graphic contexts, structural morphology, and artifact assemblages. The importance of absolute dating methods is emphasized, along with the inadequacy of existing archaeological chronologies which are primarily based on the relative dating of artifacts. There is an interesting correlation between the periods of excavation and the dates assigned to these sites, although little is concluded from this.

This book's principal achievement is to have made the phenomenon of Polish knightly residences more accessible. It provides a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature, drawing attention to the richness of the artifactual data as well as the complexity of the debates regarding the definitions and variety of this type of site. Archaeologists have traditionally focused on the motte-type residence, but other categories of manorial sites have yet to be investigated in as much detail, and some have only left ephemeral physical traces. Although Marciniak-Kajzer does not propose a cohesive new research paradigm, she makes a compelling case for the importance of radiometric dating, alongside a more detailed consideration of the broader manorial landscape, particularly the roles of topography and environmental resources, which are emphasized throughout the book. Marciniak-Kajzer's book will certainly enable the discussion on interregional comparisons of high-status residences to move forward and will contribute to furthering our understanding of the commonalities and complexities of medieval European societies.

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LOUIS MENDOLA, trans., *Frederick, Conrad & Manfred of Hohenstaufen, Kings of Sicily: The Chronicle of "Nicholas of Jamsilla", 1210–1258*. New York: Trinacria Editions, 2016. Paper. Pp. xxvi, 375; 19 black-and-white plates, 6 black-and-white figures, 14 maps, and 7 genealogical tables. \$36. ISBN: 978-1-943-63906-9.
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This book is the first modern English translation of the Pseudo-Jamsilla, a Latin chronicle with a distinctly Ghibelline flavor that covers the period from Otto IV's invasion of the southern Italian *regno* in 1210 up until Manfred of Hohenstaufen's coronation in 1258. The chronicler provides, as Louis Mendola puts it, "a very concise, superficial synopsis" (2) of Emperor Frederick II's reign (d. 1250). The focus is the four-year regency exercised by Manfred on behalf of his nephew Conradin from 1254. The account is "rather undistinguished in its format and style" (9), yet Mendola's assessment, that no chronicle is "more significant in the study of the Kingdom of Sicily during the years immediately following the death of Frederick" (1), is certainly valid.

University-trained academics are likely to be frustrated by this volume, produced by a self-styled "polymath . . . scholar and popularizer" (vii). Mendola's approach is, to say the least, idiosyncratic. Obvious examples of his tendency to whimsy include the prologue (ix–xiii), a fictional reconstruction of an event mentioned in the chronicle, and epilogue (245–46), which would certainly be at home in a travelogue but seems out of place in a translation. More perturbing than the occasional eccentricity, however, is what is missing. The most notable absence is systematic reference to existing scholarship where it might normally be expected. Mendola's introduction serves as a good example, although the issue is equally apparent in his notes. Mendola suggests that the chronicle was completed by the end of 1263 but fails to explain why he thinks this or to provide any references that would allow the reader to explore the problem further (2). The question of authorship—Mendola's preference is for Godfrey of Cosenza—is treated similarly, although the fact this is a matter of scholarly debate is at least acknowledged (3). Mendola's assessments are not necessarily wrong: Lorenzo Lozzi Gallo, writing in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* (2010), agrees with Mendola's pick for author while suggesting the commonly accepted date of com-

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position is c. 1261–62 (803). That Mendola's discussion of these topics is marked by an unsatisfying quality is linked to his lack of interest in the views of other scholars. He roundly dismisses Italian scholarship in particular: the period between 1860 and 1946 was, he tells us, "a benighted era, when few Italian scholars were very scholarly" (11); the twenty-first century has produced only "verbose analyses" of the Pseudo-Jamsilla, none of which "were deemed to contribute anything original of substantial value" (365). Mendola is not unaware of a complex historiography; he is simply not interested in acknowledging much of it.

This translation is based, ultimately, on Ludovico Muratori's eighteenth-century edition in conjunction with consultation of the oldest extant manuscript, which dates to the fifteenth century. While Mendola notes the existence of an edition produced in 2007 by Francesco De Rosa (357), he chooses not to employ it. Characteristically, he never explains why. Unfortunately, Mendola's lack of interest in referencing extends to the translation itself. Consequently, the reader is never certain how the consultation of the manuscript has altered Mendola's reading of Muratori. All that aside, this is certainly a readable and generally competent translation. Mendola rightly indicates the importance of assessing the text's language via the prism of context (13–14), an approach that is also reflected in an appendix dealing with feudal structures specific to southern Italy (297–304). The latter highlights Mendola's deep understanding of the environment in which the chronicle was composed. I must admit I still winced at some of his decisions. I recognize that my irritation with the frequent addition of the anachronistic "Holy" to "Roman Empire" and the translation of "Romanorum in Regem electum" (*Cronisti e scrittori sincroni della dominazione normanna nel Regno di Puglia e Sicilia*, ed. Giuseppe Del Re et al., 2 vols. [1868], 2:107) as "who had been elected King of the Germans" (87) may simply reflect my own academic proclivities. I was, however, more concerned to see "pretiosam pupilli hereditatem manus extenderat" rendered "attempting to usurp the young monarch's precious birthright" and "et materna successione" become "as well as hereditary right" (81; cf. Del Re et al., *Cronisti e scrittori*, 2:105). Both are examples of where Mendola seems to drift too far from the chronicler's intentions.

Despite what it lacks in scholarly references, where this book excels is in Mendola's geographical knowledge. The frequent clarification of locations mentioned in the chronicle make the volume particularly useful. Mendola's deep understanding of southern Italy's historical geography is ably displayed through extensive endnotes and excellent maps. One example is note 202, where a lacuna in the manuscript is convincingly addressed. As the translator indicates, the book necessitates revising Manfred's accepted itinerary for these years (359). Does this outweigh Mendola's idiosyncratic approach? In my view, not quite. A new Latin edition—that being prepared for the MGH was signaled as forthcoming in January 2019—is a necessary starting point for any future translation project. In the interim, this volume is useful but it needs to be employed with caution.

Trinacria Editions seem to specialize in publishing Mendola's works; he dominates their catalogue. This may account for the apparent "lightness" with which the book was edited: the peer review process of most academic presses would not have indulged Mendola quite as much as he clearly was. Nevertheless, many presses could learn a thing or two from Trinacria: this book is very reasonably priced, extremely well produced, copiously illustrated, and I spotted only two typos (106, 144).

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