



# Legacies of Violence: History, Society, and the State in Sardinia (Anthropological Horizons)

*Antonio Sorge*

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The inhabitants of highland Sardinia proudly declare a long history of resistance to outside authority. Many even celebrate the belief that “not even the Roman Empire reached this far.” Yet, since the late nineteenth century, the Italian government has pacified and integrated the mountain districts of the island into the state, often through the use of force.

In *Legacies of Violence*, Antonio Sorge examines local understandings of this past and the effects that a history of violence exercises on collective representations. This is particularly the case among the shepherds of the island, who claim to embody an ancient code of honour known as *balentia* that they allege to be uncorrupted by the values of mainstream Italian society. A perceptive ethnography of the mobilization of history in support of a way of life that is disappearing as the region’s inhabitants adopt a more mobile, cosmopolitan, and urbane lifestyle, Sorge’s work demonstrates how social memory continues to shape the present in the Sardinian highlands.

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