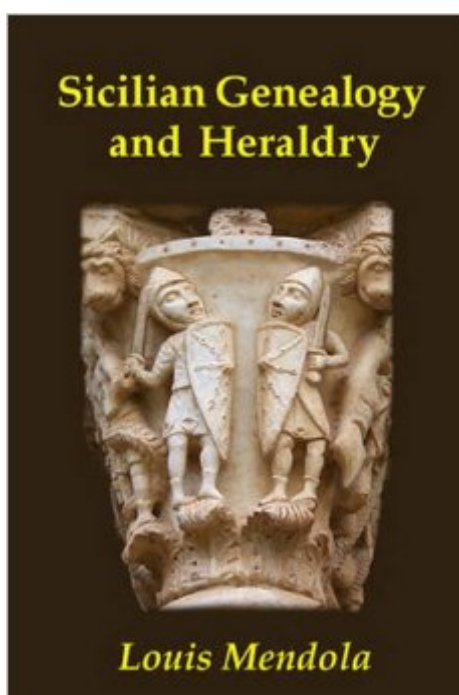


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Sicilian Genealogy And Heraldry



Synopsis

In Sicilian genealogy, a generation by generation lineage to the Late Middle Ages isn't unusual. This long-awaited, definitive guide shows you how to do it. Sicily boasts the world's best genealogical records, revealing the deep roots of a Sicilian identity and facilitating the construction of many pedigrees into the fifteenth century. Based on the author's 30 years of experience as a foremost expert in the field, this is the first complete guide ever published in English dedicated exclusively to Sicilian genealogical research. Its publication in 2013 established a new subject category in the Dewey catalogue, and it is the reference book consulted by professional genealogists researching Sicilian families. Topics range from parochial, civil and feudal records to DNA haplotyping, religion, rural life, cuisine, ethnography, coats of arms, surname origins and Jewish genealogy, with insightful, accurate information on historiography and research strategies - a few published here for the first time. With scientific rigor and disarming candor, "the Indiana Jones of Italian history" shows you how to "push the envelope" of your family history research into Sicily's multicultural medieval era. Family history is more than names, dates and pedigrees; it is the people and culture behind the names. Social context is not overlooked. If there were ever a handbook on Sicilian ethnology, this would be it. This book covers a wide range of topics in detail, transcending conventional strategies to explain the "how and why" of historical research: shortcuts and methods as well as advice on pitfalls to avoid. As a serious guide for dedicated researchers, it presumes some familiarity with basic genealogy, recommending introductory books to complement what one reads in this one, so don't expect photographs of vital statistics records and other documents. But even for family historians at the beginning of their research, this book is an excellent consultative reference. It brings to life an arcane, often elusive, field. Significantly, the author destroys a few myths about Italian family history, and about Italy itself, while describing real social history. Especially impressive is his refreshingly distinctive writing style, with blunt reality checks sprinkled throughout the lengthier chapters. That's the kind of pragmatism missing from many genealogical guides. While the chapters on the aristocracy and heraldry may interest fewer readers than those on simple lineal research, they are useful because most pedigrees before 1400 focus on the nobility. By his own admission, Mendola's tone is at times sardonic, as if this elder statesman were scolding the field's less disciplined historians while setting the stage for its beginners. Just when you think that his treatment of a particular topic has become tiresome or excessively dry and theoretical, he inserts a concrete example to make his point. It's an effective technique. In his assaults on the machinations of historical revisionists and genealogical fabulists, along with fake royalty and others who manipulate history for their own edification, the author takes no prisoners. Like Verres, the Roman governor of

Sicily who fled into voluntary exile following Cicero's opening speech at his trial for corruption, genealogy's fantasists should flee the moment Lou Mendola enters the fray. In fact, quite a few have, as the author has been consulted over the years by journalists, law-enforcement authorities and others seeking to expose genealogy's identity tricksters. His role is not unlike that of a lone sheriff protecting a town or, for European traditionalists, the last knight defending a castle. He is one of Italy's most cosmopolitan historians, consulted by The History Channel, the Vatican, the Order of Malta, the Almanach de Gotha and the BBC. This is a reference work written by a highly knowledgeable, freethinking scholar, albeit one with close connections to Europe's traditionalist Establishment. The comparison to Indiana Jones, or even Rambo (!), is not inappropriate, except perhaps for Mendola's blue eyes. If you're a researcher, consulting this useful reference is like having an experienced, heavily-armed warrior escort you through jungles and mine fields to find The Truth on the other side. Not to worry. You'll get there. And when you do, your ancestors will be waiting to meet you.

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Customer Reviews

Let me start off by saying this book is one of the most valuable tools for researching Sicilian genealogy. I had started my research well over three years ago, and had I had this book, it would have saved me much time!, at least two years! If you are expecting " and they lived happily ever after" or " let me look up my family name and see the history" this is not for you. The author painstakingly lists ever nuance in the field of genealogy, in particular Sicily which has its own set of rules. The books explains the history, human migration, even DNA! As an American doing research

on my family tree (first generation American) it was very difficult to start, and by pure luck I was able to find someone who helped me along my journey. I had spend countless days asking questions, visiting town halls, getting frustrated, visiting many churches, even having my parents help with no positive results. If I had this book, I would have been able to direct my resources (time for me) to right people. As a resident of the United States, I do not have the luxury of time in Sicily. This book is a fantastic reference and guide, and will explain even the confusing subject of heraldry in Sicily. Also interesting is the history of the Knights in Sicily. This book is mandatory if you have family or at least part of your family who originates from Sicily; moreover, this is written by someone who LIVES in Sicily and not someone who visits for a few months and retreats back to UK.

This is an informative book for those interested in Sicilian history and genealogy. If you're looking for a step by step guide to beginning an on-line genealogy search then this isn't really the book for you, but if you're on your way and are looking for some background to what you're finding, then this book is very helpful and enlightening. If you are lucky enough to have ancestors from the Diocese of Monreale (provincia di Palermo) then you'll be able to get back to the mid to early 16th century, and I am one of those people. Hopefully every diocese in Italy will one day have their parish records digitized. Familysearch.org, the Mormon site, is a great place to begin researching your Sicilian/Italian ancestry. Just remember that the records you'll find are in Latin, not Italian, so if you're not familiar with the Italian form of given names you'll end up with the wrong names of your family, and there are some names which have/had forms popular in Sicilia which you don't find much in other parts of Italia...Geronimo/Geronima for example. Looking at parish censuses will give you the Italian forms of the names, so that's a great place to double check, but they are only available for select years. You can do a lot of work from your computer, so don't get frustrated.

Didn't find that much useful to my own research which was only on the "genealogy" part of the book, not the "heraldry" which at the moment I cannot imagine being of interest, but you never know. There just wasn't very much practical guidance in here to justify a full price book.

As someone else previously mentioned this book is not a step-by-step guide to researching genealogical records. It is not an introduction for the novice. It is, however, chock full of valuable information for genealogists, both amateur and professional. It will tell you what kind of information you can expect to glean from the various types of records available, whether they be vital civil records, parish records, census records (riveli), notary records, or feudal records. The author is a

native Sicilian, one of Sicily's leading genealogists, and the islands best-selling historian. His knowledge of the subject is unparalleled and his mastery of the English language is without question. If you have a workable understanding of English you will find this work to be an entertaining, informative and enjoyable read. This book, along with the companion "The Peoples of Sicily: A Multicultural Legacy" is a must-read for anyone with more than just a cursory interest in the history and genealogy of Sicily and its peoples.

Difficult reading, very dry for the non-genealogist, however, a very revealing history of the Sicilian peoples.

If you are into researching your Sicilian Heritage (I am) this is a great book. A little hard to get into but once you do it offers so much help for your research.

well written and very interesting

I would have gladly paid more for a book without print so small I could read it. Paper can't be so expensive you need a magnifying glass to read it. We've recently discovered Sicilian roots and this book sounded perfect. None of us can read it for more than a few minutes without eye strain headaches.

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