SERIES EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The Norman Kingdom of Sicily has long attracted international scholarship. Among Britons, the redoubtable Evelyn Jamison was a pioneer editor of sources, while in recent years, an increasing quantity of distinguished work has confirmed the *regno's* central place on the historiographical map of the Middle Ages. Anglophone undergraduates, however, have not hitherto had the source materials they need for independent study. The gap is filled, for key decades of the twelfth century, by the present book. Combining unsurpassed knowledge of the Normans in southern Italy, with expert appreciation of medieval latinity, Graham Loud and Thomas Wiedemann offer a set of translations as learned as they are readable, along with an introduction and notes that place the texts securely in their political, cultural and literary setting. The jewel in this crown in the *History* of 'Hugh Falcandus', whose Sallustian relish in political reportage ensures that (as the author hoped) 'glory glows with vitality': at the same time Loud and Wiedemann provide indispensable guidance to a historian's craft that included skilful distortions and suppressions of evidence. While thus offering several kinds of exercise in methodology, this welcome addition to the Manchester Medieval Sources Series gives an entree into an intriguingly complex, and centrally important, Mediterranean world.

Janet L. Nelson, King's College London