as a Site of Encounter: Background (Page 6 of 6)



Citation: "Map of the world created by traveller and writer, al-Idrisi in 1154 for Roger II, King of Sicily (oriented with South at the top)," *The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, MS. Pococke 375, fols. 3v-4r.* Courtesy of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.
[http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley.](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley)

Roger II's tolerant rule made it easier for Muslims, Jews, and Christians to cooperate in Sicily, and their sharing of ideas and knowledge led to the creation of new products and ideas. For example, Roger hired the Muslim scholar al-Idrisi (1100-66) to create a book of geography including maps of the whole world. Al-Idrisi was born in Ceuta and educated by Muslim scholars in Cordoba in al-Andalus. Under the direction of Roger II, al-Idrisi sent out travelers to distant lands with instructions to gather geographic information and report it back to him. He also questioned ship captains and merchants. Al-Idrisi combined information from Islamic geographers, his own knowledge of trade routes in North Africa and Asia, and the Normans' knowledge of northern European geography to chart the "known" world. Al-Idrisi's team created a large silver disk engraved with the world map. Roger probably displayed this treasure in his palace. Al-Idrisi's group also wrote a book, *The Book of Roger*, in Arabic, with 70 maps of world areas. Al-Idrisi's map book is an example of the new products and ideas that are created at sites of encounter. To make the map book, he combined knowledge from the Greeks, Arabs, Persians, Indians, Jews, Italians, and Normans. The map book was more accurate and complete

than most other maps existing in the world at that time.

When the Normans conquered Sicily, Norman rulers, merchants and scholars gained access to the products, knowledge and technologies of the advanced Islamic world. Muslim, Jewish, and Latin Christian scholars in Sicily and Toledo (in Iberia) translated many books from Arabic into Latin (the universal language of western Europe). These translations introduced to Western Europe important philosophical, scientific, and mathematical texts that Latin Christians did not have. These translated books became the basis of advanced European education. Just as al-Idrisi's map book increased the knowledge of Latin Christians about the geography of the world, these translations greatly increased Latin Christians' knowledge of science, math, philosophy, and medicine. Knowledge from the Islamic world helped the Latin Christian world as it was expanding.

15. What 5 sources did al-Idrisi use to get the information to make the silver map and the Book of Roger?

16. Why was the Book of Roger important?

17. How did knowledge from the Islamic world help the Latin Christian world?

Source: Graham A. Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012), 7-11.

SE1.10 Close Reading: Geoffrey Malaterra, *About the Deeds of Roger of Calabria and Sicily* (Page 1 of 3)



Citation: Mosaic of Christ Pantokrator (Creator of All), Norman church, Santa Maria Nuova, Monreale, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Monreale/Pantokrator%20Monreale.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

Historical Investigation Question: Why did Roger I want to conquer Sicily?

Close Reading #1 Instructions: Read the introduction and the primary source and answer the questions below.

Introduction: The author, Geoffrey Malaterra, was a monk who wrote a long and mostly flattering history of the life of Roger I in the 1090s. Roger was a Norman noble living in southern Italy with his brother, Robert Guiscard, who was the Duke of Apulia and Calabria (small regions of southern Italy). Robert helped Roger raise an army of knights to attack Sicily in 1061, and by 1080, the Normans had taken over most of the island. After that date, Roger ruled as Count of Calabria and Sicily. The following text from Malaterra's book is about Roger's plans to attack Sicily.

Primary Source Text:

While he was staying at Reggio with his brother the duke, that most distinguished young man Count Roger of Calabria heard that Sicily was in the hands of the unbelievers. Seeing it from close at hand with only a short stretch of sea lying in between, he was seized by the desire to capture it, for he was always eager for conquest. He saw two ways by which he would profit, one for his

soul and the other for his material benefit, if he brought back to Divine worship a country given over to idolatry, and if he himself possessed the temporal fruits and income from this land, thus spending in the service of God things which had been unjustly stolen by a people who knew Him not.

*Primary Source Citation: Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of Duke Robert Guiscard his brother*, unpublished translation by Graham Loud, 2005, from *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*, [http://medievalsicily.com/Docs/03 Norman Conquest/Malaterra](http://medievalsicily.com/Docs/03%20Norman%20Conquest/Malaterra), p. 19*

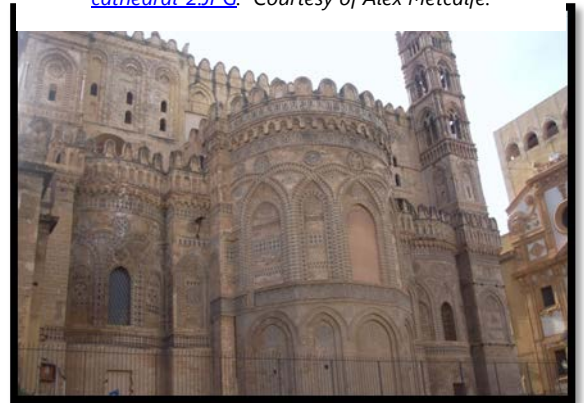
SE1.10 Close Reading: Geoffrey Malaterra, *About the Deeds of Roger of Calabria and Sicily* (Page 2 of 3)

Instructions: Answer these questions to source the text.

1. What is the author's name?
2. When was the source written?
3. Is the source primary or secondary? How do you know?
4. What were the author's sex, ethnic group, religion, and social status?

Citation: Apse of the Palermo Cathedral, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*,

<http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/pa-cathedral-2.JPG>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.



Close Reading #2 Instructions: Read through the text sentence by sentence. There are blanks after pronouns and unusual words. In each blank, write the person or group to whom the pronoun or unusual word refers. Then answer the questions below.

"While he _____ was staying at Reggio with his _____ brother the duke, that most distinguished young man Count Roger of Calabria heard that Sicily was in the hands of the unbelievers _____."

5. *Count Roger was a Norman and a Latin Christian. What group would he have called "unbelievers"?*
6. *Was the author, Geoffrey Malaterra, a supporter or a critic of Roger? Circle the evidence in the sentence above that supports your answer.*

"Seeing it _____ from close at hand with only a short stretch of sea lying in between, he _____ was seized by the desire to capture it, for he _____ was always eager for conquest."

7. *Look at your map of Mediterranean area and find Southern Italy and Sicily. Sentence 1 says Roger was in Reggio, which is in the "toe" of the Italian "boot". He was looking across the Strait of Messina. What city was closest to Roger's location in Reggio?*
8. *The last phrase gives the first reason why Roger wanted to conquer Sicily. What was it?*

SE1.10 Close Reading: Geoffrey Malaterra, *About the Deeds of Roger of Calabria and Sicily* (Page 3 of 3)

Since the final sentence is long, it is divided into two parts, one for each of the next two reasons Malaterra claimed Roger had for conquering Sicily.

"He _____ saw two ways by which he _____ would profit, one for his soul . . . if he _____ brought back to Divine worship _____ a country _____ lost to idolatry _____ . . . which had been unjustly stolen by a people _____ who did not know Him _____."

9. "To Divine worship" means back to the Latin Christian church. By "idolatry", an insulting loaded word, Malaterra was referring to Islam. Notice that the Word "Him" is capitalized. Why?
10. According to Malaterra, what did Roger think about the Muslims' religion and their control of Sicily?
11. Malaterra was a monk. Is it possible that he might have exaggerated Roger's religious feeling? Why or why not?
12. This sentence gives the second reason why Roger wanted to conquer Sicily. What was it?
13. According to Malaterra, how did Roger think he would personally benefit by capturing the land he saw?

Here is the second part of the same sentence:

"He _____ saw two ways by which he _____ would profit... and the other _____ for his material benefit _____, if he himself possessed the temporal fruits and income _____ from this land..."

14. "Temporal fruits" means money from taxes. If Roger ruled Sicily, he could charge merchants taxes to trade (like modern sales taxes). Since there were many merchants traveling and trading in Sicily, those taxes would make him rich. What was the third reason why Roger wanted to conquer Sicily?

Close Reading #3 Instructions: Read the entire passage over again and discuss this question with your partner:

15. Which of Roger's three reasons do you think was the most important to him? Explain your answer.

SE1.11 Evidence of Conflict Chart

Instructions: Now that you have looked at Roger I's reasons for conquering Sicily, we are going to look at evidence of war and conflict in the Mediterranean area between 900 and 1200. The chart gives evidence about a few of the hundreds of wars, large and small, which occurred in this time period.

1. *As a group, read each piece of evidence.*
2. *On the **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Map**, draw a line in red between the locations of the enemies to represent their conflict. Draw a separate line for each piece of evidence*
3. *Make a key in the bottom left corner of the map: Red – War and Blue – Trade (you will look at the trade evidence in the next activity)*
4. *Discuss this question: Judging by the evidence presented in this chart, was war more common between two different religious groups or between two groups who followed the same religion? As a group, make an interpretation (or claim). Explain your interpretation and include at least two pieces of specific evidence (from the chart) to support it.*

Date	Conflict	Enemies	Religions of Enemies	Locations
1040-1059	Norman conquest of southern Italy	Robert Guiscard and Normans against Lombard rulers	Latin Christians against Latin Christians	Benevento to Reggio (southern Italy)
1040-1059	Norman conquest of southern Italy	Robert Guiscard and Normans against the Byzantine Empire	Latin Christians against Greek Christians	Benevento to Bari (southern Italy)
1061-1080	Norman conquest of Sicily	Roger I and Normans against Zirids	Latin Christians against Muslims	Southern Italy to Sicily
900-909	Fatimid conquest of North Africa and Sicily	Fatimids against Aghlabids	Muslims against Muslims	Egypt to Tunis
934-944	North African revolt	Fatimids against local Arab and Berber rulers	Muslims against Muslims	Egypt to Tunis
1085-1090	Apulian revolt	Norman Duke Roger of Apulia against his half-brother Bohemond	Latin Christians against Latin Christians	Melfi to Brindisi
1190-1192	Third Crusade	Franks (from France, England, Germany) against Saracens (from Syria & Egypt)	Latin Christians against Muslims	France to Jerusalem
1196-1199	Richard I of England vs. Philip II of France	English against French	Latin Christians against Latin Christians	England to France
1174	War and rebellion	Zengids against Fatimid Egypt	Muslims against Muslims	Syria to Egypt

SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade & Conflict Map



SE1.13.1 Instructions for Primary Sources from the Cairo Geniza and the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants (Page 1 of 2)



North Africa, the Mediterranean Sea and Sicily from Weltkarte des Idrisi vom Jahr 1154 n. Ch., Charta Rogeriana / wiederhergestellt und herausgegeben von Konrad Miller, Courtesy of the Library of Congress,

Instructions: Read the background information.

Background Information

To investigate the past, historians use the primary sources that have survived from that time period. There are very few surviving primary sources about merchants and trade in the medieval world, much less than there are for religion, war, and knights. Merchants' records were considered "ordinary" papers which were later thrown away.

There are two important collections of primary sources from merchants. The first is the Cairo Geniza collection of thousands of pieces of paper from the 10th-12th centuries, as well as later time periods. Jewish people saved the papers that had the name of God on them.

According to Jewish law, these papers were put in the geniza, or storehouse, instead of being thrown away. The Cairo Geniza was a large room next to the synagogue. In this synagogue, people could throw their papers into the geniza room through a slot in the wall just above the Torah. Because most Jewish synagogues did not have a lot of room in their genizas, they often cleaned out the geniza and buried the papers. But the Cairo Geniza was so large that it was never cleaned out. Through this accident, historians have a treasure chest of sources. In these papers, there are letters from Jewish merchants which give details about trade and travel.

The second collection is from the archives of the city of Venice, an important trade city in Italy. The excerpts you will read come from a petition from ambassadors of the Byzantine Empire to the government of Venice. The ambassadors were trying to get the Venetian government to pay for damages done to Byzantine citizens by Venetians.

Instructions: As historians, your group should:

- *Read the primary source and discuss its meaning. Make sure all group members understand the meaning.*
- *Answer the questions.*
- *On the **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Map**, locate all of the cities or places mentioned in the merchant letter or petition. If it is a merchant letter, draw a blue line between the letter's place of origin and its destination. If it is a petition item, draw a blue line between Constantinople and Venice.*
- *Present your answers, evidence and conclusions to the class. On the big map, you must point out the letter's place of origin and its destination.*

SE1.13.1 Primary Sources from the Cairo Geniza and the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants (Page 2 of 2)

Questions:

1. *Is this a letter from the Cairo Geniza, or an item from the Byzantine petition?*
2. *Who wrote the letter or petition? Where was he?*
3. *Who was supposed to get the letter, or receive the petition? Where was he?*
4. *What was the relationship between two?*
5. *What was the date of the letter or petition?*
6. *What trade goods did the author mention?*
7. *What risk did the merchant(s) face? Write down the evidence about that risk, and then match it to one of the numbers on SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade. Reading the RISKS will help you find evidence from your primary source.*
8. *From your letter or petition, find evidence about how merchants reduced their risk (by protecting themselves, getting help from someone, or selling their goods for profit). Record the evidence, and then match it to one of the numbers on SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade. Reading the RISK REDUCERS will help you find evidence from your primary source.*

SE1.13.2 Primary Source from the Cairo Geniza about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

Letter #1

From Joseph ben Samuel, known as al-Dny, in Palermo, Sicily to “my elder and master Abi Ibrahim Ismail b. Abraham,” in Damsis, Egypt, 1025

My elder and master, may God prolong your life . . .

I am writing to you from Palermo . . . I was shipwrecked in Zahlaq [during a Byzantine attack on Sicily]. . . and came out of it without a dinar or even a dirhem and no garment to wear; I arrived naked in Tripoli. By God, had I not met there a Jew who owed me a qintar of wax (sent to him) from Zawila . . . I would have been destroyed. . .

I sent you 10 pounds of silk with Hayyim b. Saada and sent you also 6 dinars gold . . .

Citation: “Shipwreck in Wartime (Ca. 1025),” *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, translated by S. D. Goitein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), #71, pp. 315-9.

Vocabulary

dinar = a gold coin

dirhem = a silver coin. 10 dirhems = 7 dinars.

qintar = a measurement of weight

Note: Use Cairo as the destination on the map.



Image: Husayn Ibn Ishaq, *Ten Treatises on the Eye*, MS Tibb Taymur 100, National Library, Cairo, Egypt. Photo by Zereshk, Wikipedia Commons,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Cheshm_manuscript.jpg

SE1.13.3 Primary Source from the Cairo Geniza about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

Letter #2

From Abu Said, in Palermo, Sicily, to his brother Abu 'l-Barakat in Cairo, 1140

. . . [O]n the voyage to Sicily I was overcome by a disaster A great storm seized us on the sea and we were forced to land on an island called Ghumur. We stayed there for twenty days with no food other than nettles. When we set out from there we did not have the look of human beings any more. The seas tormented us for thirty-five days and we were regarded as lost. For we set sail in four barges, but only ours survived. . . This is the reason which prevented me from coming to Egypt this year. . .

If you intend to move, the best thing is to come to Sicily, for the spices of the East sell here well.

Citation: "The Horrors and Amenities of Travel," *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, translated by S. D. Goitein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), #74, pp. 323-327.

Vocabulary

nettles = a weed

Ghumur was a tiny island between Tunisia and Sicily. You do not have to mark it on your map.



Image: Coronation Mantle, Palermo Royal Workshop, 1133/34, photograph taken by Gryffindor and stitched by Marku1988 with Autostitch, 2007. Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Weltliche_Schatzkammer_Wienc.jpg.

SE1.13.4 Primary Source from the Cairo Geniza about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

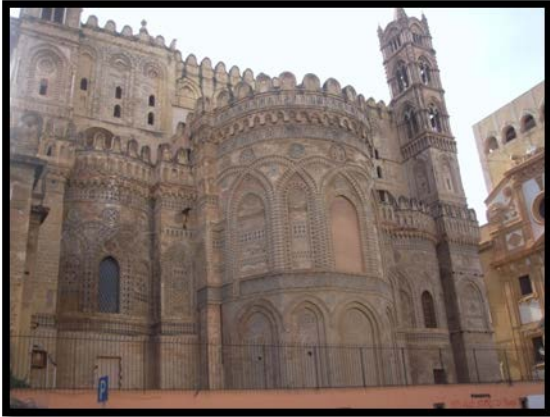


Image: Apse of the Palermo Cathedral, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/pa-cathedral-2.JPG>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

Letter #3 From Amalfi, Italy to Al-Mahdiyya, Tunisia

We suffered hardship [from pirate attacks and had to sail in the opposite direction] . . . We arrived in Amalfi after more than 70 days. This was not enough: We came to a town whose property had been confiscated and we did not find anyone who would buy any goods from us, if it was pepper or olibanum, or anything else, not even one dirhem's worth. We put our goods in warehouses and are now waiting for God's help. I do not worry for my own things. I worry for you and your goods that I am unable to sell. I really regret this very much.*

*15-25 days was normal.

Citation: "From Amalfi, Italy to Al-Mahdiyya, Tunisia," *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, translated by S. D. Goitein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), #4, pp. 42-45. The excerpt was slightly modernized by Shennan Hutton.

Vocabulary

confiscated = this means that some government or army had taken away the valuable property of the people in the town

olibanum = frankincense (a fragrance used in rituals)

dirhem = a silver coin

Note: This source is just one paper of a longer letter. There are no names on the surviving piece of paper. It describes a trip from Alexandria to Amalfi in the 11th century. Use Alexandria as the place of origin and Amalfi as the destination.

SE1.13.5 Primary Source from the Cairo Geniza about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

Letter #4 From a Iberian merchant in Fez, Morocco, to his father in Almeria, al-Andalus, 1140

I arrived in Fez on Friday. . . At our arrival we were met by the informers and they found out exactly the number of the loads (belonging to us). They went to the superintendent of the customs and told him. . . After great troubles it was agreed that the governor would take 10 mithqals; the superintendent of the customs, 3; the informers, 2; and the employees, ½. I was sick for three days out of anger and sorrow. . . I should also like to inform you that I spread out the nisfiyya clothes, and the very first garment that fell into my hands was spoiled by water in all its folds. I went out of my mind, but God, the exalted, had willed that only this one was spoiled. This happened because we had much rain on the way, but God, the exalted, granted rescue. As of late today I sold ten pairs of them for a total of 80 dinars. . . I bought first-class, excellent antimony, about twenty qintars, each qintar for 1 dinar. If you think that I should buy more, send me a note and let me know. For the lac I was offered 24 [dinars]. I am holding on to it, perhaps I shall get 25.



Image: Mosaics on Interior of Dome, S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo, Sicily, photo courtesy of Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/martoran-a-2.jpg>.

Citation: "From a Spanish merchant in Fez, Morocco, to his father in Almeria, Spain," *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, translated by S. D. Goitein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), No. 7, pp. 51-54. The translation was slightly modernized by Shennan Hutton.

Vocabulary

customs = the government department that collects taxes on imported goods

mithqal = a gold coin equal to 1 dinar

dinar = a gold coin

Nisfiyya cloth – expensive clothing, made in Cairo

antimony = kohl, used for makeup

qintar = a measure of weight

Lac = key ingredient of lacquer, a waterproof covering for wood and jewelry. It was made from insect resin found in India, Thailand, and China.

SE1.13.6 Primary Source from the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

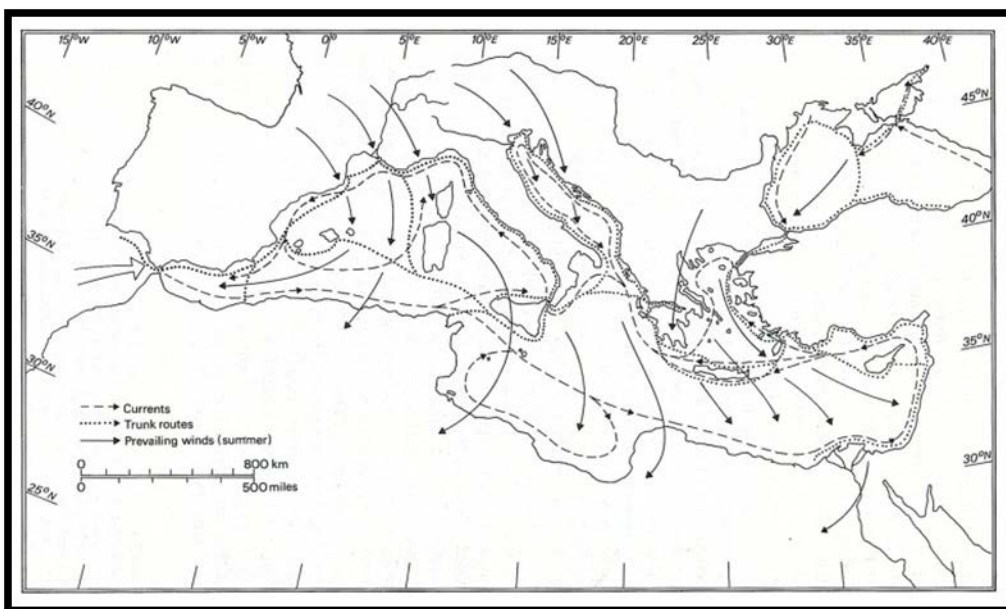
Item 1 from the Byzantine petition, 1319-1320

Item, in the month of December. . . Giovanni Fratello, Venetian, while coming to Crete with a galley, met a vessel from Monemvasia [a place in Crete] which belonged to a man named Maurosumi, and captured it. And in it were cloth, oil, money, weapons, valued at 2,200 hyperpers, as well as thirty men, who were sold for 500 hyperpers. . .

Citation: "International Disputes over Trade, Constantinople and Venice, 1319-1320," in *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents*, trans. and ed. by Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955, 2001), #156, p. 315.

Vocabulary

hyperpers = a gold coin



Currents, Prevailing winds (summer), and trunk routes [the routes most merchant ships sailed], from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 2, p. 14. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

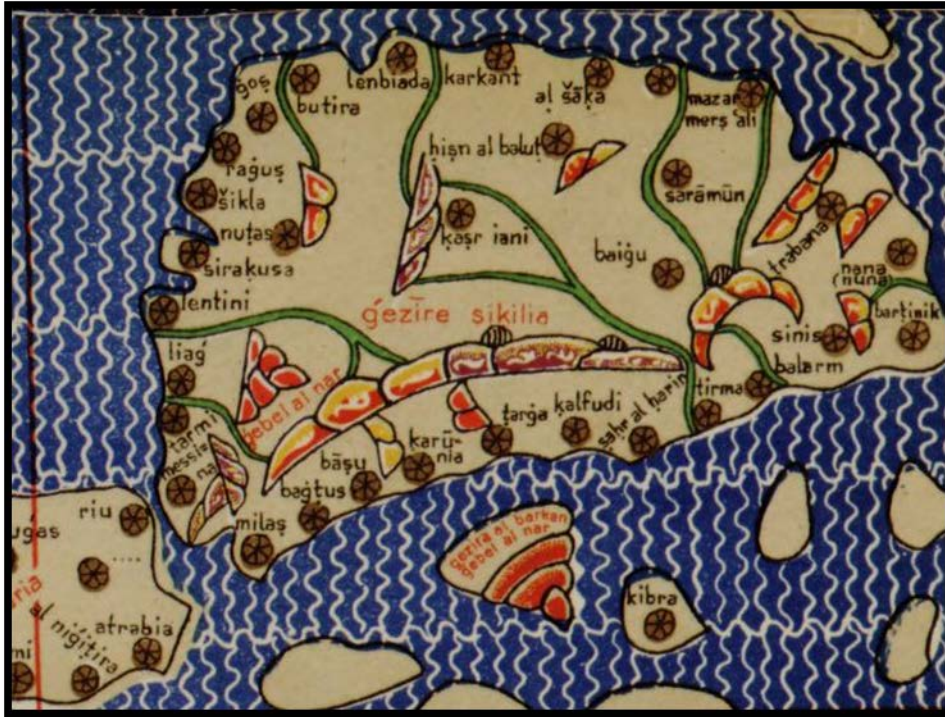
SE1.13.7 Primary Source from the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

Item 2 from the Byzantine petition, 1319-1320

Item, in the month of March. . . Nascimbene, behaving as a pirate, took 36 men from a place called Ceconi [on the island of Crete] and sold them in Rhodes. . . .

Citation: "International Disputes over Trade, Constantinople and Venice, 1319-1320," in Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents, trans. and ed. by Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955, 2001), #156, p. 316.



North Africa, the Mediterranean Sea and Sicily from Weltkarte des Idrisi vom Jahr 1154 n. Ch., Charta Rogeriana / wiederhergestellt und herausgegeben von Konrad Miller, Courtesy of the Library of Congress, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3200.ct001903>.

SE1.13.8 Primary Source from the Venetian Archives about Trade and Merchants

Historical Investigation Question: What risks did medieval merchants face and how did they try to reduce those risks?

Item #3 from the Byzantine petition, 1319-1320

Item, . . . as I was going to pay homage to my lord, the Sacred Emperor, I came across Righetto Bruno, Pietro Fauro, and Giovanni d'Armiraia, who captured me and took from me everything I had, and then sold my own person.*

*these men were from Venice

Citation: "International Disputes over Trade, Constantinople and Venice, 1319-1320," in Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents, trans. and ed. by Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955, 2001), #156, p. 316.



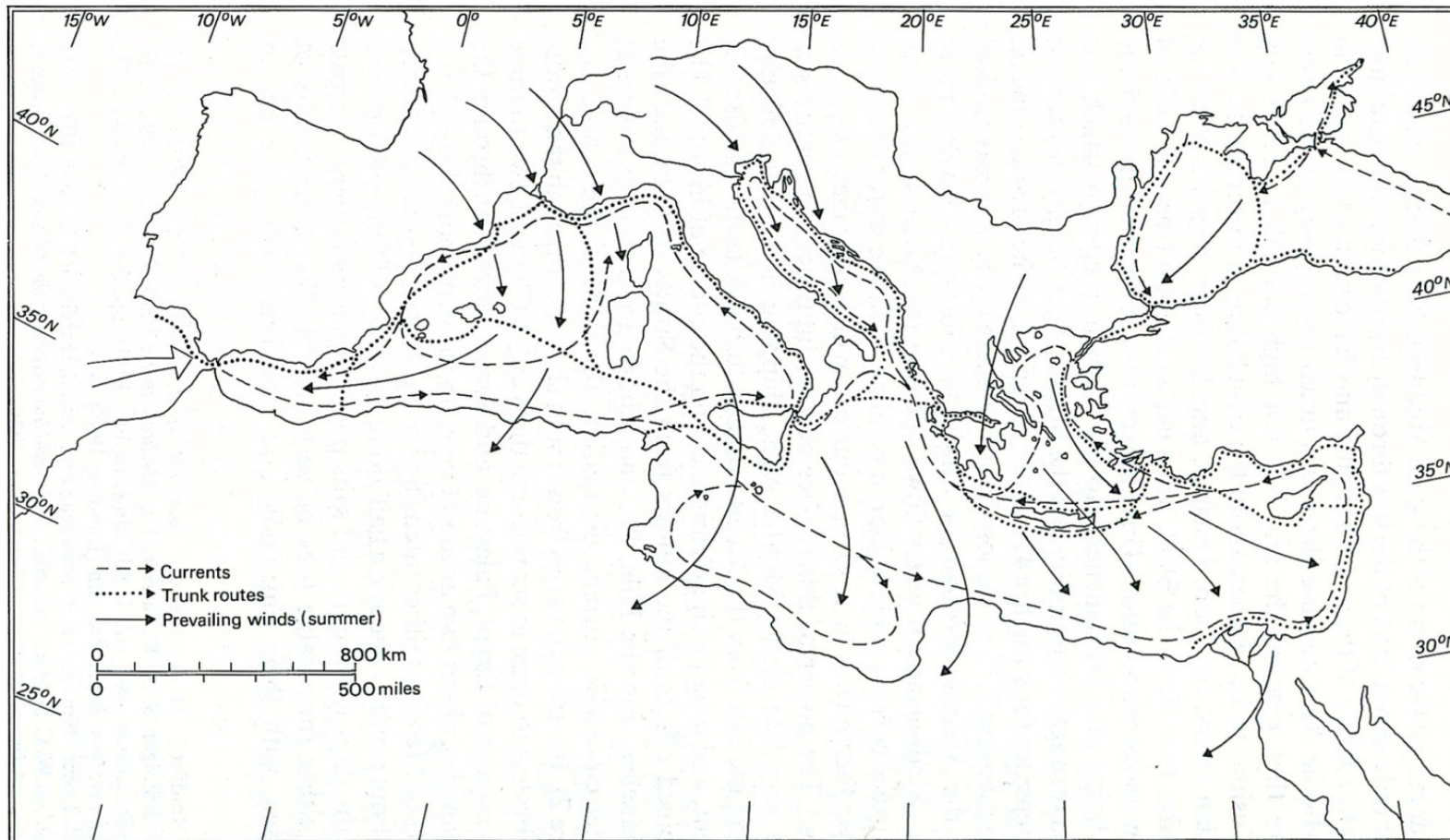
Image: Mosaic decoration in Norman palace at Zisa, Sicily, photo by Alex Metcalfe, The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200), <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/zisa-4.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

Vocabulary

homage – visiting and paying respects to one's lord

the Sacred Emperor = the emperor of the Byzantine Empire

SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade (Page 1 of 5)



Currents, Prevailing winds (summer), and trunk routes [the routes most merchant ships sailed], from *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571*, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 2, p. 14. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

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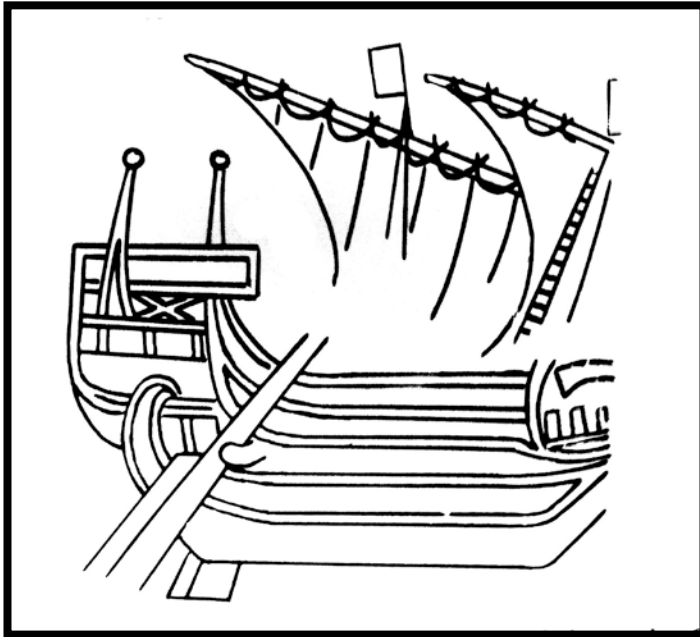
Historians make interpretations and draw conclusions from evidence in primary sources. Listed below are some of the conclusions medieval historians have drawn about the risks merchants faced (RISKS). RISK REDUCERS include practices, customs, and laws that protected merchants.

RISKS	RISK REDUCERS
<p>RISK 1: Merchants were worried that their goods or their money would be stolen. Bandits (robbers on land) or pirates (robbers at sea) stole goods and money from merchants whenever there was no government to stop them. Merchants also feared traveling into war zones, where they might be attacked by one side or the other.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 1: It was cheaper to send goods by sea than by land. Land transportation used wagons and animals, such as horses, mules, and camels. Because there were almost no paved roads, rain turned the dirt roads to muddy pits and slowed travel to a crawl. Sea transportation used boats, which were faster. The weight of goods didn't matter as much as on a boat as it did on an animal's back. For these reasons, it was almost always cheaper to travel by sea than by land, if a sea route was available.</p>
<p>RISK 2: Pirates also stole people and sold them into slavery. Christians were not supposed to make fellow Christians into slaves, and Muslims were not supposed to make fellow Muslims into slaves. So Christians enslaved Muslims, and Muslims enslaved Christians. However, some pirates broke these rules. Many of the slaves had to row the galleys, a very dangerous and miserable job. Pirates would release a slave if his relatives or partners paid a ransom.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 2: Ships did not sail directly across the Mediterranean Sea (or any other sea or ocean.) Instead, the ship followed along the coastlines, and crossed from one island to the next. Captains wanted to keep the land in sight so that they could land on shore if a storm threatened. Ships did not sail at all from November until March, to avoid the bad weather of winter.</p>
<p>RISK 3: Some governments dishonestly squeezed merchants, confiscated [took away] their goods, held them for ransom, or charged them outrageous taxes to trade.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 3: Merchants wanted protection and security from governments. Merchants expected governments to charge them taxes. Naturally merchants wanted low taxes, but they also wanted protection and security. They wanted governments to make and enforce laws against stealing, breaking contracts, and cheating.</p>

SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade (Page 3 of 5)

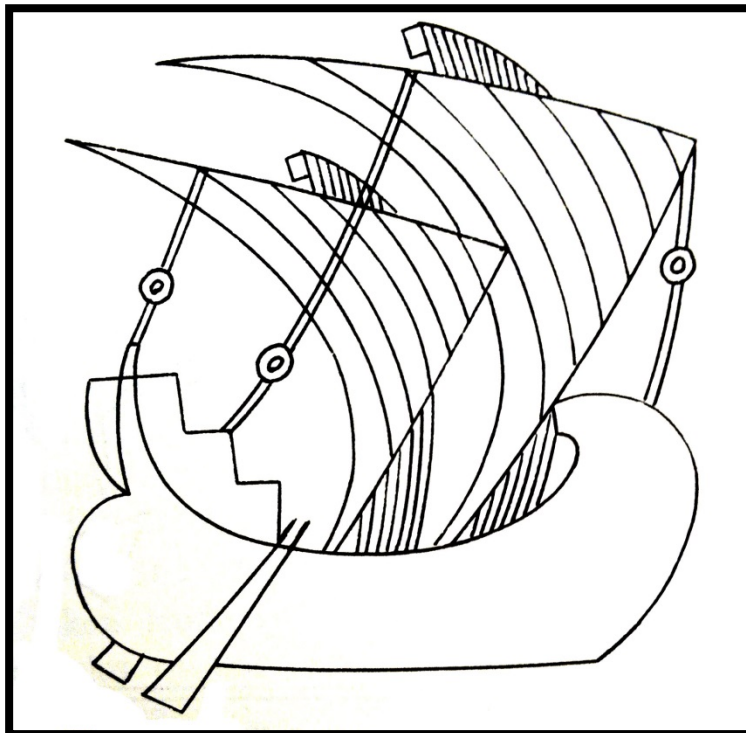
RISKS	RISK REDUCERS
<p>RISK 4: Merchants worried that they would not make a profit on their trade. In order to make a profit, they had to buy goods for a low price and sell them for a higher price. They worried about the costs of transport and taxes. If their costs were too high, or people did not want to buy their goods, the merchants would lose money.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 4: To avoid carrying money, a travelling merchant used bills of exchange, which worked like cashier's checks do today. The merchant handed over money to a moneychanger or bank in his home town, got a bill of exchange, and cashed it with the moneychanger or bank's representative when he reached the trade city.</p>
<p>RISK 5: Communication and travel were very slow and uncertain. There was no telephone or other fast method of communication. Letters had to travel by ship or by land. Ships were faster, but in the 1100s, a ship sailing from Marseilles (in France) to Acre (in the Crusader Kingdoms) would be at sea for 4 to 6 weeks. The trip home would take 8 to 12 weeks.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 5: Partnerships: Merchants often had partners or agents. In order to be partners, merchants had to trust each other closely. This was hard. Merchants chose partners or agents from their own families, close friends, and people born in the same home towns. Merchants did most of their business with others of their own religious community, but they also traded with merchants of other religions. Agents would travel around to different cities, sell the merchant's goods and return home with the merchant's money. Often merchants wrote down their agreements in contracts.</p>
<p>RISK 6: Travel by sea was very dangerous. In the 1100s, galleys and round ships were not as well-designed as in later times. (In fact, one of the major developments we will see in this unit is the development of very well-designed ships that could sail across the middle of oceans in every kind of weather without sinking.) To position the oars close to the water, the sides of galleys were very low. During storms, high waves often swamped galleys, filling them with water, and sinking them below the waves. High winds could blow a galley or a round ship onto a rocky shore where it would break apart. Shipwrecks were common.</p>	<p>RISK REDUCER 6: Because so many ships sank and their cargoes were lost, merchants spread their risk by shipping small amounts of goods on many ships. They invested a little of their money in many voyages rather than risking all their money on one voyage that might fail.</p>

SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade (Page 4 of 5)



Round Ship, 1187

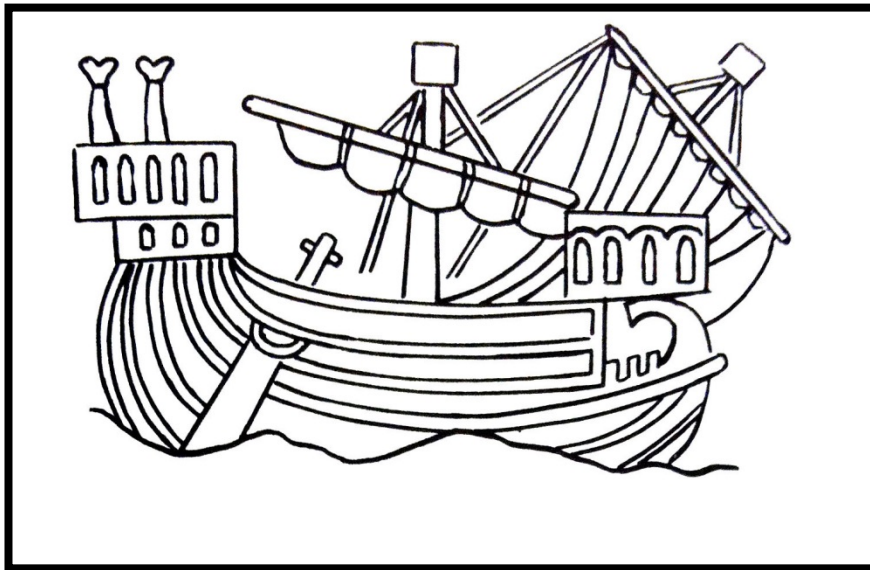
Genoese round ship, 1187, drawing by John H. Pryor to illustrate the ship which brought Conrad of Montferrat from Constantinople to Tyre in 1187, from the continuation of Caffaro's Annales januenses, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 1, p. 2. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.



Sailing Ship, 13th century

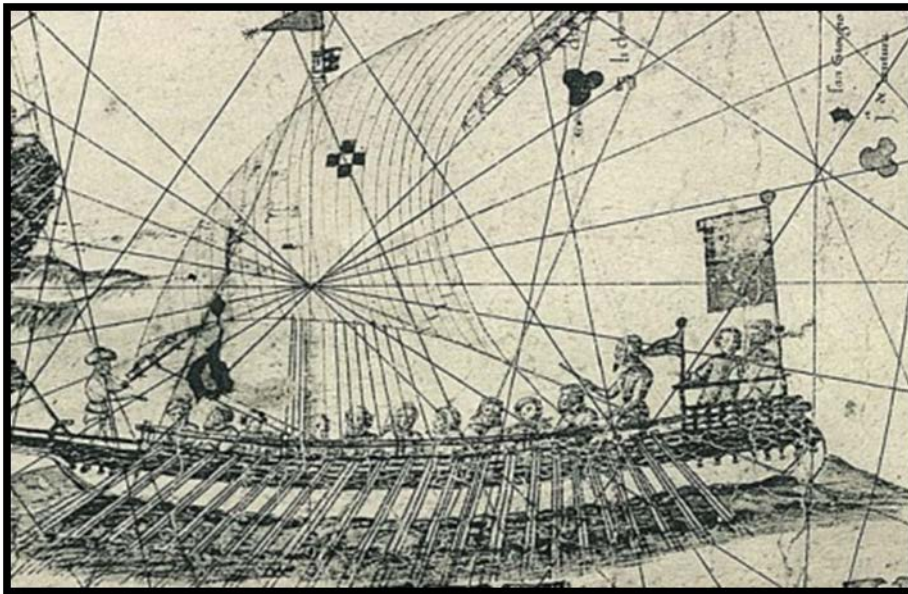
Drawing of a sailing ship (maybe Byzantine), 13th century, drawn by John H. Pryor, based on a plate found at Corinth, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 6, p. 30. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

SE1.14 Historians' Conclusions about Medieval Mediterranean Trade (Page 5 of 5)



Round Ship, 13th century

Drawing of a Pisan Round Ship of the 13th century, drawn by John H. Pryor, from an engraving on the Leaning Tower of Pisa, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 7, p. 31. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.



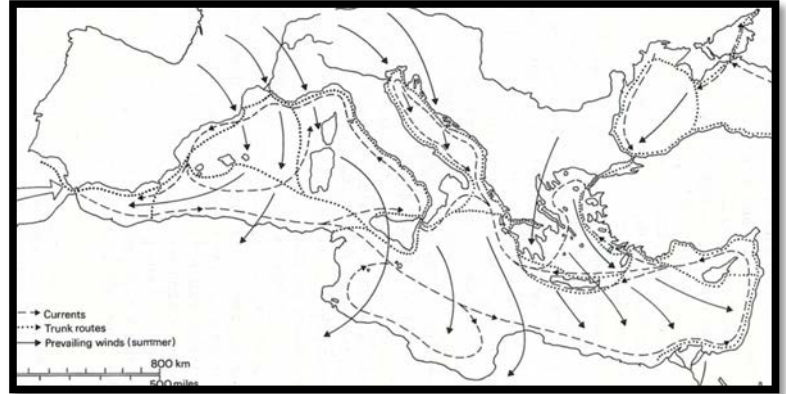
Galley, 1482

Drawing of a Portuguese galley on a map made by Gratius Benincasa, at Ancona, Italy, in 1482, University Library of Bologna, in La Découverte de l'Afrique au Moyen Âge. Cartographes et Explorateurs, Vol. 3, by Charles de la Roncière (Cairo: Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte, 1927), plate XL.

SE1.15 Locations of Trade Goods

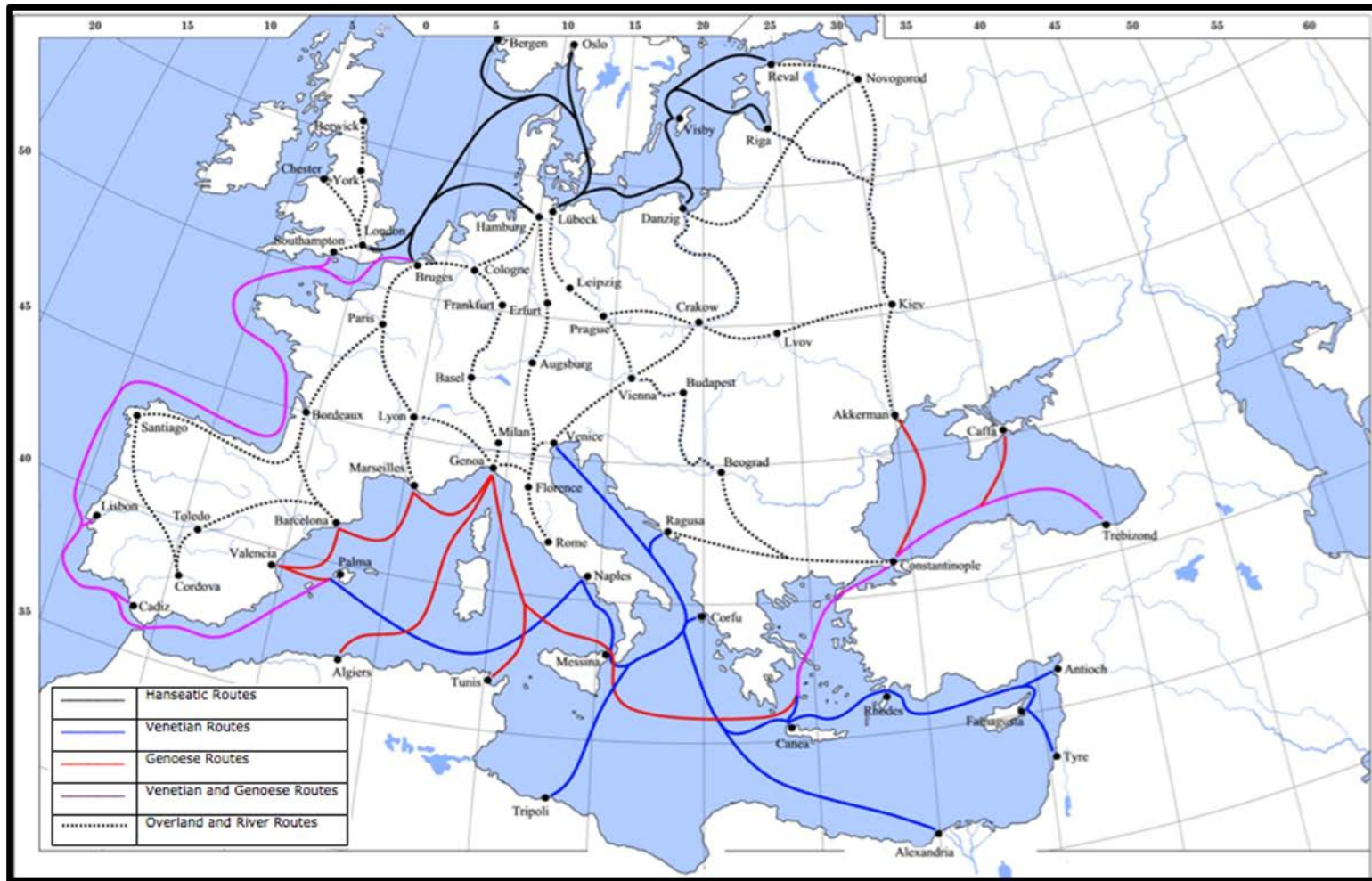
*Instructions: On the **SE1.12 Mediterranean Trade and Conflict Map**, write the number next to each trade good in the place from which it came. Note that many trade goods came from more than one place, so you will write the numbers more than once. When you have finished writing all the numbers on the map, draw a blue line between each number and Sicily.*

1. Paper from Syria, Morocco and Iberia
2. Pepper from India
3. Cheese from Corsica and Sardinia
4. Silver objects from Sardinia
5. Indigo dye from Cyprus
6. Tragacanth (a sap used to tan leather tanning and to stiffen fabric) from Seljuk Sultanate
7. Ginger from India
8. Sugar from Cyprus, Egypt, and Syria
9. Gold from Mali
10. Rice from Iberia and Syria
11. Madder (a red dye) from Egypt and Cyprus
12. Dried grapes from Armenia
13. Slaves from Central Asia, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa
14. Grain from Russia, Morocco, Iberia, and Italy
15. Gold objects from France
16. Wool cloth from France, Flanders, and Italy
17. Silk cloth from the Byzantine Empire, Egypt, Syria, Persia, and China
18. Cotton cloth from India
19. Linen cloth from Iberia
20. Leather from Iberia
21. Pearls from Oman
22. Fruits and nuts from Sicily
23. Salt from Sardinia
24. Rice from Iberia



*Currents, Prevailing winds (summer), and trunk routes [the routes most merchant ships sailed], from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, *Past and Present Publications* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 2, p. 14. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.*

SE1.16 Late Medieval Trade Routes



Citation: Late Medieval Trade Routes, created by Lampman, 2008, Wikipedia Commons, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Late_Medieval_Trade_Routes.jpg.

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 1 of 8)

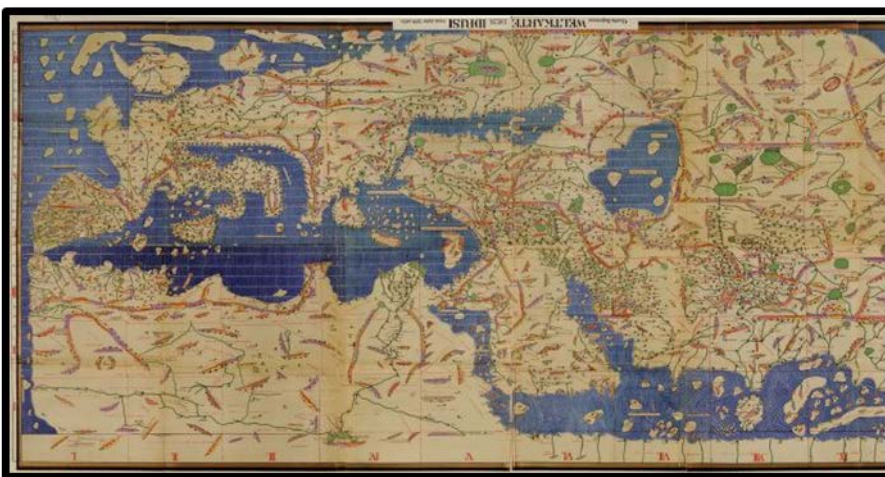
Object #1: Al-Idrisi's World Map

The smaller sections of this map were first created in 1157 by Al-Sharif Al-Idrisi, in *The Book of Roger*. Al-Idrisi and his team had been hired by King Roger II of Sicily to make maps of the whole known world. Many scribes made copies of Al-Idrisi's book during the Middle Ages. In 1928, Konrad Miller put 70 small maps from the *Book of Roger* into a large whole map that you see below. There are placenames on the map, but on this small photograph, they are too small to see.



Citation: *Weltkarte des Idrisi vom Jahr 1154 n. Ch., Charta Rogeriana / wiederhergestellt und herausgegeben von Konrad Miller, Courtesy of the Library of Congress, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/gmd/g3200.ct001903>.*

Here is the map rotated to put north at the top.



Find the Mediterranean Sea. Can you point to Sicily on this map?

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 2 of 8)



Al-Idrisi’s team drew 70 detailed maps of sections of the known world. The visual above is a magnification of the island of Sicily from a section map. Remember that the island is “upside down” since Al-Idrisi put south at the top of the map. Al-Idrisi’s team originally wrote the placenames in Arabic. Professor Konrad Miller wrote the placenames in our alphabet so that people who don’t know Arabic letters could read them. Can you find Messina? What symbol did al-Idrisi use for cities and towns? Can you find Syracuse? Hint: the spelling is different. What do you think “gezire sikilia” means?

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 3 of 8)

Object 2: King Roger II's Coronation Mantle

A mantle is a cape, a kind of coat with no sleeves. The king received the mantle and put it on during the coronation, or crowning ceremony. This mantle was made of red silk cloth and embroidered with gold thread and colored silks. Arabic writing in Kufic script around the edge recorded that the royal workshop in Palermo made the mantle in 1133-1134. The workshop artists used Middle Eastern symbols, such as the Tree of Life (in the center) and lions attacking camels. Lions were a symbol of kings. The artists outlined most of the figures with a double row of pearls.



Image: Coronation Mantle, Palermo Royal Workshop, 1133/34, photograph taken by Gryffindor and stitched by Marku1988 with Autostitch, 2007. Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Weltliche_Schatzkammer_Wienc.jpg.

Kufic script was an early form of Arabic handwriting used to copy Qu'rans and to decorate special artworks. See the script on the enlargement below.



SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 4 of 8)



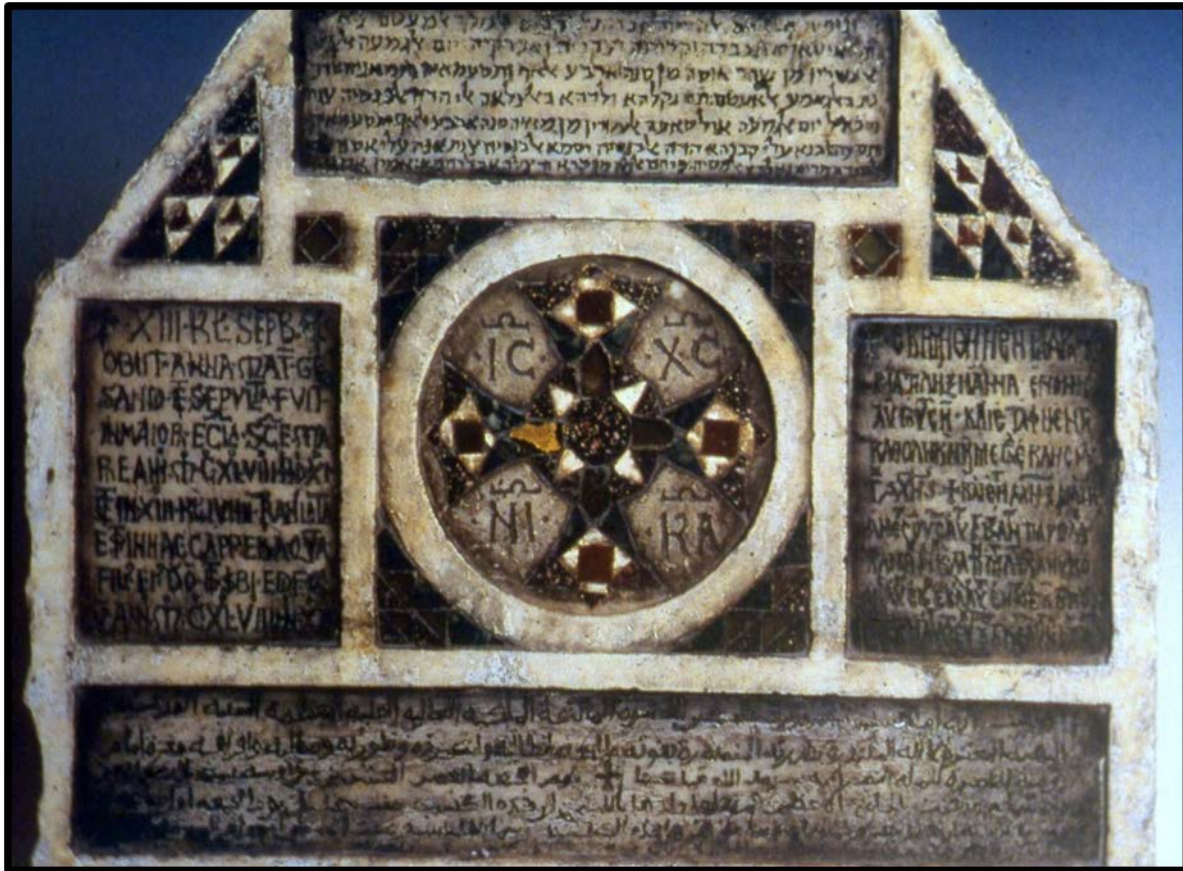
Object #3: Mosaic of Roger II's Coronation in La Martorana Church (Santa Maria dell-Ammiraglio, Palermo)

Artists created this mosaic with tiny stones. It shows an imaginary scene of Christ crowning King Roger II. Roger wears the clothing of a Byzantine emperor. The gold background, the style of the figures, and the costumes are all in the Byzantine style. The inscription uses the Greek alphabet. The first 5 letters, *ΡΟΓΕΡ*, spell "Roger." There are many examples of this type of mosaic in medieval Greek Orthodox churches. Since Roger II was very interested in showing that he was a legitimate king of Sicily, he would have liked this representation of receiving his authority from God just like a Byzantine emperor. Roger wanted his Greek subjects to accept him as their rightful king.

Citation: Roger II, S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo, photo courtesy of Alex Metcalfe, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/martorana-2.jpg>.

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 5 of 8)

Object #4: Grizandus Inscription, Zisa Palace, Palermo



Citation: Grizandus Inscription, Zisa Palace, Palermo, photo courtesy of the Soprintendenza dei beni culturali in Palermo and Alex Metcalfe, <http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/zisa-2.jpg>.

Grizandus was a royal cleric, or a priest who served the Norman kings of Sicily. He could conduct church ceremonies for both Latin and Greek Christians. He paid an artist to inscribe the same message in four different scripts – Latin, Greek, Arabic and Hebrew. Made in 1149 after the Normans had captured several North African ports, the inscription identified King Roger II as “King of Africa.” Around the cross in the center are Greek letters. They stand for:

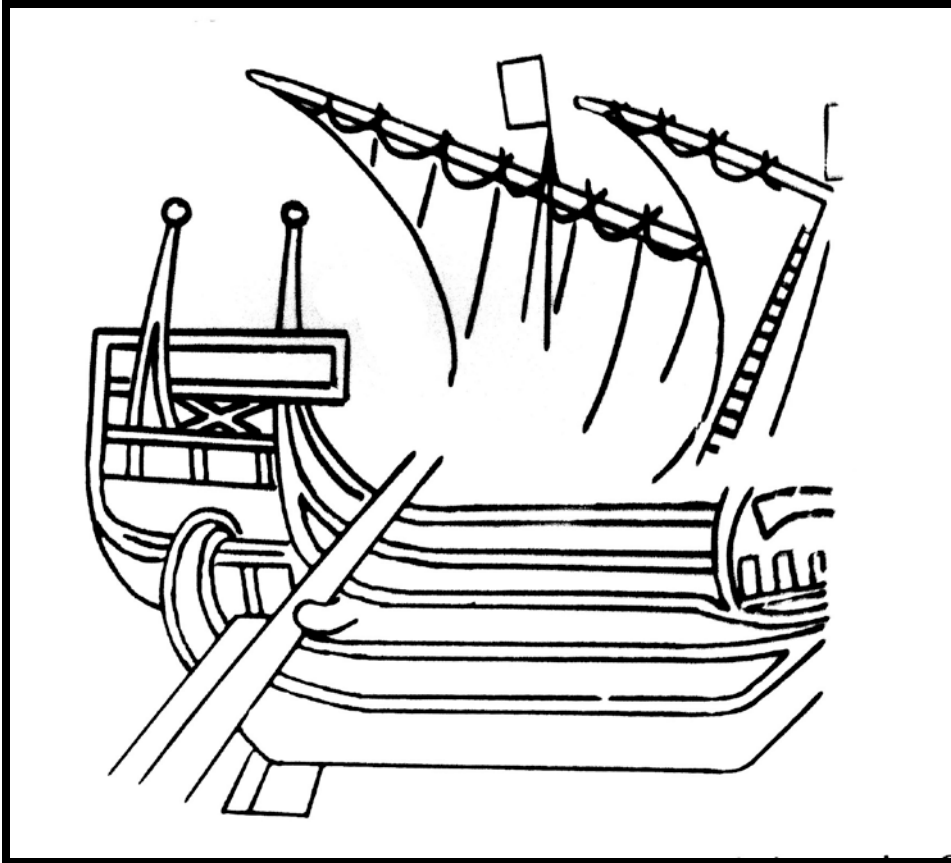
IC = Jesus

XC = Christ

NIKA = Conquer!

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 6 of 8)

Object #5: Genoese Round Ship, 1187



Genoese round ship, 1187, drawing by John H. Pryor to illustrate the ship which brought Conrad of Montferrat from Constantinople to Tyre in 1187, from the continuation of Caffaro's Annales januenses, from Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649-1571, by John H. Pryor, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), fig. 1, p. 2. Courtesy of John H. Pryor and the Past and Present Society.

Professor John Pryor drew this outline of 3/4s of a ship from a picture in a medieval manuscript, or handwritten book. The picture showed the arrival of Conrad of Montferrat, a crusader, at Tyre in 1187. Sailors guided the ship using two steering oars at the stern (the back of the ship). You can see one of the steering oars in the drawing. The ship was called a "round" ship because of its round shape and high sides. The ship had two masts with triangular lateen sails. Mediterranean sailors probably learned to use lateen sails from Indian Ocean sailors. Lateen sails allowed ships to use winds coming at the ship from the sides to go forward. The sailors tacked the ship back and forth in order to move gradually forward. But if the ship was sailing against the wind, it went very slowly (sometimes it was even blown backwards.) Round ships were also not very stable in heavy storms. Although there is very little evidence, historians think that Middle Eastern, Byzantine, North African, and Italian merchants all used round ships like this one to carry trade goods around the Mediterranean. The other type of ship used in this time was the galley, which had lower sides and lots of oars to move it forward. Slaves rowed the galleys.

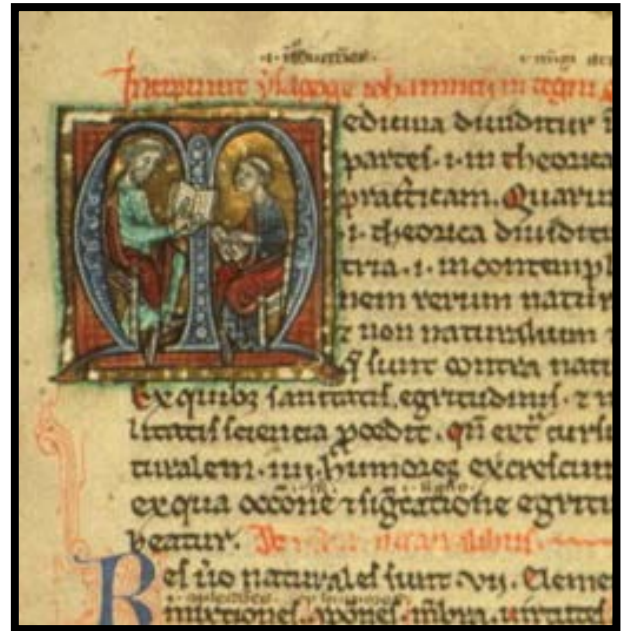
SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 7 of 8)

Object #6: Arabic Manuscripts Translated into Latin



Husayn Ibn Ishaq, *Ten Treatises on the Eye*, MS Tibb Taymur 100, National Library, Cairo, Egypt. Photo by Zereshk, Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Cheshm_manuscript.jpg.

On the left is a diagram of the different parts of the eye and descriptions in Arabic from a manuscript (a handwritten book) titled *Ten Treatises on the Eye*, written by Hunayn ibn Ishaq. Hunayn lived in the ninth century (the 800s) and was famous for translating 100 medical texts from Greek into Arabic. Like other Arabic scholars, he added new knowledge to the early Greek knowledge. This manuscript was copied in Syria in the 12th century by an unknown scribe. It is the oldest book about ophthalmology (study of eye diseases) that still exists. Medicine, science and math were much more advanced in the Muslim world than in the Latin Christian world before 1200.



Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-'Ibadi, 809?-873 (known as Joannitius), *Isagoge Johannitii in Tegni Galeni*, Oxford, 13th century, DeRicci NLM [78]. Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine, <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/medieval/images/hunayn.jpg>.

On the right is a manuscript titled *Introduction by Joannitius to the Medical Art of Galen*, written in Latin by an unknown scribe in the 13th century. It is a translation of another book by Hunayn ibn Ishaq, who was called "Joannitius" by Latin Christians. From about 1000 to 1200, teams of Muslim, Jewish, and Latin Christian scholars translated manuscripts on science, medicine, math, and logic from Arabic into Latin. In the 1100s, the first universities in Latin Christendom grew up at Salerno, Paris, Bologna and Oxford. The picture is an illuminated (painted) capital (the first letter of the first word.) It shows a teacher showing the book to a student. The crowns of their heads were shaved because they were both clerics.

SE1.17 Transfer and Creation Visuals (Page 8 of 8)

Object #7: Erice Castle



The Norman kings built this castle on a mountainside in Erice, Sicily. Other Normans built castles like this in England, France, the Crusader Kingdoms, and Italy.

Image: Erice Norman Castle, photo courtesy of Alex Metcalfe, http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Erice/Erice_castle.jpg

SE1.18 Transfer and Creation Data Sheet (page 1 of 2)

Historical Investigative Question: What products, technologies and ideas were exchanged in Norman Sicily (and Iberia and other sites of encounter in the medieval Mediterranean)?

Some of items you see here were not actually made in Sicily, but at other sites of encounter in the medieval Mediterranean. Historians think that other objects like these were made at Sicily also, but those have been lost over time. Look at each of the objects and read the descriptions. Fill in your chart. In column 3, divide your two answers by an arrow (→) to show the transfer of objects from one culture to another.

What is the title of this object? Is this a product, technology, or idea (knowledge)?	Who made it? Where? When?	What culture(s) originally created this object? → What culture(s) learned about this object?	What benefits would this object give to medieval people?

SE1.18 Transfer and Creation Data Sheet (page 2 of 2)

Scavenger Hunt with the Al-Idrisi map on the Library of Congress website. Go to <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3200.ct001903> or http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/map_item.pl, and follow the instructions to hunt for these items:

1. Find Alexandria, Egypt (It is spelled al iskanderia). What symbol did Al-Idrisi use to mark this place?
2. Find Mecca (spelled Mekka). Draw the shapes Al-Idrisi drew around the city.
3. Find the point where the Persian Gulf flows into the Arabian Sea. What is the name of the town on the Persian (north) coast?
4. Find the Caspian Sea. What was the Arabic name for this sea? (Hint: *Bahr* means body of water in Arabic.)



SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 1 of 8)

Close Reading 1 Instructions: Read the introduction and the primary source to yourself.

Ibn Jubayr was a Muslim from al-Andalus. After he returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, he wrote a book about his travels. One of the places he visited along the way was Sicily. This is part of what he wrote:

[Sicily] is populated by the worshippers of crosses . . . Muslims are among them as well, on their holdings and estates, and are treated well in their employment and work, but they [the Normans] impose a tax on them [the Muslim Sicilians] which they pay twice a year. They [the Normans] have come between them [the Muslim Sicilians] and the wealth of the land they used to have. May great and almighty God improve their condition . . .

Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!): this city is inundated with infidel merchants, and [it is] a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its low prices. No Muslim has settled there; it is grim with godlessness and crammed with slaves of crosses choking its inhabitants and almost squeezing the life out of them. It is full of smells and squalor, a cold place in which the stranger will find no friendly atmosphere. . . .

Messina's markets do a brisk and lively trade with an extensive range of goods to support a life of plenty. Your day and night pass by in safety even if your face, presence and tongue [language] are unfamiliar.

The character of . . . their king [Roger II] is surprising, for his decent conduct, [and] his employment of Muslims . . . He puts a lot of trust in the Muslims, relying on them in his affairs. . . Through them radiates the splendor of his kingdom because they abound with [they have lots of] magnificent clothes and swift horses, and each has his own retinue of slaves and attendants.



Picture Citation: Roger II, *S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo*, photo by Alex Metcalfe, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200)*,

<http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Palermo/martorana-2.jpg>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

Citation: Ibn Jubayr, "The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, 1184," translated by Alex Metcalfe, in Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation, eds. Katherine L. Jansen, Joanna Drell, and Frances Andrews (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 234-35.

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 2 of 8)



Citation: "Map of voyage by Spanish traveler Ibn Jubayr in the 12th century AD," by Nicoteacher, contains parts of [Image:Africa topography map.png](#) created by [Bamse](#) and published under the terms of the GFDL, 2008, Wikipedia Commons, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Yabar-IbnJubair.PNG>.

Close Reading 2 Instructions: *The Ibn Jubayr text is broken up into smaller pieces in the activities below. The primary source text is in quotation marks, with regular type. The instructions and questions are in Italic type. Follow the instructions and write your answers in the spaces provided.*

"[Sicily] is populated by the worshippers of crosses (Christians) . . . Muslims are among them (_____) as well, on their (_____) holdings and estates, and are treated well in their (_____) employment and work . . ."

1. *Identifying Reference Devices: In the first paragraph, Ibn Jubayr used many referers. Write whom he meant by each referer in the space after it. The first one is done for you.*
2. *Who owned the land (holdings and estates) and employed the others?*
3. *How did the landowners treat the Muslims?*

". . . but they [the Latin Christian Normans] impose a tax on them [the Muslim Sicilians] which they (_____) pay twice a year. They [the Normans] have come between them [the Muslim Sicilians] and the wealth of the land they (_____) used to have. May great and almighty God improve their (_____) condition . . ."

4. *What did Ibn Jubayr blame the Normans for?*
5. *In his prayer "May great and almighty God improve their condition," what do you think Ibn Jubayr wanted to happen in Sicily?*

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 3 of 8)

Instructions: Use the next paragraph to fill in the third column of the sentence deconstruction chart and then answer the questions.

"Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!): this city is inundated with infidel merchants, and [it is] a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its low prices. No Muslim has settled there; it is grim with godlessness and crammed with slaves of crosses choking its inhabitants and almost squeezing the life out of them. It is full of smells and squalor, a cold place in which the stranger will find no friendly atmosphere. . . ."

Connectors	Subject	Verb and Verb Phrases	What? How?	Questions
Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!):	This city (_____)		with infidel (_____) merchants	What evidence does Ibn Jubayr give about Messina?
and	[it (_____)]		a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its (_____) low prices.	
	No Muslim		there (_____);	Godlessness is a compound of 3 word parts: god + less + ness. The "ness" means "the state of having..." What do you think the "less" and "god" parts mean when they are combined together?
	It (_____)		grim with godlessness	
and	(Messina)		with slaves of crosses (_____)	
	(the Christians)		its inhabitants (_____)	What do the words "choking" and "squeezing" mean?
and almost	(_____)		the life out of them (_____).	What effect did Ibn Jubayr create by using these words?
	It (_____)		full of smells and squalor, a cold place	What were the bad features of Messina, according to Ibn Jubayr?
in which	the stranger		no friendly atmosphere. . .	

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 4 of 8)

6. From the last paragraph, what is Ibn Jubayr's perspective about the Christians in Sicily?
7. Loaded words are words and phrases that make readers react emotionally. Loaded words create connections, or "pictures" in readers' minds. An example of positive loaded words is "soft as a bunny." An example of negative loaded words is "You stink!" Authors use loaded words as propaganda, to sway their readers emotionally. List all the loaded words from the paragraph above.
8. What impression of Sicily and the Christians do these words give to the reader?

"Messina's markets do a brisk and lively trade with an extensive range of goods to support a life of plenty. Your day and night pass by in safety even if your face, presence and tongue [language] are unfamiliar."

9. When he used the word "you," whom do you think Ibn Jubayr meant? (Remember that he wrote in Arabic.)
10. What impression of Sicily and the Christians do these words (in the short paragraph) give to the reader?

The character of . . . their king [Roger II] is surprising, for his decent conduct, [and] his employment of Muslims . . . He puts a lot of trust in the Muslims, relying on them in his affairs. . . Through them radiates the splendor of his kingdom because they abound with [they have lots of] magnificent clothes and swift horses, and each has his own retinue of slaves and attendants.



11. What words does Ibn Jubayr use to describe the Muslims who work for King Roger II of Sicily?
12. Ibn Jubayr (and Muslim merchants) felt more comfortable dealing with Muslim officials rather than Latin Christian officials. By trusting Muslim officials, King Roger II was also keeping the same laws and customs of the Muslim Zirid rulers. That also made Ibn Jubayr (and Muslim merchants) feel more comfortable about traveling and trading in Norman Sicily. Why did Ibn Jubayr admire Roger II for employing Muslims?

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 5 of 8)

Close Reading 3 Instructions: Re-read the Ibn Jubayr text and use the "cognitive markers" to indicate the following:

! **Make observations:**

- ▶ What strikes you in reading this document? Do certain words leap out at you? What ideas or words grab your attention? Indicate with an exclamation mark

? **Ask questions:**

- ▶ What puzzles you? What do you find out here that you didn't know, or that challenges something you thought you knew? What language confuses you? Indicate with a question mark

~ **Identify patterns:**

- ▶ What patterns do you see? What concepts, images or key words repeat? Is this source similar to other sources from this time? Underline patterns.

→ **Note connections:**

- ▶ What connections do you see? Does this source remind you of a source or issue from another historical era? Draw arrows → to indicate connections.

[Sicily] is populated by the worshippers of crosses . . . Muslims are among them as well, on their holdings and estates, and are treated well in their employment and work, but they [the Normans] impose a tax on them [the Muslim Sicilians] which they pay twice a year. They [the Normans] have come between them [the Muslim Sicilians] and the wealth of the land they used to have. May great and almighty God improve their condition . . .

Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!): this city is inundated with infidel merchants, and [it is] a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its low prices. No Muslim has settled there; it is grim with godlessness and crammed with slaves of crosses choking its inhabitants and almost squeezing the life out of them. It is full of smells and squalor, a cold place in which the stranger will find no friendly atmosphere. . . .

Messina's markets do a brisk and lively trade with an extensive range of goods to support a life of plenty. Your day and night pass by in safety even if your face, presence and tongue [language] are unfamiliar.

The character of . . . their king [Roger II] is surprising, for his decent conduct, [and] his employment of Muslims . . . He puts a lot of trust in the Muslims, relying on them in his affairs. . . Through them radiates the splendor of his kingdom because they abound with [they have lots of] magnificent clothes and swift horses, and each has his own retinue of slaves and attendants.

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 6 of 8)

Close Reading 4 Instructions: With a partner, compare and discuss annotations, re-reading sections as needed and staying focused on the contents of the document itself. Add notes in the margin to elaborate on the cognitive markers. Then consider the entire text of Ibn Jubayr's comments on Sicily. Answer the following questions to identify Ibn Jubayr's perspective.




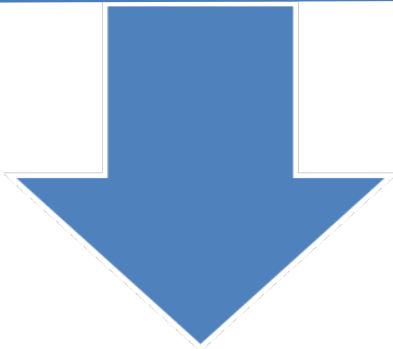
Image: Erice Norman Castle, photo courtesy of Alex Metcalfe, http://www.medievalsicily.com/Images/Erice/Erice_castle.jpg

13. Where was his home?
14. What was his religion?
15. Was he male or female?
16. When did he write?
17. What was his class?
18. For whom did he write? Who was his audience?
19. Look at your Sicily timeline. What other events were happening in Sicily around the time that Ibn Jubayr visited the island?
20. How did all these factors affect Ibn Jubayr's perspective?

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 7 of 8)

21. One of the most interesting things about Ibn Jubayr's account is that he wrote both negative and positive things about the Kingdom of Sicily and the Norman Latin Christians. On the chart, write down at least 3 examples of each.

Ibn Jubayr's Perspective on Sicily and Christians

	<p>Positive Statements about Sicily & Christians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. • 2. • 3. • 4.
<hr/>	
	<p>Negative Statements about Sicily & Christians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. • 2. • 3. • 4.

22. Ibn Jubayr's writing about Sicily is one of the few sources historians have from the 12th century. How reliable is his account? (How much should historians believe what he wrote?)

SE1.19 Close Reading: Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Page 8 of 8)

Additional Notes for Teacher Discussion

What actions did Roger II take to make Muslim merchants feel more comfortable in Norman Sicily?

- Hiring Muslim and Greek Christian officials
- Encouraging multiple languages
- Keeping Muslim laws and customs (didn't change the rules about trade)

What were the shared norms of the Norman rulers, and the Christian, Muslim and Jewish merchants?

- Respect for property rights, contracts
- Protection against robbery
- Fair taxes
- Friendly relations between merchants
- People of different cultures/religious groups should live in separate communities



Citations: Left: Mosaic of Christ Pantokrator (Creator of All), Norman church, Santa Maria Nuova, Monreale, Sicily,

Above: Mosaics on Interior of Dome, S. Maria dell-Ammiraglio (la Martorana), Palermo, Sicily,

Both photos by Alex Metcalfe, The Medieval Mediterranean: Islamic and Norman Sicily (800-1200), <http://www.medievalsicily.com>. Courtesy of Alex Metcalfe.

SE1.20 Conclusion: Causes and Effects of Norman Sicily as a Site of Encounter

Fill in the blanks to summarize what you have learned about Norman Sicily in the cause-and-effect chart below.

CAUSES (Why was Norman Sicily a site of encounter?)

- The geographic location of Sicily made it _____ for trade.
- People from different cultures, such as _____, _____, Greek Christians and Latin Christians lived in Sicily and came there to trade.
- _____ wanted to come to Sicily because there were many markets and lots of goods for sale.
- The Norman Roger I _____ Sicily in 1072-1091.
- The Norman kings hired _____ officials and kept the same customs for merchants.



ENCOUNTERS IN NORMAN SICILY (What was exchanged and created at this site of encounter?)

- Merchants brought products from Asia, such as _____ and _____ to the Latin Christian world.
- Al-Idrisi created _____.
- Muslim, Latin Christian and Jewish scholars _____ books of medical and scientific knowledge from Arabic into _____.



EFFECTS (What happened because of these exchanges and creations?)

- Trade in Western Europe (the Latin Christian world) _____.
- Roger II (and other Latin Christian people) _____ about geography beyond Europe.
- Latin Christian scholars gained a lot of _____ from the Muslim world because of the translated books.
- Knowledge from the Muslim world _____ the Latin Christian world as it was expanding.