SOCIAL POSITIONS IN THE *LIBER DE REGNO SICILIE*: USING STRUCTURAL EQUIVALENCES IN AN ATTEMPT TO ANALYZE THE NARRATIVE OF PSEUDO-FALCANDUS

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> *Comites etiam aliique viri nobiles, quibus precipue Maionis erat suspecta potentia, consilio super hoc habito, sibi invicem iuravere, quod Maionis mortem totis viribus totoque posse perquirerent, neque parerent deinceps curie, aut ab ea societate discederent, nisi prius illum aut interfectum esse cognoscerent aut extra regnum fugisse.*[1]

This quotation is an example of the tangled social interactions attested in the *Liber de Regno Sicilie*: encounters, agreements, hostilities, plotting, and clashes between characters in and around the Sicilian royal court. The *Liber,* attributed to a Hugo Falcandus, provides a vivid and detailed account of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily under William I and the first years of William II (1154–1169).

The name Hugo Falcandus – whom I shall refer to henceforth as pseudo-Falcandus – appears for the first time in a printed edition published in Paris in 1550.[2] None of the surviving medieval manuscripts cite any authority by the name of Hugo Falcandus and no such person can be identified in the surviving twelfth-century charters. However, there seems to be general agreement in previous and current scholarship that, although ps.-Falcandus was not necessarily one of the main characters in the narrative, he was certainly a contemporary and probably

[1] *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola Ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium di Ugo Falcando*, G. B. Siragusa, ed. (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1904 [1897]) [henceforth: *Liber*], 29. "… and the counts and other noblemen who particularly disliked Maio's influence discussed the matter and swore an oath among themselves to strive for Maio's death with all the forces at their command and with all their might, and neither to obey the court any more nor to abandon their new coalition until they had heard either that he had been killed or that he had fled the realm," *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by 'Hugo Falcandus,' 1154–1169*, ed. & trans. G. A. Loud and T. E. J. Wiedemann (New York: Manchester University Press, 1998) [henceforth: *The Tyrants*], 82.

[2] The editor, Martin Gervais of Tournai, explains that the binding of the manuscript which he used for this edition was perished and rotten, *Historia Hugonis Falcandi Siculi de rebus gestis in Siciliae regno,* ed. Martin Gervais de Tournai, (Paris: Apud Mathurinum Dupuys, 1550). The name 'Falcandus' almost certainly came from a misreading of the allegedly damaged title page, see G. A. Loud, "William the Bad or William the Unlucky? Kingship in Sicily 1154–1166," *Haskins Society Journal* 8 (1999): 99–113.

an eyewitness.[3] Nevertheless, the question of authorship is mostly a technical question of little relevance for the present study and probably impossible to solve.

My research project[4] sought an integrative approach that would allow me to comprehend the social process present in the textual narrative source. This study was based on the interactions among social actors, as narrated in the text, who were involved in the machinations reported. I assumed that a relational approach can contribute to an understanding of narrative sources. The two main questions that I expected to answer were, firstly, how can one extract relational data and construct networks that represent the information contained in a narrative source such as the *Liber*? And secondly, what do the networks thus constructed reveal about the significance and implications of the social space constructed by ps.-Falcandus?

Thus, the challenge of how to "read" the text became the main focus of my research. In order to concentrate on the information on social and political processes embedded in the text, I needed to transform ps.-Falcandus' rhetoricized reports so that the relations, not the individuals, were at the center of the study. The first requirement of such an attempt was to translate a textual structure into a sociological construct, namely, a socio-relational dataset. Rewriting the whole

[3] G. B. Siragusa, "Prefazione," in *Liber*, VIII–XLV; G. Gröber, *Übersicht über die lateinische Literatur von der Mitte des VI. Jahrhunderts bis zur Mitte des XIV. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: W. Fink, 1963 [1902]); Ferdinand Chalandon, *Domination normande en Italie et en Sicilie* (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1907), lii–lxi; H. Hoffmann, "Hugo Falcandus und Romuald von Salerno," *DAEM* 23 (1967): 116–170; C. A. Garufi, "Roberto di San Giovanni, maestro notario e il "Liber de Regno Sicilie," *Archivio Storico per la Sicilia* 18 (1944): 33–128; E. Jamison, *Admiral Eugenius of Sicily. His life and Work and the Authorship of the* Epistola ad Petrum *and the* Historia Hugonis Falcandi Siculi (London: Oxford University Press, 1957); G. M. Cantarella, "Ripensare Falcando," *Studi Medievali* [hereafter: *SM*] 3, no. 34 (1993): 823–840; G. E. Hood, "Falcandus and Fulcaudus, *Epistola ad Petrum*, *Liber de Regno Sicilie*. Literary Form and Author's Identity," *SM* 40 (1999): 1–41; E. D'Angelo, *Storiografi e Cronologi Latini del Mezzogiorno Normanno-Svevo* (Naples: Liguori Editori, 2003), 31–3, 70–81; A. Franke, "Zur Identität des 'Hugo Falcandus,'" *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* [hereafter: *DAEM*] 64 (2008): 1–13; R. Köhn, "Noch einmal zur Identität des 'Hugo Falcandus'" *DAEM* 67 (2011): 499–541; and the expanded and still unpublished version of G. A. Loud's paper, "The Image of the Tyrant in the work of 'Hugo Falcandus,'" originally presented at a conference on Norman historiography organised at Cerisy-la-Salle, Normandy (October, 2009).

[4] This article is based on my MA thesis, "A Relational View of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and its Royal Court: The Social Space Constructed by 'Hugo Falcandus'," Budapest: Central European University, 2013.

Liber through Franzosi's Quantitative Narrative Analysis,[5] I constructed a dataset that provided a series of narrative sociomatrices ready to be parsed through network analytical tools. Of these, measuring structural equivalence and using so-called blockmodelling turned out to be a promising approach for understanding the entire text's social dimensions because the structurally equivalent positions strongly suggest the narrative roles the author used for constructing a social system. Although I am here only scratching the surface, the insights provided strongly suggest that blockmodelling, a relational approach, in narrative analysis is an entirely new field to experiment with and explore.

Representing Narratives as Social Networks

The central idea of this methodological attempt is that narrative analysis yields an understanding of social relations as embedded in a text and that the meaning of individuals and communities in a text is conditional on their position in a system of social interactions constructed by the author. One should not only recover facts from the narrative, but also find a manner of making sense of them. This is where a structural and relational analysis seems to offer a useful approach. The narrative analysis of ps.-Falcandus' *Liber* not only helps to reveal its linguistic properties – a task perhaps better left in the hands of the linguists – but also the considerable amount of sociological information present in the narrative.[6] In Laumann's words, the peculiar and distinctive feature of network analysis "is to explain, at least in part, the behavior of network elements – i.e., the social actors – and of the system as a whole by appeal to specific features of the interconnections among the elements."[7] In order to approach the author's perspective, I needed a method that would allow me to explain the social information it contains derived from the structure of the text, not just to gauge its ideological stand or linguistic resonances. Arising from the toolbox of structural analyses of narratives, the research tool that proved to be helpful for this endeavor was Quantitative Narrative Analysis – QNA.

QNA is a method designed by Roberto Franzosi to study the behavior of historical actors as reported by narrative sources.[8] This approach to historical

[5] R. Franzosi, "Narrative Analysis – or Why (and How) Sociologists Should Be Interested in Narrative," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 519–520.
[6] R. Franzosi, "Narrative Analysis."
[7] E. Laumann, "Network Analysis," in *Large Social Systems: Some Theoretical and Methodological Problems*, ed. P. W. Holland and S. Lenhardt (New York: Academic, 1979), 394.
[8] For extensive reference to Franzosi's approach, see *Quantitative Narrative Analysis* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 2009); "Grammatiche semantiche come strumenti di organizzazione e

narratives, taking advantage of the invariant structural linguistic properties of any narrative, allows historians and social scientists to study the actions and relations of actants.[9] QNA is founded on Halliday's action-verbal clause,[10] which is defined as a process that consists essentially of three components: 1) the process itself; 2) the participants in the process; and 3) the circumstances associated with the process, recorded as semantic triplets.[11] The action-verbal clause as the characteristic narrative process implies interactions among participants. The action-verbal clauses are thus the skeleton of the language of the narrative and the raw material for identifying the behaviors and interaction of the actants in a text.

The dataset constructed through rewriting the entire *Liber de Regno Sicilie* through QNA separates the social information embedded in the narrative into 420 events. The total number of attested social interactions, coded as semantic triplets, is 1174, together with 89 social relationships also explicitly attested in the narrative. Each interaction and relationship defines an edge that connects two characters. The total number of characters presented in the narrative as social actors is 214.

This dataset thus provides a list of social actors and a list of edges. The different social interactions present in the narrative were labelled in sixteen different categories. These were grouped into six general types of interaction:

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raccolta di dati narrative," *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia* 47 (2006): 465–488; and *From Words to Numbers: Narrative, Data, and Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Franzosi's work has become one of the leading contemporary efforts to construct a strong framework for quantitative narrative analysis. See also P. DiMaggio, "Cultural Networks," in *The Sage Handbook of Social Network Analysis,* ed. P. J. Carrington and J. Scott (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), 286–300.

[9] In narrative and sociological theory, "actant" is a term employed in order to speak neither of "actors" (who act) nor of "systems" (which behave). Halliday proposes the terminology "participant."

[10] A great deal of QNA's theoretical framework comes from M. A. K. Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (London: Arnold, 1994). For Halliday, human beings experience their inner and outer worlds and represent these experiences linguistically as processes in the clause, with three primary types of processes – doing (or material processes, further divided into happening, creating/changing, and doing (to)/acting), sensing (or mental, further divided into seeing, feeling, and thinking), and being (or relational, further divided into symbolizing, having identity, and having attribute). See also R. Franzosi, "Sociology, Narrative and the Quality Versus Quantity Debate (Goethe versus Newton): Can Computer-assisted Plot Grammars Help Us Understand the Rise of Italian Fascism (1919–1922)?" *Theory and Society* 39 (2010): 593–629.

[11] Halliday, *Functional Grammar*, 108–109.

Association; Influence; Endowment; Enmity; Communication, and Promise/Oath. Each type of interaction creates a different layer of an overlapping social network,[12] producing a system of multiple relations.

An additional layer is added to this: The social *relationships* that explicitly connect the characters independently of their interactions. While the social relationships are not embedded in the semantic triplets, they were nevertheless coded as attributes of the social actors. These relationships are categorized in three general classes: kin, friendship or legal/administrative. Although not originally captured as interactions between actors, these relationships indicate a connection sufficiently relevant to the narrative for the author to mention it explicitly. The relationships layer is important for detecting patterns of social positions and roles, since kinship, friendships, or legal/administrative linkages are the structural contexts that supply the relevant social environment in which the interaction takes place between characters.[13] For this reason, the stated and specific relationships must be studied as a relational layer together with the rest of the interactions. My hypothesis here is that the few explicit mentions of kinship, friendship, and legal/administrative linkages "pre-structured" the interactions of the social reality construed by the author.

The narrative's dataset is used to build up network data stored in seven separate adjacency matrices, one for each type of interaction and one for the underlying structure of relationships. This means that the list of nodes, interactions, and relationships needs to be transformed into sociomatrices, i.e., an adjacency matrix that offers the data representing interpersonal connections in a tabular format. The network data for the whole narrative can be constructed in seven sociomatrices. The network data is not dichotomized; it is given in links

[12] As in the case study of "A Monastery in Crisis," where Sampson presented a detailed account of social relations in an American monastery, classifying the relation in four types by a dual model that partitions a population while it identifies patterns of relations; see S. F. Sampson, "Crisis in a Cloister," PhD dissertation, Cornell University, 1969. This study was used for exemplifying precisely the use of blockmodelling in the analysis of multiple social networks in the foundational work by H. C. White, S. A. Boorman, and R. L. Breiger, "Social Structure from Multiple Networks. I. Blockmodels of Roles and Positions," *American Journal of Sociology* 81 (1976): 749–754.

[13] For a comprehensive summary of the concept and role of social relationships in system and network theory, see S. P. Borgatti, A. Mehra, D. J. Brass, and G. Labianca, "Network Analysis in the Social Sciences," *Science* 323 (2009): 892–895 and H. C. White, *An Anatomy of Kinship: Mathematical Models for Structures of Cumulated Roles* (Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963). Cf. the systemic formalization of the notion of society in Niklas Luhmann's theory, especially *Soziologische Aufklärung: Aufsätze zur Theorie sozialer Systeme* (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1970), 155–178.

with values, namely, the links can bear a value greater than 1, depending on how many times each pair of characters interacted in each layer.

Blockmodelling: An Approach to Positional Analysis by Structural Equivalence

The notion of *position* refers to a group of social actors who are equivalently embedded in a system of relations.[14] Thus, a *position* in this case indicates a category of characters in ps.-Falcandus' history that are found in similar social processes with respect to actors in other positions in the same system; actors occupying the same structural position need not be in direct or indirect contact with one another. In contrast, the notion of role refers to the patterns of relation which operate between actors or between positions.

Positional and role analyses are well suited for understanding the narrative patterns in ps.-Falcandus. To begin with, positions and roles are usually based on a combination of multiple relations;[15] the most informative role or positional analyses require several types of ties. Secondly, by taking into consideration all the intricate and different types of interaction at the same time, I will be able to group all the characters into positions based on their multirelational equivalence as present in the narrative and describe the categories' social processes based on the author's cognitive descriptions. Similarity is defined here in terms of the equivalence of actors with respect to a structural property. In order to conduct both analyses based on structural equivalence, I constructed and interpreted *blockmodels*. Blockmodelling is the classic social network approach to positional and role analyses.[16]

A blockmodel consists of two elements: A partition of actors into positions and the identification of ties within or between the positions on each of the layers of relations – in the present context, layers of interactions.[17] A blockmodel is hence a hypothesis on how a multirelational network operates.

The structural property for detecting the positions in the case of ps.-Falcandus is the same as defined by H. C. White and F. Lorrain: Two actors are structurally equivalent by having identical ties to and from all the other actors

[14] S. Wasserman and K. Faust, *Social Network Analysis. Methods and Applications* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 348.
[15] H. C. White, *An Anatomy of Kinship*.
[16] C. Prell, *Social Network Analysis: History, Theory and Methodology* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), 193.
[17] Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 395.

in the network.[18] Hence, when two nodes in a network are equivalent, "they are substitutable;"[19] in other words, combining structurally equivalent actors into a single position loses no structural information. This definition of equivalence applies naturally to multilayer networks; for a pair of characters to be equivalent they must have identical connections on all the layers. Structural equivalence is also suitable for the analysis of valued ties; two actors would be equivalent if they interacted frequently with exactly the same people and interacted infrequently with exactly the same others.[20] However, it is fundamental to note that in actual network data, as is the case of ps.-Falcandus' narrative, it is unlikely, if not impossible, that any actors will be exactly equivalent. Therefore a measure of equivalence is required in order to identify the subsets of actors who are approximately structurally equivalent.

The measure I have selected for conducting the positional analysis is the correlation coefficient.[21] This is the preferred method for measuring similarity in pattern. If two characters are perfectly structurally equivalent, then the correlation between them in the sociomatrix will be equal to 1.0. As each pair of characters becomes more dissimilar, the value of the correlation decreases.[22]

The next step is to represent the positions. I first partition the characters into subsets so that characters within each block are closer to being structurally equivalent than the characters in different blocks. These positions are precisely the building blocks with which blockmodels are constructed.

The collection of the positions of structural equivalence, together with the assignment of the characters to the positions of equivalence, constitutes the blockmodel for ps.-Falcandus' network data. Hence, several interpretations of the structure of relations contained in the text can be made based on these models. It should be remembered that a blockmodel is a hypothesis about the relational structure in a social system that refers to positions rather than to characters and then summarizes features of the entire structure. Among the various possible ways

[18] F. Lorrain and H. C. White, "Structural Equivalence of Individuals in Social Networks," *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 1 (1971): 49–80.
[19] Lorrain and White, "Structural Equivalence," 63.
[20] Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 360.
[21] The correlation between two nodes is the usual "Pearson product-moment" correlation coefficient, computed on both the rows and columns of all the layers of the sociomatrix, see Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 368–369.
[22] These correlations were computed using S. P. Borgatti, M. G. Everett, and L. C. Freeman, *Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis* (Harvard: Analytic Technologies, 2002).

of interpreting a blockmodel, I described and compared the relevant positions to the attributes reported by ps.-Falcandus.

Interpreting the Narrative's Blockmodels: The Characters' Attributes in ps.-Falcandus

This type of interpretation is based on the assumption that a correlation between character characteristics and the positions in the blockmodel is likely to indicate an association between such narrated characteristics and the structural arrangement of the text's social space. By observing these correlations I can assess the extent to which the attributes of the social actors are important determinants for defining the actors' roles in the narrative structure.

The social actors in the first identified relevant position share an outstanding feature: Most of them were officials in the royal administration. With the exception of the archbishop of Trani,[23] these structurally equivalent characters are presented by the author as palace servants with specific charges. Among them are the anonymous palace *gavarretus*,[24] negatively characterized as a *vir facilitatis*, *cupiditatis*[25] when the author is explaining the plot to release prisoners kept in the palace and to assault William I; another *gavarretus*, serving in the royal castle in Taormina, appears very late in the sequence of events;[26] the *stratigotus*[27] of

[23] An archdiocese in Apulia.

[24] Although the office of *gavarretus* was identified by the later medieval notary and chronicler Richard of San Germano as a *baiulus*, a royal bailiff (*Ryccardi di Sancto Germano Notarii Chronicon*, ed. C. A. Garufi, 2nd ed., (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1938), Loud and Wiedmann have pointed out that it is unlikely, as the latter was more an official in charge of royal property and revenues in defined territorial circumscriptions, whereas the two *gavarreti* mentioned by ps.-Falcandus are guards, both subordinate to a castellan; see *The Tyrants*, 106.

[25] *Liber*, 55; *The Tyrants*, 106.

[26] When the people of Messina are besieging the castle in Taormina in order to liberate Richard of Mandra, Count of Molise; *Liber,* 154–5; *The Tyrants*, 206–207.

[27] In this sense, the term *stratigotus* was employed in the Kingdom of Sicily to refer not to a general, but to a chief magistrate of a town appointed by the king to govern it, whose presence was rather frequent, at least the government of Messina; see L. R. Ménager, *Les Actes Latins de S. Maria di Messina* (Palermo: Instituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neollenici, 1963), 27–42; see also H. Takayama, *The Administration of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily,* (New York: Brill, 1993), 75. The term *stratigotus* could vary depending on the region, being used interchangeably with the office of *catepanus* and *baiulus*, and in Apulia the latter were preferred; see J. M. Martin, *La Pouille du Vle au Xlle siècle* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1993), 818–820; *The Tyrants,* 117.

Messina, Richard;[28] and Jacob, the *hostiarius*[29] sent to Messina by the royal court to prepare a fleet.[30] It is indeed striking that the two *gavarreti*, although far apart in the narrative's plot and not connected directly, are confirmed as similar social actors with equivalent roles. This social position goes even further to include the similar office of *hostiarius* and the other royal appointment of *stratigotus*. The second position thus may confirm, beyond the mere administrative titles, one of the administrative classes bound to the government of the royal court as represented in ps.-Falcandus' construct.

Turning to the second relevant block, half of its positional members bear a comital title: Hugh, count of Catanzaro;[31] Bertram, count of Andria; and his father, the more recurrent character, Gilbert, count of Gravina. The regional scope of these titles is restricted to the greater regions of Apulia and Calabria. Ps.-Falcandus explicitly groups the other three characters in this position together as part of a party condemned for conspiracy when the royal court moved to Messina.[32] It is noteworthy that one of these conspirators, John of Sinopoli, although otherwise unattested,[33] is referred to as coming from a town in Calabria, matching the regional scope of the counts in this structural position. There is no absolute unifying attribute except the fact all of them were individual social actors, but the model suggests a social position of nobles linked to the eastern and southern mainland.

The first feature to notice in the third position is the presence of important ecclesiastical figures: Stephen of Perche,[34] archbishop of Palermo;

[28] Richard of Aversa, attested as the *stratigotus* of Messina from March 1156 to January 1168, as documented by C. A. Garufi and L. R. Ménager; "Su la curia stratigoziale di Messina nel tempo normanno-svevo," *Archivio Storico Messinese* 5 (1904): 32–8; and Ménager, *Les Actes Latins*, 39–40.

[29] Anglicised as ostiary, often translated as doorman or porter, a *hostiarius* was a guard or an attendant in charge of the door and other domestic responsibilities; Loud and Wiedemann translate it as "usher;" *The Tyrants*, 204.

[30] *Liber,* 162; *The Tyrants*, 204.

[31] Gilbert was the queen's *consanguineus; Liber*, 29. According to ps.-Falcandus, he initially participated in the mainland rebellion against Maio, and, after his relative, the queen, became regent, he went to Palermo in order to attempt to influence the royal court in his favor against the influential Qa'id Peter and the Sicilian eunuchs; *Liber*, 87–90; *The Tyrants*, 144–149.

[32] Referring to the conspiracy led by the queen's brother, Count Henry, who unleashed a temporal turmoil in the city of Messina; *Liber*, 142; *The Tyrants*, 194–195.

[33] *The Tyrants*, 195.

[34] One of the sons of the count of Perche (Rotrou II), and blood-relative of Queen Margaret. For a more detailed genealogy of Stephen, see *The Tyrants,* especially 159–64. Cf. "Étienne du Perche," in *Le livre du royaume de Sicile. Intrigues et complots á la cour normande*

Roger, archbishop of Reggio; John, cardinal of Naples, and Gentile, bishop of Agrigento.[35] Except for John of Naples, all the characters in this position are introduced by the author late in the narrative; William of San Severino is mentioned first.[36] These structurally similar characters do not share an evidently common geographical or professional denominator. In this case it seems to be more relevant to focus on the most recurrent actors included in this position, as by sharing the same position they would have equivalent social roles within the story, although some of them – Stephen of Perche, Gentile of Agrigento, and Cardinal John – are more recurrent than the others.

The common characteristic among these actors is that they are all outsiders. John, although it could be argued that his native city of Naples fell under the dominion of the Hauteville kingdom, made his career as a cardinal at the Roman curia; Bishop Gentile was of Tuscan origin and had previously served the king of Hungary as chancellor.[37] Stephen of Perche, the protagonist and controversial Frenchman, arrived at the court following the invitation and appointment of his relative, Queen Margaret.[38] I thus infer that this position points to a societal group that ps.-Falcandus seems to have identified as powerful and influential foreigners.

The characters in the fourth relevant position are less numerous, but show greater similarity. To begin with, all of them seem to have stemmed from Palermo. The first common attribute of this position was that they were all palace officials except Philip Mansellus. His structural equivalence may be due to the fact that he was the *nepos*[39] of Chamberlain Atenulf; his only occurrence in the

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de Palerme (1154–1169) [*by "Hugo Falcandus"*], ed. and trans. E. Türk (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011) [henceforth: *Le Livre*], 32–35, 253–257. For the contemporary county of Perche, including its boundaries and ruling class, see K. Thompson, *Power and Border Lordships in Medieval France. The County of Perche. 1000–1226* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002).

[35] The bishop of Agrigento, throughout the whole text his papal anointment is never attested, always remaining – and referred to as such – "the elect." The bishop-elect is introduced by the author when reporting the state of the court and his officials after Queen Margaret took over as regent; *Liber*, 90–4; *The Tyrants*, 140–141.

[36] This during King William I's campaign on the mainland, after both Maio's and Matthew Bonellus' deaths; *Liber*, 75–81; *The Tyrants*, 129–133.

[37] As illustrated by Loud and Wiedmann, Gentile was described by the thirteenth-century *Libellus de Successione Pontificum Agrigenti* as "the Tuscan, who was chancellor of the King of Hungary and came as envoy to King William;" *The Tyrants*, 140. See also C. A. Garufi, *L'archivio capitolare di Girgenti nel tempo normanno-svevo ed il cartulario del secolo XIII*, *Archivio Storico Siciliano* 28 (1903): 123–156.

[38] *Liber*, 109–10; *The Tyrants*, 159–162.

[39] Translated here as "nephew"; Du Cange, et al., *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis* (Niort: L. Favre, 1883-1887), 587. This is also the translation offered by Loud and Wiedemann.

text is when he provokes Matthew Bonellus, his uncle's enemy.[40] The collective actors here indicate another major feature of this position – a correlation between the palace officials and the Muslim inhabitants. The Palermitan *multi sarraceni* are described by ps.-Falcandus[41] as following two key professions, merchant and, most importantly, collecting fiscal dues in the *duana* (*dīwān*),[42] which characterized them as part of the royal administration. This is congruent with their structural equivalence, which is shared with the royal chamberlain and the palace eunuchs; they formed part of an administrative societal group, which is indeed confirmed by the social construct of the *Liber*'s author.

The other collective and Muslim actor is the eunuchs of the palace. These palace servants not only recur often in the narrative, but are explicitly and negatively characterized by ps.-Falcandus as *nomine tantum habituque christianus,* but *animo sarracenus.*[43] These crypto-Muslims are not only mildly prominent central actors in the account of the Sicilian royal court – for example, in the *influence* layer they rank among the top fifteen – but also provide one of the possible rich testimonies that a Latin witness presents on the "palace Saracens."[44] This position may thus be one of the key societal classes in ps- Falcandus.

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[40] *Liber*, 44–6; *The Tyrants*, 103–104. Matthew became the leader of the successful rebellion against Maio of Bari, temporarily the protagonist of ps.-Falcandus' narrative, until his downfall by means of a palace conspiracy against him, led mainly by the notary Matthew; *Liber,* 31–44; *The Tyrants,* 86–98.

[41] The Palermitan Muslims as a collective character are introduced by ps.-Falcandus when, after the conspiracy of the nobles to overthrow William I and elevate his eldest son, Duke Roger, as king, the turmoil escalated up to the sack of the palace and an attack on the Muslim population. For a comprehensive treatment of this episode, see A. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 184–188.

[42] The complete Arabic title of this office is *al-dīwān al-ma'mūr*, which literally means "the busy/well-served office," or as J. Johns more loosely but more accurately translates it, as "royal *dīwān,*" whereas the standard Greek term for this Arabic office, as attested in the bilingual confirmations and *jarida* to San Giorgio di Triocala of 1141, is τὸ ϛεκρέτον (*to sekreton*); following H. Takayama and J. Johns, one must be careful not to understand this office as a rigid organisational structure, but rather a part of a loose and changeable administrative and fiscal system specialized in the administration of the island. See H. Takayama, *The Administration*, 80–89; and especially J. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily; The Royal Dīwān* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 106–107, 193–211.

[43] *Liber* 25, *The Tyrants,* 78–79.

[44] For a study of the Siculo-Norman palace eunuchs, see especially Metcalfe, *The Muslims*, 193–207; H. Houben, "Religious Toleration in the South Italian Peninsula," in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. G. A. Loud and A. Metcalfe (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 326–331; and Johns, *The Royal Dīwān*, 219–256. It is important to note that the notion of "palace Saracens" is

The palace eunuchs were not only referred to as a collective character, however; the author refers to specific figures, which interestingly enough are located structurally in a different position: the *qa'id*s. As illustrated by A. Metcalfe, most of the high-ranking palace eunuchs held the honorific Arabic title *qa'id* or "leader."[45] Ps.-Falcandus Latinised the title *qa'id* as *gaytus*, hence Anglicised as *caid* – as is attested in Loud and Wiedemann's translation. The *qa'id*s that belong to this fifth structural position are Peter, Martin, and Richard.[46] Of these eunuchs, ps.-Falcandus is more detailed in both the description and recurrence of *Qa'id* Peter,[47] not only characterising him as bearing the common feature of the palace eunuchs, being a crypto-Muslim, but also as a *proditor*.[48] This markedly negative noun creates an initial image of this highlighted eunuch as an evil figure, sharing the label of "traitor" along with Maio of Bari.

The author's tone toward *Qa'id* Peter changes, however, later in the narrative; after his appointment as supreme *familaris*, ps.-Falcandus describes him as *licet parum consulti pectoris et inconstantis esset animi, mansuetus tamen, benignus et affabilis erat et nullum in actibus suis ma[lignandi] preferens argumentum*.[49] This certainly reveals one of the contradictory stands of the author and a shift of mood; *Qa'id* Peter goes from being one among the crypto-Muslims and a traitor to a man who, although fickle, was "gentle, pleasant and likeable, and his actions gave no grounds for criticism." He is clearly differentiated from the rest of the palace eunuchs and this differentiation seems to be shared with the other two *qa'id*s by means of their position. Although the *qa'id*s Martin and Richard are not described like Peter, ps.-Falcandus notes that they held other important charges at the palace: Martin was left by William I in the city *ad custodiam civitatis ac palacii Panormi*;[50] and

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not employed by ps.-Falcandus for referring to the palace servants that he still accused of being "Saracens in spirit," only referring to them as "palace eunuchs."

[45] "The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule," in Loud and Metcalfe, *The Society,* 303–305.

[46] These high-ranking eunuchs usually adopted Latin or Frankish baptismal names, by which they were referred, as ps.-Falcandus attests; see Metcalfe, "The Muslims of Sicily," 304.

[47] Later in the narrative, ps.-Falcandus mentions he was appointed master chamberlain of the royal palace at the death of the other, less recurrent Qa'id, see Johar (recurrent in the context of narratology; I refer to how many times the character is used either as a subject or an object in an action process throughout the text); *Liber*, 83–84; *The Tyrants*, 133. *Qa'id* Peter was later granted supreme power over all the court affairs by the queen regent; *Liber* 89–90; *The Tyrants*, 139.

[48] *Liber*, 26.

[49] *Liber,* 90; *The Tyrants,* 139–140.

[50] *Liber*, 79; *The Tyrants,* 129.

Richard was also *magister camerarius palacii*.[51] Thus, the sixth position may indicate the author's social perspective on differentiating the classes and roles among both the Palermitan and palace "Saracens" and the high-ranking Muslims: the *qa'id*s. One of the most interesting characters appears in the seventh position: Robert of S. Giovanni.[52] This position contains many important characters, including one of the leading actors of the narrative, Matthew Bonellus. Beyond their diverse origins and interaction in the text, the striking similarity here is that most of the characters are described in positive terms. For example, Tancred and William, illegitimate sons of Duke Roger (the eldest son of Roger II), are presented as *nobilissima matre geniti*,[53] whereas William is described as an *adolescens pulcherrimus* who *cum fere .XXII. etatis annum ageret, neminem militum viribus sibi parem reppererat*,[54] Tancred is presented as an outstanding man for his *ingenium* and *industria*.[55] Another character in this position, Roger Sclavus,[56] is described as having *audacia* and *virtus*. In this same, supporting, way, William of Lesina is personified as *preclarus* and *nobilis*, as he is grouped among the people with such characteristics imprisoned by Maio.[57]

It is noteworthy that ps.-Falcandus employs the positive adjective *preclarus* several times when referring to the Sicilian people during the "better times" of Roger II and to the good men later imprisoned and exiled by William I and Maio. In the long description of Matthew Bonellus, one encounters a series of supporting characterisations, such as *genere nobilissimus integreque*, *apud omnes opinionis integer*, and *summe nobilis*.[58] It is no coincidence that Robert of S. Giovanni, although not connected or put together directly with all these characters, appears to be structurally equivalent to them in the narrative; ps.-Falcandus is remarkably

[51] *Liber*, 109; *The Tyrants,* 158.

[52] Robert of S. Giovanni, presented by the author as a canon of the church of Palermo; *Liber*, 66–67; *The Tyrants*, 118–119. C. A. Garufi has already suggested Robert of S. Giovanni as one of the possible identities for ps.-Falcandus, relying on the previous theories of C. H. Haskins and E. Besta, who identified the author of the *Liber* as a royal notary. However, this theory has been heavily contested. Garufi, "Roberto di San Giovanni, maestro notario e il 'Liber de Regno Sicilie,'" *Archivio Storico per la Sicilia* 18 (1944): 121–122; Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), 262–263;

[53] *Liber,* 23. *The Tyrants*, 76.

[54] *Liber*, 51; *The Tyrants*, 105

[55] *Liber*, 50–51; *The Tyrants*, 104–105.

[56] An illegitimate son of Count Simon of Policastro. See Garufi, "Gli Aleramici," 59, 76–82.

[57] *Liber*, 22–3; *The Tyrants*, 75–76.

[58] *Liber*, 31–2; *The Tyrants*, 86–87.

explicit in characterizing Robert, describing him as *vir preclari nominis et examinate fidei*, who: *nulla coniuratorum unquam societas], nulla* [*persecutio*]*nis procella, cum totum sepe regnum concuteret.*[59] This position, explicitly supported and structurally an important and delimited class, thus likely represents a societal group of noble and illustrious men who the author identifies, despite their own contradictions and not so frequent recurrence in the story itself, as marginalised by the ruling court.

The notary Matthew[60] appears in the sixth relevant position, together with other central and prestigious characters: Bishop-elect Richard,[61] Romuald of Salerno,[62] *Qa'id* Richard (being thus differentiated from the rest of the *qa'id*s), Richard of Mandra, and the queen's brother, Richard. Grouping counts and important ecclesiastical figures, this position reveals an important group in ps.-Falcandus' societal system. From a sequential point of view, the vast majority of the characters in this position are introduced later in the narrative, after the ascension of Margaret to the regency.[63] Richard of Mandra[64] and the notary Matthew, however, are introduced earlier. These two persons are thus characterized as actors who manage not only to survive the time of William I, but also to be incorporated in a higher social position of authority around the court. More importantly, this prominent position validates Matthew's successful career, as can be attested outside ps.-Falcandus' narrative. Also, here one can find the tutor of

[59] *Liber,* 66; *The Tyrants*, 118–119.
[60] Originally from Salerno, Matthew was the notary who wrote the Treaty of Benevento in July 1156, and who is recorded as vice-chancellor in December 1169. He was a *familiaris* of the royal court throughout the reign of William II, a time posterior to ps.-Falcandus' narrative, and upgraded as chancellor under King Tancred, the same Tancred attested in the *Liber*. The notary Matthew is also referred to in historiography as Matthew of Ajello; H. Enzensberger, *Beiträge zum Kanzlei- und Urkundenwesen der normannischen Herrscher Unteritaliens und Siziliens* (Kallmünz: Lassleben, 1971), 158–60; *The Tyrants*, 81–90; cf. "Mathieu de Salerne," *Le livre*, 28–30.
[61] Richard, the bishop-elect of Syracuse, *The History*, 115; cf. "Richard, élu de Syracuse," *Le livre*, 30–32.
[62] Romuald Guarna, archbishop of Salerno, and the author of the contemporary *Chronicon sive Annales*; see H. Hoffmann, "Hugo Falcandus und Romuald von Salerno," *DAEM* 23 (1967): 116–170, and M. Zabbia, "La cultura storiografica dell'Italia normanna nel Chronicon di Romualdo Salernitano," in *IV Settimana di studi medievali (Roma, 28-30 maggio 2009*) (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2009), 4–16.
[63] Margaret of Navarre; see "Marguerite de Navarre," in *Le livre,* 22–4. It is noteworthy that the Hispanic queen, as pointed out by G. A. Loud, was one of the granddaughters of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, "El Cid Campeador;" *The Tyrants*, 156.
[64] The once *comestabulus* of the rebel Count Robert of Loritello; *Liber,* 24, 56; *The Tyrants*, 77, 109.

the young King William, Walter.[65] At the very end of the story, his career started to skyrocket, passing from being a deacon of Agrigento and archdeacon of Cefalú to "seizing"[66] the grand title of archbishop of Palermo. The seventh structural position represents one of the most powerful circles consolidated during the regency of Queen Margaret around the royal court as seen by ps.-Falcandus.

The eighth relevant position contains both Queen Margaret and the under-age King William II. This fact is not particularly informative, for a structural equivalence between them can be expected from the fact that Margaret as regent had to act in the place of the young king. Additionally, one can see that the recurrence of the queen regent in the narrative is reduced considerably after the expulsion of Stephen of Perche, and how, at the same time, the still technically under-age king becomes the subject and object of the interactions at the end of the story.[67] It is important to note that despite the queen's centrality and prestige and her structural equivalence to characters described by the author in detail, i.e., Odo Quarrel,[68] William II,[69] Bohemond of Manopello,[70] and Abu-'l-Qasim,[71]

[65] As pointed out by Loud and Wiedemann, he witnessed a series of charters as archdeacon of Cefalù: a charter of Adelicia of Adernó (*Documenti inediti,* 77), and an agreement between the archbishop of Messina and the bishop-elect of Cefalù (*I Diplomi della cattedrale di Messina*, 23). Also, Walter was not, as claimed earlier, an Englishman; L. J. A. Loewenthal, "For the Biography of Walter Ophamil, Archbishop of Palermo," *English Historical Review* 87 (1972): 75–82; *The Tyrants*, 111. For his career, see N. Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie im staufischen Königreich Sizilien: Prosopographische Grundlegung I; Bistümer und Bischöfe des Königreichs 1194–1266* (Munich: W. Flink, 1982), 1112–1119.

[66] Literally, … *Gualterius decanus Agrigentinus conducta plebis multitudine, metuque compulsis canonicis, consentiente curia, non tam electus quam violenter intrusus Panormitane regimen suscepit ecclesie*; notice here the implications of *quam violenter intrusus*; *Liber*, 163; *The Tyrants*, 215.

[67] *Liber*, 153–165; *The Tyrants*, 196–218.

[68] *non litterarum exornaret scientia neque prudentie secula]ris utilitas commendaret tante nichilominus cupiditatis erat … in conci]liandis [amicitiis virtutis fi]deique ratione posthabita solam quantitatem munerum sequeretur*; *Liber*, 112; *The Tyrants*, 162–163.

[69] *pulcherrimus … pulcrior apparens et augustiorem quamdam in vultu preferens venustatem*; *Liber,* 89; *The Tyrants*, 138–139. William II is also described as *nomina sortiti fuerat*, a reference characterising William I's eldest sons which can be read as literal praise of the young Roger – or any prince named Roger – as he describes the previous people with the same name, both King Roger II and his eldest son, Duke Roger, in positive terms; however, this characterization can equally be read as a veiled criticism of William II, for his father is presented in negative terms. For insight into this passage, see Hoffman, "Hugo Falcandus," 130–136; and *The Tyrants*, 39–40.

[70] *vir prudens et facundus*; *Liber*, 125; *The Tyrants,* 176.

[71] *Nec minus Bulcassem inter Sarracenos Sicilie nobilissimus ac prepotens multam illi Sarracenorum conflarat invidiam, cum eum ab initio plurimum dilexissent; Liber*, 119; *The Tyrants,* 170. See also Johns, *The Royal Diwan*, 234–242.

she is never described. Regardless of an absence of explicit characterization, Queen Margaret is similar in the text's constructed social space to people whom the author describes negatively. This social position of conflicting but powerful actors may reveal a perspective on the queen hidden between the lines: an actor ps.-Falcandus disproves of and perhaps even opposes.

The ninth position appears to be relevant for distinguishing two characters: the eunuch Andrew and *Qa'id* Johar. In spite of being a *qa'id* and also referred to as a *magister camerarius palatii*,[72] Johar is not identified in the same societal group as the other *qa'id*s. As was the case with *Qa'id* Richard, Johar is not grouped together with the others of his kind. These two cases thus indicate that a social role in ps.-Falcandus' perspective was not assigned simply by means of an attribute, i.e., being a eunuch, a chamberlain, or a *qa'id*, but by a position in the social space he constructed. The author, although seemingly categorical about the palace eunuchs, is in fact depicting them as social actors with characteristic and contrasting roles at the court. This could be taken as an indicator of ps.-Falcandus' discerning perspective and knowledge of how these people operated behind the façade of ideal models suggested by titles and other attributes.

These examples demonstrate that the textual attributes of the characters differ among their structural positions in the blockmodel; the cognitive classifications of the author do not match their position in his own constructed social space. The model thus makes it possible to identify similarities beyond the heterogeneity of the attributes and, hence, provides a better understanding of the implications of the social space ps.-Falcandus builds when reporting the social actors and their societal groups.

Concluding Discussion

After conducting this experiment on narrative, several points should be made. This attempt explored a few of the possible analytical tools that can be used to interpret the social relational data contained in a narrative structure. Blockmodelling, a widely used technique in social network analysis, provides a diverse and large number of tools for examining narrative data; experimenting with structural equivalences in this case yielded several insights into the source's social space. The inherent complexity of the narrative allows the consideration of a vast selection of approaches, as long as the selected tools are adequate to the characteristics and limitations of the network data obtained. As illustrated in my research, blockmodelling is a promising approach for understanding the

[72] *Liber*, 77; *The Tyrants*, 128.

entire text's image of social positions. This can further be the first step in a larger enterprise of modelling multiple social constructions, to either construct a multi-voiced perspective on a specific social reality or to integrate this social reality into a larger historical picture.

The overall results of network analysis offer a valuable additional perspective on the source and are particularly useful for providing more nuanced images of the text. King William I, *Qa'id* Peter or any other protagonist in a historiographical account is not the center around which the narrative makes sense, but a simple nodal point embedded in a social system that involved many other characters. Their actions play on different layers through which the narrative unfolds, offering more information than the form, layout, and attributional information may suggest. In the short run, at the event level, actors appear as the makers of relations; but in the long term, at the level of the entire narrative structure, the relations and their equivalence are what indeed determine and make the actors in the text. The narrative is then revealed as a repository of social relations built up by narration across time.

Networks are not only phenomenological realities, but, as pointed out by H. White, are also "measurement constructs."[73] Thus, narrative analysis, also concerned with the social space constructed by the narration, can benefit by taking networks as an object of study. Through a relational approach, one can bridge the gap between cognitive and structural standpoints and advance towards an understanding of the social images that lie between the lines.

I am convinced that if one intends to use ps.-Falcandus' *Liber* as a source, one should consider, as one already considers other features such as intertextuality and style, the implications and significance of the social space that the author himself is constructing though narration. Restricting a vision of narrative sources to just the explicit content and its formal features is being partially blind – as it would also be the other way around – to the complexity of the narrative that one can grasp and access from a number of points of view.

[73] H. White, *Identity and Control. How Social Formations Emerge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 36.