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Emily Sohmer Tai • Kathryn L. Reyerson
Editors

Mapping Pre-Modern Sicily

Maritime Violence, Cultural Exchange,
and Imagination in the Mediterranean, 800–1700

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ISSN 2731-5592

Mediterranean Perspectives

ISBN 978-3-031-04914-9

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04915-6>

ISSN 2731-5606 (electronic)

ISBN 978-3-031-04915-6 (eBook)

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

For Paul, James, and Philip

MAPPING PRE-MODERN SICILY: MARITIME VIOLENCE, CULTURAL EXCHANGE, AND IMAGINATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The first 12 of the 14 chapters presented in this collection explore a tension in the history of pre-modern Sicily. Set in the middle of the Mediterranean, the island's geographic position at once fashioned it into a strategic base for launching campaigns of maritime violence—whether as organized belligerence, during such conflicts as the War of the Sicilian Vespers (1282–1302), or the piracy of the *guerre de course* that pitted Christians against Muslims in the pre-modern Mediterranean—and a nexus of cultural exchange, where Byzantine, Islamic, and western European traditions merged to shape varying aspects of political, commercial, religious, material, and even literary, practice. Two concluding chapters will consider contemporary uses for Sicily's distinctive past, discussing how digital resources documenting the history of pre-modern Sicily can be utilized to enhance the pedagogy of world and western European history, both online and in the undergraduate classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume grew from an experimental two-part session at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in New York in January, 2020. The experimental dimension of our project lay in its first-time-ever integration of digital humanities with the presentation of research on medieval Sicily and the study of maritime violence. In addition to our contributors, we are grateful to two colleagues who participated in that session for their helpful suggestions and encouragement: Marie Kelleher, and Abigail Mullen, of George Mason University's Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, as well as those who attended these sessions, and offered discerning comments and enthusiasm. We would also like to thank our editors at Palgrave Macmillan—Megan Laddusaw, Megan Simpson, Sam Stocker, Arun Prasath and Mani Vipinkumar; Kevin Mummey, who produced the index for this volume; and Melanie Locay, Rebecca Federman, and Tom Lisanti of the New York Public Library. Finally, we wish to thank Molly Hale, of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, for permission to use the map that appears in our introduction. Please note that the Central Intelligence Agency has not approved or endorsed the contents of this publication.

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Emily Sohmer Tai is Professor of History at Queensborough Community College of the City University of New York. She received her PhD in 1996 from Harvard University. Her research focuses on the interaction between piracy, commerce, and law in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean. Tai's articles, reviews, and book chapters have appeared in *Medieval Encounters*, *Mediterranean Studies*, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, *History Compass*, *Speculum*, *Canadian Historical Review*, *Itinerario*, and in *Seascapes, Littoral Cultures and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges*, ed. Jerry Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Karen Wigen (2007) (also available in an online version at the History Cooperative and at medievalists.net). She has been the recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, and the PSC-CUNY Research Award Program. She is completing a book on medieval Mediterranean piracy.

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