THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Pavia’s Twin: Power and Identity in Early Medieval Benevento (570-899 CE)

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of History
School of Arts & Sciences
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Doctor of Philosophy

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This dissertation surveys the development of the Duchy/Princpality of Benevento from its founding in 570 to its takeover by the Lombard counts of Capua in 899, focusing specifically on its Lombard inhabitants’ conceptions of their own identity and how these evolved in response to significant political events, most notably, the Frankish conquest of the Lombard Kingdom in the north in 774. It will argue that Benevento’s continued independence after 774 contributed to and rested, in part, on the development of a more clearly defined and politicized sense of Lombard identity, one which was deeply rooted in a strong degree of antipathy towards other groups and the belief that to be Lombard was to be, above all else, free and independent. Such perceptions were a product of efforts by members of the southern Lombard elite to maintain both their political power and the cultural distinctions between themselves and other groups. The Beneventan dukes, in particular, would undertake a number of important actions, such as assuming the title of princeps gentis Langobardorum, intended to elevate their own status within the gens and to leverage their people’s shared sense of identity as a force for greater political cohesion.

These actions would help to foster a political and cultural climate which not only enabled the southern Lombards to maintain their own existing political and cultural practices, but also encouraged them to explore and more clearly define their traditions, values, history, and, ultimately, their sense of identity. Consequently, ethnicity would come to be increasingly
emphasized in political and cultural discourse during the ninth and tenth centuries, with Lombard princes and authors frequently expressing their sense of pride in Lombard achievements (especially military victories), their antipathy towards other groups, and the belief that Benevento, its rulers, and its people were the inheritors of the Lombard Kingdom’s legacy. Such sentiments not only sometimes encouraged the southern Lombards to set aside their internal differences in order to resist outside attacks on their independence, but, more broadly, created a strong link between the southern Lombards’ ethnic and political identities.
This dissertation by Martin Raymond Waldman fulfills the dissertation requirement for the
doctoral degree in History approved by Jennifer R. Davis, Ph.D., as Director, and by Katherine
L. Jansen, Ph.D., and Philip Rousseau, Ph.D. as Readers.

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For My Parents
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Introduction

The Frankish conquest of the Lombard Kingdom in 774 ended approximately two centuries of Lombard dominance over the political affairs of the majority of the Italian peninsula. It was not, however, the end of the Lombards themselves nor, for that matter, the end of Lombard rule in all areas of Italy. In the southern part of the peninsula, the Duchy of Benevento was yet unconquered and would remain so for another three centuries. Despite the loss of the Lombard Kingdom in the north, both the duchy’s rulers and its people did not turn away from their Lombard heritage nor did they come to embrace wholesale the external political and cultural influences that would henceforth shape some areas of Italy. Instead, they increasingly emphasized their identity in both their political and cultural discourse, expressing pride in their political and military achievements, antipathy towards outside groups, and the belief that they were the rightful inheritors of the Lombard Kingdom’s legacy and the last remaining members of the Lombard gens. As I shall argue throughout this study, this helped to create a stronger, more well-defined sense of Lombard identity, one that was deeply intertwined with and also helped to maintain Benevento’s political independence.

Benevento had not always played such a prominent role in Lombard affairs. Although it was nominally a part of the Lombard Kingdom, the duchy was politically marginal for the first two centuries of its existence owing in small part to the roughly five-hundred-mile journey between it and the royal capital of Pavia in northern Italy. While this did not, as I shall argue, prevent the establishment of important political and cultural connections between the two, it did enable the Beneventan dukes to exercise a higher degree of political autonomy than their northern counterparts. Consequently, they only rarely had to deal with outside interference in
their affairs. All of this changed with the fall of the Lombard Kingdom in 774. Suddenly, the Beneventan dukes found themselves struggling to maintain not only their own power and independence, but also to provide a stronger sense of political and ethnic cohesion for their people or, as one later prince referred to them, “the remnants of the gens.”\(^1\) In addition to the Franks, the southern Lombards\(^2\) would later face considerable pressure from the Byzantine emperors and groups of Arab raiders, all of whom sought to incorporate Benevento into their empires as a part of their broader efforts to extend their control and influence over Italy and the Mediterranean as a whole. There were many occasions when it appeared that Benevento might fall to any one of them. At various points during the eighth and ninth centuries, the Franks exacted tribute and oaths of fidelity from the dukes, the papacy claimed parts of Beneventan territory, the Arabs plundered the region and its monasteries with impunity, and the Byzantines even occupied the city of Benevento for a brief period of time in 890s. And yet, none of these groups were ever able to subjugate Benevento completely, owing in no small part to the firm resistance of the Beneventan rulers and their people.

These struggles would play a significant role in redefining the southern Lombards’ conceptions of their own ethnic identity. Even prior to 774, the southern Lombards had begun to emphasize ethnic distinctions in their political and cultural discourse as a means of asserting their continued political and ethnic affiliations with the Lombard Kingdom and the Lombard gens.

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\(^1\) “Gentis reliquas.” *LL Adel.* Prologue, p.306.

\(^2\) A note on terminology: Our eighth-century sources frequently refer to those living within the duchy as “Beneventans.” However, after the political division of the principality in 849, ninth-century authors increasingly use regional labels such as “Beneventan,” “Capuan,” and “Salernitan” to distinguish among the various Lombard groups in southern Italy. To account for this shift, I shall primarily utilize the term “Beneventans” to describe those individuals specifically affiliated with the duchy/principality of Benevento. “Southern Lombards,” on the other hand, will be utilized to describe all Lombards living in southern Italy, regardless of their political and/or regional affiliations.
However, the fall of the Lombard Kingdom intensified this considerably. Starting with Arichis II (r.758-787), Beneventan rulers increasingly emphasized the Lombard “character” of their rule through the use of ethnically-significant symbols and rhetoric. Rechristening themselves the “princeps gentis Langobardorum” (Prince of the Lombard gens),³ they cast themselves as the new leaders of the gens, issuing new additions to the Lombards laws (which were formerly the sole preserve of the Lombard kings), procuring saints’ relics at the expense of their rivals, initiating a number of major building projects, defying outside rulers, and offering patronage to important individuals and religious foundations “for the salvation of our gens and our homeland [pro salvatione gentis nostrae et patriae].”⁴

Such actions would have a ripple effect, creating a political and cultural climate in which southern Lombard aristocrats and religious elites could resist outside cultural and political pressures, as well as explore and define more clearly their traditions, values, history, and, ultimately, what it meant to be Lombard. Particularly in southern monasteries such as San Vincenzo al Volturno and Montecassino, which already had a significant number of Franks and Romans within their communities, Lombard monks had to adjust to increasing Frankish and papal influence over leadership positions, religious practices, and patronage, as well as the threat of Arab attacks. In response, these monks not only sought to maintain their leadership positions and distinct practices such as the Beneventan chant, but also took up the pen, producing histories, poems, and hagiographies that celebrated their people’s accomplishments, their martial valor, their princes’ individual acts of resistance, and the belief that to be Lombard was to be, above all

³ CSS 1.2, p.337.
⁴ See for example CSS 1.2.
else, free and independent. They also used these works to sharpen distinctions between themselves and the other peoples of the Italian peninsula, frequently excoriating the Franks, the Arabs, and the Byzantines for what they perceived to be these groups’ barbarity, impiety, immorality, and inferiority.

All of this would help to create a more clearly defined sense of Lombard identity by the end of the ninth century, one which was heavily emphasized in political and cultural discourse and deeply rooted in Benevento’s history of independence and resistance. Indeed, for both the Beneventan princes and some southern Lombard historians, the survival of the gens was inextricably linked to the survival of the Beneventan principality. The city of Benevento itself would become an important symbol of this, being viewed by some of its inhabitants as not just the last bastion of the Lombards’ political and cultural traditions, but also the true successor to the royal capital of Pavia. As one Lombard author, Erchempert, reflected more than a century after the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, Benevento had become “Pavia’s twin.”

The objective of this study is to understand how Lombard ethnic identity came to play such a prominent role in Beneventan political ideology and cultural discourse, and, equally important, how this identity both shaped and was shaped by the political changes the Duchy of Benevento underwent in its first three centuries of existence. To that end, I shall examine the evolution of ethnic identity and political power in the Duchy/Principality of Benevento from its establishment in 570/1 to its takeover by the Lombard counts of Capua in 899 CE. As I shall

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6 The Capuan takeover was not the end of the principality itself. Instead, it would be ruled as part of the Principality of Capua-Benevento until 981, with Capuan princes largely following the traditions of their Beneventan predecessors. However, for nearly a century, the direction of the Lombard gens and southern Italy would largely be shaped outside of Benevento. Given this and other significant political changes that occurred in the tenth and
argue, Benevento’s continued independence contributed to and rested, in part, on the
development of a clearer, stronger sense of Lombard identity in the aftermath of 774, one which
was deeply rooted in a strong degree of antipathy towards other groups and the belief that
independence was essential to being a Lombard. I would emphasize, however, that this was not
simply a natural and inevitable reaction to the external political and cultural pressures they now
faced, but rather, was a consequence of efforts actively undertaken by the Lombard princes to
leverage and reinforce their people’s ethnic identity as a means of creating internal cohesion and
elevating their own status within the gens, as well as other efforts by southern Lombard
aristocrats and religious elites to maintain their own socio-political status and distinct practices.

This growing emphasis on ethnicity in southern Lombard political and cultural discourse
has been long recognized by scholars, as one finds references to “national sentiment” and
“nostalgic Lombardism” even in early studies of the principality and its offshoots.\(^7\) However,
such expressions were ill-defined and rarely followed up with any detailed examination of how
this ethnic “consciousness” evolved and expressed itself over time. While recent scholarship on
the duchy has begun to examine these issues in greater detail, particularly the southern
Lombards’ perceptions of “others,”\(^8\) most studies still tend to focus on a few select episodes in


the principality’s history and rarely take into account earlier developments, providing the mistaken impression that Benevento’s rise to prominence and its peoples’ embrace of their Lombard identity was purely a product of the post-774 era and that they had only tenuous connections with the Lombard Kingdom. There is also a tendency to examine political developments within the duchy in isolation from its cultural developments and vice versa, not allowing us to appreciate fully the complex interplay between the two or how they can evolve over time. As we shall discuss, Benevento had a much deeper relationship with the Lombard Kingdom than is often assumed, one that actually encouraged the dukes and their people to embrace more firmly their Lombard identity both before and after 774. Equally important, the duchy’s unique political trajectory, including its early autonomy and later struggles to remain independent, significantly influenced and was influenced by the changing conceptions of ethnic identity among the political and religious elite. Over time, the southern Lombards’ ethnic identity would become increasingly intertwined with their political identity, with southern Lombard historians and princes placing a strong emphasis on political rule and resistance as core expressions of Lombard identity. This was very different from the Lombard Kingdom, where ethnicity was only rarely emphasized in either political or cultural discourse. As such, this study will not only aim to redefine our understanding of Benevento and its relationship with the Lombard Kingdom both pre- and post-774, but more broadly, enhance our understanding of how political and ethnic identities can intersect, interact, and evolve over time under changing political circumstances.

In order to accomplish this, I shall first provide an overview of Benevento’s internal ethnic and political development prior to 774, outlining how the duchy functioned and the nature
of its relationship with the Lombard Kingdom. As I noted, Benevento’s transformation into “Pavia’s twin,” did not emerge from a vacuum nor was it solely a product of the events of 774. The duchy’s long history of autonomy enabled its rulers to develop a robust set of political, economic, and cultural practices that greatly contributed to its internal stability and provided its rulers with the necessary foundations to rule independently in the aftermath of 774. However, this early autonomy did not preclude them from also maintaining close connections with the Lombard Kingdom. The continuous flow of individuals between northern and southern Italy, in particular, helped to ensure that the duchy would develop along a broadly similar political and cultural trajectory as the Lombard Kingdom. The dukes’ efforts to emulate and even compete with the Lombard kings for political, cultural, and religious prestige among their own people would also strongly encourage them to embrace the Lombard Kingdom’s legacy as their own.

Even as I seek to establish a sense of continuity between the periods prior to and after the fall of the Lombard Kingdom, it must also be recognized that the events of 774 and all that followed required the dukes not only to evolve and adapt prior strategies, but also to implement radically new ones. Although they still relied heavily on diplomacy, patronage, and violence as tools of rule, they also placed more emphasis on symbolic gestures both as a means of reinforcing their peoples’ cohesion in the face of significant outside political pressure and also to persuade them that the duchy could serve as an effective replacement for the Lombard Kingdom. The most important of these gestures was Arichis II’s decision to adopt the title of princeps, which was not merely a change in title, but was also an attempt to elevate his status within the gens, assert his independence, and reinforce the notion that he, rather than the Frankish kings, was the rightful inheritor of the Lombard kings’ legacy. I shall analyze this and other actions
both he and his successors undertook in order to assess both their underlying ethnic significance and the potential impact they might have had on other southern Lombards such as the historian, Paul the Deacon, and Lombard monks who were working to maintain their own distinct customs such as the Beneventan chant.

Both the princes’ efforts and those undertaken by elites such as Paul during the late eighth century would lay the groundwork for the much more explicit and aggressive emphasis on ethnic identity that we find in writings from the late ninth and tenth centuries. I shall devote particular attention to histories such as Erchempert’s and the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, as well as other written sources such as a hagiography and poetry, assessing their authors’ conceptions of Lombard identity, their perceptions of other groups, and how these things may have been shaped by the princes’ own actions and rhetoric. As I noted earlier, within these accounts, we see evidence of a growing antipathy towards other groups within the peninsula, with authors utilizing increasingly polemical rhetoric to describe their opponents. Equally important, we observe a strong sense of ethnic pride, with an increased focus on celebrating the Lombards’ prior achievements, particularly military ones. The princes were often central figures in these accounts and we can even observe direct and indirect support for their ideological aspirations through affirmations of Benevento’s special role in preserving the Lombard *gens* and its independence.

To further highlight just how much the southern Lombards’ ethnic identity became intertwined with their political independence, I shall also briefly compare the southern Lombards’ conceptions of their own identity with those of their northern brethren. Whereas the southern Lombards often defined themselves in opposition to the peninsula’s other inhabitants
including the Franks, the northern Lombards were increasingly coming to see their identity as being defined by their relationship with northern rulers. We can see evidence of this in the few ninth- and tenth-century writings we possess from individuals such as Andreas of Bergamo and Liutprand of Cremona, as well as the Lombards’ gradual embrace of some Frankish customs in the centuries following their kingdom’s end. In contrast, some southern historians did not even explicitly acknowledge the existence of the northern Lombards, preferring to describe the northern kingdom and its inhabitants as “Frankish” and defining themselves as the “remnants of the *gens.***” This suggests that by the end of the ninth century, the southern Lombards were increasingly coming to view their sense of identity as being defined just as much by their continued political independence as their shared history and traditions, a belief that would continue to propel them along a very different political and cultural trajectory than the north.

**Historiography & Methodology**

This issue of ethnic identity and its relationship to political power is one that has been hotly contested among historians and anthropologists. Much of the focus among medievalists, in particular, has been on the issue of ethnogenesis, which is, broadly speaking, the process by which ethnic identities form. Scholars have long grappled with how the tribes (*gens* (s.)/*gentes* (pl.)) of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages were established and what role, among others, political and military influences played in their initial development. To briefly summarize this very long and convoluted debate, until the mid-twentieth century, many scholars considered the

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identities of these tribes to be largely determined on the basis of biological kinship, territory, language, and/or shared history. However, such beliefs were often motivated more by nationalist sentiments and a desire to draw connections between the medieval past and the present rather than supported by actual historical facts.\(^{10}\) As more archaeological data was collected from areas allegedly settled by these tribes, inaccuracies and inconsistencies in our sources became even more apparent, throwing into question traditional narratives about the origins and movements of peoples throughout the early Middle Ages and other periods. Influenced by this and shifting views in the field of anthropology,\(^{11}\) historians gradually came to regard ethnic identities as being much more fluid, with the early medieval gentes, in particular, being seen not as racially and culturally homogenous kinship groups who were defined by a collection of immutable traits, but rather entities that may have been constructed over time through a variety of changing political, social, and historical factors.\(^{12}\)

With this realization, a whole new set of questions emerged, namely, who and/or what factors determined the basis for these identities? Was it Roman ethnographers seeking to categorize and distinguish the variety of “barbarian” tribes situated along their borders or was it the political and cultural elites of these tribes, who sought to create and manipulate political,


\(^{11}\) For an overview of these developments, see Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010), 50-71.

social, and cultural traditions for political gain? Likewise, can we even really speak of the existence of well-defined ethnic identities in the early medieval period, or is what we see merely a set of labels and traditions imposed by Roman and, later on, early medieval elites to both understand the groups they were dealing with and to make sense of their very confusing and fundamentally unknowable past? In one of the earliest systematic examinations of these questions, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, Reinhard Wenskus proposed that the early medieval gentes were defined by “nuclei of traditions” (*Traditionskern*) that were promoted by the elite members of individual tribes and handed down from generation to generation until they were gradually adopted by a much broader group of people.\(^{13}\) This theory had a significant influence on a number of scholars, particularly among a group in Vienna that includes Herwig Wolfram and Walter Pohl. Wolfram’s well-known monograph, *The History of the Goths*, not only offered a demonstration of the applicability of Wenskus’ theories, but with its translation, also popularized them with an English-speaking audience.\(^{14}\) Walter Pohl has had an equally significant impact, publishing several works on ethnic identity in multiple languages, many of which focus on the Lombards and their ethnic development.\(^{15}\) Although he is frequently grouped in with Wenskus and Wolfram as an advocate for the idea of *Traditionskern*,\(^ {16}\) it should be noted

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that Pohl has distanced himself from Wenskus’ original definition, considering it to be too elitist. In his view, the nuclei of traditions which helped to form individual tribes were mutable and diffused across multiple groups and networks, rather than unchanging and controlled by only a few.\(^{17}\)

The so-called “Vienna School” approach to ethnic identity has not been without its detractors. Walter Goffart has been especially vocal in his criticism, arguing that our conceptions of ethnic identities and the traditions that formed them are too reliant on information drawn from so-called “national” histories such as Paul the Deacon’s *Historia Langobardorum*. In Goffart’s view, the issue with this is not only that many of these histories present sometimes inaccurate, idealized, or even wholly invented versions of their peoples’ pasts, but that they were also heavily shaped by contemporary political concerns, as well as the authors’ desires to imitate Roman models of historical writing. As such, these narrators were less interested in reporting history than they were in shaping and creating it for their own ends, making them fundamentally unreliable for understanding the distant past.\(^{18}\) Pohl and others have decried this specific argument as turning early medieval histories into nothing more than literature,\(^{19}\) but do accept the broader notion that we should not take our texts at face value, particularly when dealing with their discussions of the distant past. Goffart’s approach has been even more influential among some British and North American academics who have also expressed varying degrees of skepticism over the existence of continuous historical and cultural traditions. Indeed, on both


sides of the debate, many have come to view ethnic identities as situational constructs which developed under the influence of and adapted to the changing political and social realities that various tribes had to deal with as they crossed the frontiers of the Roman Empire. Patrick Geary, in particular, has strongly emphasized that the conceptions of ethnic identity and traditions articulated by early medieval political and cultural elites were heavily modeled on those set forth by earlier Roman ethnographers.\textsuperscript{20} In his view, “The Germanic world was perhaps the greatest and most enduring creation of Roman political and military genius.”\textsuperscript{21} This is a view that even Walter Pohl has accepted to an extent,\textsuperscript{22} but there are some who have gone considerably further in their emphasis on the situational nature of ethnicity, their critiques of \textit{Traditionskern}, and arguments for what our sources can and cannot tell us. Charles Bowlus, for example, has articulated the view that, “The ‘imagined communities’ that Wenskus and Wolfram presume existed in the minds of barbarians and Romans of the age of migrations are difficult for us to grasp. Their imagined communities of the early Middle Ages probably tell us more about modern scholarship than they do about the societies existing at that time.”\textsuperscript{23}

Patrick Amory has proposed a different, but equally important view of ethnicity in the early Middle Ages. In his work, \textit{People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy}, he suggested the possibility that “ethnic” identities could be constructed and adopted almost entirely on the basis of political necessity and social identification, rather than any genuine sense of shared history or

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tradition. This would explain why the Ostrogoths, who controlled Italy for only a brief period of time, seemingly disappeared when their kingdom fell. Far from being a distinct ethnic group with deep historical roots, the Ostrogoths were actually just imperial soldiers of diverse origins who belatedly adopted the Gothic name and created their own traditions after serving along the Balkan frontier and rebelling against the Eastern Roman Empire in the late fifth and sixth centuries. Thus, Ostrogothic identity was a product of political ideology and military service rather than a long, drawn-out historical process.

Although Amory applied his theory to just the Ostrogoths, it raises a number of important questions about just what role political/military influences can play in shaping, even creating a sense of collective identity for individuals where none might have otherwise existed, as well as how the removal of these influences can lead to the dissolution of that identity. While the Lombards, on the surface, may not appear to share much in common with the Ostrogoths outside of the fact that both ruled parts of the Italian peninsula, as we shall discuss, the rapid end of the Lombard Kingdom in 774 and the Lombards’ seemingly muted response to this raises the question as to how well-defined and deeply-rooted Lombard identity and traditions were for those living within the kingdom. We shall also examine how, in both the north and the south, Lombard identity itself became closely intertwined with political ideology, almost becoming a label of political allegiance by the end of the ninth century.

My own view of ethnic identity and how I shall approach my sources have both been shaped to varying degrees by the above ideas. Regardless of what era one is examining, I would

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certainly acknowledge that ethnicity is very much a situational construct, one that is subject to frequent renegotiation depending on political and social circumstances, and can also be manipulated (to a certain degree) by political and cultural elites to fit their own agendas. However, like Walter Pohl, I would caution against viewing ethnic formation and evolution as being an entirely top-down process. While our understanding of this process during this period is, admittedly, primarily dependent on sources that were written from the perspective of and focused on political and cultural elites, scholars of other disciplines such as anthropology have often emphasized that, over time, a people can develop a set of shared historical traditions, cultural practices, and political interests simply through everyday interactions with one another, as well as interactions with other groups which help to illuminate differences in practice and values. The existence of such commonalities and contrasts, or rather, the perception that such commonalities and contrasts exist and the discourse articulating them are ultimately what defines one’s identity, even in instances where a group is actually comprised of individuals of disparate backgrounds, two groups share similar practices but different names, or their supposed origins are complete fiction.

In examining these perceptions and discourse among the southern Lombards, we are, admittedly, limited by the fact that we only have a handful of sources, all of which reflect, to an extent, their authors’ own personal agendas, biases, political contexts, and literary influences.

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Even so, I would argue that these texts should still be viewed as contributions to and reflections of a much broader dialogue that was taking place among the southern Lombards about who they were, what they believed, the things they most cherished, and what made them distinct from other groups. As much as their authors sometimes sought to shape this discourse for their ends, they were also shaped by it themselves, building upon and engaging in a dialogue with the works of earlier authors, the traditions and ideas that had been handed down to them by their families and tutors, the many personal interactions they had with individuals of their own gens throughout the entirety of their lives, and the knowledge and expectations of their audience. Thus, as Walter Pohl has observed, we should not treat our authors and their texts in total isolation, but instead almost “as if we were listening to someone talking to unknown persons on the telephone.”

Even without always knowing just who specifically our authors “talking to,” we can still find evidence of this broader ethnic discourse taking place just by comparing our sources. Although they may have differed considerably in terms of genres, contexts, influences, individual agendas, depictions of events, and even the eras in which they were written, as we shall discuss at length, our sources still sometimes echoed each other in terms of the perceptions and values articulated within them, as well as the rhetoric they used. In particular, the image of the Lombards as a small but divinely-guided gens that believed it was “better to maintain liberty by arms than to stain it by payment of tribute.” remained a persistent feature of their writings from the seventh-century Origo Gentis all the way to Chronicon Salernitanum in the late tenth

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27 Walter Pohl, “The Construction of Communities: An Introduction,” in Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts, ed. Richard Corradini, Maximilian Diesenberger, and Helmut Reimitz (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 6. It should be noted that Pohl himself seems to have been influenced, to a degree, by the works of Anthony Smith, citing and quoting him in a number of his works.
century. This image would gradually be reinforced and expanded upon throughout the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries by negative stereotypes of the Lombards’ foes as being “barbaric,” “profane,” “perfidious.”

Through a detailed examination of this rhetoric of ethnic pride and antipathy, I believe that we can not only come to a better understanding of how the southern Lombards came to define their identity by the end of the ninth century, but also how this conception of identity both shaped and was shaped by the political challenges they faced. As will become clear, the southern Lombards’ struggle to define and maintain their own distinct identity was linked to their struggle to maintain their political independence. To be Lombard was to be free, an idea which is perfectly encapsulated in an anecdote provided by the late ninth-century historian, Erchempert. According to him, when King Pippin of Italy wrote Prince Grimoald III a letter demanding his submission, the Beneventan prince responded, “From both parents I was born free and noble, and I believe that with God’s protection, I shall always be free!”

As much as this work is intended to contribute to the above debates concerning ethnic identity and our use of sources, I also hope that it expands their scope. While there have been many excellent works on early medieval ethnicity, there is a tendency to focus primarily on the question of origins, specifically, how did group identities form and evolve within the context of the Western Roman Empire’s end and the establishment of the post-Roman kingdoms.

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29 Erch. 6, p.236-7, 1,40 – 04.
30 Not surprisingly, the debate over ethnogenesis and ethnic identity has generated far more literature than can be adequately discussed within this brief summation. For further perspectives on ethnic identity within a late Roman/early medieval context (in addition to works already cited), see Florin Curta, ed. Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis. Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); H.W. Goetz, Jörg Jarnut, and Walter Pohl, eds., Regina and Gentes: The Relationship Between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Walter A. Goffart, Barbarians and Romans, A.D. 418-584: The Techniques of Accommodation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980); Guy
analyses and insights provided by these works are invaluable, but they do not always allow us to appreciate fully the fact that, even after they form, ethnic identities continue to evolve over time, assuming new dimensions as a result of changing internal political, cultural, and religious circumstances, as well as being challenged by the possibility of assimilation and dissolution (ethnonemesis) under sustained external political and cultural pressure and significant internal challenges. This question of how identities evolve and adapt under such circumstances is what I will attempt to address in this study, looking specifically at how the southern Lombards evolved from what was, in essence, a heterogeneous group of Romanized foederati to believing themselves to be the only true Lombards remaining in Italy. In this case, the core focus is not on determining how the Lombard gens itself formed or assessing the origins of certain traditions (though I shall discuss this to an extent), but rather, examining how members of this gens defined their identity at various points in time, how their conceptions of identity were shaped by their immediate political and cultural contexts, and also how they may have echoed, expanded upon, or distanced themselves from the conceptions of identity articulated by their contemporaries and those who came before them. In many respects, Benevento is the ideal case study to approach this question of ethnic evolution, not just because its inhabitants responded to their changing circumstances by more overtly emphasizing their ethnic identity and traditions in their writings and political actions, but also because the dichotomous political situations in northern and


Recently, Helmut Reimitz has explored this process in a Frankish context. His work provides a useful model for future studies of other groups. Helmut Reimitz, History, Frankish Identity and the Framing of Western Ethnicity, 550-850 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
southern Italy afford us an opportunity for greater clarity on how differing political situations might influence people with similar (though by no means exactly the same) ethnic identifications to develop very different ideas about what constitutes that identity.

There are other equally compelling reasons to study Benevento. From a political perspective, Benevento is unique among early medieval polities. It was not only one of the earlier and longer-lasting principalities of the early Middle Ages,\textsuperscript{32} but was also one of the few areas in Europe to be subjected to strong external pressures from the Franks, Arabs, and Byzantines nearly simultaneously. The fact that the princes managed to resist successfully these pressures is all the more remarkable, and makes Benevento a particularly interesting case study for understanding how the rise/resurgence of the great empires of the eighth and ninth centuries influenced areas outside of their direct control, both politically and culturally. As we shall discuss, even as the southern Lombards became more connected to these groups through economic and cultural exchanges, they also more sharply defined themselves in opposition to them.

A study of Benevento also promises to enhance our understanding of the Lombard Kingdom. While Benevento was not necessarily similar to other Lombard duchies, many of its political and cultural traditions were inherited from the Lombard Kingdom. The princes would also face many of the same challenges as their northern counterparts not the least of which was the emergence of significant internal divisions in the ninth century and external pressure from the Franks and other groups. And yet, they somehow managed to survive these challenges. In

\textsuperscript{32} For an overview of early medieval principalities, see Herwig Wolfram, “The Shaping of the Early Medieval Principality as a Type of Non-Royal Rulership,” \textit{Viator} 2 (1971).
examining Benevento’s history, I hope to demonstrate that the southern Lombards not only developed a more strongly defined sense of identity than their northern counterparts, but that this also contributed to a stronger degree of political cohesion among them.

Another important reason for examining Benevento is, quite simply, the lack of scholarship on the principality. Despite its increased prominence in the eighth and ninth centuries, Benevento has not been as well studied as other areas of the Italian peninsula during this period. Scholarship of the duchy lags well behind that of northern and central Italy, and even within the growing body of work on southern Italy as a whole, scholarly interest has predominantly focused either on the Byzantine-controlled areas or the centuries following the principality’s division in 849. To be fair, one significant reason for this is that we have a limited amount of contemporary documents to work with prior to the tenth century, particularly in comparison to northern and central Italy. Moreover, accessibility of sources has also been a major obstacle. While the literature from the period has been relatively well-served by the editors of the Monumetna Germaniae Historica, many of the southern charters were, until recently, scattered across sometimes poorly edited volumes from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It has only been in the last two decades that there has been a significant push to remedy this, both with the publication of a register of southern documents, as well as modern critical editions of some of our most important sources including the Chronicon Sanctae

33 Langeli estimates only about 15% of all documents from the eigth to the eleventh centuries come from southern Italy. Attilio Bartoli Langeli, “Private Charters,” in Italy in the Early Middle Ages: 476-1000, ed. Cristina La Rocca (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 207.
34 Jean-Marie Martin et al., eds., Regesti dei documenti dell’Italia meridionale, 570-899 (Rome: École française de Rome, 2002).
Sophiae. Although there yet remains some work to be done in this area (particularly with regards to Montecassino’s charter collections), there has never been a better opportunity to reassess Benevento’s history.

Such a reassessment is required for multiple reasons. While interest in the duchy has been growing in recent years, most major studies that examine it are broad overviews that tend to focus almost exclusively on either the period before or after 774, something which does not allow us to appreciate fully the degree of continuity between the two periods. The fundamental studies of southern Italian history and politics for this period written by Poupardin and Cilento still offer valuable in-depth examinations of Beneventan administrative organization and society even decades after they were written, but they also largely avoid discussing cultural developments, focus predominantly on the period after 774, and were written prior to a time when issues of ethnicity were routinely and systematically examined. This is not to say that earlier scholars failed to recognize the growing emphasis on ethnicity within Beneventan politics and society, but as I noted previously, such expressions were ill-defined and rarely followed up with any detailed examination of how this evolved and expressed itself over time.


36 In addition to recent work on the charters, Benevento and Spoleto were the subject of a major conference in 2002, the proceedings of which were published in *I Longobardi dei Ducati di Spoleto e Benevento: Atti del XVI Congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto medioevo*, (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2003).


Despite this lacuna, there has been some quality work done on Beneventan politics and ethnic perceptions. Studies of the Principality of Salerno conducted by Taviani-Carozzi and Apulia by Jean-Marie Martin have both provided greater insight into the politics and society of other areas of ninth-century southern Italy, while studies by Belting, Bertolini, Delogu, and Garms-Cordines remain fundamental for understanding the evolution of Beneventan political ideology, particularly during the reign of Arichis II.39 Most recently, Aurélie Thomas has published a study of aristocratic families in southern Italy during this period.40 The religious landscape of Benevento and southern Italy has also received considerable attention, due in no small part to the fact that two of the great monasteries of the early Middle Ages, San Vincenzo al Volturno and Montecassino, were located within the duchy’s borders. Both have been the subjects of numerous studies.41 There has also been a considerable amount published on the development of saints’ cults (particularly that of S. Michael)42 within the region and even


individual religious practices such as the type of chant used in religious celebrations or the script utilized by monastic scribes.

In recent years, greater attention has been drawn to Benevento’s role in upholding Lombard political traditions in the aftermath of 774. Walter Pohl, who, as we have seen, has written a great deal on the Lombards and ethnic identity in general, has drawn attention to the growing emphasis on ethnicity in Beneventan political and cultural discourse after 774, as well as the key role that Montecassino played in the preservation and dissemination of Lombard documents in southern Italy. More recently, Jakub Kujawinski published an M.A. thesis and a subsequent article discussing how Lombard identity in southern Italy became more defined in the aftermath of 774, particularly due to increased interactions/confrontations with other groups. Luigi Berto has studied the same set of issues, systematically assessing Lombard perceptions of

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My own work is very much an outgrowth of all these efforts. However, as I pointed out earlier, while Benevento’s embrace of its Lombard heritage in the aftermath of 774 has been readily acknowledged by scholars, the process by which this occurred has yet to be examined in a comprehensive manner. The duchy’s early history, in particular, often tends to be neglected and there is still a strong tendency to treat political developments in isolation from cultural ones. This work will address both of these issues, and in doing so, aims to provide a fuller understanding of not just Benevento’s history and its relationship with the Lombard Kingdom, but the process by which conceptions of identity evolve and adapt under changing political circumstances. With this in mind, let us take an in-depth look at the sources we shall utilize.

\textit{Sources}

For southern Italy, we possess a rich array of regional histories, hagiographical accounts, poetry and charters, as well as some archaeological and numismatic evidence. There are, of course, a few complications we must contend with, the most significant of which is that our sources are very unevenly distributed across this period. We have very few contemporary
accounts upon which we can rely for events prior to the eighth century and the archaeological evidence is also relatively limited. Even as we move later into the era, certain periods are better represented in the sources than others and certain types of evidence tend to be concentrated in particular decades. Another difficulty we face is that very few of our sources survive in their original form. Our charter collections, for example, are mainly copies from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, while the majority of our literature can only be found in single manuscripts. Compounding these issues further, a number of our works, most notably, the *Chronicon Salernitanum* and our hagiographies, were written by unknown authors. This makes it very difficult to establish precise dates for individual compositions, as well as their authors’ underlying motivations, potential biases, and possible audiences.

Despite these complications, these sources represent an opportunity rather than an obstacle to understanding the evolution and interaction of power and identity in Benevento. The histories and hagiographies from this period provide us with insights into the evolving attitudes of the Lombards, both towards themselves and their neighbors, while charters offer us a look at the day-to-day workings of the Beneventan court and the relationship between the region’s rulers and local elites. Even something as seemingly minor as the evolution of the script used to copy documents or the type of chant sung at religious celebrations can serve as a microcosm for the southern Lombards’ efforts to maintain their identity and independence amidst the internal political changes and external pressures that Benevento experienced. To that end, let us briefly examine each type of source in turn.

Charters are our most numerous type of source. Broadly speaking, these are documents which record and/or confirm transactions of property, people, and privileges to and from
individuals or religious foundations such as monasteries. Within the collections from southern Italy, we possess around roughly 800 records of transactions from between the sixth and ninth centuries,⁴⁹ the majority of which were donations from the Beneventan court to many of the region’s major monasteries and churches including the monasteries of S. Sophia, San Vincenzo al Volturno, and Montecassino. There are also a small number of Frankish and Spoletan charters relevant to Benevento, as well as charters which record private transactions between individuals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th># of Recorded Transactions (651-700 CE)</th>
<th># of Recorded Transactions (701-800 CE)</th>
<th># of Recorded Transactions (801-899 CE)</th>
<th>Total Transactions (651-899 CE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronicon Sanctae Sophiae</em> (1119 CE)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronicon Vulturnense</em> (1119-1124 CE)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronica monasterii Casinensis</em> (1099-1103 CE)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis</em> (c.792-1080)⁵⁰</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1

⁴⁹ This estimate includes original documents, copies of originals, and summaries of transactions. Martin et al., *Regesti dei documenti dell’Italia meridionale*, 570-899, 14-25. See figure 1 for a breakdown of transactions among the collections that will be cited most frequently throughout this work.

⁵⁰ Unlike the other collections, the *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis* is not a medieval collection, but rather a modern collection of predominantly original manuscripts from the archives of the Abbey of S.S Trinitá di Cava.
Scholars often use charters to document families and landholdings within a territory, as well as to identify and understand how these territories were administered. However, charters also enable us to better understand rulers’ relationships with the local aristocracy and religious elite, revealing the agency and aspirations of both. The granting of land and privileges, as well as adjudicating and mediating disputes involving them, were among the most important functions exercised by a medieval ruler. They were not only a tool that rulers could utilize to win the loyalty and support of their followers, but also provided mechanisms through which those they ruled could interact with them and even request patronage, either for their own benefit or those they were working on behalf of. This created a reciprocal relationship between the two, one which enabled rulers to expand indirectly their influence by linking into local power networks through their connections with individual aristocrats and religious foundations, and, in turn, enabled elites to influence royal activity as a condition for their support. As studies of other regions have demonstrated, monasteries in particular played a crucial role in this owing to their strong bonds with local notables either through patronage or familial links. This granted them a degree of prestige and influence with both rulers and the local aristocracy, as they could, among other things, give voice to local concerns or bolster a ruler’s political and ideological

influence with their people. This was particularly important in southern Italy, where the monasteries were both subject to and sought the attention of not only the Beneventan court, but also occasionally the Frankish, papal, and Spoletan courts as well.52

Leaving aside their practical purpose, charters were also symbolic instruments of power. The formula used at the beginning of every court-issued charter (intitulatio) was of particular importance,53 as it conveyed how the ruler was or wished to be perceived, depending on who wrote the charter. Likewise, the rulers identified and the titles attached to them in private charters provide some insight into how these rulers were perceived by those living in their territory. The Beneventan charters are particularly interesting in this regard, as the intitulatio underwent a significant number of variations over the course of the period under study, not the least of which was the transition from the use of the title dux to princeps.54 As I shall argue, these changes reflect a significant adjustment to the ideology upon which the Beneventan rulers sought to base their rule, as well as the changing political circumstances they faced in the eighth and ninth centuries.

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As with other types of sources, distribution of the charters across our period is a significant issue, with some ducal reigns represented far better than others, making it difficult to identify patterns of giving and the individuals involved. An even more significant issue is the provenance of these charters, which were largely drawn from eleventh- and twelfth-century collections. While the authors of these collections purported that they were copied from original documents, they were selectively assembled, and many monasteries were notorious for forging charters during this period as a means of defending their claims to disputed lands.  

Unfortunately, we are largely dependent on these collections as we have very few original manuscripts due, in no small part, to the fact that many of the major monasteries were devastated by Arab raids in the latter half of the ninth century. Montecassino, for example, lost a significant portion of its archives to Arab raiders in 883 and then to a fire in 896.  

Despite these complications, the southern charter collections have been relatively well served by the scholarly community. In the last fifteen years alone, three edited collections of charters and a complete register of all southern materials composed between 570 and 899 have been published, the most significant of which is the Chronicon Sanctae Sophiae. Compiled in 1119 CE and containing 224 charters, this collection includes records of land and privileges granted by the Beneventan court to the abbey of Santa Sofia and other local churches and monasteries. Nearly every ruler of Benevento from the eighth and ninth centuries is represented in this collection, making it by far our most valuable and comprehensive collection of documents. Until 2000, we were largely reliant on Ferdinando Ughelli’s seventeenth-century

edition of the *Chronicon Sanctae Sophia*, which contained numerous errors and falsifications.\(^57\) Now, we have two well-edited collections available to us. The first, edited by Jean-Marie Martin, presents the collection in its original form while the second, edited by Herbert Zielinski as part of the *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo*, arranges the charters in chronological order up until 774.\(^58\) Given the more limited chronological scope of the *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo*, Martin’s edition is more useful for this study but we should not dismiss the value of the work undertaken by Zielinski and others. The *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* is, after all, a comprehensive collection of all Lombard charters from 568 until 774. While the Beneventan volumes of this collection largely contain charters from the *Chronicon Sanctae Sophiae*, there are some additional charters, including a few not found in any of the other collections we shall discuss. Moreover, the royal, Spoletan, and private charters edited within other volumes provide a useful point of comparison.

The rest of our charter collections are not exclusively Beneventan or even Lombard for that matter. The first of these, the *Chronicon Vulturnense*, is a twelfth-century chronicle that documents San Vincenzo al Volturno’s history and also contains copies of charters issued to the monastery. Because of its position in the frontier zone between Benevento and Spoleto, San Vincenzo received not only grants of land and privileges from the Beneventan court, but also the Spoletan and, after 774, the Frankish courts as well. It has been suggested that this is evidence

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of a competition for influence between these polities,\textsuperscript{59} but we must be very careful about how we interpret these claims. Many of the early charters in this collection, including the initial grant of land made to the monastery as well as a number of Carolingian grants, are probably forgeries, something which was not recognized by the editor of our most current edition.\textsuperscript{60}

The charters from Montecassino are equally problematic. A number of charters remain unedited and our principal collection, the \textit{Registrum Petri Diaconi}, has yet to receive a modern critical edition, leaving us reliant on Erasmo Gattola’s still useful, but antiquated compilation of these charters.\textsuperscript{61} Peter the Deacon also has a well-earned reputation as a forger and his copies contain numerous scribal errors. Fortunately, we are not entirely bereft of well-edited evidence for Montecassino. In 1980, Hartmut Hoffman released a newly edited version of the \textit{Chronica monasterii Casinensis} by Leo Marsicanus, an eleventh century account which chronicles the monastery’s history and contains summaries of many of the grants made to Montecassino.\textsuperscript{62} More recently, Cuozzo and Martin have published 84 previously unedited charters from the monastery.\textsuperscript{63}

The final major collection of charters, the \textit{Codex Cavensis}, comes from the Abbey of S.S Trinitá di Cava, which is located near Salerno. In contrast to the other collections, the \textit{Codex Cavensis} contains number of original documents, many of which are private transactions


\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Chronicon Vulturinense del Monaco Giovanni}, ed. Vincenzo Federici (Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1925). For criticisms of this and some of the collections from Montecassino, see Martin et al., \textit{Regesti dei documenti dell'Italia meridionale}, 570-899, 9.


\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Die Chronik von Montecassino}, ed. Hartmut Hoffmann, MGH SS XXXIV (Hanover: Hahn, 1980).

between individuals rather than grants issued by local rulers. Moreover, within these documents, we not only find acknowledgments of the Beneventan rulers’ authority (sometimes with different titles), but also their Salernitan, Frankish, and Byzantine counterparts’ authority, which provides us with a sense of the comparative influence of these groups in the region during our time period.\textsuperscript{64}

In addition to charters, we also possess compilations of the Lombard law codes.\textsuperscript{65} First promulgated in 643 by King Rothari and added to irregularly by subsequent kings, these laws created and/or codified certain Lombard social and legal practices, including matters of inheritance, familial relations, property rights, and restitution for crimes committed. They became an important symbol of Lombard ethnic identity, owing both to their purported antiquity and the fact that they were one of the few pre-774 documents in which ethnic rhetoric was heavily employed. One later Beneventan prince actually described them as the “enduring glory of the gens,”\textsuperscript{66} though there remains some question as to just how much of a role they played in defining Lombard identity and sharpening distinctions prior to 774.\textsuperscript{67}

Where Benevento is concerned, there are very few laws in the pre-774 codes that make explicit mention of the duchy. However, after 774, both Arichis II and later, Adelchis of Benevento issued additions to the laws. While the laws themselves remain focused on traditional

\textsuperscript{64} *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis*, ed. Michael Morcaldi, Mauro Schiani, and Sylvano de Stephano vol. 1, (Naples: H. Hoepli, 1873).
social and political concerns, the fact that it was not a Lombard king issuing them is still quite significant. Adelchis’ laws are of particular interest, as they are accompanied by a prologue which offers us one of the earliest Lombard perspectives on the Frankish conquest, as well as the role of the Beneventan princes in preserving both the laws and their people’s identity.

Letter collections are another important type of documentation. We do not have any letters sent by members of the Beneventan court, but we do possess a few papal letters which were either addressed to the court or at least mention the dukes. The earliest of these, the letters of Gregory the Great, contain our first explicit mentions of the southern Lombards and are one of the few sources we have for early Beneventan history.68 Turning to the eighth century, the papal letters to the Carolingian court collected in the Codex Carolinus provide a papal perspective on events in the south.69 Although they were written from a perspective that is largely antagonistic towards Benevento and the Lombards in general, they also provide us with a first-hand account of the events surrounding the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and the Beneventans’ response to them.

The hostile tone of the letters highlights one of the difficulties in dealing with Benevento and the Lombards in general. For better or for worse, we are heavily reliant on accounts from often antagonistic, non-Lombard sources for our understanding of events prior to 774. Although the ducal and royal courts of the Lombards produced a relatively significant volume of administrative documents, there seems to have been far less interest in literature such as hagiographies and histories,70 an issue which we shall discuss in the third chapter. The period

70 Nicholas Everett has examined this problem in great detail, though most of his focus is on northern and central Italy. Nicholas Everett, Literacy in Lombard Italy, C. 568-774 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
after 774 is a very different story. In contrast to the north, southern Italy produced some of the finest examples of Lombard literature, particularly histories. We not only possess Paul the Deacon’s magisterial *Historia Langobardorum* from the late eighth century, but also lengthy regional histories by Erchempert and anonymous chroniclers from Salerno, Montecassino, and elsewhere from the ninth and tenth centuries.71

Much like our charters, these histories are unevenly distributed across our time period, with the greatest concentration being found in the late ninth century. Although we can utilize charters and other evidence to verify some of the information these later works present about the first half of the ninth century, it is much more difficult to assess the degree to which their conceptions of identity were shaped by the attitudes of the generations immediately preceding them versus the events of their own time. To be certain, these authors took many cues from Paul the Deacon’s history and other earlier works, but as we shall also discuss, their rhetoric and ideas were also directly influenced by the tensions of their own times. They were also markedly more aggressive in emphasizing both their ethnic identity and distinctions with other groups. As a consequence of this, my discussions of the latter half of the ninth century will be much more extensive than the first half.

In terms of the specific histories I shall be examining, Paul the Deacon’s *Historia Langobardorum* is arguably the most important and influential work ever produced by a

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Lombard. Writing very late in the eighth century, Paul recounted the history of the Lombards from their allegedly ancient origins until the death of King Liutprand in 744. Strictly speaking, Paul’s work cannot be classified as a Beneventan product. While I shall argue that the history was likely produced during Paul’s retirement at Montecassino in the 790s, the history itself was predominantly focused on northern affairs and there is strong evidence that it was widely distributed in the north in the decades following its publication. That said, Paul does provide Benevento with significantly more coverage than one would expect from a northern history and would have a very significant impact on some of the authors we shall discuss. Moreover, based on some of his other writings, it seems that he remained on friendly terms with the Beneventan court until his death, something which has led Walter Goffart to speculate that the *Historia Langobardorum* was, in fact, written for the benefit of Prince Grimoald III. I intend to examine these claims and the text’s overall purpose at great length in chapter four.

There is a nearly eighty-year gap between Paul’s work and our next set of histories. The first of these, the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensis*, is actually three separate accounts of Beneventan history documenting the history of Montecassino, the Beneventan civil war, and Louis II’s campaigns in southern Italy against the Arab Emirate of Bari. While not as wide ranging as the other chronicles in our possession, this work nonetheless offers us a close-up view of some of the most critical years in Beneventan history. We do not know when specifically

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72 Rosamond McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s *Historia langobardorum* and the Franks,” in *History and Memory in the Carolingian world* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 77-83.
74 The most recent edition was edited and translated by Berto, with a title that reflects the fact that these accounts were written separately. All citations will be from this edition, though please note that its passages are numbered than the MGH. *Cronicae Sancti Benedicti Casinensis.*
these accounts were written, but it was probably sometime between 867 and before Louis II’s imprisonment in 871. The identity of the author(s) also remain a mystery, but in comparison to other Beneventan authors from this period, they treat both Louis II and the Franks in a relatively positive manner.

Our other two major histories written by Erchempert and an anonymous author from the Principality of Salerno (henceforth referred to as the Anonymous of Salerno) are much more strident in their rhetoric, both towards the Franks and other outside groups. Both works were intended to serve as continuations of Paul the Deacon’s *Historia Langobardorum*, but they were very different in their tone and approach. Of the two accounts, Erchempert’s history is more straightforward, chronicling events in southern Italy from 774 until around 889. As a monk of Montecassino, Erchempert was an eyewitness to the many internal conflicts which wracked the south during the 880s and is thought to have composed his account during this same time, possibly in stages.\(^{75}\) As such, his history starts out quite broadly before narrowing into an almost blow-by-blow account of events. He was, in his own view, writing not about the Beneventan Lombards’ “rule but their downfall, not their happiness but their misery, not their triumph but their ruin, not what they accomplished but how they failed, not how they conquered others but how they were conquered by others and were subjugated.”\(^{76}\) However, the content of his history is considerably more nuanced than that, as he not only celebrated the many achievements of

\(^{75}\) Walter Pohl has speculated that an early version of this work was produced around 885. Pohl, *Werkstätte der Erinnerung*, 37-42.

\(^{76}\) *Erch.* 1, p.235, l.2-5. This text was translated into English by Joan Ferry as part of her PhD dissertation, but as this has not been formally reviewed or published, I shall be translating directly from the MGH edition for all quotes. Joan Rowe Ferry, “Erchempert’s “History of the Lombards of Benevento”: A translation and study of its place in the chronicle tradition” (PhD diss., Rice University, 1995).
princes such as Arichis II, but also frequently condemned the peninsula’s other inhabitants. As we shall see by comparing his work with other texts from this period such as Adelchis’ prologue and the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi*, he was not alone in this regard, something which demonstrates how southern Lombard attitudes towards themselves and others may have evolved after nearly a century of internal and external conflict.

Our final major history, the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, was written outside of our time frame in the 960s, but is still quite useful for our purposes as it too covers much of the eighth and ninth centuries. We cannot say with absolute certainty who the author is, but like Erchempert, he was clearly an ardent supporter of his people. In contrast to the monk of Montecassino, however, the Anonymous was much more inclined to embellish his retelling, offering up a number colorful descriptions and anecdotes involving persons and events from our period. Despite these embellishments and the author’s distance from the events he describes, we should not dismiss the Anonymous’ account entirely as a source of historical understanding for earlier periods. As I shall discuss, many of his anecdotes actually serve as a perceptive commentary on the events he is discussing, allowing us to understand why they took place and the potential motivations of those involved. The fact that the Anonymous’ explanations sometimes correspond to what more contemporary evidence (some of which he utilized) tells us about these events makes it even more difficult to dismiss outright the information he provides. In addition to this, it should also be noted that there are some similarities between the Anonymous’ own conceptions of Lombard identity and values, as well as his perceptions of other groups, and those we find articulated in our late ninth-century sources. Undoubtedly, some of this was due to the

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fact that he was influenced by these works. Nonetheless, I still think it useful to compare and contrast his perceptions with those of earlier authors in order to assess just how influential and deeply ingrained their ideas had become by this later date.

Our historical understanding will be supplemented further by outside sources such as the biographies contained in the *Liber Pontificalis* and the *Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum*, as well as some chronicles from the Franks. We shall also examine compositions by northern Lombard authors from the end of our period such as the aforementioned Andreas of Bergamo and Liudprand of Cremona. These works not only provide a different perspective on the Frankish conquest of Italy, but also on events in southern Italy during the ninth and tenth centuries. By examining the attitudes expressed by northern authors and comparing them with their southern counterparts, I hope to illustrate how divergent political attitudes were intertwined with the differing conceptions of identity for both northern and southern Lombards.

In addition to the aforementioned histories, southern Italy also possesses a rich hagiographical tradition. Our longest account is the *Vita Barbati*, which describes the actions of Bishop Barbatus of Benevento during the famed siege of the city in 663. We also possess a number of accounts describing the translation of saints’ relics to Benevento and the so-called

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79 Although it is sometimes cited by scholars when discussing the events of 774, I will not utilize the *Chronicon Novaliciense* owing to the fact it was written in the 11th century, which is well after the period we are covering. For this same reason, I shall also only sparingly use Leo’s chronicle for Montecassino, utilizing it more for its records of land grants than for its recounting of events.
Liber de Apparitione S. Michaelis in Monte Gargano, which discusses the origins of the famous shrine dedicated to S. Michael at Mount Gargano. In many of these accounts, the rulers of Benevento play a significant role in obtaining either the saints’ relics or their protection. However, we have to be somewhat careful in how we utilize these works as we cannot date most of them with any precision. Many were originally dated to later periods, though scholars now place them (or, at least, early versions of them) in closer proximity to our period, if not right within it.\(^8\) Even with these important caveats, we should not dismiss their value. These accounts (or at least the traditions behind them) formed the basis for numerous saints’ cults that arose in southern Italy during our period and earlier, some of which had strong associations with distinctly Lombard practices such as Beneventan chant and were patronized by the Beneventan court. They not only were a significant source of ethnic cohesion and pride, but also served to create distinctions between the Lombards and the other groups in the peninsula. Indeed, rather than focusing on the life and deeds of the saints, many of these texts are, in essence, historical accounts of the Lombards’ important military victories over their enemies intended to reinforce the idea that the Lombards enjoyed divine favor throughout their history.

Aside from hagiographies and histories, we also possess some examples of Beneventan poetry. The majority of these were funerary poems (epitaphs) written for the princes and inscribed on their tombs,\(^8\) the earliest of which is attributed to none other than Paul the

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8 Carmina Varia (nos. 2-14), ed. Ernest Duemmler, MGH Poetae Latini aevi II (Berlin: Weidmann, 1884).
Deacon.\textsuperscript{82} As with the histories, the funerary poems reflected the evolving attitudes of southern Lombards, both towards themselves and the peninsula’s other inhabitants. Many of these poems focused not only on praising their subjects, but also on condemning the Franks and other groups. Outside of the funerary poems, we have a few limited examples of Lombard poetry from the mid-to-late ninth century, including a poem written in the 880s that may have possibly served as the dedication of Erchempert’s history.\textsuperscript{83}

We are focused predominantly on identifying and analyzing ethnic and political expressions found in written sources, but we shall occasionally supplement this with archaeological, architectural, and numismatic evidence. Although material goods should not be viewed as a sign of ethnic and political affiliation, they do reveal myriad cultural influences that shaped the southern Italy during this period. Unfortunately, southern Italy has not been well-examined by archaeologists, but this has begun to change in the last thirty years. The excavation of San Vincenzo al Volturno, in particular, has yielded a great deal of evidence, providing us with insights into monastery’s art, its architecture, its cultural leanings, and its role in the trade networks of the early Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{84} This aside, we also have some examples of coinage from the reigns of many of the eighth and ninth century Beneventan dukes/princes. As we shall discuss, Benevento was the only Lombard duchy to mint coinage consistently, which can be

\textsuperscript{82} Karl Neff, \textit{Die Gedichte des Paulus Diaconus} (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1908), 35; \textit{Carmina Varia} (nos. 2-14).
\textsuperscript{83} Westerbergh, \textit{Beneventan Ninth Century Poetry}.
interpreted as both an indicator of its involvement in Mediterranean trade and its dukes’
aspiration to emulate other rulers, including their own kings and the Byzantine emperors.85

Not all evidence needs to be unearthed. A walk through either modern-day Salerno or
Benevento will reveal that some structures from our period still stand, including the church of S.
Sophia in Benevento. While these have all been subjected to centuries of renovations,
remodeling, and natural disasters, some of the original architecture remains and there have been
some studies conducted on the urban structure of both Salerno86 and the city of Benevento.87
Moving outside of the cities, many important religious centers remain in some form or another,
the most important being the shrine of S. Michael on Mt. Gargano. This was an important
pilgrimage site throughout the early Middle Ages, as evidenced by the numerous inscriptions that
were found during excavations of the shrine’s early medieval structures. Based on these
inscriptions, the dukes themselves appear to have visited the shrine.88

Taken altogether, the above evidence should be more than sufficient for us to assess how
the southern Lombards’ political and ethnic identities evolved from the sixth century onwards.
Compared to the north, southern Italy may not have quite as many legal documents such as
charters, but when it comes to literature, particularly histories, the southern evidence is of

Campania,” Early Medieval Europe 6 (1997): 25-45; Philip Grierson and Mark Blackburn, Medieval European
Coinage of Lombard and Carolingian Italy,” in The Long Eighth Century, ed. Inge Lyse Hansen and Chris Wickham
86 Delogu, Mito di una città meridionale (Salerno, secoli VIII-XI).
87 Marcello Rotili, Benevento romana e longobarda: l'immagine urbana (Benevento: Banca sannitica, 1986).
88 Both the shrine and the inscriptions have been examined in great detail in Carletti and Otranto, Il santuario di S.
Michele sul Gargano.
considerably higher quality. With this in mind, let us discuss specifically how we shall employ it throughout this work.

Overview

This work will proceed in a largely chronological manner, focusing on particular topics and themes as dictated by the available evidence for the period in question. In the first and second chapters, I shall examine specific events within the duchy’s pre-774 history, focusing particularly on relations between the duchy and the Lombard Kingdom. Although Benevento was not necessarily founded as an identifiably “Lombard” duchy, the political and cultural connections that formed between it and the northern kingdom through the flow of individuals helped to set the two along similar political and ethnic trajectories. Events that occurred during this period, as well as the memories of such events, further helped to strengthen the southern Lombards’ sense of identity and also their sense of belonging to both the gens and the Lombard Kingdom. This sense of belonging would only grow in time rather than diminish. Contrary to common assertions, Benevento’s autonomy was not something that occurred in opposition to royal power, but rather, was politically necessary (not to mention, beneficial) for both the kings and the dukes. I shall not only reassess the dukes’ relationship with the kings, but also look at how a desire to emulate and perhaps even compete with them laid the groundwork for Benevento’s future independence and its peoples’ heightened sense of ethnic identity.

In the third chapter, my attention will shift to the events of 774 and the southern Lombards’ response to them. I shall discuss not only the princes’ political strategies in-depth, such as their decision to issue new laws or their adoption of the title of princeps, but also
examine how Lombards at both the court and the monasteries sought to maintain their own distinct political and cultural practices. As I shall argue, the Lombard princes helped to foster a political and cultural climate that enabled and perhaps encouraged their people to explore and define what it meant to be Lombard, as well as resist potential outside influences, something which had been absent in the north.

It was amidst this political and cultural climate that Paul the Deacon wrote his important history. Despite his focus on the history of the Lombard Kingdom, I shall argue in my fourth chapter that his portrayal of both Benevento and the Lombards as a whole was very much influenced by events in the south and his admiration for the Beneventan princes. While he accepted the permanence of the Frankish conquest in the north, his continued emphasis on the Lombard martial virtues and constant demonstration of how past Beneventan dukes were model rulers suggests that he saw a very different future for Benevento, one in which the princes and their subjects continued to uphold what he considered to be the Lombards’ traditional political and cultural values. This portrayal would very much shape how future Lombard authors came to perceive both themselves and their leaders’ struggles.

These perceptions will be the focus of my fifth chapter. As I shall discuss, despite the considerable amount of internal problems and external pressures Benevento experienced in the late ninth century, the southern Lombards were still able to set aside their differences at key moments in order to preserve their independence against outside groups such as the Franks, the Byzantines, and the Arabs. Much of this, I shall argue, was fueled by both a heightened sense of ethnic pride and also their shared antipathy toward their opponents, something which is clearly expressed in our literature from this period. I shall examine these accounts in order to identify
the common ways in which southern Lombard authors negatively portrayed the Franks, the Byzantines, and the Arabs, as well discuss how this differed from their northern counterparts. Whereas the northern Lombards viewed their identity as being inextricably tied to their place within the Carolingian Empire and its Ottonian-led successor, the southern Lombards came to view their political and cultural separation from both the Franks and other groups as being essential to their identity, with the Principality of Benevento and its princes in particular serving as important symbols of ethnic identity and continuity. With this in mind, let us begin our examination with a discussion of the Lombards’ origins and the founding of the Duchy of Benevento.
I

Connections of Memory

There is a certain degree of irony to Benevento being described as “Pavia’s twin.” Although the princes of the eighth and ninth centuries were quick to embrace the political and cultural legacy of the Lombard Kingdom, their predecessors had maintained a degree of separation from it, especially in the duchy’s first century of existence when the political and cultural gulf between it and the Lombard Kingdom was at its widest, and the dukes conducted their affairs seemingly free from any royal interference. While the logistical difficulties of ruling the duchy from afar contributed to this, the dukes’ autonomy was also a product of the circumstances under which their duchy had been founded. Our sources provide few details concerning this, but the most widely accepted theory is that the duchy was not established by the group of Lombards who entered Italy in 568/9, but rather by a much smaller group of Lombard foederati who had settled in the region at the end of the Gothic Wars in 553/4 and were initially aligned with the Byzantine Empire when the Lombard Kingdom was established.¹ This would suggest that the Duchy of Benevento was not simply autonomous in its earliest days, but completely independent of the Lombard Kingdom. Given this, it is important to ask, how did Benevento evolve from a duchy established by a group of Romanized foederati to an independent principality whose inhabitants viewed themselves as the “remnants [reliquias]” of the Lombard gens?²

Although we shall see that the Lombards had begun to develop some semblance of a group identity and socio-political structures by the mid-sixth century, I shall argue that it was the connections that the southern Lombards formed with the Lombard Kingdom after the duchy’s founding that were most critical in the early stages of this process. Whatever political differences may have existed between the Lombard Kingdom and the Beneventan duchy, there is still evidence that individuals moved between the two, bringing with them their traditions, familial connections, and political allegiances. My analyses will focus on these travelers, particularly the Beneventan dukes who were not natives of the duchy. As we shall discuss, of the five dukes who ruled Benevento in its first century, three hailed from the northern duchy of Friuli, and among these, one (Grimoald I) eventually returned to the north and claimed the Lombard kingship. This did not bring about a lasting union between the Lombard Kingdom and the Duchy of Benevento, but it did move the two into closer political and cultural alignment and also created a set of genuine historical connections between the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento that later Beneventan princes and authors could draw upon in order to claim the political and historical legacy of the northern kingdom as their own.

This last point raises another issue which we must consider. More so than any other era we shall discuss, much of our understanding of this early period rests on reconstructions of events found in later sources such as Origo Gentis, Paul the Deacon’s history, and the Vita Barbati. Their authors were not only writing at a considerable chronological distance (particularly the latter two) from the events they described, but also had their own particular agendas that were influenced, in part, by the political and religious concerns of their own times. Paul’s account of Benevento’s early years, in particular, may have been intended to reinforce the
impression that the duchy had always been a part of the Lombard Kingdom and was, indeed, the most deserving to carry on its legacy in the aftermath of its downfall.³

These complications should instill in us a healthy degree of caution about completely trusting our later authors’ claims concerning what may or may not have occurred during this period, but I still think it would be a mistake to dismiss entirely the information they provide. Although our writers certainly embellished details and even occasionally fabricated things in order to fit their narrative agendas, at least some of what they reported was based on earlier written sources or other preexisting traditions, all of which shaped their understanding and interpretations of events alongside those of their audiences’. Perhaps the most well-known example of this can be found in Paul’s history, where he claimed to have not only heard the tale that King Alboin had turned a rival’s skull into a drinking goblet, but that he had seen the goblet with his own eyes at the court of King Ratchis.⁴

This is not to say that these older traditions themselves were accurate or the products of an unbroken and/or uncorrupted chain of oral transmission that took place among political and cultural elites. As Walter Pohl has rightly argued, the traditions our historians worked with were often multitudinous, fragmented, ambiguous, contradictory, and subject to frequent renegotiation.⁵ However, even recognizing this, we can still sometimes identify information in our later sources that either fits in with what more contemporary evidence tells about a particular period or may at least be broadly reflective of actual historical experiences. As we shall discuss, the Lombards’ stories of their own origins and the many battles they waged, though rife with

³ See Chapter 4.
⁴ *HL* 2.28.
many mythical elements, may have also, at their core, been a product of their genuine contacts and conflicts with other groups prior to their settlement in Italy and the memories arising from these experiences. Even a mid-tenth century Byzantine source such as De Thematibus can still provide us with some information and potential insights about the establishment of the Beneventan duchy that at least broadly aligns with the few contemporary details we possess.

Beyond enabling us to understand what actually might have occurred, these sources also help to put into perspective how events and practices from this period helped to shape the southern Lombards’ conceptions of their own ethnic identity, particularly their strong emphasis on both military conflict and the struggle to maintain political independence. While these beliefs were definitely influenced by later events (most notably, the fall of the Lombard Kingdom), they were also built upon earlier traditions such as those surrounding the Lombards’ origins, their veneration of S. Michael, and their victory over the Byzantine armies in 663. It is important for us to look at when and where these traditions originated from, what impact they might have had on the early Lombards’ sense of ethnic identity, and how later authors would utilize them to construct and articulate their own conceptions of identity.

Thus, what I shall examine here are really two types of connections from this period which shaped the southern Lombards’ identity: the political and cultural connections that formed between the Lombard Kingdom and the Duchy of Benevento during the sixth and seventh centuries, and the important traditions that emerged during this era and later Lombards built upon. The former set of connections influenced the Beneventan duchy’s evolution into an identifiably Lombard polity that was not radically different (either politically or ethnically) from the rest of the kingdom. The latter would encourage its people to maintain their ethnic and
political cohesion and boundaries once the Lombard Kingdom fell and external political and cultural pressures grew.

**Establishing an Identity**

Before we discuss the early southern Lombards and the establishment of their duchy, we must first speak more broadly about the Lombards as a whole, specifically, the degree to which their group identity and socio-political structures existed prior to their settlement in Italy. Doing so will not only enable us to assess the potential degree of political and ethnic separation between the Beneventan and the northern Lombards prior to their reengagement with each other in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, but will also provide us with some context for our later discussions. Although the conceptions of identity we find articulated in Paul, Erchempert, and the Anonymous were all significantly influenced by the circumstances under which they wrote, they were also informed by the experiences and traditions of earlier generations of Lombards, particularly their conflicts (both real and imagined) with groups such as the Vandals, Gepids, and Heruli. These conflicts would not only transform the Lombards into the dominant group that would eventually march into Italy at the head of a large confederation of tribes, but would also define their identity, both in the pre-invasion period and later ones, as being rooted in martial valor and conflict.

The Lombards’ earliest account of their own origins is found in the *Origo Gentis*, a mid-seventh century account.⁶ According to its unknown author, the Lombards were initially part of

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⁶ Dating of the *Origo* is uncertain. Paul claims that it was originally attached to the *Edictum Rothari*, which would suggest it was composed around 643, but the text itself includes mentions of Rothari’s successors all the way up to
a tribe known as the Winnili, who lived on the island of “Scadanan,” which is commonly interpreted as Scandinavia. At some indeterminate point in history, two brothers, Ibor and Aio, led a third of this tribe to the European mainland from Scandinavia. There, they came into contact with the Vandals, who demanded that they either pay tribute or face them in battle. After the Lombards refused to pay, the Vandals consulted their god, Wodan, who decreed that he would grant victory to those he espied at first light. Wodan’s wife, Freya, advised the Lombard women to join their men at first light and tie their hair around their faces to give them the appearance of warriors. Upon awaking and seeing them, Wodan remarked “Who are these Long-Beards?” Having so named them, Wodan granted the Lombards victory over their foes. From there, they would journey forth, defeating a number of other tribes before ultimately settling in Italy.

Given its later composition date and fantastical elements, this particular story should largely be interpreted as a myth rather than actual history, but there is still much that it can tell us about the Lombards, both prior to their entrance into Italy and also subsequent to it. Regardless of whether or not they have any basis in fact, origin myths such as the one above are key elements in constructing a people’s collective sense of identity and values across generations. Even when their target audience ceases to treat them as anything more than fanciful tales, they

the reign of Perctarit (671-688). Given that this text is predominantly a list of kings, it is quite possible that it was simply updated after its initial composition. HL 1.21; “Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy,” 15-9.


8 Orig. Gent. 1, tr. p.316-7.
still have the power to instruct, to edify, and to dictate certain expectations of collective behavior. The tale related by the anonymous author of the *Origo Gentis* is no different in this regard, and while it should be acknowledged that what we see is only one interpretation of this story, one which may represent an attempt to reinforce a sense of cohesion and common identity for the Lombards of the mid-seventh century, we should not assume that the author was attempting to create something entirely from nothing. The strongly pagan elements of the origin myth and the fact that a similar version of the tale was reported outside of Italy by Fredegar prior to the *Origo Gentis*’ composition all suggest they were working from a much earlier set of oral traditions. What precisely these were and when they first emerged is impossible to know, but I would suggest that they and, by extension, the *Origo Gentis* reflect, to a limited degree, the actual experiences and values of the pre-Italian Lombards. While the Lombards may not necessarily have emigrated from Scandinavia or fought a major battle against the Vandals, as we shall discuss momentarily, there were genuine historical contacts and, especially, conflicts with other groups that played a decisive role in their formation and evolution as a *gens*. It is the memory of these encounters that we find echoed in our written accounts from this period and that would also continue to influence conceptions of Lombard identity for centuries after.

Indeed, conflict is at the very heart of all written versions of the Lombards’ origin myth from the seventh century *Origo Gentis* to the ninth century *Historia Langobardorum Codicis Gothani*. The participants and the details may differ between versions, but they all share a strong emphasis on martial prowess and victory as being essential parts of the Lombards’ identity and

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history. Admittedly, other gens’ origin stories tend to share a similar emphasis, but the Lombards were unusual not only in the degree to which they continued to celebrate these things as fundamental elements of their identity, but also by the fact that they so explicitly linked their origins to a single battle. Although our Lombard authors acknowledged that they had existed prior to their alleged clash with the Vandals, it was as part of another group with its own separate name, history, and homeland. From their point of view, the gens only truly emerged once they had distinguished themselves in battle, earning themselves not just a considerable amount of prestige, but, more importantly, their own name.

Like origin myths, collective names are one of the key elements of ethnic identities. At their most fundamental level, they serve as a clear mark of a group’s separate identity, but more than that, they can also evoke certain values and past achievements. As suggested by their own origin myth, the Lombards’ name eventually assumed a much greater significance for them than just being a tribal name or even a description of their physical characteristics; it was to forever be a symbol of their military prowess and the divine favor shown to them. For the pre-Christian Lombards, in particular, the name may have had added significance because the expression “Long-beard” was also an epithet that was sometimes applied to Wodan, suggesting a belief in the existence of a deeper, almost adoptive relationship between the god and the Lombards. Even after the Lombards had thoroughly embraced Christianity as part of their identity and dismissed these pagan elements of their origin as fictitious, they could not wholly let go of this

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idea that the *gens* was somehow the product of divine intervention and continued to enjoy special favor in battle. Paul, for example, may have regarded the idea of Wodan’s involvement in their formation as “worthy of laughter,” but he also was careful to emphasize that, “victory is due, not to the power of men, but it is rather furnished from heaven.”\(^{14}\)

This particular belief in being a divinely chosen people is not unique to the Lombards, but it must be emphasized that the martial aspects of this story and their name were just as important for the Lombards as the religious ones, providing considerable inspiration and models of behavior for later generations of authors, particularly in southern Italy. Of our three manuscript copies of the *Origo Gentis*, two are from eleventh-century southern Italy, which some have taken suggest that it remained of greater interest to the more militant southern Lombards than it was to their northern brethren.\(^{15}\) Paul the Deacon also offered his own expanded version of the tale, which still celebrated the Lombards’ many victories over their foes, even though Paul himself was a strong proponent of Christian virtues such as temperance and mercy. As we shall discuss, he may have partially intended this section of his work to act as a commentary on his own times and to provide ideological support for the princes in their struggles against the Franks.\(^{16}\) The Anonymous of Salerno was even more explicit in this intention, directly referencing the Lombards’ refusal to pay tribute to the Vandals in order to condemn Grimoald IV’s decision to pay tribute to the Franks in 812.\(^{17}\)

\(^{14}\) *HL* 1.8, tr. p.16-7.

\(^{15}\) Cava de’ Tirreni, Archivio della Badia 4; Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional 413; Cingolani, *Le Storie dei Longobardi*, 33; Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, c. 568-774, 97; Pohl, “Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy,” 22.

\(^{16}\) *HL* 1.1-10; see p. 218-21.

\(^{17}\) *Chron. Sal.* 39.
More important than the account itself was the influence it continued to exercise over the Lombards’ conceptions of their own identity and values that we find in many texts. The legend’s emphasis on martial prowess and the image it presented of the Lombards as a small group of warriors constantly striving to defend their freedom against numerically superior foes was one that remained a persistent feature of their writings and, as we shall see, would also continue to shape many aspects of their culture ranging from their veneration of soldier-saints such as S. Michael and S. Mercurius to their description of themselves as an *exercitus* in their laws.\(^{18}\)

Even something as seemingly trivial as their beards continued to be regarded as a mark of ethnic distinction. Rulers not only continued to be depicted on coinage with them,\(^{19}\) but it was also later remembered as a symbol of Beneventan resistance to the Franks when Prince Grimolald III allegedly refused to groom himself in the Frankish style (i.e. with a short hair and mustache) as one of the stipulations of his release from captivity in 787.\(^{20}\)

Admittedly, the above discussions tell us much more about the later Lombards than the early ones, but we should not interpret these developments as being wholly divorced from the realities of the early Lombards’ existence. As I noted earlier, the later Lombards’ strong emphasis on martial prowess and victory as essential to their identity reflects what we actually know of their pre-Italian history and the role that contact and conflict played in their political and ethnic development. While there is insufficient evidence to prove that the Lombards actually

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\(^{18}\) LL Roth. 386; Gasparri, *La cultura tradizionale dei longobardi*, 155-61.


\(^{20}\) Erch. 4. For a lengthy discussion of hair and facial hair as a political and ethnic symbol, see Maximilian Diesenberger, “Hair, Sacrality and Symbolic Capital in the Frankish Kingdoms,” in *Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 173-212; Paul Edward Dutton, *Charlemagne's Mustache and Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2004), 3-42.
emigrated from Scandinavia or were once called the Winnili, Strabo does note that there was a group known as the Lombards living near the mouth of the Lower Elbe in the first century, which would place them near Denmark.\textsuperscript{21} Grave finds attest that the area may have been settled as early as the third century BCE, but there is nothing that would allow us to distinguish clearly the Lombards from any other tribes that might have been in the region.\textsuperscript{22} Leaving aside the methodological difficulties of utilizing archaeological evidence to identify ethnic affiliation, our earliest written sources offer a possible explanation for this, suggesting that the Lombards were a comparatively small group who were part of a confederation of Suevi tribes. In the \textit{Germania}, Tacitus described the Lombards as “distinguished by being few in number. Surrounded by many mighty peoples they have protected themselves not by submissiveness but by battle and boldness.”\textsuperscript{23} Velleius Paterculus went even further, declaring the Lombards to be “a race surpassing even the Germans in savagery.”\textsuperscript{24} Such impressions would seem to accord with the Lombards’ depictions of their own early history, though I would caution against viewing this as definitive proof of their claims’ historicity or that the Lombards already had a very firm and distinct sense of ethnic identity by the first century. After all, we do not actually have any Lombard sources from this period and early Roman authors often tended to rely more on literary tropes for their descriptions than actual observation of the tribes living outside the empire. Even

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} An excellent English-language overview of archaeological evidence is provided in Neil Christie, \textit{The Lombards: The Ancient Longobards} (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1995), 1-14. For a more recent overview (including for southern Italy), see Rotili, “I Longobardi: migrazioni, etnogenesi, insediamento,” 1-77.
\end{itemize}
their medieval successors sometimes tended to integrate these into their own descriptions. To what degree this influenced writers such as the anonymous author of the *Origo Gentis* versus some unknown source of oral tradition is impossible to know. The most we can say is that while there was a small tribe known as the Lombards in the first century that was reputed to be as fierce, many of the values, practices, and traditions that authors such as Paul would have associated with Lombard identity such as the laws, kingship, and their origin myth cannot be securely dated until much later.

Indeed, it is not until the mid to late fifth century that we can tentatively begin to distinguish the Lombards from other groups and trace their patterns of movement and settlement. After departing their homeland in the Lower Elbe, they gradually made their way southwards, settling first in the Middle Danube region around the 470s and then entering the former province of Pannonia around 526. At every turn, they came into conflict with neighboring tribes including the Huns, the Rugi, the Suevi, the Heruli, and the Gepids. The Lombards eventually subdued them all, but rather than wiping them out or enslaving them, they incorporated them into their armies and formed marriage alliances with their leaders. This process of conquering and incorporating other tribes would have a significant effect on the Lombards’ own development. The election of their first king, Agelmund, may have been prompted by some of the difficulties they faced in trying to manage this process, particularly when they first encountered the Huns. Greater variations in wealth and cultural influences among the grave finds theorized as being part

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of Lombard settlements in Pannonia would also suggest an increasing degree of multicultural influences and social stratification, with some even arguing that social status and ethnic identity were interlinked. However, as with all archaeological evidence, we cannot be certain of the individual identities of those buried, and even if we could, we have to careful about assuming that the these represented the same social categories that later existed in Italy. We can say, however, that those who eventually moved on to Italy and came to identify themselves as Lombards would have been exposed to a number of different cultural influences, both from other groups in the area and from the local Roman population.

Christianity may have been one of these influences. The Lombards’ conquest of Christian tribes such as the Heruli and the Suevi, for example, may have paved the way for their own gradual conversion starting at the turn of the sixth century. There remain, however, a number of questions as to how many Lombards actually converted. Procopius identified the Lombards as a Christian people, but modern interpretations of the evidence suggest that they were still largely pagan, or at least continued to practice pagan rituals alongside Christian ones.

29 Christie has argued against both Bóna and Kiszely’s interpretations, but also points out that the archaeological evidence from “Lombard” sites in Pannonia strongly correlates with finds in N. Italy around the time they began settling in Italy. Christie, “Pannonia: Foundation of Langobardic Power and Identity,” 18 n.31. A more recent analysis of DNA evidence taken from a Lombard-era cemetary in Hungary also supports the idea of short-term settlement and group migration, but indicates a significant degree of genetic diversity. See KW Alt et al., “Lombards on the Move – An Integrative Study of the Migration Period Cemetery at Szólád, Hungary.” PLoS ONE 9(11): accessed March 21, 2017, doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0110793
The Lombards’ political and cultural development was further altered by their interactions with the Byzantine Empire. In 547/8, Justinian granted them the city of Noricum and a sum of gold, marking the first time that the Lombards had formally been settled in Roman territory. Initially, it may have been Justinian’s intention to use them as a check on the neighboring Gepids, but the imperial government would soon employ Lombards as foederati all across their territories, including Italy during the Gothic Wars.\footnote{Christie, “Pannonia: Foundation of Langobardic Power and Identity,” 10-2.} This may not only have encouraged them to adopt Roman customs, but also Roman social and military organization. As Marius of Avenches related, the Lombards migrated to Italy “in farae.”\footnote{Marius of Avenches, La Chronique de Marius d'Avenches, trans. Justin Favrod, 2nd ed. (Lausanne: Section d'histoire, Faculté des lettres, Université de Lausanne, 1993), 569.1, p.82.} Paul loosely translated this term as “lineages,”\footnote{HL 2.9.} which would suggest that they were traditional kinship groups, but they might have also purely been warbands that had been formed in the service of the imperial government.\footnote{For discussions of the term, see Bognetti, “L'influsso delle istituzioni militari romane sulle istituzioni longobarde del secolo VI e la natura della «fara».” in L'età Longobarda, vol. 3, 1-46; Giovanni Tabacco, The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule, trans. Rosalind Brown Jensen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 91-9.} This might explain how the title of duke (dux) came into use among the Lombards, as it originated from the Roman military system and may have been granted to the leaders of these units. Although Paul claimed that the Lombards had been ruled by dukes prior to electing their first king,\footnote{HL 1.14.} more recent interpretations have argued that the dukes were actually appointed much later, either by the Lombard kings or the imperial government. This coupled with the fact that the Byzantine Empire set up duchies of its own in Italy around this same time,
would seem to suggest that the Lombards were drawing from Roman tradition rather than their own.\(^{38}\)

What we can observe from all of this is that, even before they entered Italy, the Lombards had begun to lay the foundations for some of the socio-political structures and cultural traditions that would come to define their existence in Italy. This process was far from complete, however. While I would contend based on what we have discussed so far that the Lombards did indeed possess some sense of collective identity by this point, it was still relatively fluid and ill-defined. We must remember that when King Alboin marched his armies into Italy in 568, it was not just Lombards who followed him, but supposedly Saxons, Gepids, Bulgars, Sarmatians, Sueves, and Thuringians as well.\(^ {39}\) The Byzantine Empire’s use of Lombard *foederati* may have further complicated matters, as it pulled individual warbands away from the main group of Lombards and brought them into closer proximity with the larger Roman world. We cannot automatically assume that these groups would have all continued to share the same political allegiances, cultural customs, or even sense of identity, particularly the longer they remained apart. This is something to consider as we turn our attentions to the Duchy of Benevento and its inhabitants.

*Establishing a Connection*

We know almost nothing about how the Duchy of Benevento was founded or the individuals who ruled it in its first decades. There are no explicit mentions of the dukes or the duchy in contemporary sources until 592, and our only information on the duchy’s founding

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\(^{38}\) Gasparri offers a concise, but useful summation of the debate. Stefano Gasparri, *I duchi longobardi*, Studi storici (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1978), 7-12.

\(^{39}\) *HL* 2.26.
comes from a passage of the *Historia Langobardorum*, in which Paul laconically notes, “The first duke of the Langobards in Beneventum was named Zotto, and he ruled in it for the space of twenty years.” Brief though this statement is, it has provoked considerable speculation among scholars. Initially, it was theorized that the duchy was founded by a Lombard warband that broke away from the main army shortly after it entered Italy. This warband may have been led independently by Zotto or it may have been a *fara* assigned to him by Alboin. From both a chronological and strategic standpoint, neither theory is particularly convincing. According to Paul, Alboin only managed to conquer as far south as Tuscany prior to capturing Pavia in 572. It is possible that Paul was simply confused in his chronology here, but even if we accept this, it still would not have made much strategic sense to send a Lombard army so far south, especially with most of the Byzantine forces concentrated along the northern frontier. On the other hand, if Zotto was acting independently, it seems equally unlikely that he would have made so long a trek southwards through Roman territory, potentially risking hostile encounters with imperial forces and passing up wealthier targets that were in closer proximity to territory already under the Lombards’ control.

Gian Piero Bognetti proposed a very different theory about how the duchy was founded, arguing that Zotto and his Lombards were not members of Alboin’s armies at all, but rather a

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40 *HL* 3.33, tr. p.146.
42 *HL* 2.26.
43 It is possible that Alboin wanted troops in place to cut off Byzantine reinforcements from the southern ports, but this only would have become an issue if the Lombards had managed to take control of the northern ports. Bognetti, “Tradizione longobarda e politica bizantina nelle origini del ducato di Spoleto,” 455. Pier Maria Conti, “Duchi di Benevento e regno longobardo nei secoli VI e VII,” *Annali dell’istituto italiano per gli studi storici* 5 (1976): 227.
group of Lombard foederati who were garrisoned in the region by the Byzantine Empire. Even after the Lombards entered Italy, the imperial government continued to make use of Lombard foederati and also made efforts to win the support of individual dukes. Bognetti also postulated that the Duke of Spoleto was installed by the imperial government around 574/5, just prior to the launch of a Byzantine counter-offensive. Admittedly, neither of these examples wholly explain why a group of foederati would have been placed in Benevento (particularly as early as 570/1) given that the imperial defensive frontier was far to the north, but Bognetti also had a theory for this. He contended that the Lombards had actually been settled in Benevento prior to 570/1, most likely around 553/4 at the very end of the Gothic Wars. Shortly after Totila’s defeat, a Frankish army under the command of Leutarius and Buccelinus invaded Italy and ravaged much of southern Italy. While the sixth century historian, Agathias, only mentioned Franks, Alemmani, and Heruli being in this group, a tenth century treatise by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus noted that there were also Lombards mixed in. If this was indeed the case, they may have been invited to join the local garrison after being defeated along the banks of the Volturno. Another possibility is that Narses did not actually dismiss all of his Lombard troops in the aftermath of Totila’s defeat, but may have held on to some of them in order to combat the

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45 The most well-known example of this involves a certain Droctulf, a Suevo-born duke of the Lombards who eventually sided with Byzantium and defended the city of Ravenna. HL 3.18-9.
49 Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, De Thematibus (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1952), 96-7.
remaining Gothic forces and the Frankish invasion. If so, they would have probably seen action in the south and may have been garrisoned at Benevento or the nearby stronghold of Acerenza.  

Bognetti’s theory has largely been accepted by scholars, but it must be emphasized that it rests predominantly on a single reference in Constantine’s De Thematibus. While it is clear that the emperor had access to some local information, not all of it was reliable. In a separate work, De Administrando Imperio, he claimed that when Narses invited the Lombards to settle in Italy, they first were settled outside of Benevento, and it was only after they revolted and captured the city that they expanded into northern Italy. This certainly reinforces the idea that the southern Lombards had been settled in the region prior to 568, but it is difficult to accept completely the veracity of emperor’s account in light of the other factual inaccuracies.

Unfortunately, archaeology does not provide any clearer of a picture. In contrast to northern and central Italy, there is an almost complete absence of burials and materials that might suggest any Lombard influence in the region. Given the comparatively limited amount of archaeological work performed in southern Italy, there might yet be more evidence to be found, but its absence does not, in my view, undermine Bognetti’s arguments. If Procopius’ report that only 5,500 Lombard foederati fought in the Gothic Wars is correct, it is quite probable that any Lombard force garrisoned at Benevento would have been small in number and almost entirely

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51 Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 89.
52 See for example ibid., 229-35; von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi merdionale.”; Conti, “Duchi di Benevento e regno longobardo nei secoli VI e VII.”
54 The one exception to this is a “Lombard” necropolis in Benevento, but it can only be dated to sometime between the invasion period and the end of the seventh century. See Marcello Rotili, La necropoli longobarda di Benevento (Naples: Università di Napoli, Istituto di storia medioevale e moderna, 1977), 23-32.
been composed of male warriors. They not only would have been exposed to a considerable amount of Roman influence in the years prior to Alboin’s entrance into Italy, but may have also intermarried with the local population.\(^{56}\)

In the absence of any compelling evidence to the contrary, I consider Bognetti’s thesis to be the most likely explanation for how the duchy was founded. This being the case, we ought to consider what it implies for both the duchy’s early political development and its relationship with the Lombard Kingdom. First, the duchy probably did not exist in any formal sense around 570/1. Zotto may have held the title of duke at this point, but it probably would have indicated that he was the military commander of the local foederati, rather than the head of an imperial-designated administrative or military territory. He may not have even revolted against Byzantium in 570/1, instead waiting until 576, when a Byzantine counteroffensive against the Lombards failed and Faraold of Spoleto rebelled.\(^{57}\) It is only around this point that we begin to see hints of Lombard attacks in the papal biographies, with Pope Benedict I’s biographer noting that the Lombards invaded “omnem Italiae.”\(^{58}\) The other point worth highlighting is that only a small proportion of Zotto’s forces may have actually considered themselves to be Lombard. The rest would have probably been drawn from other groups, notably the Goths, and possibly even the impoverished local populace who had grown discontented with the imperial government.\(^{59}\) While this was no different from the heterogeneous composition of the group that followed


\(^{57}\) Conti, “Duchi di Benevento e regno longobardo nei secoli VI e VII,” 234-6.

\(^{58}\) *LP* 64, p.308

\(^{59}\) Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 92-3.
Alboin into Italy, nevertheless, we should be careful about characterizing this as an explicitly “Lombard” revolt as opposed to a more general revolt of local foederati. 60

Given this, how did this theoretical insurrection of local foederati ultimately lead to the creation of a large duchy that controlled most of southern Italy and became distinctly Lombard in both its political structures and ethnic affiliation? One possible explanation is that Zotto’s forces were later supplemented by Lombard warbands moving southwards. Until a peace was formally established between the Lombard Kingdom and Byzantium in 598, the defensive frontier between Roman and Lombard territories remained very fluid, particularly after the failure of an imperial counterattack in 576. The aggressive behavior exhibited by some of the northern dukes in the aftermath of this, coupled with the absence of a king, 61 might have encouraged the leaders of some warbands to turn their attentions southwards where there possibly existed greater opportunities for plunder. 62 Paul even claimed that after the end of the interregnum in 584, King Authari ventured as far south as Calabria, claiming all territories in between for the Lombards. 63 This account is generally regarded as fictional, 64 but we cannot dismiss the possibility that the king had at one point sent some emissaries southwards, either to announce his election or perhaps even coordinate military action against the Romans. 65 For his part, Zotto seems to have undertaken an aggressive expansion of his territory in the 580s, attacking Naples in 581 and

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61 The Lombards experienced a ten-year interregnum after the assassination of King Cleph in 574. HL 2.31-2.
62 Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento.”
63 HL 4.33.
64 Von Falkenhausen suggests that this story reflects the Roman conception of Italy as a unified territorial unit between the Alps and the Straits of Messina. I shall present my own interpretation in Chapter 5. von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi meridionale,” 288.
sacking the monastery of Montecassino sometime prior to 589, which might suggest that his military strength was growing.\textsuperscript{66}

Regardless of whether or not Authari or some independent warbands ever ventured southwards, we have at least one clear example of an influential northern Lombard establishing a permanent presence in Benevento: Zotto’s more well-known successor, Arichis I. Insofar as we are aware, Arichis was not a native of Benevento, but rather a relative of Duke Gisulf II of Friuli. Paul claimed that Authari’s successor, King Agilulf, had appointed him Duke of Benevento upon Zotto’s death in 590/1,\textsuperscript{67} but this is generally not accepted as Agilulf had only recently assumed power and was still attempting to secure the loyalty of the northern dukes. This included Gisulf II who, at the time, was aligned with the Exarchate of Ravenna. Thus, it is far more likely that either Gisulf or the imperial government chose Arichis to succeed Zotto,\textsuperscript{68} a decision that was probably made as a part of a broader plan to restore imperial authority in Italy. Even prior to launching a second military counter-offensive in 590/1, the imperial government appears to have been working behind the scenes to win the support of individual Lombard dukes and to replace those hostile to them. It does not seem coincidental that both Faroald of Spoleto, and Zotto died around the same time and were replaced by successors who had possible links to the imperial government.\textsuperscript{69} A statement in one of Gregory the Great’s letters would seem to corroborate this

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 33-5; \textit{HL} 4.27.
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{HL} 4.18.
\textsuperscript{68} Gasparri, \textit{I duchi longobarbi}, 86-7. Von Falkenhausen has raised the possibility that Arichis may have broken with his relative beforehand and earned the duchy from Agilulf that way. von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi meridionale,” 252-3.
\textsuperscript{69} Ariulf is reported to have served on the Persian front in the 580s. Bognetti, “Tradizione longobarda e politica bizantina nelle origini del ducato di Spoleto,” 466-7.
possibility, as he declared that both of the recently appointed dukes had “turned against the faith of the Republic” in 592.70

We have no idea how Arichis’ appointment was received by the southern Lombards or how large a retinue he may have brought south with him. However, he seems to have felt secure enough in his power to betray the imperial government and aggressively expand the duchy’s territory shortly after his appointment. By 592, Gregory reported that Arichis had set up a blockade of Naples.71 Like Zotto, he was unsuccessful in his attempts to claim it, but he did eventually seize the city of Capua around 593/4, effectively taking control of the Via Appia and cutting Naples off from Rome. He also took the city of Crotone in 596, limiting the Byzantine presence in southern Italy to deep within Calabria, Otranto and some coastal enclaves.72

Recognizing the threat posed by the Lombards and the inability of the imperial government to stop their depredations, Gregory the Great sought to mediate a peace between King Agilulf and the exarch of Ravenna in 598. There were a few complications, however. In a letter to Theodore of Ravenna, Gregory noted that Duke Ariulf of Spoleto had refused to agree to a peace treaty unless he received explicit guarantees that he would be protected from excessive measures against him and that no one marched against Arichis. The pope considered these demands to be unreasonable, believing that Ariulf was simply looking for a way to withdraw from the agreement. Fearing Lombard treachery, Gregory refused to sign on to the pact, a decision that apparently provoked the ire of Agilulf. He did state, however, that he would allow

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71 Ibid.
72 Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 94.
one of his bishops to sign the pact and urged the king to convey that to his messengers who were currently at Arichis’ court.\textsuperscript{73}

Gregory’s letter is quite interesting for what it may reveal about the relationship between Benevento, Spoleto, and the Lombard Kingdom in these early days. At first glance, the fact that Ariulf and Arichis were expected to swear an oath separate from their king would seem to confirm their complete independence from the Lombard Kingdom. It has even been argued that Ariulf wanted to change the terms of agreement more out of fear of royal than imperial aggression against him and Arichis.\textsuperscript{74} On the other hand, Gregory mentioned that Agilulf had sent some of his men to Arichis bearing the treaty, which would seem to suggest that the king was coordinating the peace efforts with the dukes and may have at least exercised some influence over them. The pope seems to imply as much in a letter written to the king after the treaty had been signed. While praising the king for his statesmanship, the pope also requested that he warn his dukes “who are established over diverse places and especially in these areas, to protect this peace unconditionally, as has been promised, and not to look for any opportunities for themselves where either some contention or ingratitude might arise.”\textsuperscript{75} Although this statement is very general, it may have been a thinly veiled attack upon Ariulf and Arichis.

\textsuperscript{73} Greg. Ep. 9.44.
\textsuperscript{74} Ottorino Bertolini, “I papi e le relazioni politiche di Roma con i ducati longobardi di Spoleto e di Benevento (I),” Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia 6 (1952): 36.
\textsuperscript{75} Greg. Ép. 9.66, tr. v.2, p.584.
In all likelihood, the separate agreements made by Ariulf and Arichis were probably a concession to the new geopolitical realities created by papal-brokered treaty. While Agilulf may have possessed some measure of influence or even nominal authority over the southern duchies at this point, this treaty formalized the geographical separation between them and the Lombard Kingdom by leaving a small strip of territory along the Via Armerina under imperial control. Under these circumstances, it would have been very difficult for the king to compel the dukes to

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abide by the treaty’s terms without their mutual acceptance of them, and equally difficult for them to accept them without at least some additional assurances that they would be protected from any military reprisals by the Byzantines, given that they were now cut off from the support of the royal armies. When viewed in this light, it makes perfect sense that they would be expected to agree separately to the treaty’s terms, regardless of their status within the Lombard Kingdom at the time.

For the Duchy of Benevento, the most lasting consequence of the peace treaty was that it formalized its status as an autonomous duchy going forward. Even without the added geopolitical complications the treaty created, it would have been a very difficult task for the Lombard kings to exercise any sort of strong oversight of the duchy. The journey alone from the royal capital of Pavia to Benevento was nearly 500 miles with the main travel options either being to travel by sea along the Tyrrhenian coast or to travel along the Roman roads through the Apennine Mountains, neither of which was ideal during the wintertime. None of our sources provide exact information as to how long either of these would have taken during the early Middle Ages, but digital models of Roman travel patterns suggest that the journey could have taken anywhere from two weeks to a whole month for most travelers. However, this assumes that the Lombard travelers did not encounter any other unforeseen difficulties, something which was now heavily dependent on the state of the Lombard Kingdom’s political relations with the

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imperial-controlled territories. While travel was by no means impossible even during periods of significant tension between the two, as we shall discuss momentarily, there were still many obstacles which could prevent or delay travel and communications.

Despite this situation, we should not assume that geographical separation of the duchy from the Lombard Kingdom prevented any sort of relations between the two either in the short-term or the long-term. While warbands could no longer march southwards freely, the newly established peace with the imperial government might have temporarily permitted other individuals and goods to travel across Italy with greater ease. To be certain, Arichis and his successors did not entirely cease their attempts to expand their territory, but relations between them and the Romans seemed to have improved immediately following the treaty. In 599, Gregory requested that Arichis help transport timber from Bruttium for the purposes of repairing the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome, and sometime between 625 and 638, Pope Honorius requested that he provide aid in the apprehension of a fugitive monk.

Arichis’ own son, Aio, is also alleged to have traveled during this period. According to Paul, the Beneventan duke sent his son to Pavia during the reign of King Rothari and on his way there, he stopped at Ravenna, where the Romans plied him with a potion that caused him to go insane. Unfortunately, Paul provides us with no other details concerning Aio’s journey, but the fact that he records him as being on his way to Pavia might suggest that Arichis still maintained some sort of relationship with the Lombard kings. Based on the alleged timing of the event, it

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81 Ep. Lang. 4.
82 HL 4.42.
has been speculated that Aio may have been sent to participate in a ceremonial adoption\textsuperscript{83} or to affirm Arichis’ allegiances to the newly installed King of the Lombards.\textsuperscript{84}

Aio was not the only prominent Lombard who had allegedly travelled between the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento during this early period. At some point between 625 and 640, the two remaining sons of the late Gisulf II of Friuli, Radoald and Grimoald, departed their homeland after their elder brothers were murdered and their uncle took control of the duchy. Although decades had passed since Arichis left Friuli, they apparently had a strong enough connection with him to risk sailing down the Adriatic Sea in a small boat. Based on subsequent events, the duke appears to have not only warmly received the two Friulian youths, but also placed them in positions of prominence, as both would eventually hold the title of duke after him.\textsuperscript{85}

There is regrettably little else we know concerning the final years of Arichis’ reign, save for the fact that he took control of Salerno sometime between 626 and 640. He did, however, set one important precedent by being the first Beneventan duke to pass control of his duchy on to his son, most likely without royal approval. Although hereditary succession would occur in other Lombard duchies, Benevento is the only duchy that we know of that had a dynasty last longer than three to four rulers.\textsuperscript{86} While Arichis’ own successor, Aio, would be the last of his direct descendants, Radoald and Grimoald would establish a ruling dynasty that endured for over a

\textsuperscript{83} Gasparri, \textit{I duchi longobardi}, 87.
\textsuperscript{84} Thomas Hodgkin, \textit{Italy and Her Invaders}, 6: 79.
\textsuperscript{85} \textit{HL} 4.43.
\textsuperscript{86} Gasparri, \textit{I duchi longobardi}, 35-6. Our evidence for other duchies is relatively fragmentary, but we can trace the full lines of succession for Friuli and Spoleto, and, to a lesser extent, Trent. In all three cases, there were multiple instances where the dukes were removed from power after coming into conflict with king.
century. Later rulers of Benevento and its successor principalities would attempt to follow suit with varying degrees of success, thus establishing hereditary succession as a standard political practice in Lombard southern Italy for most of its history.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Arichis’ reign is that he was, by his very background, a link between the northern and southern Lombards during a very crucial phase of their development. While the few decades they had spent apart may not seem like a significant enough amount of time for radical political and ethnic differences to emerge between the two, we must remember that the Lombards’ sense of identity was still very much in its formative stages and quite fluid in the mid to late sixth century, particularly as they made the transition from being a wandering group of Germanic warriors to a growing confederation of Romanized foederati to the elites of their own kingdom and its associated duchies. Given the profound political, social and cultural changes that were likely to have occurred under such circumstances,\textsuperscript{87} there was every possibility that the southern and northern Lombards’ respective political and ethnic trajectories could have proceeded along very different paths. Arichis played a key role in ensuring that this did not happen. Through his decision to politically align himself with the Lombard Kingdom and the familial connections that he brought with him, he helped to facilitate an exchange of individuals between the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento, as well as ensured that the channels of communication would remain open between them. Given time, this would bring the Duchy of Benevento and the Lombard Kingdom into closer alignment, providing the southern Lombards with their own opportunities to contribute to the development

\textsuperscript{87} Cingolani, \textit{Le Storie dei Longobardi}, 27.
of the *regnum* and the *gens*, thus firmly establishing a place for themselves within them. This is precisely what occurred during the reign of Grimoald I.

*Establishing a Claim*

The reign of Arichis’ first two successors proved to be quite brief. Aio reigned only a year and a half before perishing in battle against Slavic raiders and his successor, Radoald, ruled for just another five years. By contrast, Grimoald ruled the duchy in some capacity for nearly twenty-five years. Half of this was spent ruling as duke, while the other half was spent ruling in Pavia as King of the Lombards. As the first and only Beneventan duke to hold the kingship, Grimoald was in a far better position than any of his predecessors or successors to integrate the Duchy of Benevento into the Lombard Kingdom. This did not happen, however, as Grimoald not only had to contend with the logistical complications of communicating with and defending the duchy from afar, but also internal challenges to his kingship from the northern dukes.

Although he successfully fended off these challenges and protected the duchy from a Byzantine invasion in 663, he did not ultimately establish a royal dynasty nor permanently alter Benevento’s autonomous status within the kingdom.

With that said, Grimoald’s reign would have some important consequences both for relations between Benevento and the Lombard Kingdom and the duchy’s internal development. As king, he helped to facilitate the spread of significant religious practices between north and south such as the veneration of S. Michael and may have also introduced some of the kingdom’s

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88 *HL* 4.44, 46.

89 *HL* 5.7.
political practices into the duchy. His military achievements were equally significant, as they not only preserved the duchy, but were also celebrated in later histories, greatly shaping later religious beliefs and ethnic perceptions, particularly the idea that military achievement was at the very core of the Lombards’ identity. Finally, he provided the southern Lombards with a stronger political and historical connection to the Lombard Kingdom than they had hitherto possessed.

Grimoald’s rise to power rested in part on his military reputation and political cunning. According to Paul, prior to becoming king he was considered to be a “very warlike man and distinguished everywhere,” possibly on account of his defense of the shrine of S. Michael at Mt. Gargano around 650. This eventually attracted the notice of King Godepert, who was seeking allies to aid him in his conflict with his brother and co-king, Perctarit. In 661, he sent Garipald, the Duke of Turin, to request Grimoald’s aid in return for his sister’s hand in marriage. Grimoald agreed, but as Paul relates, Garipald encouraged him to seize the throne for himself. After appointing his son, Romoald, as Duke of Benevento, Grimoald marched northwards with an army comprised of men from Benevento, Spoleto, and Tuscany. Although he did not take immediate action against Godepert, a series of misunderstandings (possibly instigated by Garipald) supposedly led him to murder the king while the two were meeting in the royal palace. Fearing a similar fate, Perctarit fled immediately, leaving Grimoald in sole control of the

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90 HL 4.46, tr. p.200.
91 Romoald’s exact status is unclear, but it is quite likely that Grimoald appointed him co-ruler of Benevento based on an inscription from the grotto at Mt. Gargano which describes him as “patri eius regni cumsortior.” The inscription itself is undated, but the lettering seems to be consistent with epigraphy from Pavia at the end of the seventh century. Carlo Carletti, “Iscrizioni murali,” in Il santuario di S. Michele sul Gargano, 64-5, no.44.
Lombard Kingdom. He proceeded to reward those who had followed him northwards, settling some in the north on royal lands while sending the rest home, laden with treasures.92

Paul’s depiction of these events almost borders on Shakespearean at times, but even stripped of its most melodramatic elements, it still provides a number of potential insights into the nature of Benevento’s relationship with the Lombard Kingdom at this stage. First and foremost, it indicates that even for a duke of Grimoald’s power and independence, the Lombard kingship still carried with it sufficient prestige to convince him to abandon the comforts of Benevento for the relative unfamiliarity of Pavia.93 It also suggests that Grimoald had at least some sort of prior relationship with other Lombard aristocrats, as Paul emphasized that his usurpation occurred at the instigation of those discontented with both Godepert and Perctarit.94

With that said, we should be careful not to overstate just how much northern support Grimoald had nor should we assume that both he and the Duchy of Benevento were viewed in the same light as, say, the Duchy of Turin and Arioald, another Lombard duke who had usurped the throne in 626.95 Save for Garipald and his Beneventan followers, Paul only mentions that Grimoald was supported by armies drawn from Tuscany, and Spoleto, neither of which had been completely integrated into the kingdom proper by this point.96 The fact that he felt compelled to

92 HL 4.51, 5.1.
94 HL 4.51. Bognetti went even further, speculating that Grimoald’s usurpation represented a rebellion of Arian traditionalists against the Catholic monarchy. There is, however, little evidence for this given that both Grimoald’s wife and daughter-in-law were Catholics. Gian Piero Bognetti, “Santa Maria foris portas di Castelseprio e la storia religiosa dei Longobardi,” in Letà Longobarda, vol. 2 (Milan: Giuffrè, 1966), 334-5; von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi meridionale,” 254-5.
95 HL 4.41.
96 Although Tuscany’s status was more complicated than that of Benevento and Spoleto’s, the fact that it was still minting its own coinage into the eighth century suggests that there was still a degree of separation between it and the Lombard Kingdom. Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 59, 63-4, 456-7.
settle some of his own followers in the north while heavily rewarding the rest would also seem to suggest a certain softness in his northern support, as royal gift giving on this large a scale was quite rare among the Lombards.\textsuperscript{97} In many respects, Grimoald's behavior was more akin to that of a foreign conqueror rather than that of a homegrown hero returning in triumph.

Some of the northern Lombard nobles apparently took this view as well. According to Paul, when the Byzantine emperor, Constans II, invaded southern Italy and besieged the city of Benevento in 663, many nobles abandoned Grimoald as he marched southwards, “saying that he despoiled the palace and was going back to Beneventum not to return.”\textsuperscript{98} Such actions may have simply reflected an intense personal dissatisfaction with Grimoald or lingering animosity over his usurpation, but the accusations that Grimoald intended to abandon the north could not have been leveled at any other Lombard king. If Paul’s account is indeed accurate, this may reflect a perception at the time that Benevento and its duke were somehow “foreign” and not truly a part of the Lombard Kingdom.\textsuperscript{99}

Whatever the case may be, it does seem clear that Grimoald faced a number of challenges to integrating the duchy into the Lombard Kingdom and overcoming internal opposition. Although he had left his own son in charge of Benevento, Grimoald still had to contend with the logistical challenges in ruling the duchy from afar that we have previously outlined, namely, the time and distance it took to send communications and move armies. In his particular case, these difficulties were further compounded by rising tensions with Rome and Byzantium both during

\begin{itemize}
\item 97 Wickham, \textit{Early Medieval Italy}, 133-4.
\item 98 \textit{HL 5.7}, tr. p.220.
\end{itemize}
and after the imperial expedition against the duchy in 663. While we do not know exactly how much time it took Grimoald to mobilize his armies to aid Benevento, it was apparently enough time for Constans II to land his armies, raze the city of Lucera, and nearly seize control of Benevento itself. Even after Grimoald had defeated the imperial forces, the local Romans continued to harass his messengers between Pavia and Benevento, leading Grimoald to slaughter the inhabitants of Forum Populi on Easter Day as retribution. Possibly in response to all these difficulties, Grimoald and his son eventually decided to allow a tribe of Bulgars to settle on Benevento’s northern frontier, providing the duchy with more manpower and additional security.

Internally, Grimoald continued to face some challenges in dealing with his own dukes. For reasons unknown, he replaced Atto, the Duke of Spoleto, with one of his own followers, Transamund of Capua. It is possible that Atto had simply died without any heirs, but given Spoleto’s prior history of autonomy and Paul’s notice that Grimoald punished those dukes who had abandoned him in 663, it is equally likely that he was forcibly removed from power. More well-understood are the circumstances surrounding Grimoald’s removal of Lupus, Duke of Friuli. Although he had been appointed to manage the palace while Grimoald marched southwards in 663, Lupus allegedly abused his position to such an extent that he rebelled immediately upon Grimoald’s return. In response, Grimoald supposedly invited the Avars to sack Lupus’ territory, expelling them only after they had killed the duke. Paul claims that

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100 *HL* 5.7-9.
101 *HL* 5.27.
102 *HL* 5.29.
Grimoald that he invited them to avoid stirring up civil war among his own people, but given Grimoald’s lack of compunction about doing so prior to this as well as the fact that he had once been a captive of the Avars, it is much more likely that he did this as a last resort.

Lupus’ rebellion would be the last serious internal challenge to Grimoald’s rule, but it seems clear that Grimoald was never entirely able to earn the northern Lombards’ enduring support for either himself or his family. After he died in 671 (allegedly being poisoned by his own doctors) his youngest son, Garipald, ruled for only a brief time before being removed from power by Perctarit. Interestingly, Grimoald’s eldest son Romoald was neither offered the crown upon Grimoald’s death nor does he appear to have challenged Perctarit for it when his brother was removed from power. In fact, he swiftly released Perctarit’s son, Cunincpert, from his captivity in Benevento, something which would seem to suggest that there was little appetite for continued Beneventan rule of the Lombard Kingdom.

Despite the many challenges Grimoald faced during his lifetime and his ultimate failure to establish a Beneventan dynasty on the throne, there are some indications that the Lombard Kingdom and the Duchy of Benevento, as well as their inhabitants, had moved into closer political, religious, and ethnic alignment by the end of it. Take, for example, the area of law. In 668, Grimoald became the first Lombard king to make additions to the *Edictum Rothari*, the code of laws which King Rothari had promulgated in 643. Although these were few in number and promulgated in response to particular issues that may have arisen during his reign, it is still

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104 *HL* 5.19.
105 *HL* 5.33
106 Possibly because Garipald was the son of Grimoald and King Godepert’s sister, and thus, had a stronger claim. von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi merdionale,” 255.
107 *HL* 5.33
significant that a Beneventan duke would undertake this task, as it is unknown if, by this point, the southern Lombards had ever even adopted the *Edictum Rothari* or any of its individual provisions as their own set of laws. Lest we assume that Grimoald was simply following a standard practice, it should be point out that he was the first and only seventh-century king to make additions to the Lombard laws, something which suggests, at the very minimum, a keen appreciation for their symbolic and practical value. While it is possible that Grimoald’s few years in the north as both a child and as king had instilled in him such appreciation, we should not discount the possibility that it was at the Beneventan court that he was first exposed to the laws. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that Grimoald would have promulgated the laws solely for use in the Lombard Kingdom, or that he intended to treat Benevento as a wholly separate polity. In fact, by the early eighth century, it seems likely that the southern Lombards followed some form of Lombard law despite minimal evidence of contact between the Beneventan dukes and Lombard kings following Grimoald’s reign or any other efforts being made to add to the law code.\(^{108}\) Thus, I would suggest that Grimoald’s reign should be considered the *terminus ante quem* for the *Edictum Rothari*’s introduction into southern Italy, if not the exact point at which it was first introduced.

In addition to the laws, we also find evidence of administrative similarities between the Beneventan duchy and the Lombard Kingdom. According to Paul, when Grimoald ordered Romoald to find a place for Alzeco and his Bulgars somewhere in Beneventan territory, the young duke settled them near the duchy’s northern frontier and made Alzeco a gastald.\(^{109}\) While

\(^{109}\) *HL* 5.29
we know from the *Edictum Rothari* that gastalds were already overseeing portions of the royal fisc within the Lombard Kingdom, this is the first indication that we have of one serving in the Duchy of Benevento. Unlike in the northern kingdom, however, it appears that Alzeco was operating under ducal rather than royal supervision, as Paul explicitly states that he was appointed by Romoald. It is impossible to know if this was an innovation on Romoald’s part or already a normal practice at the time, but as we shall discuss next chapter, gastalds would play an important role in administering the Beneventan duchy.

Aside from potentially introducing new political and legal practices into the Beneventan duchy, Grimoald also contributed to some significant religious developments that brought the northern and southern Lombards into closer alignment, most notably, the Beneventans’ gradual embrace of Roman Christianity and the spread of the cult of S. Michael into northern Italy. Admittedly, not all of this was by design, but instead an unintended consequence of his handling of political opponents and their families. For instance, after putting down Lupus of Friuli’s rebellion, Grimoald arranged a marriage between the duke’s daughter, Theuderada, and Romoald. Although Romoald was a Christian (likely an Arian), the *Vita Barbati* claims that he still engaged in pagan practices such as worshipping an image of a viper. Theuderada, being a devout Christian, stole the symbol of the viper and brought it to Bishop Barbatus, who had it melted down into a Eucharist chalice. He then tricked Romoald into drinking from it. After the duke found out his wife’s role in this ruse, one of his retainers exclaimed that if she were his

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110 *LL Roth*. 375.
111 See p. 123-4; Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 41-2, 159-61.
wife, he would have beheaded her on the spot, but he was promptly possessed by the devil, causing Romoald and all others present to renounce their pagan ways.\footnote{Vit. Barb. 8-10}

As filled with hagiographical \textit{topoi} as this story is, Theuderada does indeed appear to have played a significant role in securing Roman Christianity’s future in Benevento at a time when it had already begun making significant inroads among the ruling elite in northern Italy.\footnote{The kings of the Bavarian dynasty were all Catholic and Grimoald himself married a Catholic.} Aside from the influence she may have exercised in her husband’s conversion and the religious upbringing of their children, Theuderada was also reputed to have been a patron to a number of religious foundations, establishing a church in honor of S. Sabinus\footnote{Vit. Sab. 5, p.327-8.} and a church/nunnery dedicated to S. Peter outside of Benevento’s walls.\footnote{HL 6.1.} She was also alleged to have made a grant to the monastery of S. Benedict in Benevento during the brief period she served as regent for her son, Gisulf I, one of the earliest acts of ducal patronage that we know of.\footnote{CSS 2.15.} Perhaps influenced by his mother’s example, Gisulf himself would undertake his own patronage of religious foundations, endowing S. Vincenzo with much of its initial patrimony.\footnote{On S. Vincenzo and its origins, see p. 127-8.}

Theuderada was not the only child of one of Grimoald’s political opponents to help facilitate the transmission of religious beliefs between the northern and southern Lombards. Perctarit’s son, Cunincpert, also played an important role in this process. After Grimoald seized the throne and Perctarit fled into exile, the king took Cunincpert hostage and sent him to Benevento.\footnote{HL 4.51.} Although we know little about his time living in the duchy, it was there that he
may have been first exposed to and developed a strong attachment to the cult of Michael the Archangel. While the cult itself was by no means exclusive to southern Italy, one of its most significant shrines was located in Beneventan territory on Mt. Gargano and attracted many pilgrims from within Italy and outside of it.\textsuperscript{119} Given his own patronage of the shrine, it has been speculated that Grimoald was responsible for the cult’s introduction into northern Italy,\textsuperscript{120} but our evidence for this is mainly limited to some northern Italian churches dedicated to S. Michael that may have been built around Grimoald’s reign.\textsuperscript{121} Cunincpert, on the other hand, was clearly an active promoter of the cult, not only attributing his victory over a rebellious duke to the sudden appearance of the archangel over the battlefield,\textsuperscript{122} but even minting coinage with images of the saint.\textsuperscript{123}

None of this is to say that S. Michael was not important to Benevento’s rulers nor that they did not have any role to play in the cult’s development. Based on inscriptions within the shrine at Mt. Gargano dating to around this period, we know that Grimoald and Romoald provided support for building projects at the shrine.\textsuperscript{124} Grimoald’s own rise to power and historical legacy may have also been deeply tied to the shrine’s fate. As we noted, around 650, he supposedly defended the shrine against “Greek” raiders.\textsuperscript{125} Paul provides scant details about this event, but it is possible that it corresponded to another very famous battle in Benevento’s

\textsuperscript{119} Harrison, “The Duke and the Archangel,” 15.
\textsuperscript{120} Bognetti speculated that it was a means of unifying Arians and Catholics, but there is no consensus on this. Bognetti, “Santa Maria foris portas di Castelseprio e la storia religiosa dei Longobardi,” 344.
\textsuperscript{121} M. Cagiano de Azevedo, “Memorie della vittoria sul Gargano e il culto di S. Michele a Milano,” in \textit{Il santuario di S. Michele sul Gargano}, 503-12.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{HL} 5.41.
\textsuperscript{123} Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, 456.
\textsuperscript{125} \textit{HL} 4.46.
history. According to one of our earliest hagiographical accounts,\textsuperscript{126} the so-called \textit{Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis}, the Neapolitans launched a similar attack against the shrine and were only driven back when the archangel himself appeared over the battlefield.\textsuperscript{127} The order of events in the \textit{Liber de apparitione} suggests that this occurred in the sixth century, but later sources seemingly link this battle to Grimoald’s victory in 650.\textsuperscript{128}

Whatever the case may be, it does seem clear that this was the period in which veneration of S. Michael took root among the Lombards, a development which would significantly shape their religious beliefs and ethnic identity. Although the Lombards’ embrace of Christianity introduced new ideas and values which kings, dukes, and historians alike drew upon for models of political and ethnic behavior, soldier-saints such as S. Michael also reaffirmed the belief that martial achievement was at the very core of Lombard identity. In some respects, he could almost be viewed as a Christian substitute for the pagan god, Wodan, with the Lombards’ devotion to both being very much based on the roles they allegedly played in securing important military victories.\textsuperscript{129} Their attachment to Michael was further strengthened by the fact that the victory in question was over the Neapolitans, a group with whom they would clash numerous times over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries. As we shall discuss, veneration of Michael and

\textsuperscript{126} While no firm date has been established for this, it has been convincingly argued that this account can be dated to the 8\textsuperscript{th} century. See Otranto, “Il \textit{Liber de apparitione} e il culto di San Michele sul Gargano nella documentazione liturgica altomedievale,” 423-42.

\textsuperscript{127} \textit{Lib. de App.}, 3.


\textsuperscript{129} Gasparri, \textit{La cultura tradizionale dei longobardi}, 155-61. Arnold rejects the idea that Michael was a direct substitute for Wodan, believing that they were mainly attempting to imitate imperial governance. I do not necessarily disagree with this idea given the importance of soldier-saints in Roman religious traditions, but I still think that Michael’s role as a soldier-saint would have had an additional appeal to Lombards who had yet to shed all vestiges of pagan belief or those who had at least bought into the conception of Lombard identity set forth in the \textit{Origo Gentis}. Arnold, \textit{The Footprints of the Archangel Michael}, 88.
other saints did not just help to define the Lombards’ core ethnic values, but also served as proof of their military, religious, and ethnic superiority over their rivals.\textsuperscript{130} Their feast day for Michael even fell on the alleged date of this battle (May 8\textsuperscript{th}) rather than the traditional date on the Roman calendar.\textsuperscript{131}

This victory was not the only military event associated with Grimoald’s reign which would assume significant ethnic and religious dimensions over time. As we mentioned earlier, not long after Grimoald assumed the kingship, Constans II invaded southern Italy and besieged Benevento. The city very nearly fell to the imperial forces, but the rapid approach of Grimoald’s armies forced Constans II to take flight to Naples. According to Paul, the northern armies, now under the command of Romoald, pursued Constans’ forces and eventually routed them on the battlefield. In the short-term, Constans’ defeat ensured the duchy’s continued survival and enabled Romoald to begin aggressively expanding the duchy into Apulia and toward the Adriatic coast.\textsuperscript{132} In the long-term, it came to be regarded as one of the most significant victories in Benevento’s history, assuming an almost mythic reputation that Lombard authors sought to capitalize on in order to reinforce certain religious beliefs and attitudes towards Byzantium. In his extensive account of these events, Paul went to great lengths to contrast the heroic nature of Grimoald, Romoald, and their followers with that of the Byzantines, whom he described as a “\textit{gens perfida}.”\textsuperscript{133} Likewise, the Anonymous of Salerno may have been alluding to these events when he described the end of the Byzantine occupation of Benevento in 895. According to him,

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\textsuperscript{130} See p. 131-32, 295-98.
\textsuperscript{131} Otranto, “Il \textit{Liber de apparitione} e il culto di San Michele sul Gargano nella documentazione liturgica altomedievale,” 432.
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{HL} 5.7, 10, 6.1.
\textsuperscript{133} \textit{HL} 5.8, p.262, l.13.
\end{center}
during Guy of Spoleto’s siege of the city, the Byzantine commander sought to rally the Lombard citizens to its defense, declaring that, “We recognize that among your deeds, your fathers inflicted defeats upon the emperors of Constantinople.” The Beneventan citizens reminded him that their fathers had controlled the city’s towers, gates, and walls, which prompted the commander to grant them control of one set of these. Telling him that “You will see how we liberate ourselves from our enemies,” the Beneventan Lombards promptly betrayed the city to the Spoletan forces.134

Interestingly, southern Italian hagiographers also considered the events of 663 to be of some significance. Our accounts of the translation of the relics of S. Mercurius, one of Byzantium’s most venerated soldier-saints, allege that they were brought over during Constans II’s expedition.135 While this might have partially been intended to explain why they were in Italy in the first place,136 attaching them to one of the most important victories in Benevento’s history would have further enhanced their significance and served as further proof of Benevento’s ethnic, military, and religious superiority.137 The same can be said of the Vita Barbati’s account of Romoald’s eventual conversion. Although it was not until after 663 and his marriage to Theuderada that the duke finally abandoned all his pagan practices, his initial conversion allegedly occurred while the city of Benevento was under siege. According to the

134 Chron. Sal. 147, p.153-4
137 Mercurius was one of Byzantium’s most important military saints. For a further discussion of the significance of this, see p. 131-2 and Belting, “Studien zum Beneventanischen Hof im 8. Jahrhundert,” 158.
account, the Lombards held out for a considerable period of time, but with the situation looking increasingly dire, Romoald and his warriors decided to sally forth for a final battle. However, Barbatus, who was only a priest at the time, dissuaded Romoald from doing so, promising that if Romoald embraced Christianity wholeheartedly, he and the city would be saved. As further proof of these claims, he also showed Romoald a vision of the Virgin Mary. Romoald consented, and the next day, Constans II sued for peace. As a result of this, Romoald made Barbatus a bishop and granted him control of the city and the former diocese of Siponto which included the shrine of S. Michael on Mt. Gargano.\textsuperscript{138}

We do not have a precise date as to when this text was written, but the most common assessment is that this particular portion written at some point in the early ninth century (possibly the 830s) in order to support the claims of later bishops of Benevento to the shrine of S. Michael on Mt. Gargano.\textsuperscript{139} I wholly support this interpretation, but would also emphasize that it is rather noteworthy that the author chose to attach this claim, and indeed, the story of the southern Lombards’ conversion, to this particular event. As with the translation accounts of S. Mercurius’ relic, the author of this story may have felt that granting Bishop Barbatus a pivotal role in this major event would only further enhance both his prestige and that of his successors, as well as bolster their claims to the shrine on Mt. Gargano.\textsuperscript{140} The story also fits in rather nicely with the Lombards’ other stories of their military victories, in which a venerated figure (in this case, the Virgin Mary) personally intervenes on behalf of the Lombards to preserve them from the attacks of another gens.

\textsuperscript{138} Vit. Barb. 1-7
\textsuperscript{139} Martin, “A propos de la Vita de Barbatus évêque de Bénévent,” 139-42.
\textsuperscript{140} This story was even in cited in a dispute involving the monastery of S. Maria Locosano. CV 61
It is impossible to say for certain whether these perceptions of 663’s importance took root shortly after the events themselves or after authors such as Paul chronicled them. What we can say is that few events from this period had as enduring a legacy or an impact on later perceptions. The same can be said of Grimoald’s reign as a whole. While the reigns of Zotto and Arichis I significantly shaped the Duchy of Benevento and its people, Grimoald’s actions and the events of his reign had a much longer-lasting influence on the southern Lombards’ perceptions of themselves, other groups, and their relationship with the Lombard Kingdom. Whether by design or by accident, he helped the southern Lombards to establish some of their most important traditions and brought the duchy into closer political, religious, and ethnic alignment with the Lombard Kingdom.

In addition, I would suggest that Grimoald’s reign was symbolically important for the southern Lombards. While they had already established a number of connections with their northern brethren and may have acknowledged that they shared a common origin, the Lombard Kingdom itself was not necessarily something that they had a strong connection with, either politically or historically. They had no involvement in either establishing or developing the kingdom, and from an administrative perspective, its impact on their lives would always be fairly minimal.\footnote{See Chapter 2.} Grimoald’s reign, though not necessarily altering Benevento’s political status within the kingdom, at least allowed the southern Lombards to claim one of the Lombard kings as their own. What immediate effect this might have had on southern Lombard attitudes towards the kingdom is unknown, but as we shall discuss, this was something that Paul the Deacon would
later use to make the case that Benevento was the rightful inheritor of the Lombard Kingdom’s political and historical legacy.\textsuperscript{142}

*Past, Present, and Future*

In the first century of their rule, the dukes of Benevento went from being the leaders of a small, local uprising to among the most powerful figures in southern Italy, attracting the attention of the northern Lombards, as well as the ire of Byzantium and the papacy. As we have discussed, they largely acted independently of the Lombard kings and the Lombard Kingdom, but they did not act in total isolation from them. The exchange of individuals and ideas between the duchy and kingdom ensured that the two would remain largely aligned both politically and culturally, while also granting the southern Lombards a place of significance in the early history of the Lombard Kingdom under the leadership of Grimoald I.

Equally important was how this period came to be remembered centuries after the fact. Regardless of what may or may not have actually occurred, the memories of events and individuals from this period lived on, shaping later generations of Lombards’ identities and behavior, whether it was instilling in them a strong belief in martial prowess as an essential component of their identity or granting them a set of political and historical connections with the Lombard Kingdom and the northern Lombards. They would utilize these memories to create their own sort of ethnic and political mythology which they could draw upon for inspiration in their own struggles.

\textsuperscript{142} See Chapter 4.
II

Pavia’s Shadow

For the first century of its existence, the Duchy of Benevento had largely been left alone by the Lombard kings. This changed in the eighth century, as the Lombard kings intervened militarily in Benevento on at least four separate occasions, even going so far as to remove three of the dukes from power after they rebelled. Scholars have traditionally viewed these conflicts as being symptomatic of a deeper tension between the duchy’s tradition of autonomy and a growing desire to expand royal authority in the region,¹ but I think this overstates the degree to which both sides were at odds with one another. Far from rejecting royal authority, I would argue that the Beneventan dukes actually accepted their subordination to the kings and, indeed, increasingly sought to emulate them in terms of how they sought to administer the duchy, as well as their cultural and religious patronage. This would not only lay the administrative foundations for the duchy’s post-774 independence, but would also encourage the southern Lombards to embrace more strongly the political and cultural legacy of the Lombard Kingdom in the aftermath of its fall.

In this chapter, I shall focus on two facets of the duchy’s development in the eighth century. First, I shall look at the dukes’ relationship with the Lombard kings, focusing especially on the four royal interventions within the duchy. Although it has often been asserted that the kings intervened in southern Italy with the intention of curtailing the dukes’ authority, if we look at the specific context of the royal interventions in the south and their overall consequences, we find that both the political aims and impact of these interventions were quite limited. Outside of

altering the political fortunes of some individual dukes (two of whom were usurpers), it does not appear that any attempt was made to curtail the dukes’ autonomous practices or to increase royal control over the duchy’s internal affairs. Instead, I shall argue that the kings took a laissez-faire approach to ruling southern Italy, allowing the dukes to continue to exercise a considerable degree of autonomy, even when they were in a strong position to curtail it.

For their part, the dukes did not look to alter this balance of power nor to separate themselves from either the Lombard Kingdom or the gens. In fact, if we look closely at the inner-workings of the Beneventan duchy during this period, we not only find implicit acknowledgements of royal authority in the intitulatio of the dukes’ charters, but efforts being made to maintain their connections with the Lombard Kingdom and to imitate many of the political and cultural trends taking place within it. As we shall discuss in the second section of this chapter, the dukes established a dynasty that depended, in part, on marriage alliances with northern aristocrats (the Lombard kings included), oversaw a court with officials bearing similar titles to those serving in the Lombard Kingdom, and developed their own extensive patronage networks centered around major monasteries (some of which may have been founded in imitation of royal monasteries). In addition, the dukes also expanded their role in the cultural and religious life of the duchy, becoming patrons of scholars such as Paul the Deacon, collecting saints’ relics, and initiating a number of significant building projects including the cathedral of S. Sophia, all with the aim of emulating and perhaps surpassing their kings and even the Byzantine emperors in terms of political and cultural prestige, wealth, and religious patronage.

Such efforts would have a significant influence on the duchy’s post-774 trajectory. Although Benevento’s long history of autonomy significantly helped to smooth its transition
from an autonomous duchy to an independent principality in the aftermath of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, the dukes’ acknowledgement and imitation of royal authority is what encouraged them to embrace the kingdom’s legacy as their own, rather than go in a different direction. Equally important, their early religious and cultural patronage would lay the groundwork for the Lombards’ later efforts to define their own ethnic identity and boundaries, whether it was providing patronage for Paul the Deacon and some of his earliest works, offering land to monasteries that would be instrumental in preserving Lombard practices and traditions, or stirring up competition with Naples and Byzantium through the collection of relics. Thus, it should be emphasized that while the fall of the Lombard Kingdom was arguably the defining moment in Benevento’s political and ethnic development, the changes that occurred in its aftermath represented less a radical break from past developments than a natural evolution from what had already been occurring in the decades preceding.

Northern Exposure

Before we delve into the inner-workings of the Beneventan duchy in the eighth century and the ways in which it was potentially influenced by the Lombard Kingdom, we first need to look more broadly at the nature of their relationship throughout the eighth century and the events that shaped it. As I noted earlier, the conflicts between the dukes and the Lombard kings loom very large in the scholarship, providing the impression that the kings were intent on curtailing Benevento’s autonomy at every turn and that anti-royal sentiment was prevalent among both the Beneventan dukes and aristocracy. In my view, such impressions are not only difficult to square with the southern Lombards’ rather fierce embrace of the Lombard Kingdom’s legacy in the
aftermath of 774, but are also at odds with what our sources tell us both about the conflicts between the two and their impact upon Beneventan political practice in the eighth century.

In contrast to prior centuries, we have some more robust contemporary narratives for this period, including the papal biographies and Paul’s account of events that occurred within his own lifetime. Equally important, we possess a number of court records documenting land transactions and disputes within the Beneventan duchy. To be certain, the quantity of extant records prior to 774 is not considerable, numbering less than forty copies of genuine transactions from the ducal court, but this is still quite comparable in both number and nature to our extant charters that were issued directly from the royal and Spoletan courts.\(^2\) Moreover, the fact that we have charters from all but two of the eighth-century dukes also enables us to detect changes in ducal practices (or lack thereof) across the period. Far from supporting the idea that the kings wished to curtail ducal autonomy, our ducal grants indicates that the kings continued to take a hands-off approach to ruling, as they offer minimal evidence of direct royal involvement in the duchy’s internal affairs and rarely even make reference to the kings. With that said, the *intitulatio* within these charters suggest that the dukes still at least implicitly acknowledged the kings’ authority and sought to emphasize their connection to the Lombard *gens* even before the first of the royal interventions. To that end, let us briefly review the conflicts between the dukes and kings during this period, and then delve deeper into their underlying causes and what, if any, impact they might have had on Beneventan political practices.

\(^2\) This comparison includes only charters issued directly from the courts. There are considerably more northern private charters. Herbert Zielinski, “The Transmission of Lombard Documents (to 774),” in *Charters, Cartularies, and Archives: The Preservation and Transmission of Documents in the Medieval West*, ed. Adam Kosto and Anders Winroth, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2002), 34.
For the fifty years after Grimoald’s death, our sources report very few royal-ducal interactions. Save for Duke Grimoald II’s brief marriage to King Cunincpert’s sister, both sides appear to have largely focused on their own internal affairs, with the Beneventan dukes expanding their territory into Apulia and the Liri Valley,⁴ and the Lombard kings dealing with multiple rebellions. This apparent lack of engagement changed after 712 when the kingdom’s long-ruling dynasty was overthrown by a group of discontented aristocrats under the leadership of Ansprand.⁵ Although Ansprand would reign for only a brief period, his son and successor, Liutprand, would lead the kingdom for nearly thirty-one years. During that time, he would issue numerous laws, promote Roman Christianity, and aggressively expand Lombard territory at the expense of Byzantium and the papacy.⁶

These actions did not occur in isolation from other developments in Italy. In the century and a half since the Lombards entered Italy, tensions between the Roman popes and the emperors

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³ Note: The above figures do not include forgeries, documents of questionable provenance, or ducal transactions referenced in other documents.

⁴ Their conquests included Taranto, Brindisi, Sora, Arpino, and Arce Aquino, and, for a brief time, the city of Cumae. *HL* 6.1, 27, 40.

⁵ *HL* 6.35.

⁶ One of the most comprehensive examinations of Liutprand’s reign can be found in Robert Grant, “Liutprand and the Lombards: Intruders in their Italian Homeland” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1997).
had been steadily rising over various doctrinal and political differences. Matters came to a head in the 720s when Pope Gregory II clashed with Emperor Leo III over the latter’s support for the controversial doctrine of Iconoclasm and increased taxation in Italy.\textsuperscript{7} Angered by papal opposition, the emperor was alleged to have ordered the Exarch of Ravenna, Eutychius, to assassinate Gregory, a move which caused both the local Roman populace and even some Lombards to rise up and rush to the pope’s defense.\textsuperscript{8} With parts of Byzantine-controlled Italy now in full revolt, Liutprand took the opportunity to go on the offensive against the Exarchate, conquering a considerable amount of territory including the port of Classe, portions of Emilia, and the city of Auximum in 726/7.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{8} \textit{LP} 91.19; \textit{HL} 6.49.
\textsuperscript{9} \textit{HL} 6.49; Hallenbeck, \textit{Pavia and Rome}, 23.
This would have important consequences for both Spoleto and Benevento. As we noted in the last chapter, the imperial-controlled territories in central Italy separated the southern duchies from the Lombard Kingdom, limiting the kings’ ability to intervene in their affairs. Liutprand’s conquests changed this. Although the king had initially focused his attacks on the Exarchate, in 728/9, he allied himself with Eutychius and undertook a joint campaign against Spoleto, Benevento, and Rome. Their first move was against the city of Spoleto, where

Map 2 (Italy, c.700 CE)\textsuperscript{10}


\textsuperscript{11} See p. 68-70.
Liutprand received oaths and hostages from both Duke Romoald II of Benevento and Duke Transamund II of Spoleto. The Lombard and Byzantine armies then marched on Rome, but before they attacked, Liutprand persuaded the Exarch to make peace with the pope.\textsuperscript{12}

Liutprand’s next intervention in Beneventan politics occurred just a scant few years later. Around 731/2, Romoald II died, leaving behind his young son and heir, Gisulf II. As was sometimes the case in these situations, a group of aristocrats led by a certain Audelais sought to overthrow Gisulf.\textsuperscript{13} However, they faced considerable internal opposition and from Liutprand, who also happened to be Gisulf II’s uncle.\textsuperscript{14} Eventually, Audelais’ rebellion would be put down, but rather than restoring Gisulf II to power, Liutprand decided to raise him at Pavia. In his place, the king appointed another one of his own relatives, Gregory, to rule as duke. Gregory would reign for seven years before being succeeded by Godescalc in 739/740.\textsuperscript{15}

Godescalc’s reign proved to be short and controversial. Although Paul claims that he was elected to his position, it has been speculated that he obtained it through violence\textsuperscript{16} or, at the very least, over the objections of those still loyal to Gisulf II and his dynasty. However, rather than attempting to secure the king’s support, Godescalc instead aligned himself with Pope Gregory III and Transamund of Spoleto, both of whom were already in conflict with Liutprand over territories seized from the Exarchate.\textsuperscript{17} This decision proved to be ill-fated, as Pope

\textsuperscript{12} LP 91.21-2.
\textsuperscript{13} Interestingly, the only mention of Audelais is found in a later ducal list. Paul makes no mention of him. 
\textsuperscript{14} Liutprand’s niece was Gisulf II’s mother. \textit{HL} 6.50, 55.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{HL} 6.55-6.
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{HL} 6.56; Gasparri, \textit{I duchi longobardi}, 94.
\textsuperscript{17} This latest round of tensions was incited when Transamund seized the \textit{castrum} of Gallese from the Exarchate of Ravenna and decided to ransom it to the papacy rather than holding onto it. Although Transamund was driven from Spoleto by Liutprand, papal armies helped to restore him to power. \textit{HL} 6.54-5; LP 92.15, 93.2-5.
Gregory died in 742 and was succeeded by Zachary, who adopted a more moderate stance towards the Lombard king. With Zachary’s support, Liutprand was easily able to seize control of Spoleto and depose Transamund once and for all.\textsuperscript{18} Bereft of allies, Godescalc sought to flee Benevento, but was killed by loyalists to Gisulf II. Liutprand subsequently appointed Gisulf II to the position of duke, perhaps with the hope of fostering greater cooperation between Benevento and the Lombard Kingdom. To further strengthen this bond, he may have also arranged Gisulf II’s marriage to Scauniperga, the daughter of a northern aristocrat.\textsuperscript{19} The union between the two produced a son, whom Gisulf II named Liutprand.

King Liutprand died in 744, leaving behind a rich legacy that his royal successors and ducal namesake were hard-pressed to live up to. Despite his relative youth, Gisulf II only ruled for a few years before dying in 751, leaving Scauniperga to serve as regent for their son until sometime between 754 and 756.\textsuperscript{20} Meanwhile, in the north, King Liutprand’s nephew, Hildebrand, was overthrown after only seven months. His successor, Ratchis, would rule just another five years before retiring (possibly involuntarily) to the monastery of Montecassino,\textsuperscript{21} leaving his brother, Aistulf, to guide the Lombard Kingdom. Aistulf would prove to be considerably more aggressive against Byzantium and Rome than either of his predecessors. In 751, he finally conquered the city of Ravenna along with a significant portion of other imperial-controlled territories, essentially destroying the Exarchate and further cementing Lombard

\textsuperscript{18} LP 93.5; HL 6.57.
\textsuperscript{19} HL 6.57-8.
\textsuperscript{20} CDL 4.2.43/CSS 1.25.
\textsuperscript{21} LP 93.17-23.
control over northern and central Italy. These successes would prove to be ephemeral, however, as relations between the king and Pope Stephen II began to fray over Lombard incursions into Roman territory. Mistrusting Aistulf’s intentions, Stephen II journeyed to Francia to appeal for assistance from King Pippin. While there, the pope also took the opportunity to anoint Pippin and his sons as kings of the Franks, and supposedly even secured a written promise from Pippin that he would help to fulfill all papal territorial claims throughout Italy, including possession of the duchies of Benevento and Spoleto.

Pippin attempted to resolve the crisis between the papacy and the Lombard king peacefully, but after negotiations broke down, he invaded Italy and forced Aistulf to surrender hostages, provide tribute, and return the lands demanded by the papacy. However, Aistulf soon broke his word and renewed his assault against Roman territory in 755/6, forcing Pippin to march into Italy once more to subdue the recalcitrant Lombard king. It was not long after that Aistulf died in a hunting accident, leaving behind a vacant throne and no clear successor. His brother, Ratchis, left Montecassino and sought to reclaim the throne, but support among the Lombard aristocracy was split between him and Desiderius, the Duke of Tuscany. Needing

23 According to later Frankish sources, Pope Zachary had given his approval for Pippin to overthrow the last of the Merovingian kings and to claim the crown for himself. For the claim and a discussion of this, see ARF 749; Rosamond McKitterick, “The Illusion of Royal Power in the Carolingian Annals,” *English Historical Review* 115, no. 460 (2000): 1-20.
24 ARF 754, *LP* 94.15-29.
25 This last claim is heavily contested, as the terms of the document allegedly drawn up at Quierzy are first found in later papal sources, namely, Pope Hadrian’s biography and not articulated in any Frankish sources until the reign of Louis the Pious. For the claim and the debate surrounding it, see LP 97.42 and Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter*, 83-6.
26 ARF 756, *LP* 94.31-7.
27 *LP* 94.48.
allies, Desiderius promised Pope Stephen II to return all the lands promised by Aistulf and more in return for papal support. Consequently, Stephen obliged him and convinced Ratchis to return to the monastery.\textsuperscript{28} It was amidst these circumstances that Duke Liutprand, or perhaps his advisors, decided to rebel against the king alongside the newly elected Duke of Spoleto, Alboin. Pope Stephen II even claimed that both dukes wished to commend themselves to the Frankish king, though it is questionable whether or not this actually occurred.\textsuperscript{29} Whatever the case may have been, Desiderius swiftly marched against the two dukes in 758, deposing Alboin and forcing Liutprand to flee to Otranto, never to be heard from again. In his place, Desiderius appointed his own son-in-law, Arichis, as duke.\textsuperscript{30} This was to be the last royal intervention in the duchy’s affairs, as Arichis II not only remained loyal to the king for the duration of his reign, but also managed to hold onto his own position for nearly thirteen years after the Lombard Kingdom’s fall.

At first glance, the above series of events would seem to confirm the impression that this period was nothing more than a long-running struggle over royal control and ducal autonomy, with the former eventually winning out. However, this belief rests on a very narrow

\textsuperscript{28} LP 94.48-51.
\textsuperscript{29} CC 11.
\textsuperscript{30} Erch. 2; Chron. Sal. 9. Little is known about Arichis II’s background prior to becoming duke. Jarnut and Gasparri have asserted that he was Friulian, but there is no evidence for this outside of the parallels one finds between him and Arichis I in Paul’s history. Paul himself claimed that Arichis was of royal and ducal blood which might suggest that he was a member of the ducal dynasty. Stasser has argued that he was descended from Romoald I’s third son, Arichis, and that he named his children, Grimoald and Romoald, after his ancestors. The main issue with this theory is that it’s rarely dependent on the choice of names, something which could be purely coincidental given both Grimoald’s importance in Beneventan history, as well as the fact that all three names were used in other areas of Italy. Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 108; Jörg Jarnut, Geschichte der Langobarden (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1982), 117; Nicoletta Francovich Onesti, Vestigia longobarde in Italia (568-774). Lessico e antroponimia (Rome: Artemide Edizioni, 2000), 197, 201, 37; Thierry Stasser, Où sont les femmes? Prosopographie des femmes des familles princières et ducales en Italie méridionale depuis la chute du royaume lombard (774) jusqu’à l’installation des Normands (env. 1100) (Oxford: University of Oxford, Linacre College Unit for Prosopographical Research, 2008), 11-6.
interpretation of these events, one that assumes that all royal interventions in Benevento were specifically aimed at curtailing ducal autonomy and that there existed a strong degree of anti-royal sentiment in Benevento. There is an alternate explanation. If we look at the broader pattern of royal interventions in the south, we find that they invariably came in reaction to specific incidents that could have had a broader impact on royal diplomatic and military efforts directed towards the Roman papacy and the Exarchate of Ravenna. Whatever their relationship with royal power might have been prior to 728/9, both the Beneventan and Spoletan dukes had always exercised sufficient autonomy to undertake their own independent political and military actions. While these did not normally conflict with royal interests, the situation began to change as Liutprand became more diplomatically engaged with the Exarchate and other imperial-controlled territories. Despite the frequent hostilities between the two sides, early on in his reign, the king appears to have pursued peaceful relations with the local imperial officials, making a treaty with Venice and issuing commercial privileges to the people of Comacchio in 715.  

I would suggest that his actions in 728/9 were undertaken with a similar objective in mind. Although it is commonly assumed that Liutprand offered to support Eutychius against the

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papacy in return for the Exarch’s support against Benevento and Spoleto, the king may have actually hoped to secure the territories he had recently captured from the Exarchate. However, similar to the situation Agilulf had faced in 598, there would have been no possibility of reaching such an agreement without the cooperation of the Beneventan and Spoletan dukes, something which was not necessarily guaranteed given their prior hostility to Byzantium and support for Gregory II. Viewed in this light, Liutprand’s decision to march southwards is still perfectly understandable, as it would ensure that the dukes of Benevento and Spoleto would not do anything that might derail his diplomatic efforts. Looking at the other royal interventions in the south, we see a similar pattern of Lombard kings intervening in response to their diplomatic interests being threatened, whether it was Transamund’s dealings with the papacy, Godescalc’s eventual alliance with both, or Duke Liutprand’s alleged attempt to swear an oath of fidelity to Pippin.

It is not simply the patterns of royal interventions that suggest the kings had only a limited desire to control Benevento. Looking at their overall impact, we find very little evidence that these interventions actually led to any significant alterations in the duchy’s administrative practices. If we look at Beneventan and royal charters, for example, the only instance in which we observe direct royal involvement in the duchy’s administration concerned a property dispute between some of Gisulf II’s followers and the monastery of S. Vincenzo. The circumstances surrounding this case were quite exceptional, however, as the land under dispute had been given by Godescalc to the monastery before Gisulf II rescinded those grants and gave the land to his

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33 Noble also considers the relationship with Benevento, Spoleto, and the papacy as an instigating factor, though he takes the view that Liutprand saw it as a threat to his power. Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter*, 35.
followers. Scauniperga and Liutprand gave some of the land back, but this appears to have satisfied neither party and an appeal was made to King Aistulf. Even this was not sufficient to put an end to the matter, as Arichis II would also eventually judge the case, with the result being that both parties agreed to nullify Aistulf’s judgment.34

Minting practices also appear to have not undergone any significant alterations during this period. Although the Edictum Rothari stipulated quite clearly that it was a crime for any Lombard to mint gold coinage without the king’s permission,35 the duchy had been minting coinage since at least the reign of Gisulf I, a practice which continued straight through the period in question without any apparent interruption, even during Gregory’s reign. The coinage itself was modeled after Byzantine coinage, even bearing the bust of the Byzantine emperors in the early part of the eighth century. The only alteration to the coinage we find that might indicate royal influence are a few coins which display an open hand/glove in place of the dukes’ initials. The exact meaning of this symbol and the dating of these coins is open to interpretation, though it has sometimes been theorized that they appeared in either 742 or 758 when the king removed one of the sitting dukes. There is, however, no clear-cut evidence that these were royal coins and we still find other examples from this same period bearing only the duke’s initials.36

Land transactions are another area where there is no evidence that the royal interventions in the south led to any meaningful alteration in ducal practices, as the dukes appear to have had full control over their own lands and economic resources during the entirety of the eighth

34 CDL 5.7 (Benevento)/CV 1.69.
35 LL Roth. 242.
The grants of Beneventan lands that the kings allegedly made to the monasteries of San Vincenzo and Montecassino are all forgeries, with the only ones based on genuine traditions involving lands in Spoleto. Interestingly, we have a number of genuine royal charters for the Spoletan monastery of Farfa, including Liutprand confirming the Spoletan dukes’ grants, but nothing similar for the Beneventan monasteries. Also of note, all charters issued from the Spoletan court after 761 were written as being issued during the reign of Desiderius and his son, Adelchis. No such acknowledgements are found in any of our Beneventan materials (despite Arichis’ marriage to Desiderius’ daughter), and we only find two explicit references to royal authority in the entire corpus of grants. The first, a grant issued by Gisulf II in 742, offered thanks to the king for restoring his title to him, but otherwise makes no reference to him. In the second charter, Duke Liutprand referenced the presence of a royal missus at his court, but there is no indication as to the purpose of his visit.

Based on the above evidence, it appears that the impact of the royal interventions in the duchy was quite minimal and that even when the kings were in a prime position to impose their will (particularly after 758), they did not do so. It could be argued that this represented a failure to impose royal authority in the region, but the evidence of royal involvement in Spoleto would

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38 For a thorough analysis of these documents, see Brühl, Studien zu den langobaridschen Königsurkunden, 173-93. San Vincenzo: CDL 3.1.30/CV 1.11, CDL 3.1.45/1.13, CDL 3.1.46/CV 1.14. Montecassino: CDL 3.1.34.
41 CDL 5.16 (Spoleto).
42 CDL 4.2.18/CSS 1.23.
43 CDL 4.2.43/CSS 1.25; François Bougard, “Tempore barbarici? La production documentaire publique et privée,” in 774, ipotesi su una transizione, 333-4.
seem to suggest that the kings could impose a greater degree of control if they wanted to. In actuality, the absence of royal involvement in Benevento may very well be a reflection of its general lack of importance to the Lombard kings. Whereas Spoleto was much more integral to royal efforts to expand the kingdom and establish some sort of relationship with the papacy, strategically-speaking, Benevento’s main value would have been serving as a buffer against the remaining Byzantine territories in Italy such as Naples and Calabria. Given the considerable logistical difficulties that Grimoald I had experienced in trying to rule the duchy from afar, his eighth-century successors probably saw the practical value of allowing the dukes a measure of autonomy in managing their own affairs so long as they did not interfere in other matters.

It is quite possible that the dukes may have resented even these limited restrictions and decided to rebel in response, but we should not ignore the significant role that Benevento’s internal political situation played in these actions. Of the three dukes who were forcibly removed from power, two of them (Audelais and Godescalc) had arguably usurped the title from the legitimate heir, Gisulf II. A number of scholars have sought to blame these actions on anti-royal sentiment and the existence of a traditionalist/autonomist faction at the ducal court, but this ascribes deeper motives to what, in any other circumstance, would be viewed as a calculated and not at all unusual attempt by a local aristocracy to exploit a power vacuum created by their ruler’s death and his heir’s relative youth. Based on our charters, it is clear that Audelais had been a member of the court, and it would not be surprising if Godescalc was as well. However,

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45 The name Audelais appears in two separate instances. First, as a gastald (CDL 4.2.7/CSS 3.1) and later as a vicedominus et referendarius (CDL 4.2.14/CSS 2.2). Gasparri, I duchi longobardi, 93-5.
their attempts to seize power would have been complicated considerably by the fact that Gisulf II was a blood relative of King Liutprand. This alone might have placed them in opposition to the king, but based on how both are alleged to have met their end, it also seems that they faced considerable internal opposition as well.46

The case of Duke Liutprand is less clear cut, but there are some hints that internal politics also played a role in the sudden shift in loyalties that occurred around 756. As I noted earlier, Liutprand ruled jointly with his mother, Scauniperga, in the earliest years of his reign. However, between 754 and 756, all references to Scauniperga disappear from the ducal records. Liutprand may have reached his majority at this point, but it is suspected that he was still a minor based on a papal letter that mentions him being accompanied by his nutritor (educator), John, on his flight to Otranto.47 Gasparri has proposed that this same John served as gastald and referendarius under Gisulf II,48 though we also find mention of a stole saysz named John at Liutprand’s court.49 If this John was indeed a member of the ducal administration and not just a tutor, he may have exercised considerable influence over Liutprand, or even served as regent after Scauniper an’s death/removal.50 In this case, the shift in Beneventan loyalties could very well have been initiated by someone other than Liutprand, perhaps with the aim of ultimately removing him from power.

46 HL 6.55, 57
47 CC 17.
48 CDL 4.2.35/CSS 3.5; Gasparri, I duchi longobardi, 96-8.
49 CDL 4.2.39/CSS 3.25
On the other hand, we should not ignore the possibility that Liutprand’s act of rebellion was directed not so much at royal authority as it was at Desiderius in particular. As I noted earlier, Desiderius’ ascent to the throne had aroused considerable opposition from much of the Lombard aristocracy, particularly supporters of the Friulian “dynasty” of Aistulf and Ratchis. Given that the Beneventans had participated in Aistulf’s siege of Rome in 756, not to mention the fact that Ratchis had been living within the duchy’s borders since his abdication, it is quite possible that Liutprand (or his advisors) had openly opposed Desiderius’ nomination and supported Ratchis’ bid. While the Beneventan dukes had generally remained aloof from the northern power struggles, we cannot assume that they were entirely disinterested in their outcome (particularly if Ratchis offered them some sort of material reward for their support) nor that Desiderius would not seek to punish those who had opposed his nomination.

The possibility that Liutprand’s rebellion may have been a response to the internal politics of the regnum highlights the rather complicated nature of the relationship between the dukes and kings. Although neither side significantly involved themselves in each other’s affairs, we should not assume that they were completely apathetic towards each other or the inhabitants of their respective polities. In fact, there were important military, familial, and political connections which bound them together and affirmed the southern Lombards’ status as being a part of the Lombard Kingdom and gens rather than being apart from them. Militarily, there were at least a few instances during the eighth century where the kings and dukes appear to have cooperated. In 717, for example, Liutprand appears to have launched a coordinated assault

51 CC 8.
52 Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy*, 267-8.
against imperial-controlled territories, attacking Ravenna while Faraold of Spoleto assaulted Narni and Romoald II seized Cumae. Beneventan forces would also participate in Aistulf’s siege of Rome in 755/6, which, as I have said, is rather noteworthy given Duke Liutprand’s subsequent attempt to side with the papacy and Franks against Desiderius.

Marriage alliances were another important connection between the kings and dukes. Of the eleven dukes who ruled between 646/7 and 774, at least four (Grimoald I, Grimoald II, Romoald II, and Arichis II) married royal relatives, while another three (Gregory, Gisulf II, and Liutprand) were related to King Liutprand. Such ties would have been mutually beneficial for both sides. For the dukes, familial ties with the king not only served as a potential safeguard against their own aristocracy (as was the case with Gisulf II), but it may have also granted them and their position an additional measure of political prestige. To the best of our knowledge, the Beneventan dukes married far more royal relatives than their northern counterparts, granting them links to at least three separate royal lines, as well as indirect connections to important families outside of Italy. Arichis II, for example, was brother-in-law to Tassilo of Bavaria.

Admittedly, the kings may have made these arrangements because it was one of the few enticements they could offer the dukes in return for their continued cooperation, but we should not ignore the possibility that they themselves found these connections useful for their own


54 CC 8.

55 HL 6.55.

political preservation and legitimacy. If we look at the four kings who established marriage alliances with the dukes (Godepert, Cunincpert, Liutprand, and Desiderius), it becomes clear that all four did so when they were relatively new to their positions and facing difficult internal circumstances. The relationship between Romoald II and Liutprand is particularly interesting in this respect. Although it has traditionally been asserted that Romoald was forced to marry Liutprand’s niece, Gumperga, after the events of 728/9, our main source for this, Paul the Deacon, only states that “Romoald then, duke of Beneventum, chose a wife Gumperga, by name, who was the daughter of Aurona, king Liutprand’s sister. From her he begot a son whom he called by the name of his father, Gisulf. He had again after her another wife, Ranigunda by name, the daughter of Gaiduald, duke of Brexia (Brescia).” It is not totally outside the realm of possibility that Romoald could have done all this between 728/9 and his death in 731/2, but it does seem highly unlikely he would wait twenty years to get married and risk losing his family’s control of the ducal title. It would also mean that Gisulf II may have only been twelve at the time Liutprand appointed him as duke in 742, which, according to Liutprand’s own laws, placed him well below the legal age of adulthood and ineligible to marry or alienate land.

Given this, I would suggest that Liutprand arranged the marriage early in his reign, perhaps as means of securing Romoald’s cooperation for the 717 campaign or even to help him consolidate his power among the Lombards. We must remember that for all he achieved throughout his reign, Liutprand started off his kingship in a relatively precarious position, having

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57 Gasparri, I duchi longobardi, 92.
58 HL 6.50, tr. p.293-4.
59 LL Liut. 19, 117.
60 Bertolini, “I papi e le relazioni politiche di Roma con i ducati longobardi di Spoleto e di Benevento (III),” 13 n.19; Grant, “Liutprand and the Lombards: Intruders in their Italian Homeland,” 179-81.
recently helped his father to overthrow the kingdom’s longest-ruling dynasty. Thus, it was imperative for him to secure allies inside and outside the kingdom. While the dukes may have not have been in the best position to provide Liutprand with material aid, nonetheless, the support of the Lombards’ oldest ducal dynasty and descendants of a former king (whom Liutprand referred to as “the most glorious King Grimoald” in the prologue of his very first set of laws) would have offered an added degree of legitimacy.

Military and marriage alliances are, of course, not proof that either side considered Benevento as being genuinely a part of the Lombard Kingdom or that the dukes viewed themselves as being subject to the Lombard kings’ authority. After all, the kings had sometimes made similar arrangements with the Dukes of Bavaria, another long-lasting dynasty which had ruled a semi-independent duchy. However, our charters and the Lombard law codes suggest that there existed a deeper set of political and ethnic ties between the kings and the Beneventan dukes. Looking first at the law codes, it needs to be pointed out that although the dukes largely appear to have exercised many of the powers and responsibilities normally controlled by the Lombard kings, there is no evidence that they ever sought to promulgate their own laws or that there existed some sort of separate Beneventan legal tradition until after 774. In fact, we have one example where Arichis II, following the punishment outlined in one of Liutprand’s laws, confiscated a nun’s property because she had broken her vows and married.

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62 Hammer, *From Ducatus to Regnum: Ruling Bavaria under the Merovingian and Early Carolingians*, 40-6, 73, 143-6.
63 According to the document, Arichis’ judgement followed “the edicts [edicti].” *CSS 1.1.19*, p. 305; *LL Liut.* 30.
Beyond this, there are some hints in the legal codes themselves to suggest that the laws issued by the eighth century kings were not only intended to apply to Benevento, but that some may have even been developed to address specific issues related to Benevento’s distant geographical position and unique political status. Within the entire corpus of Lombard law, there are only two laws that explicitly mention Benevento. The first is a 727 law issued by King Liutprand in which he decreed that if a slave fled to either Benevento or Spoleto, his lord would have three months to seek out his slave “in order that he might do justice [*faciat iustitiam*] to that one who challenges him [*qui eum compellat*]…. If it is within Tuscany, he shall have a period of two months. And if it is on this side of the mountains [the Apennines], he shall have a period of one month.”\(^{64}\) The second is a 746 border law issued by King Ratchis in which he stipulated that, “If a judge or any other man, without the king’s permission, presumes to send his representative to Rome, Ravenna, Spoleto, Benevento, France, Bavaria, Alamannia, Raetia, or to the land of the Avars, he shall lose his life and his property shall be confiscated.”\(^{65}\)

At first glance, both laws would seem to offer a contradictory view of Benevento’s status within the Lombard Kingdom, as the law issued by Liutprand only discussed Lombard territories, whereas the law by Ratchis seemingly focused only on non-Lombard territories. However, we need to take into account both the subject matter of each law and how they fit in with other laws these kings issued. The 746 law, for instance, was issued as part of broader effort by Ratchis to exert greater control over the kingdom’s frontiers and to limit the potential for espionage. Such a task would have been incredibly difficult to undertake even with the parts

\(^{64}\) *LL Liut.* 88, tr. p.183.

\(^{65}\) *LL Ratch.* 9, tr. p.221.
of the Lombard Kingdom north of the Apennines, but it would have been all but impossible to achieve in Benevento and Spoleto given that one would still had to travel across Roman territory to reach them and there was nowhere near the same degree of royal administrative oversight. Even Tuscany had to have its own special set of rules. Thus, we should view Ratchis’ law as being less a statement of Benevento’s status within the Lombard Kingdom than an implicit acknowledgement of the continuing logistical difficulties of overseeing so distant a territory.

As for Liutprand’s 727 law, the references to both Spoleto and Benevento might seem like a hint of the expedition he would launch against Spoleto just a year later, but the law itself was actually intended to clarify an earlier law on fugitive slaves. Although Liutprand did not specify which law he was referring to, the three month time frame he provided as well as the reference to a lord undertaking justice against “one who challenges him,” suggests that he was referencing a 717 law dealing with thefts committed by fugitive slaves. In that law, he decreed that if the slave in question remained “within the province,” (i.e. the Lombard Kingdom) he would have three months to seek out the slave and either compensate the victim of his theft or defend himself (either by oath or by combat) in the event that the slave’s guilt was not clear.

Based on this, it seems that even as early as 717, Liutprand regarded Benevento as a being a part of the Lombard Kingdom and expected its inhabitants to follow the same set of laws. While this could have purely been a way of asserting his authority over all the Lombard duchies

67 LL Ratch. 13.
68 This is Azzara’s interpretation. See LL Liut., p. 240, n.68.
69 Although it is interesting that Liutprand uses the term provincia instead of regnum, it seems clear that he adopted the language used by Rothari in a previous edict dealing with slaves who fled outside of the Lombard Kingdom. See LL Roth. 256, p.78; LL Liut. 11, p.144.
(whether they acknowledged it or not), we should not dismiss the idea that this law was
developed in response to an issue brought before him involving either a Beneventan or a
Spoletan. The fact that he only cited the three-month timeframe in the 717 law and was later
forced to address the apparent contradiction between it and another one of his laws that dealt
specifically with fugitive slaves in the Lombard Kingdom proper and Tuscany\(^70\) suggests that he
actually had Benevento or Spoleto in mind when promulgating it. Moreover, even though the
law itself was written from the perspective of a northern Lombard traveling into the southern
duchies, it also implicitly acknowledged that the southern Lombards had the same right to
compensation and were also expected to observe the same customs. Far from treating the
southern Lombards as outsiders, this law affirmed that both they and the northern Lombards
were actually one and the same group. Given how Grimoald and the southern Lombards had
been treated in the prior century, the fact that we find even an implicit acknowledgement of this
in a northern document is rather significant.

The Beneventan dukes’ own charters also implicitly expressed a measure of political and
ethnic solidarity with both the Lombard Kingdom and the \(\textit{gens}\). In our entire body of pre-774
charters (including ones issued before Liutprand’s first expedition southwards),\(^71\) the \textit{intitulatio}
used by the Beneventan dukes and their subjects is almost invariably “\textit{vir gloriosissimus} (name)
\textit{summus dux gentis Langobardorum}.” A similar formula is used in the Spoletan charters, which
would seem to suggest a degree of consistency and greater significance behind the formula. If

\(^70\) \textit{LL Liut}. 44. The omission of Benevento and Spoleto from this law is interesting, but given that it primarily
focuses on the role of officials such as foresters and judges in seizing fugitive slaves, I would suggest that the king
was implicitly acknowledging his limited administrative control in both duchies, as well as the possible differences
between how they were administered and how territories within the Lombard Kingdom were administered.
\(^71\) Our earliest genuine charter which we can securely date was issued by Romoald in 719. \textit{CDL} 4.2.5/\textit{CSS} 2.14
we break the *intitulatio* down into its two major components, we can see that the first half of the formula, *vir gloriosissimus*, is adopted from the imperial title system, which utilized similar appellations to denote an individual’s socio-political rank.\(^{72}\) We can clearly see how this worked within the Lombard Kingdom just by comparing royal and ducal charters, as the king was the only one who was ever referred to as *vir excellentissimus*. Lest we assume that the Beneventan dukes and their notaries did not appreciate this distinction, it should be pointed out that upon changing his title to *princeps*, Arichis II’s charters also began to refer to him as *vir excellentissimus*.\(^{73}\)

One of the key questions concerning this formulation is whether or not it was unique to only the Beneventan and Spoletan dukes or if it applied to all Lombard dukes. Although we lack ducal charters from the northern duchies, we do find a few instances in private charters where the dukes are addressed as *vir gloriosissimus*. Three of these involve Duke Walpert of Lucca,\(^{74}\) while a fourth makes reference to a certain Duke Gregory, who may very well be the same duke who administered Chiusi and, later, Benevento.\(^{75}\) We also find Arichis II being addressed as *vir gloriosissimus* in one of King Adelchis’ charters.\(^{76}\) This would strongly suggest that for all of their autonomy, the Beneventan dukes still at least implicitly acknowledged that they were a part of the Lombard political hierarchy and recognized the king’s superior rank within it.\(^{77}\)

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\(^{73}\) “Domnus Arichis piissimus atque excellentissimus princeps gentis Langubardorum.” CSS 1.2.

\(^{74}\) CDL 1.30, 1.40, 1.56.

\(^{75}\) CDL 1.45; Gasparri, *I duchi longobardi*, 94, n.263.

\(^{76}\) CDL 3.44.

\(^{77}\) Dick Harrison, “Political Rhetoric and Political Ideology in Lombard Italy,” in *Strategies of Distinction*, 245.
Where the dukes might have sought to distinguish themselves from their northern counterparts is in the *summus dux gentis Langobardorum* portion of the *intitulatio*, as we do not find any examples of this being used elsewhere. Wolfram has theorized that the *summus dux* portion may have been intended to denote the dukes’ elevated status within the Lombard political hierarchy, but we cannot say for certain given the dearth of northern evidence, particularly from Friuli. As for the *gentis Langobardorum* portion of the *intitulatio*, my own opinion is that it was intended to serve as a marker of distinction, though not necessarily between the dukes and their northern brethren. We must remember that there were, after all, dukes in the Byzantine-aligned territories, most notably, Rome and Naples. Given their close, sometimes hostile contact with these duchies, the dukes of Benevento and Spoleto may have wanted to sharpen the distinctions between themselves and their non-Lombard counterparts, something which, as we shall see, fits in with some of their other actions, particularly concerning religious matters.

With that said, this formulation may have had an even greater significance, as it does not appear in any of the royal or the aforementioned private charters from northern Italy. Although the Lombard kings did use the expression *rex gentis Langobardorum* in the prefaces to their legal codes, they always used the Roman title of *Flavius* in their charters. The Beneventan dukes themselves could have utilized another title, as they were sometimes referred to in papal and Lombard sources by the title of *Dux Beneventanorum* and their people as *Beneventani*. And yet, in their *intitulatio*, no reference was made to the duchy that they ruled, which would

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79 See p.129-32.
81 *HL* 27, p.330, l.1.
82 *CC* 8, p.495, l.9-10.
suggest that they considered it much more important to define themselves by their *gens* than by their territory. Andrew Gillett has suggested that this was intended to express political solidarity with the Lombard Kingdom, but I would go much further than that. In defining themselves and their people as being members of the *gens Langobardorum*, the dukes were both creating distinctions between themselves and other groups and establishing a connection with Lombards in all other areas of Italy. Having largely been isolated from the main group of Lombards since the sixth century and perhaps even been viewed with some suspicion on account of this and their autonomist tendencies, the dukes may have wished to emphasize in the clearest possible terms where their political and ethnic allegiances lay. If so, this would have been an important precursor to Benevento’s post-774 transformation, suggesting that, even before the fall of the Lombard Kingdom, the southern Lombards (or at least, their dukes) were already concerned with articulating and more clearly defining their ethnic identity and linking it to political practice, perhaps even more so than their northern brethren.

On the whole, the *intitulatio* of the charters and the Lombard laws would seem to suggest that both the dukes and the kings acknowledged the southern Lombards’ place within the Lombard Kingdom and the *gens* both before and after the royal interventions. I am not arguing that kings’ relationships with the Beneventan dukes was at all similar to what they had with any of the northern dukes, nor that ducal acknowledgment of royal authority meant that the dukes were willing to cede political control over their own internal affairs. Clearly, they were not and for the most part, the Lombard kings were willing let this situation stand because it was

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beneficial to their own interests. Instead, I would suggest that even with the duchy essentially functioning as an independent polity, there still existed strong connections that bound it to the Lombard Kingdom. Such connections were not established simply through direct royal interventions, but through many of the political, familial, cultural, and religious connections that we have discussed both in this chapter and the previous one. This not only explains why the duchy evolved into an autonomous polity that was still recognizably Lombard in its political makeup and ethnic affiliation, but at least partially explains why they chose to fully embrace and build upon the legacy, symbols, and practices of the Lombard kings in the aftermath of 774. For them, royal authority was not something to be dismissed and disdained as a threat to autonomy, but rather, something to be emulated and even surpassed. We shall see this much more clearly when we examine the inner-workings of the Beneventan duchy in the next section.

The Ties That Bind

Despite its unique relationship with the Lombard Kingdom, Benevento continued to develop along a broadly similar trajectory. Based on our eighth-century evidence, it is clear that the dukes utilized a number of the same administrative structures and practices as the Lombard Kingdom, and that the duchy as a whole experienced many of the same cultural and religious trends that were taking place within northern Italy. This is not to say, however, that there were no differences between the northern and southern duchies. Whereas the northern dukes had to, at least in theory, divide their administrative responsibilities with the other royal officials and the Lombard kings, the Beneventan dukes essentially acted as kings in all but name within their own territory, establishing a long-lasting dynasty, a court with a wide-array of officials primarily
answerable to them, and extensive patronage networks that were centered around some of the most important monasteries in Italy. They also undertook some significant cultural and religious endeavors, collecting relics at the expense of Byzantium and Naples, initiating major building projects, and offering patronage to learned individuals such as Paul the Deacon. Such efforts would lay the foundation for Benevento’s post-774 independence, but it must be noted that they were often undertaken in imitation of the Lombard kings, and that even some of the non-Lombard practices the dukes adopted, such as their veneration of certain Byzantine saints, ultimately helped to strengthen their attachment to the Lombard gens.

I would emphasize that these developments, and indeed, Benevento’s post-774 survival, were not solely attributable to the duchy’s autonomous status within the Lombard Kingdom. We must remember that the territory the dukes ruled and the resources they had at their command were likely much more considerable than what most other Lombard dukes possessed. At its height in the late eighth century, the Duchy of Benevento encompassed the majority of southern Italy save for a few Byzantine enclaves in Otranto (the heel of Italy), Calabria (the toe), and along the Tyrrhenian coast (the Duchy of Naples). Often referred to by historians as Langobardia minor in order to distinguish it from the Lombard Kingdom, it was one of the largest polities in Italy.

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85 Byzantine authors commonly referred to the Lombard Kingdom as Λογγιβαρδία μεγάλη (Langobardia maior). Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 85.
The dukes themselves are considered to have been among the largest landowners in Italy during this period, often being grouped in with the papacy and their own kings, both in terms of the territory they controlled and the land they directly owned. This is not to say that all of the land within their territory would have been highly valuable or easy to control, as the central portions of duchy were dominated by the southern range of the Apennine Mountains and ill-suited for anything more than pastoralism. However, the duchy was also comprised of large

Map 3 (Benevento, 8th Century)\textsuperscript{86}


\textsuperscript{87} There is insufficient evidence to provide an exact calculation of just how much land the Beneventan dukes may have directly owned or how it compared to both the papacy and the Lombard kings, but based on their grants to the local monasteries, it is thought to have been considerable. For a brief summation of landholding patterns during this period, see Chris Wickham, “Rural Economy and Society,” in \textit{Italy in the Early Middle Ages}, 122-5.
swaths of the Campanian and Apulian plains, agriculturally-rich regions that had the additional benefit of being located along the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic coasts, respectively.

With the conquest of Salerno, Taranto, Brindisi, and Bari in the mid-seventh century, the duchy controlled cities on both coasts of Italy, something which would pay important economic dividends in the long-run. Although Mediterranean trade was at a low-point when these cities were conquered, we begin to observe an increase in diplomatic, religious, and commercial contacts between southern Italy and the rest of the Mediterranean world around the mid-eighth century. Most of our evidence of trade activity from this period is for the Byzantine-aligned cities of Naples, Amalfi, Gaeta, and Sorrento, but the Beneventan-controlled coastal cities are generally thought to have seen a steady flow of trade (most notably, Lombard slaves) to and from Sicily, North Africa, and the Near East. The fact that Beneventan coinage was modelled after imperial rather than royal coinage would further seem to suggest a significant degree of economic interaction among the Beneventans, the Neapolitans and the Byzantines. Although the dukes themselves did not necessarily play a direct role in fostering these interactions, we do know that at some point they began to collect tolls on goods entering their cities and merchants crossing through their territory, something which might at least partially explain how someone

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90 Although the weight of Beneventan gold coins was generally inferior to Byzantine coins, at least under Romoald II, they were nearly equal to that of contemporary coins found in Byzantine Sicily. Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 71.
91 CSS 1.58; Sicardi principis pactio cum Neapolitanis, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH Leges IV (Hanover: Hahn, 1868), 13.
like Archis II accrued sufficient resources to undertake some of the large building projects and stage elaborate ceremonies for his relic translation.92

As important as the coastal cities might have been to duchy’s development, the city of Benevento was still the most important urban center within the duchy. Situated in one of the few passes in the Apennines that permitted traffic to flow between the coasts and also located on the junction point between the Via Appia and the Via Traiana, Benevento had been a significant center of trade, transportation and communications since the Samnite period.93 Under the Lombard dukes, the city continued to fulfill this role and more, serving as the political, social, religious and cultural heart of the duchy. The dukes themselves primarily appear to have resided within the city, as nearly all our ducal charters were issued from the Beneventan palace, with only a handful being issued from other residences. This sort of permanent residence in a single city was unusual for rulers living north of the Alps, but no different from the Lombard kings who had largely based their court at Pavia for two centuries.94 With that said, it is still notable that we only find sporadic mentions in our sources of activities undertaken in other Beneventan cities.95

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95 Harrison provides a very clear outline of all the evidence. Harrison, The Early State and the Towns, 132-9.
Even members of the Beneventan aristocracy, some of whom owned lands on both coasts of the peninsula, appear to have also maintained residences in the capital.\textsuperscript{96} Again, this may be an issue of evidence, but we should not underestimate the drawing power of the court given that socio-political status among the Lombards was at least partially dependent on office holding. With the Beneventan dukes, rather than the kings, exercising oversight over patronage and administration of the duchy, proximity to the center of power (which modern scholars refer to as Königsnähe in a royal context) would have been every bit as important in the south as it was the north.\textsuperscript{97} Likewise, we should also not overlook the possibility that many of the other cities within the duchy were, as of yet, either too economically or politically marginal to serve as centers of high level political and social activity. For example, despite its considerable prominence in the ninth century, Salerno is not mentioned in any of our eighth century sources until after Arichis built new walls and a palace there around 774. This has led some to suspect that it was of only limited size and importance during this period.\textsuperscript{98}

A lack of other politically important urban centers would not necessarily have been detrimental to the duchy’s early development. In the Lombard Kingdom, the diffusion of political and social power across multiple urban centers created a number of problems for the kings, especially in areas controlled by the northern Lombard dukes such as Friuli.\textsuperscript{99} Although these dukes did not exercise the same degree of autonomy as their Beneventan counterparts nor

\textsuperscript{96} The gastald Guacco, for example, had possessions in Liburia, Salerno, Bari, and Benevento. \textit{Gatt. Acc. I.}, p.19-20; \textit{CMC} 1.14, 18; Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 122; Chris Wickham, \textit{Framing the Early Middle Ages}, 217-8.

\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Framing the Early Middle Ages}, 211-19.

\textsuperscript{98} Delogu, \textit{Mito di una città meridionale (Salerno, secoli VIII-XI)}, 38-42; Wickham, \textit{Early Medieval Italy}, 148-51.

did they necessarily possess the same amount of resources, they still had their own courts, armed followings, and territory, all of which could be marshalled against royal authority.

Consequently, there were many armed conflicts between the kings and their dukes, especially in the seventh century, as well as intrigues and assassination attempts such as Garipald of Turin’s plot to put Grimoald on the throne. Such conflicts benefitted neither the dukes nor the kings in the long-run. By 774, there had been at least ten successful coups against sitting kings, which is nearly half of all those who held the throne. The dukes fared little better, as most ducal lines appear to have only lasted at most three generations before being replaced.

The Beneventan dukes were the major exception to this trend. Save for the turbulence of 730s, the duchy was ruled by a single dynasty for nearly a century, which was far longer than even the so-called Bavarian dynasty that ruled the Lombard Kingdom from 653 to 712. While the political turmoil of the 730s demonstrates that this development did not go unopposed by some of the Beneventan aristocracy, the fact that we also hear reports of strong internal opposition to these usurpations would seem to suggest that both the dynasty and the principle of hereditary succession were firmly entrenched in Beneventan politics. In fact, the dukes’ wives could even, on occasion, serve as regents for their children, exercising many of the same powers and privileges as their husbands. For example, during her years serving as regent for Liutprand, Scauniperga’s initials appeared on coinage, and she was even referred to in charters as

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100 Gasparri, I duchi longobardi, 23-5.
101 *HL* 4.51.
102 Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 37-8.
103 Gasparri, I duchi longobardi, 35-6.
104 *HL* 6.55, 7.
“Nos gloriosissima domna,” in perfect imitation of the ducal intitulatio. The only female-led regency that we are aware of in the Lombard Kingdom occurred around 616 when Queen Theudelinda served as regent for King Adaloald.

This was not the only area in which the dukes’ wives may have had a significant impact. As I noted earlier, the dukes’ marriages to the relatives of the Lombard kings and northern aristocrats was an important link between the southern duchy and the northern kingdom. The individuals who came south, be it Gumperga, Adelperga, or even Gisulf II (who spent his formative years at Pavia) did not just bring with them their own ideas and traditions, but other northern Lombards aristocrats such as Paul the Deacon. This might partially explain why the Beneventan court of the eighth century does not appear to have been radically different in its makeup from the royal court, as many of the titles we find being used such as gastald, referendarius, marepahis, vicedominus, vesterarius, cubicularius, stolesayz, and thesaurius, can also be found at the royal court at Pavia.

With that said, there may have been some differences in terms of how some of these positions functioned. Instead of using dukes to administer the territories outside the capital, the Beneventan dukes appear to have primarily relied on gastalds to oversee territorial units known as actus or actiones that were centered around cities such as Siponto, Conza, Canosa, and

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106 CDL 4.2.39/CSS 3.25, CDL 4.2.40/CV 1.32, CDL 4.2.41/CSS 6.[30], CDL 4.2.42/CSS 3.10, Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 575.
107 HL 4.41.
108 Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento.”
However, *gastalds* also sometimes occupied other administrative positions at court, including that of *referendarius*, something which we do not find evidence of in the north. Much like the gastalds, the *referendarii* may have also exercised expanded responsibilities at the Beneventan court. They are not only mentioned far more frequently in our charters as dictating the dukes’ acts to the notaries, but it has sometimes been theorized that they were the equivalent of court chancellors, wielding a considerable amount of influence over the dukes’ decisions and other members of the aristocracy. Audelais, for example, had served in this position before usurping the ducal title.

The role of the *referendarii* highlights another area in which the court and the dukes themselves exercised considerable responsibility: patronage. Based on both our charter evidence and descriptions of their grants from other sources, it seems clear that the dukes not only engaged in a considerable amount of patronage, but often did so on a very large scale. In the period between Romoald I and Arichis II, the dukes settled a tribe of Bulgars, endowed S. Vincenzo and Montecassino with possibly as much as 400 and 800 sq. km of land, respectively, and potentially provided the abbey of S. Sophia with even more than that.

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10 CDL 4.2.15/CSS 3.9, CDL 4.2.21/CSS 1.24, CDL 4.2.29/CSS 2.20, CDL 4.2.48/CSS 3.29; Martin, “La Longobardia meridionale,” 339; Harrison, The Early State and the Towns, 134.

11 We know, for example, of a certain John who served as both a *gastald* and a *referendarius* under Gisulf II. CDL 4.2.35/CSS 3.5.

12 Poupardin, Les institutions politiques et administratives des principautés lombardes de l’Italie méridionale (IXe-XIe siècles), 23-4. For a list of the eight individuals who held this position see Simone Collavini, “Duchi e società locali nei ducati di Spoleto e Benevento nel secolo VIII,” in I Longobardi dei ducati di Spoleto e Benevento, vol. 1, 151, n.68. In addition, Bertolini provides a short but useful discussion of both the formulae within the charters as well as the nature and responsibilities of the position itself. Bertolini, Actum Beneventi, 64-71, 186-7.

13 CDL 4.2.14/CSS 2.2.

14 *HL* 5.29.


In the medieval world, monasteries were not just places of prayer; they were nexuses between the physical and spiritual worlds, local and central power, external and internal cultural influences, and foreign and domestic trade. As Matthew Innes has noted, the significant amount of lands they owned and the political, social, and economic connections they established with other groups made them the “multinationals” of their age.\(^{117}\) Particularly when it came to relations between rulers and the local aristocracy, the monastic communities could serve as important interlocutors, using their connections to give voice to local concerns, while at the same time, using their political and cultural influence to promote rulers’ interests.\(^{118}\) These ties were further bolstered through familial links, as members of the aristocracy, even the ducal household, often joined the religious communities or even founded their own monasteries. Godescalc, for example, made donations to S. Maria in Isernia in preparation for his wife to retire to a nunnery.\(^{119}\) Arichis II went even further, appointing his own sister as abbess of S. Sophia and his daughter, Adelgisa, as abbess of S. Salvatore in Alife.\(^{120}\) A relative of his would also become Abbot of Montecassino in 797.\(^{121}\)

As important as the political/social benefits of monastic patronage were, we should not overlook the spiritual incentives. Churches, monasteries, and other religious sites did not just play a significant role in the worship and spread of the Christian faith, they also offered the dukes the opportunity to connect with the patron saints of these foundations, enhancing their

\(^{117}\) Innes, *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: the Middle Rhine Valley, 400-1000*, 47.

\(^{118}\) For a discussion of this in other contexts, see Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy*, 323-52; Innes, *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: the Middle Rhine Valley, 400-1000*, 180-95.

\(^{119}\) *CDL* 5.7 (Benevento)/CV 1.69.

\(^{120}\) *CMC* 1.9.

\(^{121}\) *CMC* 1.17
prestige on earth and providing them with salvation in heaven. In this respect, the Beneventan dukes would have potentially benefited from their associations with both S. Benedict and S. Michael, whose reputations and associated religious foundations were renowned enough to attract both pilgrims and monks from all over Europe. Montecassino, for example, had attained sufficient prominence by the 740s to have both King Ratchis and Pippin’s brother, Carloman, join its community. The shrine of S. Michael on Mt. Gargano had an equally long reach, drawing travelers from as far as England. We cannot quantify the effect such widespread international interest may have had on the Beneventan dukes’ political or economic fortunes, but it certainly did not hurt their political and moral standing to be so closely associated with such famous foundations. We even find contemporary inscriptions from Beneventan dukes within the shrine at S. Gargano, including one from Romoald II and his wife, Gumperga.

Beyond their political and spiritual functions, it must also be emphasized that Benevento’s monasteries would play a very significant role in shaping its inhabitants’ politics, culture, and ethnic identity over the course of centuries. Montecassino was particularly important in this regard. Although the monastery had been reestablished around 717 at the initiative of Petronax of Brescia and Pope Gregory II, it was also closely linked with some

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122 Costambeys, Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy, 48-9.
123 LP 93.21, 23
125 Carletti, “Iscrizioni murali,” 69-70, no.52.
126 HL 6.40
Beneventan rulers. Gisulf II and Scaunipergera granted much of its eighth century patrimony, something which would eventually be supplemented by Arichis II’s later grant of S. Sophia and its associated territories. Such ties would do more than just provide these rulers with a material link to this monastery and its other possession; it would help to burnish and preserve their reputations, as well as define their people’s ethnic identity. Montecassino was, after all, home to two of the southern Lombards’ most important historians, Paul the Deacon and Erchempert, both whom would write influential histories that celebrated Beneventan achievements and promoted the belief that the dukes’ continued leadership was essential to the preservation of the Lombard gens. In addition to these individual efforts, the monastic community as a whole would act as a caretaker for Lombard memory and traditions (albeit, sometimes selectively), preserving the only extant copies that we have for a number of important Lombard works, including Erchempert’s history and the Chronicon Salernitanum.

Other monasteries had their own role to play in this process. Although S. Vincenzo has not left us with nearly as rich a literary legacy, it did help to define the southern Lombards’ ethnic and political boundaries. Aside from enabling rulers to establish political connections with local elites, monasteries sometimes also served as political and cultural frontier zones between two territories and the groups living within them. Many of the major monasteries in Italy such as Novalesa, Farfa, Nonantola, San Salvatore on Mount Amiata, and Montecassino

127 CMC 1.5-6. Although the bulk of evidence for Gisulf II’s early patronage rests on later traditions and forgeries, his involvement in the monastery’s reestablishment is attested by one of the ninth-century chronicles as well as three genuine grants to one of Montecassino’s other possessions, the female monastery of S. Maria in Cingla. CSBC 21; CDL 4.2.19, 27, 30, p.141-57, Herbert Bloch, Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 243-44.

128 Erch. 3.

129 For a deep analysis and summation of this, see Pohl, Werkstätte der Erinnerung; “History in Fragments: Montecassino’s Politics of Memory,” 343-74.
were all positioned along political frontiers. San Vincenzo itself was located near the frontier with Spoleto, having been founded by three aristocratic brothers from Benevento and allegedly granted its initial patrimony by Gisulf I. Although this area was not necessarily a hotbed of ethnic and political tensions in the early eighth century, after 774, San Vincenzo, with its ethnically-diverse population of monks, would soon find itself embroiled in the conflicts among the Franks, the southern Lombards, the Spoletan Lombards, and the papacy, with all sides attempting to coopt the monastery and its community as advocates for their political and cultural interests. Other monasteries such as Montecassino experienced similar pressures, but as we shall discuss next chapter, San Vincenzo was the site of a particularly well-known incident in which a Lombard abbot was put on trial in Rome for allegedly making derogatory comments about the Frankish king. The outcome of this trial and its aftermath has often been viewed as a microcosm of the broader political and ethnic conflicts taking place in southern Italy after 774.

The third and final foundation of consequence was the nunnery of S. Sophia. Established sometime just prior to 774 by Arichis II and attached to the cathedral bearing the same name, this foundation was the object of considerable ducal/princely patronage throughout the eighth and ninth centuries. While not as grand or as important as the other foundations we have

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131 CV p.131-6, 1.9. Gisulf’s role in the monastery’s founding is difficult to verify, as it is only mentioned in later sources and the charter bearing his name is a forgery. However, the destruction of the monastery’s archives in 881 CE might lend credence to the idea that this charter was based on a genuine tradition. See Zielinski’s analyses in *CDL* 4.2, p. 88*-135*, as well as Paolo Bertolini, “I duchi di Benevento e San Vincenzo al Voltorno - Le origini,” in *Una grande abbazia altomedievale nel Molise*, 130-77; Federico Marazzi, *San Vincenzo al Voltorno. L’abbazia e il suo territorium fra VIII e XII secolo* (Montecassino: Pubblicazioni Cassinesi, 2012), 15-46.
132 See p. 164-6.
133 There is some confusion over whether construction of the church/monastery had begun under Gisulf II or Arichis. Leo of Ostia attributes it to the former, but he may have been confusing it with S. Sophia ad Ponticellum. *CMC* 1.6, Martin in *CSS* p.45-6. For a contrary point of view, see Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, 264-72.
discussed, S. Sophia had the benefit of being more directly under ducal control and in close proximity to the palace. Many earlier religious foundations that had received ducal patronage, most notably S. Sophia ad Ponticellum, were placed under the monastery’s control and in turn, S. Sophia was alleged to have been placed under the control of Montecassino. As such, the monastery served as an important link between the dukes, Montecassino, and number of other important monastic foundations within the duchy.

More than that, S. Sophia appears to have been set up as a familial monastery by Arichis II. He not only issued twenty-two grants to the monastery in November of 774, but also placed his sister in charge of the nunnery. He did the same with S. Salvatore in Alife, placing his daughter, Adelgisa, in charge. These developments very much mirrored what was occurring in the Lombard Kingdom around this time, as Desiderius had undertaken a similar strategy with his foundation, S. Salvatore in Brescia. Arichis, who had actually made a donation of his own to this foundation, was clearly aware of this, and may very well have sought to imitate his king.

Arichis’ involvement in the founding of S. Sophia reflects his much broader attempts to shape the cultural and religious life of the duchy. Similar to the Lombard kings, both he and his predecessors had incorporated a number of Roman/Byzantine practices into their ruling strategies, including collecting the relics of notable Byzantine saints, promoting educational pursuits at their courts, and even constructing a cathedral which was allegedly modeled after the

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134 Erch. 3.
135 CMC 1.9.
136 See Martin’s introductory remarks in CSS p. 48-9 and also CDL 3.1.33.
137 CDL 3.1.44.
Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Some of this may have been driven by the dukes’ own personal interests and other attempts to imitate their kings, but we should also not overlook the fact that Benevento had a considerable amount of contact with Naples, Rome, and other Byzantine-controlled territories from the very beginning of its existence. Admittedly, the Beneventans were often in conflict with their neighbors, but, as their coinage demonstrates, there were also peaceful connections which would have helped to promote cultural diffusion.

Unlike their relationship with the Lombard kings, however, these connections did not actually draw the southern Lombards more deeply into the Byzantines’ orbit, either from a political or an ethnic standpoint. While there was certainly a considerable amount of contact between the two sides (particularly in the aftermath of 774), the Lombards utilized many of the practices they coopted to define more clearly their own ethnic boundaries and to demonstrate their political, ethnic, and religious superiority over the Byzantines and Neapolitans. S. Sophia, for example, though potentially inspired by the Hagia Sophia, was explicitly described in Arichis’ charters as being built “pro redemptione anime seu pro salvatione gentis nostre et patrie,” suggesting that he regarded it as almost akin to a “national” shrine for the Lombards.

138 Erch. 3. The most detailed analyses of the church and its structure are found in Belting, “Studien zum Beneventanischen Hof im 8. Jahrhundert,” 175-93; Rotili, Benevento romana e longobarda: l’immagine urbana, 184-201.

139 See p. 119-20.

140 See for example CSS 1.2. The statement, “pro salvatione gentis” appears to echo statements we occasionally find in the Lombard law codes (see. for example, LL Liut., Prologue, 723, p.158). However, we only find two comparable examples of this in two royal charters from the reigns of Desiderius and Adelchis, in which they proclaim their acts as being undertaken for the “stabilitatem gentis Langobardorum.” CDL 4.1.39, 41. The word patria appears to be have been used solely by the Beneventan dukes.
To further reinforce this point, he placed many of the relics he collected within the church, including the relics of the Holy Twelve Brothers in 760 and S. Mercurius in 768.  

These saints were intended to serve as the patrons of Arichis’ court, with the account of the Holy Twelve Brothers’ translation describing them as the “*patronos patriae.*”  

Given that S. Michael had already been adopted by the Lombard kings as their patron saint, this was perhaps Arichis’ way of giving his court its own distinct set of patron saints, but we should not overlook the role that competition with Byzantium and Naples played. Starting in the eighth century, we begin to see what Thomas Granier has aptly described as a “war of the saints” between Benevento and Byzantium/Naples, with both groups acquiring a substantial collection of saints’ relics. The southern Lombards seem to have been especially interested in coopting Byzantine saints for their own use, not just because of their reputations, but because doing so was also a sign that the divine favored them over their Mediterranean rivals. As we discussed last chapter, both S. Mercurius and S. Michael were widely venerated saints within the Byzantine Empire who were, nonetheless, associated with important Beneventan victories over the Byzantines and Neapolitans. The circumstances surrounding the acquisition of Helianus’ relics are equally interesting, as a later story would allege that a Beneventan gastald acquired them by personally outwitting none other than Byzantine emperor.  

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142 *Translatio Duodecim Martyrum*, p.575, l.52.  
144 See p. 82-6.  
legends surrounding the acquisition of these relics may very well have developed in response to
later conflicts with Byzantium and Naples, but it is interesting to note that one of our few pre-774
texts, the *Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis*, also portrayed the Neapolitans in a
decidedly negative light, even going so far as to suggest that they were still in the throes of
paganism when they attacked the shrine of Mt. Gargano in the sixth or seventh century.
Likewise, it is rather striking that of the relics collected during this period for which we have
translation accounts, all were soldier-saints, something which suggests that the southern
Lombards continued to place a special emphasis on martial achievement as a core part of
identity, even as they became more devoutly Christian.

Arichis’ patronage of scholars versed in Roman philosophy and literature did not possess
as strong a competitive motivation as their relic collections, but it too would have a significant
impact on the Lombard’s ethnic trajectory. When Arichis II married Desiderius’ daughter,
Adelperga, she brought with her Paul the Deacon, her tutor and arguably one of the most
influential scholars the Lombards ever produced. Although Paul’s greatest work, the *Historia
Langobardorum*, was still many years in the future, he was quite active during his time at court,
most notably, producing a continuation of Eutropius’ *Breviarum* at Adelperga’s request. This
supposed request earned her considerable praise from Paul, who lauded her for “exploring
hidden things with the subtle talent and perceptive zeal possessed by those with prudence.” His
praise for Arichis was even more lavish, as he declared that the duke “almost alone of all the
princes of our age holds the palm of wisdom.”

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146 See p. 295-298.
147 Lib. de App, 3.
148 Neff, 3, p.12.
Such praise may have been more than just mere flattery. While it was not unusual for early medieval authors to praise even illiterate rulers for their educated qualities, Paul’s description of Arichis as a man well-versed in physics (*physis*), logic (*logos*), and ethics (*ethica*) was a direct and rather specific reference to what ancient authors and, more recently, Alcuin of York had defined as the three parts of philosophy (the so-called trivium).\(^{149}\) Likewise, Bishop David’s praise of Arichis’ son, Romoald, as being “strong in grammar (*grammatica*)”\(^{150}\) referenced another specific area of study. Belting has interpreted this as evidence that there existed a court school (*Hofschule*) at Benevento and that Paul himself may have overseen both it and the education of Arichis’ children.\(^{151}\) While I do not believe that there is sufficient evidence to support these rather specific claims, it is not outside the realm of possibility that Paul and scholars like him were individually employed to instruct other members of the ducal household and court. After all, grammarians and other scholars had served at the royal court for decades, with Paul himself having been potentially educated at the court of Ratchis.\(^{152}\) Given the Beneventan dukes’ efforts to emulate the royal court and to compete with the Byzantines and Neapolitans, they would have had a strong motivation to embrace this sort of cultural patronage.

Even if we assume that this trend did not begin until Arichis II was appointed duke, we should not downplay the importance of this development and his relationship with Paul the Deacon in particular. Although Paul would not produce the *Historia Langobardorum* until long

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\(^{149}\) Neff, 35, p.146, l.11; Alcuin, *De Dialectica*, PL 101, col.952.

\(^{150}\) *Chron. Sal.* 21, p.26, l.9.


\(^{152}\) Paul mentions, for example, that the uncle of his tutor, Flavian was a grammarian at the court of King Cunincpert. *HL* 6.7. As for Paul, the evidence is insufficient to state definitively that Paul was educated at Ratchis’ court, but it strongly points in that direction. Goffart, *Narrators*, 335-6; Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, 5: 69-71.
after he had left the court, his comment to Adelperga that he intended to follow-up the Historia Romana with a history “up to our age” might indicate a possible genesis for the project.\textsuperscript{153} We also know based on his epitaph for Arichis in 787 that he maintained some sort of connection with the ducal family even after he left the court, something which I shall later argue shaped his history in important ways.\textsuperscript{154} Given the profound impact that Paul’s history had on other Lombard historians and the conceptions of identity they articulated, it would be fair to say that Arichis’ patronage of Paul was just as important in shaping the southern Lombards’ ethnic trajectory as some of the political actions the duke undertook both prior to and after 774.\textsuperscript{155}

From the above discussions, we can begin to grasp why Benevento was not only able to transition from an autonomous duchy to an independent principality, but also why it came to embrace the political and cultural legacy of the Lombard Kingdom. Even before the kingdom’s fall in 774, the duchy already had in place all of the important political and socio-economic structures necessary for an independent existence. However, the dukes had also begun to play a significant role in the cultural and religious life of the duchy, offering patronage to important individuals and religious foundations, as well as utilizing cultural and religious symbols to bolster their own prestige. In their efforts to emulate and perhaps even surpass the Lombard kings in terms of political, cultural, and religious prestige, the dukes were not just unknowingly laying the groundwork for Benevento’s post-774 independence, but also the belief that they were the best suited to take the kings’ place.

\textsuperscript{153} Neff, p.13, l.28; \textit{Italy and Her Invaders}, 5: 74.
\textsuperscript{154} See p. 208-10.
\textsuperscript{155} See chapters 3 and 4.
Out of the Shadows

On the eve of 774, Benevento was at the apex of its fortunes. Despite the brief moments of internal turmoil it had experienced throughout the eighth century, the duchy still retained its traditional autonomy and its capital was increasingly becoming a significant cultural and religious center in the Mediterranean. This did not occur in opposition to the Lombard kings, but rather in imitation of them. Although the dukes were, in essence, kings in all but name, they still implicitly recognized their place within the Lombard political hierarchy and more explicitly their membership in the Lombard gens. While such connections might on the surface seem to be quite tenuous, we should not underestimate just how strong and profound they actually were nor the degree to which they helped to shape the duchy’s development. Although the Lombard Kingdom’s fall would be the end of its few, tangible political connections with Benevento, the symbolic connections between the two would endure and become even more pronounced in the years that followed.
Following in the Footsteps of Kings

The Lombard Kingdom fell in June of 774. For all the prolonged violence and conflict that had accompanied its establishment, the kingdom’s end was a relatively short and muted affair. Having failed to convince Desiderius to relinquish the territories he had promised the papacy and to stop interfering in Frankish affairs,¹ Charlemagne led his armies into Italy, swiftly overran the Lombard defenses along the Alpine passes, and besieged the royal capital of Pavia. With famine and disease taking their toll, Desiderius ultimately chose to surrender to the Frankish king. This did not save him or his kingdom, however, as he was subsequently stripped of his crown and exiled to a monastery in Francia, while his son and co-king, Adelchis, fled to Constantinople. No other Lombard would hold the kingship, as Charlemagne assumed the title of rex Langobardorum for himself.² Although this did not lead to an immediate and radical alteration of the political, social, and cultural life of northern Italy, in the decades that followed, the Lombards found themselves increasingly excluded from positions of secular power. Surprisingly, this does not appear to have provoked a sustained degree of high-level political resistance nor do we find evidence of widespread ethnic tensions with Franks, something which has given many scholars pause. As Paolo Delogu has commented, “The failure of the Lombard kingdom against the Franks raises many questions. Above all, the fact throws doubt on the

¹ Desiderius had attempted to pressure Pope Hadrian into recognizing Charlemagne’s nephews as kings of Francia, which would have granted them a claim to their father’s half of the kingdom. LP 97.23-9.
political cohesion and moral determination of the Lombards at a moment at which they should have been defending their own survival as a sovereign people.”

The political and cultural trajectory of the Duchy of Benevento post-774 stands in contrast to this. As I shall discuss, despite the potential benefits of seeking closer relations with the Franks and, conversely, the challenges that accompanied remaining independent, Arichis II and the Beneventan elite eventually chose to pursue the latter path even in the face of significant political, military, and cultural pressure from both the papacy and the Franks. Despite these pressures, in the end, Benevento would retain its independence. I would argue that the actions of Arichis II were key to this, as he not only actively resisted outside attempts to take over the duchy through military and diplomatic means, but also utilized significant ethnic symbols and rhetoric to leverage his people’s ethnic identity as a source of political cohesion. His most notable action in this regard was assuming the title of *princeps gentis Langobardorum* in the immediate aftermath of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall. More than just implicitly challenging Charlemagne and, later, his son Pippin’s claims to being the new rulers of the Lombard *gens* in Italy, this title was part of a broader argument made by Arichis to persuade his own people that it was he who was best suited to replace the Lombard kings as the leader of the *gens*. He further attempted to bolster such claims by issuing new additions to the Lombard law codes, transforming the city of Salerno into a second capital, and frequently employing ethnic rhetoric in his charters. I shall examine each of these actions in turn in order to assess their underlying

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political and ethnic symbolism, as well as the potential impact they had in shaping the ethnic
atitudes and identity of the southern Lombards.

In addition, Arichis’ efforts helped to foster a new political and cultural climate within
the principality, one in which other Lombards sought to explore and define more clearly their
collective values, practices and history, as well as maintain firmer distinctions between
themselves and other groups. I shall identify and analyze significant examples of southern
Lombard elites pushing back against outside political and cultural pressures, whether it was
aristocrats holding firm in their support for Arichis’ heir, Grimoald III, while he was held captive
in Francia or Lombard monks attempting to maintain distinct religious practices such as the
Beneventan chant. While not all of these efforts were directly related to the princes’ efforts to
maintain their political independence, they indicate that, in addition to potentially being receptive
to the types of arguments being made by the Beneventan princes, the southern Lombard elite
were also increasingly interested in maintaining political and cultural distinctions between
themselves and the peninsula’s other groups.

This would have far reaching consequences, which I shall explore in both this chapter
and subsequent ones. In the short-term, the growing emphasis on maintaining ethnic continuity
and distinctions helped to fuel resistance to both Frankish and papal attempts to take control of
the principality at the end of the eighth century. In the long-term, these efforts planted the seeds
for a much deeper awakening of the southern Lombards’ ethnic and political consciousness, with
both later princes and historians seeking to define more clearly their own sense of identity and
linking it to the continued survival of the Beneventan principality. As I shall discuss at the end
of this chapter, memories of Arichis and his son, Grimoald, in particular, would play an
important role in this process, with both being cast as saviors of the gens and the rightful heirs to the Lombard Kingdom’s legacy in the latter half of the ninth century. In the view of a ninth-century prince, Arichis was not just a ruler in the mould of his ducal predecessors, but was also “following in the footsteps of kings.”

*Sine Grave Proelio*

The fall of the Lombard Kingdom did not lead to an immediate military confrontation with either the Franks or the papacy. Insofar as we know, Arichis was not even involved in Desiderius’ disputes with the Roman popes throughout the 760s/70s nor the defense of the Lombard Kingdom in 773/4, though I would suggest that this was due more to concern over potential raids from Naples and events taking place in Spoleto than it was total indifference to the kingdom’s struggles or opposition to Desiderius and Adelchis. As it stands, the conquest of the Lombard Kingdom left Arichis and his people in a rather uncertain position. Although Charlemagne made no immediate moves against Benevento, Pope Hadrian consistently pressed him to intervene in the duchy in order to secure the territories (namely, around Capua) which King Pippin had allegedly promised the papacy. While there was no guarantee that

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4 *LL Adel.* Prologue, p. 308.
6 Arichis had successfully attacked Naples in 765, something which he celebrated by adding the phrase, “Dns Victoria” to his coinage. Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, 70, 575.
7 On this, I disagree with Cilento. Although we know little about Arichis’ relationship with Desiderius, it should be pointed out that he was both Desiderius’ son-in-law and had also granted land to the royal foundation of S. Salvatore in 772, which was an unprecedented action for a Beneventan duke. *CDL* 3.1.44; Cilento, *Le origini della signoria capuana nella Longobardia minore*, 73.
8 The only extant Frankish document which officially acknowledges these claims is the so-called *Ludovicianum*, a treaty signed between Louis the Pious and Pope Paschal I. There are, however, numerous mentions of these claims in both Hadrian’s letters and biography. For the claims and thorough overview of the evidence, see *LP* 97.42; Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter*, 138-83.
Charlemagne would ever take action on these claims, the southern Lombards could not be certain of that nor that they would not get drawn into some other conflict with the Frankish king at some point in the future, particularly if Adelchis persuaded the Byzantine Empire to support his efforts to reclaim the Lombard Kingdom. Thus, Arichis and the Beneventan elite at least had to weigh whether it was better to pursue closer relations with the Franks in order to obtain some sort mutually beneficial arrangement (possibly at the expense of Benevento’s independence) or to maintain a firm degree of separation from them.

The former arrangement would not necessarily have been impossible to obtain. Although Charlemagne had swiftly conquered the Lombard Kingdom and stripped Desiderius of his crown, he still allowed the Lombard dukes to maintain their lands and titles so long as they remained loyal to him. Admittedly, he would eventually replace them with Franks and other officials from north of the Alps in the decades that followed the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, but this was a very gradually process, usually occurring after the dukes died. Moreover, we should not assume that, in Arichis’ particular case, submission would have also entailed a curtailment of his power or the duchy’s traditional autonomy. If we look at Benevento’s neighbor, the Duchy of Spoleto, it appears that after submitting to Charlemagne in 779, Duke Hildeprand was permitted the same degree of autonomy that his predecessors possessed, as he continued to issue

9 For a summation and discussion of this and other changes that accompanied the Frankish conquest, see Giuseppe Albertoni, L’Italia carolingia (Rome: La Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1997), 22-33; Delogu, “Lombard and Carolingian Italy,” 303-10; Joachim Fischer, Königturn, Adel und Kirche im Königreich Italien, 774-875 (Bonn: R. Schwarzbald, 1965); Eduard Hlawitschka, Franken, Alemannen, Bayern und Burgunder in Oberitalien, 774-962: zum Verständnis der Fränkischen Königsherrschaft in Italien (Freiburg im Breisgau: E. Albert, 1960); Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 47-63.
his own charters and even occasionally harassed the papacy without any apparent consequences.\textsuperscript{10}

Arichis was not the only one who could have potentially gained from such an arrangement. Despite the loss of their independence, many northern elites actually benefitted from the Frankish conquest in the years following. For example, Charlemagne gradually introduced immunities into Italy, granting them to a number of major monasteries in northern and central Italy, which benefitted both the monastic communities and those who had donated lands to them.\textsuperscript{11} He also invited some Lombard scholars to his court such as Paul the Deacon, Peter of Pisa, and Paulinus of Aquileia. Paulinus is particularly noteworthy, as he was also the recipient of a grant involving lands that had been confiscated in the aftermath of a rebellion in 775/6,\textsuperscript{12} something which illustrates both the potential rewards of loyalty and the perils of defiance.

Indeed, there were considerable risks to remaining independent, particularly in the event of a military confrontation with the Franks or some other outside group such as the Byzantines or the Arabs. For all their past autonomy, the southern Lombards had still often relied on the support of other Lombard leaders to help them fulfill their territorial ambitions and safeguard them from external threats, most notably, the Byzantine invasion of 663.\textsuperscript{13} As we observed in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[10] ARF 779; West, “Charlemagne's Involvement,” 343-4.
\item[13] HL 5.7. See p.84-5.
\end{footnotes}
the last chapter, they had also been largely unable to resist royal military and political pressure from the Lombard kings on the few occasions when it was applied, including in 757/8 when Desiderius overthrew Duke Liutprand and replaced him with Arichis. While it is true that there were other factors involved in these particular situations that may have weakened the southern Lombards’ ability and/or desire to resist, it is equally true that Charlemagne could potentially bring far greater pressure to bear than the Lombard kings in the event of a conflict. The Franks had, after all, soundly defeated the Lombard armies on at least three separate occasions and swiftly crushed a rebellion led by the Duke of Friuli in 775/6. We should also not overlook the fact that they commanded considerably greater economic resources, with even lower-level Frankish aristocrats being wealthier than many Lombard aristocrats, the Lombard kings included. Thus, even a limited conflict with the Franks would have severely strained Benevento’s military and economic resources.

This was not the only challenge. Even absent a confrontation with the Franks, Arichis could only hope to remain independent so long as he enjoyed the continued support of his own people. Although one might assume that two decades of conflict and the loss of the Lombard Kingdom would have created sufficient antipathy to unite the Beneventan elite against the Franks and to reject any papal claims to Beneventan territory, we must remember that Arichis’ immediate predecessor and some of his followers may have actually sought to align themselves

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14 See p. 99.
with both groups after the initial Frankish invasions in the 750s. Anyone among the Beneventan aristocracy who opposed Arichis could potentially seek to do the same in the hopes of both securing the ducal title and other benefits. Such a scenario is, of course, purely hypothetical, but not implausible as we have examples of it occurring in both the Duchy of Spoleto and the Lombard Kingdom.

In addition to the blandishments they offered to various groups and their own military and economic superiority, one of the reasons why the Franks were able to conquer and maintain control of the Lombard Kingdom without enduring a series of protracted and bloody conflicts is that many among the Lombard elite were either unable or unwilling to set aside their internal political differences in order to mount a strong opposition. It is often thought, for example, that some of Desiderius’ own dukes defected to the Frankish side in 773/4, particularly those who were connected with the family of Ratchis and Aistulf. Later Lombard authors from both the north and the south were also convinced that the end of the Lombard Kingdom had been brought about, in part, with the connivance of some of their own people. This was perhaps wishful thinking on their part, but we do know that Hildeprand of Spoleto took advantage of the tumult surrounding the Frankish invasion to usurp the ducal title and swear allegiance to Pope Hadrian. According to the papal biographer, he and his followers even went so far as to cut their hair in

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16 We know, for instance, that Arichis had already foiled one plot against his life. CSS 1.1.17.
18 Andr. 4; Chron. Sal. 9.
the Roman style, an act which has been aptly described as a “sort of renunciation of national identity.”

Hildeprand’s actions, and, indeed, the actions of many Lombards both during and after the Frankish conquest, raise questions not just about the Lombards’ political cohesion, but also about how well-defined their ethnic identity was and whether or not it significantly informed their political identity/actions. After all, one way of gauging the political importance and overall strength of a group’s sense of identity is to assess how they react to external military and political pressures, particularly the efforts they make to maintain political and cultural boundaries between themselves and other groups even in instances where they have been politically subjugated. While it is true that the dukes of Spoleto had a different sort of relationship with the Lombard Kingdom, it was not drastically different from the one that Beneventan dukes had. Even if we confine our attention to just the northern Lombards, we still only find limited evidence of consistent efforts being made to maintain political and cultural separation. Although there was one major rebellion against Charlemagne’s rule in 775/6, it appears to have been mainly limited to the northeastern region of Italy and swiftly suppressed.

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19 *LP* 97.32-3.
21 For a discussion of this in the context of Late Antiquity, see Peter Heather, “Disappearing and Reappearing Tribes,” in *Strategies of Distinction*, 95-111.
never to be followed up.\textsuperscript{22} As none other than Paul the Deacon characterized it, the conquest of the Lombard Kingdom had occurred “without serious struggle \textit{sine grave proelio}.”\textsuperscript{23}

There are, of course, other ways in which tensions could have manifested themselves aside from military resistance, but as I noted earlier, we tend to find more examples of Lombards working with the Franks rather than in opposition to them.\textsuperscript{24} Admittedly, our perception of this is perhaps somewhat skewed by the fact that nearly all of our accounts of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and its aftermath are written from Frankish and Roman perspectives,\textsuperscript{25} but we should not necessarily interpret this as evidence that they had simply suppressed all dissent either through the threat of political reprisal or the persuasion of patronage. Instead, this silence among the Lombards could indicate a measure of apathy towards or even approval of the political changes that had taken place.\textsuperscript{26} Such a notion is perhaps difficult to countenance because it is generally assumed that the aim of any ethnic group is to maintain political rule and social dominance, particularly when it is threatened by another group.\textsuperscript{27} However, this depends on there already being a certain degree of ethnic cohesion among the group, as well as a firm

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\textsuperscript{22} Andr., 4; ARF, 776; CC 57; Neff, 11. Although Hadrian accused the dukes of Benevento, Spoleto, Tuscany, and Friuli of conspiring together to overthrow Charlemagne, based on what we know from our highly limited (and predominantly Frankish) sources, only the Duke of Friuli actually rebelled. For the most comprehensive account of this rebellion and its consequences, see Krahwinkler, \textit{Friaul im Frühmittelalter}, 119-43.
\textsuperscript{23} Paul the Deacon, \textit{Liber de episcopis Mettensibus}, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS II (Hanover: Hahn, 1829), p.265, l.15.
\textsuperscript{24} See above, p. 141-2.
\textsuperscript{25} Stefano Gasparri, “The Fall of the Lombard Kingdom: Facts, Memory and Propaganda,” in 774, \textit{ipotesi su una transizione}, 56-61. Gasparri has attempted to uncover a Lombard perspective on events through an analysis of language used in Tuscan charters and \textit{placita}, as well as the “Lombard” recension of Stephen II’s biography. However, the evidence he presents is very much open to interpretation.
\textsuperscript{26} Berto, for example, has speculated that the pro-Carolingian history found in the \textit{Codex Gothanus} was written by a Lombard, rather than a Frank. I am skeptical of the arguments put forth concerning this source’s authorship, but do acknowledge the possibility that, at least by 810 (when the work is thought to have been composed), there existed a pro-Carolingian faction of Lombards. Berto, “Remembering Old and New Rulers: Lombards and Carolingians in Carolingian Italian Memory,” 28-9.
\textsuperscript{27} Eriksen, \textit{Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives}, 6.
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linkage between their ethnic and political identities. While I would not go so far as to claim that the Lombards were not a distinct ethnic group, they may not have had as well-defined an identity as one might assume, let alone one which served as a driving force for collective political action. Indeed, if we look at our pre-774 sources from the Lombard Kingdom, it is rather striking just how rarely ethnicity and ethnic distinctions were mentioned, let alone emphasized in political and cultural discourse. As Walter Pohl has observed, our Lombard texts do not offer a “restrictive definition of who is a Lombard and who is not.”

Royal charters, for example, never attached ethnic labels to either the kings or others involved in the transactions, something which contrasts significantly with charters from other kingdoms around this period. We also find few references to Romans or other groups in Lombard law. Instead, eighth-century legal practice appears to have increasingly blurred ethnic and legal distinctions among groups, as those living within the kingdom could conduct transactions using either Lombard or Roman law regardless of their own ethnic background.

As for cultural discourse, for a people who had produced a significant number of documents and demonstrated a high degree of literacy for the time period in which they lived, the Lombards have left us with surprisingly little literature, let alone works which might have

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29 This significantly contrasts with other kingdoms. For a quick and comprehensive overview of royal titulature in charters and other sources from the early medieval kingdoms, see Gillett, “Was Ethnicity Politicized in the Earliest Medieval Kingdoms?,” 85-122. For a comparison with the Franks, Wolfram, *Intitulatio I.: Lateinische Königs- und Fürstentitel bis zum Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts*, 90-155.
32 The best overview of Lombard documents and the question of literacy in Lombard society can be found in Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, C. 568-774.
directly or indirectly promoted the achievements of either the *gens* or their kingdom prior to 774. Hagiography produced during the kingdom’s existence, for example, was almost wholly concerned with local saints and rarely made any mention of the Lombards at all. Even histories were few and far between, with the *Origo Gentis* being the only example of a Lombard-written history produced prior to 774. However, the text itself was largely concerned with the Lombards’ pre-Italian affairs, rather than their achievements in Italy. The Lombards would have to wait until after their kingdom fell for someone to write a work on par with those written by Gregory of Tours or Bede, but as I shall argue in the next chapter, this text was much more a product of Benevento’s post-774 political and cultural climate.

To my mind, this lack of emphasis on identity and political rule as a fundamental expression of it at least partially explains why the Lombard Kingdom fell in the manner it did and also highlights one of the potential challenges that Arichis and his people would face, even absent a confrontation with the Franks. As I articulated in my introduction, ethnicity is, fundamentally, a dialogue between and among peoples about who they are, what they value, how they should behave and who they are not. Although we do not always have access to this dialogue at every level of society, written sources can at least enable us to gauge its intensity and also themselves play a role in shaping these identities, providing subsequent generations with rhetoric, imagery, and models of conduct with which they can describe and judge their own

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34 Everett, “The Hagiography of Lombard Italy,” 54. Paoli has suggested that, at least in the case of Spoletan hagiography, the Lombard past may have even been subjected to a sort of *damnatio memoriae* in order to facilitate the duchy’s integration into Franco-Roman reorganization of central Italy. Paoli, “Tradizioni agiografiche dei ducati di Spoleto e Benevento,” 297.
35 See p. 15-6.
people. Of equal importance, a strong emphasis on identity can also help to establish both strong political and ethnic boundaries between groups. While I shall not claim that strong ethnic self-definition is essential for political rule or maintaining independence, it often strengthens the connection between ethnic identity and these things, creating a sort of “national” identity in which ethnic identity is utilized as a politically integrative force by the elite and political rule itself serves as an essential expression/privilege of one’s own ethnic identity.\footnote{Eriksen, \textit{Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives}, 6.} It also helps to prevent the dissolution of identity and encourages a strong yearning to maintain political independence, sometimes instilling in people a sufficient degree of political cohesion to withstand even significant outside political and military pressure.

These pressures can also sometimes act a catalyst for the creation of a more defined, politicized sense of identity. This is exactly what would happen in Benevento. Whereas in the Lombard Kingdom, there was a distinct lack of emphasis on identity both before and after 774, as we shall see, it became far more central to Beneventan political and cultural discourse both in this period and over the course of the following centuries. This would gradually create a more defined sense of identity among the southern Lombards, one that was deeply intertwined with and helped to fuel their struggles to preserve their independence against not only the Franks, but other groups as well. However, it was still not a given that Benevento would take this route. Although the southern Lombards’ prior autonomy and heightened sense of ethnic awareness would have certainly made it easier to go in this direction, they still could have just as easily followed the same path as the other Lombard duchies, particularly Spoleto.
This is where the efforts undertaken by Arichis II and other Beneventan elites would play a crucial role. Although Benevento’s newfound independence presented a number of potential internal and external challenges, it also provided the southern Lombards with greater flexibility in setting the terms of their engagement with other groups and determining their own political and ethnic trajectory. Particularly for those elites, both in the south and north, who did not wish to be ruled by the Franks and rejected the possibility of greater cultural assimilation with them, Benevento could serve as a safe haven in which they could maintain and even strengthen the political and cultural distinctions between themselves and other groups. Ultimately, this was the direction that both they and Arichis decided to move in. To that end, let us first look at how Arichis responded to the end of the Lombard Kingdom and then how this both influenced and was influenced by the actions of the Beneventan elites.

_Culmen Bardorum_

As Duke of Benevento, Arichis had already wielded many of the same powers as the Lombard kings, but, as I argued in the last chapter, he and his predecessors still occupied a recognizably subordinate position within the Lombard political hierarchy. Now, with the other Lombard dukes having submitted to Charlemagne’s rule (at least temporarily) and the kings in exile, Arichis was well-positioned to assume a symbolically more important role within the Lombard _gens_. Having already spent much of his reign attempting to emulate and compete with the rulers of Pavia and Constantinople for political and cultural prestige with his building projects, patronage of scholars, and translation of saints’ relics, we should not doubt that such an opportunity would have appealed to the duke. To that end, Arichis undertook a number of highly
symbolic actions to persuade his people that he, rather than Charlemagne, was the rightful successor to the Lombard kings. In doing so, he offered a new vision of the southern Lombards’ future, one which emphasized the need to maintain their ethnic identity and practices.

Less than five months after the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, Arichis issued a number of charters to S. Sophia, all bearing the intitulatio “Domnus Arichis piissimus atque excellentissimus princeps gentis Langobardorum.” Henceforth, the Duchy of Benevento would be known as the Principality of Benevento. From an administrative standpoint, this change was largely symbolic as we do not find evidence of any significant adjustments in administrative practice, organization, or personnel in court-issued charters. Some privately-issued Beneventan charters even continued to refer to Arichis by the title of dux well into the 780s. We should not, however, underestimate the symbolic significance of this change for the Beneventan elite. The intitulatio within the post-774 Beneventan charters were unmistakably imitating the royal intitulatio, as Arichis used the royal expression, vir excellentissimus, rather than the ducal vir gloriosissimus. Later accounts also alleged that Arichis had himself crowned and anointed in a ceremony conducted by the bishop of Benevento. The lateness of these accounts coupled with some of the divergences from the ceremonies held at Pavia make it an open question as to whether or not this actually occurred, but it does seem clear that, at least in

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37 CSS 1.2, p.337.
39 CDL 5.12-16 (Benevento)
40 “Piissimus” was not regularly employed by the Lombard kings, but it would be attached to Charlemagne in Grimoald III’s early charter, indicating that it too had royal connotations. Garms-Cornides, “Die langobardischen Fürstentitel (774-1077),” 367-8; Kaminsky, “Zum sinnehalt des Princeps - Titels Arichis’ II. von Benevent,” 87-8.
41 Chron Sal. 9-11; CMC 1.9.
42 Gasparri has argued that crowning and anointing are not consistent with what little we know about Pavian traditions (Paul, for example, only mentions the king being handed a staff). Both he and Belting note, however, that
other matters, Arichis was keen to imitate royal practice as closely as possible. His decision to emend and add to the Lombard law codes, for example, was a significant break with prior tradition. As we noted last chapter, although the Beneventan dukes appear to have handled the adjudication of disputes within their own borders, they never were so bold as to issue their own additions and emendations to the Lombard law codes, seemingly recognizing that this power was reserved exclusively for the king.

Given this, why did Arichis choose to assume the title of prínceps rather than rex? External political considerations were probably one significant factor behind this, as there were already two individuals who claimed the title of rex Langobardorum: Charlemagne and Adelchis. Much as Arichis might have aspired to emulate the Lombard kings, he probably also recognized that assuming the title of rex, be it rex Langobardorum or rex Beneventani, had the potential to provoke negative reactions from both his brother-in-law and the Frankish king, potentially threatening Benevento’s independence as a consequence. Charlemagne would have been the most proximate threat, but we should not discount the danger of alienating Adelchis. Whatever Arichis’ relationship with his brother-in-law at this point, Adelchis still held


\[\text{Azzara, “Spoleto e Benevento e il regno longobardo d'Italia,” 122-23; von Falkenhausen, “I longobardi meridionale,” 258.}\]


\[\text{Garms-Cornides, “Die langobardischen Fürstentitel (774-1077),” 368-9; Kaminsky, “Zum sinngehalt des Princeps - Titels Arichis’ II. von Benevent,” 87.}\]

\[\text{Despite Arichis’ assumption of the title of prínceps, our Frankish sources uniformly refer to him and his successors by the title of dux. See, for example, ARF 778, p.74, 788, p.82, 818, p.149, CC App. 2; Poupardin, Les institutions politiques et administratives des principautés lombardes de l'Italie méridionale (IXe-XIe siècles), 6.}\]
considerable value as a potential ally against Charlemagne and the papacy while he remained in exile at Constantinople. Pope Hadrian, in fact, accused Arichis of engaging in secret negotiations with the Byzantine court in attempt to bring Adelchis back, as well as encouraging Neapolitan attacks on papal territory. Some of these accusations may have been baseless, intended only to spur Charlemagne into action against Benevento so that he could fulfill his supposed promise to grant some of the principality’s territory to the papacy, but it does seem likely that Arichis had at least some contact with the imperial court given that Adelchis and the Byzantines invaded shortly after his death in 787.

The other complication with claiming kingship over the Lombards is that the title itself had probably assumed a significant territorial definition in the two centuries they had been settled in Italy. Since the mid-seventh century, the Lombard Kingdom’s territory and political capital had remained largely stable, with the kings residing at Pavia and passing along the kingdom undivided to whomever took the throne next. As a consequence, the kings may have been viewed not just as the political leaders of the gens, but also as the rulers of northern Italy and the chief residents of Pavia. We can see this point emphasized in Paul’s discussion of Grimoald I’s reign, in which he relates how the king was abandoned by his dukes because they believed that he had despoiled the palace and was planning to return southwards permanently, even though Grimoald was a Lombard and Benevento was, at least during his reign, ostensibly a part of the kingdom. Given this and Benevento’s own complicated relationship with the Lombard Kingdom, it would have been very difficult for Arichis to plausibly claim, even with

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47 CC 64, 83, App. 1.
48 CC 80.
49 HL 5.7.
his own people, that the kingship and the kingdom were now based exclusively in the south. More to the point, there would have been very little incentive for him to make such a claim. Having already spent the better part of twenty years attempting to transform his court and capital into the political, religious, and cultural equal of Pavia, not to mention wielding power largely independent of the Lombard kings, Arichis would have gained almost nothing by staking even a titular claim to the north, let alone attempting to reconquer it. Better instead to acknowledge the end of Lombard rule there and to focus his people’s attention on ensuring the survival and future prosperity of its spiritual successor.

*Princeps* was perfectly suited for this to this task. The title itself originated in ancient Rome where it had been used by the emperors, and was still a significant honorific that carried weight among the imperial bureaucracy of the Byzantine Empire and those influenced by it. The Lombards in particular seemed to strongly associate it with rulership.\(^{50}\) Liutprand had referred to himself as a “*catholicus princeps*” in the prologue of his first set of laws,\(^ {51}\) while King Ratchis used the title, “*precellentissimus et eximius princeps*.”\(^ {52}\) More notably, Paul the Deacon actually referred to Arichis as the *princeps* in the preface to his Roman history and to the *principatum Beneventi* in another letter to Adelperga, both of which were written *before* 774.\(^ {53}\) Given Arichis’ own considerable education and his knowledge of Byzantine political and cultural practices, he may have viewed it as a suitable compromise between assuming the title of *rex* and

\(^{50}\) Kaminsky, “Zum sinngehalt des Princeps - Titels Arichis' II. von Benevent,” 82-7.
\(^{51}\) LL Liut. Prologue, 1st Year, p.138.
\(^{52}\) LL Ratch. Prologue, p.264.
\(^{53}\) Neff, 2-3. This is almost akin to Alcuin’s description of Charlemagne’s kingdom as an “*imperiale regnum*” in 796/7. Alcuin, *MGH Ep. IV*, 121. p.177, 1.2.
remaining just a duke.⁵⁴ There were also important internal considerations, as the end of the Lombard Kingdom did not also lead to the immediate abolishment of the ducal title. After all, a number of Lombard dukes continued to serve faithfully under Charlemagne, including the Duke of Spoleto. Moreover, as I have previously argued, the original *intitulatio* of the Beneventan dukes was an acknowledgement of their membership within the Lombard *gens* and political hierarchy.⁵⁵ Now that Charlemagne had taken control of that political hierarchy and had secured the loyalties of at least some dukes, it was imperative that Arichis choose something which would separate him from it.⁵⁶

As quick as he was to separate himself from the existing political hierarchy, it was not Arichis’ intention to renounce his membership within the Lombard *gens*. If anything, he placed an even greater emphasis on his Lombard identity in both his rhetoric and his actions. Although he had adjusted the *intitulatio* of his charters from *vir gloriosissimus* to *vir excellentissimus* in imitation of the Lombard kings, he did not follow suit when it came to using the title of *Flavius*. Instead, much as his ducal predecessors had done, he continued to refer to himself in charters as a ruler of the *gens Langobardorum* and went even further by adding in prayer clauses which had hitherto been absent from Beneventan charters and used only sparingly in royal ones. The most common formulation used was “*pro redemptione anime mee seu pro salvatione gentis nostre et patrie,*” which was made in reference to both the immediate act of granting patronage and Arichis’ involvement in founding the church of S. Sophia.⁵⁷ Note the use of both *gens* and

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⁵⁵ See p. 112-5.
⁵⁷ CSS 1.2, p.337
patria, which makes it clear that the prince’s acts of patronage were not just intended to benefit the principality, but also the members of the gens who were both living within and, perhaps, even outside of it. Likewise, S. Sophia was now portrayed as almost being a national shrine for the Lombards. Such rhetoric is significant because it suggests an expanded and elevated role for Arichis within the gens as well a stronger sacral dimension to his rule, with him assuming a greater measure of responsibility for his people’s general welfare and salvation than his ducal predecessors. The fact that the language used here is also very similar to that employed by Liutprand in his law codes would seem to affirm this, as would the content of Arichis’ own laws, which dealt with such issues as the selling of Christians to “pagan peoples” (i.e. the Arabs) and formalizing punishments for those who committed homicide against monks.

However, the laws were intended to do more than just burnish Arichis’ spiritual authority within the gens. Since they were first promulgated in the mid-seventh century, the Lombards’ law codes had arguably been one of their most important political and ethnic symbols. The law code itself may have originally been intended to serve as a strong force for ethnic and political cohesion for the heterogeneous mix of tribes that that had followed Alboin into Italy, as Rothari heavily emphasized the ancient nature of the laws to portray his people as a cohesive unit (an exercitus), the need to “defend themselves and their territory,” and to “work against enemies.”

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60 LL Ar. 4, 13.
61 Paolo Delogu, “Kingship and the Shaping of the Lombard Body Politic,” in The Langobards Before the Frankish Conquest, 257-60; Everett, Literacy in Lombard Italy, C. 568-774, 166; Pohl, “Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy,” 16.
He even stipulated that foreign-born warriors wanting to live within the kingdom had to agree to live and raise their children under Lombard law rather than their own. While later kings would not place so strong an emphasis on these sorts of ethnic distinctions in actual legal practice, they still continued to emphasize the laws’ importance as a symbol of their own royal authority and an enduring link to their past. As Aistulf succinctly described it, the Lombards “had preserved the dispositions of their ancestors” and it was within king’s power to add to “the edicts instituted by our predecessors, the ancient kings of the Lombards.”

By promulgating new laws, Arichis was not simply claiming a royal privilege; he was also claiming the political and legal legacy of the Lombard kings and the Lombard Kingdom for himself and his people, as well as strongly implying that authority over the Lombard gens had shifted definitively from Pavia to Benevento. One of Arichis’ successors, Adelchis, would make this case explicitly in 866, arguing that by “stepping forth in imitation of his ancestors” and issuing new laws, Arichis was “following in the footsteps of kings.” It is unknown if Arichis himself ever made these specific claims, but at the very minimum, this would have sent a clear signal to his people that he intended to continue preserve and even expand upon their ethnic traditions. It was also an implicit challenge to Charlemagne’s claims to authority over the gens, serving as a counterpoint to the Frankish king’s own attempts to preserve and add to the laws through his capitularies.

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63 LL Roth. 367.
64 See p. 146.
65 LL Aist. Prologue, p. 279.
66 LL Adel. Prologue, p.306-8. Unfortunately, we lack a prologue for Arichis’ code so it is impossible to know just how much Adelchis’ own rhetoric was influenced by his predecessor.
In addition to the changes he made to both his title and the Lombard laws, Arichis also continued to rely on more traditional strategies as a means of illustrating his elevated status, namely, patronage of religious foundations and building projects. Much like his predecessors, Arichis continued to engage in patronage with all of the local monasteries, but we witness some changes in the patterns of patronage which were perhaps intended to highlight his new status. Whereas his predecessors’ grants had been comprised of a mix of donations to laypersons and religious foundations, both Arichis and Grimoald’s appear to have been made almost entirely to religious foundations, as we only know of two grants being made to laypersons, both of which took place at some point during Grimoald III’s reign and are referenced solely in other charters. Given the monastic provenance of our records, this is not completely unusual, but it is striking that we also only have two instances of requests being made by a court officials, a practice which was very prevalent prior to 774 and after 806. Royal charters, on the other hand, rarely featured requests from individuals and, at least during Desiderius’ reign, had been directed to religious foundations. Given the possibility that Arichis had already imitated the king in other areas (most notably, by appointing his own relatives as the abbesses of S. Salvatore in Alife and S. Sophia) and even had one of his own donations to S. Salvatore in Brescia confirmed by Adelchis, it is quite possible that he was aware of this and sought to copy it for his own use.

68 The difficulty with dating some of our grants is that the very first document in the Chronicon Sanctae Sophiae (CSS 1.1) is a summation of grants issued, rather than a copy of an actual charter. Some of these donations may have been made in the period between June and November of 774, while others may have taken place prior to the Lombard Kingdom’s fall. See Reg. It. Mer. p.202-77.
69 CSS 3.6; CV 1.36.
70 CSS 3.6; CMC, 1.18; Gatt. Acc. I, p.18-9.
71 For Desiderius’ charters, see CDL 3.1.31, 33, 35-44.
72 CDL 3.1.44.
Aside from these changes, it is worth noting that the twenty-two grants issued by Arichis to S. Sophia in November of 774 represent the single largest set of donations made by any Beneventan ruler that we are aware of. While it is quite possible that he had given some lands to the monastery prior to that, the timing and sheer number of these grants was clearly intended to serve as a visible demonstration of Arichis’ wealth and power and may have also coincided with his assumption of the title of princeps. Of equal interest, these grants contain the first evidence we have for confiscations taking place on a significant scale in Benevento, as there are at least fifteen references to property that had been confiscated for various offenses including being held without the prince’s consent, being obtained through false documents, or homicide and theft. It is difficult to ascertain whether this represents a change in evidence or a change in practice, as we cannot even be certain how many of these confiscations took place after 774, but at least in comparison to both his predecessors’ and successors’ extant charters, Arichis appears to have been more aggressive in exercising control over the principality’s lands. I would suggest that if this does indeed represent a genuine change in practice after 774, it was the result of Arichis no longer having to exercise power under any legal constraints. In theory, both fines and lands confiscated according to Lombard law were to go to the king, rather than the dukes, and while it is quite probable that Arichis and his predecessors had already claimed that royal privilege for themselves, as we saw with the long-running dispute between Gisulf II’s followers

73 CSS 1.1 is actually a summation of sixty-nine grants which had possibly been made previously to the monastery.
74 CSS 1.1.5, 11, 22, 36, 48, 1.2.
75 CSS 1.1.20, 38, 56, 1.12, 18.
76 CSS 1.1.17, 19, 25, 1.16.
77 Martin et al. date at least 10 of these to sometime between Mar. 758 and Nov. 774. See Reg. It. Mer. 202-6
and San Vincenzo,\textsuperscript{79} there was always the potential that one of the aggrieved parties could seek redress at the royal court. While this only happened one time that we know of and the decision was eventually set aside by Arichis and the parties involved, we should not assume that the potential for royal involvement did not at least act as a check on both his actions and those of his predecessors. After 774, he was under no such constraints, and in a way, confiscations would have served as a clear symbol that he had taken the place of the Lombard king as the final authority on all legal matters.

One other significant action undertaken by Arichis during this period was to, in essence, re-found the city of Salerno. He not only rebuilt the city’s walls, but also built a new palace complete with its own church.\textsuperscript{80} Strategic and economic considerations undoubtedly played a significant role in this, as the city’s location on the Tyrrhenian coast made it an ideal hub for communications and transportation between the coast and the interior, a port for trade, a potential staging ground for offensives against the Duchy of Naples, a point of entry for an invading Byzantine army led by Adelchis, or even an escape route in the event of a Frankish expedition.\textsuperscript{81} The city was not necessarily intended to serve as a new capital for the principality (all charters from this period were still issued from Benevento and the city still housed Arichis’ major religious sanctuary, S. Sofia),\textsuperscript{82} but it was still symbolically quite significant. Although there had been other ducal residences in towns outside of Benevento, these largely appear to have been

\textsuperscript{79} CDL 5.7 (Benevento), CV 1.69
\textsuperscript{80} Chron. Sal. 17; Neff, 35.
\textsuperscript{82} Delogu, \textit{Mito di una città meridionale (Salerno, secoli VIII-XI)}, 50-1.
temporary residences. Arichis’ construction efforts in Salerno suggest that he not only had something more permanent in mind, but also something which would reflect his newly elevated status and signal the beginning of a new, independent period in the history of Benevento and the Lombards.  

We can see this sentiment reflected in a poem commemorating the city’s reconstruction written by Paul the Deacon, in which he described the city walls as “imitating Rome’s temples.” However, he emphasized that while Rome’s buildings had essentially been purchased through plunder and raised up by pagans, Benevento was built through the efforts of a “Catholic prince” who was “foremost among the Lombards [culmen Bardorum]” and, like Romulus, the “father of his country [pater patriae].” Similar to the prayer clauses of Arichis’ charters, we see here an image of the prince as the chief representative of both his principality and his gens, something which was not present even in Paul’s earlier works praising Arichis. Somewhat strikingly, we also see an attempt to emphasize ethnic distinctions, in this particular case, between the Romans and the Lombards. Far from attempting to link Arichis and the Lombards to the glories of Rome, Paul essentially dismissed the latter as tainted by paganism and immorality, a theme which both he and later Lombard authors would return to repeatedly when discussing the Byzantines (i.e. the eastern Romans). Given the papacy’s attempts to claim portions of Beneventan territory, as well as Arichis’ own philo-Roman/Byzantine tendencies prior to 774, what we observe here is an

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85 Neff, 2-3.
attempt by Paul (perhaps writing on Arichis’ behalf) to create a degree of separation between the prince and these groups, as well as assert Arichis’ political/ethnic superiority over them.

In some respects, the above actions can be viewed as the culmination of the Beneventan dukes’ prior efforts to emulate and perhaps even surpass the Lombards’ kings in terms of political and cultural prestige. However, in the aftermath of 774, they took on an additional degree of significance. Although Benevento had, to this point, largely followed the same political and ethnic trajectory as the Lombard Kingdom, the kingdom’s end might very well have led Arichis and his people in a different direction, whether it was further embracing the court’s philo-Byzantine tendencies or perhaps creating a more localized “Beneventan” identity. Arichis did not take this approach. Instead, his rhetoric and actions, particularly his decision to promulgate new additions to the Lombard laws, signaled to his people that he would continue to embrace the practices and legacy of the Lombard kings, as well as his own identity as a Lombard.

Even as he emphasized Benevento’s connections with the Lombard Kingdom, Arichis also sought to distance himself from its Frankish-led incarnation. Both his rhetoric and actions implicitly challenged Charlemagne’s claims to authority over the Lombard gens and any sort of continuity between the Frankish king’s rule and that of the Lombard kings. Arichis’ goal was not to provoke a conflict with Charlemagne or to lay claim to the kingship of northern Italy, but, rather, to convince his own people that the Lombards’ future lay with principality and that there was indeed a viable alternative to living under Frankish or papal rule. Thus, Arichis’ strong assertions of his identity as a Lombard were more than just declarations of his own personal ethnic affiliation; they were an appeal to his own people to continue embracing their own distinct
identity, to reject any outside influences, and, ultimately, to give their support to him. In essence, he was attempting to link the survival of the gens to his own political survival, and in doing so, instill in his people the sort of ethnic pride and political cohesion that had been lacking in the north.

It has not been uncommon throughout history for political leaders to appeal to their people’s sense of ethnic pride during times of internal and external crisis. However, this was certainly a novel approach for a Lombard political leader to take and, indeed, it very much differentiated Arichis from both his ducal predecessors and the kings he sought to imitate. It should be emphasized, however, that this strategy was not developed without any consideration for how it would be received by Arichis’ people. As we shall discuss in the next section, Arichis was not the only Lombard who was grappling with how best to respond to the kingdom’s fall nor was he the only one increasingly interested in maintaining and sharpening the southern Lombards’ ethnic and political boundaries.

Terra Beneventana

To this point we have primarily focused on how the events of 774 led to an adjustment in Arichis’ political strategies, but among both the monastic communities and the aristocracy, we also find issues of ethnicity and political allegiance being debated and becoming more deeply interconnected. While this process was not necessarily a direct result of Arichis’ actions, it did create an audience that would have potentially been more sympathetic to the sorts of arguments

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he was making and, concurrently, less receptive to any outside political or cultural influences. Over time, this would contribute to the southern Lombards’ gradual political and cultural separation from the rest of the peninsula’s inhabitants, their northern brethren included.

The southern monasteries were especially important in this regard, acting as both a buffer and point of contact between the southern Lombards and other groups living within the peninsula and outside of it. Although Montecassino and San Vincenzo continued to receive princely patronage, they also were increasingly influenced by the Franks and the papacy. To be clear, Montecassino and San Vincenzo only received patronage from Charlemagne in 787 based on our extant charters, but like the northern Italian monasteries, they already had some Frankish members and ties prior to that. They even elected Frankish abbots in the late 770s, though this particular action may not have occurred without stirring up some dissensions. At San Vincenzo, for example, the Frankish abbot, Ambrosius Autpertus, was forced to resign his position after only one year in office. Autpertus’ theological writings and personality may have been the precipitating reasons for this, but his ethnic background and political leanings are sometimes thought to have also played a significant role. Based on his writings and career, it seems clear that Autpertus was at least sympathetic to, if not an outright advocate for, Frankish interests in the region. For example, his biography of San Vincenzo’s founders made no mention of the Beneventan dukes’ role in providing the monastery with its initial patrimony, but did highlight the monastery’s early Frankish connections and influences. Likewise, it has been argued that

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87 Gatt. Hist. I, p.50-1/CSS, p.93-4; CV 1.22
89 Ambrosius Autpertus, Vita sanctorum patrum Paldonis, Tatonis et Tasonis, ed. R. Weber, CCCM 27B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), c.3.
his sermon, *De cupiditate*, was directed at the Beneventan elites and Arichis II,\(^90\) dismissing the importance of their wealth, grand buildings, and past glories, despite, as we have discussed, the growing importance of such things in their own political and ethnic discourse. Such sentiments may have not have gone over well with either the local aristocracy or Autpertus’ own monks.\(^91\)

Tensions continued to build after Autpertus’ resignation. Rather than remaining at the monastery, Autpertus departed for Spoleto where he and a few others stirred up a controversy against Potho, a Lombard who had been elected abbot in 782. According to the papal letter concerning the incident, during the customary prayer for the wellbeing of Charlemagne and his family, Potho allegedly left in the middle of it, but not before insulting the king by saying that, “If it were not for my monastery and the Beneventan land, I would treat him like a dog.”\(^92\) He was also alleged to have imprisoned monks who sought to leave the monastery and make their way to the court of the Frankish king. Once Charlemagne was made aware of these allegations, he brought the matter before Hadrian, who summoned both Autpertus and Potho to Rome to answer the charges. Potho was eventually found innocent of all charges, but died on his way back to San Vincenzo. His successor was a Frank.

This series of incidents has been subjected to considerable scrutiny by scholars seeking to understand what it might tell us about southern Lombard attitudes towards the Franks, the papacy, and Charlemagne during this time period, with some seeing them as evidence of deeper

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\(^91\) “An Admonition Too Far? The Sermon *De cupiditate* by Ambrose Autpertus,” 209-17.

\(^92\) CC 67, p.595, 1.29-30.
ethnic tensions \(^93\) and others arguing that they were simply a product of monastic politics and shaped more by relations between the papacy and the Franks at the time. \(^94\) Both of these interpretations rely heavily on whether or not one thinks that Potho was actually guilty, but my own view is that we ought to focus far more on the manner in which both Charlemagne and Hadrian dealt with this situation rather than the trial’s outcome in order to determine whether or not such tensions actually existed. Even if the story of Potho’s insult is indeed a complete fabrication, \(^95\) the fact that his accusers chose to levy this particular accusation against him rather than something like deviations from accepted theology or moral impropriety suggests that they considered them to be both believable and more likely to elicit a response, something which is confirmed by the rapidity with which Charlemagne and Hadrian reacted. Concerning Charlemagne, as we have noted elsewhere, it is a testament to the importance of monasteries to his political strategies that he brought this matter to the pope’s attention. Although San Vincenzo was outside his direct area of control, he may have viewed the community as an important political and cultural broker which could promote Frankish political interests in the region, particularly given its location on the border between Spoleto and Benevento. \(^96\) This

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incident threatened to undermine that, potentially inflaming tensions between the Lombards and Franks in southern Italy rather than diminishing them. Hadrian also seemed to be cognizant of this. Regardless of whether or not one believes his handling of this incident was motivated by politics or a genuine desire to fulfil his spiritual duties as head of the Roman church, his decision to hold what was essentially a very public trial in Rome and have five Lombard and five Frankish monks swear to the abbot’s innocence suggests that the pope wanted to make a very clear and public point that highlighted the unity between the Franks and Lombards, rather than the divisions among them, as well as perhaps demonstrating to the southern Lombards that his own prior hostility was mainly directed at their leaders, not them as a whole.

Political allegiances and leadership positions were not the only things debated within the monastery walls. The close association between the Franks and the papacy, as well as Charlemagne’s own zeal for liturgical reforms, may have encouraged the introduction of new practices within the southern monasteries. The papacy, in particular, may have applied significant pressure to the monastic communities to adopt these reforms. However, not all of them were welcomed with open arms. One of the most notable controversies was over the type of chant to be used in religious ceremonies. During this period, Gregorian chant became more widely used throughout Italy. However, considerable contention arose over this, particularly in Benevento, which had its own chant that was sung in the churches, monasteries, and on feast days for the city’s patron saints. A poem, which appears in an 11th century collection but may very well have been written in the eighth century (perhaps even by Paul the Deacon), describes

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the two chants as literally being in competition with one another, with two singers engaging in a
singing contest to determine which would be used. The Beneventan singer eventually collapsed
under the strain, but the poem’s author offered a rather sympathetic view to the chant.\footnote{Kelly, \textit{The Beneventan Chant}, 22-5.}

The struggle between Beneventan and Gregorian chant was not directly related to the
southern Lombards’ political struggles with the Franks and the papacy. It does, however,
represent a point at which the cultural boundaries between Benevento and the rest of the
peninsula began to harden, creating a separate cultural sphere for the southern Lombards.
Although Gregorian chant would gradually become dominant chant in southern Italy, the
Beneventan chant would continue to be utilized well into the eleventh century, particularly
during masses for local saints such as S. Benedict, S. Vincent, and the Holy Twelve Brothers.
The latter is particularly noteworthy as it was Arichis who had established the cult in 760.\footnote{Ibid., 11, 63-95.}
Whether or not he or any of his successors played an active role in encouraging the chant’s
continued use is unknown, but as Thomas Forest Kelley has shown, there was a rather strong
correlation between the princes’ fortunes and that of the Beneventan chant, with Gregorian chant
only beginning to take hold as their own political power declined.\footnote{Ibid., 25-40.} This suggests that even if
the princes had absolutely nothing to do with the chant itself, they still helped to create a political
environment in which a distinctly local tradition could survive against a more widely supported
one.

The Beneventan chant was not only the distinctly Beneventan practice that can trace its
origin to this period. This was also the period in which differences began to emerge between the
types of scripts utilized by northern and southern scribes. In northern and central Italy, Carolingian miniscule gradually became the dominant script, whereas southern scribes continued to deploy a type of script that had been traditionally utilized throughout Italy prior to the ninth century. Interestingly, later medieval scribes came to refer to the former script as “Frankish” and the latter as “Lombardic,” suggesting that they were viewed not just as distinct forms of handwriting, but also in ethnic terms. We do not know if scribes from our period viewed them in such terms, but it is noteworthy that even with the continued influx of Franks into the southern monasteries over the following decades, the Beneventan script remained the dominant one. While the choice of script was, as Lowe has argued, likely influenced by whatever the scribes had trained in rather than any political or ethnic considerations, in my view, it still demonstrates the limits of northern influence on the region both during and after this period.

The architectural and artistic evidence we have from this period would also seem to suggest this. Looking specifically at San Vincenzo, although its monastic space might reflect a potential degree of Frankish influence, much of its art and architecture utilized Beneventan styles rather than Frankish ones. For example, a copper inscription found on the façade of a basilica built during the reign of Abbot Joshua may have been directly modelled after a similar one found in Arichis’ chapel in Salerno. The artwork and ornamentation within the basilica was also heavily influenced by Beneventan styles, using early Roman motifs that are not found anywhere

else outside of southern Italy during the early Middle Ages. Other items, such as pottery and inscriptions on gravestones, tiles, and graffiti are also all distinctly Beneventan.102

To be very clear, I am not arguing that any of this was a product of active resistance to Frankish and/or Roman political and cultural influences, nor even that these practices were directly inspired by Arichis own actions. Rather, I am pointing out that, at the same time as Arichis was beginning to emphasize the importance of maintaining Lombard identity and political practices as part of his ruling ideology, we see a similar emphasis among the Lombard religious elite when it came to their cultural and religious practices. While one did not necessarily directly inspire the other, these parallel developments still had the potential to feed into one another. For those looking to maintain their distinct practices and separation from other groups, support for Arichis and an independent Beneventan principality offered the best opportunity to see these aims realized. In turn, Arichis would have been further encouraged to continue emphasizing identity and continuity as part of his political strategies. As we shall discuss in the following chapters, both efforts would play an equally important role in more clearly defining the southern Lombards’ sense of identity, creating a stronger degree of political and cultural demarcation between them and the peninsula’s other groups.

Monastic communities were not the only ones to follow this trend. As I noted earlier, the Beneventan aristocracy also had a choice to make between greater engagement with or separation from the north, one that could play an even more direct role in determining whether or not Arichis and his new ideology would survive in the long-term, particularly in the event of a

conflict with the Franks or the papacy. Fortunately for Arichis, there were some groups among the aristocracy who would have already been receptive to his appeals, namely, Lombards who had lost property or faced political reprisal in the aftermath of the kingdom’s fall in 774 and the rebellion in 775/6. While the transition from Lombard to Carolingian rule had proceeded relatively smoothly, we find at least a few examples of Lombards who had fled Frankish rule. The most notable example of this was Sico, a future prince of Benevento, who according to his own epitaph, was born in Friuli and sent southwards as infant around 774 to be raised at the court of Arichis.\footnote{Carm. Var. 2.} We also know of a certain Godoald who emigrated from Spoleto to Benevento after his lands were confiscated.\footnote{Gregory of Catino, Il regesto di Farfa, vol. 2 (Rome: Società romana di Storia patria, 1879), 223.} Just how many others there were like these individuals is unknown, but there does exist a capitulary issued by Pepin in 787 that commanded all those who had fled to Benevento return to Spoleto.\footnote{MGH Capit. I, 95.16.}

This capitulary, and indeed the question of Lombard exiles in general, has aroused much debate. Some scholars have seen this as proof that confiscations of Lombard lands took place in Frankish occupied territories and caused Lombards to flee southwards.\footnote{Cilento, Le origini della signoria capuana nella Longobardia minore, 73-5; Fonseca, “Longobardia minore e Longobardi nell'Italia meridionale,” 179.} On the other hand, Geoff West has argued that the capitulary was directed at fugitive criminals rather than fleeing aristocrats, and also rightfully points out that we have few actual examples of Lombards fleeing southwards or confiscations taking place after the Frankish conquest.\footnote{West, “Charlemagne's Involvement,” 347-50.} Both points have merit, though I think our charter evidence for this period is far too limited on the whole to simply
dismiss the few examples that we do have of Lombards fleeing from the north or Spoleto (for whatever reasons) as being the only ones. Given the evidence of some northerners taking flight in the aftermath of the 775/6 rebellion, and the political upheaval in Spoleto when Hildeprand usurped the title, it is not unreasonable to believe that at least some of those on the losing side of these conflicts would have fled southwards. While I would not suggest that there was a veritable flood of northern aristocrats pouring into Benevento, even a small handful would have given Arichis a set of allies who were both more directly dependent upon him for material support than the local Beneventan aristocracy and could also help to reinforce the prince’s arguments that Benevento had now replaced Lombard Kingdom. It is possible that Arichis or one of his successors even actively sought to court fleeing aristocrats. Although the traditions surrounding Sico’s flight offer differing explanations for why/when he came to Benevento, they all clearly agree that he was the direct beneficiary of princely generosity.

With that said, it is often easy to forget that not all northern Lombards in the south arrived after 774. Some, like Paul the Deacon and Adelperga, had come southwards when Arichis assumed the title of duke while others may have joined one of the major monastic communities. They too would have been affected by the Frankish conquest and not necessarily in a positive manner. Although Paul did indeed benefit from Charlemagne’s patronage, we must remember that the very reason why he was at the Frankish court in the first place was because he appealed to the king to release his brother from captivity and to restore his ancestral lands. He also described himself in one of his letters as an “exile” though the meaning of this has been

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109 Carm. Var. 2; Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum, MGH SS. rer. Lang., 51; Chron. Sal. 42.
110 Neff, 11.
In the case of Adelperga, the negative impact of the Frankish conquest was much more clear cut, as all members of her family but one were either imprisoned or exiled. Whatever ties she might have still had to the north were now severed and, in a way, she herself was now an exile.

It is difficult to assess the direct effect any of this had on the attitudes of these aristocrats, but anthropologists and sociologists have argued that feelings of displacement or exile from a homeland can sometimes lead groups to make an even greater effort to preserve or reconstruct their traditions and identity, sometimes even going as far to maintain what they perceive to be a degree of cultural purity rather than attempting to assimilate. The kingdom’s loss and the physical displacement some Lombards experienced may very well have served as a catalyst for this process. The fact that Benevento already had significant ideological connections with the Lombard Kingdom and was still a recognizably Lombard polity would have furthered pushed things in this direction, as there was not necessarily a competing pressure for these Lombards to assimilate into a new culture/society. For some, such as Adelperga, these feelings may have also translated into outright hostility towards the Franks and strong desire to remain apart from them, while others, such as Paul, may have undertaken efforts to preserve and/or reconstruct

111 Neff, 6, p.33, l.132. Goffart views this as a reference to the general condition shared by all Christians, rather than a reference to Paul’s personal condition. Goffart, Narrators, 337.


Lombard history, creating a more restrictive definition of what it meant to be Lombard in the process.\textsuperscript{114}

Even those Lombards who had no such direct links to the kingdom may have felt similar pressures. As I have argued in the preceding chapters, despite the occasional friction between Benevento and the Lombard Kingdom, the two polities still had developed very important political, cultural, religious, and social connections which greatly shaped the duchy’s development. The distance between the two, as well as Benevento’s frequent interactions with other groups (especially the Neapolitans) may have even created a heightened emphasis on ethnic distinctions among the southern Lombards and encouraged the dukes to assert much more clearly their ethnic and political affiliations in their \textit{intitulatio}.\textsuperscript{115} Consequently, native Beneventans would have still felt the impact of the kingdom’s loss and the severing of their connections to it, even though they had established a polity that was, in essence, already independent. Rather than attempting to forge a new set of connections with the Frankish-ruled north or even embracing the philo-Byzantine tendencies that the court had exhibited prior to 774, they instead sought to recast Benevento as the successor to the Lombard Kingdom, emphasizing the continuity between the two. However, ethnicity would come to play a far more central role in Benevento’s political and cultural discourse, both during this period and in subsequent ones as well.

What all of the above suggests is that Lombards at various levels of society were beginning to turn inwards and separate themselves both politically and culturally rather than

\textsuperscript{114} Costambeys, \textit{Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy}, 158-9; Pohl, “Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy,” 19-21.
\textsuperscript{115} See p. 112-5.
opting for closer ties with the papacy and the Franks. This gradual reinforcing of political/cultural boundaries between the southern Lombards and these other groups would be instrumental in creating a more defined sense of Lombard identity in the long-term. It must be acknowledged, however, that this process was very much tied to Benevento’s continuing independence. Whereas the northern Lombards had no choice but to accept a degree of political integration and cultural assimilation with the Franks, the southern Lombards’ efforts to preserve their practices and status were made possible by the fact that they were not under the direct rule of either the Franks or the papacy. However, this independence would not be assured until the beginning of the ninth century.

Nulla Fidelitas

In the aftermath of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, Benevento had largely been left alone by the Franks. Despite Hadrian’s constant demands, Charlemagne took no direct actions against the principality aside from occasionally sending missi to investigate the pope’s claims of Arichis’ perfidy.116 This changed in 786/7, when the Frankish king launched a military expedition against Arichis and the principality. For the next two decades, the southern Lombards would be subjected to varying degrees of military and political pressure from both the Franks and the papacy. Despite some occasional setbacks, the Lombards withstood these pressures, surviving at least three Frankish-led expeditions against their territory, the papal attempts to enforce its claims over some Beneventan cities, and even the loss of Arichis II. Far from weakening their political cohesion, these incidents only seem to have galvanized the Lombards’ opposition to

116 CC 64.
both the Franks and the papacy, as well as support for the princes. This resistance would not
only help to strengthen the princes’ ideological claims and reinforce the political and ethnic
boundaries between the Lombards and these other groups, but, in the long-term, would also
significantly shape later conceptions of Lombard identity.

The expedition that Charlemagne launched against Benevento in 786/7 was the most
significant military threat the principality had faced since the Byzantine invasion of 663. Even
before the Frankish armies entered Beneventan territory, Arichis sought to make peace with the
Frankish king, offering him promises of obedience, gifts, and even his eldest son, Romoald, as a
hostage. Charlemagne rejected this offer and marched his armies into southern Italy, forcing
Arichis to retreat to Salerno. However, the Frankish armies never even reached the city, instead
getting bogged down while besieging Capua. This might have only been a temporary setback,
but the campaign against Benevento was not Charlemagne’s sole concern. He also had to deal
with diplomatic issues involving Bavaria and the Byzantine Empire, the latter of which was
especially relevant to Beneventan affairs. Even as his armies were besieging Capua,
Charlemagne was meeting with a Byzantine embassy to announce that he was breaking off a
marriage arrangement between his daughter and Empress Irene’s son, a decision which would
have left Arichis free to pursue Byzantine support. The combination of this and Beneventan
military resistance appears to have been sufficient enough for the Frankish king to entertain more

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117 Charlemagne had sought to manufacture a political crisis with the duchy. For a discussion of these events and
Bavaria during this period, see Matthias Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft. Untersuchungen zum Herrscherethos Karls des
Großen* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1993), 58-63; Hammer, *From Ducatus to Regnum: Ruling Bavaria under
the Merovingian and Early Carolingians*, 137-200; Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a
European Identity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 118-27.
118 The revision of the Royal Frankish Annals actually stated that this was the precipitating cause for the Byzantine
seriously another peace offer from Arichis. Ultimately, he agreed to cease his assault on the principality in return for tribute, hostages (including Arichis’ younger son, Grimoald), acceptance of papal territorial claims to cities currently within the principality, and an oath of submission.\textsuperscript{119}

Despite the onerous terms of the peace agreement, this was not the end of Benevento’s independence. In fact, compared what had happened to other individuals who had opposed Charlemagne and the Franks, the settlement that was imposed on Arichis was relatively mild. Although he had been forced to give up his younger son as a hostage and, in theory, relinquish some of his territory to the papacy (which he never actually did), the prince remained in control of Benevento and had even been able to avoid giving his oath of submission to Charlemagne in-person. Arichis might have requested this out of fear for his safety, but he may have also seen this as an ideal way to demonstrate to his people that he intended to remain defiant even in defeat.\textsuperscript{120} According to Hadrian, he immediately reached out to representatives of the Byzantine Empire in order to persuade them to back an invasion of Italy led by Adelchis.\textsuperscript{121}

Arichis was not the only one who remained defiant. Although the southern Lombards’ military resistance had been insufficient to defeat the Frankish armies, it must be emphasized that it had not crumbled under this pressure nor is there any evidence of the sort of internal political divisions that had emerged during the Frankish invasion of the Lombard Kingdom. While we lack any sources which might provide a southern Lombard perspective on these events, we should not dismiss the possibility that this resistance was fueled, in part, by the same

\textsuperscript{119} ARF \textit{q.d Ein.} 786; Bertolini, “Carlomagno e Benevento,” 633-5; Noble, \textit{The Republic of St. Peter}, 176.
\textsuperscript{120} Einhard, \textit{Vita Karoli Magni}, 10.
\textsuperscript{121} CC, App. 1.
desire to maintain ethnic and political boundaries that we have discussed in the preceding sections. Indeed, if we look at how the southern Lombard elites dealt with the aftermath of the Frankish expedition, it seems clear that their defeat only served to strengthen their opposition to the Franks and the papacy rather than weaken it. Nowhere is this more apparent than in how they handled the death of Arichis II.

Arichis’ death in September of 787 was arguably just as much of a challenge to maintaining Benevento’s political and ethnic boundaries as Charlemagne’s expedition. With Romoald having died a few months before and Grimoald still held hostage, it was not clear who the next Beneventan prince would be or if they would continue to espouse the same ideology as Arichis. Although the principle of hereditary succession was firmly enshrined within Beneventan political practice, members of the aristocracy had previously sought to usurp power during prior interregnums. The incentives to rebel were perhaps even greater in this situation since anyone who did so could potentially appeal to either the pope or Charlemagne for support, much as Hildeprand of Spoleto had done. And yet, we only have one report of this actually occurring. According to Hadrian, a group of Capuans came to Rome asking to be made subjects of S. Peter and the pope, a request which he advised fulfilling in order to stir up divisions and dissensions. Despite this, there is no evidence that the papacy ever exercised any firm control over the city or its environs. In fact, the pope would later express frustration over the fact that, in full view of the Frankish missi, Grimoald III had openly encouraged the Capuan elites to swear

122 See p. 96-7.
123 CC 83, App. 1.
loyalty him when he returned from Francia.\(^{124}\) By the ninth century, control of the city seems to have reverted back to Beneventan control without any conflict.\(^{125}\)

This incident aside, Hadrian also appears to have been constantly frustrated by southern Lombards’ unwillingness to hand over control of the promised territories, and increasingly alarmed by the hostility which they demonstrated towards both him and Charlemagne in their demands for Grimoald’s return. Late in 787, Hadrian requested that Charlemagne send a group of *missi* to ensure that the Beneventan cities that had been promised by Arichis were transferred to papal control. The *missi* arrived in Rome and from there, went on to Benevento to investigate the political situation. According to one of the *missi*, Maginarius, when his group arrived in Benevento, they found “no loyalty [*nullam fidelitatem*]” towards Charlemagne and were even threatened with imprisonment unless they offered assurances that Grimoald would be released from captivity and appointed as ruler.\(^{126}\) Hadrian confirmed this story, and also noted that the Beneventans were vigorously pursuing other avenues for securing Grimoald’s release, even sending envoys directly to Charlemagne’s court. Not surprisingly, the pope strenuously urged Charlemagne not to heed these calls, arguing that if Grimoald was released, “you will not be able to hold Italy without disorder [*sine conturbatione*].”\(^{127}\) The pope even went so far propose a joint Frankish-Roman military expedition against the southern Lombards if they failed to transfer over the cities, fearing that their recalcitrance would only aid Adelchis and the Byzantines.

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\(^{124}\) CC 84.


\(^{126}\) CC 82-83, App. 2, p.656, l.5.

\(^{127}\) CC 80, p. 613, l.21.
Given the pope’s territorial interests in the region, it is difficult to say to whether his alarm over what was going on in Benevento was genuine or simply a strategy to convince Charlemagne to place greater pressure on the Beneventans. Based on the missi’s report, there clearly was some hostility towards the papacy and the Franks, but beyond that, we are largely reliant on Hadrian’s impressions. However, we do have at least one Beneventan text that might provide some insight into how the southern Lombards reacted to this situation: Paul the Deacon’s epitaph for Arichis. Although this text was primarily focused on praising the fallen prince and avoided discussing his recent conflict with Charlemagne, Paul did note that it was a tragedy that Arichis’ eldest son had perished before him and that his only surviving son was held in captivity in “cruel Gaul [Gallia dura].” He also portrayed Adelperga (whom he notably described as having been joined to Arichis “in regal marriage [regali in thalamo]”) as being beset by the constant fear that the two daughters who remained to her would become spoils of war.

In my view, this passage was not simply a random aside intended solely to emphasize the tragedy of Arichis’ death. It was also an attempt to persuade the southern Lombards to maintain their support for the fallen prince’s family both by eliciting sympathy for Adelperga (who was now ruling Benevento) and by raising the specter of yet another attack on Benevento by the inhabitants of “cruel Gaul.” This latter approach is particularly interesting, not just because of the strong rhetoric Paul uses to describe the Franks’ homeland, but also because it was a strategy that later authors of princely epitaphs would deploy. As we shall discuss, the epitaphs for the Beneventan princes often portrayed the Franks as dangerous “others” whose anger could only be

128 Neff, 35, p.149, l.44.
restrained by the martial and political skills of the Beneventan princes.\textsuperscript{129} The goal of this was to not only burnish the reputation of the poems’ subjects, but also to enhance the legitimacy of their dynasty. While Paul’s rhetoric was nowhere near as strident as what we find in these later poems (perhaps on account of his own ties with the Frankish court), nonetheless, I still consider this an early example of this strategy.

Paul was not the only individual seeking to keep the southern Lombards united during this trying period. Despite how she was depicted in the epitaph for Arichis, letters from both Hadrian and Maginarius make it quite that Adelperga was very much in charge of the principality and working hard to secure Grimoald’s release.\textsuperscript{130} Hadrian even contended that she was continuing Arichis’ negotiations to bring about a Byzantine invasion and planned to hand over the Beneventan treasury to Adelchis once Grimoald was returned. He claimed that Adelperga intended to do so under the guise making a pilgrimage to S. Michael on Mt. Gargano in order to give thanks for Grimoald’s release.\textsuperscript{131} Given Michael’s importance as one of the Lombards’ patron saints and someone who had previously protected them against outside invaders, such a move a would have had considerable symbolic and ethnic significance to the Beneventans, even absent any deceit on Adelperga’s part.\textsuperscript{132}

Although Hadrian was clearly trying to play up Adelperga’s alleged perfidy in order to persuade Charlemagne not to release, we should not discount the idea that Adelperga probably did exercise a significant degree of influence and authority during this brief period. As we noted

\textsuperscript{129} See p. 267-8. Interestingly, Romoald’s epitaph also noted how his eloquence had overwhelmed the Franks’ anger. \textit{Chron. Sal.} 21.

\textsuperscript{130} \textit{CC} 80, 2, App. 1-2.

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{CC} 80.

last chapter, there was a precedent for the wives of Beneventan rulers serving as regents and even evidence that they exercised many of the same powers and privileges as their husbands. However, Adelperga was more than just a stand-in for Arichis. Her relationship to both Desiderius and Adelchis made her a living link between the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento, as well a symbol of the political and ethnic continuity that Arichis had so strongly emphasized as part of his ideology. For any who had come to support this ideology, or even just those who wished to maintain their own distinct identity and practices, this would have provided additional incentive to support both Adelperga and Grimoald, and perhaps even strengthened the idea that the principality was the true successor to the Lombard Kingdom given that Adeleperga was Desiderius’ daughter. It also granted Grimoald an even stronger claim than his father to being of the “line of dukes and kings [stirpe ducum regumque].”

Based on the reactions of the southern Lombards and the threat of a Byzantine invasion, Charlemagne clearly felt that releasing Grimoald was his best option. While he could not guarantee the young prince’s loyalty in the long-term, he probably recognized that not releasing him would lead the Beneventans to support Adelchis and the Byzantines. Thus, Charlemagne gave Grimoald his freedom over the objections of Hadrian, though there may have been some conditions attached. While our Frankish sources only mention that Charlemagne installed Grimoald as duke, Erchempert later claimed that he had also made Grimoald swear an oath of fidelity, promise to place acknowledgments of Carolingian authority on his coinage and charters,

133 See p. 122-3.  
135 Neff, 35, p.146, l.7.  
136 CC 80, 4.  
137 ARF 788, ARF q.d. Ein. 788.
and keep his chin shorn in the same manner as the Franks. He noted that Grimoald carried out the first two, but reneged on his promise to shave his beard. Charters and coinage from this period do indeed bear acknowledgements of Charlemagne’s authority, but, interestingly, these disappear sometime between 791 and 793, which is around the same time that Grimoald is thought to have married a relative of the Byzantine emperor and Charlemagne’s son, Pippin, launched a campaign against Benevento.

Erchempert’s claim that Grimoald was required to shave his beard is more tenuous. While Beneventan coinage does indeed depict Grimoald with a beard, this tells us nothing about whether not he was ever actually required to shave it. There are other examples of Lombards being asked to cut their hair as a sign of political submission during this period (most notably, Hildeprand and possibly even Arichis), but this was done at the behest of the Byzantines and the Romans, not the Franks. However, just to assume for the moment that Erchempert’s claims are indeed true, it is worth asking why would Grimoald be willing to place acknowledgements of Carolingian authority on his charters and coinage, but draw the line at cutting his beard? Erchempert has nothing to say on this matter, but for my part, I would suggest that this would have been very much driven by the same sort of ideological and ethnic considerations that had underpinned Arichis’ internal political strategies. Although acknowledging Carolingian authority certainly weakened the Beneventan princes’ claims to

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138 Erch. 4.
139 CSS 3.6, 27; Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 576-7.
141 Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 577.
142 LP 97.32-3; CC 83; Kreutz, Before the Normans, 7.
being the new leaders of the *gens*, so long as the princes actually continued to rule the principality, they could always undo such actions at the earliest possible opportunity. This was the approach that Arichis had taken with his own oath of submission, and it was the approach that Grimoald would take as soon as he had secured a marriage alliance with the Byzantine emperor.

However, shaving a beard would have been more than just an act of political submission; it would have been an implicit acknowledgment of Frankish superiority and perhaps even been viewed by Grimoald’s people as a renunciation of his Lombard identity. As I have noted previously, grooming habits in the early Middle Ages were often considered a marker of ethnic identity. Particularly in the case of the Lombards, it was strongly tied to the origin story of their own tribe and name, as well as a symbol of the martial valor they had displayed in their mythical victory over the Vandals. Lest we assume that such legends no longer held any meaning to them, we must remember that it was around this time that Paul the Deacon produced the *Historia Langobardorum*, a work which not only retold this legend, but even expanded upon it at great length. Given this, and the considerable efforts Arichis had already expended in attempting to persuade his people that he was now the leader of the *gens* and to maintain their distinct identity, it would have been highly problematic for Grimoald to undertake such an act, particularly so early in his reign. Refusing, on the other hand, had the potential to bolster these ideological claims, demonstrating to those who held “no loyalty” towards Charlemagne that

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143 Diesenberger, “Hair, Sacrality and Symbolic Capital in the Frankish Kingdoms,” 204-7; Dutton, *Charlemagne’s Mustache and Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age*, 30-1.
144 See p. 49-54.
145 See p. 218-21.
although Grimoald had submitted to the Frankish king, his allegiance lay first and foremost with them and the Lombard *gens*. Again, it is impossible to know the veracity of this given the lateness of this account, but at the very minimum, it highlights how later generations came to view Grimoald as not just an important historical figure, but as the embodiment of the Lombard *gens* and its virtues.

Whatever the terms of Grimoald’s release, it seems clear that he was at least temporarily willing to work with the Frankish king. Upon his return to Benevento, both he and Hildeprand of Spoleto agreed to place their forces under the command of Winigis to face the oncoming Byzantine invasion. Their joint forces swiftly crushed Adelchis’ armies, sending the Lombard king back into exile.\(^{146}\) The man whom Paul the Deacon once referred to as “the greatest hope of the Lombards”\(^{147}\) was never heard from again, putting to an end the last major external threat to Charlemagne’s control of the Lombard Kingdom. Grimoald’s decision to support Charlemagne might seem at odds with his father and mother’s approach. Adelchis was both a blood relation and, more to the point, he still had a legitimate claim to the kingship. Turning against him could almost be viewed as turning against the *gens* and all that Arichis had stood for.\(^{148}\) However, from a political, ideological, and even ethnic standpoint, this decision made sense for Grimoald. Adelchis was not sweeping into Italy at the head of an army of exiled Lombard retainers, but as a part of a Byzantine-led invasion force. According to Theophanes, he had even taken a Greek name, Theodotos.\(^{149}\) In truth, he was probably little more than a figurehead at this point, one

\(^{146}\) ARF 788.
\(^{147}\) Neff 9, p.47, l.11.
\(^{148}\) Bertolini, “Carlomagno e Benevento,” 654.
whose own desire to reclaim his throne coincided with Byzantine desires to reclaim their Italian possessions. If Grimoald sided with him and allowed the Byzantine armies to pass through Benevento, he potentially risked his own political independence, especially if the invasion stalled as it moved into Charlemagne’s territory. On the other hand, if Adelchis succeeded, Grimoald would no longer be able to claim with any plausibility that he was both successor to the Lombard kings and the true leader of the Lombard gens. At least with Charlemagne in control of northern Italy, Grimoald could maintain this ideological stance.

We can only guess as to how the Beneventans reacted to Grimoald’s decision. Neither Erchempert nor the Anonymous of Salerno make any reference to this event, which might suggest that even well after it had occurred, some Lombards were still discomfited by this decision. With that said, we must remember that this situation was not as simple as either supporting or opposing Adelchis. The king was, after all, marching into Italy with the support of the Byzantines and Neapolitans, two groups with whom the Beneventans had a much longer history of conflicts than they did with the Franks. Although Arichis had made his own efforts to court them, there may have still existed a strong degree of antipathy towards them which would have worked in Grimoald’s favor or even influenced him to stand against them. One will recall, for example, that Arichis had acquired a number of relics at the expense of Byzantium and Naples, and that there were already legends circulating celebrating S. Michael’s appearance over the battlefield when the Neapolitans attacked the shrine on Mt. Gargano.\textsuperscript{150} Paul the Deacon also portrayed the Byzantines rather harshly in his \textit{Historia Langobardorum} He not only described in great detail the Beneventans’ victory over Constans II’s forces, but also labeled the Byzantines

\footnote{150 See p. 129-32.}
as a “gens perfida.” Sentiments such as this might explain why the author of Grimoald’s epitaph, though omitting all mention of Adelchis, had no hesitation about openly celebrating the prince’s triumph over the Greeks. Far from being an act of political betrayal, these actions could be cast as a defense of the Lombard gens against another long-time ethnic rival.

Either way, this action does not appear to have significantly harmed Grimoald’s standing with either his people or the Byzantine Empire in the long-term. In fact, he actually married Constantine VI’s sister-in-law, Evanzia. While the union itself did not last, it seems to have provided Grimoald with a sufficient feelings of security to sever his ties with Charlemagne and his son, King Pippin of Italy, and remove all acknowledgements of Carolingian authority in his charters and on his coinage. This eventually led to a series of military interventions from the Franks, but they were to be frustrated in their attempts to bring Grimoald to heel. Pippin would launch two campaigns against southern Italy (c.791-3, c.800-2), but these expeditions were too small to overcome Beneventan resistance, let alone the principality’s malaria-ridden swamps. Spoletan forces loyal to Charlemagne apparently fared even worse when they attacked the principality. Under Winigis (who was now Duke of Spoletto), they independently attempted to

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151 *HL* 5.8, p.262, l.13. Bertolini takes the completely opposite view, even going so far as to suggest that Paul was so despondent over the failure of the expedition that he ceased writing the *Historia Langobardorum*. Bertolini, “Carlomagno e Benevento,” 654.

152 According to the Anonymous, the author was likely a friend of Grimoald’s family. Although the epitaph can only be found in the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, given the likely authenticity of the other epitaphs the Anonymous includes in this section (Bishop David’s epitaph for Romoald and Paul’s epitaph for Arichis), I consider this poem to be authentic as well.


154 *Erch.* 5.


156 *Annales Guelferbytani*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS I (Hanover: Hahn, 1826), 792; *ARF* 800, 802; Alcuin, *MGH Ep. IV*, 224; *Erch.* 5.
seize numerous towns along the border including Chiete and Nocera in 802, but, in a reversal, Grimoald not only retook Nocera but even seized Winigis.\textsuperscript{157}

Realistically, none of these attacks against Beneventan territory were quite as significant a threat to the principality’s independence as Charlemagne’s expedition in 787/8. The armies sent were smaller and Charlemagne himself did not directly oversee any of these campaigns. Alcuin of York even went so far as dismiss the principality as having only “pestilential air” to offer, a statement which some scholars have interpreted as evidence that the Franks were growing tired of devoting manpower and resources to the region.\textsuperscript{158} The papacy appears to have taken a similar view. After Hadrian’s death in 795, none of his successors appear to have made as consistent an effort to convince Charlemagne to secure the promised territories. In fact, until the pontificate of John VIII (872-882), the popes seem to have had only limited involvement in the affairs of southern Italy.

Whatever internal considerations might have led the Franks and the papacy to reduce their involvement in southern Italy, from the Beneventan perspective, this was still a crucial decade in their history. Whereas Arichis had ended his reign being forced to at least temporarily acknowledge Frankish authority, Grimoald successfully defied them for over a decade. By the time he died in 806, the principality’s independence had largely been secured. This is most clearly reflected in Grimoald’s epitaph, which struck a decidedly more triumphal tone than his father’s epitaph. In his description of Grimoald’s military achievements, the author crowed that

\textsuperscript{157} ARF 802.
even the “mighty king of the Gauls was not strong enough to bend his neck.”

Such openly hostile rhetoric towards the Franks was unusual for this period, but is quite characteristic of the sources that we shall discuss going forward.

Unlike the author of Grimoald’s epitaph, we have to be careful not to exaggerate the scope and scale of Grimoald’s achievement. Benevento was not, as one commentator has described it, Charlemagne’s “Waterloo” in Italy. Although it is true that the Franks had not been able to completely break the southern Lombards’ military and political resistance, they did eventually secure tribute and a nominal acknowledgement of their authority during the reign of Grimoald’s successor, Grimoald IV. In some ways, this arrangement was not much different than what had existed under the Lombard kings, as the Beneventans were still allowed to elect their own leaders and conduct their own affairs without even having to explicitly acknowledge royal authority in their charters or coinage.

What was missing, however, were the important symbolic connections as well as the implicit recognition by the princes that they were a part of the political hierarchy that now existed in northern and central Italy. While the Franks and papacy would continue to exercise some influence over Benevento’s political and cultural development at various points, for the most part, the southern Lombards would not cease their efforts to maintain their own distinct political and cultural practices. In fact, the divisions between the southern Lombards and these outside groups would only grow over time rather than narrow. We must remember that Arichis

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160 See p. 256-75.
162 *ARF* 812, 14; *Erch.* 7.
and Grimoald’s resistance, as well as the ethnic and political tensions that supported and shaped it, were only the beginning of this process of forming distinctions rather than its culmination.

Liber Natus

Indeed, much like the events of 663, the events of this period would be long remembered and celebrated by Lombard leaders and historians, assuming an almost mythic quality that could provide inspiration during their own struggles to preserve their independence and identity. Far from viewing this period through the prism of the Lombard Kingdom’s end, historians such as Erchempert and the Anonymous portrayed it as a new beginning for both Benevento and the Lombard gens. Arichis, in particular, would serve as a central figure in their accounts, being feted for his resistance to the Franks and his supposedly considerable piety and wealth. A number of southern hagiographical accounts, for example, would focus not on recounting the lives of the saints, but rather, on the translation of the saints’ relics, Arichis’ role in them, and the elaborate ceremonies he staged.\textsuperscript{163} The Anonymous went even further in his attempts to portray his reign as something of a golden age of wealth, prosperity, and superiority over the Franks. In one particularly lurid passage discussing the aftermath of Arichis’ surrender to Charlemagne, the author claimed that the Frankish envoys Charlemagne sent were completely overawed by the magnificence of Arichis’ palace and the beauty of his courtiers. They ate well, slept well, and in the morning, one of them marveled at the fact that the tales of Arichis wealth and wisdom were

\textsuperscript{163} Translatio Duodecim Martyrum, p.574-6; Translatio Sancti Mercuri, p.576-80; Paul the Deacon (?), Hymnus Pauli diaconi in translationem Beneventum corporis beati Mercurii martyris, col.1600.
true. According to the Anonymous, some maintained that Charlemagne himself had been part of
this delegation.\footnote{164}{Chron. Sal. 12-3.}

Grimoald was remembered no less fondly than his father, though most accounts of his
reign focused primarily on his resistance to the Franks. In what is perhaps the most memorable
passage of his entire work, Erchempert described a written exchange between King Pippin and
Grimoald, in which the former declared that “Just as Grimoald’s father Arichis was once
subjected to Desiderius, King of Italy, so shall Grimoald be to me!” Grimoald’s response to this
was quite simply, “From both parents I was born free and noble, and I believe that with God’s
protection, I shall always be free!”\footnote{165}{Erch. 6, p.236-7, l.40 – 04.} Such a statement might seem like an inspiring, but generic
declaration of political independence, but for a Lombard audience of Erchempert’s own time and
even earlier periods, it would have had added significance. As we shall discuss, for the
Lombards, freedom was not simply some abstract principle of political sovereignty, but an
essential component of their identity. Consequently, this declaration was not just an assertion of
social and political status, but also of ethnic affiliation.

To be clear, this speech was in all probability Erchempert’s own invention or, at most, a
recounting of a popular tradition, but it is still a testament to how both Grimoald and his father
came to be viewed by later generations. They were not just depicted as great rulers, but figures
of considerable inspiration and to some degree, the very embodiment of the Lombard \textit{gens} and
its values. Whereas most other Lombard dukes and kings would be relegated to little more than
names in lists in later centuries, they would remain central figures in historical and
hagiographical accounts, with their resistance to the Franks being portrayed not just as political conflicts, but as a struggle to preserve the *gens*.

As important as the princes’ efforts were in shaping these perceptions, we should not overlook the importance of other southern Lombard elites in both defending Benevento’s independence and preserving the ethnic boundaries between themselves and the other groups in the Italian peninsula. Their actions, whether it was demanding Grimoald’s release or even just maintaining their own distinctive chant, would also play a crucial role in more strongly defining the southern Lombards’ identity in the aftermath of 774, both by strengthening the cultural boundaries between themselves and other groups and creating a set of common practices and traditions that would also assume a degree of ethnic significance as time went on. However, there was one former member of Arichis’ court who would take this even further, writing a history that would significantly define the Lombards’ post-774 conceptions of their identity and provide the necessary historical support for the princes’ ideological transformation of their position and the principality. His name was Paul the Deacon, and he would play just as large a role in shaping the memory and identity of the southern Lombards as both Grimoald and Arichis.
Better to Maintain Liberty by Arms

We have observed how Lombards ranging from Arichis II to Abbot Potho of San Vincenzo responded in the aftermath of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and the growing Frankish pressure in the south. However, one voice remains conspicuously silent: Paul the Deacon. Having spent time at the courts of Pavia, Aachen, and Benevento, Paul was in a better position than any other Lombard to comment on the events of 774 and its aftermath. And yet, he remained almost wholly silent on the matter. His most famous work, the *Historia Langobardorum*, closed with the death of Liutprand in 744 and only made a single, brief acknowledgment that the Lombard Kingdom had fallen.¹ This silence has only served to inflame rather than dampen interest in what Paul’s views of the Frankish conquest were. In both medieval and modern histories, Paul has been portrayed as everything from a red-blooded Lombard nationalist² to a silver-tongued Frankish sympathizer.³ He does not fit very comfortably into any of these molds, as his writings possess neither the inflammatory anti-Frankish rhetoric of the later southern Lombard histories nor the sort of overtly laudatory nature of works such as the Royal Frankish Annals.⁴ Likewise, the events of his life all suggest that he exhibited a strong dedication to the service of his people that was nevertheless tempered by a willingness to work with the Franks. About the only thing that we can say for certain is that wherever his political loyalties might have lain, Paul was his people’s greatest historian. His

¹ *HL* 5.6.
³ For an overview of the historiography see McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s *Historia langobardorum* and the Franks,” 60-83.
work has not only shaped how modern historians view the Lombards, but in many ways, how later generations of Lombard historians came to view themselves and their people.

As difficult as it is to define what Paul’s views of the Frankish conquest were, I would argue that we can tease them out from both his life and his writings, especially the *Historia Langobardorum*. While his work was broadly focused on the Lombard Kingdom and the Lombard people as a whole, I would argue individual passages within the *Historia Langobardorum* suggest that Paul was quite sympathetic to the Beneventan princes’ struggle to maintain their independence and their people’s ethnic cohesion. Although he was not as explicit in his advocacy for the princes as Erchempert or the author of the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, he nevertheless made a subtle, but strong case in support of their claims that they were the legitimate successors to the Lombard kings.

More broadly, Paul sought to preserve and define those values and traditions that he deemed to be at the very core of the Lombards’ identity, placing a particularly strong emphasis on the importance of freedom (*libertas*) and martial valor. This conception of Lombard identity was at least partially rooted in ideas found in earlier sources such as the *Origo Gentis* and the *Edictum Rothari*, but it was also far more clearly articulated and defined than what we find in any Lombard work produced prior to 774. Moreover, it was considerably shaped by the events of Paul’s own time, namely, the fall of the Lombard Kingdom and the southern Lombards’ efforts to maintain their identity, independence, and practices in its aftermath. In my view, the latter context is particularly important for understanding the *Historia Langobardorum*, as I would argue that Paul’s work was both an expression of and a very significant contribution to the
growing emphasis on ethnic continuity and distinctions that was coming to characterize Beneventan political and cultural discourse during this period.

This is not a wholly new argument, as Karl Kruger first made the case for the connection between Paul’s work and Benevento in 1981. It was Walter Goffart, however, who brought it to a wider audience with his influential work, *The Narrators of Barbarian History*. In Goffart’s view, Paul had written his history for the Beneventan court, perhaps as a means of educating young Grimoald III and encouraging cooperation with the Franks. He came to this conclusion through an assessment of Paul’s life, his works, and an in-depth analysis of the *Historia Langobardorum*’s themes, structures, and literary influences. Based on this, Goffart argued that the history was actually an unfinished work, and that had Paul actually completed it, he would have discussed the events of his own time, probably ending with the reign of Arichis II.

Goffart’s study remains one of the most comprehensive and in-depth analyses of Paul’s life and work in the English language. However, his specific arguments concerning the intent behind the *Historia Langobardorum* did not gain significant traction among scholars. While Donald Bullough’s nearly contemporary study of Paul seemed to provide support for Goffart’s ideas based on the belief that Paul was hostile to the Franks, Walter Pohl dismissed it on the basis of the limited evidence Goffart provided and his own belief that there was no strong, central theme for the *Historia Langobardorum* owing to its many contradictory themes and unresolved

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8 Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 111.
conflicts. The strongest rebuttal came from Rosamond McKitterick, who argued that Paul’s work was in fact intended for a northern audience of Franks and Lombards based in no small part on the existing manuscript evidence. Even Walter Pohl has seemingly accepted her argument that Paul’s work was strongly pro-Frankish.

For my part, I accept McKitterick’s contention that Paul’s work was read by and written with a northern audience in mind, but I do not think it was exclusively intended for them nor was Paul as supportive of Frankish rule in Italy as she argues. While I have my own particular issues with Goffart’s approach to Paul’s work (some of which shall be discussed in the course of this chapter), I would contend that there is still a case to be made for a “Beneventan” reading of Paul’s work. To that end, I shall undertake my own reevaluation of Paul’s work, focusing on a few specific aspects of the Historia Langobardorum to determine his motivations for writing it and whether or not they relate to what was occurring in Benevento at the time. While Paul may not have written about the period in which he lived, we cannot ignore the fact that his history was written after the fall of the kingdom he was writing about. Although he only briefly referenced this event in his work, I would argue that it and the events of his own life still had profound influence on what he wrote and, more importantly, how he presented his people and other groups. We shall look very closely at these depictions in order to determine what audience(s) he was targeting and why. Based on his relatively positive depiction of the Lombards, his focus on their martial valor, and the manner in which he links it with the pursuit

10 McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon's Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 60-83.
of freedom, I would argue that the work was aimed just as much at a Beneventan audience as it was a northern or a Frankish one.

To further develop this point, I shall also examine how Paul specifically portrays the Duchy of Benevento and its history in his work. While Benevento is not the central focus of the Historia Langobardorum, it still plays a surprisingly larger role in it than its actual history would suggest. Outside of Paul’s native Friuli, no other duchy is given as much attention nor depicted as positively as Benevento.\(^\text{12}\) Paul even goes so far sometimes as to obscure somewhat Benevento’s prior history of autonomy and conflicts with royal authority (including those during his own lifetime) in order to strengthen the connections between it and the Lombard Kingdom. I would argue that this echoed, and perhaps was even done in direct support of, the princes’ own claims that they were the legitimate successors to the Lombard kings.

Finally, I shall briefly look at the long-term impact of Paul’s work in defining Lombard identity and how this process might have been influenced by the events of 774 and their aftermath. While I believe that Paul was supportive of the Beneventan princes’ ideological aims, his work was still very much a response to the fall of the Lombard Kingdom and the threat it represented to the Lombards’ continued existence both politically and ethnically. By writing not just about their history and its deep connection to the kingdom, but also about those values which he deemed to be at the very core of who the Lombards were, Paul offered both a much more clearly defined conception of Lombard identity and argument for maintaining it during this time of significant transition. As we shall see, this would have a particularly significant impact on later southern Lombard authors, many of whom would draw inspiration from and attempt to

\(^{12}\) See figure 3, p. 228.
expand upon Paul’s ideas in order to grapple with the political and cultural challenges of their own eras.

Conflicted Loyalties

Context is often key to understanding both the audience and underlying purpose of a work, but in Paul’s case, it is even more crucial since we lack either a dedication for his history or clear, unambiguous statements which might allow us to divine his intent. Paul was, in my view, an author of great subtlety, but it was a subtlety born just as much of necessity as it was literary talent. With personal and professional ties to the courts of Desiderius, Arichis II, and Charlemagne, not to mention the monastery of Montecassino, Paul may not have been at complete liberty to write about the events surrounding the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and its aftermath. Even if he had such freedom, he may not have been deeply inclined to exercise it. Whatever his personal opinions concerning the Frankish conquest and Beneventan resistance to it, Paul had consistently demonstrated throughout his career a willingness to work with both groups. Moreover, as someone who was familiar with and perhaps even inspired by the works of non-Lombard historians such as Gregory of Tours, I would argue that Paul would have had a keen appreciation for the fact that written histories had the potential to reach an audience beyond the borders of the kingdoms they described. Thus, even when writing a history about his own people, I would contend that Paul still would have written with multiple audiences in mind,

13 *HL* 3.29. Outside of Gregory and Secundus, Paul does not often make explicit reference to his sources, but based on analyses of his text, it is quite likely that he was familiar with and utilized a wide array of non-Lombard sources including works by Jordanes, Bede, and Isidore of Seville. For a detailed breakdown, see Christopher Heath, “Narrative Structures in the Works of Paul the Deacon” (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2012), 102-3.
something which would have significantly influenced the content and structure of the *Historia Langobardorum*, not to mention the considerable ambiguity surrounding its intent.

Many aspects of Paul’s life are every bit as contested as the purpose of the *Historia Langobardorum*. Save a for the few specific details he reveals about himself in his writings and some later traditions (most notably, an epitaph written by his pupil, Hilderic),¹⁴ our understanding of his life largely depends on determining when and where he composed his various works, a task which is made more difficult due to the uncertain dating of some of these sources, the *Historia Langobardorum* included. Nonetheless, we know enough to sketch at least a broad biography and to assess possible influences on his life and work. As Paul himself relates, his family had been settled in the Duchy of Friuli since Alboin’s march into Italy in 568.¹⁵ Paul was born sometime during the reign of Liutprand between 720 and 735. We know little about his immediate family save that he had both a sister who was a nun, and a brother, Arichis.¹⁶ Interestingly, Paul was the first person in his family to bear a Roman name, which some have taken to mean that he was always intended for a life in the clergy.¹⁷

Although little else is known about Paul’s early life, we should not overlook the potential importance of this early period in shaping his history and his broader attitude towards his people. This is the only era of Paul’s life which overlaps with the events he discusses in the *Historia Langobardorum*. While he may not have personally witnessed any of the events he described, they clearly left a deep impression on him as he portrayed this period as the high point of

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¹⁴ Neff, 36.
¹⁵ *HL* 4.37.
¹⁶ Neff 11.
Lombard history. At the same time as Paul was learning the rudiments of Latin grammar, King Liutprand was aggressively expanding the Lombard Kingdom’s borders, reforming its law code, and vigorously promoting Roman Christianity. As Paul glowingly described him at the end of his work, “He [Liutprand] was indeed a man of much wisdom, very religious and a lover of peace, shrewd in counsel, powerful in war, merciful to offenders, chaste and modest, prayerful in the night-watches, generous in charities, ignorant of letters indeed, yet worthy to be likened to philosophers, a supporter of his people, an increaser of the law.”

Such positive sentiments may be more than just a summation of Paul’s personal feelings towards the king. In his text, this era is portrayed as the culmination of the Lombard’s long progression from a small, wandering band of pagans to the devoutly Christian masters of the Italian peninsula. More so than any of the other kings in Paul’s history, Liutprand is depicted as possessing the best qualities of the ancient and the eighth century Lombards, being both “powerful in war [belli praepotens]” but also “very religious and a lover of peace [pius admodum et pacis amator].” Some scholars have suggested that Paul’s portrayal was actually modeled on the rulers of his own age (either Arichis or Charlemagne), but we should not overlook the influence of nostalgia as well. Although Paul wrote his history after witnessing the Lombard Kingdom decline and fall due to political division and military weakness, his formative years occurred when his people were much more politically unified, militarily strong, and had

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18 HL 6.58, tr. p.306. I should note that for quotations in this section, I shall be using Foulke’s translation and will denote the page numbers with the letters “tr.” However, in instances where I include the Latin text, I will offer additional citations from Capo’s edition of the text, noting the both the page and line numbers so that the reader might find them more easily.

19 Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 29.

20 HL 6.58, p.362-4, 1.52-3; tr. p.306.

finally shed the last vestiges of their pagan past to become devoutly Christian. The positive tone of his text, its emphasis on the Lombards’ progress as a gens rather than their deficiencies, and the general sense of pride Paul expresses in his people’s accomplishments, may all partially be a product of the political, cultural, and religious developments among the Lombards that characterized the age into which he was born, rather than the tumultuous decades that followed. It may have also encouraged him to seek common ground with the Franks, who had enjoyed a close relationship with Liutprand.22

Nostalgia for the age of Liutprand was not the only thing that would have shaped Paul’s early outlook or history. Based on his own testimony, it is strongly suspected that he was tutored in Greek and Latin at the court of King Ratchis.23 It was there that he may have been exposed to not just the political intrigues that would shape his kingdom’s fate, but also some of the traditions that may have first enflamed his interest in Lombard history and even served as a source for it. He mentions in his history, for example, that King Ratchis displayed to the court the cup that King Alboin was alleged to have fashioned from the skull of the Gepid king.24 It is stories such as these that make Paul such an important source for Lombard history, reminding us that he was not merely a distant observer of events, but a consummate insider who had access to sources and witnesses that other, more geographically-remote historians would have lacked.25 This may have created personal and professional entanglements that might have limited his

22 HL 6.53-4, 58.
23 The evidence is insufficient to state definitively that Paul was at Ratchis’ court, but it strongly points in that direction. Goffart, Narrators, 335-6; Hodgkin, Italy and Her Invaders, 5: 69-70.
24 HL 2.28.
25 Bullough has speculated that Paul may have been brought to the court to learn the oral traditions of his people. Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 109.
ability/desire to speak freely on certain subjects, but it also granted him a broader perspective on
his people’s strengths and their failings.

Paul potentially experienced some of the latter firsthand. His time at the court may very
well have been cut short when Ratchis suddenly decided to give up the kingship and retire to the
monastery of Montecassino. Papal sources portray this as this as completely voluntary, but there
is a belief that Ratchis was actually forced out by his brother Aistulf and that Paul might have
followed him into the monastery.26 Other interpretations suggest that Paul did this much later in
his life, possibly after 774 or Rotcausus’ rebellion in 77627 or even in the late 780s,28 but we
cannot rule out the possibility that his entrance into the monastery occurred very early on for
reasons entirely unrelated the political situation in Italy.29 Unfortunately, we have no sources
which provide us with a definitive answer. The most we can say is that Paul’s absence from the
court, if it actually occurred, lasted until the reign of Desiderius, when he became tutor to his
daughter, Adelperga. When Adelperga left for Benevento to marry the newly appointed Duke
Arichis II, it is generally assumed that Paul either went with her or joined her at the Beneventan
court. McKitterick, on the other hand, has argued that Paul only corresponded with the ducal
court, but given that there is no evidence of his further involvement with the royal court of Pavia,
as well as the number of his works written at the behest of the ducal family and later traditions
concerning his life, I consider this to be highly unlikely.30

26 See, for example, Waitz’ introduction in MGH SS. rer. Lang., p.14.
27 Felix Dahn, Paulus Diaconus, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1876), 23-5; Taviani-Carozzi, La principauté
lombarde de Salerne (IXe-XIe siècle). Pouvoir et société en Italie lombarde méridionale, 22.
Goffart, Narrators, 336-8.
It was in the service of Arichis and Adelperga during the 760s that Paul’s literary career blossomed. Before he wrote the *Historia Langobardorum*, he composed a continuation of Eutropius’ *Breviarum*, the so-called *Historia Romana*. According to the dedication of the work, Paul composed it at the request of Adelperga, who complained that Eutropius’ work did not sufficiently cover Christian matters. In response, he praised the duchess’ zeal for learning and her faith, but also made certain to extol the virtues of Arichis II as well, claiming that “of the princes in our age, he almost alone holds the palm of wisdom [palmam sapientiae tenet],” a statement which one can either interpret as purely panegyrical or an expression of sincere sentiment based on Arichis’ own supposed educational achievements. Interestingly, Paul also promised Adelperga that he would follow up his history with one “up to our age [nostram usque aetatem],” which could be interpreted as a reference to the *Historia Langobardorum*. Given the amount of time that elapsed between the two works, we cannot say for certain if this is exactly what Paul had in mind when he made this statement or if the *Historia Langobardorum* was intended for Adelperga, but it does hint at a possible genesis for the work.

Paul may have written a number of other things at the ducal family’s request. Our earliest recounting of the translation of S. Mercurius’ relics and the elaborate ceremony Arichis staged for them is also sometimes attributed to Paul and, according to the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, a number of Paul’s inscriptions adorned Arichis’ buildings in the city of Salerno.

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31 Neff, 3, p.12, l.4-5.
32 See p. 133.
33 Neff, 3, p.13, l.28.
34 Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, 5: 74.
36 *Chron. Sal. 37*; Neff, 4; Acocella, “Salerno medioevale ed altri saggi,” 513-63..
Works such as these have led some to speculate about whether or not Paul’s role at the court was much more significant than that of a simple tutor. As I noted in an earlier chapter, Hans Belting put forth the idea that Paul was the tutor of the duke’s children and had also established a court-school.\(^{37}\) If so, he might have had a closer relationship with the ducal family than is generally assumed, though, again, this is wholly speculative. As it stands, we are not sure how long Paul was at the court or just how deep his connections with the duke and his family went. Although we know that Paul wrote an epitaph for Arichis II in 787/8,\(^{38}\) most of his other works composed for the court appear to predate the fall of the Lombard Kingdom. Inscriptions written for Arichis’ buildings in Salerno, which were probably constructed around 774, would seem to suggest that he was still at or affiliated with the court when the Lombard Kingdom fell,\(^{39}\) but others have speculated that he may have returned northwards, only to be forced back south sometime between the kingdom’s fall and the ducal rebellion in Friuli in 776.\(^{40}\) Paul’s declaration in one of his letters that he was an “exile” might seem to give credence to the latter notion, but the interpretation of this is contested.\(^{41}\) Equally problematic is that although we know Paul was associated with Montecassino in some way at this point based on a letter to Abbot Theudemar in 783, both the epitaph composed for him by his pupil Hilderic and the

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\(^{38}\) Neff, 35.

\(^{39}\) Neff, 4; Acocella, “Salerno medioevale ed altri saggi,” 507-26; Delogu, Mito di una città meridionale (Salerno, secoli VIII-XI), 37-8; Paolo Peduto, “Paolo Diacono e la capella palatina di Salerno,” in Paolo Diacono e il Friuli altomedievale (secc. VI-X), vol. 2, 655-70; Taviani-Carozzi, La principauté lombarde de Salerne (IXe-XLe siècle). Pouvoir et société en Italie lombarde méridionale, 28-9.

\(^{40}\) Dahn, Paulus Diaconus, 23-5.

\(^{41}\) Neff, 6, p.33, l.132. Goffart views this as a reference to the general condition shared by all Christians, rather than a reference to Paul’s personal condition. Goffart, Narrators, 337.
Chronicon Salernitanum contend that he took his monastic vows only after he left Francia in the mid-780s.\(^{42}\)

Regardless of Paul’s own whereabouts in the 770s and 780s, we do know that he was directly impacted by the events of 774 and their aftermath. Sometime around 776, his brother, Arichis, was captured by the Franks and imprisoned in Francia, possibly for participating in the Friulian rebellion. With his family suffering as a consequence of this, Paul wrote a short poem dedicated to Charlemagne in 781/2, entreating the king to release Arichis from captivity.\(^{43}\) The king was apparently so impressed by this that he invited Paul to join his entourage.\(^{44}\) Paul’s motives for accepting Charlemagne’s offer are unknown to us, but it is quite possible that the king had yet to agree to release Paul’s brother, or that his freedom was contingent on Paul joining his court. On the other hand, being a man of both great faith and learning, Paul may very well have been attracted by the prospect of participating in the educational, cultural, and religious reforms that were beginning to emerge from Charlemagne’s court, and may have even felt that he could serve as an advocate for his people’s interests. There were, after all, other Lombards at the court such as Peter of Pisa and Paulinus of Aquileia.\(^{45}\)

Whatever the case may be, Paul was very productive in the few years he spent there, entertaining Charlemagne with a series of poems between himself and Peter of Pisa,\(^{46}\) composing

\(^{42}\) Neff, 36; Chron. Sal. 36. McKitterick also supports this later date.

\(^{43}\) Neff, 11.

\(^{44}\) It is possible that Paul was already at the court when the poem was written, and that it was merely intended as a formal presentation piece. If this is the case, Paul may have joined the court as early as 781 when Charlemagne visited Rome. McKitterick speculates that he may have joined as early as 776, alongside Paulinus of Aquileia, but this is questionable given the lack of evidence that Paul was even in Friuli at the time. Goffart, Narratours, 341; McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 66-7.

\(^{45}\) Everett, “Paulinus, St Mark, and famosissima Aquileia,” 120-1.

a number of funerary poems for members of the royal family,\textsuperscript{47} being commissioned directly by the king to produce a new homiliary for the Frankish clergy, and writing a history of the bishops of Metz. The latter is notable because it is the only time that Paul ever directly discussed the end of the Lombard Kingdom. The passage is relatively laconic in its tone, however, noting only that the Lombard people “came under [Charlemagne’s] power without significant struggle and, as is rarely accustomed to occur, he tempered his victory with gentle moderation.”\textsuperscript{48} Given that this statement largely echoes what we find in other Frankish sources\textsuperscript{49} and is at odds with Paul’s statement in the \textit{Historia Langobardorum} (which he described as the “ruin of the Lombards [\textit{Langobardorum perditionem}]
\textsuperscript{50} I would suggest that this should be treated more as a pro-Frankish version of events than a reflection of Paul’s true sentiments (good or bad) towards the Frankish conquest.

With that said, we should not assume that the \textit{Liber de episcopis Mettensibus} was simply the work of a reluctant compiler. Paul remained very consistent in his treatment of the Carolingians and their forebears between this and the \textit{Historia Langobardorum}, even referencing the work on Metz in the \textit{Historia Langobardorum} when praising Charlemagne’s forebear, S. Arnulf of Metz.\textsuperscript{51} It was in this same passage that he also sought to justify the Carolingian takeover from the Merovingians, tendentiously stating that during Arnulf’s time, “It was ordained from heaven that the sovereignty of the Franks should be transferred to the race of these

\textsuperscript{47} Neff, 15-28.
\textsuperscript{48} Paul the Deacon, \textit{Liber de episcopis Mettensibus}, p.265, l.15-6.
\textsuperscript{49} ARF 773-4; ARF q.d. Ein. 773-4; Cod. Goth 9.
\textsuperscript{50} HL 5.6, p.260, l.17
men.” 52 Whatever his feelings towards the conquest were, I would suggest that Paul still had a genuine respect for Charlemagne, his family, and their achievements, a sentiment which persisted even when he was no longer writing to fulfil a commission. Indeed, the fact he even references his composition on Metz would suggest that he was quite proud of the work he had done. 53

Paul left Francia sometime between 784 and 787, possibly when Charlemagne went southwards to Rome in 786/7. 54 His reasons for departing the court are just as obscure as his reasons for coming in the first place. After a long life of service at the courts of various rulers, he may have decided that it was time to retire to quiet of the monastery. 55 The Chronicon Salernitanum has a rather different explanation. According to the Anonymous, Paul frequently tried to murder Charlemagne while he was at court, and was only spared punishment because of his many talents. Although he failed to kill the Frankish king, he made sure that he would not conquer Benevento as he had the Lombard Kingdom. Slipping away from his prison, he made his way to Benevento and warned Prince Arichis of the impending Frankish invasion. 56

As with many stories from the Chronicon Salernitanum, this one provides more entertainment than factual information, but it does contain one insight worth pursuing: Paul’s departure may have come at around the same time as Charlemagne was planning a visit to Italy in 786. It was during this same trip that the Frankish king would launch an expedition against

52 HL 6.16, tr. p.262.
54 Goffart suggests that he may have left in 784, while McKitterick opts for the more conventional date of 786/7. Goffart, Narrators, 342; Hodgkin, Italy and Her Invaders, 5: 78; McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon's Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 57.
55 Neff, 14.
56 Chron. Sal. 9-10.
Benevento. While I would not give any credence to the notion that Paul left to warn Arichis, he may very well have been disquieted at the thought of seeing his two major patrons in conflict and decided it was best to retire to Montecassino rather than watch the struggle unfold at the Frankish king’s side. Regardless of what actually occurred, based on both the *Chronicon Salernitanum* and the epitaph allegedly written by Paul’s pupil, Hilderic, there seems to be little doubt that Paul either took or had taken his vows around this point and retired to Montecassino to live out the rest of his years.\(^{57}\)

Neither Paul’s return from Francia nor the subsequent war between Benevento and Francia led to him severing his relationship with Charlemagne or members of his court. We know that he sent a collection of fifty-four of Gregory the Great’s letters to Adalhard of Corbie and dedicated an epitome of Festus’ *De verborum significatu* to Charlemagne.\(^{58}\) When Charlemagne requested a copy of S. Benedict’s rule from Abbot Theudemar, Paul composed the response, which would have given him a small, but crucial role in the dissemination of S. Benedict’s Rule north of the Alps.\(^{59}\) He also completed the homiliary that Charlemagne had commissioned him to produce while he was still in Francia. This collection of homilies would be widely used in the Frankish church.

All of these actions are important for understanding Paul’s relationship with Charlemagne and the Franks, as well as the manner in which he wrote his history. Even after

\(^{57}\) *Chron. Sal.* 36-7; Neff, 36.  
\(^{59}\) The authenticity of the letter itself had, at one point, been contested, with some dating it to sometime in the ninth century. For the debate and the letter itself, see “Theodomari abbatis Casinensis epistula ad Karolum regem (saec. IX. in.),” in *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum*, ed. Kassio Hallinger, vol. 1 (Siegburg: Francis Schmitt, 1963), 137-75; Goffart, *Narrators*, 343. For a discussion of the *Regula Benedicti* and the Carolingians, see Albrecht Diem, “The Carolingians and the *Regula Benedicti*,” in *Religious Franks*, 243-61.
leaving Francia, Paul remained very much involved in shaping Charlemagne’s religious reforms. However, his involvement was not as an itinerant scholar, but rather, as a member of one of the most important monastic communities in southern Italy, and more importantly, a contributor to its mission to spread its founder’s monastic rule and reputation beyond the Alps. Whatever his personal feelings towards the king and the Franks, Paul could not freely express them without potentially endangering himself, his community, and its efforts. As the affair of Abbot Potho of San Vincenzo in 783 demonstrated, Charlemagne was willing to use his influence with the papacy and within the monasteries themselves to limit potential opposition. Moreover, having issued a royal immunity to Montecassino upon and remained in contact with both Paul and its abbot afterwards, it seems highly unlikely that Charlemagne would have been totally unaware of Paul’s activities or that any major work composed by him would not have eventually found its way to the Frankish court, either directly or through the court of his son, King Pippin of Italy. Thus, regardless of whether or not Paul actually intended the work to go to the northern court, he still would have had to exercise a measure of circumspection in what he discussed and how he discussed it. This may at least partially explain why his history ended at Liutprand’s death in 744. Leaving aside the fact that this was an important moment in Lombard history, it was also the last point in which Franks and Lombards were largely in harmony with one another.

Charlemagne would not have been the only individual potentially scrutinizing Paul’s actions. His other patrons at the Beneventan court may have also kept a close eye on him. After

60 See p. 164-6; CC 67.
61 In McKitterick’s view, the court in Italy was Paul’s target audience, with the text then being disseminated north of the Alps. McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 82.
all, Montecassino was located in Beneventan territory, still received patronage from the court, and, in 797, even elected one of Arichis’ relatives as abbot.\(^{63}\) Paul himself appears to have renewed his connection with the court, as he wrote epitaphs for Adelp erga’s mother, Queen Ansa, and Arichis II. The epitaph for Ansa is of uncertain dating and is a rather difficult piece to assess, as it seems to be totally divorced from the reality of the 780s. Paul not only highlighted the failed marriage between Charlemagne and Ansa’s nameless daughter in a positive manner, but he referred to Adelchis’ as “the greatest hope of the Lombards [\textit{Bardis spes maxima}].”\(^{64}\) Given that Adelchis was currently in Byzantium, plotting to invade Italy, this sort of statement would probably not have gone over well with the Frankish court nor potentially with Arichis, who, though working to securing Adelchis’ return, considered himself to be the leader of the Lombard \textit{gens}. Consequently, some have speculated that Paul actually wrote this epitaph prior to the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, but we are, ultimately, left with more questions than answers.\(^{65}\)

Arichis’ epitaph also raises a number of interesting questions. It is not only the last of Paul’s poems that we can firmly date, but is also considerably longer than any of the other epitaphs he composed. Declaring that Arichis guided Benevento as “an experienced sailor guides a boat on the tides,”\(^{66}\) he extolled the fallen prince’s many personal qualities, his construction of Salerno, and his education at great length. He also, as we discussed last chapter, raised the sensitive issue of Grimoa ld’s captivity in “cruel Gaul [\textit{Gallia dura}].”\(^{67}\) and sought to elicit sympathy for Adelperga, both on account of her recent losses and the fear that she would


\(^{64}\) Neff, 9, p.47, l.11.

\(^{65}\) For a short summation of the issues, see Goffart, \textit{Narrators}, 343-4, n.53.

\(^{66}\) Neff, 35, p.147, l.18.

\(^{67}\) Ibid, p.149, l.44.
also have her daughters taken from her. While I would caution against viewing these passages as being any truer a reflection of Paul’s personal sentiments towards the Franks than his work on Metz, nevertheless, their political and ethnic undertones, as well as Paul’s general willingness to write an epitaph in praise of a man who had recently fought against Charlemagne, suggests to me a stronger connection between him and the ruling family than just that of a simple writer fulfilling a commission. To be certain, this is not definitive proof of where Paul’s loyalties lay nor that the *Historia Langobardorum* was composed with a Beneventan audience exclusively in mind, but it does cast doubt on the idea that Paul would not have at least shared his work with the Beneventan court.

Of course, one of the main difficulties we have with determining Paul’s motives and audience is that we cannot say for certain precisely when or where he composed his work, let alone where it was initially disseminated from. Evidence in the text, such as his brief mention of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and his time at Thionville in Belgic Gaul, would point to sometime during or after his sojourn in Francia, but beyond that, we are uncertain. It is possible Paul could have written it while in Francia, but given the short period that he was there coupled with his work on the history of the Bishops of Metz and other literary endeavours, this would have been an awfully narrow window of time to compose a work of the *Historia Langobardorum’s* length and depth, unless Paul had already done much of the writing and research prior to his journey. It is more likely that he composed it while at Montecassino,

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68 See p. 179-80.
69 *HL* 1.5, 5.6.
70 Leonardi’s suggestion that Paul started writing it while at the court does not strike me as problematic, but I disagree that he conceived the idea to write it while there. Claudio Leonardi, “La figura di Paolo Diacono,” in *Paolo Diacono e il Friuli altomedievale (secc. VI-X).* vol. 1, 16.
sometime between 784 and his death sometime in the 790s. Goffart has proposed that it was
written shortly after Grimoald III’s return from captivity, when he was still abiding by his oath of
loyalty to Charlemagne, something that Bullough also proposed.71 Given Paul’s relatively even-
handed treatment of the Franks coupled with the possible evidence that manuscripts were already
circulating in the late eighth century,72 I consider this to be much more probable than any other
period.

With that said, I strongly disagree with the notion set forth by Goffart and others that
Paul failed to complete his work, either because he died or out of disillusionment over the
Lombard Kingdom’s fall or the eventual collapse of peace between the Beneventans and the
Franks. While it is impossible to entirely disprove either of these theories, I would point out that
Paul’s history does not bear the hallmarks of an incomplete work. Though it may lack an
introduction and occasionally make reference to events that are never discussed, Paul’s work
does not end mid-passage or even mid-sentence like Andreas of Bergamo’s history nor does it
appear that he left behind any materials to be used by a continuator. Instead, the text ends at the
death of Liutprand, a major turning point in Lombard history, one clearly acknowledged by
Paul’s lengthy eulogy for him. Ending the history here makes sense not just from a thematic
standpoint (which we shall discuss shortly), but also a political one. As I mentioned earlier, Paul
was in a position where his work would endure at least some potential political scrutiny, whether

71 Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 114; Goffart, Narrators, 344.
72 The so-called “Assissi palimpsest,” for example, may date to as early as 787, though this is by no means certain.
Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento di S. Francesco, 585; CLA 3.279; Bernhard Bischoff, “Manuscripts in the Age
of Charlemagne,” in Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne, ed. Michael Gorman (Cambridge, UK:
Cambridge University Press, 1994), 54; McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,”
79-80; Laura Pani, “Aspetti della tradizione manoscritta dell’Historia Langobardorum,” in Paolo Diacono. Uno
scrittore, 388, n.56.
it was from Grimoald III in Benevento or Charlemagne in Francia. While he could safely
address events up until 744 without courting too much controversy, the period afterwards would
have forced him to discuss the conflicts between the Lombard and Frankish kings from Aistulf’s
wars with Pippin to Charlemagne’s overthrow of Desiderius. Given that two of his major
patrons, Charlemagne and Adelpopera, had a direct connection to these events, it would have been
incredibly difficult to examine them without potentially alienating one or both of them. Rather
than navigating this potential minefield, Paul may have considered it prudent to end on both a
politically and thematically happier note.

Rosamond McKitterick has also argued that Paul finished his work, but contends that it
was not produced and disseminated from Montecassino, as is often thought. As she notes, of the
115 extant manuscripts we possess that include at least portions of the Historia
Langobardorum, four of the oldest come from the north including a fragment of a palimpsest
from Assisi, which is sometimes dated to the late eighth century, possibly even as early as 787.
McKitterick has also argued that although southern authors such as Erchempert and the author of
the Chronicon Salernitanum were familiar with the work, we have no manuscript evidence with
links to Montecassino’s scriptorium. In her view, this suggests that the text was produced in
northern Italy around the mid-780s for a northern Italian/Frankish audience.

73 McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 70-1.
74 An up-to-date list of all manuscripts of Paul’s work can be found in Pani, “Aspetti della tradizione manoscritta
dell’Historia Langobardorum,” 404-12.
75 Assisi, Biblioteca del Sacro Convento di S. Francesco, 585. Bischoff tentatively designated this as a northern or
central Italian manuscript, something which McKitterick has supported based on paleographical grounds. On the
other hand, Morghen has suggested that the palimpsest was actually of southern provenance based on its
orthography. See Bischoff, “Manuscripts in the Age of Charlemagne,” 54; McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia
langobardorum and the Franks,” 79; R. Morghen, “Il palinsesto Assisiense della Historia Langobardorum di Paolo
Diacono,” Bullettino dell’Istituto storico italiano 38 (1918): 7-23.
76 McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 77-83.
McKitterick’s analyses are quite valuable in demonstrating the early circulation patterns of Paul’s text in northern Italy, but I would argue that she overlooks or minimizes some key facts. First, the southern Italian manuscript tradition as a whole is relatively fragmented and incomplete. Although the southern Lombards produced a considerable number of charters, histories, poems, and hagiographies during the eighth and ninth centuries, many of the original manuscripts were likely destroyed along with the monasteries during the Arab raids of the mid-to-late ninth century. Montecassino, for instance, lost a significant portion of its holdings in the sack of 883 and in a subsequent fire. San Vincenzo was even less fortunate, losing nearly everything in its library in 881, though its copy of Paul’s history had been stolen before that. The fact that we even have as many sources for southern Italy as we do is something of a minor miracle, as some of our most important sources, such as Erchempert’s history and the Chronicon Salernitanum, originate from only a single manuscript.

In my view, McKitterick also tends to downplay our southern Italian authors’ familiarity with Paul and his work. Erchempert cited him as partially the inspiration for his own work, and the Anonymous frequently alluded to or quoted directly from the Historia Langobardorum. He is also, in fact, our only source for Paul’s epitaph for Arichis. Of equal interest is the Vita Barbati, which actually quoted whole passages from Paul’s history verbatim. While the text has no firm date and may very well have been composed in phases, Jean-Marie Martin has argued

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78 See p. 24-40 for an overview.
80 Codex Vaticanus 5001. For an extensive analysis of it and its contents, see Werkstätte der Erinnerung, 14-76.
82 Erch. 1.
83 Chron. Sal. 20.
that the part that utilizes Paul’s work was composed in the ninth century, possibly by the 830s. Based on its subject and support for certain episcopal claims, the author of the *Vita Barbati* was likely someone associated with the Beneventan ecclesiastical hierarchy, something which indicates that Paul’s text was not only already circulating in the south, but that it had made its way beyond Montecassino by this point. While this is not quite as early as the Assisi palimpsest, it should be pointed out that the oldest complete manuscripts and explicit attestations of Paul’s work are usually dated to sometime around this same period. Thus, I do not think it can be argued primarily on the basis of transmission that Paul intended his work solely for a northern audience rather than a southern one.

To be very clear, I am not contesting the idea that Paul’s text circulated in northern Italy and even north of the Alps shortly after its composition. Indeed, I would argue that Paul both expected and perhaps hoped that this would occur. As someone who was familiar with authors from antiquity, Gregory of Tours, Bede and others, Paul would have been aware that written histories could and did often make their way outside of the areas they focused on, regardless of whether or not this was the authors’ original intention. Having worked hard to provide the Lombards with a narrative that was every bit as comparable in its scope as those previously mentioned, Paul may very well have hoped that his work would serve as a tribute to the Lombards’ many achievements.

With that said, I also consider it difficult to believe that this work was intended exclusively or even specifically for a northern audience based on southern authors’ familiarity

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84 Martin, “A propos de la *Vita de Barbatus* évêque de Bénévent,” 140.
85 Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 635; Cividale del Friuli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, XXVIII; Pani, “Aspetti della tradizione manoscritta dell’Historia Langobardorum,” 392-404.
with the work and Paul’s own background. While Paul likely recognized the potential reach of
his work and sought to modify its tone and structure to avoid unnecessarily antagonizing the
members of the Frankish court with whom he still had connections, he had also spent the better
part of forty years in Beneventan territory as both a member of the court and a monk of
Montecassino. Having likely completed his work at the latter, he would have at least shared it
with the monastic community, but Paul’s career and prior literary output both suggest that he
would not have limited his audience to just that group. Paul had, after all, contributed
significantly to the political and cultural life of the principality and formed a long-lasting
relationship with the ruling family that would endure even after he journeyed to and from
Francia. Having once promised Adelperga a history up to their present time and so recently
eulogized her husband, I find it unlikely that he did not intend to share with the Beneventan court
what would be the most significant work of history ever produced by a Lombard, especially
since, as we shall discuss, his text evinced a greater degree of sympathy and admiration for
Beneventan political priorities than it did for Frankish ones.

Perditio Langobardorum

Although the *Historia Langobardorum* was likely intended for both northern and
southern audiences, this does not necessarily mean that Paul was equally sympathetic to both nor
that he did not have strongly held opinions about their actions during the events of his own time.
While he was not willing to express these as clearly as he might have on account of his personal
connections, nonetheless, I would argue that we can still tease out his views by assessing the
manner in which he portrayed the Franks, the northern Lombards, and the southern Lombards in
his history. Of the three groups, his opinion of the Beneventans appears to have been much more outwardly positive. Whereas the Franks are depicted as militarily weak foes of the Lombards who only gradually become valued allies, Benevento is portrayed from the very beginning as a model duchy led by strong, talented dukes who enjoyed the unwavering support of their people. Such a depiction also stands in stark contrast to how he depicts the Lombard Kingdom, which is constantly beset by internal power struggles even as it slowly develops into an orderly Christian kingdom. Of equal interest is his portrayal of the Lombards themselves. Although the Lombards’ gradual embrace of Christianity and its values is a significant theme of Paul’s work, he never ceases to emphasize the importance of their earliest values, such as martial struggle in pursuit of freedom (libertas) and being faithful (fidelis) to their rulers, as essential components of their identity.\footnote{Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 114.} When viewed in the context of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and its aftermath, such sentiments could be interpreted as simultaneously being an implicit rebuke of the northern Lombards and their failure to resist the Franks, and also support for the southern Lombards’ continued struggle to maintain their independence.

While there is nothing in either the content or rhetoric of Paul’s work that can be characterized as heavily anti-Frankish, it cannot be said that they are portrayed in an unambiguously positive light. Until the final book of Paul’s history, the Franks are generally depicted as foes of the Lombards who suffer a number of military defeats thanks to the Lombards’ superior military skills and cleverness. For example, when describing Childebert II’s campaign against the Lombard Kingdom in 588, Paul notes that “King Authari and the troops of the Langobards quickly went forth to meet him and fought bravely for their freedom. In that
fight the Langobards won the victory…. So great a slaughter was there made of the Franks as is not related anywhere else.” Declarations such as these are fairly standard in most histories of this type, but Paul goes even further, chastising one of his early sources, Secundus of Trent, for failing to mention “so great a victory of theirs as this,” even though the Franks noted it in their own histories.87 Such a statement might simply have been a means for Paul to confirm the veracity of his account, but it is still rather notable just how emphatic he is in highlighting it and his use of independent sources.

The victory over Childebert is not the only one Paul relates with seemingly undisguised enthusiasm. Later on in his work, he discusses how Grimoald I defeated the Franks with a clever ruse in which he appeared to abandon his camp, only to reappear with his army later that night after the Franks had indulged in a considerable amount of food and wine. According to Paul, Grimoald “overthrew them with so great a slaughter that only a few of them escaped” and that from that point on, the location of the battle was always referred to as the Rivus Francorum (“stream of the Franks”).88 Accounts such as these have led Donald Bullough to conclude that, “The Franks figure in [Paul’s] narrative almost entirely as enemies.”89 On the other hand, Rosamond McKitterick has argued that Paul was merely echoing Carolingian propaganda against the Merovingians, something which he had probably learned about during his time at the Frankish court.90 This is certainly possible, though I am not wholly persuaded by this argument.

87 HL 3.29, tr. p.137.
88 HL 5.5, tr. p.216-7.
89 Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 111.
90 McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 72-3. Walter Pohl occupies the middle ground in this debate, noting the Paul’s depiction of the wars, but also his positive portrayals of Guntram and Arnulf. Pohl, “Paolo Diacono e la costruzione dell'identità longobarda,” 420.
Although Paul’s depictions of events may not have differed significantly from those offered by Frankish authors, the work’s perspective, the context in which it was written, and its author’s background were all considerably different. Even if we assume that this had no bearing on how any potential Frankish readers might have perceived his text, Paul was likely not writing exclusively for a Frankish audience. He was also writing for a Lombard audience, one which had likely not been exposed to Carolingian historical views of the Merovingians nor would they have necessarily been able to distinguish between the two. How would they have responded to these accounts? More specifically, how would a southern Lombard audience have reacted to these depictions, particularly in light of their recent conflicts with the Franks? Although we cannot know for certain, it seems likely that at least some would have taken some satisfaction in reading about the Franks’ misfortunes, with the battle at the *Rivus Francorum* being of particular interest. King Grimoald was, after all, one of their former rulers and possibly the namesake of their current one. While it is always possible that Paul did not take any of this into account when writing his text, I find that highly unlikely.

Leaving aside for the moment how Paul specifically depicts the Franks, we also have to take into account some of the other statements he makes that can be interpreted as supportive of the Beneventans’ efforts to maintain their independence, and perhaps even intended as a stinging rebuke to the northern Lombards who had failed to resist the Franks adequately during the campaign of 773-4 and the rebellion of 776. Looking again at the passage concerning Authari and Childebert, he states that the Lombards “fought bravely for their freedom [*proque libertatis statu fortiter confligunt*]”91 This is not a throwaway line, but rather a common refrain throughout

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91 *HL* 3.29, p.160, l.7; tr. p.136-7.
Paul’s text. For Paul, the struggle for freedom was at the very essence of the Lombards’ identity, transforming them from a small, wandering tribe in northern Europe to the masters of the Italian peninsula. Indeed, their very name was a product of this struggle as, according to their own legends, it had been granted to them by god, Wodan, just prior to a battle with the Vandals. Although Paul dismissed such tales as “worthy of laughter,” he nevertheless recounted them at great length, not just repeating what earlier sources had said, but adding his own embellishments and rhetoric.⁹² For example, whereas the Origo only stated that the Lombard leaders decided that, “It is better for us to make ready the battle than to pay tribute to the Vandals,”⁹³ Paul proclaimed that the Lombards fought for the “glory of freedom [pro libertatis gloria]” and because they determined, “It is better to maintain liberty by arms [armis libertatem] than to stain it by payment of tribute.”⁹⁴

Other episodes he relates, some of which are not found in the Origo Gentis, echo this emphasis on the link between martial deeds and freedom. As he recounts, a man of “servile [servili]” rank won passage for the Lombards through Assipiti territory by defeating their champion in single combat. He agreed to do so only so long as the Lombards removed the stain of slavery from him and his descendants.⁹⁵ After this, the Lombards’ ranks began to swell as

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⁹² HL 1.8, tr. p. 17. With regards to this particular section of the Historia Langobardorum, I disagree with the assessment that Paul despised his people’s pagan myths and barbaric past. While he was clearly discomfited by them and felt it necessary to add disclaimers, he could very easily have stripped the story down to its barest elements had he wanted to, similar to the Historia Langobardorum Codicis Gothani. For further discussions of these tensions, see Benjamin Cornford, “Paul the Deacon’s Understanding of Identity, His Attitude to Barbarians, and His “Strategies of Distinction” in the Historia Romana,” in Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages, 54, Cingolani, Le Storie dei Longobardi, 180-1; Pohl, “Paolo Diacono e la costruzione dell'identità longobarda,” 421; “Paulus Diaconus und die Historia Langobardorum: text und tradition,” 384-5.

⁹³ Or. Gent. 1, tr. p.316.

⁹⁴ “Tunc Ibor et Aio, adnitente matre Gambara, deliberant, melius esse armis libertatem tueri, quam tributorum eandem solutione foedere.” HL 1.7, p.22, l.8-8; tr. p.15; HL 1.10, p.24, l.2; tr. p.19.

⁹⁵ HL 1.12, p.26, l.10
they emancipated other slaves in return for their service as warriors. Prior to a battle against the Bulgars, King Lamissio also offered freedom to any slaves who fought on his side. When the battle was not going well, he sought to rally his warriors by crying out “to the whole army that they should remember the infamies they had suffered and recall to view their disgrace…. Finally, he urged them to defend themselves and theirs by arms, saying that it was better to lay down life in war than to submit as vile slaves to the taunts of their enemies.”

When Paul discusses being a slave versus being free, he is not simply making distinctions in terms of social status; he is making ethnic distinctions. Through acts of martial valor, those who are enslaved (presumably, as a consequence of the Lombards’ conquests) not only gain their freedom, but are also permitted to join the growing ranks of the Lombard gens as it marches towards Italy. Much like the Winnili became Lombards through their struggles against the Vandals to secure their freedom, so too do these slaves become Lombards through their own participation in other battles. Thus, as Paul portrays it, freedom is at the very essence of being Lombard. However, such freedom is not a given, but rather, is something that can only be won and secured through the constant struggle against one’s enemies. To some degree, this actually echoes the Edictum Rothari, in which the whole body of Lombard men is described as an exercitus.

This concept of “freedom” and its links to armed conflict is, of course, not exclusive to the Lombards, but given the circumstances under which Paul wrote his text, his strong emphasis on this link could be interpreted as implicitly supporting armed resistance against

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96 HL 1.17, tr. p.29-30.
97 LL Roth. 386, p.112.
Frankish rule. Indeed, this was actually how later generations of southern Lombards would interpret these stories. The author of the *Chronicon Salernitanum* directly referenced the episode between the Lombards and the Vandals to condemn Prince Grimoald IV’s decision to pay tribute to Charlemagne in 812.\(^9\) Again, we do not exactly how southern Lombards of Paul’s own time would have reacted, but if an author writing close to two centuries after Paul interpreted it this way, one would think that people in this period, who had actually fought against the Franks, would have potentially done the same.

However, it was not just the southern Lombards that Paul would have directed his message to. With regards to his northern audience, these discussions could almost be viewed as an implicit rebuke. While Paul was not implying that the Lombards in the north were literally slaves to the Franks, the model of ethnic behavior that he had praised in the early passages of his work was one that they had failed to live up to when it came to defending their kingdom. Indeed, if we look at Paul’s one and only reference to the fall of the Kingdom in his text, he describes it in starkly ethnic and religious terms rather than political ones. As he recounts, when Constans II invaded southern Italy in 663, he encountered a hermit. After Constans asked the hermit to predict the future, the hermit prophesied that Constans would not be able to defeat the Lombards so long as they were under the protection of John the Baptist. It would only be when the basilica dedicated to the saint at Monza came under the control of base individuals that the “*gens* itself will perish.” As Paul notes afterwards, the basilica had indeed come under the control of adulterous simoniacs prior to 774, ultimately bringing about the “ruin of the Lombards

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\(^9\) *Chron. Sal.* 39.
“perditio Langobardorum].” This sort of language is not at all how the Franks would have described the conquest of the Lombard Kingdom and indeed, it contrasts with Paul’s own description of the conquest in his history of the bishops of Metz. Far from describing this as the destruction of the Lombards and their kingdom, Paul merely notes that Charlemagne had “placed it under his control without a serious struggle [sine grave proelio],” and “tempered victory with gentle moderation.” The Franks and papacy used similar rhetoric in their own accounts. Walter Pohl has argued that the expression “perditio Langobardorum” was intended to denote the end of the Lombards as a political entity, but I would contend that it was even more profound than that as Paul tended to view the evolution of the gens as being inseparable from that of the Lombard Kingdom. To be certain, he acknowledges that the gens existed before the kingdom, but as his narrative progresses, both the kingdom and its kings become the instruments through which the Lombards realize their full potential as a people, not just by becoming the rulers of the majority of Italy, but also producing laws and finding salvation in Christianity. In fact, Paul maintains an almost single-minded focus on the political affairs of the Lombard Kingdom and its kings, sometimes to the exclusion of other things. To provide one example, although some have argued that this text is really about the Lombards’ gradual embrace of Roman Christianity, one does not find any sort of conversion narrative similar to the Vita Barbati nor do holy men, monks, or bishops figure particularly prominently in this text as they

100 HL 5.6, p.260, l.18.
102 ARF 773-4; LP 97.31.
103 Pohl, “Gens ipsa peribit. Kingdom and Identity after the End of Lombard Rule,” 70.
104 Paolo Cammarosano, “Paolo Diacono e il problema della regalità,” in Paolo Diacono e il Friuli altomedievale (secc. VI-X), vol. 1, 102-4.
do in, say, Gregory of Tours’ history. Instead, Paul primarily portrays this as a gradual process that was conterminous with the political progress of the Lombard Kingdom. The triumph of Catholic belief over Arianism, for example, is depicted not as the product of a synod or a missionary effort, but as a martial triumph in which the Catholic king, Cunincpert, defeated the Arian rebel, Alahis of Tridentum. Paul even claimed that Alahis had seen S. Michael prior to the battle, though he leaves it open to interpretation as to whether or not the rebellious duke imagined this or misinterpreted it as a sign of his own victory.  

On the other hand, Paul was not so dogmatic in his beliefs as to set aside his admiration for kings who espoused heretical beliefs and were otherwise good rulers. In one passage, he describes how a couple of grave-robbers sought to break into the tomb of the Arian king, Rothari, only to be turned back by John the Baptist who admonished them that, “Although he may not have been of the true faith yet he has commended himself to me.” In fact, Paul is often willing to overlook or downplay the immoral behavior of kings if it served the interests of the kingdom and its people such as when Grimoald I slaughtered an entire city’s inhabitants on Easter Day. Whereas Erchempert would have offered thunderous denunciations of such an act, Paul describes it without comment or condemnation, perhaps believing that Grimoald’s other contributions to the gens outweighed this one act. 

All of this suggests to me that Paul did not view the history of the Lombards as distinct from the history of the Lombard Kingdom. Rather, they were one and the same, with the

106 HI. 5.40-1. Although there are other events that parallel this (notably, Constantine’s victory at Milvian Bridge), it also recalls the Beneventan victory over the Neapolitans at Mt. Gargano.
107 Capitani, “Paolo Diacono e la storiografia altomedievale,” 42-3.
108 HI. 4.47, tr. p.201.
109 HI. 5.27.
kingdom serving as the ultimate expression of both the Lombards’ identity and aspirations. As such, Paul’s statement on the kingdom’s fall may very well be an indication that he viewed the end of the kingdom as the end of the Lombard gens itself, or at least, a very significant threat to their continued survival. This is not a viewpoint that the Franks would have necessarily accepted or encouraged given their attempts to conciliate the northern Lombards by maintaining important practices such as the Lombard laws, but it did not necessarily conflict with the ideology that Arichis II and Grimoald III were promoting. After all, if the Lombard Kingdom was essential to the survival of the Lombard gens, then it was all the more imperative that it have a legitimate successor that could safeguard it.

This would actually become the official view of the Beneventan court by the mid-ninth century, but to the best of our knowledge, neither Arichis nor Grimoald ever articulated this explicitly. Even the Lombard kings tended to shy away from strongly linking their own personal fortunes to those of the gens outside of the rare prayer clauses in their charters and the occasional assertion that they issued laws “for the salvation of the Lombard gens.” While I would not go so far as to claim that Paul was the first to conceive of the gens and the kingdom as being inextricably linked, he articulated this idea more explicitly than anyone who had come before him, essentially treating the Lombards’ political and ethnic identities as almost one and the same. As we shall discuss, this idea would gain considerable currency among later generations of Lombards, something which I would suggest was just as much due to Paul’s influence as it was to the efforts of the Beneventan princes.

110 LL Adel. Prologue.
111 See p. 130, n.140.
112 See p. 310-11.
Based on both this and the events of his own life, what can we say about how Paul viewed the Frankish conquest of the Lombard Kingdom? First, I do not necessarily think that Paul was wholly pessimistic about the fate of his people under Frankish rule nor uniformly hostile towards the Franks themselves. As I noted earlier, although he often portrays them as enemies, he also eventually justifies the transfer of the power from the Merovingian kings to the mayors of the palace (from whom Charlemagne was descended), even describing it as being divinely ordained.\textsuperscript{113} He also highlights the positive relationship between Charles Martel and Liutprand, and praises the Lombard king for keeping peace with the Franks in the closing lines of his text, something which could be interpreted as a reminder to both Lombards and Franks that they had once been allies (albeit, ones equal in political status).\textsuperscript{114} Finally, his own words and deeds suggest that he was at least willing to work with the Franks for the betterment of both their peoples and considered peace to be preferable to ongoing conflict.\textsuperscript{115}

Even acknowledging this, I think it highly unlikely that Paul wrote his text either at the behest of the Frankish court or in support of their conquest. While his stories of martial virtue would have perhaps appealed to the Franks and even given them a greater appreciation for their new subjects and their many achievements,\textsuperscript{116} the political environment in which Paul wrote his text coupled with his overall ambivalent depiction of the Franks, his conception of Lombard identity, and manner in which he describes the kingdom’s end, does not at all suggest that he would have considered his people’s loss of independence to be an ideal state of affairs nor would

\textsuperscript{113} HIL 6.16; Vinay, “Un mito per sopravivvere: L'Historia Langobardorum di Paolo Diacono,” 131-2.
\textsuperscript{114} HIL 6.53-4, 58; McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 73-4.
\textsuperscript{115} Pohl, “Paolo Diacono e la costruzione dell'identità longobarda,” 423.
\textsuperscript{116} McKitterick, “Paul the Deacon’s Historia langobardorum and the Franks,” 82-3.
he have had any great admiration for those Lombards who had failed to rise up and defend their independence in 774 and again in 776. However, in light of his own brother’s captivity in the aftermath of 776, he may have also recognized the futility of armed political resistance in the north and merely hoped that his tales would inspire his people to maintain their own distinct identity and traditions, even as they became politically integrated into the Frankish world.

Southern Italy was a different story. Although the Franks had secured Arichis’ submission as a result of the 787 expedition, they had not conquered the principality nor was it a foregone conclusion that they would ever do so. Far from condemning the southern Lombards for continuing to resist this, Paul may have hoped to use his history to feed into their desire to maintain their political independence and distinct identity. To do this, he not only offered a model of ethnic behavior that prized freedom and martial valor above all else, but as we shall see, examples from Benevento’s history that would have helped to strengthen the princes’ claims to being the new leaders of the gens.

*Always Faithful*

Although I consider it likely that Paul wrote, in part, for a southern audience, as critics of the Beneventan reading of the *Historia Langobardorum* might point out, the duchy was not its central focus. However, there are two things that must be acknowledged. First, even if the *Historia Langobardorum* was not primarily about Benevento, the duchy, its dukes, and events related to both are explicitly referenced in and the focus of more chapters of his history than any other duchy, including Paul’s own homeland of Friuli.
Second, we cannot rightly assume that a southern audience would have been any less interested in a history of the Lombard Kingdom than their northern brethren. As I have argued repeatedly in other chapters, Benevento was not as isolated from the Lombard Kingdom as is commonly asserted. While it was indeed relatively autonomous, there were, in fact, a number of important ideological and cultural connections between the two polities, not to mention many individuals who had migrated south including previous dukes of Benevento, their retainers, wives, and, of course, Paul himself. The history of the Lombard Kingdom and its kings was still their history, and, arguably, just as important to men like Arichis II and Grimoald III as the history of their own duchy and its dukes. Having proclaimed themselves the new leaders of the gens (at least, within their own principality), it would have been useful for them to offer some sort of justification for this claim. In my view, Paul may have shared a similar desire. Having already proclaimed in his epitaph of the Arichis that the prince was of the “lineage of dukes and kings,”117 he wanted to demonstrate that the principality itself was a worthy successor to the Lombard Kingdom and was, historically, much more firmly integrated into the Lombard Kingdom than it actually might have been. To that end, he offered a surprisingly detailed history of the Beneventan dukes’ reigns, portraying them not just as similar to the other Lombard dukes,

117 Neff, p.146, l.7.
but as exceptional leaders who transformed Benevento into a model duchy that was, in some ways, superior to even the Lombard Kingdom.

One of the more interesting aspects of Paul’s history of Benevento is just how comprehensive it is. Nearly every Beneventan duke is identified and significant details are provided concerning their reigns.¹¹⁸ With the exception of perhaps Friuli, no other duchy’s history is so well documented in the Historia Langobardorum, including Benevento’s closest neighbor and Frankish ally, Spoleto.¹¹⁹ If Paul were writing solely for a northern audience, the inclusion of the duchy’s history would be somewhat curious as Benevento never played a particularly large role in the Lombard Kingdom’s affairs nor was it ever mentioned more than a handful of times in our pre-774 documentation. This was the view taken by Paul’s northern continuator, Andreas of Bergamo, who excised nearly all mention of Benevento from his epitome of the Historia Langobardorum, including most of Grimoald I’s achievements.¹²⁰ That Paul included as much material about the duchy as he did throughout the entirety of his work would seem to suggest that he not only had a very strong familiarity with the duchy’s history and/or access to significant sources, but also thought it would be of interest to his audience.

This does not prove that Paul was writing primarily for a Beneventan audience or from a pro-Beneventan perspective, but if we look closely at how he portrays the duchy, his depiction appears to be almost uniformly positive. Whereas Paul had no hesitation about describing the

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¹¹⁸ The sole exception to this would appear to be Audelais, who briefly usurped the title from Gisulf II. Admittedly, our later catalog of the dukes is heavily influenced by Paul’s work on the subject, but with the exception of Zotto, Radoald, and Aio, we still have contemporary evidence for the reigns of most dukes. Catalogus Regum Langobardorum et Ducum Beneventanorum, 494.
¹²⁰ Andr. 1; West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 59-60.
internal discord that afflicted other duchies and the Lombard Kingdom, on the whole, Benevento is portrayed as something of a model duchy, being almost entirely free of civil discord and led by men who were both worthy of admiration and the extensive powers and privileges they wielded. Anything to the contrary was either omitted or portrayed in the best possible light. This might explain why the only things Paul does not discuss in-depth are the duchy’s founding and its first duke, Zotto. Of Zotto, the only thing he has to say is that “The first Lombard duke in Beneventum was named Zotto, and he ruled in it for a space of twenty years.”\textsuperscript{121} It is a distinct possibility that Paul knew nothing more than this, but based on his seeming familiarity with local history and willingness to retell semi-legendary stories, this is rather surprising. After all, our Byzantine sources, which were produced in the tenth century, indicate that the Beneventan duchy had been established by Byzantium and that Zotto and his Lombards were foederati who eventually rebelled. Despite the lateness of these sources and some factual inaccuracies, a number of scholars consider this idea to be quite plausible,\textsuperscript{122} which leads one to wonder did Paul simply lack this information or did he deliberately omit it?

This question is unanswerable, but there are some indications that if he had known about any early ties between Byzantium and Benevento, he would have still sought to obscure them, as he does the exactly that with his account of Zotto’s successor, Arichis I. According to Paul, King Agilulf appointed Arichis I to the position of duke upon Zotto’s death in 590/1.\textsuperscript{123} The problem with this is that there is no evidence that the Lombard kings held any sway in the south

\textsuperscript{121} HL 3.33, tr. p.146.
\textsuperscript{122} See p. 60-2; Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, De Thematibus, 96-7; Bognetti, “Tradizione longobarda e politica bizantina nelle origini del ducato di Spoleto,” 455-7; Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 89.
\textsuperscript{123} HL 4.18.
at this point. In fact, most of the evidence points to Arichis’ appointment being made by Byzantium. Gregory the Great, for example, accused Arichis of infidelity in one of his letters, and as Paul himself reports, Arichis’ relative, Gisulf II of Friuli, was at that point rebelling against the Lombard Kingdom.\(^{124}\) It is quite possible that Paul overlooked these things or was merely following local tradition, but one cannot help but notice the parallels between his account of Arichis I’s appointment and what we know of Arichis II’s appointment. Much like his namesake, Arichis II was not the hereditary successor to the duchy’s ruler, but instead, a replacement duke who had been appointed by royal decree. Given that Arichis I was among the most important of the Beneventan dukes, having allegedly ruled for fifty years, fostered King Grimoald I at his court, and helped to establish the longest lasting dynasty (ducal or royal) in Lombard history, Paul may have sought to establish historical parallels between the two as a means of further enhancing Arichis II’s reputation.\(^{125}\)

Again, though, we cannot say for certain whether or not Paul consciously omitted these details or was simply echoing local traditions. However, we do know that he had a sometimes hostile attitude towards the Byzantines, at one point describing them as a “\textit{gens perfida}.”\(^ {126}\) Such strong sentiments, coupled with the Byzantine invasion of 788 and the frequent enmity between Benevento and its neighbors (most notably, Naples) would have given him sufficient incentive to suppress any hint of an early association between Benevento and Byzantium.\(^ {127}\) Indeed, knowledge of Beneventan dukes’ early involvement with Byzantium might very well

\(^{124}\) Greg. \textit{Ep.}, 2.38; \textit{HL} 4.27.


\(^{126}\) \textit{HL} 5.8, p.262, l.13.

have undermined any claim that they the legitimate successors to the Lombard kings. If there is one thing that Paul is very keen to do throughout his account, it is to highlight the connections between the duchy and the Lombard Kingdom and to downplay the former’s history of autonomy. As he relates in another passage, at some point prior to Arichis’ appointment, King Authari had journeyed southwards all the way to Reggio in Calabria. There, he espied a column in the ocean and placed the tip of his spear on it, saying, “The territories of the Lombards shall be up to this place.” To our knowledge, Authari never actually visited southern Italy and Paul himself seems to recognize the semi-legendary nature of this tale, using terms such as “it is said to have occurred [putatur esse factum].” Nonetheless, he offers up the tale. Some scholars see this as an expression of the classical conception of the Italian peninsula as single political unit, but I would point out that it also establishes Benevento as a part of the Lombard Kingdom early on and grants the kings a role in its establishment. It is impossible to say, given the way he characterizes it, whether or not this story was Paul’s own invention or something he had heard repeated by the southern Lombards, but either way, it provides some justification for Beneventan attempts to claim the kingdom’s legacy as their own.

Paul further plays up Benevento’s connection with the Lombard Kingdom by focusing much of his attention on the life and reign of King Grimoald I. He not only examines the events of his reign, but even provides a long account of his youth discussing how a combination of foreign invasion and internal treachery had forced him and his brother, Radoald, to come

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129 HL 3.32, p.168, l.1.
south. Some of this focus may have due to the fact that some of Paul’s own relatives had been caught up in the same events, but we should not overlook that Grimoald I was also one of the most important dukes in Benevento’s history, winning a number of major military victories and issuing his own additions to the Lombard laws. He was also, much like Paul and Adelperga, a northern Lombard who had lost his home, something which adds an extra resonance to Paul’s description of his flight southwards. In Goffart’s view, this was intended to evoke the “translatio regni” that had taken place between the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento.\(^\text{133}\)

Having successfully fled the oppression of his uncle to the court of his tutor and relative, Arichis I, both Grimoald and his brother were warmly welcomed and adopted by Arichis, who raised them as his own. According to Paul, Arichis so esteemed the both of them that he suggested that they would make better rulers than his own son, Aio. Despite this opening to take power for themselves, both Grimoald and his brother served Aio faithfully until his death on the battlefield in 641/2. It was at this point that Grimoald’s brother succeeded him, though he soon died and Grimoald assumed the title of duke. He proved to be quite capable, fending off numerous incursions from external enemies, including a Greek army that was attempting to sack the shrine of S. Michael on Mt. Gargano. Paul claims that his reputation was so great that some of the northern dukes conspired to place him on the throne to put an end to the internal discord caused by the joint reign of Perctarit and Godepert. At Godepert’s request, Grimoald marched north with a large army in support of him. However, through the machinations of the Duke of Turin, he was forced to slay Godepert and assumed the crown.\(^\text{134}\)

\(^{133}\) Goffart, Narrators, 406-7.
\(^{134}\) HL 4.43-4, 46, 48, 51.
Aside from the fact that Paul paints Grimoald’s usurpation in the best possible light, it is rather interesting how he juxtaposes the orderliness of the Beneventan duchy against the internal discord consuming the Lombard Kingdom and other duchies. As he highlights, Grimoald’s eventual rise to the ducal title was a product of an orderly succession, in which both he and his brother served their dukes faithfully and respected the rights of hereditary succession, even over the wishes of their adoptive father. Contrast this behavior with the civil war begun between Perctarit and Godepert, which threatened to tear the kingdom apart, or the one that had enveloped Benevento’s closest neighbor, Spoleto, when the sons of Duke Ariulf went to war over the title. I would contend that Paul deliberately chose to portray matters this way, as it not only illustrated the value of Benevento’s long tradition of orderly successions, but the duchy’s overall superiority. Whereas other duchies, Paul’s homeland of Friuli included, as well as the Lombard Kingdom experienced frequent turmoil over the succession of individual leaders, nothing of the sort occurred in Benevento. Instead, succession from father to son (in this case, adopted) proceeded smoothly and internal discord was at a minimum, providing an unusual degree of continuity between rulers. As we shall see, even when such discord did threaten to erupt, the Beneventans “were always faithful to their leaders [suis dactoribus semper fidelis extitit].”

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136 HL 4.16; Goffart, Narrators, 401.
137 Taviani-Carozzi, La principauté lombarde de Salerne (IXe-XIe siècle). Pouvoir et société en Italie lombarde méridionale, 16.
138 HL 6.55, p.356, 1.8, tr. p.300.
Paul’s account of Grimoald’s reign as king is every bit as detailed as his account of his early life and reign as duke. Unlike his arrival at Benevento, Grimoald did not find easy acceptance in the Lombard Kingdom, despite having been born there. Shortly after he gained the throne, the Byzantine emperor, Constans II, launched an expedition against Benevento. Grimoald gathered his armies to march south, but some of his dukes abandoned him, claiming that he had despoiled the palace and intended to remain in the south. Grimoald’s own steward, the current Duke of Friuli, behaved shamefully in his absence and eventually rebelled when it became clear that the king intended to return northwards. Such acts are not unusual to see in Paul’s history, but what is interesting is the underlying motivation that Paul ascribes to them. For Paul, the tension here was not between royal and ducal authority, but between northern and southern Lombards. Despite his Friulian background, Grimoald was still viewed as an outsider, one who was only interested in plundering the north, not ruling it. As Paul demonstrates, however, the king remained more dedicated to the kingdom and its people than his own dukes, not only by winning a great victory over the Byzantine armies, but returning northwards and leading his people to other victories.\textsuperscript{139} In a way, he demonstrated that, far from being outsiders, the southern Lombards were as much a part of the kingdom and \textit{gens} as the northern Lombards.

This recurring theme of the importance of being faithful as an essential characteristic of Lombard identity and a good ruler\textsuperscript{140} is also strongly emphasized in Paul’s description of Grimoald’s desperate bid to save Benevento from Constans II and his armies. Upon learning of Constans II’s incursion into Beneventan territory, Grimoald’s son, Romoalda, sent his tutor

\textsuperscript{139} \textit{HL} 5.6-8, 16-26.
\textsuperscript{140} Cammarosano, “Paolo Diacono e il problema della regalita,” 102-4.
northwards to warn his father. The tutor, Sesuald, reached Grimoald and returned southwards bearing word that the king was on his way. He was captured, however, and threatened with death if he did not tell Romoald that his father would not be coming. When placed in front of the city’s walls, however, Sesuald warned Romoald and declared that the Greeks were a “faithless people [gens perfida].” Constans II immediately had him executed, but was forced to withdraw now that Romoald knew that his father was on his way. Once again, we see a contrast between northern and the southern Lombards, with Romoald’s tutor remaining faithful to him even in the face of certain death, while Grimoald’s northern retainers abandon him at the earliest opportunity.

Romoald himself was portrayed as the embodiment of faithfulness. When Grimoald arrived, he planned to give chase to the retreating Byzantine armies, but Romoald requested that he be allowed to take a portion of his father’s army and meet Constans II’s force, proclaiming, “With God’s favor, I will fight with him and when I shall have conquered him a greater glory, indeed, will be ascribed to your power.” Grimoald agreed, and Romoald marched his army forward. He met Constans II’s forces on the battlefield and won a lopsided victory. According to Paul, the tide of battle turned when one of the Byzantine soldiers was impaled and lifted aloft on the royal banner.

This series of events and the way they are depicted are significant for a number of reasons. First, as we have observed, this was not just a consequential victory for the Lombards as a whole, but especially for the Beneventans. The tale of how the southern Lombards finally

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141 *HL* 5.8, p.262, l.13.
142 *HL* 5.10, tr. p.222.
143 See p. 84-7.
converted to Catholic Christianity, the *Vita Barbati*, takes place during this time and even utilizes passages directly copied from Paul’s history.\(^\text{144}\) Likewise, most accounts of the translation of the relics of S. Mercurius, patron saint of Arichis’ court, mention that the relics had first come to Italy during this expedition and the *Chronicon Salernitanum* also alludes to these events as having inspired the Beneventan Lombards to rise up against the Byzantine occupation of the city in 895.\(^\text{145}\) How much of this is due to Paul’s account versus preexisting traditions is difficult to say, but it seems clear that this passage would have and, ultimately, did resonate with a southern audience.

In addition, this series events can almost viewed as a paralleling the events that took place around the same time as Paul was composing his work. After Grimoald III was released from his captivity in Francia, he agreed to place his forces under the command of Winigis to fight an invading Byzantine army nominally led by his own uncle and previously crowned King of the Lombards, Adelchis. Given that the invasion itself may have taken place with the support of Grimoald’s own father and mother, this placed him in a difficult position. By reminding his audience of these past events and the treachery of the Greeks, that so-called “*gens perfida,*” Paul may have been implicitly justifying Grimoald III’s actions, or, if the work was written beforehand, arguing against a Byzantine-Lombard alliance.\(^\text{146}\)

There is also an additional measure of symbolism in Romoald asking for his father’s banner and a portion of his army. While this could be interpreted as symbolizing the trust given

\(^{144}\) *Vit. Barb.* 4.  
\(^{145}\) *TrSM2; Chron. Sal.* 147.  
to Grimoald III by Charlemagne, it could have also represented the transfer of Lombard royal authority from Pavia to Benevento. For neither the first nor the last time in Paul’s text, we see a Beneventan duke being entrusted with his authority from the king and using it for the betterment of the kingdom and the *gens*. Whereas the Duke of Friuli had abused the powers the king had invested in him for personal gain, Romoald proved to be faithful and more than capable of acting in his father’s stead. Romoald himself would never actually become king, but as Paul illustrates, in this moment, he was far worthier to succeed his father than any of the other dukes.

Paul’s relatively positive portrayal of Grimoald and Romoald may simply reflect the fact that they continued to be admired by the Lombards and also possibly because the former was a native of Paul’s own Friuli. However, we should not ignore the Beneventan connection either. Although Grimoald’s dynasty had potentially been removed from power by Paul’s time, it is quite possible that they remained venerated figures in Beneventan history. Arichis II even named two of his sons Romoald and Grimoald,¹⁴⁷ which some have interpreted as evidence that he was actually descended from the king.¹⁴⁸ Whether or not this is true is difficult to prove, but at the very least, it indicates that they continued to be regarded as important figures even a century later and that a Beneventan audience would have likely read any account of their lives with considerable interest. Thus, Paul had significant incentive to portray both of them in the best possible light.

After Grimoald’s death, Paul largely focuses the next section of his history on covering the north, though he does make sure to note Benevento’s succession of dukes and even the

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¹⁴⁸ For a discussion of Arichis’ origins and the names, see p. 99, n.30.
marriage between Grimoald II and a daughter of King Perctarit. The next time he devotes significant attention to the duchy is when he discusses Liutprand’s reign, which was, as we have already discussed, one of the most turbulent periods in Benevento’s pre-774 history, with Liutprand intervening in the duchy’s affairs on at least three separate occasions. What is most interesting about Paul’s depiction of this period not simply what he covers, but what he does not. Tensions between the Beneventan dukes and the Lombard kings are almost wholly downplayed, with no mention being made of Liutprand’s march southwards in 727/8 and no suggestion that the usurpations that occurred may have been a product of opposition to royal involvement in the south. Paul also downplays the severity of the usurpations and the king’s involvement in quelling them, portraying them as having only limited support and being brought to halt by the Beneventan people themselves. Despite a later ducal list suggesting that a certain Audelais held power for nearly three years, Paul merely states that a conspiracy against Gisulf II arose. As for Godescalc, Paul is careful to emphasize that he did not he gain power through violence, and that his predecessor (appointed by Liutprand) had died through natural means. It is possible that Duke Gregory had indeed died of natural causes, but it is generally assumed that Godescalc usurped his title, which might explain his eventual murder at the hands of Gisulf II’s partisans.

Unlike Paul’s earlier omissions and obfuscations concerning Benevento’s early history and ambiguous relations with the Lombard Kingdom, I do not think that we can possibly attribute these to a lack of information. Paul was born around this time and the length and detail

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149 *HL* 6.2.
150 See p. 95-7.
151 *Catalogus Regum Langobardorum et Ducum Beneventanorum*, 494.
152 *HL* 6.55-7.
of his account indicates that he was very well informed as to what went on. During his stint at
the Beneventan court, he may have even known people who had witnessed firsthand the events
that had taken place at the court during his time. Thus, any information he left out about events
during this period was, in my view, likely deliberately omitted so as not to undermine the
impression that Benevento was a model of loyalty, both with regards to its dukes and the
Lombard kings.\textsuperscript{153}

Interestingly, this treatment was only reserved for Benevento. For the Duchy of Spoleto,
Paul had no hesitation about highlighting its long history of discord up to Liutprand’s time
including a detailed account of the treacherous actions of Duke Transamund against
Liutprand.\textsuperscript{154} Such disparate treatment may have served as a commentary on the politics of
Paul’s own time. Although Benevento and Spoleto had traditionally been allies, the Spoletans’
decision to align themselves with the Franks turned them against one another. The central figure
in all of this, Duke Hildeprand of Spoleto, was in some ways very much like Transamund, as he
too had usurped his position and allied himself with the papacy against the Lombard king.\textsuperscript{155}
Given Paul’s innate distaste for Transamund and in general for those who had betrayed the
kings’ trust, one must wonder if he was attempting to establish a deliberate parallel between the
two dukes. If so, his portrayal of the Spoletan duchy may have been intended as a subtle attack
on both the Spoletans themselves and the Franks for allying with them.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{153} As Wickham has observed, Paul was not above doing this for other aspects of his work, whether it was largely
ignoring the Lombard kings’ early embrace of Arianism or Liutprand’s acrimonious dealings with the papacy.
Wickham, \textit{Early Medieval Italy}, 29.
\textsuperscript{154} \textit{HL} 6.55-7; Goffart, \textit{Narrators}, 418, 22-3.
\textsuperscript{155} \textit{HL} 6.44; \textit{LP} 97.32-3.
\textsuperscript{156} Cammarosano, “Spoleto e Benevento e il gli imperi,” 170.
This is not to say that Paul totally overlooked the troubles Benevento experienced during this period, but his emphasis was on the Beneventans’ loyalty to their dukes rather than the duchy’s internal discord. As I noted, he makes no mention that Audelais actually succeeded in usurping power from Gisulf II nor does he give Liutprand credit for quelling his rebellion. Instead, Paul suggests that he arrived after the “Beneventans, who were always faithful to their leaders [qui suis dactoribus semper fidelis extitit], slew [the conspirators] and preserved the life of their duke.” A similar impression is given concerning the end of Godescalc’s reign, as Paul claims that, “The people of Benevento, who were faithful to Gisulf [fidelibus Gisulfi], fell upon him and he was killed.” Liutprand’s role in this is peripheral, even though he was the one had caused Godescalc to take flight in the first place.

As with his treatment of Spoleto, Paul’s emphasis on the loyalty of the Beneventans to their dukes in these situations may have had some connection to events in his own time. It was only recently that Grimoald III had been held in captivity in Francia and Benevento had experienced a brief period without a ruler. Such a situation was ripe for civil discord, but surprisingly, the aristocracy rallied to their prince, even going so far as to demand his return when Charlemagne sent his missi to Benevento. Eventually, the king decided to release Grimoald, who returned to take control of the principality, much as Gisulf II had returned from Pavia. The Anonymous of Salerno actually picked up on this parallel, as he used Paul’s own

157 HL 6.55, p.356, 1.8, tr. p.300.
158 HL 6.57, p.360, 1.7-8, tr. p.303.
159 CC 82, Appendix 2.
description of the Beneventans as, “Always faithful to their leaders [suis ductoribus semper fidelis extitit],” to describe their adulation and devotion to their returning prince.160

It is interesting to note that Gisulf II’s return to Benevento is the last thing Paul discusses before ending his work with an account of Liutprand’s final years and death. Although, chronologically speaking, the two events were not that far apart, there may have been an added motive behind their placement.161 If we look at the structure the final book of Paul’s history, it begins with Paul discussing the accomplishments of Romoald and ends with the return of Gisulf II.162 Much like Arichis I, Gisulf II was being entrusted with rule over the Beneventan duchy by the king. However, his relationship with the king went even deeper than that of his illustrious predecessor, as he had been educated at the court and raised with “fatherly care [paterna pietate]” by Liutprand.163 He was, in some respects, the perfect successor to the king whom Paul eulogizes extensively at the end of his work. This juxtaposition of one reign starting and another ending offers the perfect conclusion for Paul’s work, one filled with sadness for the loss of the Lombard’s greatest king, but optimism for the future of Benevento under Gisulf II and his successors.

McKitterick has taken a different view, arguing that Paul’s portrayal of Liutprand suggests that he was the perfect analog for Charlemagne, on account of their shared piety and the fact that both had established palace chapels, issued laws, and promoted classical learning at their courts.164 However, she ignores another perfect candidate for this: Arichis II. Much like

163 *HL* 6.55, p.356, l.15.
Liutprand, he had issued laws, demonstrated his devoutness with his patronage of monasteries, construction of churches (including a palace church), and efforts to obtain saints’ relics, and also promoted classical education (though unlike Liutprand, Arichis was well educated).\footnote{Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 114.} Leaving aside these historical parallels, one even finds a number of rhetorical similarities between Paul’s eulogy for Liutprand and his epitaph for Arichis.\footnote{HL 6.58, Neff 35.} Both are characterized as “amatores pacis,” and each is praised for being “sagax” and “sapiens,” as well as possessing “consilium.” Liutprand is illiterate, but “equal to the philosophers,” while Arichis contemplates both the physical and moral aspects of philosophy. They are also equal in their devotion during the nightly vigils (pervigilium). The language employed here might purely be formulaic, but if so, we find very few examples of it being employed in any of the other epitaphs attributed to Paul or more generally, in his poetry. Only Queen Hildegard merits being described as “sapiens,”\footnote{Neff, 26, p.114, l.13.} while Queen Ansa is praised for her “amor pacis.”\footnote{Neff, 9, p.47, l.14.} Although I would not go so far as to claim that Paul deliberately modeled his eulogy of Liutprand after his epitaph for Arichis (or vice versa), the specific historical and rhetorical parallels between the two make it far more likely that it was the reign of Arichis, rather than that of Charlemagne, that Paul was trying to evoke with both his history and eulogy for Liutprand.\footnote{Gasparri, “Il ducato e il principato di Benevento,” 110; Taviani-Carozzi, \textit{La principauté lombarde de Salerne (IXe-Xle siècle). Pouvoir et société en Italie lombarde méridionale}, 30-3. Taviani-Carozzi has also noted that Arichis’ epitaph also very much resembles Paul’s descriptions of Justinian. \textit{HL} 1.25.}

Liutprand’s death was both the end of Paul’s text and a major turning point in the Lombards’ political fortunes. Shortly afterwards, the Lombards’ relationships with the papacy
and the Franks broke down, leading to an escalating series of conflicts that would bring about the
kingdom’s downfall. As I mentioned earlier, Walter Goffart has tried to make the case that Paul
intended to continue his text all the way up to his own time, not necessarily with an eye towards
belaboring these events, but celebrating the reign and achievements of Arichis II. I disagree with
Goffart’s theory, but even without a section lauding Arichis II, Paul had already made the case
that the Beneventan princes were best suited to replace the Lombard kings as leaders of the *gens.*
While he did not entirely rewrite Benevento’s history, he did shape it in such way as to obscure
the more autonomous aspects of duchy’s history and to establish a historical precedent for the
same sort of ideological claims that Arichis himself had made. Dukes such as Arichis I and
Gisulf II may have wielded considerable power, but in Paul’s portrayal, it was power that had
originally been entrusted to them by the king, not seized in defiance of it. Whereas other dukes
had repeatedly betrayed their kings’ trust, the Beneventan dukes remained steadfast in their
loyalty throughout the kingdom’s history. This coupled with the devotion of their people and the
stability of their duchy was an indication that they were not only worthy of wielding the
authority entrusted to them, but also among the best representatives of the Lombard *gens* and its
values. Thus, even though the “*perditio Langobardorum*” had occurred in the north, there still
existed viable candidates who could assume leadership over the *gens* and carry on the kingdom’s
legacy.

To be clear, I do not believe that Paul was advocating that the princes should seek to
restore the Lombard Kingdom or to provoke conflict with the Franks. As his own statement
concerning the kingdom’s downfall makes clear, the kingdom’s time had come and gone.
Benevento, on the other hand, was at the time of the work’s composition, still largely
independent and under the rule of a Lombard rather than a Frank. It was this state of affairs that Paul worked so ardently to maintain, reminding both Lombards and Franks that they had once worked together, while perhaps implying that the Beneventans would prove to be more capable and trustworthy an ally than their northern and Spoletan brethren had been in the prior decades, given the opportunity. However, this was to be a partnership of two separate powers rather than the subordination of one to the other, and as Paul made clear throughout his work, war in defense of liberty was something to be celebrated as being quintessentially Lombard rather than disdained.

Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future

Although Paul’s work offered considerable justification for the ideological claims the Beneventan princes were making at this time, I would not go so far as to say that the sole purpose of his work was simply to advocate for this particular political agenda. After all, the Historia Langobardorum was about much more than just Benevento or the Franks; it was about the Lombard gens as a whole and their evolution over time. While such a work still would have been of considerable interest to the Beneventan court, had Paul wished to simply support Arichis and Grimoald’s agenda, he would have focused even more on Benevento and perhaps been much more explicit in his advocacy for the princes, like his continuators. Instead, Paul had a much broader purpose in mind, one which aligned with and may have very well have been influenced by the princes’ political ideology, but was also a response to the circumstances under which he wrote his work.
What makes Paul unique in comparison to Bede and a number of other early medieval historians is that he composed his work with the knowledge that the kingdom he was describing had perished. Thus, one should not just ask, “Who did Paul write this work for?” but “Why did he write it now?” What would be the point of discussing a conquered kingdom, particularly if he did not intend to actually discuss the events surrounding its fall outside a very limited degree of foreshadowing? There is a seeming disconnect between the relatively positive tone of Paul’s work and the realities of his own time. Erchempert even implicitly contrasted his own, largely negative account of Lombard history with Paul’s, declaring, “It is the custom of the teacher of history, especially in discussions of his own race, to recount only those things which are recognized as relating to the height of their glory.”

Despite this praise, Paul clearly acknowledged the Lombards’ deficiencies. He did not, however, belabor them in such a way as to suggest that their downfall had been preordained from when they first set foot in Italy or that it was completely deserved. For him, the history of the Lombard Kingdom was one of constant progress, not decline, so much so that, as Bullough has observed, one could almost read his text without realizing that the kingdom he was describing had fallen.

And yet Paul did indeed write with the knowledge that his kingdom had fallen. Although his interest in writing a history of the Lombards may have preceded the events of 774, the Lombard Kingdom’s fall gave an even greater urgency to the task. For two centuries, the Lombard Kingdom had provided the Lombards with a sense of political cohesion and helped to create some semblance of a collective identity. However, as I have argued previously, this

171 Bullough, “Ethnic History and the Carolingians,” 100.
identity was not particularly well-defined nor was it heavily emphasized in political, religious, or cultural discourse prior to 774. Now, with the kingdom gone and the Franks exerting considerable political and cultural influence on the Lombards, there was a very real possibility that this collective identity would either cease to exist or be so radically altered as to be fundamentally unrecognizable. Paul’s work was an attempt to counteract this, not just by preserving the traditions concerning how the Lombards came to be, but also the values and practices which he deemed most important to their own distinct identity. The Lombards of Paul’s history were not the militarily weak, politically fragmented, simoniacs whose infighting and corruption had led to their downfall at the hands of an outside foe, but powerful warriors whose gradual embrace of Christianity and strong belief that “it was better to maintain liberty by arms than stain it with the payment of tribute” enabled them to conquer their foes (including the Franks at certain points) and become one of the dominant powers in Italy. Although their kingdom had fallen, Paul wanted to ensure that they would not only be remembered for this, but to encourage northern and southern Lombards alike to maintain their distinct identity by providing them with examples (both positive and negative) from which to draw inspiration. For a southern audience, in particular, this would have gone hand-in-hand with their attempts to maintain their independence and their own distinct political and cultural traditions.

In many respects, Paul’s text was very much a reflection of the cultural and political trends that were occurring in Benevento during this time. As we discussed in the last chapter, at multiple levels of society, the southern Lombards were coming to grips with the sudden loss of

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the kingdom and the external political and cultural pressures they faced as a result of it. Their response was to define more explicitly the boundaries between themselves and other groups, with Arichis II, in particular, emphasizing the continuity of ethnic identity and practice as a core part of his political ideology. As a monk of Montecassino, Paul may very well have witnessed some of these efforts firsthand\textsuperscript{174} and been inspired to make his own contributions to them. Having read and perhaps been inspired by the works of Eutropius, Gregory of Tours and others,\textsuperscript{175} Paul knew well the value of written histories in shaping a people’s perception of themselves as well as others’ perceptions of them. However, lacking anything of comparable value for his own people, Paul took it upon himself to fill this lacuna while there still existed an opportunity to influence how his people would adapt to the loss of their kingdom and the outside pressures they faced, whether they were southern Lombard monks debating which chant to use in religious ceremonies or northern aristocrats facing the growing prospect of political marginalization. In doing so, he made a singular literary contribution that would not only very much shape how we view the Lombards today, but also, as we shall see, how, they came to view themselves in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Given this, it is fair to ask just whether or not Paul’s depictions of the Lombards and their values had any basis in reality or were merely idealized representations created by Paul in response to the changing political and cultural circumstances? The truth probably lies somewhere in between, but for my part, I would caution against too strongly emphasizing the degree to which he \textit{invented} the history and conception of Lombard identity that he presented to

\textsuperscript{174} Amelli, “L’epigramma di Paolo Diacono intorno al canto Gregoriano e Ambrosiano,” 153-75.

\textsuperscript{175} See p. 197, n.13.
his readers. Just as he shaped the Lombards’ history to suit his own ends, so too would Paul have been shaped by it, his own experiences, and the interactions he had both with members of his gens and outside of it. As significant as it was, his work should still be viewed as part of a much broader ethnic and political discourse that was taking place both in his own time and even before then. While we might not have access to this discourse outside of the handful of sources that have been left to us, we should not assume that it did not take place in any form. As I observed earlier, at their core, ethnic histories such as Paul’s still partially reflect the everyday conversations that people have about who they are, what they believe, the things they most cherish, and what makes them distinct from other groups. To be certain, Paul’s work was a very important contribution to this dialogue, but I would argue that its enduring popularity and influence reflects, in no small part, the fact that what he had to say very much resonated with his readers based on their own views and experiences.176

In my view, Paul did not invent a wholly new sense of Lombard identity, but rather, defined in much clearer terms what this identity was and gave voice to the sort of ideas and sentiments that were driving this growing emphasis on maintaining ethnic identity and distinctions within Benevento. This is not to say that Paul’s work was intended to provide an unfiltered record of his people’s beliefs and history nor that he did not expand upon them in unique and meaningful ways. His strong emphasis on the Lombards’ constant struggle for freedom in his fleshed-out narrative of their origins, his linking the fate of the gens to that of the

176 For a discussion of this in a more modern context, see Anthony Smith’s discussions of “invented” traditions and “imagined communities.” Anthony D. Smith, Nationalism and Modernism (New York & London: Routledge, 1998), 117-42.
kingdom, and his portrayal of the Beneventan dukes and people as being “always faithful,”177 were all intended, in part, to influence the behavior and direction of his people going forward. While this is not something that Paul himself explicitly articulated, his efforts to produce an occasionally idealized portrayal of the Lombards’ past in response to the political and cultural tensions of his own time are fairly consistent with what anthropologists and sociologists have observed among other groups throughout history. As Anthony Smith has noted, “A community’s golden age can chart an ethnicity’s future and even furnish a blueprint.”178

By providing his people with a certain image of, for lack of a better word, “Lombardness,” Paul was offering them a standard that they could both judge themselves against and could also use to reinforce further the ethnic boundaries between themselves and other groups.179 Although his people had evolved considerably from the wandering pagans who had initially marched into Italy, they were still, in his view, a free people who could only remain as such so long as they were willing to fight for it. As Paul himself stated, it was “better to lay down life in war than to submit as vile slaves to the taunts of their enemies.”180 To be certain, such sentiments eventually came to be tempered by Christian piety, but at no point did Paul ever entirely reject the value of martial pursuits and virtue. Grimoald I was “adorned with wisdom no less than strength,” and Liutprand could still be a “lover of peace” while also “powerful in war.”181 For Paul, the Lombards’ past values were not something to be ashamed of or

177 HL 5.6, p.260, l.18; HL 6.55, tr. p300.
180 HL 1.17, tr. p.29-30.
181 HL 5.33, tr. p.236, 6.58, tr. p.306.
condemned, but rather, something that had been and should continue to be integrated into their present selves.\textsuperscript{182}

That is not to say that Paul tried to hide completely what he considered to be the more embarrassing aspects of their past. Their paganism, their occasional acts of brutality, and their frequent infighting were all readily on display in history. However, much like John the Baptist forgave Rothari for holding the wrong beliefs, so too could Paul forgive his people their stumbles. Unlike a century later when Erchempert proclaimed that there was nothing worthy that could be written about his own people due to their many failures,\textsuperscript{183} Paul believed that a brighter future lay ahead for his people. It was not, however, to be with the Franks who had led to the “\textit{perditio Langobardorum}” in the north, but the Beneventans who, by being “always faithful to their leaders,”\textsuperscript{184} demonstrated that they were in fact, the very best the Lombard \textit{gens} had to offer, and therefore, the most qualified to continue building upon its political and cultural legacy.

We shall see in the next chapter how the conception of Lombard identity that Paul articulated influenced later ethnic and political discourse in southern Italy, but for now, it is worth noting that he also provided subsequent authors with a substantial rhetorical and literary foundation which they would utilize to articulate their own conceptions of Lombard identity and history. The author of the \textit{Chronicon Salernitanum}, for example, cited Paul’s tale of how the Lombards received their name to condemn the payment of tribute to the Franks and at one point, 

\textsuperscript{182}Leonardi, “La figura di Paolo Diacono,” 21-2.  
\textsuperscript{183}\textit{Erch.} 1.  
\textsuperscript{184}\textit{HL} 5.6, p.260, l.18; \textit{HL} 6.55, tr. p300..
also proclaimed that “It was better to die fighting than to bend the neck to a foreign gens.” Erchempert was equally strong in this belief, claiming that when Pippin of Italy wrote to Grimoald III that he would put him in his place, Grimoald replied “From both parents I was born free and noble, and I believe that with God’s protection, I shall always be free!” This sort of rhetoric, though not taken directly from Historia Langobardorum, very much reflected its and even contributed to the mythologizing of the period in which Paul wrote and the individuals who shaped it. Arichis II and Grimoald III, in particular, were often extolled as the upholders of the same sort of values that Paul had set forth in his own work.

Ironically, Paul himself became something of legendary figure, at least in southern Italy. In the Chronicon Salernitanum, he was portrayed not just as a gifted writer and orator, but as the embodiment of Lombard values and patriotism as evidenced by his frequent attempts to murder Charlemagne and long service to Arichis II. Such a portrayal is very much at odds with the Paul we know, but it reflects just how influential his work was in shaping later ethnic discourse. Having both been inspired by Paul’s tales and utilized them in his own historical anecdotes, the Anonymous sought to ensure that Paul’s life and deeds were just as worthy of admiration as the Historia Langobardorum. Like Arichis II and Grimoald III, he had to be a symbol rather than just a mere historical figure. Thus, the Anonymous not only sought to remove the taint of his association with the Franks by portraying Paul as Charlemagne’s would-be assassin, but also emphasized that he had lived up to his rhetoric about loyalty by remaining faithful to King Desiderius and saving Benevento by warning Arichis of Charlemagne’s impending invasion.

185 Chron. Sal. 42.
186 Erch. 6, p.236-7, 1.40 – 04.
187 Chron. Sal. 9.
In the end, both Paul and his history considerably influenced and were considerably influenced by the political and cultural changes taking place in Benevento and the Lombard Kingdom. While he may not have been the red-blooded nationalist that the *Chronicon Salernitanum* portrayed him to be nor even vehemently opposed to Frankish rule, his sympathies still lay with the Beneventan princes’ and their people who, much like their ancient forebears, continued to struggle to maintain their freedom in the face of a superior threat. It was out of a desire to support them and, more broadly, to preserve his people’s identity and traditions that Paul wrote his work. As we shall discuss in the next chapter, although Benevento would not turn out to be the stable successor to the Lombard Kingdom he might have envisioned, nonetheless, its people did share his strong desire to maintain both their independence and distinct identity.
V

Remnants of the Gens

Benevento had weathered the initial wave of Frankish attacks on its independence, but this was only the first of many trials it would endure throughout the ninth century. After Grimoald III’s death in 806, the principality began to experience a significant degree of internal discord, with members of the aristocracy increasingly challenging the princes’ authority and, for the first time, even forcibly removing them from power. This would eventually lead to a civil war that resulted in the principality being split between Benevento and Salerno, leaving both increasingly vulnerable to outside threats from the Franks, the Arabs, and the Byzantines. These challenges would sorely test the Beneventan princes and bring the principality to the brink of collapse. On the surface, it would appear as though the southern Lombards were on a path to ruin, lacking both the ethnic and political cohesion to withstand these internal and external pressures. However, while the principality did not emerge from the ninth century unscathed or unchanged, it still managed to remain independent through some of the most severe political tests it would face in its history. I would argue that it was more than just the princes’ political maneuverings that made this possible; it was also the potent combination of ethnic pride and antipathy towards other groups which existed and was intensifying among their people during certain moments of crisis, something which we find expressed in the histories, hagiographical works, and other southern Lombard texts from this period. The authors of these sources not only celebrated Lombard achievements past and present (particularly martial ones), but also strongly denounced the other groups in the Italian peninsula using harsh rhetoric as part of an appeal for greater political and ethnic unity. For them, independence and the defense of it were more than
just political choices; they were at the very essence of what it meant to be to a Lombard. To that end, I shall undertake an examination of our post-774 sources, focusing specifically on how they portray other groups (both with regards to specific events in history and more broadly) and how these portrayals were, in turn, used by their authors to define an ideal model of behavior for the Lombards and to elevate the symbolic importance of Benevento and its princes.

Although the expressions of ethnic pride/antipathy that we find in our sources could be interpreted as mere rhetoric or, at most, solely expressions of their authors’ individual views/agendas that were developed mainly in response to the traumas of the ninth and tenth centuries, I would argue that they were actually much more than that. At least some of the sentiments and the rhetoric used to express them that we find in sources such as Erchempert can be traced to earlier writings emanating from the Beneventan court such as the funerary poems for various princes, hagiographical works like the Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis, and Paul the Deacon’s history. This is not to say that these later authors did not offer their own distinct interpretations of these ideas and rhetoric nor that they did not adapt and modify to fit the particular set of circumstances that they were writing under, but rather, that these interpretations represent more an evolution of prior thought rather than a sharp departure from it. The key difference between later authors such as Erchempert and earlier writers such as Paul was the degree to which the former explicitly and aggressively emphasized ethnicity and ethnic distinctions, both when discussing earlier periods in Benevento’s history, and the crises of their own time.

In addition, we observe among the Lombard authors from this period a certain degree of consistency in terms of how they portrayed both their own group and others, whether it was
highlighting the Franks’ “greed,” the Byzantines’ “perfidious” nature or the belief that “freedom” was an essential component of Lombard identity. All of this suggests that whatever the differences among our authors in terms of their agendas, the genres they were working within, or their own political and social circumstances, they were all articulating and amplifying a much more broadly held set of perceptions which were not confined solely within the walls of the monastery and the halls of the palace. By identifying what these perceptions were and examining them within context of the Lombards’ interactions with outside groups, I intend to demonstrate how these perceptions acted as a catalyst for both political action and a deeper exploration among political elites, historians, and hagiographers of what it meant to be Lombard.

Ethnic identities and perceptions of difference can often serve as a force for mobilizing people, particularly in instances involving significant external political and military pressures.¹ In the particular case of Benevento, we shall see that, despite the severe internal political problems the principality was experiencing during this period, there were still a number of key moments where the southern Lombards were at least temporarily able to set aside their political differences in order to deal with outside challenges, whether it was Louis II’s expeditions in the 870s, the Byzantine occupation of the 890s, or the Arab raids of the late ninth century. While one can point to political self-interest as a major motivating factor behind this, our sources explicitly and implicitly suggest that strong perceptions of ethnic difference were just as much of an animating force in this process. Such perceptions were fueled, in part, by the princes’ own actions and rhetoric, but as we shall discuss, they were not the only ones involved in these struggles nor can it be said that these perceptions were solely a product of southern Italy’s

immediate political situation. After all, most of the sources in this period were not written by those affiliated with one of the southern courts, and, as I noted earlier, they also tended to reflect a much longer history of confrontation and contact with these groups.

Confrontation with these groups of “others” also forced Lombard authors to evaluate what it meant to be Lombard, defining their “virtues” in opposition to the “vices” of these other groups, as well as defining more clearly their values and traditions. In their accounts, the conflicts between the Lombards and outside groups were portrayed as more than just political clashes; they were struggles to live up to the reputation of Arichis II and to maintain the values espoused by Paul the Deacon, namely, that to be Lombard was to be forever struggling to maintain independence. Consequently, the southern Lombards came to view their history of independence and struggles against external foes as evidence that they had inherited the political legacy of the Lombard kings, something which enhanced the symbolic importance of both the Beneventan princes and the principality. More than that, however, they also came to believe that the fall of the Lombard Kingdom had reduced the northern Lombards “to insignificance [ad minime],” leaving the southern Lombards as the only true Lombards remaining in Italy. As Prince Adelchis described it, his people were the “remnants of the gens [reliquias gentis].”

Gens Barbara

Of the three groups I shall analyze, the Franks arguably played the largest role in inspiring Adelchis’ proclamation. They were, after all, the ones who had conquered the

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Lombard Kingdom and, in doing so, inadvertently acted as a catalyst for the southern Lombards’ own growing sense of ethnic awareness. With that said, the relationship between the two groups had grown considerably more complicated since the era of Arichis II and Grimoald III. Particularly in the aftermath of the Beneventan civil war, some Lombards actually looked to the Frankish emperor, Louis II, to stop the constant infighting between the princes and to put an end to the Arab threat. Even the princes seemed to acknowledge the need for outside aid. And yet, a century after the fact, memories of past transgressions had not faded from the southern Lombards’ collective memory, as evidenced by the continual reminders of past Frankish aggression against the Lombard Kingdom and Benevento we find in our ninth and tenth-century sources. While the Franks were never perceived as being a wholly hostile presence in southern Italy like the Arabs, nor as morally bankrupt as the Byzantines and the Neapolitans, they were still frequently portrayed in both histories and court propaganda as barbarians who were volatile, greedy, and culturally inferior, something which reflected present political concerns, the growing mythologization of Arichis’ reign and his resistance to the Franks as a sort of Beneventan golden age, and the genuine significance of these early conflicts in shaping Benevento’s politics and history. All of these things served the princes’ interests, as it ensured that their people’s admiration for individual Frankish leaders would not necessarily translate into them welcoming the possibility of Frankish rule. For historians such as Erchempert, on the other hand, memories of early Lombard resistance to the Franks coupled with present day difficulties only seemed to reinforce the idea that to struggle for independence was at the very heart of their identity.

In 812, Prince Grimoald IV made peace with the Franks, agreeing to pay a sum of 25,000 solidi. After Charlemagne died, Grimoald made a similar arrangement with Louis the Pious,
paying an annual sum of 7,500 *solidi*. This may have provoked considerable backlash from the Beneventan elite, but both sides appear to have abided by the agreement, with the Franks largely leaving Benevento alone for the next two decades. However, the principality’s growing internal discord in the 830s eventually led the Franks to reinsert themselves into southern Italian affairs. After civil war erupted between Radelchis and Siconulf in 839 CE over control of the principality, Siconulf allegedly bribed the Duke of Spoleto into securing him an audience with the newly crowned Louis II in order to gain recognition for his claims. The outcome of this audience is disputed by our accounts, but it would not be long before Louis would forcefully intervene in Beneventan affairs. Although the civil war had initially been a conflict among southern Lombard elites, it began to spill into other parts of Italy after Radelchis and Siconulf both hired Arab mercenaries in order to supplement their armies. The mercenaries, sometimes with the aid of the princes, plundered a number of major monasteries (Montecassino included) and even went so far as to launch a raid against Rome in 846. With both the monasteries and the papacy requesting he take action, Louis dispatched Guy of Spoleto to broker a peace between Radelchis and Siconulf, dividing the principality between Benevento and Salerno.

The division of the principality was a significant moment for the southern Lombards, one that would significantly weaken them and leave them divided along political and regional lines. Benevento now controlled only half of its original territory, having lost the cities of Capua and

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4 Grimoald IV faced both a rebellion and was assassinated in 817. *ARF* 812, 14; *Erch.* 7; *Chron. Sal.* 39.
5 Erchempert claims that Louis II did not recognize Siconulf’s claims while the papal biographer and the author of the *Annales Bertiniani* claimed that he did in return for a substantial sum of gold. *Erch.* 18; *LP* 82.17; *Ann. Bert.* 844.
6 *CSBC* 1.5, 2.2-3, 7-8; *Erch.* 16, 8; *Chron. Sal.* 81-3; *LP* 104.44-7, 105.4, 7.
7 *MGH Capit.* II, 203; *CSBC* 1.5; *Erch.* 19; *Chron. Sal.* 84. The terms of the treaty itself can be found in *Radelgisi et Siginulfi divisio ducatus Beneventani*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH Leges IV (Hanover: Hahn, 1868), 221-6.
8 For further discussion, see p. 311-2.
Taranto, as well as vast swaths of Campania. However, this would not prevent further hostilities between the two principalities nor further internal divisions among the southern Lombard elite. The counts of Capua, in particular, would take advantage of this tumult to accrue more power and autonomy. As all of this was occurring, the Arabs continued to raid parts of the south with seeming impunity.

Map 4 (Lombard Principalities c.850)

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9 Radelgisi et Siginulfi divisio, 9.
10 For an overview of this, see Cilento, Le origini della signoria capuana nella Langobardia minore, 81-151.
The division of the principality also marked the beginning of a new, more dangerous phase in the relationship between the southern Lombards and the Franks, one which could have brought about the end of the southern Lombards’ independence. Unlike his predecessor, Louis was not intervening in the south as an invader, but in the guise of a peacemaker and liberator. Whereas his predecessors had largely been treated with contempt by the Lombards, Louis was viewed as a devout, charismatic, and capable military leader, qualities which, as we shall see, earned him a considerable degree of admiration from Lombard authors such as Erchempert. In some ways, this positive perception, along with his greater involvement in Italian affairs as a whole, made him an even greater threat to Beneventan independence than Charlemagne.

Indeed, Louis’ influence continued to grow in the south following the division of the principality, as both the princes and the monasteries became increasingly dependent on him for protection from each other and the Arabs. However, the emperor’s heightened involvement did little to calm both the internal and external political situation. Although he had captured and executed the leaders of the Arab forces in Benevento in the 840s/50s, political unrest in North Africa coupled with a need for slaves and plunder led to more frequent raids in southern Italy and the establishment of colonies in both Sicily and Bari. Louis attempted to rectify this situation in 852 by mounting an expedition to retake the city of Bari, but his successes were limited due to a lack of a strong navy and an insufficient support from the Lombard princes.

12 Louis was unusual in that he actually spent the majority of his reign in Italy, first ruling as King of Italy and then as emperor. For a discussion of Louis’ reign, see François Bougard, “La cour et le gouvernement de Louis II, 840-875,” in La royauté et les élites dans l’Europe carolingienne (Villeneuve d’Ascq: Centre d’histoire de l’Europe du Nord Ouest, 1998), 249-67.
13 Much of this unrest had to do with tensions between the local Berber population and the Arab rulers of North Africa, the Aghlabid emirs. Alex Metcalfe, The Muslims of Medieval Italy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 7-22; Giosuè Musca, L’emirato di Bari, 847-871 (Bari: Dedalo, 1964), 34-5.
14 CSBC 2.14; Erch. 19-20; Chron. Sal. 83.
Consequently, southern Italy continued to suffer under incessant attacks from the Arabs for the next fifteen years, with both Prince Adelchis of Benevento and the monasteries of San Vincenzo and Montecassino eventually being forced to offer tribute to Sawdan.\textsuperscript{15}

Louis would remain involved in southern Italian affairs,\textsuperscript{16} but he would not launch another major expedition against the Arabs until around 866/7. Arriving at Montecassino, he called together representatives from Salerno, Capua and Benevento to organize an offensive against the raiders. As with his prior expedition, the response from Lombard leaders was decidedly tepid, with the Capuans outright refusing to support his efforts. Unlike in 852, Louis had no intention of turning back nor would he tolerate only half-hearted support. In response to the princes’ recalcitrance, Louis seized control of the city of Capua and then marched into Salerno and Benevento to ensure the loyalties of both Prince Guaifer and Prince Adelchis, respectively.\textsuperscript{17} The Anonymous suggests that both rulers welcomed him voluntarily, but Erchempert explicitly states that he seized control of both cities from their rulers.\textsuperscript{18} Invited or not, it seems that Louis had decided to take a much firmer hand in the affairs of southern Italy.

With the Lombard princes brought into line, Louis launched his expedition against the Emirate of Bari. Despite the eventual dissolution of an alliance he had formed with Byzantium, he still won a considerable number of victories and even managed to seize control of Bari and Sawdan in 871. Now that the emir was in captivity, he launched another offensive to retake Taranto and retired to Benevento to plan his next move. However, Louis failed to anticipate that

\textsuperscript{15} Erch. 29.
\textsuperscript{16} He was, for example, heavily involved in the disputes over the rule of Salerno. CSBC 2.19; Erch. 20, 28; Chron. Sal. 94, 101.
\textsuperscript{17} CSBC 1.6-9
\textsuperscript{18} Erch. 32; Chron. Sal. 105-6.
the Arabs were not the only threat he would face while in southern Italy. Although Adelchis had supported the emperor in his effort to recapture Bari, both Frankish and Lombard sources suggest that tensions were growing between the two over the emperor’s increased control and the behavior of his officials.\(^{19}\) Fearing for his position and perhaps also, as Erchempert and the Anonymous allege, angry over the harsh manner in which his people were treated by Louis’ officials, Adelchis seized the emperor and his family in late 871, imprisoning them for nearly a month. It was only a combination of pleas from the Bishop of Benevento and the threat of an Arab resurgence that led Adelchis to release the emperor, but not before he had extracted a promise from Louis to foreswear vengeance and never again bring an army into Beneventan territory. Louis relented, but was swiftly absolved of his oath by the pope. He eventually mounted another campaign against the Arabs in southern Italy, driving them out of parts of Campania, but was ultimately unable to reclaim Apulia or avenge himself upon Adelchis. Frustrated with his lack of progress and distracted by other matters in the north, Louis left southern Italy and died not long after in 875.\(^{20}\) Neither Adelchis nor his successors would suffer any further reprisals for the actions, as Louis’ successors turned their attentions towards their own internal affairs. For all intents and purposes, the Frankish threat to Beneventan independence was finally at an end,\(^{21}\) but it deprived the Lombards of the support they needed against the Arabs. In fact, Louis’ failure to drive the Arabs out of southern Italy completely would give them sufficient time to recover their strength and to resume raiding the Lombard principalities in decades to come.

\(^{19}\) Ann. Bert. 866-75; Erch. 33-6; Chron. Sal. 106-9, 117-9.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid.  
\(^{21}\) Kreutz, Before the Normans, 47.
Despite the long-term repercussions of his actions, Adelchis was not unjustified in his fear that Louis intended to take permanent control of the southern principalities. According to both Erchempert and the Anonymous of Salerno, Louis’ officials acted heavy-handedly, particularly after the capture of Bari, and even the Frankish annals state that Louis intended to remove Adelchis from power. Our charter evidence would also seem to suggest this was Louis’ ultimate aim. As early as 861, he issued a grant to S. Salvatore in Brescia listing the Lombards in Benevento among his fideles, something that none of his predecessors had ever done. During his southern expedition, he also minted coinage bearing his name and we even possess a charter from Adelchis’ court that was dated to the “eighteenth year of domnus Louis’ reign,” the first acknowledgement of Frankish authority in a Beneventan charter since the reign of Grimoald III. In Salerno, evidence of Louis’ control was even more pronounced, as all private charters between 868 and 871 were dated to his reign, as were two others in 873-4 when he returned southwards. In some instances, those involved in these transactions did not even acknowledge the fact that Guaifer was still prince. Whether or not the same held true in Benevento is unknown as we lack private charters from this period. It seems clear, however, that Louis was taking steps towards integrating the southern principalities into the Kingdom of Italy.

He might very well have succeeded too. Whereas his predecessors had been viewed with a great deal of mistrust and even animosity, Louis’ efforts against the Arabs earned him a significant measure of support from certain segments of the Lombard population, most notably.

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22 Ann. Bert. 871; Erch. 34; Chron. Sal. 109;
23 MGH DLII, 32, p.132, 1.28-9.
24 CSS 3.21, p.513, 3.27; Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, 69, 576-9.
25 CDC 1.64-70, 77-8, especially 1.68-70, 77.
the monks of the local monasteries and the local clergy. This is not too surprising given that Louis had already granted them imperial protection in 849 and responded to their request for aid against the Arabs in 852. It is also possible that issued some grants, confirmations, and immunities to southern monasteries and churches throughout his reign. While most of the charters Louis allegedly issued are either lost or forged, later grants suggest that he may have exempted S. Maria in Cingla from financial exactions, the monks of Montecassino from oaths, and confirmed the possessions of the Church of Benevento and Siponto.

For these actions, as well his attempts to rid the peninsula of the Arabs, Louis earned himself a considerable amount of praise in our histories. The most striking example of his positive reputation is the Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensis, a set of three historical accounts which detailed his campaigns against the Arabs in 852 and 867, as well as his role in ending the civil war. We know nothing of the authors’ backgrounds, but the fact that they were willing to openly celebrate Louis’ interventions and speak positively of his involvement in ending the Beneventan civil war is an indication of the strong relationship he enjoyed with the monastery at this time, as well as the continuing influence of Benedictine traditions on the north’s religious development. The Lombard princes, on the other hand, were not portrayed so well. Although the authors did not condemn the current princes of southern Italy, both Siconulf and Radelchis were heavily censured for their role in bringing the Arabs into the peninsula, as well as their

26 The one exception is a grant to the church of Monte S. Angelo. MGH DLII, 54; MGH Dip. O. I, 338.
repeated depredations against the monasteries. Criticisms against Siconulf may not have been controversial given that his dynasty had already ended, but highlighting Radelchis’ actions may not have sat well with his son, the present ruler of Benevento, Adelchis.

Lest we assume that these highly positive accounts of Louis’ interventions were purely a product of the time in which they were written, it is worth noting that both Erchempert and the Anonymous of Salerno offered equally positive impressions of the emperor. Erchempert was especially fulsome in his praise, at one point referring to Louis as that “most holy man, the savior of the Beneventan province.” Consequently, both authors took a rather ambivalent view of Adelchis’ decision to seize the emperor. Although they generally considered the Beneventan prince to be a good ruler, they also recognized the negative impact his decision had on the Lombards’ fortunes vis-à-vis the Arabs, believing that their resurgence was a form of divine punishment for Louis’ imprisonment.

With that said, neither Erchempert nor the Anonymous were wholly prepared to condemn Adelchis nor do we find any suggestion in either of their accounts that southern Italy would have been better off under Frankish rule. In fact, Erchempert sought to justify Louis’ imprisonment as also being a form of divine punishment for his treatment of Pope Nicholas I and for failing to execute Sawdan when he had the opportunity do so. He also noted that at the Devil’s instigation, Louis’ officials “began to gravely persecute and cruelly harass the Beneventans.”

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31 CSBC 2.2, 7-8.
32 Erch. 34, p.247, 1.25-6; West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 126.
33 Erch. 1, 20;
34 Erch. 34; Chron. Sal. 111.
35 Erch. 37.
36 Erch. 34, p.247, 1.21-3.
The Anonymous provided a similar impression, albeit with a much more strongly ethnic
dimension. He claimed that Louis’ wife, Engelberge repeatedly insulted the wives of Adelchis’
retainers and even claimed that the Lombards did not know how to pick up their shields in order
to defend themselves. Unable to bear such slanderous remarks, Adelchis’ retainers seized the
imperial family.\textsuperscript{37} Interestingly, our Frankish source for this also mentions that Engelberge had
convinced Louis to remove Adelchis, something which suggests the Anonymous may not have
entirely been exaggerating her role in this affair nor simply engaging in the sort of slander one
typically finds being made against queens.\textsuperscript{38}

The contrast between our chroniclers’ positive portrayal of Louis as an individual
coupled with their justifications for his captivity would seem suggest that, despite their
admiration of the emperor personally, there was not necessarily a willingness to submit to
Frankish control of southern Italy. As the Anonymous explicitly states and Erchempert hints at,
ethnic tensions may have played just as a much of a role in Adelchis’ deceitful moves as his own
personal political considerations and, more importantly, ensured that he had the necessary
support to undertake them. For all the internal difficulties he experienced during his reign
(including eventually being assassinated), it is rather noteworthy that neither Adelchis’ own
aristocracy nor elites in Salerno or Capua sought to oppose him in order to win the emperor’s
favor, either during the hostage crisis or when Louis returned in 873.\textsuperscript{39} While some of this was
undoubtedly rooted in the other elites’ self-interest in maintaining their own power and/or

\textsuperscript{37} Chron. Sal. 109.
\textsuperscript{38} Ann. Bert. 771. For an overview of Engelberge’s life and role at court, see Bougard, “La cour et le gouvernement
\textsuperscript{39} Andr. 16; Ann. Bert. 871; Chron. Sal. 113; Erch. 35; Gest. Ep. Neap. 65.
grievances stemming from Louis’ prior actions;\textsuperscript{40} I would also suggest that for all he had accomplished against the Arabs, Louis was still unable to completely transcend the ethnic and political tensions that had existed between his people and the Lombards long before he marched southwards.\textsuperscript{41}

Despite nearly sixty years having passed since Grimoald IV had made peace with the Franks, memories of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall and other Frankish actions against Benevento had not faded from memory. In fact, the Lombard princes and those affiliated with them were still quite eager to remind their people of them. As I noted in my earlier discussion of Paul the Deacon’s epitaph for Arichis,\textsuperscript{42} it became customary in the epitaphs of the Beneventan princes to highlight their role in preserving the principality from Frankish aggression and to characterize the Franks as a sort of looming menace, prepared to inflict fresh humiliations on Benevento given the opportunity. Sico’s (d. 832) epitaph claimed that he and his mother had been forced to flee to Benevento on account of the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, and that after he assumed power, he had “Defended his country from the anger of the Franks.”\textsuperscript{43} Radelgar’s (d. 854) epitaph used similar language to describe his interactions with the Franks, noting that he had “restrained the mighty kings of the Franks.”\textsuperscript{44} Ironically, neither prince had ever actually fought against the Franks, but the memories of 774 and Grimoald’s refusal “to bend the neck” to the “mighty kings

\textsuperscript{40} Kreutz, Before the Normans, 37-47; Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 60-3.
\textsuperscript{42} See p. 179-80.
\textsuperscript{43} Carm. Var. 2, p.649, l.31.
\textsuperscript{44} Carm. Var. 12, p.59, l.25.
of the Gauls” might have driven the epitaphs authors to adopt such rhetoric in order to enhance their subjects’ reputation in comparison to their more illustrious predecessors.\textsuperscript{45}

In addition, we should not discount the possibility that there was a genuine degree of animosity towards the Franks among the epitaphs’ Lombard readers. As we shall discuss momentarily, although relations between the southern Lombards and Franks had grown considerably more complicated since the era of Arichis II and Grimoald III, there was still a history of conflict between the two, one which was well-remembered and, indeed, central to Benevento’s history and its transformation from a duchy into a principality. If such animosity did indeed exist, both the epitaphs’ authors and, indeed, the princes’ themselves would have had every incentive to feed into it. Even absent an actual threat, fear of the “other” can still be a powerful force for internal political cohesion,\textsuperscript{46} something which the princes of the ninth century were frequently in need of.

Adelchis, in fact, sought to use the looming menace of the Franks in order to bolster both his prestige and to stoke the flames of opposition against them. Much as Arichis had done, he issued a new set of additions to the laws in 866. Although he may have done this partially as a means of salvaging some of the prestige and power his position had lost upon the division of the principality, the timing of this coupled with the rhetoric contained in the prologue suggests that he may have also intended it as a preemptive strike against Louis II’s expedition.\textsuperscript{47} Leaving aside the fact that the law itself was a potent symbol of the Lombards’ identity (or as Adelchis referred to it, “the enduring glory of the gens”) around which he could rally his people, it offered

\textsuperscript{45} Chron. Sal.29, p.32, l.39-40.
\textsuperscript{46} Eriksen, \textit{Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives}, 111-3.
\textsuperscript{47} Capo, “La polemica longobarda sulla caduta del regno,” 15-6.
the prince an opportunity to remind them of their past interactions with the Franks. As he described it in his prologue, God had granted the Lombards rule of Italy and through his inspiration, the kings had submitted their laws to writing all the way through the reign of Desiderius. However, Charlemagne “coveting [invidens] his throne,” seized control of the Lombard Kingdom through “deceit [subdole] and cunning [callide].” As a result, the “the gens faded to insignificance [gente ad minime decidente].”

We shall explore some of the implications of Adelchis’ laws elsewhere, but as it pertains to the relationship between the Franks and the Lombards, the prologue is still a remarkable piece of political propaganda. Although nearly a century had passed since the Lombard Kingdom’s fall, this was the first account (and the only court-produced one at that) to actually provide a southern Lombard perspective on these events. While Adelchis did not outright attack Louis II nor even challenge the Franks’ right to rule northern Italy, he was still keen to remind his people that they had lost their power through deceitful means and were now once more suffering from “the attacks of many peoples [infestatio multarum gentium].” Clearly, Adelchis hoped that by reminding his people of the present dangers and the Franks’ past treachery, they would remain wary of Louis.

We find this perception of Franks as being both treacherous and covetous echoed in other sources. The Anonymous of Salerno, perhaps taking a cue from Adelchis’ account, claimed that Charlemagne had been induced to invade Italy by a secret delegation of northern Lombard aristocrats who offered him the kingdom along with many riches and garments of gold and silver

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if he would rid them of Desiderius.51 Erchempert was even more explicit in his condemnations, proclaiming that the Franks were a people “greatly enslaved” to a “lust for money.”52 His primary example for this was Guy I of Spoleto, who during the Beneventan civil war willingly betrayed his own brother-in-law, Siconulf, when Radelchis II offered to pay him to lift his siege of Benevento, and then accepted another bribe from Siconulf to plead his case before Louis.

This emphasis on the Franks’ greedy and treacherous nature was intended by both authors to reinforce a much broader perception that the Franks were somehow culturally and morally inferior to the Lombards. Erchempert, for instance, went so far as to label them a “barbarous gens” and to compare their attacks on Benevento to a plague of locusts gnawing away at crops.53 The Anonymous was not quite so explicit in his rhetoric, but he did at one point state that Charlemagne had “usurped” the imperial title from the Byzantine emperor54 and portrayed him as often behaving in a volatile and petty manner. This earned him a reprimand from a group of southern Lombard bishops, who described him as a wolf who had attacked and scattered the flock of the Christian faithful.55 Later, after peace was made, the Anonymous claimed that when Charlemagne sent his envoys to retrieve Arichis’ children as hostages, they were overawed by the munificence of Arichis’ palace. Some even claimed that Charlemagne himself had come in disguise and told Arichis that, “In truth, I heard the stories about your

51 Chron. Sal. 9.
52 Erch. 17, p.241, l.21.
53 Erch. 2, 5, p.236, l.25.
54 Chron. Sal. 11, p.17, l.18.
55 Chron. Sal. 10.
wisdom and your glory in my land, but did not believe what was told to me, until I came myself and saw it with my own eyes.”

Such anecdotes reflect, in part, both the genuine historical importance of prior conflicts in Benevento’s history, and also the degree to which this early resistance had become a part of the southern Lombards’ own political and ethnic mythology. Conflict is often at the heart of ethnic myths, serving as a sort of “rite of passage” for a people that can often be referred back to both as a means of justifying subsequent conflicts and illustrating a people’s virtues. This was true of the Lombards’ supposed conflict with the Vandals, and it would also be true of the southern Lombards’ conflicts with the Franks in the eighth century. Indeed, whatever the degree of genuine animosity Erchempert and the Anonymous might have harbored towards the Franks on account of their prior attacks on Benevento, it must also be recognized that the Franks served as a useful narrative foil to illustrate the greatness of the Beneventan princes and the Lombards as a whole, similar to how Roman historians utilized so-called barbarian groups as a foil to illustrate the greatness of Rome. By playing up the “barbarous” nature of the Franks, Arichis II and Grimoald III’s achievements and behavior appeared all the more heroic, with Arichis’ wealth and wisdom being sufficient to awe the Frankish emperor and Grimoald III standing taller for his willingness to weather the Frankish attacks. Even Grimoald IV, whom the Anonymous generally detested for his decision to pay tribute to the Franks in 812, could sometimes appear heroic. As the Anonymous described it, prior to Grimoald’s elevation he managed to spy on Pippin’s camp with a cunning ruse and win a major victory. When Pippin found out, he

57 Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives, 111-3.
exclaimed, “If a _stolesayz_ could accomplish such things, the prince of this land could do even more!” and marched his forces back north.  

To a certain degree, the authors’ perceptions of the Franks’ were predicated upon their role in the story they were trying to tell. When the Franks sought to impose their control over Benevento, they were the villains and the princes the heroes. When they left it alone or even sought to aid the principality, they were generally portrayed in a much better light than some of the other groups we shall discuss. Despite their fierce condemnations of the Franks, Erchempert still favored peace with them above all else and the Anonymous of Salerno was even willing to praise Charlemagne once he moved beyond discussing the hostilities between the Franks and the Beneventans. For both authors, the whole reason why Louis could play the hero in these specific circumstances was that neither Adelchis nor any of the other princes could adequately fulfill this role.

Narrative considerations aside, the increasingly ambivalent impression of Frankish leaders may have also reflected the gradual normalization of relations between Franks and Lombards that had taken place throughout the ninth century. Even after the discord that had arisen during the reigns of Abbot Potho and Autpertus, the southern monasteries continued to welcome Frankish monks and elect Frankish abbots. Some other Franks may have even settled in Benevento, as Adelchis granted to his own brother the property of a Frankish freeman who had died in 862 without heirs. The Beneventan princes themselves were willing to set aside old

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60 Admittedly, some of the Anonymous’ positive impressions are based on the belief that Charlemagne had retired to Montecassino, when in fact it had been his uncle who had done so. *Erch. 7; Chron. Sal.* 31-5.  
61 *CSS* 3.22.
enmities by establishing marriage alliances with the dukes of Spoleto. Both Sico and later Adelchis married their daughters to Guy I and Guy III of Spoleto, respectively. Adelchis’ daughter, Ageltrude, would even become empress in 891, as well as the mother of Emperor Lambert. In some respects, this was quite reminiscent of the alliances between the Lombards and Franks in the eighth century.

In spite of all this, memories of the past hostilities and Lombard victories remained strong enough to be recalled and celebrated long after the Franks and Lombards officially made peace in 812. Indeed, as I noted earlier, the southern Lombards’ political and ethnic identities, as articulated by Erchempert, the Anonymous, and Adelchis, were very much founded upon the memories of Beneventan resistance to the Franks. For Adelchis, the conquest led Arichis to “follow in the footsteps of kings,” in order preserve and emend the laws, which were “the enduring glory of the gens.” Erchempert, as we shall recall, also contributed to the mythology surrounding Arichis and Grimoald’s reign, with the defining moment being Grimoald’s defiant declaration to Pippin that “From both parents I was born free and noble, and I believe that with God’s protection, I shall always be free!” The Anonymous was even more explicit in this. Rather than acknowledge that the Lombards had ever paid tribute to the Franks, he instead claimed that when Grimoald IV asked his aristocrats for their support in this matter, one of them leapt up and declared, “It is better to die in combat than to live with misfortune. Have you never read, my prince, of how our forefathers departed their homeland because of the tribute, which the

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64 Erch. 6, p.236-7, 1.40-04; Berto, “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 160-2.
Vandals demanded of them?" Grimoald was apparently so abashed at this rebuke that he moved against the Frankish armies and won a great victory over them akin to the Lombards’ original victory over the Vandals.  With memories and beliefs such as these, is it any surprise that Louis II encountered resistance in his attempts to take control of even a politically divided southern Italy?

To be clear, Louis’ efforts in the south were not doomed solely by past memories, but they were, along with the tensions Louis’ own actions created, certainly a significant factor. For all the political divisions that existed among the aristocracy, monastic communities and the southern princes at this point in time, they were also bound together by ties of identity which were constructed, in no small part, upon memories (both real and invented) of their resistance to the Franks in the late eighth century. This would have made accepting Frankish rule and opposing Adelchis a very difficult proposition for them. Indeed, for all the handwringing both Erchempert and the Anonymous did concerning Adelchis’ actions, there is nothing in either their accounts or our northern sources to suggest that he faced any opposition from other members of the aristocracy both during and after his capture of the emperor. For instance, when Louis launched another expedition southwards in 872/3 to expel the Arabs, he still found himself stymied in his attempts to move into Benevento and Apulia. The author of the Annales Bertiniani even claimed that the Beneventans had preferred to pay tribute to the Byzantines rather than Louis II, who, frustrated in his attempts to capture Adelchis, had been forced to

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66 Chron. Sal. 40-1.
67 Ann. Bert. 873; Erch. 35-6.
entreat Pope John to effect a reconciliation.\textsuperscript{68} The Anonymous, on other hand, stated that when Louis arrived at the walls of Benevento, the defenders flung various insults at him.\textsuperscript{69}

To some degree, the end of the Franks’ involvement in southern Italy was something of a Pyrrhic victory for the southern Lombards. Without Louis’ aid, the princes would be unable to put a halt to the Arabs’ raids and internal divisions began to emerge once more. Moreover, although the Franks posed a significant threat to Beneventan independence, it was this threat that encouraged the Beneventans and other southern Lombards to set their internal differences aside occasionally and also to define more firmly both their ethnic and political identities. Indeed, the ideas and values presented in the histories of Paul, Erchempert, and the Anonymous, particularly the devotion to martial virtues and the belief that, “It is better to maintain liberty by arms than to stain it by payment of tribute,” may not have become so essential were it not for threat presented by the Franks and the choices they forced the southern Lombards to make beginning in the late eighth century.\textsuperscript{70} Such values would persist into 870s, and, as we have seen in the Anonymous’ account, long after the Franks had ceased to be a threat to southern Italy. However, additional strategies would be needed to maintain this political and ethnic cohesion under threat from the Arabs, the Byzantines, and the Neapolitans.

\textit{Gens Profana}

Although the Franks had played an extremely important role in shaping Benevento’s political and ethnic trajectory, the Arab raiders arguably had just as significant an impact on

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ann. Bert}. 873.
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Chron. Sal}.119.
\textsuperscript{70} \textit{HL} 1.7, tr. p.15, 1.10, tr. p.19.
these things in the latter half of the ninth century. In the short time that they occupied Beneventan soil, they ravaged the principality’s major cities and monasteries, upset the local balance of power, attracted the ire of the Frankish and Byzantine Empires, and significantly diminished the Lombard princes’ individual reputations. While they would largely be expelled from the peninsula in the tenth century, for the Beneventan princes, the Arabs were an intractable political challenge that would contribute significantly to their political troubles in the ninth century. Southern Lombard authors took an even more dire view of the situation, considering the Arabs to be quite literally a scourge sent by God to punish the Lombard princes for their internal divisions and moral failings. However, even amidst this pessimism there was also the hope that the Lombards’ identity, as both Christians and proud warriors, would compel them to set aside their divisions and unite in common cause against the Arabs.71

The end of Louis’ interventions in southern Italy marked the beginning of a new and more destructive phase in the princes’ wars with the Arabs. Although Louis’ campaigns had dealt them a significant blow, bands of Arab raiders soon renewed their attacks against Lombard-held territories. Neither Adelchis nor his counterparts in Salerno and Capua were equipped to deal with these on their own, which eventually led Bishop Landulf of Capua to plead with Louis II for assistance. Despite his ill feelings over his captivity and the lack of support he had received, the emperor eventually relented and together Lombard and Frankish forces drove the Arab raiders out of Campania. However, relations between the Franks and Lombards broke

71 It must be acknowledged that the term “Arab” is somewhat inaccurate given that the diverse ethnic composition of their armies and the populations who lived under their rule. However, as they were still often under ethnically Arab leadership and our authors tend to use the equally inaccurate (and arguably more offensive) terms, “Saraceni” and “Agareni,” I consider this label to be better suited to these discussions. For more on this issue, see Kreutz, Before the Normans, 48-9.
down before Louis could move into Apulia. Adelchis attempted to recover the region on his
own, but was unable to do so on account of both the Arabs’ relative strength and distractions
created by internal squabbles with the other princes. It was amidst one of these military ventures
in 878 that he was murdered by his own kinsmen. Two more princes, Gayderis and Radelchis II,
would be overthrown in quick succession, leaving the Beneventan principality under the control
of Aio. As all this was occurring, more internal conflicts erupted throughout Italy, providing
not just a distraction from the Arab threat, but directly contributing to it as the Lombard princes
were free once more to hire Arab mercenaries in their endless wars. Despite the deleterious
effect this would have in both the short-term and the long-term, they may have had little choice
in the matter as the Neapolitans under the leadership of Athanasius II aggressively used Arab
mercenaries against the Lombard principalities with little concern for the destruction they would
cause throughout southern and central Italy. It was amidst this turmoil in the 880s that both San
Vincenzo and Montecassino were sacked, sending their communities into exile until the
monasteries were later rebuilt in the tenth century.

This would have significant repercussions beyond Benevento’s borders. The Byzantine
emperors, who had temporarily assisted Louis II in his expedition and were waging their own
struggles to hold Sicily and maintain control of nearby sea lanes, turned their eyes towards
Apulia as a potential base of operations. Led by the talented general Nikephoros Phokas, the
grandfather of the future emperor of the same name, they swiftly reclaimed Otranto, Taranto, and

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72 Erch. 35, 38-9, 48; Chron. Sal. 117-9, 123, 128-9.
73 Erchempert mentions, for instance, that Guaifer had allied himself with them until Pope John VIII urged him to
break it off. Erch. 39; Chron. Sal. 121.
74 Erch. 44; Chron. Sal. 126.
Bari in the 870s. Despite a long history of tension with the Lombards, the Byzantines were apparently invited into the city of Bari by its citizens, who greatly feared another Arab attack.\textsuperscript{75}

Byzantium’s intervention in southern Italy was symptomatic of the much larger problem the Arabs were causing Benevento. One of the reasons why Benevento had successfully been able to maintain its independence is that for as much as they might have liked to integrate the principality into their empires, it was never geopolitically important enough for either the Frankish or the Byzantine emperors to dedicate the time and resources necessary to overcome Lombard resistance. This changed when southern Italy suddenly became a hotbed of raider activity. Although the Arabs had been raiding parts of Italy since well before the 840s,\textsuperscript{76} the local conflicts among the Lombard elites, as well as their battles with the Neapolitans, attracted an increasing number of mercenaries from across the Mediterranean world. Given their interests in Sicily, Calabria, central Italy, and other coastal regions, this was not the sort of situation that either Byzantine or the Frankish emperors could tolerate. As such, southern Italy went from being a peripheral concern to an important geopolitical one for both emperors. The papacy also became heavily involved in the region during the reign of Pope John VIII, who sought to rally opposition against the Arabs and even anathematized the Duchy of Naples and Amalfi in 880 and 881 for their continued association with them.\textsuperscript{77} However, neither papal excommunications nor the threat of imperial intervention were sufficient to sway Athanasius nor prevent the

\textsuperscript{75} Erch. 38; Chron. Sal. 120.

\textsuperscript{76} Much of this unrest had to do with tensions between the local Berber population and the Arab rulers of North Africa, the Aghlabid emirs. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 7-22; Musca, *L’emirato di Bari*, 847-871, 34-5.

destruction of San Vincenzo and Montecassino.\textsuperscript{78} The communities would survive in exile, with the monks of San Vincenzo heading to Rome and the monks of Montecassino to Teano, which was under the control of Atenulf of Capua.\textsuperscript{79}

The loss of these monasteries was a significant blow to the Beneventan princes’ power and prestige. While the Beneventan civil war and its aftermath had complicated relations between the princes and the monastic elite, the subsequent Arab depredations created an added degree of resentment. At a time when the princes were already having considerable difficulty maintaining the principality’s internal cohesion, they could ill afford to lose the one group of allies who had the potential to significantly shape political and ethnic discourse. After all, Montecassino and, potentially, San Vincenzo, had significant connections with the aristocracy. Moreover, our earliest southern histories, the \textit{Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi} and Erchempert’s history, were both written by monks of Montecassino, partially in response to the Arab raids and the disillusionment the authors felt over the princes’ failure to curb the raids. In terms of the former, much of the blame was laid at the feet of earlier princes who had brought the Arabs into southern Italy and attacked monastic property.\textsuperscript{80} However, one of the chroniclers also noted that even when the Lombards finally recognized the threat posed by the Arabs (or as one author described it, “waking from a heavy sleep,”) their efforts against them proved to be “wise, but useless” in execution due to their disarray on and off the battlefield.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{78} Erch. 44; \textit{Chron. Sal.} 126.
\textsuperscript{79} Erch. 69.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{CSBC} 2.2, 7-8; Berto, “The Muslims as Others in the Chronicles of Early Medieval Southern Italy,” 9-10.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{CSBC} 2.26, p.30, 1.433, 6-7.
Erchempert was even more blistering in his condemnations, not just of individual leaders, but his people as a whole. Despite the considerable pride he took in their early achievements, he declared that the purpose of his history was to recount, “not their rule but their downfall, not their happiness but their misery, not their triumph but their ruin, not what they accomplished but how they failed, not how they conquered others but how they were conquered by others and were subjugated.” Erchempert’s anger was very much rooted in his own personal experiences. Whereas the authors of the Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi could at least look to Louis II’s expeditions with the hope that they would bring peace and stability to the region, Erchempert had lived to see them fail and may have even witnessed firsthand the destruction of Montecassino.

These humiliations very much informed Erchempert’s history and his portrayal of the Arabs in particular. In his view, this “gens profana” and its attacks on Benevento were just as much a symptom of the principality’s political and moral decline as they were the cause of it. They had, after all, been employed by the Lombard princes and Neapolitans in their endless wars against each other, and their successes were very much predicated upon the opportunities created by southern Italy’s political fragmentation. Thus, Erchempert came to view them as almost a form of divine punishment intended to act as a corrective for the internal disunity and moral bankruptcy that afflicted Benevento and southern Italy as a whole. As we discussed earlier, Erchempert explicitly stated that God had roused the Arabs against the Lombards as punishment

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82 Erch. 1, p.235, l.2-5.
83 Erch. 44, 61, 69. Erchempert’s omission of Montecassino’s destruction has been noted, but outside of Peter the Deacon’s claims that he had written a lost text recounting this event, it is assumed that he did not wish to discuss it. Berto, “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 158.
84 Erch. 19, p.242, l.4.
85 Berto, “The Muslims as Others in the Chronicles of Early Medieval Southern Italy,” 10.
for Louis II’s imprisonment, while at the same time punishing the emperor for his failure to execute their leader, Sawdan of Bari.\footnote{Erch. 37.} Even the papacy was not immune from such divine chastisement. Although it was Duke Athanasius II who unleashed the Arabs against Lombard and papal territory, Erchempert blamed the desolation of these lands on Pope John VIII for his decision to ordain Pandonulf of Capua’s brother a bishop in return for Capua’s subjection to Rome. This, despite the fact that Abbot Berthar of Montecassino had begged him “not to commit so great a sin, from which the ruin of the land and the shedding of blood would undoubtedly occur.”\footnote{Erch. 47, p.254, l.36-7.}

Erchempert also sought to demonstrate that willful association with the Arabs had its price, particularly where the Neapolitans were concerned.\footnote{Granier, “Napolitains et Lombards aux VIIIe-XIe siècles. De la guerre des peuples à la “guerre des saints” en Italie du sud.” 431-5.} For refusing to break his ties with them, Duke Sergius II ultimately suffered excommunication and blinding.\footnote{Erch. 39.} When his successor, Duke Athanasius II and Guaifer, a Lombard defector, unleashed their Arab auxiliaries against the rest of the peninsula, another group of Arabs located along the Garigliano struck Calabria and destroyed the Greek army encamped there.\footnote{Erch. 51.} Athanasius himself would see his fortunes reversed as his own bands of Arabs turned against him and Atenulf of Capua used his own Arab auxiliaries against Naples. Erchempert’s language in these passages is almost biblical in its tone, with him issuing a stern declaration that, “By the righteous judgment of God, those who had

\footnotetext[86]{Erch. 37.} \footnotetext[87]{Erch. 47, p.254, l.36-7.} \footnotetext[88]{Granier, “Napolitains et Lombards aux VIIIe-XIe siècles. De la guerre des peuples à la “guerre des saints” en Italie du sud.” 431-5.} \footnotetext[89]{Erch. 39.} \footnotetext[90]{Erch. 51.}
handed over innumerable Christians to the sword and as captives to the Saracens and had been enriched by their wealth, were not unjustly lashed, gnawed, and plundered by them.”

This portrayal of the Arabs as a form of divine punishment and the severe condemnations of those who collaborated with them were not unusual in the Christian world, as both Byzantine and Visigothic authors had deployed similar rhetoric in response to their people’s significant territorial losses and political setbacks in the seventh and eighth centuries. Frankish authors had responded in similar manner to the Vikings. However, in both Erchempert’s history and, as we shall discuss momentarily, the Anonymous’ chronicle, there was also a significant ethnic dimension to these portrayals. Although Erchempert was sometimes muted when it came to his own people’s use of Arab mercenaries, occasionally, his indignation at this practice crept into his text. While he did not explicitly condemn the otherwise admired Radelchis I for employing them during the Beneventan civil war in the 840s, he devoted a considerable amount of space to describing the humiliations he suffered as a result, portraying the Arabs as essentially ruling Benevento in his stead. Erchempert’s words concerning a certain Pando, Radelchis’ official who had hired the Arabs to protect Bari, were even less charitable. In describing his murder after the Arabs rebelled and took control of the city, Erchempert labeled him a “traitor to his gens and country.”

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91 Erch. 77, p.263, l.24-6
94 Erch. 18.
95 Erch. 16, p.240, l.42.
This harsh rhetoric perfectly encapsulates Erchempert’s opinion of his people’s use of Arab mercenaries. He did not merely see their use as deplorable and un-Christian, but as wholly antithetical to who the Lombards were. They were the tools of the Neapolitans, not the Lombards, and it would only be by turning away from them that they could reclaim their former glory. This is illustrated most clearly in his statements concerning Guaifer, a Lombard who had aligned himself with Naples and taken over the amphitheater of Capua Vetere. He noted that although Guaifer had used Arab mercenaries to devastate Rome and Capua, through heavenly grace he had a change of heart and was eventually captured. The Lombards then retook the city and, as Erchempert triumphantly noted, “Great joy resulted, as did peace and security; and those who were accustomed to being subordinated began to rule, and those who had ruled there with laws [imperaverint legibus] for three hundred years began to command those who had conquered with the Saraceni [vicerant Saracenis] for some years. Triumphant, the Lombard forces began to rule over those whom they had always subjugated by arms [subegerant armis].”

Note especially how Erchempert defined the Lombards as a people who rule through laws and arms, rather than emphasizing their Christian virtues. In this, he was very much harkening back to the traditions espoused by Paul the Deacon and highlighted by Adelchis, appealing to his people to return to them.

The Anonymous of Salerno also shared Erchempert’s belief that the Arabs were a form of divine punishment and the antithesis of the Lombards, invoking the image of a swarm of locusts

96 Erch. 74, p.262, l.32-5.
97 Berto, “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 163-5. Interestingly, Erchempert’s reminders of past history and depiction of this event as a restoration of former glory finds parallels in some of the Asturian accounts from this period. Tolan, Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination, 98-100.
to describe them.\textsuperscript{98} However, he was not nearly as negative in his view of their impact as Erchempert. Just as the Arabs were instruments of divine displeasure, so too did they provide the opportunity to win back God’s favor and demonstrate the sort of martial feats that would not have been out of place in the \textit{Origo Gentis} or the early passages of Paul’s history. According to the Anonymous, such moments occurred when the Arabs besieged Salerno as God’s punishment for the Lombards’ betrayal of Louis. For days, Salerno suffered greatly, but soon divine punishment turned to divine favor and many miracles occurred. With God’s protection, a soldier was able to leap safely from Salerno’s walls and slaughter seventy raiders, while two others were victorious in single combat against foes possessing almost mythic physical characteristics. God even intervened directly to prevent a Lombard woman from being raped on an altar by causing a beam to fall from roof and crush her attacker, who just so happened to also be the commander of the Arab forces.\textsuperscript{99}

Not all efforts to preserve the Lombards required divine intervention. On a number of occasions, the Anonymous highlighted how the princes set aside the differences between themselves and even the Franks and Byzantines for the preservation of their people. He noted, for example, that Louis II’s expedition southwards was at the invitation of both Guaifer and Adelchis.\textsuperscript{100} Likewise, when the Arabs were attacking Campania, he described in detail how Bishop Landulf II of Capua convinced Louis to set aside his anger at Adelchis and to follow Christ’s example in order to save the region and its Christian inhabitants. At one point, the Beneventans and Franks even worked in concert to win a great victory over the Muslim

\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Chron. Sal.} 93.
\textsuperscript{99} \textit{Chron. Sal.} 112-3; Berto, “The Muslims as Others in the Chronicles of Early Medieval Southern Italy,” 19-20.
\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Chron. Sal.} 102.
invaders. Such examples of cooperation were not necessarily the norm at this point in time, but the Anonymous may have viewed them as presaging other important ventures that had occurred in his own century.

Despite the Arabs’ role as the Lombards’ enemies, the Anonymous differed from earlier chroniclers by also highlighting instances in which they proved to be virtuous, sometimes even more so than the Lombards. Just prior to his description of the Arab siege of Salerno, the Anonymous claimed that Guaifer had been forewarned of the attack by an Arab residing in the city to whom he had given his cap. Another group of Arab mercenaries invoked Christ’s aid when the Salernitans broke their agreement with them, earning his protection in return for recognizing him as the “king of heaven and earth.” Even Sawdan had his virtues, as he initially attempted to dissuade Adelchis from seizing Louis II on account of the fact that his own people would take advantage of the situation. Much like Erchempert, the Anonymous may have sought to use these episodes involving the Arabs as a means of encouraging his people to live up to their Christian and ethnic virtues, but for his part, there was also a greater willingness to acknowledge their humanity and even room for a certain degree of admiration.

The somewhat contrasting portrayals between Erchempert and the Anonymous may very well reflect the chronological distance between them. For Erchempert, the Arabs were still a very real menace whose presence was evidence of the Lombard princes’ continued moral and political failings. The Anonymous, on the other hand, lived at a time when peaceful contacts

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102 Chron. Sal. 126, p.140.
with the Arabs through trade, diplomacy, and other social connections occurred with some frequency. As such, he did not necessarily view them with the same measure of hostility nor did he see their presence as evidence of the Lombards’ failures. Instead, as Guaifer’s victory at Salerno demonstrated, they were a potential catalyst for their resurgence.

The Anonymous’ perception is a product of the tenth century, but those who came before him may have at least held out the hope that the Lombards’ decline was not irreversible and that they could find the unity necessary to overcome their present. Indeed, contact and confrontation with this group of “others,” forced Lombards such as Erchempert to reevaluate and reaffirm the values they considered to be at the very core of their identity as both Lombards and Christians. While such evaluations did not always portray the princes and the Lombards in the best light, they also served as an argument for a common identity and purpose that transcended the political and regional divisions that had emerged in the latter half of the ninth century. The Arabs were portrayed not just as a Beneventan, Salernitan, or Capuan problem, but a Lombard one that could only be dealt with by working together. These hopes of greater unity remained largely unrealized in Erchempert’s own time, but the sort of sentiments expressed in his work and the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensis* may have eventually had an effect on the southern princes and the aristocracy. Although Montecassino’s destruction represented the nadir of relations between the monastery and the Beneventan princes, the community’s exile placed them in closer proximity to their eventual successors, the counts of Capua. Even Erchempert, who generally

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107 Cilento, “Capua e Montecassino nel IX secolo,” 359-60.
depicted the counts in a harsh light, may have recognized the potential for a Capuan-led
turnaround. At the end of his work (which may have been part of a later revision intended for
the Capuan court), he adopted a decidedly more positive attitude towards Count Atenulf and
even a degree of optimism when it came to the Lombards’ struggles against the Arabs and the
groups that employed them, particularly, the Neapolitans “whom they had always subjugated by
arms.”

Erchempert’s recognition of Capua’s growing importance was not misplaced. In 899,
Atenulf would take control of Benevento, reuniting it with his own territory of Capua. Just
fifteen years after this, Atenulf’s son, Prince Landulf I, would participate in a joint expedition
against the Arabs at Garigliano that also involved the forces of Guaimar II of Salerno, Berengar
of Italy, Pope John X, and Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. While this would not
completely eliminate the Arab threat to the peninsula, it nevertheless was a major victory,
particularly for Landulf who was singled out by Liudprand of Cremona for having played a
decisive role in organizing the alliance and winning the battle. The only downside for him and
his successors is that this victory would also prove to be beneficial to the Byzantines, whom, as
we shall see, were the most persistent threat to Benevento’s independence.

_Gens Perfida_

The situation Benevento faced with the Arab raiders was not the only political conflict to
assume significant ethnic and religious dimensions. Territorial competition with Byzantium and

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108 _Erch. 57, 73, 74_, p.262, l.35; Berto, “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride
in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 164; Pohl, _Werkstätte der Erinnerung_, 39-42.
109 Liudprand, _Antapodosis_, 2.51-4.
Naples also were characterized as a competition for divine favor and moral superiority, particularly as the balance of power began to shift against the Lombards. Consequently, Lombard historians sought to portray the Byzantines and Neapolitans as being Christians in name only, a view which was very much informed by Beneventan hagiographical and religious traditions. As we noted in a prior chapter, although the southern Lombards had coopted a number of their saints from Byzantium, the veneration of these individuals was often tied to the memories of past Lombard victories over both Naples and Byzantium.\textsuperscript{110} While such memories were insufficient to prevent Benevento from gradually falling under control of Byzantium and suffering greatly under the constant attacks of Naples, they nevertheless fueled the southern Lombards’ desire to remain independent, as well as their belief that they were both ethnically and spiritually superior to their rivals.

Before delving into this, I should note that the Neapolitans and the Byzantines should not be regarded as one and the same group. Although Naples was ostensibly part of the Byzantine Empire’s Italian possessions, the Neapolitans had gradually begun to distance themselves from the empire over the course of the seventh and eighth centuries, both in terms of their politics and identity.\textsuperscript{111} Consequently, even Lombard authors began to distinguish between the “Greeks” (i.e. Byzantines) and the Neapolitans,\textsuperscript{112} often viewing the former and their leaders (such as Basil and Nikephoros Phokas) in more positive terms than the latter. As we shall discuss, however, Lombard authors tended to employ the same rhetorical strategies (particularly religious ones) to

\textsuperscript{110} See p. 82-6.
\textsuperscript{111} Gay, \textit{L'Italie méridionale et l'Empire byzantin depuis l'avènement de Basile Ier jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071)}, 16-24; Kreutz, \textit{Before the Normans}, 14-5.
condemn both groups, so I shall examine them together rather than as two completely distinct groups.

Despite their prior military setbacks against the Lombards, by the middle of ninth century, the political situation in southern Italy had begun to favor both Byzantium and Naples. Having gained some internal stability, the Empire began to reassert itself across the Mediterranean world while Naples was able to use the Lombard princes’ internal conflicts to its advantage. In both cases, the situation with the Arabs played a significant role. As we already observed, for the Neapolitans, the Arabs were a weapon to bludgeon the Lombards into submission, even if it meant the destruction of important monasteries such as Montecassino and San Vincenzo.\textsuperscript{113} This growing reliance on Arab support was actually quite contrary to the Byzantine Empire’s interests. Although the empire had lost most of its possessions in southern Italy by the end of the eighth century, it still controlled Sicily. However, the Arabs invaded the island, gradually pushing Byzantine forces out until they finally managed to seize the capital city of Syracuse in 878. To combat this, the imperial commanders not only needed to reinforce Sicily, but to take back control of the seas and prevent the Arabs from receiving reinforcements. Naturally, they turned their attention to Apulia, both because it was a hotbed of raider activity and because of its ports on the Adriatic Coast, which could be used as base from which the imperial armies and navies could take control of nearby territories and sea lanes, and also protect Byzantine interests in other areas such as Dalmatia.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{113} Erch. 44; Chron. Sal. 126.
\textsuperscript{114} Kreutz, Before the Normans, 43.
The Beneventan princes were in no position to stop this. In fact, both they and their counterparts in Capua and Salerno were becoming increasingly reliant on Byzantine aid against the Arabs and each other. When Gayderis was overthrown and imprisoned in 881, for example, he escaped to the imperial court and eventually was resettled in Apulia. Count Pandonulf of Capua had also sought to enlist the aid of the imperial armies to support him against his rivals. Prince Guaimar of Salerno, on the other hand, was forced to call upon the aid of Byzantium to protect his city and territory from the depredations of the Neapolitans and their Arab mercenaries. The Byzantines provided Guaimar with gold, wheat, and auxiliary troops for the protection of the city, an act which impressed even Erchempert.

Material aid was not the only blandishment the Byzantine Empire offered the princes. They also offered them the title of patrician, something which carried with it a recognition of the princes’ high status and may have been a useful propaganda tool in their wars against Naples. After receiving the honorific during a visit to Constantinople in 887, Guaimar of Salerno was actually referred to as “prince and patrician” by a Salernitan notary in a private charter drawn up between the gastald, Benedict, and the priest, John. It is unknown if the Capuan counts received a similar honorific, but there are hints that they might have. Despite a prior alliance with Aio, Atenulf of Capua refused to aid him when the Byzantines sought to retake Bari. Instead, he signed a treaty with the Byzantine Empire. It has been speculated that he did so in

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115 Erch. 41-2, 48; Chron. Sal. 124, 129.
116 Erch. 41-2.
117 Erch. 54.
118 CDC 1.102, p.130; Erch. 67; Chron. Sal. 133.
119 Erch. 76, 80 Chron. Sal. 142.
the hopes of also obtaining the title of patrician, which finally would have granted Capua equal status to that of Salerno and Benevento, at least on the international stage.\footnote{Gay, L'Italie méridionale et l'Empire byzantin depuis l'avènement de Basile Ier jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071), 143-4.}

With nowhere to turn for aid, Aio eventually lost Bari to the Byzantine forces and was forced to retreat to the city of Benevento as the Byzantine armies advanced. He would die in 890/1, leaving his son Ursus with considerably less territory than his predecessor and bleak prospects for the future. Shortly thereafter, the Byzantine armies besieged the city of Benevento. The Beneventans attempted to resist, but it became increasingly apparent that the city would fall without any assistance. When the Byzantine *strategos* offered terms for peace, they accepted, marking the first time in the principality’s history that the city had fallen under outside control.\footnote{Chron. Sal. 142-3.}

The Byzantine armies would occupy the principality and its cities for the next four years, establishing the imperial *theme* of *Langobardia*. There are only limited reports about how the Lombards were treated during this period. Our one anonymous account from the 890s, the so-called *Continuatio codicis Vaticani*, claimed that the Byzantines behaved in a brutal manner, indulging in countless acts of violence, robbery, and licentiousness. Such acts “united nearly all of the inhabitants of Apulia, Samnium, Lucania, and Campania in hatred of them.”\footnote{CCV p.496, l.33-4.} The Anonymous provides a similar impression, albeit in less lurid terms. He claimed that at first the Byzantines sought to ply the Beneventans with gifts,\footnote{This might be an allusion to the fact that the abbots of Montecassino and San Vincenzo both received confirmation of their properties and privileges in 892. *CMC* 1.49; *CV* 2.80.} but “as was the custom of the Greeks, they governed harshly.”\footnote{Chron. Sal.143, p.150, l.31.} They then attempted to expand into the Principality of Salerno at the

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\footnote{Gay, L'Italie méridionale et l'Empire byzantin depuis l'avènement de Basile Ier jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071), 143-4.}
\footnote{Chron. Sal. 142-3.}
\footnote{CCV p.496, l.33-4.}
\footnote{This might be an allusion to the fact that the abbots of Montecassino and San Vincenzo both received confirmation of their properties and privileges in 892. *CMC* 1.49; *CV* 2.80.}
\footnote{Chron. Sal.143, p.150, l.31.}
encouragement of exiled Salernitan aristocrats, but the Beneventans foiled this plot and began to secretly cooperate with Guaimar of Salerno, encouraging him to enlist the aid of his brother-in-law, Guy IV of Spoleto.\textsuperscript{125}

In 895, Guy marched into southern Italy and expelled the Byzantine forces from the occupied city of Benevento. He may have had inside help, however. The anonymous author of the \textit{Continuatio codicis Vaticani} suggested that the Byzantines quit the city out of fear of both the Franks and the Beneventans whom they had repeatedly mistreated.\textsuperscript{126} The Anonymous, on the other hand, claimed that when the commander of the city exhorted the Beneventans to defend the city as they had done against emperor Constans II, they responded by noting that they had been in possession of the walls, towers and gates. Hoping to win their support, the commander gave them control of one wall, one gate, and one tower. In gratitude for the trust he had shown him, they promptly opened the gates for Guy’s forces.\textsuperscript{127}

Although it was Guy who directly brought about the end of the Byzantine occupation, our two accounts would seem to suggest that there was a degree of “popular” resistance as well. While these portrayals were undoubtedly crafted in such a way as to play up the Byzantines’ villainy and grant the Lombards a greater degree of agency in their own liberation (as opposed to giving credit to Guy and the Franks), it is not outside the realm of possibility that the Byzantines did indeed face intense resistance from the Beneventan Lombards both before and during Guy’s siege. As we have discussed throughout this work, there was a very long history of conflict between the southern Lombards, Byzantines, and Neapolitans. Moreover, whereas Lombard

\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Chron. Sal.} 144-6.
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{CCV} p. 496.
\textsuperscript{127} \textit{Chron. Sal.} 147.
authors’ dislike for the Franks seemed to wax and wane depending on the political circumstances, the invective directed towards Byzantium and Naples was deeply rooted, going back all the way to Paul’s declaration that they were a “gens perfida,” and the Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis.\textsuperscript{128} Significantly, this invective was rooted in not just on political differences, but religious ones as well.

Despite the many elements of Byzantine culture and religion that the Lombards had adopted, the close contact between the two only seemed to accentuate the differences between them rather than bring them closer together. Even peaceful contacts such as trade had the potential to cause longstanding grievances, the most notable of these being the Lombards’ collective anger over Byzantium and Naples’ involvement in the selling of Lombard slaves to Arab merchants.\textsuperscript{129} While all groups engaged in the practice to varying degrees, the Byzantines and Neapolitans were often condemned most loudly for this practice in our Italian sources. In a letter dated to 776, Pope Hadrian claimed that Lombards starving of famine were selling themselves into slavery via Greek merchants,\textsuperscript{130} something which would seem to be confirmed by Arichis’ law against selling Christians to pagan slavers.\textsuperscript{131} Both Prince Sico and his successor, Sicard, also took a hard line against this practice, as the former’s epitaph made much of the fact that he freed slaves from the Neapolitans,\textsuperscript{132} while the latter banned them from selling

\textsuperscript{128} HL 5.8, p.262, l.13; Lib. de App, 3.
\textsuperscript{130} CC 59.
\textsuperscript{131} LL Ar. 13.
\textsuperscript{132} Carm. Var. 2.
Lombard slaves as part of his treaty with them in 836.\textsuperscript{133} These efforts seem to have had minimal impact on such practices, however, based on Erchempert’s very strong denunciations of both the Neapolitans and the Byzantines, the latter of whom he described as being “similar in appearance to beasts, and therefore equal in spirit, they are Christians in name [\textit{vocabulo christiani}], but in practice sadly like the Agareni. They despoiled all of the faithful for themselves and procured them for the Saracens.”\textsuperscript{134}

This image of the Neapolitans and Byzantines as slavers significantly informed our sources’ portrayal of the Byzantine occupation of Benevento. The Anonymous declared that although the Byzantines were sometimes generous, the Beneventans, “who were accustomed to rule other \textit{gens}, seemed at the time as if they were subservient to them.”\textsuperscript{135} The anonymous author of the \textit{Continuatio codicis Vaticani} was even more explicit, claiming that Byzantines intended that the “Beneventan citizens and all those across the territory be bound in iron chains and taken from their region, similar to how that evil king of theirs, Antiochus, had once desired to remove by deceit the people of Jerusalem.”\textsuperscript{136}

This focus on slavery was part of much broader critique of the Byzantines and Neapolitans as both being immoral and Christian only in name as Erchempert had labeled them.\textsuperscript{137} For the author of the \textit{Continuatio codicis Vaticani}, especially, the conflict between the Lombards and Byzantines was a conflict between “divine providence [\textit{divinia providentia}]” and

\textsuperscript{133} Sicardi principis pactio cum Neapolitanis, 3.
\textsuperscript{134} Erch. 81, p.264 l.24-5.
\textsuperscript{135} Chron. Sal. 146*, p.152-3, l.36-7.
\textsuperscript{136} CVC p.496, l.31-3.
\textsuperscript{137} Erch. 81, p.264 l.24-5.
“human malice [humana malitia],” with the Byzantines serving as the instruments of Satan.\textsuperscript{138} To further reinforce this idea, he spent much of his text describing the many omens that accompanied their arrival in southern Italy such as fire, comets, plague and earthquakes, and also characterized the many of acts of brutality that they committed during their occupation of Benevento as being acts “which Christ hates and Satan esteems [quod Christus odiit quod Satanas diligit].”\textsuperscript{139}

The Anonymous of Salerno was not as explicit in his criticisms of the Byzantine occupation itself, but he still offered a number of choice anecdotes demonstrating how the Byzantines lacked genuine piety and may very well have been under the influence of Satan. For example, he claimed that during the reign of Arichis II, the patriarch of Constantinople engaged in an affair with his own niece. To keep it a secret, he dressed her up as a eunuch and even recommended that she succeed him in office while still in this guise. The ruse might not have been discovered were it not for the fact that Satan himself appeared before Arichis to boast of his achievement. Arichis wasted no time in sending a message to Constantinople, an act which simultaneously illustrated his widespread renown and piety while discrediting the Byzantines.\textsuperscript{140}

The Neapolitans were also not immune to this type of invective. Leaving aside the intimations of impiety found in Lombard critiques of their associations with the Arabs,\textsuperscript{141} we ought to remember that Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis described the Neapolitans as still

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{138} CVC p.496, l.20; Kujawiński, “Le immagini dell’“altro” nella cronachistica del Mezzogiorno longobardo,” 792.
\item \textsuperscript{139} CVC p.496, l.29-30.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Chron. Sal. 16; Berto, “The Image of the Byzantines in Early Medieval South Italy: The Viewpoint of the Chroniclers of the Lombards (9th-10th centuries) and Normans (11th century),” 9-11.
\item \textsuperscript{141} See ibid, p.21-22; Granier, “Napolitains et Lombards aux VIIIe-XIe siècles. De la guerre des peuples à la “guerre des saints” en Italie du sud,” 431-5.
\end{itemize}
being in the throes of paganism when they attacked the shrine of S. Michael at Mt. Gargano. It was only after the saint appeared over the battlefield and they were defeated that “the demonic spirit [demoniaco spirito] was driven from Neapolitans.” This claim was later repeated by one of the authors of the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi*, who stated that after the battle “the Neapolitans were led to Christ’s faith [ad fidel Christi perducti].” As I noted much earlier, we cannot say with certainty when this alleged battle took place, but it may have corresponded to Grimoald I’s defense of the shrine around 650. Given that the author of the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi* and Erchempert later claimed that a second victory had taken place on this same day in 859, they may very well have wished to strengthen the connection between the two events by having the Lombards be involved in both victories. This would not only reinforce their sense of moral and religious superiority, but would even implicitly grant them a role in the Neapolitans’ conversion to Christianity.

This emphasis on the Lombards’ religious superiority was a common thread within both their hagiography and even their religious celebrations. As we have noted on a few different occasions, many of the Lombards’ most venerated saints were primarily of Byzantine origin.

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142 Lib. de App. 3, p.542, 1.11
143 CSBC 1.4, p.4, l.33; Kujawiński, “Le immagini dell’altro” nella cronachistica del Mezzogiorno longobardo,” 774-6.
144 See p. 82-3.
145 HL 4.46.
146 CSBC 2.22; Erch. 27.
149 T. S. Brown, “Ethnic Independence and Cultural Deference: the Attitude of the Lombard Principalities to Byzantium c. 876-1077,” *Byzantinoslavica* 54 (1993): 10-1. Brown tends to downplay the Lombards’ hostility to the Byzantines and instead emphasizes the degree of influence the Byzantines’ exercised over their cultural and religious practices. I do not disagree that they exercised considerable influence over these things, but as I have noted at various points, these influences were often adapted to reinforce the Lombards’ ethnic boundaries.
with their relics having sometimes even been acquired directly at the expense of Naples and Byzantium. This competition continued into the ninth century, albeit in a much more violent manner, when Sico and Sicard forcibly seized the relics of Januarius and Trophimene from Naples and Amalfi, respectively.\(^{150}\) It is possible that this emphasis on religious superiority was due to the broader religious divisions that were emerging between the eastern and western churches during this period, but in the specific case of the Lombards, it appears to have been rooted far more in an equally strong sense of military and political superiority. One of the more fascinating aspects of southern Lombard hagiographical accounts is that many of them offer some reminder of important Lombard military victories that had taken place in connection with either a saint or the acquisition of their relics. Worship of S. Michael was very much connected to the Beneventan victory over Naples, with the Beneventan feast day even differing from the Roman one in order to coincide with the date of this victory.\(^{151}\) Likewise, the events recounted in the *Vita Barbati* largely involved Constans II’s campaign, one of the most significant military moments in Beneventan history. While the author was not particularly keen to celebrate the military valor of the Lombards, he did at least show that the Lombards’ survival was due in part to the fact that they enjoyed divine favor, with Barbatus showing Romoald a vision of the Virgin Mary as proof of this.\(^{152}\) Interestingly, the Anonymous would also claim that the Virgin Mary


\(^{151}\) Otranto, “*Il Liber de apparitione e il culto di San Michele sul Gargano nella documentazione liturgica altomedievale*,” 432.

\(^{152}\) *Vit. Bar.* 4-7.
appeared in one of Guaimar of Salerno’s dreams on the eve of a battle with the Byzantines, stating, “Be steadfast, Guaimar, there is nothing to fear. For tomorrow you will engage in battle, and I shall grant you victory [victoriam tibi collatura sum].”

Accounts such as these not only served to sharpen the distinctions among the Lombards, the Byzantines, and the Neapolitans, but also acted as a continual reminder of the Lombards’ past achievements and a reaffirmation that martial valour was a key component of their identity, with the Liber de Apparitione and the Anonymous’ accounts in particular recalling the Lombards’ original victory over the Vandals. More than that, these accounts reinforced the belief that the Lombards were a chosen people. Returning to the comparison in the Continuatio codicis Vaticani between the Byzantine occupation and that of “their” King Antiochus, one should note that the author was not simply condemning the Byzantines, but implying that the Beneventan Lombards were very much akin to the Israelites. One of the authors of the Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi made a similar point, albeit in a more negative context, comparing the division of the principality to the divisions which had dispersed the Israelites across the world.

As with Louis II’s attempts to take control of Benevento, we can see how preexisting tensions and feelings of antipathy would have helped to fuel a groundswell of Lombard opposition to the Byzantine occupation and other efforts to conquer the principality, even in the

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155 CVC p.496; Berto, “The Image of the Byzantines in Early Medieval South Italy: The Viewpoint of the Chroniclers of the Lombards (9th-10th centuries) and Normans (11th century),” 7; Kujawiński, “Le immagini dell’“altro” nella cronachistica del Mezzogiorno longobardo,” 792.
156 CSBC 1.5.
absence of a prince spearheading the political resistance and stoking old resentments for political advantage. In some respects, the rivalry between the two groups, as well as the Lombards’ rivalry with the Neapolitans, may have been even more intense than their rivalries with other groups, working its way not just into histories and hagiographies from multiple time periods, but even influencing when the southern Lombards celebrated the feast day of S. Michael. To be certain, such tensions did not preclude peaceful interactions between these groups, political alliances, or even occasional moments of admiration, but they also helped to perpetuate a steady cycle of conflict which would occur for the remainder of the Beneventan principality’s history. Although the Beneventans had reclaimed their independence in the aftermath of the Byzantine occupation, the Byzantines still controlled parts of Apulia and Calabria and, for the next century and half, would attempt to assert their hegemony over Lombard territories and the princes who ruled them with varying degrees of success. However, as the rhetoric and portrayals of the Byzantines and Neapolitans in the Chronicon Salernitanum, the Continuatio codicis Vaticani, and the number of Lombard hagiographies from this period attest, the Lombards would not remain silent in the face of such challenges nor would they cease to assert their ethnic, political, and religious superiority. In this respect, they were quite different from their Lombard brethren in northern Italy.

_Gentis Reliquia_

The southern Lombards’ interactions with their non-Lombard neighbors played an important role in helping them to define more sharply their identity and also created a degree of political and ethnic cohesion among them, even in times of internal division and external crisis.
They were not the only Lombards living in the Italian peninsula, however. In northern Italy, the Lombards had lived under Frankish rule for over century, gradually becoming culturally assimilated and politically integrated into the Carolingian Empire to at least some degree. While distinctions in terms of cultural practices and identity still existed, the strong “us-versus-them” mentality which had developed in the south did not take root in the north. If anything, the northern Lombards came to embrace their place in the Carolingian Empire, which begs the question, how did they define their own identity? More than that, how did their southern brethren view them and vice-versa? While our sources provide only limited answers to both of these questions, nevertheless, I think they are still essential to understanding just how profoundly the differing political situations in the north and south shaped their people’s conceptions of their own ethnic identities, with the southern Lombards in particular seeing their identity as being inextricably linked to the history and continued existence of an independent Beneventan principality.

The greatest difficulty in assessing these questions is the dearth of identifiably Lombard sources in the north during this period. Unlike in southern Italy, northern Lombards in the ninth and tenth centuries did not produce many high quality narrative accounts. While the dissemination patterns of Paul’s work coupled with the continued production of collections of Lombard law would seem to suggest an enduring interest in Lombard history and traditions, we have very little idea as to what sort of ethnic and political discourse was taking place among the northern Lombards, either with regards to their newfound status as members of the

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Carolingian Empire or their relationship with the Franks in general. It was not until around 877 that this silence was finally broken by Andreas of Bergamo, who composed a short history of Italy that covered the periods both before and after 774.158

Andreas’ work is very interesting for both what it contains and what it does not. As Andreas himself acknowledged, he was no Paul the Deacon, nor for that matter was he Erchempert or the Anonymous of Salerno. His Latin was generally crude, his grasp of the facts far more tenuous than even the Anonymous, and the geographical scope of his work tended to oscillate wildly between local events and the broader affairs of the Carolingian Empire, providing very inconsistent and limited coverage of both.159 And yet, he provides us with our most detailed northern Lombard perspective on the fall of the Lombard Kingdom and its aftermath, one that was very different from what we find in our southern Lombard, papal, or Frankish accounts. In contrast to those, Andreas was much more ambivalent about the Carolingian conquest of Italy, offering up a detailed account of events that neither exculpated Desiderius from blame for the conflict nor downplayed the suffering inflicted by the conquest. As he noted, “There was much tribulation in Italy; some people were killed by the sword, others perished through famine, and others were slaughtered by beasts so that scarcely few people remained in villages or cities.”160 Charlemagne himself was not vilified by Andreas for these

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158 It has been speculated that the short history in the Codex Gothanus was written by a Lombard, rather than a Frank, but as I have stated before, I am skeptical of the arguments put forth. Nevertheless, a Lombard identity for the anonymous author would only strengthen rather than weaken my points. Berto, “Remembering Old and New Rulers: Lombards and Carolingians in Carolingian Italian Memory,” 28-9.

159 A typical critique of his work can be found in Wickham, “Lawyers’ Time: History and Memory in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Italy.” For somewhat more charitable views, see Berto, “Remembering Old and New Rulers: Lombards and Carolingians in Carolingian Italian Memory,” 29-48; West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 55-76.

160 Andr. 4, p.224, l.20-2.
conditions, but he was also not feted for bringing about the Lombard Kingdom’s downfall either.\(^{161}\)

For Andreas, the real hero of this conflict was neither Charlemagne nor Desiderius, but Rotcausus, the Friulian duke who had rebelled in 776. Far from adopting the Carolingian position that this rebellion was a grave betrayal of trust, Andreas offered a highly-romanticized account of it, even claiming that the rebels won a significant victory over Charlemagne’s forces at Livenza in 775/6. Unable to quash the rebellion through force of arms alone, Charlemagne inserted a spy into their midst in order to convince them that it was futile to resist further without the “comfort” of a king. Rotcausus and his followers accepted this line of reasoning and surrendered to Charlemagne. Instead of being punished for their recalcitrance, however, they were allowed to serve the king honorably.\(^{162}\)

There is no contemporary evidence that any of this occurred. While we know that Charlemagne eventually restored the lands of some of those he had either imprisoned or who had fled into exile,\(^{163}\) Charlemagne is thought to have swiftly crushed the rebellion, killing its leaders on the battlefield or executing them.\(^{164}\) This was not the story Andreas wanted to tell, however. As both an inhabitant of the Carolingian Empire and someone who had clearly been inspired by Paul’s history and even began his work with a short epitome of it, it would not do to portray the Lombards as having meekly accepted defeat without at least one significant victory over their

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\(^{162}\) Andr., 4.

\(^{163}\) MGH Dipl. Kar. I, 187, 208

\(^{164}\) While I acknowledge that the Frankish sources might have remained silent on some things (particularly a rebel victory at Livenza), one would expect that if Charlemagne had granted clemency to rebels, the Frankish accounts of these incidents would have noted it as means of highlighting Charlemagne’s virtues. ARF 776; Gasparri, “The fall of the Lombard kingdom,” 64-5; Krahwinkler, Friaul im Frühmittelalter, 125-6.
foes. To do so would not only be an acknowledgment of the Lombards’ humiliation, but completely at odds with the values expressed in Paul’s much admired history. Thus, Andreas offered an alternate characterization: the Lombards had not so much been subjugated by the Franks as they had earned their place in the Carolingian Empire by a powerful display of tenacity and valor. From this perspective, their surrender to Charlemagne was not so much a failure as it was a triumph.165

It is after this point that Andreas ceases to focus primarily on the Lombards. Having discussed how they came to be integrated into the Carolingian Empire, the Frankish emperors and their deeds become the main focus of his text. To be sure, he still includes some discussion of Italian affairs, but it is rather striking that he almost wholly ignores other periods of Italian history including the period between 833 and 863.166 Italy only comes back into focus when Louis II appears on the scene, with Andreas primarily focused on the emperor’s campaigns in southern Italy. His account of these events does not vary significantly from the other sources we have discussed (save for his claim that Adelchis only imprisoned Louis’ retainers), but he did take considerable care to emphasize that Louis’ victories were due to both his Frankish and Lombard supporters. He may have only been referring to the northern Lombards, however, as he vehemently condemned the treacherous actions of Adelchis, “prince of the Beneventans.”167 It is not long after describing this event and Louis II’s death that Andreas’ text breaks off mid-sentence.

166 West rightfully points out that despite his reputation for being provincial, Andreas actually had a fairly wide political perspective. West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 57-8; Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 51.
167 Andr., 14-6, p.228, l.36.
The changing scope of Andreas’ text might simply be a reflection of the sources he had to work with, but it was also partially a reflection of the northern Lombards’ own political and ethnic evolution throughout the ninth century. As the early passages of his work highlight, Andreas still remained connected to his people’s past and took considerable pride in their achievements. However, he also implicitly acknowledged that with the end of Rotcausus’ rebellion, they had ceased to have exclusive control over their own historical trajectory. While he still considered them to be a distinct people, their political and historical horizons were no longer their own, but instead matched those of the Carolingian Empire, something which would significantly define who they were as a people. This, however, did not represent a break with the past, but rather a continuation of it, as reflected both in the manner that Rotcausus’ rebellion ended and the pride which Andreas took in Louis’ achievements.\footnote{Capo, “La polemica longobarda sulla caduta del regno,” 25-30; Gasparri, “The fall of the Lombard kingdom,” 64-5; West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 64-5.}

This worldview appears to have also affected how Andreas’ viewed his southern brethren. Despite their pre-774 ties, Andreas goes almost out his way to obscure any acknowledgement of the relationship between northern and southern Lombards. In the epitome of Paul’s history that began his work, nearly all references to Benevento are removed and even the reign of “Grimoald of the Beneventans” is largely glossed over with a brief acknowledgement of his laws and a statement that Andreas did not have space to describe his many deeds.\footnote{Andr., 1, p.223, l.2.} However, his detailed recounting of the deeds of Perctarit and Cunincpert in the next few sentences suggests that the real reason is that he only considered northern events to be relevant to his history. He would not make any further reference to the southern Lombards until
discussing Louis II’s campaigns, though as I noted, although he acknowledged that Louis II had conducted his campaigns “with the Franks, Lombards, and all of his other loyal nations,” he exclusively referred to Adelchis and his subjects as “Beneventans.”

This label was frequently used by the southern Lombards as well, but in the context of Andreas work, the implication seems to have been that they were a distinct group, one that was not necessarily even Lombard. For Andreas, the only clearly defined Lombards were those living under the rule of the Carolingian emperors.

Our other northern Lombard author, Liudprand of Cremona, took a different tact in his treatment of the southern Lombards, but he too may have strongly defined Lombard identity based on its connections with the Ottonian Empire. This can be most clearly seen in his account of the embassy he undertook on behalf of Emperor Otto I to the Byzantine court in Constantinople in 968. As Liudprand’s name suggests, he was of Lombard descent, something which his host, Emperor Nikephoros Phokas, sought to mock him for by exclaiming “You are not Romans but Lombards.” To this, Liudprand issued the rejoinder:

“The annals recognize that fratricidal Romulus, from whose name they are called Romans, was born to a whore, that is, he was generated in defilement; and he made a refuge for himself where he welcomed defaulted debtors from foreign climes, runaway slaves, murderers, and people who deserved death for their crimes, and he attracted such a throng of such people that he called them Romans; from this aristocracy there arose those whom you call cosmocrators, or emperors. We, that means the Lombards, Saxons,

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170 Andr., 12, p.227, 1.15-6, 16, p.228, 1.36, 9
Franks, Lotharingians, Bavarians, Swabians, Burgundians, so disdain them that we utter no other insult than ‘You Roman!’ to our enemies when aroused, and we understand that single term, the name of the Romans, to include every baseness, every cowardice, every kind of greed, every promiscuity, every mendacity, indeed every vice. Since you say we are unwarlike and ignorant of riding skills, if the sins of the Christians merit that you persist in this harshness, the coming wars will demonstrate what type of men you are and how pugnacious we are.”

The rhetoric contained in this statement, particularly Liudprand’s account of the Byzantines’ vices and his emphasis on his people’s warlike nature is quite comparable to what one would find in the works of Paul, Erchempert, and the Anonymous of Salerno. The key difference, however, is that Liudprand was not simply speaking of the Lombards, but of all the groups in the Ottonian Empire. Though distinguished by label, at least in this context, he still defined their virtues as being collectively one and the same.

It is possible that Liudprand’s statement was reflective of how he defined his own identity, but there was also a political motivation behind this. As Mayr-Harting has emphasized, at the time Liutprand wrote the so-called *Legatio*, Emperor Otto was courting the southern Lombard princes in a bid to wrest control of southern Italy from Byzantium and to bolster his claims to the imperial title. Consequently, Liudprand may have crafted the *Legatio* in such a way as to persuade them that their best interests lay with Otto rather than the Byzantines. In

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173 Henry Mayr-Harting, “Liudprand of Cremona’s Account of his Legation to Constantinople (968) and Ottoman Imperial Strategy,” *English Historical Review* 116 (2001): 539-56. For other assessments of this work, see Karl Leyser, “Ends and Means in Liudprand of Cremona,” in *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: the*
addition to the above statement, he also emphatically reminded Nikephoros that southern Italy, “which you relate as being part of your empire, the indigenous people and language show to be part of the Italian kingdom. The Lombards held it by might, and Louis, the emperor to the Lombards and Franks, freed it from the hand of the prostrated Saracen hordes.”

Leaving aside Liudprand’s convenient omission of the fact that the southern Lombards had rather decisively rejected Louis’ authority, his use of the term Lombard itself may have been an attempt to express or even recreate a degree of solidarity between his own people and the southern Lombards. Somewhat strikingly, however, the Legatio is actually the only time Liudprand ever uses the term “Lombard” in his literary output. Elsewhere, he either utilizes the term “Italians” to describe the peoples of Italy, or more narrowly, their city of origin, something which may reflect the fact that the Frankish rulers of Italy themselves had ceased over the course of the ninth and tenth centuries to emphasize the ethnic origins of the Lombard Kingdom and the distinctions between themselves and the kingdom’s inhabitants. While I would not go so far as to claim on the basis of this that Liudprand did not consider himself to be a Lombard or that he employed it for purely political purposes, it could be that neither he nor the audiences he wrote his others works for considered this to be their primary identity. Instead, it may have been superseded by a broader Italian identity which defined itself in much more strongly regional terms vis-à-vis its position within the Ottonian Empire.

174 Liudprand, Legatio, 7, tr. p.242-3.
176 Delogu, “Lombard and Carolingian Italy,” 306; Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 73.
The southern Lombards may have similarly connected their ethnic identity with their political identity, but unlike Liudprand or Andreas, they based theirs on the rejection of outside authority. Similar to Andreas, they almost wholly ignore events taking place outside of southern Italy after 774 except for those that directly impinged upon the principality’s affairs. Likewise, references to *Longobardi* living in territories north of the principality are very rare. Instead our sources almost uniformly label anyone from the Kingdom of Italy as being “Frank” or “foreign,” even in instances where the person in question might be Lombard or of Lombard-descent. This disconnect is most apparent in our sources’ treatment of Spoleto and its inhabitants, who are almost invariably described as “Franks,” despite the duchy’s Lombard origins. Erchempert, for instance describes Winigis as leading an army of “Franks” against Benevento. Later, when discussing the brief alliance between Lambert of Spoleto and the Beneventan gastalds against the Arabs, Erchempert portrayed the composition of their forces as being that of “Beneventans and Franks,” rather than “Beneventans and Spoletans.” While it seems that he was willing to accord the Beneventans a degree of distinction from the rest of their southern brethren, no such privilege was granted to the Spoletans. This, despite the fact Lambert was the son of Sico’s daughter and therefore, of Lombard heritage.

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177 Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 146.
178 This is echoed not just in definitively Lombard texts such as Erchempert’s history and the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, but also in the *Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum* and the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensi*. West, “Studies in Representations and Perceptions of the Carolingians in Italy 774-875,” 94, 97-8. Interestingly, the Anonymous does refer to Adelbert of Italy as “King of the Lombards” and his people as *Longobardi*, perhaps as a means of distinguishing between them and the invading armies led by the Ottonians. However, this is the only time he does so. *Chron. Sal.* 169.
180 Erch. 5.
181 Erch. 29, p.245.1.26
The Anonymous of Salerno also seemed to have associated Spoleto more strongly with the Franks than the Lombards based on his portrayal of Prince Sico and his rise to power. Although Sico was a Lombard born in a formerly Lombard-controlled territory, the Anonymous emphasized that his status as an outsider/foreigner was a source of considerable tension among the aristocracy, who resented his appointment as gastaldo of Acerenza. As he noted, the Beneventans often whispered, “[Acerenza] should not be held by a foreigner [proseliti] but by someone Beneventan-born.” 182 Even Sico’s elevation to the position of prince was insufficient to quell such murmurings, as his chief ally derogatorily noted that “wretched Sico” could be easily controlled because he was a “foreigner.” 183

The Anonymous’ depiction of Sico may not have been simply a literary artifice intended to accentuate the tensions of Sico’s reign, but instead might reflect the author’s tenth century viewpoint. After two centuries of separation, the Anonymous and his contemporaries may very well have considered their Spoletan brethren to be foreigners who were largely indistinguishable from their Frankish rulers. Much as in the north, Lombard identity may have become limited to the boundaries of a particular territory. The key difference is that whereas the northern Lombards considered their integration into the Carolingian empire to be an important aspect of this, the southern Lombards believed that Lombard identity was defined by continuity with the pre-774 past, in which the Lombards still ruled their own polity and strongly adhered to the traditions and values of their ancestors. 184

182 Chron. Sal. 43, p.44, l.11-2.
183 Chron. Sal. 54, p.55, l.1-5.
184 Pohl, “Le identità etniche nei ducati di Spoleto e Benevento,” 100.
The princes themselves sought to encourage this viewpoint. In the prologue of his law code, Adelchis described Charlemagne’s conquest as having reduced the gens “to insignificance,” a line which somewhat echoes the prophecy Paul recounts that with the kingdom’s fall, the “gens itself will perish.” Unlike Paul, Adelchis explicitly stated that this was true only in the north. In the south, “Arichis, Duke of the Beneventans…stepping forward in imitation of his ancestors, ruled the remnants of the gens nobly and honorably….Then long after that time, it was pleasing to the Almighty to grant us leadership of the remnants of the gens.”

For Adelchis, the end of the Lombard Kingdom, its king, and the practice of lawmaking was the end of the Lombard gens in the north, leaving behind only those who lived under the rule of the Beneventan princes and continued to adhere to the laws of their forefathers.

Indeed, what defined one as being Lombard in the eyes of Adelchis, Erchempert, and the Anonymous was not simply the hereditary and historical connections with the Lombards’ past, but the continuity of independent rule, political and cultural practices, and values (particularly martial ones), or as Adelchis termed it, the “stepping forward in imitation of [their] ancestors.” Such things were maintained through constant struggles against groups of “others” which reinforced ethnic boundaries and reaffirmed that, like the group described in the Origo Gentis, they were a still a chosen people, small in number, but superior through the might of arms and the rule of law. Looking at our sources from this period, the conflicts between the Lombards and other groups, as well as among themselves, were never portrayed as being simply political conflicts. Instead, they were moral conflicts rooted in the struggle to maintain perceived

185 HL 5.6, p.260, l.14.
continuity of practice, values and identity while under pressure from inside and out. It was Grimoald III temporarily making peace with Charlemagne, but refusing to shave his beard and asserting that he “born free,”\textsuperscript{188} Grimoald IV contemplating paying tribute and being dissuaded from doing so by the reminder of his ancestors’ refusal to do so,\textsuperscript{189} Adelchis acquiescing to Louis’ control until his people’s martial valour was questioned,\textsuperscript{190} Guaifer’s use of Arab mercenaries before he changed his mind and the land was restored to those who “ruled with laws,”\textsuperscript{191} and the Beneventans being inspired to rise up against their Byzantine occupiers by memories of the events of 663.\textsuperscript{192} Regardless of whether or not they had any basis in reality, these reconstructions of events and the rhetoric that accompanied them built and expanded upon the beliefs that Paul and Arichis had articulated a century earlier.

This strong emphasis on continuity was important not just for maintaining the southern Lombards’ political cohesion against external threats, but also for maintaining a degree of internal ethnic cohesion amidst the growing political and regional divisions in southern Italy. With the formal division of the Benevento and Salerno in 849 and the rise of Capua as a semi-independent power in subsequent decades, we see the southern Lombards described much more frequently in our sources using labels such as *Beneventani, Salernitani,* and *Capuani.* While such labels were applied, in part, to denote political and regional affiliations, as both Erchempert and the Anonymous emphasized, there were also very real divisions and resentments among these groups. In describing the Salernitans’ decision to align themselves with Siconulf against

\textsuperscript{188} Erch. 6, p.236-7, l.40 – 04.  
\textsuperscript{189} Chron. Sal. 39.  
\textsuperscript{190} Chron. Sal. 109.  
\textsuperscript{191} Erch. 74, p.262, l.32-5.  
\textsuperscript{192} Chron. Sal. 147.
Radelchis II, for example, the Anonymous noted that one of the prince’s supporters had argued, “It seems most shameful that you inhabit such an illustrious city and remain under the rule of Benevento.” Likewise, Erchempert often depicted the Capuans as being almost worse than the other groups that attacked Benevento, even claiming that Count Landulf II’s own mother had a dream prophesying the devastation he would inflict on the Beneventans.

Despite these significant divisions, there is nothing to suggest that the Beneventans, Salernitans, and Capuans had come to regard themselves as wholly distinct from one another. While Erchempert and the Anonymous often deployed these regional labels in their texts, they also continued to utilized the term Longobardi to describe their people, particularly when comparing them other groups such as the Franks and the Byzantines. Looking specifically at the work of Erchempert, he often used the terms “we” and “ours” even when describing the achievements of non-Beneventans, particularly those who achieved military victories over other gentes. Similarly, the Anonymous’ attachment to his own principality did not preclude him from speaking with a measure of pride and admiration about the deeds of the other Lombard princes nor acknowledging their common heritage. When discussing Atenulf’s takeover of Benevento, for example, he described the Beneventans as the prince’s “brethren [stemma].” For both these authors, whatever political and regional differences may have existed, their history, traditions, virtues, and vices were still collectively one and the same.

193 Chron. Sal. 79, p.75-6, l.29, 1-2.
194 Erch. 22.
195 See for example, Erch. 57, p.258, l.6-7, in which he triumphantly declares that, “only one of our people died,” in a battle between the Capuans and the Neapolitans. Berto, “The Muslims as Others in the Chronicles of Early Medieval Southern Italy,” 4-5, esp. n.18; “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 164; Kujawiński, “Le immagini dell’”altro” nella cronachistica del Mezzogiorno longobardo,” 815, esp. n.124.
196 Chron. Sal. 154, p.162, l.6-9.
Even with its division in 849 and takeover by the Capuan counts in 899, the Beneventan principality also continued to play a largely symbolic, but crucial role in binding the southern Lombards’ together and defining their sense of identity. Regardless of whether or not they lived within the principality’s territory, there were some who viewed both the principality and its princes as essential links between the southern Lombards’ past and present. Erchempert was the foremost advocate for this view. Despite beginning his work with the admonition that it was his intention not to write about his people’s triumphs but “their downfall,” his work was just as much an eloquent argument for Benevento’s importance, both in the past and in his own time. Perhaps echoing the arguments Adelchis made in the prologue of his law code, Erchempert devoted much of his work to reinforcing the belief that the Beneventan principality was the successor to the Lombard Kingdom and its princes the guarantors of the Lombard gens’ independence and unity. The city of Benevento itself was a symbol of their past glory, their present challenges, and future hopes. As he described it in a short poem generally thought to have accompanied the work and dedicated to Prince Aio:

“Alas, Pavia’s twin town has been puffed up with pride, whether left to itself or rule by overbearing masters; in consequence of this, it is groaning, ravaged by innumerous enemies. It lies quite exhausted, destroyed by brambles and thorns, bereft of its inhabitants and filled with wild beasts. But behold, a new day dawns upon it, when it

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197 Questions have been raised about the authorship of the poem and its dating. Ulla Westerburgh was the first to identify it with Erchempert, and while this has generally been accepted, there remain some questions. Walter Pohl, for instance, has suggested that the poem was written for an earlier version of the work, probably around 885 before Aio’s fortunes began to decline along with Erchempert’s opinion of the prince. Berto considers the linguistic and tonal discrepancies between the poem and Erchempert’s work to be too significant for it too have been a dedication for the history. Pohl, *Werkstatte der Erinnerung*, 37-42; Luigi Andrea Berto, “Linguaggio, contenuto, autori e destinatari nella Langobardia meridionale. Il caso della cosiddetta dedica della Historia Langobardorum Beneventanorum di Erchemperto,” *Viator* 43 (2012): 1-14.
receives its cherisher, and rejoices that you, magnanimous father, are here. Now again the pearl-like town is joyfully singing odes and loudly shouting “hail” under so great a prince. Every age and condition, males and females exult and rejoice in pastimes, they shine and glitter exceedingly. In the times gone by, the country has been badly sundered, but behold, in your time with the protection of God, it is united.”

This dedication has much in common with Erchempert’s introduction, but obviously its ultimate conclusion is much more hopeful, seeing in Aio the possibility of Benevento’s salvation. Such hopes were soon to be dashed, but I would suggest that Erchempert had not wholly given up on his people or the principality. Introduction notwithstanding, Erchempert’s work cannot be simply described as a work of decline and fall. There is, as Taviani-Carozzi described it, a strong “nostalgia for unity” with the princes serving as symbols of this. It also reflects a deep belief that Benevento was indeed both “Pavia’s twin,” and its replacement, much in the same way as Constantinople had come to be seen as a second Rome. The earliest passages of the work, in particular, depict the period from 774 to 817 as a golden age for Benevento and the Lombards. Rather than dwelling on the fall of the Lombard Kingdom, Erchempert instead focuses on the strong military and moral leadership provided by Arichis II, Grimoald III, and Grimoald IV, all of whom he sees as embodying the essential qualities of the Lombard gens. Arichis is the perfect ruler, a “most Christian man, highly distinguished and very vigorous in matters of warfare,” who defends Benevento from the Franks even at the price of giving up his

198 Westerbergh, Beneventan Ninth Century Poetry, 9-10.
200 Erch. 2, p.235, l.12-3.
own children as hostages. Among these is Grimoald III, who returns to Benevento after
swearing oaths to Charlemagne, but refuses to shave his beard and openly defies King Pippin.\textsuperscript{201} Finally, Grimoald IV is a “very gentle and indeed most pleasant man, who not only undertook a
treaty of peace with the Franks, but with all \textit{gens} established on every side [of the
principality].”\textsuperscript{202}

Erchempert’s depiction of the principality’s early days as a golden age may have all been
intended to illustrate just how far the principality and its people had fallen, but I would suggest
that he had another purpose in mind, namely, to present a vision of the past that could serve as a
blueprint for the future, one in which the Lombards, united under leadership of a wise, powerful,
and moral prince, set aside their political difference to work in common cause for the betterment
of the \textit{gens}. His depictions of the Franks, the Arabs, and Byzantines were also intended to
reinforce this message and, as we have discussed, there were even some later passages in the
work where Erchempert highlighted the Lombards’ fortunes turning around due to their renewed
commitment to the values which had originally brought them so much success, most notably his
discussion of Guaifer’s change of heart.”\textsuperscript{203}

Erchempert was not the only one who sought to articulate and reinforce the belief that the
principality and the position of prince were still, at the very least, symbolically important to the
fortunes of, not just the Beneventans, but the Lombard \textit{gens} as a whole. Atenulf of Capua’s
forcible takeover of Benevento in 899 could also be interpreted as evidence of this. While
political coups and rebellions against a sitting ruler may seem like indisputable evidence of a

\textsuperscript{201} \textit{Erch.} 4, 6.
\textsuperscript{202} \textit{Erch.} 7, p.237, l.6-8.
\textsuperscript{203} \textit{Erch.} 74, p.262, l.33.
polity’s internal weakness, they are sometimes proof of the continuing vitality of its administrative and social structures, as well as the attractiveness of its leadership positions. Although Atenuulf had already wielded considerable power and was, in essence, already an independent ruler, he did not seek to establish Capua as a separate principality nor did he actually assume the title of *princeps* until after his takeover of Benevento. Even under these circumstances, both he and his successors were very careful and perhaps even keen to acknowledge Benevento’s symbolic importance, as well as to maintain many of their predecessors’ traditions. According to the Anonymous, despite suffering from severe gout at the time he overthrew Radelchis II, Atenuulf ordered some of his followers to carry him into S. Sophia, which “had been built by the most distinguished Arichis.” There, he was elected prince by exiles returning to the city, not just legitimizing his political coup, but also providing him with a symbolic connection to his predecessors and the venerated founder of the principality. His successors further reinforced this connection by continuing to issue charters as the “*principes gentis Langobardorum*.” They even appear to have maintained a strong presence in Benevento itself, as a number of our extant charters from the tenth century were issued from the “*sacratissimo Beneventum palatio*” rather than the Capua. Likewise, we see some references to these individuals as the “*principes Beneventani*” rather than the “*principes Capuani,*” in the *Chronicon Salernitanum.*

This emphasis on continuity between Beneventan and Capuan rule may have been part of a strategy undertaken by the Capuan princes to maintain the support of the Beneventan

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205 CSS 1.39, 43, 3.40-2, 5.
206 See, for example, *Chron. Sal.* 158, 166
aristocracy, but it may also explain why Atenulf desired to claim the position in the first place. Although Benevento was much diminished in his own time and he was arguably more powerful and influential than its princes, the principality’s antiquity, its links to Arichis II and Atenulf’s own ancestors, and the belief (as articulated by Erchempert and Adelchis) that the Beneventan princes had replaced the Lombard kings in the aftermath of 774, may have all still held considerable allure for Atenulf and his successors. Rather than trying to compete with this legacy by creating an independent principality in Capua or attempting to shift power away from Benevento completely once they had taken control, they chose to embrace it wholesale, elevating themselves from Capuan counts to Beneventan princes instead of transforming the Beneventan principality into a purely Capuan one. In doing so, they essentially reinforced the arguments made by Adelchis and Erchempert that Benevento was indeed “Pavia’s twin” and its princes were leaders of the gens rather than solely being territorial overlords.

Interestingly, even the Anonymous of Salerno seems to have given some credence to these arguments. While he did not necessarily share Erchempert’s nostalgia for a unified southern principality, he was at least willing to acknowledge that Benevento’s antiquity gave both it and its princes a certain importance, even for those Lombards living outside of their borders. This is most evident in his account of Atenulf’s accession, where the shadows of the past glories and Arichis II provide an added weight to his portrayal of events. As we have already mentioned, when describing Atenulf’s takeover the Anonymous made certain to note the prince’s visit to S. Sophia and remind his audience that it had been built by Arichis II. The inclusion of this might have been intended to reinforce the idea that Atenulf’s accession should be seen as a restoration of Benevento’s former glory, but as the Anonymous notes, Atenulf’s
mother did not see it that way. As he described it, “Truly, that woman, who ought to have been filled with joy for her son, instead grieved for his brethren, because they had come to such a point as to be ruled by an outsider.”

Note here how the Beneventans are described almost paradoxically as Atenulf’s “brethren [stemma]” even as he himself is labeled as being an “outsider [exterus].” What the Anonymous seems to have been implying here is that although there now existed a degree of separation between the Beneventans and the Capuans, the latter still recognized the principality as their point of origin and held a deep abiding respect for its traditions. Thus, it was a great shock to Atenulf’s mother (or rather, the Anonymous) that the principality, with its long and celebrated history of defying outside rulers (which the Anonymous had consistently glorified in his account including but a few passages before), would now willingly consent to being ruled by one, even if the person in question had some sort ancestral ties to it. In describing it this way, it was not the Anonymous’ intention to question the legitimacy of Atenulf’s rule, but rather, to emphasize the significance of this transition and also to highlight Benevento’s continued importance to all Lombards regardless of their political/regional affiliations, even as late as his own era.

To some degree, this represented a triumph for the ideology of Arichis II and his successors. While the southern Lombards’ identity was not, at the end of the ninth century, defined by allegiance to the Beneventan principality itself, it was inextricably tied to the principality’s political ideology, its history of political resistance, and the broader political aim of remaining independent. This explains, in part, why the northern and southern Lombards

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207 Chron. Sal. 154, p.162, l.7-8.
increasingly defined their identities in very different terms. Whereas the northern Lombards’ identity had come to be defined by their acceptance of outside rule and their participation in its political and cultural systems, the southern Lombards’ based their identity on the rejection of these things, believing that independent rule was at the very core of their identity. In essence, the southern Lombards’ political and ethnic identities had become one and the same. They were Lombard because they were independent, and in turn, they were independent because they were Lombard.

*Pavia Preserved*

The events of the late ninth century sorely tested the southern Lombards, but they were also crucial for the preservation of their ethnic identity and independence, not just in Benevento, but also in Salerno and Capua as well. Although the process of more clearly defining and connecting these had begun with Arichis II and Paul the Deacon, there was no guarantee that it would have continued, particularly after the division of the principality. Indeed, southern Italy’s internal political breakdown left the door open for the regionalism to play a greater role in shaping its inhabitants’ identities. However, Benevento’s historical and symbolic importance provided the southern Lombards with a common bond around which they could rally. The conflicts of the late ninth century further reinforced this, enabling the Lombards to take collective action against these groups of “others” and to define themselves in opposition to them. Admittedly, there were still important internal divisions among the southern Lombards, and authors such as Erchempert and the Anonymous often distinguished between the Beneventans, Capuans, and Salernitans in their texts, but they also frequently used the term *Longobardi* when
describing encounters between their people and other *gentes*. Despite the different times in which they lived and attachments to different principalities, they still considered themselves to be Lombards first and foremost, sharing a common history, political ideology, and ethnic values, all of which had been defined by and were forever linked to the principality of Benevento and its princes.
VI

_Pavia’s Memory_

At the dawn of the tenth century, the Beneventan principality was both under new leadership and on a new path forward. While Atenulf of Capua would largely continue the traditions and practices of his Beneventan predecessors, the principality’s main center of power shifted from the city of Benevento to the city of Capua. Benevento would remain symbolically and politically important, but for the first time in three centuries, the course of southern Italian politics and the direction of the _gens_ would largely be shaped outside of its walls. The city would eventually regain its independence in 981 after the division of the Principality of Capua-Benevento, but by then, the political situation in southern Italy had grown considerably more complicated. The internal political struggles that had begun in the ninth century continued unabated, while the external political situation became increasingly chaotic with the Byzantine emperors vying against those of the Ottonian Empire for control and influence over southern Italy.¹ To counteract these trends, the Lombard princes resorted to hiring Norman mercenaries, a move which backfired even more spectacularly than their earlier decision to employ the Arabs. The Normans quickly turned against their employers and began to conquer southern Italy piece by piece. By 1077, they had completely taken control of the principalities, bringing to an end five centuries of Lombard rule in the south. The city of Benevento would be given over to papal control, belatedly fulfilling one of Pope Hadrian’s territorial ambitions.

There are many fascinating aspects of the tenth and eleventh century Lombard principalities that merit further attention, but for our purposes, the most important one is that

¹ Kreutz, _Before the Normans_, 94-136.
even amidst the political turbulence of these centuries, these principalities, their rulers, and their inhabitants remained proudly, even defiantly Lombard. Three centuries after the Lombard Kingdom fell and Arichis II first proclaimed himself “princeps gentis Langobardorum,” the last of his successors in Benevento still issued charters with the same intitulatio.\(^2\) Even after the Norman conquest of southern Italy, aristocratic families continued to emphasize their Lombard heritage,\(^3\) while monastic chroniclers eagerly documented and compiled the many acts of patronage undertaken by the princes (both real and imagined) that we have discussed throughout this work. This enduring attachment to Lombard identity and history in the south was something that had to be cultivated and shaped gradually by princes, monks, historians, hagiographers and many others over the course of centuries, often out of political necessity and under pressure from outside groups. This would not permanently preserve the southern Lombards’ political independence, but it prolonged it and even enabled Lombard identity to survive for a time after the end of the southern principalities.

The irony of all of this is that the Beneventan duchy was not even founded as an explicitly “Lombard” duchy, but rather only gradually became such through the steady exchange of individuals and ideas with the Lombard Kingdom, as well the formation of a shared sense of historical memory. The installation of dukes from the north, especially Grimoald I, as well as the spread of practices such as the veneration of S. Michael, helped to create a shared sense of

\(^2\) CSS 6.25.

identity and memory between the southern and northern Lombards and ensured that Benevento would follow a broadly similar political and cultural trajectory as the Lombard Kingdom. For all the emphasis that has been placed on Benevento’s early autonomy and its importance in providing a strong foundation for the duchy’s future independence, the dukes still considered themselves a part of the kingdom and the *gens*, a belief which encouraged them to embrace more aggressively royal traditions and practices, as well as their Lombard identity, in the aftermath of 774.

Confrontation with other groups defined the southern Lombards’ sense of identity just as much as the commonalities they shared amongst themselves. Prior to 774, the Lombards’ sense of ethnic identity was still relatively malleable and did not always find significant expression in political action. It was only through confrontation with the Franks and the threat of political marginalization that there emerged a strong desire to strengthen distinctions and to articulate firmly what it meant to be Lombard. The princes’ defiance of the Carolingian emperors, in particular, helped to foster a political and cultural climate where other Lombards could explore and maintain their political and cultural affiliations without serious repercussion, developing a stronger sense of identity in the process. Whereas the northern Lombards had little choice but to assimilate into the broader Carolingian political and cultural system, the southern Lombards chose to embrace their princes, their own distinct political and cultural traditions and the belief that it was “better to maintain liberty by arms than to stain it by payment of tribute.”

This overarching belief is one of the major reasons why the southern Lombards successfully navigated the challenges that would follow in subsequent decades, and why the

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4 *HL* 1.7, tr. p.15
Principality of Benevento itself would survive, being taken over not by the Franks, Arabs, or Byzantines, but by the Lombard counts of Capua. Despite the many times when they had been forced to make concessions, pay tribute, and swear oaths of loyalty to outside rulers, the princes could rely on their peoples’ developing feelings of antipathy towards these other groups to provide them with the necessary support to undertake whatever actions were needed for the principality’s defense. Even at times when internal political consensus was difficult to achieve, contact and confrontation with the “barbaric” Franks, the “profane” Arabs, and the “perfidious” Byzantines created a measure of cohesion among not just among the Beneventans, but the southern Lombards as whole, transcending whatever internal differences they might have had and also reinforcing the distinctions between themselves and these other groups. Such distinctions were not ones that could easily be bridged, no matter what political and military methods were used.

It was not only their peoples’ antipathy which aided the Beneventan princes’ in maintaining the principality’s independence. Just as antipathy creates distinctions, it also can also create a sharper sense of identity and attachment to it. For the Lombards, this sense of identity was one very much rooted in their identity as Christians, as warriors, and above all else, as a free and independent people. From Paul to our anonymous hagiographers to Erchempert to the Anonymous of Salerno, it seems that a number of Lombards had absorbed the idea that to be Lombard was to forever be struggling to maintain one’s freedom and traditions against outside foes who often possessed superior numbers and resources.\textsuperscript{5} Admittedly, such a belief by itself is

not enough to defeat a superior foe nor is it any substitute for administrative, military, or economic resources. It can, however, sometimes mean the difference between failure and success. The southern Lombards’ well-defined sense of ethnic identity, one which was came to be tied to their political status, encouraged them to remain resilient under considerable pressure until opportunities arose for them to push back whether it was simply outlasting Charlemagne and Pippin until other matters diverted their attention, halting Louis II’s gradual takeover of southern Italy by taking him hostage, rising up against the Byzantine occupation when Guy’s armies stood outside of Benevento’s walls, or even setting aside prior hostilities with the peninsula’s other groups to expel the Arabs in 915.

For the Beneventan princes, in particular, this sort of resiliency and cohesion in the face of outside pressure was an important source of power, perhaps the only one they could rely on by the end of the ninth century as conflicts between themselves and other Lombard elites became more frequent. Indeed, even as the Beneventans, the Salernitans, and the Capuans developed their own distinct political aims and regional identities, they never ceased to recognize themselves as Lombards first and foremost nor did they ignore Benevento’s historical importance. As we noted earlier, Erchempert often used the terms “we” even when describing the achievements of non-Beneventans. Likewise, the Anonymous’ attachment to his own principality did not preclude him from speaking with a measure of pride and admiration about

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6 See for example, *Erch.* 57, p.258, l.6-7, in which he triumphantly declares that, “only one of ours died,” in a battle between the Capuans and the Neapolitans. Berto, “The Muslims as Others in the Chronicles of Early Medieval Southern Italy,” 4-5, esp. n.18; “Erchempert, a Reluctant Fustigator of His People: History and Ethnic Pride in Southern Italy at the End of the Ninth Century,” 164.
the deeds of the other Lombard princes. To him, it did not matter who wore what crown so long as they continued to uphold the values of the *gens*.

In affirming the collective identity and values of the Lombard *gens*, these authors also helped to reinforce the Beneventan princes’ place within it. Even in the fifty years prior to the Capuan takeover of the principality, when their failures began to outstrip their successes and competing centers of power arose, the Beneventan princes remained important symbols of their people’s identity and the memory of their actions (real or imagined) still had the capacity to inspire long after they were gone. They were, in the view of authors like Erchempert, the preservers of tradition, the leaders in war, and the medium through which the saints granted their protection to the principality. When they prospered, not just the principality, but the *gens* as a whole prospered. When they faltered, it was the *gens* that suffered. It is why Adelchis declared that when the Lombard Kingdom fell, its people “faded to insignificance,” save in Benevento, where Arichis “followed in the footsteps of kings” and “ruled the remaining *gens*.”

It is also why Erchempert, who wished to write about “not [the Beneventans’] rule but their downfall,” could still also speak of Benevento as “Pavia’s twin,” an expression which affirmed the continuity between the Lombard kings and the Beneventan princes. Finally, it is why Atenuulf of Capua chose to embrace the legacy and practices of the Beneventan princes as his own, and why the Anonymous claimed that the count’s mother was terror-stricken when she heard the news of her son’s elevation to the position of prince. Much as the Byzantines had believed that the political and cultural legacy of Rome had passed to the city of Constantinople and its emperors,

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8 Westerbergh, *Beneventan Ninth Century Poetry*, p.9, l.10.
so too did the southern Lombards believe that the Beneventan princes were the keepers of Pavia’s political and cultural legacy.

This belief and the other types of discourse which we have discussed have often been viewed as evidence of an evolving “national” sentiment among the southern Lombards, but we must be careful about using such terminology given the close connections it has with the establishment of the modern state. The southern Lombards’ identity was not necessarily defined by allegiance to a specific polity, but rather, by continued adherence to the political ideology of Arichis II and the broader aim of remaining independent. To be certain, there were some like Erchempert who believed that the territorial boundaries of the Beneventan principality should be synonymous with the ethnic boundaries of the Lombard gens, but for other like the Anonymous, the principality was mainly an important symbol of their past and the link through which the Lombard Kingdom’s political and cultural legacy had been passed down to all Lombards living in the south.

The more appropriate term to describe this particular ideology might be what Chris Wickham has referred to as “Lombard legitimism” or Bertolini has called “nostalgic Lombardism,” in which political power and ethnic identity were deeply rooted in the belief that the southern Lombards, in contrast to their northern cousins, were “the remnants of the Lombard gens” on account of their continued independence and willingness to struggle against the

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10 Bertolini, “Carlomagno e Benevento,” 670; Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, 146.
Franks and other groups for it. Clearly, this is what the southern Lombards themselves believed, though we should be careful about wholly accepting such claims to continuity. After all, the Duchy of Benevento had largely been autonomous from the Lombard Kingdom in its first two centuries of existence and the Lombards as whole had not placed significant emphasis on ethnic identity prior to 774. While the events of 774 did not fundamentally change the duchy’s underlying political structure, the stronger emphasis on ethnic identity in both a political and cultural context represented a break with the past, one which might not have occurred had it not been for the unique set of circumstances the dukes and their subjects had to adapt to. It was only the shock of losing their kingdom coupled with the sudden political and cultural pressure from the Franks and other groups that forced the southern Lombards to strongly define what it meant to be Lombard and to associate it more strongly with their political allegiances.

There was, however, still an element of choice in this whole process. Had a different ruler been in place at the time or the elites been more willing to embrace the potential benefits offered by the Franks, Benevento may have ended up following a trajectory similar to the northern kingdom or the Duchy of Spoleto. This did not happen, however, and the southern Lombards began to evolve along a different path, guided and encouraged by not just the princes, but also by authors such as Paul the Deacon. This evolution, as we have seen, continued into the late ninth century and beyond, when the southern Lombards confronted not just the Franks, but also the Arabs, the Byzantines, and the Neapolitans. While their own internal problems sometimes hampered their ability to deal with these challenges, through it all, both the southern Lombards and Benevento were able to maintain their independence. More than that, their confrontations with these groups instilled in them a deep pride in their military achievements, a
greater degree of religious devotion, a sense of cultural superiority, and a potent desire for independence, all of which sharpened their sense of ethnic identity.

The southern Lombards were not necessarily unique in any of these beliefs or even in strongly politicizing their ethnic identity, but the circumstances under which all of these things occurred certainly were. This evolution did not occur at the center of the Lombards’ political power, but on the periphery, not at their kingdom’s beginning but at its end, and not from expansion and conquest, but from defending themselves against three of the most powerful groups in the Mediterranean world. Although we have explained why this occurred in Benevento and southern Italy as a whole, other questions remain, most notably, why here and not elsewhere? More specifically, why not in the Lombard Kingdom? Despite my own tentative conclusions on this particular issue, the question of whether or not the northern Lombards truly “faded to insignificance”12 is one that merits a much more detailed examination, particularly given the seeming revival of interest in the Lombard past in later centuries with the emergence of the Lega Lombarda and the composition of the Cronicon Novaliciense, which recounted the last days of the Lombard Kingdom and the deeds of Desiderius’ son, Adelchis.13

As for Benevento and the other southern principalities, the question of Lombard identity beyond the chronological scope of this work is one that continues to receive an admirable degree of attention.14 Nevertheless, even as the focus shifts to the twilight of Lombard rule and identity

in southern Italy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, we should not fail to appreciate what they and their rulers had achieved up to this point. By the time the Normans conquered southern Italy, the Lombards had controlled portions of the region for close to five hundred years, largely following a model of rule that had been set forth by Arichis II and his predecessors. Save for the region’s earliest inhabitants, the Romans, and the Byzantines, no other group can similarly claim to have significantly impacted the political and cultural life of southern Italy for so long a period of time. Whatever individual trials and tribulations the Lombard princes and their people might have experienced, in the end, they successfully preserved their political independence and their distinct identity, and in doing so, significantly contributed to the path that southern Italy still follows to this day.
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