

How significant was the role of the papacy in the establishment of the Norman kingdom of Sicily?

Paul Ostroverhy

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Introduction

The history of the Normans in southern Italy has often been overshadowed by the history of the Normans in northern Europe. After all, the Normans are most famous for their conquest of England in 1066 and their settlement in Normandy, from which they originate. In this research, however, we shall be turning our attention away from Normandy and England to focus primarily on the region of southern Italy. It is there that another Norman state, the Norman kingdom of Sicily was established in 1130 and would go on to become a political powerhouse whose administrative system would become one of the most advanced in Europe at the time.¹ This essay will focus primarily on the events leading up to 1130, examining which factors were the most significant in bringing about the creation of a Norman kingdom in southern Italy.

The Normans were descendants of Norse vikings that had migrated west, conducting raids on France starting from the 7th century, pillaging the Seine valley and burning down cities.² Eventually, the vikings assimilated themselves with the local Franks thereby gaining a

¹ Takayama, H., 1990. The great administrative officials of the Norman kingdom of Sicily. *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 58, pp.317-335.

² Breese, L.W., 1977. The persistence of Scandinavian connections in Normandy in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. *Viator*, 8, pp.47-62.

permanent foothold in the region we now call Normandy. The intermarriage with the locals resulted in the creation of a new people called the Normans.³ Having established who the Normans are, we can now look at the Normans' first contact with southern Italy. The region being situated on a cross road between Normandy and the Middle East, when the first crusades happened, a number of Normans, in the process of returning to Normandy, found themselves in southern Italy. Once there, they were offered mercenary roles. In the years that would follow, a growing number of Normans would start migrating to southern Italy to be employed as mercenaries fighting for whoever offered the best offer.⁴

The disintegrated and diverse region in which some of these Normans now found themselves had remained divided for the last few hundred years, home to a number of war-torn factions whose history was primarily continuous conflict between various ethno-religious groups. Since the fall of the Roman Empire, southern Italy became the home to a number of people and different rulers. The primary groups were the Lombards, a Germanic tribe that had migrated south in the 6th century, the Byzantine Greeks, whose communities were long-established in the region and the Fatimid Arabs. When the Normans came, the Arabs were in possession of the island of Sicily since the 9th century.⁵

Having established a brief and contextualised account of who the Normans were and why they came to southern Italy, we can now turn our attention to the figure of Roger II of Sicily (1095 - 1154). Son of a Norman lord who would become the first Norman king in southern Italy, by the time Roger was born the Normans had already implanted themselves in the region. Several Normans were in possession of various lordships and territories that remained divided due to feudalism.

The accepted date for the foundation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily has been Christmas day, 1130, when Roger was crowned King of Sicily at the Palermo Cathedral, blessed by Pope Anacletus II.⁶ Whilst several countries refused to recognise the Kingdom for another thirty years, mainly due to their enmity with Roger II of Sicily, this essay will recognise 1130 as the foundation date for the Kingdom of Sicily.⁷

This essay will examine which factors played a more important role in making Roger II a monarch and thereby causing the creation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily. In focusing primarily on different aspects of Norman history that led to the creation of a Kingdom in southern Italy, this essay will look at a number of causes that led to Roger becoming King of Sicily. These include the Normans' military capabilities, Roger's personal political endeavours, the religious significance of the papacy and a number of other factors. In thoroughly discerning

³ Bates, D. (2002) Normandy before 1066. John Wiley & Sons, Limited, pp. 20-21

⁴ Van Houts, E., 2013. The Normans in Europe. In The Normans in Europe. Manchester University Press, p. 223.

⁵ Aspinwall, J. and Jäckh, T., 2021. 1091: A Charter of Roger I for the Reorganisation of Sicily, pp. 2-3

⁶ Loud, G.A., 2014. Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. In Roger II and the creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. Manchester University Press, p. 1

⁷ Matthew, D., 1992. The Norman Kingdom of Sicily. Cambridge University Press, p. 33

the significance of each factor, this essay will argue that the papacy played the most important role in causing the creation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily, on the basis of the following statement: the papacy was the sole power capable of bestowing a Christian subject the right for kingship.

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Chapter 1: Important factors

A) The Normans' successful policy of assimilation

It is important to consider that it was not exclusively because of the phenomenal situation created by the papal succession crisis in Rome, which I will cover in more detail later, that Roger II of Sicily was able to assume kingship. Whilst it may be argued that this unexpected turn of events certainly accelerated the process in which Roger would eventually become the legitimate monarch of a newly-established Kingdom, there were a number of other important factors, often root causes, that were very important in placing Roger in such a situation as to make the prospect of a Kingdom even possible in the first place.

The most significant ones were the Normans' ability to integrate themselves rapidly into their local surroundings and their military superiority over local enemies, characterised chiefly by their ability to adopt new methods of war quickly. For instance, it was the Normans in southern Italy that were one of the first people to use mobile wooden towers in warfare, which enabled them to take over fortified towns more effectively. The fact that southern Italy was heavily disintegrated into a number of small, rivaling states that were all jostling for power made it possible for the Normans to pursue their interests more successfully.⁸

From the very start the Normans were able to distinguish themselves through their military and mercenary skills. Back in 1017, a small group of Normans, on pilgrimage to Monte Sant' Angelo, were persuaded by the Lombards, locals of Apulia, to fight against the Byzantines.⁹ It could be argued that the Normans' Christian faith was a root cause in bringing them to Italy in the first place, and would it not have been for the religious significance of Monte Sant' Angelo, the Normans would never have passed by southern Italy and settled there.¹⁰ But the Normans' military skills is a more important factor, as Normans' mercenary reputation enabled them to stay in southern Italy and grow in numbers after news that southern Italy was recruiting mercenaries.¹¹ This can be seen as a root cause to the eventual creation of a Norman Kingdom in this area, because the root factors that made the Normans stay in the land in the first place was

⁸ Houben, H., 2002. Roger II of Sicily: A ruler between East and West. Cambridge University Press, p. 11-12

⁹ Dimov, G 2016. Economy, trade and urban life in Langobardian and Byzantine southern Italy - 10 - 11th centuries. *Historia*, 24(1), pp.8-33.

¹⁰ Brown, G.S., 2015. The Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily. McFarland, p. 21

¹¹ Brown, G.S., 2015. The Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily. McFarland. pp. 103–113.

not only the local political disunity but the willingness of the locals to employ them as mercenaries, and once the Normans had distinguished themselves as skilled military fighters, they were able to stay and grow in numbers. During their first years in southern Italy as war-fighting mercenaries, the Normans did not hesitate to pillage and ransack Rome for their own benefit. In fact, the Norman raids were so devastating that in 1059, the pope, fearing that the Normans might align themselves to Constantiople, their chief religious rivalry, went as far as offering the lands of Calabria and Apulia to a faction of Normans in return for fealty.¹²

This ability of the Normans to assimilate themselves in the countries that they settled in, and in the case of Roger II of Sicily, embrace the multicultural environment to further his political agenda, was key in the establishment of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily.¹³ Perhaps this is best exemplified by the Sicelo-Norman architecture, such as the Capella Palatina, that arose after Roger II of Sicily became King. The Cappella Palatina combines elements of Arab Muslim, Greek Orthodox and Latin Christian cultures, creating a unique architectural syncretism that reflects the ethno-religious diversity of southern Italy at the time of Roger II of Sicily. It is precisely because of the Normans' abilities to assimilate themselves over the course of a few generations that Roger was able to become King, because in assimilating themselves they were able to assume the pretensions of power and cease to be viewed as foreign invaders that had no cultural connection to southern Italy.

One of the most significant ways in which the Normans integrated themselves within their new homeland and ceased to be viewed as foreign invaders was by intermarrying with the local, aristocratic families that were already well-established in the region.¹⁴ This first happened in 1029 when the duke of Naples handed over the county of Aversa to Rainulf, a Norman warrior, marking an important date for the Normans in southern Italy. It was the first Norman feudal lordship on the territory of southern Italy.¹⁵ Following the elevation of Rainulf to that of a count, he was allowed to marry the duke's sister, thereby connecting a Norman warrior to a noble family that exercised significant power in that region.

This reflects the Normans' successful policy of successfully integrating themselves within the local elite.¹⁶ This was the same case for the Normans in Normandy, who over the course of a few generations managed to fully assimilate themselves within the local aristocracy and build a new nation of their own.¹⁷ In fact, intermarriage facilitated more effective cultural assimilation for

¹² Smith, D.M., Duggan, C. and Finley, M.I., 1968. A history of Sicily. Chatto & Windus, p. 13

¹³ Sauquet, M., 2018. Roger II, King of Heaven and Earth: An Iconological and Architectural Analysis of the Cappella Palatina in the Context of Medieval Sicily, p. 4

¹⁴ Houben, H., 2002. Roger II of Sicily: A ruler between East and West. Cambridge University Press, p. 11-12

¹⁵ de Lindquist, J.C., 2006. Rethinking the Arthurian Legend Transmission in the Iberian Peninsula. eHumanista, 7, p.81

¹⁶ Houben, H., 2002. Roger II of Sicily: A ruler between East and West. Cambridge University Press, p. 9

¹⁷ The Normans: A Tale of Dukes and Warriors, Conquerors and Kings. 'Men from the North' Episode 1. (2010) [DVD] BBC.

the Normans.¹⁸ This was an effective method by which the Normans could cease to be viewed as foreign invaders thereby legitimising their illegal occupation of southern Italy.¹⁹

The transition of the Normans from wandering, homeless mercenaries to Normans that acquired a permanent foothold to Italy is particularly relevant. It can be argued that 1029 is an important date for the Normans, precisely because it anchored their presence in southern Italy and paved the way for the foundations of a Norman state in southern Italy. Had the Normans never integrated within the local elite and embraced a new culture, it can be argued that a Norman Kingdom in southern Italy would never have existed.

Whilst it took many more years for the Normans in southern Italy to complete their social ascendancy, these root causes remain some of the most important contributors to the eventual establishment of a Norman kingdom in southern Italy. They remain, however, inferior factors compared to the papacy. Whilst it can be argued that the Normans' successful ability to settle themselves in new lands combined with military strength laid the foundations for the Kingdom of Sicily, the papacy, in its capacity to bestow a Christian ruler the right to assume kingship, can be argued to carry more weight in terms of which factors are most significant.

B) Succession to the duchy of Apulia

Having established a number of root causes that made the Normans successful in integrating themselves within the southern Italian landscape, we can move and look at another key event, Roger's succession to the duchy of Apulia, to see how interwoven a number of factors and causes are with each other. In determining how the duchy of Apulia bolstered Roger's chances of becoming King, and comparing its importance over other factors, we can then look in detail at the two primary factors that led to Roger becoming the duke of Apulia: papal weakness to resist the Normans' continual ascent to power and Roger's personal efforts for Norman unification in the south.²⁰ It could be argued that had the Normans remained disunited they would not have been able to effectively build a state of their own.

Upon the death of William, duke of Apulia, in July 1127, Roger, who had been expecting to have an uncontested succession to the duchy of Apulia, found himself faced with several claimants to the ducal throne that threatened his personal intentions to unify the Norman south. What led to the creation of several claimants to the ducal throne can be traced back to Duke William's failure to produce a son. As such, during his lifetime, whilst he still hoped to have a son that would one day become duke after his death, he had to look for alternatives and was willing to present to

¹⁸ Mossman, S., 2020. The Norman world, c. 1000–c. 1100. In *Debating medieval Europe* (pp. 264-299). Manchester University Press.

¹⁹ van Houts, E., 2013. The Normans in the Mediterranean. In *The Normans in Europe* (pp. 223-278). Manchester University Press.

²⁰ Sartore, M., 2013. Eleventh-and Twelfth-Century Similarities in the Norman Influence, Contact and "Conquests" of Sicily, Southern Italy and England. *Al-Masaq*, 25(2), pp.184-203.

several claimants the idea of a possible succession to his duchy, which was a direct cause to the succession crisis that followed his death.²¹

Firstly, it is known that Duke William had made a promise to pope Honorius II stating that the entire duchy of Apulia would be transferred to the papacy following the duke's death. The matter is further complicated when we learn that Duke William made a deal with Bohemond II, stating that whoever should die first childless should have the estate of the other.²²²³ As such, when he died without a son, there was no explicit successor that had been named and the matter remained unresolved. What resulted was a succession crisis, in which the claimants were able to capitalise on the chaotic situation to further their personal interests. The three main claimants were Roger, pope Honorius II and Bohemond II.

In the end, Roger became duke of Apulia despite papal resistance and reunited once more the lands of his forefathers: Apulia, Calabria and Sicily.²⁴ This was due to a number of factors, primarily Roger's personal perseverance in the face of heavy opposition and his military capacity that ultimately made the papacy renounce their claims over the duchy of Apulia.

From the start, the only real opponent Roger faced in the succession crisis was the papacy. Bohemond II, participating in the crusades, was absent from southern Italy at the time of Duke William's death, so his chances of becoming duke was slim. On the other hand, the papacy persevered until the end in their attempt to stop Roger becoming duke. For example, when Roger took control of Salerno, thereby offering Roger the chance of becoming duke, the papacy threatened him with anathema should he assume the ducal throne. Opposition faltered and Roger was finally able to become duke when the papacy recognised that they were too weak to resist the Normans, partly due to the Normans' superior military forces. Pope Honorius II also had ulterior reasons, such as the desire to have permanent peace in southern Italy, which is one of the reasons he allowed this political concession to happen.

Whilst the papacy had to back down and allow Roger to become duke, the threat of anathema shows how the papacy still retained a level of authority over the Normans, thanks to the religious significance of the papacy. For whilst Roger was determined to pursue his personal interests and further his political agenda, the Normans as a whole had never faltered to recognise the Pope's paramount authority, seen in the example of Roger's father, Roger Bosso, who is known to have never explicitly pursued an anti-papal policy throughout his life.²⁵

There is an interesting situation that arises. Roger's personal endeavour for political unification certainly accelerated the pace for a Kingdom to be established in the long-term. In fact, in the

²¹ Loud, G.A., 2014. Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. In Roger II and the creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. Manchester University Press, p. 15

²² Oldham, B., Deploying Peace as a Weapon A Closer Look at History Writing in Norman Italy, 1127-1139.

²³ Norwich, J.J. (1967) The Normans in the South: 1016-1130 Vol 1. London, p. 307

²⁴ Douglas, D.C. (1976) The Norman Fate 1100-1154. Berkeley: University of California Press.

²⁵ Douglas, D.C. (1969) The Norman Achievement, 1050-1100. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 146

quest for more power, land and prestige, Roger established the idea of a Kingdom that otherwise would not even have been an idea that would have been thought of seriously. Therefore, it is with reasonable justification that we can assume that Roger's acquisition of more land and power, and Roger's personal endeavours to unify southern Italy, were significant factors that led to the creation of the Kingdom of Sicily in 1130. And yet the papacy remains omnipresent in the whole process. The relationship and power dynamics between Roger and the papacy is hugely important. Even when the papacy was too weak to resist Norman expansion, it remained important precisely because papal weakness facilitated Norman expansion. Whilst in this instance we can recognise Roger's political actions as more significant compared to the role of the papacy, who were forced to back down in the face of Norman military power, the papacy remains an indirect cause that led to Norman expansion and hence the eventual establishment of a Norman Kingdom in southern Italy.

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Chapter 2: The 1130 Papal schism

Anacletus II's desire to seek political allies was a more important cause than Roger's personal ambition and political motives concerning the creation of the Norman monarchy. Having looked at several important factors that led to the establishment of the Kingdom of Sicily, this chapter will now look at the immediate cause that led to the Kingdom of Sicily being created. In writing a brief account recounting the events that led to Roger II of Sicily being issued a papally-approved right to assume kingship following the negotiations at Avellino, this chapter will try and look at the two most significant factors within this immediate cause, Anacletus II's desire to seek political allies and Roger's personal ambitions, and assess which was most significant in causing the outcomes at Avellino, in which the pope agreed to make Roger king, and thereby which was a most significant factor concerning the creation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily.

The exceptional circumstances that led to the Avellino negotiations can be traced back to the death of Pope Honorius II in 1130. Following the pope's death, a succession crisis ensued in which two papal factions claimed that their preferred candidate was the rightful pope.²⁶ As a result, a conflict arose concerning the now contested position of pope, which led to two popes being elected: Anacletus II and Innocent II. This led to a period of significant political turmoil and unrest.

The historian John Julius Norwich has given a very detailed and comprehensible account of the events that followed Honorius II's death in 1130. The two papal factions were those that supported Cardinal Pierleoni, the future Anacletus II, and those that supported Cardinal Aimeri who was backing the candidacy of Innocent II.²⁷ The latter was allied with the Frangipanis, a powerful Roman aristocratic family that exercised significant political influence in the city of

²⁶ Chodorow, S.A., 1971. Ecclesiastical politics and the ending of the investiture contest: The Papal election of 1119 and the negotiations of Mouzon. *Speculum*, 46(4), pp.613-640.

²⁷ Norwich, J.J., 2018. *The Normans in the South, 1016-1130*. Faber & Faber.

Rome.²⁸ In February 1130, the Frangipanis elected their pope, who assumed the name of Innocent II. Supporters of Cardinal Pierleoni immediately deemed the election as invalid and soon after held their own papal election in which Cardinal Pierleoni became pope, assuming the name of Anacletus II.

Following the succession crisis, Innocent II turned to his international allies, thereby shifting the tide in his favour. Whilst Anacletus II enjoyed significant backing by Rome's most powerful men, his popularity outside of Rome was meagre.²⁹ Threatened, Innocent II fled Rome to seek political allies abroad. As a result, by September 1130, Anacletus II's position became increasingly bleak when his rival Innocent II was recognised as the rightful pope in April 1130 by most senior members of the Church during the Council of Etampes.³⁰

This was the principal factor which made Anacletus II seek the support of the Normans in Sicily. Lacking the international support that his rival Innocent II had obtained, Anacletus II was in desperate need of political allies to support and protect his cause, and therefore turned to the Normans for help. By 1130, Roger II of Sicily had proven himself to be one of the most powerful men in southern Italy, having successfully unified the lands of Sicily, Calabria and Apulia. As such, it was to Roger II of Sicily that Anacletus II turned for support. A deal was struck at Avellino. Roger II of Sicily had demanded to Anacletus II that he be made King of Sicily, and in return the Normans would provide support and fealty to Anacletus II.³¹

Roger II was willing to cooperate with Anacletus II for a number of reasons. Most significantly was his political concerns which can be argued to have had as much influence on his decision as his personal ambition to secure himself a legitimate title that would make him equal to the monarchs of the great powers of Europe. In terms of political concerns, Roger II recognised that the unification of southern Italy would not last until the nation would have a legitimate ruler superior to their vassals. It is therefore safe to assume that Roger II recognised the political reality around him and realised the opportunities that would entail cooperation with Anacletus II, thereby the reason why Roger II was willing to negotiate at Avellino.

On the 27th of September 1130, following the Avellino accords, Anacletus II issued a papal bull that bestowed Roger with the title of 'King of Sicily', that encompassed the crown of Apulia, Calabria, Sicily and the honours of Naples, thereby making Roger the monarch of a newly established Kingdom that unified all the lands in southern Italy south of Papal territories.³²

²⁸ Baumgartner, F.J., 2003. Election by the College of Cardinals, 1059–1274. In *Behind Locked Doors: A History of the Papal Elections* (pp. 19-38). New York: Palgrave Macmillan US.

²⁹ Tessera, M.R., 2010. *Orientalis Ecclesia: The Papal Schism of 1130 and the Latin Church of the Crusader States*. *Crusades*, 9(1), pp.1-12.

³⁰ Stroll, M., 1987. Chapter IX: LEGALITY AS A FACTOR IN DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION. In *The Jewish Pope* (pp. 91-101). Brill.

³¹ Houben, Hubert (2002). *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 7, 148.

³² Hoffmann, H. (1978) *Langobarden, Normannen, Päpste. zum Legitimationsproblem in Unteritalien*, *Repositorium: Langobarden, Normannen, Päpste. Zum Legitimationsproblem in Unteritalien*, as cited in Loud, G.A. (2016) *Innocent II and the Kingdom of Sicily*.

The historian and academic Donald Matthew, suggested that the most significant factor that led to the issuing of the papal bull was not Roger's desire to become King but Anacletus' desperate desire to have Roger's loyalty and support secured. Matthew has argued that this can be most clearly seen in the number of political concessions that Anacletus allowed in return for Norman support.³³ There is a degree of reliability in the aforementioned statement, because if we look at the relationship between the papacy and the Normans in the south prior to the papal bull, we see that these two factions had been in constant rivalry and opposition. Ever since the first Normans came to southern Italy, the papacy had tried to suppress their mercenary activities, and had tried on multiple occasions to limit Norman expansion. Having put this into context, it can now be argued that the amount of concessions Anacletus allowed clearly indicates the level of desperation in which Anacletus II must have found himself to seek the support of the Normans and fulfil some of Roger's greatest political ambitions.

As such, the primary factor that led to the issuing of the papal bull and thereby the eventual establishment of the Kingdom of Sicily was not Roger's personal ambition but Anacletus II's desire to seek political allies. The papacy's internal succession crisis allowed Roger II of Sicily to exploit Anacletus II's political weakness for his interests. Had Anacletus II not found himself in need of political allies, the negotiations between Anacletus II and Roger II at Avellino would never have happened and the Normans in the south would have been left without a kingdom.

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Chapter 3: The Medieval Papacy

The papacy was the single most important factor that led to the creation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily because the papacy was the sole power with the ability to bestow upon a Latin Christian the right to assume kingship in Europe. To understand the extent at which the papacy is intertwined with the history of the Normans in southern Italy, this chapter will provide a contextualised history concerning the rise of the papal monarchy. This chapter will talk about how the views on papal authority held by pope Gregory VII and the papal reforms initiated by pope Urban II helped make the papacy a great political and religious power in Europe. Having established an account recounting the rise of the papal monarchy, this chapter will then explain why the role of the papacy in bringing about the establishment of a Norman kingdom in Sicily has remained important and why its importance cannot be overlooked.

The earliest signs of the papacy as a rising power began in the 8th century when it was evident that the papacy was striving for relative territorial independence, having started to exercise political rule over a designated territory surrounding Rome.³⁴ During the 8th century, the

³³ Matthew, D., 1992. *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*. Cambridge University Press, p. 35

³⁴ Llewellyn, P., 1986. The Popes and the Constitution in the eighth century. *The English Historical Review*, 101(398), pp.42-67.

papacy's power grew as its sphere of influence expanded as a result of missionary efforts that helped convert Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia to Christianity. With the help of such people as St Boniface and St Willibrord, who were key leaders in Rome's missionary missions, the papacy became a spiritual centre of Europe. The pope, believed to be the successor of St Peter and the representative of Christ on earth, became the figure to which these newly converted people and nations were able to look up. As such, the pope became the spiritual leader of Europe who was able to unite the diverse populations together, laying the foundations for a future powerful papal monarchy.³⁵ By the 9th century, the papacy was able to establish the norm in Europe that no one should become monarch unless they had received the pope's blessing. The most famous example is Charlemagne, who was crowned in 800 by the Pope and bestowed with the new title of Emperor of the West.³⁶ With the help of missionary missions in neighbouring non-Christian countries, the papacy was able to establish themselves as an important, independent Church that, in its capacity to unite the West by virtue of its religious significance, laid the foundations for eventually a politically powerful state.

It must be recognised that whilst the papacy became an important source of religious authority for Europe as early as the 8th century, it was not until the 11th century when the papacy began to assert itself politically. Having established some of the root causes that made the pope a significant source of authority in the first place, we can now turn our attention towards the 11th century, when the papacy started to become a political powerhouse in Europe.

The resurgence of the papal monarchy in the 11th century as an independent and politically assertive power can be traced back to the reforms on the papal administration initiated by pope Urban II during the 11th century. Urban II wished to install a papal monarchy that would be able to compete with the rising feudal powers of Europe. The means by which the pope achieved that was by installing a new and effective administration in Rome inspired by the feudal administration in Capetian France. The Papacy's increasing political assertiveness is evident in 1051, when Pope Leo IX ordained, in the words of Tom Holland "The launching of nothing less than a papally sanctioned holy war"³⁷ to eradicate the Normans, at the time still cruel mercenaries that had recently arrived in southern Italy to ransack the land.

Furthermore, the papacy was able to exercise significant religious significance in Europe thanks to the notion promulgated by Gregory VII stating that the pope should have the right to appoint and depose kings.³⁸ Whilst this was not an official canon law of the Catholic Church, this view was upheld by most members of the Church, thereby brushing aside the Christian doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance that had previously been prevalent in Rome. As such, the papacy was able to expand its religious authority thanks to Gregory VII, who laid the intellectual

³⁵ Barraclough, G. (1968). *The Medieval Papacy*. London: Thomas and Hudson, p. 51-52

³⁶ Aguilera-Barchet, B. and Aguilera-Barchet, B., 2015. *Popes vs. Emperors: The Rise and Fall of Papal Power. A History of Western Public Law: Between Nation and State*, pp.121-152.

³⁷ Holland, T. (2009) *Millenium: The end of the world and the forging of Christendom*. London: Abacus, p. 275

³⁸ Blumenthal, U.R. and Williams, S., *Was Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) a traditionalist or a revolutionary?*, p 117-9

foundations for future popes determining to what extent the papacy should exercise its religious authority and impose itself as superior to the monarchs of Europe.

This religious authority exercised by the papacy was so significant that even Roger II of Sicily, in his ambitious pursuit for titles and power, always recognised papal authority. In fact, papal recognition was very important for him and in many instances he only started to act when he was sure that he had received the pope's blessing, because papal authority legitimised his actions.³⁹ This mode of thinking can already be seen in Roger all the way back in 1117, when he only started his career when his knighthood was recognised by Pope Paschal II.⁴⁰

As such, we can see that by the beginning of the 12th century, the papacy had managed to reform and establish itself as an important political power, as well as institutionalise the notion that the Pope had the exclusive right to decide who should have the right to have a crown bestowed upon their head. This suggests that papal authority was very significant in Europe during the time of Roger II of Sicily, who, in order to become a legitimate monarch in the eyes of other European feudal states, had to receive the pope's official approval. In conclusion, we can safely assume that the papacy held particular importance and relevance concerning the creation of the Norman kingdom of Sicily precisely because they were the means by which Roger II of Sicily could become King.

* * *

Conclusion

There is a chain of factors that are interdependent to each other and therefore it can be hard to decide on one factor as more significant to others. We can see them if we start moving backwards in time starting from 1130. Firstly, the Kingdom of Sicily was created following negotiations between Roger and Pope Anacletus II. This was caused by the Pope's desire to seek political allies and Roger's personal ambitions. Already there are two immediate factors that led to the negotiations happening, that in turn led to the Kingdom of Sicily being created. Moving on, the negotiations would never have happened had Anacletus II not found himself in desperate need of Norman military forces to fight off his political rivals. This in turn was caused because of the papacy's internal succession crisis.

We can see yet another significant factor that arises. If the Normans did not have the military strength that they had, they would not have been able to present themselves as possible allies to Anacletus II capable of fighting off his enemies, which in turn would not have made Anacletus II

³⁹ Matthew, D (1992). *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*. Cambridge University Press, p. 34

⁴⁰ P. Jaffe & S. Lowenfeld, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, 2 vol. (Berlin 1885), 6562; Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination*, I, p. 366, as cited in Takayama, H., 1993. *Creation of a New Kingdom by Roger II (1112–40)*. In *The Administration of the Norman kingdom of Sicily* (pp. 47). Brill.

so lenient in his concessions to Roger. But whilst some people may now draw the conclusion that the most significant factor was the Normans' military strength, there are further complications that hinders this conclusion. When the Normans first arrived in southern Italy, their fighting skills were certainly strong and their reputation as a fighting force was certainly famous in the area, but they remained bandits and people that pillaged and terrorised the land around them. It was not before the Normans started to accommodate themselves in their new surroundings and intermarry with the local elite that they gained some form of respectability that allowed them to eventually become an important political force in southern Italy. This in turn led to them being able to gain more power, become established within the feudal system, such as Roger becoming duke of Apulia and eventually having the Normans negotiate with Anacletus II at Avellino, where the pope agreed for Roger to become King of Sicily.

This chain of events all have factors that are interdependent on each other, but I have omitted the role of the papacy in my explanation above which might give the impression that it was insignificant. In fact, the papacy was a very important factor, because Roger was so keen to receive official papal backing that he only pursued his political agenda, such as seizing more land and fighting off enemies. after having been given papal blessing. The papacy sometimes voluntarily allowed the Normans to become more powerful at times even though in a repeated number of times it was too weak to resist unwanted Norman political expansion. Nevertheless, the Normans were Latin Christians so the pope remained an important figure of authority that was able to exercise a relatively high degree of political influence and soft power on the Norman neighbours. But what makes me draw the conclusion that the papacy was the most significant factor in the creation of a Norman Kingdom of Sicily, is that it was exclusively the pope who was able to bestow unto a Christian lord the right to kingship.

Anacletus II, finding himself in exceptional circumstances, allowed huge concessions to be made, therefore other factors can be argued to have been more significant in terms of bringing the pope to a situation where he was willing to make Roger King of Sicily in return for military support. These include Roger's political strategies, the Normans' military capabilities, and other factors discussed above. But what makes the papacy the most significant is the fact that not only were they the sole power able to make Roger a legitimate King in the eyes of other European powers, but that the papacy had been actively involved with the whole Sicilian Norman story from the start. As such, the papacy can be argued to have been hugely significant in the creation of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, and we can go even further by stating that the most significant factor that lead to Roger II of Sicily becoming King was the papacy.

* * *

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Literary Review:

The story of the Normans in southern Italy has received much less academic coverage and scholarly attention in comparison to the history of the Normans in England. Nonetheless, over the years there have been a number of academics that have devoted themselves to study and documenting the history of the Normans in southern Italy. Having never heard of a Norman presence in southern Italy and only heard that there once happened to be vikings in Sicily, I

searched for an introductory text that would acquaint me with the period of history that I was going to research.

First came the book 'Millenium' by Tom Holland, which provided an introductory text to the era in which I was to research. As indicated in the title, the book looks at the history of Europe around the turn of 1000 A.D. The author is a popular historian who has written bestselling books on a number of historical periods, such as the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire. As such, it was a very easy read precisely because the author wrote in a prose that whilst being non-fictional, was not reflective of a scientific paper. Recognising that this book would provide little precise information on Norman Sicily, I understood that this book's purpose was to bring about a contextualised introduction to the era that I would be researching in.

It was only after having read portions of 'Millenium' by Tom Holland that I set about researching the history of the Normans in southern Italy. I watched a BBC documentary on the Normans, presented by Robert Bartlett, which was a good way to start getting into the Normans. Only then did I properly start learning about the Normans in southern Italy. Having had no prior knowledge about Italo-Normans, I searched for a comprehensive, academic book that covered the entire history of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily. My attention turned to two books: 'The Kingdom of Sicily', written by Donald Matthews, and the 'Normans in the South' by John Julius Norwich. These two books are the backbone of my essay. They have provided a well-written, peer-reviewed and concise history of the Normans in southern Italy. In fact, I went for these two authors precisely because these two authors have done extensive research into this academic field.

John Julius Norwich, in his introduction to his book 'Normans in the South' explained that his attempt was to provide the first accessible and comprehensive history of the Normans in southern Italy. The author visited a number of archives, where he spent a lot of time unearthing primary sources that helped him write the book. It must be recognised though that just because he wrote something does not mean that it is not a historical fact. But what is fair to assume is that there is a level of accuracy and that over the years there has been a thorough peer-review conducted on the book and it has stood the test of time.

Regarding the medieval papacy, the book of the same title by Geoffrey Barraclough proved to be invaluable in helping me to better understand the history of the papacy at that particular era. This is especially true when it came to looking at how the papacy developed into what the papacy was leading up to the events of 1130 when it was in the process of establishing itself as a significant political powerhouse in Europe. This can be termed my foundation book in terms of the medieval papacy, and only after having read relevant chunks from that book was I able to go search for other sources that would provide similar and alternative views on particular details that I either wanted proof check or clarification.

Having acquired a basic knowledge in terms of the history of the Normans in southern Italy, I was able to look at other sources, other books written by other academics on the same topic. What made the two books above so helpful was that I now knew exactly what I wanted to research. Therefore, with the help of google scholar and after having roamed the school library, I

was able to gather a significant variety of sources. These sources were each looked at, questioned whether they were reliable, whether they were peer reviewed, and whether they were relevant enough to my subject. I always looked at where these books were published. For example, when a book, such as Hubert Houben’s Roger II of Sicily, is published by Cambridge University Press, I am able to assume that this book has received an extensive check of accuracy before it has been published. Cambridge University Press targets a particular audience, publishing books for teachers and students to use in an academic context, and therefore books that are written on Norman Sicily and published at Cambridge University Press can be assumed that there is a significant academic reliability that makes it a usable source for my research.

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Source Analysis Table

Title	Critical Evaluation	Citation
Millennium: The End of the World and the Forging of Christendom	<p>Whilst the author of this work used extensive primary and secondary sources for his book, it is neither an academic paper or a scientific paper. The author being a popular historian, his non-academic style of writing reflects his desire to make the thematics he covers more accessible to a wider audience. This makes it harder to extricate relevant information that can be used elsewhere. Nonetheless, despite the stylistic embellishment of the book with lots of literary flourishes, the author has used extensive academic research and provides a very thorough contextual history of the era in which the Normans lived: covering primarily the end of the first millennium and the increasing role of the Church in the history of Europe. A problem that does arise is that there is a narrative behind the work, in which he focuses on how people thought the apocalypse was imminent, meaning that a lot of academic sources are used as complementary to support his overall story. A grand narrative rather than a scientific paper. As such, the primary difference between Tom Holland and somebody like Graham Loud is that the former is a popular historian and has written on a variety of things, ranging from the Roman Empire to fictional works of gothic horror, whilst the latter is a career academic historian that has researched extensively on his areas of expertise and wrote for an academic audience.</p>	<p>Holland, T. (2009) Millenium: The end of the world and the forging of Christendom. London: Abacus.</p>
Normans in the South	<p>This is a source that has been peer reviewed and known to be one of the most thorough academic texts on the Normans in Sicily. On the other hand, since its first</p>	<p>Norwich, J.J. (1967) The Normans in the South:</p>

	<p>publication in 1967, it has grown slightly outdated so its academic reliability is not as great as a work from say Graham Loud. Nonetheless, I trust this author for a number of reasons: in his introduction he explains that he did extensive research in the archives, such as in the Bibliothèque nationale, meaning that he uses a lot of primary sources, creating one of the first comprehensive and thorough accounts of Norman history in Sicily. Therefore, the primary reason I decided to read ‘Normans in the South’ was because it would provide me with an introductory text that would bring into context the history around the Normans in Sicily. I would then be able to look at other works with better understanding. Whilst his professional career was primarily spent working in British diplomacy, he did become a full-time historian that has been thoroughly peer-reviewed and since his publication of Normans in the South in 1967, it has evolved to become a relatively reliable and still cited book that successfully covers the history of the Normans in southern Italy.</p>	<p>1016-1130 Vol 1. London.</p>
<p>The Norman Kingdom of Sicily</p>	<p>This is another, very reliable source, it has been academically peer-reviewed. The author is a western and British academic, a professor at the University of Reading. The publishing house is Cambridge University Press, which specialises to deliver reliable books to both teachers and students, so there has been a level of proof-reading before this was published, testifying there is a minimal form of academic reliability. It is good precisely because of the unbiased tone in which it was written and the author has refrained from extensively making historical assumptions and suggestions of a certain historical development. So this is definitely a reliable historian who has written a reliable piece of academic work, and who has done extensive academic research into this academic field, so what he has written I have taken most of it and made the assumption that there is some form of historical evidence behind his research. This book has been written by someone who already had dedicated years to the subject, which is why it can be more reliable than a university level dissertation, for example.</p>	<p>Matthew, D. (2004) The Norman Kingdom of Sicily. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press.</p>
<p>The Normans:</p>	<p>This is a documentary made by the BBC covering the</p>	<p>The Normans:</p>

<p>A Tale of Dukes and Warriors, Conquerors and Kings. "Men from the North" Episode 1.</p>	<p>Normans both in Normandy, England and other parts of the world, such as Sicily and Jerusalem. Its presenter, Robert Bartlett, is a professor at the University of Saint Andrews and is a known medievalist who is a fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Therefore, it is fair to assume that by virtue of being a fellow of these societies, who are the leading institutions in the UK for academics, especially those specialised in the humanities and hence history, that Robert Bartlett has extensive academic expertise. On the other hand, it seems to be that he is influenced by western historiography, as are a lot of the other authors that I have consulted throughout my research on Norman Sicily, because there seems to be a lack of non-western sources or alternative perspectives. If there was a paper written on Norman Sicily from a professor from Cairo, for example, it would have been interesting to compare and see to what extent are the diversions in terms of perspective and focus. Whilst it is a well-known professor, he has won the Wolfson History Prize, who has presented this documentary, it is not a book so we cannot see the bibliography or the sources from which Robert Bartlett has taken to talk about the Normans. But on the whole, it is fair to assume that there is a relatively high historical accuracy.</p>	<p>A Tale of Dukes and Warriors, Conquerors and Kings. 'Men from the North' Episode 1. (2010) [DVD] BBC.</p>
<p>The Norman Achievement, 1050-1100</p>	<p>The author is a well-known British historian who has won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, which was previously awarded to four winners of the Nobel Prize in Literature. So the historian has been widely acclaimed, and has worked at the University of Cambridge and Oxford. He is a specialist on Norman history, having specialised exclusively on the Normans throughout the whole world. This is undoubtedly a most reliable source. A very academic peer-reviewed book.</p>	<p>Douglas, D.C. (1969) The Norman Achievement, 1050-1100. Berkeley: University of California Press.</p>
<p>The Medieval Papacy</p>	<p>Geoffrey Barraclough did history at a university level and was a professor of medieval studies later in his life. He had a particular view of history, believing it to be a way in which we can compare history with the present. He was actively involved in contemporary politics, having supported the Soviet Union and disapproved of the Warsaw Uprising. Whilst this may have affected some of his opinions in his books on more contemporary issues, I believe that this did not influence his opinions on medieval history too much. He was academically peer-reviewed and was a professor at a university so we can assume that there is a minimal degree of accuracy in his writings. He was a known medievalist and he was into this historical investigation so the way he analysed the past was very thorough and methodological, which is helpful in the case of the medieval papacy. This book, the author explained in</p>	<p>Barraclough, G., 1968. The medieval papacy.</p>

	<p>his introduction that he had set out to seek primary sources, such as the archives in the Vatican, that would help him in his research on this particular academic field. As such, this work is reliable, relevant and helpful precisely because the author has consulted a number of primary sources, having unearthed them almost like an investigator, and set about to thoroughly explain in a clear, academic narrative the history of the medieval papacy, covering certain parts of history in significant detail, which has proven an invaluable help in my own research on the topic of the papacy.</p>	
<p>Roger II of Sicily: A ruler between East and West</p>	<p>This is a German full-time historian that specialises exclusively in the history of southern Italy. He is a member of the Accademia Pontaniana, so he has obviously some form of academic recognition which suggests that what he has written has received some form of peer review. This book was published by the Cambridge University Press so it is very reliable as it is aimed for a scholarly audience. It focuses on the figure of Roger II of Sicily, so there is not only a level of academic reliability but the author has focused a lot on some very minute details which makes this book so helpful because it uses a number of reliable sources and focuses exclusively on the life of Roger II of Sicily.</p>	<p>Houben, H., 2002. Roger II of Sicily: A ruler between East and West. Cambridge University Press</p>
<p>Economy, trade and urban life in Langobardian and Byzantine southern Italy - 10 - 11th centuries</p>	<p>This is a scientific paper written much more recently by a relatively unknown Bulgarian author. It was published at a Bulgarian publishing house called Az-Buki which is headed by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. This publishing house targets an audience of teachers, scholars, specialists in the fields, so there is some form of peer review. I do not speak Bulgarian so I was unable to read the journal in original and it was exclusively thanks to google scholar that I was able to see an extract translated into English that contained a relevant piece of information to my work. This work, however, is certainly not as reliable a source as a source from Hiroshi Takayama or Donald Matthew, whose academic credentials have received wider recognition.</p>	<p>Dimov, G 2016. Economy, trade and urban life in Langobardian and Byzantine southern Italy - 10 - 11th centuries. Historia, 24(1)</p>
<p>The Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily</p>	<p>This is an American historian who worked primarily, there is a parallel here with John Julius Norwich, in the field of diplomacy, serving as the U.S ambassador for a number of countries before he devoted himself into writing about history. In an article, he tells CA that he starts off as recounting his experiences of the Gulf War, and later on he is influenced to write about Norman Sicily after the travels that he did in southern Europe. He is certainly more than a mere amateur historian and has certainly used extensive</p>	<p>Brown, G.S., 2015. The Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily. McFarland</p>

	academic research to write his book. Nonetheless, somebody like Robert Bartlett and Donald Matthew have been life-long committed scholars in the field of history and therefore may have prevalence over him in terms of writing. Despite that, he remains a fairly reliable source and his book on the Normans conquest of southern Italy remains relatively well peer-reviewed and well-researched.	
Roger II, King of Heaven and Earth: An Iconological and Architectural Analysis of the Cappella Palatina in the Context of Medieval Sicily	This was written by a university student studying at Trinity College, Hartford. Therefore, whilst it has employed a number of sources to back up the text, it has not yet been extensively peer-reviewed and remains a work written by a student rather than a specialised academic that has worked in the field for many years. This was a dissertation written under the supervision of Professor Triff by a student who was completing a bachelor of arts in art history. The supervisor, Professor Triff, specialises in architecture and is an academic that has been a fellow to Harvard University. Therefore, whilst they may be academic, they are not specialised in history and therefore this source, whilst I certainly think it as relatively reliable, does not carry as much academic weight as an entire book dedicated to the history of Norman Sicily, such as the one written by Donald Matthew.	Sauquet, M., 2018. Roger II, King of Heaven and Earth: An Iconological and Architectural Analysis of the Cappella Palatina in the Context of Medieval Sicily
Rethinking the Arthurian Legend Transmission in the Iberian Peninsula	This was written by somebody from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There is not a lot of information that I know about the work and author apart from that it has been published online on semanticscholar.org which is known to publish scientific literature. On the other hand, there are a lot of works published on this website so the peer review has not been extensive. As such, whilst I've used this in my essay, it certainly is not a source that I can claim to have been fully peer reviewed and written by a well-known historian. It is therefore not as reliable as some other sources that I have used, such as Donald Matthew.	de Lindquist, J.C., 2006. Rethinking the Arthurian Legend Transmission in the Iberian Peninsula. eHumanista
1091: A Charter of Roger I for the Reorganisation of Sicily	All I know from the author John Aspinwall is that he has some form of connection with the University of Lancaster. Theresa Jäckh, according to the Durham University website, is a tenure track professor at Tübingen university who is a research fellow at Durham's department of history. She is a member of the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies so this is an academic that works at a university who has done extensive research in her academic field. As the Durham University website indicates, this academic has done a lot of research in the relationship between Muslim and Christian communities in Sicily dating 800 - 1200. This is a very recent scientific paper so it has not had the chance to be fully	Aspinwall, J. and Jäckh, T., 2021. 1091: A Charter of Roger I for the Reorganisation of Sicily

	peer-reviewed. Nonetheless, one of the authors is an academic who works at a university and therefore we can assume there is a good academic reliability.	
Roger II and the creation of the Kingdom of Sicily	This is a very reliable source. The author is a professor emeritus of medieval history at the University of Leeds, who specialises in Italian history, especially on Norman Sicily and the Papacy during the 11-13th century, as well as Germany during the middle ages. He has been a fellow of the Royal Historical Society since 1982, and holds a BA, MA and MPhil from Oxford University. Therefore this is a career academic who has spent a lot of time researching on his particular area of expertise. It is therefore safe to assume that he is fairly academically reliable.	Loud, G.A., 2014. Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. In Roger II and the creation of the Kingdom of Sicily. Manchester University Press
The administration of the Norman kingdom of Sicily	Hiroshi Takayama is a professor emeritus within the Department of Occidental History at the University of Tokyo. He has specialised in medieval Europe, looking specifically at the Normans in the Italian south. He offered a relevant and unbiased text that dissected very clearly and concisely the administration in the Norman kingdom of Sicily.	Takayama, H., 1993. The administration of the Norman kingdom of Sicily (Vol. 3). Brill.
A history of Islamic Sicily	I went for this book because it gave a detailed account of the Islamic invasion and settlement on the island of Sicily, focusing primarily on the Arabs and the Fatimids. This is what made this book so relevant because it is both an academic, English-language book focused primarily on the Arabs in Sicily rather than the Normans or Lombards. The author remains relatively unknown, so whilst I did use it for my essay I understand that it was written in 1975, there might have been new developments, theories, new evidence, but for my essay it was helpful.	Aḥmad, ‘Azīz (1975) A history of Islamic Sicily. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

