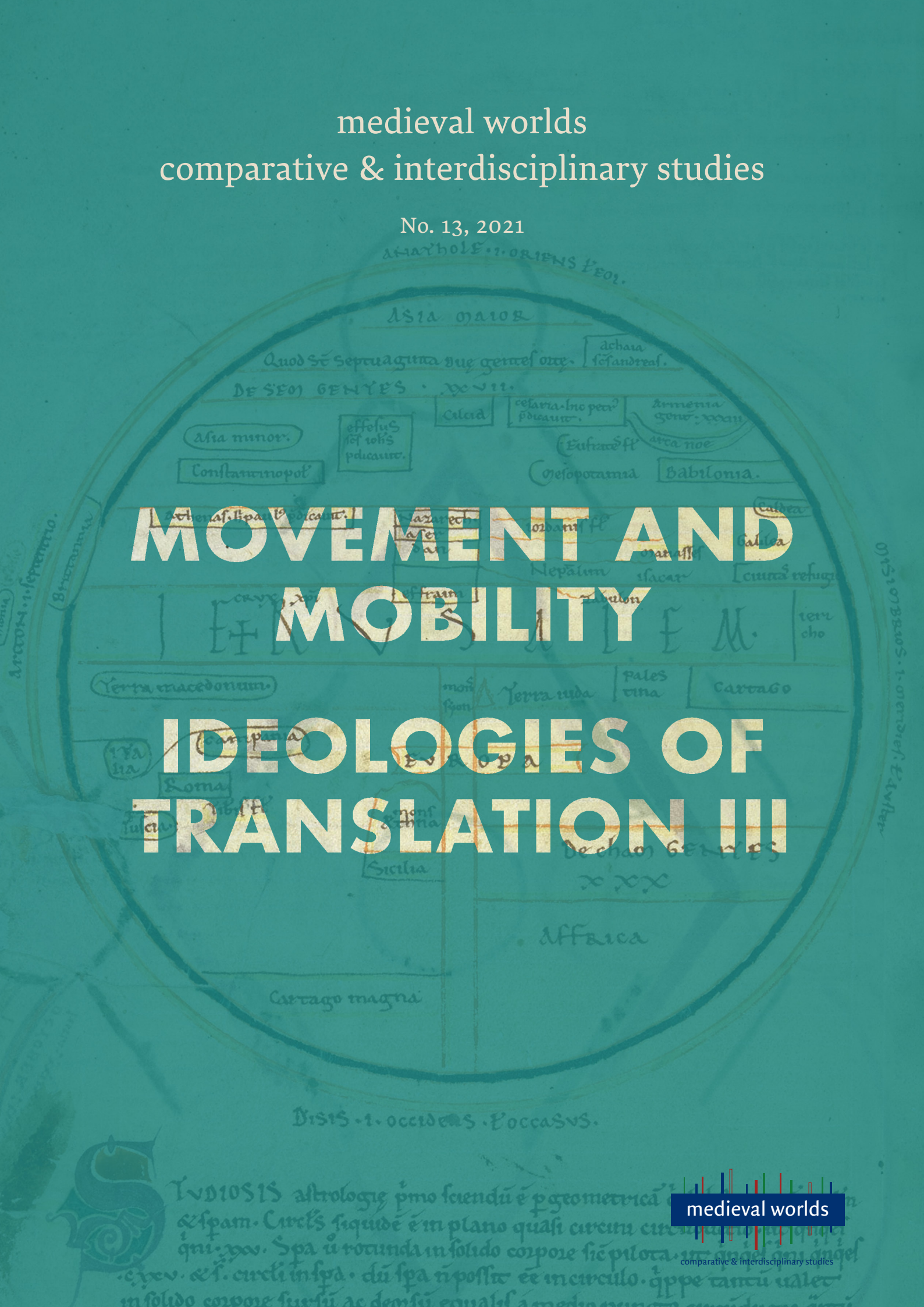


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No. 13, 2021



**MOVEMENT AND  
MOBILITY  
IDEOLOGIES OF  
TRANSLATION III**

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**S**VDIOSIS astrologie pmo sciendū ē p geometrica  
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in solido corpore sursum ac deorsū equalis a medio

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Volume 13, 2021

Movement and Mobility  
in the Medieval Mediterranean:  
Changing Perspectives  
from Late Antiquity  
to the Long-Twelfth Century, I

Guest Editors:

Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner  
and Edoardo Manarini

&

Ideologies of Translation, III

Guest Editor: Jan Odstrčilík

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ISSN 2412-3196 Online Edition

Media Owner: Institute for Medieval Research

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Cover design, layout: Anneke Gerloff-Mazas

Cover image: Computus collection including Byrhtferth of Ramsey's diagram

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Austrian Academy of Sciences Press

Dr. Ignaz Seipel Platz 2, 1010 Vienna, Austria

Tel. +43-1-515 81/DW 3402-3406

Fax +43-1-515 81/DW 3400

[hw.oeaw.ac.at](http://hw.oeaw.ac.at), [verlag.oeaw.ac.at](http://verlag.oeaw.ac.at)

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# Editorial

Walter Pohl and Ingrid Hartl

In our 2021 summer issue, the medieval Mediterranean takes a prominent place. The first of two thematic sections addresses this macro-region that has received increasing attention in historiographic debates recently, a contact zone in which evidence of movement and mobility can be used to trace the exchange of cultures, of ideas and products. Under the title *Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century*, guest editors Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner and Edoardo Manarini have assembled a series of articles, which will appear in this and the following volume 14 of *Medieval Worlds*.

Furthermore, our successful series *Ideologies of Translation* continues, focusing once again on the emerging research area of historical multilingualism, in which philological, linguistic, palaeographic and historical methods are combined to trace the scribes' and preachers' engagement with the texts and with their audience. This sub-series was launched in volume 12, in which multilingual sermons from England, France, Italy, Catalonia and Ireland were examined, and guest editor Jan Odstrčilík provided the readers with an overview of recent research and methodologies in this vibrant field of studies. In the present volume, this thematic section is complemented by studies on code-switching between Latin and English or Irish in sermons of the 7th, 9th and 15th centuries, and rounded off by a discussion of a compelling and little-known piece of evidence for multilingual preaching.

Both these thematic sections are featured on the cover. But of course, as usual in our volumes, there is more to discover. Three stand-alone articles provide interdisciplinary and comparative insights into an exceptional world map from a Christian Iberian manuscript; into Byzantine and Chinese gardens in comparison; and into the relations between religions among the 9th century Khmer. The relationship between religions also takes centre-stage in our report about the ongoing activities of the ERC Synergy Grant *EuQu (The European Qur'ān. Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion 1143-1850)*, which concludes our present summer edition.

We would like to round off this preface with two announcements. As we keep receiving more and more submissions and suggestions for thematic volumes, we have decided to start a loose series of supplementary issues prepared by responsible guest editors, each covering only one coherent topic. The first issue is planned for October 2021 under the working title *Medieval Biographical Collections: Perspectives from Buddhist, Christian and Islamic Worlds*. It includes cases studies on manuscripts from widely different cultural backgrounds, and with often surprisingly similar structural features. Secondly, the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, which hosts our journal, has promised to upgrade our website and make it more attractive and usable. So, watch out for more from *Medieval Worlds*!

# Introduction: Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century

Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner, Edoardo Manarini\*

This article introduces the themed section »Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century«. This series of articles engages with the ongoing debates in historiography on the role of movement and mobility in the socio-political frameworks of medieval societies throughout the Mediterranean world from Iberia to the Near East. The papers introduced here consider a wide range of contacts and exchange from the diplomatic encounters of late antique Byzantium via the exchange of (religious) ideas and spiritual objects in Italy and the Near East to the fundamental mobility of capital, slaves and goods. Rather than reveal a static, ossified and self-contained range of landscapes, this article will argue that there were not only cross-cultural, religious and political contacts but also economic and social connections that fused the Medieval Mediterranean into a heterogenous contact zone of cultures, ideas and products. Using this broader framework of the Mediterranean as a contact zone and border region between and across the *longue durée* represented by the period from Late Antiquity until the end of the twelfth century allows the contributions to demonstrate movement, not stasis after Rome and the expansion of horizons rather than their restriction.

*Keywords: movement; contact zone; Mediterranean economies; cultural production; pre-modern society; celestial mobilities; socio-cultural exchange*

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\* Correspondence details: Christopher Heath [corresponding author], Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Metropolitan University, Department of History, Politics and Philosophy, All Saints, Manchester, Lancashire M15 6BH; email: c.heath@mmu.ac.uk; Clemens Gantner, Institute for Medieval Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Hollandstraße 11-13, 1020 Vienna, Austria; email: clemens.gantner@oeaw.ac.at; Edoardo Manarini, Dipartimento di Studi Storici, Università di Torino, Palazzo Nuovo - Via S. Ottavio 20, 10124 Torino, Italy; email: edoardo.manarini@unito.it.

...the king possessed nothing at all of his own, except a single estate with an extremely small revenue in which he had his dwelling and from which came the few servants, few enough in number who ministered to his wants and did him honour. Whenever he needed to travel he went in a cart which was drawn in country style by yoked oxen with a cowherd to drive them. In this fashion, he would go to the palace and to the general assembly of this people which was held each year to settle the affairs of the kingdom and in this fashion he would return home again.<sup>1</sup>

Einhard's memorable depiction of a Merovingian king in the early eighth century making his lugubrious way to the annual assembly of the Franks struck a chord for both Einhard's Carolingian contemporaries and later commentators.<sup>2</sup> It is, of course, as a passage, used as a demonstration of the weak, feeble and somewhat tragi-comic state that the Merovingians then embodied, a pale shadow of their powerful predecessors. Or at least, this is what Einhard would have us believe. Careful reflection on this passage also feeds into the perpetuation of persistent characterisations (one might be tempted to suggest caricatures) of early medieval society in Occidental Europe that such societies were fundamentally ossified, static and immobile. There remains an apparent dichotomous paradox that, on the one hand, emphasises regional and local impulses as the foundational engine of society, and on the other hand, identifies a vibrant mobility, between, across and through the continent and beyond. Defining this vibrant mobility has been an encouraging aspect of recent historiographical endeavours to tackle the realities behind early medieval societies in Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Asking the right questions and finding an effective interpretative balance between narrative and normative sources stands at the centre of the contributions below. In seeking to understand the role of movement and mobility in the Mediterranean societies analysed in this themed series of contributions, it is evident that a clear-cut paradigm does not work. Pre-industrial societies may well have depended upon the agricultural resource base at their disposal and have had limited inter-connectivity, economically speaking, beyond immediate contexts and contacts, but this did not mean that they remained closed to movement and mobility into and across their territories.<sup>4</sup> In this special section, for example, some contributions concentrate on movement within Italy, as we will explain in more detail below.

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- 1 Thorpe, *Einhard and Notker*, 55-56. »Nihil aliud proprii possideret quam unam et eam praeparavi reditus villam, in qua domum et ex qua famulos sibi necessaria ministrantes atque obsequium exhibentes paucae numerositatis habebat. Quocumque eundum erat, carpento ibat quod bubis iunctis et bulbulco notico more agente trahebatur. Sic ad palatium sic ad publicum populi sui conventum qui annuatim ob regni utilitatem celebrabatur ire, sic domum redire solebat.« *Einhardi Vita Karolis*, ed. Pertz, 444. The key word here is *carpentum* which can be rendered as either carriage, cart or chariot. This word originates from the Gaulish *carbantos*. It could also be used to mean a wagon or barouche. Du Cange highlights two senses: a) a two-wheeled covered carriage/coach or chariot especially used in towns or by women and b) a wagon or cart for agricultural use. See Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infime latinitatis*.
  - 2 For discussion of this passage see Fouracre, *Long shadow*, 5-6 and Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, 102.
  - 3 For the broader picture McCormick and Wickham remain fundamental. Works on particular aspects of the mobility in the Middle Ages continue to encourage refinement of the perceptual responses to these issues. As starting points, see McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy* and Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*. For interesting perspectives on contact zones and border regions, see Wolf and Herbers, *Southern Italy as Contact Area*.
  - 4 There are many examples which allow one to identify longer-distance trade and contact in specific items: olive oil, chestnuts and silk for instance, although the latter is hardly an everyday item at this time. See Story, *Lands and lights*, and Balzaretto, *Chestnuts in charters*. For silk, see Fleming, *Acquiring, flaunting and destroying*. On the other hand, one should also recall the inter-connections maintained by the post-Roman Byzantine Empire through its maritime links. On this, see Zavagno, *Going to the extremes*. In contrast, see Prigent, *Monnaie et circulation*.



Still, the Mediterranean Sea and travel by ship along its coasts, straits and inlets was a major connecting element that is present in most contributions in the section in some form or another. It has often been shown just how central this sea was, even after the political integrity of the Roman Empire had been lost – and before modern seafaring technologies brought another revolution.<sup>5</sup>

There was a wide plethora of possible contacts predicated upon social, economic, political, intellectual and ecclesiastical bases which, at any point, may or may not have aligned in such a way as to initiate and invigorate fundamental change at the socio-cultural and socio-economic levels. Consequently, it flows from these multivalent movements that there remains a variance between societies in terms of scale, in other words, between the macrocosm (e.g. the empire, the kingdom, the city) and the microcosm (e.g. the valley, the village, the landed estate). Here again, historians have to ask the right questions and find the appropriate interpretative model, which takes into account variance in the experiences of individuals who managed and lived the realities of the situation on the ground.

Contact at the elite level is not the same, of course, as that lower down the societal ladder. The latter is less likely to be commented on in narrative sources and to attempt to unpick the reality, one must resort to the witness of diplomatic and normative materials which generally retain their own issues of interpretation. In this respect, one example of elite movement in Italy will illustrate the scenario. In 661, Aripert I (653-661) died, and the Lombard kingdom was partitioned between his two sons Perctarit (661-662 and 671-688) and Godepert (661-662) in an experiment of shared authority that was not repeated in this fashion again. Within the year, however, Godepert had been killed and Perctarit had been forced into exile. He travelled eastwards to the Avar Qaganate, where he was protected for a time until a messenger from his supplanter Grimoald (662-671) reached the Avars demanding that Perctarit be given up.<sup>6</sup> Perctarit returned to Pavia where he resided briefly under the rather grudging protection of Grimoald. This uncomfortable scenario did not persist, for we are told by Paul the Deacon that Grimoald was worried that the popularity of Perctarit in Pavia would prompt the return of his predecessor to both prominence and power. Once again, Perctarit was forced into exile via Asti, the powerbase of his father, where »friends« (*amici*) were resident who were »still rebels against Grimoald« (*et qui adhuc Grimualdi rebelles extabant*) as Paul the Deacon indicates.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, Perctarit travelled to Turin and westwards into exile in Francia. Even here, Perctarit feared the intentions of Grimoald and had embarked to sail across »to the island of Britain to the kingdom of the Saxons«, at which point the news of the death of Grimoald reached him and he returned to Italy.<sup>8</sup> The prominence of this story in the *Historia Langobardorum* implies that the events described were hardly run-of-the-mill and commonplace. For our purposes they adequately demonstrate that movement and mobility was perfectly possible in the late seventh century. Of course, it does not demonstrate that such theoretical

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5 Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, esp. 7-172. See also McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*. All this refers to the great Braudel, *La Méditerranée* for the big changes in the early modern era.

6 Paolo Diacono, 4.51 and 5.2, ed. Capo, 234-253, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 205-213.

7 Paolo Diacono, 5.2, ed. Capo, 252-253, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 213.

8 Paolo Diacono, 5.33, ed. Capo, 278-281, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 236-237.

transit was either straightforward or certain. In his commentary on the pilgrimages of Willibald (721-724) and Bernard (867) from the west to Palestine, McCormick sets out the very real difficulties experienced by pilgrims and travellers who were beset not only by physical challenges but also by the random inadequacies of the transport infrastructure and the limitations imposed by those who controlled the territories visited.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, these movements were anything but ordinary.<sup>10</sup>

Thanks to the recent insights provided by sociological studies,<sup>11</sup> the issue of human mobility, together with its practice and its representation, is investigated according to innovative and more comprehensive approaches, which aim to examine the phenomenon in the broadest and most multifaceted way possible.<sup>12</sup> Applied to the early medieval period, this theme has mostly been tackled through the concept of »great migrations« of the fifth and sixth centuries, which has now replaced the traditional concept of »barbarian invasions«.<sup>13</sup> In both cases, however, it is a similar way of understanding the physical movement of large human groups, which can be more or less violent, from one point of origin to one of final arrival. It is therefore essentially understood as a change of residence or as a crossing of a political-administrative border. If instead applied to the Middle Ages, the concept of movement is immediately connected to the so-called »armed pilgrimages«, the crusades, in which the predominant movement is that of armies and the encounter with other cultures is invariably a religious, political, and economic clash. The studies presented here deliberately depart from these paradigmatic visions of the concept of mobility in the medieval period, to present instead a broader, nuanced and more complex picture, which can also take into account other types of mobility, the examination of which increasingly helps our understanding of medieval societies.

The essays presented here are the proceedings of the papers presented during the conference of the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean held in Barcelona in 2019, under the general theme of »*Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean (6th-15th centuries)*«, in the session entitled »*Movement and Mobility in Uncertain Times: Changing Perspectives in the Mediterranean*«. This dossier interrogates the reality of movement and mobility in the Middle Ages adopting a *longue durée* perspective. Considering both a wide range of source material and immediate contexts, the articles are designed to allow discussion between and across both chronological and geographical boundaries but at the same time permit detailed consideration of specific localities and contexts. How did individuals on the ground perceive and understand movement in the Mediterranean world? What does this tell us about the responses of both societies and individuals to those who moved through and between the spheres of a multidimensional Mediterranean? These are the key questions which this section of articles will approach and discuss.

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9 McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 129-138. But on Bernard, see recently Reynolds, *History and exegesis*, who shows that the author may have used second-hand knowledge.

10 McCormick sets out in a number of useful graphs the hierarchy of status with regard to movement. See McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 160, 163. A glance at his »Register of Mediterranean communications« is also illustrative and softens the bias, see, *ibid.*, 852-973.

11 See Cresswell, *On the Move*.

12 See also the recent Paziienza and Veronese, *Persone, corpi e anime*.

13 See, for example, Pohl, *Eroberung und Integration*; Pohl, *Wandlungen und Wahrnehmungen*; Pohl, *Völkerwanderung*; Pohl, *Migrations, ethnic groups*.

Admittedly the Mediterranean is not the only protagonist in all of the case studies herein. Indeed, rather than the sea itself, it is people (both alive and dead) and artefacts that will be considered. The approach here, then, is one that supplements the approach of significant recent scholarship, rather than seeking to replace it with new theoretical modelling.<sup>14</sup> That said, of course, the Roman *mare nostrum* provides the key framework within which the contributions are presented and thus the Mediterranean context is not one that is incidental to the issues discussed. The sea, then, facilitated movement and communication and thus promoted mobility and connectivity. Only through the Mediterranean could all the mobility described in this section ever happen. So, despite not being mentioned constantly, the sea was always there, making all the communication described possible, sometimes even causing it. The Mediterranean and its shores are thus at the centre of our section, not only geographically. They had retained their connecting role despite having split up politically and gradually becoming culturally even more diverse than the old empire had been. This did not keep people from feeling a strong connection. Even in the emerging Islamicate world, many »stayed Roman«, as they did elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> It (nearly) goes without saying that, albeit only a small section in this journal, our goals can only be achieved through a comparative approach, including several historical disciplines. We are thus providing input from medieval studies (both the early and the high Middle Ages), Byzantine and Late Antique studies, orientalist and Judaist approaches. It would be unrealistic to include all of these viewpoints in all contributions. Rather, the articles gathered here each provide a focused analysis of aspects of movement around the Mediterranean. By doing so, however, what emerges is a mosaic that provides at least a little more information than the sum of its parts. This bigger picture can only be produced by examining different source types comparatively and by choosing a perspective »from the ground« up, by studying microstructures even, in some cases.

The essays of this section will be presented in this and a subsequent issue of *Medieval Worlds* (vols. 13-14),<sup>16</sup> pursuing the individual approaches and chronologies selected by each of the authors to examine the theme of mobility and its perception in various contexts of the medieval Mediterranean. However, more precise and meaningful lines of research also link the studies. The essays by Christopher Heath, Ecaterina Lung and Enrico Veneziani examine the issue of human mobility in the Italian peninsula and towards the East through the diplomatic and juridical perspective typical of political authorities: in his examination of Lombard legislation, Heath will consider how Lombard kings, and therefore society as a whole, perceived those who moved through and across the kingdom, both illicitly and legally, arguing that the Lombard kingdom was subject to greater interconnectivity between the Atlantic world of Francia and the Mediterranean cultures of the East. The Perctarit episode, discussed above,

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14 Both Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, and Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, for example, follow a far more holistic approach, which can only be achieved in a monograph

15 See Conant, *Staying Roman*, on northern Africa in early Muslim times. See also the contributions by Heath (touching on the situation in Lombard Italy), Gantner (showing Rome, Italy and Constantinople in the process of drifting apart, embodied in the diplomatic mission of Anastasius), and Bondioli, whose piece will demonstrate prolonged, if not intensified interconnectedness, not least on the economic level. See also McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*.

16 The contributions by Lorenzo Bondioli, Fabrizio De Falco, Andra Juganaru, Ecaterina Lung and Enrico Veneziani are planned for publication in *Medieval Worlds* 14. We rely on provisional versions of these articles for this introduction.

also had a »diplomatic« context as well as political, religious and cultural dimensions that illustrate the mosaic of connections between the Mediterranean and beyond. Lung instead focuses on diplomatic relations between the western post-Roman kingdoms and the Byzantine Empire. Paying particular attention to the »barbaric« component of these relations, she considers the barbarian embassies sent to Constantinople or to Byzantine generals on the battlefield in order to understand what problems were linked with the distances they had to cover in order to complete their missions and what role cultural differences played in these relations. Still on the relationship between political institutions and mobility, Veneziani shifts the focus to the twelfth century by offering an emblematic case of immobility through the examination of the pontificate of Honorius II (1124-1130), considered by historiography to be a weak pope due to the fact that, unlike his predecessors, he displayed a much lower level of mobility. Veneziani shows that Honorius was an exception because he managed to control and reside in Rome for much of his pontificate thanks to his solid authority and to the broader consent his authority attained among Roman elite families. As we see here, in and for the 12th century, lack of mobility can and could still be interpreted as a sign of weakness, very similar to the depiction of the already mentioned last Merovingian king in Einhard's rendering many centuries before. Acting as a counterpoint to the issues of multifaceted movement, this contribution concludes this section.

It is not only the movement of people and individuals which is discussed in the papers here. Objects, too, played a crucial part in the movements around the Mediterranean – as did both ideas and religions. These movements attest that human mobility is directly linked to the transfer and germination of ideas and thought.<sup>17</sup> Our essays, however, provide more information than that and therefore contribute strongly to the image of an interconnected Italy, as we shall show. The joint essay by Francesco Veronese and Giulia Zornetta and the contribution by Edoardo Manarini focus on the mobility of relics and their cult as an occasion for political itineraries and power struggles in early medieval Italy. Manarini examines the case of the cult of the relics of Pope Sylvester I (314-335) which assumed importance in the legend of the holy pontiff only during the eighth century, when the *translatio* of the body by the abbot Anselm, from Rome to his monastery of Nonantola, gave rise to the clash over his memory and ideology between Lombard Nonantola and the Roman popes. These two institutions had built their own legitimation discourse in the eyes of Christianity on the basis of the mobility/immobility of these relics. Veronese and Zornetta consider two other cases of the translation of saints' bodies, with the *furta sacra* of St. Mark and of St. Bartholomew. Related to plans to strengthen local public authorities, the mobility of two of the most important relics in the whole of Christianity is investigated in the wide Mediterranean context, thus also considering the circulation of cultural models to and from the Carolingian worlds to which Italy very much belonged at that time.<sup>18</sup> The authors will show just how complex and multifaceted these worlds had become.

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17 For a theory of relic transfer and mobility, see, for example, Smith, *Portable Christianity*, and the classic Geary, *Furta sacra*.

18 Bougard, *Was there a Carolingian Italy?*, as well as the entire new volume Gantner and Pohl, *After Charlemagne*.

The remaining essays contemplate aspects of political and cultural mobility together in the broad geographical horizon of the Mediterranean basin. Clemens Gantner explores the figure of Anastasius *Bibliothecarius*, examining his characteristics as a »broker« between two cultures and three courts, namely Rome, Constantinople and Pavia. His career was embellished with many points of intersection between different political environments, which, through his abilities and knowledge, made him one of the most illustrious figures of the ninth century. The contribution will, however, focus on a quite well-documented diplomatic mission that led Anastasius to Constantinople – and on the implications this particular embassy had for himself, the eastern and the western empires and the papacy. Committed to the study of pilgrimages of ascetic women towards Eastern holy places, Andra Juganaru examines the texts of the Church Fathers addressing spiritual relationships and providing advice for nuns who were willing to embark upon their own long and perilous *peregrinatio*. A picture emerges marked by the question of authority between late antique male spiritual guides and ascetic women. Whereas the contributions by Gantner and Juganaru stay very much within the framework laid out by the Ancient Roman Empire – and show the longevity of it – the essays by Lorenzo Bondioli and Fabrizio De Falco shift the chronology and the geographical focus to different landscapes and cultures. Bondioli proposes an extensive study on the Islamic Mediterranean of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with a markedly economic perspective, while also considering diplomatic, cultural and political elements of the interactions that Muslim rulers reserved for non-Muslim cultures. Starting from the documentation of the Cairo *geniza* also helps us to take a short look at the world of Jewish traders active around the Mediterranean. De Falco explores the same shores from the particular point of view of the Anglo-Norman court of Henry II of England (1154-1189), through the works of Gerald of Wales and Walter Map. The negative description of the eastern Mediterranean, of the crusade and, in a way, also of the Holy Land is examined in the context of Henry II's political initiatives, showing clearly how the two authors' personal motivations concurred to shape their narratives.

The dossier therefore presents many different ways of approaching and studying the theme of mobility and human movement, which can be physical or imagined, of living or dead people, or even of spirituality, of texts and cultural materials, as well as of goods and riches. The meeting point of all the events and the cases studied always remains the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, a fundamental means that unites the lands they water and the human societies that reside on them. Over the centuries, these societies have faced the issue of human, social and economic mobility, always in original and never unequivocal ways.



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# Aspects of Movement and Mobility in Lombard Law: Fugitives, Runaway Slaves and Strangers

Christopher Heath\*

Lombard laws were issued between 643 and 755. They comprise *in toto* an invaluable normative source for the Lombard kingdom and society in the seventh and eighth centuries. Commentators have concentrated upon the witness that the laws comprise for the ability of Lombard kings to rule, control and influence society. This paper, however, will consider aspects of both movement and mobility through and across the kingdom using the prism provided by the law with regard to fugitives, runaway slaves and strangers. What does the law tell us about the conceptual parameters associated with those who composed and compiled Lombard law? How did the Lombard kingdom respond to movement and mobility? What do prescriptions which relate to frontiers reveal about the broader interconnectivity of the Mediterranean world? In addressing these issues, and in considering the broader connotations revealed, this paper will argue for a deeper mobility in the early medieval West.

*Keywords: Lombard laws; mobility; fugitives; slaves; spatial responses; Pirenne thesis; Rothari.*

## Introduction

At first glance, one may identify an apparent paradox with Early Medieval society in the West. On the one hand, there is a set of societies forged by the movement of peoples and ruling elites into parts of the former Western Roman Empire, but on the other hand, such societies were apparently organised on the basis of a social conservatism that emphasised the absence of social mobility and movement.<sup>1</sup> In his classic work, *The Birth of the Western Economy*, Robert Latouche (1881-1973) observed that »any attempt« to identify the origins of economic life in the Early Middle Ages »must inevitably...raise the problem of the transition from the ancient world to the Middle Ages which contemporary German historians... like to call *Kontinuität*«. <sup>2</sup> Finding a measured interpretative balance between continuities and discontinuities

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\* Correspondence details: Christopher Heath: Manchester Metropolitan University, Department of History, Politics and Philosophy, All Saints, Manchester, Lancashire M15 6BH; email c.heath@mmu.ac.uk.

- 1 Peters, Foreword, xvii. The literature on the development of early medieval Europe in terms of the movement of peoples is considerable, but one may usefully consult: Halsall, *Barbarian invasions* and Leyerle, *Mobility and the traces of Empire*.
- 2 Latouche, *Western Economy*, xiii. Latouche is not explicit as to who he means, providing no footnote. His bibliography suggests that he might have been thinking of (for instance) L. M. Hartmann's *Zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte Italiens in fruhen Mittelalter* (Gotha, 1904) or A. Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der Europäischen Kulturgeschichte* (Vienna, 1923-1940) to name but two works, although, the latter was, of course, Austrian. For Alfons Dopsch, see Wood, *Modern Origins*, 236-241.

across the varied landscapes of the Mediterranean basin and further afield into the Atlantic worlds of Francia, Britain and Scandinavia remains a series of challenges that continue to engage historians.<sup>3</sup> If one were to narrow the focus and consider the Lombard kingdom on a geopolitical level, a paradoxical impression, similar to that sketched out above, is also furnished. One could characterise Lombard society of the seventh and eighth centuries as a static, self-contained entity that remained, up to the 680s, in a state of intermittent conflict with Byzantine-controlled territories (mainly) to the south and in an often inferior and contested relationship with the Frankish kingdoms to the north.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, however, the spatial theatre in which the Lombard kingdom operated between the period of Rothari (636-651) and Liutprand (712-744) was noticeably fluid.<sup>5</sup> An ongoing and erratic accumulation of territory shifts the boundaries between the Lombards, on the one hand, and Byzantium, on the other, so that (ultimately) a tilting point in terms of power is reached in favour of the Lombard kingdom during the rule of Liutprand. This shift in power in the Italian peninsula reaches a symbolic crescendo with the capture of Ravenna in 751 by Aistulf (749-756). At this juncture we see the restriction of an indirect political presence of Constantinople in north-central Italy to Venice and Istria alone.<sup>6</sup>

If the spatial parameters of the kingdom throughout this period are fluid, one might think that this would be reflected in the normative source materials that we possess, such as the law. The variable frameworks within which the Lombard *regnum* operated, as we shall see, had an often implicit (and occasionally explicit) impact on specific prescriptions in the laws. One may detect how those who framed the titles responded to movement and mobility through, into and across the kingdom. Using the law and legal codes as evidence for impulses and responses, however, is not without implications. As Tom Lambert notes in his analysis of Anglo-Saxon law, we must be alive to the fact that law may not be a »perfect source for the reconstruction of behaviour«. <sup>7</sup> Lambert and other commentators, when considering the

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3 The literature on these issues is naturally enormous, but for entry into the issues, see McCormick, *European Economy*; Wickham, *Framing*; Loseby, *Mediterranean economy*.

4 For a short summary of Lombard military endeavours, see Peters, Foreword, ix-xi. For further discussion of law and contingent political rhythms, see Delogu, *Editto di Rotari*. See Fabbro, *Warfare and the Making*, for one reading of the first century of Lombard warfare in Italy. For the south, see now Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*.

5 After the resumption of active hostilities with Byzantium, the Lombard kingdom progressively »nibbles« away at the Byzantine controlled territory of Emilia; conquers Liguria in the 640s; and later adds Corsica and the whole of the exarchate and the pentapolis. Similar attrition occurs to the south with the enlargement of Lombard *Tuscia*. There was also somewhat limited expansion of Benevento at the expense of the Byzantine empire across the course of the eighth century. See Cosentino, *Storia dell'Italia Bizantina*, 238-245.

6 Evidence for the »peace« of 680 is limited to a vague reference in Theophanes, and is thus rather unsatisfactory. See now Brown, 680 261-272. The reference in Theophanes to the »peace« may be found in Mango and Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, 496 *sub anno* 6169 i.e. 677-678: For *Venetia* and Istria, see Gelichi and Gasparri, *Venice and its Neighbours*. Also pertinent is West-Harling, *Three Empires*. Boundaries between the Franks, the Avars and the Bavarians and the Lombards are relatively stable in the eighth century, notwithstanding Paul the Deacon's report that Liutprand had captured significant territory from the Bavarians.

7 Lambert, *Law and Order*, 1 and 7-8. Avoiding the projection of »alien« conceptual frameworks when tackling early medieval law is an important part of any analysis of law at this time. For Lombard law, in particular for the *Edictum Rothari*, the thin evidence for the application of provisions at the initial promulgation is also a difficulty.

witness of law as a source for early medieval societies, have emphasised the methodological risks associated with accepting the texts at face value and as a straightforward window on early medieval societies.<sup>8</sup> Notwithstanding the real variances that may disconnect the initial aims of those who drafted the titles, the intentions of those who approved the law and the conceptual horizons such legislation reveal, law as a source brings both possibilities and problems.

Lombard law also embodies this dual challenge of problems and possibilities. Between 653 and 755, Lombard kings issued a number of codifications [and amendments] of the law.<sup>9</sup> The question that is immediately begged, of course, is whether such enactments reflected »the« reality at the time of codification. Clearly the prism between the legal texts as we have them now and reality at the point of promulgation is problematic, even were we to accept at face value the fundamental veracity of the texts.<sup>10</sup> This is an issue that is particularly apposite for the *Edictum Rothari* (ER).<sup>11</sup> The prologue tells us that custom is set down but also that »he« (in this case the king himself, Rothari) has reviewed, amended and updated specific clauses. It will be for us to consider this aspect in detail below.<sup>12</sup>

Historiographical responses to Lombard law appear to muddy the waters further. Older discussions of Lombard law were predicated on assumptions of not only their German origin but also their alleged barbarism.<sup>13</sup> Thus, for the usually phlegmatic Thomas Hodgkin (1831-1913), an entirely scathing overview of Lombard law appeared to be a natural impulse, as we see here:

And so the Lombard invaders, like children, repeat the lessons which they have learned from their forefathers of the forest and try to fit in[to] their barbarous law terms ...the stately but terribly misused language of *Latium*. Throughout Roman ideas, Roman rights, the very existence of a Roman population are not so much menaced or invaded as calmly ignored. The Code of Rothari, promulgated on the sacred soil of Italy, in a land which had once witnessed the promulgation of the Code, the Institutes and the Digest of Justinian, is like the black tent of the Bedouin pitched amid the colonnades of some stately Syrian temple, whose ruined glories touch no responsive chord in the soul of the swart barbarian.<sup>14</sup>

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8 Indeed, the pitfalls are emphasised in significant works; see Davies and Fouracre, *Property and Power*, 1-3; Rio, *Legal Practice*, 1-5 with reference to *formulae*.

9 In terms of titles, Rothari's *Edictum* has 388 titles; Grimoald added nine; Liutprand 153 titles on fifteen separate occasions; Ratchis fifteen; and Aistulf nine titles.

10 For discussion of the applicability of the *ER* to conditions in 643 and the manuscript footprint of Lombard law, see *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, xxvii-xxx and xlvi-li respectively. One is on firmer ground with Liutprand's law, which, in providing amendment and extension of the law, refers to both current issues and conditions at the point of promulgation.

11 Wormald, *Kings and kingship*, 598-599; Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 36-39 and 69-70; Wormald, *Lex Scripta*; Fischer Drew, *Laws of the Salian Franks*, 26-27.

12 »We have perceived it necessary to improve and to reaffirm the present law, amending all earlier laws by adding that which is lacking and eliminating that which is superfluous« (*necessariam esse prospeximus presentem corrigere legem, quae priores omnes renovet et emended, et quod deest adiciat, et quod superfluum est abscidat*). *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 13-14, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 39. See Everett's amended translation, Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 164.

13 See the useful precis in Davies and Fouracre, *Settlement of Disputes*, 2-3.

14 Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, 238. Even more positive Anglophone commentators at this time, such as Charles Kingsley (1819-1875) in his lecture series *The Roman and the Teuton*, opined that the »code« was one of the best ways to study the Lombards since »one may gain some notion of that primeval liberty and self-government, common at first to all«: Kingsley, *Roman and Teuton*. Everett discusses the Italian work on uncovering the »real« sources for Lombard law. See Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 164-167 and n. 3, which furnishes full bibliographical references.



Subsequent work by historians, however, has recognised that the Laws comprise *in toto* an invaluable normative source for both the Lombard kingdom and Italian society in the seventh and eighth centuries.<sup>15</sup> The corpus of Lombard law has been used by historians to address a variety of historical issues. Commentators have, for instance, concentrated upon and considered the witness that the laws comprise for both the intentions of centripetal authority and the ability of that authority to rule, control and shape the socio-economic reality on the ground. In other words, what might be considered possible, reasonable and enforceable and, by implication, what could not.<sup>16</sup>

One may take the view that normative materials dwell upon the mundane and the theoretical.<sup>17</sup> Yet whilst the analysis of law is not a simple golden key that unlocks the mysteries of early medieval societies, it is still an invaluable resource in understanding the conceptual frameworks within which polities operated.<sup>18</sup> Legal codes set out what is considered acceptable, or at least expectable in any pertinent scenario. Obviously, what is not comprehensible to those who frame and compose the law – or at least foreseeable by them in specific contexts – should be identifiable by an absence. Thus, if one balances these aspects, one may extrapolate and comprehend the mental furniture of both those who formulated the laws and those who authorised and enacted the codification. Identifying clauses in Lombard law that explicitly allow »x« in circumstance »y« provides us with the potential to perceive what was considered possible in spatial terms. We may go further than this. In tackling those provisions that allow, restrain and prevent or prescribe, we may pinpoint three sets of responses. First, concerning allowance, one may identify what is theoretically conceivable, though this does not simply equate to what may have actually happened on the ground; secondly, regarding restraint, we can see what is considered preventable, although again, not necessarily the actual capacity of any given authority to actually stop what is interdicted; and, thirdly, we consider a linked category, deviance, in other words, what happens when matters go awry, how the situation should be re-balanced and how to deal with opposition that may arise. Theoretically, at least in the interstitial spaces between all these responses, we may find »a« reality or at least a possible meaningful impression of that society.

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15 The key editions of the laws may be found in *Leges Langobardorum*, ed. Blühme; *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*. For Gasparri »le leggi longobarde...costituiscono un mezzo per entrare nei meccanismi sociali, economici e culturale dell'eta longobarda...« ix-x. That said, Gasparri also contends that doubt remains about the historicity of the *Edictum* as we currently have it. He says, »una legislazione tutta orientate sul passato e priva de riferimento alla societa presente« and »fossero almeno parzialmente obsolete gia al momento dela loro promulgazione«, x-xi.

16 Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*; Ausenda *et al.*, *Langobards*; Albertoni, Law and the peasant, 417-445; Sutherland, Idea of revenge. Everett's discussion, for instance, concentrates on the evidence for literacy and literate practices rather than the operation of the kingdom – although his discussion on the immediate circumstances of the issue of the *Edictum* is very useful.

17 Fischer Drew suggests that law tackles »the unusual rather than the usual condition...«: Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 22. Davies and Fouracre held that »political and social structures are best appreciated not through the study of laws and other normative texts, but through charters«: Davies and Fouracre, *Property and Power*, 1.

18 Faulkner, *Law and Authority*, 1-5 is a useful discussion. Whilst he observes that the *leges barbarorum* »are among the richest of all sources of early medieval history« their potential value has »always proved very difficult indeed«. Rio is perhaps a little more cautious in that she observes that »historians no longer take [law codes] as a straightforward reflection of society, but they still convey the value systems deployed«; see Rio, *Legal Practice*. To access the broader debate on the value of law as a historical source, see Fossier, *Sources de l'histoire économique* and Brunner, *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*.

In our subsequent discussion of the issues raised by a close analysis of the legal titles in the *Edictum Rothari* and the laws of Liutprand, Ratchis and Aistulf we shall first consider the range of regulations on different forms of movement, namely how the law, in theory, sought to allow, restrain and control movement within both the »public« sphere and the »private« worlds of individuals. Subsequently, we shall broaden the field of enquiry to analyse the spatial theatre in Lombard history before, thirdly, we consider the specific evidence for the crossing of liminal frontiers. Subsequently, wider and broader conclusions, in particular, the implications for the transformation of the Roman world debate, may be drawn. We shall first, however, consider the specific regulations that pertain to movement and mobility.

*Allowance, Restraint and Deviance: Impulses and Responses in Lombard Law*

One does not have to scratch far below the surface to see reflected in Lombard law, an apparently dynamic and often mobile society which undertakes forms of quotidian movement naturally. We should, however, at this point be clear about the working definitions of »movement« and »mobility« used in this item. Whilst they are frequently used as synonyms, they may also be defined within narrow and broad contexts. In simple terms, movement may be defined as a physical act of moving. Narrower aspects associated with movement, for instance will relate to relatively banal and short-range activities that in medieval law codes relate to specific actions that may either be permitted or interdicted. »Mobility« may then be defined as the ability to move or be moved freely and easily. In wider contexts it may relate to the principle which allows, or at least does not restrain the theoretical allowance to undertake movement that is more than local or even regional – including the crossing of political frontiers. Further, in setting out a legal framework that permits or allows such movement but also delimits and restricts it, we may be able to identify the boundaries between what might be called the public sphere and the private sphere. In other words, where the implied competence of the »public« authority to control and protect existed and where such competence ended.

Mobility in Lombard law is addressed in implicit terms. Thus there are *capitula* that deal with both freemen and slaves who are found »in someone else's courtyard« (*in curte alterius*)<sup>19</sup> and those that punish freemen or slaves breaking the peace in »another« district, the clear implication being that this is not their own area, and thus constitutes some form of movement.<sup>20</sup> Activities on the road attract a whole slew of prohibitive titles that include

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19 See *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ER 32 and 33, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-25, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 58-59. The difficulty here appears not to be the simple unauthorised and alien presence of the individual freeman or slave but the temporal framework, i.e. at night, because, as the ER indicates, »it is not consistent with reason that a man should silently or secretly (*silentium aut absconse*) enter someone else's courtyard at night.« Intent would then appear to be the key element here. In Burgundian law, the *Liber Constitutionum* or *Lex Gundobadi* also identifies the courtyard as a specific locus of crime. See title 92, which relates to women whose hair has been cut off in their own courtyard. Also of interest here are those provisions which intend to protect vineyards, i.e. title 103. See *Leges Burgundionum*, ed. Salis, 111 and 114-115, transl. Fischer Drew, *Burgundian Code*, 82 and 86-87. In Frankish Law, in particular the *Lex Salica Karolina*, breaking into property rather than being present without fault is the prime concern, e.g. the breaking into the enclosure of a mill (*clusam*) attracts a separate fine in addition to anything that may be stolen; see *Lex Salica*, ed. Eckhardt, 222, trans. Fischer Drew, *Laws of the Salian Franks*, 214-215.

20 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ER 39 and 40, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 24-25, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 60.

throwing someone from his horse, not extinguishing fires beside the road, allowing freemen to move wherever they like, and even the expulsion of lepers from their »own« district.<sup>21</sup> We should also mention the two specific capitula which deal with the »*magistros Commacini*« (master builders of Como) which hints at both the continuance of economic specialisation and employed mobility beyond Como itself.<sup>22</sup>

Both the differences and the similarities between the regulation of different types of movement and, in particular, how they relate to the nature of the persons and places in question, reveal not only the hierarchical impulses in the law code but also the variances in treatment of individuals in spatial responses. Already from the very brief selection of clauses above, it is evident that, in the details of punitive address, Lombard law is hierarchically determined by status. In relation to those lurking in courtyards at night, a freeman may provide compensation of 80 *solidi* for himself, whereas a slave may be remitted (by his or her Lord) by the payment of 40 *solidi*, although if either offers resistance they may be killed with impunity.<sup>23</sup> Not all slaves, however, were encompassed in the same categories in the *ER*. The *Edictum Rothari* provides three terms for the dependent. First, household slaves (*servus ministerialis*); secondly, *servus massarii*, who may be termed tenant slaves; and, thirdly, field slaves or the *servus rusticus*. Titles 130, 132 and 134 in the *ER* provide an explicit hierarchical pyramid of value.<sup>24</sup> Household slaves are valued at 50 *solidi* (although a minor or subordinate is valued at 25 *solidi*); tenant slaves at 20, and a field slave is allocated 16 *solidi* and so on.<sup>25</sup>

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- 21 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 30, 148, 176 and 177, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-23, 44-45, 54-55, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 58, 76, 83-84. Using Everett's division of the *ER*, title 30 pertains to crimes against private individuals; 148 to »damage to property«; and 176 and 177 pertain to laws on succession. Here Everett follows Azzara; see Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 167 and, *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, xxviii-xxix. Waylaying or pillaging on the road is directly forbidden in the *Pactus Legis Salicae* (14 and 21), as is »blocking the road«; see *Pactus Legis Salicae*, 14 and 21, ed. Eckhardt, 64-69 and 120-121, trans. Fischer Drew, *Laws of the Salian Franks*, 79 and 94-95. Likewise, in the *Lex Burgundionum*, title 27 prohibits the blocking of either the »public road« or a »country lane«. For this, see *Leges Burgundionum*, ed. Salis, 64-65, transl. Fischer Drew, *Burgundian Code*, 42. The recognition of leprosy triggers expulsion from the civitas or from the leper's own house (the clause pertains to income). For leprosy, see Miller and Smith-Savage, *Medieval Leprosy*.
- 22 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 144 and 145, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 42-45, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 75. For the *Magistri*, see *Leggi dei Longobardi*, 119. 58 and 59, ed. Azzara and Gasparri. See also Moschetti, *Primordi eseggetici*. Whilst there is no explicit indication that the »*magistri comacini*« are peripatetic, the import of the clauses would suggest that their activities were not restricted to Como alone. One may adduce, however, that a certain Rodpertu »*magistrum comacinu*« was active in Tuscania in 739. See Monneret de Villard, *L'organizzazione industriale*, 45.
- 23 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 32 and 33, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-25, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 58-59. Consider titles 37 and 38 re: those freemen and slaves who break the peace in a district where the king is present, or simply titles 39 and 40, where the peace is broken in another district.
- 24 *De servo ministeriale occiso/ On killing household slaves; De servo massario occiso/On killing tenant slaves; De servo rusticanum qui sub massario est/On the killing of a field slave subordinate to the tenant slave: Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 38-41, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 72-73. For discussion, see Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 30.
- 25 By way of relative comparison, we find values adumbrated for *aldii* (half-free) at 60 *solidi* (*ER* 129); ox ploughmen at 20 *solidi* (*ER* 133); master swine-herders at 50 *solidi* (*ER* 135); cattle-herders, goatherds, oxherds all at 20 *solidi*. If one computes the value globally provided by the litany of unpleasant injuries set out between *ER* 48 and 73, one may attain a considerable corporeal value, dependent, however, on the personal status of the individual concerned.

The form of unfreedom delineated in the law is one tethered to unfreedom associated with the tenure of land occupation rather than as a result of slave raiding and trading.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, the responses in law to spatial issues are also mediated through a hierarchical pyramid of application, and, as we shall see, this has a direct impact on movement and mobility. In this sense, with regard to allowance, the *ER* is explicit that freemen (and thus by implication not those who are *aldii* i.e. the half-free or slaves) are allowed to move and should in theory be left unmolested. This clause is set out below:

*De homine libero ut liceat eum migrare*  
*Si quis liber homo, potestatem habeat intra dominium regni nostri cum fara sua megrare ubi voluerit, sic tamen si ei a rege data fuerit licentia...*

Concerning freemen who are allowed to move  
 Any freeman together with his family [fara] has the right to go where-ever he wishes within our kingdom provided that this privilege has been given to him by the king.<sup>27</sup>

Here it is noteworthy that the theoretical allowance to move has been abrogated by the king as a *licentia*. At first sight it appears that the provision is merely one of theoretical allowance, but it is made clear that movement can also be interdicted by regnal authority and/or action.<sup>28</sup> In practice, however, one must wonder how feasible it would have been to enforce the »privilege« or even to return those who had not acquired any explicit permission to move. Secondly, the hierarchical approach to movement is demonstrated by the reference to freemen (*homine libero*) alone. Whilst the regulation is indicative of »a« perceptual view, the difficulties of enforcement would suggest that the provision was only honoured in the breach.<sup>29</sup>

26 This is something that becomes relevant for the ninth century, in the south of Italy in particular. There is some anecdotal evidence for this in the northeast of Italy in the seventh century; see Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, ed. Waitz, 37. On ninth-century slavery, see the account of Bernard *Monachus*. On eighth-century slave raids, see Paul the Deacon's account in the *HL* of Avar raids and subsequently Slavic incursions into Friuli in the eighth century. See Rio, *Slavery after Rome*.

27 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 177, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 54-55, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 83-84. Whilst not referring to this particular title directly, Paziienza notes that the »capitoli dell'Editto...sembrerebbe sancire almeno teoricamente il totale controllo regio sui movimento della popolazione«. Clearly, as Paziienza suggests, the reality differed. See Paziienza, *Mobilita interna*, 97-99.

28 On this clause and its broader context, see Fabbro, *Warfare and the Making*, 175-176. The caveat to the allowance in the clause is: »*Et si aliquas res ei dux aut quicumque liber homo donavit et cum eo noluerit permanere el cum heredes ipsius : res ad donatorem vel heredes eius revertantur*« (If a duke or any other freedman gives him some property and the recipient does not wish to remain with him or his heirs, the property shall revert to the donor or his heirs). *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 54-55, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 83-84. By contrast, in the *Pactus Legis Salicae* (45) movement into another village to reside was not directly governed by regal allowance but determined by those who lived in the new location: *Pactus Legis Salicae*, 45, ed. Eckhardt, 172-176, trans. Fischer Drew, *Laws of the Salian Franks*, 109-110. Further, it is interesting that those provisions that relate to »those who refuse to come to court« do not delineate exceptions based on logistical difficulties in travelling. See *Pactus Legis Salicae*, 1 and 56 ed. Eckhardt, 18-20 and 210-214, trans. Fischer Drew, *Laws of the Salian Franks*, 65 and 119.

29 See below, however, for discussion of subsequent attempts to restrict the movement of foreigners.

On this level of movement, unfettered mobility across and into the kingdom was not circumscribed for the free. The treatment of those described as »waregang« or »foreigners« was, however, also illustrative of a broadly permissive approach.<sup>30</sup> This is what the clause says:

*De Waregang*

*Omnes waregang qui de exteris fines in regni nostri finibus advenerint seque sub scuto potestatis nostrae subdederint legibus nostris Langobardorum vivere debeant, nisi si aliam legem ad pietatem nostram meruerint. Si filius legitimus habuerint heredes eorum existant sicut et filii Langobardorum; si filius legitimus non habuerint non sit illis potestas absque iussione regis res suas cuicumque thingare aut per quolibet titulo alienare.*

On Foreigners

All foreigners who come from outside our frontiers into the boundaries of our kingdom and yield to the jurisdiction of our powers ought to live according to the Lombard laws, unless through our grace they have merited another law. If they have legitimate children these heirs shall live just as do the children of the Lombards. If they do not have legitimate children it shall not be in their power to give away any of their property or to alienate it by any means without the king's consent.<sup>31</sup>

There is much of interest here for our purposes. It is evident from a close scrutiny of the details of this passage that we see a variance between the contingent political rhythms that framed the promulgation of the *ER* and the thinking demonstrated at the core of the titles. Issued in the immediate context of renewed hostilities between the Lombards and Byzantium, the permissive element of the »waregang« title is somewhat intriguing. Indeed the reports of narrative sources do not sketch out the movement of foreigners into the kingdom as quotidian, tolerable or unimportant.<sup>32</sup> For our specific purposes two elements of the title should be further considered. First, the use of »advenerint« implies an active movement »into« the jurisdiction. Active is significant, as opposed to the passive process (from the perspective of the population), where those in adjacent territories who were formally »waregang« were rendered into subjects by conquest. This would be relevant, for instance, for those who lived in (modern) Liguria, which, during the course of the 640s, was conquered by Rothari.<sup>33</sup> Later, it also encompasses the Italo-Romans who became subject to Liutprand as a result of his conquests in the Romagna and the Exarchate of Ravenna in the 730s and 740s. The physical

30 See Bruckner, *Sprache von Langobarden*; Onesti, *Vestigia longobarde*, 29-30, who uses the definition »straniero in cerca di protezione«; and *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 126. See also, Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 116.

31 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 106, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 124-125. Certainly, one must argue for Lombard and Roman rather than necessarily Roman v Lombard. Here again the comments of Gasparri are useful. He says: »...l'editto sia stato applicato anche ai Romani...un'idea...che concorda perfettamente con i più recenti studi sui rapporti fra Longobardi e Romani«, *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, xi.

32 I.e. war with Byzantium in 643. One might imagine that this was the legal basis for the acceptance of the settlement of Alzecco, a *dux* of the Bulgarians reported by Paul the Deacon. Conversely, the Saxons are reported to have left Italy »because it was not permitted to them by the Langobards to live according to their own laws«. See Paolo Diacono, 3.6 and 5.29, ed. Capo, 276-277, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 234 and 298. For discussion of Alzecco and the Bulgars, see Vlaevska, *Storia di un problema storiografico*.

33 Balzaretto, *Dark Age Liguria*. See above re: Alzecco.



expansion of the kingdom then does not explicitly allow adjustment of the terminology used in the law. Yet, secondly, the title provides a flexibility and discretion on the part of the regnal authority so that if »waregang« should »yield to the jurisdiction of our powers« (*potestatis nostrae subdederint*) they may remain in the kingdom and »live according to the Lombard laws« (*legibus nostris langobardorum vivere debeant*). It is not axiomatic that Italo-Romans were »waregang« and there are other independent references in the law which seem to support this reading.<sup>34</sup> Accordingly despite an apparent articulation of clear spatial limits and conceptual boundaries, we should avoid extrapolation that would see jurisdictions and their boundaries as either softened or hardened.<sup>35</sup> Cross-referencing this title to the opening global intent of the *ER* set out by Rothari could even allow us to assert that Rothari's asserted motivations in the prologue run against the allowance set out here.<sup>36</sup>

Allowance with reference to internal mobility also appears to be at the centre of concerns with activities that inhibit or prevent movement on the road. In the first place, in *ER* 17 it is indicated that »if one of our men wishes to come to us, let him come in safety and return to his home unharmed« (*si quis ex baronibus nostris ad nos voluerit venire, securus veniat, et inlesus ad suos revertatur...*).<sup>37</sup> This clause has theoretically stringent compositional fines which are also attached to the subsequent clauses 26, 27 and 28. This section of the *ER* deals with offences against the movement of individuals and those committed in specific venues.<sup>38</sup> Activity described as »wegworin« (road-blocking – glossed as *orbitaria*) that interferes with the free movement of a free woman or a girl attracts the penalty of 900 *solidi* as compensation; 20 *solidi* to a freeman in the case of obstruction alone; and, finally, a further 20 *solidi* in cases where slaves were inhibited.<sup>39</sup> The common interdicted activity across all three of these titles is simply placing oneself into the path of a third party to prevent their movement,

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34 Occupants of the Romagna and the Exarchate are termed »Romans« in pertinent titles in the Lombard laws e.g. Liutprand 127.11 and Aistulf 4.

35 On the principle of personality of law, see Peters, Foreword, xiv: »Germanic law was personal not territorial it »belonged« to each member of a people where-ever he or she went.«

36 »In unum previdimus volumine conplectendum, quatinus liceat unicuique salva lege et iustitiae quiete vivere et propter opinionem contra inimicus laborare, seque sousque defendere fines« (We wish to have all law collected in one volume, so that everyone may live peacefully under a secure law and with justice, and so that everyone will willingly work against enemies and defend themselves and their territory). Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 164. See also *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 14-15, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 39. Frequent notices in narrative sources, principally Paul the Deacon's *HL* would also back this interpretation; see, for instance, the notices on Friuli and the Slavs in *HL*: 6.24 which reveals a less than harmonious connection. *Paolo Diacono*, 6.24, ed. Capo, 326-329, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 266-270.

37 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 17, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 20-21, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 56. See also, in relation to the »road«, *ER* 26 road-blocking *wegorin*: *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 26, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-23, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 57.

38 Crimes against private individuals in Everett's taxonomy. Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy*, 167.

39 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-23, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 57-58. The level of composition does not suggest that enforcement on the »public« road was any more rigorous than infractions of law on »private« property. For »wegworin«, see Bruckner, *Sprache von Langobarden*, 213 and Onesti, *Vestigia longobarde*, 130-131.

with additional penalties applied if injuries should be inflicted (see *ER* 26 and 27). In a following clause, *ER* 29, which deals with »him who blocks a field or meadow or any enclosure to another man« (*si quis messem suam aut pratum seu qualibet clausura vindicanda homini prohibuerit*), such activity is allowable only if undertaken in self-defence, adding that one is guilty if »one blocks the road to a man simply walking along« (*sicut ille qui hominem sempleciter viam ambolantem antesteterit...*).<sup>40</sup>

This explicit reference to fields and meadows hints at the delineation of public and private spheres of spatial use. A number of other clauses also seem to repeat this distinction. The *ER* allows, for instance, for movement into gardens where no ill intent is involved which is not considered possible for those sneaking into or found in a courtyard after sunset. In this sense a conceptual boundary has been crossed beyond the public environment of the road into the private world of the individual or landholder. The latter is then endowed with the capacity to determine the good or ill intent of the third party. The title indicates that if one is »seeking his own property and does not do any damage he shall not be guilty« (*nam si post suam rem ingreditur et damnum non fecerit, non sit culpavlis*).<sup>41</sup> Licit movement here ultimately depends on the intent of the individual but also upon the venue and the time in and at which the episode occurs. At the same time, however, there is no explicit indication that an individual enjoys an elevated level of protection in exterior public spaces. In terms of spatial frameworks, then, there is some ambivalence at work in the *Edictum*. There is explicit provision, on the one hand, to safeguard the mobility of individuals undertaking (short-range) activities and journeys; and there is also protection for the movement of individuals and groups across jurisdictional boundaries; but, on the other hand, with both hierarchical impulses in terms of protection of individuals on the roads and elsewhere, an evident set of limitations is apparent.

If there is not a clear-cut set of responses in the clauses that deal with allowance, one may wonder whether the control and restraint of mobility is demonstrated in equally ambivalent terms. Near the commencement of the *Edictum*, clauses 3 and 4 prohibit two actions. The first forbids anyone from fleeing outside »the province« (*provincia*) and the second relates to those who proffer »invitations to or introduction of enemies into the province«; both offences merit the penalty of death without composition. They are reproduced here:

3. *Si quis foris provinciam fugere tentaverit* [On him who attempts to flee outside the province]

*Si quis foris provincia fugire timtaverit, morti incurrat periculum et res eius infiscentur.*

He who tries to flee outside of the country shall be killed and his property confiscated.

40 Azzara and Gasparri, *Leggi dei Longobardi*, 22-23; and Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 58 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 29, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 22-23, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 58.

41 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, *ER* 284, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 86-87, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 109. There does not seem to be the same presumption of guilt at work here as in the first examples. The concern with boundaries, fences and roads may link in with the suspicion of the uninvited in courtyards.

4. *Si quis inimicus intra provinciam invitaverit* [On him who invites enemies within the province]

*Si quis inimicus intra provincia invitaverit aut introduxerit, animae suae incurrat periculum et res eius infiscentur.*

He who invites or introduces enemies into the land shall be killed and his property confiscated.<sup>42</sup>

Both of these titles are associated with offences against public authority. Emplaced in close proximity to clauses that deal with those who seek the death of the king and to those who assist spies, the rigorous penalties in the clauses are designed to deter those who would choose to challenge the kings in Pavia.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, both clauses are silent as to the mechanisms of enforcement but, in theory, at least, we might assume that »local« institutional governance (as set out in its fullest expression in the later laws of Liutprand) could be mobilised to restrain those who might flee.<sup>44</sup> Whilst silent as to effective enforcement, both clauses also imply a finite spatial extent of the kingdom that can be equated with the use of the word »provincia« where this is essentially coterminous with the Lombard kingdom and where »outside« is »anywhere else«. This is deceptive in that the term »provincia« is left undefined in terms of jurisdiction. It might be tempting then, as we saw with the »waregang« clause, to see this inexactitude as a product of the unfixed extent of the kingdom itself.<sup>45</sup> If, however, we use a narrower definition of »provincia« to connote that area associated with a Lombard *dux*, we may identify a congruence that connects territories, jurisdictions and borders with conceptual frameworks. Further anecdotal evidence can be found in the *HL* of Paul the Deacon both generally and specifically with his catalogue of Italian provinces in book 2 of the *HL*, but is also present in his frequent references to specific areas.<sup>46</sup> Further, in practical terms,

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42 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 114. See also Gasparri, Regno Longobardo in Italia; Bognetti, *Santa Maria Foris*, 446 n. 164. For comparison in terms of treatment of the malefactor, see Alamannic law title 24: »if anyone invites a foreign nation into the province« (*de homine qui gentem extraneam infra provinciam invitaverit*): *Leges Alamannorum*, ed. Lehmann, 84-85, trans. Rivers, *Laws of the Alamans*, 74.

43 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 16-17, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 53. Both titles 3 and 4 fall into the section of the *Edictum* that deals with what might be termed »crimes against public authority«. The implication here is that the offence is one against the public authority in the public sphere.

44 It is interesting that the second clause, if we are to believe Paul the Deacon's *HL*, was a tenet that was breached by Lombard kings themselves – see the invitation of Grimoald (662-671) to the Avars to enter Friuli in the late 660s and nullify the activities of the *dux* Lupus: *Paolo Diacono*, 5.17-20, ed. Capo, 268-273, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 227-229. For discussion re: Lupus, see Gasparri, *Duchi Longobardi*, 67-68 and Heath, *Narrative Worlds*, 217-218.

45 See Secord, *Three Worlds Met*, 6-11, which sets out a typology for borders, i.e. »linear boundaries of political demarcation; nonlinear divisions between cultures or barriers; and, border zones or zones of interaction«, in other words zones of separation and zones of interaction. More generally, see Berend, *Medievalists and the notion*, 55-72 and Abulafia and Berend, *Medieval Frontiers*.

46 *Paolo Diacono*, 2.14-24, ed. Capo, 94-105, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 71-79.

Lombard Italy demonstrates the administrative footprint of Late Roman Italy with its patchwork of dukes and gastalds based in urban centres with discrete and delineated zones of authority. The key geopolitical division in the peninsula, however, that between the Lombards and Byzantium, also fostered a congruent crystallisation of boundaries, concepts and peoples.<sup>47</sup>

### *The Spatial Theatre in Lombard History*

Up to this point, an analysis of specific titles, principally in the *Edictum Rothari*, with regard to movement and mobility in Lombard society has been undertaken. Whilst the clauses discussed deal with allowing mobility and restraining illicit movement, they deal specifically with the situation on the ground in the Lombard kingdom. It will, however, also be useful to consider how this operated in wider and broader contexts in what may be termed the spatial theatre of the Lombards. Mobility and movement are one of many pertinent impulses that affect the treatment of Lombard history in Italy.<sup>48</sup> As we noted above, a paradox of immobility versus mobility is a function of the mixed witness of narrative materials which concentrate on shorter contingent political rhythms. It is often the case, – our main narrative source Paul the Deacon's *HL* being no exception – that such narratives dwell upon the exceptional rather than the mundane. One may cite Paul's account of his distant relative's escape from Avar slavery courtesy of a friendly wolf as indicative of this sort of response.<sup>49</sup>

Negative appraisals of the Lombard impact on Italy have remained persistent, obscuring in some respects the subtleties of the situations on the ground. If we turn to Latouche again for one emblematic example, his view was that the »Lombard invasion brought disorder as well as poverty to the peninsula«. <sup>50</sup> For Latouche, the sixth century was an era that was a »muddled spineless Merovingian world«. <sup>51</sup> Pithy (but mostly incorrect) *obiter dicta* aside, however, recent work in a variety of historiographical contexts has cut across the grand narratives of the Early Medieval past as perceived by historians writing after the publication of Henri Pirenne's *Mahomet et Charlemagne*.<sup>52</sup> There are numerous examples in this

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47 One should, nevertheless, remain cautious about the operation of borders in the Early Middle Ages. Sharper borders predicated upon antagonistic geopolitical impulses do not necessarily equate to clear demarcations on the ground. One does wonder whether the Italian situation allowed for greater ease in establishing and upholding perimeters of polities. I thank Dr Gantner for discussion on this point.

48 General surveys include: La Rocca, *Italy*; Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*; Christie, *Lombards*; Cammarosano and Gasparri, *Langobardia*; Jarnut, *Storia dei Longobardi*; and Ausenda *et al.*, *Langobards*.

49 *Paolo Diacono*, 4.37, ed. Capo, 218-219, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 185.

50 Latouche, *Western Economy*, 119. In this he echoed his mentor Pirenne, who observed that »they [i.e. the Lombards] overran the population, took its land and reduced it to the condition of a vanquished enemy«: Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, 70. Such responses, of course, have a very long provenance. Gregory the Great's eschatological impulses were often deployed when referring to the Lombards to correspondents.

51 Latouche, *Western Economy*, 120. One may find rather more positive appraisals of this period and the sixth/seventh centuries in the essays in Gnasso *et al.*, *Long Seventh Century*; Esders *et al.*, *East and West*; Fischer and Wood (eds.), *Western Perspectives*; Esders *et al.*, *Merovingian Kingdoms*; and Hodges and Bowden, *Sixth Century*. And see now Effros and Moreira, *Oxford Handbook*.

52 Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne*. On Pirenne, see Wood, *Modern Origins*, 224-229. Also useful, Esders and Hen, Introduction. See also Hodges and Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne*; Delogu, Reading Pirenne again; and, Effros, Enduring attraction.

respect, but two will suffice here to set the scene. Fouracre's recent work, for instance, on the provision of lighting materials for ecclesiastical sites, and what he usefully terms the »moral economy«, provides one helpful example of the management of resources beyond a simply local environment. As he indicates, »the expense of materials needed to fuel the lights put the means to provide them beyond the reach of most people.«<sup>53</sup> What interests us here in this context, however, is the plausibility of supply to satisfy demand, and in this respect, the provision of olive oil for lamps in the northern monasteries of Francia was one corollary of the demise of the Lombard kingdom in 774.<sup>54</sup> But here one finds the enduring paradox of socio-economic frameworks that are not appropriately refined, in that whilst the supply of oil was facilitated across a considerable distance, the production of goods can be seen as a function of a closed economy dependent upon the labour of those restricted in terms of service and freedom.<sup>55</sup> Contact, movement and mobility need not, however, be restricted to comment on the transport of specialised or even luxury goods across long distances. A second example of work which cuts across the grand narratives of this period, deals with contacts between the Lombards and Avars, who were neighbours to the northeast of the Italian peninsula.<sup>56</sup> Csánad Bálint's important work, *The Avars, Byzantium and Italy* sets out and identifies, *inter alia*, the landscapes of transmission of goods. So far as trade is concerned, his model separates economic transactions pursuant to a hierarchical model predicated upon geographical proximity – i.e. from local to »international«. <sup>57</sup> Clearly functioning trade contacts can be exemplified by all these categories, dependent upon the nature of the goods and their origins. For Bálint, however, whilst there is evidence of Avar export of horses to Italy, »Byzantine and Italian jewellery items, luxury goods, pottery and coins [only] occur sporadically and in low numbers in Avar lands.«<sup>58</sup> The picture, then, even from two distinct examples, is mixed. It highlights the dangers of an undifferentiated definition of trade and transmission, movement and mobility. What impact does this have for Lombard responses to movement and mobility?

To address this question, one must recognise the tensions between the explicit and the implicit in both narrative and normative sources. From the outset, the scenario that we sketched out above is one that can be demonstrated by a careful analysis of the Lombards both in historical terms and in the legal responses to space and control. In discussing, for instance, the early origins of the Lombards in *Germania*, and at the start of the *Historia Langobardorum*, Paul the Deacon (c.735-796) tells us that:

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53 Fouracre, *Lights, power*, 369.

54 Fouracre, *Lights, power*, 373. See also the essays Fouracre »Framing« and lighting; Story, *Lands and lights*. Economic aspects of the Frankish conquest of the Lombard kingdom are dealt with in Gasparri, 774, 81-174.

55 See, for instance, the charter of Pistoia of 767 cited by Fouracre (Fouracre, »Framing« and lighting, 307) for the reference to *Regesta Chartarum Pistoensium* (which I have been unable to consult directly).

56 There are many examples of contact and conflict between the Avars and the Lombards in Paul the Deacon's *HL*. See, for instance, from book 4 alone, *Paolo Diacono*, 4.4, 4.12 and 4.37, ed. Capo, 184-185, 192-193 and 210-215, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 152, 159, (both imply a »state« of conflict) and 179-183.

57 Bálint, *Avars, Byzantium and Italy*, 179. The four categories are local, regional, inter-regional and international. See also Kardaras, *Byzantium and the Avars*, 135-155; Pohl, *Avars*, 220-253; and Daim, *Byzantine belts*.

58 Bálint, *The Avars, Byzantium and Italy*, 188.



from this populous *Germania* then countless crowds of captives are often led away and sold for gain to the people of the south.

*ab hac ergo populosa Germania saepe innumerabiles captivorum turmae abductae meridianis populis pretio distrahuntur.*<sup>59</sup>

This idea, the fecundity of northern populations, was one that Paul had borrowed from classical ethnography: a trope that allowed commentators to explain the responses of »barbarians« to their space, an apparent need to find alternative sites to expand and their resistance to control by the creation or imposition of defined boundaries that might be envisaged or policed by settled polities to the south.<sup>60</sup> Throughout his narrative in book 1 of the *HL*, Paul emphasises the modest nature of the Lombards as a people in terms of population and power. He tracks their uncertain progress from the modern *Bardengau* (to the south of Hamburg and west of the Elbe) to the borders of Italy in 568/569.<sup>61</sup> Whilst the historicity of Lombard movement in this period need not detain us, his telescoped account of roughly 400 years amply demonstrates the possibility of movement in the four centuries after the first attestation of the Lombards in classical sources. The picture he provides alters once the Lombards have reached the borders of Italy, which was roughly four centuries after the events that the passage above describes. Here, over the following 200 years or so, they ruled a *regnum* with a core based on the Po plains, comprising most [but not all] of northern and central Italy. This is the point at which the production and codification of law becomes relevant.

As we have already noted with an analysis of the *ER*, geopolitical alterations do not necessarily map across to socio-cultural or economic adjustments. In terms of broader movements of people across Eurasia in the early Middle Ages, the migrations of the Lombards were part of the transformative processes at work on the Roman world, where one theoretically over-arching structure at the level of the empire was replaced by the installation of locally focused and regional regimes.<sup>62</sup> As is well known, these geopolitical changes do not cohere with socio-economic change propelled by variant rhythms. Such adjustments mask the kaleidoscope of socio-economic, religious and cultural zones, contact regions and communities that linked and divided the Mediterranean world and beyond. In this sense, the spatial theatre in which the Lombards operated once they had settled in Italy was not a »closed« system, nor was it one that demonstrated a uniform cultural conformity.<sup>63</sup> The complicated

59 *Paolo Diacono*, 1.1, ed. Capo, 12-13, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 2 (with adjustments by the author); Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. Waitz, 48. See the useful discussion of James and the concept of »barbarism« in James, *Europe's Barbarians 200-600*, 1-15. See also Jones, *Image of the barbarian*.

60 James, *Europe's Barbarians*, 21-30. Strabo was of the view that »it is a common characteristic of all the peoples in this part of the world [i.e. *Germania* beyond the Rhine] that they migrate with ease, because of the meagreness of their livelihood and because they do not till the soil...« (κοινὸν δ' ἐστὶν ἅπασιν τοῖς ταύτη τὸ περὶ τὰς μεταναστάσεις εὐμαρὲς διὰ τὴν λιτότητα τοῦ βίου καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ γεωργεῖν μηδὲ θησαυρίζειν...). *Strabo: The Geography*, ed. Jones, 156-157. On Strabo, see Almagor, *Who is a barbarian?*, 42-55.

61 For discussion of this period, see Cingolani, *Storie dei Longobardi* and, Rotili, *I Longobardi*.

62 Local aspects of societies are dealt with in Cooper and Wood, *Social Control*; Zeller *et al.*, *Neighbours and Strangers*, and the essays in Rousseau and Raithel, *Companion to Late Antiquity*. Locally focused studies include Viso, *Reino y las sociedades locales*; Hummer, *Politics and Power*; and, Innes, *State and Society*, to name only three. This could be characterised as the replacement of an »imperial« space in which Italy acted as the centre to the creation of multipolar post-imperial spaces. The insecure and fissiparous tapestry of Italy in the period 568-640 renders this post-imperial space complicated and contingent. See Van Nuffelen, *Historiography and Space*.

63 Fouracre, *Cultural conformity*. See also Fouracre, *Space, culture and kingdoms*.

and often chaotic political conditions in Italy between c.568 and c.640 demonstrates the connectivity of the Lombards within the wider Mediterranean world, but also beyond to the Avars, the Franks and the Barvarians who were neighbours to the east, west and north; their geographical locus linked them into both the Atlantic world and the steppe worlds of the Avars and others. A flexibility to spatial contexts was part of this initial period of settlement in Italy which saw expansion beyond the kingdom's core in the Po valley to Spoleto, Benevento and even attempts to expand into Provence in Gaul.<sup>64</sup>

After the *interregnum* of 574 to 584, however, the spatial viewpoint of the Lombard kingdom is increasingly fixed and orientated around the Po valley in the north. Whilst the description of the nineteen provinces of Italy by Paul the Deacon does not associate specific provinces with the Lombards, the transit of his narrative demonstrates an increasing effort to stabilise the spatial and liminal framework of the kingdom. In terms of spatial perspective, the residence of the early kings moves from Verona to Milan to Pavia, but it is the Po valley that retains a centrality in terms of governance and law.<sup>65</sup> Paul the Deacon provides a notice that Authari (584-590) identified a column adjacent to Reggio di Calabria. This was the point where, the king declared, »the territories of the Langobards will be up to this place« (*usque hic erunt Langobardorum fines*).<sup>66</sup> Yet, for all practical intents, both Spoleto in the centre of the peninsula and Benevento in the south remained politically exterior to the kingdom throughout the long seventh century. The promulgation of the *ER*, which follows on from this period, as we have seen above, marks a specific point, a snapshot of responses and impulses before the relatively unfixed parameters of the Lombard kingdom are increasingly ossified. The period between the death of Rothari and the accession of Liutprand (i.e. 651-712), during which no significant territorial adjustments were undertaken, was the backdrop to this crystallisation of spatial responses, which will be considered below in respect of Lombard frontiers.

### *The Limits of the Frontier*

Although Rothari and the Lombards had recommenced territorial expansion in earnest from the 640s, after a period of consolidation post-*interregnum* of 574-584, the geopolitical framework of the peninsula remains stable for the next 75 years or so. The *ER* itself, as we saw above, both condones and restricts movement and mobility. In the final half-century of the kingdom, however, Lombard law reveals new attempts to maintain and control its own spatial framework, to determine and manage licit mobility, and to stop illicit movement.

Part of this impulse to control movement and solidify frontiers was predicated upon events in the early eighth century. The Lombard hegemony in the peninsula orchestrated by Liutprand had been undermined by both the emergence of the papacy as an independent protagonist and by Frankish interventions into Italy. This is demonstrated by two key provisions in the laws of Ratchis (744-749 and 756-757).<sup>67</sup> First, Ratchis attempted to prevent the movement of representatives:

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64 For the spatial turn, see Lefebvre, *Production of Space*; de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*; Rohkrämer and Schulz, *Space, place and identities*; and Withers, *Place and the spatial turn*.

65 For Pavia as a »site of power«, see Bougard, *Public power and authority*, 44-45.

66 *Paolo Diacono*, 3.32, ed. Capo, 168-169, trans. Foulke, *Paul the Deacon*, 145-146.

67 These have been analysed in detail by Walter Pohl; see Pohl, *Frontiers in Lombard Italy*.

*Si quis iudex aut quiscumque homo missum suum diripere presumpserit Roma, Ravenna, Spoleti, Benevento, Francia, Baioaria, Alamannia, Ritas aut in Avaria sine iussione regis animae suae incurrat periculum et res eius infiscentur.*

If a judge or any other man without the king's permission presumes to send his representative to Rome, Ravenna, Spoleto, Benevento, Francia, Bavaria, Alamannia, Raetia or to the land of the Avars, he shall lose his life and his property shall be confiscated..<sup>68</sup>

And the second emphasised the importance of guarding and maintaining the boundaries

*ut inimici nostri et gentes nostre non possint per eas sculcas mittere aut fugacis exientes suscipere, sed nullus homo sine signo aut epistola regis exire possit*

in order that neither our enemies nor our people can send spies through them or allow fugitives to go out and in order that no man can enter without a letter sealed by the king<sup>69</sup>

It is noteworthy, in the first place, that Ratchis explicitly sets out those areas that are considered to be external to the Lombards, in theory at least. All of the places highlighted can be considered to be exterior to the kingdom proper. The presence of Spoleto, Benevento and Ravenna in the list is intriguing. They had all formed part of the inclusive and expansionist dimensions of Liutprand's and (subsequently) Aistulf's (749-756) kingdom and were part of the Lombard political space in the eighth century. In this sense, they were not exterior in a spatial sense.<sup>70</sup> This clause, no doubt prompted by contingent political rhythms pertinent in the 750s, pinpoints the awareness of the conceptual boundaries of the kingdom but does not seem to take account of the developments earlier in the century. The second relevant clause attempts to create fixed control of the borders and aimed to constrain movement across, through and into the kingdom. We should be cautious in accepting at face value the detailed provisions in a subsequent title of Ratchis which set out the procedure for compliance.<sup>71</sup> There is still a conundrum at work here which needs explanation. One solution would be to see the clauses above as part of a continuum of responses and evidence for an increasing crystallisation of the Lombard »spatial« zone. With this reading, the titles become evidence for a conscious formulation of a Lombard spatial zone which is defined and expressed by its opposition to adjacent polities. Such expression in border or contact zones such as Friuli may always have been sharper due to the proximity of exterior communities, identities and polities.

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68 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 268-269, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 221. Pohl, *Frontiers in Lombard Italy*, 117-121 sets out the immediate geopolitical context of the title.

69 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 272-273, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 223-224.

70 Indeed, in relation to law, both Spoleto and Benevento used Lombard law issued in the *regnum proper*. For further detail and discussion of autonomous governance, see Conti, *Il Ducato di Spoleto*, 171-174 and Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 32. Waldman reminds us that »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«; see Waldman, *Pavia's Twin*, 6.

71 Pohl, *Frontiers in Lombard Italy*, 117-121.

Finally, let us briefly look at deviance from societal and legal injunctions in this regard. We have already seen in the discussion above that Lombard law attempts to set out a framework of mixed allowance and restraint, albeit rather unbalanced. As we noted, it is often entirely silent about crucial aspects of enforcement. This, in effect, reifies the intangible tension between the two impulses. The reality of this tension between hubris and performance in the laws is sketched out by the witness of provisions that relate to fugitives and runaway slaves that mark the limits of the Lombard kingdom's powers. We find that if slaves flee, re-imposition of physical control and restriction is envisaged. More pertinent, however, is that Liutprand's law provides a period of three months for the lord »to seek him out« (*eius eum perquirere*). Subsequently Liutprand issued further clarification on his provision in V.88, where the geographical realities on the ground are set out.<sup>72</sup> Here again, fugitive slaves are tackled – and a specific duration provided for a lord to seek out a fugitive is set out within specific areas. For Benevento and Spoleto the period is three months, for *Tuscia* two months, and anywhere else in the *regnum*, one month. These durations set out the view from Pavia, rather than demonstrate a particular difficulty in these areas themselves.<sup>73</sup> This is also reflected in a remarkable *capitula* which concerns fugitives, slaves and strangers. The clause issued in Liutprand's additions of 723 marks a distinct shift in both the willingness of Lombard rulers to countenance unfettered movement allied to an organisational impulse that sought to control the situation on the ground throughout the entire *regnum*. Here Liutprand indicates that:

*Si in alia iudiciaria inventus fuerit, tunc deganus aut saltarius, qui in loco est, comprehendere debeat et ad schuldahis suum perducatur, et ipse schuldahis eum iudici suo consignet. Et ipse iudex potestatem habeat eum inquirendum, unde ipse est...*

If a fugitive or a stranger has been found in another judicial district, then the deganus or the forester [saltarius] in that region ought to take him and lead him to his own schultheis and the schultheis shall consign the fugitive to his judge. The judge shall have the power to enquire of him from what place he comes.<sup>74</sup>

The law sets out in full the consequences of failure to undertake these pertinent enquiries but also provides for a time limit of one month in »these parts« or »for across the mountains that is in parts of *Tuscia*, it shall be two months«.<sup>75</sup> Responses to this sort of deviance from conformity are also addressed in the laws of Ratchis and Aistulf. Both were fundamentally concerned with boundaries and infiltration – a product of the instability of the kingdom at that time as a result of Frankish interventions. Not only did Ratchis ban judges or »any other man« (*quiscumque homo*) from sending representatives outside the kingdom without permission,<sup>76</sup> but he also sought to regulate and restrict access to the kingdom. Ratchis sets out his thinking directly:

72 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 190-191, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 182-183.

73 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 164-167, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 164.

74 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 164-167, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 164.

75 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 164-167, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 164.

76 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 286-269, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 221.

## On protection of the frontiers

*Hoc autem statuere previdimus: ut marcas nostras Christo custodiente sic debeat fieri ordinatas et vigilatas, ut inimici nostri et gentes nostre non possint per eas sculcas mittere aut fugacis exientes suscipere, sed nullus homo per eas introire possit sine signo aut epistola regis. Propterea unusquisque iudex per marcas sibi commissas tale stadium et vigilantium ponere debeat et per se et per locopositos et clausarios suos, ut nullus homo sine signo aut epistola regis exire possit.*

It is our command, that with the help of Christ, our boundaries will be maintained and guarded in order that neither our enemies nor our people can send spies through them or allow fugitives to go out and in order that no man can enter them without a letter sealed by the king. Every judge should use such care and vigilance with regard to the frontier committed to him both in his own actions as well in those of his local officials and gate wardens that no man can go without a letter sealed by the king.<sup>77</sup>

Ratchis is particularly anxious about »strangers« (*peregrini*) who »plan to go to Rome«. These are to be »diligently« questioned. To underscore this, Ratchis impels the judges in *Tuscia* in particular to ensure that no one should depart without authorisation. This tone of suspicion of travellers is also echoed in Aistulf's law on broken boundaries issued in 750.<sup>78</sup> Here is a clear transit in terms of both geographical specificity and performance. As we saw above in the *ER*, borders or zones of contested control are implicitly acknowledged. Later law attempted to create a fixed line of control with detailed mechanisms of restraint using local networks of power to control the situation on the ground and by so doing to create a Lombard space and a non-Lombard space which was to be policed and guarded by mechanisms set out in detail in law. Two final points are worth emphasising. In the first place, clear geographical parameters are enunciated with regard to specific territories (which in some respects is a reflection of the experiences of the Italian peninsula in the early eighth century); and in the second place, in concert with the vigorous »new« kingship of Liutprand and his successors, we see an operative and conscious extension of the horizons of competence and ability of the Lombard kings and kingdom. This manifested in a capillary arrangement which expected local agents of the kings to enforce and maintain control of movement on the ground.

### *Conclusions*

A comparison between the titles of the *ER* and the later law of Liutprand, Ratchis and Aistulf is illustrative. It has allowed this article to consider both the specific and narrow witness of Lombard law with respect to movement and mobility but also to seek to place this within the broader landscape of the spatial theatre of the Lombards. Identifying the interpretative balance between movement and mobility on the one hand and restriction and control on the other has also been one of the key concerns of this contribution, and in this respect this is reflected in the tensions evident in the law. Those who provided the framework of law do not supply straightforward responses to the issues highlighted above. However, in the formulation of what is and what is not perceived as enforceable and thus in the actual reified spatial

77 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 272-273, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 224.

78 *Leggi dei Longobardi*, ed. Azzara and Gasparri, 282-283, trans. Fischer Drew, *Lombard Laws*, 229.



framework, we may detect clear responses to mobility and movement. Layering our analysis into allowance, restraint and deviance also permits us to identify tensions and contradictory impulses in the laws. We have seen that on an uncomplicated basis the laws provided a clear framework that positively allowed movement for certain sections of Lombard society; it incorporated a specific concern to ensure that movement on the road was not restricted or contested, which suggests a concern for specific areas in the public zone, whereas, at the same time, we may identify concerns regarding entry into the private zone of individuals and properties. The apparent absence in the *ER* of effective mechanisms for control and enforcement should cause us to pause when we consider the effective power of the Lombard kings. We have also seen that there were theoretical limitations to movement and these were associated with those who were unfree. Our difficulties, however, must remain associated with the issues that arise as to the applicability of law and its effective use on the ground. That said, analysis has pinpointed a shift in the perceptual dynamics of Lombard law, which, affected by short-term and contingent political rhythms, narrowed the horizons of the kingdom and sought to police mobility. This is evident in the later laws of Ratchis and Aistulf – but not absent within the *corpus* we have of Liutprand's laws. On the other hand, the *Edictum Rothari* presents a society open to movement and trade, and one where kings in Pavia could not control fixed borders. Ultimately, attaining an effective balance between security and mobility, between inter-connectivity and migration, proved to be a set of tensions that were irreconcilable for the Lombard kingdom.

#### *Acknowledgements*

My thanks to Clemens Gantner and Edoardo Manarini for their comments on earlier drafts and to the anonymous referees for their apposite and useful insights, which assisted the production of the final version.

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### *Abbreviations*

- ER = Edictum Rothari  
 HL = Historia Langobardorum  
 MGH = Monumenta Germaniae Historica

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# *Ad utriusque imperii unitatem?* Anastasius Bibliothecarius as a Broker between Two Cultures and Three Courts in the Ninth Century

Clemens Gantner\*

In 870, Anastasius, former (and later once again) librarian of the papal bibliotheca and chancellery, well-known erudite and former anti-pope, reached the pinnacle of his career as a diplomat. While exiled from Rome for a crime committed by his cousin, he was an important member of a mission sent to Constantinople by the Carolingian emperor and lord of Italy Louis II. He was sent there to negotiate a marriage alliance between Louis's daughter and only surviving child Ermengard and a son of the upstart Byzantine emperor Basil I, which was ultimately to serve to bind the two empires together in the fight against the Saracens, southern Italy and Sicily. While there, Anastasius also joined the papal delegation at the Eighth Ecumenical Council, which was there in the pope's stead to formally depose Patriarch Photius and negotiate the case of Bulgaria. We thus see Anastasius as a diplomat and cultural broker between Latin and Greek ecclesiastic and lay culture and between three courts. He composed a letter about his dealings in the East for Pope Hadrian II in 870, and thus we have an invaluable first-hand eyewitness account. While most negotiations started in 869 and 870 between the East and the West ultimately failed or were rendered pointless by political change, Anastasius shows us that 870 was a great chance for all sides. And while most parties involved lost something by the failure of the exchanges, Anastasius himself regained and kept a powerful position in the papal administration once again.

*Keywords: Anastasius Bibliothecarius, Louis II, emperor, Hadrian II, pope, Rome, papacy, Carolingian Empire, Byzantine Empire, diplomacy, cultural broker*

## *Introduction: The Talented Anastasius*

Anastasius, nowadays known as »the Librarian«, was one of the most illustrious figures of the ninth century – some might rightfully say also one of the most notorious.<sup>1</sup> He had been born into a family which was based in the city of Rome and which was to become relatively influential in the ninth century, as far as we can judge from the scant and patchy evidence

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\* Correspondence details: Clemens Gantner, Institut für Mittelalterforschung, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1020 Wien; email: clemens.gantner@oeaw.ac.at.

1 Forrai, Anastasius Bibliothecarius; Forrai, *Interpreter of the Popes*; Forrai, Greek at the Papal Court; Forrai, *The Sacred Nectar*; Perels, *Papst Nikolaus I. und Anastasius Bibliothecarius*; Neil, *Seventh-century Popes and Martyrs*; Arnaldi, *Come nacque la attribuzione ad Anastasio del »Liber Pontificalis«*; Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliothecario, antipapa.

that has come down to us for the Roman elites of this period. Anastasius must have received an exceptional education for a young cleric of his time – in his work, which we mostly have transmitted from the 860s onwards, he shows himself as an adept Latinist, author, theologian, and diplomat. His unique characteristic was, however, his mastery of Greek.<sup>2</sup> Apart from Greek names running in his family, which was exceedingly common in families with definitely Latin-Roman origins from the seventh century on, there is nothing to suggest that his family may have been of Greek origin. Given the career of his uncle Arsenius, bishop of Orte, that even seems rather unlikely. What is more, in a legal process against Anastasius in 868, he was testified against by a kinsman of his, bearing the name Ado, which is certainly not a Greek name, and one could rather speculate about a Frankish connection there.<sup>3</sup> His Greek was also far from flawless, as his translations show, suggesting that he used a learned language.<sup>4</sup>

Still, due to his thorough education in Greek, he was able to translate a whole corpus of very different texts from Greek into Latin and showed himself capable of discussing difficult theological matters in Greek, a rare ability in ninth-century Rome.<sup>5</sup> The combination of all this education made him the closest anyone got to a bilingual person in the whole Latin West in his time.

That is not to say that the knowledge of Greek had declined as dramatically as some scholars still think today, despite Tom Noble's important contribution some four decades ago.<sup>6</sup> Considering just the city of Rome, it can be shown that many Greek texts, especially saint's lives, were indeed produced well into the tenth century. However, these texts were written by a Greek community that does not seem to have been able to produce high-quality material in Latin<sup>7</sup> – the same applies in reverse for the admittedly rather small group of erudites in the Latin language, most of whom were working for the Lateran administration. However, as we shall see below, Anastasius worked with a small team, and the members of this group were also able to translate from Greek texts.<sup>8</sup> Thus, while he was not working alone, we can see our protagonist as the head of all these translation operations, which seems to have made him a man whose qualities the popes could not dispense with.

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2 Arnaldi, *Anastasio Bibliotecario*, antipapa.

3 *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 868, trans. Nelson 148-150, ed. Grat, 144-150 (Ado at 149).

4 See, in great detail, Forrai, *Interpreter of the Popes* 95-114. Tabachovitz, *Sprachliches zur lateinischen Theophanes-übersetzung*, 16-22, is surely overly critical in his judgement, but already clearly shows flaws in Anastasius' Greek. On this particular translation, see also Mango and Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, 96-98. On Anastasius as a translator, see also Chiesa, *Scopi e destinatari delle traduzioni*, 121-124.

5 Forrai, *Interpreter of the Popes*.

6 Noble, *Declining knowledge of Greek*.

7 The classic study is Sansterre, *Les moines grecs et orientaux à Rome*, esp. 48-51 and 69-76.

8 Chiesa, *Scopi e destinatari delle traduzioni*, 121-124.

### *Cultural Output*

Apart from his services as a political negotiator and broker, Anastasius was also a cultural broker, as his literary career proves: in the 860s and 70s he produced a remarkable output. He interpreted several important saint's lives while Nicholas I was still pope.<sup>9</sup> After the translation of the acts of the Eighth Ecumenical Council, with which we will deal in more detail below, he also translated those of the seventh, the Second Council of Nicaea, which had been held in 787.<sup>10</sup> He also produced an ample dossier on the seventh-century pope Martin I, who had convened the Lateran synod of 649 and was therefore famous for his steadfast defence of orthodoxy against monotheletism (the latter decreed by two consecutive emperors but considered a heresy by the papacy and many others).<sup>11</sup> In addition, he translated a set of three Byzantine chronicles into Latin and occasionally added comments. This *Chronographia tripartita* was then widely copied, but even more than that, it was integrated into Western historiography and transported an important set of knowledge from both the Greek and the Syrian east.<sup>12</sup> A sizeable part of his material he may have even obtained for himself and the Latin West at Constantinople. He made the material accessible to the Latin world and his translations are sometimes the only remaining version of a text.<sup>13</sup> Through his translation work, Anastasius was as much a cultural broker as he was the power broker between at least three courts. All the same, we shall concentrate on his role as a politician and diplomat in due course.

### *Anastasius' Political Odyssey*

Anastasius will probably have stood out even as a youngster due to his exceptional talents. In 847 or shortly thereafter, Anastasius was made priest of the church of S. Marcello. By 850, he had, however fled from the city, the reasons for which remain undisclosed in the sources we have at our disposal.<sup>14</sup>

A possible theory is that he did so in order to avoid being consecrated as bishop of a suburbicarian see by Pope Leo IV. This consecration would have reduced his chances of sitting on the papal throne later in his career to a minimum, as a switch (*translatio*) from one bishopric to another was considered uncanonical at the time, only dispensable by the pope himself, which made it problematic in this specific case. Therefore, Anastasius may have fled Rome to *avoid* elevation to a major order (so to speak). A statement from the pope himself seems to contradict this at first: in a summoning letter a few years later, Leo argued that Anastasius' ambition had been too high.<sup>15</sup> At first glance this does speak against a quarrel over a promotion – but does it really? Whatever the true motivations may have been, he was swiftly excommunicated by Pope Leo.

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9 Forrai, *Interpreter of the Popes*.

10 For details on Anastasius' translation and the discrepancies concerning the letter of Pope Hadrian I, see Lamberz, »Falsata Graecorum more«?.

11 Neil, *Seventh-century Popes and Martyrs*. And see further work by Neil on various aspects of Anastasius' compendia and work as an author, compiler, and translator.

12 Mango and Scott, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, lxxiv-xcv.

13 See Forrai, Anastasius Bibliotecarius, 320, on the methodological difficulties. For an assessment of the working conditions, see Forrai, *Interpreter of the Popes*, 89-94. Note that she does not speculate as to where the manuscripts came from.

14 Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliotecario, antipapa.

15 Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliotecario, antipapa.

The anathema is transmitted in its full text in a manuscript, Vat. Lat. 1342 of the Vatican library.<sup>16</sup> It contains the text of a letter addressing Anastasius directly, followed by a solemn pronouncement of the anathema in a nice rubric in capitals, as well as an illustrious list of subscribers, including many bishops of the Roman metropolitan area, but also Paul, the envoy of the archbishop of Ravenna John, and claims that Emperor Lothar signed the acts as well (named directly after the pope, still in the rubric). Thereafter 65 bishops and many other clerics are also listed as witnesses.<sup>17</sup>

The anathematization was a big deal in Rome; the decision was even advertised on the walls of St Peter's basilica. This seems to have been far from a standard procedure; the fact was even recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*, the semi-official papal historiography.<sup>18</sup> When the anathema was renewed at another Roman synod in 853, the sentence was again fixed to the walls of Old St. Peter's. The text has been preserved by Hincmar of Reims.<sup>19</sup> We must assume that a very serious political rival was to be driven from Rome once and for all. Leo IV did everything to ensure that, if he were to return, he would never hold an office in the papal administration again. This does, however, show Anastasius' prior standing.

This also becomes clearer from the events of 855: Anastasius returned to Rome at the head of a small armed force, provided by Louis II, emperor and king of Italy. The LP tells us that

the deposed priest entered Rome as an enemy and with his wicked followers swiftly made his way to the Lateran patriarchate; and like a bloodstained tyrant he opened its doors with worldly force and many kinds of weapons, and so entering by this door he sat on the throne which his hands should not even have touched.<sup>20</sup>

The Frankish *missi* succeeded at first in replacing the already elected Benedict III – who had *not* been confirmed by the emperor in his office and was therefore not a pope yet, despite the claims of the LP.<sup>21</sup>

Anastasius did not manage to hold on to the throne. The Romans threw the Franks and Anastasius out of the city and reinstated Benedict. This could and should likely have been the end of Anastasius' career in Rome. It was, however, probably his unique skills, which we have already described, that made him indispensable, so that he was restored to the Roman clergy under Benedict's successor Nicholas I (858-867), with the highest post he held being abbot of the important monastery at Santa Maria in Trastevere.<sup>22</sup> He was promoted to the post of *bibliothecarius*, which meant head of archives as well as most scribal production, by the next pope, Hadrian II (867-872).<sup>23</sup> However, disaster struck again: he had to flee Rome

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16 BAV Vat. Lat 1342. The manuscript contains canon law, mostly Roman synods. The 850 synod begins on fol. 203r, the anathema proper on fol. 211r-213r.

17 BAV Vat. Lat. 1342, fols. 212r and 212v.

18 LP Vita of Benedict III, c. 12, trans. Davis, *Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes*, 172.

19 *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 868, trans. Nelson 148-150, ed. Grat 144-147.

20 LP Benedict III, c. 13, trans. Davis, *Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes*, 172.

21 For the imperial point of view, see RI 3, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, nn. 135, 136 and 140.

22 Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliotecario, antipapa.

23 Perels, *Papst Nikolaus I. und Anastasius*, 231.



a few months into that pontificate after one of the greatest scandals in papal history, which I can sum up here only very briefly. Anastasius' cousin Eleutherius had tried to force a marriage with Pope Hadrian's daughter through abduction – not an uncommon strategy at the time, one has to concede. The coup failed, however, and Eleutherius killed the pope's daughter and wife – only to be slain in turn by imperial envoys, who had tried to negotiate with him. Arsenius, Eleutherius' father, bishop of Orte and imperial *apocrisiarius*, that is overseer, at the Lateran, had to flee Rome in a hurry. Anastasius, too, was suspected of having played a part in the conjuration – which is quite unlikely, given that he had been a political opponent of his uncle since 867 at the latest.<sup>24</sup> Still, after a few months holding his position in Rome, he too was banished by a harsh papal decree preserved by Hincmar of Reims in the *Annals of St Bertin*.<sup>25</sup> He went to join the court, or at least the entourage of Emperor Louis – who at the time was campaigning against the Saracens at various places in southern Italy.

### *The Mission to Constantinople – Prerequisites*

We meet Anastasius again, travelling back from Constantinople at some point in late spring or summer 870, when he wrote a long letter to Hadrian II, designed to justify his own conduct and to function as a companion letter to the translation of the synodal acts of the same year.<sup>26</sup>

We have seen that Anastasius' involvement had a backstory of its own, but we also need to take a brief look at the geopolitical situation since the 840s, because it needs to be clear why a Western imperial delegation was heading east at this point. Byzantium and the West had been in a climate of loose cooperation, but also of mutual distrust since the Franks had risen to more power during the eighth century. The two empires had been neighbours somewhere in Istria and in the Venetian lagoon since about 774. Charlemagne's imperial coronation in 800 had further complicated matters, as had several religious issues that were and largely remained unresolved. There had been armed conflict after that, mainly between Venice and the Italian Frankish kingdom, mostly in the time of King Pippin of Italy (d. 810), Charlemagne's son and, at the time, likely heir.<sup>27</sup> An accord had again been reached with the treaty of Aachen in 812, but distrust had remained, even though there had been political and military cooperation as well. In early 842, Emperor Theophilos (829-842) had reached out to the new and troubled emperor Lothar I (840-855) and had sought Frankish help against the Saracen threat – somewhere, as the letter is vague, but most likely in Italy. In due course, a marriage alliance was concluded between Lothar's son Louis and a daughter of Theophilos. None of this was ever carried out, as Theophilos died even before his delegation reached Lothar in Trier, but the agreement lingered on, with the Carolingians trying to obtain control over 'their' south and the Byzantines still expecting that marriage to be concluded at some point. This all dissolved in 853, when Louis abandoned the southern project for a while and found himself a Frankish woman, albeit first as a concubine. This led to reduced relations between

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24 Anastasius, ep. 3, to Ado, ed. Laehr, 401. See Laehr, *Briefe und Prologe*, 421-425. On the unhappy events, see Grotz, *Erbe wider Willen*, 168-172.

25 *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 868, trans. Nelson, 148-150, ed. Grat, 148-150.

26 Anastasius, ep. 5, to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 403-415. For the edition of the whole translation by Anastasius, see Anastasius, *Gesta sanctae*, ed. Leonardi and Placanica.

27 See soon Gantner, *Silence of the popes*, as well as the whole *Spes Italiae* volume.

the Franks and the Byzantines until the late 860s.<sup>28</sup> In the meantime, however, the East-West axis was still tested several times. Many of these tests started during the Roman pontificate of Nicholas I (858-867). Nicholas was a young and energetic pope, who stood out not mainly for his ideology, which was simply very papal and Roman, but mostly for his strong-mindedness in thinking it through and standing by it. This brought him into conflict with most Western rulers, not least King Lothar II (855-869) and Emperor Louis II (855-875). His most exacerbated quarrels were, however, with the Byzantine court. Nicholas had, early in his tenure, supported the deposed patriarch Ignatios against his successor Photios, actually following legal protocol and, in fine papal tradition, simply assuming responsibility for the case. This had led to a harsh exchange of letters with the young Byzantine emperor Michael III (842-867), or rather his advisors.<sup>29</sup> The question of which church was ultimately responsible for leading the new Christian mission in the Bulgarian kingdom further complicated matters, as the Bulgarians had temporarily turned to Rome.<sup>30</sup> In 867, Michael and Photios convened a synod to have Nicholas officially deposed. Before this synod met, they also contacted (or tried to contact) Emperor Louis II, who was campaigning against the Saracens between Bari and Benevento. They clearly tried to enlist his help and get Nicholas arrested in the West. They knew that Louis had had trouble with the pope only recently – and they offered official recognition of Louis and his wife Angilberga as emperors at the synod. As far as we know, the Western imperial couple was even acclaimed at that synod in autumn 867, which does not necessarily mean that their help against the pope had been guaranteed.<sup>31</sup> I would even suspect that Angilberga would have known about Nicholas' serious illness by summer 867 and tried to play to both sides, but nothing can be proven. We do not even have the acts of the synod in September 867, as the political tides in Constantinople shifted soon thereafter. Michael III was murdered by his hierarchically inferior colleague and successor Basil I (867-886), Photios was deposed and Ignatios reinstated. Before this news reached Rome or Louis, Nicholas was already dead (d. 13 November) to complete the full turn of events. New communication seems to have been initiated between the Frankish and the Byzantine empires fairly quickly, but, again, religio-political matters interfered as well, as full communion between Rome and Constantinople was also sought. This led to a synod to be held in Constantinople in autumn 869, which in the West is recognized as the Eighth Ecumenical Council. The East no longer fully recognizes it, on good grounds, as this council was indeed far from universal. Its last session even had to be postponed, mainly to assure a minimum quota of consent among the Eastern ecclesiastics.<sup>32</sup> This happened around the same time as Louis II, who had been campaigning in southern Italy against the Saracens since 866, started negotiations with Basil about a marriage union between his daughter Ermengard and Basil's son. The Byzantines were, in return, expected to provide naval support for Italy and it was envisaged that in due course the Franks would, in turn, provide troops for the planned reconquest of Sicily.<sup>33</sup>

28 Gantner, »Our Common Enemies Shall Be Annihilated!«; Gantner, Kaiser Ludwig II.

29 Noble, Pope Nicholas I and the Franks.

30 LP Nicholas, cc. 19 and 75-76, ed. Duchesne, vol. 2, 155 and 165.

31 RI 1,3,1, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, no. 273. See Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum*, ed. Martin and Petit, vol. 16., col. 255 D and E, for the account by the Byzantine author Niketas-David.

32 Chrysos, Council of Constantinople.

33 This information can be gathered from Louis II, Letter to Basil, ed. Henze, 385-394. See Henze, Über den Brief Kaiser Ludwigs II.; Fanning, Imperial diplomacy.

Therefore, an imperial mission travelled to Constantinople in late autumn of that year and reached Constantinople early in 870.<sup>34</sup> And it is from this point on that a letter by Anastasius becomes our best source for what happened next.

*Anastasius' Letter to Pope Hadrian II (870, ep. 5)*

First, we need to discuss the transmission of the letter briefly, as it will also help in dealing with its contents. Anastasius' letter to Pope Hadrian II was inserted, in all probability by its author, as a dedicatory piece to go with the translations of the acts of the Eighth Council, which had recently been finished. This translation had been done by Anastasius himself and he may have felt that his probably originally older letter would fit in nicely. Interestingly, today we have the very manuscript of this translation in which Anastasius entered his own corrections to the text. It is important to note that the letter seems to have come down to us in a slightly re-worked version.<sup>35</sup> This manuscript is the *Vaticanus Latinus* 4965, today kept in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.<sup>36</sup> It was clearly produced by Anastasius' own trusted collaborators in a nicely executed Carolingian minuscule. It had a very interesting later history, as Rather, the famous bishop of Verona, entered his glosses in the tenth century. It is even possible, but not certain, that the manuscript had made its way to Bobbio a few years after its production in 870/71.<sup>37</sup>

It is very likely that Anastasius indeed worked on this very manuscript with his own team, probably scribes from Rome – and possibly from his own workshop at the monastery of S Maria in Trastevere, where he had been abbot until falling from grace in 868.

The letter to Hadrian II contained in this important manuscript, as well as in many other copies of the translation of the acts of the eighth council, was, judging from its narrative, written while still on his way back, possibly shortly after his return to Italian shores. This seems only logical, considering that in Rome Anastasius could have reported to Hadrian directly. It is also quite clear why Anastasius would have chosen to write a long letter instead: he was still removed from his office as abbot and was *persona non grata* in Rome for his alleged part in the murder of the pope's daughter. He thus probably sent the original version of this letter ahead before going to Rome (rather briefly) himself. This we can safely assume, even though the author himself already mentions the translation of the acts – he could have meant that as a current project, or he could have edited that sentence into the text when he chose the letter as a preface to his translation.<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, Anastasius told the rest of the tale himself, in a gloss, to be found in the original manuscript Vat. Lat. 4965 itself,<sup>39</sup> in which he described

34 The embassy was therefore not a reaction to the alleged arrival of a Byzantine fleet before Bari in 869. This fleet in all probability only arrived as a *reaction* to Anastasius' mission later in 870. The timeline will be revisited below, at n. 52. See also Kislinger, *Erster und zweiter Sieger*.

35 Leonardi, *Anastasio bibliotecario e l'ottavo concilio ecumenico, 74-90 Palma, Antigrafo/Apografo*, esp. Tav. 11 and 12.

36 BAV Vat. Lat. 4965, s. IX ex.

37 Palma, *Antigrafo/Apografo*: the manuscript was indeed corrected together with the exemplar from Bobbio – which does not mean that this must have been done at that monastery. On the manuscript and its genesis, see Leonardi, *Anastasio bibliotecario, 90-104*. Schmid, *Roms karolingische Minuskel*. See also Chiesa, *Filologia e politica*.

38 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II no. 5, ed. Laehr, 403-415.

39 BAV Vat. Lat. 4965, fol. 22v. The account is a gloss spanning the full page. See an edition in: Leonardi, *Anastasio bibliotecario, 170-171*.

the rest of the journey. The Latin missions, both the papal and the imperial one, had gone to Dyrrhachium together. There, however, their ways parted. The papal envoys boarded a ship to Ancona, which was captured on the way by Slavic pirates, whereupon the original codex with the council acts was lost. Anastasius' party made it to Siponto safely and went to Benevento. It was only from there that some went on to Rome, bringing the copy of the acts with them.<sup>40</sup> Anastasius cannot have stayed in Rome for long, as he was back in Benevento with Louis II early in 871.<sup>41</sup> It is therefore far from certain whether Anastasius really produced the translation of the acts *in* Rome, or whether he already *brought* it to Rome<sup>42</sup> – he could have worked with his Roman team at a number of places, for example Montecassino or Benevento proper. Indeed, we have no document attributed to him from Rome until summer 871.<sup>43</sup>

The letter was re-worked into a very fitting preface: Anastasius first and foremost sums up his mission to Constantinople, but actually, he does far more than that: he gives an ample summary of all papal policy of the past and present pontificate, as far as it related to the East. Accordingly, he starts the letter with a long list of charges against the former patriarch of Constantinople, Photios, whose deposition had recently been sanctioned at the council.<sup>44</sup>

Only after this longish »recap« does he explain the nature of his own personal mission as follows:

So when this venerable synod was being held, it happened that I your servant was present, sent by the pious emperor Louis with two other notable men, and carrying out an embassy ... arranging the marriage which both sides were hoping and preparing for, between the emperor Basil's son and the daughter of the said God-worshipping Augustus (Louis II). For in such a godly business, one which was believed without doubt to relate to the unity of both empires, indeed to the freedom of all Christ's church, your assent as supreme pontiff was particularly sought.

So by God's will it happened that I too rejoiced at the conclusion of so great an affair (the council) with the apostolic see's representatives, and that I, coming home with shouts of joy, could bring my sheaves with me (Ps. 125 (126),6). For some seven years, I had worked tirelessly on it, and by writing, I had broadcast the seeds of words throughout the world. It was in obedience to the supreme pontiffs, your predecessor

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40 BAV Vat. Lat. 4965, fol. 22v. Leonardi, Anastasio bibliotecario, 171.

41 As is proven by the famous letter to Basil I, drafted by him in the name of Emperor Louis II, see Louis II, *Letter to Basil*, ed. Henze.

42 Contrary to Palma, Antigrafo/Apografo 324, it is not logical to assume that Anastasius would have waited for the papal envoys to arrive with the official copy to start producing his translation in the course of the year 870.

43 Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliotecario, antipapa, accordingly dates his return to office to summer 871. Accessed on 7 April 2021: [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antipapa-anastasio-bibliotecario\\_%28Enciclopedia-dei-Papi%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antipapa-anastasio-bibliotecario_%28Enciclopedia-dei-Papi%29/).

44 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II no. 5, ed. Laehr, 403-410, starting with the early tenure of Emperor Michael III and ending with the events of 870.

(Nicholas) and yourself, that I expounded almost everything that relates to the present affair and that has been issued by the apostolic see in Latin, whether contained in the codex of this synod or in other volumes. After I chanced to be at Constantinople for the reason I have mentioned, I provided many comforts for these representatives of yours, as they too bear witness.<sup>45</sup>

Anastasius, despite calling himself the pope's servant repeatedly, had actually been in the imperial city to negotiate a marriage alliance between his employer at the time, the Western emperor Louis II, and the Eastern emperor Basil I through Louis' only surviving daughter, Ermengard. The mission to Constantinople was led by Angilberga's relative Suppo, soon to be dux of Spoleto, and his *seneschal* count Everard.<sup>46</sup> While we know very little about the latter, Suppo was clearly very close to the empress and was surely chosen as an older relative of Ermengard, and not for his intimate knowledge of Eastern politics or his diplomatic skills – these requirements were instead to be filled by the experienced Anastasius.

The imperial embassy arrived in February 870, just in time to enable them to take part at the last session of the council held there, as we will discuss later. Their mission was of the highest possible relevance for the Carolingian emperor, and it is no coincidence that Anastasius had been asked to be one of the leaders of it. Apart from his skills in Greek and his diplomatic experience, he had also been Ermengard's teacher and thus will have had a personal interest in the wellbeing of his pupil.<sup>47</sup> Sadly, we have no more information than this about the negotiations in February 870.

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- 45 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 410, trans. Davis, *Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes*, 280, n. 104. *Igitur cum haec celebraretur venerabilis synodus, accidit me famulum vestrum missum a Hlndowico piissimo imperatore cum duobus aliis viris insignibus interesse ferentem etiam legationem ab apostolicis meritis decorato praesulatu vestro, causa nuptialis commercii, quod efficiendum ex filio imperatoris Basilii et genita praefati Dei cultoris augusti ab utraque parte sperabatur simul et parabatur. In tam enim pio negotio et quod ad utriusque imperii unitatem, immo totius Christi ecclesiae libertatem pertinere procul dubio credebatur, praecipue summi pontificii vestri quaerebatur assensus. Dei ergo nutu actum est, ut tanti negotii cum loci servatoribus apostolicae sedis et ipse fine gauderem et veniens fructuum in exultatione portarem manipulos, qui per septennium ferme pro eo indefesse laboraveram et per totum orbem verborum semina sedule scribendo dispereram. Nam pene omnia, quae ad praesens negotium pertinent quaeque a sede apostolica Latino sermone prolata sunt sive quae in huius synodi codice sive quae in aliis voluminibus continentur, ego summis pontificibus obsecundans, decessori scilicet vestro ac vobis, exposui et postmodum Constanti-nopoli pro praedicta causa reppertus non pauca in his vestris loci servatoribus, ut ipsi quoque testantur, solatia praestiti.*
- 46 RI 1,3,1, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, no. 301; accessed on 16 November 2020: [www.regesta-imperii.de/id/0870-02-00\\_1\\_0\\_1\\_3\\_1\\_4518\\_301](http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/0870-02-00_1_0_1_3_1_4518_301). On Everard, see Hlawitschka, *Franken, Alemannen, Bayern und Burgunder*, no. 67, 180f: he was probably later a supporter of the Guidonian emperors Guy I (III) and Lambert. For Suppo III, see Hlawitschka, *Franken, Alemannen, Bayern und Burgunder*, no. 153, 171-173. And see Bougard, *Les Supponides*.
- 47 RI 1,3,1, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, n. 290; accessed on 16 November 2020: [www.regesta-imperii.de/id/0869-00-00\\_1\\_0\\_1\\_3\\_1\\_4507\\_290](http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/0869-00-00_1_0_1_3_1_4507_290); Flodoard, *Historia Remensis ecclesiae* 3, 27, ed. Heller and Waitz, 550.



Consequently, modern research often concluded that negotiations must have failed,<sup>48</sup> but Anastasius' letter does not support this interpretation. It is far more plausible for the text above that in the course of 870, Anastasius still believed that the marriage alliance was to be concluded soon: »causa nuptialis commercii, quod efficiendum ex filio imperatoris Basilii et genita praefati Dei cultoris augusti ab utraque parte sperabatur simul et parabatur«, he says – the marriage is hoped for by both parties and prepared by both!<sup>49</sup> From the Carolingian point of view, it was probably to be concluded with the next mission, which was indeed sent in spring 871.<sup>50</sup> By then, however, the political tides had shifted: first, even though the chronology remains unresolved, it is very likely that a Byzantine fleet arrived before Bari in late summer 870.<sup>51</sup> Its commander, Niketas Ooryphas,<sup>52</sup> seems to have been under the impression that he would already take Ermengard to Constantinople. The misunderstanding culminated in a diplomatic éclat, information about which we can find in yet another letter penned by Anastasius, though this time in the name of Emperor Louis himself. This is the famous letter written to Basil I, preserved in the anonymous Chronicle of Salerno. Therein we learn that both Basil and his envoys to the West had refused to acknowledge Louis' imperial rank at a later point.<sup>53</sup> This cannot have happened during Anastasius' Eastern mission, otherwise we would surely have heard of it in the earlier letter.<sup>54</sup> We also learn that the political alliance had not brought the desired results for both sides: Louis had taken Bari in February 871, but the naval support from the Byzantines had been minimal – in fact, he had had to resort to Slavic allies to block reinforcements for Bari. As a result of these events, the marriage alliance was called off by the Carolingian side.<sup>55</sup>

In 870, however, this was, of course, not known, and, as we learn from the letter to Hadrian, not even expected. Though Anastasius does not tell Pope Hadrian much about this part of his mission, we can discover a lot when we take a close look at the passage. The most important factor for the geopolitical importance of the message is Anastasius' notion that the marriage negotiations could be seen as »related to the unity of both empires« – *ad utriusque imperii unitatem*.<sup>56</sup> He used this peculiar expression, even though he must have been aware that this aspect would be a little worrying for the papacy. Since the 730s at the latest, the popes did not desire any direct influence of the Eastern emperors in the West, let alone in Rome itself. In fact, they did everything in their power to stay on agreeable terms – but

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48 For example, RI 1,3,1, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, no. 301.

49 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 410.

50 RI 1,3,1, ed. Zielinski and Böhmer, no. 326.

51 See Kislinger, *Erster und zweiter Sieger*; and see below, n.52.

52 Niketas Ooryphas #25696, in: *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, accessed on 18 May 2020: [db-degruyter-com.uaccess.univie.ac.at/view/PMBZ/PMBZ27850](https://db-degruyter-com.uaccess.univie.ac.at/view/PMBZ/PMBZ27850).

53 Louis II, Letter to Basil, ed. Henze and Westerbergh, *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 107-21.

54 Despite that very clear argument from a letter that can be dated with high certainty, the historians upholding the traditional chronology that has the fallout with the East start already in 869 are more numerous. For a summary and support of the traditional timeline, see Kolditz, *Gesandtschaften, Briefe und Konzilien*. But see Kislinger, *Erster und zweiter Sieger*, for a compelling refutation of that timeline. In my forthcoming monograph on Louis II and his time, I shall address this question in more detail.

55 Louis II, Letter to Basil, ed. Henze.

56 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 410.

nevertheless to keep Constantinople as far away as possible.<sup>57</sup> It is therefore unlikely that anyone in the papacy would have relished the thought that a son of the new, upstart emperor Basil might one day be able to reign in Italy. We cannot say today why Anastasius even thought that this may be good news – but obviously it was to him and he expected Hadrian to feel the same way. It seems that no one in the West even considered Basil's son ruling Italy after Louis II's death a real possibility, and maybe it would have been regarded far-fetched by 870. Later in her life, we meet Ermengard again as a very strong woman<sup>58</sup> who wielded a lot of power – and it is not impossible that Anastasius, as her teacher for a short time, had already recognized that strength in her. Maybe it was this confidence in the princess and the Carolingians in general that led Anastasius to believe in his core mission, but ultimately, we will never be able to tell.

What we do know, however, is that compared to the rest of the letter, the imperial mission seems, in Anastasius' eyes, to be the successful part. This means a lot given that the council of 869/70 was in many respects a triumph for the Western churches.<sup>59</sup>

In the letter at least, Anastasius had other concerns, as we can already see in the longer cited section: in Anastasius' opinion the breaking points in early 870 lay mainly in the ecclesiastic field. It is thus not conspicuous that Anastasius mentions no other imperial personnel. Indeed, not even Basil's son or Ermengard are mentioned by name (which has the consequence that we do not know which of Basil's sons was meant to be married). Both names will have been known to the addressee, of course, but it underscores the character of Anastasius that he only mentions this in passing. The letter was meant to document the problems Anastasius must have seen as most pressing in great detail: the schism Photios had brought about, the Bulgarian question and the question of the acts of the synod. Anastasius verbosely described how he had been excluded from the negotiations on Bulgaria in particular and how his presence would have enhanced the papal position.<sup>60</sup> For the acts of the synod, the

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57 Noble, *Republic of St. Peter*; Gantner, *Freunde Roms und Völker der Finsternis*, esp. 60-138; Gantner, Label 'Greeks'; Gantner, *Romana urbs*; Gantner, *Eighth-century papacy*; Dell'Acqua and Gantner, *Resenting Byzantine Iconoclasm*.

58 Bougard, *Ermengarda, regina di Provenza*: Ermengard married Boso of Provence shortly after her father's death and was key in his establishment of a separate kingdom in southern Francia. She was also the mother of Emperor Louis III (the Blind),

59 Chrysos, *Council of Constantinople*.

60 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 411-414.

letter mainly explains how its author had been essential in the preservation of the acts' text for the papacy – while the pope's own embassy lost the original copy of the acts meant to be brought to the Lateran. For this, Emperor Basil is blamed at least implicitly, as he had failed to provide for a secure journey for the papal delegation. Still, it becomes equally clear that Anastasius and the imperial embassy had taken better precautions than the pope's men – and had been right to do so.<sup>61</sup>

### *Anastasius, Power Broker Par Excellence?*

The letter from 870 is very much dedicated to Anastasius' self-promotion, urgently needed to regain fully the favour of Pope Hadrian. He negotiates with the Byzantine emperor for the Carolingian emperor. Besides this, he also grasped the opportunity to represent the papacy vis-à-vis the Eastern ecclesiastical elites – certainly no easy task. Anastasius did this, even though he had not received an official mandate from the pope. He calls himself the pope's servant in the letter, but really he was at the council by chance. What is more, he underlines his usefulness and thereby justifies his unsanctioned actions. He even informs Hadrian and the world about his personal motivations for doing so, explaining that already under Pope Nicholas he had considered the fight against the former patriarch Photios as his personal project. Anastasius was an erudite diplomat and ecclesiastic, essentially writing an application to be taken back into papal service. He did this while working for Emperor Louis, whose daughter he seems to have instructed as her teacher during these years. We thus see Anastasius as a diplomat, even as a power broker between East and West.<sup>62</sup> He was one of the most important authors of letters sent by the popes Nicholas I (858-867), Hadrian II (867-872) and John VIII (872-882), being at times nearly solely responsible for the formulation of the Eastern policy.<sup>63</sup> The same seems to apply for Louis II's correspondence with the Byzantine Empire, as far as we can tell from the very scant evidence.

And even though he personally certainly caused discord between the imperial court and the Lateran at some points during his long career, he also worked as a power broker between those institutions he knew so well – incidentally showing us that a power broker does not need to be functional or even successful all the time.<sup>64</sup> That he may even have been of service

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61 Anastasius, ep. to Hadrian II, ed. Laehr, 410: *Nam pene omnia, quae ad praesens negotium pertinent quaeque a sede apostolica Latino sermone prolata sunt sive quae in huius synodi codice sive quae in aliis voluminibus continentur, ego summis pontificibus obsecundans, decessori scilicet vestro ac vobis, exposui et postmodum Constantinopoli pro praedicta causa repperit non pauca in his vestris loci servatoribus, ut ipsi quoque testantur, solatia praestiti. Qui etiam diversos hominum eventus considerans gesta huius synodi, quae apostolicae sedis loci servatores in uno volumine secum portaturi conscripserant, in altro codice transcripta Romam aequae deferre proposui. Unde factum est, ut eisdem loci servatoribus praedones incidentibus et codicem ipsum cum omnibus suppellectilibus suis amittentibus ego codicem, quem detuleram, Romam vexisse dinoscerer, quem sanctitas vestra grato suscipiens animo mihi ad transferendum in Latinam tradidit dictionem. Ad quod opus ego idoneum esse me denegavi, licet in interpretandis ex Achivo in Romanum sermonem scripturis praesenti tempore quoddam conamen arripere nitar et nonnulla iam ad aedificationem plurimorum et praecipue vestri decessoris hortatu interpretatus edidisse dinoscar.*

62 For the theoretical approach used, see Gantner, Eighth-century papacy, esp. 245-247; Hinderaker, Translation and cultural brokerage.

63 See Perels, *Papst Nikolaus I. und Anastasius Bibliothecarius*, 242-316.

64 See Hinderaker, Translation and cultural brokerage, 358. Going beyond Hinderaker's definition of cultural brokerage, however, Anastasius' deeds possibly did supersede his original standing and Roman origins.

for Louis in this respect is suggested by the fact that after his return to papal service in 870 or 871, Hadrian II unflinchingly supported Louis II's cause<sup>65</sup> once Louis was released after having been imprisoned in southern Italy in late summer 871 for 40 days<sup>66</sup> – though I have to admit, that Anastasius' influence cannot be proven, due to our relative lack of sources for these years.

### *Conclusion*

In this article, we have but rushed through Anastasius' life and acquired only glimpses of what he accomplished. He was a complex figure, maybe even a polymath. Mostly, we have met him at one of the last points of intersection he faced during his career. In the few years between 868 and 872, he was deprived of office and status, but remained a sought-after teacher. He was then sent on his most important diplomatic mission, but, as it turned out, also the most important cultural mission of his lifetime by the emperor, only to return into papal service thereafter. During these vicissitudes, all his actions stayed firmly connected to his role as a broker between East and West, between the past and the present through his cultural work and between the lay world and the ecclesiastical sphere.

We have no reason to doubt his personal claim that he had indeed been the most important author (*dictator*) of the papal letters dealing with Eastern affairs – after all, why should he have overstated his contribution when writing to Hadrian II, who had himself been part of the papal administration and would have known the truth anyway? Given this evidence, he was ultimately among the more successful papal diplomats of the early Middle Ages. No wonder then, that he was also employed in that profession during his exile by the imperial court. It was a lucky coincidence that he even managed to serve his interim as well as his long-time lord during his mission to Constantinople in 870. As we have seen, the official leaders of the mission were (or in one case at least seem to have been) close to the empress, the emperor or the princess, but they were in all probability not equipped to lead negotiations with the Constantinopolitan court or even Emperor Basil himself. For this, they will have needed Anastasius with them. And Anastasius, who will thus have been heavily involved in the marriage question, told the pope that this part of the mission had gone well. He was euphoric enough even to invoke an idea of a unity of the Eastern and Western empires under the couple to be – possibly he knew Ermengard well enough to appreciate that she would not simply be dominated by any husband. In the much more famous letter from 871 Anastasius wrote in the name of Louis II and we can sense his frustration with the course that events had taken as much as his employer's. The »Greeks« had already insulted him and the papal delegation in 870, and now they had insulted the imperial side as well. Ultimately, therefore, the librarian and diplomat will have come to see this part of his career as a failure, but quite probably not as his personal defeat. His comment only a few years later in his translation of the acts of the Second Council of Nicea, that parts had been »falsified, as is the custom of the Greeks« shows that he still held a personal grudge.<sup>67</sup> His efforts were partly in vain. Constantinople sacrificed an alliance with the Western empire for short term gains in southern Italy

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65 Grotz, *Erbe wider Willen*, 300-303.

66 Granier, *La captivité*.

67 See Lamberz, »Falsata Graecorum more«?. Indeed, the Greeks acts of the 787 council seem to have left out a big part of a letter by Pope Hadrian I on purpose.

and in the Balkans – and thereby achieved territorial gains and renewed political influence mostly by luck, while it had to accept the loss of Syracuse in 878 and Sicily a little later as a very high price for it. Louis II, together with Anastasius, had sacrificed the same alliance as well, mostly due to hierarchical questions, losing the south for the north Italian kingdom for good. And the papacy, while it gained a better standing in the church temporarily, lost Bulgaria to the Eastern church and had to accept another tenure of the hated Patriarch Photios only a few years later.

Anastasius still (probably) witnessed many or all of these developments before his death and none of them were ultimately his fault – and in none of the developments will he have been blameless. Still, for him personally, things turned out well. He was taken back into papal service in late spring or summer 871. In this year he was on a mission for Hadrian to Naples before August.<sup>68</sup> For Pope John VIII, who ascended to the papal throne in 872, he served as *bibliothecarius* again. He is even mentioned as head of the chancellery in many of his letters and privileges by then. Anastasius died in 878 or 879 as a quite old man in Rome and will, in all probability, have considered this last stretch of his career as its high point.<sup>69</sup> We have seen him, instead, in the last of several turbulent stages, when he rose to his highest »international« or super-regional importance all the same. Over a period of about three years he worked at no less than three of the most important courts of his time: in Rome, at the mobile, impromptu Carolingian court of the late 860s and in Constantinople. He acted as a broker between all of them – during his stay at the Byzantine capital even simultaneously – and through his longish letter, he provided us with a first-hand account of one of the most fascinating diplomatic missions of the ninth century.

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68 J<sup>3</sup>, no. 6284, ed. Werner *et al.*, 162-163. The last time Anastasius is attested in Rome before this is 12th October 868, at his trial in front of Hadrian II: see J<sup>3</sup>, no. 6190, ed. Werner *et al.*, 147.

69 Arnaldi, Anastasio Bibliotecario, antipapa.



## References

### Abbreviations

- BAV = Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana  
 LP = Liber Pontificalis  
 MGH EE = Monumenta Germaniae Historica Epistolae  
 MGH SS = Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum  
 RI = Regesta Imperii  
 J<sup>3</sup> = Regesta Pontificum Romanorum vol. 3

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- BAV *Vat. Lat. 1342* = Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vaticanus Latinus 1342.
- BAV *Vat. Lat. 4965* = Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vaticanus Latinus 4965.
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# Holiness on the Move: Relic Translations and the Affirmation of Authority on the Italian Edge of the Carolingian World

Francesco Veronese, Giulia Zornetta\*

Between the eighth and ninth centuries many kings, dukes and counts in Carolingian Europe promoted the collection of relics in cathedrals and/or urban foundations both to centralize their power and to increase their prestige. Their ventures were part of a wider framework in which the mobility of the saints' bodies, which was strictly defined by the Carolingian authorities, put various political and social agents in a relationship, often competitive, with each other. This paper considers two cases of the translation of saints' bodies at the peripheries of the Carolingian Empire: the *furta sacra* of St Mark (from Alexandria, Egypt to Venice, 828) and St Bartholomew (from the island of Lipari to Benevento, 838-839). Both the hagiographical traditions narrate the theft and transport of the relics from the Islamic world to the Italian peninsula by boat. These two cases are also both related to a conscious and ambitious plan to strengthen local public authorities. The paper examines the underlying political strategies that led to the mobility of two of the most important relics in the Mediterranean context and the circulation of cultural models from the Carolingian worlds, which relocated the saints' bodies in order to redefine the political balance.

*Keywords: translations of relics; public authorities; peripheries of the Carolingian Empire; Benevento; Venice*

## *Introduction*

In the ninth century, the mobility of saints' relics and the involvement of public authorities in the process of translation already had a long history. Since the mid-fourth century emperors had begun moving the relics of the apostles to Constantinople in order to shape it as a Christian capital.<sup>1</sup> This pattern continued in various post-Roman communities, for example the politically driven relic translations that took place in the Lombard kingdom. In 725 King Liutprand moved St Augustine's body from Sardinia to his capital in Pavia and buried it in one of the most important churches of the capital city, San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro; later he endowed a monastic foundation there.<sup>2</sup> During this period, the translation of St Augustine's relics was conceived as an important operation in terms of

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\* Correspondence details: Francesco Veronese, Giulia Zornetta, DiSSGeA - Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche, Geografiche e dell'Antichità, Università di Padova, via del Vescovado 30, 35141 Padova, Italy; email: francesco.veronese.3@unipd.it; giulia.zornetta@unipd.it.

1 Cronnier, *Les inventions*, 333-354.

2 *Historia Langobardorum*, 6. 48, ed. Bethmann and Waitz, 181.



its role in both sustaining and consolidating the king's public authority.<sup>3</sup> The news of the translation spread as far as the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, where Bede reported it in his *De temporum ratione*.<sup>4</sup> As highlighted by Edoardo Manarini in this issue, relics and their installations in new locations were key assets in the affirmation of the great monasteries established in the eighth century by kings and aristocratic groups in the Lombard kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

Later in the eighth century, Charlemagne began regulating all matters concerning the cult of saints and their remains within his realm.<sup>6</sup> Only those figures belonging to a distant past and renowned for their *auctoritas passionum* or *vitae meritis* were admitted.<sup>7</sup> As a result, there was a significant increase in the production of hagiographical texts that served as the main means to prove a relic's antiquity. New texts were drafted and old ones rewritten.<sup>8</sup>

The relocation of relics was also regulated. The Council of Mainz (813) established that translations could only take place with the consent of the ruler and/or an assembly of bishops.<sup>9</sup> A new genre of hagiography, *translationes*, developed in order to prove that relics had been moved according to Carolingian rules.

At the same time, accounts of illegal relocations, which openly broke the laws (both human and divine), also appeared. Einhard's *Translatio Marcellini et Petri*, written in 830-831, had a key role in the development of what Patrick Geary famously described as *furta sacra*.<sup>10</sup> In Einhard's text, the choice to move relics was attributed to God and the saints themselves, whose authority was clearly higher than that of any worldly ruler. So, in Carolingian times both the practices and the narratives of the translation of relics were reshaped.

These choices and events appear to have also affected areas on the peripheries of the Carolingian world. In around the same years as Einhard's *Translatio* was written, possession of the evangelist Mark's body was claimed by the dukes of Venice, and in Benevento the *Translatio sanctorum Ianuarii, Festi et Desiderii* was written in the form of a *furtum sacrum* narrative. In both places all the aforementioned traditions – late Roman/Byzantine, Lombard, Frankish/Carolingian – helped remodel society and politics. Although the role of the Roman/Byzantine and Lombard traditions has long been acknowledged and highlighted by scholars, only recently has the exchange of practices and textual models between the Carolingian world and these regions been investigated in depth.

This paper compares how and evaluates why relics were translated in these contexts. By analysing how the elites and public authorities in Venice and Benevento exploited saints and relics to support their strategies, strengthen their social and political positions, and build their own legitimacy, the extent to which they were influenced by Carolingian rules becomes visible, illustrating the level to which these activities on the peripheries of the Carolingian world followed Carolingian patterns.

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3 Di Muro, *Usò politico delle reliquie*.

4 *De temporum ratione*, 66, ed. Mommsen and Jones, 535.

5 Manarini, *Translation of St Sylvester*.

6 Riché, *Carolingiens*; Fouracre, *Origins*; Smith, *Old saints, new cults*.

7 *Capitulare Francofurtense*, 42, ed. Werminghoff, 170.

8 Gouillet, *Écriture et réécriture*, 33-40; Gibson, *Carolingian world*.

9 *Concilium Moguntinense*, 51, ed. Werminghoff, 272.

10 Geary, *Furta Sacra*.

*Public Authority and Regional Competition: St Bartholomew and the Beneventan furta sacra*

According to hagiographic tradition, the translation of St Bartholomew from the island of Lipari took place in 838 at the instigation of Prince Sicard of Benevento (832-839) and thanks to some *navigatores*, probably the Amalfitans, who, unlike the Lombards, had a large fleet at their disposal. The relics were transported by ship to Salerno and in 839 they arrived in Benevento, where Sicard had a church built next to the cathedral in their honour, which, after the death of the prince, was completed by Ursus, the bishop of Benevento.<sup>11</sup>

Sicard's interest in St Bartholomew was aroused by the Islamic campaigns for the conquest of Sicily, which began in 827 with the landing in Mazara del Vallo and ended over a century later.<sup>12</sup> Located just north of the island, the Aeolian archipelago had been sacked by the Aghlabids on at least two occasions and was in danger of being conquered by them.<sup>13</sup> The removal of the relics of St Bartholomew could therefore easily be justified as an attempt to save the disciple's precious body, a motivation that was in fact duly adopted by the hagiographic tradition.<sup>14</sup> An initial account of the facts was probably written in Benevento after 839, but this first draft only exists now in the form of subsequent redrafts that were not written in Benevento itself.<sup>15</sup> This also explains why the roles of Sicard and Bishop Ursus only emerge in a later narrative, the one written by a Beneventan monk, Martinus, in the mid-eleventh century.<sup>16</sup>

Hagiographic texts are, however, only one part of a larger whole that must be taken into consideration in order to understand the arrival of the body of St Bartholomew in Benevento. This translation must, in fact, be considered within the framework of the political designs of the Siconid dynasty, whose ambitions were not only focused on the Lombard territories, but on all of southern Italy.

After a conspiracy against Grimoald IV (806-817), Sico (817-832), the father of Sicard, assumed the title of prince thanks to the support of some members of the Beneventan elite. Both the chronicles and his funerary epitaph highlight his foreign origin and note that, unlike his predecessors, he was not part of the dynasty of the founder of the principality, Arechis (758-787).<sup>17</sup> Lacking a vast family heritage and strong parental ties, it is likely that those who supported his seizure of power saw in him a leader who would be easy to influence. In reality, Sico proved to be highly skilled both in affirming his own political authority and in his relationship with the aristocracy, to which he tied himself through a shrewd marriage policy that saw his daughters as protagonists.<sup>18</sup>

11 *Translatio*, ed. Westerbergh, 10-12; *Translatio S. Bartholomaei*, ed. Borgia, 340-342.

12 Nef, *Reinterpreting the Aghlabids*.

13 Amari, *Storia dei musulmani*, 237-438; Kislinger, *Storia di Lipari*, 13-17.

14 *Translatio S. Bartholomaei*, ed. Borgia, 336-339.

15 Westerbergh, *Anastasius*, 49-52; Anderson, *Historical Memory*, 231-233.

16 *Translatio S. Bartholomaei*, ed. Borgia; Vuolo, *Agiografia beneventana*, 224-225.

17 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 42, ed. Westerbergh, 42-43; *Carmina varia*, 2, ed. Dümmler, 649-651; *Gesta episcoporum Neapolitanorum*, 51, ed. Bethmann and Waitz, 428.

18 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 55, ed. Westerbergh, 55; Thomas, *Jeux lombards*, 115-117; Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 161-163.

The war against the Neapolitans helped consolidate the internal consensus around this prince. It diverted the heated internal competition of the first half of the ninth century towards the most traditional of external enemies, Naples, with which the Lombards had long fought over the fertile plain of Liburia.<sup>19</sup>

In 831 the Lombards besieged Naples, inflicting a crippling loss on Duke Stefano III (821-832), and leading to the imposition of an annual tribute on the Neapolitans. The local commercial market, which was the most important in the region, was also forced to use the Benevento currency.<sup>20</sup> This was an opportunity to expand the economy of the Lombard hinterland, so much so as to suggest that commercial objectives were the foremost motivators of the military campaigns of the Siconids.<sup>21</sup> This attempt, however, proved unrealistic, not only because it was short-lived, but also because the Beneventan coins contained a very modest quantity of gold compared to that of the Byzantine coins which circulated amongst traders in the Tyrrhenian region.<sup>22</sup>

These aggressive measures were also accompanied by the theft of the prestigious relics of St Januarius, which were brought by Sico to Benevento with great ceremony and entrusted to the custody of St Mary's cathedral.<sup>23</sup>

The *Translatio sanctorum Ianuarii, Festi et Desiderii* was written in Benevento shortly afterwards, and unsurprisingly does not explicitly indicate the theft of relics. The author pays little attention to the context of the war against the Neapolitans and justifies the translation of relics with one of the *topoi* of the hagiographic genre, that is the will of the saint to be found and be moved, in this case to return to his original episcopal see.<sup>24</sup> According to tradition, in fact, Januarius was bishop of Benevento and he was martyred in Pozzuoli during the persecutions of Diocletian together with his companions, including Festus and Desiderius. As pointed out by Thomas Granier, both the narrative strategy of the hagiographic text and, above all, the silence of the chronicler Erchempert, a monk at the abbey of Monte Cassino who wrote his *Ystoriola* at the end of the ninth century, lead to the hypothesis that this theft struggled to find full acceptance amongst the Lombards. On the other hand, Neapolitan sources do not mention it because the abduction of the patron saint constituted a profound humiliation for the Tyrrhenian city, where the cult of Januarius continued almost undisturbed.<sup>25</sup>

It is precisely in this sense that Sico's decision to steal the relics and take them to Benevento must be interpreted as real spoils of war.<sup>26</sup> However, this was not only a success on a military and religious level, but also in terms of the internal political balance.

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19 Martin, *Guerre*, 102-114.

20 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 57, ed. Westerbergh, 57-58.

21 Di Muro, *Economia e mercato*, 87-89; Wickham, *Considerazioni conclusive*, 750.

22 Oddy, *Analysis*, 84-86; Arslan, *Monetazione*, 89-90.

23 *Carmina varia*, 2, ed. Dümmler, 650-651; *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 57, ed. Westerbergh, 58; *Chronica monasterii Casinensis*, 1.20, ed. Hoffmann, 66.

24 *Translatio sanctorum Ianuarii, Festi et Desiderii*, 888; Vuolo, *Agiografia beneventana*, 222-223; Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 108-118.

25 Granier, *Miracle accompli*; Granier, *Lieux de mémoire*, 63-102.

26 Granier, *Conflitti*, 36-39; Galdi, »Quam si urbem«, 226-228.

Before the ninth century, St Mary's Cathedral had never been at the heart of elite Lombard patronage. It did not hold an important position either in terms of its own identity or in the context of urban devotions, which instead were concentrated in the numerous private churches and monasteries founded by the Lombard dukes and members of the Benevento elite.<sup>27</sup>

The translation of St Januarius enhanced the religious geography of the capital, endowing the episcopal see with an unprecedented importance and an increased level of visible representation of princely political authority. By entrusting these prestigious relics to the cathedral, Sico created a new urban devotional centre that competed with the illustrious St Sophia in Benevento. This female monastery was built by Arechis and modelled on St Salvatore in Brescia, which had been founded by the Lombard king Desiderius and his wife Ansa before 757.<sup>28</sup> Its prestige was inextricably linked to the birth of the southern principality of Benevento, which took place in 774 following the Carolingian conquest of the Lombard kingdom, from which the south of Italy was excluded.<sup>29</sup> The church of St Sophia was also home to numerous relics, including those of St Mercury and the Twelve Brothers, whose bodies were moved to Benevento from some nearby towns.<sup>30</sup> The complex founded by Arechis was therefore not limited to being the fulcrum of the prestige of the first prince, but also became the main centre of urban devotion.

When Sico came to power in 812, St Sophia was undoubtedly the richest and most important ecclesiastical institution in Benevento. It is therefore not strange that the new prince turned to another institution, the episcopate, to consolidate his prestige in the urban environment. From the first half of the ninth century, St Mary's Cathedral was recognized, alongside the palace and the princely court, as a place of representation of public authority and became the building – both religious and public – in which the Lombard princes exalted their link with the capital. Upon his death in 832, Sico chose to be buried in the cathedral's *paradisus*, as did the princes of the Radelchid dynasty. On the other hand, the tombs of Arechis and his descendants were located in the cathedral of Salerno, a city to which Arechis was particularly attached.<sup>31</sup>

During 833 Sicard resumed the conflict against Naples, which, in the meantime, had rebelled on several occasions against the previous agreement. In 836 he signed a new treaty with the city: the *pactum Sicardi*.<sup>32</sup> However, this did not lead to a definitive pacification, so much so that the Neapolitans constant about-turns resulted in Sicard reformulating his project of expansion towards the Tyrrhenian coast. In order to bypass the commercial control of Naples, he tried to strengthen the economic role of Salerno by deporting Amalfitans to this city.<sup>33</sup> Previously they had been invited to settle in Lombard territory enticed by generous

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27 Fonseca, *Particolarismo e organizzazione ecclesiastica*; Rotili, *Spazi monastici*; Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 56-67; La Rocca, *Élites, chiese e sepolture*; Wood, *Proprietary Church*, 166-175.

28 Belting, *Studien zum Beneventanischen Hof*; Delogu, *Mito di una città*, 13-35.

29 Loré, *Monasteri, re e duchi*, 958-965; Zornetta, *Monastero femminile*.

30 Vuolo, *Agiografia beneventana*, 208-211; Galdi, *Identità e pluralità*, 99-101; Wood, *Giovardi*; Di Muro, *Uso politico delle reliquie*.

31 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, ed. Westerbergh, 24-26, 31-32; Delogu, *Mito di una città*, 38-69; Peduto, *Arechi II a Salerno*; Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 102-111.

32 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 72-73, ed. Westerbergh, 70-72; *Pactum Sicardi*, ed. Martin; West, *Communities and pacta*, 384-389.

33 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 74, ed. Westerbergh, 72-73. Di Muro, *Economia e mercato*, 82-86.

donations, but only a small group accepted the proposal.<sup>34</sup> Sicard then decided to act otherwise, and in 838 he sacked Amalfi and deported its inhabitants. On this occasion, the relics of St Trofimenia, martyr of Minori, were also stolen, and they were once again entrusted to the cathedral of Benevento.<sup>35</sup>

The hagiographic work that traces this story is fundamental for understanding the relationship between Sicard and the Amalfitans. However, more than anything, it is the text that traces the events concerning the numerous movements involving the body of St Trofimenia. Although its dating is debated, an initial version was certainly used by the anonymous author of the *Chronicon Salernitanum* and it therefore predates the end of the tenth century.<sup>36</sup> The author was also not from the Lombard area, but was more likely of Amalfi-Minorese origin.<sup>37</sup>

Like the relics of St Januarius, those of St Trofimenia also constituted the spoils of war. Once they reached Benevento, they made it possible to demonstrate and memorialize Sicard's recent military successes in the public and urban context of the cathedral.

These were not the only saints that came to the city during the principality of Sicard, as St Felicity and her seven sons were also added to the Benevento pantheon. Unlike the previous translations, this one does not seem to have been particularly publicized and the related hagiographic text only briefly mentions the involvement of the prince and the bishop.<sup>38</sup> Antonio Vuolo thus hypothesized that these relics had been purchased in Rome, perhaps through the organization led by the deacon Deusdona, known through Einhard's *Translatio sancti Petri et Marcellini*.<sup>39</sup>

As I have demonstrated above, the translations promoted by the Benevento princes concern how their public authority was represented. Their aim was to boost the prestige of Benevento as a religious centre and simultaneously promote its role as the capital of the principality. Although translations were a common feature of the Lombard world, both Arechis and the Siconids were probably following the model of the Lombard kings, i.e. Aistulf and Liutprand, who had accumulated numerous saints' bodies in the churches of Pavia and elsewhere.<sup>40</sup> What was unique in this case was the truly active role that the Benevento princes played in actually ensuring that these translations were carried out, which assigned an otherwise absent religious component to their public authority. Unlike what happened, for example, for the Carolingian kings, who took part in rites of consecration and unction by the bishops, the Lombard kings did not have a sacral dimension in any true sense.<sup>41</sup> The participation of the princes of Benevento in the translation of relics was meant to compensate for this absence, thereby placing them in direct contact with the sacred.

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34 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 72\*, ed. Westerbergh, 71; Sangermano, Ducato di Amalfi, 294-295; Taviani-Carozzi, *Principauté*, 800-807.

35 *Historia inventionis ac translationis*, 235-236; *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 74, ed. Westerbergh, 72-73; Granier, Conflitti, 40-49.

36 Avallone, *Historia S. Trophimena*, 763-767.

37 Oldoni, *Agiografia longobarda*, 603-614.

38 *Passio et translatio Beneventum ss. Felicitatis*, 18.

39 *Translatio et miracula ss. Petri et Marcellini*, ed. Waitz, 240; Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 44-49; Vuolo, *Agiografia beneventana*, n. 75, 221-222.

40 Tomea, *Intorno a Santa Giulia*, 34-46; Di Muro, *Uso politico delle reliquie*.

41 Gasparri, *Kingship rituals*.



While Arechis merely centralized some cults that had already been established in the Beneventan area, the translations promoted by the Siconids not only encompassed a wider range but also had a more complex symbolic design, which included not only Lombard territory but also the whole of southern Italy.<sup>42</sup> Grafting the cults of Januarius and Trofimena onto Benevento was clearly an attempt to make the Lombard capital a religious reference point for the communities of the Tyrrhenian coast. While the Siconids' military campaigns certainly had an economic significance, albeit temporary and unrealistic, their thefts of relics suggest an attempt to widen the horizons of their project to a religious and political dimension.

It is in this context that the translation of St Bartholomew from Lipari must be read. To become the sacred reference point of all southern Italy, Benevento and its cathedral had to act as a counterpart to the ancient and prestigious tradition of the Neapolitan church. One of the ways to reach this goal was to enrich the city pantheon with a protector of the highest importance, such as a disciple of Christ. In fact, since the fifth century, the claim of an apostolic origin had been a key strategy for increasing the prestige and legitimacy of the episcopal church.<sup>43</sup> Unlike what happened in Venice with St Mark, the cathedral of Benevento did not claim a tradition linked to the figure of Bartholomew, especially as he was active in the East rather than in the south of Italy, but limited itself to hosting the prestigious relics. However, the translation of St Bartholomew from Lipari should be interpreted both in terms of competition with the Tyrrhenian cities, Naples and Amalfi, and within the framework of the political designs of the Siconids throughout the whole south.

The arrival of the relics of St Bartholomew was certainly a success – but this was short-lived. In fact, in 839 Sicard was killed during a conspiracy hatched by the local aristocracy, and his ambitious political project came to an end.<sup>44</sup> After his death, the Lombard principality was divided by factions and plagued by a violent conflict, which ended a decade later with the mediation of Emperor Louis II and Guy of Spoleto, and the birth of two distinct political bodies: the Principality of Benevento and the Principality of Salerno.<sup>45</sup> In Benevento, the memory of the Siconids, especially of Sicard, underwent a kind of *damnatio memoriae*. Yet it was cultivated in Salerno, which became the capital of the principality led by Sicard's brother, Siconulf, in 849. In order to give prestige to the dynasty that formed the roots of this new Lombard principality, the *Chronicon Salernitanum*, a historiographic work written in Salerno at the end of the 10th century, offers an overall positive image of the Siconids. However, while this is true for Sico and Siconulf in particular, Sicard is presented as a violent ruler, prey to irrational outbursts, and strongly influenced by the aristocracy.<sup>46</sup>

Although the relics of St Bartholomew were undoubtedly prestigious, after 849 they lost much of their political appeal in Benevento. In the latter half of the ninth century, the princes preferred to direct their devotion to St Januarius, probably because he was linked to a victorious ruler, Sico, and, above all, because he was directly linked to the identity of their

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42 Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 192-193.

43 Granier, *Saints fondateurs; Vocino, Caccia al discepolo*, 357-359.

44 Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 170-173.

45 Gasparri, *Ducato e il principato*, 116-120; Zornetta, *Italia meridionale longobarda*, 211-230.

46 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 65-72, ed. Westerbergh, 62-71.

town. The epitaphs of later rulers, who were also buried in St Mary's Cathedral, recall the special devotion of some of the members of the Radelchids to St Januarius.<sup>47</sup> This dynasty ruled over Benevento until 900 and seems to have been particularly linked to the episcopal see, also in terms of how their political authority was portrayed. Adelchis (854-858) was the first prince to introduce the dedication to St Mary on coins minted in Benevento.<sup>48</sup> One of the sons of Radelchis I (839-851), Aio, also obtained the office of bishop and tried to increase the prestige of the cathedral by relaunching the cult of the most important relics preserved in the cathedral: those of St Bartholomew. He requested help from Anastasius Bibliothecarius, a prominent figure of the Roman curia, who undertook a translation of Theodorus Studita's *Sermo* about the life of Bartholomew.<sup>49</sup> In fact, as already mentioned, the hagiography of St Bartholomew had a rather complex tradition. There appears to have been a previous narrative relating to the relics being moved to Benevento, but there was also a short account of the text attached to Anastasius' translation.<sup>50</sup>

Again, however, the success of the renewal of the cult of Bartholomew seems to have been short-lived. At the end of the ninth century, the Principality of Benevento faced a series of setbacks. The Byzantines conquered much of what is now Puglia and Basilicata, causing the loss of an area rich in fiscal properties.<sup>51</sup> The diocese of Benevento found itself divided into a territory where one part was subject to Lombard power and one to the Eastern Empire; this second part also included the prestigious sanctuary of San Michele al Gargano. On the other hand, Atenulf of Capua overthrew the Radelchids in 900 and the cathedral lost its role of supporting the political authority because the new dynasty remained mostly rooted in the city of Capua.<sup>52</sup> Unquestionably, from the 10th century onwards, the centre of gravity in southern Italy belonged to its maritime areas. Compared to the Tyrrhenian duchies and the Principality of Salerno, Benevento lost its political relevance and became peripheral.

[G. Z.]

*Competing Bodies, Chairs, Patriarchates: The Transfer of St Mark to Venice*

The *Istoria Veneticorum*, written by John the Deacon in Venice in the early eleventh century, recounts that in his last year of life, the duke Justinian Particiaco *Sanctissimi Marci evangelistae corpus, de Alexandria a Veneticis allatum, recipere promeruit*.<sup>53</sup> To install the relics in a worthy location, Justinian had a chapel built in the ducal palace, but he died before the work was accomplished, and the undertaking was completed by his brother and successor

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47 *Carmina varia*, 12; 13, ed. Dümmler, 659; 660. Recently, on the Radelchids' epitaphs: Anderson, *Historical Memory*, 87-110.

48 Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, 1113-1114; 576.

49 *Anastasii Bibliothecarii Epistolae*, 18, ed. Perels and Laehr, 441-442.

50 *Translatio*, ed. Westerbergh, 8-17; Bonaccorsi, *Sermo*.

51 Loré, *Curtis regia*, 35-44.

52 Gasparri, *Ducato e il principato*, 130-134.

53 *Istoria Veneticorum*, 2. 39, ed. Berto, 118.

John. The *Istoria* places the translation in 822/823, the period in which Justinian ruled the duchy after the death of his father Agnellus, who had included his son in the administration of the government. According to the chronicler, Agnellus died in 822, but other sources indicate that Justinian was actually duke only between 828 and 829, raising uncertainty about the actual date of the translation.

The *Istoria Veneticorum* was compiled to exalt Venetian autonomy and the role played by Duke Peter II Orseolo (991-1009) as a peacemaker in conflicts between opposing family factions.<sup>54</sup> John the Deacon's reconstruction of the history of the duchy was structured to project into the past the dichotomy between a group that supported an approach to western royal and imperial power and one that favoured the maintenance of privileged relations with Constantinople. While John the Deacon's account is not a neutral narrative, however, the dating of the translation of St Mark in 822/823 does not appear to be related to this strategy. He wrote about two centuries after those events, and probably made a miscalculation.

Placing the issues of the dating aside, the other aspects of the story are confirmed in previous sources. The translation was the subject of a hagiographical narrative, the *Translatio sancti Marci*, dated by Emanuela Colombi to the latter half of the tenth century.<sup>55</sup> This text also refers to the duchy of Justinian, attributing to him the desire to build a chapel in the ducal palace, completed by his brother John.<sup>56</sup> In the 860s the monk Bernard, in the account of his pilgrimages, remembers that he went to Alexandria to pray at the body of St Mark, but that he was unable to do so, since the Venetians had stealthily appropriated it.<sup>57</sup> A final confirmation came from Justinian's testament, dated hypothetically to 31st August 829, which has come down to us in incomplete late copies.<sup>58</sup> One of the lacunae concerns the passage in which the duke entrusted his wife Felicita with the task of arranging *de corpus vero beati Mar[...]*, traditionally identified as that of St Mark.

Further evidence placing the translation between 828 and 829 comes from the analysis of the political context. Since the events that affected the duchy at the beginning of the ninth century have been the subject of precise reconstructions, including recent ones, I will limit myself to a few background details.<sup>59</sup> Between 806 and 812 the Carolingians and the Byzantine emperors contended for control of the Upper Adriatic. In 804, during the plea of the Rižana, the aristocracies of Istria, a Carolingian territory that depended ecclesiastically on the Byzantine patriarchate of Grado, complained to the Carolingian authorities about the fiscal conditions imposed on them by *dux* John and Patriarch Fortunatus.<sup>60</sup> The *Annales regni Francorum (ARF)* for the year 806 opens by referring to a mission to Charlemagne by the *duces Venetiae* Obelerius/*Willeri* and Beatus, together with the *dux* and the bishop of

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54 Paziienza, Archival documents; Provesi, *Terre et la mer*.

55 Colombi, «Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias», 76-79.

56 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, 16.5-6, ed. Colombi, 128-129.

57 *Bernardi monachi Itinerarium*, 6, ed. Ackermann, 117.

58 *Ss. Ilario e Benedetto*, 2, ed. Lanfranchi and Strina, 17-24. A new online edition by Annamaria Paziienza is available at [saame.it/fonte/documenti-veneziani-venezia-4/](http://saame.it/fonte/documenti-veneziani-venezia-4/), accessed on 16 February 2021.

59 Borri, *Adriatico*; Paziienza, *Venice beyond Venice*; West-Harling, *Rome, Ravenna, and Venice*, 89-100; Paziienza and Veronese, *Pipino*.

60 Borri, «Neighbors and relatives»; Paziienza, Archival documents.

Zadar, that met in Thionville in northern France, following which Charlemagne issued an *ordinatio de ducibus et populis tam Venetiae quam Dalmatiae* that sanctioned the inclusion of the lagoons in the Carolingian domains and thus opened hostilities with Constantinople.<sup>61</sup> From that year until 810 there were a series of military actions, followed by negotiations and truces between King Pippin of Italy and the commanders of the Byzantine fleets sent to the area.<sup>62</sup> In 810, after the death of his son Pippin, Charlemagne took over the negotiations.<sup>63</sup> After exchanges of embassies, the matter was resolved in 812 with the Treaty of Aachen.<sup>64</sup> The *ARF* links the event to an even more important achievement in Charlemagne's eyes, perhaps his underlying goal. On that occasion, the Byzantine ambassadors addressed him *imperatorem eum et basileum appellantes*.<sup>65</sup> For the first time the Eastern emperors recognized the imperial power of Charlemagne, honouring him with the same title as they used for themselves. In short, the stakes were very high.

The Treaty of Aachen put an end to the disputes over the Venetian Duchy through diplomatic-military means, but the game moved to a new terrain. Between the Byzantine lagoons and the Carolingian hinterland there was a political and political-ecclesiastical border. The Byzantine lagoons depended on the patriarchate of Grado, while the churches in the hinterland were suffragans of the patriarchs of Aquileia. The separation between the two patriarchates occurred between the second half of the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh as a result of the schism of the Three Chapters and the Lombard conquest of much of the Italian peninsula.<sup>66</sup> In the early ninth century this division of jurisdiction was delicately balanced but contested. To seek a remedy, on 6th June 827 a synod of the bishops of *Aemilia*, *Liguria* and *Venetia* met in Mantua. In the presence of two papal representatives and two of the emperors Louis and Lothar, they were all there to discuss the allocation of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Istria between Aquileia and Grado.<sup>67</sup> The patriarch of Aquileia Maxentius presented a *dossier* consisting of *libelli precum*, *sacrae litterae* and other documentation in his possession.<sup>68</sup> He thus provided himself with a multiplicity of tools, starting with the selection of the place in the territory of the *regnum*, the audience and the participants. The documents presented by the deacon Tiberius in the name of the patriarch of Grado Venerius (who was absent) were deemed unreliable as they were *nullius manu roborati*.<sup>69</sup> Maxentius' strategy paid off. The acknowledgment of the jurisdiction of Aquileia over the Istrian churches accompanied the reclassification of Grado to a *plebs* of Aquileia.<sup>70</sup>

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61 *ARF*, a. 806, ed. Kurze, 120-121; Štih, Imperial politics, 65.

62 *ARF*, a. 806, 087, 809, 810, ed. Kurze, 122-130.

63 *ARF*, a. 810, ed. Kurze, 133.

64 Ančić, Treaty of Aachen.

65 *ARF*, a. 812, ed. Kurze, 136.

66 Rando, Chiesa di frontiera, 13-14; Sotinel, Three Chapters.

67 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff; Azzara, Patriarchi contro; La Rocca and Veronese, Cultures of unanimity, 51-52.

68 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 585-586.

69 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 588.

70 Azzara, Concilio di Mantova.

One of the arguments that Maxentius put forward in support of his position was the Marcian legend of Aquileia – the tradition that assigned the evangelization of northeast Italy and the foundation of the Christian community of Aquileia to St Mark. In Mantua, Maxentius began with a sort of calling card of the church of Aquileia, founded by Mark, the spiritual son of Peter, and the *elegantissimus* Hermachoras.<sup>71</sup> The Aquileian church was therefore a direct derivation (*discipula, peculiaris, vicaria*) of the Roman one. Hermachoras, Mark's first successor, was invoked again towards the end of the proceedings.<sup>72</sup> While he resided in Aquileia, Mark, who was eager to see his master, took to Rome the *elegans vir* Hermachora, *ab omni electus clero et populo* and consecrated bishop by Peter in person. Peter, Mark and Hermachoras were thus established as the founders of the relationship between the churches of Aquileia and Rome. Hermachoras, who had been invested with religious authority by Peter, had previously been elected bishop by the people and clergy of Aquileia, in compliance with canonical procedures. This was in contrast to the election of Candidianus, the first patriarch of Grado, which the council described as taking place *contra canonum statuta et sanctorum patrum decreta*.<sup>73</sup> The aim was to discredit the patriarchal succession of Grado by opposing it to the legitimate and apostolic tradition supposedly held by the Church of Aquileia.

The first mention of the Marcian legend appears in the *Liber de episcopis Mettensibus* written by Paul the Deacon in the 780s.<sup>74</sup> Its origins, however, have been traced back to the schism of the Three Chapters. According to Pier Franco Beatrice, Gregory the Great conceived the legend to affirm the authority of Rome over the schismatic patriarchate of Aquileia, presenting its origins as the result of an initiative promoted by Peter.<sup>75</sup> In any case, in the 830s the legend appeared sufficiently authoritative to be exploited to establish the superior metropolitan dignity of Aquileia over Grado. The assembly in Mantua marked a significant turning point in how the legend was portrayed.<sup>76</sup> References to St Mark re-emerge in several places in the council's acts. Maxentius's speech included a quote from Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*, which was dedicated to the flight of his predecessor Paul to Grado in 568/569.<sup>77</sup> The text was, however, modified in order to underline the temporary and emergency nature of the transfer of the see and the illegitimacy of the election of Candidianus. The privileged relationship between St Mark and Aquileia was further strengthened with a reference to the relics of the saint. Paul the Deacon recounted that at the time of his flight, Paul took with him the treasure of his Church.<sup>78</sup> The synodal acts specify that the chairs (*sedes*) of Mark and Hermachoras were also part of that treasure.<sup>79</sup> Their possession

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71 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 585.

72 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 588-589.

73 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 586.

74 *Liber de episcopis*, ed. Santarossa, 129.

75 Beatrice, *Hermagorica novitas*.

76 Veronese, *Saint Marc*, 300-301.

77 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 585-586.

78 *Historia Langobardorum*, 2, 10, ed. Bethmann and Waitz, 78.

79 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 585.

by the Church of Aquileia demonstrated the reliability of the Marcian legend, and therefore the antiquity and prestige of the patriarchate. The Marcian tradition was then detailed in the final part of the acts, in which the foundation of Grado, a simple fortification (*munitio*), was traced back to the Aquileian patriarchs.<sup>80</sup>

The *dossier* assembled by Maxentius was effective because it was not addressed to the local communities of northeastern Italy but rather to a Carolingian audience, made up of the bishops gathered there and the envoys of the pope and the emperors; and it was done through strictly Carolingian means. The resources of the past, such as the Marcian legend and the *Historia Langobardorum*, were placed at the service of present needs, through pathways also attested, for example, by the *ARF*.<sup>81</sup> The *libelli precum* were key to defining a common Christian culture in the Carolingian Empire.<sup>82</sup> The memory and the relics of St Mark were an integral part of this strategy, and served as the means for establishing the antiquity – and therefore the admissibility in the eyes of the Carolingian authorities – of a cult through its hagiography. Several scholars have identified an element of the *dossier* in the *Passio Hermachorae et Fortunati*, whose prologue, which was added to the original text on the cusp of the eighth and ninth centuries, is dedicated to Mark's mission in Aquileia.<sup>83</sup> The presence of the two papal delegates at the assembly in Mantua strengthens this hypothesis: the prologue of the *Passio* highlights the link between Peter and Mark and the derivation of the Church of Aquileia from the Roman Church.<sup>84</sup> Its inclusion among the *sacrae litterae* of Aquileia thus benefitted Maxentius's cause.

Despite the peremptory nature of the decisions taken in Mantua, the question was not resolved. The Aquileian offensive triggered reactions from various actors. In Grado they took the shape of written responses. In the *Carmen de Aquilegia numquam restauranda*, Maxentius, who was defined as *veneficus* and *venenosus*, was accused of having tried to trick three emperors – Charlemagne, Louis the Pious, and Lothar – in order to extend his ecclesiastical dominion over *totam Dalmatiam*.<sup>85</sup> The drafting of the *Passio Helari et Tatiani*, which was interpreted as a polemical response to the *Passio* of Hermachoras and Fortunatus, has been traced back to a similar initiative by Grado.<sup>86</sup>

Above all, Maxentius' reinterpretation of the past was revived and rejected by his opponents. In her edition of the *Translatio Sancti Marci*, Emanuela Colombi stressed its two-part structure: a historical prologue, dedicated to the origins of the Grado patriarchy, and the actual narrative of the translation.<sup>87</sup> The first part is presented as »a sort of ›reasoned – and manipulated – anthology‹ of selected passages from the *Historia Langobardorum*«, and a point-by-point response to the arguments that had decreed the Aquileian victory in 827.<sup>88</sup>

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80 *Concilium Mantuanum*, ed. Werminghoff, 588-589.

81 McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 31-54; Reimitz, *History*, 293-334.

82 Pilsworth, *Vile Scraps*, 178-180; Phelan, *Formation*, 249-252.

83 Picard, *Souvenir des évêques*, 414-415; Vocino, *Under the aegis*, 32-33.

84 *Passio Hermachorae*, ed. Chiesa, 171-176.

85 *Carmen de Aquilegia numquam restauranda*, ed. Dümmler; Gasparri, *Formation*, 40-42.

86 *Passio Helari et Tatiani*, ed. Cerno. For its attribution to Grado, Vocino, *Saints*, 288-291; for a different view, Cerno, *Aquileian patriarchate's title*.

87 Colombi, »Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias«, 76-81.

88 Colombi, »Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias«, 76; Colombi, *Alcune riflessioni*.



A comparison between the acts of Mantua and the prologue of the *Translatio* offers evidence for this interpretation. Both texts drew from the *Historia Langobardorum*, but in taking up the same passages, they collated and reworked them in opposite ways. In the prologue of the *Translatio*, the flight of Paul to Grado was placed within a broader historical context, defined by the Gothic wars and the Lombard invasion of the peninsula, in order to reconstruct the motivations behind it.<sup>89</sup> The change of the episcopal see was thus justified within a context of political and ecclesiastical transformations. The effort to establish the definitive character of this change, in contrast to what was stated in Mantua, was supported by a reference, absent in Paul the Deacon, to the council convened at Grado in 579, during which the bishops gathered there raised Grado to *totius Venetiae metropolis*.<sup>90</sup> The provision was also ratified *ex consensu beatissimi papae Pelagii*.<sup>91</sup> In other words, more than two centuries before the synod of Mantua disavowed the flight of Paul as a displacement of the patriarchal see, another synod, equally certified by the papal authority, had instead established that displacement as a definitive act.

The real trump card of Maxentius, as the author of the prologue well knew, was, however, the Marcan legend. Rather than attempting to discredit it, he cleverly reinterpreted the legend to support his rationale. Some of his reinterpretations of the narrative of Paul the Deacon concern the details of the transfer of the see that call into question the relics of Mark and Hermachoras. The text of the *Historia* had already been interpolated in the acts of Mantua, attributing to the patriarch the saving of the chairs of the two saints. The author of the prologue interpolated this interpolation, stating that it was not the chairs of Mark and Hermachoras that were being moved, but rather the bodies of the martyrs of Aquileia – including that of Hermachoras.<sup>92</sup> In his version the chair of Mark was sent to the patriarchs only at the beginning of the seventh century by the emperor Heraclius to seal the change of see.<sup>93</sup> The two texts therefore attributed this relic with very different functions. In the acts it was placed at the foundation of the Aquileian episcopal tradition, not interrupted by its temporary sojourn in Grado. In the prologue of the *Translatio*, Mark's chair served instead to renew the link between the saint and the patriarchate after a definitive transfer endorsed both by the pope and by the Byzantine emperors. The author of the *Translatio* echoed the importance attributed by the acts to the relics of Mark and Hermachoras, taking up the challenge and exploiting them to his advantage. In his account, after Paul's escape, the bond between the true patriarchs (of Grado) and St Mark was strengthened through the acquisition of a new relic; in other words, only thanks to the relocation of the see did Mark's chair come to Italy.

Maxentius' claims entailed a complex reworking of the past reinforced by references to ancient and prestigious relics. The writer of the prologue of the *Translatio* exploited the same arguments, but with a very different interpretation: he agreed to be judged by norms established by the Carolingians. However, even this was not considered sufficient. In addition to the textual strategies expressed in the prologue of the *Translatio*, the Venetian duchy

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89 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, ed. Colombi, 112-116.

90 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, ed. Colombi, 115-116.

91 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, ed. Colombi, 115-116.

92 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, ed. Colombi, 115.

93 *Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias*, ed. Colombi, 116.

went even further in its investment in relics of Mark by procuring his body.<sup>94</sup> The translation seems to have taken place between 827 and 829, in line with the needs and strategies of Venice and Grado in the aftermath of the pronouncements of the Mantuan synod. To safeguard the duchy's ecclesiastical and political autonomy, it reacted by resorting to a material shift of holiness. The translation allowed the dukes to enter into disputes that concerned them a great deal but from which they had been excluded when, after the Treaty of Aachen, the level of international relations was replaced by that of hierarchies between dioceses. The acquisition of new Marcan relics served to strengthen the apostolic identity of the patriarchate, placing it on an equal footing with Aquileia. In this way their owners, the dukes, carved out an unprecedented role in the dispute between Aquileia and Grado. The prologue of the *Translatio* and the translation belonged to the same context of political-ecclesiastical competition and appear to be united by their adherence to discourses and tools developed in a Carolingian context, which was linked to the cult of saints and relics. By agreeing to play according to the rules set by others, Venice and Grado astutely managed to preserve their ecclesiastical autonomy against Aquileian attempts to increase its influence.

[F. V.]

### Conclusions

In exploiting the translation of relics, the dukes of Venice and the princes of Benevento proved to be well informed about what was happening in the nearby Carolingian world and how to leverage new patterns of hagiographic promotion to their benefit. The translations discussed here occurred at a time when the relics of the saints began to circulate with renewed intensity throughout the Frankish Empire, taking on a new role within the machinery of political and social competition. For example, the *ARF* for 826 reported that Hilduin commissioned the translation of the body of St Sebastian to Soissons, and for 827, that Einhard did the same for Marcellinus and Peter to Seligenstadt.<sup>95</sup> Both elevated the status of the sanctuaries that hosted them to key places in the political and religious life of the empire. In 833 Louis the Pious was subjected to public penance in Soissons, in the basilica of St Mary, where the body *Sebastiani praestantissimi martyris* rested.<sup>96</sup> In his letters Einhard presented himself as the spokesman for his martyrs, who were assigned with the role of protecting the peace and stability of the empire.<sup>97</sup>

Given that the councils and capitularies had forbidden the raising of new figures to veneration, the acquisition of relics of established or acknowledged saints became the only way to make use of sainthood – a sainthood as far removed in time and space as possible – as an instrument to legitimize one's strategies or claims. The translations and their narrations – the *translationes* – are an indication of the position of those who performed them towards the Carolingian power and the rules it imposed on the cult of the saints. The very fact of resorting to the translation of relics underlined an adherence to the principles that guided this legislation, because it implied the exploitation of already existing saints rather than the creation of new holy figures. This is also true in the case

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94 Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 88-94.

95 *ARF*, a. 826; a. 827 ed. Kurze, 171-172; 174.

96 *Relatio Compendiensis*, ed. Booker, 15.

97 Sot, *Service de l'empire*.

of *furta sacra*, in which the violation of these rules by carrying out translations without authorization (and subsequently legitimizing the translations by narrating them) served to reinforce the Carolingian regulatory framework by the very fact of breaking it.<sup>98</sup> Both the legitimate translations and the thefts of relics (and the respective narratives), as they were configured in the Carolingian world, were products of the »Carolingian attempt to regulate the cult of saints«,<sup>99</sup> and therefore indicators of the level of success of this attempt.

Venice and Benevento were political entities on the peripheries of the empire, or rather, several empires. Through their proximity to and reliance on Carolingian political power, they accessed and astutely mimicked the strategies that were becoming the norm in the Carolingian sphere.<sup>100</sup> They did so by turning to prestigious saints from the past, for whom the *auctoritas passionum* and the *vitae meritis* were documented through hagiography beyond any reasonable doubt, and by welcoming their material remains. The choice was not necessarily entirely spontaneous: in the Venetian case of St Mark, his memory and his relics were first recalled by Maxentius of Aquileia. In the case of Benevento, the choice and the initiative were all down to the Siconids. However, both cases appear to reflect not only the existence of but also the adherence to a common language, the one developed in (and imported from) the Carolingian world, relating to the use of sainthood and relics to support political competitions. In Venice and Grado, in the need to respond to the patriarch of Aquileia with his own (and totally Carolingian) means and arguments, this language was combined with reinterpretations of the past and its sources. In Benevento, on the other hand, the Siconids appropriated the new concept of a *furtum sacrum* to give strength to their political ambitions, on the one hand in competition with the Tyrrhenian cities of Byzantine tradition and on the other in the representation of their political authority in the framework of their capital city.

Thus, neither the dukes of Venice nor the princes of Benevento limited themselves to absorbing the Carolingian language of sainthood and its instructions for use, but rather craftily re-employed it to pursue their own purposes, sometimes diverging from the interests of the Carolingians. The Venetian dukes used it to avoid being subjected to a politically very close figure to the Carolingians, i.e. Maxentius. The Siconids did so in an attempt to create a regional domination on the southern borders of the empire. In short, both showed that they understood the political value of discourses and textual tools developed in the Carolingian world, but also that they knew how to take advantage in multiform and above all autonomous ways.

It was not a one-way process. During the abbacy of Erlebald (822-838) in Reichenau, a monastery on Lake Constance awarded with royal protection, an anonymous monk recounted in the *Commemoratio brevis de miraculis Genesii* that, before arriving in the Alamannian monastery of Schienen, a relic of the martyr Genesius passed through Venice and was acquired through the mediation of Venetian *negotiatores*.<sup>101</sup> About half a century later, another monk from Reichenau reported in the *Translatio Ianuarii* that Januarius's relics had arrived in the monastery at the time of Louis II. The image of Venice and southern Italy as areas characterized by the translation of relics was therefore accepted in the Carolingian world and integrated into its narratives.

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98 Veronese, *Rispetto delle leggi*.

99 The reference here is to Fouracre, *Origins*.

100 Smith, *Old saints, new cults*; Vocino, *Traslazioni*.

101 *Commemoratio brevis*, ed. Wattenbach, 9.

*Acknowledgements*

This article has been published within the framework of the Mobility & Humanities project of the University of Padua's Department of Historical and Geographical Sciences and the Ancient World (DiSSGeA). The Mobility & Humanities project is funded as a Project of Excellence (2018-2022) by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR). The authors would like to thank Edward Schoolman for reading and improving the previous version of this text.

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### Abbreviations

AASS = *Acta Sanctorum*

ARF = *Annales regni Francorum*

BHL = *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1898-1899)

CCSL = *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*

CISAM = *Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*

MGH = *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*

EE = *Epistolae*

SS = *Scriptores*

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# The Translation of St Sylvester's Relics from Rome to Nonantola: Itineraries of *corpora sacra* at the Crossroads between Devotion and Identity in Eighth-Tenth-Century Italy

Edoardo Manarini\*

Pope Sylvester I (314-335) became an important figure in the political history of early medieval Italy. His legendary relationship with Constantine I (306-337), the first Christian emperor, played a significant role in establishing his ideological prominence. Declared a saint of the early Roman Church, Sylvester's relics did not gain much attention until the middle of the eighth century, when they became a source of competition. On the one hand, Roman popes venerated his body in the monastery of St Stephen and St Sylvester, founded by Pope Paul I around 760 inside the Eternal City; on the other hand, the Lombard king Aistulf and his brother-in-law, Abbot Anselm, claimed to have brought Sylvester's relics north, in order to have them buried in Anselm's newly founded monastery of Nonantola in the Po Valley. Scholars would appear to have overlooked this major issue when investigating the relationship between Lombard elite society and Roman popes in the eighth century. This article will therefore consider the dates, forms, and narratives of the *translatio* of St Sylvester in order to evaluate Nonantola's political and ideological involvement in this »holy« movement. The main argument is that through the »journey« of Sylvester's relics within the Lombard kingdom, King Aistulf was able to increase his prestige and political influence. For its part, Nonantola rewrote the history of its origins by centring it on the relics of the Constantinian pontiff and those of Pope Hadrian I, in order to claim political and spiritual primacy throughout the medieval period.

*Keywords:* Carloman and St Sylvestre on Mount Soratte; translations of relics; St Sylvester of Nonantola; hagiography; Pope Sylvester I; Lombard kingdom; St Sylvester in Capite; Pope Paul I

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\* Correspondence details: Edoardo Manarini, Dipartimento di Studi Storici, Università di Torino, Palazzo Nuovo – Via S. Ottavio 20, 10124 Torino, Italy; email: edoardo.manarini@unito.it.



In recent times, the role of royal abbeys and monasteries in the political context of early medieval Italy has been examined from the innovative perspective of fiscal estates.<sup>1</sup> This strand of research relates to the broader topic of fiscal properties in the kingdom of Italy under the Lombards and Carolingians. In recent years the topic in question has attracted renewed attention from historians interested in assessing the extent of such properties, their distribution and their economic and political value for royal power holders. This renewed perspective on public assets has also made it possible to acquire a different awareness of the role of royal abbeys and monasteries, which are now acknowledged to be an integral part of the system.<sup>2</sup> After the vain attempts made by the Lombard king Liutprand (712-744) to safeguard the royal patrimony against possible unlawful acts at the hands of minor officials, the *actores* of the kingdom, the brothers Ratchis (744-749/756-757) and Aistulf (749-756) sought to find another way to ensure exclusive royal control over fiscal properties.<sup>3</sup> The two kings followed a strategy based on exceptions that entailed the founding or endowment of large monasteries with considerable public resources, as a way of freeing them from the control usually exercised by the *actores regni*. This is the case with St Sylvester of Nonantola, whose founder, Anselm, obtained very substantial fiscal endowments from his brother-in-law, in areas ranging from the Apennines to the Po.<sup>4</sup>

These powerful and wealthy monastic foundations, of course, also carried crucial spiritual power within the kingdom, especially in relation to the conduct and prestige of individual kings. The prayers recited by the monks and devotion to the saints they venerated in their churches constituted a constant and tangible source of support for the *stabilitas regni* of early medieval kings. It is within this context that we can best appreciate Paul the Deacon's account of how King Liutprand organised an expedition to Sardinia to retrieve the remains of St Augustine, which had been brought to the island by African bishops exiled by the king of the Vandals Thrasamund in 486.<sup>5</sup> In the early eighth century, »Saracen« raids became increasingly destructive, even in Sardinia,<sup>6</sup> also threatening the saint's relics in their new location in the city of Carales (Cagliari), which seemed no longer safe enough to house such an important treasure for Christendom as a whole. The Lombard king therefore had Augustine's bones retrieved and then buried, with all honours, in the monastery of St Pietro in »Ciel d'oro« near Pavia, a symbol of royal power at the very heart of the kingdom of Italy.<sup>7</sup>

In this article, I would like to retrace the story of the relics of the pope saint Sylvester I (314-335) in the eighth century. Like Augustine, bishop of Hippo Regius, after his death Sylvester was transported to various places, evidently for the purpose of exploiting the symbolic, religious and political value of his relics, insofar as the papal tradition had attributed to this pontiff the conversion of Emperor Constantine, and hence of the whole empire, as

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1 See Lazzari, *Patrimoni femminili*; Lazzari, *Tutela del patrimonio fiscale*; Loré, *Monasteri, re e duchi*. On fiscal estates in the early middle ages, see Bougard and Loré, *Biens public*; Tomei and Vignodelli, »Dark Matter«.

2 On St Sylvester of Nonantola, see Manarini, *Politiche regie e attivismo*; Manarini, *Politiche regie e conflitti*.

3 Lazzari, *Tutela del patrimonio regio*, 11.

4 See Manarini, *Politiche regie e attivismo*, 18-23.

5 Bede, *De temporum ratione*, 66, ed. Jones, 535; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, 6.4, ed. Bethmann and Waitz, 181. See Di Muro, *Uso politico*; Stone, *St. Augustine's Bones*; Tomea, *Intorno a S. Giulia*, 34-36.

6 Cosentino, *Byzantine Sardinia*, 351.

7 Pani Ermini, *La Sardegna*, 300.



early as the fifth century.<sup>8</sup> According to the Roman perspective, Pope Sylvester I was the linchpin of the »Constantinian turn«, insofar as he was responsible for the emperor's conversion. After embracing the new religion according to the Roman faith, Constantine was able to support Christianity throughout the Roman world and to assign Rome undisputed primacy within Christendom. However, the historical sources paint a substantially different picture, in which no particularly significant events stand out in Sylvester's twenty-year-long pontificate.<sup>9</sup> Sylvester did not take part in the two great ecumenical councils held during his papacy, the Council of Arles in 314 and that of Nicaea in 325, nor did his legates play any notable role.<sup>10</sup> The most reliable historical information about Constantine's baptism is provided by St Jerome, who draws a different picture still: in all likelihood, the emperor was baptised only a short time before his death and certainly embraced the Arian brand of Christianity through the influence of the Arian bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia.<sup>11</sup> The whole legend of Sylvester, therefore, was fabricated for the purpose of obliterating the memory of Constantine's Arian baptism and of changing his story by placing Rome and its bishops at the centre of Christendom. Starting with accounts of Constantine's baptism, the legend soon took shape in a first written form, which scholars date to the years between the late fifth century and the beginning of the sixth, during Symmachus' pontificate (498-514).<sup>12</sup> Over time, this initial core expanded considerably, developing into the *Silvesterlegende*.<sup>13</sup> Sylvester became a confessor and champion of orthodoxy who had led an exemplary life, performed miracles, triumphed in disputes with demonic creatures, and finally received the Donation of Constantine.<sup>14</sup> We find all this in the so-called *Actus Silvestri (AS)*, which became a key text in the development of Roman Catholic Christianity. At various moments in the Early Middle Ages, Roman pontiffs were to draw upon and revive the veneration of Sylvester, to suit contingent political aims and memorialisation strategies. It is within this framework that the story of St Sylvester's relics and their movements takes place.<sup>15</sup> But things are somewhat more complicated and contradictory, since throughout the Middle Ages – and even beyond – two major monasteries vied for his remains: the Abbey of St Sylvester of Nonantola and the Roman monastery of St Sylvester *in Capite*.

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8 See also, for further readings, Pohlkamp, Kaiser Konstantin; Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*; Wirbelauer, Riche mémoire. On the account provided by the *Liber Pontificalis* on the life of Sylvester I (n. 34), see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention*, 97-100.

9 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri* tra Oriente e Occidente, 241.

10 Scorza Barcellona, *Silvestro I*.

11 Jerome, *Chronicon*, a. 337, ed. Helm, 234. In his *continuatio* of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Rufinus of Aquileia re-elaborated the figure of Constantine in a doctrinal key, while avoiding the story of the baptism: Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri* tra Oriente e Occidente, 247.

12 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri* tra Oriente e Occidente, 242.

13 See Levison, *Konstantinische Schenkung*.

14 On the category of confessor saints, see Bartlett, *Saints and Worshippers*, 16-19.

15 On the hagiographical genre of *translationes*, see Heinzelmann, *Translationsberichte*. An overview of the development and regulation of the veneration of relics in the Early Middle Ages is provided in this issue by Veronese and Zornetta, *Holiness on the move*. On translations of relics in Lombard and Carolingian Italy, see Tomea, *Intorno a S. Giulia*; Vocino, *Traslazioni di reliquie*; Veronese, *Rispetto delle leggi*.

The aim of my article is to consider dates, actions and narratives associated with the *translatio* of St Sylvester in order to evaluate the political and ideological implications of this »holy« movement. First, I will examine the hagiographical dossier from Nonantola, and particularly the text about the *translatio*, for the purpose of setting the account of King Aistulf and Abbot Anselm's transfer of Sylvester's body in the political context of the mid-eighth century.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, after a short investigation of the relations between the monastery of St Sylvester *in monte Soracte* and Carloman son of Charles Martel, I will turn to the Roman side, by examining the papal version of the event, which took place after the incursion by the Lombard army. The main sources here are the lives of Popes Stephen II and Paul I featured in the *Liber Pontificalis* (*LP*), some letters which these pontiffs sent to the Frankish king Pippin, and documents pertaining to the founding of the monastery of St Sylvester *in Capite*. Lastly, returning to Nonantola, I will analyse how the monastic community responded to this dispute, and particularly how it redeveloped the memory of the translation of the relics and of the very founding of the abbey in accordance with new political requirements that emerged over the course of the Middle Ages.

### **King Aistulf and the Nonantolan translatio**

*The Acta sanctorum of Nonantola and the Text of the translatio Silvestri*

In the medieval period, the Abbey of Nonantola boasted a rich and valuable library.<sup>17</sup> This was first established by its founder Anselm (c.730-803) in the early years of the community, and it was then enlarged by his successors through acquisitions and the work carried out by copyists in the adjacent *scriptorium*. In the modern age most of the codices were gradually transferred to Rome and today the abbey holds only three manuscripts:<sup>18</sup> a late eleventh-century Gradual;<sup>19</sup> the so-called »Gospel Book of Matilda of Tuscany«, also from the late eleventh century;<sup>20</sup> and the hagiographical codex entitled *Acta sanctorum*.

This codex was bound in the eighteenth century by putting together two existing manuscripts. In total it comprises four separate codicological units, which, on palaeographical grounds, can be dated to the years between the late tenth century and the beginning of the twelfth.<sup>21</sup> These quires bring together all the forms of veneration and hagiographical legends associated with the abbey. In the early years, these legends must have been transmitted in a purely oral form. Then, between the tenth and eleventh centuries, the monastic community felt the need to record in writing the hagiographical and memorial material on which it based its identity and its political claims.<sup>22</sup> A palaeographical analysis of the handwriting can

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16 On the attention Lombards devoted to Roman relics, see Ammannati, *La lettera papiracea*.

17 Pollard, »Libri di scuola spirituale«, 332. Branchi, *Scriptorium*. On the importance of the exploitation of the written word for early medieval monasteries, see Smith, *Aedificatio sancti loci*.

18 See Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 115-119.

19 See Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 230-233.

20 See Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 254-262.

21 Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 272; Golinelli, *Agiografia monastica*. See also the detailed description in Parente and Piccinini, *Splendore riconquistato*, 125-132.

22 On the practice of historiography at Nonantola, see Frison, *Note di storiografia*. A survey on the polysemic uses of the past is given in Innes, *Introduction: using the past*; see also Geary, *Phantoms*. On relations between oral and written tradition, see Goody, *The Power*.

therefore provide a rough date for the texts, although this does not necessarily coincide with the moment in which the narratives were originally drafted. Some internal textual evidence suggests that there is a likely temporal rift between the development of the stories and the redaction of the manuscript we have. Let us take a brief look at the four codicological units before focusing on the one that is of most interest for the present article.

The first codicological unit includes a life of the founder, Abbot Anselm,<sup>23</sup> a list of the abbots of the monastery, and the transcription of some letters from Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) concerning the autonomy of abbeys with respect to bishops. Although it is most likely that the texts were developed earlier, the handwriting can be dated to the early twelfth century, which makes this section the latest of the four.<sup>24</sup> Originally it must have made up the final part of another manuscript, as the *folia* are numbered in Roman numerals from 276 to 283. The same section was also the last to be bound with the other quires to create the present codex.

The second codicological unit constitutes the earliest and original nucleus of the Nonantolan hagiographical collection. It consists of the *Vita sancti Silvestri*, written in a measured and calligraphic Carolingian minuscule which may be dated to the last decades of the tenth century.<sup>25</sup> The text belongs to the so-called C version of the *AS*. Ever since the research conducted on the complex tradition of this text, first by Wilhelm Levison and later by Wilhelm Pohlkamp, three different versions have been identified, A, B, and C.<sup>26</sup> The studies in question aimed to produce a critical edition of the text, but this has yet to be published, owing to the large number of witnesses – roughly 300 codices in Latin, 90 in Greek, and several in Syriac.<sup>27</sup> Version A is the earliest of the three main redactions; it is written in Latin and was first recorded in manuscript form in the tenth century. The second-earliest version is B, which is characterised by a new prologue assigning the work to Eusebius of Caesarea; its manuscript tradition can be traced back to the eighth century. Finally, the most recent version, C, combines the previous two with certain additions; most significantly, it draws upon *LP*. No manuscripts earlier than the mid-ninth century are preserved for this version.<sup>28</sup>

It is noteworthy that the veneration of Sylvester also reached its peak in three moments: the first occurred between the fifth and the sixth century, when Pope Symmachus established the first core of the Sylvester cult and dedicated to the saint the *titulus Equitii* on the Esquiline (the current church of San Martino ai Monti).<sup>29</sup> The second occurred in the seventh

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23 *BHL* 541; edited in *Vita Anselmi abbatis Nonantulani*, ed. Waitz, 566-570; *Vita di sant'Anselmo*, ed. Bortolotti, 255-263.

24 Golinelli, *Agiografia monastica*, 24.

25 Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 273. The hypothesis of the end of the tenth century is proposed by Golinelli, *Agiografia e culto*, 33; instead inclined towards the eleventh century are Ludwig Bethman in *Vita Anselmi abbatis Nonantulani*, ed. Waitz, 566; Gaudenzi, *Monastero di Nonantola*, 279; Bortolotti, *Antica vita*, 178.

26 See Levison, *Konstantinische Schenkung*; Pohlkamp, *Tradition und Topographie*.

27 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri tra Oriente e Occidente*, 242.

28 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 5. It is also the only one printed in Mombricitius, *Sanctuarium sive Vitae Sanctorum*, ed. Quentin and Brunet, 508-531.

29 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri tra Oriente e Occidente*, 242. See Boaga, *Complesso titolare*. On the division of the city of Rome in twenty-five *tituli*, see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention*, 57; Guidobaldi, *Organizzazione dei tituli*.

century, under Sergius I's pontificate (687-701), when there is evidence of the existence of an oratory dedicated to St Sylvester in the Lateran palace.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the third moment was in the mid-eighth century – the very period we are focusing on – when Pope Paul I founded the monastery of St Sylvester *in Capite* and Pope Hadrian I officially recognised the *AS*' narrative by mentioning it in two letters, addressed to Emperor Constantine VI (790-797) and Charlemagne (768-814).<sup>31</sup> Until a critical edition of this text becomes available, it will be impossible to draw a close correspondence between these three moments and the different redactions of the text. However, as we shall see in the following pages, interesting correlations can be found between the political events of the eighth century and redaction C, the earliest manuscripts of which date from the middle of the following century. In the Nonantolan hagiographical codex, therefore, we find a late tenth-century redaction of version C, accompanied by an account of the *translatio* of Sylvester's body to Nonantola in the mid-eighth century.<sup>32</sup>

The third codicological unit is devoted to the veneration of the martyr saints Synesius and Theopompus of Jerusalem, whose bodies were transferred to Nonantola from a small church in the Veneto attached to the monastery after the Hungarian invasions of the early tenth century.<sup>33</sup> The text covers the *passio* of the two martyrs, the translation of the relics to Nonantola, and the miracles worked by the two saints' bodies.<sup>34</sup> It may be dated to the mid-eleventh century.<sup>35</sup> This account is the most original one in the context of the Nonantolan hagiography, as it draws more directly upon the Benedictine hagiographical tradition, leaving aside the usual political and patrimonial issues recurring in the other texts.

Also dating from roughly the same period is the fourth and last codicological unit, which presents the *Constitutum Constantini* and the life of Pope Hadrian I. With the addition of the *Constitutum* to the Nonantolan hagiographical tradition, we have the *Silvesterlegende* in all of its various constitutive elements: the *AS*, the *translatio*, and, of course, the *Constitutum Constantini*, which represents the final redevelopment of the relations between Sylvester and Constantine.<sup>36</sup> This last account was put together between the eighth and the ninth century, probably in a Roman milieu.<sup>37</sup>

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30 *Liber Pontificalis*, 1.86, ed. Duchesne, 371.

31 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri* tra Oriente e Occidente, 245-246.

32 *BHL* 7736, 7736a, 7737; *De translatione sancti Silvestri*, ed. Bortolotti, 269-271.

33 See Bellelli, *I codici latini*.

34 *BHL* 8118 (*passio*), 8115 (*translatio*)

35 Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 273.

36 See *Constitutum Constantini*, ed. Fuhrmann.

37 On the *Constitutum Constantini* see Levison, *Konstantinische Schenkung*. Although it was probably composed in a Roman context, its composition among the Franks has, however, been proposed. On the latter hypothesis, see Fried, *Donation of Constantine*; recently, the Roman origin was maintained in Goodson and Nelson, *The Roman contexts*. In 1974, Pietro De Leo proposed that the *Constitutum* was written in Rome by a Greek monk who fled there after the iconoclastic crisis, maybe staying in the Greek monastery of St Sylvester *in Capite*: De Leo, *Constitutum Constantini*.

The life of Pope Hadrian I is narrated in two versions, in verse and in prose.<sup>38</sup> The contents are roughly the same, but, of course, the second version is more detailed and it is intended for a learned public, mostly consisting of clerics. The one hundred verses of the poetic version of the life are instead addressed to the *concio plebis*, the assembly of the people of Nonantola, who would probably listen to a recitation of the pope's deeds on what, according to the abbey's liturgical calendar, was his feast day, possibly 8th July.<sup>39</sup> This was believed to be the day of his death – at least at Nonantola – because of the fortuitous circumstances of Pope Hadrian III's death near the monastery in 885 on that very day.<sup>40</sup> The memory of Pope Hadrian III's death – and of the burial of his body in the abbatial church – was thus intentionally kept vague by the monks in order to establish the local veneration of Hadrian I. Scholars investigating the two texts have long wondered which was composed first. Judging from the textual motifs and the two modes of fruition, it is most commonly held nowadays that the two texts were composed around the same time, with two different target audiences in mind.<sup>41</sup>

Let us now return to the section dedicated to St Sylvester in order to add some philological details before dealing with its content. As already mentioned, the great hagiographical codex from Nonantola devotes an entire section to St Sylvester's life in its C version. It is noteworthy that this is the only redaction to mention the pontiff's death and his burial in the Priscilla cemetery along the Via Salaria, a few miles north of Rome.<sup>42</sup> This detail may have been added to the legend in the eighth century, which is to say when St Sylvester's relics started attracting some interest even outside the Church of Rome: the latter would have felt the need to reaffirm that their current location was the original one, which had remained unchanged since the fourth century.

Likewise, the account of the translation of the relics is recorded in a small number of codices, all belonging to redaction C. In his edition of the entire Nonantolan hagiographical corpus, produced in the late nineteenth century, Pietro Bortolotti identified another six witnesses in addition to the Nonantolan one – three preserved in France, three in Belgium.<sup>43</sup> From a palaeographical standpoint, the version preserved at Nonantola is the earliest, since it is written in a late tenth-century Caroline minuscule.<sup>44</sup> Over the course of its history, the

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38 *BHL* 3737, 3738; both texts are edited in Gaudenzi, *Monastero di Nonantola*, 280-312.

39 In the same quire as the life of Abbot Anselm, a mass for Pope Hadrian's feast day has also been copied; see Golinelli, *Agiografia e culto*, 45.

40 *Liber Pontificalis* 2.112, ed. Duchesne, 191; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 885, ed. Pertz, 401-402.

41 Ropa, *Agiografie e liturgia*, 43-44.

42 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri tra Oriente e Occidente*, 242; Scorza Barcellona, *Silvestro I. On the matrona Priscilla and the cemetery named after her*, see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention*, 91, 122.

43 Bortolotti, *Antica vita*, 178. Quoting the *BHL* online database, Golinelli (*Agiografia monastica*, 28) indicates sixteen manuscripts attesting the first version of the *translatio* (*BHL* 7736), one for the second (*BHL* 7736a) and twelve for the third (*BHL* 7737). However, a first analysis of the catalogues of the various libraries has shown that these data are groundless.

44 Bortolotti, *Antica vita*, 178, but the dating to the late tenth century is proposed by Golinelli, *Agiografia e culto*, 33.

manuscript must also have served a liturgical function, since in the margins, for the whole length of the text, the pages bear rubrics dividing it by *lectiones*. Their enumeration, which from the third *lectio* to the last, the eighth, is given in Arabic numerals, enables us to date the manuscript to the thirteenth century, and hence to confirm the enduring use of this text in the everyday life of the monastic community.<sup>45</sup>

Scholars have yet to examine the philological relations between the Nonantolan witness and the other six, later, transalpine manuscripts, so it is impossible to propose a *stemma codicum* for the text. As far as dates are concerned, Troyes MGT anc. 7, Paris BNF lat. 3788 and Bruxelles KBR 5519-5526 have been dated to the twelfth century; Namur MAAN vil. 15 and Bruxelles KBR 206 to the thirteenth; and Bruxelles KBR 8515 to the fifteenth. Bortolotti thus based his edition on the earliest Nonantolan witness – even though he regarded it as more recent than the latest studies have shown it to be – and was only able to check the variants in three of the six transalpine manuscripts.<sup>46</sup> Bortolotti also discovered a *recensio brevior* of the text in a codex from the Philipps Collection of the Brussels Royal Library (KBR),<sup>47</sup> which he believed to belong to a different tradition from that of the Nonantolan version present in the other manuscripts.<sup>48</sup>

Let us now turn to examine the content of the *translatio Silvestri* and try to set it in its historical context, since the veneration of Pope Sylvester I stretched back to the very origins of the abbey. The monks maintained that the saint's body had been retrieved in Rome by the Lombard king Aistulf, who had then handed it over to his brother-in-law Anselm, in order for it to be preserved in his monastery. In the early years multiple names were associated with the abbey, but in the tenth century Nonantola exclusively came to be named after St Sylvester. In the following section, I will discuss the events which occurred in the mid-eighth century, as these constitute an essential starting point for grasping the memorial and identity-building strategies adopted by the monks over the course of the following centuries.

#### *King Aistulf's Military Expedition of 755*

The events related to the *translatio* took place in the context of King Aistulf's military operations against the Roman duchy between 755 and 756, when Lombard troops occupied the territory and besieged Rome for almost three months. In the early years of his reign (749-752), Aistulf pursued a bold expansionist policy which enabled him to conquer almost all of the central northern Italian territories still nominally under Constantinople's control.<sup>49</sup> The king then took advantage of his dominant position to strike a forty-five-year peace agreement with the newly elected Pope Stephen II.<sup>50</sup> However, the situation changed radically for

45 On the liturgical use of the *translatio*, see Tiraboschi, *Storia dell'augusta badia* 1, 67; on Nonantolan liturgy in general, see Ropa, *Agiografie e liturgia*.

46 Troyes MGT anc. 7, Namur MAAN vil. 15 and Bruxelles KBR 206.

47 *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Bruxelliensis* 2, 437-439. See the edition of the text in *Translatio Sancti Silvestri*, ed. Bortolotti, 272.

48 Bortolotti, *Antica vita*, 178.

49 On mid-eighth-century political events in Italy involving the Lombards, the Franks and Rome, see Delogu, *Lombard and Carolingian Italy*, 294-300; Gasparri, *Italia longobarda*, 100-106. A specific enquiry on Aistulf's political and military choices is provided by Hallenbeck, *Pavia and Rome*, 52-85. On the 756 siege of Rome, see Hallenbeck, *Rome under attack*.

50 See Noble, *Republic of St. Peter*, 71-78; Hallenbeck, *Pavia and Rome*, 52-59.



Aistulf following the pontiff's negotiations with Pippin III – who had just supplanted the Merovingian Childeric III on the Frankish throne (751)<sup>51</sup> – and his first Italian expedition in 754.<sup>52</sup> The siege of Rome may have been an attempt by the Lombard king to force Stephen II to grant the Lombards a more favourable agreement than the one they had been compelled to sign the previous year, under the threat of Pippin's army.<sup>53</sup>

The hagiographical narrative offers the following version of the story: after founding the monastery of Nonantola, which housed phalanges of monks right from the start,<sup>54</sup> Anselm decided to make the abbey the final resting place for St Sylvester's limbs – the Latin uses the word *artus*, which I will return to shortly. Anselm therefore asked the king, who found himself in the territory of the Roman duchy, to authorise the transportation of the holy relics from Rome. In this passage we catch a glimpse of the later Carolingian laws concerning the transfer of relics, which was only deemed legal if sanctioned by the authorities.<sup>55</sup> Aistulf agreed and so Anselm, escorted by a group of monks, was able to retrieve Sylvester's body – the text now uses the word *corpus* – and to take it back to Nonantola in order to bury it in the abbey's church. As though to confirm the rightfulness and lawfulness of the translation, the saint already started working various miracles on the way back, showing his approval of Anselm's actions.<sup>56</sup>

The narrative, then, is quite straightforward: in order to increase the aura of sanctity and symbolic weight of his monastery, the founder decided to obtain one of the most coveted and valuable relics in Christendom. The circumstances were favourable because Aistulf was already near Rome – the hagiographer casually glosses over the very earthly military deeds in which the king was engaged – and was bound to consent to his brother-in-law's operation. As though heading a procession, Anselm entered Rome and *cum reverentia* removed the saint from his original grave. I have emphasised the two terms used by the Nonantolan hagiographer, *artus* and *corpus*, because the choice of these words might express a sort of *excusatio* to the Church of Rome and the pope, the previous keepers of the relics; as such, it might reflect a concern to avoid the charge of performing a *furtum sacrum*.<sup>57</sup> Anselm had set off with the intention of retrieving only the saint's limbs, which is to say one or more portions of what remained of his mortal body. In all likelihood, all that remained was bones, seeing that 400 years or more had gone by. It was only for reasons beyond Anselm's control – namely Aistulf's desire to retrieve the relics and the dilapidated condition of the Roman cemetery (although the hagiographer does not dwell on such matters) – that the Nonantolan mission ultimately returned with the whole *corpus*, which is to say with all that remained of Sylvester's body.

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51 See Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, 290-292.

52 See Gasparri, *Italia longobarda*, 105-107.

53 Hallenbeck, *Rome under attack*, 206.

54 On the historical consistency of this hagiographic *topos*, see Schmid, *Anselm von Nonantola*.

55 See Veronese, *Rispetto delle leggi*. On Carolingian regulation on the cult of saints, see Fouracre, *Origins of the Carolingians*.

56 *De translatione sancti Silvestri*, ed. Bortolotti, 269-271.

57 On the concept, see Geary, *Furta sacra*, 3-27.

This text supports two distinct levels of reflection on the events reported. First, this version of the story is told from the perspective of Nonantola, according to the earliest reconstruction. I will get back to later redevelopments shortly. One piece of historical information that seems plausible, as it is also reported by the Roman sources, is the role played by King Aistulf in the relics episode. The first level of reflection, therefore, concerns the political behaviour of the leading actors of the mid-eighth century. In other words, it consists in reflecting on the religious and symbolic motivations behind the retrieval of the relics of St Sylvester and their placement in the Abbey of Nonantola, which had been founded through the crucial contribution of Aistulf.

In a charter granted to the abbey by Louis the Pious and Lothar in 825, Anselm's church is said to have been dedicated to *omnium apostolorum* (to all the apostles), and to be the place where the body of St Sylvester rests, »in quo beatus Sylvester corpore requiescit«. <sup>58</sup> Only a few decades later, then, do we find some indirect evidence attesting to the translation of the relics. Given that we have no references to any translation from either the Carolingian period or the reign of Desiderius (757-774), Aistulf's successor, St Sylvester's relics – or part of them – must have been transported from Rome to Nonantola in the period indicated by the Nonantolan narrative. Just as King Liutprand (712-744) decided to retrieve the remains of a Church Father in order to enshrine them in the church in the capital of his kingdom, possibly the church dearest to him, <sup>59</sup> so King Aistulf sought to implement a similar plan by retrieving from Rome the relics of Sylvester, the pope who had converted Emperor Constantine, and hence the whole West, to Christianity. <sup>60</sup> As we shall see in the following section, the memory of St Sylvester and the tradition associated with him were to become a source of competition with the Carolingians, who, in those years, were busy consolidating and legitimising their royal power. <sup>61</sup>

Secondly, another level of reflection pertains to the memorial and identity-building discourses developed by the monastic community over the course of its history. The veneration of the saint at Nonantola is attested from the ninth century, when at least two copies of the *AS* had been copied following the C version, but without any reference to the relics of Sylvester. <sup>62</sup> It then intensified over the course of the tenth century, when the life and *translatio Silvestri* were copied in the manuscript which later became the ancient section of the *Acta sanctorum*. In this respect, the reception of Carolingian regulations in the narrative adaptation of the account suggests that this was first laid down before the drafting of the current Nonantolan manuscript, possibly in the late ninth or early tenth century. The cult was intended to celebrate the figure of Sylvester by establishing a direct parallel between the pope

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58 *DD Lu I*, ed. Kölzer, n. 249; *RI 1*, ed. Mühlbacher and Lechner, 321. The dedication to Sylvester is already mentioned in Charlemagne's diplomas for Nonantola: the first original is the second granted by the king in 780: *RI 1*, ed. Mühlbacher and Lechner, 96; *DD Kar I*, ed. Mühlbacher, n. 131.

59 Di Muro, *Usò politico*.

60 On Aistulf's symbolic and ideological programme, see Harrison, *Political rhetoric*, 250-251.

61 On the Pippinid conquest of Frankish royal power, see Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, 287-292; Goosmann, *Memorable Crises*, 159-204; Fouracre, *Long shadow*; Ricciardi, *Re e aristocrazia*.

62 St. Gallen 567 and Bamberg patr. 20. See Bischoff, *Manoscritti nonantolani*, 111-114; Branchi, *Scriptorium*, 175-178.

and the founder Anselm, and between Constantine and the Lombard king Aistulf, who was also praised as the founder of the abbey. This kind of hagiographical discourse was essentially designed to provide ideological support to the political claims of the abbey, whose political and spiritual influence had been waning significantly over the course of the tenth century.

*The Roman Account: Reticence and Sanctity*

*St Sylvester in Monte Soracte and Carloman's Retirement*

Before carefully examining the Roman version of what happened in 756, we must turn our attention to another monastic institution dedicated to the Constantinian pontiff, whose history appears to be closely related to the events we are investigating. In this case, what captures our interest is not so much the saint's relics, as the tradition of his veneration in the Roman area and its evolution over the course of the eighth century. The Roman monastery of St Sylvester *in monte Soracte* became particularly important for the cult of St Sylvester in this period through the action of Carloman, *maiordomus* of the Frankish kingdom of Austrasia (741-747), eldest son of Charles Martel and brother of Pippin III.<sup>63</sup>

Mount Soratte is a limestone mountain that dominates the Roman countryside. It rises in the Tiber Valley north of the Eternal City and its slopes were already a place of religious worship in Antiquity. The first Christian traces date back from the earliest days of Christianity in Rome and Latium, when many hermits established themselves on the summit of the mountain to flee the world and engage in contemplation.<sup>64</sup> Benedict, a monk of S. Andrea al Soratte who wrote a *chronica* in the late tenth century,<sup>65</sup> traces the founding of the *aeclesia* of St Sylvester *in monte Soracte* back to Damasus' pontificate (366-384). He credits the pope himself with having established the monastery, to mark the site where Sylvester had sought refuge from Constantine's persecution,<sup>66</sup> even if, according to his tale, the latter emperor was also involved in the foundation of the church.<sup>67</sup> This information, which is not recorded anywhere else, is clearly inspired by the *Silvesterlegende* laid down in the *AS*.<sup>68</sup> The first historical attestation dates from the late sixth century, when Pope Gregory the Great described the life and miracles of a monk residing in the monastery »quod Soracte monte situm est« in the first book of his *Dialogi*.<sup>69</sup> The monk in question was Nonnosus, the *praepositus* of the monastery around the mid-sixth century, who had already given proof of his profound saintliness and miraculous powers during his lifetime.<sup>70</sup>

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63 On Carloman's political career, see McKitterick, *Frankish Kingdoms*, 33-34; Goosmann, *Politics and penance*.

64 Canella, *Luoghi di culto*, 329.

65 See *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, VII-XX.

66 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, 9.

67 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, 6.

68 Mombricitus, *Sanctuarium sive Vitae Sanctorum*, ed. Quentin and Brunet, 511.

69 Gregory the Great, *Dialogi*, 1.7, ed. de Vogüé, 66.

70 See *Acta Sanctorum*, 2nd September.

The most detailed source concerning the history of the monastery between the sixth and the eighth century is undoubtedly monk Benedict's chronicle, even though it was only composed in the late tenth century. In addition to drawing upon other historical accounts in relation to earlier periods – including the Venerable Bede, the *LP*, and Gregory the Great –<sup>71</sup> it is most likely that Benedict had exclusive access to legends and oral accounts of the history of the first monastery *in monte Soracte* and that he incorporated them into his work. However, by the time of his writing, the dedication of the monastery to St Sylvester had certainly been established for at least two centuries, so much so that the pontiff's tomb could be placed inside the abbatial church, along with a commemorative tombstone.<sup>72</sup> It is reasonable to assume, then, that the attribution of the dedication of the monastery to Sylvester was an effort on the chronicler's part to backdate the cult of the saint *ab origine*. Besides, the very legend featured in the *AS* affirms the holiness of Mount Soratte for the first time by stating that St Peter and St Paul appeared to the emperor in a dream, ordering him to seek out Sylvester, whose hiding place they revealed to him.<sup>73</sup> Given that the two saints' intervention represents the centrepiece of Constantine's conversion story, Giuseppe Tomassetti has suggested that the first church erected on the slopes of the mountain was dedicated to Rome's two most prominent saints.<sup>74</sup>

In this respect, what we know about the cult of St Nonnosus seems to confirm the hypothesis that the figure of Sylvester was originally assigned less weight. Nonnosus would appear to have been the primary object of devotion in the earliest monastic community *in monte Soracte*, even though his name is always associated with that of Sylvester.<sup>75</sup> If we once again turn to the only source close to the events in question, we realise that Pope Gregory makes no mention of the dedication of the monastery, as the focus of his narrative is specifically on the saint's life and deeds. After the miracles performed in his own lifetime, according to Pope Gregory, once deceased, Nonnosus' body was buried in the church on the slopes of the mountain, where he was venerated as a saint.<sup>76</sup> In the mid-eighth century even King Ratchis (744-749) and Queen Tassia made a pilgrimage to Nonnosus' tomb. Beyond Ratchis' veneration for the saint, this journey also shows that the Lombard king was always eager to control the shifting southern borders of his kingdom, and always kept an eye on Rome and southern Italy.<sup>77</sup> To strengthen Nonnosus' link with the monastery, monk Benedict recounts that while the royal couple was praying by his relics, the saint performed a miracle by freeing a man from the evil spirits possessing him.<sup>78</sup>

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71 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, XXII-XXIII.

72 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, 10.

73 Mombritius, *Sanctuarium sive Vitae Sanctorum*, ed. Quentin and Brunet, 511. See also Canella, *Storia e leggenda*, 32-34.

74 Tomassetti, *Della campagna romana*, 557; Canella, *Luoghi di culto*, 329.

75 See Tomassetti, *Della campagna romana*, 555-560.

76 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, 22.

77 See, in this volume, Heath, *Aspects of movement and mobility*.

78 *Chronicon di Benedetto*, ed. Zucchetti, 66.

In the mid-eighth century, the situation changed drastically and the monastery *in monte Soracte* acquired European-wide relevance. It was at this time that the abbey came to be unambiguously associated with St Sylvester and his cult, even though no mention of his relics is made in our sources.<sup>79</sup> Even more interestingly, this link emerges from Frankish sources, those closest to the Carolingian royal household. The Pippinids' interest in the cult of this saint no doubt introduced a significant novelty in the papal tradition of the discourse on Sylvester, since for the first time a political actor outside the Roman milieu appropriated it in order to legitimise his recent acquisition of royal power.

Following his victorious campaign against the Alamanni in 746,<sup>80</sup> according to the *Annales Regni Francorum (ARF)*,<sup>81</sup> Carloman confided to his brother Pippin III that he wished to leave the saeculum in order to become a monk. The following year he reached Rome, was tonsured, and founded a monastery dedicated to St Sylvester on Mount Soratte. Some time later, Carloman moved to Monte Cassino and took up the monastic life there.

The version of the *ARF* in the so-called *continuatio Einhardi* added two more highly interesting details which, as we shall see, were later rearranged in the last version of the event provided by Einhard's *Vita Karoli*. The account of the *continuatio* features a direct reference to the *AS* – although no mention is made of the Church of Rome – with regard to the reason for Carloman's founding of the Soratte monastery: »ubi quondam tempore persecutionis, quae sub Constantino imperatore facta est, sanctus Silvestrus latuisse fertur«. Carloman would have chosen to move to Monte Cassino after receiving virtuous advice from someone whose identity is not mentioned.<sup>82</sup> As the narrative of the *ARF* provides the »official« Carolingian version of the event,<sup>83</sup> it must be recalled that Carloman belonged to the kinship branch that had lost the contest for the throne.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, the episode brings out powerfully the desire to establish a direct link between the Pippinids, who were seeking to legitimise their royal power after the coup of 751, and the Roman and Christian imperial tradition embodied by St Sylvester.

However, other sources complicate the picture. The *Annales Mettenses Priores* reveal that the advice in question was offered by Pope Zachary, thereby bringing the pontifical voice into the narrative, which had been noticeably absent in the two previous versions. Like the *ARF*, the *Annales Mettenses* were drafted in a milieu very close to the Carolingian family: they may have been written by Gisela herself, Charlemagne's sister and the abbess of Chelles.<sup>85</sup> Their

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79 A document from the register of Pope Gregory II (715-731) already records the dedication to Sylvester: *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, 2207, ed. Jaffé *et al.*, 255. However, since it survives only inside the *Collectio Canonum* of Deusdedit composed in the eleventh century, there is no need to refer to it here; see *Kanonessammlung des Kardinal Deusdedit*, 3.231, ed. Glanvell, 369.

80 *Annales Mettenses Priores*, a. 746, ed. Simson, 37. See Becher, *Verschleierte Krise*.

81 *Annales Regni Francorum*, a. 746, ed. Kurze, 6.

82 *Annales Regni Francorum*, a. 746, ed. Kurze, 7.

83 McKitterick, *Constructing the past*, 115.

84 The Carolingian accounts should therefore be read bearing that in mind, as pointed out by Goosmann, *Politics and penance*, 53.

85 See Nelson, *Gender and genre*.

account, though, presents the event in a more neutral form, so to speak, by leaving out the figure of Sylvester and focusing the whole action on the pontiff: having decided to leave his kingdom, Carloman moved to Rome, where Pope Zachary ordained him a monk and advised him to withdraw to Monte Cassino and live there under the guidance of Abbot Optatus (750-760).<sup>86</sup>

A very similar narrative, with no references to Sylvester or even Mount Soratte, is featured in the *LP*'s life of Zachary.<sup>87</sup> It is conceivable that Carloman's plans about Soratte were not received favourably in Rome, both because they would have been viewed as an interference in the cult of Sylvester, and because Stephen II's interlocutor had always been Pippin, not his brother.<sup>88</sup> So what was later recorded in the *LP* must be a watered-down version of the event, which already took account of the later compromises struck by the two parties – as we shall soon see.

On the Carolingian side, the final rereading of Carloman's actions was provided by Einhard in the *Vita Karoli*:<sup>89</sup> probably out of love of the contemplative life, Pippin's brother resigned from the secular government of the kingdom, travelled to Rome *in otium*, and then – after taking the monastic vows – moved to Mount Soratte. Here, around the church of St Sylvester, he built a monastery in which he hoped to find the tranquillity he was looking for, along with his brothers, who had joined him from across the Alps. However, throngs of noblemen started heading towards Rome from Francia, in order to visit Carloman, to the point that the latter decided to move away to escape the constant disturbance. Leaving Mount Soratte, he reached the monastery of St Benedict at Monte Cassino, where he lived out the rest of his days.<sup>90</sup>

Einhard does not assign the pontiffs any weight in the event but makes sure to distinguish between the existence of a church of St Sylvester on Mount Soratte and Carloman's monastic foundation. This subtle distinction may be regarded as the outcome of the negotiation between the Carolingians and the pontiffs: while being welcomed into the monastic world of Roman central Italy, Carloman did not appropriate the figure of St Sylvester. Once freed from the awkward self-legitimising discourse of the Carolingians, the saint's memory and cult would have remained exclusively connected to the Church of Rome and its popes – had it not been for Aistulf.

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86 *Annales Mettenses Priores*, a. 746-747, ed. Simson, 37-38.

87 *Liber Pontificalis*, 1.93, ed. Duchesne, 433. On Frankish additions in this *LP* section, see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention*, 210-216.

88 On Pope Stephen II's role in shaping the Carolingian-Roman allegiance, see Noble, *Republic of St. Peter*, 71-94; McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 146-148. For his part, Carloman served as Aistulf's envoy at Pippin's court in 754: Hallenbeck, Pavia and Rome, 77-78.

89 Later, Regino of Prüm also told of Carloman. He basically relied on the ARF account (recension B), but also expanded the tale in order to make a hero out of Carloman, an *exemplum memorabile*; see Goosmann, Politics and penance, 51-53.

90 Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, 2, ed. Holder-Egger, 4-5.



*Pope Paul I and the Roman Account on St Sylvester's Relics*

Let us now consider the relics episode from the Roman side.<sup>91</sup> King Aistulf's military operations in the Roman duchy in the late months of 755 are also associated with the removal of the relics by Roman sources, within the Church of Rome (the *LP*),<sup>92</sup> and by the *Codex Carolinus*. Although the *Codex* brings together letters which the pontiffs addressed to the Frankish court, the collection was commissioned by Charlemagne. The representation of power and relations which this collection provides should be regarded as a Frankish political statement, albeit one expressed through the papal voice.<sup>93</sup> However, the picture both these sources paint is an inconsistent one.

First of all, we can rely on three letters which Pope Stephen II sent King Pippin to ask for his aid against Aistulf's incursions into the duchy's territory and for troops to break the siege on Rome.<sup>94</sup> These letters describe the many acts of devastation perpetrated by the Lombards: outside the city, buildings, churches and monasteries were pillaged and set on fire; monks were murdered and nuns raped and killed; many Romans were seized as slaves or slain.<sup>95</sup> The life of the pontiff included in the *LP* adds further details concerning these events:

everything outside the city this pestilential (*pestifer*) Aistulf devastated with fire and sword, and thoroughly wrecked and consumed it, pressing mightily on so that he could capture this city of Rome. He even dug up the sacred cemeteries of the saints and stole many of their bodies, which was greatly to his own soul's detriment.<sup>96</sup>

Based on the expression »*multa corpora sanctorum [...] abstulit*«, subsequent chroniclers, as well as modern historians, have attributed generic *furta sacra* to Aistulf designed to breathe new spiritual life into the churches of Pavia and the kingdom through the relics of saints.<sup>97</sup> The only translation we can identify is precisely that of St Sylvester, although the Roman sources do not mention it explicitly.

A detailed analysis of the *LP*'s account, however, would appear to suggest that the whole passage on Aistulf must be interpreted in the light of the last sentence: »*ad magnum anime sue detrimentum*«. For obvious reasons, throughout the text the king is portrayed in totally negative terms, as a diabolical figure.<sup>98</sup> All value judgements aside, the biographer sought to demonstrate that the king's earthly behaviour was bound to have repercussions on his

91 For the earlier papal policy on relics, see Goodson, *Building for bodies*.

92 A comprehensive analysis of the text is provided by Capo, *Liber Pontificalis*; and now McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention*; see also Gasparri, *Italia longobarda*, 154-164.

93 Gasparri, *Italia longobarda*, 105. On the *Codex Carolinus*, see Van Espelo, *Testimony of Carolingian rule?*

94 *Codex Carolinus*, 8, 9, 10, ed. Gundlach, 494-503.

95 *Codex Carolinus* 9, ed. Gundlach, 498-500.

96 *Liber Pontificalis*, 1.94, ed. Duchesne, 451-452: »*Omnia extra urbem ferro et igne devastans atque funditus demolens consumpsit, imminens vehementius hisdem pestifer Aistulfus ut hanc Romanam capere potuisset urbem. Nam et multa corpora sanctorum, effodiens eorum sacra cymiteria, ad magnum anime sue detrimentum*«. The quote is from *Lives of the Eight-Century Popes*, 94, trans. Davis, 68. On this biography, see Gantner, *Lombard recension*, 68-70.

97 *Chronicon Salernitanum*, ed. Pertz, 475; *Pauli diaconi continuatio tertia*, ed. Bethmann and Waitz, 209. An enquiry about the relics Aistulf took can be found in Tomea, *Intorno a S. Giulia*, 41-46. Doubts as to what actually happened have also been expressed by Goodson, *Relics translation*, 125.

98 The life of Stephen II also exists in a so-called Lombard recension, which eliminates all the negative adjectives used to describe King Aistulf and the Lombards; see Gantner, *Lombard recension*; McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 52; Lidia Capo believes that the redaction is of Roman origin: Capo, *Liber Pontificalis*, 64-65.

soul. Aistulf's profanation of cemeteries and theft of numerous bodies of saints no doubt represented the culmination of a series of increasingly wicked behaviours certainly destined to seal his damnation. This hypothesis is confirmed by a document issued by Stephen II's successor, his brother Paul I, who ruled as pontiff between 757 and 767. On 2nd June 761, he founded a monastery near an urban residence of his for the safekeeping and veneration of many of the relics buried in cemeteries and catacombs outside the city walls.<sup>99</sup> This measure had become necessary because of the state of abandonment in which those ancient places of worship lay. The text explains how, in addition to the ravages of time, the tombs had recently suffered devastation at the hands of the Lombards, who had profaned, pillaged and demolished them, stealing the bodies of some saints: »quorundam sanctorum depredati auferentes secum deportaverunt corpora«. Therefore, the Lombard troops would appear to have stolen only some of these relics.

This deed is crucial for the dossier on St Sylvester's relics transmitted by the Roman tradition. The monastery founded by Paul I was dedicated precisely to saints Sylvester and Stephen and was conceived by the pontiff as a means to permanently enshrine the cult of St Sylvester in Rome by combining for the first time a dedication to the saint with the burial of his remains:

ut, quia beatus Silvester christianorum inluminator fidei, cuius sanctum corpus in nostro monasterio a nobis reconditum requiescit, pridem persecutionem paganorum fugiens conversatus est, iustum prospeximus, ut sub eius fuisset ditione, ubi ipsum venerandum requiescit corpus.<sup>100</sup>

To this day, the church preserves its original dedication, having acquired the name of St Sylvester *in Capite*, meaning precisely St Pope Sylvester I. The foundation charter itself, which is now lost, bore on the *verso* the date on which the two saints were buried in the new church, shortly after the founding day, 2nd June 761: the *corpus* of St Sylvester was brought to the monastery the following 9th June, that of St Stephen on 17th August.<sup>101</sup> The transfer of the relics from the cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria, outside the city of Rome, is further confirmed – as we shall see – by a letter that pontiff Paul I addressed to King Pippin not long afterwards, as well as by the account of this pope's life in the *LP*:

this holy prelate constructed from the ground up a monastery in his own house in honour of St Stephen the martyr and pontiff and St Sylvester, another pontiff and a confessor of Christ. He built a chapel on to this monastery's upper walls, and with great veneration he deposited their bodies there.<sup>102</sup>

99 *Concilia aevi Karolini*, 12, ed. Werminghoff, 64-70. On the eighth-century papacy's relics' policy, see Smith, *Care of relics*; Maskarinec, *City of Saints*.

100 *Codex Carolinus*, 42, ed. Gundlach, 556; see also *Regesto del monastero di S. Silvestro*, ed. Federici, 216-226.

101 *Concilia aevi Karolini*, 12, ed. Werminghoff, 65.

102 *Liber Pontificalis*, 1.95, ed. Duchesne, 464: »Hic sanctissimus presul in sua propria domu monasterium a fundamentis in honore sancti Stephani, scilicet martyris atque pontifices, necnon et beati Silvestri, idem pontificis et confessoris Christi construxit. Ubi et oraculum in superioribus eiusdem monasterii moeniis aedificans, eorum corpora magna cum veneratione condidit«. The quote is from *Lives of the Eight-Century Popes*, 85, trans. Davis, 81.

To complete the establishment of the cult of St Sylvester from a papal perspective, Paul I also needed to settle the issue of St Sylvester *in monte Soracte* and of its relationship with the Pippinid dynasty. The only sources about this are two letters which Paul I addressed to Pippin between 761 and 767. As these epistles too come from the *Codex Carolinus*, it is possible to interpret them on two distinct levels. The first letter, sent between 761 and 762, informs us that Carloman's presence on Mount Soratte was due to Pope Zachary, who had donated the monastery of St Sylvester to him. We further learn that Pippin later asked Paul I to donate the monastery to him, and that the pontiff granted his request.<sup>103</sup> It is immediately evident that this account conflicts with what the *LP* states in its life of Zachary, where no mention at all is made of Mount Soratte with reference to Carloman. Perhaps, as he could not deny the latter's involvement in the cult of Sylvester on Mount Soratte alongside his brother, Paul I sought at least to bring this involvement back within the pontifical orbit, by imagining that his predecessor was responsible for Carloman's presence on the mountain. It is more difficult to make sense of Pippin's request that the pope donate the same monastery to him, but it may reflect the king's desire to follow in his brother's footsteps and remain associated with the Roman Christian imperial tradition embodied by Sylvester.

Be that as it may, the issues would appear to have been settled for good shortly afterwards, as the second letter – already mentioned above, and written between 762 and 767 – informs us that the king of the Franks returned the monastery *in monte Soracte* to the pontiff, that the latter might complete the foundation of his own abbey of Saints Sylvester and Stephen: Pippin granted the pope possession of the other monastery of St Sylvester too »ad laudem Dei et vestri [i.e. Pippin's] memoriam«. <sup>104</sup> To further strengthen the political and ideological-symbolic relations between the Pippinids and the Church of Rome, Paul I enshrined the relic of St Denis which his brother Stephen II had brought back to Rome from Francia as a gift from Pippin in the new monastery of St Sylvester. Not only was an altar dedicated to the first Bishop of Paris inside the church, but his name was added to the dedication of the monastery itself.<sup>105</sup> The dedication was retained until the twelfth century.<sup>106</sup>

Paul I was thus able to bring together the tradition and cult of St Sylvester in a single place, under solid papal patronage. The memory of the saintly pontiff could only become associated with – and exploited by – the Frankish political authorities through the Church of Rome, which imposed itself as a mediator. The Pippinids/Carolingians thus agreed to leave the figure of Sylvester to the popes because, through their mediation, they would still be able to ensure the kind of legitimation of their own royal power that they had been seeking since the coup of 751.<sup>107</sup> However, the *Codex Carolinus* bears witness to Charlemagne's desire to preserve the memory of these events and of his uncle and father's connection with St Sylvester *in monte Soracte*: echoing earlier Frankish sources, these letters evoke the dynasty's direct relationship with the saintly pontiff.

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103 *Codex Carolinus*, 23, ed. Gundlach, 526-527.

104 *Codex Carolinus*, 42, ed. Gundlach, 554-556.

105 Hilduin, *Libro de sancto Dionysio*, ed. Waitz, 3. See Ferrari, *Early Roman Monastery*, 302-312; Goodson, *Rome of Pope Paschal I*, 214.

106 *Regesto del monastero di S. Silvestro*, ed. Federici, 220.

107 On the following developments, such as the choice of Saint Petronilla as the patron saint of the Frankish royal family and Paul I's *parrainage* to Pippin's daughter Gisela, see Goodson, *To be daughter*; McKitterick, *Charlemagne, Rome and the management*. In general, on the ability of the papacy as a political and cultural mediator, see Gantner, *Eighth-century papacy*.

The church of St Sylvester *in Capite* immediately became a place of worship and veneration on account of the many bodies of saints and martyrs – around fifty – which had been brought there from dilapidated cemeteries outside the city.<sup>108</sup> A set of inscriptions still preserved in the churchyard lists the *Dies nataliciorum* (feast days) of the saints found in the church, divided by gender.<sup>109</sup> Based on an analysis of the writing, the inscription has been dated to the period of Paul I's pontificate.<sup>110</sup>

The Roman tradition about the relics of St Sylvester is therefore connected to the pontificate of Paul I, who held the apostolic throne in the decade following King Aistulf's campaign against Rome. In my opinion, it is important to take this close time-frame into account. To sum up, according to the papal version of the story, Aistulf's Lombards devastated the cemetery areas around and outside the city, with the chief aim of pillaging them. During this looting, the Lombards also removed some relics and bodies of saints, whose names are not mentioned. Given the utter state of ruin of the sepulchres, and to avoid the complete deterioration of those precious relics, Paul I then decided to found the monastery of St Sylvester *in Capite*. Shortly after its founding, the pontiff also transferred there the bodies of the two titular saints of the monastery, St Sylvester and St Stephen. The fact that no mention is to be found of the translation performed by Anselm, along with the emphasis given specifically to the relics of St Sylvester, betrays the disposition of the Roman ecclesiastical authorities towards the Nonantolan claims: the translation, in their view, had never occurred and St Sylvester's relics had never left the Eternal City.

#### *A New Foundation Story for St Sylvester of Nonantola*

After the initial disputes in the second half of the eighth century, the controversy surrounding the relics of St Sylvester would appear to have cooled down, as the two contrasting positions became entrenched. While significant, the sources at our disposal do not allow us to clarify what really happened, that is, whether Sylvester's relics – as a whole or just a portion – were transferred from their original location on the Via Salaria to Nonantola in 756 or whether they were brought within the Aurelian walls, into the newly established Roman monastery of St Stephen, St Sylvester and St Dionysius in 761. But ultimately this is not the point.

In Rome, the version developed by Pope Paul I in the years just after Aistulf's expedition was laid down in its final form with the redaction of the *LP*, where it was featured within the account of the pontiff's life. By contrast, at Nonantola, probably between the tenth and the eleventh century – as we will now see – the need must have been felt to redevelop the original story of the translation of the saint, which was established with the text appended to the account of his life. Perhaps the urge to redevelop the tradition of the founding of the abbey was due to the need to counter the version endorsed by Pope Paul I in Rome. No doubt, the monks sought to consolidate the ideological claims made by their abbey, which aimed to reassert its pre-eminence within European Christendom, since the tenth century had brought a marked decline in its political and spiritual prestige compared to the previous century.<sup>111</sup>

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108 Goodson, *Rome of Pope Paschal I*, 208; on Paul I's policy towards relics, see *ibid.*, 213-216.

109 Goodson, *Rome of Pope Paschal I*, 209-210.

110 *Monumenta epigraphica*, 37.1-2, ed. Silvagni. See Gray, *Paleography*, 52-53.

111 See Manarini, *Politiche regie e attivismo*, 58-74; Gelichi, *Monastero nel tempo*; Golinelli, *Nonantola nella lotta*.

The text of the *translatio* Silvestri we are focusing on was probably composed on the basis of oral accounts and legends dating back to the period in which the monastery was founded. The text continued to be copied and regarded as useful – not least for liturgical purposes – up until the late tenth century, judging from the handwriting in the surviving manuscript.<sup>112</sup> In the late Ottonian period, a moment of marked transition, the monastic community must have felt the need to redefine its identity-building discourse, which had hitherto rested on the hagiography of St Sylvester and on the founding of the monastery by Aistulf. The monks then established the sainthood of their first abbot, Anselm, by recording the *Actus vel transitus Anselmi abbatis*,<sup>113</sup> but also by officially reserving a day in the liturgical calendar for his commemoration, 3rd March. The time frame for this process may be inferred from the agrarian contracts which the monastery drew up between 995 and 1019, where the rent day falls in March, rather than on the day of St Martin, on 11th November, as would have been customary.<sup>114</sup>

A new version of the translation of St Sylvester's relics – and hence too of the founding of the abbey – was inserted into the life of its founder Anselm, drafted in its final form around the mid-eleventh century,<sup>115</sup> which is to say just a few decades after the text of the *translatio Silvestri* had been copied. In order to substantiate their account of the translation, this time the monks attributed a key role in this event to one of Paul I's successors, Pope Hadrian I (772-795): a widely renowned figure whose memory had become associated with the tradition of Carolingian power in Italy already in the years immediately after his death.<sup>116</sup> The new tale inserted into the life of Anselm goes like this: while Pope Hadrian was in Rome, he was visited by the Lombard king Aistulf, who brought him various gifts for St Peter, including the praeceptum for the foundation of the monastery of Nonantola, which the king himself had granted Abbot Anselm not long before. The abbot himself was present and took the document and placed it on St Peter's body, thereby donating his monastery to the Church of Rome. The king then asked Hadrian to grant his brother-in-law the body of Pope Sylvester I. The pope agreed, consecrated Anselm as abbot, and placed Nonantola under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Ravenna Sergius, as his representative.<sup>117</sup>

As far as our enquiry is concerned, the most striking fabrication in this new version is the fact that Aistulf's reign is said to coincide with Hadrian's pontificate. Actually, the whole narrative is built around the role played by Hadrian and the legitimating memory of him, which is used to support all the monks' claims about the relics and, more generally, in favour of the abbey's autonomy. Even the figure of the real founder of the monastery Anselm is de-emphasised in this new account, since he only plays a secondary role compared to Aistulf – the person responsible for founding the abbey and involving the pontiff – but also compared to Hadrian, who, through his munificence and authority, laid the foundations for the holiness and autonomy of Nonantola.

112 Golinelli, *Agiografia e culto*, 33.

113 *BHL* 541. According to Tomea, though, it must be dated not later than 974: Tomea, *Intorno a S. Giulia*, 32.

114 Tiraboschi, *Storia dell'augusta badia* 2, ns. 98,105,108,115. See Golinelli, *Agiografia monastica*, 24-25.

115 Golinelli, *Agiografia monastica*, 29.

116 Story *et al.*, *Charlemagne's Black Marble*, 158. On Pope Hadrian I and Charlemagne, see Hartmann, *Hadrian I*.

117 *Vita di sant'Anselmo*, ed. Bortolotti, 257-259.

In rewriting the history of its origins, the monastic community chose to add to the veneration of St Sylvester that of Pope Hadrian, whose body it also claimed to possess after the fortuitous circumstances of Pope Hadrian III's death near Nonantola in 885.<sup>118</sup> The choice of this pope is hardly a matter of chance, because the figure of Hadrian I ensured an unexpressed yet direct link with Charlemagne's royal power: by including precisely this pope among the abbey's founders, the monks turned the Carolingian element into one of the original defining features of their identity. From this perspective of »mobility«, the ideological discourse based on possession of the relics of St Sylvester may be seen to acquire a new meaning, by juxtaposing the first officially acknowledged pontiff of the Roman Empire to the pope who had enabled Charlemagne to build a new Christian empire through the stable control of the Italian kingdom. The abbey had sprung from Anselm's piety and King Aistulf's resources; and through the intervention of Pope Hadrian I it had acquired the bodies of saints that made it a unique site within Christendom: Constantine's pope, St Sylvester, and St Hadrian himself, Charlemagne's pope.

### *Conclusion*

The case of *translatio* examined here is no doubt significant, yet at the same time contradictory. The translation of the relics of St Sylvester and the political and spiritual use of their holiness represent an instance both of mobility and of immovability, where both situations rest on specific reasons and claims, on the basis of which different authorities developed their identity-building and symbolic discourses for centuries.

First of all, what in a sense paved the way for the *translatio* was the Roman Church's creation of a tradition about Sylvester, collected in the *AS*, starting at the time of Symmachus' papacy in the early sixth century. The first versions of this tradition did not mention the issue of the pontiff's relics, since what mattered was rewriting the tale of Constantine's conversion, which, according to St Jerome, had involved the Arian faith – an idea that the Church of Rome found unacceptable. The ideological portrayal of Sylvester as the founder of Constantine's Christian empire was then relaunched by the Frank Carloman, who vied with his brother Pippin for the throne before withdrawing to monastic life: Carolingian sources associate him with the veneration of the holy pontiff on Mount Soratte. The connection between the Pippinids, who had just ascended the Frankish throne, and Sylvester was to bestow further symbolical legitimation on Pippin III's power.

It is at this point that the relics come into play. The Lombard king Aistulf and his brother-in-law both hedged their bets on their translation. The former, following the example of his predecessor Liutprand's use of St Augustine's relics, sought to strengthen his reign against the Frankish-papal alliance by establishing a direct connection with Constantine's Roman Christian imperial power. By bringing the *corpus* into his abbey, Anselm instead sought to make the monastery one of the foremost sites in Christendom: a God-enlightened crossroads where political power and sainthood coexisted harmoniously. This narrative was incorporated into the hagiographical text entitled *translatio santi Silvestri*, which was chiefly composed

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118 *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, ed. Jaffé et al., 427.



and preserved at Nonantola. The more successful project of the two was Anselm's one: his institution endured beyond Aistulf's reign, even acquiring new vigour after the Carolingian conquest. In Charlemagne's empire, Nonantola emerged as one of the great and powerful royal abbeys and came to be known as the place »in quo beatus Sylvester corpore requiescit«. <sup>119</sup>

By contrast, Pope Paul I hedged his bets on the immovability, or rather stability, of Sylvester's relics in Rome. By founding the monastery of Saints Sylvester and Stephen, he primarily sought to prevent the plundering of the bodies of martyrs and saints that Aistulf was to carry out during the 755/756 siege of Rome by bringing a large number of relics to safety inside the monastery walls. Secondly, Paul I sought to complete the papal version of the cult of St Sylvester by associating the *AS*'s narrative with a concrete place, St Sylvester *in Capite*, where the faithful could see the saint's relics. The founding of this monastery also enabled the pontiff to reach an agreement with the Pippinids/Carolingians, who granted the pope exclusive control over the St Sylvester tradition in exchange for the full legitimation of their own royal power. Paul I thus added St Denis to Saints Sylvester and Stephen in the dedication of the monastery he had founded.

St Sylvester's relics were moved again as late as the beginning of the eleventh century. Faced with a new political and institutional situation, the monastic community of Nonantola felt the need to rewrite the history of its foundation, this time starting precisely from an account of the translation of the saint's relics featuring the direct involvement of Pope Hadrian I. The new veneration of this pontiff, which the monks associated with that of Sylvester and of their founder Anselm, constituted an attempt to paint the abbey's history in a new light, more suited to the eleventh century.

In the case just examined, then, St Sylvester's relics acquired different meanings depending on their state of mobility or immovability. In the face of the stability of the relics affirmed and established by the Church of Rome, the monks of Nonantola changed their identity-building discourse to suit new political requirements. However, there is one principle to which they always remained true: once brought within the abbey's walls, the body of St Sylvester was to ensure Nonantola's perpetual autonomy and independence from all secular powers.

### *Acknowledgements*

An oral presentation of this work was delivered as a contribution to the strand »Movement and Mobility in Uncertain Times: Changing Perspective in the Mediterranean« in the context of the 6th Biennial Conference of the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean, held in Barcelona from 8th to 11th July 2019. I am grateful to Christopher Heath for co-organising that lively three-panel event, as well as editing these proceedings, also with the precious help of Clemens Gantner. I warmly thank both. I am indebted to Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner, Dario Internullo, Tiziana Lazzari, Francesco Veronese, Giorgia Vocino, Giacomo Vignodelli for their helpful comments on earlier written drafts of this article. The views expressed are, of course, my own.

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119 *DD Lu I*, ed. Kölzer, n. 249.

## References

### *Abbreviations*

- BNF = Bibliothèque nationale de France  
 BHL = Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina  
 CC SL = Corpus Christianorum Series Latina  
 DD Kar I = *Pippini, Carlomanni, Caroli Magni Diplomata*  
 DD Lu I = *Ludovici Pii Diplomata*  
 LP = *Liber Pontificalis*  
 MAAN = Musée provincial des Arts anciens  
 MGH = Monumenta Germaniae Historica  
 MGH SS = Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores  
 MGT = Médiathèque du Grand Troyes  
 KBR = Royal Library of Belgium  
 RI 1 = *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern (751-918)*

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 Bruxelles, KBR 8515.  
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