“The Administrative Organization of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily -Historiography and Perspective-”

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The Administrative Organization of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily
-Historiography and Perspective-

by

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I. Historiography

Many historians have treated the administration of the Norman kingdom of Sicily as one of the greatest achievements of the Middle Ages on the assumption that it attained extraordinarily high specialization and bureaucratization in medieval Europe. Some have seen in it even the forerunner of modern governments. However, scholars’ opinions on the functions and relations of the actual officials or organizations differ widely, and sometimes contradict each other.¹

Most of the earliest researches on the Norman administration were concerned with the question of its origin. In the nineteenth century, some scholars thought that Sicilian system had its origin in England. Rosario Gregorio, for example, an Italian scholar of the early nineteenth century, proposed the theory that King Roger II had established his administrative organization on the model of the system of William the Conqueror of England,² and this opinion was accepted by William Stubbs, the celebrated English scholar.³

Having a great interest in the relationship between the Sicilian and English administrations, Otto Hartwig compared the two organizations of the two kingdoms,

¹ I should like to thank Dr. Graham Loud of the University of Leeds for his help.


that is, the *duana de secretis* of Sicily and the Exchequer of England, and he too concluded that the Sicilian institution had had its model in England. According to Hartwig, the *duana de secretis* had consisted of two divisions, one (*duana baronum*) supervising accounts and the other (*sekreton tôn apokopôn*) collecting taxes and paying expenses. This structure of the *duana de secretis* was seen as parallel to the organization of the Exchequer of England which consisted of the Upper Exchequer (*scaccarium superius*) and the Lower Exchequer (*scaccarium inferius*).4

Against this theory of an English origin, Michele Amari, a distinguished Italian Arabist, suggested an Arabic origin for Sicilian administrative organization. The *duana de secretis*, he explained, had its origin in a Muslim office (*dîwân at-tahqîq*) whose duty had been the preservation of land registers (*daftar al-hudûd*), and that the *duana baronum* corresponded to the *dîwân al-majlis* of the Fâtimids, an office dealing with the transfer of lands.5 Amari’s idea emphasizing an Arabic origin was accepted by La Lumina, G. B. Siragusa, and Hans von Kapp-Herr.6

In 1901 Carlo Alberto Garufi, an Italian scholar, proposed a new theory on the financial and administrative organization. His opinion was accepted by most subsequent scholars, and remained as the most commonly accepted theory for a century.7 According to Garufi, the highest policy-making organization of the kingdom was a royal court council (*consiglio aulico*), which supervised the whole royal administration. Its members were called *hoi archontes tês kratâias kôrtês* in Greek and included the master chamberlain of the royal palace and the master justiciar of the royal

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court. The financial administration was supervised by a specialized financial committee (Gran Secrezia), whose members were called hoi archontes tou sekretou in Greek, and which consisted of the master chamberlain of the royal palace, the master justiciar of the royal court and the masters of the duana.  

These officials directed the supervisory office of financial administration (ufficio di Riscontro), which consisted of two departments, the duana de secretis and the duana baronum. The duana de secretis supervised the affairs of the royal domain and the duana baronum handled feudal affairs. This supervisory office was called diwân at-tahqîq al-ma’mûr in Arabic, and had a subordinate treasury office (ufficio del Tesoro) or ad-dîwân al-ma’mûr in Arabic, which in turn had a subordinate office of Profits (ufficio dei Proventi) or diwân al-fawâ’d in Arabic. The supervisory office also

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consisted of officials of three ranks: master of the duana, sekretikós, and kâtib. This structure was parallel to that of the Byzantine financial officials, which had quaestor, eksképtôr and skribas.\textsuperscript{10}

Garufi’s idea on the Sicilian administrative organization had enormous influence over subsequent historians. Despite some scholars’ serious questions about its structure,\textsuperscript{11} many others accepted his model without serious examination, and used his study as the foundation of their own researches. Caspar and Chalandon, whose works are still standards on the Norman period, immediately accepted this opinion, with only slight modifications.\textsuperscript{12}


\textsuperscript{11} For example, Enrico Besta (“Il ‘Liber de Regno Siciliae’ e la storia del diritto siculo,” in \textit{Miscellanea di archeologia, storia e filologia dedicata al Prof. Antonio Salinas} [Palermo 1907], p. 295 note 2), following Amari’s idea (“Su la data degli sponsali,” p. 431; \textit{Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia}, 2nd ed., a cura di C. A. Nallino, 3 vols. in 5 parts, vol. III, pp. 327-328, note 2) that ad-dîwân al-ma’âr had been an abbreviated expression for dîwân at-tah=qîq al-ma’âr, insisted that there was only one office for collecting taxes to which other offices were subordinated, and denied the separation of the supervisory office and the treasury office as suggested by Garufi. Besta’s opinion was accepted by Charles Homer Haskins (“England and Sicily,” p. 652 and note 174) and Luigi Genuardi (“I defetari normanni,” in \textit{Centenario della nascita di M. Amari: Scritti di filologia e storia araba}, 2 vols. [Palermo 1910], vol. I, p. 161). Haskins (“England and Sicily,” p. 653) and Carmela Ceci (“Normanni d’Inghilterra,” pp. 331-332) regard the members of the financial committee (ârchontes tou sekrétoû) as identical with the masters of the duana, which contradicts the triple-layered structure of the officials of the supervisory office proposed by Garufi. This opinion was accepted later by Jamison (\textit{Admiral Eugenius}, p. 51) and Kamp (“Vom Kämmerer,” p. 52). Baviera Albanese (“L’istituzione,” p. 271), identifying arconti del segreto (ârchontes tou sekrétoû) with qa’îd (gâîfî) in Arabic, places the camerarius palatinus et magister regis duane de secretis et baronum at the top of the office of the duana.

Most of the questions and criticisms posed by other scholars were concerned with only a part of Garufi’s theory. A whole-scale re-examination of his model was not undertaken until Mario Caravale wrote an article on the financial officials in 1964.\footnote{Caravale, “Gli uffici finanziari,” pp. 177-223.} Prior to this, however, Evelyn Jamison, one of the most respected authorities on the Norman administration, outlined her theory of the financial and administrative organization in her study of the admirals in the Norman period. Although she was affected by Garufi’s ideas, her picture of the financial administration is rather different from his. She regarded the treasury and the duana as the two basic financial organizations and emphasized differences between Roger II’s organization and that of William I and William II. According to Jamison, Roger II’s financial organization consisted of two departments, the treasury (camera) and the duana. The treasury was “concerned with the receipt of revenues and the disbursement of monies”; its higher officials were treasurers or chamberlains. The other department, the duana, was a purely Arabic office and was known only by its arabic title of dīwān at-tahqīq al-ma’mūr. It was “charged with the administrative and judicial business appurtenant to the finances of the kingdom,” and was administered by the shaikhs of the dīwān. The treasury and the duana were both ultimately controlled by the curia, but more directly by the great admirals of Greek origin, who thus constituted the link between the two offices.\footnote{Evelyn Jamison, Admiral Eugenius of Sicily, His Life and Work (London 1957), pp. 39, 49.}

Jamison thought that this central fiscal organization had developed rapidly, and had acquired a more complicated structure under William I and William II. The treasury came to have three chamberlains. Its head was the master chamberlain of the palace, and his two subordinates were the chamberlain of the palace and the controller of the royal household. These three chamberlains were responsible for the receipt and payment of monies. The duana (duania de secretis in its full Latin name, sekretion or méga sekretion in Greek and dīwān at-tahqīq al-ma’mūr in Arabic), on the other hand, received a great extension of powers after Roger II’s death. It “became the central organ of the whole kingdom for the purposes within its scope, including the judicial decision of cases of fiscal import.” It dealt with all matters concerning royal rights and the royal demesne, while keeping the registers of lands and services. By 1174 and probably about 1172 however, a new section of the duana, the duana baronum appeared. This office was “concerned with feudal and patrimonial tenures and services due to the crown.”\footnote{Jamison, Admiral Eugenius, pp. 49-53. Jamison thinks the two duanae were directed by a board of about ten senior officials. The board was generally called árchontes tou sekretiou or sekretikoi in Greek, magistri duane in Latin, and shaikh of the dīwān at-tahqīq al-ma’mūr in Arabic, but some members were}
In 1964 Mario Caravale, an Italian scholar, proposed a new theory different from Garufi’s. He examined all the sources used by Garufi, and concluded that Garufi’s structural analysis was basically right but needed to be modified. According to Caravale, the duties of the _ad-dîwân al-ma’mûr_ and the _dîwân at-tahqîq al-ma’mûr_ were differentiated during the reign of William II, and had not been separated under the reign of Roger II. He also suggested that the function of the _duana de secretis_ and the _duana baronum_ were distinct in their administrative districts, not in their duties as Garufi had thought: The former had competence over Sicily and Calabria, and the latter over the rest of the peninsula except for Calabria.\textsuperscript{16}

Thus, we had two important theories which made modifications to Garufi’s. But, most contemporary scholars seem to prefer Garufi’s theory. Enrico Mazzarese Fardella, the most recent contributor to our subject, is no exception.\textsuperscript{17} After having clarified important historiographical issues and problems, he examined the structure of the _duana_ in the Norman and Hohenstaufen periods. As for the structure of the _duana_ in the Norman period, he followed Garufi’s understanding.\textsuperscript{18}

In the historiography, we can see that the concerns and the framework for analysis of earlier scholars greatly affected the studies of later scholars. Before the study of Garufi, scholars’ main concern was the origin of the Sicilian administrative system. They compared some elements of the Sicilian administration with those of the English, Islamic or Byzantine ones, and they found similarities between them. After the study of Garufi, however, scholars main concern was shifted to the structure of the administrative organization. Many scholars argued various theories different from

\begin{itemize}
\item also called _magistri duane de secretis_ (hoi epi tou megalou sekretou), or _magistri duane baronum_ (hoi epi tou sekretou tôn apokopó̂n) according to the section for which they were responsible. Jamison’s theory on the financial board who controlled the _duanae_ seems to have been accepted by Norbert Kamp (Norbert Kamp, “Vom Kämmerer zum Sekreten: Wirtschaftsreformen und Finanzverwaltung im staufischen Königreich Sizilien,” in _Problem um Friedrich II_ [Sigmaringen 1974], p. 52).
\item Caravale, “Gli uffici finanziari,” pp. 177-223. This theory of Caravale was accepted by Norbert Kamp (“Vom Kämmerer zum Sekreten,” p. 52).
\item According to his observation, the _curia_ was something not well defined, an organism composed according to changing political criteria, and, more than once, a perfect outer identification of the sovereign, while the _camera_ and the _duana_ were not always be distinguishable against Jamison’s schematization.
\end{itemize}
Garufi’s, but most of them seem ultimately to be based on the structure proposed by Garufi.

These views, including Garufi’s, on the administrative organization are very complicated, but it is not too difficult to find the central points at issue. There are three major themes: (1) the structure of the financial administration; (2) its evolution; and (3) its relationship with those of other monarchies. The first major theme includes several controversial issues: 1) the relationship among ad-dîwân al-ma’mûr, diwân at-tahqîq al-ma’mûr, duana de secretis and duana baronum; 2) what were hoi árchontes tês krataiás kortês and hoi árchonts tou serétou; 3) their relationship with the curia, camera, duana de secretis and duana baronum.

II. A New Framework for the Norman Administration

When we examine the Norman administration of Sicily, we have to bear in mind two important historical facts. One is that since the kingdom was born when Roger II (count of Sicily and Calabria, then duke of Apulia) was crowned, the substance of the kingdom was the county of Sicily and Calabria. The other point is that Roger II’s dominion was multiplied just before and after the coronation. We are tempted to think that the administration of the kingdom began when the kingdom was created. But, in fact, all the regions of the kingdom in the later period were not subject to the kingship at the beginning of the kingdom. The regions and inhabitants under the Norman kingship changed rapidly, especially during the reign of Roger II. It was only the county of Sicily and Calabria that Roger II inherited from his father. However, he thereafter obtained the duchy of Apulia, the principality of Capua and the principality of Taranto, together with the titles of duke of Apulia and king of Sicily. Feudal lords in this region were not willing to respect the new kingship, and Roger II had to fight with them to secure their obedience for more than ten years. In due course, he introduced various institutions, and formed an administrative system suitable for the whole kingdom.

In order to recognize how the administration of the kingdom was formed and changed, we must understand the characteristics of the administration of Roger I, count of Sicily and Calabria, whom Roger II was to succeed. Roger I, a mere landless knight when he arrived in southern Italy, was a strong ruler of Sicily and Calabria when he died. To administer the drastic increase in lands and people, his government might well change its character and function at different stages of the conquest. None the less, we can point out some of its important characteristics.

First, Roger I’s power, based on a strong army of Muslim mercenaries and wealth derivings from his large demesne and various taxes, was far stronger than that of his feudal vassals. In order to prevent his vassals from gaining power, he granted only scattered pieces of land to them. Second, his central government, consisting mainly of
his Norman compatriots and Greek officials, was small, as his continual campaigning necessitated frequent changes of location. Third, Roger I kept the administrative units and officials of the former governments, both Byzantine and Muslim, and made full use of them, although the Byzantine influence was dominant in his administration, as most of his territory, as well as his central base was in Calabria. Fourth, he effectively made use of the land registers the Muslim rulers had left.

Most of these characteristics were preserved in the government of his widow Adelasia. Only one important change should be noted, however; the transfer of the principal residence of the count from Mileto in Calabria to Messina, or San Marco, in Sicily. As the centre of the county moved to Sicily from Calabria, the office of amiratus (governor of Palermo) gained more importance at the central government, although Greek officials were still dominant in administration.

When Roger II came of age, the capital was moved further westward and finally fixed at Palermo. In this city the central government was to develop, not least with an increase in its staff. In the earlier part of his reign, however, the government did not change that much. It was still the continuation of that of his parents. Roger II continued to use Greek officials, although the office of amiratus gained special importance.

Important administrative changes were introduced after his acquisition of large territory in the peninsula. Between 1127 and 1140 he gained the duchy of Apulia, the principalities of Taranto and Capua, and the duchy of Naples. In this period he had to fight with both feudal lords and cities in these new territories to put them under his control. When he pacified all of them in 1140, he had become the sole powerful ruler in southern Italy. In order to govern his subjects in this vast area, which consisted of various entities with different political and cultural traditions, he instituted a number of administrative reforms.

First, he installed local chamberlains and local justiciars systematically all over the kingdom. It is possible that administrative boundaries were drawn at this time, especially in the case of the justiciars, but it seems to me more likely that the king simply assigned some important towns and parts of the royal demesne to the chamberlains, and placed justiciars in principal towns.

Secondly, he created a new office called in Arabic the diwân at-tahqîq al-ma'mûr. This office was concerned exclusively with land administration. We can summarize the functions of the diwân at-tahqîq al-ma'mûr as follows: (1) the inspection of transferred lands, whether royal lands or fiefs, and the delineation of boundaries of the transferred lands; (2) the preparation of documents which recorded the boundaries of transferred lands; (3) the preservation of dafâîr (land registers); (4) the issuance of jarâ'id (writs of transfer). I presume that this office was created around the remaining land registers of former Muslim rulers in order to keep and to revise these useful documents, although it is also conceivable that this office extended its sphere of functions in the course of time.24

Third, Roger II transformed the central government, which had been formed to govern only the county of Calabria and Sicily, into one more suitable for the newly established kingdom. Conceivably, one of the major changes in his entourage was the increased role of the lay and ecclesiastical magnates, especially the bishops and counts of the peninsula, after 1140. But, the amirati as well as the chancellor continued to overshadow the other officials at the central government. However chamberlains and justiciars need special attention. While new local justiciars and chamberlains were instituted ca. 1140, other justiciars and chamberlains continued to work in the central government, and a justiciar working at the royal court (curia regis) already had the special title of justiciar of the (royal) court (iustificator curialis), probably in order to distinguish him from local justiciars.25

Under Maio royal officials seem to have advanced in specialization and hierarchization; this change was especially marked in the organization of chamberlains and justiciars at the central government as well as in the provinces. At the beginning of the reign of William I, a chamberlain working at the central government came to be distinguished from the local chamberlains with a new title of “chamberlain of the royal palace (camerarius regalis palatii).”26 After the death of Maio in 1160, another title of “master chamberlain of the royal palace (magister camerarius regii palatii) appeared, which suggests the plurality of chamberlains of the royal palace as well as their


hierarchization. This master chamberlain of the royal palace came to take a significant role in the central administration.  

Justiciars at the central government also show the specialization and hierarchization under Maio. A new title of master justiciar (*magister iusticiarius*) at the central government appeared in 1157, and a more defined title “great justiciar of the royal great court (*magnus Iusticiarius Regie magne curie*)” appeared in 1159. The latter title suggests that justiciars of the great royal court had by this time been distinguished from local justiciars. Further information, quite interesting and contrasted with that available for the chamberlains, is gained from a document in January of the same year. This shows the existence of three master justiciars of the royal court (*regis curie magistri justiciarii*). Thus, the *curia regis* came to have three professional members dealing with justice. The system of three master justiciars of the great royal court seems to be in contrast with that of one master chamberlain at the royal palace in this period, but, most interestingly, it was similar to that of the three chamberlains of the royal palace in a later period.

After the death of Maio a royal inner council of *familiares regis* was established and came to govern the kingdom. The day after Maio’s assassination King William I summoned Henry Aristippus, archdeacon of Catania, and appointed him as a *familiaris*

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so that he would take the role and office of Maio of Bari in dealing with the affairs of the kingdom. Count Silvester of Marsico, an elderly cousin of the King, and an Englishman, Richard Palmer, bishop-elect of Syracuse, were then appointed to be familiares regis by March 1161. Thus the first royal inner council of three familiares regis was formed. From this time, the familiares regis came to have special significance in the Norman administration. Familiaris regis was a well-defined title to indicate a member of the royal inner council during the reigns of William I (1154-66) and William II (1166-89). As the decision-makers on policy and other important matters, they were the most powerful people in the kingdom.

At the beginning of William II’s reign, a new office called duana baronum was created for the government of the peninsula. This new office was located in Salerno, perhaps in the castle of Terracena, and had competence over the whole peninsula except for Calabria. It carried out various administrative duties needed there: (1) the granting of royal lands and royal properties; (2) the communication and promulgation of royal ordinances; (3) permission for sale of lands; (4) lending money; (5) buying houses and payment of the sums owed for this; (6) the holding of courts and the solution of various problems through judicial hearings; (7) the control of officials; (8) the receipt of indictments.

Thus the administrative organization of the kingdom changed continuously; some offices became more important while others lost their significance in the government.

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34 Falcandus, p. 69: “erant eo tempore familiares regis, per quos negotia curie disponebat, Richardus Siracusanus electus, Silvester comes Marsicensis et Henricus Aristippus.” See also Jamison, Admiral Eugenius, pp. 46-47.


The *duana baronom* did not exist before the reign of William II, nor did the inner council of *familiares regis* before the death of Maio. We should underline the importance of chronological developments with regard to administration and officials, because so many previous scholars have treated offices belonging to different periods as if they were contemporaneous, and thereby confused our image of the Norman administration. In order to examine the structure of the Norman administration, we must clearly specify the time period, which should be limited narrowly enough.  

Let us now focus on the two decades under William II after the creation of the *duana baronom*, so that we may see the structure of the Norman administration at its most developed stage. In this period, the royal inner council of *familiares regis* held the highest authority in the government and made decisions on important issues of the kingdom or on matters concerning the king’s interests.

The master chamberlain of the royal palace and his two subordinate chamberlains of the royal palace directed the executive and administrative functions of the central government. Most of the holders of these offices were Muslims or ex-Muslims. For special duties concerning the administration of land, however, there was a special office called *diwan at-tahqiq al-mamur* (or *duana de secretis*, *ho mega sekreton*, *ho sekreton*), which was located at the royal palace in Palermo and under the direction of one of the two chamberlains of the royal palace. It had high officials called *magistri duane de secretis*, *ashâb diwan at-tahqiq al-mamur*, *hoi epi tou megâlou sekrêtou* (hoi epi tou sekrêtou), or *hoi archones tou sekrêtou*, most of whom were also Muslims or ex-Muslims. Their primary duty was land administration within Sicily (later possibly Calabria too), but they were among the most powerful officials of the kingdom.

For the government of the peninsula a branch office called the *duana baronom* (or *ho sekreton tôn apokopôn*) had been created at Salerno to meet a variety of local administrative needs. This office was directed first by one of the chamberlains of the royal palace and later by the *amiratus* of the royal fleet. It had high officials called *magistri duane baronom* or *hoi epi tou sekrêtou tôn apokopôn*, who were also among the most powerful officials of the kingdom. Local officials such as local chamberlains, local justiciars, magistrates of towns (*catepani* or *strategoi*), and *baiuli*, worked for the king’s interest under the direction of these high officials.  

### III. Differences and Reasons

The structure of the Norman administration outlined above is different from that posited by previous historians. It is much simpler than the previous ones. It does not

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allow for the *Gran Secrezia*, a specialized financial committee. This new model refutes the triple-layered structure of officials at the *duana* and suggests that the functions of the high officials at the *duana* were not purely financial as had been believed, but varied with different offices and involved more general administrative duties. Given the fact that many scholars have argued for a highly developed bureaucracy and specialized administration based on Garufi’s model, my model for the Norman administration poses a serious question about such a specialized image of the Norman administration of Sicily.

Why do I have different conclusions from the previous scholars? The first and evident reason lies in the language problem. Many of the previous scholars seem to have been unfamiliar with Arabic. As a result, they had a tendency to take Arabic words as special technical terms. An obvious exception was Amari. His studies offered basic information on Arabic words to those who did not understand Arabic. We should not forget that just one office could be expressed in at least three different ways in three different languages. It is very important to define as many of the correspondent terms as possible. The lack of this procedure probably contributed to the complicated and confusing image of the administrative organization proposed by previous scholars.

Secondly, I suspect that scholars did not pay enough attention to changes in administration during the Norman period. Apart from relatively recent scholars like Jamison, Caravale and Mazzarese Fardella, scholars here tended to ignore the possibility of change. They seem to have tried to find an administrative organization which can be applicable to the whole period of the kingdom’s history. However, the change of administration over this period was great enough to invalidate any generalization about its administrative organization. As I have already mentioned, we cannot discuss the Norman administration without specifying the period. Therefore, it is natural that the scholars who focused on the reign of Roger II and those who studied the reign of William II had different images of the Norman administration, and that those who mixed up the elements belonging to the reign of Roger II and those pertaining to William I and William II had an image of administrative organization far more complicated than it actually was. Jamison, Caravale and Mazzarese Fardella were quite right in paying more attention to chronological change in the administrative structure, but the changes in the administration did not occur simply because of a change of reign.

The third and biggest factor is the assumptions of scholars about the Sicilian government. Garufi proposed a very complicated model of the administrative

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39 It is necessary to set aside one basic presumption which has dominated the historiography: the division of the financial and judicial boundaries of the administrative system. This presumption has led scholars to miss important and key factors which connect the various elements and clarify the whole
organization, and later scholars also suggested no less complicated models. Some of them are difficult to grasp. The scholars who have dealt with this subject do not seem to have raised questions about this complexity and difficulty for understanding. I assume that they had expected to discover a complex administrative organization when they began research. One of the main reasons why these scholars had been interested in the Norman administration was probably that it had been regarded as the most advanced in Europe; its high bureaucratization and specialization had been illustrated by various specialized offices with Arabic, Greek and Latin titles. It would have been the *raison d'être* of their studies to confirm this image, or to make this image clearer, and to emphasize the peculiarity and importance of Sicilian government.

All of these three factors have contributed to the highly specialized image of the Sicilian administrative organization.

IV. The Characteristics of the Norman Administration in Sicily

Based on our new understanding, let me summarize the characteristics of the administrative organization of Sicily. First of all, it should be kept in mind that the administrative system changed rapidly and substantially in a very short time. As I have emphasized, the change of administration in the kingdom was great enough to invalidate any generalization. We should define the period when discussing administrative organizations or administrative structures. These changes occurred mainly in the central organization, or the provincial administration of the peninsula. Few changes in the administration of Sicily itself were observed after 1140. Therefore we should pay attention to regional differences as well as chronological changes.

Secondly, it was common in Sicily for high officials to hold more than one office concurrently. This seems to pose serious questions about the high specialization and bureaucratization of the government of Sicily.

The third point is also concerned with the officials. In this kingdom the central government included, as well as Greek and Italian officials, many ex-Muslim ones who were closely connected with the Muslim population in Sicily. The participation of ex-Muslims in the central government was an important characteristic of Sicilian administration. It is probable that the kings appointed many Muslims or ex-Muslims to administrative system, and as a result, has contributed to a confusing image of the Sicilian administration. This division should be set aside at the outset. One must, instead, examine the officials or organizations without separating the financial and judicial administrations, and discover their relationships, based on contemporary terms. Of course, we may regard one type of relationship as a specialized administration if it is exclusively or remarkably tied to and formed by one particular element (for example, finance). It should, however, be considered in the context of the whole administrative system.
offices under their direct authority in order to weaken the power of barons and thus strengthen their own power. More importantly, the kings needed their sophisticated skills and knowledge of administration, and the Muslims, as opposed to the baronial class, needed the kings as their protectors. There was a marked tendency to exclude the nobility from the central government.

The fourth and one of the most important characteristics is the administrative difference between Sicily and Calabria, and the rest of the peninsula. In Sicily and Calabria the king had immediate control of inhabitants and lands by means of registers of lands and villeins. Vassals and churches were no obstacle to the royal administration. Here there existed a valid and stable administration. In the peninsular administration, however, the vassals were indispensable. The king could control and govern inhabitants and land only through vassals. The list of these vassals was the catalogus baronum.40

This administrative difference developed from historical circumstances. In Sicily there existed an Arabic tradition of registers of land and villeins, and both Roger I and Roger II owed much to this tradition in developing their administrative institutions. In the process, the office of the duana de secretis was created. Furthermore in Calabria there existed a Byzantine tradition of registers of land. Because of the political situation, however, the annexation of Calabria to the administrative district of Sicily was delayed until the time of the creation of the duana baronum.

The mainland north of Calabria was always politically unstable and had no tradition of registers of land and villeins. The landowners changed very frequently, due to the unsettled situation.41 Here barons and towns tended to be independent of the king, and were great obstacles to a centralized administration. Therefore, a quite different administrative organization was necessary, and the duana baronum, an office suited to these conditions, was created. This duana baronum governed inhabitants and lands through barons. The catalogus baronum supplied the government with indispensable information on these barons. The creation of this office stabilized the peninsula, and henceforth baronial revolts disappeared. Thus, we may regard the creation of the duana baronum as one of the most important steps for centralization of the Norman administrative system.42

V. Conclusion

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40 Takayama, The Administration, p. 166.
41 See however the contribution by Graham Loud elsewhere in this volume for some qualifications to this view.
42 Takayama, The Administration, p. 165.
The administrative organization of the Norman kingdom of Sicily was based on the existing administrative institutions of the former rulers, or was created to control the existing different offices. The boundaries of the former duchies and principalities were made use of as the largest of their administrative units by the Norman rulers. The core regional unit of administration was the former county of Calabria and Sicily. It had a more solid and cohesive administration, based on the surviving institutions and divisions of the Muslim rulers. This area was controlled by the king more closely than any other area. The peninsula north of Calabria had a different administration. The king tried to control this area through his local officials like chamberlains and justiciars, but to a large extent his vassals were the most important medium to control the inhabitants here.

The time lag in absorbing different regions, each of which had its political and historical integrity, made it difficult to organize a homogeneous administrative system over the whole kingdom, and, as a result, led to the coexistence of different administrative systems. Although some scholars have seen in this kingdom an advanced centralization of government, and even the origin of modern states, our study suggests that its administrative system was still a mixture of different systems.

This development pattern of the administrative system may appear peculiar to southern Italy, but this kind of administrative system might have been formed in any country when a monarchy with a small territory grew into a kingdom (or state) which governed a vast territory. I suspect that this twofold administrative system could be seen in the process of centralization or state-formation.\(^{43}\)

In the changes and characteristics of the Norman administration, we can see the ruler’s consistent will to control the people and resources in his kingdom more efficiently. In order to fulfill this purpose, the monarchs created various organizations and offices. We see two different processes or circumstances in which a new organization was created. Some organizations and offices were established on or around the existing administrative institutions which the previous rulers had left. This was true of the duana de secretis. Some other organizations were newly created to unify the existing systems. This was the case with the duana baronum.

We may regard the changes of administration as the process in which the ruler realized his wish to control the people and resources in his territory. He created or modified offices to control them better in response to the dangers of revolts and invasions. The degree of regional integrity and existing administrative methods and offices greatly affected the establishment of the administrative system.

If a newly acquired land had an administrative system similar to his old domain, it would be easy to establish a homogeneous system all over his territory. But it would not be the typical case, and certainly not in that of Sicily. I suspect that most rulers had to spend a lot of energy to make their administration homogeneous. At the beginning it is natural that the rulers had a different administrative system in their existing domain and in the newly acquired lands. If the ruler succeeded in centralization and established a homogeneous administration, his domain would have stronger integrity and become a more cohesive administrative unit.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize that, for the study of administration, whether it is for Sicily, southern Italy, or indeed for any other monarchy, we should pay full attention to the gradations of the rulers’ power, and closely examine regional differences and chronological changes.