

STEFANO VECCHIONE

CASTLES *and* COASTAL TOWERS *of* CALABRIA



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Front cover:

COSENZA

The medieval suburb of the hill Pancrazio
and the castle norman-swabian

Last of cover:

STIGNANO RC

Tower of San Fili (14th 15th century)

Page one:

SAN NICOLA ARCELLA CS

Tower vice regnale of Porto San Nicola
(16th century)

BELVEDERE CS

Aragonese castle (11th 13th 15th century)



The long land from the saracen charts

A WIDE BUT FRAGILE AND DEFENCELESS
FRONTIER OUTSTRETCHING TOWARDS
THE MEDITERRANEAN

From one shore to the other in the *Great Inner Sea* that does not divide but unites, «daring navigators depart, taking along with them the Gods from their original cities, in search of new lands, where to found new colonies from which temples will be raised». For Calabria these are *invasions* of different types of people, attracted by the great forests of pines, oaks, chestnuts all with high tree-trunks and Silan pitch that could be used for their ships. Armed to the teeth, the invaders devastate and brutally upset the newfound land, appropriating the *Mediterranean trinity*: the harvest of golden wheat and the millenarian cultivations of vines and olives. They absorb, assimilate and drive inland the populations which already submit to faraway kings; the bruzis are incapable of resisting the attacks which come from the sea, the crumbling of the fortifications, the fires the massacres, the pillage of their villages.

It is the *contaminations* of encounter/collision between East and West which marks the «Long land». in the Saracen charts, a wide but fragile and defenceless frontier outstretched on the Mediterranean. From then on, in the Bruzio territory «myths mingle and religion integrate into one single tissue, which is that of the history of the civilization of the region», and signs of different culture, alternate in revealing or concealing themselves in the different ways of life of the Calabrese, in the traits of their amazing faces: Greek, Saracen, but also Longobards, Normans or even Albanians. With the continuing changes in language and traditions, joined by a fervent religious feeling, the little towns and villages of Calabria, where feudalism has never completely disappeared, have so many events to recall noble origins on the complex successions of the scourges of the Muslim raids and the aggressions that came from East and West. From the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Long land is overturned by a «succession of raids, invasions, external and internal wars, destined to shatter dominations, to overturn equilibriums, to overwhelm dynasties and

SCILLA RC

Feudal castle of the Ruffo

