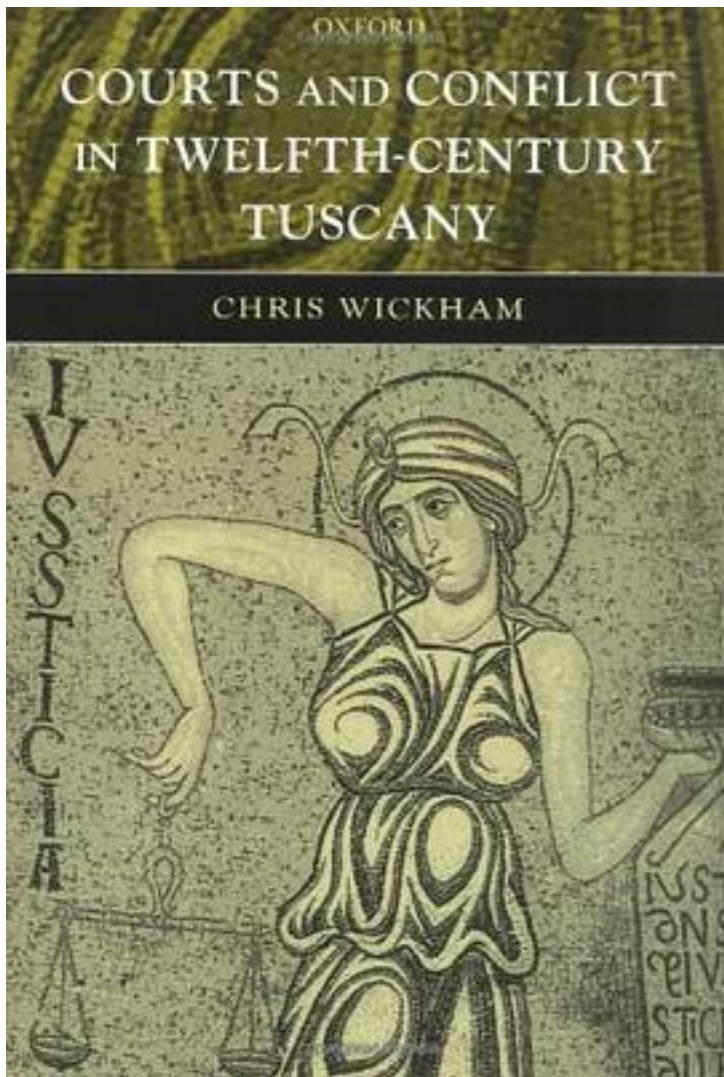


# Courts and Conflict in Twelfth-Century Tuscany



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The twelfth century in Italy is seen as a period of major institutional and political changes: the origin of the communes, and of the Norman state in the south. It is also the period of the 'rediscovery' of Roman law and the fast development of canon law, both of which were spearheaded in Italy. But the exact content of these major shifts is considerably less clear. Arguably, the twelfth century in the north and centre of Italy was the period of the weakest political structures in the whole period from 700 to the present; the early city states were uncertain entities for a long time, operating with very ad hoc procedures. But people had to live their lives in this framework nonetheless; one of the best sorts of evidence we have is records of court proceedings, which begin to survive above all in the second half of the century. This book looks at the world of the slowly crystallising city states through the experience of ordinary people disputing with each other: what remedies did they use? what strategies? I argue here that they used the developing patterns of the communes, and also those of law, entirely pragmatically, selecting the parts of them that fitted best with their own assumptions about how to act in public, which were not necessarily those of the theorists. The book focuses on three cities in Tuscany: Lucca, Pisa, and Florence, and shows how people in each of these cities reacted differently to the social changes of the period. Throughout Tuscany, people - including judges - paid much attention to how violent public acts could legitimate public claims to rights, and were experts in the etiquette and meaning of such acts. Seen through this legal-anthropological analysis, the social history of the period looks very different.

作者介绍:

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